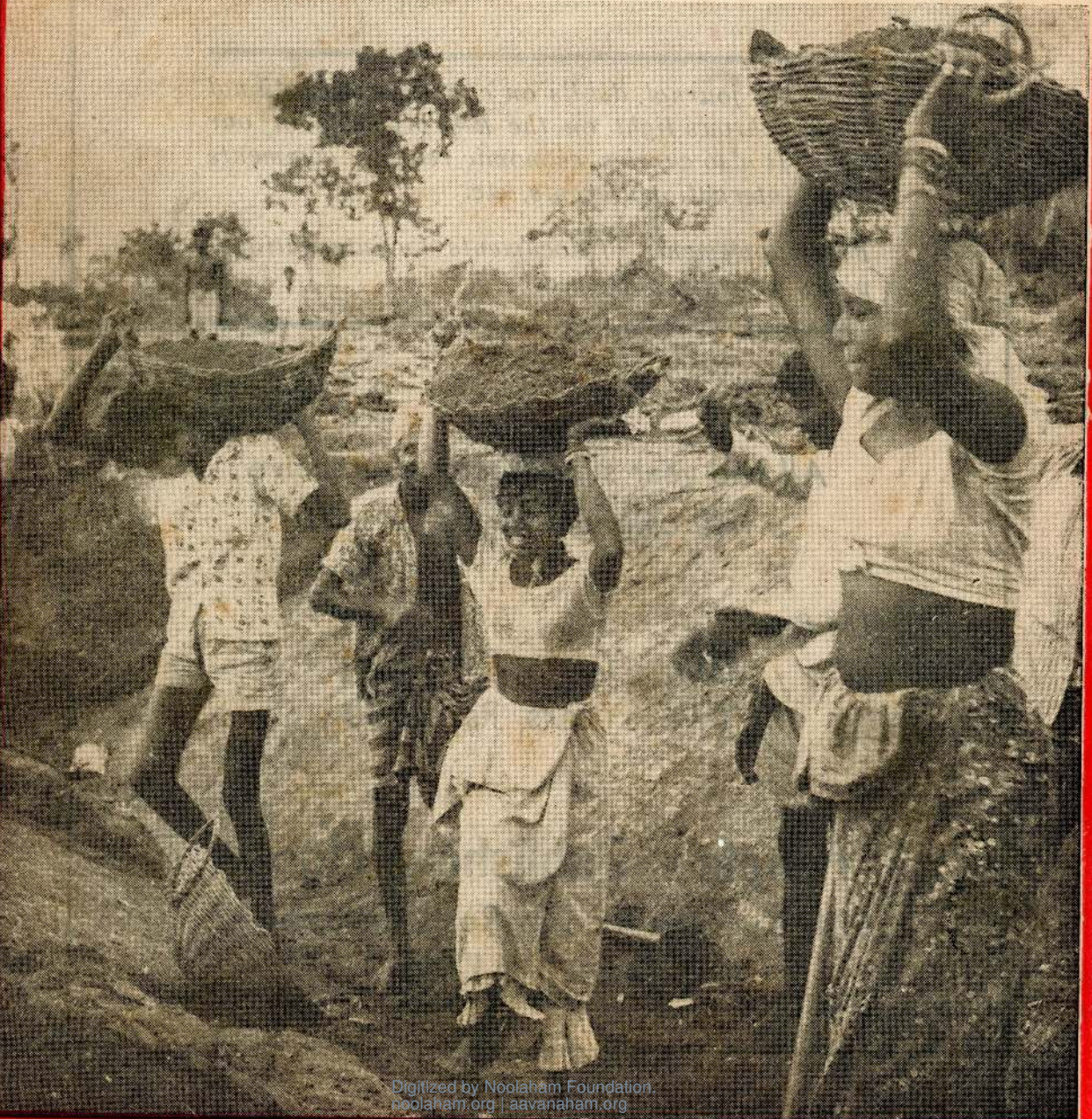


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# TRIBUNE

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## Letter From The Editor

IT IS NOW MAHAWELI all down the line.....and we have ourselves caught the infection and on our cover this week we have a picture of earth work by human labour at a site on the Mahaweli Diversion Project. Machines are necessary in the modern context of speed and urgency, but more important than machines and the capital necessary to make things hum is willing enthusiastic human labour. Prime Minister, Premadasa, speaking in the NSA on March 10 very correctly stated: ".....it is wrong to assume that our people want everything free. They are prepared to offer their toil and sweat to any government which launches a programme of work for the benefit of the country and the nation. This government is determined to offer such a programme to the nation....." The Accelerated Mahaweli Programme In Six Years is a shortened program of the 30-year master plan picking on the most important priorities which can be fulfilled in six years, that is in the lifetime of our NSA. A series of such six-year accelerated programmes will have to be carried through to complete the original 30-year scheme. Though the six-year shortened ("accelerated") scheme was suddenly sprung on the public as a UNP post-election promise, it was launched on a transparently bogus propaganda slogan....."The 30-year Mahaweli plan in five years".....pretending that the UNP was capable of doing the impossible. The bluff was called and the government thereafter sought to save its face by coining the term "accelerated" to mask the curtailed and shortened programme. This led to an undercurrent of disbelief in the government and it will be sometime before credibility can be restored about Mahaweli. Although government spokesmen had also talked a great deal about "foreign aid", it is only now, after the Hopper okay that one can be sure that the financial and technological assistance in adequate quantum will come from the rich western countries. Such assistance on a massive scale comes only with the imprimatur of the IMF-IBRD. With the first doze of IMF standby credit of \$ 93 million, some circles in the government had hoped that the work on the Mahaweli could be started. But with the increased foreign exchange expenditure stemming from the devaluation, additional subsidies for wheat flour, milk powder and fertiliser, there was no money for Mahaweli. And bilateral assistance was not forthcoming. Potential donors, the lenders and dispensers of technical know-how, were all waiting for the final IMF-IBRD okay. As we indicated in our issue last week, the IMF package deal is now a fact with a standby credit around \$ 300 million. This "okay" from the IMF is also a green signal for donors and lenders. Immediately it was known that Hopper had given the okay, several bi-lateral offers have come from donor countries for Mahaweli and other projects. The first big offer has come from Britain which is willing to finance the Victoria Reservoir which is the largest of the 12 projects in the accelerated Mahaweli plan. Britain is willing to loan £ 2 million on easy terms. The bulk of the loan will be for the purchase of turbines and generators for the Victoria Project expected to generate 10 megawatts of power. A Swedish public sector corporation is reported to have offered aid and finance for the Victoria Reservoir but this is likely to be used for the Maduru Oya project. The IMF-IBRD package is a hard and tough deal. The government has not yet revealed the scope and extent of the "sacrifices" Sri Lanka has to effect to qualify for the loans, but there is no doubt that if the devastating subsidies that have corroded our economy can be eliminated during an upsurge of developmental work, a great deal would have been achieved. Sri Lanka's economy is still burdened with subsidies which make economic development unreal and illusory. There are four major nationalised undertakings which are heavily subsidised—viz., the CTB, the Milk Board, the Petroleum Corporation and the Fertiliser Corporation—and, at least, until these organisations are able to operate efficiently in a viable and profitable manner, it would be impossible to effect a take-off from stagnation.

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## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

### On Foreign Affairs

Colombo, March 25,

In the second week-end of March, Minister Hameed came out of his cocoon of milk powder and the FTZ to proclaim through his customary lobby in the *Weekend of March 12* that Sri Lanka as Chairman of the Non-Aligned was "summoning" a special extraordinary session of the Movement's Foreign Ministers. Iqbal Athas revealed in the report that "according to diplomatic sources here, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. A. C. S. Hameed, is now making contacts with member countries of the movement. The idea is to apprise them of the decisions to be reached at the Kabul meeting of the Non-Aligned Coordinating Bureau, these sources said. Foreign Minister Hameed, these sources revealed, wants to ensure that there is consensus on the Kabul decision and to narrow down these differences, if any that may arise. The twenty five nation Non-Aligned Co-ordinating Bureau is meeting in Afghanistan, capital of Kabul in the first week of May. Their primary task is to map out a unified Non-Aligned stand on issues coming before the special sessions of the United Nations special sessions on disarmament which begins in New York on May 23. It was the Non-Aligned Movement which was instrumental for these special sessions. After a call for nearly a decade, the Non-Aligned Summit Conference here in 1976 adopted a resolution calling for a special session. This was embodied in the Colombo Declaration. The special Foreign Minister's meeting to be held in New York, is to come off before May 23."

This was before the Israeli attack on Lebanon. *Tribune* tried

very hard to find out on March 13 and 14 which Non-Aligned Foreign Ministers had been contacted for Special Meeting to be held before May 23, but failed. Some of those who can speak for the Foreign Ministers of some non-aligned countries have expressed surprise why there should be any special meetings immediately before or after the Kabul meeting. *Tribune* had tried to find out from the officials of the Foreign Office whether a special non-aligned Foreign Ministers' meeting has been summoned and why, but the Foreign Office was buried in deep mystic silence. Either no requests or invitations had been issued or it was being kept a dark, dark secret. In which event why was the *Weekend of March 12* tipped off to spread a front page banner headline about an impending Foreign Ministers' meeting to prepare for the Kabul meeting? And who or which were the "diplomatic sources", the *Weekend* relied on for the news? It will be good if someone can throw light on this mystery.

**Then Israel came to the rescue of Minister Hameed. Israel launched its massive attack with 25,000 troops on South Lebanon on March 15.**

On March 17, the *Ceylon Daily News* reported as follows: "Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. A. C. S. Hameed, condemned the Israeli attack of Southern Lebanon as a serious violation of territorial integrity of a sovereign nation. Action of this nature could make the solution of the Middle Eastern problem more difficult, he said. Israel yesterday had mounted an attack on Southern Lebanon. He was watching the situation closely and would call upon the Non-aligned Bureau to consider what action should be taken, a SLBC news cast said last night."

This is the first statement in a long while our roving (Foreign) Minister Hameed has made on a matter of significance in foreign affairs. The last one was to condemn Israeli settlements in occupied Arab lands. If he has made any other statements, it has escaped our notice and we will be grateful if our attention is drawn to them.

The Non-aligned Co-ordinating Bureau did meet in emergency session in New York—it was not a Foreign Ministers meeting the *Weekend of March 12* had proclaimed Hameed had summoned. The Bureau passed a stout-hearted resolution "(1) The Co-ordinating Bureau of the non-Aligned Group of countries met in emergency session on March 17, 1978 to consider the Israeli's invasion of Lebanon by land, sea and air which commenced at midnight on 14-15 March 1978. (2) The Co-ordinating Bureau unanimously condemned this latest act of blatant aggression by Israel against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon as well as its expansionist policy. The aggression has caused a considerable number of deaths in Lebanese territory and enormous damage to property as well as large scale refugee migrations from the Southern Lebanese Region. (3) The Co-ordinating Bureau considers that the latest brutal Israeli attack also aims at bringing into jeopardy the very existence of the Palestinian people who live in the territory of Lebanon and to eliminate the Palestinians and the Palestine Liberation Organisation as one of the key factors for settling the question of Palestine and the conflict in the Middle East. (4) The position that has arisen further aggravates the explosive situation in the Region and constitutes an immediate and direct threat to international peace and security requiring urgent action by the International Community



(5) The invasion complicates immeasurably and retards progress towards the solution of the Middle East problem as a whole and will have severe repercussions on all efforts at achieving a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East question. The Co-ordinating Bureau reaffirmed that a solution of the Middle East question is possible only by a recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people including the right to self-determination and an independent sovereign state of their own, in Palestine the withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied by it since June 1967 and the strict implementation of relevant United Nations Resolutions. (6) The Co-ordinating Bureau expressed its solidarity with the Lebanese people and fully supported the complaint made by Lebanon to the Security Council regarding the invasion of its territory by Israel. The Bureau further expressed its full support for all efforts by Lebanon to secure the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli invader and to re-establish its sovereignty and conditions of peace and stability in South Lebanon and the country as a whole. (7) The Co-ordinating Bureau reiterated its unequivocal support for and solidarity with the Palestinian people under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation at this critical period in their just struggle. (8) The Co-ordinating Bureau calls upon all non-Aligned countries to condemn this new aggression of Israel and to demonstrate their active solidarity with the Arab peoples confronting the aggression, in particular with the Lebanese people and the Palestinian people."

