

25TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

# TRIBUNE



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## *Role Of The Press*

Our society needs an accurate, truthful account of the day's events. We need to know what goes on in our own locality, region, and nation. We need reliable information about all other countries. We need to supply other countries with such information about ourselves. We need a market place for the exchange of comment and criticism regarding public affairs. We need to reproduce on a gigantic scale the open argument which characterised the village gathering two centuries ago. We need to project across all groups, regions, and nations a picture of the constituent elements of the modern world. We need to clarify the aims and ideals of our community and every other.

These needs are not being met. The news is twisted by the emphasis on firstness, on the novel and sensational; by the personal interests of owners; and by pressure groups. Too much of the regular output of the press consists of a miscellaneous succession of stories and images which have no relation to the typical lives of real people anywhere. Too often the result is meaninglessness, flatness, distortion, and the perpetuation of misunderstanding among widely scattered groups whose only contact is through these media.

*—The Commission on Freedom of the Press (USA), University of Chicago Press, 1947.*

**READ THE TRIBUNE EVERY WEEK**

## From Our Desk

FROM TOMORROW, Sunday, August 12, the first restriction on the use of fuel is expected to come into force when all private vehicles are banned from the streets from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. At the time of writing it is not clear under what regulations the ban will be legally enforced. Apart from price-increases which has reduced the subsidies which the government has so far footed, no restrictions have been imposed in regard to imported fuel. The Sunday ban is the first curb. What more will come is not possible to say now. But there is no doubt that Sri Lanka must cut down on the use of petrol, diesel and kerosene. The government in recent times had permitted the free imports of motor and other vehicles. Essential users of motor vehicles have now been submerged in the mass of those who have the money to import vehicles for pleasure and aimless travel. The vehicles, machines and engines used for actual productive purposes are now compelled to pay prices which can be justified only for those who own and run cars for non-productive purposes. Rationing on the basis of essentiality (for production) has not been introduced for fear that a black market will come into existence. How the government is likely to meet this problem is anybody's guess. There are many households and families in Colombo with four and five cars each. Most of them were imported for resale, but the bottom has dropped out of the new, reconditioned and second-hand market. Rationing cannot be on the basis of the number of cars owned because this will lead to a special kind of blackmarket. In any case, the Government cannot let the matter drift, because reliable estimates indicate that within thirty years or so there will probably be no oil left in the world to squander on motor traffic. Apart from everything else, it has become necessary to look for alternative fuels. The conventional combustion engine will, moreover, rule supreme for the foreseeable future. Gas turbines, fuel cells and electric motors are no match yet. And nearly half the world's known oil reserves are in the crisis-torn Middle East, so alternative energy sources are a must. Hydrogen, could it but be harnessed, would be a winner. There are practically inexhaustible reserves of it in the seven seas not to mention in coal and natural gas. Besides it generates nearly three times as much heat as petrol and could hardly be improved on for clean exhaust fumes. But hydrogen presupposes coal mined or nuclearpower generated (but nuclear power today is controversial?) Storage is an even more intractable problem, the options being gas, liquid or metallic hybrids. It may, in the long term, be a convincing energy alternative, but manufacture and fuelling likewise need clarifying. Natural gas is convenient and clean, but costly. In the past it used mainly to be a refinery by-product (that is, from the flares that were burnt like torches in the desert). It is already extensively used as primary energy being used as butane or propane for cooking and heating. The Dutch have used LPG as a motor fuel for several years. They have an extensive filling station network. LPG is a clean burner and the mixture of propane and butane that is marketed seldom if ever pinks. A 65-litre (roughly fifteen-gallon) tank lasts for about 500km (300 miles).

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## More About Poultry

LAST WEEK'S COVER PICTURE showed some young lads counting chillies. This week they are showing themselves off on a tractor at their photogenic best. The picture was taken sometime ago when diesel fuel was available more easily and more cheaply than now—cheaper because of government subsidies. Today, the situation is different. The Government does not think it wise to continue such subsidies. Diesel oil which was around Rs. 2 a gallon in 1973 now costs Rs 10/50 a gallon (and this is yet with a small subsidy). The price is likely to go up higher either when the subsidies are removed (which the government must do in pursuance of its current policies) or if OPEC pushes prices up again (because the value of the dollar drops or the industrialised countries raise the prices of their manufactured exports). The days when young farmers or anyone else were able to gallivant on tractors or other vehicles are over—and it is unfortunate that many still do, especially bureaucrats and technocrats who have official cars.

The price of diesel and kerosene, the price of tractors and other farm equipment, the price of fertilisers, insecticides and weedicides, the price of cattle food, poultry feed and all other inputs required for agriculture and livestock have gone up many times, but retail prices of farm produce have been kept low at levels that were rea-

listic when diesel was available at Rs. 5 a gallon, kerosene at Rs. 2.50 a gallon and fertilisers, insecticides, etc. etc., several times cheaper than now. That is why farmers are slowly (but surely) giving up the production of commodities like chillies, onions, eggs and broilers. The panjandrums in Colombo seem to be blissfully unaware of what is happening in the countryside as they propound theories of free (and partially controlled) imports to keep agricultural prices artificially down for the benefit of "consumers" (mainly urban). Even more staggering is the argument that such almost "free" imports (at cheap prices which other countries manipulate for dumping their exportable commodities) will induce the local producer to produce more better quality goods at competitive prices. This theory may be true if government will help the producer, especially those in the rural agricultural sector, to start, expand and improve production. But such help, in spite of big talk, has not been forthcoming in concrete terms—in any sector in sizable terms.

In the *Tribune* last week, reference was made to the manner assistance was given in India to persons to start poultry keeping. We reproduce below an article in the *Madras Hindu* of July 27 entitled PROSPERITY THROUGH POULTRY. "If you are a young person keen on venturing upon self-employment, poultry-keeping can be a sure bet among the various livestock enterprises. This is an area where the investment is low but the re-

turns are high and quick. Now, apart from the better safeguards provided by research in poultry science, facilities for comprehensive insurance cover against accident and disease are available. With the demand for poultry products ever increasing the present trend is to develop this industry on more scientific lines. 'The chicks can lead you to prosperity if only you are sincere and do your duty towards the fowls. Namakkal (in Salem district) is a shining example where the bird population is 12 lakhs against the human population of 1.5 lakhs. This was how Miss Shantha Sheela Nair, Managing Director of the Tamil Nadu Poultry Development Corporation (TAPCO), tried to bring home to a group of young men and women the unlimited scope poultry farming offered for self-employment. The 20 graduates, who had been facing the problem of unemployment for two or three years and had chosen to venture upon this industry formed the first batch of a poultry training programme for unemployed graduates which Miss Nair inaugurated. 'If the tempo of their enthusiasm continued, they will not regret their decision' says Dr. P. Kothandaraman, Head of the Poultry Science Department, Madras.

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## NEXT WEEK

**EXCLUSIVE TRIBUNE  
INTERVIEW WITH  
PRESIDENT  
J. R. JAYWARDENE**

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Veterinary College, who has organised the training at the instance of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, as part of the college's extension activity. This two-month training in both theory and practice is being conducted at the Poultry Research Station, Madras.

"At the end of their training, Dr. Kothandaraman says, the participants will have adequate skill to handle the birds in a scientific manner. They should not go in for big units right now, but start with 100 birds and gradually build up the farm. A person venturing into this field will have practically no worry in organising the unit. There are agencies like TAPCO which supply pure and hybrid chicks as well as quality feed and other inputs. The nationalised banks are there to advance the money required for the venture. The bird from its 5th month lays eggs and that goes on for another 12 months. The marketing problem is taken care of by TAPCO and the veterinary services are provided by both TAPCO and the Animal Husbandry Department. How much can a 100-bird unit bring in to the owner? After paying off all dues including loan repayments, the minimum return will be Rs. 150 a month on an investment of about Rs. 4,500 says, Mr. B. Doraiswamy, Agricultural Development Officer, Syndicate Bank. In this venture there is hardly anything the entrepreneur has to put except his personal attention. The investment comes from the bank; in respect of persons belonging to families of small and marginal farmers and land-

less labour, the Central Government grants a subsidy of 25 to 33 1/3 per cent. The bank has helped 150 persons around Madras and nearly 375 in Tamil Nadu with a total investment of Rs. 15 lakhs; its experience is that in areas where agricultural activities are limited due to soil conditions, water scarcity or other reasons, poultry-keeping has been a great success.

"When the Veterinary College advertised the first training programme over 100 graduates from Chingleput district put in their applications. However, for want of facility, the college could take in only 20 persons. The college has programmed to conduct three such courses in a year. It also has a one-month course, for one hour a day in the evenings, to help employed persons take to poultry farming in a small way as a means to supplement their income. This course is conducted for four batches of 20 persons each in a year. The interest the programme has evoked in jobless graduates has made the college to think whether it cannot take in more persons for training. Agreeing with the view that the programme or giving training to 60 graduates in a year was unlikely to have any significant impact on either the employment situation or poultry development, Dr. Kothandaraman said it would not be difficult for the university to expand the programme; but the first two or three batches would provide a better idea on how to improve the scheme. 'If there is demand the university will definitely come out with new schemes

to help more young men to stand on their own."

If concrete schemes of this kind are introduced in Sri Lanka and implemented, this country will soon be exporting eggs and broilers, after satisfying local demand. The same can be done in regard to all subsidiary food crops.

But, unfortunately, our Agricultural Extension Services are non-existent except on paper. The Livestock Extension Services seem to operate only in some areas. But the Veterinary Department is a total mess in all parts of the island. In this situation can anyone expect higher and better production? Imports will only destroy what exists, not induce greater production. It is a sad state of affairs but true.

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#### COMMENT

- Subsidies
- Press Criticism

\***FOOD STAMPS.** From September, Sri Lanka will move into the era of Food Stamps (for families earning under Rs 300 a month, or the unemployed who earn nothing) from the era of Ration Books (with subsidised rice, flour sugar and the like). Ration Books were introduced in the difficult days of the Second World War, and the UNP of D. S. Senanayake later used subsidised food through Ration Books as a social welfare measure and also a political lever to win support in elections. In 1953 the then

Finance Minister, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, had made an attempt to end the system of food subsidies and ration books, but he failed. As a result of this attempt and certain connected events, Mr. Dudley Senanayake had resigned from the post of Prime Minister. Later, Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike, as Finance Minister had toyed with the idea of ending food subsidies but it turned out to be nothing more than an exercise in thinking aloud.

Finance Minister, N. M. Perera, however, had endeavoured to strengthen his position by stressing that he had refused to give in to the IMF demands to withdraw food subsidies and devalue the currency. N. M. had hoped that some of his unconventional and unrealistic levies would more than make up for the continuing food and other subsidies. He had also tried to avoid or evade devaluation by a multi-tier system of parities—and increased FEEC rates and CRA. But all these devices had failed. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike, in the last two years after the LSSP was pushed out of Mrs. Bandaranaike 1970-77 regime, resorted to other populist gimmickry but he neither fooled the IBRD-IMF complex nor his own people. He was thrown out of Parliament at the 1977 elections together with the SLFP.

In the first twenty years of that post Second World War Brettons Wood economic system, the pundits of the capitalist hierarchy preached, and enforced in the developing countries the theory and practice of import-substitution industrialisation

mainly for a protected home market coupled with increased production for export of primary crops, minerals and the like. All this was wrapped up in a muddled Mixed Economy fantasia and sold to the developing countries (with the bait of aid) as a panacea for the poverty and the economic stagnation that imperialist exploitation had bequeathed to the newly independent and emerging countries constituting the Third World. But the mixed economy experiments based on import-substitution industrialisation (raising hopes among the poor under-developed nations of a rapid transformation into an advanced industrialised country) only accentuated mass poverty and also increased the burden of national and foreign debt. The benefits from the fanciful import-substitution industries, which were made virtual monopolies—producing poor quality goods at higher than world market prices—created a new elite, the most notorious among them being the FECS and CRA operators.

In the last two or three years of the sixties, the expectations placed on import-substitution industrialisation had been blown sky high. And in the beginning of the 70s the Brettons Wood system and its elaborate machinery of Reserve Currencies to service international trade and commerce had become an anti-diluvian anachronism. Various attempts were made to patch up the Bretton Woods system with a basket of floating currencies, sale of gold and other more unconventional and

questionable practices, but all in vain. OPEC became inevitable in this situation and it has become a global force. There is no substitute for oil, but there is a new technological revolution ahead to reduce or eliminate the use of oil consequent on the discovery of other sources of energy. But this is a long way off.

The Jayewardene Government came to power in an era of floating currencies and a new capitalist punditry of the virtues of an export-oriented economy. The Jayewardene government had no option but to accept the new version of IMF-IBRD package with its new velvet gloves that indicated that the ending of all subsidies was no longer insisted upon as a precondition for any capital and aid inflow. Sri Lanka has had two years of this kind of package where the subsidies have been eliminated in calculated bits and pieces. New subsidies were often introduced to soften the removal of decades-old subsidies.

The Jayewardene Government also came to power at a time when the capitalism of the West was anxious to prevent the developing nations of the Third World into drifting into socialism because they had no viable alternatives in a world of limited options. The Jayewardene Government was in a mood to capitalise on this. And as *Tribune* has often said in the past Sri Lanka has now become a guinea-pig showpiece of a Western experiment to save Third World countries from socialism. As a result of this western desire to sell a new version of a leap-frogging panacea into capitalist

plenty and prosperity, Sri Lanka has been blessed with a quantum of investment and aid that the capitalist West would not have dreamt of giving a small Third World country a decade ago. And the Jayewardene Government has also raised the correct slogans—human rights regular elections, democratic institutions independent judiciary etc. etc.—to cajole those in the West who nurse illusions of the kind of “democratic governments” that would benefit Third World countries. The options for the West are also limited after the total failure of the cold war and military bloc (CENTO, SEATO, ANZUS) dictatorial regimes they had favoured earlier.

