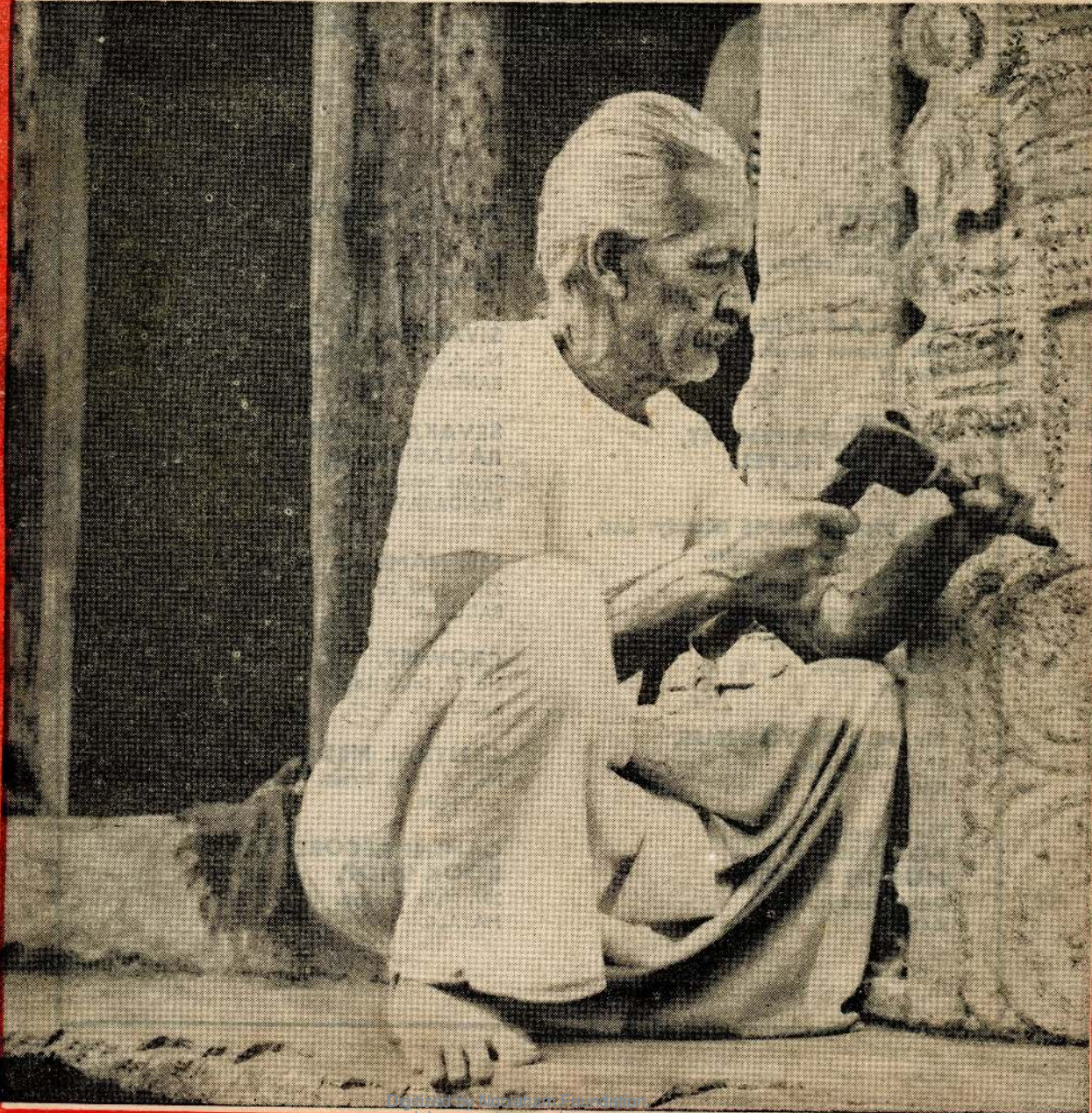


TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW



IN THE UP-COUNTRY

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Letter From The Editor

THE SINHALA AND TAMIL NEW YEAR brought into sharp focus many of the problems confronting the country today. In fact some of them have tended to obscure the silver lining that had recently emerged on the Sri Lankan horizon. Campus unrest and violence seems to be under control through the use of a ministerial big stick and a frightening red-baiting propaganda barrage to justify a self-defeating witch-hunt against university teachers and students. This unfortunate over-reaction may make it possible to re-open the campuses by April 24—students are anxious to complete their courses—but this unnecessary show of strength will not bring real peace or help the growth of independence and autonomy in University life. In foreign relations, India, Malaysia and Singapore have come to the forefront. Foreign Minister Hameed paid his long over-due visit to New Delhi, whilst Deputy Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe travelled to Kuala Lumpur. Customary communiques oozing with assurances of cordiality and co-operation were forthcoming but it is not clear what practical benefits would result from these visits. The current visit of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew is, however, the talk of the town this week. It is not an official state visit, but the high-powered team accompanying Lee and the important discussions being held at different ministerial and official levels makes it clear that it is not strictly a private visit. There are suspicions in responsible quarters that what Singapore is really after, under the cover of rendering assistance, is a low-down on the situation here with a view to keeping tabs on Sri Lanka's ambitions to rival Singapore. Under certain circumstances, this country, centrally placed in the Indian Ocean, can outstrip Singapore as an entrepot centre bridging Asia, Africa and the Pacific. Apart from everything else Sri Lanka has an agricultural base that can make it a real granary of foodstuffs and a producer-exporter of much-in-demand primary commodities. Economic co-operation on a limited scale may be one outcome of the Lee Kuan Yew visit, but Sri Lanka cannot afford to follow Singapore's foreign policy in many matters of burning international urgency (although many in the UNP administration will be tempted to tilt to the West as much as Singapore does) or resort to Singapore's policies on civil (human) rights or internal security procedures. On the domestic front, there has been a significant and substantial increase in the Maha paddy harvest. Though a good part of the 700 million rupees granted as agricultural loans from last October was misused on futile consumerism, the substantial part properly used has yielded rich dividends. If this rate of increase in paddy production is maintained, the country will soon be self-sufficient in rice, and if a similar increase is generated in the production of cereals like kurrakkan and subsidiaries like maize, sorghum and manioc, a sharp reduction in the import of wheat flour can be effected quickly. But these hopeful signs are over-shadowed by the law and order situation. The crime rate (mainly robbery), has kept mounting, the homicide rate has broken all previous records, communal clashes and tensions still persist in some areas, and a small but well-knit terrorist group in the North has shown remarkable capability vis a vis the special police units. The time has come for our Police to shed itself of age-old colonial conceit and arrogance based on false notions of superiority (intellectual included)—neither the police uniform nor the CID badge any longer stun ordinary people into a state of paralytic coma of subservience and inactivity—and get down to the job of coping with the problems of the day with humility and humanity which alone will induce co-operation from the public. The Presidential Commission to investigate the excesses perpetrated under the last regime will soon begin its work. Textiles are available in the co-ops but the blackmarket (in textiles leaked out from government sources) continues to flourish. Vegetables have again shot up in price. But the biggest governmental flop is fish—more of it elsewhere in this issue.

TRIBUNE

Ceylon News Review

Founded in 1954

A Journal of Ceylon and
World Affairs

Editor S. P. Amarasingam
Every Saturday

April 22, 1978

Vol. 22 No. 43

TRIBUNE

43, DAWSON STREET,
COLOMBO - 2.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

● Terrorism ● Police ● CPSL And The National Minorities

Colombo, April 17, 1978

In spite of much that makes one hopeful about the present and the future of Sri Lanka, many events have taken place in the last few days that tends to drive even the most optimistic into the depths of gloom. The most scari-fying event is the Murunkan episode where a posse of special unit policemen were wiped out by terrorists.

The Police have been thrust into the limelight in recent times. It is not their fault alone that the crime rate and the homicide rate have risen to dizzy heights. The whole community, including all the governments in the last three decades, must bear the responsibility for it. It has become an unfortunate habit to heap all the blame on the Police for all the evils in our society today. There is no doubt that the Police have many shortcomings and several of them are black sheep. But, by far and large they do a good job, given the opportunity to act, the co-operation of the people and the support of the government.

Whatever view one takes of the individualistic James Bond style of sleuthing that led to the assassination of the special CID police unit led by Inspector Bastianpillai in the Murunkan area, there is no doubt that he and his group laid down their lives in the cause of eliminating terrorist activity in this country. Life in this country will not be worth living if terrorism is allowed to become a force. Whatever one's political sympathies, terrorism must and cannot be tolerated or condoned. Whe-

ther Bastianpillai's murder is the result of a well-publicised vendetta that allegedly stemmed from his third-degree methods on the 4th Floor or not, is immaterial—the simple position is that terrorism cannot be condoned. (It is also necessary for government to eliminate police cruelty and brutality that often drives young people to terrorism or provides them an excuse to justify terrorism.)

The Police, it must be remembered, is the chief instrument to fight crime and terrorism, and the community must ensure that police morale is sustained for this purpose. It is one thing to maintain the necessary vigilance against police excesses and the abuse of police powers, but it will be national suicide to denigrate police morale to the point where the Force becomes effete and ineffective. (But this should not be a cover for condoning police excesses).

Apart from public co-operation, police officers look for support and encouragement from superiors and governmental authorities to preserve their morale. The recent Murunkan tragedy has aroused fresh murmurs among rank and file police officers—murmurs which the topmost government circles must take immediate notice of. *Tribune* is aware that police officers are unhappy that the IGP did not think it fit—as he should have—to disturb his holiday in Nuwara Eliya (or somewhere else) to attend the funerals of Inspector Bastianpillai and the other officers. Odious comparisons are being made about the conduct of other service chiefs in similar circumstances.

Cynics in the Police understandably make acidic comments about the IGP's call for volunteers to fight terrorism. They point out that the wives and dependents of three police officers killed by terrorist bullets in the North during the last two years have still

not received the special compensation paid in such cases. Police officers will take the risks essential to fight terrorism only if they are assured that their families and dependents will be looked after in case of untimely death or disaster overtakes them.

Apart from the money compensation, the human touch is even more important. It is difficult to understand why the IGP did not visit the scene or attend the funerals together with other top brass. Police officers say that this is not the first time this has happened.

The Police Force, in recent years, has not functioned as a good Force should have. But, it is pointless indulging in post-mortems anymore—we have had enough of them just as much as we have a surfeit of Commissions. It is time to do everything essential to make the Police Force a decent and efficient unit to combat crime, anti-social activities, and terrorism. The Police must become an integral part of the community and not consider themselves as a separate caste (as in colonial times) to brain-wash and slave-drive the under-privileged for the greater glory of the ruling elite. The armed robber and the cunning terrorist have brought this home in the most forcible manner. The robber and the terrorist are products of the social, economic and political imbalances in society and the police cannot make any headway against them unless the whole community and the government can successfully deny the robber and the terrorist the climate and the *milieu* in which they arise and in which they can operate successfully.

We have excellent police officers and excellent material from which to mould a good Police Force. Meritocracy must replace nepotism, favouritism and the consequential bum-sucking stoogery. Police officers, in such a set-up,

are driven to resort to illegalities, frame-ups, bogus charges, slanted intelligence reports and the like in order to win promotions. All this must end. Police officers must be treated as human beings (and not as freaks from outer space) in the same way as police officers must deal with the members of the public in an honest, humane way. A revolution is essential in police-public relations, just as much as a revolution is needed inside the Force itself. For a start, the IGP must step out of his ivory tower.

The most important measure needed to eliminate terrorism, insurgency and youth revolt is a happier politico-economic climate where unemployment is reduced to a minimum and the cost of living is equated to realistic wage levels together with political arrangements enshrined in the Constitution that will make national unity possible by removing every vestige of discrimination on racial, religious, linguistic, or caste grounds. The Third Amendment which the Select Committee is expected to place before the NSA shortly, many hope, will create a better political climate by eliminating communal confrontations and ending unnecessary tensions that stem from constitutionally-validated imbalances and inequalities. These are fundamental pre-requisites for a successful war against insurgency and terrorism.

