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TRIBUNE



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Letter From The Editor

THE YEAR OF THE CHILD will soon come to an end. We have chosen the picture on the cover to remind our readers of the many publicity campaigns that were conducted this year to draw attention to the plight of under-privileged children all over the world. In Sri Lanka, many tamashas were held. Newspaper supplements, radio talks and the like were thrust upon a public that was increasingly concerned only with the rising costs of living. In spite of all the big and brave talk about increased economic activity and a proliferating growth rate, the prices of essential foodstuffs have spiralled so much that the spectre of malnutrition has begun to haunt every home. Even a cursory visit to government hospitals, dispensaries, OPDs and the clinics of private practitioners will show that disease and illness have increased tremendously since the IMF-type inflation (on our devalued currency) has beset the country. A few fortunate children in Sri Lanka are now able to see TV, but the overwhelming majority of them are condemned to kuckle down to a new way of austere life prescribed by some leaders of the government—to live, for instance, without the pol sambol for the morning pittu or coconut milk in their curry. People have been asked to eat less coconut, to conserve coconuts and to find substitutes for coconut. Exports have been temporarily reduced or banned, but there is already talk about importing coconuts. The present coconut shortage in Sri Lanka is man-made. The SLFP-ULF government by its unrealistic Land Reform policies and programmes had ruined the coconut industry. The UNP government, which came to power in 1977, had every opportunity to pull the coconut industry out of the mess, but it has failed to do so and keeps on trotting out excuses for its sad default. We shall deal with these excuses elsewhere in this and later issues together with post-mortems on the news reports that small, medium and large coconuts were available at Co-ops and M.D. stalls at 40 cents, Rs. 1.15 and Rs. 1.25 each respectively (vide Daily News on 14.12.79). Full page eye-catching advertisements also appeared 14.12.79 in the daily papers that food items and textiles would be sold at reduced prices for the "festive season" (whose festive season?) effective from 15.12.79 to 25.12.79 with the following reductions: Marketing Department products by 10%, Salu Sala by 5%; CWE-wholesale and retail by 5%. This kind of eye-wash will not add to the government's credibility. How many people, even in Colombo and the bigger towns, are able to reach MD, CWE or Salu Sala outlets directly? Is it not a fact that the long queues at these places consist of professional queue-standers who are employed by traders to buy as much as possible at reduced and often (invisibly) subsidised prices to be resold at higher (open market) prices outside? These much advertised festive season "cheap sales" by the government agencies mainly help the trader who takes the goods to the people in shops close to them or even to their door. This 10-day price reduction by the MD, Salu Sala and CWE will not even act as a deterrent to peg down prices in the open market.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

President Jayewardene

Colombo, December 18,

Galle will poll on Thursday, December 20. The consensus among all neutral observers is that Mr. Dahanayake will win without any difficulty. Whilst some say that he will score a runaway victory with a landslide majority, others say that it will be an uphill task for him to obtain even a substantial majority. It is argued that unlike in the General Election, there is general apathy even among UNP voters. The poll in 1977 was 83.4 per cent (or thereabouts). This time it is said that the turnout would be much less.

It is true that the election lacks the sharp competitive spirit characteristic of a keenly contested by-election. The anti-UNP forces are in three viciously divided camps—SLFP, JVP and LSSP. The CP and other Left groups are keeping out of the fray. Reports indicate that there are fierce, often violent, clashes between the JVP and LSSP and this detracts from fighting the candidate of the ruling party. The SLFP candidate has not shown even the barest enthusiasm expected of a candidate with hopes of winning the seat. The SLFP candidate in Galle is reported to be behaving as if the battle is already lost. The JVP is over-cock-sure of "victory" in its public pronouncements but nobody takes this claim seriously.

The UNP did not want to take any chances with this by-election. And that is why the UNP picked on the maverick free-lancer, Mr. Dahanayake, with a large personal backing in Galle, to be its candidate. The President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, in a speech in Galle on December 13 stated: "We wanted to win this by-election and the party after careful consideration decided to put forward Dr. Dahanayake. We did so after a careful study of the elections held last May.....it was quite apparent from the polling statistics that if our rival parties joined together they could easily defeat us. On the other hand, if Dr. Dahanayake was given UNP nomination we could comfortably win the Galle seat with the combined votes of the UNP and Dr. Dahanayake's personal votes. That was mathematics and not politics.....we were confident that Dr. Dahanayake could win this by-election with a majority of 10,000 votes. That was why we gave him UNP nomination.....In July 1977 also Dr. Dahanayake applied for UNP nomination. This time we gave him nomination as it would have been foolish not to do so." (Ceylon Daily News, 14/12/79)

Mr. Jayewardene also paid a glowing tribute to the political record of Mr. Dahanayake and he stressed that, "we took him as our nominee in a free democratic manner after obtaining the views of all party organisations and adhering strictly to party rules and regulations." President Jayewardene said that the by-election was a special one. It fell vacant as a result of an election petition by Dr. Dahanayake who fought his own case in appeal and unseated Mr. Albert de Silva. After that seat fell vacant there were nearly 40 odd applicants for the UNP ticket."

IN VIEW of the hints and innuendos in certain opposition papers and in some political circles, that Dr. Dahanayake had been forced (foisted) on unwilling party branches and the higher executive bodies of the UNP by the President Mr. Jayewardene took this opportunity to set out the correct position. The President thereby not only met this charge but also the one about Albert de Silva, the unseated UNP, MP for Galle, for being selected to fill the vacancy in Kamburupitiya. It was said that it was only a "temporary" appointment.

President Jayewardene said he was sorry that the former MP for Galle, Mr. Albert de Silva, was unseated. At the time he could not help Mr. de Silva. "But as soon as the Kamburupitiya seat fell vacant he was appointed MP for Kamburupitiya because Mr. de Silva was free from blame. His appointment as MP for Kamburupitiya would be permanent. No one need have any fears about Mr. Albert de Silva's future. The UNP was a responsible party. It was not the personal property of the President, Dr. Dahanayake or anyone else. The UNP belonged to the people and the party would always do what was right," he said.

The President thus laid low the ghost that Albert de Silva was only holding the Kamburupitiya baby until the President's "nephew", Upali Wijeyewardene, had mobi-

2

lised sufficient support in his mother's borough of Kamburupitiya for the people to demand that he be made their MP. The President has thus made it abundantly clear that Upali Wijeyewardene was not his nominee nor would he help him to get a launching pad in Kamburupitiya to fulfil his political ambitions. According to Manik de Silva (vide *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Hongkong, 21/12/79) Upali Wijeyewardene with his many billions (how he made them will be as revealing as that of any fortune piled up in this rapacious capitalist era in any part of the world) has Presidential ambitions. Upali no doubt thinks that he has the requisite blood relations and in-laws with the UNP, SLFP and CP hierarchical chieftains and that he also believes that his billions entitle him to be the supreme leader of the country in double quick time—in the same way he made his millions and is now minting his billions. **Nobody grudges him his millions or billions, but the people of this country are not likely to fall for much quick fire operators and elevate them to high political office.**

IN THIS GAME OF SHADOW BOXING that Upali Wijeyewardene has chosen to inflict on this country, not many (until recently) knew that Upali Wijeyewardene was projecting himself as the Economic (FTZ) Czar of Sri Lanka on a global advertising spree at the taxpayers expense. Only very recently when a FTZ advertisement appeared in the *Time* magazine of 19th October 1979 did people in high places begin to sit up. The advertisement copy had a photograph of Upali Wijeyewardene way up top symbolising him as the all-in-all of Sri Lanka's economic development programme in the FTZ. Before the UNP top-notchers got over the shock of seeing Upali given the top billing, the *Time* of November 26 had another FTZ advertisement with the President's picture replacing that of Upali's (and the text of the copy was also slightly different).

This switch in pictures raised more comment. Our columnist *Grassroots* in his piece this week (vide p. 5) refers to the President's picture replacing Upali's in the *Time* advertisement. But before this *Grassroots* column appeared in print in *Tribune* this week, the *Time* magazine of December 10 repeated the Upali Wijeyewardene picture copy. The

Time advertisements of October 19, 26 and December 10 were no doubt part of a pre-planned schedule (there was a miss on December 3). *Tribune* understands that it was only on December 13 or 14 that an authoritative directive was issued to stop all personal pictures in such advertisements. How long it will take (even in this era of telexes) for this directive to be carried into effect in the schedules of the FTZ's advertisement agent and the *Time* magazine is yet to be seen.

It is strange that this storm in FTZ advertising should have broken only now when such advertisements appeared in the *Time* magazine. Full page advertisements playing up Upali Wijeyewardene had appeared in many Malaysian and Singapore papers from September 10 onwards. *Tribune* had been sent copies of such advertisements by its readers in that region no sooner they had appeared, but we had bided our time to make our comments. In the *Time* advertisement the same kind of arguments as in the *New Strait Times* advertisement (a copy of which is before us) has been used in a greatly shortened and paraphrased form. *Tribune* will deal with this way of "selling Sri Lanka" in a later issue.

But we would urge the President to consider whether the best interests of this country is served by the nature and content of statements and statistics (some from doubtful sources based in Hongkong) published in it. The President has shown such sagacity and political wisdom in the way he has handled so many matters since he assumed power in 1977 that it will be a pity if he fails to see that this millionaire's method of "selling" this country is neither politically appropriate nor economically justified—either nationally or internationally.

WHILST IT IS TRUE that *Tribune* does not see eye to eye with the President in regard to economic policies he has advocated, there is one matter on which the *Tribune* endorses the actions he has taken, and which, in our view, the people of this country must admire. It is the nationally sensitive and political explosive Sinhala-Tamil question with the currently dangerous mix of, TULF-ism, Sinhala

extremism, Northern terrorism and the North and South chauvinism. President Jayewardene started with the legacy of the August-September 1977 communal conflagration which was no doubt sparked off by forces inimical to the new government. To President Jayewardene's credit it must be said he quickly brought the disturbances under control and he set up the Sansoni Commission for everybody to let off steam. This steam-letting has gone on for two years and though many had felt that the evidence presented before the Commission was likely to add fuel to the latently burning flames, the general consensus is that the Commission (whatever its findings) has served a useful purpose in tying down several extremist communal elements before the Commission. It has also been possible to identify the most dangerous communal forces—both among Sinhalese and Tamils.

The Sansoni Commission was only one limb of the Jayewardene policies to resolve the communal tangle. The other culminated in the setting up of the Presidential Commission to evolve a system of Development Councils to decentralise administration on a district-cum-regional basis. At the time of writing the indications are that the recommendations of the Presidential Commission may become an acceptable basis for a solution to the Sinhala-Tamil problem in the context of the Eelam backlash. *Knowledgeable circles also realise that President Jayewardene by a careful and judicious use of the Security Forces has not only contained the Northern terrorists but also nipped in the bud all attempts by Southern rowdy elements to start communal disturbances.*

When the complete story of this period is written in the years to come, historians and researchers will discover the extent and sweep of the patience, magnanimity and understanding shown by the President to defuse dangerous situations and take the country towards the path of national unity and communal amity. He had to deal with Jekylls and Hydes of many hues and kinds and what he has achieved so far is nothing short of the miraculous. Those who are aware of the many cross currents and under-currents that buffeted the state of Sri Lanka in the last 30 months will admit that but for statesmanlike handling of men, matters and events by the President, the country could have (in 1979)

witnessed a communal holocaust and a blood-bath far worse than anything that has happened before.

There are some who demand that Emergency be lifted in the North. "Ask the ordinary man and woman in Jaffna", say many Tamil readers, "and they will tell you that the Emergency has made life safe in the peninsula. We are able to take our women and children out, specially in the evenings. We are not afraid of being robbedor our throats cut....."

There are, we believe, talks and negotiations at present for the lifting of the Emergency. If political expediency requires this, then let the government lift the Emergency, but before doing that the Government must ensure that the ordinary citizen in the North is able to live without fear of being robbed, thrashed intimidated or hooted at, that women and children can go about (even for evening shows) without being humiliated or harassed. This is the prime duty of the government. How this is to be achieved without a State of Emergency in the affected areas is hard to envisage, but to many people what is important is not the Emergency or the lifting of it but the need to have a situation where peaceful citizens are not thrown at the mercy of rowdies—even if they pretend to be political martyrs.

THE PRESIDENT AND THE GOVERNMENT have difficult times ahead. Global inflation is going full pace ahead. An ounce of gold yesterday topped \$ 470 an ounce. It may reach the \$ 500 mark. In early September when gold topped \$ 200 mark, there was consternation in banking circles. Economists were certain that gold could not get anywhere near \$ 300 mark. Today, it is fast approaching the \$ 500 mark. *Many suggest that the increase of oil prices (or the threat of increases) has led to this phenomenal increase in the price of gold. This is a rather simplistic approach. It can be argued, more realistically, that the increase in the price of gold has led to the increase in the price of oil.*

From the time the US dollar went off gold in 1970/71 and the world monetary system was thrown out on floating currencies, inflation became rampant as chaos overtook the

ternational economic system. It is necessary to understand the reasons why the price of gold has gone up to very nearly the \$ 500 mark to understand why the price of oil is shooting up. How long the world will be able to bear the burden of rising prices is hard to say? But, a crash is inevitable unless there is a slow return to normalcy.