In 1978, half the ration books to distribute subsidised foodstuffs, about 7.5 million of them, were withdrawn. Part of the subsidies withdrawn were given as increased salaries—the increase not given because of increased production or productivity but to meet the higher prices triggered by uncontrollable inflation. Other subsidies—not through the ration books—were slowly withdrawn at different times during the year in piecemeal fashion. And now the remaining 7.5 million (or thereabouts) ration books are being replaced for those below the subsistence income level. All other so far subsidised items have been and are being de-subsidised—milk foods, flour, petrol, diesel (soon kerosene also), transport. The poor have been promised a further salary increase and food stamps. How will this work?

The subsidy on flour (and

bread) has been further reduced, but even at the new price of wheat flour at Rs. 1.30 (up from Rs. 1.12) there is still a subsidy. At present world market prices of wheat it should be sold at Rs. 1.65 a lb. And when our government jacks up its prices to that level, world prices would have moved to Rs. 2 a lb.

This UNP Government has not lucky. It ventured on this economic experiment when global inflation has reached unbelievable proportions. The OPEC oil war versus the rich West has hit the poor developing nations below the belt. A world recession or depression seems to be round the corner.

A recent issue of the *TIME* magazine spotlighted Sri Lanka as a supreme show-piece or a country that has awoken from a long socialist slumber desperately seeking capitalist solutions to underdevelopment, stagnation and poverty. Can the *TIME* or the West carry Sri Lanka safely through the economic and energy holocaust that is fast enveloping the world? Sri Lanka is a small enough baby for the rich West to carry, but will it? And has Sri Lanka generated enough production to weather the coming storms?

\***MAHAWELI.** There is a current story that the world renewed firm of consultants, NEDECO, employed to investigate the Accelerated Mahaweli Programme had completed their work last week, that is, the report was ready for delivery on August 1. The story goes that the Report was actually delivered to Government (or the relevant authority in dhar-

mista) only on Monday August 6. The most intriguing part of the story is that every expert who had worked on the job and signed the Report left the island on or before Sunday August 5.

Was this only a coincidence? Or, was it deliberate and calculated action on the part of these experts to escape any possible lobbying by interested parties who may want parts of the report changed, altered or amended before it was released to the parties mainly concerned with the report, viz., the Governments of the aid donor countries and the World Bank?

All this may be empty, gossip, but there is no doubt that the NEDECO report was commissioned by the Government of Sri Lanka in conjunction with the government of several aid giving countries. The Government of Sri Lanka will be well advised to release the full report to the public. It would be unwise to rely on the “leak” of favourable purple patch extracts in the government media—because unfavourable critical evaluation may be “leaked” by other parties to the Opposition.

NEDECO experts have been on the job for many many months now and the report is eagerly awaited—for NEDECO is a prestigious firm of world repute. Rumour has it that there will be great reluctance on the part of some people to release the full report—its contents are said to be explosive dynamite. Anyway as a curtain raiser there was a conference at the Mahaweli Development Board on Thursday of August 2, President Jayewardene thought it necessary

to reassert that the government will be able to complete the Accelerated Mahaweli Programme on target—August 1983. Mr. Jayewardene also said that there was an element of truth in the recent press criticism of the Mahaweli programme. "We have a free press in our country," said President Jayewardene. "There were certain criticisms recently about the Mahaweli Programme. I think there was an element of truth in them but we shall not be scared of criticisms because if by 1983 we have achieved our targets then we can be happy that we have provided the best answer to our critics."

All democrats who believe in democracy will welcome the President's response to criticism—press or otherwise. Other government spokesmen on Mahaweli should follow the President in this matter—instead of indulging in cheap jibes, abuse and arrogant disdain in their feeble and ineffectual attempts to reply to such criticisms. The NEDECO Report will be yet another answer to critics—if it is published in full.



**BELIEVE IT OR NOT**

## Tea Plantations

**LONESTAR MILLION.** Another million rupee question is whether the commission to the local agent of Lonestar (raw cotton deal) has been paid even before the shipments were fully completed and before the claims, if any, were settled. This is

in respect of the order which is believed to be in dispute, where legal opinion (it is so reported) has been sought as to whether a suit can be filed. Three of the four shipments are said to have come—the fourth is still due (will it come at all?) But, has the local agent been already paid the Rs. 1.6 million which is the full commission payable after the entire order has been delivered to the satisfaction of the buyer? If a dispute does arise and a claim is made (and the fourth lot is shipwrecked), can anybody be surcharged for the commission paid out prematurely?

**\*WASTE AND TEA.** According to planting gossip a Canadian Team of so-called Experts came out on a feasibility survey on the Tea Rehabilitation Project. One of these so-called Experts and Accountant by the name of Potter introduced a system of accounting that all planters pointed out was not suitable as it did not exercise sufficient control and even the person on the plantation would not be able to know how much has been spent on any particular item till the end of the year. This was blindly accepted by the Corporation and forced on the Plantations. That initially a sum of Rs. 45,000/- was spent on printing forms for this system. That after two months it was decided to do away with this system and revert to the system previously in operation. Plantations have now been asked to frame the 1980 Draft Estimates on the old system whilst planters are aware that a different system of Accounting and Estimates are to be introduced

from 1980, which means that the Estimates planters are now asked to frame will have to be re-done. Money has already been spent on printing forms and more money will have to be spent on printing the new forms. Millions of rupees will be spent by way of Staff Salaries and overtime in duplicating work. Is this not an act of sabotage? The 1979 Estimates for running of the Plantations have still not been approved. Some Plantations have still not submitted the 1978 December Accounts. The Corporation itself has still not finalised the 1975 accounts.

Moreover, the Running Chart for vehicles provide a page every day—30 pages per month—when a sheet is enough for a month. Plantation vehicles do not make hundreds of trips a day. Imagine how much could be saved by way of paper and printing if the book is done away with and sheet is introduced.

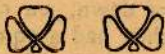
**\*PLANTATION HIGH JINKS** In a rather small property in the up-country now under the aegis of the LRC there is an organisation of comparatively elephantine proportions where they have the following impressive staff and logistical support: (1) One Director; (2) One Deputy Director; (3) 15 Clerks; (4) One Jeep; (6) One large House for an office. All this paraphanelia is only to "oversee" a miserable 300 acres or so of tea land—which can be more easily and cheaply looked after by a smaller outfit.

Then there is the very curious case of a Superintendent of a Janawasa who actually overlooks only 85 acres tea



but is said to overlook another 177 acres tea—when in point of fact, he does not, as the 177 acres Tea estate which has a factory of its own, has its own Superintendent. Thus one Estate is blessed (or cursed?) with two Superintendents! It would be interesting to know what the COP of this 177 acres is. A breakdown of the 'ghost' Superintendent's total emoluments would show that he draws the following in cash: Salary Rs. 1400/-; Provident Fund 10%—Rs. 140; Clerical allowance Rs. 400; House Rent allowance Rs. 140; and finally two bungalow labour allowances, Rs. 600; making a grand total of Rs. 2,680 per mensem. It is not known whether, in addition, some check-roll labour find their way to his bungalow for periodic stints.

### Sherlock Holmes



FROM THE TRIBUNE

## 25 Years Ago

August 7, 1954

Sir John Kotelawela's latest pronouncements on his attitude to SEATO and his approach to international problems creates a most alarming situation. A Premier with the views of Sir John Kotelawela is a menace to the safety and the welfare of the country. By wanting to align himself with international Yankee puppets like Mohamed Ali of Pakistan in order

to drag Ceylon into the Anglo-American war bloc, Sir John forfeits every right to be Premier of this island. When Sir John became Premier he outlined his foreign policy at a meeting celebrating United Nations Day on October 24, 1953. He declared that Ceylon "will pursue the path of peace and that she would establish the "closest possible alliance with our immediate neighbours with whom we have historical, cultural, geographical religious and linguistic ties." He went on to say that Ceylon will adhere to a policy of strict neutrality and "will not get involved in the cold war of the East and West or in any other power blocs."

**Camouflage.** There is no doubt that Sir John began his regime with intentions of following the policy of neutrality laid down by Mr. D. S. Senanayake and adhered to by Mr. Dudley Senanayake. But, his recent declarations leave no room for any doubt that he has abandoned this policy of neutrality. His occasional protestations in favour of a policy of neutrality and non-involvement in the context of his actions, assume the sinister form of a deceptive camouflage to mask an attempt to drag Ceylon into the more of American power politics. This desire for another Conference of Colombo Powers seems to be only to bring pressure on others to join SEATO, and not to consider a Nehru Plan with China as a signatory of an Asian Security Pact. Sir John has said that he would have nothing to do with China or Russia. Mr. Dudley Senanayake has come out strongly

against this policy of being dragged into the American bloc. He is equally decided that Ceylon should not fall in to any other power bloc. Mr. Dudley Senanayake is very strongly in favour of the policy similar to that of Pandit Nehru.

**Unanimity.** This is one matter on which the vast majority of the Members of the Government Parliamentary Party and the entirety of the Opposition seem to agree; that Ceylon should follow a policy of neutrality similar to that of Nehru and India. The whole country, except for a few Washington patriots in our midst, are solidly behind such a policy. There is no doubt that Sir John Kotelawela is not in sympathy with such a policy. It is known that he makes no secret of his contempt for Nehru's policy of neutrality. In these circumstances, when it is abundantly clear that Sir John's views are contrary to those of the vast majority of the people of this country, both with the Government and the Opposition, the best thing he can do is to quit the office of Premier. Unless of course, he will immediately purge himself completely and unreservedly of his shortsighted and suicidal attitudes with regard to SEATO. Ceylon must refuse to have nothing to do with this attempt to make Asia an arena for war so that Dulles and Eisenhower can get Asians to fight Asians for the greater glory and profit of the munition-makers and multi-millionaires of the USA.



TRIBUNE, August 11, 1979

## Social Confrontations And Economic Development

by Dr. M. L. M. Salgado

A recent development, perhaps during the last decade and more so during recent years, has been the establishment of a number of new garment factories in the Ratmalana, Katubedde areas. Originally, over a decade ago, well-known shirt factories spread on old Airport Road, Ratmalana and in Attidiya Road and its environs, while Velona was a long established textile factory in the environs of Katubedde, close to Moratuwa. Velona now monopolises in the manufacture of a variety of male and female garments from hosiery and gauze banians and other female garments from undies to bell bottoms. Recently, since the demise of Mr. Ruskin Fernando, the Velona Complex has expanded, both along Galle Road and towards the West along De Mel road. What was once a sleepy unromantic village area decades ago, has now been replaced by an active and enterprising industrial complex, giving employment to a large number of females. These girls come from suburbs such as Piliyandala and Kesbawa and even from Panadura and Korallawella. What were isolated shirt factories such as DIA and HENTLEY have now spread to other areas as DUMEX along Attidiya Road at Ratmalana. These have now specialised in the manufacture of shirts of well known brand names, both for local consumption as well as for export.

Within barely one year what was once Lady Catherine Estate of the De Soysa family, has now become the busy of modern multinational Sri Lanka combines, manufacturing garments for export and a little for local consumption. These factories give employment to battalions of young girls. Recently, along Telawala Road (Maligawa Road) leading to Telawala village on the banks of Bolgoda river, there have sprung almost overnight the factories of a well known Sri Lanka-Japanese complex. Another large new impressive Garment factory has sprung up at the well known MALIGAWA once the feudal residence of the De Soysa family of Moratuwa. Similarly, along Angulana Station Road, another Sri Lanka family combine has spread their well established industrial efforts in consolidating the sites for new factories for the manufacture of garments, mostly for export. THE LABOUR FORCE is mostly feminine, and employment has been made available to hordes of teenage girls who come to work fitting into a rigorous and strict routine and time table, where punctuality is demanded with vigour and day and night shifts variegate the landscape of Ratmalana. The day shift starts between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. and while on my morning walk along Maligawa Road, past Nelumpura Housing Estate and the numerous factories, small and big, that dot the landscape, I have with delight viewed the aesthetic landscape of well dressed, some in mod style, some with lips painted, but

most of them badly shod, (perhaps shoes are comparatively costly) decent looking self-possessed girls, from modest middle class families, rushing to work in friendly groups, with little time to gossip, to be in time, after travelling in sardine-packed buses, which stop at "Belekade" bus Halt. The girls present an everchanging and bright social confrontation with the old society. Whatever prudish parents, holding to the well-meaning ideals of their grandmothers of a forgotten age, barely three decades ago, may say, these girls give the picture of self-discipline, self-possessed females, able to look after themselves and should be a pride to Sri Lanka's new social complex.

There are however problems—perhaps problems within problems. When they leave their homes in the early hours of dawn, we may wonder if they had a square meal for breakfast, Sri Lankan style, of hoppers, or quickly gulped down scraps of bread and pol smabol, sufficient to provide adequate energy to work at modern machines turning out textile garment of varied hue, from frocks to blouses, minis to midis and maxis, of new and sprightly designs, that have to offer competitive markets and discriminating foreign customers of the European Economy, in West Germany, Belgium and Holland, and to the presiding Panjandrums of Brussels, and Bonn, or even the US market now flooded by Taiwan and Hongkong, and perhaps Malaysia, before Katunayake's Free Trade Zone, was dreamt of.