In this connection, it is interesting to note that the Communist Party of Sri Lanka (CPSL) at its recent 10th Congress and the LSSP at its Delegates Conference adopted new policies in regard to the question of the Tamil minority. The CPSL had led the way when it, some months ago, went back to a new streamlined and updated version of the policy adumbrated at its first Congress: self-determination and autonomy for Tamils in their traditional home-

lands. In the intervening period between the 1st and 10th Congress, the CPSL had under the impact of the imperatives of the quest for parliamentary power back-slided into supporting (with ineffective mental and verbal reservations) the Sinhala Only chauvinism of the SLFP. The revolt of the V. Ponnampalam group in Jaffna and the total bankruptcy of SLFP politics undoubtedly brought the CPSL to a rude awakening of contemporary realities.

The CPSL has now decided that the new United Front against the Right led by the ÚNP, must be led not by the SLFP but by a vigorous ULF based primarily on the LSSP, CPSL PDP, and elements that come over to it from the conservative but honest Right (SLFP) and the ultra Left (JVP etc. etc.) This aspect of the political strategies of the CPSL and LSSP will be analysed and examined shortly in a separate article. Here reference will be made mainly to the solutions being offered by the CPSL for the Tamil minority problem.

Pieter Keuneman re-elected General Secretary of the CPSL, in his speech introducing the "Theses of the Central Committee", after referring to the pre-congress discussion" whether our decision to take part in the United Front Government formed in 1970 was correct or not", went on: "...Another such question that arose in our discussion is whether the Sri Lanka Tamils have developed all the characteristics of a nation in the strictly scientific, Marxist-Leninism concept.. Sri Lanka Tamils cannot legitimately claim, or be conceded, the right to self-determination unless and until they have acquired all the characteristics of a nation in the scientific, Marxist-Leninist sense. But neither Marxism-Leninism nor our Party approached this question so dogmatically. Contemporary history

especially since the defeat of racism in World War II and the formation of the world socialist system has many examples, especially in Africa of peoples successfully exercising the right to self-determination even though they may not yet have acquired one or more

WORK ON STONE

ON THE COVER, this week, we have the picture of a craftsman, dedicated to art and devoted to his work. There are too few of them left in the country today. There have been demands in recent times in many quarters that craftsmen of this kind should not be allowed to fade away without training young people to take their place in larger numbers than before. This is a field in which Government must take a special interest. Whilst commercial motivations will help to create craftsmen to produce articles readily saleable to tourists and at centres abroad, those who work on stone only have a limited and restricted market. Stone-carvers of the past have left behind in Lanka treasures of beauty for all time. Foreign invasions, the denigration of indigenous culture and debasement of traditional values have all but wiped out many forms of native art and none more so than carving on stone. Is it not time to generate a renaissance in this art form? Sri Lanka has some of the best granite for carving and our young people have talent in abundance ready to flower. Without merely harping on the glories of the past, a new synthesis of the old and the new, of the ancient and the modern and of the foreign and the indigenous will pave the way for a new era in Sri Lanka stone-carving. It can well be a golden era.

features of a nation in the scientific, Marxist-Leninist sense. As our Party agrees that the Sri Lanka Tamils have the right to self-determination which is, after all, the main thing—the question whether they have acquired all the features of a nation or are still in the process of acquiring them is a matter that we can study further without affecting our immediate work."

Further, in the concluding parts of the speech, he elaborated these points more fully. The full text of the extract is published below for the record.

"The new situation developing among the *national minorities* is also important for our efforts to unite the Left and democratic forces. The racial disturbances that followed the UNP's assumption of office in July 1977 were the worst since those of the late 1950s. They showed how explosive the question of communal relations has become. They dealt a major blow against any normalisation of Sinhala-Tamil relations that had taken place since then, and strengthened separatist tendencies among the Sri Lanka Tamils. The communal disturbances of August 1977 have also revealed that, unless concrete and purposeful steps are taken immediately to solve the problem of communal relations on a just basis, new threats of communal violence will arise, fissiparous tendencies will grow stronger, and a real threat to the unity and territorial integrity of the country can arise. Although the UNP government had promised to solve the problems of the Sri Lanka Tamils, and even succeeded in persuading many of them that it would do so, it has not yet come forward with any concrete proposals. Nor has it convened the All-Parties Conference on this question that it promised at the time of the General Elections. Its only

constructive step in this direction has been to abolish the discriminatory and procedures of so-called "media-wise standardisation" in admissions to the University.

"In the so-called *Keuneman Report* to the Cabinet in 1974, our Party had also condemned media-wise standardisation as discriminatory and demanded its abolition. But our demand was not accepted by the SLFP leaders, under pressure from communalist elements. However, in abolishing media-wise standardisation, the UNP government also did away with the part of the report which was accepted—namely, the 30% reservation of University admissions to poor students with the necessary qualifications and who came from schools in 10 districts which are still relatively undeveloped both economically and educationally. This created a situation which the same communalist elements have tried to exploit once again. Our Party opposes all attempts to introduce principles of racial discrimination into the entrance to higher education. We oppose the proposals for 'racial quotas' and the practice of media-wise standardisation. Instead we demand, 'standardisation by class'—whereby special weightage is given in such admissions to qualified students from working class or poor rural families. After the general elections, the political and class polarisations that have been taking shape among the Sri Lanka Tamils have become more noticeable. This is seen in the divisions within the TULF, with some representatives openly supporting the UNP government, while others opposing it from both national and social positions. In the interests of class solidarity, bourgeois forces among the Tamils have also urged the TULF, not to embrace the UNP government but to adopt a so-called "wait and see" policy towards it.

"The polarisation among the Sri

Lanka Tamils reflects, on the one hand, the crisis of the "policies of bargain" pursued by their traditional bourgeois leaderships and, on the other hand, the search for new policies among the rising petty-bourgeois forces especially radical sections of the youth. The traditional bourgeois leadership of the Sri Lanka Tamils had hoped for imperialist support, in order to strike a better bargain with their Sinhala counterparts over the share out of political power and economic influence. But it has become clear that this hoped-for support has not materialised and is even less likely to do so after the formation, on a national level, of the UNP government, which is fully acceptable to the imperialists. This is why vacillatory and compromising elements in the TULF, now seek to make peace with the UNP government and to get what they can for them selves.

"At the same time, a totally opposite trend is developing, especially among the radical youth and petty-bourgeois sections who form the active cadre of the TULF and an important segment of its socio-political base. Due to their petty-bourgeois character, the policies of these sections is not without distortions and contradictions, driven by frustration and desperation, and understandably angered by the humiliations and mis-treatment they have experienced, these sections have raised the unrealistic divisive and unacceptable demand for a separate state of Eelam. On the other hand, the ideas of scientific socialism have begun to exercise an increasingly attractive influence on radical Tamil youth, who see in scientific socialism the only real solution to the national and socio-economic problems they experience. This had led them, and the TULF leaders associated with them, to adopt positions similar to those of the Left parties on many socio-

economic problems that affect the whole country—eg the Budget, problems of democracy, attacks on the working people and so on. It has also led them to search for ways and means of developing relations with progressive forces among the Sinhalese and with socialist and national liberation forces abroad.

"Our Party must take a positive attitude towards such developments and help in every way possible to see that they continue in directions that help to restore national unity, preserve the territorial integrity of the country, and help the overall advance of Left and democratic forces throughout the country. In this regard, our Party should take steps to restore the confidence which the national minorities had in us by frankly accepting and correcting certain rightist and opportunist errors, which disfigured our correct policy in the recent past and led to suspicions about what we really stood for. Examples of such mistakes are the incorrect positions we adopted over the events of 8th January, 1966, and our failure energetically and publicly to oppose not only the many discriminations that Tamil-speaking minorities experience in their daily lives, but also the excesses of some of the security services in the North during the period of the Emergency. We should also popularise and make more widely known our proposals as to how the question of communal relations can be justly solved. Our Party accepts the right of the Sri Lanka Tamils to self-determination. But as a Party which seeks to unite all sections of the working people and not to divide them, we consider that this right should be exercised in such a way as not to harm the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka or the unity of the working class and progressive forces, both Sinhalese and Tamil. We therefore, oppose proposals, to divide Sri Lanka into separate, dwarf states. We believe that this view is shared by the

vast majority of both Sinhalese and Tamils.

"For many years our Party has considered that, as a step towards restoring unity between the Sinhalese and Tamil people and enabling them to co-operate in solving the tasks of progressive development, the principle of regional autonomy within a unified state should be accepted and applied. This is also fully in keeping with recent trends towards administrative decentralisation. We are happy that our Party's proposals in regard to regional autonomy have been accepted by other parties of the ULF as well, and incorporated into the official document of the ULF. We must now campaign actively to persuade the Sinhalese people of the justice of the proposals for regional autonomy and its necessity in the interest of achieving communal harmony and unity. We must also campaign among the Tamils to persuade them that their right to self-determination can best be expressed through regional autonomy within a unitary state.

"Our Thesis breaks new ground by linking the questions of self-determination and regional autonomy, and by setting out the broad lines along which the principle of regional autonomy can best be applied. Depending on the wishes of the people of the area, one or more autonomous regions can be set up in the Northern and Eastern areas of the country, were the Sri Lanka Tamils have traditionally lived for centuries. These autonomous regions should also have the right to amalgamate if they so wish. We also propose a number of constitutional guarantees of the legitimate and cultural rights of both the Sinhalese and Tamil peoples, so as to ensure equality of treatment and guarantee that no citizen suffers any disability or discrimination as a result of his race, culture or lan-

guage. All these principles, which are set out in the Thesis have to be elaborated further so that both the people and the Party membership are clear as to how our proposals should operate in Law, administrative practice, and in their daily lives. As this cannot be done at a Congress, which has also to deal with a host of other matters, our Central Committee has proposed your acceptance of a resolution that a special conference should be held in the course of this year for this purpose.

"Our Thesis also draws pointed attention to the need to remove the dual discrimination that Up-country Tamils of Indian Origin, who number nearly one million people and are mainly plantation workers, experience—both as community and as workers. It makes a number of proposals in this regard. It also asserts that, although the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreements have created a basis for reducing this problem to manageable size and taken certain positive steps forward towards its solution, they cannot be regarded as the final word on the matter. It is necessary to solve what is left unsolved in this problem through discussions with the representative organisations of the Up-country Tamils with the Government of India, with full respect for the voluntary principle in the matter of allowing a choice between a return to India and settlement in Sri Lanka.

Our proposed conference should also give more consideration to the new trends developing among the Muslims of Sri Lanka, referred to in our Thesis. Our Party should find ways and means of establishing closer links with the increasing sections of the youth and intelligentsia of this minority community, who are being attracted to socialism as a result of the spectacular advances made by the Muslim populations in the Central

Asian Republics of the Soviet Union under the socialist system, and who are increasingly expressing solidarity with the anti-imperialist struggles of the Arab and other Muslim people. We should also support their efforts to overcome as rapidly as possible the education and other historically-inherited disadvantages which the Muslims of Sri Lanka experience at the moment, as well as fight to end the difficulties and vexations they experience as a result of discriminatory interpretations and applications of the Official Language Act and the Citizenship Acts.

"The pro-imperialist reactionary forces, led by the UNP have tried, and still try, to use the national minorities as political reserves. For this purpose, they use the bourgeoisie leadership among the national minorities and their policies. It is necessary decisively to change this position and, by solidarising with the radical and democratic forces now developing among the national mino-

rities, make them allies of the Left and democratic forces of the country in general."



QUIDNUNCS

Textile Scandal What Next?

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 Websters 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.

In the *Quidnuncs* column of the *Tribune* of April 1 1978 (vol. 22 No. 41)—not an April Fool's issue—we had an item about the textile imports of Cytex Ltd., and Paragons Ltd. (*Tribune* has no axe to grind. Our only concern is the public interest.) We published particulars as far as our *Quidnuncs* could ascertain them. If such particulars were partially incorrect, inadequate, or incomplete we have always published further particulars often supplied by the one

or more parties concerned or named in the report to make the record complete.

On the 31st March, in the afternoon, shortly after the April 1, issue of *Tribune* was released a director of Cytex Ltd—he said his name was Hussain—telephoned the Editor and wanted to know who had furnished the "wrong information" about Cytex imports. The Editor requested him to furnish the "correct information" for publication. The Cytex Director demanded that *Tribune* send a reporter to their office immediately to be given the full facts. He was told that *Tribune* did not send reporters to meet tycoons under these circumstances. The Director was invited to send a note pointing out inaccuracies and setting out the "facts". This he declined to do and threatened "to take *Tribune* to Court....."