Sri Lanka is only a tiny dot in this global panorama, but the impact of the impending economic armageddon can be devastating to the people who live in this island. The coming year will unfold what is in store for us and mankind.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Working Hours

by Nimal Sarathchandra

In a democratic country it is customary to seek public opinion before implementing important decisions that effect the lives of its citizens. In keeping with this tradition the government has now sought the opinion of the people as regards the most suitable hours of work. The fixing of working hours for government employees as well as other employees in the private sector, depends, to a great extent on the transport facilities that could be made available to such workers and the successful changes in the living habits of the people to which they have been long accustomed.

There are employees who travel for work daily from far-off places, sometimes twenty five to seventy five miles away. These employees get up early in the morning as early as four o'clock and return home late in the night. This they do for five consecutive days. How much they can concentrate on their work, how much energy and stamina they can devote for the fulfilment of their duties could be evaluated only after a careful work study. In a tropical country like ours, where the hot humid climate and the scourging sun saps the energy of the workers and reduce their productivity, it would be in the best interest of the country to start the day as early as possible. Even now in certain work sites situated on the dry zone areas the gong goes at 5.30 in the

morning for them to get up and work commences at 6 a.m. and the day's work goes on smoothly without a lunch break till two in the afternoon.

The government with its good intentioned rules and regulations can change the ways and habits of its citizens, wakes them from their slumber and have them to work for the good of the country with a sense of dedication.

Comparing with other developing nations in the neighbouring regions, we have to admit that still we are lethargic, dull and completely unaware of our duties towards the country. We love comfort, pleasure, sleep, shun work and obligations and fight for rights and amenities.

The travail of bus and train travel should not be our excuse. The wind, rain and cold should not deter us in our daily work. Problems are the rule on life. Solving them are our victories.

Let us start our work at 7 a.m. in the morning and work full eight hours without a lunch break. Short snacks could be had over the files and a cup of tea could be served free by the employer.

Let the first bus or train move out before 4 a.m. and the working day start also at 4 a.m.
Sri Lanka Port Authority,
Colombo.

FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

:: FTZ :: Fish :: Air

By Grassroots

FREE TRADE ZONE AND TIME MAGAZINE. Two interesting advertisements appeared in two recent issues of the prestigious Time magazine. Both related to Sri Lanka. Both concerned the Free Trade Zone. But there was one significant difference in the two advertisements which have made people wonder as to what happened. The first advertisement carried a photograph of the GCEC boss Mr. Upali Wijewardane while in the second advertisement Mr. Upali Wijewardane's photograph had been replaced by that of the President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene. Was the change in photographs the result of some

after-thought (or a directive from the top). In any event people are asking whether the President's photograph should not have come first. The other question that is being asked is whether Mr. Upali Wijewardene should have his photograph at all—at State expense. After all it is argued he is a big private sector businessman in Sri Lanka and the issue is whether this advertisement will be construed as publicity for himself and his business empire. It is a little more different from getting posters with photographs pasted on public walls suggesting that one is the popular choice to be Member of Parliament for a local constituency.

Coming back to the *Time* magazine one must not forget that over a year ago a Full Page advertisement appeared in it pleading for AID to cyclone stricken Sri Lanka. Our man in Jakarta, Indonesia was said to have been responsible for that HELP US advertisement. Now, not a year later appears this INVESTMENT advertisement. Will top businessmen who read *Time* think that there is something strange and inconsistent in the two advertisements, one BEGGING FOR AID and the other inviting INVESTORS!

—0—

FISHY BUSINESS. High level public servants and Corporation staff are talking about the funny doings of one of their colleagues—a young civil servant who held high office in Colombo and who is now Chairman of an Important Authority overlooking what comes from the sea. For some years he has been associated on the Board of a semi-government authority dealing with fish. It has now come out that for the past four years he has been receiving (on request no doubt) seven pounds of good fish (often seer) every week. There was no harm in that. Anyone can eat fish. But the talking point is that he never paid for this bounty—7 lbs. of fish per week for the past 4 years. When asked why he did not pay, the polite reply was “I was not billed for it.” “I was not asked to pay for it”. What a nice situation to be in.

Unfortunately, the Minister who has control of the institution that supplied the fish is now asking the beneficiary to pay for it. The total works out to about Rs. 4,000/—.

If he does not pay, the matter may go to higher ups. NOR-SEE-ating.

—0—

AIR LANKA GOOFS. Recently there was a news item in the national dailies about a funny situation concerning the registration or legal incorporation of AIR Lanka in England. Although Air Lanka had been incorporated as a Company in Sri Lanka, its management appears to have forgotten or omitted to incorporate it in England. While Air Lanka slept, some private Sri Lankans in London had applied on their own to the Registrar of Companies in England and had incorporated a Company of their own by the name of Air Lanka Ltd. No one knows the reason. This may have been done even as a joke. But, the question is why did the Air Lanka Board in Sri Lanka fail to think of this. Someone must take the blame or is this not necessary because the institution is under the President?

The omission to register or incorporate Air Lanka in England is similar to the omission or neglect by its predecessor Air Ceylon to pay for the rent of their office in Heathrow Airport. Someone forgot to pay the rent and hold the premises (and the landing rights that went with it) at Heathrow which was lost to Air Lanka who has now to be satisfied with a landing at Gatwick.

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A Little Sting by The Hornet

:: From Here & There

GODMEN AND SHOP EMPLOYEES: Has the Labour Department turned a blind eye to the many labour offences committed in the city? If Labour Officers only care to do their rounds of the shops in Pettah, Kollupitiya and Bambalapatiya they will find shop employees on their feet for more than 12 hours a day helping their employers to make fortunes which are being smuggled out of the country through VIPs carrying gems. These miserable shop assistants work overtime, underpaid and underfed, without being provided even with a cup of tea. What is interesting is that some of these

employers are followers of contemporary Godmen who live in the lap of luxury and whose portraits hang overlooking this inhuman exploitation. Tired and hungry men and women work without a murmur for their masters on a paltry salary of Rs. 75 per month—no overtime and no provident fund. The workers believe that the Gods and Godmen have miraculously put the Labour Officers to sleep or materialised gifts into their hands.

A PROPHECY. A well known light reader and fortune teller has foretold that in five years' time Sri Lanka will reach the height of its development—skyscrapers, broad roads, luxury cars and helicopters but that there will be no Sri Lankans in the city except Members of Parliament, Ministers and members of 15 families, who will strut about like the Gate Mudaliyars and Muhandirams of old. The rest of the Sri Lankans will be bond slaves to foreign business tycoons. History is going to repeat itself in a revised form. The people however will enjoy their sovereignty on paper.

WOMEN WORKERS AND NIGHT SHIFTS. Is the Labour Department aware of women working on night shifts contrary to all decent labour practices? Can any reader answer?

NATIONAL BANKS. Is it true that the Government has in some cases withdrawn monies from the National Banks and deposited them in Foreign Banks?

OMBUDSMAN: It is believed that the question of appointing an Ombudsman has been shelved and no such appointment is to be made now or in the future?

THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE CYNIC. A Sri Lankan cynic made a most devastating observation with regard to the various organisations of the United Nations. "They are the permutations and combinations of the letters of the English Alphabet, which release Unnecessary Flying Objects into developing countries."

LABOUR AND THE FREE TRADE ZONE: How is it that our Left parties have not pointed out that Lee Kwan Yew of Singapore never allowed the multinationals to exploit the workers and to pay them salaries on a sub-human levels? It is fair or patriotic to sell our labour so cheap and permit the "robber barons from abroad" to pay them the minimum wages under the law which is insufficient to buy per day 1 bottle of milk, 2 lbs. of bread

3 coconuts, 1/2 a pound of onions, 1/4 pound of dry fish and 1/2 a measure of rice. The rest is on credit. Who is developing whom?

OUR EXPORT: We export our brains, we export our brawn, we export our women and our babies too. We import chicken, we import onions, we import chillies, we import anything and everything. We believe in development without our brains, without our brawn, without our women and without our babies. It will be wrong for the enemies of this government and this country to say that our babies have to return the colossal monies we keep borrowing, when they grow up. Our babies will have either grown up abroad or been dead at home.

BROTHELS AND DEVELOPMENT: Has the Vice Squad been disbanded in the national interests to promote tourism? Hornet has buzzed into and buzzed out of 300 brothels between Katunayake and Bambalapitiya. We sell and export human flesh to import corned beef.

REPLY TO WRB—I

On "Inactivities"

by *Tribune* investigator

The first point in the Water Resources Board (WRB) statement is under the heading "Inactivities of the Board". The Secretary of the WRB who has signed the document probably meant it as a jocular comment on the criticisms made against the Board in the *Tribune*, by saying "Inactivities", but this heading betrays the truth. *Inactivities* is indeed the correct word to describe the work of the WRB.

This is how the section under *Inactivities* reads:

"In January 1978 the staff of this Board consisted of one Engineer and nine clerical hands, with a budget of less than half a million rupees (no aspersions are cast on the previous Board when these statistics are given). This year the Water Resources Board has been given a national budget of Rs. 15 million, and is responsible for the implementation of foreign aid projects to a value of Rs. 36 million. Both technical and administrative staff have been recruited to undertake this work. The total local budget would be spent during the course

of this year and the foreign aid projects are all on schedule.

"The General Treasury and the National State Assembly have thought it fit to grant this sum and the external agencies—the World Bank, the Norwegian Government and the British Government have considered that we are capable of handling such an expanded budget. The comments of these national and international bodies of how we have conducted our affairs during the year 1979 is on record for the private investigator to see *if he wishes to, but we would like to inform him that these institutions do not share his private view.*" (italics WRB's).

The fact that the Treasury gave the WRB an enhanced budget and the fact that certain external agencies (you-scratch-my-back-and-I-scratch-your-back agencies) have thought the WRB capable of spending the money is held up as a certificate of competence. The public who require tube wells will judge otherwise. What is important is not that the staff has been recruited and that the money would be spent (how much of it on advertising?) during the course of this year, but the number of tube wells that have been successfully sunk. The fact that foreign aid projects are on schedule are even more meaningless because nobody knows what these schedules are (the WRB has published no advertisements about them).

With its budget at half a million rupees^s in 1978, and now greatly enhanced, the WRB should have first sought "aid" to obtain equipment but now bemoans that what it has is "dilapidated." It will be recalled that shortly after the Jayewardene Government came to power, there was a big tamasha and a great deal of fanfare to accept two Indian rigs for sinking wells. Have these rigs which are hardly two years old become "dilapidated". It was also proclaimed that each rig could sink at least one hundred (100) wells a year? How many wells have these rigs really sunk? Were they used or were they left to rust in some junkyard?

There is something wonky with the logic motivating the WRB — to find satisfaction in the fact that the General Treasury and the National State Assembly (it is now the Parliament—once again but the Rip Van Winkles of the WRB haven't got woken up) to vote Rs. 15 million (or more) to the WRB. This Rs. 15 million is only a drop in the vast ocean

of money now voted by Parliament for development activities and this certain does not confer on the WRB a certificate, as we said earlier of competence. The WRB must and will be judged by the work accomplished—i.e., number of wells sunk and windmills erected (and certainly not by the number of self-adulatory advertisements published or the quantity of Ipil-Ipil seeds distributed by obliging State banks which should pay more attention to improving their bureaucratic and antiquated banking practices which are being shown up by the foreign banks now on the scene).

The WRB also refers with obvious pride to certificates they have got from the World Bank, the Norwegian Government and the British Government—stating that the WRB (as presently constituted) was capable of handling such an expanded budget. The WRB claims that these certificates are in respect of how "we have conducted our affairs during the year 1979". The year is not yet over, and when the WRB statement was drafted there were still two months to go, and the public cannot think very highly of "forward" certificates for the year 1979 drawn up long before the year neared its end. And who were the person or persons authorised by the World Bank, or the Norwegian Government, or the British Government to issue such certificates?

The WRB should publish these documents from the World Bank, and the Norwegian and British Governments in a special New Year supplement—for the edification of the public. Why keep the light hidden behind the proverbial bushel or even non-existent windmills? The WRB should spend part of the Rs. 15 million the State has entrusted to its tender mercies on this Special Supplement and make public the views of the World Bank and the Norwegian and British Governments.

Neither this Investigator nor any other honest investigator will want to walk into the spider's net at the WRB Hqs. (full of old advertisement cobwebs) to inspect these documents. The WRB should display them in the full glare of Ipil-Ipil type publicity.

It is not such certificates the public want. They want tube-wells. They want to know what the two Indian rigs have done and why they are now classified as "dilapidated."?