Perhaps under the scintillating make-up of these young girls, young and attractive, well dressed but not well shod, with lipstick and mod hair styles hurrying hastily to work, and being warned by supervisors if late, to be punctual to the dot, and warned to complete their 8 hour tasks to rule, and earn either a bonus for efficiency, or a reprimand for unsatisfactory work, there may be many a damsel, cases of ill-fated human females, with Sri Lankan blood, in their veins whose dietetic calories are below the minimum standards fixed by nutritionists. The redeeming feature is a cup of free tea at the canteen, fortified with a few slices of bread and dhal, or cheap snacks supplied above cost to stimulate the human machine to efficiency.

IT IS A COMMON SIGHT to see most of these teenagers carrying their lunch parcels, perhaps a rice and curry packet, prepared in the early hours of the morning by a tired mother or sisters, at the hour when the Koha breaks the monotony of dawn by its song that the days of hard work have begun and the solitary female, rushing to work with her grub, is perhaps the only breadwinner of the family of 5 or 6 humans enduring the rigours of an exacting cost of inflated living. There may be many rushing to work with but a cup of tea washing down a thin slice or two of bread, purchased the previous evening and flavoured with watery gravy of the previous night's scanty dinner. In most cases, I often wonder, between the flowered gar-

ment, and the tight fitting bra, below the make up and powder, and finger nails sometimes polished and painted red, many a fair damsel rushing for work after dawn has very little energy at the end of the day even to drag her wearied limbs home, to travel in a crowded bus, do a necessary bath, or a wash and brush-up, and sit to a more substantial meal than she had the whole day, prepared by a servantless doting mother or a grumbling sister, anxious for the delayed arrival of their bread winner the mainstay and supporter of the family.

There are also a quite a number, I am told, who are boarded in numerous overcrowded boarding houses, in the neighbourhood of Katubedde-Piliyandala road, and along Kaldemulla Road and a few in the more prosperous houses of Nelumpura Housing Complex and Lady Catherine Housing Estate in the vicinity, 4 to 5 in a room, not adequate for even 2, ill furnished human hovels some of them, reminding us of Charles Dicken's description of sweated labour, or of Beatrice Webbs studies of the East End of England in her time before the Fabian Socialists and Sidney Webb joined in Social studies of the poor, sweated labour in England supported by Charles Booth.

Usually the day shift ends at 5 p.m. but quite often the night shift ends at 10 p.m. as female workers cannot be made to work after 10 p.m. While thanking for small mercies, one may wonder whether under our social conditions, even 10 p.m. is not

too late for our young girls to return home, more often late and alone, unless a parent meets them at the bus stop. At 10.30 p.m. it is a common sight at the Kotelawalapura Bus stop to see young girls waiting to catch an overcrowded bus home may be at Piliyandala and or Kesbawa, or even Panadura that these girls have to travel to, and on the following day sometimes come for a morning shift the following day. It is also not an uncommon sight to see prowling "tigers" in the form of prowling sexy devils following these young hardworked girls, so called long haired mod boys, attempting to delude these girls only anxious to get home early and not waste their time on flirtatious diversions.

IS IT NOT TIME for a reassessment of the social, labour and human conditions under which female workers in Garment Factories work, considering the very large number of such breadwinners involved. This is a task not only for State Organisations such as the Labour and Social Service Departments, but more so for private religious and social service bodies such as the YWCA, the Salvation Army, Buddhist Women's Congress and also organisations of Catholic Convents and Nunneries, Women's Welfare Societies whose social conscience may not have been pinched by the sight of these working girls, who look well dressed and happy below whose breasts there may be human hearts that palpitate and tremble within the webs that are in-geitably caused by managers and supervisors whose

dictum is efficiency and a low cost of production to enable their masters to compete in a highly competitive, yet profitable, export market.

There are several human problems. Are the hours of work suitable for our female teenagers? Commencing work at 8 a.m. with a short break for lunch, barely supplying adequate calories for a full 8 hour day of soul destroying machine work, and finishing at 5 p.m. may be reasonable as far as the 8 hour day goes. But what about the shift where young teenage girls work till 10 p.m. beyond which Labour Regulations do not permit night duty? For our girls, mostly coming from some distance, and from rural areas such as Piliyandala, Kesbawa and even from Panadura, by the time they manage to creep into an overcrowded bus, and reach home, often alone, it is quite late. Invariably a family member an elder brother or parent meets them at the bus stop to escort these youngsters home. It is necessary to protect them from marauding bag snatchers particularly on pay day.

There is talk, may be partially true, or perhaps exaggerated that Supervisors are slave drivers, that welfare amenities are minimal that bonuses are grudgingly paid. While there certainly are very commendable employers, managers and supervisors, there may be black sheep whose treatment of female labour, is not by any means exemplary. I am however aware of a proprietor of a large garment factory complex who is not only an exemplary pay master, but

also appreciates human values. Having started at the bottom of the ladder, he has a human heart and realises that the pangs of hunger must be first met if labour is to do a full day's turnover, I have seen at midday the van arriving at the canteen door with lunch served on plates, and tied with another plate above.

The happiness and sustenance of many a home depends on the earnings of these female workers. It is a social duty of those better off and of the state and of social service organisations such as Lions and Lionades, and Rotarians to fill this urgent social need. Surely in Sri Lanka, with its high standard of higher education among women, there may be a Beatrice Webb, who can give the lead, and a Charles Booth to finance the good cause and lead a movement for social and welfare studies for social welfare for female labour.

It was Charles Booth's "*Life and Labour of the People in London*" which set the pace for such reforms as have been suggested in this paper that set the pace for Social Reforms and labour legislation that brought forth Beatrice Webb to the forefront, and join Sidney and Beatrice Webb.

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#### NONALIGNED NEWS

by Aquarius

● Western Media ● Kam-  
puchea ● Pakistan ● China

The Havana Summit is only three weeks away and it will not be long before the Western chorus begins that the

Non-aligned Movement is about to fall to pieces riven with disputes, quarrels, ideological differences and big power politics.

Many Western countries now claim that they have "changed" their attitude to the Non-aligned. In the bad old days, not so very long ago anyway, they admit they had overtly condemned and ridiculed the Movement, but many now admit that they covertly tried to de-stabilise the movement by all the clock and dagger tricks of the trade which are now a matter of historical record. There is no doubt that governments in the West are more discreet and careful than before in talking about the Non-aligned Movement (NAM). A very careful protocol is maintained.

But the newspapers and news magazines of the West show that there has been no change. Take the *TIME* of June 18, 1979. Under the heading WHO'S NEUTRAL? NONALIGNED NATIONS SQUABBLE, the *TIME*, went to town with the old message of John Foster Dulles—only in language refined to soothe Third World susceptibilities. For the record, the *TIME* report read:

"The last triennial summit of nonaligned countries ended three years ago with heavily ideological attacks against Western imperialism but little evidence of genuine progress toward Third World unity. This year's summit, scheduled for September in Havana, with 93 countries eligible to attend, appears to be breaking down even before it begins. At a

preparatory conclave last week in Sri Lanka, squabbles over almost everything delayed the start of the planning conference itself. Armed troops, called up by the government to guarantee the conferees' security in Colombo, appeared to be needed mainly to protect the delegates from each other....The conferees also bickered over Cuba's role as host of the Havana summit and wielder of the power that goes with it. Because of its African ventures and close ties with Russia, Cuba was regarded by some as the paradigm of the aligned nation and therefore out of step with the non-aligned world. They feared that Cuba would seek to conduct the Summit to a Russian tune and continue doing so during the next three years, since it is customary for the host nation to act as chairman of the non-aligned nations co-ordinating bureau between summits. To critics, that was a little like putting the fox in charge of the henhouse. China, which is not a member, perceived Cuba as the Soviet Unions' tool to wreck the non-aligned movement.....If history is any guide, delegates will spend endless hours in argument: what is and is not an aligned nation? Has the movement lost relevance since it was started in 1955 by India, Yugoslavia and Sri Lanka? Has East-West detente rendered nonalignment useless. No, says Sri Lanka President Junius R. Jayewardene: non-alignment is an even more necessary device to 'pursue evenhanded relationships' while 'carefully avoiding the

in the context of rivalry between powers.' That pursuit can be tricky at best, disastrous at worst, as the non-aligned nations struggle merely to align themselves to talk about it."

One does not have to hold a post-mortem to show that the *Time* only revealed the old Western imperialist cynical arrogance that the poor developing nations of the colonial world were lesser beings not capable of uniting or doing anything else without quarelling or squabbling. John Foster Dulles must have jumped with glee in his grave to see how the black natives were behaving without the white masters. The *Time* report is certainly not a true or objective report of what took place in Colombo.

One cannot expect anything positive, rational or objective from the Western media. Even now, the Western media talks of the Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea as an outcast and leper—although it had pilloried the Pol Pot regime when it was in power. Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew and a few others are still breathing fire and thunder against Vietnam and the new Kampuchea. But Japan seems to have adopted a more realistic attitude. V. T. Sambandan, reporting to the *Madras Hindu* on July 19, under the heading **INDIRECT JAPANESE RECOGNITION OF THE HENG SAMRIN REGIME:** said 'An unofficial Japanese trade mission is visiting Kampuchea tomorrow, the first from a non-communist country since the coming into power of the Heng Samrin

Government in January this year. The 30 member delegation of the Japan-Kampuchea Trade Association is to identify items, means of settlement and shipment and also look into the possibility of signing a trade agreement between the People's Republic of Kampuchea and Japan. Though Japan recognises only Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea the informal approval of Government to the trade delegation is interpreted as a *de facto* recognition of the Heng Samrin government, especially if an agreement is signed. The trade mission follows a two day visit to Kampuchea by a Japan Communist Party team early this month during its visit to Indo-China. The JCP supports Heng Samrin government....The arrival in Phnom Penh of the Japanese mission is the continuation of the Japanese tradition of carrying on trade even with countries which it does not recognise. However, the sending of a trade mission barely a month after the Foreign Minister, Mr. Sonoda said Japan did not consider the presence of the Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea as legitimate seems to indicate that Japan has come to the conclusion that Heng Samrin's Government is in control of the country..” The western media has not given any publicity to this visit. It does not suit them now to say that the Heng Samrin government is in control or that the Pol Pot “guerilla war” is only fictional.

Even Pakistan, once closely allied to the West, has begun to complain about the Western news media. The

Embassy of Pakistan in Colombo issued a statement on July 31 on the question of PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAMME IS FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES ONLY.

It said: "On Sunday (29th July 1979) a few newspapers in Colombo had published reports about Pakistan's nuclear programme based on false and tendentious reporting of some foreign news media. These reports are baseless and the *Eight Days* (London weekly) article which has been quoted is a prime example of the sensational and carefully orchestrated propaganda campaign launched against Pakistan's peaceful nuclear programme. This article made the wild and reckless charge the Pakistan was producing a hydrogen bomb. It is a pure figment of imagination run wild; no work on fusion technology is being conducted at PINSTECH. There is a small research reactor there which is being operated under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards since 1963 and its regular inspection. No Pakistani had ever worked at the Almelo plant, nor had access to it. This had been confirmed by Urenco itself. Furthermore, the Almelo plant produced low grade enriched uranium whereas Pakistan was charged with wanting to produce weapons grade uranium. There is nothing clandestine or ominous about Pakistan's purchases. All countries make purchases abroad for their research programme and Pakistan had done the same in a very straightforward manner. No banned item of equipment had been pur-

chased by Pakistan in foreign countries. The report that a site near Multan or Chitral or in Baluchistan had been chosen for a nuclear blast was utterly false as also the statement that the explosion was scheduled to be carried out in autumn this year. Pakistan is committed to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the unassailable right of all States for equal access to peaceful nuclear technology. Pakistan is poor in fossil fuel and would be spending this year on import of oil nearly 950 million dollars out of its total export of 1450 million dollars. Hence it vitally needs other sources of energy. *The massive and malicious propaganda campaign is aimed to tarnish Pakistan's image as a peace-loving country, to deposit it as the transgressor and thereby to stop it from exercising a sovereign right. It is surprising that not a word is being said or printed about more than a dozen other countries which are carrying out far more advanced nuclear research which are not open to inspection. Nor any interest is being shown in the hijacking of a consignment of uranium some years ago and no notice is being taken of unsafeguarded reprocessing of plutonium in Israel and the method of enrichment of uranium perfected by South Africa. Pakistan's nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes only and her record shows that she has all along taken initiatives in the international forums to control the danger of nuclear proliferation.* Such initiatives include proposals for the establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone in South Asia, gua-

rantees for security of non-nuclear weapon States and a joint declaration by the countries of South Asia renouncing the manufacture or acquisition of nuclear weapons. Pakistan has nothing to hide and is prepared to accept international inspection of her nuclear research facilities in addition to existing international (IAEA) safeguards on Karachi reactor and in respect of the reprocessing plant, provided this is on a non-discriminatory basis."

With Pakistan's break with CENTO and its application to join the Nonaligned Movement, the campaign in the Western media to tarnish the image of Pakistan has increased.

Whilst the Western news media attempt to paint the countries of the Third World in a sorry light, it is interesting to examine how China has recently responded to the activities of the non-aligned Movement. Many commentators on international affairs have recently paid a great deal of attention to the attitude of China to the Non-aligned Movement (NAM). For many years, China had ignored the non-aligned movement as such. Now, with the abrogation of the Treaty of Friendship (Defence and Military Co-operation) with Soviet Union due to come into effect in April 1980, observers wonder whether China, which now claims to be a developing Third World country, will not take the initiative to join the Movement itself. These observers point to several developments to show that China seems willing to con-

sider a request from some of the founding father's to come into the Movement as a guest or an observer.