While Hameed kept everybody guessing as to when and where he was next taking off, political and diplomatic circles in Colombo were flabbergasted by a report in the *Ceylon Observer* of March 14 re-

printing a report published in *The Korea Herald* of Seoul. The *Observer* headline was LANIA EMBASSY IN SEOUL IN TWO MONTHS. The undated report was by Kim Kyong-hae. For the record we publish this report in full: "Sri Lanka may open its resident embassy in Seoul in a couple of months to pursue ever-expanding diplomatic and economic relations between Korea and Sri Lanka. This was disclosed by visiting Sri Lankan Ambassador to the United Nations B. J. Fernando in an exclusive interview with the *Korea Herald* at the Piaga Hotel (on Feb. 16). Sri Lanka will also support the stand of South Korea in international conferences including nonaligned meetings said Mr. Fernando. He said that economic co-operation between Korea and Sri Lanka would be substantially expanded when a high-powered Korean economic mission visits Colombo this month. As to the current situation on the Korean peninsula Amb. Fernando symbolically viewed that the economic strength of a nation is the best safeguard against any invasive manoeuvres. Asked why relations between Korea and Sri Lanka developed rapidly in recent years, Amb. Fernando said: 'That's because we are of the opinion that South Korea is the best example for us to emulate to attain our national development.' He observed that the strengthening of bilateral relations between Korea and Sri Lanka is one of the main political pursuits of Sri Lankan President Junius Richard Jayawardene who sent his special envoy to President Park Chung Hee last September in connection with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The Korean economic mission, according to the ambassador, will seek increased trade between the two countries along with Korean investment in the newly established free trade zone in Colombo and

discuss economic assistance to Sri Lanka on the part of Korea. We want you to assist us with our housing program. We understand that you have an extremely outstanding experience in the construction field. I also believe that Korean constructors can proceed to Sri Lanka' said the ambassador. Mr. Jayawardene became president through a constitutional amendment enacted by his United National Party government just three months after routing former Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike and her Freedom Party from power in the July 21 national elections last year. Amb. Fernando explained that the constitutional amendment provides for a popularly elected president with executive powers while maintaining the parliamentary system. 'Here in Korea, I have seen what a strong and efficient leadership can do for the fast development of Korea. We also adopted the presidential system to attain rapid development like Korea', said the ambassador. **He noted that the parliamentary system cannot lead developing countries to attain fast development.** Concerning the establishment of diplomatic relations between Korea and Sri Lanka Amb. Fernando said that the first diplomatic act of President Jayawardene was to establish diplomatic relations since Sri Lanka thought South Korea must take its place in the world. During his stay here he met Minister of Foreign Affairs Park Tong-jin and acting Minister of Foreign Affairs Yoon Ja-jong to discuss 'peace in this region and the expansion of mutual economic co-operation'. He noted that Sri Lanka would surely usher a new era when three economic projects of President Jayawardene are successfully carried out in five or six years. The three projects include the Mahaweli River Multi-purpose Scheme which would irrigate 1,000,000



acres of land, produce 2,000,000 kilowatts of electricity and create jobs for 250,000 families the free trade zone in Colombo and the Great Colombo Development Plan. "We have just launched the three projects, and I believe that the three projects will give us brighter future and a new era in Sri Lanka is expected in the forthcoming five to six years" said Amb. Fernando. Explaining that south Korea would continue to expand its influence among nonaligned countries in the economic field, Amb. Fernando viewed that relations between Korea and Sri Lanka would be expanded gradually since the two economies could complement each other. He said that a diplomat should read widely be patient, and always keep in mind the objectives of his country."

It is difficult to be restrained or detached in making any comments about this interview. B. J. Fernando has been appointed to the topmost diplomatic post in our Foreign Service and the first statement he makes outside Sri Lanka contains bloomers that in other countries would have resulted in his instant recall—at least for further briefing and education. Before he left the island too, B. J. Fernando had unburdened himself of pontifical assertions in a newspaper interview which showed that the government has not made a proper choice for the UN post. The interview in Seoul has only confirmed the view that B. J. Fernando will not be able to measure up to the job at the UN—unless he is transformed through a series of miracles.

Diplomacy is a professional job, and very few non-professionals can make good diplomats, and it is amply clear that B. J. Fernando has blundered even before he presented

his credentials at the UN. He was on his way to New York and had tarried at Seoul to speak about matters on which he should have remained silent as an envoy of Sri Lanka. There are a number of questions which arise from the B. J. Fernando's interview in Seoul.

First he promised Korea that Sri Lanka would open an embassy in two months in Seoul. On what authority did he make this statement? *Tribune* is not able to get any confirmation from any government source about opening an embassy in two months. And should this information, if true, not have been revealed first in Sri Lanka and not in Seoul and not take political circles in Colombo by surprise. Second, B. J. Fernando had said that Sri Lanka would "support South Korea in international conferences and in non-aligned meetings." This is a *carte blanche* endorsement of support for one of the most dictatorial and undemocratic regimes in Asia tied to US by a military agreement. South Korea is not a member of the Non-Aligned Movement and cannot be admitted as member according to its rules. Pakistan could not be given entry even though the military pacts in which she was involved were dead and defunct. How B. J. could have given South Korea the assurance that Sri Lanka would support the "stand of South Korea" even in non-aligned meetings is something beyond comprehension. Can Sri Lanka, which is the head of the non-aligned movement, make these promises without consulting the other members of the movement, at least those in the 25-member Bureau?

Third, B. J. Fernando is entitled to admire the great economic progress made by South Korea, but had he a mandate to say that "South Korea is the best example for us to emulate to attain national development"? South Korea is one

of those countries where human rights have been put into cold storage and if the UNP government attempts to follow South Korea in this, it will find itself in major difficulties with the people of this country. Fourth, and the most astounding pronouncement was that the "parliamentary system cannot lead developing countries to attain fast development". This is a repudiation of the avowed policy of the UNP which swears by the parliamentary system and a free ballot both of which are unknown in South Korea.

The rest of B. J. Fernando's *blah blah* is amateurish and puerile nonsense, unworthy of Sri Lanka's Ambassador to the UN. And, as we mentioned earlier, at the time of the interview in Seoul he had not yet presented his credentials as UN Ambassador to the Secretary General.

*It must be said that apart from the excellent choice of Noel Wimalasena as High Commissioner in the UK the other choices of non-career men, Karunaratne for Washington, Dissanayake for Jakarta and Fernando for the UN have not inspired confidence.*

The conduct of Sri Lanka's foreign affairs is certainly in the doldrums ever since this government came to power, Foreign Minister Hameed has been gallivanting in the four corners of the world—from South to New Zealand. But he has so far not gone to India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Persian Gulf countries or any Arab country. And hardly any of the really important non-aligned countries.

The least Minister Hameed could have done is to have visited Egypt, as a leading non-aligned country, especially after Sadat had taken a spectacular step to bring peace to the Middle East by going to Jerusalem. Instead of that,



the initiative came from the Egyptian side. President Sadat sent a special envoy, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Boutros Ghaly, who concluded a three (non-aligned) nation trip by arriving in Colombo on March 21, having gone to Yugoslavia and India immediately before.

There are bureaucrats and politicians in Sri Lanka who may feel that Egypt should first make the pilgrimage to Sri Lanka because the latter was the head of the non-aligned movement. This argument may have some validity if Minister Hameed had stayed home and had held a durbar to enable the Foreign Minister of non-aligned countries to pay obeisance to him. But, Minister Hameed has been jumping around the world so much and too often that he cannot rely on such an excuse to explain why he did not include Cairo in one of many itineraries.

This has turned out to be a case of mountain coming to Minister Hameed. Dr. Boutros Ghaly is a dynamic personality of remarkable charm. He is continuing the peace initiative Sadat took (in going to Jerusalem) by going to Belgrade, New Delhi and Colombo. There were and there are apprehensions in Yugoslavia and India that Sadat's unilateral action in going to Israel was neither prudent nor realistic especially because it had seemingly caused a 'split' in the Arab world. While India has maintained a discreet silence on the merits of Sadat's strategy, Marshal Tito had been critical about what he felt was Sadat's attempt to appease Israel. India, while not commenting on Sadat's bid to make Israel to agree to his universally-acceptable minimum terms, had repeatedly underlined India's support for the Arab cause especially support for the PLO's demand for a homeland and sovereign state on the West Bank and the Gaza

strip. Minister Hameed, when he was in New York for the last UN sessions, had issued a statement condemning Jewish settlements in occupied Arab lands. This was the first and last statement by Sri Lanka on the Middle East question—until Israel's invasion of Lebanon evoked a fresh condemnation. In between unfortunately ominous stories of contacts and flirtations between Sri Lankans and Israeli diplomats and businessmen abroad have circulated.

Whilst India's Janata leaders have publicly made it clear to President Carter, who had lobbied for the recognition of Israel, that they could not consider re-establishing ties with Tel-Aviv until Israel withdrew from all occupied Arab lands, Sri Lanka has maintained a peculiar silence. It is hard to believe that approaches have not been made to Sri Lanka about recognising Israel, but Sri Lanka has not said one word about it. This country's reluctance to make its position known on this question is understandable. Whilst canvassing for international financial aid and investment for the FTZ and other projects, Sri Lanka cannot afford to offend the international Jewish lobby.

Dr. Boutros Ghaly's visit could not have been timed better. The co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement at a ministerial level will meet in Kabul early in May whilst the UN Special Sessions on Disarmament—wanted by the Non-aligned Summit—will open in New York on May 23. In addition, Israel has created a new crisis in the Middle East by invading South Lebanon.

Dr. Ghaly discussed these and all connected matters in Colombo. Judging by the satisfaction he showed at the press conference he held, there is no doubt that Minister Hameed and the Government of Sri Lanka have responded in a

way that was expected of a leading non-aligned country, especially its current chairman. Dr. Ghaly said he had discussed not only all matters like Disarmament, Decolonisation, and others of significance to the non-aligned movement but also the topical question of the Israeli invasion of South Lebanon.

His press conference had a fairly good coverage in the local daily press as the extracts cited below will indicate:

The Sun 23/3—

"Sri Lanka responses to any initiative of peace" said the visiting Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Boutros Ghaly in reply to a question asked yesterday regarding Sri Lanka's position on the Egyptian peace initiatives in West Asia. Dr. Ghaly arrived in Sri Lanka after visiting Yugoslavia and India. His mission was to brief the three leading Non-Aligned nations on Egypt's stand in bringing about a settlement in the West Asia region. Dr. Ghaly said the policy of disarmament, colonisation and Israel's aggression into Southern Lebanon as well as the forthcoming Non-Aligned meetings in Kabul and Belgrade as well as the UN special sessions on disarmament were the main topics of discussions with Sri Lanka leaders. A former journalist himself Dr. Ghaly told newsmen that President Anwar Sadat of Egypt was a "flexible man". He was looking for new methods of establishing peace in the region. His visit to Jerusalem was only in search of such a new method. He wished to accelerate this process of peace and he was prepared to do it through Geneva, mediation, the good offices of the United States or even through direct contact. He would not hesitate to go to all parts of the world to achieve peace. However, Dr. Ghaly pointed out that Israel was following a very rigid policy and without the right of self determination for the three million Palestinians there could



be no peace in the region. "The Israeli do not understand the philosophy of non-alignment. They do not know how to cope with a philosophical approach in achieving peace". He added that the Israeli incursions into Southern Lebanon late last week had shown a negative policy by Israel and this had now become a new obstacle in the quest for peace. He said that it was now difficult to negotiate peace until Israel withdraws from Lebanon. He answered in the affirmative when asked whether the Egyptian-Israeli peace negotiations had proved unsuccessful. Referring to inter-Arab disputes, Dr. Ghaly said that they were highly exaggerated and added that there was always disputes among brothers and those were more difficult to solve. He stated that there will continue to be these disputes but that they must be solved peacefully within the Arab framework. Dr. Ghaly observed that the Palestinians should decide for themselves what they desired in West Asia. The Egyptians had no mandate nor any trusteeship to speak on that aspect. However, one thing was certain and that was that without the right of self-determination of the Palestinians there could be no peace in West Asia. There could be no direction towards this end, he said without Israeli withdrawal from territory captured on June 5, 1967 and without the recognition of the Palestinians in the Gaza and the West Bank. "We will continue towards this end," he added. In conclusion Dr. Ghaly observed that he was leaving Sri Lanka with "a little frustration." This frustration he said was for having come only on official business. "I told your Foreign Minister," he said, "the next time I come it will be as a tourist to spend a week here with my wife holidaying."

