

Vol. 22 No. 29 — January 7, 1978 — Rs. 1-50

TRIBUNE



Foreign Subscriptions

Foreign air mail and surfacemail rates have been increased as from January 1, 1978.

The new subscriptions rates can be had on application from the

Circulation Manager,

T R I B U N E

43, Dawson Street, Colombo-2.

TELE: 33172

Letter From The Editor

ON THE COVER we have a picture which portrays a scene of hope—of young healthy paddy plants growing in regular transplanted rows. In many parts of the paddy-growing areas of this island there is every prospect of a bumper harvest if there is minimal rain in January. If the rains do not come, as they have not in some recent years, the crop will be much less in rain-fed fields; and the water in the tanks which are normally kept for the Yala have to be drawn for the Maha. It should also be remembered that owing to the unseasonal rains in September, October and November, the Maha sowing in many places has been turned into a *Mada* crop and this can upset the statistical production projections of the Agricultural Department. It is not necessary to stress that the statistics provided by officials for many years now have been completely wrong. And this year, too, their calculations can prove to be totally incorrect. And, a preliminary survey by *Tribune* investigators show that the old malpractice of granting paddy loans to non-paddy growers has reached enormous proportions in many paddy areas. The Government, in its anxiety, to grow more paddy has granted loans running into several million rupees. The "authority" for certifying "paddy-growers" in any area are the Grama Sevaka and the Chairman of the newly appointed UNP Cultivation Committees. In three areas, visited by *Tribune* investigators, it was found that Grama Sevakas and the bosses of persons who will not grow paddy. In many cases, it was found that a large number who have obtained loans have grossly exaggerated the extent of lands on which they claim they can grow paddy. If the government is foolish enough to think that the loans granted is any indication of the area that will be sown, it will find itself in a Fool's Paradise. The fact is that large amount of easy money has been released in paddy areas and there is a new inflationary upsurge. To certify lands as paddy growing—sometimes non-existent or, at best, marginal lands—Grama Sevaka and Cultivation Committee Chairman grab a "cut" out of the loans. In one instance, a Grama Sevaka who was poor as the proverbial door mouse a few months ago has been able to acquire for himself a 20-acre plot of paddy irrigated land out of his ill-gotten gains. A large number of those who have got the loans do not seem to have any intentions of repaying these loans—they think that if they wear green shirts, sport green caps and shout UNP slogans they will be absolved from repayment by pleading crop failures or by making some other excuses. In the meantime, from the paddy loans, these "farmers" have purchased transistor radios, sewing machines, bicycles wrist watches, polyester shirts and nylon sarees. In some towns, there are no radios, bicycles or sewing machines to be had even at enhanced prices. These "loan-getters" have been on a spending spree that has astonished our investigators—whilst the fields they are supposed to have ploughed and sowed are lying idle. *Tribune* is not yet in a position to say whether this state of affairs is true of all paddy-producing areas where loans have been lavishly granted for the Maha. From the past, there are several hundred million rupees of unpaid paddy loans. And, this year too, the Government, in its haste and anxiety, has rushed into granting loans without taking the most elementary precautions to ensure the recovery of these loans. The one hurdle that had to be cleared in the past—that old loans had to be repaid before new loans were granted—was removed by an all-too benevolent government. And, the result is a paddy-loan mayhem where new kinds of racketeering have emerged. Unless, the Government adopts a few simple measures to check the kind of malpractices that have surfaced now, all governmental plans to increase paddy production are doomed to failure; that is the returns for the money invested will neither be proportionate nor anywhere near the expectations of departmental officials who sit in comfortable chairs and scrutinise loan statistics to compute paddy production. The first and most important measure necessary to end the corruption in paddy loans is to impose heavy and debilitating penalties on the "authorities" certifying that particular persons owned lands which could be immediately utilised for paddy production or that these persons could be relied upon to spend the money on paddy farming and not on buying semi-luxury consumer articles. Secondly, the government should immediately send out Flying Squads of incorruptible officials (who will not fall for the big talk of local UNP organisers or other power-brokers) to check whether those who have got loans have really ploughed and sown the fields for which loans have been granted. This check must be made before excuses of crop failures and other similar disasters can be trotted out. Thirdly, the government must adopt stern measures to ensure repayment, for this season as well as the future. Unless this is done, the government can forget its increased paddy growing programme—because the infection and disease that stem from racketeering in unlimited paddy loans will spread throughout the island like an epidemic.

TRIBUNE

Founded in 1954

A Journal of Ceylon and
World Affairs

Editor S. P. Amarasingam
Every Saturday

January 7, 1978

Vol. 22 No. 29

TRIBUNE

43, DAWSON STREET,
COLOMBO - 2,
Telephone: 33172

CONTENTS

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

—After 150 Days, Mahawell,
Flour Mill p. 2

BUDGET—7

—Financial Year 1978 p. 5

BETWEEN THE LINES

—Global Economic Upheavals,
Sri Lanka Press,
The Judiciary p. 7

FOR THE RECORD

—Flour-Mill Deal p. 10

EXPORT OF MANPOWER

—Clarification p. 11

A SOUND EDUCATIONAL POLICY

—By R. Kahawita p. 12

HAVING ONE'S POCKETS PICKED

—Soliloquy p. 14

LETTERS

—From Our Readers p. 15

GRAMA SASTRA - 4

—Love Of People p. 19

WARNING FROM MALAYSIA

—On "Free" Enterprise p. 20

THE AGONY HAD ENDED

—Youth p. 22

TAMIL AFFAIRS

—CINTA Report p. 23

CONFIDENTIALLY

—Super Car! p. 24

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

After 150 Days

Colombo, December 31.

Looking back on the record of the UNP Government from July 21 to December 31, one is overcome with an overwhelming sense of apprehension that this Government and its Ministers, like all previous governments and ministers, have bragged too much and continue to brag too much—and very soon, it will be found that there is a big gap between promise and performance. It is true that some of the "pledges" made in the UNP election manifesto have been fulfilled, like the Second Amendment to introduce a Presidential system, the Repeal of the CJC Act, the Local Government Amendment Act, etc. etc.

But, it is the "promises" the Government and Individual Ministers have made after July 21 and continue to make that will boomerang on the Government. One has only to glance over the newspaper headlines that different Ministers secured for themselves on the basis of sensational promises during the last five months to realise that major bloomers have been committed. Any Opposition party has only to wade through the daily papers to collect bucketsful of unfulfillable promises to fling at the UNP. What is ironic is that the UNP Ministers need not have made these promises—there was sufficient euphoria that stemmed from the election victory and the misdeeds of the SLFP to carry the government forward for a year or two even if did nothing!

Minister Premadasa, anxious to hit the headlines (like the early bird that wants to catch the worm), from the body count of newspaper headline-promises, has made the largest number of unfulfillable promises. One of the most staggering of such boasts was that he will build a hundred thousand houses a year (or was it every month?). The promises about house-building were so staggering that *Tribune* was stunned into silence. We wondered whether Minister Premadasa would bring down some "miracle" from West Germany to fulfill this promise. There is no doubt that this boast about build-

ing 100,000 houses every year for six years will fade into of oblivion soon. Minister Premadasa has now gone a little slow on his newspaper headline-promises, but in the first three months he made so many boastful promises that anyone who wants to denigrate his position politically has only to publish all his newspaper-headline promises strung together in one piece. They are a mouthful that cover practically the work of all Ministries and all Ministers.

In addition to this, Premadasa, over-reached himself in gunning for Anura, Sirimavo and the Bandaranaike family. In his desperate bid to steal the political limelight, he rushed into sensitive areas that bordered on the vulgar and this has created an anti-Premadasa sentiment among a large number of people who had started off expecting a great deal from him. He has quietened down on his anti-Bandaranaike monomania, but not before he left a bad taste in the mouths of large sections of the public.

Premadasa has also not won any encomiums from the public by his throwing open all the pavements in the shopping and other areas in the city of Colombo to thugs who parade as hawkers. Obscenity has been let loose on the pavement where shoppers are fleeced with short measure (in textiles) and short weight (in everything else). The rabble in Colombo Central suddenly blossomed into a new breed of pavement hawker-underworld. Premadasa's gimmicks in trying to win popularity with the toughs who have invaded the pavements has done the UNP no good. The take-over of land under Land Reform brought defeat to the SLFP. The take-over of the Colombo pavements by hawkers (really thugs and hoodlums parading as traders), if permitted to continue much longer, will bring defeat to the UNP, at least in the City of Colombo.

Next to Premadasa, Minister Mohamed has had the most headlines in the first 150 days—with star-struck promises. He has even succeeded in bamboozling many, including MPs, who don't use the CTB and the CGR that he has made a good start and that everything will be hunky-dory once new buses, engines and waggons are imported. He has promised to create a paradise for commuters

by importing 1000 buses for the CTB and 17 locomotives and 1000 waggons and carriages for the CGR.

Recklessly he is getting spares down by air. Where is the money to come from for all this? And, if the government accedes to Mohamed's wishes, there will be no money for more important imports. But what troubles people who are knowledgeable is that all these imports will not make any difference except for a few months. The new buses, the new locomotives and the waggons will soon be relegated to the junk yards which are already over-flowing with un-repaired locomotives, carriages and waggons. In fact, the CGR will find it difficult to find space for the new imports in their sheds and yards. The real crux of the problem is that the Workshops and Repair Yards of the CTB and CGR have to be made to work to get the transport services going. Instead all Mohamed-inspired hopes are pinned on "imports" to usher in a new millennium.

And the millennium will not come—with such promises. And the CTB is now, once again, being flooded with recruits on chits—recruits allegedly from certain chosen electorates. A Commission (Presidential or otherwise) six years hence by a new government will throw open the Mohamed-Padora's box—because imports mean commissions and those who collect them will bring disrepute to the UNP. The Minister may have clean hands and a clear conscience, but the stink that has already arisen in some goings on in the CTB will provide the Opposition—even if not presently represented in the NSA—with enough dirt to bring the UNP down at the next elections.

When *Tribune* first mentioned that a stink had begun to overcome the Tobacco (Beedi) Corporation in 1973/74, our comments were dismissed by government spokesmen as mischievous and also that they were based on false information deliberately concocted by interested parties. We had, however, persisted with our exposures until 1975/76, but the government's refusal to pay the slightest heed to our "allegations" made us turn to other matters after "predicting" that the misdeeds generated by the corruption in the Tobacco Corporation will boomerang on the SLFP. And it

did! We have recently stated that the Transport Ministry under Mohamed will become the Achilles Heel of the Government—unless radical changes are introduced in the Ministry.

Other Ministers too have made promises of a startling nature. Even the cautious Lalith Athulathimudali had scored a newspaper headline early in September that Sri Lanka will have TV "in six months". The six months will soon be over and there is not the slightest prospect of TV for a long time. To pretend that some experiments carried out by the OTS in "TV" is fulfilment of the promise is an attempt to cheat that will recoil upon the UNP. Minister Athulathimudali must also watch his step—judging by the press clippings of his "promises."

It is possible to go on scrutinising the newspaper headline promises of UNP Ministers in the last five months. They will fill several volumes, and will show that the UNP government has not learnt the lessons of the past—that it is stupid to make promises that cannot be kept or fulfilled within a reasonable time. It is one thing to make promises during the heat of an election campaign, but it is a totally different thing to make them in the first five months of a new government's tenure.

One of the most unbelievable promises made by the Government was to say that the 30-year Mahaweli project could be completed in five years. Even Mr. J. R. Jayawardene was persuaded into making this promise. But the five years became six years all so quickly. And Minister Disanayake has now said that even if 75% of the project can be done in six years, it would be an achievement. It will certainly be an achievement even if fifty percent of the thirty-year project is completed in ten to twelve years! Or fifteen years!

What induced the Prime Minister and the government to launch this five-year gimmick is a mystery. It will turn out to be a veritable *gundu*; as sure as the sun rises in the East! In the NSA, one Minister, when pressed, had said that "our Engineers" had told them that it was possible to do the job in five years—the names of the engineers were not divulged. These "unnamed engineers" will probably be the scape-goats when

the government is unable to fulfil its promise about Mahaweli (even 75%) in six years. The "engineers" will then pass the blame on to "bureaucrats" and "politicians". If the High Command of the UNP had only consulted engineers like Mr. R. Kahawita, who had been involved in the Mahaweli Project right from its inception, and who has been writing in the *Tribune* on the Mahaweli for the last three or four years, the Prime Minister would have got a realistic picture of the situation—and would have been told that the 30-year project cannot possibly be telescoped into six.

There is not the slightest doubt that the 30 year Mahaweli Project cannot be done in six years—in spite of Raju Coomaraswamy's and Rana Cooke's pilgrimages to Washington and Manila and Minister Gamali Disanayake's assurances to a *Daily News* interviewer that it can be done. Mr. J. R. Jayawardene will be well advised to review the situation and tell the public frankly that the 30 year project cannot be done in 5 or even 6 years; and thereafter set more realistic and appropriate targets for the Mahaweli Scheme. It will be far better to say now that a mistake had been made and make the changes immediately rather than be confronted six years hence with failure and face a charge of fooling the public with false promises. Unattainable six-year Mahaweli gimmicks must be called off if the UNP is to sustain its credibility.

This is not the only project from which Mr. J. R. Jayawardene has to stage a strategic retreat with as much grace as possible. One does not know who did it, because all information available to us indicates that Mr. Jayawardene was misled (virtually taken for a ride) on his birthday, September 17, 1977, when he was persuaded that the Flour Mill to be set up by a Singapore and a local combine would be in the country's interest.

The *Socialist Nation* of September 23 and December 7 focussed attention on this Flour Mill to be set up in Trincomalee. On the face of it, it appeared to be a project that brought Sri Lanka many benefits—but deeper examination showed it was virtually a swindle. Wheat

bran is the more valuable than wheat flour. A proper evaluation would have shown that Sri Lanka was being diddled for millions. The *Daily Mirror* of December 12 did well to take this matter up with a brave editorial requesting the Minister of Industries to look into the deal and take suitable action to protect the country's interest.