On Monday, April 3, Mr. A. Y. S. Gnanam telephoned the Editor and regretted that the article was published without prior reference to him or the company. The Editor repeated the invitation to send in a note with all the facts as Cytex understood them for publication. Mr. Gnanam undertook to send us such a note, but *Tribune* has so far not received it. No sooner we receive the same we shall publish it in full. Of course with our comments, and the comments of the *Quidnuncs* who brought us the news in the first instance.

In the meantime, there are a few matters that have subsequently been brought to our notice on which further clarification from Cytex would be welcome. There is, however, one matter on which we had erred. We had said that the Cytex defence was that they had the machine to "cut and stitch" the 32"—36" into saree width of 45". The *Quidnunc* concerned—not being a textile expert—had mistaken the word "stretch" for

Notice under Section 7 of the Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) as amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964

Ref. No. 94/3/193.

It is intended to require the lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars see the Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka No. 314 of 21/04/1978 (part III).

SCHEDULE

Situation: In the village of Yatala watta, D. R. O's Division of G. B. P. North, Galle District.

Name of Land: Maminadola Mukalana alias Mayiyoyokka Hena

Plan and Lot Nos: Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 in P. P. Gaa 726.

W. E. L. Fernando
Acquiring Officer
Galle District.

The Kachcheri,
Galle, 06 April 1978

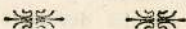
"stitch" because he could not imagine that it was possible to "stretch" ordinary textiles, even synthetics, even a few inches. The *Quidnunc* concerned now tells us that what was done was that the short width textiles were "stretched" and not "stitched". What is not clear is whether the goods examined by the authorities were before or after "stretching" and whether specimens with 38" to 41" width were really after "stretching".

Three questions of significance arise; (1) whether "stretching" of width will not mean shortening in the length? (2) whether similar "stretching" has been done in regard to past imports and this may be of crucial importance so far as the import duty payable is concerned? (3) whether Government should not make it compulsory for private textile importers and manufacturers to make known the fact whether a piece was "stretched" or not.

Quidnuncs, say that it was a matter of gossip in the Textile underground of Colombo of that the President and Secretary of the Synthetics Manufacturers' Association got the orders for 2 million and 1 million yards respectively. An additional charge of US cts. 5 was allowed for the yardage airfreighted. *Quidnuncs* say that the Customs, in the first instance, were only concerned with the duty chargeable: and as this was a special government order, they did not concern themselves with the aspects like classification, quality, material, etc. and further that the customs was strictly concerned only with the yardage for duty levying. No inspection was under taken until there were "tip-offs" by parties who seemed to be in the know. (The duty on "saree material of 45" width was either Rs. 150 per saree or 25% of the value).

Quidnuncs say that Cyntex Ltd., had airfreighted their 2 million yards in a special charter flight from Dubai (why Dubai?): that the entire consignment had been cleared on a special deposit and been transferred to the importers stores. It was only after the trouble had started about the Paragons imports that the Cyntex consignment was examined. Paragons had airfreighted 300,000 yards and brought the balance 700,000 yards by sea. The orders for the 3 million had been placed, it is said, in Karachi, Singapore, Hongkong and Tokyo. The Customs, where the air-freighted goods were concerned, had accepted them as imports presumably in accordance with the licence and had only worked out the duty. It was the Paragon's sea-freight consignment that had started the ball rolling in regard to "inspections", allegedly because of a man from Hyderabad now ruling the roost in Pettah. Lace material, polyesters and moscrepe, among other items, had surfaced. We do not know whether the full story will ever be unfolded.

If the information *Quidnuncs* have gathered is not as complete or accurate as Cyntex or Paragons know the to be, we invite them to furnish them true facts for publication and verification, if necessary. We await Mr. Gnanam's communication.



LETTERS

Sansoni Commission

Sir,

Your footnote to S.A.V.'s letter in the *Tribune* of March 25th says that "exigencies of space" prevented you from repeating the evidence, before the Sansoni Commission, reported in bulk by the dailies. If you would care to make

a comparative study, you will find that the English dailies do not give the same coverage to the evidence as done by the independent dailies like *Eelanadu* & *Virakesari*. To illustrate, I quote the following extracts from the evidence of Mr. K. R. Suvendrarajah, a businessman of Anuradhapura as reported in 3 different dailies.

According to the *Eelanadu* of March 21st, "The Anuradhapura North UNP member Bandara's private secretary Pathirana was with a knife in the crowd. He (witness) also knew that he was the UNP organiser of the Jaffna junction area in Anuradhapura. He came with the knife and 'placed it against the neck of constable Alagaperuma, who was helping us, and asked 'Are you going to save the Tamils?'"

The corresponding reportage in the *Ceylon Daily News* of March 25th is "Alagaperuma too, in civils, accompanied them to the kacheri. As the van passed the Jaffna junction, a crowd led by Pathirana, attacked them."

The relevant passage from the *Sun* of March 21st is "The crowd then rushed to one Mr. Alagaperuma (note the 'l') a police constable who arrived at the scene. They pointed a knife at Alagaperuma and asked whether he was going to safeguard the Tamils"

While "exigencies of space" is your problem, the English dailies might as well say "brevity is the soul of wit".

Ever since your KESARI days you have stressed on the importance of independent & objective reporting & analytical writing. To keep your readers well informed is it too much to expect you to devote at least a page a week to report some of the vital parts of the evidence before the Sansoni Commission?

N. Deva Rajan

Jaffna.
27.3.78

Herodotus And The Holy Writ

Sir,

I was interested in the letter in your issue of 14.1.78 by Mr. H. Levin pertaining to Belshazzar's feast in Babylon as I have had occasion to refer to this subject in an article "Herodotus and the Holy Writ".

The following extracts will I think interest your readers.

In an article written by Douglas, who was supposed to have been the most accomplished writer in India in his time, (*Ceylon Literary Register*, 1891-92), he says, "It is said in the Bible, And it came to pass that night, that the Angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred four score and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib, king of Assyria departed and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh (2 Kings 19)

Herodotus the famous traveller of the 5th century BC refers to this subject in his records and regarding which Douglas, (*Ceylon Literary Register*, 1891-92), has this to say, "Belshazzar's Feast and the Fall of Babylon have exercised the imagination of many a poet and painter, and criticism stands abashed at the glowing narrative. It may however, to strengthen a wavering faith in the Holy Writ that Herodotus is explicit enough on the feasting and dancing on that memorable night. He says, the city was taken at both extremities, some time before it was known at the great Royal Rendezvous. The statement of Herodotus that the destruction of Sennacherib's army was due to field mice is a rude awakening to our preconceived notions, and looks askance at the poet's pen and painters brush, though it detracts nothing

from him whose name is the Almighty. It is a sharp descent, however, as one would say, from the wing of an archangel to one of the smallest of God's living creatures. The means are different but the end is the same.

"The nibbling of mice may have been as effective as the breath of the archangel. 'Look at me and learn to reverence the Gods' was the inscription which Herodotus tells us was placed on a statue of Vulcan, with a mouse in its open palm, erected at Memphis as supposed to commemorate the event and we can only repeat the dictum:-

'Where reason fails with all her powers,

There faith prevails and love adores'

"The version of Herodotus presupposes I imagine that the mice must have devoured the food of the army before they attacked their thongs, bucklers and bowstrings. In Greek, mouse and rat are the same word; in Latin, the rat of Egypt, *mus Egyptius*. In 1879, millions of rats invaded the Dekhan and destroyed the crops over a thousand miles."

The reference by Douglas to the destruction of Sennacherib's army as due to field mice and the descent from the wing of an archangel to one of the smallest of God's living creatures is of interest as while he points out that Herodotus has confirmed the Bible where it refers to the decimation of Sennacherib's army he doubts the reference to the archangel as the means of the destruction of the army. The reference to the archangel is symbolic and is actually a reference to the scourge of plague which was actually the immediate cause of the destruction of the armed might of Sennacherib.

That it was not the rats themselves but the plague that was the cause of the disaster can be inferred from what Keller has pointed

out in his book *The Bible as History* where he says at page 257, "Whilst the Assyrian records are enveloped in a veil of secrecy, the Bible says: 'and it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred four score and five thousand and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib, king of Assyria departed and went and returned and dwelt at Neneveh (2 Kings 19)".

Herodotus Halicarnassus, the most famous traveller in the ancient world..helped to solve the puzzle..In Egypt he had a long conversation with a temple priest who imparted a strange story to the inquisitive Greek.

It happened that at the very time that Sennacherib the Assyrian marched against Egypt with a large armed force, there was a priest on the throne of Egypt who treated the army as a contemptible pro-

My No. 3/40/1/168

Notice Under Section 7 of The Land Acquisition Act as Amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) act No. 28 of 1964.

Please see the Gazette No. 314 part iii dated 7/8/21 of Republic of Sri Lanka for the particulars of Acquisition of land which is described in the Schedule below:-

Situation: Paraghamada and Ehalagastenne Villages, Noonagolla wasma, D.R.O's Division of Inamaluwakorale

Name of Land: Rattota Estate alias Gallindshena.

Extent: 99 Acres, 1 Rood, 17 perches.

Plan No: VP. 561 (Ex. 1) and V.P. 563 (Ex. 2)

Lot Nos. 34, 46, 69, 74, 75, 77, 11

H. A. D. R. Hathurusinghe
Additional Govt. Agent,
Matale District

The Kachcheri,
Matale, 31st March, 1978

fession. The Egyptian warriors who had been so disdainfully dealt with, refused to take the field. Thereupon the priest king hurried to the temple in deep despair. There he was told, God would help him. Relying upon this, the king, who had actually no soldiers behind him but only shopkeepers, tradesmen and market folk went to meet Sennacherib. At the narrow entrances into the country "an army of field mice swarmed over their opponents in the night, gnawed through their quivers and their bows, and the handles of their shields, so that on the following day they fled minus their arms and a great number of them fell."

Hence concludes Herodotus' story, "This king still stands in the Hephaestus's temple with a mouse in his hand and with the following inscription, 'Look on me and live in safety.'

However obscure the meaning of this religious legend may be, its core is historical.

For the peoples of the ancient world, as also for the Bible (I *Samuel*), the mouse was what the rat was for the people of the Middle Ages. It was the symbol of plague. On the city of Lachish, Starkey, the archeologists found shocking proof of the story in 1938. A mass grave in the rock with 2000 human skeletons unmistakably thrown in with the utmost haste. The epidemic must have raged with frightful destruction amongst the Assyrian warriors.

Further confirmation of the devastation of countries by plague introduced by rats is provided by De Queyroz in his book, *Conquest of Ceylon* where at page 15 he says: "But as all human prosperity has its limits, and great riches become an incentive to great vices, when this city (Anuradhapura) and kingdom was most prosperous, then were they ruined entirely, there preceding a protracted civil war

followed by a contagion of small pox, which is the plague of these nations and warm climates, where it attacks the same person two or three times. There was added to this a lack of provisions and an invasion of poisonous rats, and by these scourges the greater part of the people of that city perished in punishment, as they confess of unspeakable crime....."

The reference to poisonous rats is of significance in this context. Thus we see that the archeologist has helped to restore our faith in the poet, the painter and the Holy Writ.

J. R. Sinnatamby

85, 5th Lane,
Colombo 3.
8.3.78

On Buses

Sir,

Mr. Mohamed, like every Minister of Transport before him has promised us more new buses. One cannot but be sceptical about this solution to the CTB's ills as long as buses continue to be carelessly used and indifferently maintained.

How many of our buses have managed to survive without having their bodywork damaged in one way or another? How many CTB buses have head-lights, tail-lights brake-lights and turning indicator lights that are not defective? A bus with a speedometer in working order is a rarity. Buses that show such obvious signs of negligence must surely be having more serious, if less easily noticed, mechanical defects.