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Dec. 6 — Dec. 12

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—Janadina; SU—Sun; DV—Davasa; DP—Dinapathi; CM—Chinthamani; WK—Weekend; RR—Riviresa; DK—Dinakara; EN—Eelanadu; IDPR—Information Dept. Press Release.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6: Textile Industries Minister, Wijayapala Mendis has appointed a 16-member Committee headed by a Chartered Accountant to investigate and report on the numerous allegations of shortcomings, mismanagement etc., during the tenure of the former National Textile Corporation. Some 3,000 airmail letters, many of them dated 27.11.79 in Colombo were recovered from the Hendala canal by the Wattala police yesterday; Police said the letters and three bags, which were found on the banks of the canal were handed over to the postal authorities yesterday. The new rubber-rice pact signed by Sri Lanka with the People's Republic of China in Peking contains several features favourable to this country compared to the previous agreements; deputy Minister of Food and Shipping, M. S. Amarasiri who led the delegation, returned to the island yesterday. Police investigating the GCE A-level scandal have appealed to the Examinations Department to transfer certain officers in the interest of students who are sitting the GCE O-level examination beginning December 11—CDN. The President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene has accepted the recommendation of a Cabinet sub-committee that no one should lose his job being not proficient in the official language; this has been stated by Mr. C. Rajadurai, Minister of Regional Development, in the course of an interview with Madras television. The Sri Lanka government was following sound economic policies which would bring about greater

economic growth and development; this was why the Citibank was here, said Mr. G. J. Clark, Senior Vice-President of the Citibank, based in the United States at a press conference yesterday—CDM. Sri Lanka which was at one time Britain's major supplier of tea, is fast losing its hold on the British market and has fallen behind not only India, but also the smaller tea producers like Kenya and Malawi. Sri Lanka will soon enter into an agreement with India for a joint inter-University relationship. A securities exchange will be soon established in Sri Lanka in a bid to revive and modernise the sharemarket—SU. The Agriculture Department has initiated a training scheme for its field workers to enable them to pilot the government's new agricultural extension program to be launched with World Bank assistance next year—CO. While speaking in Parliament yesterday the Leader of the Opposition praised the Ministry of Industries & Scientific Affairs headed by Mr. Cyril Mathew—DP.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7: Police yesterday launched a massive hunt for several persons who have gone into hiding after duping many youths by taking money from them on the promise of getting them jobs in Middle East countries; police said some of them had posed as Employment Agency bosses and had taken money involving lakhs of rupees from young men and women—CDN. The CID yesterday uncovered what was described as a major attempt to sabotage the GCE (Ordinary Level) Examination which begins on December 11 and will continue till the 17th at over 2,000 centres—CDM. Government will adopt new measures immediately in a bid to avert a deterioration of the country's tea industry; some of these measures were discussed at a top level meeting President J. R. Jayewardene held with certain senior Ministers on Wednesday. President J. R. Jayewardene yesterday warned that he would dissolve the UNP-led union in the Education Ministry if a solution could not be found to the union's internal problems within one month. The government will gift 11,000 houses to tenants or occupants of State buildings paying a rental of less than Rs. 25, Prime Minister R. Premadasa announced yesterday. A second batch of overseas letters addressed to persons in Sri Lanka were found by the police in the Wattala area yesterday—SU. The vast majority

of public servants who recently voted at a poll conducted to determine their preferred working hours have opted for a seven-hour work day between 9 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. with a half hour lunch break—CO. The PM speaking in Parliament yesterday revealed that the Chairman, Deputy Chairmen and representatives of the proposed District Development Councils will be elected by the people and the District Minister will be the link between the government and these Councils—DP.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8: Government has now decided to provide all school children, irrespective of whether they attend government, private non-fee levying or private fee-levying schools with free school text books from the Kindergarten to Grade 10 from January. Six officials of the Examination Department (two of them staff officers) were transferred out of the department yesterday following investigations into the GCE-A Level scandal—CDN. Government has taken urgent steps to flood the market with imported potatoes and onions for the festive season; the Deputy Director and the General Manager of the CWE, have left for Pakistan by air to purchase and supervise on the spot shipment of these two items which are in great demand—CDM. Any group of at least 50 persons resident in Sri Lanka and associated for any lawful purpose, may go to form the "people's company" which will be introduced by the proposed Companies Act of Sri Lanka. Several more police stations in Colombo were yesterday alerted to search for the remaining two mail bags believed lost from the Central Mail Exchange yesterday—SU. The government has decided that the private sector could establish cement factories but the cement produced will have to be distributed locally and not exported—DP.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9: The government last week directed the Foreign Ministry to initiate urgent negotiations with several foreign capitals to arrange the quick import of critically-needed cement to keep Sri Lanka's booming construction industry humming. The Ministry of Labour has decided to tighten the conditions under which Lankan women may be sent abroad for domestic service following a report made to Colombo by Mr. Tissa Jayakody, Sri Lanka's envoy in Abu Dhabi—SO. Sri Lanka will receive good quality Burmese rice next year in terms of the rice-

rubber pact with China; as much as 120,000 tons out of the 150,000 metric tons contracted for under the new pact with China will come from Burma. Air Lanka will take Aeroflot—the Soviet airliner to task for certain alleged malpractices such as the sale of heavily cut-price tickets in the European sector—ST.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 10: Sri Lankan babies are sold to foreign couples for adoption; this racket has been uncovered by the Ministry of Social Services; following this both the Minister of Social Services, Mr. Asoka Karunaratne and the Deputy Minister Mr. J. L. Sirisena said yesterday that they would be pressing the government for the imposition of a complete ban on foreign adoption of Sri Lankan children. Foreign Minister A. C. S. Hameed yesterday continued his consultations from London with Dr. Kurt Waldheim, United Nations Secretary-General in New York in the search for a solution to the crisis that has arisen following the holding of hostages at the US Embassy in Teheran informed sources here said—CDN. President J. R. Jayewardene said yesterday, that although the President of Sri Lanka was in effect an uncrowned executive, the real power lay in the hands of the people—SU. Once the proposed district development councils start operating, the job vacancies in each district will be given to people from that district—DP. With a view to seeking redress against the violent acts in the North, people from the North and South and important personalities took part in prayers and fast at Jaffna yesterday; this body appeared to be seeking the blessings of God to prevent laws and actions against human rights—VK.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11: The Ceylon Workers' Congress has requested the government to review the operation of the Indo-Ceylon Agreement (Implementation) Act of 1967 and the citizenship Act of 1948 in order to take measures to end the category of stateless persons, Mr. M. S. Sellasamy, General Secretary of the CWC said: he said a delegation from the CWC met President J. R. Jayewardene recently and told him that the operation of the two Acts was creating a new category of stateless persons which the Sri Lankan and Indian Governments were committed to end. The Examinations Department has enforced tight security both at the department and at the examination centres in connection with the GCE O-level examination which

begins today: some 300,000 candidates will sit the exam which will be held at 2169 centres—CDN. The President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene has asked Members of Parliament to suggest an alternative system if the Job Bank Scheme introduced by the Government had not measured up to expectations. The Sansoni Commission probing the August 1977 communal disturbances concluded its sittings yesterday in Kandy—CDM. Sri Lanka will participate in a five nation project to establish a submarine Telecommunication System in the Asian region; government is of the opinion that this system costing Rs. 900 million, is of vital importance as at present there is no alternate telecommunication facility in the event of the satellite network malfunctioning; the proposed project will help establish a sophisticated network among the five-member countries; they are Malaysias, India, Singapore and Australia which will finance it. Armed Services are to be called in to and from the Central Mail Exchange—SU.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12: Prime Minister R. Premadasa yesterday said that Government would launch the Rs. 100 million UNESCO-Sri Lanka based Cultural Triangle Project at the Jetavana Stupa at Anuradhapura on January 1, 1980 at the auspicious time of 3.25 p.m. Sri Lanka's role as a silent mediator in the Iranian crisis is earning considerable political goodwill both in and outside the United States; to date, UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim has kept the State Department briefed about Sri Lanka's efforts in breaking the diplomatic impasse in Teheran—CDN. Nearly 6,000 people were rendered homeless in the Northern and Eastern provinces by heavy rains which have resulted in major floods during the past few days—CDM. The setting up of Special Courts of permanent body to hear appeals on lands acquired by the government for a public purpose, is one of the several amendments being considered by the government to the Land Acquisition Act; the need to set up special courts follows several complaints from affected landowners that there were long delays in finalising their appeals before the Court of Appeal or the Supreme Court. The four suspects arrested by the CID in connection with an alleged attempt to cause serious injury to President J. R. Jayewardene, were yesterday discharged by the Colombo Joint Magistrate T. Joganathan—SU.

Two delegations will visit Sri Lanka at the beginning of next year in order to have talks regarding investment in industries and commercial ventures here—DP.



SHORT STORY

Papa Markus' Christmas

by Sita Selladurai

Anton Markus leaned back in his easy chair and relaxed. He had just treated himself to a sumptuous Christmas dinner—roast chicken and breuder, which he had cooked himself. In the good old days, when his mother and father were alive, it used to be roast turkey and Christmas pudding. But those days were gone, perhaps, never to return. Even chicken, he now indulged in, only on special occasion—and he considered Christmas very special indeed.

He was pleased with his efforts at brightening up the family home-cum-store. The red and gold tinsel, with the live greenery and bunches of balloons, helped somewhat to hide its otherwise frugal appurtenances. The store was originally begun by his Mama over forty years ago, when he, and his sister were kids. Though it had undergone many changes through the ages, yet it retained the same name, 'Mama-Papa-Store'. Everyone in town had come to associate the 'Mama-Papa-Store' with goods of quality. At the beginning, the store had contained only such items as cheese cakes, pies, pickles and chutneys, that were the efforts of Mama's culinary talents. Later, his sister's expertise at needlework had been added, and baby clothes and household linen began to appear on the shop windows. Then Anton had begun to contribute his efforts at art, which ranged from water-colour scenery to batiks, and very soon the 'Mama-Papa-Store' become renowned for its miscellany of choice items.

Anton had returned to his home town to stay, over a month ago—after an absence of thirty years, which was a very long time. Everything had changed. The town, the people, and most of all the house, which had dilapidated beyond recognition. Perhaps, it was his fault to have left it entirely to his sister

to manage single handed, after the death of his mother and father. May be it was the loneliness and boredom that had hastened her passing away at such an early age. But Anton had his reasons for not wanting to come home earlier, considering the circumstances that had forced him to leave his home town, in the prime of his youth.

He had known Diedre then for five long years, which period he thought was adequate enough time for getting to know a person intimately. He used to meet Diedre almost everyday after school, and walk with her along the beach, on their way home. Many a day, they used to sit together on the rocks, watching the waves dash against them, and laugh and talk of trivial things that had happened, and would happen. Nothing else had mattered to him then. Life seemed so full of happiness and he felt that Diedre reciprocated his feelings. He had not spoken to her about love—not yet—but then those things were implicit, he had thought. Just a month before Diedre's seventeenth birthday he had gathered together all the money he had saved up by way of pocket money, milk money, and bus fares, and gone to the capital to buy her his first gift. After walking to many shops he had picked on a chain of blue sapphires. On the day of her birthday, he had knocked on her door—his gift neatly wrapped and tied with a blue ribbon, having rehearsed how he was going to propose to her.

That day, Diedre had other visitors too, in fact there seemed to be some sort of a party. Anton had felt somewhat uneasy. Then Diedre had walked up to him and said, "Anton meet George, we are engaged to be married," in quite a matter of fact way. For a moment Anton had stood motionless, his cheeks aflame, his throat strangely constricted. He had felt an awful grief come up in him for all things he had dreamed to be, and will be no more. The room whirled around him—he felt dizzy. Then murmuring something about being unwell, he had left, still clutching the necklace of blue sapphires in his hand. He had stood it for a week. Then he had departed from his home town for good. That day, the sky was slate grey—so drab and melancholy was its colour that it seemed to spell of the infinite sorrow in his heart, and as the train that bore him away puffed out of the station on the misty May morning,

Anton had hoped that his memories of Diedre would gradually fade away in the mists of time.

From then on, a whole new world opened out to him. After a fortnight in the metropolis, when he stayed with an uncle, Anton managed to secure for himself a teaching post in a mission school, along the south coast. There he spent the best years of his life, devoted and dedicated to the humble, yet noble vocation of teaching.

Anton was a teacher with a difference. He was not content with merely imparting a knowledge of Arithmetic, Language, History, Geography and other subjects on the curriculum. Though he taught these subjects with a particular thoroughness, he endeavoured more than ever, to produce a self-reliant, peace-loving, polite young citizen of every pupil who passed through his hands. Whenever his deep insight sensed that 'all was not well' with any of his young charges, he would walk up to him, tap him on the shoulder and say, "See you after school, son." Then over a cup of tea, in his cheery two roomed bedsitter, Anton had helped to solve the problems that had troubled many a young mind. He talked to parents whenever he felt the need to. Soon, Papa Markus, as he affectionately came to be known, was regarded as friend and counsellor of both parents and pupils alike. At school fairs, concerts, prize-givings, in fact wherever Papa Markus met a kith or kin of any of his past pupils, he never failed to inquire after them. His face broadened into a spontaneous smile, when he heard that Sunil had entered Law College, Upali had passed out as doctor, or Ranjit had secured a place in the Railway Clerical Service.

Moralists used to say that performance of duty brings happiness. Anton's life was a happy one. In fact he felt he could not have been happier. Over the years, and in many ways, Papa Markus had come to represent everything that was love. The love that he felt for his friends, young and old, was an understanding creative love—a redemptive goodwill. It overflowed whenever stimulated, seeking nothing in return. He regarded everyone he was fond of as a friend. Though Papa Markus had friends of both sexes, he never again felt the sentimental outpouring he had once felt for Diedre. Perhaps, he had graduated from

that emotional bosh, into a deeper higher form of love.

Many a Sunday evening, after church, Papa Markus had walked to the beach with a song in his heart, and sat down on the rocks and watched the waves dash against them. He used to be reminded of the days when he sat on the rocks at home with Diedre. But they were only memories, and happily they had ceased to bring with them the hurt that had once accompanied them. Even the necklace of blue sapphires which lay with his clothes in his closet, was now only an article he associated with her memory. He no more felt the pangs of agony and hurt, that he had once experienced at the sight of it. How true he thought that 'Time and thinking can tame the strongest grief.'