To our surprise the *Daily Mirror* staged a climb-down on December 14 and tried to effect a "cover-up" (saying that facts had been made available to show that the *Socialist Nation's* report and the *Daily Mirror's* editorial had been based in incorrect "facts"). But the cover-up was weak and unconvincing. All that this transparently stupid cover-up did was to rob the *Daily Mirror* of the credibility it had built up after it had been taken over by the government. One or two more similar cover-up attempts in true Watergate style will destroy all the credibility the *Daily Mirror* can ever hope to summon.

The Prime Minister, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, should review the Flour Mill deal. Unless "facts" not available to us now (the *Daily Mirror* apologia had no "facts") are made public, there is no doubt that every patriotic citizen will call for the cancellation of the deal. The prestige and reputation of Mr. J. R. Jayawardene will rocket even higher than what it is if he frankly admits that the Government had made a mistake and takes appropriate action to safeguard the country's interests. Either the whole deal has to be called off or the Singapore-cum-Local tycoons must be compelled to hand over a substantial part of the profits from bran to Sri Lanka.

If this is not done, the UNP will not be able to "cover up" this deal with all the control it has established over the media. The Flour Mill deal will be a repetition of the much lamented UREA FACTORY scandal which was spotlighted in the NSA by the Minister of Finance & Planning towards the tail end of the Third Readings of the Budget.

The interests of the country demand that the Flour Mill deal should be cancelled. We can find no argument in support of the Project. The country cannot hand over to sharp tycoons millions of rupees only because they do not

ask for capital or foreign exchange to set up the mill. The wheat has to be imported with foreign exchange by the Sri Lanka government and the international operators will walk away with the really worthwhile by-product bran. At the end of twenty years, the mill will be a junk—obsolete and of no value—and when handed over to Sri Lanka will be of little or no use to this country.

What surprised many persons who support the UNP is that the government was willing to hand over the bran to profit-greedy operators at a time when the country was short of nutritious food—especially concentrates for livestock. Coconut poonac which traditionally has been the basic ingredient of the concentrates—often poonac sixty percent and bran forty percent—has been virtually unavailable to livestock farmers as a result of the Land Reform Law and the deterioration of our coconut industry. Poonac, which was once Rs. 250 to Rs. 400 a ton shot up to Rs. 2200-2400 a ton. Today, the price is hovering around Rs. 1600 a ton. At this time, it is uneconomic for a livestock farmer or dairy owner—with beef controlled at Rs. 4/- a lb. and milk bought by the Milk Board at .95 cents a pint to feed animals with poonac or concentrates. Livestock farmers and dairy owners today prefer to go out of business. The cattle population of the country has dwindled and continues to dwindle. Milk production continues to go down every day.

Those in the livestock and dairy business say that unless the price of poonac is stabilised around Rs. 600 to Rs. 800 a ton, it would be uneconomic to rear cattle either for meat or milk. One important thing is that poonac prices must be stable. It is not enough to be able to buy it at Rs. 600 a ton this week to find the price shoot up to Rs. 1600 the next. It is well to remember that the price of meat and price of milk for the local producer should bear some relationship to the price of concentrates—poonac and bran. (Rice bran is better than wheat bran, but wheat bran can be fortified—like rice bran—with appropriate minerals and vitamins).

What continues to astound many is that the Milk Board imports milk powder to keep consumers supplied, at Rs. 12/- a lb., that is Rs. 2/- a pint. But the Milk Board

pays only .95 cents a pint to the local producer. It is happy to pay foreign dairy owner Rs. 2/- a pint! Of this .95 cents, about .70 cents a pint goes in transport charges; and often concentrates cost as much as .40 to .50 cents to produce a pint. Labour charges, capital overheads, veterinary charges all make it totally unprofitable for the local dairy owner. The livestock owner who rears meat cattle is in a worse position.

Livestock owners and dairy farmers were furious when they read of the Singapore flour mill deal. So were others who know the value of bran. Rice bran which was about Rs. 5/- a cwt. has now shot up to Rs. 25/- a cwt. When this country needs all the bran it can get hold of—why enrich Singapore and local entrepreneurs by giving away the bran from the wheat we import. This scandal will soon be heard in every part of the island.

One hundred and fifty days have gone by since the government came to power. And though much has been done to undo some of the evils perpetrated by the SLFP and UF government, there is precious little that has been done for development—especially in agriculture. Millions have been handed out as easy bank loans to persons who claim to be paddy "farmers", but Tribune has fears that much of this money will be expended on futile consumerism (vide this week's Letter to the Editor). Pompous sounding official edifices have been created—Agriculture Development Authority, Deputy Directors of Agriculture at every Kachcheri etc. etc.—but in the field the situation is the same as before. Or worse.

Tribune has tried to find out what the Agricultural Department or any other governmental authority has for the farmer. It has failed. Loan-giving seems to be the one and only activity. And commissions and cuts galore are being made by certain persons. It is useless handing out loans when there is precious little else for the farmer. Leaving paddy aside—the planting season is over—can the Director of Agriculture tell the public how much of seed, say maize, sorghum and soya bean, he has for the NCP, NWP, NP and the EP? These have to be sown in the next three months. How much gingelly seed has he got

for the different areas which grows gelly? We can ask a whole lot of other questions. But the 150 days since the government came to power has been spent in "exposing" the misdeeds of the past and little or nothing has been done to make a real start in food production—except big speeches and bigger promises. The SLBC is fed with stories of what every department was planning to do. It is the same old story as in the days of the SLFP. It has begun to weary listeners.

One hundred and fifty days is a little less than six months. But it is a crucial period. The government should have shown its mettle, at least in the field of food-production—but it has not. Government spokesmen said, "wait for the budget". Now they say, "wait for the new Agricultural Development Authority"—many fear that this pontifical set up may turn out to be another fiasco like Prof. H. A. de S. Gunasekera's District Development Council Authority.

One hundred and fifty days have gone by and government has little to show to its credit even in areas of work where much could have been done—agriculture. Government spokesmen evade the issue by talking about the FTZ. Propaganda is made about growing fruit trees—mango, coconut, papayas and everything else the Fruit Board wants people to grow. Lavish newspaper advertisements promise subsidies for fruit growing—but the Fruit Board does not care a damn whether planting material is available or not. In fact, the Fruit Board is one of the most "inaccessible" of all such governmental statutory boards. Letters are not answered. Telephone calls are useless—no one who can say anything concrete is ever available (the phone is semi-permanently "engaged"). And nowhere can anyone get adequate quantities of grafts, seedlings or plants to make any project worthwhile.

The Veterinary Department is a scandal. After seven long years, the Department woke up from its sleep. Veterinarians—a favoured and pampered tribe who specialise in foreign trips and scholarships—who never left their offices for seven years recently called on

some farms to tell them that a Hoof and Mouth epidemic was spreading in some districts. They told the farmers what medicine they should purchase. That was all.

One indignant farmer has written to *Tribune* that a "Veterinary Surgeon" who made an appearance after 8 long years in a particular area said that he had "no time" to look at a sick animal in the cattle shed at the farm he had stopped because he had to rush away on urgent work. The farmer wants to know "what am I to do?" We do not know ourselves. Perhaps the Director of Agriculture, or the chief of the Veterinary Department, or the Minister of Agriculture and Lands or the new Agriculture Development Authority may be able to answer the farmer's question. What is he to do? Is he to send his animal by parcel post to the veterinarian, or the Director or Minister?

This is a dismal note to end the year 1977 and first 150 days of the Dharmista government. But, a discerning person, interested in the welfare and future of the country, cannot but be weighed down by a deep sense of frustration. One can only hope that the New Year will bring something better—that the government will have something more than mere talk in developmental work especially in the production of food. People are getting tired of Ministerial bragging. Some thing real, something concrete must be done. Empty newspaper headlines and bogus SLBC newscasts will only make matters worse. The big daily papers are happy with the large chunks of lucrative government and private sector advertisements, and seem prepared to take the country for a ride and the government for a fall.

BUDGET — 7

Financial Year 1978

Before the tea-interval, the Finance Minister had also revised the general outline of Appropriations he proposed to make for 1978. The Estimates for 1978 had already been tabled about ten days before Budget Day, and his comments on the estimates were only guidelines for the proposals he made after tea interval:

Mr. Speaker, the draft estimates for 1978 which I have already tabled before this House show that the gross recurrent expenditure of the Government would be Rs. 6,674 million which is Rs. 668 million more than what has been provided for in the Budget for 1977. Gross capital expenditure for 1978, as shown in the draft estimates, amounts to Rs. 3,764 million, which is also higher than what was provided in the 1977 Budget by Rs. 195 million. Total expenditure inclusive of net payments of Rs. 100 million on Advance Account Operations for 1978 is thus about Rs. 963 million or 10 percent more than what was provided for in the Budget for 1977, most of this increase being really swallowed up by the substantial increase in recurrent expenditure.

The components of gross expenditure for 1978 can be summarised as follows:—

	(Rs. Million)
Personal Emoluments ..	2,198
Food Subsidy ..	1,180
Interest on Public Debt. ..	1,131
Pensions ..	440
Other Recurrent Expenditure ..	1,725
Public Debt. Amortization Payments ..	967
Capital Expenditure ..	2,797

It will thus be seen that of a total recurrent expenditure of Rs. 6,674 million roughly 24 percent is being spent on food subsidy and pensions, while interest on public debt is also significant being 17 percent of recurrent expenditure. The increase in recurrent expenditure over 1977 is mainly attributable to the increases in these items of expenditure. Recurrent expenditure, net of a provision for 2 percent under-expenditure, is, however, expected to amount to Rs. 6,541 million.

Total capital expenditure for 1978 is estimated at Rs. 2,797 million but if one were to allow for the unusual under-expenditure element of 25 percent the magnitude of the capital budget would be Rs. 2,098 million. The amount in respect of Sinking Fund contributions provided for 1978 is Rs. 967 million or Rs. 119 million more than in 1977. In addition, an amount of Rs. 100 million has been provided for on account of net out-payments to be expected in

respect of the Advance Account activities of the Government.

Estimated revenue for 1978 is Rs. 6,813 million which represents an increase of Rs. 752 million or 12 percent over the revenue estimate in the 1977 Budget. This increase in revenue at existing rates of taxation is possible, largely because of the better prices expected for our tea exports. The substantial increase also reflects in a way the sharp increase in price levels in the country which in turn has led to higher collections from BTT and other taxes, which are levied on domestic transactions and incomes.

The current account surplus for 1978 is Rs. 172 million being the difference between the recurrent expenditure of the Government including Advance Account net payments, and the estimated revenue. This surplus is possible despite the continuing increase in recurrent expenditure essentially because of the good performance of our tea and rubber prices that are expected in 1978. If for some reason or other, this trend does not continue, the country will have to get back into the position of not being able to generate any public savings to finance its capital expenditure and will have to rely entirely on borrowings both local and foreign in order to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I have already referred to capital expenditure net of under-expenditure and Sinking Fund contributions etc. as being Rs. 2,098 million. This can hardly be considered adequate in terms of our country's needs. What is more, a development expenditure of this magnitude hardly provides any resources to undertake any new major projects, most of the funds having to be allocated to on-going projects which account for more than 75 percent of the expenditure.

Even with this magnitude of development expenditure if one also takes into account the Sinking Fund contributions of Rs. 967 million the Budget deficit that emerges would be Rs. 2,893 million. This has entirely to be financed by borrowings. I expect to raise a sum of Rs. 1,600 million by way of rupee loans, which is Rs. 300 million more than what was hoped to be raised in the 1977 Budget. It has become possible to do this largely as a result of the interest rate on rupee securities going

upto 10 percent from 9 percent and the increased investments expected from the National Savings Bank and Sinking Funds.

Commodity Aid funds are expected to finance the deficit to the extent of Rs. 743 million in 1978 while project aid financing would be Rs. 550 million. Mr. Speaker, thus you would see that borrowings both local and foreign have, as in the past, come to the rescue in a big way. It is, therefore, important to ensure that what is borrowed is productively invested to enable one to repay the loans in the future; otherwise we will end up by simply committing the future generations yet unborn in this country to a life of misery.

I would like to emphasize what is a very critical factor which any government that rules this country has to take note of. This is the close inter-dependence between our foreign exchange position and our domestic budget. Whether one approaches it from the point of view of being able as a country to import any of our requirements or from the point of view of generating enough revenue or spending enough funds on development, the two are vitally linked. If our exports were to do well, given the high dependence of our revenues on export performance, we will do well domestically too, by generating enough revenues to meet our needs, whether current or capital. On the other hand, if we do badly it is borrowing from foreign sources as in the case of project aid which has to sustain even the minimum degree of capital expenditure we ought to incur. This is not a satisfactory situation for any country.

Mr. Speaker, in other words, the foreign exchange budget and the domestic budget are closely inter-linked. By the same token, it is important that whatever budgetary policies we pursue should ensure within the limits possible that the export sector is given the necessary inducement to not merely survive but prosper. At the same time, our long-term strategy should be one where we ought to be able to reduce our dependence on imports. But let us remember that the climate and incentives for our investors to do so have been sadly lacking in the past, so that we, by and large, had an export sector which did not prosper reasonably enough to

sustain ourselves domestically while domestic economic activities also came to be throttled by ill-advised legislation, import restrictions and exchange control. If we are to ensure prosperity to our people and sustain it over a long-haul it is important that the whole system has to be reformed in a radical way to free the economy of all controls and provide the necessary stimulus and incentives for the growth that we all seek and the development we all have long been waiting for.