The Ceylon Daily News, 23/3—

"Egypt's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mr. Boutros Ghaly who has been visiting key-non-aligned nations as President Sadat's special envoy to whip up support on some

important international questions including the Middle East peace initiative said yesterday that Israel's aggression against Lebanon had proved an obstacle to Middle East peace. Mr. Ghaly who had earlier visited Yugoslavia and India as special envoy and who was in Sri Lanka briefly for discussions with Sri Lanka leaders said that President Sadat was willing to go anywhere in pursuit of his quest for peace in the Middle East. But his peace initiative started late last year had received a setback by Israel's aggression against Lebanon. Mr. Ghaly said that there could be no peace in the Middle East without the concurrence and support of the Palestinians and the recognition of self-determination for the Palestinian people. The Minister said that during his discussions with President Mr. J. R. Jayawardene and other Sri Lanka leaders he brought up three questions—non-alignment, development of bilateral relations between Egypt and Sri Lanka and the democratisation of the Third World. Mr. Ghaly said that Egypt was not against the Super Powers but the idea was to diminish the importance of the Super-Powers in the attempt to solve the problems confronting Third World countries. The visiting Minister underlined that everything must be done to obtain peace in the Middle East. He granted that there were differences between the Arab countries. But these differences were not in regard to the long-term objective of peace but in connection with the means to achieve that peace. Mr. Ghaly said he was happy with the response he had in Sri Lanka in regard to the main issues he had discussed. He felt that Sri Lanka would always support the idea of self-determination for the Palestinians. The Minister who was on President Sadat's delegation on his historic peace mission to Jerusalem said he hoped that Israel was sincere in its efforts to find a solution to the Middle East problem. "You must understand that the Middle

East conflict is 30 years old and it is not easy to find a solution to it in a short time." Still Mr. Ghaly thought that Israel's negative attitude as had been evinced recently made a solution to this long-standing problem difficult especially because of Israel's latest aggression in Lebanon and its refusal to consider the question of self-determination for the three million Palestinians. Mr. Ghaly said that one of the questions he discussed here was the upcoming special session of the United Nations on disarmament initiated by the non-aligned community. He conceded that this was not a simple issue and it was different to talk of disarmament when there were problems such as decolonisation that had to be solved. Disarmament he said was a long-term policy and it was only after settling questions of decolonisation that one could really sit down to talk in terms of global disarmament. But while agreeing that disarmament was a difficult issue he said that still it was a question that had to be pursued. He discussed the non-aligned meeting in Kabul which would be held in preparation for the special sessions in New York. Mr. Ghaly said that he also discussed in Sri Lanka the possibilities of economic co-operation between Egypt and Sri Lanka. Earlier yesterday he had visited the Mahaweli diversion project near Kandy and said that Egypt had experience in irrigated agriculture and there were possibilities for co-operation in this field. Asked about the differences among Arab countries over President Sadat's peace mission and the non-attendance of some countries at the Cairo talks, Mr. Ghaly said that Egypt was still ready to invite them again in pursuit of peace."

The Daily Mirror 23/3—

"Dr. Boutros Ghaly, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt who leaves Sri Lanka today after a two-day visit told a news conference last night that his country which had experi-



ence of both free trade zones and agricultural and power projects would assist Sri Lanka. Dr. Ghaly said Egypt had experience of free trade zones at Port Said and Suez and would place this experience at Sri Lanka's disposal. "As for agricultural irrigation we have been doing it for seven thousand years and here too, Egypt would assist Sri Lanka," he said. Dr. Ghaly visited Polgolla yesterday by helicopter and said he was very impressed by the work being done there. He said that as far as economic co-operation between the two countries was concerned Egypt would offer Sri Lanka assistance not only on a technical and individual basis but also through organisations in the Arab world. There were organisations created by the Arab League and the Organisation of African Unity which had set apart two billion dollars and Sri Lanka would receive special funds from these organisations for feasibility studies and other forms of aid. He said Egypt and Sri Lanka had been very close friends since the days of Bandung. Both countries had the same aspirations and both believed in peaceful co-existence. There had been a very useful exchange of views during the discussions he had specially on how to diminish the influence of the super powers and on preparations for the conferences of Foreign Ministers at Kabul and Belgrade. Questioned about the outcome of his talks here on the situation in Lebanon and the United Nations' resolutions he said that Sri Lanka had always responded to any initiative towards peace. The recent developments in Lebanon had interrupted the dialogue between Egypt and Israel and a great deal would now depend on the good offices of the US Government. Dr. Ghaly said "Sri Lanka was the last lap on his present tour because one always keeps nice things for the end."

It is to be hoped that Dr. Ghaly's visit will induce Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister and government to take an active interest in political

developments in the world—and not be concerned solely with promoting the FTZ, trade and tourism. There are many urgent matters of great importance impinging on the non-aligned world; none more urgently than the complicated situation in Zimbabwe.

Minister Hameed has to catch up with events in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and we look forward to studied, careful, cautious and appropriate statements on all matters of importance.



## BETWEEN THE LINES BY SERENDIB

### ● UNCTAD ● Trilateral Commission ● Declining Dollar

DEBT RELIEF: Minister Lalith Athulathmudali has, according to reports in the local papers, covered himself with glory at the UNCTAD Conference in Geneva from March 6 to 11. He was elected the President of the meeting. It is not clear what part he had played in helping to get the compromise consensus resolution adopted by the unanimously 116-member board of the UNCTAD on the easing of the debt problem. It was very much of a Sri Lanka show with Gamini Corea, the Secretary General, and Lalith Athulathmudali as President of the Conference. Gamini Corea has done a great deal of spade work on the third world debt question and the choice of Lalith was probably a gesture to Sri Lanka for the good work done by the Secretary General. It must also be remembered that Sri Lanka is chairman of the non-aligned movement and the Non-Aligned Summit raised this question of debt relief and the new inter-

national economic order. Anyway, it was a special honour for Lalith Athulathmudali who seems to have risen to the occasion.

Sri Lanka also had another Minister. Ronnie de Mel, in attendance at the UNCTAD Conference but he did not seem to have had the *imprimatur* of President Jayawardene. He has returned to Colombo without completing the European odyssey he had outlined at the press conference on 19.2.78, ostensibly to meet Vice President Hopper of the World Bank. Many believe that the Hopper meeting was an excellent face saving excuse for his recall. Now Lalith will be the only Sri Lankan Minister in orbit in Europe.

In regard to debt relief it is known that the Trilateral Commission which is the transnational force behind the Carter Administration had decided to advise all rich industrialised governments in which it had influence to adopt a new strategy towards Third World countries. The main reason for the strategy is no doubt to win over Third World countries and there was nothing better than to exhibit a conciliatory and sympathetic attitude on the debt question. Whether this sympathy will be translated into real action in the long run is another matter, but an outward display of sympathy is not merely a tactical device but was something that has become necessary, at this stage, because debt relief has become an imperative essential to save the capitalist system, (or what is left of it), from serious dislocation and breakdown. Many responsible commentators have categorically stated that if the Trilateral Commission had not intervened, the rich industrialised nations could not have been persuaded to soften even to the extent they did. TRILATERAL COMMISSION: Much has been written about it, but in



a letter to the *Times of India*, New Delhi edition, 2/3/78, Jag Mohan commenting on a book review in that paper, entitled "DEMOCRACY, ZERO GROWTH" by Maurice Golding, succinctly summed up the position: "Sir, it is belatedly that your paper has published at least some material about the Trilateral Commission (February 25), even though it was with reference to a French book. India and the developing countries have to be on guard against the predatory activities of the Trilateral Commission, now five years old. This Commission is an updated version of the Bilderberg Group, an Anglo-American think-tank force, which aimed at putting the non-aligned world in an economic straight-jacket. It will be of interest to your readers to note that apart from Jimmy Carter, Walter Mondale, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Cyrus Vance, Warren Christopher and Richard Holbrooke (all of the Carter Administration), the Trilateral Commission has among its members, Hedley Donovan (Editor-in-Chief, *Time*) and David Rockefeller. This brother of the former American Vice-President, Nelson Rockefeller, is in fact the founder of the Commission and the chief source of the Commission's enormous funds. In the Japanese contingent of the Commission's members are the heads of the Bank of Tokyo, and the Sumitomo, Fuji, Mitsui and Dai-ichi Banks. Numbering sixty, they are the *Zaibatsu* leaders of today's Japan. Among the European members are the head of the Barclay's Bank, the French financier, Edmond de Rothschild, and John London, President of the Royal Dutch-Shell. This is a veritable trade union of bankers and oil producers."

"Robert Manning in an article published in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, noted that the Trilateral Commission 'is not a social club for the elite or a job place-

ment agency for the democratic administration. And he added: 'it has drawn up concrete proposals for revising and modernising global institutions to move from Kissinger's Metternichian juggling act to a post-Bretton Woods, post Vietnam world order.' The Trilateral Commission wants to replace the 'balance-of-power' politics by 'world-order' politics, for which several models have been drawn up. Brzezinski, who guides the think-tank force, is an advocate of 'architectural approach' to world politics as against 'the acrobatic foreign policy' of Kissinger. The book, *The Crisis in Democracy* mentioned by Mr. Dileep Padgaonkar is also aimed at such an 'architectural approach'. Let me quote one more passage from Manning's article, which is of extreme relevance to India and the third world countries: 'The thrust of the Trilateral game-plan is a renovation of the world economic system—restoring stable exchange rates, overhauling and strengthening institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and evolving a common position among the Trilateral countries, which after setting their respective economic houses in order could co-ordinate their approach towards the socialist bloc and the third world. The key task in the Commission's version of *managerial* geopolitics is the management of interdependence. The developing countries need the aid, technology, know-how and markets of the Trilateral World. The Trilateral countries increasingly need the developing countries, as sources of raw materials, as export markets and most important of all as constructive partners in the creation of a stable world order.' And all this is not from a communist publication, but from the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. I wonder whether

the latest move on the part of West to write off the debt of the third world has been inspired by the Trilateral Commission."

Nothing, as far as we know, has been published in Sri Lanka about the Trilateral Commission. It is time that this sad default is made good.

**MYSTERY OF THE DOLLAR:** For several months now, the US dollar has been slipping on the world currency markets. Less than a year ago the dollar rate to the Swiss franc was 2.50: in the first week of March it was quoted at 1.82. It has slipped still further after that. It is still slipping. The dollar has depreciated even more disastrously *vis a vis* the West German deutschmark and the Japanese yen. United States experts and bankers have wanted West Germany and Japan to inflate their economies to offset the fall of the dollar—and not merely endeavour to support the dollar on the currency markets. The British pound sterling has improved its position considerably whilst the dollar has slipped, and this revealed many serious differences between the UK and US. The weakening of the US dollar has undoubtedly adversely affected some of the richest countries in the world. A West German banker had told a British news paper in February: "last year the Bundesbank had to write off DM 7.3 billion because of dollar depreciation which were funds that could have been invested in the economy."

The fall of the dollar has far-ranging political, economic, commercial and social implications. No expert has yet worked out the implications so far as the Sri Lanka rupee is concerned, but the details have been worked out for India. "Indian businessmen would find that their CIF quotes could vary considerably—in the West German



market for example, a buyer of Indian goods quoted in US dollar would find that he has benefited by nearly ten percent in last eight weeks. There are also national implications. India's foreign exchange reserves dropped by Rs. 131 crores because of readjustment of the rupee/dollar rate early in February, reflecting the growing strength of the rupee. Gold price celebrated the fresh bout of currency uncertainty by surging above the \$ 180 per ounce mark."

Examining the reasons generally attributed for the fall in the value of the dollar the commentator stated: "The uncertainty about the dollar's future has blamed on the prolonged miners' strike in the US. There was also talk of the US resorting to some form of capital controls of foreign borrowing to bolster its balance of payments position. But such arguments only tend to distract attention from the real issue and from the need to deal with the oil deficit. The heart of the matter is that the US will not take any further steps to support the dollar until the West Germans take steps to reflate their economy... West German businessmen are apprehensive about the growing appreciation of the mark as exports tend to fall and imports rise. The German economy, so structured that it is heavily dependent on exports, is being affected by the dollar's decline, recent Scandinavian devaluations and the growing weakness of the French franc. The West Germans argue that the US government should wake up and halt the dollars' slide. The OPEC countries are also worried about the current situation. The Saudi Government suggested recently that if the present trend in dollar value continued, there might be second thoughts about keeping Saudi cash in American securities and investments. The

other OPEC nations are talking about a 'currency basket' formula for oil pricing."