The first major achievement of China's diplomacy in recent times was to normalise relations with Yugoslavia after years of estrangement. Yugoslavia was accorded special privileges on the limitless Chinese market as a gesture of this new friendship. China has also taken concrete steps to normalise relations with India, but this has not been easy in view of her occupation of a sizeable part of Indian territory since 1962 and also because she continues to build strategic roads across the Himalayas and the Karakorum right up to the Indian border. Indian leaders have made it clear that they are willing to talk, but that no settlement or normalisation would be possible until China vacated the illegal occupation of Indian territory.

China has also wooed Egypt with a great deal of success. Even at the risk of antagonising the Arab world, China has increased its ties with Egypt and has even agreed to deliver military supplies and spares (e.g. Chinese made MIG 21s) to the Sadat regime. There have been reports in some Arab papers that the Deputy Prime Minister of Egypt, whilst on a visit to China, had been willing to sponsor China's entry into the Non-aligned Movement. But neither Cairo nor Peking had thought that the Camp David Accords and the subsequent Treaty between Egypt and Israel would evoke such hostile reactions against Egypt in Arab countries.

Today, Egypt is politically and diplomatically isolated in the Arab world. Peking-Cairo agreements have little or no meaning: in fact, they will be counter-productive among the Arabs so far as the non-aligned movement is concerned.

At the time of the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned countries held in Colombo early in June this year, China delivered many lengthy sermons and exhortations on "true non-alignment" and tendered advice on what and whom "genuine" non-aligned countries should avoid. This, many observers felt, was Peking's way of feeling the ground regarding the chances of the possible participation of China in the NAM after 1980. The pro-Peking paper, published in Hongkong, *Ta Kung Pao*, had editorially stated that after China gets rid of the Treaty of Friendship with Russia, China, "as a Third world country would also become a non-aligned country."

The abrogation of this Treaty is no doubt regarded as the removal of a major obstacle in China's march toward non-alignment. But in this, China is mistaken—if one takes the views about China in many non-aligned countries. It was not the Treaty of Friendship alone that stands in the way of China's participation in the NAM. Much of Peking's foreign policies are incompatible with the principles and aims of the Non-Aligned Movement. China's support for NATO and the American presence in Asia, and es-

pecially in the Indian Ocean, have not done China any good among the non-aligned nations. China has even given her support for the creation of SATO in the South Atlantic which would include South Africa, despite the attempts of the Non-aligned Movement to demilitarise the Ocean and make it a zone of peace. Reports have appeared that China was willing to collaborate with UK, US and other NATO powers in hostile surveillance activities even against neighbouring non-aligned countries.

Though China pays lip service to disarmament and denounces the arms race, China has not so far joined in the would struggle for Disarmament. On the contrary, China in pursuance of its concept of the inevitability of a new world war, justifies the arms race and actively participates in it, and calls upon advanced Western powers to transfer modern arms and sophisticated technology to China under various pretexts. Because of this insatiable desire to bridge the technological gap in armaments, China finds herself in the company of the worst enemies of non-aligned movement and the forces struggling for national liberation.

China befriended and has consistently supported the Pinochet Junta in Chile. China has also discontinued aid to the major liberation movements in Africa and Latin America and in many instances (e.g. Angola) it extended assistance to their enemies. Observers believe that such actions by China in Africa and Latin America helped and accelerated the

establishment of diplomatic relations with the USA and the increased collaboration with the rich Western powers. In her activities in Africa, China continues supporting splinter groups not recognized by the OAU, such as the UNITA, FNLA and the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, thereby siding with the racialisists. Significantly after Deng Xiaoping's visit to the USA, the political vocabulary of Chinese propaganda dropped all the words that condemn Smith's racialist regime, while the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe which is fighting against the racialisists' domination in Rhodesia is hardly mentioned at all. In her policies in Latin America, China continues to forge stronger links with Pinochet's regime in Chile, exchanging visits, and at the same time is increasing its attacks on nonaligned Cuba.

China attacks non-aligned member countries like Cuba and Vietnam and insists that they should be taught "lessons," and maintains the friendliest relations and closest collaboration with the big imperialist and racist powers which are the avowed enemies of the Nonaligned Movement. Unless China is able to effect major and drastic changes in her foreign policy, she will be as far removed from the NAM as any Western Power.

But the way the Western media presents China today is vastly different from what it did only a short time ago. And what it said then and what it says today is only to achieve the sectarian objectives of the West—it has little relevance to truth or reality.

## A LETTER FROM DELHI

### The Spectre Of Destabilisation

from J.M.

New Delhi, July 25.

The spectre of destabilisation is hanging over India now. The menace of the Skylab by-passed the Indian sub-continent. But the fallout from the smog off the imminent destabilisation is real. The inhabitants of the second most populous country in the world cannot escape troublesome times ahead. It is ten days since Morarji Desai resigned as the Prime Minister of the Janata Government on July 15, under great pressure. His government was faced with a no-confidence motion tabled by the Leader of the Opposition, Y. B. Chavan, when the Parliament began its monsoon session. It was an act of bravado on the part of Chavan. He belongs to one of the two Congress factions and little did he anticipate that this move would have a catalytic effect later on and topple the 28-month-old crisis-ridden Janata Government.

On July 9, the opening day of the session, nine members of the ruling Janata party led by the intrepid joker, Raj Narain, crossed the floor and groped for seats among the Opposition benches. Raj Narain, formerly a Socialist leader, wrestler, party-breaker and a leader of one of the constituents of the Janata Party (the Bharatiya Lok Dal) had earlier resigned from the Janata Party executive as a result of disciplinary action

against him due to his anti-party activities. In recent weeks, he had been carrying on a virulent campaign against the Jana Sangh, another constituent of the hotch/potch Janata Party, notorious for its communalism, Hindu revivalism, obscurantism and power hunger. Raj Narain had also been consistently campaigning against Prime Minister Morarji Desai's alleged collusion with his son, Kanti Desai, a wheeler-dealer ever prone to shady dealings during the last two decades.

Dissidents turned deserters began swelling up in number with each passing hour, corroding into the absolute two-thirds majority of the Janata Party in the Parliament. On the opening day, Janata's strength stood at 302 in the lower House (Lok Sabha) of 539 with five vacancies. Desertions acquired the snowball effect and on the second day when the no-confidence motion was sought to be taken up, the Janata Party majority tumbled down to a bare three. Efforts were made to come to terms with other parties. As horse-trading was resorted to deserters began leaving in groups.

THE OBDURATE DESAI refused to see the writing on the wall and asserted that he would not knuckle down to political blackmail. This provoked Ministers to resign. The more Desai insisted on being unruffled and believing in his destiny, the Janata Party collapsed. George Fernandes, the one-time Socialist leader, who used to hold the city of Bombay to ransom with his crippling strikes and who was the leader of one segment of the Janata Party



and the Industries Minister, spoke for one whole hour defending the government on July 12. And three days later walked out with his group. In a letter to the Prime Minister, he wrote: "During the ten hours of the debate on the no-confidence motion, I was the only member of the Cabinet to defend the government's performance. And everyone knows that I did it to the best of my ability.... Since you are insisting on holding on to the government which has lost majority support, I have no option but to resign from the government. I did my moral duty to defend the government when the House, when the government, enjoyed majority support. I am now doing my moral duty by resigning from it when it has lost its majority support and, therefore, its right to rule. I am herewith submitting my resignation from the Janata Parliamentary Party." There was no mystery about the desertion of the Janata Party by the Socialists for early this month they had a convention in Delhi at which they advocated realignment of forces and linkages with like-minded forces outside. The Socialists were also bitterly critical of the Jana Sangh domination in the Janata Party. The Socialist Party, which was the first to forego its identity to merge with the Janata was now the last to regroup itself. Possibly, inspiration must have come to George Fernandes from Willy Brandt the former Chancellor of West Germany and Secretary-General of the Socialist International. He is a close friend and men-

tor of George Fernandes; and Brandt campaigned for Fernandes during Indira Gandhi's emergency period. Brandt in an article published in a Swiss journal (*L'Impartial*), early this month condemned Morarji Desai's government for its repressive and obscurantist policies and for not carrying out the grandiose promises made in the election manifesto of the Janata Party. Fernandes pretended to be embarrassed by this article but all the same took the hint. After all he is the stoutest defender of the Siemens deal with the public sector in India.

**THE STRANGE SPECTACLE** of the Ministers with Cabinet rank deserting the Desai Government reached another high when H. N. Bahuguna, the Petroleum and Chemicals Minister, walked out of the Janata Party and issued a statement. Here are a few excerpts and they deserve reading for Bahuguna was a stalwart of Indira Gandhi's government at one time and he formed the Congress for Democracy with Jagjivan Ram, only to merge with the Janata: "The nation is facing a great peril today. Frequent and prolonged communal riots have shattered the faith and confidence of the minorities in the government.... This crisis of confidence amongst the minorities is only but a very important aspect of the general climate of frustration, confusion and lack of direction which pervades all round.... The Harijans have been victims of untold atrocities.... The working class is up in arms against the government and its wrath is mo-

unting every day.... Regional forces are raising their heads and secessionist activities are on the increase in the North-Eastern Region. Inflation threatens to overwhelm the economy and the middle classes are suffering under the crushing weight of mounting prices.... The recent revolt of the security forces has raised serious questions about the survival of the democratic system.... The country has reached the precipice and courageous action is needed to pull it back from the brink."

More revelations came from Jagjivan Ram, the Harijan leader and Deputy Prime Minister holding the portfolio of Defence: "The current political crisis concerns not only the fate of the Janata Party but has serious implications for the country, bringing as it does a real probability of political instability.... Not only Harijans but all weaker sections, especially in rural areas, have been subjected not just to deprivation of rights but violent atrocities. We have not been able to restore confidence in them.... The people are greatly concerned over the acute and steep rise in prices, some of which they attribute to our economic and fiscal policies.... Disruption of industrial production and even of public services is becoming widespread because of our failure to win the confidence of the working classes.... Administrative weakness, verging on near-collapse, is visible all round.... The virus of leaderlessness and disruption has entered even police services...." Turning to the foreign policy of the Desai Gov-

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ernment, Jagjivan Ram said in his letter to the Prime Minister: "In the matter of foreign policy too, impromptu reactions or belated responses have threatened to alienate friends, such as those in the Arab world, to cite only one instance. In the name of genuine non-alignment, some of your statements have had the effect of giving it a definite tilt and of dilution of established and cherished policies." These are the candid comments of a septuagenarian politician, who did a quick walkover from Indira Gandhi's government to join the Janata. It must not be forgotten that he too has a son, whose bedroom pictures with his mistress, were sold at news-stalls for Rs. 100 a dozen. His involvement in shady defence deals have not been denied.

THIS COLLAGE of quotations is intended to provide a cubistic portrait of the Janata Party, which was brought into power because of the wrath of the people against Indira Gandhi. But for the 800 odd days it has been in power, it had been a cabalistic conglomeration of warring cliques. Let the great self-righteous, self-proclaimed Gandhian Prime Minister be judged by his fellow ministers. Now, one more excerpt, and it is from Madhu Limaye, a Socialist and till recently a General Secretary of the Janata Party. This is what he said: "What is happening is nothing less than the disintegration of the Janata Party .... The Janata leadership allowed a party within a party to function. (This is a reference to the Jana Sangh ...J.M.)...

He (the Prime Minister) is not an ordinary mortal and cannot think of human approaches and human solutions. He is a superman in direct communication with the God Almighty. It is, therefore, not possible to have any dialogue with him...In my opinion, not only must the Janata Government go, the Janata Party must also break up. If the creation of the Janata Party was a historic necessity for the purpose of defeating the Emergency rule of Indira Gandhi's dictatorship, the total break up of the Janata Party is the historic necessity now. Without this break up it would not be possible to fight the virus of communalism or provide an alternative government." There cannot be a greater indictment of the Prime Minister and his rule. Yet, the Prime Minister dillyed and dallied and finally tendered his resignation as the Prime Minister on July 15. It was a clever manoeuvre on his part. For the next day the Parliament was adjourned sine die and he did save his face by not being voted out of power. He held on to the trump card of being the leader of the Party's Legislature Party thus preventing Jagjivan Ram or the Janata Party President, Chandra Shekhar from offering to form alternative government.

The leader of the Opposition, Y. B. Chavan, when invited to form a government, indulged in the game of numbers with his cronies (the anti-Indira Gandhi (Congressmen) and finally declined the offer. Raj Narain, the long-time laughing stock of the

Janata Party had the last laugh as he toppled the second Prime Minister of India, the earlier one being Indira Gandhi. It was he who filed the election case against Indira Gandhi having contested against her and this led to the Allahabad Court verdict, which was the source of all trouble. Again in 1977, it was Raj Narain who defeated Indira Gandhi in her home constituency of Rae Bareilly. Now having formed the Janata (Secular), he went about trying to claim that his Janata was the genuine one and also the funds and flag. But it is Raj Narain's nature not to be a leader by himself. He can only be a Sancho Panza to a Don Quixote, whether it be the late Socialist leader, Dr. Ram Mahohar Lohia or Charan Singh, the founder of the BLD. Charan Singh, whom once Jawaharlal Nehru described as "a man of the 17th or 18th century" created the cocktail party of Bharatiya Lok Dal out of kulak leaders belonging to the Jat community, private entrepreneurs of the conservative Swatantra Party and Socialists like Raj Narain. It was his party's flag with the agriculturist with a plough within an industrial wheel that he lent to the Janata Party when this ramshackle party was formed in 1977. Since then he has also been a claimant for the prime ministerial gadi (chair).

