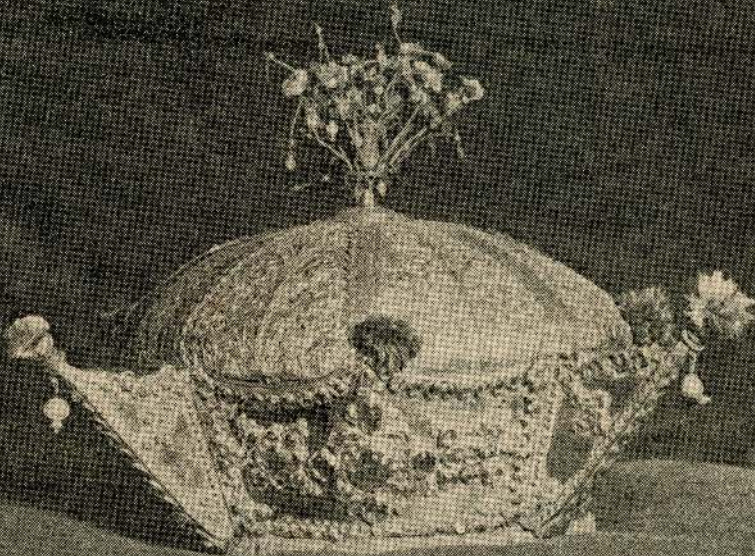


Vol. 24 No. 25 — December 29, 1979 — No. 2-50

# TRIBUNE



**25TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION**



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## Letter From The Editor

ON THE COVER we have a picture of the Crown some kings of ancient Sri Lanka had worn. But when the monarchy passed over from Sinhala kings to the British this Crown became a museum piece. But though kingship as a formal office of sovereign power has ceased to exist in this island with the adoption of a republican status from 1972 (and its reiteration in 1978), the spirit of kingship continues to flourish in big and small places. The fact is that instead of one big king and one queen, we today have a whole series of kings and queens, big and small, at different levels throughout the country. In the ancient past, kingship was hereditary or by selection by the powerful lords who chose a strongman or a figure-head depending on the circumstances. Today, our kings are chosen through the ballot box and though a few queens are also elected others come through marriage ties or concubinage. But the persons who exercise power today do not want to assume royal titles because it will detract from the much-publicised halo of elective democracy. That is why, no doubt, the President, when he recently saw the dominating Revolving Crown at the Wen-nappuwa Carnival stated: "When I saw the crown rotating, I thought to myself that there is no king in Sri Lanka to be crowned. Kingship in Sri Lanka was snuffed out way back in 1815. . . . Sri Lanka first became a republic in 1972: it had a President as the Head of the country. It is not my intention to, in any way, insult that erstwhile incumbent in office, but the fact is that the President of that era was only used as figure-head. It was the Prime Minister who wielded all the power. The UNP government changed that position completely and provided for an elected executive President. Thus, for the first time in 2,500 years, we crowned the people. I hope through this experiment, to give an opportunity gradually to help even the Opposition to set up a government. Our aim is to develop this country in six years. But everybody knows that a country cannot be resurrected in six years. It might take 12 or 20 years. But we can lay the foundation and let the development take its own course. The UNP aims to safeguard the sovereignty of the people, and protect democracy through elected representatives. I appeal to the people to help foster this hard won democratic freedom and never to allow family bandyism to raise its ugly head once more in this fair isle." It sounds a little far-fetched to assert that the people are kings because they have an Executive President who symbolises the crowning of the whole people as the supreme power. It is true that once in seven years the voters have the right to elect a President and once in six years (or sooner) to elect members of Parliament. But this system of elections once every six or seven years does not make the people kings. From what is happening today those whom the people elect behave like Kings—big and small, good and bad. Leadership to be effective must actively have attributes of kingship. It does not matter what we call them, Kings or Presidents or Ministers or MPs—it is how they behave and act that matters. Family bandyism continues to proliferate, so also corruption. But, people wouldn't mind these for a time, if the prices of food, shelter and clothing were brought within their means.

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## **THE GALLE BY-ELECTION**

Colombo, December 24,

That Dr. W. Dahanayake will win the Galle by-election on the UNP ticket was foregone, but the majority he secured was not expected. It was felt that the general apathy among voters, not unusual at a by-election, would make it difficult for W. Dahanayake (WD) to win a substantial majority. But he did. He won by a majority of 13,012 whereas in 1977 the UNP majority over Mr. Dahanayake was only 5,009. The number which polled in 1977 was 37,542 of 45,100 (83%) whereas at the last by-election the total polled was 36,181 out of 47,608 (76%). The percentage of those voted in 1979 is less than in 1977, but this alone will not account for the fact that the combined UNP+WD votes in July 1977, (i.e. 26,713) had dropped to 22,377 in December 1979 in spite of an increase of 2,508 additional voters on the list.

The President himself had said (vide *Tribune*, 22/12/79) that the Galle by-election was more a question of mathematics than politics because in the July 1977 General elections and May 1979 Municipal elections, the combined non-UNP votes was more than the UNP's. That is why the President had wanted WD as the UNP candidate once he had applied for nomination (as he had done in 1977). By the same mathematical yardstick the pro-UNP votes in December 1979, which should have been 26,713 plus a percentage of the new voters, had dropped to 22,377. The drop in the votes polled was 7%—83% to 76%. The drop in the total votes polled can be explained as by-election apathy (but there have been particular by-elections in the past when the votes polled had been higher than during the previous general election). But the 4,336 drop in the pro-UNP votes is clearly an indication of a certain amount of disillusionment in the UNP owing to the higher costs of living and galloping corruption. THIS IS ALSO EVIDENCED by the fact that the SLFP has increased its votes from 6,448 to 9,365—an increase of 2,917 votes. This is a creditable performance for the SLFP. But in view of the fact that the SLFP has not yet

put forward any credible or viable alternative policy to that of the UNP, there is no doubt that the SLFP's increase was due to the image of the UNP being tarnished by several acts of commission and omission. The JVP did well to obtain 3,366 votes, but the LSSSP fared disastrously with 634 votes. Of the total poll, the JVP and LSSSP together secured 12.5%—the cutout point. But in a breakdown, the JVP gets 9.3% and the LSSSP 1.7% (both lost their deposits). It is yet too early to conclude that the Galle by-election was further confirmation of the proposition put forward by certain circles that the JVP is emerging as the leading "Socialist Marxist-Leninist Party". The JVP has certainly done its best to lay claim to this position, but some of its self-posturing tactics have not found acceptance in the wide spectrum of the radical Left in this country. For one thing, the Galle by-election was announced at a time when the LSSSP, CP, JVP, LSSSP (N) and the RMP (CMU) were negotiating to form a United Left Front. The JVP jumped the gun and unilaterally announced its candidate for the by-election, though in Left circles, Galle was regarded as an LSSSP seat. The CP, which in terms of the earlier LSSSP-CP united front agreement should have backed the LSSSP candidate, backtracked in order to appease the JVP. This has been considered strange conduct on the part of the CP because the JVP has been fiercely and aggressively using rowdy tactics to break up CP meetings in Colombo and even in Matara. The JVP has a 600-800 strong band of storm-troopers trained to break up meetings, and they showed their prowess by breaking up a joint trade union meeting in Hyde Park some time ago and more recently a CP meeting in Matara. This storm-trooping was done in spite of the fact that pro-JVP elements of the CP were also on the platform.

### **THE NEW YEAR**

*Tribune* wishes its readers a happy and prosperous New Year. We take this opportunity to state that consistent with the government decision to cut down holidays, *Tribune* has not missed an issue, as in the past, during X'mas and New Year, nor will it skip an issue during the Sinhala and Tamil New Year. *Tribune* will in future work half days on Saturdays.

How far these tactics will take JVP is hard to say, but if the LSSP and CP do not pull themselves up by their bootstraps, the JVP will steal the thunder from the old traditional Left Parties. But the JVP cannot find any comfort in the 9.3% of the votes it polled—a good part of it because of sad default of the LSSP and CP. Without a United Front with all other Left groups—LSSP, CP, LSSP (N), RMP (CMU) etc.—the radical left which the JVP claims to represent cannot hope to reach the 12.5% necessary to qualify for a seat under proportional representation system—especially on a district basis. Whatever noise the JVP makes, whatever rowdy tactics its storm-troopers (born in the 1971 insurgency and now allegedly resuscitated by West German terrorist youth inspiration) adopt, the JVP cannot become a Third Force by itself—certainly not in the way the JVP leadership is going about its business.

Furthermore, the Galle by-election has shown that no radical Left Party cannot by itself hope in the foreseeable future to become a major Opposition Party or even challenge the SLFP. The Left, if it stands disunited as at present, can hope to make any headway—and even if “united,” it can reach the 12.5% cut out point only if the Left United Front functions as it should. (If the cut-out point is reduced to 5% or 8%, the urge for left unity will be weakened because the sectarianism in individual Left parties and groups will be strengthened). Judging from the Galle by-election and the results of the May 1979 MC and UC elections, even a strong and dynamic ULF with a radical common programme cannot hope to win a majority in Parliament (or in the Local Bodies) in the troubled years of the 1980s—unless it has a realistic anti-UNP electoral agreement with the SLFP. This is a simple fact that cannot be wiped out by wishful thinking even under Marxist-Leninist veverbiage.

THE SLFP ALSO cannot, in the present context, hope to defeat the UNP in a straight fight in the 1983 General Elections or any election in the 1980s. Even a strong SLFP-ULF electoral alliance will find it difficult to oust the UNP. This is not because of the system of proportional representation. If one exam-

ines the PR system realistically and mathematically—with lists on a district and not national basis—the UNP can be kept down as the permanent opposition party if the SLFP, a ULF and the TULF get together. This is why the President and UNP have done everything in their power to win over the TULF (first its CWC wing) and also to prod the Left not only to be divided but also to keep it away from the SLFP. The UNP has also been at great pains to ensure that the SLFP keeps away from the Left. The entire campaign in the pro-government media is directed towards this: and, so far, this campaign has been successful—the radical Left is in disarray and all left groups are keeping at arms length from the SLFP which does not seem to realise that by itself it cannot hope to defeat the UNP.

Some sections of the SLFP seem to labour under the illusion that what has happened in India will happen in Sri Lanka, and that there will be a swing to Mrs. Bandaranaike as there is towards Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Such a spontaneously massive swing has not yet taken place here and is not likely to take place for a number of reasons: *first*, the UNP government has not cracked up like Morarji Desai's Janata Party; *second*, the economic disaster that Janata's policies have brought India has not been repeated in Sri Lanka—on the contrary, the UNP has done comparatively well on the economic front and certainly better than the SLFP in the 1970-1977 period; *third*, Mrs. Indira Gandhi has been able to forge a powerful party with alternative policies to the Janata—this has not happened in Sri Lanka.

It is time to realise that President Jayewardene's UNP—in spite of the gross corruption and rising prices—has been able to achieve something which no other Third World country in a comparable position has been able to do. The Jayewardene government has been able to turn Sri Lanka, a country that had taken several firm pro-socialist measures, on a 180° roundabout turn to a free-market economy, cut subsidies as required by the IMF and establish a free exchange system—without any riots, strikes, disturbances, civil commotion. This is something which a large number of countries which had sought to implement IMF policies—

Egypt, Guyana, Janen, Zaire, Indonesia, etc. etc.—had failed to do.

This is no mean achievement. And in spite of the high prices, corruption and ostentatious living by an elite, the UNP was able to score a notable victory in the Galle by-election. The size and magnitude of the majority (in spite of the drop in votes) is no doubt due to the flexible, realistic and manipulative strategies of the President in choosing Dahanayake as the UNP candidate—in spite of serious objections to WD inside the UNP itself.

So far as the World Bank, IMF and Western bankerdom are concerned, Jayewardene's Sri Lanka is today, trumps. This government will get all the foreign credits and investments it can carry. With the Galle by-election, the confidence of international capitalism in Sri Lanka will be greatly strengthened. If, in addition, President Jayewardene is able to solve the Tamil question with his Development Councils and other measures in language and the like,—present indications are he will succeed before March or April 1980—Sri Lanka's standing in the world of international (capitalist) finance will rank very high.

Though the ruling hierarchy of the UNP has gone headlong on the path of a free market economic system, neither the 1977 elections, nor the May 1979 local government (or December 1979 by elections) is an indication that the people of Sri Lanka have yet overwhelmingly decided in favour of free enterprise as against socialism. The voting pattern in 1977 and 1979 show that the issue of capitalism versus socialism has not yet been decisively decided—and if the Left and SLFP set about their politics realistically, this question will become the major issue in 1983. The UNP smokescreen of "democratic socialism" has become so thin that no UNPer—except the President himself—talks about it anymore. The President knows the virtue of this slogan.

It is, the President's political genius in manipulative politics alone that has guaranteed the UNP its strong and dominant position today. And in this he has succeeded beyond anybody's wildest dreams because of the total disarray in the forces of the Opposition. It must be noted that the debate on the Budget, especially during the Committee stage, was a further confirmation of the fact that the Pre-

sident has very nearly succeeded in attaining a national parliamentary consensus on many major issues. The Third Reading was passed without a division, that is without even the appearance of a formal objection. Some SLFP MPs continued to be sharp in their attacks on some Ministers, but many of them were "constructive" in their criticisms, and even praised some Ministers. The TULF were all sweetness right down the line—a harbinger of the glad tidings that in the Development Councils the basis of national unity may be laid.