Three months ago his sister had died, and Anton had decided to return, bag and baggage to his home town. He had left all his friends behind. He had no friends now—only acquaintances. But soon he would make friends—he had no doubt about it. He grinned and nodded to people whom he faintly remembered as he passed them on the street—telling himself proudly that he had not forgotten what it was like to smile spontaneously. Some of the streets he was still able to recognise, and though he had not seen them for thirty years they now came back in pristine detail. Many however, were beyond recognition, and made impersonal by huge, gray concrete buildings. At the place where Diedre's house had once stood by the beach, there was now a multi storey hotel. The rocks where they used to sit were no more. Instead there stood a long line of dingys and the beach was full of sun bathers who lazed on deck chairs under coloured umbrellas. Papa Markus's heart had saddened at these unfamiliar sights, but nevertheless, he accepted them as the inevitable products of progress.

Today, on his first Christmas Day alone at home, Papa Markus felt a warm conscious happiness for the simple beauties around him. The peace, the order, the cleanliness—the sheer blessedness of everyday existence. He wondered whether he should close up and go to bed early. He glanced at his watch. It was still only eight o'clock. Perhaps he should wait a little longer, giving time to last minute shoppers. Most of the things he had put out

for sale had gone, but quite a few still remained. The necklace of blue sapphires was still there, lying nestled in its white, silk lined box. He had thought of putting it out only two days before Christmas. He had clung to it selfishly long enough—why not give somebody the pleasure of wearing it. It was the price he had found difficult to fix on. Prices today had appreciated five-fold, but finally—the tag he had put on it, indicated only thrice what he had originally paid for it. Now it lay there among the other disarray of ornaments, consisting of bracelets, lockets and rings that were his sister's.

Just then, he saw a child standing outside, her small forehead and nose pressed against the glass of the window. She was scanning the jewellery in the showcase with her large earnest eyes, as if she were looking for something special. She was clad in a blue pinafore, and on her feet were a worn out pair of rubber slippers. She stood for sometime, and then as if she had made up her mind, she made straight for his door and knocked firmly. Anton hastened to open it, and on seeing him she cleared her throat and said, "Please Papa Markus, could I see that necklace of blue stones in the white box?" She couldn't be more than six years old he thought as he handed the box to her. She held it in both her hands and looked at it closely, and with a satisfied air she handed it back and said, "They are lovely. Will you wrap them up pretty for me please?" Anton watched intently as she undid the bundle she had, tied up in a handkerchief, and poured the contents in a heap on his counter. It consisted of many coins. "I emptied my piggy bank," she explained, "There are over ten rupees." and the trusting, innocent look in her eyes, smote his heart.

Anton hurried away to the corner of the room, carefully undid the price tag, and wrapped it up. Then he tied it up with a blue ribbon and handed it back to her. "There you are!" he said tenderly, "And take care not to lose it on the way." "Oh! no. I won't", she chimed back, "Its for my big sister—she looks after me. We have no mother you see," she added simply, and the happiness within her shone out, setting her soft round face aglow.

The bells in the distant steeples chimed out the message of Christmas, and the song

In Anton's heart joined in unison. "I will see you home," he said to the little child on second thoughts. Then locking the door behind him, he took her small hand gently in his, and walked her safely home.

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REMEMBERING

The Worst Cyclone

by V. Buvanandaram

THE REMEMBRANCE at the first anniversary of the "worst cyclone in living memory" (1978) is over. Was it the worst cyclone? Our memory is short but not so short as that of India, where every major meteorological event is the worst in their living memory. Our memory goes back to May 9, 1907, when a similar cyclone got into our land through Kalmunai and was driven out through Batticaloa, where its cyclonic waves beached S. S. Lady Havelock near Kalkudah rest-house and its tornadoes smashed and foundered a couple of schooners at sea and all coconut plantations between Kalmunai and Batticaloa were laid waste. This present anniversary one (1978) too behaved much the same till it got to Polonnaruwa, after which it wearied its way to Mannar, where it fell into the bay and died. Most of the damage by these two cyclones like smashing up buildings, uprooting giant trees and bursting closed up temples and churches were all due to the tornadoes they spawned.

The Governor's speech to the State Legislature on the 1907 small yet severe cyclone is like a reminiscence of the cyclone of 23rd November 1978. He had inadvertently mentioned March 8 instead of May 9 and this mistake has crept into records: "The houses were crushed in the village of Akkaparal, which was in the very centre of the storm. It is impossible to conceive of a greater scene of devastation than it presented."—"At Kalmunai hospital the walls were apparently very much stronger. The doctor went out that night—a terrific night it was—as trees were falling in all directions, and he found in one of the walls symptoms that it might possibly collapse so he hurried the patients into another ward,

and a short time after it did collapse. But while he was arranging the second ward without a moment's warning the second ward collapsed and six were killed or injured and died by morning"—"Coconut and arecanut trees were snapped across, twisted round and torn up by the roots. Many trees left standing had their crowns and leaves so battered that they cannot survive." Total damage, 47 lines, 1,243 cattle, 4,837 houses, schools and temples and 366,737 coconut trees.

1907 was a very exciting year with many strange happenings. Comet David was seen in the early hours of the morning during August and September, its tail covering 13 degrees of the heavens. On February 20, a mini-tornado passed through Colombo, knocking a rickshaw and its wallah into a drain at Wall Street, Kotahena. Coconut and fruit trees were uprooted at the centre of its track of half a mile before it vanished into the canal off Skinners Road. At Rakwana, a brilliant meteor was seen on May 30, crossing from west to east. On January 4, there was a periodical rising and ebbing of the seas off south and west coasts, where the sea bed was visible. This was traced to the explosion of a small island off Sumatra on 1st January, which killed 340 people. Storms, thunderstorms and heavy rains were prolific during the year. A virulent thunderstorm poured over Puttalam, tamarind seed-sized hail and another at Fairfield Estate, Lindula killed a kankany. Upper air circulations were numerous over the island and that particular one on December 15 which at its very small centre gave to an area 40 square miles, rainfall in 24 hours which is still unbeaten Kalawewa 15.02", Mahallupalama 14.80" and Maradankadawala 13.71". In spite of all these rains, 1907 was a remarkably dry year, with large excesses of rain only at Mullaitivu and Mannar but nearby Mantota experienced the longest continuous drought of 144 days from May 11 to October 1.

THIS OUR PRESENT YEAR, 1979, seems in a small way strangely similar to 1907. There was the cyclone in May this year that threatened to invade our land through Batticaloa but moved away to strike coast at Nellore. We had the sea bed fissures off Sumatra and Java and floods and upper air circulations due to the pull of planets, the Sun and the Moon. As in this year, Jupiter and Saturn did not get

together in 1907, however, when the island off Sumatra burst on 1st January 1907, Jupiter and Sun were in opposition. Each pulled our earth in opposite directions and Jupiter being in opposition to the Sun, it was close to Earth, so that not only the gravitational pull but even the magnetic pull would have come into play. At the same time, Saturn and the Moon too were in opposition and they too were pulling the earth in opposite directions, gripping at different places, opposite to each other.

The cyclone of December 22/23 1964 did not spawn tornadoes, inspite of its eye being visible. It rushed through from Trincomalee to Talaimannar pushing down every single tree in the jungle path, with its anemobiograp measured winds of 100 kts. both at Trincomalee and at Mannar. Then it churned up cyclonic waves in the Palk Strait and thousands of lives were lost including our fishermen from the North, who go there for their seasonal fishing, based on those tiny islands that dot the Palk strait and the Gulf of Mannar. Dhanushkodi was lost forever and our fishing village of Myliddy lost all their men. Mr. Bandaratileke, Customs Officer, Talaimannar was dragged out of bed by giant cyclonic waves and swallowed up by the sea. A champion swimmer, he swam to safely with the lights of the beached ss Goshan and lived to tell us of his harrowing experience.

A similar frightful experience was related by a rare man who happened to cross the path of this cyclone on land. He had come to repair his wrecked car at Tuckers and we met there. I had to take in all his unprintable words about our department. He had, after listening to the week-end forecast on the radio, taken his family on a holiday to his brother's at Trincomalee and met this cyclone in thick jungle. He came to assault me, when he heard, where I work. I got away saying that I was out of the island attending a seminar on satellite information. Really, I had arrived that day from Tokyo and satellite information about that cyclone was also received that very day from Washington. I had no chance to see it and others could not interpret it.

NONE ALIVE WILL REMEMBER the Jaffna cyclone of December 1884. Nothing much about its damage is known, but it helped to establish a fundamental law in the movement of cyclones. This cyclone came in from the

east and the first to know of it was Hambantota which received the highest fall for the 11th. 1.58".

The cyclone of November 78 too came the same way from the east and Radio Guam informed through the US Embassy that the cyclone was moving west, south of the mountains and may strike Colombo. Mr. Balasooriya of the Sun had a long wait to get me to squash this warning. On the 12th, the 1884 cyclone stood in front of Batticaloa, wondering whether to enter or not! It couldn't and it didn't. In the meanwhile an anticyclone had developed over the island with its centre over Millawana, (07. 7N, 80.5E). The cyclone, now unable to enter land at Batticaloa moved north and it was only at the latitude of Jaffna, it was out of reach of this anticyclone and was free to move in the westerly direction it wanted to. At sunset on the 16th of December 1884 it entered the peninsula from the east and the anticyclone had moved down south to be now centred over Watawela (07.0N, 80.5E). Okada's law of repellence between a cyclone and an anticyclone was established only in 1902. This cyclone traversed the whole length of Jaffna peninsula, fell into Palk strait and emerged out to enter Tamil Nadu. It then crossed the whole breadth of south India and entered Arabian sea, perhaps to land on some Arabian coast as a welcome guest. To have travelled so long against the friction of land and the energy expended in creating cyclonic waves, it too should have been one to be reckoned with the all time greats that have ravaged Sri Lanka.

The worst in a cyclone is not in the cyclone but in our values. At the mouth of the river Ganges millions have died like flies dragged into the sea by cyclonic waves. They must be "best" cyclones for having helped solved population problems.

This anniversay cyclone and the cyclone of 1907 smashed up schools, temples, churches, houses and destroyed plantations. They robbed the living and left only a few dead. They certainly must be the worst.



NEDECO Report - 3

by R. Kahawita

Let us now examine the main conclusions of the NEDECO Report and see how we can better the prospects forecast by them. As we said the consultants experienced certain handicaps in the paucity of ongoing studies, a change in the priorities from the original by the decision of the Government to give the highest priority to power development on an "exaggerated forecast of National Power requirements", shifting the development priority to Maduru Oya Reservoir area, and finally a revision of the original stage groupings into 12 projects by the Mahaweli Authorities. In the light of these specifications the Consultants addressed themselves to (a) "Implementation speed with regards to Irrigation Development, mainly based on maximum Settlement Possibilities". (b) "The expected increase in electricity demand, which sets a limit to the requirements for new hydro-power development."

IN THE AREA OF LAND DEVELOPMENT AND SETTLEMENT, they set themselves a target of 11,250 Acs. in the first year starting from 1980 and thereafter increase by 2250 Acs. each year with a possible maximum of 22,500 Acs. a year as we gain experience in land development and settlement techniques. By the time we reach this target of 22,500 Acs. it would be the year 1985 and we would have developed and settled a total of 45,000 Acs. and the acreage that would go into full production would be 11,250 Acs. of irrigable land in the year 1984/85. *To maintain, even the above targets, there are several obstacles, the Consultants say. They are, "manpower shortage in various trades, organisation and management, timely preparation of studies, investigations etc."*

When it comes to the movement of about 70,000 persons annually, the main limitations in keeping to this target are the requirements to meet the social needs of the 70,000 persons a year so that they can go into "agricultural production" in the 4/5th year of their taking possession of their holdings. Extension services, inputs, marketing, processing, trans-

port etc. are some of them and without devoted and efficient services at all levels to handle them the targets are just wishful thinking. *This target the Consultants compare with what is happening and what has happened since 1970 in area H—Kalawewa where there are much better accessibility and an already settled population. The implementation speed and methods have to be much better than in area H if we are to reach the target of 70,000 persons annually.*

IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES contributed by us to the Tribune, "we said the same things years back and also suggested starting a major training programme of technicians, middle grade technical personnel, extension workers, selected farmer leaders, so on and so forth, so that there would be a full complement of trained personnel to meet each group of settlers and to be with them for the period of 4/5 years till the settlers get on their "agricultural feet". With the accelerated programme and the findings of the Consultants, the numbers of trained personnel has been magnified. It is around 15,000 trained persons as extension workers, surveyors, irrigation officers and social workers. On a 4/5 year programme of production the annual out put of this category of officer is around 3000 trained officers. This is where we said there would be road blocks, the consultants also say the same thing today *We said it three years ago. As recently as a few months ago, we suggested how we could meet the targets and make a concerted effort to keep to the government promises.*

A decision has been made "to construct Kothmale Reservoir as the first project". In the opinion of the consultants, "with a tight construction schedule it may be expected to be completed by early 1984 for Irrigation and mid 1984 for energy production." It means that the reservoir can be filled in mid 1984. The programme is, indeed, tight because working time or effective construction time is 24 months, provided weather conditions from 1980 to 1984 would be as we forecast. The coming years will be very "wet years" is also a forecast based on rain-fall studies over a period of 50 years. If it were to be so, construction would drag on beyond 1984. Nevertheless let us hope it can be done in four years.