Mr. Speaker, before I unfold our package of measures to revive and revitalise our economy let me summarise the pre-budget picture for 1978 as follows:—

	(Rs. Million)
Recurrent Expenditure	—6,674
Less Under-expenditure at 2%	+ 133
	<u>—6,541</u>
Advance A/c. Outpayments (net)	— 100
	<u>—6,641</u>
Revenue	<u>—6,813</u>
Current (A/c. Surplus	+ 172
Capita Expenditure	+ 3,764
Less Sinking Fund	
Contributions etc.	+ 967
	<u>—2,797</u>
Less Under-expenditure at 25%	+ 699
	<u>—2,098</u>
Add-back Sinking Fund Contributions etc.	— 967
	<u>—3,065</u>
	<u>—2,893</u>

The above figures show that our Annual Revenue today is just sufficient to meet our present annual recurrent expenditure. This is the extent of the havoc caused to the economy by the Sirimavo Bandaranaike Government by the lack of economic growth in the last seven years. If we were to make financial provision for our present capital expenditure only without any new works whatsoever, we are in the red by about Rs. 3,600 million, not taking into account possible under-expenditure. Honourable Members will, therefore, see that we cannot undertake any capital expenditure

even at 1977 levels without resorting to borrowing. This is the sorry state of our economy.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to be merely content by balancing my Budget for 1978 a one with all the costs on terms of borrowing and the inadequate development expenditures that this would entail. No, Mr. Speaker, our task is much more important than that. We like to look beyond and do whatever is in our power not merely to improve the present lot of the people of this country who elected us to power so overwhelming; but also to be fair by the future generations still unborn who deserve a better life than what we can, in terms of past policies, provide for them.

At this point in my Budget Speech, I would draw the attention of Honourable Members to the advice of our Revered Teacher, the Lord Buddha, which was quoted by our Hon. Prime Minister, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene when he presented his first Budget in 1947:

“එකකන භොගෙ භුක්ඤ්ජයා,
එහි කම්මං පයොජයෙය,
චතුර්ඵස්සච නිධාපෙයාය,
ආපදස්ස භවිස්සති.”

That is—

“Divide the wealth you earn into four parts. Of that wealth one quarter should be spent on maintaining yourself and your family; two quarters should be spent on future investments to your business in order to develop it; the fourth quarter you should save for a time of depression.”

This advice is valid not only for individuals but for nations. If we spend all our wealth on consumption, on eating and drinking, as we have done in the past, we cannot hope to go forward as a nation or solve any of the pressing problems of the people like employment. Are we going to fritter away all our resources on consumption, or are we going to invest, develop and solve the burning problems of the people? This is the question to which this Government must find the correct solution in the best interests of the people of this land.

+ +

BETWEEN THE LINES

BY SERENDIB

- Global Economic Upheavals
- Collapse Of The Dollar
- Sri Lanka Press
- The Judiciary

FEELING THE PINCH: In the *Editor's Notebook* column, last week, and even before, the warning was given that global economic upheavals can upset the best-laid plans of the UNP. But, these warnings were not taken seriously by anyone connected with the government—and those who were aware of realities preferred to remain silent. Even before the Third Reading of the 1978 Budget was concluded, the world was in major economic trouble. The value of the dollar had started sliding dangerously down everyday as against the Japanese yen and the West German *deutschemerk*. And the partial failure of the wheat and grain crops in countries so widely scattered as the Soviet Union, China, Argentine and Australia had sent up the world price of wheat and other grains skyhigh. In less than a week the price had jumped from \$ 155 to \$ 225 a ton. It is likely that the price will go still higher.

Sri Lanka has no alternative now but to raise the price of bread and flour and also restrict its issue of flour. The UNP government can go back to its old promise of eight lbs. of cereals a week for a person and have a propaganda exercise to sell the new policy of rationing flour. The ration books which were to be discarded for at least 7 million people may now have to be resurrected in order to ensure a ration of 8 lbs. of cereals per adult per week.

This is only the first of the global economic troubles that is likely to hit Sri Lanka. What many of our globe-trotting financial wizards and our ubiquitous bureaucratic panjandrams do not seem to know (or are unwilling to admit) is that the IMF is already (very nearly) a

dying and decadent phenomenon—and that even now it is being sustained on artificial respiration rendered by petrodollars and other *ad hoc* injections of capital from some of the affluent countries. But, very soon the IMF would be assailed by the currency war that has begun to hot up.

As early as November 13, a columnist in the Indian *Weekly New Wave* had pithily summed up the situation: "Japanese currency, the almighty yen, could not have chosen a more appropriate month than October for baring its ferocious fangs against the enfeebled dollar. October happens to be devoted to statistics in that country—and the proud people had their fill of numbers. Yen crashed through the psychological barrier of 250 to a dollar and firmed up at 248.751 yens to a dollar on October 28 after starting at 250.751 to a dollar. Yen's upward march continued despite the government buying several billion dollars in the currency market. The bewildering array of quickly changing figures about yen-dollar ratio more than satiated people eager for figures and more figures. It has always been so in the 2600 year old nation comprising 3937 islands covering 145,267 square miles and having 113 million people. To complete the figures, it was the 30th anniversary of the statistical month, which many Japanese believe is a hall-mark of any advanced society. As an offshoot of the obsession with figures, school students are asked to provide information about their order of birth—whether first, second or seventh child. More children were asked to enter a competition on statistics this year, and five children aged seven years walked away with the first prize by writing a statistically supported study on why their mothers did not play with them as often as they should. The first ever symptom of this obsession with statistics came on October 18, 1870 when the Meiji government directed all local administrative units to submit exhaustive statistics. It is surprising the Japanese, so very meticulous about numbers, forgot to celebrate the centenary of the first statistical order! Or, did they?"

Since that time the dollar has suffered even more disastrously than had been anticipated in November.

The virtual collapse of the dollar, as the sole surviving reserve currency from Bretton Woods, brings an end to an era. The currencies of the two major countries, Germany and Japan, defeated in Second World War have laid low the currencies of the two most powerful victor countries, USA and UK. Will this lead to another world war or will the new victor emerge after this currency cum economic war?

THIRD WORLD DEBT: The debt burden of the poorer countries has been variously estimated—from \$ 300 to \$ 400 billion. Some "experts" try to minimise it. But knowledge people realise that "the origin of the collapse is the strangulation of international trade under the pressure of \$ 250 billion of Third World debt, and \$ 150 billion in debts of the weakest industrial countries."

The writing on the wall had appeared in the USA as early as June when "the US copper industry inaugurated the period of collapse by locking out 45,000 trade unionists. Sitting on a six-month stockpile of the metal, whose price has fallen well below its cost of production, the industry had advertised its intention force a strike, for six months if possible, in a final effort to bring copper back up to breakeven levels. The companies have made abominable offers to the United Steel Workers of America — Phelps-Dodge's is a dime an hour over three years—because they do not have the money. They are going under themselves. However, the Western European press is citing the collapse of the US economy to gain leverage for overthrowing Rockefeller's bankrupt monetary system. Italy's *Il Sole 24 Ore*, the official newspaper of the Italian industrial confederation, warned that extreme inflation 'permeates everything in the American economic system, with a speculative cycle resembling the situation prior to the 'big crash' of 1929. The dissolution of the industrial economies, now showing through the fabric of lies 'about recovery', overrides the patch-together plans of monetarists, and forces the issue of a new monetary system onto the agenda of world affairs."

Early in July it was reported that "a crucial warning-light began flashing last week, when the dollar collapsed on international foreign

exchange markets as a direct response to the mammoth \$ 24 billion projected US trade deficit. Hysterical warnings of the consequences of the deficit emerged from august quarters, including a statement by Rep. Henry Reuss, Chairman of the House Banking and Currency Committee, that the Arabs might pull out of the dollar and collapse the monetary system if the deficit continued. The immediate form of the crisis, which has its origin in the world debt situation, is the breakdown of all the temporary swindles and band-aids that have held the situation together until now. In the United States, where consumer credit and auto sales have sustained miserably low levels of production so far this year, the miniature credit bubble is set to burst. More disastrous is the situation of the weaker industrial economies, such as Italy, where the austerity measures imposed in February by the International Monetary Fund have not only stopped the country's balance of payments deficit, but have produced a 10 percent collapse in industrial output over the last three months."

A US commentator explained in some detail the situation in mid July "Key is the fact that the US, the largest capitalist economy, is grinding to a halt. *Business Week* underscored the danger this week in an article headlined, *Second Quarter Slowdown Ahead*, citing a consulting firm's estimate that monthly increases in output had fallen from \$ 15 billion in March to \$ 5 billion in April and \$ 4 billion in May of this year. Virtually all the 'growth' took the form of inventory accumulation, *Business Week* says. Judging from figures just released, the turning point came in May, when inventories rose by 1.2 percent—considerably more in volume terms, taking into account a 5 percent drop in the prices of most industrial raw materials, and the run-off in petroleum inventories after the Spring glut. At the same time manufacturers' shipments fell for the first time this year. For some categories of raw materials, such as steel, the collapse has already hit: weekly steel production has dropped from about 2.8 million tons a week at the end of May to 2.6 million tons a week in June. The most astonishing thing about this situation is that despite the collapse of new investments by industry, the big-

gest 'official' worry the economists let show, the capital goods industry is collapsing even faster. Capacity in the capital goods industry is shutting down so fast that order backlogs rose by \$ 4.3 billion during April and May, even while orders remained dead flat! It doesn't pay, given current rates of investment for the capital goods industry to operate, so it is rationalising away capacity faster than orders fall. The same terrible process is at work in West Germany, where the Krupp steel company had to sub-contract out most of a \$ 150 million steel order placed by Iran—because it had chopped away too much capacity to manufacture the steel alone. This occurred in May, when overall West German steel production fell by almost 10 percent."

And in regard to the role of the IMF he said: "The downturn in the big West German and US economies is more than matched by events in southern Europe, whose economy has become unhinged. The IMF's credit squeeze forced a 10 percent production in Italian industrial production between March and May, and has brought the country's credit system to the verge of collapse. The country is living on overnight loans on the Eurodollar market, which have risen from less than \$ 3 billion at the end of 1976 to \$ 7.6 billion in May. Industrial debt service is so high that the Montedison group alone will need \$ 3.4 billion in new loans this year for refinancing and minimal investment—half of the credit ceiling for the entire country set down by the IMF. World trade contraction is the engine of the collapse, starting with the projected US trade deficit of \$ 24 billion for 1977, doubling the last record deficit. Every dollar of this deficit is accounted for by America's trade with the Third World (excluding the oil producers,) in which the red ink will run up to \$ 27 billion. This means that Third World countries are stopping imports of US goods—Brazil by 10 percent last year—and using their import earnings to pay debt service. For the other industrial countries, this policy shuts off their exports as well. West German trade dropped by 15 percent in April alone. In direct reaction, world commodity prices, on which Third World earnings depend in large part, have fallen drastically, by 9 percent in June alone, as

measured by the Dow-Jones Commodity Futures index. Huge sections of dollar-denominated debt, from Brazil and Mexico to inventory-heavy US industry, depend on a high level of commodity prices. Whether measured by Brazil's ability to service its \$ 40 billion debt by selling coffee and soybeans, or Chile's ability to finance its huge payments burden with copper sales—or the ability of the US copper industry to stay afloat—the break in commodity prices alone is enough to throw the world credit markets into an illiquidity snap. Publicly, bankers are still talking of 'excess liquidity' in the monetary system that is adequate to roll over debt payments coming due this year. That question is about to be settled abruptly."

CANCELLATION OF DEBTS: A commentator in Britain commenting on a new trend among affluent countries which had realised that to permit the debt burden to oppress poor countries would finally result in the entire edifice collapsing like a house of cards stated: "Canada and Sweden, the sober minded among the industrialised countries have set a time bomb that is bound to explode in the face of USA and its cronies. These two have cancelled debts advanced to very poor countries totalling 500 million dollars. Canada's Minister for Foreign Aid, Allan MacEachen, however, says that the real worth of the debt is much less if one were to take inflation into account. The 300 million dollars of debt that his country has written off is equal to about 50 million dollars, he says. Both the countries have decided to go against the majority of the industrialised nations who have been resisting any idea of agreeing to a moratorium on debt repayment, particularly by those few countries which are too poor to repay. Developing countries have been demanding a moratorium for long. Even at the recently concluded North-South dialogue in Paris this proposal was reiterated, but to no effect.

"Today, the total debt burden of the developing countries stands at a staggering 225 billion dollars (Rs. 2,02,500 crores approximately). Out of this the very poor nations owe not less than 26 billion dollars (Rs. 234,000 crores). Interest payments on this outstanding loan

every year works out to a billion dollars. Even these nations are not able to meet. Some of these countries are not actually that poor in resources. But because of the manipulation of prices by international cartels, the single commodity economy of these countries suddenly collapses. Take Chile and Zaire—when copper prices bottomed out, they went broke. Apart from Canada and Sweden, there are two other countries eager to emulate this gesture. They are Belgium and Denmark, but they have been restrained by mounting pressure from other advanced countries. But sooner rather than later, they would jump the gun and join Canada and Sweden. When that happens, the USA will have a major headache. It has to collect a huge sum of money, and this has come from the Wall Street, bankers. If developing nations refuse to repay debt, demanding a moratorium or cancellation and quote the examples of Canada, Sweden and others, then the entire Wall Street will go berserk. That will be the time to sound the alarm bells for the present oppressive international economic structure the USA and others have erected to trap the poor nations."

While enthusiasts in Sri Lanka sing praises of the IMF and the invisible IMF kangannies apply the screw, the world economic situation is daily getting worse. The "free" economy of Sri Lanka and the "floating rupee" may soon be caught up in a maelstrom of international economic turbulence—So that even the much-publicised Free Trade Zone may find it difficult to get off the ground.

IN SRI LANKA: The columns of daily newspapers in Colombo do not reflect the realities of the economic upheavals that have beset the world. Many people may not like the Almighty Dollar and what is stands for in a neo-colonialist term of reference, but the Dollar is still the index and yardstick of prosperity in the capitalist world of which Sri Lanka is still a part. The collapse of the dollar—however powerful the Yen, or the West German mark may become—will bring ruin to Sri Lanka's economy. But, that is another story.

In the meantime, our newspapers are full of trivialities that mean little or nothing, but betray a total

lack of realism. Take the story in the *Observer*, 28/12/77 under the heading RAIL CATERING 'SATISFACTORY'. One would have thought that an *Observer* reporter or investigator had checked this himself or had found out what train travellers thought of the service. Instead of that we have a splendid example of the lower depths to which our papers have descended "The CGR is now satisfied with the catering service provided to rail commuters. The Secretary to the Ministry of Transport, Mr. Mahinda Elayaperuma said that there had been a marked improvement in the quality of food served at the Railway Restaurants and on buffet cars. "We have now appointed a catering consultant who works in an honorary capacity and under his guidance we have been able not only to improve the quality of the good served, by the Railway Catering Service but we have also been able to reduce the price of some of the items of food", Mr. Elayaperuma said. The quality of food served here came under heavy criticism from MPs and public in the last few years. Since the improvement in catering there have been no new complaints."