As Sri Lanka enters the Eighties, a new era in our Political history seems to open out. The sharp, polemical, agitational, multi-party conflicts have come to an end. The people are also no doubt tired of such futile exercises in politics and politicking. This is a fact that all political parties, including the Left, must take into consideration.

W W W

FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

## Agitate & Criticise, But Toe The Line —No Inconsistency?

By Grassroots

The Annual Sessions of the United National Party (also its 25th Anniversary) which was held on 14 December produced two important statements on political thinking and Party policy. One came from the President and the other from the General Secretary of the Party's foremost trade union the Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya. The President in an innovative speech (which is so characteristic of him) said that as a political party the UNP must be an AGITATIONAL PARTY, ready to criticise its own Government in Power. "Agitate and criticise" he said "but in doing so don't weaken and try to destroy the very Party or the Government." At first sight there appears to be a contradiction in this general statement of policy, but when analysed and explained carefully there is no inconsistency.

In the President's view criticism is approved and welcomed but it must be constructive criticism and not merely for the

sake of criticism or for the purpose of embarrassment or for Press publicity.

For instance a few days later a national newspaper carried a cartoon of former Plantations Minister M. D. H. Jayewardene looking back at the President's statement with the caption reading "a casualty of the agitation." But the cartoon was wrong. M.D.H.'s "sacking" had nothing to do with the President's new approach for a cry for agitation and criticism in the political system. M.D.H. had breached the principle of Cabinet responsibility, which is something quite different from Agitation and Constructive criticism.

Another example is criticism of Ministers and Ministries by District Ministers and Members of Parliament. Sometime back there were instances of District Ministers unravelling wastage in Ministries and Government Departments and Corporations and getting photographs and accounts of such wastage published in the Press—much to the embarrassment of the Cabinet Minister concerned. These methods were frowned upon. It was argued that Government M.PPs and District Ministers should first thrash out all their problems and issues *BILATERALLY* with the Minister concerned and *ONLY* if he failed to get satisfactory relief should he criticise or get the criticism publicised. Government M.PPs were also cautioned not to criticise important Government policy in Parliament *WITHOUT* first raising and discussing the issue at the Government Parliamentary Group meetings.

What is most important is that criticism of the Government or of a particular Minister by Members of Parliament or by Members of the Party must be done in the proper *FORUM*. Before criticism is made publicly the individual Minister must be contacted and given a chance to remedy any defects which are the subject of the criticism. The Parliamentary Group meeting must be used as a forum for criticism within the Government ranks rather than wash dirty linen in public. Members of the Party can agitate through their branch organisations, trade unions and ultimately through the Working Committee of the Party. What is important is the proper forum.

The second important matter taken up at the Annual Sessions of the United National Party was the complaint or accusation made

by the General Secretary of the Party's trade union that high level officials of the Government including Secretaries of Ministries and Chairman of Corporations were not toeing the policies of the Party and were not assisting the Party machinery or the trade unions to achieve their objectives which have been accepted as Party policy. The complaint went even further to say that there was open opposition and antagonism by these high level officials which could in certain cases even amount to sabotage. It is regrettable that a generalisation has been made rather than the individuals who are guilty of this accusation being ferretted out and identified. It is all too common today to generalise and to paint every one with the same brush. This is more damaging than the complaint itself. The Party hierarchy and the leadership should not permit generalised accusations of this nature to be made by responsible trade union leaders. One or two instances of not satisfying a trade union request should not be branded or labelled as a general antagonism by high officials to the Party trade union leaders. His Excellency the President also did state that certain high level officials, mainly Corporations Chairmen, have become a law unto themselves and are conducting themselves as if they were more powerful than Cabinet Ministers. This is not a new occurrence for this Government only. Every Government has to live with this type of individual, but the Party and the Government should seek to identify these individuals cases rather than side-track the issue by making general complaints which are never substantiated or followed up by proof or evidence to justify the accusation. After all the Select Committee of Parliament which approved these high level appointments is a continuing and standing body and any member of the public including trade unions leaders can complain to the Select Committee about any individual holding a high level job.

Accordingly, while we congratulate the new thinking enunciated at the twenty fifth Annual Session of the United National Party held on the 14 of December we make a plea that the principles enunciated should not remain more hopes or aspirations but should be galvanised into action and practical implementation.

TRIBUNE, December 29, 1979

## POLITICS

+Caste and Family, +Food and Profits

**CASTE AND FAMILY IN THE POLITICS OF THE SINHALESE 1947-1976.**

By Janice Jiggins. New York and London: Cambridge University Press. 1979. 189 pp. \$19.95. This is an interesting, well-documented book based largely on a doctoral thesis submitted to the University of Sri Lanka, Peradeniya. The author has shown much care in her choice of sources; accurate information of the kind she was after is hard to come by in Sri Lanka. References to caste are usually in undertones lest the susceptibilities of the groups concerned be affected. She was furthermore fortunate in the advice and guidance she received from her mentors. Normally not even natives of the soil have access to the material that the author so skilfully garnered.

Three main families are carefully scrutinized—the Senanayakes, the Bandaranaiques and the Jayewardenes. They provided the Governors-General, Presidents, Executive Presidents and Prime Ministers of Sri Lanka since the country obtained independence in 1948. They also ran the partially responsible governmental systems in operation under the British raj from 1921 to 1947. In fact beginning from the first decade of the twentieth century, it was they who monopolized the politics of the nationalist movement and, in terms of their frames of reference, sought and reaped the returns invested by their predecessors during hard times. D. R. Wijewardene built a press which backed the Senanayakes. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike was involved in the Ceylon National Congress and then launched his Sinhala Maha Sabha (the Great Council of the Sinhalese) in 1937 and later, in 1951, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. J. R. Jayewardene stuck fast to the National Congress and the United National Party of the Senanayakes. Like George Nathaniel, Viscount Curzon, in a previous age, Jayewardene was "really a very superior person" (in the best sense of that term); he sublimated ambition to his sense of duty and responsibility, bided his time by displaying mountains of patience and was duly rewarded by the greatest electoral victory

ever won by any party leader in Sri Lanka's post-independence history.

All three families belonged to a class—the upper class. They were wealthy, elitist, English-educated, very westernized. They spoke the same language of politics, despite the surface differences, and thought the same thoughts. They had the conscious knowledge of effortless superiority. Family rivalries kept them apart but a crisis or an event of national dimensions brought them together. In 1936, under the Donoughmore system, they banded themselves to form the Pan-Sinhalese Board of Ministers. In 1947, at the inauguration of the Soulbury Constitution, the elder Senanayake (Prime Minister, 1947-52) had four of the future prime ministers in his cabinet; there was his son, Dudley (Prime Minister—1952-53, March 1960—July 1960, 1955-1970), his nephew, John Kotelawala (Prime Minister, 1953-56), the distinguished 'etranger' S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike (Prime Minister, 1956-59), and his kinsman, J. R. Jayewardene (Prime Minister, 1977-78 and Executive President of the Republic of Sri Lanka since). President J. R. Jayewardene would like to repeat the grand coalition of 1947 if only Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike would agree to enter such a one.

The sprawling tentacles of family that spread over to the top echelons of the public and diplomatic services are not of immediate relevance (see Appendix). Whether they were available or not, the three families would have gathered their minions from the same social milieu. If they were not so ready at hand, the poor boys who entered the higher civil service would have had the correct marriages arranged for them and found their way into the establishment. The point being made here is that Sri Lanka's political class with its administrative appendages represent an elitist and upper class approach to politics. Those who dwelt on Mount Sinai expected their followers to come to them with tables of stone on which could be written the party message. Hence the C. P. de Silvas and Maithripala Senanayakes (deputy leaders of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party), the Premadasas (Prime Minister in the Gaullist Republic since 1978) and those of their ilk. Such men, despite their different origins, are traditional and conservative. They could be relied on to defend the flag. And the leaders when they reach



the exalted office take good care to include in their governments men from the important castes. If they want popular support they must have these representatives. That is a truism in the island's politics. The author lays bare all these calculations in the course of her peregrinations into the caste and family structures of the island's polity.

The question arises as to what all this means to the political prospects of the island democracy. To complement this scrutiny of the ruling class, a more thorough examination of the traditional left wing opposition, than has been attempted in Chapter 5, would have provided some answers to the whys and wherefores of Sri Lanka's political meanderings. And what of the other two major ethnic groupings, the Ceylon Tamils and Muslims? The 'families' have often wanted 'showpieces' from these groupings in their bandwagons. And for very good political reasons. A holistic study of the island's plural social structure could therefore provide better insights. As it is Ms. Jiggins has helped us cross the threshold. We would urge her to proceed further so that in the end we could have an illuminating social interpretation of Sri Lanka's political complexities.

**A. Jeyaratnam Wilson**

University of New Brunswick,  
Fredericton, N. B.

## MERCHANTS OF GRAIN :

**The Power and Profits of Five Giant Companies At The Center of the World's Food Supply.** by Dan Morgan, *Vinding Press, New York, 1979. Cloth \$ 15.95.*

"It is difficult to understand how the international grain companies could have slipped through history as inconspicuously as they have.....Grain is the only resource in the world that is even more central to modern civilisation than oil. It goes without saying that grain is essential to human lives and health. But as much as oil, grain has its politics, its history, its effect on foreign affairs.....After World War II, dozens of countries that once fed themselves began to depend on a distant source—the United States—for a substantial part of their food supply. As America became

the center of the planetary food system, trade routes were transformed, now economic relationships took shape, and grain became one of the foundations of the postwar American Empire. Food prices, diets, the dollar, politics and diplomacy were all effected"—from the introduction to *The Grain Merchants*.

World trade in basic food commodities amounts to more than \$ 50 billion yearly. This trade is controlled by five companies owned by seven American and European families: Cargill, Continental (known to Canadian grain growers), Louis Dreyfus, Bunge and Andre. The political power these companies can exercise becomes clear when one realizes that North America and Argentina are the only two areas in the world where climatic conditions can guarantee good crops consistently.

Grain has been made a world-wide staple, not only for human consumption but as an animal feed. Developing countries particularly are kept under the thumb of these cartels as they are forced to use their agricultural land for export products (coffee, cocoa, bananas etc.)—land which could keep their own populations self-sufficient in food—in exchange for grain. Even in Europe and Asia where grain is a basic component of their agriculture, climatic conditions force those countries to rely on grain imports to maintain their populations' eating standards. As an exporter of grain, the Soviet Union buys from these companies to fulfil international commitments.

Their monopoly allows the United States government to use grain as a political weapon. Morgan cites Chile as a prime example. When Allende took power the US cut off grain supplies to the country. After the 1973 coup they restored their shipments. This weapon is not only used against progressive governments but has tied reactionary states to agricultural dependency on the U.S. Morgan deserves credit for his excellent research. He uncovers scandals, "global food crises", political maneuverings, and the "mystery" of world trade yet his conclusions ignore his own research. He remains an unabashed supporter of the capitalist system and stands in awe of these companies and the men who lead them. Despite the fact that he admits their wealth is based on the hard, unrewarded work of the people who produce the grain.

Even while acknowledging the efficiency of the Soviet agriculture he fails to see how food supplies could develop without the monopolistic control of these companies.

The Grain Merchants is not easy reading, but I'd still recommend it not only for a better understanding of the significance of the grain trade on world politics but it will involve a sickly laugh next time you hear food prices have jumped 5% because "farmers deserve a better deal."

Canadian Tribune,  
13.09.79.

Norman Brudy



My No. LA/4310

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

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 69 (Part III) of 28.12.1979.

**Schedule**

Name of Land : Mellankulama Kele

Name of Village : Mellankulama (Part)

Plan No. & Lot No : Final Colony Plan pu/15  
Supplement No. 2

D.R.O's Division : Kumara Wannu Palatha.

**N. P. K. Nelumdeniya,**  
Acquiring Officer,  
District Land Officer,  
for Government Agent Puttalam.

The Kachcheri,  
Puttalam,  
05.12.1979.

**LETTER**

**The Job Bank**

Sir,

As one who spearheaded a protest against the "chit" system when the SLFP were in power—the President himself wrote to me at that time supporting my endeavours—I am interested in the comments of members of Parliament re the present Job Bank.

My understanding is that to be registered with the Job Bank, folk have to persuade the MP of the area to endorse the application. I am personally unable to see what essential difference there is between this system and the old chit system. Both required the MP's support. The only difference is that the present Job Bank is an absolutization of the system. It is publicly stated that only those whose names appear on the Job Bank list will get employment. The old chit system never went as far as that—at least not officially.

My complaints against both methods of getting employment is that both could do violence to an individual's conscience. A job-seeker may not know, may not be known to, the MP, worse still either party may know the other only too well, the job-seeker may have worked against the election of the victorious MP, or in any event may just not like the MP as a man-in any democracy or all of these possibilities are permitted. Yet this man too must approach the MP and ask for his support to help him get a job. I can think of no more demeaning situation—it does violence to all that appears to be decant in society. If I have allowed my feelings about the MP to be public (adverse ones obviously) the MP would have to have near-arahat feelings not to allow the situation to be prejudiced against my request. But that it should be statutorily necessary for me to ask is what goes against the grain.