For some time now, I have been noticing another phenomenon—buses without their rear shock-absorbers (dampers). Within the space of a short period I have noti-

ced these buses without rear shock absorbers:—

23 Sri 4156	23 Sri 4976
23 Sri 4213	23 Sri 4668
23 Sri 5566	23 Sri 3303
23 Sri 4209	23 Sri 4394
23 Sri 3979	23 Sri 6037
23 Sri 6383	23 Sri 4415
23 Sri 6440	23 Sri 4832

I invite other motorists to make this observation themselves when they are following Tata-Benz buses in which the diagonally fitted rear shock absorbers are easily visible.

Fr. James Cooke, O.M.I.

De Mazenod House,
40, Farm Road,
Mattakkuliya,
Colombo 15.

Cleaning Up Colombo

Sir,

I heartily disagree with *Tribune's* endorsement (Feb. 18, page 1) of Prime Minister Premadasa's activity on behalf of the city of Colombo. Members of the Cabinet, and in particular the Prime Minister, are responsible for matters that affect the whole country. They cannot involve themselves in particular details that concern one or other locality. Obviously the Prime Minister cannot undertake to clean up every town in Sri Lanka, or even all the Municipalities. So, if he takes it upon himself to see that the streets of Colombo are "brighter, cleaner, and more attractive," and does not (because he can not) do the same for other cities, he is unfairly favouring Colombo.

Every Municipality has (or has the right to have) a Council, duly elected by the citizens and charged with the responsibility for all matters pertaining to the city. If a Cabinet Minister finds that some Council is neglecting its duty, it is not for him personally to do that work. The role of the Minister

is to see that the local authorities actually do what they have been elected to do. Where for the time being a Special Commissioner is acting in place of an elected Council, he has the same rights and dut-

ies and should be left to do his duty. The Cabinet and the National State Assembly ought to aid the local authorities, safeguarding their rights and seeing that they do their duties. But it is wrong

for them to absorb and destroy the subordinate bodies.

Claude R. Daly S.J.

31, Clifford Place,

Colombo 4.

3 March 1978

SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

March 29 — April 4

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.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29: Ministers have been warned to be extra vigilant when acting on the advice of the bureaucracy; some members of the bureaucracy have continued to misguide leaders of successive governments and similar attempts are being made even now. Patriotism will occupy a prominent place in the new Educational Reforms Structure introduced by the Ministry of Education. The Agricultural Development Authority will start work in ten electorates in the North Western and Western Provinces from Monday. The Police have sought the assistance of the media in Sri Lanka to help stem the rising tide of crime. The Minister of Irrigation etc said that with the appointment of District Ministers next month decision making and implementation of the government's development programmes would be decentralised; these changes would also integrate the village with the estate. Under a master plan to give people fish at a cheaper price, the Minister of Fisheries has invited foreign firms to fish in our deep sea and sell Sri Lanka 40% of their catch in varieties determined by him and the transaction to be in rupees. Air Ceylon will close down ten of its branches abroad by Friday—CDN. A four member team of experts is here to review the entire tax and tariff structure of the country. A check is to be maintained over the registration of new small industries within 20 miles radius of Colombo; an order to this effect has gone from the Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs—CDM. Five tons of Potassium Nitrate, a highly explosive chemical said to be illegally imported into the country by a local private firm, has

aroused the suspicion of the security authorities. There will be far-reaching changes in the administrative machinery at district level when the district ministry scheme comes into effect. Three new remand prisons are to be constructed in Colombo, Kandy and Kalutara. The government will issue the new series rice ration books to consumers entitled to their revalidated ration books this year—SU. In future high appointments to government departments, corporations etc will be made only after a sub committee of MP's have investigated and found them fit for appointment—DP. The Laksala has increased the prices of all their goods by 5%. The National Milk Board has decided to increase the price of locally produced condensed milk by 75 cents; thus the price of a tin of condensed milk is Rs. 4—JD. 146 students from Royal College and 127 students from Ananda College have been called to enter the University this year—DK. The Minister of Foreign Affairs will leave on Monday, April 3 for India on a goodwill mission in response to a long standing invitation by the Indian government—IDPR No. 64/78. The South Korean Economic Delegation left yesterday after a week's survey of possible investment in the FTZ—IDPR No. 62/78.

THURSDAY, MARCH 30: Initiatives have been taken by the President to ensure the availability of adequate employment opportunities in the public sector, corporation sector and the private sector. The Minister of Education said that there was a move recently to create trouble in the campuses and to bring the government into disrepute, however the government acted with patience. The UNP has decided to appoint a number of committees headed by experienced public servants and other responsible citizens to look into various allegations made by members of the public. Mr. Nisanka Wijeyaratne has been appointed Minister of Higher Education in addition to his present portfolio of Minister of Education. The government yesterday approved two proposals of the Minister of Plantation Industry (1) a Palmyrah Board and (2) a National Institute of Plantation management. All heads of divisions of the University of Sri Lanka have been instructed to send in confidential reports on lecturers or other members of the teaching staff suspected of inciting students to strike or participate in acts of violence. The PM wishes that the UK and European branch of the UNP looks after the interests of all Sri Lankan nationals in those countries and is a source of strength and encourage-

ment to them—CDN. Women will enjoy equal rights and privileges with men in admission to jobs in the public and corporation sectors and other state institutions; a decision to this effect was taken by the government yesterday. Several students of the strikebound Colombo Campus are anxious and willing to get back to their lectures. Students of the Colombo Campus yesterday continued their strike which began on the 27—CDM. Seven regional boards of the CTB, each headed by a Chairman, will shortly be appointed by the Ministry of Transport with a view to streamlining the transport system of the country. More than one million persons over eighteen years of age have not applied for identity cards according to the Department of Registration of Persons—SU. The Minister of Fisheries has said that those foreign vessels which fish in our territorial waters without permission will be confiscated and a fine of Rs. 2 lakhs will be imposed—DP. The government has decided to brief MP's about subversive activities reported from various parts of the country. A large stock of valuable trawler and mechanised boat spares is deteriorating in the Fisheries Corporation's engineering store at Mutwal; these spares are valued at about Rs. 3.5 million—CO. The government has decided to allow May Day rallies as usual this year—VK.

FRIDAY, MARCH 31: The President yesterday appointed a three member special Presidential Commission of Inquiry headed by Mr. Justice J. G. T. Weeraratne, to inquire into and obtain information in regard to misuse and abuse of power during the period May 1970 to July 1977. Following a request made by the Cost of Living Committee the price of Perakum Condensed milk was reduced from Rs. 4 to the former price of Rs. 3.25; this item will be sold to the public through the co-ops and authorised dealers. The Administration of Justice Law enacted by the previous government has contributed in a large way to the soaring crime wave in the country; under this law 34,000 IRC's are on the loose and 32,000 persons who have committed grave crimes have received suspended sentences. A Sri Lanka International Airline will soon replace the international services of Air Ceylon—CDN. Bombs and weapons found in the residential universities were enough to fight a war and that was one reason why the government decided to close the halls of residence at all university campuses said the Minister of Education. The Ceylon Institute of Scientific and Industrial Research is to be reorganised and expanded according to the Minister of Scientific and Industrial Affairs. The secretary of the new Ministry of Higher Education, soon after he assumed duties yesterday met the Colombo Campus student leaders and promised that he would meet representatives from all other campuses at an early date to discuss their grievances—CDM. The Draft

Bill that will replace the existing University of Ceylon Act has called for far reaching reforms upon the entire higher education structure of the country; this bill which was drafted after hearing the views of all sections of the university community will come up for discussion before the cabinet next week. The Ministry of Defence yesterday directed the police and armed forces to provide added protection for lorries carrying consumer goods to the outstations from Colombo—SU. The Arts Faculty will be step by step removed from the Peradeniya Campus and the campus will be reserved specially for medicine, engineering and science subjects said the new secretary of the Higher Education ministry—VK. Work on deepening the Nuwara Eliya Lake has commenced; this is being done at an enormous cost using the best machinery of the Ministry of Irrigation etc for the mere pleasure of rich tourists. The Fertilizer Corporation and the Paddy Marketing Board are short of sacks to pack their stuff; so the Jute Corporation is going to increase its production—JD.

SATURDAY, APRIL 1: There is a mess in the National Paper Corporation and chaotic conditions prevail; the result is a shortage of paper and boards both locally manufactured and imported; this is the unanimous view expressed at an emergency joint meeting of the All Ceylon Printer's Association, All Ceylon Printer's Co-operative Society and the All Ceylon Paper Merchant's Association which met this week. The Colombo Tea Trade is perturbed over the increase of import duty on tea by the Pakistan Government on Thursday. The Food Ministry yesterday directed all co-operative societies in the country to purchase good quality rice wherever available and sell it to the consumer at cost price. A modern film school and film complex will be started by the State Film Corporation near the cestne Tharanga on the old race course in Colombo. The Minister of Transport promised that there would be a record development and improvement in the transport sector of the country this year once the Transport Ministry's plans are implemented. The payment of Rs. 50 monthly to unemployed youth will start in a few week's time according to the the Minister of Finance. The Commission of Inquiry probing Air Ceylon resented an interim reports to the siPresident yesterday morning—CDN. The government has taken steps to wipe out the infamous 'pori' sstem which eas been operating in the port of Colombo for nearly 20 years; under this sgstem employees of government departments in duty in the port take unofficial ave by mutual arrangement and draw their pay as if they had worked. Infectious diseases such as dysentery and hepatitis have broken out in several areas. Local film audiences who had hituerto been starved of first rate English film fare would be abld to see shortly some of the films that have received world

acclaim—CDM. Urgent emergency measures have been taken by the government to save the Mahaweli water that is now flowing into waste; radio active devices of the Atomic Energy Authority are being made use of to gauge the rate wastage in order to take remedial measures. The PM of Singapore Mr. Lee Kuan Yew will visit Sri Lanka on April 10. The Minister of Finance has removed the levy of BTT on gem exports with effect from midnight yesterday—SU. Former PM Mrs Sirimavo Bandaranaike said that she would continue her political career for the emancipation of the country and that she would not run away due to defeat—VK. The Job Bank has got double the number of jobs needed to launch its programme—DM. The Ministry of Housing and Construction has taken steps to construct 100,000 houses in the city and villages—LD. Mr. Colvin R. de Silva is questioning the government as to what happened to the three students taken by thugs who invaded the Arts Education Centre at the end of last month—JD. The government has increased the price of essential drugs for the third time—ATH. An uneasy peace returned to South Lebanon yesterday as there were no reports of fighting for the first time since Israel launched its massive attack two weeks ago. A senior Pakistani embassy official said that appeals for mercy on behalf of former PM Zulfikar Ali Bhutto were premature and suggested a lack of confidence in the country and its judicial system—DN. The SWAPO Nationalists group has agreed that 1500 South African troops can remain in Namibia for the time being but objects to their bases. The Urban Guerillas, kidnappers of former PM, Aldo Moro, yesterday released a five page letter in which the former PM writes of his trial to the Interior Minister; a communique from the red brigades was attached. Former Indian PM, Indira Gandhi drew large crowds yesterday when she came to speak in an important parliamentary by-election campaign for Karnal in the Northern state of Haryana. Italy's ruling Christian democrats last night rejected any deal with Urban guerillas for the release of kidnapped former PM Leopoldo Moro. French PM, Raymond Barre today submitted his government's resignation to President Giscard d'Estaing who accepted the resignation. The visit to Cairo of Israeli Defence Minister Ezer Weizman, who spent thirty hours in Cairo and his talks with President Sadat were described today as a failure; observers believe that there has been no change in the attitudes on either side—SU.