All that it means is that the railway bosses, who are under fire for inefficiency and worse, are "satisfied" that the service is "satisfactory" enough to please commuters. An *Observer* reporter should try to get into the buffet car and sample the food before writing a frontpage headline story that can mislead the public about the catering service. When readers find out the truth, the *Observer's* credibility will disappear very fast. Every issue of nearly every daily newspaper teems with instances of such reporting that only tend to destroy the credibility of these papers. No wonder the circulations of these papers have begun to slip.

"INTERFERENCE" AND THE JUDICIARY: Much has been said by Mr. J. R. Jayawardene and others in the UNP that the Judiciary should be "independent". Very correctly it was pointed out that the Republican Constitution of 1972 had brought the Judiciary to be under the legislature (which was regarded as sovereign and supreme) but in reality the Judiciary was placed under the Executive Power. In the 1972-76/77 period the Political Executive's interference with Judiciary

became grossly flagrant and absolutely scandalous.

The UNP government has set out to effect the separation of powers and make it possible for the Judiciary to be "independent". But there are some disconcerting signs which run counter to the loud proclamations of the UNP leaders. In recent weeks, Colombo has been the venue of conferences of judges where high dignitaries in the Executive pontificated to judges. What was worse was that judges were invited to become part of the law making process. In a later seminar, selected members of the judiciary were thrown together with a medley of non-descript persons from the pseudo-academic world and other organisations in an attempt to formulate amendments to the Constitution and the Law. The worthy Minister and his Deputy—splendid examples what members of the Executive should be (who are also part of the Legislature)—lectured to, among others, judges as what was good and what was not.

Looked at from any angle this kind of seminar will lay the foundation for interference and undue influence that may be exercised on the judiciary. Even if the Minister or his Deputy refrains from issuing "orders" to Judges, as had happened in the past, this kind of get-together to formulate laws will provide opportunities for members of the Executive and the Bureaucracy to interfere with or influence particular members of Judiciary in the future. Ambitious judges will also seize such opportunities to promote themselves.

There are other reasons why judges should not be drawn into the law-making process. It is the same judges who would be called upon to adjudicate on the validity of some of these laws—and if they have helped to formulate them, it cannot be said that they "can be independent" when any question regarding validity come up.

One praiseworthy feature of this surfeit of conferences and seminars—which seems to attract a new breed of elite far removed from discerning persons with an element of self-respect—is that the judges of the Supreme Court have kept out of these gatherings.

It might be argued that members of minor judiciary may have something useful to contribute—but

the government can easily do without the parochial experiences of the minor judiciary. All that has happened now is that a number of judges of the minor judiciary think they have got "close" to the Minister! Where does influence begin and interference end?

There are enough lawyers and jurists help to draw up the new laws which can be placed before the public for discussions without bringing in members of the minor judiciary.

+ + +

FOR THE RECORD

The Flour-Mill Deal

The *Socialist Nation* of September 23, 1977 published on its front page a report under the heading FLOUR-MILL DEAL: ACT OF NATIONAL BETRAYAL: GRAVE BLOW TO PEASANT AND NATIONAL ECONOMY! FOREIGN FIRM WILL RECOVER INVESTMENT IN 4 YEARS!! We re-print this article *For the Record* (vide *Editors' Note Book* in this issue). The *Socialist Nation's* second report of December 7, 1977 on the flour mill deal was quoted in full by our columnist *The Archivist* in his piece on *The Weeklies* in the *Tribune* of 31.12.77.

The agreement that has been recently signed between the Government of Sri Lanka and a Singapore-Chinese firm named Prima for the setting up of a 400,000-ton-capacity flour mill in Trincomalee is a very good illustration of the grave danger to the independence of our country and its well-being that stems from the policies of Mr. J. R. Jayawardene's UNP Government:

The agreement has been well advertised as a first-rate bargain for Sri Lanka, at the same time as it is sheepishly suggested it is also no loss to the Singaporean firm involved. Our gain, it is said, is that the mill will be constructed without cost to ourselves and, at the end of 20 years of running by the Singapore firm, it will be presented to us "as a gesture of

good will". Our only obligation is to keep the mill supplied with imported grain (wheat) and consume the flour that will be turned out for us. The foreign firm's gain will be that the bran that is produced by the milling of wheat grain will belong to the firm, which will do what it wishes with it.

The first comment that we have to make on this deal is that this is not the first time that it has been proposed to a Government of Sri Lanka. This proposal was made to the last Government and carefully examined by it. It was turned down by the last Government for several important considerations.

Firstly, to establish a mill for turning out flour from imported grain on this gigantic scale is to cut across the whole approach of self-reliance by which alone a developing economy can build itself. We not only tie ourselves to the annual import of 425,000 tons of wheat for this mill, but we are totally dependent on a foreign firm for processing such an essential food item and by that very fact give this firm a controlling hand in the import of the grain itself.

Secondly, self-reliance in our economic context has to mean immediately self-reliance in the production of food. In recent years an average of 40 per cent of our export earnings has been expended on the import of just three food items, viz. rice, flour and sugar. There is no road to development that does not reduce this dependence. Self-sufficiency in rice and sugar production is, therefore, a high priority in our development plans.

Thirdly, rice production has been the main area of economic development in the post-independence period. Despite our rapidly increasing population, we have reduced our imports of rice from 50 per cent of total consumption in 1955 to 28 per cent in 1972 and even less subsequently. Vast amounts of capital have been invested in the expansion of rice cultivation by successive Governments and the area harvested annually has increased from a little over 1 million acres in the early 1950's to more than 1.7 million acres today. The establishment of this flour mill is a direct blow at the entire rice economy.

Fourthly, the availability of cheap imported flour not only

depresses the peasant's income from rice cultivation but forces the prices of subsidiary foodgrains to uneconomic levels. It undermines the entire basis of peasant existence in our country.

These are powerful arguments from the general features of our economic existence against this kind of deal with foreign capital. But there are also equally strong arguments from our specific experience with the wheat trade.

First of all is the fact that the Government of Sri Lanka has itself established a mill for wheat flour after very careful examination of the project. The mill produces only 100,000 tons of flour annually. But the Government has been considering the prospect of expanding the capacity of the mill. The West German development bank, KFW had offered the necessary finance for expanding this state mill and a project report was to be prepared for the purpose. Did the J.R. Jayawardene Government examine this possibility? If not, why not? The blind hatred of the state industrial sector that the UNP suffers from is no argument for refusing to consider the prospect of expanding a state industry that already exists.

Secondly, what is the technical expertise that the J. R. Jayawardene Government consulted before concluding this deal with the Singaporean firm? According to reports reaching us, the Singaporean firm will make enough profits from this deal to take £ 6 million out of this country every year. In 4 years it will recover the entire investment on the setting up of the mill in Trincomalee. It need not wait 20 years to show its "goodwill" to us, for long before the 20 years elapse the machinery will be nothing but scrap.

Thirdly, has the J. R. Jayawardene Government investigated the economics of setting up this mill in Trincomalee? The bulk of the consumers of wheat flour will invariably be in the urbanised areas of the West coast. Surely, the expansion of the existing mill in Colombo with its already existing facility of being supplied directly from a ship in harbour, is an important cost advantage? Or is it more important to give various UNP lorry mudalalies permanent long haul contracts?

Fourthly, one of the real advantages of setting up the State Flour Milling Corporation was the need of producing bran for feed for our livestock industry. Local production of bran is not merely a huge saver of foreign exchange, especially with the large possibilities of expanded dairy-farming in our country; but the availability of bran helps to stabilise prices of our coconut products and release copra and coconut oil for export, thereby further increasing our foreign exchange resources. But the Government has the audacity to pretend that the guarantee of a minimum of 25,000 tons and a probability of 40,000 tons of bran annually to the Singaporean firm, is an act akin to dumping refuse in a dustbin kindly proffered by a foreigner.

We have no hesitation in branding that deal with a foreign firm as a treacherous act of betrayal of our national interest to an agency of foreign imperialism. The commitment to supply the mill with wheat imports is not hedged with any conditions relating to price of wheat. We shall have to buy wheat from abroad at whatever price is dictated to us. And the world knows how wheat prices in the USA are regulated: i.e. supported at artificial floors, not only by giant business combines but by the Government of the USA itself. The interests of developing our agriculture, of building self-reliance for economy and assuring our famished cultivators of a reasonable standard of living have been entirely subordinated, if not sold out, for the prospect of lucrative profits for foreign arms and a handful of native parasites.

Will Prime Minister J. R. Jayawardene have the courage to examine the truth of what we have said and scrap this treacherous business deal before it is too late?

NEXT WEEK

- ① WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS
 - ① SADAT'S COUP—3
 - ① INDO-CHINA TANGLE
-

NOT AN APOLOGIA BUT A CLARIFICATION

Export Of Manpower

Sometime ago *Tribune* made an appeal to its readers to canvass advertisements for the paper. An old and long standing reader brought us an advertisement a fortnight ago which we publish on the last page in this issue. It is, as readers will see, an advertisement calling for applications for jobs in Saudi Arabia.

Tribune has so far not concerned itself with Sri Lankans who went abroad for employment. We were aware that many technically qualified persons have sought asylum in employment abroad. This was the brain drain, his had begun in the years after 1956 when Sinhala Only was enforced as the sole official language and English was dethroned even a second or third language. The brain drain became worse after 1960, and though there was a slight slowing down from 1965-70, it became a tidal wave after 1970. All the measures the UF-SLFP government took to check the brain drain was futile and were often unjust and unprincipled. A very large number of *Tribune* readers abroad today are people who were carried away in the different waves of the brain drain from this island and are now either permanently or temporarily living abroad. We have sympathised with their plight and have hoped that conditions would make it possible for them to return to their homeland, not merely in retirement but also for employment.

But employment in the petrodollar rich Middle East is a question that *Tribune* has not examined so far. We were aware of the controversy about some aspects of employment in the Middle East but we did not want to be drawn into it without acquainting ourselves with all the facts. We did not want to accept this advertisement before we knew what employment in the Middle East really meant. We did not want it said that the advertisement had made us susceptible to a particular way of thinking.

No sooner we received the advertisement, some of our investi-

gators went out to ascertain basic facts relevant to the question, and after we had satisfied ourselves that any sane person should support every effort to find employment for even a small fraction of our unemployed (variously estimated from 1.2 to 2.2 million) in Saudi Arabia and other oil rich Arab countries—or anywhere else for that matter.

It will be a long long time before Mahaweli or the FTZ can absorb even a small number of the presently unemployed, and the Government would do well to consider the feasibility of exporting the manpower of a part of the unemployed—until the country develops adequately to provide them jobs.

Export of manpower—especially brawn-power—needs processing. The youth have to be taught English without which no employment will be possible in the Arab countries or in a large number of other countries—otherwise it must be French or German. Furthermore, the Government should organise crash vocational training to enable these youth to acquire technical skills wanted in these countries.

There has been talk that Government should "take over" the business of selecting recruits for employment in these Arab countries. The "take-over" stink destroyed the last government and there is no doubt that if the government "takes over" this business only UNP stooges and catchers will be selected whether they are proficient in English or have the necessary skills. Better qualified candidates will be overlooked for political considerations. Foreign employers will not want a sectarian government agency to recruit its employees. We say this not because the advertisement we carry is from a private operator, but because we are convinced that if the government "takes over" this trade it will kill the goose that is already laying golden eggs—and if the export of manpower is properly organised the golden eggs will be plentiful. But a government monopoly in recruitment will sound the death knell of this export.

These are a few of the questions we have so far considered, but our investigators are looking into all controversial matters that have been raised and about which we will have something pertinent to

say in the coming weeks. There are questions whether the export of manpower, especially brain power is in the interest of the country; there are doubts about the terms and conditions of employment in Arab Countries; and a whole host of allied questions.

Sensational stories, have appeared in the daily press about the life and working conditions in some of these countries. As this has become a major question of urgency to thousands of youths in search of employment, *Tribune*, will devote space and attention to these problems. —Ed.

+ +

WHAT THE COUNTRY

NEEDS—2 (part I)

A Sound Educational Policy

by R. Kahawita

This is the first part of the second instalment of Mr. R. Kahawita's series about a Sound Educational Policy. The second part of this instalment will appear next week. The first instalment in this series appeared in the *Tribune* of September 24, 1977.

"What the Country needs: A sound Educational Policy to develop the Personality of the future citizens and to meet the demands of the development of the Country.

R. Kahawita

SINCE THE INSTALLATION of the new Government in the seats of power, three far-reaching Policy Statements on Education have been made by the new Minister for Education. They are:—

- (a) School-going age has been reduced from 6 years to 5 years.
- (b) The old public examinations, G.E.C. (O) and G.C.E. (A) have replaced the H.N.C.E., with international acceptance of the standard and quality of the former two examinations.
- (c) The standardization scheme has been discontinued thus plac-

ing the student achievements as the yard stick to qualify for higher education.

These amendments and changes in the educational system is in keeping with the "United National Party Programme of Action for a Just and Free Society. (What this means to a Free Society is covered in a pamphlet issued by me—"Observations and Comments". Copies of this pamphlet can be had at 286, Duplication Road, Colombo for a one rupee stamp.