I see no reason whatsoever why I as a citizen of this land should have to seek the favour of an MP to get employment. I do see why members of Parliament, whatever their Party label may be, defend this feudal order—it gives them power, almost the power of life or death over every unemployed person in their area. Men do not surrender power lightly.

**Bryan de Kretser**

Prithipura, Hendala

## Dec. 13 — Dec. 19

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—Dinamina; LD—Lankadipa; VK—Virakesari; ATH—Aththa; SM—Silumina; SLDP—Sri Lanka-dipa; JD—Janadinā; SU—Sun; DV—Davasa; DP—Dinapathi; CM—Chinthamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Riviresa; DK—Dinakara; EN—Eelanadu; IDPR—Information Dept. Press Release.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13:** Christmas this year will be a season to remember for a long time; the shops are full of the good things of life—food, drink and clothing; tourists visiting the World Market in Duke Street, Colombo and the other shops in the Fort, Pettah and Maradana said the prices were cheaper than in most other countries. The Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Construction which had undertaken large housing schemes in the urban areas and the villages has now ventured into a new area of housing development; under the direction of Prime Minister, R. Premadasa, massive housing schemes are to be put up by the National Housing Development Authority at various sites in Colombo. The five private firms which had received government approval to operate domestic air services in Sri Lanka were unable to begin their services due to the unavailability of Aviation Gasolene (Avgas), an aviation spokesman said yesterday—CDN. Sri Lanka's export trade is experiencing a big boom now; the export earnings which shot up to a new high during the first eight months of this year stood at Rs. 9,987 million; this was 18 per cent higher than that of the same period last year. Shippers have been warned that stern action would be taken if they are found guilty of shipping low quality rubber to China; this warning has been issued by the Commissioner of Commodity Purchase on the orders of Mr. M. S. Amarasinghe, Deputy Minister of Trade and Shipping. The Asian Develop-

ment Bank has approved two loans, one for US \$ 10.9 million (Rs. 171 m) and another for US \$ 11.3 million (Rs. 177 m) for Sri Lanka; the US \$ 10.9 million loan is for a rural credit project while the other is for a rural electrification project—CDM. A three-member Ministerial team will examine in detail the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation's move to set up a giant off-shore oil storage complex; the idea is to ascertain whether there would be dangers to the environment. Fresh coconuts will be sold at 40 cents, Rs. 1.15 and Rs. 1.25 a nut from cooperative outlets and Marketing Department retail outlets, it was decided at a top level conference presided over by Trade and Shipping Minister, Lalith Athulathmudali yesterday. A special team from the World Bank will arrive in Sri Lanka shortly to study and recommend a more effective method of disposing of the city's daily garbage collection. Working hours in the State sector will be from 8 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. beginning from January 1, 1980, Cabinet decided yesterday; this came after Minister of State, Anandatissa de Alwis placed before yesterday's weekly Cabinet meeting the outcome of the public opinion poll conducted through the newspapers—SU. Some Indian nationals who come here on tourist visas regularly are operating a large-scale gem smuggling racket using Colombo as their base of operation — Customs sources said yesterday that the ring of Indian nationals operated from offices in the heart of Pettah. The Ministry of Fisheries has issued 613 boats this year to fishermen on the 35 per cent subsidy scheme drawn up by the Minister of Fisheries Mr. Festus Perrera and the Secretary to the Minister, Mr. Anura Weeraratne. A Parliamentary Select Committee will be appointed to investigate and report on the matter of bogus letters written on letter heads of M.Ps. being sent to Ministers and officers—DP.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14:** The government has decided to set up a National Committee for the Conservation of Coconuts with Coconut Industries Minister Harold Herat as its head, Trade Minister, Lalith Athulathmudali will be associated with it; Mr. Athulathmudali said yesterday that the government considered the restoration of the Coconut Industry "a matter of national urgency". Foreign Minister, A. C. S. Hameed returned yesterday after his mission to Iran where he

had discussions with the Iranian authorities about the crisis that has arisen following the holding of hostages at the United States Embassy in Teheran. The Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs has recommended to Cabinet that there should be regular transfer of staff involved in "sensitive posts" either within the same department or between departments; this was one of the suggestions put forward by the Ministry to the Cabinet on Wednesday to minimise bribery—*CDN*. Sri Lanka's gross external assets have reached a record level; the level of external assets at the end of August this year was adequate to finance about four and half months of imports projected for 1979—*CDM*. Government has decided to reorient the functions of the Land Development Department to immediately undertake a programme of tree planting, landscaping and general environmental improvement. More than 1,000 families in the Seruwila and Kuchchiveli areas have been rendered homeless by rising floodwaters—*SU*. It is understood that the government is seriously considering the ban on the import of vehicles for government departments, corporations and boards; government sources point out that this will be an initial step by the government to prevent waste and to conserve fuel—*DP*.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15:** Justice Minister K. W. Devanayagam said yesterday the government would increase the salaries of judges and provide them with better living conditions in order to make the judicial service more attractive than it was now. Today nine Mayors of Municipal Councils will leave on a three-week official tour to the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong and Singapore. The new year will be the end of over-staffing in government departments and public corporations, a Public Administration and Home Affairs Ministry spokesman said yesterday; work in the public sector would also be streamlined to get the maximum output, he said—*CDM*. Commissions of inquiry appointed by President J. R. Jayewardene, will have to submit their original reports in the official language in future; this directive from the President was conveyed to Secretaries of Commissions yesterday—*CDM*. The Chairman of the Janatha Estate Development Board (JEDB) and the State Plantations Corporation (SPC) have been asked to make proposals to tighten manage-

ment of the state-owned plantation sector which today dominates the national economy—*CO*.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16:** President J. R. Jayewardene yesterday stressed the need for the UNP to be an agitational force, even against its own government, to keep the government on its toes without in any way seeking to weaken or destroy it. Mr. Jayewardene told cheering green-clad UNPers who flocked to the Sugathadasa Indoor Stadium for the party's 25th annual conference that there was a tendency among those who held office as Ministers and MPs to ignore the party machinery; "we must not let this happen", he declared. Solar powered lighting units which can be a blessing in rural homes and in developed urban areas will soon be a reality under a program to be initiated by the Prime Minister, Mr. R. Premadasa—*SO*. The food and kerosene stamp scheme, introduced by the Government in an effort to divert scarce funds to development while ensuring the welfare of the people is not serving some of the poorest sections although certain people who are not entitled to it are benefiting—*SU*. A separate Court will be established to hear the cases of government servants with a view to expediting such cases.—*CM*.

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 17:** The minimum age for marriage is to be raised to 20; Percy Samaraweera, Deputy Minister, Public Administration and Home Affairs said it had become necessary to raise the minimum legal age for marriage on grounds of health, the welfare of children and the population problem. A chairman of a leading export firm and former cricket captain of Sri Lanka have been questioned by the CID in connection with certain GCE (A-level) certificates which had allegedly been in possession of their children, Police said yesterday—*CDN*. The President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene will soon resolve the stalemate which has resulted in several months delay in the commencement of the Open University. Will the major international airlines bypass Sri Lanka; this question has been posed as a result of the high price of aviation fuels and the suspension of credit facilities on fuel purchases by airlines—*CDM*. An Addiction Treatment Centres Act, under which drug or liquor addicts will be compelled to undergo treatment at specified institutions, is to be introduced in

Parliament shortly by the Government; the draft law based on the recommendations of a three member committee appointed by Justice Minister, K. W. Devanayagam has been sent to the Ministry of Health for approval—SU. A second Investment Promotion Zone is to be opened at Boosa; the Chairman of the GCEC, Mr. Upali Wijewardene, said that the proposal to open the second IPZ on the former Manning Race Course of the Galle Gymkhana Club, had already received the blessings of President, J. R. Jayewardene—CO.

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18:** The government has decided to take over the remaining 385 estate schools in January and February bringing all estate schools under state management, an Education Ministry spokesman said; about 390 estate schools came under government management earlier this year. The private sector will not follow the government in altering working hours, a spokesman of the Employers' Federation of Ceylon said yesterday. Labour Minister Capt. C. P. J. Seneviratne yesterday called upon the 2000 odd Trade Unions to help in the massive task of nation building, "let us build ourselves up; till then we must give up all agitations", he said—CDN. Norway has rebuffed K. Vaikunthavasan, Head of the London-based Tamil Co-ordinating Committee and self-proclaimed leader of the so-called Eelam Tamils abroad; it is reliably learnt that the Norwegian Foreign Ministry has informed the Government of Sri Lanka that there is absolutely no truth in Vaikunthavasan's claim that Norway had promised to reevaluate aid to this country—CDM. A full investigation is to be conducted into a series of prison breaks to determine whether they had been carried out with the complicity of the guards. The political curtain on what may be the last by-election in this country comes down today when all the political parties wind up their electioneering in Galle—SU. A team of British evaluators have been commissioned by the Sri Lanka government to work out the economics of the Sapugaskanda urea factory which is threatening to become a massive white elephant. The Finance Minister warned in Parliament that the country is facing a grave situation in that the price of flour, sugar and petrol is increasing more and more—VK.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19:** The government has picked eleven firms, ten foreign and

one local to start mining for gems and possible mineral deposits in 43, 900 acres of land which will be permanently submerged under the Mahaweli and Samanalawewa schemes. Midwives will play the key role in Rs. 124 million model health care system which is to be started soon in the Mahaweli Development area, the Health Ministry said yesterday—CDN. The President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene told an election rally in Galle yesterday that he could not see any party other than the UNP and Dr. W. Dahanayake winning the Galle by-election. Tourism is the fastest growing industry in this country and a record Rs 1.1 billion would be earned this year by the tourist industry; last year's earnings were Rs. 838 million; Mr. Anandatissa de Alwis Minister of State said this in Parliament yesterday in the course of his reply to members who spoke during the committee stage discussions on the votes of his Ministry—CDM. Oil prices in Sri Lanka in the New Year may increase by another thirty per cent, President J. R. Jayewardene warned yesterday. Police guards were posted at a number of leading schools in Colombo yesterday following reports of possible clashes among students—SU. The current Examinations Department scandal has had international repercussions and the education authorities in a number of countries have called for detailed checks on the examination certificates of Sri Lankan students studying in universities abroad; Education Department sources said yesterday that these countries include the UK, Nigeria, Ghana, Zambia and Singapore—CO. Vessels bringing rice, flour, sugar and other foodstuffs in future call at all the four ports in the country direct; food cargo vessels hereafter will call over at Kankasanturai in the North, at Trincomalee in the East, at Galle in the South and at Colombo in the West; unloading of foodstuffs only at Colombo and transporting them to various parts of the island will be done away with from the middle of next year—DP.



## Public Relations

by R. C. Thavarajah

Retd. Supt. of Police

The Police were called upon to do everything from prompt action in profiteering in food items, textiles, hoarding of price controlled articles, detecting Excise offences and even to drive away beggars from the streets. The effect of Police acting outside the purview of normal duties made a big dent. More people were antagonised. The offender and his supporters ganged up against the Police. The Police, in their part, were exposed to temptation. Those who yielded to the temptation came in for much criticism.

It will be relevant to refer to the instructions to the Metropolitan Police Training Programme:—

"The primary object of an efficient Police is the prevention of crime, the next that of detection and punishment of offenders if crime is committed. It should be understood at the outset that the object to be attained is the Prevention of Crime. To this end, every effort of the Police is directed. Lord Brampton, Home Secretary, laid much emphasis on this aspect of prevention obviously realising the wisdom of the time honoured adage that "Prevention is better than cure."

ANOTHER UNHEALTHY TREND which permeated into the "system" of administration was the conflicting and incompatible demands made on the Police. An officer is told to "clean up all vice" and at the same time "to make allowance for human culture". It is not surprising therefore, that the Police are perched on to the precarious cliff of uncertainty.

In the backdrop of such a state of affairs political interreference reared its ugly head. Some unprincipled and ill-mannered politicians who contributed to the unpopularity of a particular political party went even to the extent of using vituperatives such as "Police Dogs" when the necessary "co-operation" was not forthcoming.

In such a climate the Police re-acted by adopting a pachyderm attitude. Some took up a defensive if not hostile attitude with a fervour which the critics describe as a 'msi-guided sense of esprit-de-corps'. Those, who

chose to throw self-respect to the winds, wormed their way into the confidence of some powerful politicians to get promotions, scholarships, and transfers to congenial stations.

Ben Whitaker, English Barrister and Extra-mural Lecturer for London University in Law, who studied psychology and criminology for three years in his timely and deeply considered book entitled 'The Police' says "accusations of favouritism, then have some basis in fact, if by that term we mean an essentially personalised selection for a few vacancies. A further danger is that it breeds mistrust in the men."

With Police morale at a low ebb, public criticism mounted steadily. It was most unfortunate that the admirable bulk of the Service became linked with the stigma of some undesirable elements in their own camp.

The honest, hardworking and loyal officers complained bitterly of the public's lack of sympathy and co-operation. They felt that their problems were not understood by the public. The police, on the other hand, did not make much headway in re-establishing better public relations. The scissor and paste job of organising volley-ball matches, film shows, bicycle races and field day celebrations had only temporary entertainment value. Living and working in isolation cannot achieve good Police-Public relations.