Kotmale has got priority because of the forecast of energy requirements. But till

Kotmale is commissioned for power production, installation of 200 M.W. thermal power is urgent. "In view of the limited time available, it is urgent to pay attention to this requirement", the consultants conclude. In an article headed "Power Crisis," in the Tribune we also did say the same thing, so this is nothing new to us, and our reasons were the generation of Hydro-power depending on river flow fed by tropical rains is critical in use. Such power has to be supplemented by thermal generation. This is almost an axiom, when massive carry over storage in a river system is not practical either for technical reasons or for financial feasibility. Kotmale has a storage capacity that will last only 140 days. So we cannot get away from thermal generation. The consultants have recommended 200 M.W. unit of Thermal Power as a sine-quo-non to meet the power demand assuming it is real.

Power development at Bowatenne which is not ready yet, can contribute 30 M.W. It is considered as an "on-going project" with a higher firm power factor than Kotmale. This should be completed by 1981 to meet the power crisis. In some other connection we had suggested two units of 15 M.W. each for greater elasticity in power production, because the main function of Bowatenne is irrigation. In this chain we have Kotmale, Polgolla Diversion and Bowatenne. These are inter-related to the Irrigation requirements in Kalawewa, Minneriya, Kantalai and P.S.S. systems, until such time Moragahakanda Reservoir takes over this function, which has now receded to the back stage in the accelerated programme, Kotmale and Bowatenne are vital to the above system.

The Consultants have not addressed their mind to improve the cultivation successes of the existing fields, without which we will have to be satisfied with two crop failures out of five years. Raison d'etre for what we say is happening just now. N.C.P. village tanks and major tanks are full to capacity, some are bursting, others are in danger of flood damage. This has occurred during the inter-monsoon rains. The N.E. monsoon rains have not set in yet, they are yet to come according to the Meteorological Department. When the rains come and the flow increases in Mahaweli, Mahaweli diversion water will flow back to the river lower down. With Moragakande Reservoir which

has an additional capacity of half a million acre feet of storage, this water could be held back for issue for a full Yala Cultivation. It means over 200,000 Acs. of two crops a year with 100% success. We have thrown that away by putting Moragahakanda Reservoir to the back ground. Why? because Kotmale has been given high priority on an "exaggerated power forecast". At least the consultants had the "Intellectual honesty" to say this.

THE CONSULTANTS also conclude that Victoria Reservoir will not be required for Power reasons till mid 1986 as Kotmale has been given high priority and the inevitable need of thermal power supplement immediately. When Victoria is ready for power generation, National Power requirements up to 1989 will be met—not taking into consideration the power available from on-going projects, Bowatenne and Canyon. **The obvious question is why do we not push on with the Canyon and Bowatenne power projects which are under construction and can be completed much before mid 1984—the possible completion year for Kotmale and the thermal generating plant? This same question is in the mind of the consultants. They have not raised it because it is outside their terms of reference. It is for this reason they say "exaggerated power forecast."**

According to the consultants it is difficult to justify the urgency for power at Victoria. Therefore it follows, the necessity for a high Victoria dam does not arise, except to transfer the irrigation load from Randenigala to Victoria with dire consequences of inundating old settlements, a series of new development projects and highly productive, Cocoa, coffee and pepper lands. All these crops are in short supply all over the world. We know as a matter of fact that one pepper crop of Victoria Estate was sold for 400,000/- in one year alone. Pallekelle Estate was a premier minor crop plantation before we started to destroy our economy in the name of progress. Every inch of this property, at least what is left of it, will be inundated. If the Irrigation load is shifted to Randenigala, all these would be saved, including the gold will and the support of the thousands of people who are going to be displaced.

Randenigala is the obvious point of control and management of Mahaweli water.

The Consultants have not addressed their mind due to certain constraints placed on them by the Terms of Reference and the urgency of power development in those terms.

Victoria has been studied in isolation without giving it its correct place in a scheme of integrated development of Mahaweli resources. This has even effected the usefulness of Polgolla as a diversion structure. And in a year of normal rain all as today, Polgolla would be redundant for diversion for a greater part of the season. It may even be inundated by the water spread of Victoria Dam. We shall come back to this later.

If we draw inferences from the NEDECO report, a high Victoria is not necessary in an accelerated programme, which included Randenigala in the original five year programme. Now, that Randenigala is relegated to a very low priority—or may not be taken up at all, Victoria Dam has assumed that position but its full usefulness will be ten years hence. There, are what we call mutilation of a sound development program, which has taken place, mainly due to the wrong advice given to the Government by those who should have known better.

(To be continued)

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OIL

WHY PRICES KEEP RISING?—2

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 first part of a comprehensive article on the politics of oil as seen from the angle of an Arab oil producing country—Iraq.

Henceforth (i.e. after OPEC came into existence) the United States began to increase

its scheming against the Arab nation and search for new ways for perpetuating imperialist pillage of Arab oil. So it founded the International Energy Agency (February 1974) and was able to convince capitalist powers (except France) to join it. Among the goals of this Agency were: ensuring stable sources of inexpensive crude oil, storing for emergency enough to last the consuming member nations for 90 days, securing access to financial sources to cover the expenditures on the search for substitutes and imposing new government taxes on oil imported from OPEC.

The establishment of the IEA was not the last resort, since the US began to hint at using food as a weapon against oil-exporting countries and also threatened to occupy the oil wells in the Arabian Gulf, "if the free world were subject to strangulation!!!" in addition to deliberately publicising studies and surveys distorting the facts so as to compel exporting states to succumb to pressure. In doing so the US and other industrial capitalist countries wished to continue robbing OPEC oil wealth at cheap prices which are inconsistent with the importance of oil as a primary material for a wide variety of industrial product, as fuel to turn the wheel of transportation and communications and as a safe, relatively clean source compared with the other energy substitutes.

So, it is not without grounds that the US in the field of energy is concentrating on OPEC oil and particularly that of the Arabs. A quarter of a century ago, the US was the top oil-producing state and the most conspicuous exporter of oil, its total production totalled more than half of the whole world production in the early fifties at the rate of 25% of the entire world exports. Yet it declined to the third position in production (after the Soviet Union and Saudi Arabia) and became the biggest importer of oil. The US now imports 60% of its oil consumption from foreign markets. Consequently the proportion of its imports of crude oil rose from 27% in 1973 to 50% of the total in 1978. As for the western capitalist industrial states collectively (the US, the EEC countries and Japan), their dependence on Arab oil increased from 57.9% in 1973 to 60% in 1978, of their total oil imports.

ARAB OIL PRODUCTION constitutes one-third of the whole world production, but its

share among the world exports exceed 60%. This great discrepancy between the proportion of production and that of exportation springs from the fact that the Arab countries refine only a small fraction of their oil amounting in 1978 to a mere 10% i.e., about 2.4 million barrels a day out of a total Arab production of 21 million barrels daily. This quantity of Arab oil equals only a proportion of 3.2% of the total worldwide refined and industrialised oil. It is certainly a very low proportion and indicates underdevelopment of Arab economy to the credit of the capitalist oil-consuming powers. **Because of draining 90% of Arab oil as low price crude, the major monopoly oil companies and those engaged in the refining industry and ramified petrochemicals were, and still, are realising fabulous profits, whether by way of trading in crude oil bought at low prices and sold in world markets at extremely high prices, or by reselling oil in its industrialised form at soaring prices to different countries of the world including the exporting countries themselves.**

Although significant changes have occurred on the prices of crude oil between the end of 1973 and the beginning of the following year, in addition to the price adjustment in 1977 and 1978 bringing up the prices to between the extremes of \$ 18 and \$ 23.5 for each barrel, monopoly companies continued to harvest increased profits.

They exploited the rise in the prices of crude oil to push up the prices of their products by far more. US policy of allowing the decline of the dollar which is the standard unit for oil transactions, had a supplementary effect in the process of swallowing up the oil revenues on the one hand, and realising for the companies still higher gains, which redoubled their amounts in 1977 in comparison with 1972, being the year that immediately proceeded OPEC decision to readjust the oil prices. To illustrate this in figures we find that the net profits of the seven companies (Seven Sisters) was \$ 4704 million in 1972 but in 1977 it rose to \$ 9395 million.

It is clear, however, that the monopoly oil companies could not have netted billions of dollars every year, had it not been for the convenient opportunities opened up for them in exploiting OPEC oil, in general and Arab oil in particular. Oil now occupies the highest

rank among the other energy sources and will continue to do so for sometime to come, because of its low cost, handiness and manifold utilities.

The rate of utilising oil out of all energy sources in 1950 marked 27% and leapt to 47% in 1978. This was so, despite the efforts exerted to develop substitutes for oil and particularly in the last six years earmarked to reduce dependence on oil. The attempts to turn to coal and the development of coal industries clashed with serious technical, financial and ecological obstacles. Until 1965 coal accounted for 41% of the total energy supplies, oil 37% and gas 16%. As this ratio altered in favour of oil, the coal supply declined to 28% of the total world energy supplies with gas remaining at 16-18%.

On the plane of nuclear energy we find, that despite the current rapid developments for its use, it still forms only two percent of the world's total energy consumption. Further dependence on nuclear energy in the future will remain limited by its high production costs, the immense dangers entailed by possible radiations and the difficulty of disposing its waste. With regard to hydroelectric power, it realised no concrete progress during the fifteen years beginning 1965 when it was 5.4% and now has become only 6%.

(To Be Concluded)



WORLD PRESS

Postal Rates

BERNE, Nov. 30,

Postal services throughout the world have been given the go-ahead to raise international letter rates by as much as 100 per cent following last month's Congress of the Universal Postal Union at Rio de Janeiro. The staggering increases, which are the biggest in the 105-year history of the Berne-based United Nations agency, apply also to postcards, printed matter and parcels. Most countries will be allowed to implement the new charges from July 1981. Some including the United States, Britain and France, have been told they can go ahead six months earlier. Union spokesman Leonard

Rubens told the *Associated Press* the increases were inevitable if the quality of international postal services was to be maintained. He pointed out, however, that the increases were purely routine procedure and that similar recommendations were made at each union congress held every five years. In 1974, the maximum increase permitted was 70 per cent. In most categories, the new rate is 50 per cent upon the previous levy recommended by the union's last Congress in Lausanne in 1974.—AP.

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Iran

New York, Dec. 2,

A former US diplomat, Mr. John Scali said today a secret cable produced by Iranian students holding American hostages was definitely genuine, causing great concern among US security experts. Yesterday, in Teheran, the students produced photocopy of a cable marked secret and sent by the Charge'd Affairs Mr. Bruce Laingen, to the US State Department on August 9. The students said the cable proved that two of their hostages in the US Embassy were officers of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) passing off as diplomats. Mr. Scali, former US Ambassador to the United Nations and now senior correspondent for the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) said, "The secret cable is undoubtedly genuine".

Many other secret US diplomatic documents may now be in the students' hands, he said reporting from the State Department. Mr. Scali said the coding SRF which the students said was mentioned in the cable, "is intelligence terminology, meaning Special Reporting Facility. Every American embassy around the world has such a facility for its intelligence staff." He added, "hundreds are involved in such work in Iran, far more in Washington, without being branded as spies seeking to overturn the Government. Disclosure of the cable, however, is causing deep concern among US security experts. It undoubtedly means the students have obtained hundreds, perhaps thousands of secret diplomatic messages.

—Reuter

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BOW, New Hampshire, Nov. 30,

Lillian Carter, mother of the US President yesterday said that if she had a million dollar

she would hire someone to kill Iranian strong man Ayato'llah Khomeini. During a question-and-answer session at the Bow Men's Club—Miss Lillian was asked how she would "handle fanatics" like the Ayatollah if she were the President. "If I had a million dollars to spare I'd look for someone to kill him", she said, and the crowd stood and cheered. She also said she believed the deposed Shah of Iran should not be returned to his homeland, saying "How can you send the Shah back to a sword? to certain death?" —AP

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London, Friday, Dec. 8,

The deposed Shah of Iran, in an apologia which began serialisation today in a British magazine, partly blames the United States for his downfall. He made his comments in a document soon to be published as a book replying to his critics. It is being serialised by the weekly news magazine *NOW* which published its first instalment today. In its introduction to the series, the magazine says the Shah accuses the Americans not only of helping to force him from power, but of working behind the scenes to see that his generals took no action to save him.

The Shah said that in January, when he was still on the Throne of Iran, he discovered that General Robert Huyser, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the American Command in Europe of the United States Air Force had been in Teheran for several days. The Shah said that the intelligence services of NATO and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) might have had good reason for thinking that the Iranian constitution was to be abused. It was therefore necessary to neutralise the Iranian army the Shah said, "that was clearly the purpose which brought General Huyser to Teheran." The Shah added, "General Huyser put a surprising proposition to General Ghara-Baghi, my Chief of Staff—a conference with Mr. Bazargan, who after my overthrow was to be appointed Prime Minister by the Ayatollah Khomeini.