In 1978, he resigned as Home Minister and called his fellow ministers a "bunch of impotents" and later stage-managed one of the biggest peasant rallies in Delhi on the occasion of his 75th birthday. Subsequently he rejoined

the Desai Government as the Finance Minister but with the promotion as another Deputy Prime Minister, with Jagjivan Ram also promoted as another Deputy Prime Minister. This shameless politician who masterminded the toppling game, disowned Raj Narain publicly as part of the game and now has become leader of the Janata Secular. He has fully justified the title given to him, "the Father of Defectors." Apart from collusion in the toppling game, Charan Singh and Raj Narain have been responsible for unearthing details of the business operations of Desai's son, Kantilal Desai. Charan Singh as the Finance Minister ordered raids on the residence and office of an operator called Balasubramaniam, a close associate of Kantilal Desai. This Balasubramaniam, a declared tax-dodger, has been hobnobbing with the Prime Minister and his son to the extent of accompanying them on their State tours and diplomatic missions abroad unofficially. Consequent to the raids, Balasubramaniam has filed an incriminating affidavit in the court and fled the country just in time to meet Desai and his son at Frankfurt on their return journey from a visit to the Socialist countries. Once the details were revealed in the court, the holier than thou attitude of Desai will dwindle down to a petty father shielding his errant son.

**COMING BACK** to the spectre of destabilisation hanging over the country, here below is a quick survey of the political and socio-

economic situation in the country. What we are witnessing in New Delhi is an absurd political drama reminiscent of Ionesco's "Chairs" with gerontocratic politicians indulging in the game of musical chairs. And as the drama was unfolding in the Lutyens-designed Parliament Building, De hi was waterless for five days in a row because the Jana Sangh controlled Union of Waterworks Workers sabotaged the mains and the Army had to be called in. Within the last few weeks the Army has been called in more than a hundred times and not only to set right water and electricity plants. On June 1, the army had a clash with the police at Gandhinagar while disarming the latter. On June 25 an Army major and 26 others were killed in Delhi in a clash between the Army and the Central Industrial Security Force, a para-military Force set up the state-owned enterprises. On the same day another three were killed in Trivandrum when the Army had to take over the camp of the Central Reserve Police. The Army has been called to quell communal riots in Aligarh, Jamshedpur and elsewhere. This has become an endemic affair lately. As Jyoti Basu, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) Chief Minister of West Bengal remarked, "it is for-

fortunate that the military here, because of its good traditions, does not involve in the political matters." But perceptive observers are worried that some day it may become necessary to call the army to set right the political machinery based on the Westminster model. The elected representatives of the people have been unscrewing the nuts and bolts. The strategists of the political parties have been throwing handfuls of sand into the works. Will military rule find its own level here or in adjacent Bangladesh, Pakistan and other nearby countries?

At this juncture, the pundits and professors are having futile discussions quoting passages from moth-eaten books on parliamentary practices. And these were the people who hailed in 1977 the Janata Party Government as the coming of the second independence. What is its record during the two years and four months it has been in power? The wholesale price index has gone up from 177 to 1977 to 205.9 in 1979 and the consumer price index from 3-to 331. The prices of coal, cement, steel and electric power have gone up by 20 percent. In 1979, we have lost 23 million man days while two years ago we lost only 12.74 million man days. What is more in the first five months of this year we also lost a minimum of 300 people in communal disturbances. This is a sorry

tale that has been told in this letter from New Delhi. The only way of hope is that there is a polarisation of political forces. The Jana Sangh, the obscurantist political party dominated by the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh, which believes in Hindu revivalism, Hindu polity and Hindu supremacy over other communities, has been isolated. Almost all parties except those supporting Morarji Desai and Jagjivan Ram have now banded themselves together to isolate and eliminate the Jana Sangh and its diabolic parent organisation which has been identified as the chief instigator of the communal riots. Fortunately the parties and politicians pitted against Desai and his Janata Party display colours ranging from pink to deep red.



## OMAN

### Again, The Dhofari Rebellion

THE DHOFARI REBELS, supported by the PDRY (South Yemen) have reportedly renewed their fight recently against Sultan Qabus' regime in Oman. Clashes between the rebels and Omani army units have taken place in several places in Dhofar in recent weeks. The renewed fighting came almost three years after Qabus declared that he had put down the rebellion, with the help of

the Iranian army, and had forced the remnants of the defeated rebel force to retreat to the PDRY. Following the suppression of the rebellion, Sultan Qabus took great pains to win over the inhabitants of Oman's Dhofar Province (which borders on the PDRY), particularly by carrying out development projects in the social, industrial and agricultural fields and making improvements in the transportation infrastructure. However, recent political and strategic developments in the ME, and especially in the Persian Gulf, over which Qabus has little control, have again manoeuvred Oman a delicate strategic situation, and have encouraged the PDRY and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman to renew the fight in Dhofar.

These developments were: (1) The upheaval in Iran and the consequent termination of vital Iranian military aid to Oman, whose army is in a relatively primitive stage of development. (2) The PDRY has recently gained an at least temporary advantage in its struggle with Saudi Arabia and Yemen. The Saudis have demonstrated a sorry inability to maintain order in the Arabian Peninsula and the PDRY has been left free to continue to carry out its radical regional policy, with USSR and Cuban aid and some apparent degree of collaboration with Libya and Ethiopia. (3) Oman, unlike Saudi Arabia, decided to support Egypt in its

ME peace policy. Although isolated and endangered by his stand, Qabus has steadfastly rejected all pressures and mediation attempts refused to implement the sanctions resolutions of the Baghdad Arab summit and foreign and finance ministers conferences (in fact, he refused, along with Sudan, to even attend). Among the reasons for that decision are Sultan Qabus' tendency to maintain a policy line independent of his neighbouring states—an earlier instance was his decision to establish diplomatic relations with the Peoples Republic of China—and his apparent hope to secure Egyptian military support, in place of the Iranians, in case of a deterioration in relations with the PDRY and a renewal of the rebellion in Dhofar.

QABUS' DECISION may have been made easier by the fact that, from the security standpoint, he is in an all-or-nothing situation. He cannot trust promises of aid from Iraq and Syria, which generally have supported the PDRY and the PFLO (Popular front for the Liberation of Oman) nor the aid of Saudi Arabia, which has been ineffective in its struggle with the PDRY. Only Egypt's Sadat is on record as promising military aid to Qabus should the need arise. In fact, in December 1977 the PDRY declared that it would establish normal relations with Oman if the Iranian army units were evacuated. But although the troops had returned to Iran at the beginning of 1979,

the PDRY has not honoured its promise. It has maintained in support, for the PFLO, whose units have been refurbished and re-organised in their South Yemeni redoubts. There are few details as to the scope and the frequency of the recent clashes—several British officers employed by the Omani army have reportedly been killed—but the Dhofari rebels, with aid from the PDRY and its Soviet and Cuban allies, could exploit the present weakness and disorientation of Oman and the other conservative countries of the Persian Gulf in order to extend the fighting.

The burden of preserving security and stability in the country is in the hands of the Omani army. This force is still undergoing a process of Arabization; it is still under British command, and many NCO's are Pakistani and other mercenary elements. The Western powers, and particularly the US, are not entirely confident that Qabas can survive unaided. They appear to have concluded that they should take unilateral steps to secure free passage in strategically vital sea-lanes like the Straits of Hormuz, where most of their oil passes. Thus, recently it was reported that the US had decided to establish a special task force of about 10,000 men for instant intervention in trouble-spots outside Europe, and especially in the Persian Gulf.

OMAN, because of its location at the gateway

to the Persian Gulf, stands to be a primary beneficiary of these decisions. In fact, only three years ago Sultan Qabus invited the US to establish an air base on Masira island, in the Gulf of Oman, after the British left it, but the US then agreed to use the island airport only for fueling and maintenance stopovers for its reconnaissance planes. Since then, Oman has tried several times to persuade the US to become more involved strategically in Persian Gulf affairs. These efforts were redoubled following Iran's withdrawal as "Gendarme of the Gulf". The recent deterioration in Persian Gulf stability could, paradoxically, help Oman to emerge from its isolation. The tension in relations between Iran and Iraq, and the statement by Khomeini's colleagues that Bahrain remained the fourteenth district of Iran, and that Iran would not evacuate the islands it had occupied in the Gulf in December 1971, have caused the Arab Gulf littoral states to renew old plans of organizing against Iranian or other expansionist aspirations in the Gulf. On the other hand Oman, determined in its policy to secure stability and co-operation in the Gulf area and to prevent Soviet penetration, has not given up on Iran. In late June an Omani delegation, headed by an assistant foreign minister, visited Iran and was received by the Iranian leadership, including Khomeini. The Omanis appeared to

be counting on a quick re-emergence of traditional Iranian interests vis-a-vis the Arab powers in the Gulf region, and hoping that within a short time the new Iranian regime would recognize the importance of co-operation with Oman to secure free passage in the Straits of Hormuz. Renewed co-operation with Iran, now openly at odds with Iraq, might serve as a counter-balance to renewed Iraqi aid to the PFLO.

Thus Oman's efforts to emerge from its isolation and to secure aid in case of an intensified infiltration campaign by the PDRY and the PFLO, depend on a number of developing situations: the success of inter-Arab efforts to weaken Egypt; Iran's chaotic passage toward a new definition of its strategic role in the region; the ability of the conservative Arab regimes in the area to organize a joint defence effort; and US determination to actually develop and deploy a post-Vietnam intervention strategy.

M.E.I.S. Vol. 7 No. 6

June 30, 1979



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NEXT WEEK

● THE SECOND WIFE

—A Short Story

From Nigeria

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## The Jansz-Daly duel

Sir,

*Tribune* of 28th July carried a letter dated 14.7.79 from John B. Kumarakulasinghe of Batticaloa. He wrote: "Those of us who are following the *Tribune* debate would like Dr. Jansz to meet Fr. Daly's (*Tribune* 7.7.79) arguments."

Our letter of 10th July, which appeared in *Tribune* of 28th July, contained our counter-argument only on the subject of Astrological Twins. In passing we may remark that in the print of that letter it was unfortunate to find that the spelling of IGNORAMUS appeared as 'ignoramous.'

In the present letter we meet the other argument of Fr. Daly, who seemed confident that it is unanswerable. In his letter of 19th June (*Tribune* 7.7.79) this was how his contention was worded:

"Besides I did mention (and Dr. Wallbeoff Jansz has ignored) what happened in Andhra Pradesh in November 1977: some tens of thousands of people lost their lives on a single night as the waves washed over their villages. It is safe to assume, without actually verifying it, that they were not all born of the same parents on the same day.... But, regardless of the time and place of their birth, or the position of the heavenly bodies at the respective times, all the persons died within a few hours, and of necessity many within any one minute. How do the astrologers account for that?"

From this it is clear that the importunate Jesuit is confident that the deaths of numerous persons at the same spot on the same occasion within a few hours, many of them within a minute, cannot be accounted for on astrological grounds. "How can it be, when all the victims' horoscopes could not have been identical?" is what he seems to imply. Here follows our reply to that.

At the time and place of a person's birth the pattern of the planets and luminaries that are situated in different positions in the heavens surrounding the earth is unique. That particular horoscopic arrangement will not happen again. Planetary position and configuration are continually changing. It is only in those exceptional cases of exactly simultaneous births at the identical movement in the identical spot that we meet with identical horoscopes. But such cases are uncommon.

It is therefore safe to assume that the horoscopes of the great majority of persons who were killed on the occasion of a great disaster at almost the same time in the same place were different. As to whether death was indicated astrologically in every one of the cases of all those numerous victims whose birth horoscopes were different, no one can say anything with assurance in the absence of their birth data.

But this much is certain. The astrological indications of death are of more than one kind. There have been instances where death was astrologically indicated in different ways in all the mem-

bers of a family that perished together at the same time. It is true that their birth horoscopes were all different, but the different post-natal celestial movements in relation to those different natal maps pointed in every case to the same event at the same time—death. A terminus can be the common focal point to which different approach routes converge from various widely-separated starting points.

We can make this point clearer to readers by means of examples, but we have to introduce certain technicalities by way of explanation. Please follow this carefully.

The middle one of the three sectors of the heavens which occupy the quadrant between the upper meridian and the western horizon is called by astrologers the eighth house. Of the twelve houses of the horoscope, the 8th is the one that is specially connected with death. Death is indicated by one or other of certain postnatal celestial movements—a direction, or a progression, or a transit, or a combination of them—which activate a basic natal affliction. This radical affliction in many cases, but not in all, is one that is denoted by an evil configuration involving malefic planets located in the 8th house of the heavens at birth. The malefic planet concerned might have been Mars, or Saturn, or Uranus, or Neptune, or Pluto—either alone or in conjunction with another malefic in that house, or conjoined with the Sun or the Moon located therein.

In the case of other deceased persons there might

have been no malefic planet in the 8th house at their birth, but instead there could have been the Sun or the Moon afflicted therein by being in evil configuration with a malefic planet lying outside the 8th house in opposition or square to the luminary that was situated inside that house.

In the case of other people the 8th house of the heavens at the time and place of their birth was unoccupied by planets or luminaries, but the point of the ecliptic that was on the boundary between the 8th and 7th houses—termed the 8th cusp—was in evil aspect with a malefic planet situated outside in square or opposition to it. Years later an eclipse of the Sun, with Mars also in close conjunction, might occur in the zodiacal place that previously happened to be the 8th cusp at birth. If such be the case, that would be a reliable pointer to a death at the time when a malefic planet next passes in transit over that particular zodiacal place, or in opposition thereto.

Death is sometimes indicated by directions, progressions, and transits which do not in any way involve the tenant, lord, or cusp of the 8th house. For instance the Sun, which is the cosmic symbol of vitality, might have been afflicted at birth by being in evil configuration (conjunction, opposition or square) with a malefic planet, neither of the two being anywhere near the 8th house of the heavens, or even in aspect with it. Subsequently the point on the ecliptic which denoted the longitudinal position in the zodiac of this natively afflicted Sun, could

be carried (or 'directed') by axial rotation of the celestial sphere down to the western horizon or down to the lower meridian. In such cases the completion of either of these movements is ominous of death.