To continue from where I stopped in Part I of this article:

After fifteen years of the "School-takeover" and after putting our children through that period of experimentation, what has the Sirimavo Government produced? An indisciplined, demoralized, cultureless, uneducated, irreligious automaton, who now fill our halls of education and employment bureaus. This has been admitted by the arch policy-maker herself (already referred to in Part I). Thus this verdict by her alone, is sufficient cause to demand by the parents and the devoted educators for the appointment of a Presidential Commission to report on the education policy system and content of education from the School take-over to date. We will then know the damage done by the UF partnership to our younger generation. This was my concluding observation in Part I. It will also give a clue to why the people of Sri Lanka behave like beasts periodically since the so-called "Bandaranaike Policies and Principles" were introduced into the administration. What they are, there is no written evidence to enlighten the inquirer even though Mrs. Bandaranaike said (a few days ago) at a public meeting that these principles and policies will live in the hearts of the people in spite of mud and wattle Statues of Mr. S. W. R. D. are destroyed by irreverent and irresponsible youths. These youths are her own creations nurtured and brought up into manhood by the so-called Bandaranaike Policies and Principles, which destroyed the denominational schools and with it the religious and moral fibre of the new generation. It is the conduct of the products of nationalised schools that forces the University Authorities to close the Campuses more often than they are open.

It is strange that the parents, the teachers, the denominations so far, have not raised a cry of despair and made a concerted demand to stop the rot that has eaten into the moral and religious character of the children. (Of all the denominations only the Muslims objected to the teaching of communism in the school instead of religion and religious practices. They saw the sinister move of the UF Government and raised a voice of alarm. All others were silent and exhibited a very tragic indifference to what was happening to the schools and school population. Is it because, having begotten the children and having handed them over to the state, they were no more responsible to their future—or did not care what happened to their progeny? Are the parents also losing their faith?

OF ALL THE RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS the most understandable attitude is that of the Catholic hierarchy and Catholic parents. To them has God changed? God is eternity and so are his commandments. Man cannot change Him but man can change his own conscience. But it is not to change his conscience from the path of righteousness, that a religious environment, teaching and practice of religion are demanded of the Catholic parents. It is for this reason that the church behoves the Catholic parents to send their children to Catholic schools. It is of this fundamental rule to bring up the children in a religious atmosphere that the church has often denied the administration of the sacraments to parents who violated the parental obligation to give their children a Catholic education. The crusade to maintain the Catholic schools for the Catholic children should have been launched at the time of the School takeover and pressure maintained till "the Catholic conscience" was liberated. The Founder of Christianity said: "Render unto Caesar what are of Caesar and to God what are of God." The Christian conscience belongs to God and not to Caesar. If it is to Caesar then man is capable of murder, looting, arson, rape etc., which this country has been going through periodically since 1956 through to 16th to 31st of August, 1977 Anno Dominus.

Time has come for the Christian Parents and their Spiritual Leaders to demand the restoration of their

schools and the responsibility of teaching and training their children according to the religious principles of living and behaviour and above all to teach and practice the religion to create the "full man."

The Christians, particularly the Catholics had built and equipped first-class schools. May it be in the villages or in the urban areas, their schools were superior to all other schools and excelled in the quality of education, discipline, and management. They provided educational facilities to both boys and girls managed and inspired by dedicated teachers both lay and religious teaching orders. With the take-over of the schools and submitting to the evil forces without protest and to continue in that attitude the church also connived, so to say, with the forces of evil to destroy the Christian conscience.

It is true, education is free to those who succumbed to the new dispensation and assistance was denied to those who remained outside the Government scheme. But this does not clear the conscience of the Christian parents. The crusade to redeem the schools must be started and continued, particularly now, as the country has seen what has happened to the future generations under the National System of education. And above all the Government which relinquished office a few months ago has admitted the tragedy that has overtaken the excellent system that it was once. The new Government is more than aware of this tragedy. It is for this reason that "the JR administration" has made three far-reaching policy declarations on education spontaneously. No Government gives anything without being asked—that is why Trade Unions, Group demands, representation by associations, societies, etc. are a way of confronting a Government to get the rights of the citizens. If a Government gives anything without a demand, it does not mean it is for the good of the people neither is it for its own good. In this instance, change of policy on education is mandatory. The present administration is committed to it.

There were successive Governments, after the schools take-over but no denomination has ever asked for the restoration of the schools that were take over, not even

at a school prize-giving which used to be the traditional forum where a Government and its educational policies are put on the mat. This kind of indifference and muteness on the part of the parents is a betrayal of their progeny. Education is free, yet it is the parent who must have the last say what his child should be, and it is the parent who finally finances the free education system through various taxes and levies. Therefore his voice must prevail and in the "Just and Free Society" that "the JR administration" is going to usher in, the free expression and voice of the parent has a place of highest importance.

LET US EXAMINE what the Manifesto of the present leadership says on education and what his education policy is:—

(A) "Having accepted the ethical wisdom of all religions, Religion will be the foundation on which the education system, and the conduct of daily life will be built. To achieve the moulding of the future generations our religious precepts and principles, primary education will be conducted by various religious groups, in a national and religious environment, and make religious education an essential feature in education thereafter."

(B) The Party strategy is: "Parents to participate with the teachers to plan the education of their children. Improve content and quality of education to enable the student to develop his personality."

The former, (A) has opened the door for the parents, supported by their spiritual leaders to spear head a movement to restore their schools to them for administration and management, while remaining in the national free system.

It is within this frame-work of policy statement on education, the parent-religious leaders must agitate to get back the control and management of the denominational schools while being in the National free system. The responsibility of financing education and providing every child equal opportunities in education is the obligation of a government and it is to fulfil that obligation that the government went on a spree to take over the schools. Financing of education is one thing, management of schools through its esta-

ishment is another thing. Without full involvement of the management with the school education alone will not produce "the full man", ingrained in religious, moral, and human values. This is what happened to our schools which the new administration has realised and is determined to make a change in the educational system. The UNP has been a silent witness to the tragedy of our schools during the last seven years and it is for this reason that the party high command has put into its manifesto of May 1977 the dictum: "We shall obtain the assistance and co-operation of all religious groups to ensure that all children obtain their primary education in a national and religious environment and make religious education an essential feature in education thereafter. We shall also render all assistance to re-organize and revive the system of Privena Education." We firmly believed that all religions have contributed to the codes of conduct and moral standards that civilised nations and peoples seek to follow. The break-down of these standards and of discipline arise where the influence of the teachings of religion are divorced from the conduct of daily life. "We will seek to remedy this deficiency."

I have quoted the last paragraph, because it is almost the voice of one of our greatest educators—Rev. Fr. Peter A. Pillai, who as a lonely crusader staged a bold fight to stay the hand of Satan destroying the future generations of Sri Lanka. "The JR Administration" has offered to make amends to what has taken place. This offer is made to the Buddhists, Christians, Hindus and to Muslims. Further, the offer is to revitalise Privena Education which was responsible to build up the village life in an atmosphere of religious and moral values, long before the Missionaries came to Sri Lanka. Now it is for the parents of all children, educators and religious denominations to organize themselves and place before the Government a complete and workable scheme to take over to conduct "primary education in a national and religious environment"—and make religious education an essential feature in education thereafter." The door is open now, and if our religious leaders fail to accept the invitation we may be losing our faith for all times. And the religious

leaders would have failed in their leadership to build a religious, moral, and a just people according to the religious teachings they profess to believe.

The pattern of education to be developed by "the JR Administration" has been announced by the Minister for Education and confirmed by the Hon. Prime Minister at the Jubilee Celebrations of Zahira College last week—a college which has survived the school-take-over because they fought a recalcitrant Government to retain their rights. The guide lines enunciated by the Government are School-going age is 5 years, Public examinations are to be GCE (O/Level) and GCE (A Level) with international recognition of the local examinations, standardization of results to enter University to be abandoned and finally teaching of three languages Sinhalese, Tamil and English a must to all children. It amounts to put back education to what it was before the last Government started "experimenting with others' children". There is now real freedom in education. Thanks to the enlightened JR Administration.

Let us see now how these guide lines can be worked out into a pattern to meet the needs of our country to create a better society and to satisfy our aspirations in cultural, moral and religious values.

(To be Concluded)

+ +

SOLILOQUY

On Having One's Pockets Picked

(as dictated by the spirit that pervades pockets to Titus Handuna)

The first time my master had his pocket picked was nigh fifteen years ago when he was walking from a wedding at the Masonic Hall to a rowing club and he was wearing a suit, a single-breasted. There was a ten rupee note in the inside pocket of his coat. He had not yet come to Slave Island when he had to pass three men who were straddling the road and walking towards him. One of them bumped his chest with his shoulder,

a pardonable thing as there was not much room to pass, so close were they all, but he had not gone on much farther when he felt in his pocket and the note was not there. The fact that he recovered the note later is neither here nor there as St. Anthony has mysterious ways of returning lost goods to their owner.

On the second occasion it was about two years later, when he was looking after some boats, and he had twenty rupees in a shirt pocket to take with him to the Main Street in the Pettah. The bus going there was a little crowded and my master now leaning heavily on the man who was in front of him. When he had got off the bus and was about to enter the shop he intended visiting, he found that the notes were missing and he had perforce to return minus the goods for repairing the boats. Looking high and low was of no avail and he never recovered the money.

The next occasion was not more than a year later, and he found an oldish man with the fingers in his shirt pocket while he was waiting for a bus in Kotahena. My master lost no money that time.

Several years slipped by until we are in the times in which we are now writing. My master boarded a bus in Flower Road at the same time as two young men, one of whom actually spoke a word or so. The bus had not yet reached the Bo-tree at the junction with Green Path. when my master felt in his shirt pocket and found that the envelope in which he was carrying his money was missing, and he instinctively grabbed the man who was nearest the exit which happened to be the entrance at the rear of the bus, while at the same time proclaiming that his pocket had been picked and ringing in the bell in the bus violently with his other hand. The bus continued to accelerate, and no one took the slightest notice, least of all the conductor who was standing quite close. The bus was not crowded, although there were some people standing, including all who were involved in this drama. There was not much involved, not much more or less than ten rupees.

The man he had grabbed, who also happened to be the man who had spoken, indignantly repudiated the idea that he had picked my

master's pocket, although no such imputation had been made. his seizure by my master having been put a precaution, as he was nearest the exit and therefore the more likely to get off of all those near. While he was still protesting and my master was proclaiming that the bus should be driven to a police station, another man of a similar age to the man my master had grabbed, drew his attention to an envelope on the floor of the bus, and my master released his grip on the man he was holding to pick it up. A quick scrutiny revealed that it was his envelope and that all the money was in it. The bus continued to accelerate and the man at the exit or the entrance continued to protest, until the new man who had spoken asked the first man why he continued to stand where he was not get up into the bus properly, for he was on the step. He was quick to obey and he then shut up, which made my master suspect there was collision between the two, and that the one on the step had picked his pocket and passed the money with the same swump of the hand to the second man, who, fearing there would be a row and that the row would not be worth the money involved, had dropped the envelope after glancing at its contents. It was only when it was all over that the conductor took any notice, and that and the way that the driver had responded or reacted to the bell, which was to completely ignore it, made my master suspect that there was some collusion on the part of pickpockets and the crew of the buses.

Subsequent observation on this part of my master's seemed to confirm this. The observation was easy as my master was now very wary of pickpockets, and his attention was easily drawn to any that were likely to be so. In fact his attention became so riveted on these men, knowing their sleight of hand, and realising that a moment's loss of attention might mean their getting away with it, that the would-be pickpockets were unable to operate, and this gave my patron or master the chance to learn a thing or two more.

One was that pickpockets, on the shorter runs at least, do not pay their fares and that the conductors cannot fail to know this, I say shorter runs, for my master,

noticed that pick pockets do not stay on a bus for long, and that they get off at the most unlikely places to board another bus. He noticed that they get off at a bus stop, in the middle of no where, where no person would get off one bus to board another, that they then do a figure of eight, which takes them out of the cover at a bus stop as if they were going on by foot, but brings them in again to board another bus presumably.

My master was quite certain he spotted two lots of pick-pockets within days or a few weeks of having his pocket picked on the occasion I have just related. In fact, one of the second couples was a man he had known for years, not to speak to, but at least to nod to, if there was chance of a reciprocal exchange of courtesies. He was a Tamil lad, I believe but now a man with an extremely hard face.

Then my master's pocket was picked once again, and it gave him quite a shock because it was on a bus which leaves Colombo about 1 a.m. along a route which he travels very often. He had fallen asleep and he woke up and felt his pocket and at once realised that his money had gone. It was over three hundred rupees. He had woken up many times in the course of that one journey and so he had no hesitation in grabbing the man who was next to him, a man who could not talk who pointed vigorously down at my master's feet. When he looked, there was the envelope with the money intact, but out of its cellophane cover which he recovered, later. Once again, no one betrayed any interest until after the money had been recovered. The dumb man got off at the next halt.

+ +

LETTERS

Budget And The Bookseller

Sir,
Your correspondent TQF of Nawala has rightly complained about the sharp business practices resorted to by Booksellers. The weekend press had a defence at the booksellers by the Secretary of their Association who is himself the Manager of one of the oldest

bookshops in Colombo. H. W. Cave & Co., Ltd. where I had an even more startling experience than TQF at KVG's. A day or two before the Budget I went to Caves and saw a magnificent array of new books which had just arrived and had been price marked. I purchased two or three for my children, and went back there two days later which happened to be after the budget had been announced. Lo and behold, all these shelves were as bare as old Mother Hubbard's cupboard! On inquiry from one of the embarrassed salesmen I found that the top brass had ordered all the books on display withdrawn for re-pricing. I called the following week and found all the prices had gone up by 110-130% in a matter of ten days—far beyond my purse. What is the government doing about these anti-social activities? Why only talk of terrors to come? Why not use the big stick now and teach these marketeers a sound lesson?

Colombo.
26.12.77

C. de Z.

On Appointments

Sir,

The *Sunday Times* of December 25, carries on its last page a report of two well known sportsmen being appointed Directors of the Industrial Development Board and the Oils and Fats Corporation respectively. One wonders whether proficiency in sports is their only qualification for these posts or whether they are academically and professionally qualified and the appointments are therefore, quite in order, although one of them—Mr. Roy de Silva would be an asset to the Insurance Corporation if appointed to it.