SUNDAY, APRIL 2: A Constitutional Amendment will become necessary to effectively work the new system of District Ministries the government plans to implement, a report prepared at high government levels reveals. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs has asked all GA's to make arrangements to receive the

Kapilavastu relics which will be exhibited throughout the country during the Wesak season. The Fisheries Corporation is expanding its exports of prawns and shrimps as a foreign exchange earner and the 'shrimp girl's of the corporation will be provided with better facilities to help the corporation pack its product expeditiously—SO. Late attendance is a daily occurrence in over 90% of the public sector institutions; this finding has been made by the Committee of Government MP's which inquired into the bureaucracy in its interim report to the President. The government has approved legislation to give effect to the transfer tax to motor cars which was one of the proposals in the budget of the Minister of Finance; according to the proposals a transfer fee will be levied instead of the 80% tax which has been in operation since 1963—ST. Over 800 Sri Lankans who were lured by the prospect of seeking employment abroad are stuck in Karachi with nowhere to go; some sell their passports for Rs 155, while others peddle drugs and still others work like slaves on the streets. Police stations throughout the island have been alerted against the possibility of demonstrations and disturbances that may be created by subversive groups led by released insurgents in a bid to commemorate the 7th anniversary of the April 5th uprising—WK. An order is likely to be brought soon preventing anyone who has been convicted by a court and released on bail from leaving this island without the permission of the same court—CM. About 15,000 youths in the city of Colombo are said to be in the habit of using drugs—SLDP. The US Commerce Department announced a 4.52 billion dollar trade deficit which is the worst in the history of the US and the dollar immediately plunged in the world currency markets. Fifty planes landed in a continuous stream at Pan Guron International Airport bringing Norwegian troops and equipment for the United Nations peace keeping force in Lebanon—SO.

MONDAY, APRIL 3: The government will launch a three pronged drive to bring down searing fish prices; this week the Fisheries Corporation will start releasing quantities of fish from a buffer stock of 34,000 tons, secondly stocks will be sold at reasonable prices on a retail basis and thirdly the corporations staff will go into fishing wadis to purchase at least 75% of the fish caught in the country. Wanton damage, cannibalisation of tea factories and theft by employees appointed during the previous regime in 80 estates have cost the Sri Lanka State Plantations Corporation over 15 million rupees. Malaria is rearing its head once again and the health authorities are battling the disease with international co-operation. The three-member Special Presidential Commission of Inquiry appointed by the President to inquire into and report on the various misdeeds

committed between May 1970 and July 1977 will meet almost immediately to discuss the preliminaries in regard to the functioning of the Commission—CDN. Mr. B. J. Fernando has been appointed by the Sri Lanka government as her UN representative and there is no question of any other person representing Sri Lanka in the UN agencies. The Public Performance Board has asked the police to crack down on dramas and plays that are put on the boards without their scripts being approved by the board; this is because many of the plays have been found to be of a subversive nature. The 47 Municipal Dispensaries in the city are now experiencing a shortage of drugs. CTB footboard travellers are soon to be persecuted, on the orders of the Minister of Transport. Transport Minister has announced that 3 locomotive engines and 150 coaches and 400 goods wagons will arrive in Sri Lanka within the next two months—CDM. The President has stepped in to revamp the police service in this country and thereby utilise it as an effective instrument in combatting the crime wave which has reached alarming proportions in recent months. The PM said yesterday that the country was facing a terrible moral crisis and economic upliftment must go hand in hand with a spiritual awakening. Smugglers and exchange racketeers are reported to be having a field day by sending out to India a variety of articles imported to Sri Lanka following the liberalisation of imports—SU. A decision to recall retired university professors and lecturers and those who have gone abroad has been taken in view of the fact that more students are being admitted to the campuses of the university and also because of opening new campuses—DP. Encroachment in Wild Life Conservation Reserves by government departments and state agencies has engaged the attention of the President who has ordered that no reservations be taken over without the authority of the NSA—CO. Tourism has become the fourth biggest foreign exchange earner for the country; it earned Rs. 364 million last year which is more than the money earned by the export of gems and coconut products—DW. Investigations have revealed that 1 million Rs. have been spent to shift the Insurgent Rehabilitation Centre to two places—LD. A Buddhist Bikkhu from Sri Lanka who was carrying heroin has been arrested in Rome—ATH. The Inter-Parliamentary Union wound up a week-long spring session with a vote condemning Israel's invasion of South Lebanon and urging its immediate withdrawal. Pay disputes which have deprived Londoners of national newspapers during the past week were settled today. Somali guerillas in the Orgaden claimed to have blown up an Ethiopian supply dump as hostilities in the horn of Africa flared up—SU.

TUESDAY, APRIL 4: The Job Bank scheme whereby

nearly 160,000 persons are to be found employment on a crash programme basis is being delayed because some MP's have yet to return the 1000 application forms handed to them nearly a month ago; they have now been asked to send the forms before the Sinhala and Hindu New Year. The government's target was to build at least 100,000 housing units in urban as well as rural areas to accommodate the people who were at present faced with housing difficulties said the PM yesterday. The President of the All Ceylon Paper Merchant's Association disassociated his association from the joint meeting which was reported in the CDN yesterday, in a letter to the press. The Minister of Transport will soon present legislation in Parliament to regulate taxi fares and give the public a better taxi service comparable to those in other countries. The Bank of Ceylon and the People's Bank have distributed Rs. 550 million as agricultural loans to farmers during the first three months of this year. The former Chief Justice Mr. Victor Tennakoon will head the new Law Commission which will undertake urgent research into existing laws with a view to updating all legislation and bringing it in line with present day needs. The Sri Lanka Airforce has offered to expeditiously airlift urgently needed drugs and machinery for the government from abroad, particularly from neighbouring countries. Sri Lanka will join hands with other South East Asian and Pacific countries in a bid to put a stop to the illicit trafficking of drugs. A Dutch-perkoo museum is to be set up shortly—SU. The Ceylon Shipping Corporation is buying up Ceylon Shipping Lines Ltd Sri Lanka's oldest shipowner and charterer—CO. Students sitting the GCE 'A' level examination in arts subjects has dropped considerably because of the difficulty of getting employment. The number of CTB commuters has increased by 1.1 million this year—DM. The Minister of Education has decided to appoint one teacher for every 25 students. The Police have decided to exhibit the photographs of pick pockets on buses—DW. President Carter flew from Monrovia to Washington today after completing a weak long trip to Latin America and Africa. China today accused the Soviet Union of using Cuban troops as mercenaries for armed intervention in Africa. Pope Paul today made an emotional appeal for the release of Aldo Moro amid growing press speculation that the former PM's guerilla captors start to plan bargaining—SU.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

By Ariel

Middle East, Indo-China, China

There is a dangerous stalemate in the Middle East. Israel is dictating to the UN the terms on which it will withdraw from South Lebanon: that no Palestinian commando or guerilla should be allowed to come down south of the Litani River. This means that any Palestinian, the length of whose nose the Israelis do not like, must be kept out by the UN troops. Reports indicate that Israeli forces are checking on every Palestinian returning home in such a way that groups were being held up for days—in spite of protests by UN troops and the International Red Cross. The simple position is that Israeli troops are in occupation and are carrying out police surveillance duties—and the UN troops seem to discharge only ornamental functions. Whether UN Secretary General's recent visit to Lebanon and Israel will make any difference is not clear.

Israel's action in South Lebanon will encourage aggressors and others to defy the UN and world public opinion if they have the arms to terrorise their victims. Israel's strength to bully comes from the military, political and economic support from the USA. Now, there is nothing to prevent other countries which have Big Power support to act in the same way Israel has done. Can anyone complain if Ethiopia "occupies" parts of Somalia in the same way Israel has occupied South Lebanon on the ground that Somalia was projecting a guerilla movement in the Ogaden. Israel is a law unto itself in the Middle East and there is no doubt that it has *de facto* pushed its borders to the Litani

River. Israel has for a long time wooed the Christian community in Lebanon and had triggered the civil war in a bid to eliminate the Palestinians and also bring Lebanon and its Christians under Israeli sway. The pretext was that it was only ensuring its security and its borders. Now every country with a border problem or security problem can act in the way Israel has done—and invite UN troops to overlook and sanctify its occupation.

The American and Western attempt to solve the Arab-Israeli problem from Nixon-Kissinger days to the present have so far ended in failure. There are suggestions that there are Vance—Brezenski differences, but they do not seem to matter. In like manner the Anglo-American attempt to solve the problem of black majority rule in Southern Africa and Rhodesia have all but failed.

At the time of writing the US Secretary of State, Vance, and British Foreign Secretary, Owen, are in Southern Africa to resurrect the Anglo-American plan for black majority rule in Rhodesia. Earlier, the British had more or less acquiesced in the "internal settlement" Ian Smith had stage-managed in Rhodesia with a few "black leaders". The US had hailed it as a "significant step" forward. But, the front line states had blasted the agreement. In a joint communique after a week-end summit meeting at the end of March, the leaders of Africa's five front-line states told the governments of US and Britain to move ahead with the Anglo-American settlement for Rhodesia or to admit that they had abandoned the plan. According to Peter Buck (NSIPS): "The US and Britain have 'equivocated with a view to abandoning their previous commitment,' the communique said, noting 'with grave concern' the failure of the British and Americans to condemn the

'internal solution' proposed by Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith. The internal solution excludes the black Patriotic Front from participation in the government and continues minority rule, while the original Anglo-American Rhodesian settlement plan called for the immediate ouster of Smith and the establishment of a black majority interim government. As the Carter Administration continues to waver on a peace policy for southern Africa, the frontline states have escalated the guerilla war against the racist Smith regime. A unit of 500 to 1000 guerillas reportedly entered Rhodesia and is fighting with Rhodesian armed forces. The situation is at a critical point. Whether the guerilla war will explode into a major East-West confrontation depends on the actions of the Carter Administration. Either President Carter will follow the insane confrontationist policy advocated by National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brezvenski and his British allies, or he will pursue the peace policy of Secretary of State Vance and United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young. The Vance faction has urged negotiations among all parties in Rhodesia leading to elections, majority rule and the rapid ouster of Smith".

On March 28, the Cuban Foreign Minister, Isidoro Malmierca, arrived in Tanzania to meet the frontline leaders and about the same time Soviet First Deputy Defence Minister Sokolov arrived in Mozambique.

On March 29, the US State Department responded positively to the front-line leaders and issued its strongest condemnation to date of Smith's "unilateral" settlement offer, "...The so-called internal settlement has serious inadequacies" said State Department spokesman John Trattner: 'It is inadequate to bring a lasting and peaceful settlement.' He pointed out that

Cambodia

since the Rhodesian government was 'illegal' so is Smith's internal deal. Although Trattner's statement is a change from the department's previous position calling the internal deal a 'significant step' toward peace, a department spokesman told reporters yesterday that the United States was not returning to the original Anglo-American proposals. UN Ambassador Andrew Young, who attended the front line meeting, told reporters, "This clearly puts the ball in the Anglo-American court. The pieces will either fall into place before too long or the whole thing will fall apart for some time."

The ball is now in the Anglo-American court whilst the front line states are planning a long-term war of attrition against the White racists in South Africa and Rhodesia—and they are likely to canvass for support from Cuba and the Soviet Union.

IN ASIA, the "war" Cambodia is waging against Vietnam has reached a point where Hanoi's patience has begun to wear thin. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* (FEER) in recent issues has published some excellent reports about the situation in the area.

In its issue of April 21, there are lengthy reports by Nyan Chanda who is an old Vietnam hand. He is one of the few correspondents who has "travelled the length of the troubled Vietnam-Cambodian border." He has filed a special report from the battleground of KA MAT in Tay Ninh province. He has also reported conversations with senior Vietnamese leaders and written interpretative pieces about the "escalating war of nerves" between Peking and Hanoi.

The *Ceylon Daily Mirror*, 18.4.78, published an article by Nyan Chanda in which it was stated: "Despite increasing tension with China, however, nobody in Hanoi foresees an open rift. Premier Phan Van

Dong's statement in Delhi about friendship with China and the message sent last week to Chairman Hua Kua-feng clearly indicate that privately-expressed bitterness notwithstanding, Vietnam is not about to step over what one ambassador calls the 'safety margin' in dealing with the northern neighbour. Some observers even suggest that Hanoi's thinly-disguised critique of China is a part of a border diplomatic game to pressure China into loosening its support for Cambodia and persuade the latter to come to the negotiating table." The article concluded: "All the indications are towards an escalating propaganda war in which both sides will be

testing the other's will, while the cannon and mortars will continue to be heard in the never ending war of Indo-China."

This is from an article in the FEER of March 1. The articles in the FEER of April 21 have brought the situation up to date.

All that Nyan Chanda and other commentators on the Indo-China scene have written focus attention on the foreign policy strategies of the Hua-Teng regime now supreme in China. A great deal has happened in China in the last few months culminating in the recent Eleventh Congress of the Party and Fifth National Peoples Congress.