The Police in other countries are trying different solutions to the problem. In Paris, a magazine called 'Liaison' is published with the prime idea of explaining to the public what the problems of the Police are. In Germany, the Head of the Munich Police Force has enlisted the services of a psychiatrist to teach his personnel better relations with the Public. The Japanese Police conduct an annual survey of public opinion concerning them. In the United Kingdom, the Chief Constable of Brighton suggested that his force should appoint a Public Relations Police Officer whose job would be to familiarise the public with their programme of work and assuring them that they would be given a fair deal.

It must be remembered that contact on a personal level will always remain the most vitally important factor. The Police should seize every opportunity of exchanging views not only with the elitish groups, professional

men, Heads of Schools, Religious leaders, Social Service Organisations but also with the common man and even with criminals who have "retired from active service" and who are on their way to re-habilitation.

V. E. Leonard, B.S., M.A., Ph.D., Chairman, Department of Police Science and Administration in the State College of Washington in his book *Police Organisation and Management* writes—"The power of the Press has not been underestimated. The newspapers of a community or city can 'make or break' a Police Department. Among the external controls that condition Police Administration the Press plays a commanding role."

One cannot agree with the author more. In our country, publicity is given on an individualised basis giving prominence *not* to the officers who performed the hard, dangerous and excellent job but to the top brass who released the news item. On the other hand, some isolated instances of misconduct are given attention out of all proportion to their importance. This does not help much in building a better image of our Police.

In the wider interests of building better public relations, one wonders whether the single malfeasance of one officer is worth all the song and dance the Press makes. No one gainsays that the reading Public have a right to know. Releases to the Press must, therefore, be channelled through a responsible officer so that all the dailies in all the languages will carry the correct facts and not distortions or embellishments.

It will also prevent one newspaper from scoring a "scoop". The Policeman in Sri Lanka, like the Canadian Mountie, must get his man. The news reporter must also get his story. The public must know what is happening. It is, therefore, essential that the Police and the Press must work in close liaison.

Bruce Smith in his book "Politics and Law Enforcement" says:—"Police Administration has become a complex and highly technical calling. The problems of Law Enforcement can be satisfactorily described and made real only to persons who have had some experience with Public Administration or who have themselves known the complexities which surround the business of handling and directing large numbers of men".

That a society will have the Police it deserves is a truism that cannot be lightly dismissed. The urgent need today is two-fold—Human problems and tensions of the Police must be appreciated. The Public should be better informed of their problems with evidence and understanding instead of "being spasmodically inflamed by cycles of ephemeral incidents."

The Police, for their part, must abide by the directives enunciated by C. Reith in his book "A Short History of the British Police" (Oxford University Press), 1948, to understand how vital Police-Public Relationship is. They, the British Police, were told that they must cultivate this by "combing modesty, firmness, dignity of manner and address with good humour, kindly friendliness and by showing infinite patience under provocation."

His Excellency, the President has made an excellent choice in appointing Mr. E. L. Abegonewardene, who last served as Asst. Secretary to the Ministry of Defence (National Security) to the Police Commission. Mr. Abegonewardene was indubitably the best Inspector-General of Police this country had so far. He has not only the ability, the know-how but also the experience which is better than the vacuous theories of academicians elaborated in their libraries. The task of refurbishing and re-vamping the country's Prime Law Enforcement Agency cannot be done by the Police Commission alone. It calls for the combined effort both by the Police of all ranks as well as the Public.

Ours is a beautiful country whose people are known the world over for their sincerity and their traditional hospitality. In the ultimate analysis, let it *not* be said that, due to our indifference and apathy, it is a place (with apologies and slight alterations to Bishop Heber's verdict)

*"Where tho' the spicy breezes  
Blow soft o'er Lanka's Isle;  
Where every prospect pleases  
But only Police Man alone is vile".*

Concluded

16/3, Circular Road,  
Kandana.

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## Ground Water

by *Tribune Investigator*

This week, we will set out the full text of the WRB statement on "Ground Water" before we make our comments: (all italics and emphasise theirs)

"This investigator who is apparently not knowledgeable on the subject of ground water has thought it fit that he should not consult anybody other than possibly his informants to get data. We would like to mention in the very outset that every one of the points made in his article is either rooted in ignorance or in malice and frequently in both. He says, 'Water Resources Board is being crowing about having found water for the Free Trade Zone, millions of gallons. The simple fact is they dug, they struck water and exploit it to the full.' He sounds like Caesar—I came I saw I conquered. *In one stroke of the pen, this knowledgeable investigator has eradicated the need for Geologists, Geophysicists, Engineers for extraction of ground water.* In fact, the world would be very grateful to this gentleman, if he could explain little more the hidden knowledge that he has got on this particular subject. It is well known that at the very second meeting that we had with the G.C.E.C., we said with confidence that water shall not be a problem for the implementation of the Free Trade Zone Project at Katunayake and that we shall provide it in time. In fact, we have now provided 1.2 million gallons of water per day, one year ahead of schedule.

"The fact of the matter is that the ground water table of the Free Trade Zone, which is now being exploited by this Board, has been studied as far back in 1964 and the aquifer conditions were well known to the Board and that fact gave us the confidence to give that assurance.

"THIS INVESTIGATOR MAY HAVE TELEPHONED THE BOARD TO VERIFY HIS FACTS, IF HE WANTED TO PRESENT A CORRECT PICTURE. He further says that it does not take long to train persons for boring. Yes, in three days we can get a person trained for boring, but it takes nearly two years to get a

well Driller trained to some degree of efficiency. If the Investigator cares to see us, we can explain to him the difference between boring and drilling—believe me, there is a difference of at least 2 years, and the Driller is one member of a multi-disciplinary team that is required to get a ground water exploitation project in operation. It is true the general public only sees the Driller who apparently gets the water. *Of course, what this investigator is saying is that the rest of the world is mad in having Geologists, Geophysicists and Engineers working in terms to explore ground water, while one borer trained in a few days could do it well. Sometimes ignorance is not bliss.*

"It takes nearly two to three years for most foreign funded schemes to get from the conceptual stage to the implementational phase. The ground water exploitation scheme of the Water Supply & Drainage Board itself is no exception. The private investigator in his morbid hurry is tripping over all sorts of follies. This gentleman also speaks of an escapade regarding a tube well in Victoria Park. We are unable to understand whether he wishes to pay a compliment or find some fault, because at very short notice we drilled a well at Victoria Park, which is functioning to date. In fact, the fountain in the Victoria Park gets its water from this well.

"The private investigator has written to say that over extraction of ground water could only be a problem in Jaffna and not in the miocene limestones, Hurrah! *In fact, this is a completely contrary view to that of all the national and international experts who have studied the ground water conditions of the miocene limestones of Sri Lanka.* The Israelis have given safe yields to Puttalam, Irrigation Department has predicted safe yields to Mannar and a British team is now working on the aquire conditions of some parts of the latesols. The Tribune investigator is either completely looney or is propagating a totally new theory. We wish he could have the time to telephone us, if he does not want to see us, and discuss this matter a little further—*purely for the sake of knowledge.*

"The subject of Ground Water Investigations was handed over to this Board in January 1978 and during the last 20 months the Board has completed 205 drill holes with the dilapidated equipment available with us. In this



context, we may point out that in the years 1976 and 1977 only 53 wells have been done. These figures, we presume, depict the REAL TEST Mr. Investigator.

"The Investigator says that the Water Resources Board has not formulated projects to obtain foreign assistance. He is obviously not aware that this Board had formulated 3 projects for external financing, namely, the Ground Water Investigations in Latesols which is now being implemented with British Aid, the Ground Water Investigation in the Kurunegala District which is now being implemented with World Bank assistance and the Ground Water Investigations in the Hambantota District which is being implemented with Norwegian assistance. We are also now in the process of formulating projects for Puttalam and Monaragala."

What does the statement of the WRB on Groundwater boil down to :

1. That the Investigator is "apparently not knowledgeable" and that he has not thought it fit to consult anybody other than "possibly his informants": that every point in his articles were rooted in ignorance or malice or both. To substantiate these charges, the WRB says that the Investigator had said that WRB had "dug" in FTZ, "struck water" and "exploited" it to the full. From this, the WRB goes on to say that the investigator has "eradicated" the need for geologists, geophysicists, engineers etc. etc. The WRB then ascends the sudden heights of Olympian cynicism to ridicule the Investigator's "hidden knowledge" which a "grateful world" was waiting for.
2. That the WRB did not have doubts about getting water for the FTZ and they did one year ahead of time.
3. That the WRB admitted that the water table of the FTZ area was studied as far back as 1964 and the aquifer conditions were well known to the WRB. After repeating such all-too-well-known facts, the WRB complains that the Investigator "may have telephoned the Board to verify his facts ...." (meaning should have)....if he wanted to present a 'correct picture'.
4. That the Investigator had said that it did not take long to train a person for boring. The WRB's position is that one can learn to bore in 3 days and that to drill one has to learn for at least 2 years.
5. That the Investigator was chastised again for not seeing "us" to be given a lecture on the difference between "boring" and "drilling".
6. That the WRB then talks pontifically about "drillers" and "multi-disciplinary teams" and ends the para with a bit of rhetorical demogogy...."what the Investigator is saying is that the rest of the world is mad....sometimes ignorance is not bliss."
7. That the WRB stressed that it takes nearly 2 to 3 years for most foreign funded schemes to get from the conceptual stage to the implementational stage. Reference is made to the National Water Service & Drainage Board and suggests that "the Investigator's morbid hurry leads him to trip" over "all sorts of follies."
8. That the Investigator had written that "over-extraction of groundwater could only be a problem in Jaffna and not in the miocene limestone". That the Investigator in saying this was either "completely looney or is propagating a completely new theory". After this blunderbluss bombast, the WRB falls back on its perpetual wail "we wish he would have the time to telephone us....purely for the sake of knowledge."
9. That groundwater investigations were handed over to the WRB in January 1978 and in 20 months they had completed 205 drill holes with the dilapidated equipment available to us".... and also found comfort that in 1976 and 1977 only 53 wells had been done.
10. That the Investigator had stated that the WRB has not formulated projects to obtain foreign assistance that the WRB had already obtained assistance for 3 projects and two more were on the offing.

The arguments of the WRB onslaught on this investigator on the question of Ground Water is contained in the ten points mentioned above. We shall proceed to discuss them in the next article and show that the WRB cannot get away so easily with such bluff and bluster.

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#### POINT OF VIEW

## “State To Pay Teachers of Private Schools...”

by R. Kahawita

THE above was front page headline News in the *Ceylon Daily News* of December First. This, to us, is the most courageous and bold decision the present Government has made in her two and half years of stewardship; courageous, because of the sectoral agitation that went on during the pre-school take over period; bold, a welcome step towards the establishment of a well publicised Dharmista Society. The Government of 1960 took over the Denominational schools as a popular gesture to satisfy a section of the voters, whose clamour to take over was prompted by jealousy than in the national interest. What happened to the schools after the takeover supports this.

We can recollect of one national figure vehemently opposed the schools take over and decided to go “private non-fee levying”. He was Fr. Peter Pillai, then Rector of St. Joseph’s College, Maradana. Those who opposed the school’s take over had the moral and personal support of Dr. W. Dhahanayake, who himself a Minister of Education one time and had the premonition of what was going to happen to the education system if nationalized helter-skelter. We are happy to see him still up and about and even may be in the House to compliment the Government on the bold step it has taken.

ACCORDING TO THE PRESS RELEASE 26 schools, with 1215 teachers and about 40,000 students will be involved in the “re-establishment of justice” towards the denominations. The 1215 teachers will be paid by the State on a par with the State teachers and their pension rights will be restored to the same status and level as of the State school teachers. It means

that the 26 schools will be non-fee levying, State aided and privately managed so that they can still maintain their administrative standards and discipline—woefully missing in State schools.

We say it is a bold step, because all the successive Governments since 1960 were frightened to touch with a barge pole even the issue lest they lose political popularity. So they accepted what happened in 1960 as if that too was their Think-Box and they would have done the same thing if they were in power then. It was a case of the majority discriminating against the minority because the latter was better organized and disciplined than the former. This is obvious if we analyse the 26 schools involved, denominational wise. Of the 26 schools eighteen (18) are Catholic schools, five are other Christian schools, two are Hindu and one Muslim. The two Christian denominations dominate the scene—23 schools out of the 26, as if they were the only people with a conscience to preserve their religious beliefs in the face of oppression. In fact it may be so due to their religion and religious teaching which the Government of 1960 attempted to destroy in the belief—“destroy the saplings, then, there will no be trees.”

THE LEVERAGE the present Government has today is its Constitution, where everyone’s fundamental rights are written into the Constitution. The Constitution says:— **“Every person is entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion...”** With that freedom enshrined in the Constitution it behoves a Catholic parent to send the children to Catholic schools. That is the freedom of Conscience and Religion which the 1960 Government violated deliberately when the Catholic schools were taken over and now restored under the New Constitution. Further it says **“No Citizen shall be discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion, language caste, sex etc.”** “When one is confronted with the figures of liberated schools, the Catholics had to suffer to—protect 18 of their schools—this is 69% of the liberated schools.” If this is not discrimination what is? So under the present Constitution, the Catholics have got back what is constitutionally theirs and no one can whine.