The commentator concluded by referring to some of the implications valid for Western Europe: "The fall in dollar's value will continue until the US Government resolves the problem of its trade deficit largely caused by oil imports and poor export performance. The health of the dollar is no more a domestic issue because it is damaging the level of demand in Western Europe. And this means jobs. It is a political issue, a question of pride for the Carter administration. The talk about a dollar devaluation sounds far fetched but not entirely impossible. The current weakness of the franc and the prospects of a left-wing government in France further complicate the matter."

Washington, it is believed by many, has let the dollar slide down because it was in its interest to do so—US exports now have a better chance on the world markets. It also wanted, it is said, West Germany and Japan to take positive steps to re-order their economies to help the US-dominated capitalist system. And this they have now done—because the further fall in the value of the US dollar would have compelled the OPEC countries to end the freeze in oil prices and increase prices and any such increase in oil prices would have brought fresh complications in the economies of Germany and Japan.

On March 13, according to Reuters, "West Germany and the United States announced a major new co-operative effort aimed at supporting the dollar which has been falling for months on the increasingly anxious foreign exchange markets. The plan, announced simultaneously in Bonn and in Washington, allows for billions of dollars worth of cash to be made available so that dollars can

be bought back on the markets if the US currency runs into more trouble. Under the agreement, West Germany has doubled the amount of credit that it has extended to the United States to four billion dollars. This can be used by the American authorities for interventions on the markets if they become disorderly. The US Treasury has also arranged for the sale of credits worth around \$ 70 millions to the West German Central Bank (Dundesbank) in order to purchase marks. The marks can then be used to intervene on markets and buy dollars. The transfer to West Germany is in the form of 'Special Drawing Rights'. The US would draw further on its reserves in the International Monetary Fund to acquire additional foreign exchange if and when necessary."

On the same day, Japan "bowing to pressure from its trading partners has agreed to an import package of one billion dollars or more which may also aid Asian airlines. The package, announced on Saturday, is aimed at easing pressure on the yen which has been rising against the Western currencies because of Japan's large trade surplus. Under the proposals, Japan will make advance payment for imports and purchase of Airbus from Europe which it will lease to Asian airlines. Reports say that the airlines of former European colonies in Asia will be offered the Airbuses on lease. Excluding the airline proposal, the package does not contain anything that would help developing countries since the items to be purchased by Japan are not those that the developing countries can supply. The package is meant to benefit Japan's Western trading partners. The commodities that Japan plans to buy include iron ore pellets and pelletised pig iron which will be stock-piled for future



use. About five million tonnes of crude oil will also be stored in idle tankers."

But, in spite of these measures, at the time of writing, the dollar continues to slip. Why? Is it because the US and its dominant group of bankers want a devaluation of the dollar? The settlement of the US coal strike at the end of February was supposed to have pulled the dollar back from the point of no return on the international markets.

The new co-ordination between elements in the Carter administration and Western European capital banks led to a series of measures in mid-March: the US, Federal Reserve began to intervene in support of the dollar, the Swiss took action to prevent capital flight from the dollar into the Swiss franc—the Swiss lowered central bank rates to all-time low to discourage loose funds from seeking refuge in Switzerland and extended already existing exchange controls to impose punitive taxes on foreign deposits of Swiss francs.

But will all this help? Has the general crisis of capitalism, which Marxists talk about, taken a new turn for the worse? Is this why *Time* magazine of March 13 has a cover story about *Socialism* in the world. "Self-proclaimed socialists of one variety or another governments rule 53 of the world's sovereign states, controlling 39% of its territory and 42% of its population". *Time* seeks to explain why people and countries were falling for "socialism" and also to show that "socialism rarely delivers", and *Time* "offers an analysis of socialism's promise compared with performances".

In this the Trilateral Commission's (remember *Time* editor is a Trilateral) new effort to "save"

the world from socialism? This new effort has been going on for sometime. Carter, in January, threatened Western Europe with dire consequences if communists and allies were taken into governments. But there is an unmistakable leftward trend in Europe. But more important than socialism and leftward swings is the fate of the dollar.

What are the chances of the dollar surviving as an international reserve currency and the chances of the US economy staging a quick recovery? This is a question that is difficult to answer. The continued downward plunge of the devastated dollar prompted an editorial comment on February 28 in Switzerland's leading newspaper *Neue Zuercher Zeitung* said: "Washington does not know what it is doing or why it is doing it. That is not in America's long-term self-interest. America's capacity for leadership has been gravely damaged. The fall of the dollar undermines the foundation of the world edifice. Strong finance and a strong currency are the basis for national sovereignty....."

Various solutions have been suggested to "save the dollar". The economists in the Carter Administration do not want to adopt these remedies. Other "save the dollar" panaceas seem too far-fetched to be realistic eg, the demand to go back to a gold-backed international monetary system.

What next for the dollar and world capitalism?

## QUIDNUNCS

### ● Currency Notes Tender ● Tractor Tenders ● Textile Scandal

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

**\*CURRENCY NOTES' TENDER.** QUIDNUNCS report that all seems to be well in regard to the tender for currency notes. In the *Tribune* of March 4 our *quidnuncs* had raised some important questions about the proposed tender for the printing of new currency notes. They had been aghast that some bright sparks in the Treasury (Ministry of Finance) had tried to get some changes introduced in the tender conditions—evidently to suit some particular tenderer (or tenderers) and to pre-empt others from participating in the tender. There are various



versions floating around (with our currency floating everything floats) as what alterations were sought, but they do not matter now. In any event, the original Tender specifications and conditions, based on the Bank of England's model—we are still very much British and Commonwealth—have gone out to all high-quality printers of currency notes the world over including two or three in Asia. All's well that ends well. In the meantime, some bureaucrats and VIPs are anxious to know how *Tribune quidnuncs* got on to this matter especially when they were not involved in the Wild Life show which was made a backdrop for high-powered lobbying for grabbing the Sri Lanka currency printing order. The only new clause added to the tender was that "canvassing" would disqualify a participating tenderer.

**\*TRACTOR TENDERS.** Our *Quidnuncs* were able to pick up bits of gossip, that throws more light on our Confidentially story of February 4, *Tractors, Tenders, Human Nature*. This was a piece on how the Tractor Corporation placed orders for Kubota and Yanmar two-wheeled tractors on what were alleged to be "tenders". One *quidnunc* has sent in a report stating that "since the revealing article in the *Tribune* nothing has happened... The Ministry inquiry is on, the Auditor General is asking questions but Tractors and Tenders remain exactly where they were. Bar the shouting the tender has been awarded and everybody is sitting pretty. The *quidnunc* goes on to say: "In the *Tribune* article references were made to the Chairman of the Tractor Corporation and his lengthy stay in Japan". Our *quidnunc* has asked a number of questions in this connection: was the Chairman during his stay in Japan a guest of the Firm or Firms that were awarded the tender? Did not one firm get about 15% of

the order while the other firm about 85%? Where did the Chairman stay in Japan? When he stayed in Hotels, asks the *quidnuncs*, who paid for the luxury suits? The *quidnunc* goes on to ask: Could this not be verified from the Corporation itself? Did he, as required under the Exchange Control Act tender the bills in respect of his expenses? If not, why not? Further, should not he name the Hotels in which he stayed? Will it not then be possible to find out who footed the bills? Is it also not strange that all these years the difference in the offers of both these Firms were only a few rupees, whereas on the last tender the difference was nearly Rs. 500/- on each machine? Did not the higher-price tenderer get 85% of the order and the lower 15% and that by this preference for the higher priced tractors did the country not lose nearly a million rupees in foreign exchange? Wasn't a fraction of this enough to pay hotel bills?

**TEXTILE SCANDAL.** For many weeks now, there were in the daily newspapers little items about a major textile import scandal. It was reported that the importers awarded tenders to import synthetic saree material (nylex etc) had brought in other material like ployester etc., which was not included in the licence. The import documents evidently conformed to the government's import licences, but on a tip-off, the consignments were examined and it was found that there were other material which could not be called "saree material". And, finally, the daily papers on March 20, 21 and 22 reported that one firm had been fined Rs. 25.5 million with the goods being confiscated. In the case of the second firm, no penalty was imposed but the goods are said to have been "requisitioned" (for which payment will probably be made).

Whilst the so-called national dailies from the *Lake House*, *Times* and *Gunazena* groups mentioned no names, the party dailies *Dinakar* and the *Aththa* on 21/3 and 20/3 published the names of the firms and some of the tycoons connected with them. Our *Quidnuncs* have been busy ferretting out as much information as possible and we set out below what they have discovered so far. If the details they have unearthed need clarification or amplification or explanation, and if the parties involved feel that our report is incorrect in any detail, we will be happy to publish corrections and amplifications. And if any of the questions we raise point an accusing finger, it is not motivated by any malice but solely by public interest.

According to the *Quidnuncs*, the story goes back to a time shortly after the UNP came to power in 1977. Mr. J. R. Jayawardene felt (quite rightly) that there was a vast hunger for synthetic sarees or nylex sarees among the women folk and with the IMF granting the first stand-by credit, the government decided to import sufficient synthetic saree material to satisfy this demand—to saturation—before X'mas and New Year. When this was known, the tycoons who run the local Synthetic Textiles Manufacturing Association told the bureaucrats handling the subject that they could produce all the necessary saree material locally. Bureaucrats were persuaded to accept this and the original idea of importing this material was dropped. But, at the end of October or early November it was found that the local manufacturers could not meet even a fraction of the demand. Thereupon, a fresh decision was taken to import synthetic saree material.

*Quidnuncs* say that sealed quotations were invited from firms which



could handle big quantities. Thereupon, our *Quidnuncs* say Cyntex Ltd., had quoted US cents -/50 a yard for plain synthetic saree material and -/55 cts. a yard for printed. Paragons Ltd., had quoted US cts. -/40 a yard for plain and -/45 for printed. Only one other firm, Kundanmalls had quoted, but their prices are not known and in any case they did not get an order; on the basis of these quotations Cyntex Ltd., was given an order for 2 million yards and Paragon Ltd., 1 million yards. Both firms had indicated that they would bring in a substantial part of their respective orders before X'mas — if necessary by air.

The first question raised by our *Quidnuncs* is why Cyntex Ltd., which had quoted higher was given an order for 2 million yards whilst the firm quoting the lower figure was given only 1 million yards. Ordinary persons cannot be blamed if they think that Cyntex Ltd., was given the larger quantity at a higher price was because it was an A. Y. S. Gnanam show and Gnanam was a blue-eyed favourite of the powers that be. Of course, the bureaucrats who placed the order say that Cyntex Ltd., had promised to bring in a higher quality saree material than the quality the lower-priced rival could possibly bring. What *Quidnuncs* have not yet been able to find out is whether the material imported by Cyntex was of a higher quality than the Paragon imports. This is one of the unanswered questions which needs further probing. Unless satisfactory answers are forthcoming, it would be reasonable to conclude that Gnanam and Cyntex Ltd., had been "favoured" by the bureaucrats and allowed to make a greater profit—contrary to public interest.

The second stage of this drama starts with the arrival of the consignments. It is not clear how much was air-freighted and how much

came by sea. But, what is important is that none of it came in time for X'mas and New Year. Of course, the 3 million yards will be available for the Sinhala and Tamil New Year—if the Salu Sala and the Co-ops can rise up to the occasion. But with the arrival of the consignments came tip-offs which made it necessary for the Customs and the Authorities to re-check and re-scrutinise the consignments. If newspaper reports are to be believed, the examination were conducted through "raids". The outcome of the raids, it has been revealed in the daily newspapers, was that both consignments did not conform to the import licences issued by government—which were only for synthetic saree material, popularly known as nylex.

In the case of the Paragons consignment it was found that a certain percentage (25% to 30%) was polyester and there also was a quantity of lace (saree) material. It was argued that polyester could be used for sarees and that lace was only for sarees. Evidently, the investigating bureaucrats refused to accept these contentions, and this firm was fined Rs. 25.5 million as penalty and the entire consignment of 1 million yards was "confiscated." Paragons have appealed.

In the case of Cyntex Ltd., it was found that what was imported was synthetic material of 32"—36" width and not the regular standard saree width of 45". The 32"—36" width material is usually used for shirts, blouses and garments. *Quidnuncs* say that Gnanam and Cyntex had argued that they had enough machines to cut and stitch the smaller width pieces to make the 45" saree material. *Quidnuncs* say that women will not like to have a patched up saree even if it has the blessings of Gnanam and Cyntex. In any event, what is important is that the bureaucrats seem to have accepted this expla-

nation and have not imposed a penalty on Cyntex Ltd., and instead of confiscating the goods, they have been "requisitioned". And "requisitioned" goods are paid for.