Apart from the Sun, there is another horoscopic factor that is of vital importance, namely the point of the ecliptic that was ascending on the eastern horizon at the time and place of birth. This vitally important ecliptic point, briefly termed the Ascendant, might have been afflicted at birth by being in evil aspect with one or more of the five malefics in conjunction, opposition or square to it. Any subsequent evil direction, or progression, or transit, or eclipse involving this vital spot in a horoscopic map is a sufficiently deadly portent.

For an explanation of directions, progressions and transits—which are certain postnatal celestial movements that are of prognostic significance—readers are referred to the last in our series of eight articles on astrology that appeared in *Tribune* of 9th June. It was on the subject of Independent Ceylon's Horoscope. In this connexion the preceding article, which appeared in *Tribune* of 12th May, is also well worth reading. It was titled: 'Celestial portents of death.'

**To summarise: It is possible for the deaths of many people at the same time and the same place to be accounted for in terms of different astrological indications, each of which is a sufficiently reliable pointer to one's terminus**

**vitae, and despite the differences between the respective horoscopic patterns at birth.**

The objections raised by Fr. Daly as arguments which call in question the validity of astrology are typical of the ignorant layman. It is with a view to instructing the layman in some of the principles of this sublime science that we have resorted to certain astrological technicalities, having tried our best to use language that is intelligible to the layman. If the specialist cannot come down to the level of the ignoramus to make him understand a special subject, he must try to raise the ignoramus to the level of understanding of the specialist.

The case for astrology has not yet been proved to the satisfaction of Fr. Daly S.J. but it has been abundantly proved to the satisfaction of Fr. Cassidy S.J. It had also satisfied Pope Julius II, Pope Leo X, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Albertus Magrus, the Anglican clergyman, Rev. John Butler the eminent astronomer, Johannes Kepler, the poet and philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and all those persons who have cared to study the subject and test the claims of astrologers by the techniques they have taught.

We hope that reader John B. Kumarakulasinghe of Batticaloa is satisfied that we have presented a reasoned case for astrology, not only in our replies to Fr. Daly, but also in the series of eight articles that preceded this controversy.

**Dr. H. D. Wallbeoff Jansz**  
Colombo,  
30th July 1979.

## ON EATING OUT

### Union Place & Slave Island

**The Lanka Soya Food Products** situated at Darley Road, opposite Hyde Park offers a variety of soya bean products—cutlets, rolls, cake, and chilled soya milk and soya beverage. This place is small, clean and pleasant and deals exclusively in Soya bean products. It is certainly an enterprising venture as we have never yet tasted food of this quality made from Soya beans.

On the Town Hall end of Union Place one finds side by side **Salaka Hotel** and **Cream House** selling a variety of short eats ranging from 40 cents to Rs. 1/25; tea at 50 cents and rice and curry at Rs. 3/- and cool drinks from Rs. 1/50 to Rs. 3/-. The short-eats are fairly good but the standard of the rice and curry is poor. The cleanliness in the **Cream House** was one step better than at **Salaka hotel** probably because different types of customers patronize these two places. We cannot understand why the hotel is kept dirtier just because it is patronised by workers.

On the other end of Union Place near the Slave Island junction we found **Globe Hotel** specialising in vegetarian food. Stringhoppers were 15 cents; thosai 30 cents; vadai 50 cents and tea 50 cents. Nearby we found **Hotel de Rado** which specialises in Muslim specialities with Buriyani at 6/50 and ordinary rice and curry at Rs.

3/-. The food here is below average but the place is fairly clean, certainly better than many of the hotels we visited in Fort. Somewhere close to this is also the **United Hotel** which looks more like a garbage dump than a hotel. Though one doesn't have the facilities to sit and eat there now, this must have been possible at some earlier date judging from a dilapidated chairs and tables stacked against the walls. One really does pity the insides of anyone who buys the food parcels that are available at this place for Rs 2/75.

Situated at Kumaran Ratnam Road near Slave Island junction is **Hotel Nippon** which is one of the few hotels which specialises in Japanese food. It also boasts of Chinese, Western and Indian but the latter we learnt was available only at dinner time. There is a large dining hall with wooden paneling and decorated with attractive Japanese lanterns and the walls are adorned with paintings. Leading from it one finds Green Haven with potted plants and other type of foliage to give a pleasing effect. This place is exclusively for diners. A dead rat prevented us from having the pleasure of entering the bamboo room which we were informed was air conditioned and charged Re. 1/- extra for each dish. On the other side of the passage way is the Bar with a snack bar attached, which are both pleasant and comfortable.

The Japanese food is perhaps a little bit too bland for Sri Lanka palettes but we suppose it is an acquired taste specially because most

of these dishes contain raw fish. Perhaps the only dish which Sri Lankans may appreciate is Yakisoba which is Japanese style fried noodles with chop suey and meat. We were told by the waiter that most Sri Lankans order Japanese dishes but are unable to eat them. But we were informed that a large number of Japanese patronise this place and the food was appreciated by them. We would advise Sri Lankans to leave the Japanese food to the Japanese themselves. Soups at Rs. 15/-; fish dishes from 15/- to 18/-; Sukiyaki from Rs. 22/- to 50/- and another Japanese speciality consisting of rice, vegetables and meat cooked in whisky of which a minimum of 4 portions have to be ordered at Rs. 60/.

The Chinese food is fairly good but it is better to be cautious when ordering a Chammin which is a Nippon speciality because there is more liquid in it than one expects to see and it seems to be more of a thick soup. Another point to take note of is that the quantity is more than one bargained for and two people can easily share any one of these dishes. Special Chinese dishes include Pork Rs. 8/50 to 10/-; Prawns Rs. 9/- to 10/-; Crabs Rs. 10/- and 10/50; chicken Rs. 10/- and 10/50; Beef at Rs. 6/- and 7/-; Mutton Rs. 10/50; Fried rice at Rs. 4/50 and 7/50; Noodles at Rs. 4/50 to 7/50; chop Suey Noodles at Rs. 7/- and 10/50; Soup at Rs. 6/50 and 10/50; Cha min at Rs. 7/- to 11/-.

The Western Food leaves room for improvement but they are very generous with their portions: Appetizers at



Rs. 6/- to 11/-; Soups at Rs. 6/-; Roasts and Grills at Rs. 10/50 to 36/-; Pick of the Ocean at Rs. 7/- to 9/-; Eggs at Rs. 2/- to 5/-; Omelettes at Rs. 4/- to 7/-; Vegetables and Salads at Rs. 2/- to 6/-.

This is one of the few places which boasts of Indian food and a wide range of dishes both tandoori and otherwise are available with Chapathis, parathas and Naan (which needs 1 hour's notice) Chicken and meat dishes ranging from Rs. 10/- to 36/-.

Ordinary rice and curry is also available ranging from Rs. 7/- to 9/- and snacks from Re. 1/- to 23/-. Desserts from Rs. 1/50 to 7/- and beverages (cold) from 2/50 to 6/- and hot from 1/50 cents to Rs. 6/-

### The Gourmets

## SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

### July 26 — Aug. 1

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

CDN—Ceylon Daily News; CDM—Ceylon Daily Mirror; CO—Ceylon Observer; ST—Sunday Times; SO—Sunday Observer; DM—Dinamaina; LD—Lankadipa; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLD—Sri Lankadipa; JD—Janadina; SU—Sun; DV—Dzvasa; DP—Dinapathi; CM—Chintamani; WK—Week-end; RR—Riviresa; DK—Dinakara; EN—Eelanadu; IDPR—Information Dept. Press Release.

**THURSDAY, JULY 26:** The Government Dental Surgeon's Association called

off its work-to-rule campaign yesterday evening after the government agreed to its request for a non-pensionable allowance in lieu of channelled consultation practice on the same terms and conditions as for medical officers. Government yesterday declared all 24 Administrative Districts in the country as security areas; the order was made by the Minister of Proscribed Organisations, Mr. T. B. Werapitiya, under Section 2 (3) (ii) of the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act No. 48 of 1979. Government yesterday deferred a final decision on the appointment of a Presidential Commission and its composition as the Tamil United Liberation Front had still not stated its position whether they would or not participate in such a Commission. A second consignment of wrist watches worth over Rs. 250,000 was lost at the Katunayake International Airport this week minutes after it was unloaded from an aircraft; investigations made by the airport authorities revealed that this consignment had got lost virtually on the tarmac even before the goods had reached the Customs counters—CDN. The Cabinet yesterday decided to go ahead with the appointment of a Presidential Commission to look into the administrative functions of the country and matters of regional development in a broader perspective so that political and economic problems of all communities could be solved in a just manner; Mr. Victor Tennekoon, QC former Chief Justice, will be the Chairman of the Commission with Dr. A. J. Wilson

and Mr. A. C. M. Ameer QC as members. Five thousand families in five electorates have been settled on 2½ acre plots under government's scheme for the diversification of crops last year on 26,000 acres of uneconomic tea and rubber plantations, according to government sources—CDM. Government has appointed Wimal Amarasakera, a former government agent, as Chairman of the United Ports Authority. Opposition Leader and TULF Secretary-General A. Amirthalingam on Tuesday requested President J. R. Jayewardene to withdraw the state of emergency in the Jaffna district; his request was contained in a letter he handed over to President Jayewardene when he met him on Tuesday. Mr. Cyril Mathew the Minister of Industries in a letter to the President has said the only fair system of University admission is on the racial proportion basis; the Minister has said that by the ratio system all other irregularities could be stopped—DM. The Education Ministry has given the power to School principals to admit students for next year—LD. Over 5 lakhs of students in grade six are having an acute problem as school text books approved by the Ministry have not been printed yet by the Government Printers. Rs. 62 million worth of mineral sands has been exported this year—DV. The Ministerial sub-committee has proposed to government that the price of a gallon of kerosene oil to be increased to Rs. 7/—ATH. The government has decided to increase the price of flour to Rs. 1.75 and a

gallon of kerosene oil to Rs. 10/50—JD.

**FRIDAY, JULY 27:** The Tamil United Liberation Front will almost certainly participate in the Presidential Commission to be appointed by President J. R. Jayewardene to inquire into the problems affecting Tamil speaking people, Mr. M. Sivasithamparam, President of the TULF said yesterday; he made this announcement after a meeting of the Parliamentary Group of the TULF in Colombo, most of the members attended. The Leader of the Opposition Mr. A. Amirthalingam, met President J. R. Jayewardene and handed over a letter to him in which he alleges that there was complicity by some members of the police force in Jaffna in certain cases of homicide which had occurred recently; judicial inquiries in respect of these alleged homicides are now proceeding. Government has given the green light to India's Taj group to build a 600-room Five Star de Luxe hotel complex on 11 acres of land adjacent to the Galle Face Green, official sources said, yesterday—CDN. Sri Lankan Prime Minister, Ranasinghe Premadasa arrived in Stockholm on Thursday for a four-day visit before continuing on to the Commonwealth heads of State meeting in Lusaka. The Government's massive construction programmes have shot up the import bill to a record Rs. 7,000 million in the first four months of this year. Sri Lanka will get Rs. 127.8 million from the Federal Republic of Germany the Asian Development Bank and Ku-

wait Fund for the Urea Fertilizer Project at Sapugas-kande; the project which is estimated to cost Rs. 2.30 million is expected to be completed by 1980; Sri Lanka's contribution to the project is 6.5 million US dollars (Rs. 100, million)—CDM.

The State Pharmaceuticals Corporation has raised by 15 per cent the prices of certain categories of drugs imported and distributed by it. Employees in the state and private sectors with incomes between Rs. 300 and 1,500 a month will be eligible for a pay rise from October; this has been decided by Government in a bid to offset the difficulties that may be caused to certain income categories as a result of the introduction of the food stamp scheme. President Sanjiva Reddy today called on Opposition leader Charan Singh to form the next Indian Government and succeed outgoing Prime Minister, Morarji Desai—SU. The Minister of Education has decided to appoint an Education Service commission to handle appointments, promotions, transfers etc., of all employees from teachers to Education directors; the commission appointed in line with the Public Service Commission will be set up to make appointments etc. without political considerations. The Government has decided to double the free rice ration. The Ministry of Trade and Shipping has decided to reduce the prices of imported sarees with immediate effect—DV. The Cabinet has not been able to decide on the proposed salary increase because of the di-

ferences between top members on the amount and category of those who will be entitled to receive it—JD. The government is facing a crisis as they have not been able to find ways to bridge the budget deficit—ATH.