The excuse for the school take over was to develop a National System of Education—that was in 1960. We are still on the look out

for that National System. Instead, after the school take over, what have we? An indisciplined and disrespectful student population, which is evident wherever one cares to wander, and from what surfaces at the campuses of Higher Education—barbaric scenes etc, every year at the commencement of a new academic year. This is a consequence to the degree of indiscipline in the State schools today. To correct this eruption of vulgarity in the Campuses, correction must commence at the school level, where the moulding of character and moral behaviour begins. This is possible only by creating Institutional discipline based on one's convictions. This is what the Christian denominations did ever since the missionaries came to Ceylon. The teaching of religion, correcting, and guiding the young to be good members of a society, was their calling in life. They turned out the citizens that gave the leadership in every walk of life. This is what generated the envy of others which resulted in the schools take-over. Of course the excuse then was to develop a "National System of Education. We all know now what it was and is.

Sadly, we still hear of a University here, a University there even though the powers that be know very well the University education is not the need of the moment to push through a massive programme in four areas of development. Yet they do not wish to change as if the thinking was done for us by previous regimes and as if still they have the last say in policy making. So the education muddle will be around Universities, while every Minister who has a development programme to push through grumbles that he has no trained personnel to man the works or letters do not move beyond an office file.

We believe that the popular demand is a degree and bell-bottom, so we want to be popular with the voter in that belief. What the young wants today is an education and training to get *permanent employment*; not to be sweepers and cleaners etc., because that is what they are fit for with the present so called National System of education.

We hope the step the Government has taken to liberate the Denominational schools will lead to a better National System of Education.

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## Nine Speeches

by S. P. Amarasingam

IN THE MORNING SESSION of Tuesday, September 4, at the Sixth Summit after the speech of Marshal Tito, the President of Iraq, Saddam Hussein took the floor. He said that the Non-aligned Movement had arisen because of the genuine and pressing need of peoples who suffered domination and threats to their liberty, wealth, national identity and cultural heritage. He said the just struggle the Arab countries were waging against Zionist aggression found its strongest support in the Non-aligned Movement which steadfastly opposed imperialism and racism. Iraq wanted the eradication of all forms of exploitation and discrimination at the economic level, he said, and called for the establishment of an equitable economic order. He also wanted the setting up of stable associations of developing countries producing raw materials and the strengthening of existing ones to better confront the monopolies of the highly industrialized countries. Developing countries, he said, must receive a just price for their raw materials, and stop the further deterioration in the international terms of trade. Colonial powers rob the riches of the developing countries through ridiculously low prices and then try to convince them that their internal economic crises were caused by the countries which exported oil. Saddam Hussein further said that the colonialists and monopolists should understand that the days of colonialist plunder are over, that people now refuse to live under the shadow of colonialist bayonets, hunger and poverty while other countries unjustly enjoy prosperity and opulence.

After referring to the Arab unity that had existed in the past, Saddam Hussein said he was obliged to bring up before the 6th Summit the problems that stemmed from the stand taken by the Egyptian Government towards the rights of the Palestinian Arab people. The Egyptian government has colluded with the Zionist entity and American imperialism and concluded the peace treaty which the overwhelming majority of the Arab people have rejected. It did this instead of unifying

it efforts with the efforts of the Arab brethren. Saddam Hussein asked the Conference to penalise this government morally and materially for collusion against the Arab family of nations. He said such measures were necessary to stop the proliferation of conspiratorial and treacherous tendencies against the interests of the peoples and their basic rights, against the scandalous violation of the principles of true solidarity, and the basic principles of non-alignment. The Camp David agreement, said Saddam Hussein, had violated the principles of the Non-aligned Movement. "The two agreements of Camp David and the other agreements which followed them are a stab in the back of the struggle against imperialism, it accepts the Zionist entity and thus perpetuates the imperialist presence in the very heart of the Arab homeland."

NEXT, THE PRESIDENT OF SYRIA, Hafel al Assad, made his speech and stated that: "as we meet on Cuban soil, I am honoured to begin my speech by paying homage to the Cuban people and to the leader of their Revolution, our friend President Fidel Castro, and to thank him and the Cuban Government for their efforts in preparing and hosting this Conference, providing all the ingredients for its success. After welcoming the new members to the Movement, the Syrian President said it was in the interests of the enemies of the people to destroy the Non-aligned Movement, of seducing some members and sowing discord in its ranks. We are the vanguard of those who insist on upholding solidarity and cohesion among the non-aligned countries. But this should be the result of adherence to principles, to stop the infiltration of enemies into our ranks. Elaborating, he stressed that Israel was carrying our savage bombings in southern Lebanon, against Lebanese towns and villages and against Palestinian camps. Egypt, he continued, which was once in the Arab trenches against Israel was now in Israeli trenches fighting the Arabs, which had once proclaimed that Israel was a racist entity that should be fought now finds its president saying that Israel is a civilized entity and that there must be reconciliation and cooperation with that entity. After condemning the Camp David agreements, Hafel el Assad said that the Arab position would continue to be what it has always been, "a hardline position that insists on the justness

of our cause, that demands the right to defend ourselves and requires the defense of liberty, to fight against aggression and colonialism, Zionist racism in Palestine, against racism in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa". He went on to say: "We must strengthen the unity of the Non-aligned Movement, but with an increased fighting content and in consonance with its resolutions, especially those agreed upon at the Summit Conference of Non-aligned countries, which is the supreme institution of the Movement." It was crucial, he said, to raise the share of the developing countries in world production and their participation in world trade and change the basic principles that today govern international economic relations. This will require a revision of tariff policies by developed countries vis-a-vis developing countries. It also requires changes in the terms of trade between these countries to correct the constant losses which the developing countries experience through increases in, inflation and lack of access to the world market.

AFTER HIM, Mengistu Haile Mariam, President of Ethiopia took the floor. He congratulated Fidel for his election as Chairman of the historic conference and said this was a well-deserved tribute to the people of Cuba, who, under his leadership, had made important contributions to security, freedom, justice, equality, democracy and socialism, and was a recognition of the important role which Cuba would continue to play in the Movement. "We realize that the new phase of our struggle which focusses on our fundamental problems enables us to identify friends and foes and to see clearly the many obstructive forces that are arrayed against us. . . . . On the other hand, the forces that stand for peace, justice, freedom, human progress and prosperity have supported and are supporting our cause. . . . . Having identified the enemies and friends of our Movement, we can, with the support of our friends, fortify our ranks and effectively tackle and defeat imperialism, the arch enemy which aspires to enslave mankind in perpetuity and which is responsible for our backwardness and for the injustice and oppression we have suffered for so long." He called for an effort to come up with an effective common strategy that would pave the way for a joint action program. Mengistu pointed to the desperate and vain efforts of international imperialism

to block the course of history still constituted a serious threat because they encouraged certain states with expansionist ambitions and provoked many regional conflicts that lead to heavy loss of life and property in some member states. It is also evident, he continued, that the divisive manoeuvres of imperialism have created strife and controversy within our Movement.

After dealing with the problems of Southern Africa, Western Sahara and the Middle East he went on to deal with "the attack by the Peking expansionists on the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the humiliating defeat they had received at the hands of the brave Vietnamese people, whom they had wanted to teach a lesson." The Revolutionary Government of People's Kampuchea was the rightful representative of the Kampuchean people, he said. Mengistu reiterated that Ethiopia's foreign policy was based on the principles of non-alignment and that it would do all it could to preserve unity and concluded that his country was ready to strengthen relations and militant solidarity with the forces struggling against imperialism, colonialism and racism for peace, justice and equality.

IN THE AFTERNOON AND EVENING SESSIONS, which went on until 10.45 p.m. there were speeches by Ziaur Rahman, President of Bangladesh; Michael Manley, Prime Minister of Jamaica; Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the PLO; Forbes Burnham, Prime Minister of Guyana; Somora Machel, President of Mozambique; and Denis Sassou Neugesso, President of the Peoples Republic of Congo. The Syrian President, Hafez el Assad, one of the Deputy Presidents, chaired this session.

The first speaker was the president of Bangladesh, Ziaur Rahman, and he stressed the Non-aligned Movement provided support to detente, decolonisation and other struggles. He advocated intensified efforts to obtain a new international economic order and said that the political will to advance and make progress together was indispensable and that his delegation had distributed a document with these suggestions at the Conference. These included the establishment by the Movement of a Research Centre for Studies on Development and that his country would be happy to undertake the preparatory work required for the organisation of such an institution.

Jamaica's Prime Minister, Michael Manley, was the next speaker. He praised Sri Lanka for its contribution to the Movement in the last three years and paid tribute to the Movement's founders. He went on to say that history occasionally produced movements and men that serve as the inspiration for great processes and that these movements and men were at the same time catalysts and solid rock; because it was difficult to imagine a change without them and because they seemed to provide the solid foundation for new structures. We may claim to be communists or socialists or humanists or simply progressive, but all anti-imperialists know that the balance of forces in the world shifted irrevocably in 1917 when there was a movement and a man in the October Revolution and that was Lenin—catalyst and rock. Manley went on to say that today the anti-imperialist forces were stronger than ever before, in spite of imperialists' attacks on Latin America, adding that this was so because "our hemisphere has had a movement and a man; a catalyst and a rock; and the movement is the Cuban Revolution, and the man is Fidel Castro".

Holding the Summit conference in Havana was a tribute to the Cuban people and to Fidel's wise leadership and added that without the Cuban Revolution and Fidel, the Non-aligned Movement would not have reached the level of development on this continent which had enabled it to ensure that the Conference would be held in this part of the world. He was gratified by the fact that Cuba was a non-aligned country that defended the principle on non-alignment, including the right to hold one's own opinion. He added that the balance of power in Africa had tilted positively and irreversibly when the Cuban comrades helped their African brothers to inflict the first military defeat on a racist army in Angola.

He said that it was fitting to describe the non-aligned countries as anti-imperialist, anticolonialist, anti-neocolonialist, anti-racist and that they stood for peace, disarmament and democratic relations among states and that they were opposed to blocs—but it was much more important to oppose the historic forces and circumstances that give rise to such blocs. When a member of the Movement or the Movement as a whole adopted a position that coincided with one adopted by the socialist community

it was said that this was done to benefit the socialist countries. Nothing could be further from the truth, he said, adding that if someone shared their points of view this should be cause for satisfaction and that it should be understood that the non-aligned were not going to change their opinions just to avoid coinciding with those of the socialist world or with any other part of the world.

Manley declared his support for Panama's claims on the Canal, the revolution in Grenada, the victory over tyrant Somoza in Nicaragua, the independence of Puerto Rico, the Palestinian people's struggle for their legitimate rights; the POLISARIO Front's struggle for liberation in Western Sahara and the peoples of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa in their struggle for liberation. He condemned the United States for its blockade on Cuba and hailed the fall of the Shah of Iran and Idi Amin Dada in Uganda. The recognition of People's Kampuchea by the Non-aligned Movement should not be postponed any longer, he said, condemning the Pol. Pot regime for its acts of genocide. In appraising the world economic situation, Manley spoke at length on the manoeuvres carried out by the developed capitalist countries and their exploitation of the underdeveloped countries, naming as an example the way the high price of oil was passed on in the prices of the commodities they manufacture, prices which, in the end, the poorest countries had to pay. He drew attention to the need for a new international economic order and for part of the surplus profits of the oil-producing countries to be invested in underdeveloped countries. *He endorsed the statement made by Iraq in the morning session to the effect that the price of oil for the so-called Third World should be frozen until the end of the year.*

YASSER ARAFAT, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, condemned the Camp David agreement and reiterated the Palestinian people's determination to struggle for their inalienable right to self-determination, independence and the establishment of their national state. US imperialism was bent on ignoring the rights of the Palestinian people and supported and protected the Zionist state's criminal and genocidal policy, he continued, This US policy had led to the isolation of the Egyptian Arab Republic from the heart of the

Arab nation. US imperialism had been able to achieve a pact between Egypt and the Zionist expansionist Israeli aggressors, he said, a pact that represented 13,000 million dollars for the US war industry. How can the signatories claim that these are peace agreements when they include a clause legalising the purchase of arms by Israel worth a total of 13,000 million dollars? Actually, the Camp David agreement is aimed at guaranteeing Israel's superiority in the area and at perpetuating the Zionist occupation of Arab and Palestinian territories.

He asked the Non-aligned Movement to censure Egypt and warned that the steps that had been taken under the auspices of the United States were closely related to the United States' aims to have a gendarme to safeguard its interests in the Middle East; replace the aggressive CENTO treaty, which had been torn to pieces by the Iranian people's victory that overthrew the Shah's bloodthirsty regime; and surround the Arab region and threaten it militarily. U.S. imperialism would like to take over the sources of oil in the Arab countries, he said, in order to have control over the reserves of this strategic hydrocarbon, as if no sovereign peoples existed in those territories, as if that oil didn't belong to anybody.