HE NEVER COMPLAINED

BY RALPH PEACOCK

Bing Crosby is dead and the papers
decree
He was fifty-two years at the the
top of the tree
Fifty-two years of fame and
command
And his country's media in the
palm of his hand
And he never complained.

He never complained to you or
to me
About death or famine or poverty
He never complained to 'Uncle Sam'
About Bangladesh or about
Vietnam
He appeared unmoved by the
Kennedy's fate
(And Attica and Watergate)
He just never complained.

Jane Fonda can protest and Dylan
can sing
But none of the problems ever
touch Bing
Through the struggles and
torments of
Redskins and Blacks
He sang about Christmas and
kept on

paying tax
If this is a good man, I don't want
to know
I'd rather have those who stood
up and said NO
Those who complained.

He lived with his family in
comfort and ease
While Cally's men slaughtered
the Vietnamese
And never helped in verse or
in song
The people who tried to atone
for this wrong
He never admonished Bob Hope
or John Wayne
For supporting causes where no
one would gain
No, he never complained.
And now that he's destined
for heaven forever
Who'll move over? Che? Ho?
Martin Luther?—Never!
They always complained.

It is not easy to write about developments in China from official bulletins and the comments of China-watchers, but commentators in countries like Sri Lanka, who have little or no opportunities to visit China or Indo-China, have to rely on such foreign reports. The dust has settled on the Fifth National Peoples Congress and the 11th Party Congress for students to venture on a review of recent developments in China. There are so many aspects of development in post-Mao China that any examination cannot be done in less than half-a-dozen articles.

One of the aspects that will interest readers in Sri Lanka is the new outward diplomatic policies pursued by Peking. During the Cultural Revolution and the rule of the Gang of Four China had become a closed book and diplomatically it had turned inwards. Today, without any change in its basic Maoist policies in foreign affairs, the Hua-Teng regime have adopted outward foreign affairs strategies on global dimensions. China has been particularly active in Asia: in ASEAN countries, especially the Philippines and in India. Special attention has been paid to neighbouring countries, particularly to Nepal and Burma. These two countries have just hosted Teng Hsia-ping who was clearly seeking "special relationship" with them as a counterbalance to India and the growing influence of Vietnam and Laos in Indochina. Peking's tacit support to Kampuchea in its attacks on Vietnam is regarded as a tactic to deny Hanoi freedom of political manoeuvre and generally erode its standing in that part of the world.

Peking has gone out of its way to praise ASEAN and supports attempts to make it a strong political and military organisation. But ASEAN countries seem to be uncertain of Peking's continued contact with the insurgent and gue-

rilla forces in several South East Asian countries. During the recent visit of Chinese Vice Premier Li Hsien-Nien to the Philippines, *Newsweek*, 27/3/78, reported that the private talks between him and Marcos were devoted to the problem of the Maoist New Peoples Army (NPA) which has been conducting a sporadic hit-and-run campaign against the Marcos regime. In the past, when the Gang of Four held sway in Peking, the NPA had received material aid from the Chinese. "This support seems to have diminished somewhat recently, but Philippine officials insist that it continues..." Discussions also took place, it is reported, about the Spratly Islands' problems.

But more than these problems, one matter that seems to worry ASEAN countries centres round the position of 22 million ethnic Chinese scattered in different countries in Asia. The *Time* magazine of December 22, 1978 had a special cover page report entitled THE CHINESE ABROAD.

(To be Continued)

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MATTER OF CONSCIENCE

Vietnam And Reparations

by D. D.

According to the *Hindu* which has been quoted in the *Tribune*, Sri Lanka, of 11.03.78, Prime Minister Phan Van Dong of Vietnam is reported to have stated that "President Nixon had promised at one time over three billions as compensation, but the subsequent administrations had gone back on this assurance". It is clear from the Vietnamese Prime Minister's statement that it is not the quantum of the reparations or reparations itself that is in issue

because he says "The Vietnamese Government viewed its demand for reparation more as a matter of principle than one of mere compensation because it wanted to set a precedent for the future." According to the Deputy Foreign Minister of Vietnam (*Asia Week* of 30.12.77) economic assistance by the US is a matter of "morality and honour"

The fact that subsequent US administrations reneged on earlier commitments obviously do not bother the Government of Vietnam. This will not surprise any right thinking person. Can the scourge of a 30 year war that ravaged and ravished a beautiful country be quantified in terms of reparations? The struggle for freedom which started in 1945 at the conclusion of World War II, first against the Japanese, followed by the war against the French who had returned to continue their dominion ended with the surrender of the French at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 to the forces of General Giap, who has been hailed as the greatest military strategist since Alexander the Great. The vacuum which was filled by the US military and other advisers became the scenario for one of the epics of history that will continue to inspire for all time all those who value and cherish liberty and freedom.

On that morning of April 30, 1975, a 21 year old Vietnamese girl by the name of NHIP was abroad the first tank which smashed down the metal gates of Doc Lap Palace. While a soldier tore down the yellow and red striped flag of the defunct Republic of Vietnam, it was this girl NHIP who raised the communist flag symbolising the fall of Saigon and the end of the War. Nhıp was born early in 1954 in the Mekong Delta shortly after her father had been shot dead by a French Officer—but that is ano-

ther story (Asia Week of 27.05.77) Fighting for their freedom, the people of Vietnam were prepared to "pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, and oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty"—the words of a great American President John F. Kennedy. Man's thirst for freedom is unquenchable. The Bastille fell because the Frenchman wanted liberty, equality and fraternity. Rousseau in his Social Contract says "Man is born free, and now everywhere he is in chains" Stalingrad could not be conquered by the Panzer Divisions hurled against the city, because the people in it preferred death to loss of liberty and freedom. Over 200 years ago, a small band of valiant men began a struggle for freedom in America. They pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honour, not only to found a nation of free men, but to forge an ideal of freedom—political independence, personal liberty, elimination of foreign rule and the right to run their own affairs. And they won. It is certainly a strange paradox of history that this nation of free men should 200 years later find herself in the dock, accused of preventing or attempting to prevent another nation "to run their now affairs". Nations that endured the yoke of colonial domination had looked up to the US as the beacon light of freedom to people everywhere. People in whose veins the blood of freedom ran looked up to her. Fox once declared:

"Happy Americans. While the whirlwind spreads desolation over one quarter of the globe, you remain protected from its baneful effects, by your own virtues and the wisdom of your Government. You feel not the effects of these prejudices and passions, which convert the bashed seats of civilisation into scenes of horror and bloodshed. You profit by the folly and

madness of contending nations". Under the influence of FREEDOM you advance to opulence and distinction. Should you be compelled to avenge insult, the world will bear witness to the equity of your sentiments and the moderation of your views and the success of your arms, will no doubt, be proportionate to the justice of your cause"

Why the happy Americans entered the cauldron of Vietnam, only the Americans can answer. There was no injury to avenge and therefore how can the world bear witness to the justice of the cause? A crisis of conscience has overtaken this great country. They now face the great moral issue—Reparations.

The people of Vietnam, on the other hand have every reason for resentment. They fought for the freedom of their motherland, for the unification of a dismembered nation. Neither napalm bombs, not defoliation military strategy nor the Mai Lai massacre could humble this brave people. The people of Vietnam proved what Lord Palmerston had once said "Opinions are stronger than armies. If they are founded on truth and justice, they will, in the end, prevail against the bayonets of infantry, the fire of artillery and the charges of the cavalry" 400 years ago a similar battle for freedom was waged in Holland. The battle cry of the men and women of Leyden was:

"And when all has perished *but ourselves, be sure that we will each devour our left arms, retaining our right to defend our women, our liberty and our children and our religion against the foreign tyrant. Should God, in His wrath, doom us to destruction and deny us all relief, even then we will maintain ourselves for ever against your entrance. When the last hour has come, with our hand we shall set fire to the City, and perish, men women and child-

ren together, in the flames, rather than suffer our homes to be polluted, and our LIBERTIES to be crushed"

Leyden survived and in memory of the heroism of her inhabitants, the University of Leyden was established in 1575. In similar fashion Vietnam has survived and as a monument to the heroism of her great people, the City of Saigon has now become the Ho Chi Minh City—a shrine to which there will be eternal pilgrims. That is the story of Vietnam.

What of reparations? Centuries ago, colonial powers embarked upon a journey of piracy and conquest to sustain and raise their life styles. And in doing so, unwittingly they also assumed a tremendous moral responsibility towards the countries which came under their tutelage. This responsibility is best described in a remarkable peroration by Adlai Stevenson, another great American who could not become President, when he addressed an African Seminar at Lake Forest, Illinois, on 13.04.62. Although Stevenson had spoken of Africa, the sentiments expressed are no less applicable to situation like the one faced in Vietnam:

"The responsibility of the Atlantic Powers (vis a vis Africa) goes much further than a general moral obligation. The white races have involved themselves by historical decision to go into Africa. By decisions on history, Europeans, like the Arabs, have taken Africans out of Africa. The races have been mixed, not by act of God, but by an act of man, and the men who made the decisions made them all too often in brutal and inhuman greed.

"I personally cannot read Lincoln's second inaugural without wondering whether the justice and retribution of what great address do not apply far beyond the Civil

War to all the relations between black and white, to all the debts that must be paid and all the injustices that must be remedied, and all the hate there is to anneal and cancel.

"Today we have the resources for a tremendous act of historical justice"

The US has been blessed with great sons at various times in her history. The names of Jefferson, Lincoln, Wilson, Stevenson and Kennedy are just a few that come to anyone's mind almost by instinct. Wendell Wilkie and Humphrey, like Stevenson could not reach the White House, but like the rest they all graced the firmament in which they moved shining like beacons in a dark benighted world of hate and war. They were men "whom in death people still mourn and whom in life they loved". The wheels of fate will compel the US to dispense historical justice. The springs of civilisation in a land that produced these men will never run dry, and there has always been ample testimony that it is the heart of America that first responds whenever and wherever there has been a calamity. The US still remains the supporter of nations fighting for freedom and independence. Edwin Markham, the American poet has written "There is a destiny which makes us brothers. None goes his way alone."

The tragedy of Vietnam is an unbearable scandal for the human conscience. What is so tragic and terrible about it is the thought that US involvement was not an accident. The inexorable lesson of centuries is that suffering must be borne and no one can say that the men, women and children of Vietnam have not borne their suffering—and borne it without flinching. The sacrifices of life offered, the hearths and homes made desolate by this war and the sadness imposed upon these now unlit

homes, demand that the "injustices must be remedied and all the hate there is annealed and canceled." The USA now has the opportunity to discharge a "tremendous act of historical justice." Will the reparations be paid? Will it be in dollars or in true understanding and friendship without any political overtones or undertones? These are questions that the US administration must answer. No one else can answer for her.

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Notice Under Section 7 of The Land Acquisition Act, (car 460) As Amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act, No. 28 of 1964.

Reference No. ATH 1/202

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka No. 314 (part 111) of 21/04/1978,

SCHEDULE

D.R.O's Division; Colombo
Situation; Ward No 42 Havelock Town within the Colombo M. C.

Village; Bambalapitiya.

Name of land; New Katheresan Temple, part of Assmt. No. 339, Galle Road.

Lot No; 1.

Plan No. P.P.Co; 4884

H. C. Gunawardane

District Land Officer of Colombo District.

The Kachcheri,
Colombo.
3/4/1978

WHY?

Some People Do Not Blame Israel For The Sadat Deadlock

We received the article we publish on this page from a reader abroad who wrote to us on March 30: "...In your issue of 25th March you published two articles on the Middle East and Israel—one under International Affairs by Ariel and the other a confession by I. F. Stone. The one by Stone starts with 'a Tribune reader sent us this clipping from the New York Times...etc.' Considering the fact that I am also a regular reader of Tribune may I request you to publish in your weekly Tribune the enclosed article from the Times of London"

With pleasure, we publish a different point of view. The article entitled WHY SOME PEOPLE DO NOT BLAME ISRAEL FOR THE SADAT DEADLOCK by William Frankel appeared in the Times on Monday, January 30, 1978 —Ed.