The second question worrying the *Quidnuncs* is why Paragon's explanations were not accepted by the inquiring bureaucrats if Cyntex's arguments were accepted. There is no doubt that, polyester can be used as saree material and 45" lace can be regarded as saree material much more than 32"—36" synthetic material.

There is no doubt that if the UNP government wants to maintain its credibility with the public it must inquire (1) why bureaucrats awarded the 2 million yards

**Notice Under Section 7 of  
The Land Acquisition Act  
(chapter 460) as amended  
by the Land Acquisition  
(Amendment) Act No. 28  
of 1964**

Ref. No. EA/4/153

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below for a public purpose. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka No. 310 (Part III) of 23/03/1978.

**S. Panditha**  
Land Acquiring Officer,  
Galle District.

Kachcheri,  
Galle.  
8-3-1978

**Schedule**

Name of Land— Katukelewatta  
and Ketakalawatta  
Situation— Galgamuwa village  
in the Grama Sevaka's Division of Pedinnoruwa in the D.R.O. Division of Four Gravets, Akmeemana, Galle District.  
Plan and Lot No.— Lot 1 in  
P.P. GAA. 1290.



order to Cyntex Ltd., when they had before them a lower quotation from Paragons. But, if the Cyntex material was to be of higher quality, then why place an order for the poorer Paragon's material? (2) Why bureaucrats were willing to accept the Cyntex explanation that the 32"-36" width could be regarded as "saree material" because it could be cut, stitched and tailored to make a 45" width—whilst rejecting a similar contention of

Paragons regarding polyester and lace material?

After due inquiries, the government must take appropriate action to safeguard its reputation. As far as our *Quidnuncs* can see, both Cyntex and Paragons have to be treated on an equal footing that penalties must be imposed on both, and also a decision made whether the goods must be confiscated without compensation or re-quisitioned with payments?

The case of the 3 million yards of "synthetic saree material" imported by Cyntex and Paragons, *Quidnuncs* assert, provide the government with an excellent opportunity to show its *bona fides* regarding irregularities that stem from the actions of bureaucrats who seem to specialise in making wrong decisions. If the government permits to bureaucrats to have the way in these matters, then doomsday will come sooner than expected.

SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

## March 11 — March 16

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; IDPR—Information Department Press Release; DK—Dinakara.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 11:** It is wrong to assume that our people want everything free; they are prepared to offer their toil and sweat to any government which launches a programme of work for the benefit of the country and the nation; this government is determined to offer such a programme to the people said the PM in the NSA yesterday. The Greater Colombo Economic Commission is considering the setting up of another investment promotion zone in addition to the 600 aere Katunayake area—in the Biyagama electorate. Incentives to be offered by the GCEC to investors in the investment promotion zone will be released in full tomorrow. A large quantity of synthetic saree materials was siezed by the Price Control men from a leading synthetic textile manufacturer in Colombo yesterday. 21 thousand tons of wheat flour will be donated to Sri Lanka by the Canadian government during this year. Teachers who had not completed five year's service in difficult areas would be sent back to such areas to complete it before they are posted to popular stations—CDN. The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Sports yesterday raised a matter of privilege in the NSA on a series of articles appearing in the newspaper *Sun* culminating

with the article appearing on March 1, written by a 'learned counsel'. Internationally renowned bankers from abroad who are in Sri Lanka now have expressed their willingness to invest in multi-million dollar projects here—CDM. All rural police stations in the island have been alerted to be in readiness for possible raids by armed gangs on banking institutions in those areas. A meeting of leaders of parties was held last Wednesday and it was decided that the elections should be based on the 1977 election list—SU. The Textile Corporation has stopped issuing textiles to the Salusala because it owes the corporation Rs. 11 million—LD. Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike has filed action against 'Lake House' asking for damages of Rs. 750000 for an article which she alleges was defamatory—DK.

**SUNDAY, MARCH 12:** The Minister of Education has decided that as far as possible admission to the campuses of the University of Sri Lanka will be on 'area basis'; according to this decision students from Colombo will be admitted to Colombo, Vidyodaya, Vidyalankara and Katubedde campuses; those from the Central Province to Peradeniya, those from Northern Province to Jaffna Campus etc. The Department of Immigration and Emmigration will throw a dragnet over the up-country estate areas to seek out persons of Indian origin who are liable to be repatriated but are believed to be evading it. The GMOA has been successful in getting the Establishment Code amended in respect of the payment of a settling-in allowance to officers transferred to new stations and the payment of combined allowance to officers on relief duty. Legislation for the setting up of a Legal Aid Commission to assist needy litigants will be presented in the NSA shortly. Sri Lanka will soon have another Hotel Training School; the ILO has allocated 92000 US dollars worth of materials and other equipment for the project. Fisheries banks to provide assistance to fisherman are to be opened in the Fishery Harbour areas and MPCS divisions in the coastal belt—ST. The government on Friday stepped



in to acquire by a special gazette notification the Tower Hall, centre of the indigenous theatre revival and forum of nationalist agitation in the early years of this century—SO. The President has ordered an immediate and complete review of the salary structures of more than one million employees now in the state services and private sector organisations—WK. Some MP's of the previous regime who were the Chairmen of cooperative societies under the Land Reform Commission have embezzled public funds amounting to 40 million rupees—SLDP.

**MONDAY, MARCH 13:** The World Bank has reached an agreement with the Government of Sri Lanka to finance a comprehensive integrated rural development scheme in Kurunegala, over a three year period. The Buddhist Encyclopaedia, work on which commenced 22 years ago will be completed within the next seven years. With the ultimatum given by the President and PM last week to Depts and Corporations to clear their backlog of imports in the Colombo Port, something unknown in the history has happened, within the next two years the Port will be empty. The World's industrialised states yesterday undertook to try to help poorer developing countries solve their debt problems by easing terms of loans they have already granted. The Ministry of Industries and Scientific Affairs has decided not to allow any more factories within the City of Colombo. The Ministry of Fisheries has set the target for the production of fresh water fish for 1978 at 25,000 tons as against the 18,000 tons produced last year—CDN. The Customs authorities last week decided to tighten security measures at all the exit gates in the Port of Colombo in a bid to prevent port thefts and large scale smuggling activities at the gates. The Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs will give on long term lease 'developed plots' to industrialists to put up factory buildings in the industrial estates to carry on their own industries in a bid to develop small industries. Sri Lanka is expected to get yet another 100,000 tons of flour from the US under PL 480 this year—CDM. Four divisions have been established by the Ministry of Plan Implementation to deal with wide-ranging subjects now under the purview of 13 different ministries; the President as Minister of Plan Implementation will be directly supervising these four divisions—categorised into Agriculture, Industry, Economic Infrastructures and Social Infrastructure. Relics of the Lord Buddha will be brought to Sri Lanka from Kapilavasthupura on April 22 for public exposition; the relics will be in Sri Lanka for 36 days to coincide with the Wesak celebrations—WK. The Minister of Agriculture has decided to construct an agricultural technical experiment centre at Palekelle at a cost of Rs. 100 million. The Fisheries Corporation is going to import 50 tons

of dry fish from Malaysia soon—LD. The porcelain factory at Rattota, constructed by the previous government has earned Rs. 10 million foreign exchange from 1974-77—DK. The Committee inquiring into the activities of the Gem Corporation has found that many 'gems' exported by the corporation to Australia and Japan have been returned when they were found to be coloured stones—DW. Dr. B. Sen, Secretary General of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee arrived in Sri Lanka on Sunday on a four day official visit—IDPR No. 94. A panel of experts for International Year of the Child 1979 consisting of governmental and non governmental personnel with expertise in many allied fields had their first meeting on March 2—IDPR. No. 96.

**TUESDAY, MARCH 14:** Crucial decisions concerning Sri Lanka's immediate and mid-term development efforts are expected to flow from talks today between the President and the World Bank's Vice President for South Asia. Technical education in the country would be broad-based with the assistance of private and international assistance said the Minister of Education yesterday. The National Youth Service Council has engaged over 2700 youth in National Development Projects that are being carried out at present in ten districts. The establishment of an anti-waste squad in every public and private sector institution to eliminate waste and accelerate production has been proposed to the government by the Lanka Swadeshi movement. The Minister of Textile Industries said yesterday that his ministry will establish a body shortly to co-ordinate activities in various sectors in the textile industry to eliminate waste and inefficiency and infuse stability to the industry—CDN. Crop improvement in Sri Lanka, considered vital to the country's agricultural programmes, will be among the research projects considered for international financing when the Board of Governors of the Canada-based International Development Research Centre meets this week. Of the storage capacity of 840 tons only the space for 200 tons was being utilised to store meat and vegetables; this was revealed during the course of an inspection by the Committee investigating the MD—CDM. The first Presidential Commission of Inquiry to probe alleged acts of omission and commission by the previous government is to begin sittings next month. The Minister of Education tracing back the turbulence that prevailed in the University campus at Peradeniya queried how bombs had come into the university. The autonomy of the University has been embodied in the Draft University Bill which is now ready and will shortly be placed before the Cabinet for approval the Education Minister announced yesterday—SU. A bill is soon to be introduced in the NSA to make it compulsory for the pri-



vate sector and the government establishments to sell consumer goods at the same price—DP. The Japanese government is soon to give Sri Lanka a gift of 1000 buses—DM.

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15:** Job Placement Committee are now being set up in every electoate in consultation with the MP of the area to implement the Job Bank Scheme; these committees will be headed by the AGA of the area and will consist of a representative each of the Labour department and a technical department; the MP of the area or his representative will serve as an observer in the Committee. The Speaker of the NSA yesterday called for an economic agreement between India and Sri Lanka which would provide a wide market for our products. A tgroup of directors from the Asian Development Bank has just concluded an official visit to Sri Lanka to study our development needs and on going projects sponsored by the ADB. A committee headed by the Minister of Justice will study the problems facing the co-operative movement and propose remedial measures—CDN. The Colombo Fraud Bureau has been called in to investigate the interception and tampering of certain vital mail addressed to the Ministry of Shipping, Aviation and Tourism as well as some mail addressed personally to the Minister. The government will allow small-scale foreign entrepreneurs to undertake government contracts. Over 16,000 teachers had been transferred to various parts of the island in 1970 by the previous government; but the present government would not dream of doing such a thing said the Minister of Education. The Speaker of the NSA yesterday lashed out at technocrats and the bureaucrats who were 'totally unresponsive' to the demands of the people, and said that if the government followed their advice, there would be disaster—CDM. The government has decided to take new and far reaching measures in a bid to arrest the exodus of engineers from Sri Lanka. World Bank Vice President yesterday described as 'very satisfactory' the crucial talks he held with the Sri Lanka President. The government hs decided to provide alternative employment in departments and corporations to employees of Air Ceylon who will face retrenchment when the national carrier ceases to operate international flights from March 31—SU. District Ministers will be appointed next April—DW. The Salu-sala has decided to issue the 550,000 nylex sarees only through co-operatives. Sri Lanka will buy Rs. 35 million worth of dry fish from Pakistan—LD. The sum of Rs. 700 perese tly paid by the Agricu ural Insurance Board in case of a crop failure will be increased to Rs. 1000 paper acre on a directive from the Minister of Agriculture and Lands—IDPR No. 102. A regional Seminar of the WHO on Drug policies and management will be held in Colombo next week—IDPR No. 103.