Prime Minister Forbes Burnham of Guyana said that the Non-aligned Movement was anticipating the course of history and was growing stronger and gaining prestige with each passing day. He clearly defined his country's stand on such pressing problems as the struggle for liberation, the zones of conflict and the enemy's manoeuvres against the Movement. He described Morocco's attitude in occupying Western Saharan territory as intransigent and called on that country to change its attitude. He expressed his support for the liberation movements in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa and condemned the bombings and attacks on the Front Line countries. Burnham also condemned the occupation of a part of Cyprus by foreign troops and the fact that the people of Puerto Rico were denied their independence. Regarding the Middle East Burnham expressed his government's support for the Palestinian people, stressing that they had a right to self-determination, a home and a state of their own. He went on to say that he could not imagine how the relations between Egypt and Israel

could possibly solve the Palestinian problem and that even though his country was not calling for Egypt's expulsion from the Movement, the Movement's decisions must be respected.

On the question of Southeast Asia, Burnham said that no one could fail to be horrified by the genocide carried out by the Pol Pot regime and that the representatives of People's Kampuchea should occupy Kampuchea's place in the Movement. Moving on to the economic aspects, Burnham called for concrete actions to alleviate the situation in the developing countries, stressing, among other things, the need for a firm political decision to solve the problem of the adverse—although not deliberate—effects of the high price of oil on the economy of the underdeveloped countries. He also referred to the enemy's manoeuvres, including the campaign to the effect that Cuba was trying to align the Movement. These manoeuvres, he said, were aimed at dividing the Movement and should be rejected.

The President of Mozambique, Samora Machel, rejected the attempts by imperialism and some of its allies to weaken and confuse the essence of the Movement. Since when has imperialism been able to show us the roads to political and social emancipation? Since when have they become authorities on non-alignment, those who colonize Puerto Rico, occupy Guantanamo, deny Panama its right to the Canal, split up the Comores, instal bases in the Indian Ocean and support Pretoria and Tel Aviv? Machel referred to the urgent problems affecting the non-aligned countries and the world today. He said that giving support to the peoples in overthrowing tyrannies and repulsing criminal aggressions by warmongering regimes did not constitute intervention or interference in their internal affairs, but was the duty of all the non-aligned countries. International solidarity with the people's struggles, he said, was in line with the Movement's ideals. This is why we hail the fraternal support which led to the downfall of the evil dictatorships of Somoza in Nicaragua, Idi Ami Dada in Uganda and Pol Pot in Kampuchea, he said.

Machel expressed his support for the Revolutionary Council of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and which represented the will of its people and emphasized Mozambique's

friendship with and admiration for Vietnam whose people had made the greatest contribution in the world today to the struggle for the liberation of the whole of humanity. He described the Camp David agreement signed by Egypt and Israel as a capitulation and a betrayal and stressed that Mozambique recognized the PLO as the only representative of the fraternal Palestinian people. He insisted that the problem could not be resolved unless the Palestinians were granted their full right and all Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967 were recovered. Samora Machel hailed the political courage of Mauritania which with honour and dignity had reestablished relations of friendship with the Saharan people. He said this should serve as an inspiration to all those who refuse to recognise the national identity of other peoples. The non-aligned countries, he went on to say, must join forces against the colonialist and racist powers and support SWAPO and the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front, the legitimate representatives of their peoples. He called for help in transforming the Indian Ocean into a peace zone and for an all out effort to convene a world conference on disarmament in order to create the conditions for genuine international peace and security. Machel denounced the recent decisions by imperialism to set up a force to intervene in the countries which are recovering their natural resources, an attempt by reactionary international sectors to resuscitate their colonial practices against the peoples. The non-aligned countries, he warned, must not allow oil to be used by imperialism as a way of dividing the Movement.

At 10.15 p.m. the President of the People's Republic of the Congo Denis Sassou Nguesso, the last speaker, greeted the Cuban people and hailed their internationalist spirit and spoke of the "judicious choice of Havana as host for the 6th Summit". After referring to Fidel, whom he described as an exemplary revolutionary, Nguesso spoke of the struggle in which the Congolese people have been involved since August 1963 to consolidate their legitimate revolutionary and anti-imperialist aspirations. He said that the Non-aligned Movement is called upon to play a role of the utmost importance in guaranteeing the security and well being of the peoples and that it is essential to maintain unity in order to confront the

aggressiveness and arrogance of imperialism—Nguesso referred to the economic crises in the capitalist world and their repercussions on the underdeveloped countries. Imperialism is developing a dangerous protectionist policy in those Third World countries that receive some economic aid, he said. Given the worsening of our economic conditions, it is even more pressing for us to organize in order to establish a new international economic order. He added that this would be a difficult struggle and that victory would depend on the solidarity between the Movement's member countries, which must step up their economic and technical cooperation.

At 10.45 p.m. President Hafex al Assad closed the day's session.

To Be Continued

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IN THE SILICON AGE - 5

## Disorganic Development

by

**A. Sivanandan**

(Director of the Institute of Race Relations)

We publish, by courtesy of *Race & Class*, the fifth and concluding instalment of the development and reformulation of a paper originally given at the "Three Worlds or One?" Conference, Berlin, in June 1979. *Race & Class* is the quarterly journal of the Institute of Race Relations and the Transnational Institute in London—it is a journal for Third World Liberation.

BUT IT IS NOT without its contradictions. Where those contradictions are sharpest, however, are where they exist in the raw — in the peripheries. (For the purposes of the general analysis presented here, I make no distinction between periphery and developing periphery.) For what capitalist development has meant to the masses of these countries is increased poverty, the corruption of their cultures, repressive regimes — and all at once. All the GNP they amass for their country through their incessant labour leaves them poorer than before. They produce what is of no real use to them and yet cannot buy what they produce—

neither use value nor exchange value—neither the old system nor the new.

And how they produce has no relation to how they used to produce. They have not grown into the one from the other. They have not emerged into capitalist production but been flung into it—into technologies and labour processes that reify them and into social relations that violate their customs and their codes. They work, in the factories, in town, to support their families, their extended families in the village to contribute to the building of the village temple, to help get a teacher for the school, to sink a well. But the way of their working socialises them into individualism, nuclear families, consumer priorities, artefacts of capitalist culture. They are caught between two modes, two sets of social relations, characterised by exchange value in the one and use value in the other—and the contradiction disorients them and removes them from the centre of their being.

And not just the workers, but the peasants too—they have not escaped the capitalist mode. And all it has done is to wrench them from their social relations and their relationship with the land. Within a single life-time, they have had to exchange sons for tractors and tractors for petrochemicals. And these things too have taken them from themselves in space and in time. And what happens to all this production, from the land and from the factories? Where does all the GNP go—except to faceless foreign exploiters in another country and a handful of rich in their own?

IN SUM, what capitalist development has meant to the masses of these countries is production without purpose, except to stay alive; massive immiseration accompanied by a wholesale attack on the values, relationships, gods that made such immiseration bearable, rulers who rule not for their own people but for someone else—a development that makes no sense, has no bearing on their lives, is disorganic.

To state it at another level. The economic development that capital has super-imposed on the peripheries has been unaccompanied by capitalist culture or capitalist democracy. Whereas, in the centre, the different aspects of capitalism (economic, culture, political) have evolved gradually, organically, out of the centre's own history, in the periphery the capitalist



mode of production has been grafted on to the existing cultural and political order. Peripheral capitalism is not an organised body of connected, interdependent parts sharing a common life—it is not an organism. What these countries exhibit, therefore, is not just “distorted” or “disarticulated” development (Samir Amin), but disorganic development an economic system (itself “extraverted”) at odds with the cultural and political institutions of the people it exploits. The economic system, that is, is not medicated by culture or legitimated by politics, as in the centre. The base and the superstructure do not complement and reinforce each other (That is not to say that they are in perfect harmony at the centre). They are in fundamental conflict—and exploitation is naked, crude, unmediated—although softened by artefacts of capitalist culture and capitalist homilies on human rights. And that contradiction is not only general to the social formation but, because of capitalist penetration, runs right through the various modes of production comprising the social formation. At some point, therefore, the political system has to be extrapolated from the superstructure and made to serve as a cohesive—and coercive—force to maintain the economic order of things. The contradiction between superstructure and base now resolves into one between the political regime and the people, with culture as the expression of their resistance. And it is cultural resistance which, in Cabral’s magnificent phrase, takes on “new forms (political, economic, armed) in order fully to contest foreign domination” (Amilcar Cabral, *Return to the Source*, New York, 1973).

But culture in the periphery is not equally developed in all sectors of society. It differs as between the different modes of production but, again as Cabral says, it does have a “mass character”. Similarly at the economic level, the different exploitations in the different modes confuse the formal lines of class struggle but the common denominators of political oppression make for a mass movement.

Hence the revolutions in these countries are not necessarily class, socialist, revolutions—they do not begin as such anyway. They are not even nationalist revolutions as we know them. They are mass movements with national and revolutionary components—sometimes religious, sometimes secular, often both, but

always against the repressive political state and its imperial backers.

Concluded



### OIL PRICES—3

## Options For The Future

Rising prices are generally attributed to the rise in oil prices. To a certain extent this is justified—but not entirely. Prices of commodities are connected with the economic and political system. Some blame the Arabs for the misery consequent upon price rise. Little do they realise that the Arabs have been as much victims of colonial exploitation as Sri Lankans or any other people of the Third World. We publish the last part of a comprehensive article on the politics of oil as seen from the angle of an Arab oil producing country—Iraq.

FURTHERMORE, comparison of oil with other energy sources does not give its real importance. Oil differs from all substitutes. In addition to it being more economical and less liable to cause environmental pollution, it is at the same time, exhaustible and a primary material for the production of plastics, artificial fibres, rubber, sponge, textiles, dyes and other petrochemical products which are not furnished by the other energy substitutes except for coal whose industrialisation processes pose limitless technical, and environmental problems such as disposal of its residue, comparatively reduced thermal output, the problems of transportation and its danger to the environment, in addition to the tremendous manpower needed to mine it.

It is to be remembered that the capitalist industrial countries’ neglect of coal and dependence on oil do not imply that coal cannot answer all the world need for energy, besides, it is not short in reserve. The proven coal reserves which is possible to extract now cannot be compared with the size of the world oil reserves. The coal reserves equal 72,388 billion barrels of oil in addition to other long range extractable reserves estimated at 21,137 billion barrels of

oil, while we find that the world oil proven reserves do not exceed 850 billion barrels at the most optimistic estimates. In spite of all, that insistence on draining this resource by the capitalist industrial powers did not stop, especially as the greater part of the oil does not exist in most of them, while the richest coal reserves are plentiful in the US and Europe. Hence the energy consuming nations are not so well concerned about preservation of oil and do not mind its shrinkage, because it does not constitute a national wealth to them, especially as they are capable, even in the foreseeable future, of adjusting their economic and technical potentials to switch to coal when oil runs out.

CONCENTRATION of the consuming nations on Arabs oil is considered one of the reasons behind the schemings of imperialism and its monopolies against the Arab nation simply because Arab oil constitutes 52.4% of the total world oil reserves, just as its exploitation swells the monopolies profits that cannot be provided by non-Arab oil areas. For example, drilling an oil well in the Middle East used to cost \$100 thousand in the sixties, while the same operation in Africa cost something like 3-5 million. In the mid seventies drilling an oil well in the North Sea in Alaska cost \$20 million because of the difficulty of exploration, drilling and production in these rugged regions in addition to the great difference between what an oil well gives here and what it gives elsewhere.

The Mexican Government, for example, appropriated for prospecting oil between 1977 and 1983 a sum of \$ 17 million in order to increase its production by two million barrels a day in 1985, i.e. to reach the total of 3.5 million barrels a day in that year. It goes without saying that Mexico has the most important source of oil on which the US counts. In order to realise the size of the costs necessary to develop the operations of extracting oil outside the Middle East area, we must note that the construction of the Alaska pipeline alone cost \$ 40 billion.

Therefore the US and its allies, members of the international Energy Agency, concentrate their efforts on continuing to plunder Arab oil in its crude form at a cost that does not measure up to the real value of oil. For that they exercise pressure and threats of occupying its sources, as if they were part of their occupied lands. They also use

every means to obstruct the aspirations of the exporting, and particularly the Arab states, to industrialise their oil and shift to export it as industrial product and derivatives.

Along the same line we find imperialists inciting, some OPEC countries to increase their production, so as to raise an oil surplus and thus impede readjustment of prices and save a money surplus that goes back to the treasuries of the Western financial establishments to utilise in developing their oil substitute sources. Actually the imperialist countries led by the US were able to achieve many of their exploitative goals because of the assets of six Arab oil countries abroad which reached the figure of \$ 124.7 billion by the end of 1978 in the form of deposits in Western banks, U.S. Treasury stocks and bonds, stocks and spares in insurance companies, other monopoly industrial firms or purchases of estates and others.

Consequently, the struggle of the Arab masses in their different countries for liberating the oil wealth and investing its revenues in development and Arab social and economic progress, turning towards, industrialising, the greatest possible proportion of it and working for channeling their production in a way that harmonises with the supreme national interest and guarantees the rights of the coming generations, is an anti-imperialist anti-zionist struggle which counteracts fragmentation and inherited backwardness and promotes Arab unity and progress.