The day President Sadat recalled his Foreign Minister from Jerusalem a BBC commentator delivered his verdict that the fault for the debacle lay with the Israelis. The Egyptian President's concessions had been met with Israeli inflexibility. His concession, it was explained was to have moved from the extreme Arab position that Israel had no right to exist. In depressing contrast, Mr. Begin had offered no advance on the positions taken by Israel before Mr.

Sadat's dramatic initiative last November.

This appraisal of the situation, in one form or another, seems to be widely held in this country and has been particularly evident in press comment.

Because I had just returned from a stay of four months in the United States, I was startled by the contrast this presented with opinion on that side of the Atlantic. Mr. Begin is there generally considered to have been surprisingly flexible and compromising and to have made concessions which could not have been anticipated.

During the many decades of the Arab-Israeli conflict, attitudes have become fixed. Both the pro-Israelis and the pro-Arabs back their sides and, from the all too abundant facts, select those which favour their cause. Slogans and conventional wisdom so very quickly take over that it becomes important, while the facts are still fresh, to reduce from them—rather than from the interpretations placed on them—which side has in fact moved from opening position and which has been unyielding.

In his address in Jerusalem at the special session of Israel's Parliament which was the climax of Mr. Sadat's historic visit, he formulated his two main demands in these words (the translation is from the text issued by the Egyptian Presidential office): "There are Arab territories which Israel has occupied by armed force. We insist on complete withdrawal from these territories, including Arab Jerusalem." He secondly called for "achievement of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to establish their own state."

This formulation of the two most sensitive and vital issues in the dispute had long been the extreme Arab position. President Sadat in fact took the same hard,

line, and in almost the same words in his speech on November-8 when he made his spectacular offer to go to Jerusalem.

On the following day Mr. Begin issued a statement which declared that "Israel categorically and absolutely rejects the conditions named by President Sadat; i.e. total withdrawal to the June 1967 lines and the establishment of a so-called Palestinian state."

If language means anything at all, Mr. Sadat must have known before his momentous journey that if he rigidly adhered to the hard line there was no prospect of an agreement. There would have to be some movement, both from his maximalist demands and from Israel's absolute rejection of them if any possibility were to exist, in his own words, to the Knesset, to "build a durable peace" based on justice."

After Jerusalem, the two leaders met in Ismailia on December 25 and 26. Two ministerial committees, one political and the other military, began their meetings in Jerusalem and Cairo respectively. Both are in limbo since January 18 when Mr. Sadat took even his own Foreign Minister by surprise by recalling the political delegation from Jerusalem.

In his speech to the People's Council on January 21 explaining the recall, and in subsequent statements, president Sadat made it clear that his conditions for a return to the talks were total withdrawal from territories occupied in the 1967 war and self-determination for the Palestinians which would permit, as Foreign Minister Kamal put it at the time, "a house for the Palestinians" equal to the "house for Israel". On these two fundamental issues, comparing the language of the opening demands with the latest expressions of the Egyptian position, it is difficult to detect any movement or com-

promise on their part.

On behalf of Israel, Mr. Begin presented a peace plan to President Sadat at Ismailia on Christmas Day. It has been published and is more detailed and comprehensive than any plan hitherto offered by the Israelis. In its two major areas, it goes further than any previous Israeli government's proposals.

The first is the willingness of Israel to restore Egyptian sovereignty over the whole of Sinai within its international boundaries. All previous Israeli proposals on the return of conquered territory in Sinai had included the retention of some land for security needs. In the Ismailia plan, Israel made proposals as to the timetable for withdrawal and the protection of what they see as their security interests including the controversial settlements. But all were proposed on the footing that they were not final positions but a basis for discussion in the negotiations which were to follow.

Secondly, and again going farther than any previous proposals by Israel, a 26-point detailed plan was presented for the abolition of Israeli military government of the West Bank and Gaza and for its replacement by home rule. For the five year transition period which these proposals covered, self rule was to exclude foreign affairs and defence which would continue to be controlled by Israel. After five years the whole scheme would be open for review.

Before putting these proposals to Mr. Sadat, the Israeli Prime Minister had shown them to President Carter and his Secretary of State. Mr. Cyrus Vance, as well as to Mr. Callaghan, Mr. Carter's public comment was that Mr. Begin had taken "a long step forward" in offering self-rule to the Palestinians on the West Bank and had shown "a great deal of flexibility". In an official communique, Mr.

Vance described the plan as a "notable contribution" and commended its "constructive approach".

It is frequently pointed out that Mr. Sadat's public statements have to be seen within the context of his delicate relations with the Palestinians and the "rejection front". Mr. Begin too has his internal problems; in some respects easier, in others more difficult than his Egyptian counterpart since Israel is a parliamentary democracy. He faces strong criticism from the Labour opposition which is saying that he has offered too much too soon. Nor is his own party, which contains the traditional hardliners, unitedly behind him.

On the basis of a comparison between the present stance of both sides and their positions two months ago, it cannot be said that Mr. Begin has not responded to President Sadat's bold initiative, nor that there has been movement from both sides. Mr. Begin may have to move farther and offer more concessions before agreement is reached, but he has moved.

President Sadat, on the other hand, appears to be taking the position that he has made his contribution with his courageous visit to Jerusalem and that he should not be expected to give more. While Mr. Begin has made his peace proposals and claims that the next move should come from Egypt, President Sadat replies that Mr. Begin should produce something more. On the two principal issues of withdrawal and a Palestinian state, Mr. Sadat has publicly not moved one iota.

Mr. Sadat deserves the admiration that has come to him throughout the world for his brave and dramatic gesture which offered, for the first time, hope of a real peace in the area. He was taken to the hearts of the Israeli people and, as millions of television viewers saw, received a hero's welcome in Jerusalem.

"But this magnificent gesture will only achieve its objective if it leads to reasonable and conciliatory negotiations with compromises made by both sides. The Egyptian President can dash the hopes of the peace-loving world if he acts as though his initiative entitles him to unquestioning acceptance of his demands. The Israelis have demonstrated both readiness to negotiate and unwillingness to bow to demands or ultimatums.

That is why the prevailing opinion in the United States, so different from the consensus here, is that thus far Israel has done all the giving while Egypt's only response has been to ask for more.

PRIORITIES

Accelerated Mahaweli Programme

by C. A. A. Goonaratne

THE MAHAWELI GANGA Development Programme has been formulated for a period of 30 years previously. The present UNP Government has accelerated this programme of implementation to a period of six years. Several views have been expressed on this accelerated programme by politicians as well as others who were associated with this project, including the former Minister of Irrigation, Power and Highways, during the Committee stage of the Budget in the National State Assembly. Many of them have expressed publicly and privately that in view of its massive size and complexity in nature, the implementation of the UNDP/FAO Mahaweli Master Plan in six years is not practicable. Mr. R. Kahawita one of the best known authorities on the planning and development of water resources in Sri Lanka,

is one of them. In addition to his experience in multipurpose reservoir projects as an engineer, Mr. Kahawita is a good Agronomist as well as a practising farmer who has first hand knowledge in land development and colonisation works. Therefore, it is important that the people in authority should not disregard such opinions which have been expressed with great good will and interest at heart for the economic development of this country, although his views on the period of implementation are not in agreement with that of the Government.

Sri Lanka spends about Rs. 4,000 million worth of foreign exchange to import her food requirements annually on the present parity rates. This is about 55% percent of our export earnings from tea, rubber, coconut, gems and other non-traditional exports. Due to this reverse flow of foreign exchange, this country is left with no hard currency required for the procurement of raw materials and machinery for industrialisation. This has been the routine story during the last two decades or more. The unemployment question at present is one of the most acute problems facing the country. This figure is around 1.3 million. The cost of living is spiralling upwards daily. No government can find a satisfactory solution for the high cost of living without solving the two intricate problems mentioned earlier.

The United National Party during its election campaign gave an undertaking to the people of this country that it would solve the three major problems of —(i) food shortage, (ii) unemployment, (iii) high cost of living, if it comes to power at the elections. The people have given them a mandate in unprecedented terms in the history of Sri Lanka. Therefore, now it is the time for the

Government to act fast without losing any time. Solutions to all the pressing problems in Sri Lanka are embodied in the Mahaweli Master Plan. The implementation of the Mahaweli Master Plan in 30 years will not have any appreciable impact on any of the above-mentioned serious problems. Therefore, the question of implementing the accelerated Mahaweli programme should be considered under this background.

It is a must—there is on question of saying 'can't'. If that is said, it simply follows that none of the urgent problems can be solved. Of course, it is not possible if we simply carry on the routine policy and practice that has been followed hitherto. There is no choice in the earliest possible time. The longest period available is six years—the life span of the present government, of which seven months have already lapsed now. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that if this project is to be completed as proposed in the accelerated programme, new life should be infused into the organisation responsible for this colossal task. THIS ORGANISATION should be a dynamic one in all its aspects of engineering design, preliminaries associated with design works, procurement of machinery and equipment, stores organisation, organisation of man power resources and so on, so that the work could be carried on as scheduled. Discussions and conferences with zero outcome have been an experience in the past. Finding reasons and excuses for not carrying out the work as expected by the policy planners has been the outlook in certain quarters in public service. This concept has to be changed altogether to its positive aspect and whereby ways and means of implementing a project effectively could be formulated.

To carry out any plan effectively, realistic targets should be

fixed, based on the resources needed to achieve the desired results of the policy planners within the specified period. It may so happen that some of the resources needed may not be available at our disposal. What are we going to do in such circumstances? These things have to be defined clearly in the initial stages itself, without allowing them to be vague and abstract terms. If these targets are fixed arbitrarily with many unknowns, the plan will end up with 'no plan' and utter confusion. These things have happened in our country, not once but many a time during the recent past and as such, adequate precautions should be taken at the inception itself to prevent further repetitions.

The Five Year Plan of the last Government is one of them. It was a complete failure. On the whole, not even 20 percent of the desired targets were realised. Such was the performance due to unrealistic planning of the Five-Year Plan, which was under personal control of the Prime Minister. Ultimately, much publicized though it was, the Five-Year Plan was gradually forgotten and abandoned. What happened next? The promises given to the people were not fulfilled due to non-realisation of targets envisaged in the Five-Year Plan and the government party failed miserably at the elections.

The success or failure of the present Government will depend on the implementation of this gigantic Mahaweli Project. Surely this Government will retain its power at the next general election if it succeeds in implementing this programme. The Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation or the National Newspapers by their propaganda cannot just fool people. The pulse of the people is the actual yardstick of measurement of benefits. If this project is successfully implemented within the life span of

the present Government, I am sure the person who is responsible for such implementation will be highly rewarded by the grateful citizens of this country simlas thengs have happened in other countries in the recent past. In Israel, Yatze Rabin lead the six-day war successfully and the people made him the Prime Minister of his country at the election which followed the war.

ACCORDING to the reports prepared by the ID (Irrigation Department), the MDB (Mahaweli Development Board) RVDB (River Valleys Development Board) and the CECB (Central Engineering Consultancy Bureau), it is estimated that in order to implement the

My No. LA/ 4064

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 in the schedule below For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka Part III No. of

SCHEDULE

Name of Land: Kolongahamula, Hena, Weti yawewa Kumbura, Gonamalawela, Uguressawela, Mahakuratihena Kumbura, alias Dangaha Kumbura, maha kuratihena alias Siyambalayaya, Siyambalayaya.

Name of Village: Kelegama Uguressawa and Kuratihena

Plan No. & Lot No. F. V. P. 3055 Additional 1 Lot No. 221 to 251. F. V. P. 3052 Additional 1 Lot No. 109 to 115, V. P. 3055 Extraet 1 Lot Nos, 46 to 66

D. R. O's Division: Anamadawa in Puttalam District and Nikaweratiya in Kurunegala District,

Siripala Jryrweera
Additional Government Agent
for Government Agent

The Kachcheri,
Puttalam, 04, 04.1978.

Mahaweli Master Plan, the approximate quantum of work needed to be executed is as follows: (1) 600,000 acres of jungle clearing; (2) 56,000,000 cu.yds. of earth work in the construction of 15 reservoir dams and in the construction of the RB., LB transbasin canal and the NCP Canal; (3) 95,000,000 cu.yds. of earth work in the construction of main, branch, distributory and field canal systems to provide irrigation facilities to 950,000 acres; (4) 19,000,000 cu.yds. of rock excavation, fill etc. in the construction of dams and power houses. (5) 75,000 linear feet of tunnelling of varying diameters; (6) 4,000,000 cu.yds. of concreting in the construction of dams, spills and power houses; (7) Construction of 1,220 main canal major structures; (8) Construction of 5,660 branch canal structures; (9) Construction of 210,000 structures in the distributory and field canal systems; (10) Construction of 12,000 building for office, stores, quarters, etc.