**THURSDAY, MARCH 16:** Dr. David Hopper, World Bank Vice President for South Asia, in his talks with President Jayawardene has indicated World Bank support for Sri Lanka's major development programme—the accelerated Mahaweli Development Project. New directions in development research will be explored at the BMICH this week, when the Board of Governors of the Canada-based IDRC will meet from today. Lands temporarily entrusted to the three plantation crop research institutes will be handed over to other state institutions. Foreign Affairs Minister Hameed condemned the Israeli attack of Southern Lebanon as a series of violations of territorial integrity of a sovereign nation. A special fund for the development of the city of Colombo and to provide better amenities to its inhabitants was launched yesterday with initial contributions of Rs. 1000 each from the President and the PM. All Kachcheries in the country will soon be streamlined—CDN. The President will shortly appoint a team of highly talented personnel to assist him in a massive programme of economic development. For the first time here the police will introduce a scheme known as 'Secret Witness' by which it would seek information from the public to solve crime. Four campusus of the University of Sri Lanka—Colombo, Vidyodaya, Vidyalankara and Katubedde staged a token strike yesterday. Cement in mini bags weighing 12 kg and priced at Rs. 6.50 will be put out for sale from Monday by the Ceylon Cement Corporation. A mini train service for the Vihara Maha Devi Park will be gifted by Japan—CDM. A five-member bench of the Supreme Court will tomorrow inquire into petitions sent by individuals and various Buddhist organisations against the admittance of a Buddhist monk as an Attorney-at-law in the Supreme Court. The Salu Sala has commenced issuing 27 million yards of textiles to co-operatives and private distributors for distribution to consumers during the Sinhala and Tamil New Year—SU. It is not necessary for Tamil officers to pass the Sinhala exams for promotions according the treasury circular No. 700—DP. The Milk Board takes Rs. 3.25 loss on every pound of tinned Lakspray sold to the consumer said the Milk Board Chairman. Immediate action is being taken by the CGR to ensure that trains are lit up at night. Thirteen trade union organisations including federations aligned to the LSSP, CP and SLFP have subscribed to a joint declaration rejecting the White Paper on employment relations published on January 31—CO. The present shortage of school text books will end in about two weeks when the Education department distributes the newly printed books—DW. The Textile Corporation has decided to increase the production of textiles by 2500,000 yards for the New Year—DM.



REFORM OF THE  
PUBLIC SERVICE—4

## The Case For Sri Lanka

by A Special Correspondent

This is the fourth of six articles on the Reform of the Public Service. The author has been a member of the Public Service for many years and is not yet able to write under his own name. But what he has to say has a great deal of meaning and significance.

Before this discussion proceeds further, it would seem necessary to decide which of the two systems discussed already will meet the needs of this country. Since the grant of independence to our country, the political pendulum has swung fairly consistently indicating the political maturity of our people. Our country has also accepted the two party system of democratic government. The writer is of the view that the "spoils system" as in the USA will not suit this country. It will not be possible for the public servant who goes out with the government to secure employment easily, although we have witnessed the spectacle of officials who have held the top positions in the state service securing top level private sector positions as well. But there are many who have not.

In this connection it is of interest to note that in France "civil servants are not free to enter any business after leaving the Service; if the business is supervised by the branch in which the civil servant worked, he may not enter it for a period of years. These restrictions, which undoubtedly produce hardship in some individual cases, are designed not only to protect the state but also to protect the civil servants themselves against temptation" reported Ridley and Blondel.

*This type of bar to employment in the private sector should not, in the writer's view, be considered for this country where the employment factor is crucial. The Fulton Committee holds the view "However well the service is managed there will always be able men and women who decide for personal or other reasons that they wish to leave the service for another kind of work. At present the pension arrangements make voluntary severance difficult. We do not believe that restrictive pension arrangements are the right way to keep staff—even those with scarce skills whose departure is a real loss to the service. It would be highly regrettable if civil servants did not have valuable contributions to make to other areas of national life; it should be natural for others to employ them." One is reminded of the case of Sir Paul Chambers of the British Treasury who joined as the first non-professional Chairman of ICI. That could certainly not have been a loss to the nation.*

**It appears therefore to the writer that a non-political permanent civil service will best suit the needs of Sri Lanka. Does not a permanent civil service mean that, it will attempt to be a government within a government? This is certainly not what is envisaged—it has to be remembered that the pre Republican Constitution PSC was abolished because it happened to remain outside the pale of parliamentary control. Modern administration requires civil servants with a strong sense of public service capable of working in a political environment, remaining the servant of democracy and responsive to the control of Ministers. Government is no longer the performance of routine services deploying instruments of authority towards a pas-**

**sive and compliant public from whom the civil servant maintains an appropriate (in his opinion) social distance. This attitude is now archaic and dysfunctional.**

Nor does the writer feel that there is any case for the state officer to claim independence of the political master. Earl Gray in 1858 pointed out "It is no arbitrary rule, which requires that all holders of permanent offices must be subordinate to some Minister responsible to parliament, since it is obvious that, without it, the first principles of our system of government—the control of all branches of administration by parliament—would be abandoned". In our country, Sri Lanka, too it is essential that the control of every branch of executive action is subject to the national legislature, which will be exercised through the Ministers, and the President.

It is thus in the nation's interests to evolve a machinery, set up an institutional device, which will promote a healthy public service free from political influences. It will then attract the best in the land, because the public service offers opportunities for service not available elsewhere. I am reminded of what Earl Baldwin said in a speech delivered on 26.06.1936 at the Leys School, Cambridge. This is what he said:

"And if you go into the civil service or politics, there is no greater or finer work. There is not much financial gain in it; there are many disappointments; but if you do your work in the right spirit, you will find the deepest satisfaction in it".

This is not a personal memoir, but I feel compelled to record that I have had the deepest satisfaction over the years from being a member of the public service in this country. It is for this reason that I have at-



tempted to write this paper, because all of us in the public service want to make it safe for the public servant.

### PRE-REQUISITES FOR THE CREATION OF A NON-POLITICAL CIVIL SERVICE.

No one can embark upon this exercise unless some pre-requisites are fulfilled. These would seem to be:

- (a) The principle must first be politically accepted;
- (b) If politically accepted, institutional machinery must be set up to protect the public service.
- (c) In safeguarding the service from political interference, care should be taken not to permit the service from assuming arbitrary powers. The service should be so structured and controlled that in fact it is "the servant of democracy and be responsive to the control of Ministers" as postulated by the Fulton Committee which confirmed the views expressed by Earl Gray in 1858.

From what can be inferred from the proceedings in Parliament over the years, from speeches of politicians from public platforms and from what has been observed by discerning persons, the tragedy of the public service in Sri Lanka today is that it has been broken, battered beyond recognition. This has largely been brought about the public servant himself when some used political influence and were guilty of "toadying, flattery and self-seeking". Even recent proceedings in the NSA have highlighted this infirmity.

Out of sheer frustration perhaps one member of the NSA, Dr. Ranjit Attapattu, declared "A PSC should be appointed to which a public servant could appeal when he is discriminated against" (33). What was the reason for this call

Dr. Attapattu was until election a member of the public service. Yet another member of the NSA, Mr. X. M. Sellathambu warned the government thus "The last government fell to its doom when it believed these statistics furnished by the bureaucrats. The self-sufficiency statistics (in rice) was clearly the work of bureaucrats and the government must not believe them. Mr. Sellathambu added "I was a bureaucrat myself and I know what they are up to". Yet another Member of the NSA, the Deputy Minister of Justice Mr. Shelton Ranarajah, speaking on the votes of the Ministry of Justice wanted an independent Judicial Service Commission. He said "At present the Council of Ministers dealt with judicial appointments and transfers. Steps would be taken to vest these functions in an independent JSC. The Attorney General and the Secretary to the Ministry of Justice have been removed from the JSC and their places filled by two Supreme Court Judges" (34). If the need for an independent JSC has been felt and recognised, how much greater is the need for an independent PSC?

My personal conversations with politicians have persuaded me to believe that they very sincerely do not wish to have any involvement with the public servant, so long as the public servant acts correctly. In 1858 Benjamin Disraeli gave expression to this feeling when he wrote to a friend Pakington on one occasion "the interests of the party can never require an improper appointment; an improper appointment is a job, and nothing injures a party more than a job" (35). Jennings has remarked that "any suspicion of 'jobbery' would form the subject of an attack in Parliament. Nothing delights an Opposition more than a suspicion of a 'job'. It is as anxious for the chase as a hound that has scented a fox." It is probably

thus that by Order in Council of 1920 Britain provided that "the qualifications of all persons proposed to be appointed, whether permanently or temporarily, to any situation or employment in His Majesty's establishments, shall, before they are appointed, be approved by the Commissioners"—the reference is to the Civil Service Commissioners.

Richard Crossman has referred to an instance where a civil servant's integrity was upheld and which finally led to the downfall of the government of Ramsay Macdonald<sup>36</sup>. This was a case in which the Attorney General was prosecuting a Communist for inciting the troops to insurrection, and he was told to stop the prosecution because the Cabinet did not like it. Ramsay Macdonald, who was the Prime

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#### Schedule

D.R.O's Division: Weke  
Situation:  
Village: Kalukondayawa  
Name of Land: Megahawatta, Kal Eriya Kumbura and Ipanapela Kumbura.  
Lot No.: 1 to 6  
Plan No. P.P. Co.: 4842

P. A. Senaratne.

Assistant Government  
Agent of Colombo District.

The Kachcheri,  
Colombo.  
Date:— 06.03.1978



Minister, having stated that he was not consulted or implicated (which, as the Cabinet minutes made clear was not correct) tried to challenge the records. The result, Crossman says, was a "deadly and elaborate minute from the Cabinet Secretary (Hankey at that time) to the Prime Minister—which leaked widely in Whitehall. MacDonald was forced to make a partial withdrawal which led to the downfall of his government."

The legislature will therefore be ready to protect a civil servant when he has acted correctly. One cannot ask for anything more than that. Surely we can depend upon our own NSA to afford protection to the civil servant, who stays outside the arena of politics.

**INSTITUTIONAL MACHINERY SUGGESTED FOR SRI LANKA.** Let us next examine the type of machinery that would suit the needs of an independent country, a machinery that will help to maintain the standards of integrity and efficiency that was the pride of the service some year's back. The sturdy independence of the public service was at its peak during the days when the Service was directly under the Governor, later the Chief Secretary and still later under the PSC that consisted of the three Officers of State. That type of PSC will certainly be an anachronism now.

What is needed now is an institution that would be strong enough to shield the state officer from political influence or pressure while at the same time educate the Service to shed its bureaucratic reflexes and help it to become the "servant of democracy and responsive to the control of Ministers". It was, the writer believes, most unfortunate that the PSC which existed up to the time of the Republican Cons-

titution of 1972 was dismantled. One obvious reason for this somewhat drastic departure was possibly that its actions could not be questioned in the legislature. In the House no Minister was responsible for the actions of a Commission which while being funded by the legislature was not responsible to it. It would not be in consonance with the dignity of the NSA to have an agency of government, controlling the government's sole instrument for the execution of its policies and programmes, to remain outside its control.

In removing this congruity, the framers of the new constitution of 1972 found it expedient to vest all the powers which the PSC held in the Cabinet of Ministers. The question that is now being asked is whether the remedy was the correct one. No doubt two statutory boards have been set up, but only as advisory bodies. Is there much use in such a mechanism?

There is no mandatory requirement that their advice should be accepted or in the event of non-acceptance, the reasons for such non-acceptance should be tabled in the NSA. In the absence of such constitutional requirement, the two Boards without any disrespect to any of the members of the Boards, are ineffective at best and rubber stamps at worst. It is not clear why two such bodies were set up at all. One is inclined to ask whether the purpose was to have a thin veneer of respectability to whatever orders were being made. Decisions made elsewhere are sent to the Boards for their blessings. Where such blessing was not forthcoming, the decisions still held as discussed earlier.

The writer is aware of only one instance where a member of the

State Service Advisory Board resigned, as reported in a local newspaper, over the issue relating to the appointment of a Head of Department. Adequate publicity was not given to this honourable course of action. This was a case that needed the widest publicity and should perhaps have been brought to the notice of the NSA. But nothing happened and the honourable man went into the wilderness. References

#### REFERENCES

- 33—*Ceylon Daily News* of 23.11.77;  
34—*Ceylon Daily News* of 10.12.77;  
35—In a letter to Pakington dated 19.12.1858; 36—Quoted by Richard Crossman in *Inside View* from 'Whitehall Diary' by Thomas Jones.

(To be Continued)

#### Next Week:

PROPOSALS FOR CONSIDERATION.

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RACE RELATIONS IN SRI LANKA 3

## Spiritual Challenge To All Religions

by Fr. Tissa Balasuriya, OMI.

We publish the third of three instalments of an article on Race Relations in Sri Lanka by Fr. Tissa Balasuriya, OMI. Readers will find this series not only interesting and thought-provoking but also one that will induce action to bring about a Sri Lanka that will banish race conflict for ever.  
—Ed.