Concluded

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### 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. 1549.00	Rs. 1552.00
Sterling Pound	Rs. 3412.50	Rs. 3418.50
Deutsche Mark	Rs. 893.20	Rs. 894.80
French Franc	Rs. 381.65	Rs. 382.35
Japanese Yen	Rs. 6.4900	Rs. 6.5050
Indian Rupees	Rs. 191.80	Rs. 192.20

## New Style Opposition

THE OCCUPATION OF THE KA'BA MOSQUE in Mecca by a group of religious extremists is an exceptional and totally new phenomenon on the Saudi political scene. Until this manifestation of fundamentalist religious opposition, only two rather different types of opposition were thought to exist in Saudi Arabia. *The one form of opposition* was that which existed within the royal family itself. It was composed of young western-educated princes who not only jockeyed for positions of power and influence within the establishment but also advocated cautious liberal reforms. Yet their demand for reform was in no way intended to undermine the present system or to upset the existing Saudi regime. After all, members of the royal family, with all its branches and factions and internal differences, could hardly afford to undermine the system which afforded them the power, influence and wealth they enjoyed. The royal family made every effort to preserve its own cohesion, and in most cases kept internal differences at a low key, not allowing them to surface.

A *second form of opposition* was that outside the royal family, which sought radical change and the overthrow of the existing regime in Saudi Arabia. Most of the rather scanty information available about these clandestine groups has been obtained in the past from sources hostile to the Saudi regime. From these not particularly reliable sources, it transpires that the opposition groups have been in existence since the late forties, and were active from the early fifties until recently. Their activities were centred in the main urban areas of Riyadh and Jidda, in the vicinity of the oil fields situated in the north-east of the country and in the zone bordering North Yemen. Their supporters came mainly from families in the Hijaz and Jajd who had long been in conflict with the ruling house.

According to members of this opposition, they also had a following within the armed forces, and even within the National Guard (an elite, predominantly bedouin force established for the protection of the royal family). They also enjoyed support amongst the workers in the oil fields—both Saudis and foreign-

ers, such as Egyptians, Palestinians and Yemenis. These oppositionary forces operated over the years within the framework of a number of organisations, whose activity however, does not appear to have been either sustained or consistent. The most well known of these groups were: (1) The Arab Peninsula Peoples Union; (2) The Popular Front for the Liberation of the Arabian Peninsula; (3) The Revolutionary Najd Party; (4) The Popular Democratic Front in Saudi Arabia and (5) The Saudi Arabian National Liberation Front.

*Common to all these groups was the demand for the replacement of the existing "anachronistic" regime in Saudi Arabia by a "People's Republic" in which the "patriotic forces" would be properly represented and oil wealth redistributed equitably. These groups were usually identified as being "anti-imperialist" i.e., opposed to Saudi Arabia's ties with the western powers. They were closely related to the Arab nationalist movement and the radical leftists within the PLO—such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, headed by George Habash and the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, headed by Nayif Hawatima.*

IN THE EARLY SIXTIES, during the Egyptian involvement in the Yemen war, tension and conflict governed Saudi Arabia's relations with what was then referred to as the "revolutionary" or "progressive" group of Arab states headed by 'Abd al-Nasir'. These countries, particularly Egypt and Syria, lent no small measure of support to the oppositionary groups in Saudi Arabia. In the late sixties these groups even succeeded in staging numerous abortive coups. Eventually, however, they were flushed out of the country almost completely by the Saudi security forces. A parallel improvement in Saudi Arabia's relations with Egypt and Syria, in the early seventies, served to limit even further outside support for the opposition movements. Anti-Saudi broadcasts by these groups were carried on South Yemeni radio until the advent of a shortlived improvement in relations between South Yemen and Saudi Arabia in 1976-77. The last of the Saudi opposition groups known to have been in existence was The Committee for the Defence of the Rights of the Saudi People affiliated with the Saudi Arabian National Liberation Front. As far as is known, mem-

bers of this group operated from Iraq and western Europe. All these opposition organisations relied on the unstable support of external elements, and were unable to establish an independent power base within Saudi Arabia. Thus they never seriously eroded the stability of the Saudi regime.

The third form of opposition to the regime, that which has now surfaced with the attack in Mecca, appears to have the makings of a more formidable force, endowed with greater motivation and organisational capabilities than that hitherto faced by the Saudi regime. This new group emerged against a backdrop of rejection of the ever increasing exposure of Saudi society to the West. Its criticism of the regime is in terms of religion—at a time when the so-called “winds of Khomeini” are still gathering momentum in the muslim world. This could prove to be particularly dangerous to the Saudi regime, despite its own basically conservative religious character.

The relatively rapid process of modernization that Saudi society has been undergoing in recent years has posed a serious dilemma to the Saudi leadership. The regime realized early the possible dangers inherent in the influence of foreign ideas and life styles on a traditional society imbued with religious norms and values. It feared that too rapid a process of westernization could precipitate a breakdown of the traditional order and endanger the regime. This fear was shared not only by the royal family but by the religious establishment as well, and the two have therefore co-operated—maintaining the position and status of the religious establishment in exchange for the legitimacy which the men of religion bestowed upon the regime. But the regime, while theoretically still adhering to the dictates of the puritanical doctrines of Wahabism, has in practice deviated blatantly from these principles in recent years. As far as is known, the regime's growing hypocrisy vis-a-vis its founding creed has met with no opposition from the religious establishment. Thus it is quite plausible that the group that took over the Ka'ba Mosque in Mecca was protesting against this co-operation between the regime and the religious establishment, based as it is on deviation from puritanical Wahabism and an openness to the West in general.

This was a particularly dangerous challenge to a regime that bases its own legitimacy on religious precepts. In a society like that of Saudi Arabia, an opposition movement such as this could have much more appeal to the general population than the foreign ideologies of the left. It is therefore not surprising that the regime chose to combat the attackers with the weapon of religion as well. The attackers were described as deviants from Islam who would be punished in accordance with Islamic Law. And the regime obtained from the men of religion a *fatwa* (declaration of legal opinion) authorizing the regime to use force against the attackers at the holy site. The regime seems to have won this round. But the very fact that such an operation, by hundreds of armed men, could be staged in the heart of Mecca says something about the efficiency of the Saudi internal security apparatus.

*Middle-East Intelligence Survey, vol. 7, No 16, 16-30, November, 1979.*

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## AFGHANISTAN

### **In Search Of An Ayatollah**

by Daniel Sneider

New York, Nov. 30,

This week, in a hall somewhere in Bavaria in southern Germany, a meeting has been taking place. The room is full of Afghans, exiles from their country who are plotting the overthrow of the present government of President Hafizullah Amin. For more than a year, since the April 1978 revolution which overthrew the family that had ruled this Central Asian nation for more than a century, an armed resistance has been mounted to the new government. Based largely out of Pakistan, the rebels are divided among many groups, many tribes, and many leaders—they have no ayatollah for what they describe as their Islamic “*jihad*” (holy war) against a “godless Communist” regime in Kabul.

**The search for an ayatollah, someone to unify the often warring and squabbling groups, has been demanded by the backers of the anti-Afghan movement**

residing in London, Washington, Teheran, Pakistan and the Middle East. In the words of one former senior American State Department official, still intimately involved with Afghanistan "they need a person to rally the tribes. It would take a rallying family or a person who has not emerged as yet."

One of the men mentioned by the American official as a prime candidate for the position was the center of the Bavarian meeting General Abdul Wali. A former Afghan army general, Abdul Wali's main qualification is that he is the son-in-law of the former king of Afghanistan, Zahir Shah. The ex-king now sits compacently in his Rome apartment—"He is a nice guy", said the senior official, "but a do-nothing". Abdul Wali on the other hand is ready to seek the throne according to our Washington source. "He is a real leader, and has tribal backing," but he later added, "he is not very popular." So go the problems of what the British call the "Great historic intervention to control Afghanistan, the buffer state between "Russian" Asia and "British" India.

The fate of the Islamic rebellion in Afghanistan is of great interest to those who are behind the recent events in Iran, in Pakistan, and throughout the region. The Amin government is the most stridently anti-Khomeini government in the world, the Afghan government press minces no words in day after day describing the Iranian regime as "fanatics, oppressors, and tyrants." The highest circles of the government, starting with President Amin who succeeded former President Taraki two months ago, have identified their enemy a "made-in-London-Muslims". They are referring to the Ikhwan Mussalman, the same conspiratorial Muslim Brotherhood organisation which stands behind Khomeini, which organised the assault on the US embassy in Pakistan, and which is spreading chaos throughout the region from Bangladesh to Turkey.

Afghanistan also represents something else. It is a Soviet-backed government—a counter-deployment to the London-sponsored "Islamic revolution," which was a revolution aimed in part at Soviet Central Asia and its large Muslim population. Since Amin's accession to the presidency, the Afghan government has toughed its stance against the Brother-

hood rebels, sending its army into the heavily rebel-infested provinces which border the rebel sanctuaries in Pakistan. It has simultaneously reached out to draw legitimate Muslim religious leaders into the base of the government. If Amin's approach succeeds, the Islamic "wave" will be broken in Afghanistan and the control of the Brotherhood strongholds in Iran and Pakistan will be threatened.

The base of the Brotherhood's operation province of Pakistan, the home of the fabled Pathan tribesmen of the Khyber Pass, which links Pakistan and Afghanistan. The tribesmen are still organized, as they have been for centuries, in feudal class, and the clans into tribes headed up by a tribal khan or chief. More than half the population of Afghanistan is Pathan, and many of the tribes live in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, passing freely across the border in seasonal migration with their flocks. The Northwest Frontier Province was a part of Afghanistan until the British Indian Empire conquered it in the 19th century. (Afghanistan itself was a virtual British protectorate until 1920). It is here, among the tribes and the refugees, that the Brotherhood recruits its "mujahideen" (holy warriors). The main activity of the tribes has not been covered in the numerous reports appearing in the Western press on the "rebellion."

Their main activity is the growing, processing and smuggling of hashish and opium, in a drug "triangle" that recent reports say is rapidly replacing the famous "Golden Triangle" of Southeast Asia in importance. Along with the smuggling of dope is that of guns and precious stones. The poppies which are grown high in the hills of northwestern Pakistan have long been the source of supply for Iran's huge addict population. Until the April revolution they were smuggled through Afghanistan, but now go through the sea and through Baluchistan, the mountainous area which stretches across from Iran to Pakistan and Afghanistan. The difference now is that the Brotherhood's dope is now finding its way into Europe in large amounts.

Some of the tribal khans and their followers have fled with their mullahs to Pakistan, forming the refugees now camped in army-run camps where they receive training and arms. The efforts of the new Afghan govern-

ment have been focussed on land reform (taking huge estates away from tribal landlords and mullahs and distributing them to the peasants), and on a literacy campaign among the 96 percent illiterate and ignorant populace. These campaign have driven the landlords and mullahs out. They now lead the "rebellion" which is largely a matter of scattered tribal revolts generated by lies that the government has turned and destroyed mosques and and is trying to kill Muslims. Even an effort by the government to carry out the country's first national census was the subject of a black propaganda rumor campaign in which ignorant tribesmen were told that this was part of the government's plan to eliminate Muslims".

—NSIPS

(To be Concluded)

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## SRI LANKA

### Areas For Cooperation

by Dion McDonald

Washington,

Donald R. Toussaint assumes the role of US, Ambassador in Colombo during an era of "very solid" US-Sri Lankan relations and at a propitious moment for strengthening economic ties between the two nations. The Ambassador gave this assessment in a recent interview in which he also cited the "mutual respect" inherent in the US-Sri Lanka relationship. "We don't always agree when we look at the world's problems," he said, "but even in our disagreement, there is respect and friendship and candor." The American and Sri Lankan cultures place "a great value upon frankness." Mr. Toussaint observed, noting both cultures also esteem "popular participation in and popular control of the government.... There are many common things between our two cultures," he added, "and from what I know about the experiences old Americans in Sri Lanka, it's been a very happy one." The Ambassador said he would like to see that experience expanded and gave the commercial sphere as an area which offers significant opportunity for growth. He noted

that both countries want to increase their exports. He explained that there is "a concerted interest on the part of Sri Lankans in improving their export performance and in making opportunities for private firms—including foreign firms—to become involved." "I'm very hopeful," he said, "that US companies and entrepreneurs will be able to participate in that commercial development." He noted that a few American firms are now making export products in Sri Lanka, but on a very small scale.

Mr. Toussaint said trade between the United States and Sri Lanka is now running 70-80 million dollars a year. American private investment in Sri Lanka is approximately four six million dollars, which he noted, is a "very modest" investment. "There is opportunity for considerable expansion there," he said, "provided American companies are willing to operate on the basis the Sri Lankans want them to operate." Ambassador Toussaint pointed out that Sri Lanka offers very attractive opportunities for labor-intensive industries because labour there is not expensive. A number of US businessmen and industrialists are showing an interest in the opportunities Sri Lanka offers for private investment, he said. Among them are 15 or so senior-level executives who will go to Sri Lanka on an investment mission scheduled for next summer. The mission, sponsored by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), will spend one week there. Participants will have the chance to assess the investment climate, meet with key government officials, and consult with businessmen interested in joint ventures. A US government agency, OPIC helps US investors to make profitable investments in about 80 developing countries, while encouraging investment projects that will aid in the social and economic development of those countries.