**SATURDAY, JULY 28:** The World Bank this week agreed to give Sri Lanka Technical and Financial assistance to help carry waters of the Mahaweli to the North, North Central and Eastern provinces; this pledge of assistance is over and above the Rs. 285 million US dollars (Rs. 4175 million) already given for the Accelerated Mahaveli Programme by the Sri Lanka Aid Consortium which met in Paris last May. Smuggling of narcotics by mail is the current menace the Narcotics Bureau of Colombo is facing—CDN. There is every possibility of the TULF MPs returning to Parliament shortly; the TULF Parliamentary group has been boycotting Parliament since they walked out of the House early this month as a protest against the re-adjustment of the boundaries of Vavuniya and Anuradhapura districts—CDM. Government has decided that the six-hour Sunday driving ban should be enforced throughout the country from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Cabinet will decide on August 1, the date from which this ban should be enforced. Government has identified four main areas for examination by the proposed Presidential Commission which is to report on the solutions to outstanding Tamil issues; they are: University admissions; Government employment; Land

settlement; Decentralisation or devolution—**SU**. Mr. U. B. Wijekoon, the new District Minister for Jaffna said that people in Jaffna are living quietly and peacefully and there is no trouble in any part of Jaffna—**EN**. The President speaking at the National Film Award ceremony held yesterday evening stated that talks will soon begin about exporting locally produced films to India and Middle Eastern countries. The IGP had decided to establish Crime Prevention Head offices in each district to combat the increasing number of crimes—**DP**. The Minister of Cultural Affairs said that steps have been taken to give a special allowance to former Artists who are unable to continue to earn a living. An agreement was signed yesterday with the UNESCO for a 14 million dollar aid programme for 1979-83 period for the development work on behalf of children—**DM**. The Ministry of Food & Cooperatives is unable to implement some of the proposals forwarded by the Committee headed by the Minister of Justice Mr. K. W. Devanayagam and these unimplementable sections are to be discussed again. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Unemployment, is taking steps to set up an ultra-modern Training Centre in the FTZ of international standards. The President has ordered the Ministry of Textiles to sell the over 100 lakhs yards of textiles stacked at various places even at a loss; tenders for the sale of these textiles will be called in the near future. A member of the politbureau of the

JVP Mr. Vase Tillekeratne said that discussions moderated by the JVP have already begun to unite all socialist parties and that the first rounds of talks which has been already held has been successful—**LD**. The Sinhala Mahajana Peramuna has requested the President to appoint a Presidential Commission to solve problems faced by the Sinhalese—**DK**. Trade Unions have become very suspicious of the recently signed agreement between the Tyre Corporation and B. H. Goodrich of USA because the Chairman of the Tyre Corporation has refused to give a copy of the agreement to the Corporation Trade Unions—**JD**.

#### **SUNDAY, JULY 29:**

The high-powered tender board appointed by Government to consider the award of the Rs. 1,500 million hydro-cracker contract of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation has completed its task and finalised its recommendations to the Cabinet—**SO**. A big racket in large scale pilfering of diesel oil from CTB buses was detected yesterday by a team of investigators from the Peliyagoda Police. Sri Lanka will soon own a formidable merchant shipping fleet; this is to be achieved with long-term aid from Japan; the agreement is expected to be finalised between the two countries in September this year—**ST**. It will be compulsory for all police officers to be proficient in Sinhala, Tamil and English; all new recruits should be able to enter complaints in all three languages within a period of three years from the date of appointment, else

they will not be made permanent—**CM**. The Government is to implement a new scheme to train women as fishermen, carpenters, masons, bus drivers, toddy tappers etc. to solve the employment problems among women; steps were taken to open a Training center in the next three months. The Ministry of Industries and Scientific Affairs has commenced an Island-wide survey to find uranium; after the completion of this survey done with the aid of the International Nuclear Power Institute the Ministry hopes to ask for permission from the Government to produce uranium—**SLDP**. The Government has decided that solving the unemployment problem will be the main target of the next budget; subsidies will be cut to find money for development work; the government's estimated expenditure is Rs. 15,000 million with the estimated revenue at Rs. 9,600 million; the budget deficit is Rs. 5,400 million—**RR**.

**MONDAY, JULY 30:** The salary increase the government has decided on, the continuation of the heavy subsidies and the food coupon scheme will cost the country Rs. 3,000 million annually. Finance and Planning Minister, Mr. Ronnie de Mel said yesterday. The government yesterday announced the increase of the price of wheat flour from Rs. 1.12 to Rs. 1.30 a pound; this increase came into effect from midnight; as a result of this price increase a loaf of bread which was Re. 1/- a pound will now cost Rs. 1.15. The Communist Party of Sri Lanka yesterday unanimously appointed Mr.

K. P. Silva, General Secretary in succession to Mr. Pieter Keuneman. Finance & Planning Minister, Ronnie de Mel will lobby opinion at forthcoming meetings of Finance Ministers for the creation of an "Oil Facility" to help countries like Sri Lanka which have been most seriously affected by the recent increase in oil prices—CDN. The government has decided to regularise encroachment on state lands in the case of deserving persons and evict all other encroachers; this decision was taken on a recommendation by Mr. Gamini Dissanayake, Minister of Lands and Land Development after a block-by-block survey of encroachments on state lands, on a directive by the Government—CDM. Government is considering the appointment of a permanent Presidential Commission to inquire into public complaints of bribery or corrupt practices by those holding high positions; the Commission, vested with full powers to summon persons and call for documents, will entertain public complaints in camera; thereafter, it will report its findings to the President for necessary action. The Politbureau of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party is to meet on Wednesday to decide on the party's nominee to the proposed Special Presidential Commission that will examine and report on solutions to outstanding Tamil issues—SU. The government has decided to take drastic action against encroachment on state lands after a recent survey revealed that non-deserving persons as well as stateless persons were encroaching on lands adjacent to

streams, areas which are vital to the protection of the environment—CO. It is reliably understood that the much disputed boundaries of the Vavuniya District will be changed again dividing the district into Vavuniya North and South; this change apparently came about due to a meeting between the President and TULF leaders—VK. The government has decided to levy high taxes and in some cases stop the import of raw materials and other goods which may affect locally produced goods, on the advice of the Parliamentary Advisory Committee—DP. The TULF is expected to decide to call off their boycott of parliament at tomorrow's MP's meeting—DV. Army and Police units in the North

have reported that well known criminals in the North have left the area; police have taken steps to track them down—DM. The President has decided to appoint detection units in each district under a district minister; these units will carry out surprise investigations on Departments, Corporations and other statutory bodies to stop wastage and corruption. A fully equipped laboratory will be one of the main areas of extensions the Mineral Sands Corporation has decided to implement this year—LD. A certain foreign embassy is using pressure on the government to stop further investigations into the misdeeds done by former PM Mrs. Bandaranaike—JD.

### COMMUNAL HARMONY

At the Seminar on "The Role of Media in relation to Communal Harmony" organised by the Marga Institute, the following citizens who participated in the seminar decided to take steps towards the formation of a Council for promotion of communal harmony through the media. The functions of this Council will be to scrutinise the media in order to detect and to counteract dissemination of material that is likely to lead to communal tension, and also to further healthy and harmonious communal relations through the media.

The signatories appeal to all citizens who agree with these aims to support them and would be glad to hear from any persons who would like to assist in the work of the Council. Please communicate with the Secretary, Council for Communal Harmony through the Media, P.O. Box 601, Colombo.

*Charles Abeyasekera, S. R. Asirwatham, Miss Sunila Abeyasekera, Mohan Bhagavandas, Mrs. Sardha Coorey, Miss. Radhika Coomaraswamy, Wimal Dissanayake, The Rev. Celestine Fernando, Godfrey Gunatilleke, Victor Gunawardene, Bandula Sri Gunawardhana, S. A. Gnānamuttu, S. M. Kamaldeen, V. Kanesalingam K. Kailasapathy, P. P. Manikam, K. S. Nadarajah, S. Nimalendran, M. J. Perera, Rajan Philip Pillai, J. R. Ratnanayagam, E. Rathinam, C. V. Rajasunderam, Reggie Siriwardene, S. Sivanayagam, Enoka Stanislaus, Livy Wijemanne.*

## TUESDAY, JULY 31:

The Presidential Commission to be appointed by President J. R. Jayewardene in the next few days will be asked to formulate a scheme of devolution of power to the District Councils that are to be set up in the 24 districts of Sri Lanka, government sources said yesterday; the Commission will also be asked to define the powers and functions of the District Councils. The Bank of Ceylon has launched a program to open representative offices and branches in European capitals and the Middle East, informed sources said, yesterday. An Education Service Commission on the lines of the Public Service Commission will be set up soon to handle teachers' promotions, appointments, transfers, disciplinary matters and all other aspects, Mr. Sarath Perera, Senior Assistant Secretary said yesterday—CDN. The so-called depressed classes in the Northern province have called upon the authorities to strictly enforce the Provisions of the Social Disabilities Act; a spokesman for the depressed classes said that they are being subjected to various indignities and disabilities because they belonged to a particular caste; they were more interested in the removal of the disabilities and social stigma attached to their caste than any demands for separatism. The Prime Minister, Mr. R. Premadasa, enroute to Lusaka to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government conference, made a brief stop-over in Rome to visit the Vatican—CDM. Lankans will from tomorrow

be called upon to pay Rs. 250/- as licence fee per year for their television sets—one of the highest levies in the Asian region. L. T. P. Manjusiri, 77, a Sri Lankan, was elected to receive the 1979 Ramon Magsaysay Award for Journalism, Literature and Creative Communication Arts, the awarding foundation announced today; the award carries a 10,000 US dollars cash prize and a gold medal, and is in honour of the late President Ramon Magsaysay. The Presidential Commission to be appointed this week to examine and report on a solution to outstanding Tamil issues will not hold formal public sittings; instead, the Commission according to informed sources, will call for written public representations only; this is to enable the Commission to conclude its sittings before the end of August, as against the earlier suggested deadline of December 31, 1979—SU. Action is being taken to remove anomalies existing in categories and salaries of teachers; teachers' salaries will be fixed between Rs. 3,000 and 12,000 per annum and the present 27 categories are to be reduced to three. The Minister of Rural Industrial Development Mr. S. Thondaman has assured that he would discuss with the government parliamentary group and try to obtain redress for the non granting of promotions to tamil officers who have passed the third standard in Sinhala—DP. Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakkara (LSSP newwing) stated in Jaffna that the reason why the government had declared that terro-

rism should be wiped out from Jaffna was because they wanted to curb the democratic freedoms of the people—EN. A fully equipped training centre in to be set up in the FTZ area which can train thousands of youths at a time—DM. The Government is to take over a number of tea factories that are presently under private ownership—DV. The government is to increase the train fares to cut railway department losses—LD. Trade Unions have protested against government-plans to increase the salaries by Rs. 50/- and simultaneously cut down holidays by 38 days—ATH.

## WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1:

The Bank of Ceylon is introducing attractive investor schemes today to mobilise domestic savings, to mark its 40th anniversary; the schemes are the Contracted Savings Account Scheme and the Special Fixed Deposit Scheme, a Bank spokesman said. The Industries Ministry will in future strictly adhere to the rule that no industry will be allowed a 20 mile radius of Colombo City; the centre of the radius is Parliament building. Prime Minister R. Premadasa, who is now in Lusaka to lead the Sri Lanka delegation to the Summit of the Commonwealth Heads of Government was given a special audience by Queen Elizabeth this noon at her villa in Mulungushi village. The government has noted an usual upsurge this year of foreign investment coming into Sri Lanka willing to operate without the special tax and other benefits outside the Free Trade Zone; during the first six months of this year a

total of Rs. 452 million were invested in 40 projects authorised to operate outside the FTZ; of this amount Rs. 255 million came in as foreign exchange. All aircraft ground handling operations at the Colombo Airport, Katunayake handled earlier by Air Ceylon were taken over at midnight by Sri Lanka's new international airline Air Lanka. A five-member Pakistani delegation led by the former Chief of the Supreme Court Mr. Homodoor Rahman will arrive here on Thursday to study the working of the proportional representation scheme. Pakistan's nuclear programme was for peaceful purposes only; the Pakistan Embassy here said commenting on reports about Pakistan's nuclear programme based on what it called false and tendentious reporting of some foreign news media—CDN. Henceforth, Government doctors who complete their period of compulsory service will be free to resign if they wish to; rules governing the resignations of Government Medical Officers are to be relaxed—CDM. The unprecedented move to bring school hewisi bands into the Esala Perahera in Kandy, the country's most historic pageant, has met with strong opposition. Fort Police are investigating the alleged theft of Rs. 90,000 from the Port (Cargo) Corporation office. The government yesterday clamped down a levy of Rs. 2,500 on those trading in TV sets. Two detectives from the Crime Detective Bureau Headquarters, left last night for England to record the statements of a number of persons in connection with

the Vicarage deaths of Loise Peris and Russel Ingram—SU. The Minister of Transport has said that educated unemployed youth in rural areas will be given a bus driver's or mechanic's training—VK. The Minister of State, Mr. Anandatissa de Alwis is taking steps to establish a regional broadcasting station in Jaffna. At a conference held under the Chairmanship of President J. R. Jayewardene yesterday it was agreed on principal that preference will be given to those workers who have been living in estates under the N.A.D.S.A in providing housing facilities—DP. A consignment of 30,000 lbs. Of infant Milk powder is rotting in a forest near the Mahaweli river by Victoria farm—DV. The government has spent Rs. 57 lakhs for the first year of work done by the presidential Commission—ATH. The UNP government which calls itself the father of free education is taking steps to abolish free education in the country—JD.



## FANTASIA

### Idolatry Of An Ideal by Raji de Silva

The Mugs are WE. WE, sit in the Gallerée. THEY, are the Toffs. THEY sit below us. And from deep in the well of the 'House,' THEY look up at WE, disdainfuller, then turn their gaze, entranced and rapt, at the two imposing, uniformed marionettes, who march in a very little man, and they perch him, (upsy daisy, aren't we

COSY!), up on a very big chair. Then he blows his whistle and we give a little wriggle and settle down to goggle at that edifying spectacle, Democracee.

Democracee, its a plummy sort o'puddin' what's got plums by the dozin', but we don't get no look in, not a crumb nor a lickin', and tho' they've rode to the feast on our backs, they won't be askin' us, THAT'S certain. Public Opeenion? We're just beasts of burden!

Hah! Now the fun has begun. They are scramblin' to their feet, cavalier, cool, courtly, slick, suave and bent in three. "Sire! We're reliable, we're so readily available, you musn't forget US, you know. Only a something, a very little SOMETHING, QUICK! because we spy a twinkle in the eye of the other side that's tempting us to go." So he twiddled his thumbs and pulled out the plums and they are sitting in his corner, going guzz'e, guzzle he-hee, "SUCH good boys are we!"