CHRISTIANS have generally been inward looking in the past, concerning political issues. The Church agencies busied themselves on a long term basis primarily for the



promption of their self interest, specially the defence of their rights or privileges. There is hardly a tradition of large scale Christian institutional involvement in Sri Lanka on issues which concerned the good of others or the common good as such. The dedication to communal justice can therefore have a salutary influence on the entire Christian community by reaching it to be more other-centred and less self-centered. This is true for the Christian groups of the minority races also. They have generally tended to isolate themselves from the mainstream of the peoples struggles in the country. It is only their own consciousness of their suffering racial oppression that has now awakened quite a few among them to a concern with the cause of their people. Action for communal justice can have the impact of making all committed Christians aware of the wider struggle for liberation that the oppressed masses of our country, belonging to all races are trying to wage against the forces of injustice that dominate them. Adversity may teach us this lesson.

*Spirituality has to be concerned with the objective building of the values of the Kingdom of God on earth. Justice, truth, freedom and peace must be the basis of human relations. Racism and racial prejudice militate against these values. Hence one concerned with spiritual growth must, in the Christian Perspective, work assiduously for the promotion of these values. It is not enough that our concern be active only when the social relations erupt in violence. This is only the tip of the iceberg. Racism is like icebergs. Its roots and substance are far more insidious than the visible top. Hence our dedication to this cause must be serious and persevering. We must keep on working even when most people are only busy about their day to day affairs and likely to forget August 1977 like a bad dream*

*or a nightmare. We have to preserve to create interest in positive solutions. Goodwill needs to be generated on all sides for peace with justice.*

This is often a thankless task. Extremists on different sides may argue against any attempts at peaceful solutions in terms of one nation. Others may be frustrated and despondent and unwilling to lend any support to such a cause. Efforts at good will require an endeavour to understand different points of view. This will mean trying to explain the problems of one group to another which may be strongly prejudiced. Others will regard this as a fruitless search as the roots of distrust are so deep. While some others will argue that only a radical special revolution can create the environment for racial harmony, and hence any other concern for resolving issues is likely to be counter-productive. It will be necessary to be able to listen to all these points of view patiently and still push ahead towards inter-racial understanding and solutions acceptable to all. Communal justice cannot mean merely giving into one pressure group. Generally it is the minority who are more oppressed, however from certain points of view the majority may also be more disadvantaged. It is part of the growth in our social sensitivity to try to develop a sense of justice and fair play through all these issues, and sometimes under trying circumstances.

Resolving the problems of race present a definite pastoral challenge to the Churches. They meet a few lakhs of persons weekly at the Sunday and other Church services. They have thousands of dedicated full timers committed to the apostolic ministry. They have access to the mass media of communication and contacts with governmental and voluntary organisations. Given the long standing nature of our racial problems and

the calamitous situation to which the country was recently brought owing to them, should not the Churches decide on this issue as one of their more immediate and intensive short term priorities of pastoral action? If they do so a conscious policy of mass education must be undertaken. A programme of activity for mobilizing public opinion should be elaborated and perseveringly carried through.

*An ocmenical action programme of all Christians is likely to bear more fruit, than if each Church were to work separately. Such action can and has to be at different levels. At the National level the Bishops Conferences, Conference of Religious Superiors, National Agencies like the Catechetical and Liturgical Commissions, lay apostolate organizations, Schools, the mass media etc. should work out certain targets and policies concerning the issues of race. If this is done it will be easier at the grass root levels to work in a systematic manner. The Bishops Conferences have a very great moral influence in the country. They should use it for national issues preferably in conjunction with leaders of other religions. A joint pastoral by all the Bishops with spiritual orientations and guidelines of action can be a very significant contribution by them to the cause. What a significant grace it would be if the Sinhala and Tamil Bishops of all Christian denominations would meet to dialogue on this issue and give a joint leadership to all their fellow believers in Christ?*

The Religious Superiors Conference in Sri Lanka is gradually evolving towards being an agency of reflection and action. Yet given the gravity of these issues this is still far too slow. After all, it is the religions that have the most full timers in the churches. Women religious number about 2,500; men



religious are about 500 or so. These are more than any diocese can dispose of. True, they have already many commitments. Yet if the religions give conscious priority to these issues much more can be done. They are doing excellent work in rehabilitation. But a much deeper analysis of the situation and a programme of action that is nationwide, including political impact, needs to be undertaken urgently, seriously and perseveringly. This can be a call to the religious families to look beyond their present preoccupations and apostolic horizons to respond to a national challenge. In doing so they are also likely to find an even more meaningful mission in Sri Lanka. The presence of members of the same religious congregation in several provinces of the country and with members of different races can be a particular grace for and a call to this mission of reconciliation and justice. The demands of live of neighbour to which the religions are committed could inspire them to more active engagement in work for communal justice at a basic level of changing mentalities and relationships among the races.

What is said of religious congregations can be applied within limits to lay *apostolic groups*, specially the larger and more organised ones. If they accept such an orientation they can be a catalytic presence in localities and work places. In the heart of the crisis some, like the charismatic movement groups, were particularly active. It is highly desirable that this concern has a systematic long term orientation and thrust. In the process they would also develop their methodologies of analysis, action and evaluation. They would learn to make alliances with groups of different faiths and ideologies in order to work for the common tasks of national integration. This

will naturally influence their spirituality also.

The parishes can be very powerful bases of consciousness raising and action for communal justice. They cover many areas of the country, specially in the towns in which the races are mixed. This will require a thinking out by the parish clergy and lay leaders how the activities of the parish could be geared to this goal. Here too, the occasion of troubles bring out much self sacrifice and organisational skill. Perhaps the dioceses should take their orientations at the level of deaneries and other councils. How the liturgy, novenas, church feasts, parish visitations can help remove racial prejudice, build harmony and influence public policy would have to be worked out at parish level in the concrete situations. Art, music, drama and the mass media can also carry more powerfully than at present the religious motivation towards communal justice.

**A most important type of action is the consolidation of friendly relationships among the leaders of religions at the grass root levels. If the leaders from the temple, kovil, mosque and church get together in a village, or an urban area, they can be the most portent influence for communal harmony and justice. This will however require much persistent effort; an overcoming of certain in-built prejudices and also the consequent evolution of a spirituality, of the widest ecumenical dimension. This will, we are confident, bring out what is best in each religious tradition and help purify all of any narrowness and deficiencies. In the coming months and years an immense effort may have to be made in this direction. It can also be a means of help-**

**ing the present Government to persevere in its promise to set up a free and just society on the basis of righteousness and morality.**

The socio-economic developments activities of the church need to further consider orientation towards these fundamental issues at national level. They have now moved from immediate relief to long term rehabilitation of some of the victims of the August incidents. They have also geared their activities to community building on a micro level. It is necessary that community building at a wider and more national level be the framework within which micro communities are formed and activated. It is important to realize that the broader relationship of social groups are also practical problems in the country. Not to take the national issues seriously

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**Schedule**

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Situation:  
Village: Guruwala  
Name of Land: Kekunagahawatta  
Lot No. 1 to 4  
Plan No. P.P. Co.: 3783

**P. A. Senaratne**  
Assistant Government  
Agent of Colombo District.

The Kachcheri,  
Colombo.  
Date:— 02-03-1978



and directly may be a form of escapism from the more difficult challenges. Social development workers too have to ask themselves whether they give in too easily to the temptation to opt for the path of less resistance, by neglecting such issues. The programmes of groups such as the YMCA leadership training, Sister Formation Institute, Social Animation, etc. need to be evaluated in this perspective also. The cross of social development today is closely related to the struggles of liberation of oppressed classes, marginalized races, and neglected cultures. Social development has to relate meaningfully to their struggles at national level also.

Race relations are a spiritual challenge to all of us and to all our religions. If racial prejudice persists from generation to generation, is it not an indication of the failure of the religions to communicate the best in their message to the masses of their followers? We are challenged by our present situation to accept other persons, all persons, as fellow human beings equal in dignity and in rights. As peoples and as a nation we are still far from this ideal. Our present trials may help us to go closer to it. In responding to this we can all grow spiritually. The religions themselves can thus come closer to their original and core message of other centeredness and service.

If the Christian churches merely continue their traditional activities without an effort to meet the grave issues that deeply threaten our national life, would it be surprising that many will leave aside Church activities as not only irrelevant but also a holy distraction from our basic human responsibilities today? If on the other hand the Churches as a body respond in an enlightened and courageous manner to these challenges

not only will the nation be well served by them, but Christianity itself would in the process leave its self built ghettos and enter the mainstream of national life and of the aspirations of our peoples. All this will require a deep and profound reflection by individuals, small groups and organisations on the situation today, the gospel imperatives, the strategies for change, and the shift in priorities among these groups themselves.

Concluded.

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EDUCATION

### Ruin of Science

Roy Muthaya

In recent times much publicity has been given to the ruination of English in schools which in turn has had serious consequences on the standard of English in the country. The manner in which science and Mathematics were ruined over the last seven years rivals the ruination of English, not only in its magnitude but also in its disastrous consequences to the Nation. By ruination it is not merely meant the lack of textbooks, teacher, laboratories, equipment etc. Such defects could be easily remedied and the damage done is not irreversible. I am referring to the radical changes that were brought about in the form and content of syllabuses of science subjects. In the name of a National System of Education, science education took a completely new turn and it was a turn for the worse.

The standard of mathematics and science in schools is closely linked to a nation's scientific and technological progress. When the Soviet Union sent up its sputnik, man's first artificial satellite, panic stricken Americans revised completely their schools' mathematics and science programs. The initial American

failures in the space race were attributed to the poor science education in American Schools. When this was remedied rockets and satellites took care of themselves.

Teachers of Mathematics know what crimes were perpetrated on innocent school children in the name of 'New Mathematics'. The new schemes produced pupils who got distinctions in the N.C.G.E. examination but were incapable of performing simple mathematical functions like elementary multiplication and division! Solving simple equations with one unknown factor became impossible for most NCGE products. Simple operations were taught in the most circuitous way and most pupils got lost somewhere on the way.

When NCGE products went up to the HNCE, the gap between the NCGE. and H.N.C.E. was so great that teaching the N.C.G.E. products became a veritable nightmare for the teachers. The plight of the Chemistry and Physics teacher in the H.N.C.E. was much worse. The students couldn't cope with the elementary mathematics needed to do calculations in Physics and Chemistry, so that the teacher first had to teach Mathematics before beginning Chemistry or Physics. This made syllabus completion almost impossible.

The compilation of the Mathematics syllabus itself left much to be desired.

There is little or no Geometry in the entire N.C.G.E. syllabus. Imagine producing mathematicians who have little or no idea of Geometry! What a nightmare this would be to the University dons when these products of the New Age eventually end up in the University?

In the H.N.C.E. mathematics syllabus Applied Mathematics has been completely dropped. This is another anomalous situation which the University would have found almost impossible to rectify.



The worst blunders were committed in the fields of Biology, Physics and Chemistry. Most countries in Asia use London Syllabuses for the 'O' Level and 'A' level examinations as guide lines to formulate their own syllabuses. Borrowing and adapting to local conditions is the essence of progress in science.

In England, the Nuffield Schemes were published for Chemistry, Physics and Biology. These were the results of many years of research and labour by some of Britain's top scientists and educationists. Almost everyone from our Curriculum Development Centre in Colombo went abroad, most of them to Britain, to study modern trends in Curriculum Development. All of them came back, most of them bringing with them new cars. But the new trends emerging in the teaching of Science in Britain failed to make its appearance in Sri Lanka.

The Nuffield schemes are very thorough and comprehensive. Invariably this led to an expansion in syllabuses. New findings in the fields of Biology, Physics and Chemistry percolated down to the 'O' and 'A' level by means of these Schemes. This was the aim of the Nuffield Schemes and they succeeded admirably.

What did our foreign trained experts of the Curriculum Development Centre do? They took bits and pieces from Nuffield handbooks, put them together and called it General Science. Three major areas of scientific study were rolled into one subject. To add insult to injury, the five year course beginning at grade six was reduced to a four year course. Over-simplification became the course of the science students of the new N.C.G.E., H.N.C.E. order.

At the H.N.C.E. level, the four comprehensive subjects of the old 'A' level which were adequate to follow any course of the students choice at the University, were reduced to two—Biological Science

and Physical Science. The bureaucrats of the C.D.C. seemed to revel at oversimplification. Our universally recognised 'O' and 'A' level examinations were replaced with the completely superficial and inadequate N.C.G.E. and H.N.C.E.

Last month a circular was issued by the Ministry of Education instructing all schools to forthwith convert all H.N.C.E. classes into 'A' level classes with new syllabuses; the first new 'A' level examination is to be held in August 1979. This is the brightest thing to happen in the science education scene over the last so many years. Fortunately, the first H.N.C.E. examination was never held. Otherwise we would have on our hands a set of young people fit for nothing and the University would have had a problem of admitting students totally ill prepared for University entry.