Strengthening business and commercial ties between the United States and Sri Lanka will be high on the Ambassador's list of priorities. "It has to be," he noted, "given the importance that exports have to the growth and prosperity of the American economy. They are important in terms of our domestic economy and our domestic prosperity." The Ambassador pointed out that trade and commercial involvement is but one aspect of the

economic relationship between the United States and Sri Lanka. Another area comprises US contributions to multilateral institutions like the World Bank and Asian Development Bank and American participation in international programs of development.

The United States is also involved in direct aid to Sri Lanka contributing about 30 million dollars annually to projects there—primarily food and health care programs—administered by the US agency for international development. Mr. Toussaint, 52, said the assignment in Colombo will be “my first venture into the Indian sub-continental cultural area. I look forward with tremendous anticipation and excitement to have some experience in that new area.” His previous positions have included Deputy Chief of Mission in Manila and Jakarta, Counsellor for political Affairs in Teheran, and Deputy Co-ordinator of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology. He earned a Master’s degree at Yenching University, Peking, and a Ph.d. at Stanford University in California. Mr. Toussaint also holds a graduate diploma from the Institute D’etudes Politiques, University of Paris. “I have enjoyed very much working with countries that are going through the development process,” the Ambassador said. “And I have always had a tremendous respect for the equanimity and the equity of Sri Lankan culture.” Mr. Toussaint said that, “the most remarkable thing” he has observed about Sri Lanka is that despite the pressures attending social and economic change, the country, “has maintained a consistent commitment to democratic forms of government” and dealt with tensions in “a very open, democratic way.”

—USICA

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## AFGHANISTAN

### Safeguarding The Revolution

KABUL, December 6,

The opening plenary session of the National Organisation for Defence of Revolution which had begun at 10 a.m. ended at 6.15 p.m. yesterday with closing statement by Comrade Hafizullah Amin, General Secretary of the PDPA CC, President of RC and Prime Minister. Dr. Shah Wali

on behalf of the Presidium of NODR plenary session, proposed the election of Comrade Hafizullah Amin as President of NODR in DRA which after voting was unanimously approved and confirmed by representatives of NODR plenary session. Comrade Amin expressed gratitude for being elected by members of the founding plenary session of NODR, as president of NODR in DRA. Following are some excerpts of the Speech of Comrade Hafizullah Amin: Dear compatriots, Delegates of the glorious people of Afghanistan,

It is a great pleasure for all of us to welcome you respected representatives of the PDPA, those of the Labour Unions of Afghanistan, the Khalqi Youth Organisation of Afghanistan, the Khalqi Women’s Organisation of Afghanistan, committees for defence of revolution, agricultural co-operatives, assisting funds, various industrial and commercial organisations, teachers, poets, writers, artists, clergymen and all big and small nationalities and tribes of Afghanistan to this auditorium. Our meeting on the occasion of the establishment of the National Organisation for Defence of Revolution (NODR) which is considered an important democratic set up in the socio-political life of the Afghan society will leave a profound impact on Afghan history only second to that of the Saur Revolution.

One and a half years ago, such a meeting was impossible. Only the victory of the Saur Revolution which was really khalqi from the viewpoints of its objectives and nature that resulted in the transfer of power from the exploiters, that is, the feudal lords, the bourgeoisie, the intermediary commercial agents, the usurers and others who sponged on the working class represented by the PDPA, this sincere advocate of the working class in Afghanistan, made our meeting possible today.

The Saur Revolution was brought to success under the leadership of PDPA, the vanguard of the working people in this country and the support of all working people of our beloved homeland. Our revolution has triumphed according to the general laws of the epoch-making working class ideology and the specific conditions in Afghanistan with the support of all the working people. The Saur Revolution was brought to success with the participation of heroic officers, gallant cadets

and patriotic soldiers with the backing of all the working people. The Saur Revolution freed the noble people of our country from longstanding feudal oppression, paving the way for the creation of a society void of exploitation of man by man, a society where each works according to his ability and is rewarded according to his work.....This is the second year during which the working people of Afghanistan are living, working and struggling under the DRA red flag. The entire world is watching seriously the development of the triumphant Saur Revolution and is being convinced that, in a short time, important steps have been taken toward the building of a new society, a society of justice and equality, a society void of exploitation of man by man.....”

“Land reforms were successfully carried out in our country with the result that the domination of feudalism was ended for ever. The long cherished aspirations of the peasants were finally realised. About 300,000 families of landless peasants and those with little land came to possess free of charge approximately one and a half million acres of land. And around 11 million peasants were freed from the centuries-old bondage of usurers and feudal lords.....”

The Saur Revolution constitutes an integral part of the world revolutionary process and the resultant drastic changes on the globe whose cornerstone was laid through the Great October Socialist Revolution. DRA's international stand is based on three basic revolutionary forces of our age, that is the international socialist alliance, the international movement of the working class and the national liberation movement of various peoples. The progress made by the above revolutionary forces in connection with the struggle for global changes on the basis of the epoch-making working class ideology, national and social liberation from imperialism, colonialism and racism is considered our own. In the same token, the progress made by us toward building a society void of exploitation of man by man forms part of the gains of the international forces of revolution and peace.....”

The NODR being established as a powerful khalqi set up should be turned into a centre of unity for all patriotic social forces and elements who take active parts within the frame-

work of our khalqi state in the building of the new society whose motto will be “from each according to his ability and to each according to his work”.....The establishment of such a vast powerful national organisation will greatly contribute to solidarity among the people, facilitating the successful implementation of socio-economic development plans and eliminate the enemies of the people. The people of Afghanistan by making sacrifices are paving the way for the victories of the working peoples in the region and the world. They, who have served as a model in obtaining their independence and battering the bastion of colonialism and imperialism for the peoples of the region to see are, in the same token, setting a precedent in bringing to success a proletarian uprising, the Saur Revolution, in the light of the epoch-making working class ideology in countries similar to Afghanistan. Therefore, Afghanistan is also serving as the best example for building the first socialist society in the region. Glory to the crusading and constructive people of Afghanistan.....

—Kabul Times



Kabul, December 7,

A major political event has taken place in Afghanistan: the National Organisation for the Defence of the Revolution (NODR) has been established, following the decision by the Meshrano Jirgah (House of Elders). Participating in it were delegates of the National Democratic Party of Afghanistan, trade unions, peasant committees, youth and women's organisations, creative unions and Council of Ulema. The April revolution, which took place a year and a half ago has effected crucial social and economic change in the country, Power is now in the hands of the proletariat and toiling peasantry, led by the People's Democratic Party. It took a short time to carry out progressive special transformations. A land reform is being implemented. Equality of men and women has been established. Over 600 new educational establishments have been opened and more than a million Afghans are now learning to read and write. An Academy of Science has been founded. Measures are being implemented for improving the living condi-



tions of broad sections of the population. The Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has endorsed the basic targets of the economic and social development plan for 1979-1984.

The revolution has drawn active political life millions of Afghan working people. Party organisations have been set up at industrial plants. Some mass organisations are also active. The fundamental change in Afghanistan meets with violent resistance of counter-revolution. Conspiring against the people's state are the remnants of the feudal clans, leftist extremists, world reactionary forces and nationalists. Incited by the forces of imperialism and international reaction, counter-revolutionary elements resort to sabotage and armed attacks against settlements. Home and foreign reactionaries want to undermine the process of building a new society in Afghanistan.

—Leonid Mironov,  
—Pravda, 17/12/79  
APN.

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IRAN

## A Legal Solution?

Washington, December 18,

The United States believes the World Court ruling points the way for release of the American hostages in Iran. The World Court's decision, handed down December 15, was unusually swift, issued less than a week after hearing the first arguments. It was also unusual in its unanimity; all 15 of its judges concurred; none filed separate opinions. The charge of some Iranian officials—that somehow the Court can be manipulated by the United States—can hardly be substantiated. Two of the Justices were from the Soviet Union and Poland; seven were from Third World, including India, Nigeria and Senegal, along with two Islamic nations, Syria and Egypt.

The reason for the swift decision and the unanimity is not hard to find. It is the nature of Iran's action—the occupation of the US Embassy in Teheran and consulates in Tabris and Shiraz and the holding of 50 American diplomats, consular officials and visitors as hostages. These are clear violations of the

Vienna convention of 1961—itself a modification of centuries of diplomatic practice. As the Court ruling put it: "There is no more fundamental prerequisite for the conduct of relations between countries than the inviolability of diplomatic envoys and embassies." That is why, the opinion continued, "nations of all creeds and cultures have observed reciprocal obligations", in that regard throughout history. This Court ruling is a provisional one, calling for the immediate release of the hostages to end a dangerous situation. The court also called on both the United States and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to take no action that would aggravate tension or make the dispute still more difficult to solve. The court left the way open for the Iranian government—which chose not to take part in the initial proceedings—to present its arguments and for counter claims.

For the United States, the ruling provides additional support for possible further action under the UN charter, including asking for international sanctions against Iran. With the departure of the deposed Shah from the United States, it is of course conceivable that Iranian authorities may see a more rapid, easier way out—that is, simply to release the hostages and return to legality and normal diplomatic practice among nations.

—VOA Commentary

### WITHOUT COMMENT

#### Massive Abuse Of Vehicles

—Ronnie

Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel lashing out at some of the Government Corporations yesterday stated that there was a massive abuse of vehicles in these institutions. Mr. de Mel speaking after he declared open the new Bank of Ceylon branch at Dematagoda said that at a time when Sri Lanka should conserve fuel in order to save valuable foreign exchange some of the institutions were wasting considerable amount of petrol. The Minister said that he knew of one particular State institution where it has about 600 jeeps. "Fifty jeeps would have been more than enough for this institution, while the rest of the jeeps are being misused", Mr. de Mel pointed out.

—Sun, 5/12/79

# Confidentially

- Sunday Ban
- Gas Turbines

IS IT NOT TIME that the Government tightened up on the six-hour private car ban on Sundays? That in the city of Colombo and even outstations there are more cars and vehicles on the roads than there should be? That traders, gem merchants, and other rich elite, who have not yet obtained a "red" number for one of their private cars for their Sunday morning jaunts (and also to secure Income Tax reliefs), are able to get permits from obliging officials? A sample survey of those cars on the roads on Sunday mornings during the restricted six hours will show that over 75% of them had got permits on false pretences? That many officials who give these permits may not get direct bribes for issuing them but there is an unwritten code of give and take (*quid pro quo*) in these matters? That it will be seen that certain proprietors and executives of business houses—especially those belonging to foreign nationals who have conveniently Sri Lankan citizenship also—which specialise in hampers and gifts on X'mas and New Year, Thai Pongal, Sinhala New Year, Wesak, Deepavali, Hadji, etc. etc., seem to get all the permits wanted? That the use of "red number" cars on Sundays for obvious and ostentatious private travel is never questioned? That unless this abuse of the Sunday ban is checked, honest law-abiding citizens will be tempted to circumvent the laws as certain others are doing? That it is in the interests of the country to see that oil consumption is reduced? That it is essential to see that those who need petrol, kerosene and diesel for productive development and professional work got the oil—even at subsidised prices? That others who use petroleum products for high living must be prevented (if they cannot be persuaded) from using more oil (petrol and diesel) than is absolutely essential—until public transport services are improved when they should be further restricted?

IS IT NOT TRUE that there is a great deal of gossip in political and commercial circles

about many matters of importance? That this week we will deal with one that concerns the tender for the new Gas Turbine Unit plants? That stories assert that the lowest tenderer is being overlooked—although its local agent has big political, banking and commercial pull? That the gossip is that the tender will go to the highest tenderer—more apparently for political rather than other considerations? That no decisions have yet been made, but tenders have become such a sensitive sector that any little thing sparks off fierce gossip that verge on a war of nerves? That the government consultants Messrs Preece, Cadrew & Rider of London have been Sri Lanka's consultants for the hydro-electric projects from the twenties or thirties when the Norton Bridge and Laxapana schemes were mooted? That there has been no word of criticism against the consultants, but it is alleged that certain interested parties (local) had made sustained efforts to vary Tender Board decisions? That for instance, on the eve of the issue of Tender forms a lobby had tried to confine the issue of tenders to suit a particular group of manufacturers? That the device was to pressurize the government to insist on the supply of "3 units" and not "2 or 3 units", as was decided upon, to suit the requirements? That immediately prior to the issue of Tender Documents about the 17th June 1979, an attempt (which is on record with the Government) was made to fix the number of units at 3 in spite of the decision of the Tender Board and the Consultants? That in fact the Tender Document which had been already prepared called for "2 or 3 units" for a requirement between 60MW to 75MW? That the issue of this Tender document was temporarily withheld? That it was only the intervention of a Minister which prevented this from happening at that time? That this same subversion of tender procedure is also said to be at the bottom of an attempt to influence the Cabinet to set aside the Tender recommendation which was to give the award to the lowest acceptable Tenderer, who had offered 2 units with the best cost-benefit ratio and in compliance with the Specifications and Conditions? That, it is said, that if this should happen it would be unfair by the lowest tenderer? That tenderers for such multi-million projects have to incur heavy expenditure even to prepare the Tender?

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