More than one questionable appointment had been made by this government since it assumed office a mere five months ago, whilst condemning in strong language the former government both in the NSA and outside it for 'atrocious' acts committed by them, which certainly deserve severe strictures. A wrong act, whosoever perpetrates it, is wrong and never could be right. Whoever is responsible for it should hang his head down in shame. By the way, what justification was there for appointing Hettimulle Varjibodddhi Thera a Director of the SLBC. Was this

appointment sponsored or approved by the Maha Nayake Thera of the Siyam Nikaya? As a Buddhist, I am intrigued by such an appointment. Surely it cannot be said that it was made in the best interest of Buddhism!

C. E. J. Alles

113, Anagarika Dharmapala Mawatha, Dehiwela.
26.12.77

A Christian Thought

Sir,

I write this sitting alone in my room on Christmas day instead of attending service—an obligation for all Christians.

I have stopped going to church I don't think Jesus will mind. I recall, when He was dying on the Cross, His heart was heavy and He turned to His best friend and asked him: "Do you love me", three times. When He was reassured He did not want anything for Himself. He just said, "Feed my sheep". He did not say, Every week put on your best clothes, go into a select place and sing my praises. His concern was for the poor, the handicapped and the neglected. He wanted them tended. He said: "Whatever you do to the least of these, you do it for me".

Today Christmas has been prostituted into a commercial festival. It is the grand occasion to boost business. Business people, not only Christians, jump on the band wagon and shout: Do business with me for a Happy Christmas. All that Tamasha now associated with Christmas would not have pleased Jesus. He was more concerned that people be provided their needs. The first need of every human being is adequate food needed for his growth. This is fundamental, specially at the beginning of life. When the brain of the child develops so rapidly that 80% of its entire growth is completed in the first two years. If the needed nutrients are not provided then the child will remain handicapped for life, condemned to a life of retardation from which there is no deliverance.

It is known that today in the Third World (a euphemism for poor world countries) about 1000 million human beings are unable to adequately feed themselves and are condemned to brain retardation,

from which there is no deliverance. It is not good enough for well nourished people, dressed in their Sunday best, to wish them a Happy Christmas, without providing the most basic human right—adequate food. The food denied to the least of these is food denied to Jesus.

I prefer to sit in my room and ponder how poverty can be wiped off the face of the earth.

I think Jesus is nearer me than the fat cats singing his praises.

A Christian Rebel.

Colombo.
25.12.77

+

Sucker Punch

Sir,

I have rarely read a note more apposite than Jayantha Somasundaram's review under the above caption in the *Tribune* of 17.12.77.

Mixed with pleasure was pain. In Sri Lanka Left and Right are indeterminate and the knocking out of Parliament of the Left parties needs no tears. What does concern me is the mounting hardships due to rising living costs.

While the game of Parliamentary Democracy is being played, privation is mounting. Unless essential needs are provided without delay there can be an explosion which may blow up all parties.

Kumar

Colombo.
24.12.77

+

Ruhuna Campus

Sir,

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever; its loveliness increases; it will never Pass into nothingness."

Nearly a quarter century ago a film entitled "Lost Horizons" drew packed houses in our cinemas for several weeks in succession. As the film version of James Hilton's novel "Lost Horizon" it was unsurpassed for suspense and dream-like excitement. It portrayed the strange events that followed the arrival at a scheduled monastery in Tibet of a mixed party of Westerners transfronted over the Himalayas against their will in a stolen aeroplane. Nearly a quarter century later history repeated itself

when the film "Madol Duwa" was screened in our cinemas. The suspense and excitement it aroused was the same as in the case of the screening of "Shangri La" (Lost Horizon). To the many thousands of people, particularly the toddlers and teenagers, who saw the film it was a thing of beauty and a joy for ever which lingers and increases in one's imagination.

"Enchanted Island" has been selected as Sri Lanka's entry for the International Film Festival and Trade Fair in Madras in January 1978. This film based on Martin Wickremasinghe's "Madol Duwa" sub-titled in English and in Eastman colour has been screened in Belgrade's television. Shangri La is an imaginary place but Madol Duwa is real and has a local habitation and name, namely, Koggala. Its windswept and foam lamed peaks and the pure unadulterated sunlight and air are unsurpassed anywhere in the island. Today it is in the same condition as it was kept after World War II when it was a sea plane base—a rugged plain with disintegrating concrete runways planked by an unkempt natural inland lake and island on one side and by the ocean waves on the other. It needs only the "Midas" touch of a landscape artist to restore it to the enchantingly beautiful natural setting it was during the boyhood of the author of the novel.

Foreign tourists and the tourist industry have been quick to gauge its potential. The foreshore will suffice for their purposes. The immediate hinterland, lake and island must be preserved as a national heritage for the benefit of the youth of our nation and what better purpose can these be put to than to site the Ruhuna Campus? Up to 1976 the principle as well as the practice have been to establish campuses in the metropolis and regional capitals where population and schools are densest but alas! not today.

Today like rice, campuses are politics and an elected representative of a southern electorate who has no roots in Ruhuna appears to insist that the Ruhuna Campus be sited in an obscure village in the outskirts of Matara, namely Kekenadura within easy access of Dondra electorate, instead of Mone-ragala, Tissamaharama, and Galle—the ancient capitals of Ruhuna and

Tangalle (Hambantota) district which can not only provide lovely sites but also has the honour of having provided the majority of the 10 giants and the rank and file of Dutugemunu's army which liberated Anuradhapura more than 2000 years ago and until the 13th century AD provided the life line of the Sinhala nation and therefore it merits precedence over Matara on historical grounds.

Not all the population of Ruhuna are descendants of later date nomadic and fisher clans. The Ramayana thus describes Lankapura, the earliest capital (since 2375 BC) before Kataragama, Tissamaharama, Mone-ragala and Galle:

*"Beyond the sea my Lanka stands
A glorious city fair to see
As Indra's Amaravati".
"Royal Lanka's glorious town
A city bright and rich, that showed
Well ordered streets and noble
road." etc. etc.*

Rather than the degradation of ancient and historic Ruhuna by cheap wattle and daub and cadjan lecture halls and halls of residence in an obscure village in proximity to Dondra electorate as proposed in unseemly haste it is more honourable to deny Ruhuna any campus at all until eternity but this view cannot be put across to our revered PM his party, the Opposition and the people of Sri Lanka who have a sense of justice and honour because the news papers appear to be aiding and abetting this proposed degradation.

R.W.W.

5, De Alwis Avenue,
Mount Lavinia.
23.11.77

+

Medical Faculty Admission

Sir,

Long before this year's A. Level results were published there were several reports in the newspapers that the Minister of Education was in touch with the University authorities to see whether the yearly intake to the two medical Colleges in Colombo and Peradeniya could not be increased. He should be commended for taking this step. The Minister and the Minister of Health have realised that the medical personnel are hardly adequate to man the medical services and unless

timely steps are taken the services could very well grind to a halt what with the large number of doctors resigning from the Health Department to go abroad or to set themselves up in private practice.

The statistics are alarming. For about 200 doctors who pass out every year as doctors 150 leave the Department after the completion of five years or otherwise.

The case for a larger intake into the Medical Faculties are strengthened by two other valid reasons.

(1) The intake of students for medicine has remained static for nearly 15 years. The proposal to set up two new campuses at Matara and Batticaloa will result in more students being admitted for arts and general science. But the intake for Medicine ever since the Peradeniya Faculty for Medicine was set up has remained the same—175 in Colombo and 75 in Peradeniya.

(2) While that has been so, the number of students qualified to do medicine has increased at least four times from what it was about 10 years ago. The total number of passes in arts and science was about 10,000 eight years ago. Three years ago it was 15,000 two years ago 18,000 and this year 27,000. There was some relief for those wanting to do general science and arts with the opening of the new campuses, but not for those who are qualified to do medicine. The nature of the competition to fill these 225 places at the Medical Colleges can be judged from the fact that about five years ago, four plain passes in the four science subjects were quite sufficient. Now, two or even three credit passes are not going to help one to be admitted for medicine.

The two Medical Schools are very keen to maintain proper standards. That is to their credit. Lack of accommodation is a real difficulty, especially in the Colombo Medical College. Lecture halls were not built to accommodate large numbers. But in a crisis like this we expect the Medical College to adopt a more flexible attitude on admissions.

I feel the Peradeniya Faculty can solve the problem to some extent. Lecture hall accommodation should not prove an insuperable difficulty there. Besides, work on the new hospital at Peradeniya is expected to start soon, so that clinics etc. can be arranged for

a larger number of students before long. The Peradeniya Faculty has been the "small sister" (I was almost saying the Cinderella) of the two campuses. It is time for it to grow and be able to double its present intake with increase of 50 or so in Colombo.

P. Wimalasuriya.

24, Nimal Road,
Bambalapitiya.
23-11-1977

+

Railway—Waggon And Carriages

Sir,

Your 'Brickbat' Vol. 22 No. 24 dated 3rd instant is timely, with the intention of preventing Foreign Exchange being fritted away unnecessarily.

Mr. B. D. Rampala (Retd.) General Manager, Railway was appointed advisor to the Honourable Minister of Transport, and within the space of two months had resigned. The public are unaware of his reason for making that decision. Indeed, it was a severe blow to the proposed re-organisation in the working of the Railway. On the technical side Mr. Rampala's experience and advice concerning locomotives and modifications of the now famous Rumanian coaches, cannot be assessed in a short letter.

I comment, on two proposed importations, Wagons and Carriages.

(a) Wagons move out and return from the Colombo Goods yard which extends from the Northern end of Colombo Fort Station up to the entrance to Maradana Station.

(b) Carriages move out and return from Maligawatte Coaching yard opposite the old Railway Coal Stage and the Dematagoda Running Shed.

In my opinion, after years of retirement, there is no available space for either yard to be further extended to accommodate additional wagons and coaches unless Rolling Stock absolutely unrepairable, is confined to the scrap heap. Marshalling of goods and passenger trains in the respective yards will be seriously affected causing inordinate delays in timekeeping.

Two recognised officials (men on the spot) whose advice on adequate space and congestion is invaluable to the Hon'ble Minister, must be consulted before importation of Wagons and carriages are made.

1. Depot Master, Colombo Goods yard. (D.M.CLY).

2. Assistant Transportation Superintendent (Carriage and Works) Maligawatte (A.T.C. & N. MGW.) Rolling stock cannot be confined to the scrap heap, merely to make way for new importations. Maintenance and repairs are the purview of the Chief Mechanical Engineer, Ratmalana, whose advice is invaluable. I am sure the Hon'ble Minister of Transport will seek further advice from technically qualified personnel before he makes a final decision on quantity and quality before importation.

It would then be fitting to reverse the 'brickbat' to a 'bouquet'.

Douglas John

Retired District Traffic Inspector
Railways
27A, Melbourne Avenue,
Colombo 4.
4th December 1977

+ +

**The Land Acquisition Act
(Chapter 460) Amended
by the Land Acquisition
(Amendment) Act, No. 28
of 1964.**

**NOTICE UNDER SECTION 7,
My No. LA/86**

**LANDS TO BE ACQUIRED
FOR THE KATARAGAMA
PLANNING SCHEME SELLA**

KATARAGAMA

NOTICE is hereby given that the Section 7 Notice under the Land Acquisition Act, published in Part III of the Government Gazette No. 14,688 dated 22.08.1969 and all actions followed thereafter are cancelled.

W. P. S. Jayawardhana
Addl: Government Agent
and Acquiring Officer.
Moneragala District.

26th day of December, 1977,
Kachcheri, Moneragala.

EVEREADY®

**BEST BATTERY
IN THE WORLD**



UNION CARBIDE CEYLON LIMITED

**UNION
CARBIDE**

Ceylon Tea-110th Anniversary (1867-1977)

Sir,

The 110th anniversary of CEYLON TEA brings the good news that in 1976 the "total export earnings (reached the record of) Rs. 4,707 million" (*Tribune*, 17.12.77). After 110 years, on the other hand, the PM himself showed compassion towards the Plantation Workers when in the NSA on 6.10.77, he admitted that they are "unfortunate people..brought here as slaves and continue to live in conditions far worse than other citizens of the country.." (*Tribune*, ib., p.2). That's the sad situation of INJUSTICE: there have been losses and deficits everywhere else, except in the Plantation sector through the sufferings and exploitations of the Plantation Workers, and yet, after 110 years of CEYLON TEA, after 30 years of Independence and 3 years of having become government Servants (and how useful servants), they get so little. Promises have been made once again: a new WORKERS' CHARTER, better housing, education, health service, etc., and the more socialist promise of making them "equal co-owners and copartners". Let such inspiring promises become a living moment to commemorate the 110th anniversary of CEYLON TEA and offer to the CEYLON TEA WORKERS too.. "a just and free society". Let 1978 then become a turning point in the shameful, painful, sorrowful history of the CEYLON PLANTATION WORKERS, Justice demands it.. NOW, please.

Pio Ciampa, S.J.

Estate People's Services,
Kahawatta.

Ombudsman

Sir,

Now that the people of this country have elected into power the present Government with a massive majority, it is time the Government in turn promptly looked into the grievances of the people. In that a law abiding citizen in his time of need must be necessarily freed from the merciless clutches of a bureaucrat who continues to remain unchanged even today.

To mention a few difficulties faced by a peaceful citizen, namely admission of his children to school, to purchase a property and to procure the building materials in connection with it, and other unforeseen domestic difficulties, he has on and off to face a stupid official who little cares for his earnest pleadings but pathetically turns it down with greater disappointment. Even today there are helpless pensioners who experience undue delay in obtaining their arrears. Also there are ratepayers who silently suffer the mis-doings of local bodies due to the inexplicable disappearance of their files. Above all, today's electricity bill complications where the prompt payer gets his power supply abruptly disconnected whereas the noticeable defaulter continues to enjoy regardless.

To put an end to this unhealthy state of affairs between the State and the Citizen, it is now vital the new Government bent upon a just and righteous society, seriously considered to appoint an OMBUDSMAN who can go deeply into all acts of omission and commission in respect of every citizen's day to day outcome of dealings with the State and thereby achieve appreciable success and headway to keep one and all happy and contented towards this Dharmista minded regime.

N. Sr: Kantha

Hendela.

Grama Sastra-4

The Love Of The People

by Gamiya

DICK WILSON in his *Asia Awakes* asserts that "every government in Asia has tried to create a satisfactory link with public opinion, especially in the countryside" p.193).