ITS FUNNY YOU KNOW, how Democracee, changes the Toffs who were so like us once upon a just a little while ago. They're stiffy, they're stuffy. They are oh so Toff-y. Myee! Aren't they funnee? They roughed and tumbled in the heat of the election, but now they've had time for sober reflection, on their newly acquired social position, they've abandoned ole Marx the spoils-sport, for Emily Mannerly Post, ("Social graces mark the perfect host, the subtle dfference of gold from dross"), and of COURSE the test of the man of dis-

inction, is the one who graciously makes deep genuflection before those sacred Parliamentary conventions. So, tho' they came to fame on a political slogan, now profoundly pious, solemnly intone, "We MUST forget politics, LET'S think of the Nation!"

And in the dulcet tones of a cooing dove, making love, they say "My Honourable Friend he says," tho' they called him an ornery cuss in the fray. They had a tough time jumping the bandwagon, (it was a tricky muddle just to stay on in the saddle), and they suffered something AWFUL from having No Conventions. But they've found the best cure...they've turned into perfick li'l gentlemen! They make me SICK. It must come from being greedy for I've had too much Democracee!

Democracee, it makes for a nasty mentalitee. Before the 'lection we were the belles of the ball. And then we didn't want them, no, not at all. But now they've had that roll in the hay, where and oh where have all those gallants run away? I bet they are sitting in a corner calling themselves asses, for they've sworn their love and stolen our kisses, but now after all the heat and the friction and the flaming of our matrimonious intentions, we ain't gonna let 'em off so easy. To get rings on their fingers belles have to be on their toasies. It'll be Breach of Promise or Alimony and the'll pay thro' their nosies.

Oh! Parliamentaree, Democracee, its the loveliest sight you ever did see. Its

a battle in Parliament, where they duel so elegant, where the winner says, "Touche!" and the other says, "Ouche!" and, carefully schooled, in the Queensberry Rules, they sweep a bow and go their way. Until the next day. And WE, are Mugs, you see. Democracee!

Oh! the antics, of the Democratics! They keep you in FITS. They've had a terrible time with disalektiks. (They never did like it a BIT). But they've learned jolly quick, that its simply terrific, and what you call aristokratik not to think. And the only cloud in their silver lining, (its only a teensy little thing), is, WHICH is the fish-fork and WHAT'S Etickitt?

But the funniest thing about the Toffs, the one that makes you LUFF, is that that they serve the masses so desperately, they just HAVEN'T no time for you and me. They've come forward so proud and bravely, to sacrifice and save the country, but they take pretty good care, (oh VERY), to avoid contamination by poverty, (its so CATCHING and might remain, you see)...why, we'd rather be in Rome sipping Cianti! Tea? But of COURSE, the life-blood of the country ...so necessary...for the Economy.....but friendship with nations don't you think? And when in Rome do as the Romans drink! Of course, it there's no other recourse, London will have to do; or else, LET'S, to Paree. And if nothing else works, we'll go look up the ADB! Democracee! Ah, OUI! C'EST LA VIE!

IN THE LONG AGO AGE, we had the early Christian

martyrs, romping around with the Roman gladiators. And a lion or two was often invited, to lend a hand or so with what was remained. But in these deplorable Democratic days, political problems can't be solved in that way, and the population explosion, REFUSES to fit into a lion. Anyways, however, these days they have much better manners, and we are merely, genteelly, flung to the liars. And as we march to the fate that is ours, singing, 'OH Abide With Us, Mugs And Sinners', a more martial air they favours, 'ONWARD! Democratic Saviours!' And they jet a plane to the strains of that popular refrain, "My mission's a failure. I've to go abroad AGAIN!" Democracee! Ah, me!

Dmocracee, is you see.... well, you can't really define it. Its, its...oh, it can mean lots of things. ANYthings. Or everythings. You could onlee, possiblee, define Democracee, by becoming one of the Toffs. And then things start becoming all rather obvious. Just go ahead. Have a spree. And anything THEY do becomes Democracee. Naturallee, and on the contraree, anything WE do becomes anti-social. And also anti-national. And oh, very, reactionary. Not to speak of being q i e anti-revolutionary. In short, its NEVER ever Democracee. Consequentlee, it reduces WE, to doing nothing whatever. But watch the Toff. Show off. Of course in a very careful, democratic sort of manner.

But life's not lost all its punch, we can still have quite lots of funch, watching the

Toffs, fling off their togs, that were so tweedsy, and struggle frantically, into something flimsy, what occasionally, when the day is windy, take off, before the Toff, and before you could say, "High Diddle Jinks!" its alas a case of Gone With The Winds!



**LETTERS**

**Private Schools**

Sir,

These days there seems to be much talk and controversy over the future of Private Schools and this is as a result of certain public speeches made by certain politicians at various school functions. Both the inviter and the invitee have private axes to grind. The former is more concerned about the financial benefits while for the invitee this is ideal ground for the canvassing of votes and thus stabilise his position in the seat of power. At these functions problems of the teachers and the lapses in the educational set up are put forward and pin-pointed in a masterly way so as to convince the masses and the authorities and win their support and co-operation. The solutions to these problems are presented in such a surreptitious manner that they are more beneficial to the authorities than to the teachers and the students. In the rush the problems of teachers, parents and children remain unsolved and even aggravated.

It is no secret and no exaggeration to state that the

lot of the teachers in private schools is most pathetic and deplorable. The parents of the children are disillusioned by various religious denominations by a misnomer 'Religious Education'. The poor teachers in these schools suffer silently and could even be called the true martyrs of this modern world. Certain religious authorities who are so vociferous about righteousness and justice resort to most unjustifiable and unrighteous means to meet their ends. Some of them even seek loop-holes in the law to wriggle out like worms unhurt at the expense of teachers and at the same time preach love. Teachers, Minor Staff employed in most of these schools are being exploited by unscrupulous religious heads under cover of religion.

The mental anguish and pain these poor employees are made to bear cry out to heaven for vengeance. The very cry of Jesus Christ from the

Cross "Father, Father why hast thou forsaken me?" resounds over and over again through these suffering souls. The take-over of all schools by the Government was an act of God though some selfish men try to explain this as an act of the devil. Under the pretext of granting, imparting religious education most religious institutions resort to most irreligious acts quite contrary to the teachings of their religious founders.

These schools must be governed and controlled by the State while the administration should be given to religious bodies. In predominantly Christian countries such as Italy and France schools are governed and controlled by the State and there are State Schools as well as State Denominational Schools. In our country too this could be done with ease. As we all know money is the root of all evil, the greatest good that this government could

**OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATES**

Official Exchange Rates of Commercial Banks to their customers for Telegraphic Transfers fixed on Tuesday this week were as follows:—

CURRENCY	PER 100 UNITS	
	Buying Rate	Selling Rate
U.S. DOLLAR	Rs. 1556.00	Rs. 1559.00
STERLING POUND	Rs. 3616.50	Rs. 3622.50
DEUTSCHE MARK	Rs. 860.20	Rs. 861.80
FRENCH FRANC	Rs. 369.05	Rs. 369.75
JAPANESE YEN	Rs. 7.2480	Rs. 7.630
INDIAN RUPEES	Rs. 195.05	Rs. 195.45



do to these religious heads of schools is to take out all financial matters from them.

**J. Annesley Fernando**

Colombo.  
26.6.79

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## Peradeniya Incident: Correction

Sir,

A letter printed in your issue of 7 July 1979 gave a distorted account of an incident which occurred at the University of Peradeniya on 1 June, 1979. On that day a second year student returning to his boarding after working in the Library was way-laid by a group of students. In the altercation that followed the second year student received a wound on his forehead and one student out of the group who waylaid him received a stab wound on his neck. Both these students were admitted to the Kandy Hospital.

Contrary to the imputations in the letter published in your journal there was no "negligent attitude and deliberate favouritism on the part of University authorities." Indeed the entire case was promptly handed over to the Police and I was subsequently informed by the Police that both parties would be prosecuted.

On the basis of information available to me I prohibited the 2nd year stu-

dent referred to, from attending lectures, the use of the library and entry to the University Campus on 3rd June 1979. This step was taken partly because a group of students, were trying to make use of this incident to create a situation of unrest and agitate for a strike with a view to getting the final examinations postponed.

However, on 7 June, 1979 both students who were wounded came to my office and expressed their desire for an amicable settlement. The student who is alleged to have stabbed apologised to the other, both orally and in writing and the apology was accepted. On this basis and on a promise of good behaviour I waived the penalties imposed on 3 June, 1979. The measure won general acceptance and Pradeniya is tranquil today.

I am aware that there is considerable frustration among those who hoped to use this incident to disrupt the smooth working of the University. Your correspondent has been taken in by them and has unfortunately not cared to verify matters with the relevant authorities before rushing into print.

**Prof. B. L. Panditharatne**  
Vice-Chancellor

Office of the Vice-Chancellor  
University of Peradeniya,  
Peradeniya.  
July 20, 1979.

x x x x

## Army Strength?

Sir,

In the issue of the *Tribune* of June 16, 1979 the reference in "25 years ago—June 5, 1954", the non-disclosure of the strength of members of the Army, by the Commander of the Army to the Auditor-General reveals the fact that the strength also concealed from Parliament.

Section 2 of the Army Act 17 of 1949, and also the Navy Act and the Air Force Act reads: (1) There shall be raised and maintained in accordance with the provisions of this Act and of regulations made thereunder, an Army NOT Exceeding such strength as may from time to time, be determined by Parliament; (2) The Army shall consist of (a) a Regular force, (b) a Regular Reserve and (c) Such Volunteer force and volunteer reserves as may be constituted under Section 5 and 6.

Are we still to believe that for the last twenty five years the strengths of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force have been growing, without any Parliamentary control? Not even when the Defence Estimates are discussed at Budget time?

**Watchdog**

20th July 1979.

+ + +

# Confidentially

## HOT MILK?

IS IT NOT AN ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT that a "promise" made in a newspaper advertisement in early July to set up "hot and cold milk" booths at Railway Stations has actually been fulfilled? That a report in the *Daily News* on July 19, 1979 had stated: "Milk Bars to provide the public clean wholesale milk hot or cold at reasonable prices will be set up at Railway Stations. The first of these milk bars will be inaugurated by the Minister of Rural Industrial Development Mr. S. Thondaman on July 25 evening at the Fort Railway Station premises. Gradually these booths will be extended to other main railway stations as well. This service will be run by the National Milk Board with the assistance of the Ceylon Hotels Corporation and the Bank of Ceylon. The Minister of State Mr. Anandatissa de Alwis and the Minister of Transport, Mr. M. H. Mohamed will participate in the opening ceremony on July 25."? That when nothing took place on July 25, many people shrugged their shoulders and said that this was only one more instance of a broken governmental promise? That this was not the end of the story. That the "News Editor", *Tribune*, received a letter dated August 1, on August 3 (delivered by hand) which read: "The Chairman and the Board of Directors have pleasure in inviting you to the

opening of the Fort Railway Station Milk Bar on Wednesday 8th August at 5 p.m. by the Hon. S. Thondaman, Minister of Rural Industrial Development, The Hon. Alhaj M. H. Mohamed, Minister of Transport and Hon. Anandatissa de Alwis, Minister of State will be associated with the Hon. Minister of Rural Industrial Development on this occasion?" That the invitation had been sent by "Secretary, Milk Board"? That *Tribune* was surprised to get this letter? That for one thing *Tribune* has no "News Editor"? That being a weekly paper it does not need a News Editor to gather spot news? That this is well-known who have customarily invited *Tribune* to such functions? That, this apart, *Tribune* has never been invited to any function at the Fort Railway Station or any place under the aegis of the CGR or the Transport Ministry? That from the time the minions of an LSSP Minister of Transport in the 1970-77 period had started making mess of the CGR (the CTB was luckier), *Tribune* had been critical of the many shortcomings of the Railways? That the infamous coaches from Romania built on the specification of LSSP bureaucrats and catchers, was the last straw that made *Tribune* initiate a major campaign against the management of the CGR? That *Tribune* had expected matters to improve after the UNP came to power in 1977 but its hopes were doomed to disappointment? That things had gone from bad to worse? That the only consolation is that it is often darkest before dawn? That a

new type of Romanian coach built on better specifications have recently come in? That passengers say that though better than the older ones, the new second-class carriages are still a little hard on the spine with the curvature on the seats being insufficient for long-distance running? That in Sri Lanka, everything moves so slowly that a distance of 50 miles is a long-distance run? That *Tribune* has been told that the new third class and first class (and air-conditioned) carriages will provide real comfort and value for the money? That in the meantime the opening of the milk booth may be another silver lining on the CGR horizon—provided by the Milk Board? That the credibility of the Milk Board is no low today that a flamboyant Thondamanesque flourish like a booth at the Fort railway station may help to resuscitate the Milk Board? That *Tribune* will visit this Milk Booth after a week or ten days to see if the dirt and filth at the Railway Canteens, Restaurants Rooms and Buffet cars have not overtaken this Milk Booth?

Next Week: Railway catering

X X X

## Can't We All Co-operate?

".....I am speaking in an opposition electorate. Where, I ask you, do you differ from our government in policies affecting education, health, agriculture, industry, employment and so many other fields of human endeavour? Do we not one and all seek better management, more facilities and government assistance in all these fields? Opposition is not to the policies but to the manner of their implementation. Cannot we all cooperate in that task during the four years still left to the government to go before the people?....."

J. R. JAYEWARDENE

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