As it is the science teachers in 'A' level classes across the country face the mammoth task of preparing the former H.N.C.E. students to sit the 'A' Level examination. The lack of background on the part of these students is going to make this task considerably formidable.

To ensure that the N.C.G.E.—H.N.C.E. type fiasco is not repeated, the Minister of Education should always rely on the University Dons for guidance on science curricula and particularly on curriculum innovations. Reliance on obsolescent bureaucrats can lead not only the Minister, but the whole Nation up the garden path.

## LETTERS

### Employment For Bhikkus

Sir,

It is an established fact that over 70 lakhs of persons in this country are without proper means of sustenance. A large number of fami-

lies have the great misfortune of not having even a single wage earner to support them. To them death will be a welcome relief from the suffering they undergo. Isn't it therefore, a government's paramount duty to enable them to live? No useful purpose is served by mouthing pious platitudes all the time. They only tend to embitter people more and more.

The Education Minister (who should know better) had recently announced his intention to appoint 2,000 Bhikkus to teaching posts in government schools—to teach Buddhism. Quite apart from the fact that it is against the tenets of Buddhism for Bhikkus to seek jobs, is it government policy to provide them with employment, as if it is its bounden duty and a matter of great urgency to find jobs for these job-hunters after graduation when there are thousands of deserving well educated unemployed young men and women throughout the country today? It cannot be gainsaid that among them are hundreds who are equally, if not better, qualified to teach Buddhism than the modern Varsity-educated job-seeking Bhikkus to whom Buddhism apparently means little. No Bhikku worthy of the name will debase himself by performing a job for the sake of lucre. Surely he did not enter the Noble Order with such a base objective in view!

If the Minister considers that teaching of Buddhism must be entrusted to Bhikkus on the assumption perhaps that they are well versed in it and are therefore, better qualified than laymen to teach the subject—it is debatable whether the majority of them are actually so—why can he not get the thousands of Bhikkus who were appointed to schools throughout the country by his predecessor, Minister Badiuddin Mohamed, for political reasons, as is well



known, to confine their teaching to Buddhism and appoint 2,000 young men and women in their place to teach other subjects. The question of appointing another 2,000 Bhikkus to teach Buddhism will then not arise.

The problem of acute unemployment among the educated youth which is very disquieting, can never be solved in the manner the Minister proposes to set about it. Obviously it will only succeed in aggravating matters. It behoves him therefore to re-consider his decision in the government's interest.

C. E. J. Alles

113, Anagarika Dharmapala  
Mawatha, Dehiwela.  
20.2.78

\* \* \*

## Mother Tongue

Sir,

Dr. Bryan de Kretser is held in the highest esteem in this island. His sincerity and integrity are undisputed. His own son is, I believe, being educated in Sinhala only in a "village" school which is not surprising seeing that the boy's mother is a Sinhalese but what the boy's reaction will be when he grows up to manhood is problematic. However, I am afraid Dr. de Kretser's is both an emotional and unpractical theory.

If the Sinhalese are educated in Sinhala only, the Tamils in Tamil only and the Burghers in English only, the Sinhala and Tamil people will become serfs under the Burghers in their own land because in every department and organisation in the public and private sectors, in embassies abroad, in the United Nations etc., there will have to be a Burgher top brass who will tower above the Sinhala and Tamil personnel like a colossus to whom the Sinhala and Tamil

rank and file and the masses will have to cringe and stooge.

This was the situation in the public service in particular from the inception of British rule until 1958 when Minister Philip Gunawardena submitted the famous cabinet memorandum alleging irregular functioning of the Treasury and PSC of which the then Chairman was a Burgher. In spite of "underhand" manoeuvres such as finance ministry adverse observations on the cabinet paper and delay of 3 months in its transmission to the Cabinet at a time when the Finance Minister and Minister Philip were attending international conferences abroad the cabinet paper received the unanimous approval of the cabinet which decided to take remedial action; but the resignation of Minister Philip forced upon him by the ultimatum of his cabinet colleagues, the assassination of the then PM and collapse of his government which occurred in rapid succession made it possible for the Cabinet paper and decision to be sent into cold storage.

But the succeeding governments became wise to the situation and the hegemony of the Burgher top brass aided and abetted by their stooging Sinhala and Tamil colleagues fortunately came to an end.

There is no one living or dead who knew or know this cabinet interlude better than myself who was made to suffer for it by being denied promotion for a dozen years by the then absolutely independent PSC aided by the top brass, but the miscreant top brass received sledge hammer blows for their misdeeds from a bold and fair minded madame PM like Queen Bodicea of old England who avenged the misfortunes her people suffered under Roman rule, in particular the last of our Brahmin top brass who received ignomi-

nous treatment which left him no alternative but to go out and eat or cultivate grass had not received it is "Satan" manoeuvred for him a high political appointment abroad following an alleged dinner at Hotel Taprobane at which he was chief guest.

After the 1971 insurgency and the recent demand by the Tamils for Eelam only has sanity prevailed. Sri Lankans should become proficient in Sinhala, Tamil and English if they are to live in unity, with self-respect and also to be progressive.

R.W.W

5, De Alwis Avenue,  
Mt. Lavinia.  
7.2.78

My No. EA/3/287

### The Land Acquisition Act (chapter 460) as amended By The Land Acquisition (amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964

Notice under Section 7

It is intended to acquire the land described below for a public purpose. For further particulars, please see the Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka No. 310 (Part III) of 23/03/1978.

**Situation:** In the village of Mahagama North in Ganga-boda Pattu DRO's Division in Kalutara District Western Province.

**Name of land:**— Ambagahawatta  
Lots & Plan No. Lot 1069 in  
FVP 135, Supplement No. 6

**D. M. Gammampila**  
Acquiring Officer, and  
Assistant Government  
Agent, Kalutara Dt.

Kalutara Kachcheri,  
09.03.1978



# Confidentially

## Yet More About Fish

IS IT NOT STRANGE that the Minister of Fisheries, Festus Perera, should make the astounding revelation about fishing licences to "certain foreign firms to bring in forty trawlers to fish in the deep sea" only after *Tribune* had revealed that the fish in the waters of our maritime zone was being taken away to foreign markets? That in the *Sun* of 21/3/78 the Minister revealed that "these firms would be required to pay royalty to the government of Sri Lanka on each ton of fish caught and sell forty per cent of the catch to the Fisheries Corporation. Other requirements include employing local personnel on these trawlers and accommodating an observer from the Department of Fisheries on each trawler?" That this column had first taken up the question of the scarcity and high prices of fish in the issue of March 18? That in the next issue, March 25, we had referred to a statement by the Fisheries Corporation Chairman, Oscar Fernando, in the *Sun* of March 16 that a Hongkong organisation was already fishing off Trincomalee and that it was expected to touch Trincomalee to sell the Corporation 40% of the catch expected to be about 30 tons? That we had commented on this and pointed out that a trawler could catch several shiploads and transfer them to refrigerator ships on the high seas before reporting to the Fisheries Corporation of Sri Lanka? That anticipating further questions from several sources, the Minister rushed in with this interview to the *Sun*? (That it is also evident that the *Sun* is on the war path on this matter and we will not be surprised if the *Sun* or *Weekend* has a

long investigative report about selling the fish in waters of our maritime zone?) That what the Minister says is that Sri Lanka personnel will be employed on the trawlers and that there will be a representative of the Corporation on each trawler? That this system is an invitation to corruption? That it will not be difficult for the foreign entrepreneurs to bribe Sri Lankan personnel in their employ and the Fisheries Corporation representative on board to report only what the entrepreneurs want to declare or hand over as a 40% of the catch? That a system like this will sooner or later involve the Fisheries Ministry and the Fisheries Corporation in the biggest stink of all time and the current investigations into the Air Ceylon or the Beedi Corporation will fade into insignificance? That already the air is thick with rumour about scandals with one Hongkong trawler operating off Trincomalee and the seven trawlers of the Corporation leased to a foreign entrepreneur? That with these eight trawlers operating in our waters, the supply of fish to our markets has come down by nearly half (that is the estimate of our investigators)? That one has to use one's imagination to know what devastation forty foreign trawlers will do?

IS IT NOT FUNNY that the day after the Fisheries Minister unburdened himself about the licencing of 40 foreign trawlers (our birth-right for a mess of pottage) the Chairman of the Fisheries Corporation, Oscar Fernando confided to the *Sun* (22/3) as follows: "The Fisheries Corporation purchased Rs. 250,000 worth of seer fish during the month of February this year, direct from the fishermen. The system of quick payments by the Corporation for deliveries had resulted in more fishermen selling their catch to the Corporation. The Corporation's

retail fish market at Price Park is open to the public on all days of the week except Sundays. Mr. Fernando predicted a considerable fall in the price of fish in a short period when the foreign fishing vessels begin operations in our territorial waters?" That Oscar Fernando has turned a futurologist to predict that there would be a considerable fall in the price of fish in a short period when the foreign fishing vessels begin operations in our territorial waters? That he does not answer the queries we have raised as how the catch made by the foreign vessels can be checked? That it is known that foreign trawlers operating thousands of miles from their home station have arrangements to get fuel, water and food on the high seas from a "mother ship" to which are transferred their catches for cleaning and preservation? That such "mother ships" even have facilities for canning? That if the UNP government does not want a fishy stink to overtake the developmental activity they should make public the Agreements signed with foreign firms and entrepreneurs to fish in our waters? That all the details set out in these Agreements must be revealed—for instance the royalty payable on each variety of fish? That the royalty on tuna, pomfret, sole and seer must be more than the royalty on cheaper varieties? That the names of the foreign firms and entrepreneurs must be published together with the names of their local agents and contact men? That all the clauses must be published to enable the public to evaluate the kind of safeguards provided in the agreements? That, whatever the safeguards, the temptations that will be dangled before the Sri Lankans on board the trawlers to join the foreigners in the biggest exploitation of our seas and participate in what will turn out to be the biggest swindle of all time?



# All Citizens Must Act To Stop Adulteration Of Food

When someone adulterates foodstuffs for sale he is not merely making a big profit but is committing a crime against the health of the community. When kerosene or kerosene oil is mixed with mineral oil it can lead to blindness or heart disease. When adulterated chillie powder is mixed with sand or milk with dirty water...

The adulteration Report of Columbia Municipal Council for 1936 (released very recently) revealed that samples of many food items tested were adulterated, better—with evaluations of wheat and vegetable fat products—with maize and rapeseed flour. Coffee in water—with wheat flour, vegetable oil powder, coffee powder—with powder ground for health, starch (in wheat flour), Tumeric powder—with wheat flour, maize flour, pulses and a toxic coal...

“Liberty and democracy have no meaning without equality and equality cannot be established so long as principal instruments of production are privately owned. Private ownership of these means of production thus comes in the way of real democracy.”

—Jawaharlal Nehru

# Citizens Can No Longer Afford To Wait For The Authorities To Act

Test food samples (some can be done at home by simple tests and others in private or school laboratories at little cost) and expose the food cheats.

# And Demand Streamlined Legislation And Prompt Enforcement

SPACE DONATED



## All Citizens Must Act To Stop Adulteration Of Food

When someone adulterates foodstuffs for sale he is not merely making a big profit but is committing a crime against the health of the community. When coconut or gingelly oil is mixed with mineral oil it can lead to blindness or heart disease. Who suffers when chillie powder is mixed with sand or milk with dirty water?

The administration Report of Colombo Municipal Council for 1976 (released very recently) revealed that samples of many food items tested were adulterated: *Butter*—with emulsions of water and vegetable fats; *Arrowroot*—with maize and tapioca flour; *Chillie powder*—with wheat flour, coriander, poonac or sawdust; *Coffee powder*—with powdered ground nut husk, starch (to as much as 85%); *Turmeric powder*—with wheat flour, maize flower tapioca and a toxic coal tar dye material.

The maximum fine for adulteration under the Act is Rs. 200/-. The Municipality's Report stated: This fine is inadequate when I think the cumulative effect on the health of the community when food adulterated with substances like metanil yellow diluted in turmeric powder and formic acid diluted in vinegar are consumed by us."

## Citizens Can No Longer Afford To Wait For The Authorities To Act

Test Food samples (some can be done at home by simple tests and others in private or school laboratories at little cost) and expose the food criminals.

## And, Demand Streamlined Legislation And Prompt Enforcement