In fact the party manifesto of the government now in power said in clear, cold terms that it would not forget the peasant and the countryside, and when the dust of massacre '77 and of other problems has settled, we hope that questions of national import

ance like the peasantry, the worker, the racial minorities, the destitute, the 'out-castes' will be taken up piecemeal and in globo, effectively.

Meanwhile the migration from the rural to the urban seems to continue. A serious study of the causes seems needed. Once in a distant way, a few persons may come Uva's way, especially Lower Uva, succumbing as they do to the call of the poor and needy, the peasant and pauper. I met a person from Colombo who is in Buttala now. Buttala is the former Guttahalaka of the third century BC, a one-time well-known junction-village on the Anuradhapura-Magama road. I stood stock still when I saw his unassuming house on stilts in the centre of a large plain. Selfless, devoted to the peasant, he had seen how useful and necessary it is to make these people happy. Then again, six miles away from Butala towards the Wellawaya-side of the road, in scrub-jungle land by the roadside, I met a young couple

The Land Acquisition Act (Cap 460) as Amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act, No. 28 of 1964.

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 7.
Ref. No. 3/64/286
J. 71 L. 856 (VE)

It is intended to acquire the land/Lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka No. 299 of 06/01/1978 (Part III).

SCHEDULE

Name of Village Etc.:—

Godigamuwa village, Polgahawela D.R.O's Division, Dambadeni Hath Pattuwa, Kurunegala District.

Name of land:—

"Porawatta"

Plan & Lot Nos.:—

Lot No. 1 in P.P. Ku/787

H. M. W. Samarakoon

Assistant Government Agent,
Kurunegala District.

The Kachcheri,
Kurunegala.
December 22nd 1977

that had chucked up the heat and humidity of Colombo, and started life to help people. One could have battered them with questions and tried to corner them, but sincerity cannot be defeated; it shows up. The parents of these two, who are a young married couple, must surely be good courageous Christians to see that their offspring grow up and live among the simple poor of Pelwatta close to the 'pahe Kanuwa'. God is surely with them in their sincerity and genuineness as they wish to give a hand to uplift people without the lure of filthy lucre or of enrichment through adding land to land.

I once heard a trumpet-blast of an elephant in the thick jungle of Kendaganwila 2 years ago, and I stood rooted, feeling that that was the last time I would hear such sounds, for I was on my way back to so-called 'civilization' in a nearby town, but when I heard a similar sound in the daytime at Pelwatta, a few days ago, I knew there was some conspiracy of hearts between man and animal, for it was a woman, the young wife of the gentleman-farmer who assured me: "Don't worry, it is a loner (a lone elephant) that was here last night, and we scared it away by lighting six fires around our house. They seem to be getting to know us, and after all, we hurt no one and we intend hurting on one, but only helping people". Courage, daring, service, are writ on their brows: an object-lesson to the town-bogged, baggy-trousered, ex-schooler loafing the streets of downtown Colombo or Kandy.

The lure of the wild? No. The lure of people. I then knew that they had got down to their work. Making a social survey of the needs of people, they were discovering that Need no. 1 in Pelwatta is water. "O for a draught of that rich beverage, water", one could say, and another would add: "Water, water, nowhere, nor any drop to drink". Where are the village-planners and helpers? Where are the bamboo and artesian wells which the *Tribune* spoke of two or three years ago? The thirsty peasant looks up and is not slaked.

WARNING FROM MALAYSIA

On Foreign Investments, Rich Industrialised Countries And Trade (Not Aid)

We publish a report from the *Straits Times* of December 27, 1977, published in Kuala Lumpur which will be of interest to our readers.

Kuala Lumpur,
December 26.

Finance Minister, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, took to task today foreign groups and investors who practised "one-upmanship". He also warned them against attempting to be too "clever by half". Tengku Razaleigh said it was unfortunate that these groups did not even attempt to understand the socio-economic problems and aspirations of Malaysia. "They are unkind and tend to be cynical, not realising that although this kind of attitude might help score little debating points, their negative attitude could indeed become seriously counter-productive in the long term. This criticism unfortunately applies not only to individual investors but also to larger entities," he told the Harvard Club of Singapore. The text of his speech was released here.

Tengku Razaleigh said businessmen, national agencies and governments must conduct their economic relations with decorum and decency. There was no point in stealing a march over someone or engaging in back door dealings if this would cause unhappy economic relations. It would not be conducive for the more stable and viable economic relations necessary and for which there were no substitutes in the longer term. "This is why we attach considerable importance to ASEAN co-operation which we expect to be conducted in a business like manner but yet within the framework of good filial and family relations," he said. No one member of a family can hope to outdo the others every time. There are bound to be some reactions within the family sooner or later which can cause family disharmony. Family decorum should be observed so that no one

could get away with the impression that he has a right to the biggest bite at the dinner table just by trying to be smart in beating the others to the dinner table."

Tengku Razaleigh urged that the ASEAN concept be pursued not only at governmental level but also at private sector level. He said the school systems could help to cultivate a sense of co-operation and mutual respect among students, who he said, were growing up with a spirit of arrogance and were led to believe that they could afford to disregard neighbours and live in isolation. These students and even some adults, he said, naively believed that their ability to solve small problems gave them the capacity and right to prescribe solutions to bigger issues of which they knew so little. Tengku Razaleigh stressed that every country had its own ethos, problems and aspirations. We have our own views of ourselves, the world and the paths we must take. We only hope that others respect these legitimate rights and refrain from taking individual countries for granted because they think we are less aggressive than they are."

Tengku Razaleigh said it was important for investors and those within Asean to identify and crystallise their own concepts of what could be defined as their own national outlook. This would enable the countries to appreciate the other point of view and help strengthen the understanding of each other's socio-economic needs and aspirations. Tengku Razaleigh said there was no such thing as "a free and unfettered laissez faire system. Some of the most sophisticated countries that held high ideals of the free enterprise system are indeed some of those with the greatest number of legislative constraints and safeguards against the exploitative extremes that a private enterprise can bring to societies," he said. On the petroleum negotiations, he said it was necessary that any negotiations had to be tough if both sides were determined to strike a fair bargain.

Tengku Razaleigh said many petroleum companies thought they could ride "roughshod" over a small developing country with a little oil reserves and which had the "audacity" to ask for a fair deal from a big oilman of the world. As is now evident, this kind of

commercial arrogance was soon found to be out of place in the Malaysian context when we emerged as one of the few developing countries that was able to put up a strong fight and in the end obtained a fair deal from the major petroleum companies. The Malaysian David has indeed been able to get Goliath to come to terms. This proves one of the fundamental tenets of our economic philosophy—that in all our economic dealings, our national interest must naturally come first." Tengku Razaleigh said during the negotiations, foreign investors were plagued by vicious propaganda about Malaysia's economic and financial viability. Given the very powerful propaganda machinery of some of these foreign lobby groups, there were initially some adverse reactions from some investors," he said. Some of these lobbyists even used the Industrial Co-ordination Act (ICA) as a lever to promote their insidious propaganda that Malaysia was being difficult in its investment policies."

Tengku Razaleigh said he could think of no country in the world that was exclusively committed to the maximisation of economic growth at the expense of the more important social or national objectives. These objectives, he added, sought to promote overall national unity and a fairer distribution of income and welfare to the greatest number of people. No country wants a rat race, and we ourselves want to attach increasing importance to the development of a better quality of life for the majority of our people by giving them a vested interest in economic growth, a higher standard of living and a favourable quality of life. The purpose of the ICA is to achieve long-term national economic stability and viability. We are all aware that even the best of intentions and legislations would always have to be carefully monitored, reviewed and modified if the final objectives are seen to be adversely affected by unintentioned or inappropriate implementation techniques." He said the amendment to the ICA was a clear indication that the Government was prepared to adopt and introduce innovative measures to achieve the national aspirations while being pragmatic enough to be flexible and realistic in the

formulation and pursuit of its socio-economic policies.

Tengku Razaleigh said Malaysia was also becoming increasingly "disenchanted" with the international economic and financial system. We believe in international co-operation that is built on a firm and fair basis. Just as we contribute to international economic growth, we believe it is only proper that we should get fair prices for our primary commodities. The international community, and especially the industrial countries, should also play their rightful role through active promotion of fairer terms of international trade. In short we believe that the industrial countries in particular should exert a stronger political will to rapidly achieve the new international economic order we have pledged to build but which is still unable to even take off."

Tengku Razaleigh warned that the present international economic crisis could lead to an international economic catastrophe because of the consistently parochial and short sighted policies adopted by many industrial countries. The present rising trend in protectionism must stop. We must begin to move towards greater international trade liberalisation before it is too late, not only for us but for the whole world, the rich and the poor alike," he said. It is erroneous to blame the present crisis, as some Western observers tend to do, on the increase in oil prices.

"On the contrary, the economic crisis was brought about by the selfish and myopic policies pursued by some industrial countries that still refuse to accept the emergence of the Third World and its rights and potential contributions to international economic expansion and well-being." Tengku Razaleigh said small countries alone could not be expected to take the lead in trade liberalisation when the economic giants chose to continue with parochial policies. He said it appeared that the international situation might have to get worse before these so-called rich countries could be persuaded to make things better for all. He expressed the hope that history would not be allowed to repeat itself by pure default and sheer indifference. This callous attitude was clear at the recent Unctad (United Nations Conference on

Trade and Development) discussions on the Common Fund in Geneva where some of our so-called friends let us down so badly despite earlier pledges of support. We do not see the world as owing us a living; neither do we see ourselves as owing anybody a living, which is why we have always insisted on fair trade and not aid. We believe that given our economic strength and rich potential and our multi-racial society, we have a contribution to make to the world in socio-economic development and nation-building. We have and can continue to provide a worthy example of what a developing country can achieve if allowed to pursue its own destiny without interference from outside."

Tengku Razaleigh also spoke on the Government's measures to bring about a new economic policy and to build a united nation with one language, under one King and with a fair share for everyone

The Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) as Amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act, No. 28 of 1964.

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 7.
Ref. No. 3/64/329
J. 72 L. 940 (VE)

It is intended to acquire the land/Lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka No. 299 of 06/01/1978 (Part III).

SCHEDULE

Name of Village Etc.:-

Embalawa village, situated in Walgampattu Korale, Wariyapola D.R.O.'s Division, Dewameddi Hathpattuwa, Kurunegala District.

Name of land:-

"Veherabendawatta"

Plan & Lot Nos.:-

Lot No. 1 in P.P.Ku/296

H. M. W. Samarakoon

Assistant Government Agent,
Kurunegala District

The Kachcheri,
Kurunegala.
22nd December 1977

under the Malaysian sun. He expressed satisfaction that the Malaysian economy was moving steadily in the right direction despite rough weather. If our past performances in economics and finance have been impressive, we are confident that our economic potential, which is related to our strong natural resource base, will continue to be attractive. There is no reason to be less than optimistic as to our impressive economic potential and prospects for the future," he added.

+ +

REVIEW

The Agony Had Ended

by Jayantha Somasundaram

The agony that the people of Bangla Desh went through in the nine months preceding December seventy-one, was unprecedented, even in a world like ours that has grown numb to feeling in the face of man's inhumanity to man. US Congressmen Cornelius Gallagher who toured the refugee camps in India at that time, recalled that he went there thinking that the atrocities stories were exaggerated. "In the war, I saw the worst areas of France—the killing grounds in Normandy—but I never saw anything like this. It took all my strength to keep from breaking down and crying."

Out of a population of 75 million, 3 million died at the hands of the Pakistani Army while another 10 million fled, as refugees into India. Supported and encouraged by the Soviet Union, India in December seventy-one, decided to move into East Pakistan, in a lightning surgical attack. In two weeks, the Indian Army, along with the Mukti Bahini freedom fighters, had defeated the Pakistanis, and the Indians were elevated to the status of a major regional power for the first time. US and Chinese support did not save Pakistan against the immensely superior Indian Armed Forces. That December war ended the agony for Bangla Desh.

Bangla Desh is also significant, in the ending of another, different kind of agony. This pertains to the younger generation in the west, particularly the United States. The

post war generation, children of the affluent society, faced an immense trauma in the form of the Vietnam war which built up throughout the sixties.

Convinced of the immorality of the war, young people in America came out in increasing numbers to protest. In October sixtyseven 35,000 critics marched through Washington. In November sixty-nine the figure was 250,000. That October 15th had been designated Moratorium Day, and in Vietnam American GIs went onto the battlefield wearing black armbands, so pervasive was the protest movement. The campuses were the focal point of agitation. In sixty-eight 204 campuses recorded demonstrations and 22 per cent of the Harvard Seniors indicated that they preferred jail to service in Vietnam.

"We demand that no more American youth be sent to fight in a war that is helping neither them nor the people of Vietnam," cried this generation. "We have learned the lessons from Nazi Germany and will not go along with the aggressive warmaking policies of any government, even if it happens to be our own." Leaders sprang up across the nation urging protest and draft-dodging. In sixty-seven, Martin Luther King entered the campaign. In sixty-eight Yale Chaplin William Sloane and Dr. Benjamin Spock drew prison sentences for inciting draft evasion.

Disillusioned by both affluence and violence, many young people dropped out of the mainstream of social life. By sixty-seven, movements such as the Love Children, Flower Children, Gentle People and Free People had emerged. At time they identified themselves with concrete political action against the war, but this was not always the case. They were motivated by escapism rather than rebellion. "The notion that the great plastic society is the only reality and anything other than that is a drop out culture is one of the crazy, insane, lunatic notions indulged by the leaders."

Rejecting the values of contemporary society they fashioned a counter-culture. Music and fool-

the-eye art became bizarre, or to use the coined phrase, psychedelic. Psychedelia is the intensely pleasurable perception of the senses. "Something beautiful man, like it blows your mind."

The search for meaning, denied by existing culture, continued. They went in for drugs and meditation. In that turbulent decade, eight million Americans some as young as 12 years, sampled marijuana. Drugs became the sacrament in a new religion of love and freedom.