—Reuter

Middle East

Paris, Dec. 1,

Libyan leader Col. Muammar Gaddafi yesterday called on the Palestinian Orga-

nisation to destroy the Suez Canal and threaten shipping in the Babel-Mandeb straits leading into the Red Sea. Col. Gaddafi quoted by the Libyan News Agency monitored here, said "the Canal must be destroyed because it has become, through the traitor (Egyptian President Mr. Anwar Sadat) an artery which supplies the (Zionist) enemy with weapons and goods." The Palestinians should also destroy Arab oil wells unless they were used for the benefit of the Palestinians. Otherwise, the oil "can only serve to supply the enemy and his allies." Col. Gaddafi said in a speech marking the second anniversary of Palestinian solidarity day. The Palestinian action on any other front than the Suez, Babel-Mandeb and oil fronts be "contrary to revolutionary rules and in-appropriate", he said. The Palestinian masses should have freedom of action in all Arab countries. The Palestinian masses in Libya are free to act, he said. They can take revolutionary action in the way they prefer. He urged those in Libya to set up revolutionary committees and unify the offices of Palestinian nationalist groups —AFP

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United Nations, Nov. 30,

The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution yesterday rejecting the Camp David agreements in so far as they apply to the rights of the Palestinian people. It strongly condemned "all partial agreements and separate treaties" and declared the Camp David agreements have no validity in regard to Palestinian people and territory. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 75 to 33, with 37 abstentions. Earlier, the US was voted down in an attempt to make the resolution subject to a two-thirds majority rule. An Egyptian proposal to soften the resolution by deleting a paragraph was also defeated. Negotiations are now under way involving Israel, Egypt and the US for Palestinian self-rule in the Israeli-occupied Gaza strip and West Bank of Jordan river. These talks are held on the basis of the Camp David accords signed on 17th September 1978. The US in an explanation of vote, rejected all four resolutions as "totally negative.....and divisive in intent."

Voting on the stamp resolution and another calling for further work by the UN com-

mittee on the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people was deferred pending a report on how much they would cost the world organisation. In another resolution, the Assembly urged the Security Council to "take as soon as possible a decision" on a 1975 recommendation for a Palestinian State, including the Gaza strip and the West Bank.

—AP.

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Philippines

by Fr. J. Reuter, S. J.

The Carter administration has proposed to triple military aid to the Philippines in 1980, providing 500 million dollars in aid over a 5-year period. The money is going to be used to prevent the people from asserting themselves in any way. At present very peaceful people—not nuns, not priests, but simple lay people, men and women—have begun "The Christian Movement for Social Change". The people who join this movement are going to join in great numbers and many of them are going to be killed. American money is going to be used to put them in jail and to kill them. I know this sounds extreme, but that is precisely what is happening. Tyranny in the Philippines is maintained, sustained, supported by the money of the American people.

Very few people know the real state of things in the Philippines. On the island of Mindanao it is not a religious war. The Muslims and Christians are very close. They are banded together, shoulder to shoulder, back to back, against oppression. This war is the oppressed people against the military not Muslims against Christians. The Muslim-Christian Brotherhood for Justice and Peace on the island of Basilan would like to have peace if this is possible.

At the beginning of 1979 a battalion of soldiers swept into two islands south of Basilan which were occupied by Muslims. The soldiers laid waste two villages, burning the houses, raping the women, killing the men, releasing their boats out onto the high seas, leaving them no way of supporting themselves after the raid. It was an organised raid, disciplined, with the commander watching every move. This commander can be identified without doubt. I have fifteen affidavits on

this massacre and there are three eyewitnesses who can identify him.

The Muslim-Christian Brotherhood for Justice and Peace brought this evidence to the military, because President Marcos has said, again and again, that he will not tolerate abuses among the military and that he will punish any soldier who goes beyond the normal military rules. The evidence against the Commander we are talking about was ironclad. The military promised to do something. They did. They recommended him to be general and sent him to the United States for special training. He is there now, studying on a grant of American money.

We do not have martial law in the Philippines, though Marcos uses that word. Nothing in martial law would enable him to abolish the Congress, and Marcos has abolished the Congress. Nothing in martial law would enable him to ask every judge in the country, including the Supreme Court to tender their resignations—which he holds and which he can accept any day. Nothing in martial law would enable him to appoint all the governors, all the mayors, all the village captains. Nothing in martial law would enable him to rule by decree, dictating wages and prices. We do not have martial law. We have a dictatorship. If the United States stopped helping "martial law" in the Philippines, martial law would end, and end soon.

—N.J. News/November 1979

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IN AFGHANISTAN

What Went Wrong?

Last week we published an interview given to an European Journalist by the Afghan leader Hafizullah Amin—excerpted from the official paper "Kabul Times". This week we publish an article by a non-aligned Asian commentator who has been in Afghanistan and has an intimate knowledge of that country. His socialist sympathies had made him hope for much from the Revolution of April 1978. His recent visit has brought disappointment in regard to many developments in the Democratic Republic of Afgha-

nistan (DRA) and is one of the many who hopes that government would wake up to realities before it is too late. For obvious reasons he wishes to remain anonymous (for the present). The article was sent on to us from New Delhi where the writer is at the moment to cover the Indian elections—Editor.

THE PROGRESSIVE MEASURES adopted by the leadership of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) following the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) misfired mainly in the following three spheres resulting not only in antagonising the populace but also leading to failure or partial failure of the measures themselves.

I. Matters Related to Islam: Afghans have been staunch Muslims since the advent of Islam in the tenth century. Ironically, the Afghans inflicted heavy losses on three successive Arab invasion armies. Especially one of these had to pay a rich ransom to the last Hindu King of Kabul in order to save their skin in dead winter. The world renowned Arab geographers had not yet begun their comprehensive studies regarding the climates, fauna and flora of this region. But paradoxically, the Afghans today are paying tribute to the memory of some of the Arab conquerors like Shahe Doshamshira, the King using Two Swords, inside the capital and two Arab Princes Tamim and Jobeir, outside, as their guardian saints. Especially in the former's shrine, one could see daily scores of men and women steeped in ancient traditions in a state of ecstasy, making all sorts of wishes which they claim are often granted.

At any rate, the people who as a whole are that religious must be handled with extreme care as far as religious matters are concerned. What had led the PDPA leadership to underestimate the popular religious zeal and even bigotry was perhaps the excessive enthusiasm of its leading members for Marxist-Leninist ideology. Moreover, PDPA leaders, while speaking in public or issuing important decrees, had ignored at the outset, to observe certain customary formalities dictated not so much by Islam but by cultural heritage. If they had done this, they would have avoided undue criticisms and hostility from rural groups. For instance, every national leader who wishes to appeal to the public at

large has to begin his statement with tributes paid to God and Mohammed and while disclosing his plans for the improvement of the standards of living of the people, ought to minimise his personal role or that of his party through emphasising the hand of destiny guided by the Almighty. According to the popular belief, it is God who provides His creatures with food, clothing and shelter. Man is depicted as an instrument in His hands. The fact that the deposed President, Noor Mohammad Taraki, made a lavish promise to the Nation that his administration (not God) would take care of the above three basic human needs, he greatly hurt the religious susceptibilities of the people throughout the country. And what he promised has remained unfulfilled to date. The form is often more important than the content so far as ordinary people are concerned, and if the PDPA leaders had observed these traditional forms (until the people were gradually "educated" out of them), the Revolution would have made giant strides by this time.

Also the proclamation of Nine Decrees by the Revolutionary Council had a great deal to do with public agitation in one way or another though there is no doubt that much of the anti-government hostility was caused by the continual instigation by neighbouring countries especially Pakistan. The BBC and the VOA broadcasts also fanned this flame. However, one decree cancelling mortgages was used by reactionaries to meet a major campaign to rouse popular antagonism. According to one decree, even all those who had lent poor small land-owners sums of money and in lieu used to get their crops for a number of years, had to write off their investments. But, the trouble was that from the approximately 200,000 Afghans working in Iran due to lack of employment at home, at least 10,000 had made some money to tie on land in the manner stated above and they found their life-time savings "gone with the wind" overnight.

There were really no detailed studies conducted prior to the implementation of land reforms, debt cancellation or even proper preparations for the census. Among the people possessing lands in excess of the maximum extent allowed to be privately owned, that is 15 acres, there were thousands of people who had through sheer hard work or

frugality purchased the inheritances of their good-for-nothing brothers or cousins and had thus extended their acreage and their income. When they were left with only 15 acres each, they were greatly disappointed because they had lost what they had acquired after a life time of hard work. Most of them were not "repacious landlords" but small time petty landowners. They even were taunted by their mischievous colleagues or profligate relations about the outcome of their frugality. The land reform were not carried out nation-wide. The census, of which much was claimed, was also partial.

The equality between the two sexes is something inevitable in the world today but this could be only fostered in slow stages in many developing nations. Islam has also recognised the rights of women but drastic reforms should not have been pushed too hard or too fast. The ex-King Amanullah committed the same mistake and paid for it in 1929 by a forced abdication. Despite the fact that times have changed much since then, a new regime "oozing" socialism all over should have been more circumspect especially when the "honour" and "dignity" of male members of a patriarchal society were in question.

The points referred to above were in varying degrees considered by the general public as opposed to Islamic principles or teachings though the impact thereof could be mellowed down after a few years. However, these measures were meant to alleviate the people at large, both socially and economically. But they were pushed too hard, too fast. But who can draw the line between religious and economic matters in a theocratic society?

2. Socio-Economic Matters: The PDPA leadership also pushed too hard and too fast popular indoctrination of working class ideology. Actually, the entire mass media including the TV were and are used for this purpose. This does not leave any room or enough room, for public education, entertainment or even general enlightenment on a wide variety of matters. For instance, the inhabitants of a backward little developed country have to learn a thousand and one new things concerning several topics ranging from the running of a household to sanitation and manners.

No doubt this ideology revolves around economic development which is of fundamental importance in any society, but in a society not yet rid of the bourgeois frame of mind and still dependent on the free market supply and demand fluctuations, the people cannot be easily persuaded to believe in an abstract thing which they have not tasted yet. Further, instigating the working people to rise against the rich in a class struggle in the hasty and the prematurely impulsive way it was done in the DRA, only helped the reactionaries to unleash hostile antagonism against the government. This could easily have been avoided with a little horse-sense realism about popular sentiments. Many of the progressive and necessary changes could have been pushed through in easy stages after consolidating power.

So much hullabaloo was made in Kabul about the first five-year socio-economic development plan that the people who had expected much have lost all faith in it. Enough has been uttered about these high-sounding Plans already under the previous regimes and not much achieved in reality that it would take a simpleton to believe in all what is promised. The people want to see tangible concrete results. No such thing has been presented to the people so far except the completion of a few carryover projects from the previous Plans such as one or two factories. The credibility gap is now big and is daily increasing.

The PDPA has no doubt made the school curricula more consistent with the realities of life. However, so much of the student's and also the teachers' time is wasted on street marches, called out on flimsy grounds, that it would be hard for them to meet the minimum educational requirements. Also examiners are encouraged to exercise so much flexibility, nay, disregard to the standards of the students that it won't be difficult for the entire student body in each school to pass out each year if things go on as they are now. This will certainly lead to a drastic decline in the standard of education.

Since economic development cannot be achieved without attaining higher standards, the present trend to appease students and draw more membership for the party will definitely hurt the country in the long run.

3. Matters Related to the Party and Government: It is now a general practice in all government agencies in the DRA to fire or demote all those who are not party members and replace them with Khalqi Party Youth, no matter how green and inexperienced the latter may be. Hundreds of top experts in various vital fields have been either retired or just told to go home without any prior warning or provision made for their future. Since each middle-aged official is likely to have a large family consisting of at least 5 children, they must feed on thin air.

Also thousands have been arrested without the right of the due processes of law. Despite the fact that the Government under President Hafizullah Amin has promised not to jail anybody without proven guilt, the arrests go on unabated. Yet who pays the damages to those jailed for several months under the previous government without any trial? Nobody cares to answer this question.

Yet, the mass media blares forth every day that the era of freedom has just dawned on the oppressed people of Afghanistan and they should celebrate the occasion. This State media has lost all sense of proportion and common sense.

Many people, though favourably disposed to socialism cannot bring themselves to accept all that is being done in the name of the Great April 1978 Revolution. Unless and until the present government does some rethinking and adjusts its socio-economic and political policies in line with the specific requirements of the country, it will continue to find itself in trouble with the rebels who have been surrounding the main towns, drawing increasing support from the local populace and in some cases from the local military units.

HELD OVER

- HAVANA DIARY—13
 - INSIDE SAUDI ARABIA
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Final Pre-Election Alignments

by R. Varadachari

Press Trust of India Correspondent in Colombo

THE LAST FORTNIGHT was one of swift and significant developments in the Indian political scene. This is but natural as the count down for the mid-term elections has already begun with only a little over a fortnight left for the poll. The ruling Lok Dal-Urs Congress alliance had a big jolt with major desertions from their ranks which have considerably dimmed their election prospects. The Indira Congress has gained substantially by these last defections and its election prospects have considerably brightened. All the major political parties in the election fray have released their much awaited election manifestoes. Electioneering is in full swing. The South Indian State of Kerala has come under President's rule because of the impact of election alliances and adjustments in the national scene on the state politics. Pre-election tension in Assam has increased, leading to imposition of President's rule.

The Lok Dal of the caretaker Prime Minister, Mr. Charan Singh, had a major shock with the decisions of its coalition partner, the Urs Congress, not to have a common manifesto and to go it alone in the elections. The Coalition Government has now been reduced to a formality even though it has not completely broken down. The differences between the two ruling partners centred round sharing of Parliamentary seats and the late Jawaharlal Nehru's economic philosophy. While Mr. Charan Singh has been denigrating Nehru's economic doctrine as one which had overstressed industrial growth at the expense of rural development, the Urs Congress has resented Mr. Charan Singh's assessment of Nehru's contribution to the economic advancement of India since independence in 1948. The Urs Congress believes that there should be a balance between industrial growth and rural uplift and the economic advancement of urban workers and rural masses and that Mr. Charan Singh's approach gives over-stress on farmers' welfare and rural development which would have an adverse impact on the country's industrial growth. With

this basic difference in approach, it became difficult for the two parties to work out a common manifesto and they have now fallen apart.