The above work load has to be carried out approximately during a period of five years and five months. It is understood that some of the preliminary investigations and designs have been done. The rest of the investigations and designs and the whole heap of massive construction work, to the ultimate point of the farmer receiving water to his plot of land, has to be done during this period. This in no doubt is the biggest challenge that any government in Sri Lanka has undertaken for realisation, in its known history.

To meet the above challenge we must have resources. We have some. The balance such as specialised knowledge, materials, plant, machinery and equipment, are to be imported. These can be done provided the financial resources are available in time. To accomplish all these activities, the necessary organisational set-up is the

most vital factor. The organisational set-up consisting of investigational teams, design groups, operational planning units, administrative machinery, store-management, finance and accounting sections, have to be established with due consideration to the most critical time factor. The operational planning division consisting of engineers, planners, economists, administrators and finance managers is the nucleus of this organisation. It will be the duty of this division to set out realistic targets for all the activities in accordance with the resources needed to execute them within the specified time.

If these preliminaries as outlined are done up effectively, with the true National spirit that demands for a work of this magnitude, the Mahaweli can be done within the limited period. It is the spirit that matters most in works of this nature. A lethargic mind can do nothing.

C. A. A. Goonaratne.

"Tambiliwatte"

Baseline Road

Thimbirigaskatuwa

3. 3. 78

LANGUAGE

In Transacting Government business

by R. Kahawita

Some time back I had occasion to write about the assinine extremes to which the official languages—Sinhala only—was interpreted by the Bureaucracy under the previous regime. One was a labour office in Badulla and the other at the Registrar General's office. These encounters were inevitable in a

regime who took control of the Government on the language issue.

Is there the need to carry on in the same old way in a Dharmista Society which was ushered in on the 4th of February? To me, a Sinhala, and to my shame, without any knowledge of the written language, a change in the language policy is imperative if we are to build the Dharmista Society. I feel it is more so, because I have not been able to square up my Pension due to the language muddle since last year. I had several encounters with the officials of the Pensions Department and finally I was informed that the officer dealing with my Pension was a Tamil speaking officer who stopped coming to work after the August 1977 incidents and that I would have to wait till he returns to work. In the meantime how am I to live? This is not so much of a serious matter to the Nation. What is serious to the Country is the dislocation of Government business due to the language issue.

It is true, Non-Sinhala speaking officers have been given time to learn the "official Language" and if they failed to achieve proficiency within the specified period, a variety of Penalties is imposed which effects the officer's emoluments and progress in the Department he is working. In my time under the Colonial administration I had to learn colloquial Tamil to get over what then was called "The efficiency Bar". This was bad enough—but it did not hinder my progress nor my efficiency. What the Government officers experience today may be a different version and for a different reason of the same colonial Policy.

Those days, getting things moving and done to create the sense in the Public Servant's mind "I am your obedient servant" attitude was more important than having a set of frustrated public officers to obstruct

Government business. Today with the people as supreme and the Public servant's allegiance being to the constitution where the supremacy of the people is enshrined, "the obedient servant attitude" though very necessary, the desire to serve the people is more important. The service to the people is, in transacting Government business expeditiously and efficiently. This is a necessary prerequisite to the progress of our country.

With massive development programmes of the boards of the Government, co-operation of all Government employees must be available to a Government. Whether a Government employee can work in Sinhala or in Tamil is not the primary requirement. The primary criterion today is whether an officer can throw his full weight to accomplish what the Administration has undertaken to do. Other administrative requirements must be of lesser importance. Because, if a Government fails to deliver the goods it is the people who will decide not the bureaucrats.

I accept that all Government servants, without exception must be able to work in Sinhala and Tamil. And that future employees must fulfil this requirements if they seek employment under the Government. In turn the Government must provide facilities in all the schools to learn the two languages. This has been already announced by the Government as a matter of Policy. When this Policy is implemented the future entrants to the Public Service will not have problems as now confronting those who are caught in the Transitory Period.

This class of officer, that is, who are in service today, should be provided with facilities to learn the languages whilst in employment. These facilities should be provided in every Government office—may be five days in a week for five hours a week. The Government Depart-

ments should be able to organize classes to teach the languages through its own officers who may be paid a stipend for conducting the classes—I did it at Rs. 5/- an hour—half hour of office time and half hour after office—One hour a day—three times a week. It was successful. It is for the Head of the Department to find the Money. In those days the official languages Department provided the funds as far as I recollect. Anyway this is something we should do today to win the confidence of the Public Servants and to register the determination of the administration to push ahead with the new languages Policy. With the bilingual education in full force there may not be this problem after another ten to fifteen years. But the nation can't wait till then. The current problem must be solved.

Once a scheme of this nature is put into operation, there should not be any excuses. And those who fail to obtain proficiency in one language or other, should face the restrictions placed on salary increments, and promotions.

In the meantime, the case of those officers who are undergoing hardships should be reviewed and relief given at least on compassionate grounds. An administration cannot afford to be stupid today when we want every one to put the shoulder to the wheel. This is what the President asked from the people in his historic address to the Nation on the 5th of February 1978.

Special consideration: because it is almost next to impossible for an adult to apply his mind to a level of studies which he should have done as a toddler—third standard level to J.S.C. level. In his spare time, if he has any spare time after commuting, and foraging for food, will be taken up with domestic chores etc. And the most difficult problem will be finding a suitable teacher, and a place to

spend a few minutes in quietness to "learn a language". These are common problems to an adult trying to maintain a family on a tight income at the same time fulfil his language obligations. Assisting this class of employees is more humanitarian than anything else. Because learning a language is an administrative obligation which could be altered to suit the circumstances. The best way to achieve this administrative requirement is by each Department conducting classes for the benefit of its employees as suggested above.



**The Land Acquisition Act
(Chapter 460) As Amended by
The Land Acquisition (Amed-
ment) Act No. 28 of 1964
Notice Under Section 7 (1)**

Reference No: 25/5/සමු/473

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. 314 of 21/04/1978 (part 111)

K. P. R. Gunatillake
Asst. Government Agent,
Kegalle District.

The Kachcheri,
Kegalle.
23/03/1978

SCHEDULE

Name of land: Malini Kumbura alias Yatikiwele kumbura.

Situation: Situated in Elugallo Village, Galboda Pattu, Galboda Korale D.R.O.'s Division in Kegalle District.

Plan & Lot No: Lots 101, 102 and 103 in Supplement No. 2 to F.V.P. 166

Confidentially

Fables Of Festus

IS IT ANY SURPRISE that we should continue to harp on the fishy business of fish supplies once again this week? royalty rates paid by foreign fishing? That the propaganda barrage of Minister Festus Perera about plentiful supplies of fish at cheap prices caught us—as it did many millions in this country—in the solar plexus and we have had no option but to revert to the question of fish again? That in the last week of March, Minister Festus Perera dropped his big talk about foreign fishing vessels coming to our rescue and switched to glorify local supplies? That the last bit of information about the foreign connection was to mention that the Corporation had 200, or 250, or 400 tons (different papers had different figures) of buffer stocks of fish caught by foreign trawlers and that this would be released to the local consumers for New Year? That, suddenly, on April 3, there was a front page three column spread in the *Daily News* that buffer stocks amounting to 34,000 tons would be released for the benefit of the consumers? That everybody was duly surprised as to how the buffer stocks had suddenly shot up to the astronomical figure of 34,000 tons? That in this three-column spread Minister Festus Perera laid it on thick about his "three-pronged drive" to reduce prices by flooding the market with plentiful supplies? That Minister Festus Perera spoke heroically about his Herculean task in cleansing the Augean stables of stench and corruption in his Ministry and how the Corporation would soon be a viable unit owing to earnings from foreign royalties on scandalously low rates

and from the export earnings on prawns and lobsters? That he claimed.

That his Ministry and Corporation were on the verge of a major breakthrough to plentiful fish and low prices? That the *Daily News* thereafter dutifully wrote an editorial on April 5 backing the Ministerial claims to the hilt? That on the same day the *Observer* buoyed up the spirits of its readers by assuring them that 24 Corporation stalls in Colombo would be daily supplied with 60,000 lbs of fish that is about 2000 lbs per stall on an average? That the *Observer* also confided that the Corporation had a buffer stock of 250 tons of popular varieties of fish and that heharassed consumer had nothing to fear? That on April 11, the *Daily Mirror* joined the Ministerial propaganda bandwagon to spread a dramatic banner headline; **FESTUS PLANS TO K.O. BLACK MARKETEERS: BUFFER STOCKS TO BE RELEASED FOR SALE AT FIXED PRICES?** That the *Daily Mirror* was good enough to publish the official prices for the record and for posterity: Salaya Rs. 2, Hurulla Rs. 2/50, Wawuvalaya Rs. 2/75 (full), Rs. 3/20 (cut pieces), Thalapath Rs. 4/50 full, Rs. 4/60 cut, Seer Rs. 5/50 full, Rs. 6/50 cut, Angila Rs. 4/00 full, Rs. 5/00 cut, Paraw Rs. 4/25 full, Rs. 5/75 cut, Parati Rs. 3.00; Geelawa Rs. 4.00 full, Rs. 5/00 cut, Mullet Rs. 2/90 full, Rs. 3/90 cut, small Mullet Rs. 2/00 full, and Rs. 3.00 cut, Atissa Rs. 3/10, full Rs. 4/10 cut, small Rs. 2/10, Kelawalla Rs. 4/00 full and Rs. 5/00 cut, Balaya Rs. 3/50 full, Rs. 4/65 cut, Mora Rs. 3/40 full, Rs. 3/50 cut, Prawns medium Rs. 5/75, Small Rs. 3/00 Lobsters Rs. 30/00, Katuwalla Rs. 3/00, Pannawa Rs. 2/00, That thereafter on April 17, the SLBC in its 6.15 pm broadcast informed the public that 30,000 lbs of fish had been released every day and that there was no shortage of fish at the official prices? That

in the interim period between April 11 and 17 the Minister had flown another sensational kite that the buffer stocks would be released in packets at fixed prices? That the day after this Arabian Night Tale, the Minister had thrown a red herring across trail by warning the public not to buy packeted fish put out by some "private agents of the Corporation" because they were being sold at exorbitant prices and also because the preservative used for the packeting was toxic? That this was the end of the packeted fish gimmick? That *Tribune* is yet to meet anyone who bought one of the Corporation packets at the fixed prices? That one does not need to be a sleuth or a detective to know that a huge hoax or fraud is being perpetrated on the consuming public by these tales about plentiful fish at fixed prices? That if there were buffer stocks of 200, or 250, or 400, 34,000 tons of fish, and if they were released either at the rate of 60,000 or 30,000 lbs a pound nobody seems to know where all this fish has gone? That the nearest anyone got to such fish at fixed prices was to be told at different stalls that such fish had been sold out? That *Tribune* readers from Mullaitivu, Batticaloa, Hambantota, Dondra, Beruwala, Panadura, Negombo and Puttalam have reported that catches by local fishermen have been abnormally low and that prices were therefore stunningly high? That many families in Colombo and outside complain that this was the first New Year their lives they went without fish? That the credibility of the Government has been corroded in a big way by the Fables of Festus? That people will soon demand a special Presidential Commission to find out what has happened to all the fish that were in our seas—not to speak about the fish that had come into our buffer stocks?

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 (referred very recently) revealed that samples of many food items tested were adulterated. Biscuits—with emulsions of water and vegetable fat; Arrowroot—with maize and rapeseed flour; Chilli powder—with wheat flour; Condensed peaches or raspberries—coffee powder—with powdered ground nut husk; starch (as much as 82%); Instant powder—with wheat flour, maize flower, rapeseed and a toxic coal tar dye.

“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 criminals.

And Demand Streamlined Legislation
And Prompt Enforcement

SPACE DONATED

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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, ponnac 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."

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