The counter-culture expressed itself in dress. The new wave began with the mini-skirt which Mary Quant introduced in London in 1960. By sixty-four Rudi Gernreich had come up with the topless bathing suit. Attire became increasingly outrageous. "We are going through a period of extreme exhibitionism," wrote Margaret Mead. The Beatles had already set the trend in unconventional hair styles. Then came the Twiggy-look. It included off-beat colours, fabrics and unexpected shapes. This was the beginning of the mod-look. Finally there was the funky-look.

While most wrote off the new generation some serious observers refused to discount this counter culture. Traut bishop James Pike said, "there is something about the temper and quality of these people, a gentleness, a quietness, an interest—something good" At first they rebelled and protested against everything, seeking to draw attention to themselves by being incorrigible. Then they evolved their own escapist counter-culture, finally they began to fashion concrete and mature political responses.

The festival at Woodstock in sixty-nine, was a mirror of this period. Here on a 600 acre dairy farm in New York, 400,000 people between the ages of 15 and 25 years, spent three days participating in a concert that dramatised their values. It was probably the greatest event in a movement protesting not merely against the war, but against all of the values of American society. But Woodstock called for an abstract peace. Two years later came evidence of a new confidence and a new consciousness. The agony of the wilderness that characterised the sixties was drawing to a close.

At Madison Square Gardens in August seventy-one, George Harrison of the Beatles, staged the Concert for Bangla Desh. Its significance went beyond the charity aspect. This performance sent shock waves throughout American youth. They were able to grasp in clear terms the issues involved in Bangla Desh and react in a positive constructive manner.

George Harrison introduced not only Western celebrities like Leon Russel, Eric Clapton, Ringo Starr and Bob Dylan, but also the oriental musician Ravi Shanker. There was incredible rapport established between audience and artists. Performers like Billy Preston underwent emotional hysteria on stage, as he intoned that "we should love one another, because that's the way God planned it."

Finally George Harrison sang the epic ballad "Bangla Desh". This song which pleaded for the 'people of Bangla Desh' and the other compositions as well, were elements of this generation's Mass, in which the suffering people of the world, particularly the people of Bengal, were the Eucharist. And one could sense that a bewildered American generation, despairing after Vietnam, were reaching out to clap the chalice. The agony had ended.

REPORT

CINTA Confident Of PM's Promises

At the Annual General Meeting of the Ceylon Institute for National and Tamil Affairs (CINTA) held recently at the Salva Mangayar Kalagam the President in the course of his address, reviewing the activities of the Institute in the past year and the tasks for the future, said the greatest National event of the year was the change of Government led by Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, the President of the UNP, which came in with a massive majority unprecedented in the annals of Parliamentary Government and for the first time too the TULF became the majority party in Opposition. Its leader Mr. Amirthalingam assumed the role of Leader

of the Opposition. His party was returned with a mandate for self-determination and a separate State comprising the traditional homelands of the Tamil-speaking people.

The Jayawardene Government heralded the dawn of a new era in the history of the Island, assuring all citizens a just and free society. If his Government keeps faith with its promises repeated so often publicly, it will undoubtedly lay the firm foundation for peace, goodwill and amity amongst all the ethnic communities inhabiting this land. The PM has recognised publicly what no previous Government had before, namely that the Tamil people who are citizens of this Island have genuine and legitimate grievances which need to be remedied: that the indifference with which these grievances—the creation of earlier Government after independence—were looked upon in the past, had driven the Tamil speaking people to demand a Separate State. The Nation looks forward with confidence to the creation of that just, free and righteous society, to which the Government is committed—a Society where discrimination is its secretive, subtle and vicious forms is dead as the dodo.

Some acts of the Government, soon after it came into power have been encouraging and give the Nation the hope that it will implement its promises. One of the first acts is the removal of standardisation of examination marks against which this Institution has persistently agitated as being an immoral and dishonest scheme and it therefore expresses appreciation of a decision which has been the cause of frustration and deep resentment by the Tamil youth. The appointment of the Sansoni Commission, particularly the choice of the Commissioner, to investigate the carnage unleashed on the Tamil people in August by forces opposed to the Government to create chaos in the country and the announcement that a Commission will be appointed to investigate the tragedy which occurred in Jaffna on 10th Jan. 1974 on the final day of the IATR conference which the last Government callously ignored, and another to inquire into the shooting incident at the Puttalam Mosque, reveal the PM's anxiety to heal the wounds which are sore and remain festering in the hearts of the Tamil-speaking people.

On the National level, the trilingual educational change, the revocation of the Criminal Justice Commission Act as an obnoxious and immoral piece of legislation and the amendments to the Administration of Justice bill are acts that have won the plaudits of the people. The provision for Plantation workers of Indian Origin to exercise their votes in Local Government Elections is a democratic measure which they had been unjustly deprived of hitherto.

Many problems await remedial action for which solutions may not be possible over-night, but solutions based on justice must be found despite obstructive forces. This Institute has confidence that the PM who has the qualities of firm and just leadership will achieve what has been promised, and it awaits with eagerness those provisions in the Constitution which will ensure to all its citizens justice—social economic and political—liberty of expression, equality of status and opportunity and the right to enforce such rights by judicial process. Let us therefore be patient and await the fulfilment of the promises of the PM which will lead to the dignity of the individual and amity among the various groups of citizens. It is a matter for great satisfaction that the TULF is co-operating with the Government in these efforts.

The election of Office bearers resulted as follows:—

- President: Mr. V. Manicavasagar
 - Deputy Presidents: Mr. A. C. Nadarajah
Mr. C. Ranganathan QC
 - Hony. Secretary: Mr. J. K. Retnanandan
 - Hony. Treasurer: Mr. J. M. Swaminathan
 - Hon. Act. Sec. and Treasurer: Mr. S. Nagarajah
- and a Board of Management of 10 members.

J. K. Retnanandan
Hon. Secretary
Ceylon Institute for
National And
Tamil Affairs

31A/1 Boswell Place,
Colombo 6.

Confidentially

That Super-Luxury Car

IS IT NOT TRUE that political, diplomatic, commercial and intellectual circles in Colombo are still talking about a super-duper luxury car imported by a firm in Colombo on which a custom's duty of two and a quarter lakhs was paid? That the duty could well have been more if the Customs had really been tough about collecting duty in the customary Shylockian manner of insisting on every letter of the Customs Law? That the *Daily Mirror* must be congratulated for spotlighting this scandal about the import of this ultra-luxury car? That for the record, the ball was set rolling with a front-page story (Lloyd R. Devarajah reporting) in the *Sunday Times* of December 11, 1977 under the heading 241 USED CARS NET Rs. 7.2m DUTY—Rs. 240,000 CUSTOMS LEVY ON BMW? That the report read: "The 241 second-hand cars imported last week-end yielded a revenue of about Rs. 7.2 million by way of Customs duties alone. The highest duty paid was Rs. 240,000 for a BMW limousine imported by a leading local business house. The cars were all ordered before the July general election on import licences issued by the previous government. The vehicles came aboard five cargo ships including one vessel that was specially chartered from the UK—the JOHAN U—which discharged its entire cargo of 192 second-hand cars within ten hours and left the port last Saturday. Among the makes of vehicles that were imported were Peugeot 340s, 404s, 504s and a 104; Ford Cortina, Escort, Capri, Hillman Minx, Avenger, Lancia, Lancer, Morris Oxford, Renault 4, Toyota, Datsun, Austin Mini, Fiat 1600s, Mitsubishi and Mercedes Benz 220, 220S, 200, 180. All the importers of these vehicles stormed the small office of the Customs motor car appraiser, Mr. K. Balendra, who took the sudden influx of second-hand car imports in his stride. He scrutinized and processed the documents and import licences of this record import and disposed of them in less than two days. Working single-handed

he also visited the quayside where the vehicles were parked and examined the engine and chassis numbers and appraised their values and calculated the import duties, all the work being completed by last Tuesday afternoon. The staff of the Bank of Ceylon branch at the Customs headquarters also rose to the occasion and worked until 4.30 p.m. and helped all importers to pay their five-figure Customs duties so that they could clear the vehicles from the port that day itself." That the *Daily Mirror* followed this up on December 12, 1977 with the heading JUST FANCY THIS! "Just fancy this! The editorial staff of the *Sunday Times* was last Saturday swamped by a spate of anonymous telephone calls demanding them not to publish a section of the lead story which appeared under the headline '241 used cars net Rs. 7.2m duty—Rs. 240,000 Customs levy on BMW.' These anonymous callers wanted the *Sunday Times* not to publish the fact that the highest duty paid was Rs. 240,000 for a BMW limousine imported by a leading local business house. Our inquiries reveal that the car was imported by Jones International Ltd., a subsidiary of the Maharaja Organisation, and it had been cleared on a special deposit of Rs. 240,000. The question asked in commercial circles is how under the previous regime a licence came to be issued for the import of such a luxury vehicle? That the piece concluded with an Editor's Note: "Over to you Mr. Minister!"

IS IT ALSO NOT TRUE that the *Sunday Times* of December 18 published a comeback from the importer under the heading BMW AFFAIR: YOU BE THE JUDGE and it read: "Mr. V. N. Coomaraswamy, Group Director and General Manager of the Maharaja Organisation Ltd., writes: 'I have to refer to an article published in the *Ceylon Daily Mirror* of Monday, December 12, 1977, on the front page, under the caption, *Just Fancy this!* The article refers to a headline in *The Sunday Times* and a reference to Rs. 240,000 Customs levy on a BMW car and it confirms that further inquiries made by your newspaper reveal that the car was imported by Jones International Ltd., a subsidiary of the Maharaja Organisation Ltd. and that it had been cleared on a special deposit of Rs. 240,000. The state-

ment in *The Sunday Times* of a Customs levy of Rs. 240,000 on the BMW and the statements in the *Daily Mirror* of Monday, that the car had been cleared on a special deposit of Rs. 240,000 are false. At the time of the publication of this article, the car had not been cleared and duty had not been assessed. These facts could be checked with the Customs authorities if you so wish. This car was imported on a licence issued according to law for the import of a BMW car within the ceiling fixed by law. The car was first registered in August 1974 and is of a 1973 model. This, too, could be established by documentary evidence in our possession. Since members of this organisation concerned with the import of this vehicle were not aware of the false statements referred to in this article appearing in *The Sunday Times*, there was no need for any member of this organisation to make any anonymous telephone calls. Furthermore if the car was imported without the valid licence, it would not and could not have been cleared, as falsely alleged in the newspapers." That the *Sunday Times* concluded the report with an Editor's Note which read: "We publish a picture of the BMW 30 Si Model car consigned to Jones Jewels Ltd., a subsidiary of the Maharaja Organisation. The car was cleared last Tuesday from the port of Colombo on payment of a reduced deposit of Rs. 225,000/-." IS IT NOT FUNNY that the importer should want to justify this scandalous waste of foreign exchange by quibbling that at the time of the *Sunday Times* article had appeared the car had not been cleared and the sum of Rs. 240,000/- referred to in the *Sunday Times* article had not been paid? That the argument on which the importer relied was that everything had been done "according to the law?" That it was an "old" car—a 1973 model registered in 1974? That it is not necessary to do any sleuthing and quidnuncing to know that importers are able to get "new" cars as "old"—for the purpose of beating import laws in developing countries? That the question is not whether everything was hunky-dorily "legal" but why any patriotic citizen should want such a super-car (capable of doing a 160 m. p.h.) in poor Sri Lanka? That more will appear in this column about this matter soon?

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

For 1978 and 1979

TITLE		YEARLY	2 YEARLY
		Rs. Cts.	Rs. Cts.
Soviet Union	(Monthly)	12.00	20.00
Soviet Literature	„	12.00	20.00
Soviet Woman	„	10.00	16.00
Culture And Life	„	10.00	16.00
International Affairs	„	16.00	26.00
Socialism: Theory And Practice	„	12.00	20.00
Sputnik	„	50.00	80.00
Foreign Trade	„	60.00	96.00
Soviet Military Review	„	16.00	26.00
Soviet Film	„	16.00	26.00
Sports In The U.S.S.R.	„	8.00	12.00
New Times	(Weekly)	16.00	26.00
Moscow News	„	16.00	26.00
Asia And Africa Today	(Bi-Monthly)	15.00	24.00
Far Eastern Affairs	(Quarterly)	15.00	24.00
Social Sciences	„	34.00	55.00

*All two year subscribers will receive
a wall calendar for 1978 — 79*

People's Publishing House,
124, Kumaran Ratnam Road, Colombo-2.
Phone: 3 6 1 1 1

Immediate Employment Opportunities In Saudi Arabia In Well Established Companies

Construction Staff

1. CIVIL FOREMEN
2. CARPENTERS
3. PLUMBERS
4. PAINTERS
5. ELECTRICIANS
6. MASONS
7. AIR CONDITIONING MECHANICS
8. REFRIGERATION MECHANICS
9. OFFICE EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY REPAIRERS
10. WELDERS
11. DIESEL MECHANICS
12. HEAVY EQUIPMENT MECHANICS

Job Requirements:-

Age; 20 to 45 years, ability to speak English and good work experiences. Only those who are suitably qualified will be called for interviews.

Office Staff

1. SECRETARIES (Male & Female)
with knowledge of Stenography
2. TYPIST CLERKS (Male & Female)

Job Requirements:-

Age: 20 to 45 years, good personality and ability to speak, read and write English fluently. Only those who are suitably qualified will be called for interviews.

Terms of Employment:-

Attractive salaries. Free food and housing. Free medical services. Free Air passage to Saudi Arabia and back.

How to Apply:-

Prepare your own applications in duplicate and send them with three (3) copies of passport size photographs and photocopies of Certificates. Write job applied for on top left hand corner of envelope. Applications should reach us by 15-01-78. Address all applications to:-

THE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR LAGODAN LIMITED

(LABOUR DEPARTMENT LICENCE NO. FORTY TWO)

21, Dawson Road, Colombo-5.

CANVASSING WILL BE A DISQUALIFICATION

OUR SERVICES ARE FREE. WE CHARGE NO FEES IN SRI LANKA OR ABROAD FROM THOSE SELECTED FOR EMPLOYMENT OVERSEAS