It is now only an alliance in name at the centre, particularly when both the parties have fielded candidates against each other in several states. Mr. Charan Singh has pointed out that in this unhappy position the only (next best) course is to keep their fight at a "friendly level." However, there seems to be no meaning in an alliance without a common manifesto and a common programme and a common front. The rift in the ruling alliance has worked to the advantage of the Indira Congress which has been the biggest gainer in the defection game which has gained momentum with the poll date drawing close.

If the Lok Dal election prospects have dimmed with the Urs Congress parting company with it, the Urs Congress was denuded of its hold in the South Indian State of Andhra Pradesh with Mr. Brahmananda Reddy, who was Minister of Industries in the Charan Singh Government, left the party and joined the Indira Congress. Mr. Brahmananda Reddy had been the biggest critic of the emergency rule of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and her alleged "authoritarianism" and was heading the Congress at the time of Mrs. Gandhi's exit from the party. Mr. Reddy has alleged that Mr. Devraj Urs, who is the Chief Minister of Karnataka, has been running the party as his private limited company without giving scope for collective leadership and responsibility. Mr. Reddy's staunch supporters and lieutenant, Mr. A Prasad Rao, who was Minister of State for Tourism and Civil Aviation in the Charan Singh ministry, has also left the Urs Congress and joined the Indira Congress. With Mr. Brahmananda Reddy joining her camp, Mrs. Gandhi's hold on Andhra Pradesh would appear to be total. The present Chief Minister of the State, Mr. Chenna Reddy, belongs to her party. Her power base in the Uttar Pradesh in the North has already enhanced with Mr. H. B. Bahuguna joining her after breaking away from Mr. Charan Singh. There have also been sizeable defections from other parties to her camp. She has every reason to be jubilant because of these developments. THE RULING ALLIANCE has another set back when Mr. Zulfikarulla, resigned from

the caretaker cabinet and joined the opposition Janata Party. Mr. Zulfiqar, as the leader of the Muslim National Front, has considerable pull with the Muslim minority community particularly in the North Indian State of Uttar Pradesh. Mr. Jagjivan Ram, leader of the Janata Party, has described in a buoyant mood that the development was an "event of great political significance". He has added "authoritarian and opportunist elements (meaning thereby the Indira Congress and the Lok Dal) have all along been trying to side-track the real problems of the minorities to cover up their fraud on the minorities. The decision taken by the Muslim National Front has unmistakably proved that they regard the Janata Party as the only political organisation which commands the confidence of the minorities. We are confident that this step will strengthen the forces of communal harmony." Mr. Zulfiqar, by joining hands with Mr. Jagjivan Ram, has enabled the latter to counter the propaganda that the Janata Party is dominated by the Hindu revivalist Jan Sangh and the moves of Mrs. Gandhi through some leading muslim religious leaders and Mr. Bahaguna to win over the Muslim votes, bulk of which went against her in the last elections.

POLLING IN THE NORTH-EASTERN border state of Assam will take place only in four constituencies on the announced date and the remaining ten seats will be declared vacant and filled later, as nominations have been received only in the four constituencies because of student agitation in the state. Practically the whole of this sensitive border state has been in the grip of tension for more than a month now following an agitation by students and other organisations demanding postponement of the poll in the State till the names of "foreigners" are eliminated from the electoral rolls. The agitators have successfully prevented filling of nomination papers by the last date in majority of the constituencies. Mr. S. L. Shakder, Chief Election Commissioner, has told pressmen in New Delhi that election process would be gone through as scheduled in the four constituencies where nominations have been filed. He has added that the electoral rolls could be revised now in the other constituencies and the names of "foreigners" in the electoral list deleted. "They can take as long a time as they want to find

out the foreign nationals and remove their names. I would not tell the state to hustle", Mr. Shakdher said. He has also made it clear that non-filling of the ten seats would not create any problem in constituting the seventh Lok Sabha. Due to continued political instability, President's rule has been imposed in the state and the state assembly kept in suspended animation.

The Kerala Legislative Assembly has been dissolved and mid-term elections are to be held on January 21 in the State. The dissolution came in the wake of political instability caused by frequent defections and crossovers of members belonging mainly to regional parties. The Chief Minister of the State, Mr. Mohammed Koya of the Muslim League had advised the Governor of the State, Mrs. Jothi Venkatachalam, to dissolve the Assembly and hold fresh elections in order to what he called "end the political uncertainty" in the state. His advice follows withdrawal of support to his

Notice Under Section 7 Of The Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act, No. 28 Of 1964.

Reference No:— 11/7/7/14

The Government intends to acquire the land described in the Schedule below, for a public purpose, for particulars, please see part III of the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 68 of 21-12-1979.

Schedule

District	: Anuradhapura
D.R.O.'s Division	: Nuwaragam Palatha (South)
G. S.'s Division	: Tulana No. 7
Name of land	: Atorawa Henyaya, Atorawa Wela, Deyulgahahena Etc.
Plan No.	: F.V.P. 223 & Sup: No. 1
Lot No.	: From Lot No. 6 to 68
Name of Village	: Atorawa

W. M. Jayatilleka
Acquiring Officer and

Anuradhapura District Land Officer.

The Kachcheri,
Anuradhapura.
27/11/1979

50-day old ministry by the Urs Congress which decided not to have any truck, direct or indirect, with the Indira Congress which had also been supporting the Koya coalition minority ministry without sharing power. In a pre-emptive strike, Mr. Koya asked for dissolution of the assembly, which still had a life of two years and four months, without waiting for a formal defeat on the floor of the house. Kerala had been a problem state with its high rate of literacy and political consciousness and one cannot be sure of any one party gaining an absolute majority in the next elections.

ALL THE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES in the election fray—the Indira Congress, the Janata Party, the Lok Dal and the Urs Congress—have released their manifestoes. While it is not possible to analyse them in depth for want of time, it can safely be said that they have all stuck their known positions and have tried in particular to woo the Muslim minority community which constitutes about eleven percent of the population. All the parties have offered to restore in some form or other the minority character of the only Muslim University in Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh and have also announced special proposals for protection of the minority interests and ensuring their safety, security, well-being and progress without any discrimination or embarrassment. The Manifesto of the Indira Congress centred round the theme "Bring back Indira and save India" which is a new version of the party's election slogan in the last general elections "India is Indira". The manifesto says: "The Indian National Congress (I) is the only party and Mrs. Indira Gandhi is the only leader who can save the country after its traumatic experience." It adds that the Janata and Lok Dal Governments had created "chaos" in the country and that "opportunistic coalitions" could not succeed in a country of India's dimensions and complexities. The Indira Congress manifesto regrets that the left parties have taken recourse to "shortsighted and unprincipled alliances with casteist and reactionary parties." It says that Urs Congress had lost its identity under Mr. Charan Singh's prime ministership and is fast disappearing from the political scene.

The Janata Party of Mr. Jagjivan Ram has, as its main election theme, "Defeat dictators and defectors." It warns the people that Mrs.

Gandhi will usher in dictatorship in the country once again if she is returned to power and promises to ban defections by law in an apparent reference to the Lok Dal which, it says, has formed "a government of defectors" at the centre. It promises the people "bread with liberty", "stability with freedom" and establishment of "socialism by democratic process." The Janata Party alone makes a critical reference to the dissolution of the Parliament by the President, Mr. Sanjiva Reddy in what it calls, "violation of some of the most basic conventions of the constitution." It has not condemned Mr. Reddy for his refusal to give Mr. Jagjivan Ram a chance to form a government before ordering a mid-term poll. The Lok Dal's election plank is "defeat authoritarianism and communalism". It warns the people that Mrs. Gandhi is the fountain of authoritarian forces in the country and that the Janata Party which has the former Jan Sangh as one of its main constituents is dominated by Hindu communal elements. The Lok Dal stands for decentralisation of economic power and priority for the development of agriculture and small scale sector. The Urs Congress swears by the late Jawaharlal Nehru's

Notice Under Section 7 Of The Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 Of 1964.

Ref. No. 94/5/288

It is intended to acquire the land described in the Schedule below. For further particulars see the Gazette No. 68 (Part III) dated 21-12-1979 of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Schedule

Situation: In the village of Patuwatha, D.R.O.'s Division of Wellabada Pattu (South) in Galle District.

Name of land: Kaluwagahahena Paranahena, Kanaththa, Paranahenagodella' alias Kanaththewatta

Plan and Lot No.: P. Plan No. 1311 Lot No. 1
S. Panditha
Acquiring Officer,
Galle District.

The Kachcheri,
Galle. 30th November 1979

faith in public sector and his political philosophy of "democracy," socialism and secularism." It claimed to be true Indian National Congress of pre-independence vintage.

The Indian voters have thus before them a bewildering array of election promises and opportunistic alliances and adjustments and will be hard put to show discernment in the exercise of their franchise. One should hope that they will show enough political sagacity to give for themselves a strong and stable government which was after all, the main purpose of the mid-term poll.

—SLBC talk 14.12.79

IN THE SILICON AGE - 4

The "Chip" Civilisation

by

A. Sivanandan

(Director of the Institute of Race Relations)

We publish, by courtesy of *Race & Class*, the fourth 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. The last part of this paper will appear next week.

THE SCOPE OF THESE CHANGES have been dealt with in the growing literature on the subject. (See, for instance, I Barron and R. Curnow, *The Future with Microelectronics*, London 1979); C. Jenkins and B. Sherman, *The Collapse of Work*, London, 1979); Trade Union Congress, *Employment and Technology*, London, 1979); ASTMS, op. cit. Colin Hines, *The "Chips", are down*, London 1978); Chris Harman *Is a machine after your job?* London, 1979). But they have mostly been concerned with the prospects of increasing and permanent unemployment, particularly in the service industries and in the field of unskilled manual employment—in both of which blacks and women predominate. (Of course there are those (guess who) who suggest

that automation will not only release people from dirty, boring jobs and into more interesting work, but even enhance job prospects).

A study by Siemens estimates that 40 per cent of all office work in Germany is suitable for automation—which, viewed from the other side, means a 40 per cent lay off of office workers in the next ten years. The NORA report warns that French banking and insurance industries, which are particularly labour intensive, will lose 30 per cent of their work force by 1990. Unemployment in Britain is expected to rise by about 3 million in that time. (Cambridge Economic Policy Group, *Economic Police Review*, March 1978). Other writers have pointed to a polarisation in the work force itself—as between a small technological elite on the one hand and a large number of unskilled, unemployable workers, counting among their number those whose credit has become outmoded. Or, as the Chairman of the British Oil Corporation Lord Kearton, puts it: "we have an elite now of a very special kind at the top on which most of mankind depends for its future development and the rest of us are more or less taken along in the direct stream of these elite personnel." (Introductory address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science Symposium, *Automation Friend or Foe?*).

ALL THE REMEDIES that the British Trades Union Congress has been able to suggest are "new technology agreements" between government and union, "continuing payments to redundant workers related to their past earnings" and "opportunities for linking technological change with a reduction in the working week, working year and working time." (Trades Union Congress, *Employment and Technology*, London 1979). The Association of Scientific Technical and Managerial Staffs (ASTMS) whose members are more immediately affected by automation, elevates these remedies into a philosophy which encompasses a changed attitude towards work that would "promote a better balance between working life and personal life," "recurrent education throughout adult life" and a new system of income distribution which in effect will "pay people not to work". (ASTMS, op. cit).

But, in the performance, these are precisely the palliatives that enlightened capitalism (i.e. multinational capita-

lism as opposed to the archaic private enterprise capitalism of Margaret Thatcher and her mercantile minions) offers the working class in the silicon age. Translated into the system's terms, "new technology agreements" mean a continuing social contract between the unions and the government wherein the workers abjure their only power, collective bargaining (and thereby take the politics out of the struggle) and a new culture which divorces work from income (under the guise of life-long education, part-time work, early retirement, etc.) and provides the *raison d'être* for unemployment. Already the protagonists of the establishment have declared that the Protestant work ethic is outdated (what has work got to do with income?), that leisure should become a major occupation (university departments are already investigating its "potential"), that schooling is not for now but for ever.

I AM NOT ARGUING here against technology or a life of creative leisure. Anything that improves the lot of man is to be welcomed. But in capitalist society such improvement redounds to the few at cost to the many. That cost has been heavy for the working class in the centre and heavier for the masses in the periphery. What the new industrial revolution predicates is the further degradation of work where, as Braverman so brilliantly predicted, thought itself is eliminated from the labour process (Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, New York, 1974) the centralised ownership of the means of production, a culture of defied leisure to mediate discontent and a political system incorporating the state, the multinationals, the trade unions, the bureaucracy and the media, backed by the forces of "law and order" with micro-electronic surveillance at their command.

For in as much as liberal democracy was the political expression of the old industrial revolution, the corporate state is the necessary expression of the new. The qualitative leap in the productive forces, ensnared in capitalist economics, demands such an expression. Or, to put it differently, the contradiction between the heightened centralisation in the ownership of the means of production—made possible

not only by the enormous increase in the level of productivity but also by the technological nature of that increase—and the social nature of production (however attenuated) can no longer be mediated by liberal democracy but by corporativism, with an accompanying corporate culture, and state surveillance to go with it.

BUT NOWHERE, in all the chip literature, is there a suggestion of any of this. Nor is there in British writings on the subject (American writers, however, have done better in this regard. See in particular the articles of Job Stewart and John Markoff in the *Pacific News Service* and Rachael Grossman et al in the Special issue of *Southeast Asia Chronicle*) with the exception of the CIS report (Counter Information Services. *The New Technology, Anti-Report No. 23*, London 1979) any hint of a suggestion that the new industrial revolution, like the old, has taken off on the backs of the workers in the peripheries—that it is they who will provide the "living dole" for the unemployed of the West. For, the chip, produced in the pleasant environs of "Silicon Valley" in California, has its circuitry assembled in the toxic factories of Asia, Or, as a Conservative Political Centre publication puts it, "while the manufacture of the chips requires expensive equipment in a dust-free, air condi-

Notice Under Section 7 Of The Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 Of 1964.

Ref. No. EA/4/90

It is intended to acquire the land/lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars see the Gazette No. 68 (Part III) dated 21-12-1979 of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Schedule

Situation: Unawatuna East Village, in the Grama Sevaka Division of Unawatuna East, D.R.O.'s Division of Talpe Pattu South in Galle District.

Name of land: Mahameestrigewatta
Plan and Lot No.: Lot 1 to 8 in P.P.GAA 1507

S. Panditha
Acquiring Officer,
Galle District.

The Kachcheri,
Galle, 30th November 1979

tioned environment little capital is necessary to assemble them profitably into saleable devices. And it is the assembly that creates both the wealth and the jobs" (Philip Virgo, *Cashing in on the Chips*, London 1979). Initially the industry went to Mexico, but Asia was soon considered the cheaper. (Besides "Santa Clara was only a telex away"). And even within Asia the moves were to cheaper and cheaper areas; from Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea and Singapore in the 1960s to Malaysia in 1972, Thailand in 1973, the Philippines and Indonesia in 1974 and soon to Sri Lanka. "The manager of a plant in Malaysia explained how profitable these moves had been: "one worker working one hour produces enough to pay the wages of 10 workers working one shift plus all the costs of materials and transport" (Cited in Rachael Grossman, *Women's Place in the Integrated Circuit*, *South East Asia Chronicle* No. 77, Jan-Feb. 1979).

BUT THE MOVES the industry makes are not just from country to country but from one batch of workers to another within the country itself. For, the nature of the work—the bonding under a microscope of tiny hair-thin wires to circuit boards on wafers of silicon chip half the size of a fingernail—shortens working life. "After 3 or 4 years of peering through a microscope", reports Rachael Grossman, "a worker's vision begins to blur so that she can no longer meet the production quota" (Ibid).

But if the microscope does not get her ("grandma where are your glasses" is how electronic workers over 25 years are greeted in Hong Kong), the bonding chemicals do. (Workers who must dip components in acids and rub them with solvents frequently experience serious burns, dizziness, nausea, sometimes even losing their fingers in accidents. It will be 10 or 15 years before the possible carcinogenic effects begin to show up in the women who work with them now" (*Southeast Asia Chronicle*, No. 66, January-February 1979). "And why her?" Because they are invariably women. For, as a Malaysian brochure has it, "the manual dexterity of the oriental female famous the world over. Her hands are small and she works fast with extreme care. Who, therefore, could be better qualified by nature and inheritance to contribute to the efficiency of a bench assembly production-line than the oriental girl?" (Cited in Ibid).

To make such intense exploitation palatable, however, the multi-nationals offer the women a global culture—beauty contests, fashion shows, cosmetic displays and disco dancing—which in turn enhances the markets for consumer goods and western beauty products. Tourism reinforces the culture and reinforces prostitution (with packaged sex tours for Japanese businessmen), drug selling, child labour. For the woman thrown out of work on the assembly line at an early age, the wage earner for the whole extended family, prostitution is often the only form of livelihood left (See A. Lin Neumann, *Hospitality Girls in the Philippines*, *Southeast Asia Chronicle*, No. 66, Jan-Feb. 1979).

A global culture then, to go with a global economy, serviced by a global office the size of a walkie-talkie held in your hand (See, *The Day After Tomorrow* by Peter Large, *Guardian*, 17 February 1979)—a global assembly line run by global corporations that move from one pool of labour to another, discarding them when done—high technology in the center, low technology in the peripheries—and a polarisation of the workforce within the centre itself (as between the highly skilled and unskilled or de-skilled) and as between the centre and the peripheries, with qualitatively different rates of exploitation that allow the one to feed off the other—a corporate state maintained by surveillance for the developed countries, authoritarian regimes and gun law for the developing. That is the size of the new world order.

To Be Concluded

POLICE AND PREJUDICE

The Bogey man

by R. C. Thavarajah
Retd. Suptd. of Police

EXCEPT FOR ONE WORD, the caption is the same as the title of Jane Austen's delectable and lasting contribution to English Literature, "Pride and Prejudice". It is not calculated to be a gimmick to catch the reader's

eye. One does not have to labour the point. The plain simple fact is that there exists—at least to some extent in certain sections of the public—some prejudice against our Police. This is not peculiar only to our country. Other countries like Great Britain and America too had the same problem. Six Parliamentary Commissions sat between the years 1770 and 1828 to inquire into the state of London's Police. In 1929, a Royal Commission was appointed "to find means to restore the relationship between the Police and the Public" In the years 1960 and 1962, Royal Commissions were appointed to go into the working of the British Police.

The British, when they ruled our country, wanted a Police "FORCE" to watch their vested interests. An unpalatable feature of the history of our Police Service is the fact that, during the early periods of British rule, some Police Stations in the Island were maintained solely from the funds of big Estate Companies owned by the British. The Visiting Agents and the Superintendents of these Estates were a law unto themselves. They used to lord it over the Indian and indigenous estate labourers, the Police and even the lesser beings.

The rulers used the Police as a weapon of repression. Unhappily, even some of the parents, for their purpose, used to subdue their recalcitrant children with the warning "The Policeman will come and catch you". Thus, the Bogey-Man edifice grew to a monstrosity. The Policeman, instead of being a friend, became a Frankenstein monster always to be feared and avoided. From the point of view of the colonial administrators, it was all very convenient and expedient. However, the tragic side effects were the psychological restraints which resulted in a trumeau of prejudice between the public and the Police.

That some unorthodox and unconventional methods of 'putting down' crime were resorted to cannot be disputed. Here again it was a matter of convenience. It was the same story in other countries too. It is said that in America in the old days, the Cop on the beat kept the peace by dispensing "Kerb-stone justice". What he took before a Court was something he could not handle with his "night stick". It was the same story here too. A burly constable pedalling away all alone on his bicycle with only his baton struck terror

in the hearts of the rowdy, the thug, the petty thief, the gamblers, and the "moonshiners". Quite unfortunately, he struck terror in the minds of school children and innocent village folk.

WITH SRI LANKA GAINING INDEPENDENCE, there was the inevitable euphoria and effervescence of the newly won freedom. The people, who were conscious of their rights and privileges began to assert them. Politicians, who had very little to offer the people, shouted themselves hoarse from platforms of the glory of liberty and equality. This was the most crucial point where the Authorities should have brought into sharp focus the new role of the Police in a free and Independent State.

A complete re-orientation in attitudes, notions and concepts which was most necessary was lost sight of. The shift of Emphasis on Service to the people and not being an "agent" of foreign rulers was not effected. A grounding in social psychology and equipping the recruits in understanding social problems and inter-acting within the society was not given the priority it deserved. Instead, the same Military type' training in drill, handling of weapons and parade—ground regimen formed the basic education' at the Training School. The much talked of De-militarisation' was only nominal. The term "Force" was changed to "Service".

The British Police do not spend their valuable time on the parade ground marching with rifles and acquiring the demeanour of a soldier, as Shakespeare put it, "sudden and quick in quarrel, seeking the bubble reputation even in the cannon's mouth". The accent is on correct motivation—protecting society from the criminal. After Independence, successive Governments used the Police like the proverbial "Gamarala's Vangediya". This was the most erroneous and ill-advised approach.

To Be Concluded



TRIBUNE, December 22, 1979

Confidentially

● Shady Deal ● Bus Bodies

IS IT TRUE that negotiations are taking place for the sale of a large holding of a leading Public Company which at present is registered in the name of a foreign concern at a price which is far below the present market value of these shares? That this Company has been a pioneer in its field and was floated by a group of leading Ceylonese entrepreneurs in association with a foreign concern whose name is also well known in this country? That these Ceylonese promoters took a great risk and in the early years had not even received dividends? That since the Board made shares available through the share market in Colombo to the public, the issue was well supported and on the whole we understand that there are over 400 shareholders in the Register of Members? That in recent times due to the rapidly expanding tourist traffic generated through promotion by our Governmental authorities, this Company has also benefitted and in the last two years a dividend of 20 per cent has been paid to shareholders? That in addition, due to the enterprise shown by the Ceylonese promoters, the Company is at present capitalised at a very low figure and the market asset value of these shares are worth at least three times the figure shown in the Balance Sheet? That in these circumstances, it is most puzzling to note that the foreign collaborator has decided to sell these shares to another private company registered in Sri Lanka which also has foreign holdings at a price of Rs. 10/- per share? That at present, in the market, these shares are well supported and it is likely that the market value may be between 50 and 100 per cent in excess of the par value? That it will be interesting to ascertain whether the Government is aware of the true position and the full implications of this deal? That in fact we understand that the foreign company is at present owned by their Government and it is surprising that such a large asset holding is being sold at a loss of well over Rs. 1 million to that Government? That this is very relevant since we also understand that arrangements

are being made abroad for the shares of this Company to be made available to public shareholders and it certainly does not augur well if management of these Companies coming under Government control at present is permitted to sell their assets at this depressed level?

IS IT NOT A FACT that during the Committee Stage of the Budget debate, the Ministry of Transport came in for sharp criticism? That of the many items that were queried one was about the purchase of complete buses (not chassis alone as heretofore)? That *Tribune* understands that tenders were called sometime ago for 300 complete buses? That TATA Benz of India was one firm that had tendered although it is well known that the firm does not make bus bodies? That ASHOK LEYLAND of India did not tender because they do not make bodies and did not want to get the bodies made by sub-contractors as TATA Benz was said to be doing? That the questions raised in Parliament focussed attention on the fact that bus bodies were built in Sri Lanka and that the country could have saved about a lakh in foreign exchange on each bus body? That knowledgeable persons also say that even if it was necessary to get the bus bodies from abroad (because of delays in making them here) the CTB should have called for tenders separately from manufacturers of such bus bodies in India and elsewhere—one among whom will supply the bodies to the Indian bus chassis manufacturers who may win the CTB tender? That, it is said that Sri Lanka could have saved at least Rs. 7 million in foreign exchange if the order for the 300 bus bodies had been placed directly with the makers of such bus bodies? That the fact that the CTB called for tenders for complete buses in the way it did has given rise to many suspicions that hint at deals under the counter? That what is even more surprising that when the tender for 300 complete buses were called for, there was a confirmed order for 350 bus chassis to be delivered? That it might have been better in the first instance to have called for tenders for bus bodies to fit these chassis? That if this were done money could have been saved and buses could have been sooner on the road? That the Minister of Transport seems to be satisfied that there is no hanky-panky in all this? That many others are not so?

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At Kollupitiya - Kollupitiya Lane Housing Scheme

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At Bambalapitiya - Marine Drive Housing Scheme

Two tower blocks of houses and maisonettes, facing the proposed Marine Drive and the sea. The first block of 17 storeys will contain 60 two bedroom flats. The second block rises to 24 storeys and consists of 48, 3-bedroom maisonettes. Both blocks will be serviced by basement car parks, lifts and emergency standby systems and have a podium at first floor level.

In Colombo 7 - Bullers Lane Housing Scheme

Located behind BMICH building, this middle class housing development will consist of 95 units, terraced, two storey houses, each 3 bed-roomed and with its own separate garden and backyard with direct street access.

NOW HOUSES IN COLOMBO FOR THE UPPER MIDDLE INCOME GROUP.

The National Housing Development Authority set up by the Prime Minister, R. Premadasa with imperative target—a house for every family has done a great deal to relieve the housing difficulties of the lower and middle income group. The housing needs of the upper middle income group, however, had for very long been neglected. And today speculation in land has jacked up land values to such astronomical heights that for most persons in this group, owning a house of his choice has become only a dream. But now, at last, the National Housing Development Authority has initiated a series of meaningful steps to transform this dream into reality. The National Housing Development Authority is in possession of sites in the prime residential areas of Kollupitiya, Bullers Lane, Bambalapitiya and Maradana.

HOUSING UNITS IN THESE SCHEMES WILL BE PRE-SOLD ON EASY TERMS. A MODEST DOWN PAYMENT AND THE BALANCE IN COMFORTABLE INSTALMENTS AFTER THE HOUSES ARE HANDED OVER.

For you, this means that the house of your dreams can be yours without the worry and bother usually involved in building or buying a house. Fill the coupon and send it to:-

The Chairman
National Housing Development Authority,
Sir Chittampalam Gardinar Mawatha,
Colombo 2.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

Occupation / Profession:

Annual Income:

Housing Scheme Preferred:

Unit Preferred
House / Shop:

Amount of down payment you can make: