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PRESS COUNCIL
AND
FREEDOM

PRODUCTION
YEAR

SAFARI IN
CEYLON

EFFICIENCY AND
THE PRIVATE
SECTOR

FROM DMK TO
ADMK

BRANDT'S
OSTPOLITIK

SCIENTIST
ON THE MOON



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Tribune

IN THIS ISSUE

The Press Council and Freedom

SRI LANKA is now undergoing the birth pangs of **Production Year 1973**. **Tribune** will in forthcoming issues reflect the process of increasing production, but in the current issue not very much is said about the efforts to step up production or the campaign to grow more trees and plant more chillies. There are, however, a few brief references to this matter in the Editor's **Rambling Notes** stressing that what is important is not the mere planting but the looking after the plants that have been put down into the earth.

In his Notes, the Editor is more concerned this time with the outcry against the Press Council Bill. **Tribune** has never had any sympathy for the big daily papers against whom the Press Council Bill is obviously directed. Apparently the main target of attack is the publication of spot news about the activities, discussions and the like of the Cabinet and the Government, but once the Government is made the sole authority for the release of such news, comment is put into blinkers because there may be little or nothing on which to comment. The Editor has stressed that the Press

Council Bill, with pretensions to extending protection to **truth** against the malpractices and sensationalism indulged in by circulation-crazy "capitalist" newspapers, will ultimately (if not immediately) prove to be self-defeating, as several other measures of the UF government have already proved to be, and that the Bill will boomerang back on its sponsors in a way they will not expect or can even envisage.

Alkardi Mugana has a long piece in this issue about one of his **safaris** in Ceylon. It is really two safaris in one. First he moves up the Kelani Valley, turns round at Ratnapura to Kiriella and comes on to Kahawatte and Pelmadulla and returns to Colombo via Avisawella. The second **safari**, apart from a brief look at a coconut estate on the west coast near Negombo deals exclusively with the branch of the Prichipura Home which is at Mawanella. Interspersed in his descriptive surveys are interesting tidbits in the form of comment about life and living in Sri Lanka, better known as Ceylon (it is still Ceylon to many of us and will always remain so). **Canax** has another

refreshingly **vigorous** piece on the political life in the island and he bravely advocates a kindergarten to bring education and enlightenment to budding and even veteran **politicos** (as they are called in our daily papers.) His humour has a touch of ironic cynicism but is not vicious.

There are a number of other articles which will interest our readers. The article about Tamil Nadu provides a detailed background about the great split in the DMK. The piece on the efficiency the private sector should provoke comment and discussion among many circles in Ceylon. The article on the abuse of anti-biotics must make everybody sit up and think. A new writer, in **Tribune**, **Paul Caspez**, has a penetrating piece about the **Forgotten People**. After an academic

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RAMBLING NOTES

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

PRODUCTION YEAR:

PRESS COUNCIL BILL.

THE NEW YEAR has dawned with the Prime Minister making a major effort to initiate a leap forward in production in the year 1973. With this kind of a leapfrog putsch in production in agriculture (and industry as well), the Prime Minister hopes that it would be possible to make a start on the Five Year Plan which is already more than a year overdue. At the rate things were deve-

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exercising in defining terminology, the writer draws attention to revealing statistics about the forgotten people of Sri Lanka.

ON THE COVER, our artist has made an effort to depict Sri Lanka in the era of the Press Council. The papers will be "controlled", but the light of freedom will shine nevertheless—until the controls are removed and total freedom is once again permitted to prevail. Recent history has demonstrated that it is better to tolerate the freedom of the wild ass rather than contain people behind curtains of enforced secrecy—where only the viper's tongue of gossip or government-doctored news circulate.

loping in this country, this paper had expressed the pessimistic view that the Five Year Plan would never get started at all—and that it would suffer the same fate as the Ten Year Plan drawn up in 1952-53 with the assistance of the World Bank, the Six Year Plan for Agriculture drawn up by Philip Gunawardena, Minister of Agriculture in the first Bandaranaike government of 1956-59, and several other Five Year and Three Year Plans which have followed each other with monotonous frequency ever since this country had attained Independence.

The reasons attributed to the failure of these plans—to get started in most cases—are many: parliamentary instability of particular governments, bureaucratic red-tape, sectional party political wrangling, foreign exchange shortages, unwillingness of the products of our educational system to go into agriculture (or even industry) and to do an eight hour job of work for the eight hour's pay, the impossible burden of the food subsidies, and so on and so forth. **But whatever the excuse, the fact is that all Plans since 1947 to**

make this country break through stagnation and get on to the road of economic development proved abortive and futile.

But the new Plan of the UF government, proclaimed a little later than scheduled owing to the insurgency, was backed by an overwhelmingly stable parliamentary majority. It was made public in the latter half of 1971, and with much fanfare and tomtom-beating it was announced that it would get going in 1972. But the original 1971-72 budgetary proposals, based on sizable cuts on the food subsidies, were rejected by the backbenchers and the revenue proposals announced in Parliament with the Budget Speech were withdrawn within 24 hours. This made any start on the Five Year Plan a virtual impossibility and no amount of wizardry by the UF pundits was able to produce a remedy.

What was worse was that 1972 turned out to be a bleak year with drought reducing agricultural production; and world prices of our exports registering a sharp decline together with unexpected increase in the prices of commodities Ceylon imported—machinery, capital goods and manufactured consumer articles from Europe, America and Japan, and also rice, wheat, sugar and other foodstuffs not only from Asia but elsewhere as well.

The prospects for 1973 seem to be worse. The rice harvest in Asia has failed, and the price of rice has already shot up to over £ 53 a ton and it is likely to go up further. The price of sugar has already crossed the £ 105 a ton mark. The price of wheat has more than doubled in the last two weeks. Prices of our imports are double and treble what they were only three years ago, whilst the increase of the prices of our exports, if there have been any increases at all, have been less than minimal.

The Government, caught on the horns of this dilemma, has taken one irrational step after another. In the plethora of doctrinaire UF punditry, the Government has adopted one measure after another to make this country a model egalitarian society and thus pave the way for 'socialism'. But every one of these measures, as we have repeatedly pointed out in the *Tribune* was irretrievably self-defeating, and events have already shown how correct have been our prognostications.

One sure indication that these seemingly highly "radical" measures of the UF government were intrinsically and inherently self-defeating, was the decline in production and productivity in 1971 and 1972. The insurgency and intransigent UNP sabotage cannot explain the extent and magnitude of the

decline. one does not need to be a pundit or even an astrologer to predict that production and productive levels in 1973 will be worse than in 1972.

THE PRIME MINISTER in her recent speeches has shown that she is keenly aware of the true situation. She has warned the country of the problems facing the people and has urged increased production. She has gone so far as to say that she had announced that 1973 would be Production Year without informing officialdom because the bureaucrats would have trotted out reasons why such a massive productive effort, as conceived by her, could not be started "so soon". She has also said that in 1974 Ceylon will not import rice and other foodstuffs. She hopes no doubt, that production here will catch up, but it is also a fact that with the phenomenal increase in price of rice, wheat and sugar, Ceylon will not have the money to import even the restricted quantities which she will import in 1973.

To symbolise the beginning of the production drive, the PM launched a tree and plant growing campaign on January 8 — incidentally the birthday of the late PM, SWR Bandaranaike. Lakhs of trees and plants were no doubt planted on January 8, but the question is how many of them will survive the first week or the first month? *Tribune* has a

memory which is neither short nor hazy, and if even a quarter of the trees and plants put down in various "growing campaigns" since 1947 had survived, or had been looked after the planting for a minimum period, this country would have been self-sufficient in food a long time ago. But now, faced with actual "starvation", it is to be hoped that at least a small percentage of the trees and plants put down on January, 8, 1973, will be looked after and will thereafter bear fruit.

BUT THIS production drive has been launched under the most inauspicious circumstances. The daily press in this country is under threat of a gagas far as governmental news is concerned. Whilst there is not the slightest doubt that the daily papers have merited stern action against them for the way they had sought (over the years) to mislead the public, (but if election results are any indication, the daily papers have never been able to swing any elections after 1952.) it would be self-defeating and foolish to impose curbs on the press, reminiscent of a totalitarian and regimented society.

The choice is clear: this country has to remain a democracy or a closed totalitarian regimented society. If the Government wants this country to remain a democratically-run society, (and the election

manifesto of May 1970 was pledged to ensure parliamentary democracy), then the Press Council Bill is a violation of basic democratic freedoms. If however the Government wants a totalitarian regimented society, where only government news and comments are permissible, then it must seek a fresh mandate from the people.

The Government pretends that the Press Council Bill does not violate democratic principles and that it only brings under some kind of government control over abuses which stemmed from private and monopoly ownership of the big daily papers. There is no half way house in this matter. Either one must choose the democratic way with all its ramifications and difficulties (for the government and the public), or one must openly and frankly opt for a totalitarian and regimented society, which has its limitations but which has its advantages in compelling discipline and work.

Tribune has stated in earlier issues that the Press Council Bill was the result of the wayward, irresponsible and mischievous role of the big daily papers in this country over the years. *Tribune* has no sympathy for the big daily papers which have never showed any sympathy to the lesser periodicals seeking to express a point of view contrary to the hypocritical views of the owners of the big dailies

under cover of lofty principles.

But *Tribune* has always felt and has stated that the efforts of the Government to curb the basic freedom of expression were bad. The Press Council Bill, as it stands, seeks to impose curbs on the publication of news of a governmental nature—making the Government the sole source of all official news. The authors of the Bill claim that comment on such news will be free. But what is important is that a great deal of news, true and factual, pertaining to government activity may never be officially released and comment will also be shut out. **The source of all comments is news, and if news is bottled up, then there will be no basis for comment. Furthermore, once news and information are restricted, comment will be futile.**

However, it would be difficult even for the UF government with its overwhelming majority to root out the spirit of democratic freedom inherent in the soil of Ceylon. If the Government persists in the Press Council Bill as it stands now, it will be just another self-defeating measure which will ultimately tend to undermine the prestige and position of this government.

The spirit of freedom will shine—in spite of the manacles the Government seeks to thrust upon the press and the freedom of information. The people are

entitled to all news about the Government, and if the papers are mischievous or untruthful the people will know what is true. Every election since 1956 has shown that the people cannot be misled by the daily press. But the people will not forgive the Government for that matter, if it seeks to shroud government (and Cabinet) news behind a curtain of secrecy.

PAINLESS DENTISTRY

After years of research Soviet experts have found a way to end one of the painful experiences of life—a visit to a dentist. The breakthrough was described by Lev Vikhrev who, like most Russians, went to the dental surgical clinic expecting the worst. He knew that Russian dentists do not use anaesthetics except for the most serious work. "Yes, we have to drill your tooth". Dr. Alexander Dneprovsk told his patient. "Will it be painful?" Vikhrev asked. "We shall avoid pain", the dentist replied. "Please attach this clip to your ear."

With a light plastic clip in place on his patient's ear, the dentist started drilling. "I was sitting rigidly, waiting for acute pain, but there wasn't any", Vikrev recalled. "There was only a tickling sensation in my tooth."

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

The Forgotten People of Sri Lanka

By PAUL CASPERSZ

THE HYPOTHESIS advanced in the present paper is that the people are forgotten when decisions are in process, when policies are formulated and executed. This is so both in civil and in religious society. As regards the latter, in this paper christian religious society is specifically intended. The analysis of buddhist or other non-christian religious societies in so far as they lack the organized governmental structures of christian society, would be more complex, but it may be hazarded that the hypothesis would probably cover even these societies.

The first question that arises is obviously that concerning the identification of the people. *Who are the people?* For a first plunge into an answer, it may be said that the people are all human beings other than the person conducting the inquiry. It is not that he considers himself as being outside the people—which may be for him a logical impossibility—but that he has to establish his relationships with all those who are not himself. The total of not-himselfs are the people.

The person belongs to a social group, class, com-

munity, association. Therefore when he speaks of the people, at a second remove, he refers to all those who do not belong to his group, class, community, association. Thus he can talk of a "we" and a "they". If he belongs to the power-holding class, then "they" are the People. We the Elite. They the People. And the People would in this case be those bereft of power, and the objects of the exercise of power on the part of the power-holders.

But what about the power-less themselves? In their language the word 'People' exists. The point is that it is used differently. The power-less do not talk of the people as of a "they". They rather say, We the People, They the Big Persons. When they refer to the power-holders, they refer to those who exercise power over them, from outside. The People submit willingly or sullenly, or fatalistically almost unthinkingly as if by immemorial custom, or they do not submit, violently or non-violently. However, there is clear objective consciousness that they are the People, while the others are the rulers of the People.

TO CONCLUDE this part of the argument, the People

are those who do not wield power in society. This power is of course worthy of separate analysis in its various manifestations: cultural, political, economic, and in its mechanisms for reward and punishment. For the present, it is enough to dichotomize society according to the categories of power-full and power-less. Only the latter are the People, as the term understood in the context of the initial hypothesis.

The dialectic between the power-wielders and the power-less, or between the Elites and the People calls for some further investigation. The former are a minority, the latter a majority. The former speak, are spoken of, are spoken with; the latter do not speak, but are spoken to and often are spoken at. The former are considered to have knowledge; the latter ignorance in a greater or less degree. The former lead and want to lead; the latter are led and have to be led. This is so in both civil and religious society, at least according to the hypothesis.

WHEN THE WHITE COLONIALISTS wielding power went to Asia, Africa and America, the power-less majority were all the indigenous People, whom the colonialists called the Natives. Only a few years ago, a senior medical professor in Liverpool asked a brilliant medical student from India, 'Are you the only native here?' The

Forgotten People

Indian student answered, 'On the contrary, Sir, there are thousands of natives in Liverpool, I am the only black man!'

For hundreds of years the colonial masters ruled without the consent of the People. But though the People were humbled, they could not be broken. The African, Mexican and Peruvian cultures proved to be as resilient to the onslaughts of white western domination as the civilizations of ancient India and Sri Lanka. It may take much time, but the People will win in the end.

Nationalists in the newly independent countries may however veer to the other extreme. Idealizing the past—without which it is impossible to revive a crushed People—they sometimes depict a picture of the past in which the People were suprême. But the realities of serfdom, caste and feudalism, oppression and exploitation cannot be ignored. Fortunately, they interest more the social historian rather than the social reformer for whom it is sufficient to know that the colonial period strengthened the elitist features of the old civilizations and introduced new elements such as domination by a foreign language into the old story of the estrangement of the Elite from the People.

THE STAGE is now sufficiently set to introduce the People of Sri Lanka.

Useful data may be gleaned from the Socio-Economic Survey 1969-70. There was less inequality in the distribution of income in 1969-70 than there had been in 1963. In 1960 while the lowest tenth of household units received only 1.5 per cent of total income, and the highest tenth 36.8 per cent, in 1969-70 the figures were 3.7 and 22.6 respectively. In 1963 the percentage of income receivers who received less than Rs. 100 per month was 59.2, while in 1969-70 it was 49.2.

But the People are still in dire poverty. In 1969-70 the poorest 174,325 or 8.3 per cent of all households received only 2.2 per cent of total income or a sum which Tissa Balasuriya has worked out to mean Rs. 13 per person in this sector per month or 43 cents per day (1). There is obviously some under estimation here (the rice ration, for instance has not been included), for on 43 cents per day the papers should report every day some deaths from starvation. The next group comprises 35.3 per cent of all households and received only 87 cents per person per day. Allowing generously for under estimation, it would still seem safe to say that more than 80 per cent of the individuals in Sri Lanka lives on less than Rs. 2.50 per person per day for all expenses and saving. From the economic angle these are the People.

Indices of social differences are more difficult to come by. Overcrowding is on the increase. The average number of occupants per housing unit was 5.4 in 1963; in 1969-70 it was 5.8. One out of every three households does not have toilet facilities of any sort. Even in the urban sector only 20 per cent of housing units has flush toilets, while 27.6 per cent employs the bucket system, 24.8 per cent water seal, and 13.0 per cent makes do with cess pits. Only 9 per cent of all households had a cooker (mainly kerosene) and only 1.3 per cent a refrigerator. The People are clearly in an overwhelming majority.

RELIABLE INDICES of caste disabilities are not available. It was felt that the youth violence of 1971 had one significant cause in caste. But an analysis of 10,000 arrested persons shows that 58.2 per cent were goyigama, while only 10.2 per cent were vahumpura. However more than 90 per cent occupies lower middle or lower positions according to the social position of their fathers.

The Houtart Survey reports the social distribution of Catholics in Sri Lanka as follows: higher classes 4 per cent; intermediary classes 28; lower classes 68. The People are numerically predominant in the Catholic religious society (2).

Among the power-holders in the Catholic group only

SAFARI IN CEYLON

MORE WANDERING:

Hanwella, Ratriapura, Kiriella, Kahawatte, Pallobodde & Pelmadulla, Mawanella — Kitul, Floods, thalla bolls, Kumbuk, gamarala and gooiya, carrom, thunciahathera, flies, free medicine, Prithipura home.

Starting December 14,

WHAT with sleep, or lack of it, and the heat, it being the middle of the day, it was Hanwella before I could take things in. Rubber was what greeted my eye, miles of estates, all different in

their way which can never be quite said of coconut estates; then coconut at first estates, these later degenerating into what I would call coconut gardens; and paddy fields, sown at least a month but these petered

out. The narrow gauge railway line ran by the road for miles and we kept criss-crossing. Although the road was flat, the land on either side was undulating. Soon after we left Hanwella we came across a vast complex in the process of being built, looking for all the world like the Tuhiriya complex in that stage of growth, but while that was for wearing, this was for plywood. So on to Avissawella, the sight of

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10.8 per cent of the priests, 10.6 per cent of the religious sisters and 26.2 per cent of the religious brothers were born of fisher or labour fathers. Even apart from the fact that these persons become upwardly mobile in the social ladder once they leave home for seminary or convent there is underrepresentation of the People among the accredited full-time officers of the Church.

While the People have no power in society today, they have tremendous potential. The main cause advanced by the established Left parties and others for the failure of the youth struggle in 1971 was that the violent youth did not seek nor have the support of the People. "Did those who engineer this putsch from the beginning", asks Colvin R. de Silva, "keep the masses out because only the masses could

upset their calculations and machinations?" (3). However this may be—and it is disputed—it affords testimony that the left leaders realize where the untapped resources of the nation really lie.

In their own way, the foreign experts realize this too. The demographers among them scarcely conceal their almost pathological fears of the human potential of the Third World. It would be possible to detect these fears even in a writer so esteemed in many circles as Gunnar Myrdal. His chapter on Population (A) is full of amazing recommendation none the less suspect because they are so brazen. He alludes to "nationalistic intellectuals in an underdeveloped country" (5) who might harbour suspicions. These suspicions are indeed fundamentally that writer lies Myrdal have made insufficient or myopic analysis of power

and the People in the world of today.

The hypothesis made at the beginning of this paper has been elaborated. Lines of inquiry for testing it have incidentally been suggested, but these must be left for further research and a separate paper.

Meanwhile it would, be best to act as if it were true. Let the Elites of civil and religious society do what is possible, and with a sense of urgency, to make their decisions, formulate and execute their policies with the People. This implies the sharing of the power of the minority with the majority. The all-crucial question is whether the power-holding minorities will do this of their own accord, or whether they must be forced to it by revolution, and whether the revolution will be violent or not.

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a kitul tree on the way, made me excited in the way that Kitul trees always do. Kitul trees give one Kitul-panni or honey, and I am living for a day when I shall see a kitul estate. As a single tree provides thousands of seeds at a time in the right season, it should not be very difficult to plant an estate. The kitul tree also gives us one of our three different kinds of toddy.

Beyond Avissawella the country was much more varied, and it would have required more concentration to describe it. The paddy was back with us again. Pass Kuruwita we saw some fine mountains to the left particularly one very fine jagged peak, which we saw again after some miles. Could it have been Adams Peak?

Seeing Ratnapura when I did it would have been difficult to believe that the town periodically goes under water. Once the flood has cleared I do not suppose anybody gives it a thought until the next flood. I seem to remember hearing that some years ago somebody did give it some thought and a foreign expert was asked over to give his advice. But his advice, when it was followed, left matters worse than they had ever been.

Kiriella, on the Ratnapura-Panadura road, also gets flooded, not the town but the surrounding countryside,

and it becomes a Venice with boats bearing people of both sexes and all ages appearing and disappearing among the trees. Every body becomes aquatic-minded while the flood lasts - they have to or they would not be able to get about. When the Kiriella countryside is flooded it is an entrancing sight for anybody who loves water and boating. The Kiriella boats with people in them must look very like gondolas, but for the life of me I cannot remember whether they had sides or were more like a thep-pang. I think they were thep-pangs.

At a place in Kahawatte I saw some statues which I thought were very finely fashioned and would have sworn were made out of wood or plaster. I was very surprised to be told that they were made of rubber, and were made by Richard Pieris. They are quite good enough and light enough to be exported.

I do not know whether I was just lucky but it was a change to come all the way from Colombo in a bus, which if it was always full, was never over crowded. The Ratnapura bus depot is in an attractive place situated on the top of own knoll.

ALONG this road I came upon a house that makes thalla balls, but these were in the shape of lozenges, which is the best word I can think of to describe their shape. Thalla is not

is not to be confused with thal. The thalla bush grows to a height of three feet. The seed is pounded and so are coconut jaggery and kitul jaggery - kitul jaggery I found was softer than coconut jaggery. Then they are all pounded together, and put into a machine which spews them out in the required shape. The final operation is to wrap each piece up in paper.

Somebody pointed out a kumbuk tree, a very fine specimen, and said they were always to be found by water and he also said, and others there agreed that the water by a kumbuk tree is always good for bathing in, because it was always cool.

I heard that word gamarala used on this trip and I wondered why I had not heard it before whenever I was in close association with farming. Most certainly, I have not heard it used in the Wannu People who might call themselves gamaralas always prefer to describe themselves as govias. Goviya I was told today is strictly a paddy farmer who does nothing else, but gamarala does paddy cultivation and other types of farming such as hena or chena work. A gamarala, in other words is the more complete farmer, while the govija sticks to growing paddy only. I rather suspect that gamarala is more a Kandyan term, and, as

most people in the **Wanni** or dry zone seem to come from the southern province or from other districts similarly situated, that is why the word **goviya** is preferred.

On the southern or or south-western side of Palledde, which is between Ratnapura and Hambantota I had time to notice a fine line of hills running parallel to the road, rather like hills you can see above Ampitiya. I looked closely to see if it was cultivated, I could not see any tea but there did seem to be some cultivation on the hill side up near the top. And a certain amount of grass as in Diyatalawa. I feel this hill grass ought to be utilized. In England similar country is grazed by sheep, and you rarely see cattle on hills, except in some places, but there are breeds of cattle which are said to thrive on poor grazing, and of those which can stand cold and not as well, and exposed conditions the chief are Galloway and West Highland. As these are beef breeds give all their milk to their calves, there are no complications such as having to milk them. Palledde gets its rain from September to December, during the north-west as it were. I was quite stumped on this until I remembered the range of hills to the south-west, and realized

that protected as it is by these hills, it could not possibly get any rain from this direction. This range must by rather the like the range above Adisham near Haputale where often the weather is a complete contrast on either side of the knife-edge that the top is - I hear the jungle comes quite close although you would not think so just here. There are no elephants just deer and rabbits.

The word **goonai** should pass over into the English language. It sounds fine, means healthy or something like it, and it is much better than that word salubrious which I have only seen used in Nuwara Eliya. To talk about salubrious N'Eliya gives me the shudders. Such a sonorous word!

Carrum is a game I have seen people playing seldom and I have not had the patience to watch it, any more than I would have watched a game of marbles, until my last visit to the **Wanni** any way. On an evening in the countryside one does like a game sometimes and it was with nothing better to do that I sat down to play carrum. I was not particularly good but I cannot say that the others seemed much better. Although they had more luck, but what I want to say is that it is an attacking game, and as such it soon absorbs your interest,

and it certainly had mine to the exclusion of almost everything else. I cannot say it exercised my intellect, although it seemed to be exercising other people's but that was probably because I knew very little of the game. But grip my attention it certainly did, and I was prepared to forgo other thoughts, and in this way it was a medicine, potent and effective, a mind healer. I felt better for my game of carrum.

A card game as "th 'thunciahatara" (304) exercises the brain, much as bridge would do, but I cannot say it leaves one refreshed in the way that carrum does. In fact, playing as I usually do with more active or agile minds than mine, it usually leaves me tired, and if I am already distracted I cannot get my self to concentrate at all

There is the ruins of an ancient devale a quarter of a mile out of Avissawella, on the Kegalle road, and well off the road to the right. There I found a dog dripping saliva from its jaws quite badly and I reported it to a passing policeman, in case the dog was mad.

In Pelmaddulla I walked into a **kadday** and I was suprised to see no flies on the food either in the glass case or out of it. Closer inspection revealed that there were flies neither on the tables nor on the floor. Mystified,

I walked outside to inspect the gutter, and I found the gutters on both sides of the road were functioning. I dare say anybody could walk through Pelmadulla and point out a thousand things that are wrong, but the point I wish to make is that the things that really matter were right. Flies breed on dirty ground and in refuse, but the refuse has to be there long enough for the flies to breed in it. To satisfy myself about the flies, I walked into another **kadday** and there I found hardly any flies to speak of. Pelmaulla must be one of the cleanest villages or towns on the main roads of Ceylon. In Nuwara Eliya there certainly are flies.

Now I wish to speak of something that I have avoided for sometime and that is that there is a feeling abroad on this island that you cannot get the best medicines at a number of government hospitals and dispensaries unless you pay for it. Some have said you only have to pay up your 25 cents stamp but others have said it takes Rs. 1 to get good medicines, and Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 3 to get an injection. It does not seem possible that anybody would try to help themselves in this particular way fattening themselves upon people's illnesses. But I think that while this fear is abroad something should be

done to dispel this fear and to restore confidence in the medical system. I seem to remember now that people who obviously could not afford to go to private doctors, and there are more of these anyway in remote areas, have told me that despite their illnesses, they keep away from government dispensaries because the good medicines are not to be had there. Or else only at a price.

* * * *

Starting December 28,

THE STRETCH of road by the Kelaniya near Wattala brings back to my mind what I was told about two concrete boats that were made in Ceylon. Their hulls shaped like ordinary boats, not flat-bottomed, they floated all right, but when engines were fitted to them they could not take the vibration. The conceiver of the project is no longer in Ceylon but the experiment goes on; and I hope it turns out to be practicable. What is so wonderful about the idea is that if it turns out to be feasible, no imported materials will go into the making of the hull.

The estate bungalow can be quite an institution. Although one usually does not associate beautifully-kept and coloured gardens with coconut estates as one does with the houses and gardens kept by Europeans on tea estates, I

saw such a garden on a coconut estate. Have a luncheon party on an estate like this, and the setting is perfect. The conversation can be quite instructive, too, as when one learns on how little people lived in the year not so very long ago, and how cheap things were then, so that people could live well. Even a new car had cost their owners as little as Rs. 2000.

In another place, I learnt something about rubber. In planting rubber you need a nursery first. After a year you do a bit of grafting with each rubber plant. If it has not taken in three weeks you do afresh. If it has, you snip off the plant just above the graft. Meanwhile you prepare a hole to receive each plant, two feet deep by two and a half feet square. You replace the earth shorn of all stones and allow it to lie for three weeks because rubber must be planted in firm earth and not in loose soil. The actual transplanting can be only done in the wet season. Rubber trees can be tapped in their sixth year. I was told that rubber trees do not need watchers as coconut and cocoa estates do, because it is too troublesome to tap the trees at night, or something to that effect. The trees are susceptible to certain disease and strains have been developed which can resist these.

It is strange how little people do know about

the countryside. Some people have an idea that it is dangerous to travel at night alone because one might get way-laid and robbed, but once in the area others point out how foolish this is, that people are not like that. It reminds me of the so-called slave camps which are really absurd. No doubt they make good reading, but stories like these bring little credit on a country, and it requires a warped mind to invent them. It is strange how little some of the reading public are led by their common sense, and in some cases, the more educated they are, the less they have it.

THE PRITHIPURA Home for small children at Hendala has an atmosphere where the little children, confined to their cots, exude an atmosphere that quite takes your breath away. There is an extension of this home now off Mawannella. When the pioneers first moved into the coolie line they now occupy they had to get rid of the bugs that had taken up their abode in two of the rooms. Now the line least resembles a line as one popularly imagines it. It is like a home. A stick *massa* holds the books and magazines.

The little girls and boys are out on their own soon after dawn, clearing up the hillside, weeding and preparing beds, without apparent supervision but obviously with a great sense of responsibility.

After breakfast they will be out on the hill in another direction, and out of sight this time, clearing up the road, and the survey officers who came there were surprised at the confident "where are you going?" which greeted them from these little owners of the land. Although there is work going on almost all the time, for one never really sees anyone idle, yet the atmosphere is not really one of work, but of diligent occupation.

The food is excellent and I had no less than six curries on this most ordinary of days. There is nobody here who is not as important as anybody else and yet nobody gets in another's way. This home is one for children and young people. The view from the front is very fine, overlooking a broad valley. The water supply is very good and easy to get at. The small young people here must be receiving one of the finest preparations for life that anyone can get.

It looks as if they will soon have all the paddy and rice they want, and plantains and cotton. There is already rubber, cocoa and coffee here, and plans are afoot to put down coconuts and mulberry. There is grass which can be used for the cattle, and enough steep hillside to make training possible for Ceylon's future marathon runners. The Director who guides the development and the running

of the place is a Doctor of philosophy, who wrote his thesis on Buddhism, and his name is quite well known. If Ceylon's future is going to be different from what most people anticipate, it will be because of the quiet work of such people as him.

It is long cry from here to the sea at Hendala, and one little boy told me that he preferred the hills. To like this sort of life you really have to start young.

THE EVENING brought another revelation, albeit on the same theme. It was close to dusk, and there were the children, both girls and boys, on the hill-side moving up and down it with the buckets, and fetching the water from the stream below. The impression I got was that they had gone there on their own, because there they were working and I had not seen them go. There was not an adult among them. When afterwards I commented on what I have just said, I was told that they would have been told it was time to start their watering. There was a little chilli planted and many beds ready for more, some other vegetables, plantain trees well laid out, and in some places the earth terraced with stone, obviously done not so long ago. One twelve-year old, eight years out of Prithipura, was casting weed-

icide on the growing paddy like one who had done it all his life.

After dark they all gathered round one of the women to learn a few lessons with their slates before them, and to hear stories read to them. These children were not just part of the establishment for they gave one the impression that it was theirs, so much theirs that there was no need for them to make a song about it.

IN THE MORNING we had some *sarsup*, *anodha* or *katuartha* as it is called in Sinhalese. We ate the flesh off the fruit itself. In Colombo the flesh is usually removed the from seed and eat we the fruit from a cup. Outside there was a ladder being made under the direction of a Tamil girl. It was twelve feet long, and the lowest branch of a jak tree was higher than that. One of the boys climbed onto the tree from the ladder and went another twelve feet up. Then with the aid of *kekka*, he brought down a ripe jak. It fell on the mat spread out for it, and it rolled off. The clean jak was put on to an container and the rest of the fruit, which had been split on impact with the ground, was washed in a bucket.

The *sarsup* tree is a small one. Equally small is the *rum* tree whose fruit looks good but cannot be eaten, but it can be used in arrack, our

Ceylon whisky. The fruit also makes a good gourd. The sequel to the felling of the jak fruit was that the children trooped off with the *udellus*, whose handles were as long as themselves, up the hill to clean the road. We have not seem them once, but I shall pass them on my way out. This place has also some given employment to the local people and they are treated as friends.

The children have trooped in for breakfast, and I am still here. We finished our breakfast with a delightful sweet made of soya bean, sugar and coconut; it is called *aggala* or *laddu*.

There I saw some fine sheet rubber. A rich rock brown in colour, bound in sheets of twenty five, each bundle weighing thirty pounds or more, an oblong no more than two feet long, the pile really looked good.

It is a real pity that people try to learn so much from books. One hears a lot of nonsens about "food for thought". There is so much to be learnt from observation, and what one observes is a useful corrective to what people try to teach us. We would not be so gullible if we used our eyes more—and our common sense.

AFTER CLIMBING the steep hill to the road behind the house, I passed some village children on my

way down, and I asked them how they were. The children were as small as "tots", which is not what they would be called in England. Their reply was, "we are not doing so badly". When I asked them what they were doing, they said "we are marking time". My final question as to where their mother was evoked the reply "she is at home". We said goodbye and passed on.

From the look of the paddy that I could see on the Kandy road, harvesting will start next month, in January.

The price of food at the *kadday* where we stopped was terrible. Right opposite was a small *kadday* with food at the right price, and there I got what I wanted.

Colombo seemed as full as ever with more traffic than usual on the road, and the weekend had already started.

PROBLEM SOLVED

Bill Shepherd, who owns a taxi company in Wolverhampton England, found an original way of solving union management problems. He urged his drivers to join the Transport and General Workers Union; then he joined it and appointed himself union shop steward.

Efficiency and the Private Sector

by
SUBODH MATHUR

THIS ARTICLE on the comparative virtues of the public and the private sector by Subodh Mathur, a lecturer in Economics, Rajasthan University, Jaipur, will be of great interest to readers in Ceylon where the present government has placed great emphasis on the public sector as a saviour for our economic ills. There is a general belief among many people that the private sector runs its business efficiently whilst the public sector is synonymous with inefficiency. The author endeavours to show that the private sector is as inefficient as the public sector, if not more inefficient.

New Delhi,

MOST of us in India have got used to the idea that "the private sector makes profits, and the public sector makes losses". From this it is concluded that "the private sector is efficient and the public sector is inefficient". For, does not the Hindustan Steel incur losses every year, and do not the rich get richer every year?

THERE IS more to the matter than this simple analysis would have us believe. I would like to submit that (a) the private sector does not always make profits; (b) that even when it makes profits, this is not a definite indication of efficiency; and (c) we tend to use separate criterion for judging the two sectors, and that the criterion used for evaluating the private sector's performance is far too lenient.

Let us straightway introduce the criterion by which we shall judge the

working of the two sectors. For the private sector, economic theory suggests that an "invisible hand" guides all decision-makers in such a way that when they try to maximise their profits or utility (depending on whether they are producers or consumers), they also maximise social welfare. We shall, therefore, not be breaking away from tradition if we adopt maximisation of society's welfare as our basic criterion.

In the context of present-day India, it is easy to interpret this to mean fulfilment of consumer's needs and desires, because maximising consumer satisfaction will very closely approximate to maximisation of society's welfare. Our criterion of judging the efficiency of the two sectors will, therefore, be the manner in which, and the extent to which, they satisfy consumers.

ONE MORE methodological observation must be

made. We must be clear about the meaning of "profits". Profits are usually defined in the accounting sense of the term, namely, the excess of total revenue over total cost. Profits, for businessmen, namely, the excess of total revenue over total cost. Profits, for businessmen, however, are often what would be maximum profits in the accounting sense. If a businessman could have earned Rs. 10,000 but actually earns only Rs. 9,000, he feels that he has suffered a loss, even though he might still be making a profit in the accounting sense.

Economists often define profits as "extra-normal" profits, where "normal" profits are the entrepreneur's reward and are included in the cost of production, just as wages—labour's reward—are part of the cost of production. This definition is often used in discussions about the behaviour of a firm under the assumption of perfect competition. This definition is used to show that in equilibrium, no firm makes a profit.

Even if we accept the accounting definition, we find that the rate of profit varies with the accounting practices used. The biggest problem arises in evaluating depreciation and inventories. Some firms use mathematical formulae (linear depreciation, exponential depreciation) to calculate depreciation cost; others try to place a value

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upon the actual wear-and-tear in a particular year.

Further there are at least two methods of evaluating inventories, namely; first in, first out (FIFO), and last in, first out (LIFO). The basic question which these methods try to answer is: at what prices should a firm evaluate its stock of raw materials and unsold finished goods? Should they be the prices which prevailed in the market when the firm made or set them, or should they be the prices prevailing now? The rate of profit depends on the way this question is answered.

If an iron and steel company fixes the cost of the stock of coal it keeps at the prices at which it bought it, and evaluates the worth of the same stock of coal at the prices ruling when it uses it, then it is likely to make a profit without having done anything! As we see it, this has nothing to do with efficiency. Further, a mere change in the accounting method used can turn loss into profit, and vice-versa.

THE IMPORTANCE of this point comes out clearly if we look at the practice followed by the public sector enterprises. Most of them use mathematical formulae to calculate depreciation cost, and these tend to give a high value for depreciation cost in the earlier years even though there is very little actual wear and tear. This pushes up costs and makes

it difficult for firms to show profits. Secondly, in calculating the net worth of inventories, they normally do not resort to the type of "trick" outlined above.

Let us now examine the contention that the private sector makes profits. Elementary economic theory tells us that under perfect competition some firms make profits while others make losses, and this flux continues till long run equilibrium is attained. Long-run equilibrium is not normally achieved, and so we should expect that some firms will be making losses. This is precisely what is happening in agriculture.

IT IS NOT CUSTOMARY to treat agriculture as part of the private sector in India, but there is no logical or economic reason for excluding it. Indian agriculture satisfies not only the basic requisite of the private sector (namely, private owned means of production) but it is also a close approximation to the textbook model of free enterprise. It is well-known that our farmers are individually very small compared to the size of the grain market, that our farmers are responsive to price signals and economic incentives, and that there is virtually no Government interference in his sector.

We are not so interested in proving that the agricultural sector makes losses as in the fact that there is consumer dissatisfaction

with this sector. The situation is not entirely unexpected.

Theodore Schultze, one of the first to suggest the need to transform traditional agriculture, quotes Sol Tax's study of "Penny Capitalism" in Guatemalan agriculture. There also the textbook model of free private enterprise flourishes in agriculture, but income levels and output do not rise: everyone remains poor and dissatisfied.

It is therefore, clear that the unfettered working of the market mechanism under perfect competition is not a sufficient condition for the private sector to be efficient. This by itself is no discredit to the private sector: all that it means is that the efficiency of the private sector should not be taken for granted.

Now, let us look at the organised private industrial sector. Admittedly, perfect competition is not present here. So if we adopt the criterion that perfect competition means efficiency (as did Adam Smith), we should expect to find inefficiency. If we adopt our criterion, then, once again, we should expect to find inefficiency because some of the imperfections in the market are due to monopoly. Elementary economic theory tells us that when firms make profits under imperfect competition, they do so at the expense of consumers. Clearly the question of efficiency does not arise.

AS A MATTER of fact, there are many private sector firms which are making big losses: the number of "sick" sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh is very large; big industrial houses like Andrew Yule, Jessops, Martin Burn are reported to be doing badly. Some other firms are stagnating, while some are expanding very slowly. The whole point is that private sector firms are not invulnerable to losses, and that they often succumb; further, even if they are making profits, we cannot conclude that they are efficient.

Two very interesting examples of this are available if we extend our analysis beyond India. Penn-Central Railways, one of the biggest railway companies in the world, was making huge losses despite liberal Government assistance, and ultimately it had to close down. This did not create too many problems because the services it was providing were in any case unsatisfactory. On the other hand, Roll-Royce was providing its customers the finest of services, and the quality of its products was known all over. In other words it was technologically efficient and it did its best to satisfy its clientele; nevertheless it had to close down because it was incurring a big loss.

Do the private sector firms bother about consumer satisfaction? The question is almost rhetorical. However, the stan-

dards people use to judge the private sector are so lenient that it can get away with a lot of things. If the post office nearest to our house is temporarily out of aerogrammes, we are ready to shout and scream about Government inefficiency (and probably rightly) so. But if the shop nearest to our house does not stock our favourite brand of soap, we do not even raise a protest. (In fact, some of us probably feel happy that the shopkeeper must be making profits!) If the shops near our house run out of bread by evening time, we accept it as a natural fact of life; but if the postman delivers letters at 6 o'clock in the evening we feel that the Government has done us grievous harm.

WE ALL complain that it takes very long to withdraw money from the nationalised banks; but why do we not complain when the "efficient" private sector banks refuse to even open an account in our name unless we maintain a minimum deposit of Rs. 250? We insist that Roadways buses have complaint books, and we write letters to newspapers if they are not available; then why do we accept it as natural that private sector buses many not even have a time-table, let alone a complaint-book?

People claim that these double standards are adopted because it is not possible to decide who is to

blame if the private sector is not giving good service; on the other hand, it is very easy to determine responsibility in the public sector. Though we do not subscribe to this view *in toto* we are willing to grant this point for the moment.

Our point is that the private sector as a whole cannot shrug off its responsibilities; and just because it may not be possible to find out who is responsible for some shortcoming, it does not mean that we make the private sector our favourite child, whose every trick we will tolerate.

Many people feel that we should not worry about the private sector because if it is inefficient (which by their criterion means that it is making losses), then it is wasting its own money. In India, however, many private sector firms run on the basis of loans from the Government or from semi-Government agencies, so that (granting the fact that they will have to return the loan) it is not their own money which they will be wasting. THE SIMPLE financial position that we should not worry about what the firms do with the loans because they will have to return them, is hopelessly inadequate in a country where there is a shortage of savings and of investible funds. Our resources must be used in the best possible manner and it is really irrelevant whether the user is the

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FROM DMK TO ADMK

From

A Special Correspondent

Though this background article was written at the beginning of November, and though much water has flowed under the bridges in Tamilnadu since then, this article provides a great deal of information about the great split in the DMK.

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Continued from page 15.

public sector or the private sector. Hence, people who use the profit-loss criterion must condemn private sector losses just as much as public sector losses.

Let us revert to our criterion of consumer satisfaction. As an example of this, consider the recruitment policies of private sector firms. They rarely advertise vacancies; when they do, merit is rarely the (only) criterion used in selection (unless you argue that having "contacts" who can help the firm make profits is itself meritorious). Yet we complain that a Ministers' pull is all you need to get a public sector job. Why do we forget that a mere uncle already in the firm is enough to get a private sector job?

To round up our analysis, it is not our contention that the public sector is always efficient, or even relatively so. All that we want is that when we judge the public sector by one criterion, we should apply the same criterion to the private sector. If we use the criterion suggested above, we find that the private sector has many grave shortcomings; shortcomings which should not be tolerated.

Madras,

INDUSTRIES Minister S. Madhavan has quoted an irrational proverb, not mind-ing the "rationalist" moorings hitherto claimed by the DMK, to describe the "why" of his party's split. "Man is done and undone only by woman", the usually tough-talking Minister said. A little earlier he clarified whom he meant by "that" woman. "MGR" is the last trump card in the hands of 'Indira' Congress in the toppling game. As usual, they are going to fail again," he told a public meeting.

The DMK President and Chief Minister of the State, Sri M. Karunanidhi, is admittedly more shrewd. He spoke on the why of it all with studied indecision. "Being a woman, the Prime Minister is not likely to become ungrateful. I do not think that personally she is responsible for what happened. But others in the Indira Congress are not disinterested parties to what has happened," his assessment went.

YET ANOTHER Minister Sri K. Ambazhagan, simplified the matter and reduced the causes of the split to

mere personal ambitions. "The film star wanted to become a minister without giving up his film career. Sri Karunanidhi could not obviously concede this unreasonable request. Therefore, the star has chosen to split the party," his reading went.

The lesser gods of the DMK, the so-called party strongmen, Sri S. Muthu, Mayor of Madurai and leader of the much-dreaded "Tamilar Padai", and his lieutenant Sri S. S. Then-narasu, the Secretary of Ramanathapuram District DMK, bluntly traced MGR's role as splitter to Smt. Gandhi's "inspiration". Sri Thennarasu said that the film star had met Smt. Gandhi twice before, and the "result now is the split in the party."

There was at least one Minister who saw communist hand behind the film star's recalcitrance! But then, he betrayed ignorance not usually associated with Ministers who are in a position to know. He accused the CPI leader, Sri M. Kalyanasundaram, of "instigating" the film star to split the DMK. The fact is that Sri Kalyana sundaram has not returned from tour abroad and may not even know that the DMK is split.

The Syndicate and the Swatantra Party traced the DMK split to Sri Karunanidhi's "autocratic ways". Sri Kamaraj said he was not bothered about the "inner party" affairs of the DMK, except for the

factual development of the party's former Treasurer, Sri M. G. Ramachandran, adding substance to his own charge of rampant corruption, above and under the table, under the DMK regime! Swatantra leader Dr H. V. Hande said somewhat the same thing and added that the "fall of the DMK Ministry, imminent as it seems, is going to be Sri Karunanidhi's own making".

THE OLD VETERAN Rajaji declared that the DMK under Sri Karunanidhi had fallen from the principles laid down by the party's late founder C. N. Annadurai, and that MGR, the founder-leader of the new Anna DMK, was a truer inheritor of "Anna's political legacy".

The CPI leader Sri K. Balathandayutham traced the DMK split to the deadweight of corruption. The contradiction between the section which had benefitted most by the DMK rule and the section which did not benefit could not have been avoided at all, he said. In so far as MGR represented the platform for fighting corruption the CPI supported him, a Party spokesman officially clarified.

In some other circles it was stated that the split in the DMK was due to clash of personalities. For a long time, Sri Karunanidhi was meticulously planning the ouster of the filmstar Treasurer who, because of his popular base was the only serious rival to his "absolutism in

the party and the Government" Sri Karunanidhi tried to project his son as the "alternative opiate" for the party's film-loving cadre, smash the thousands of active "MGR" Manrams (fan Associations), and eventually wielding the disciplinary cudgel, had thrown him out of the party.

On the other hand, these circles held, MGR had long ago come to the conclusion that in the cruel power struggle within the DMK he could not match wits and strategy with his rival Sri Karunanidhi and, therefore, had created the circumstances in which he would become the "martyred" hero in the eye of his supporters. By his choice of the anti-corruption platform he has only ensured a popular base for his new party, the Anna DMK, because the ground for this has already been carefully prepared by other Opposition leaders, especially Sri Kamaraj.

THERE ARE thus differing assessments of the background to the split in the DMK. The split itself is the cumulative outcome of many factors—personal and political. What, however, is beyond dispute is the fact that corruption has become rampant and thanks to MGR's campaign, people are prepared to believe the worst that can be said or is being said, about the DMK Ministers and party functionaries.

The CPI State Executive's resolution which puts forward the proposition that

the DMK regime has lost the confidence of the masses makes a comprehensive reading. Sri K. Balathandayutham, the CPI MP, who briefed newsmen on the Executive's resolution, said that the strength of "numbers" behind the Ministry in Tamil Nadu "is artificial". Therefore, the CPI would organise the masses on the basis of a joint action by all the opposition parties including the Syndicate and the Congress, to initiate a mass movement to secure the resignation of the "discredited and minority Government of Sri Karunanidhi".

The DMK itself is in an unenviable position. The traditional opponents of the Congress are not likely to support its continuance in office in the context of the current realities and the isolation from the entire gamut of non-DMK, political opinion. Even the Marxists who all the time see Congress conspiracy to oust from power all non-Congress parties everywhere in the country, are unable to justify their thesis in Tamil Nadu.

THE FACT is that the Marxists, too are the critics of the rampant corruption and unheard of repression under the DMK regime. When there is only a police repression, the regime can be easily branded fascist. But when the police repression pales into insignificance before the private goonda violence against farmers, workers, students and political opponents, the CPM has

no word in its dictionary to describe the situation. Even so the CPM may express muted protest against the conspiracy to topple the only non-Congress Ministry in the State, but it is in no position to make a logical defence of the DMK regime's current policy of suppressing its own cadre which placed it twice securely in State-power since 1967.

That the DMK regime is largely isolated from the people is patent. Hitherto the charge against the DMK Ministry has been that it was functioning in the "larger interests" of its own partymen. It has allowed party functionaries to grow rich and richer, throwing to the winds the interests of the people and norms of good government. The CPI resolution charged that the DMK Government is functioning not even in the primary interests of party functionaries but only in the interests of the "Karunanidhi clique".

From the point of view of the common man, the MGR episode stands simplified. MGR has been more than a matinee idol adored and worshipped on and off the screen by the film-loving masses. Every month at least two MGR films are released and there is not one theatre in the State which throughout the year is not screening one or the other of over 150 MGR films. The film star, to be exact, is the opiate for the masses in

so far as he represents a judicious combination of do-gooding roles in films with subtle and sometimes even brazen campaign for the DMK.

MGR has been totally identified with the DMK, and the latter is known in the backwoods of rural areas and urban centres too as *MGR Katchi*. After the death of the party's founder in 1969, MGR is the most popular leader of the party, the mass-charmer, the vote-getter, the philanthropist, and many other good things rolled into one.

A LEADER of this stature has been summarily thrown out of the party! Why? He had asked the party functionaries and Ministers to declare their assets and acquisitions and submit themselves, if necessary, to judicial probe just to disprove the various allegations made against them.

For emphasising this moral code in the public, he has been charged with acts violative of party discipline. The manner of his removal from the party also added a piquancy to the whole affair.

It happened somewhat abruptly. As soon as MGR made the demand for a party probe into the assets of party functionaries, DMK President Karunanidhi telegraphically summoned the Central Executive members and district secretaries to his residence. A letter signed by them calling for disciplinary action against the film-star Treasurer of

the party was given to the President. In the next hour, even as MGR prepared to visit the party office to look into accounts, he was removed from Treasurership and even from the primary membership of the party by the General Secretary, Sri V. R. Nedunchezhian.

The decision was "unanimously" ratified by the party's General Council later. And Sri Karunanidhi spoke of the compelling circumstances in which he had to "throw out from the party my dear friend of twenty year's standing." Evidently, this plan had been prepared with due thought and consideration. The decision to remove the film star was taken much earlier. The Karunanidhi group was waiting only for the right moment. When MGR talked publicly about corruption, the opportunity was seized and the plan was put through with the ruthlessness and method which are characteristic of Sri Karunanidhi's style of functioning.

IT WAS INEVITABLE for MGR to fight back. In this he had his own assessment of the party setup at the grass-root level. Over the years the DMK has shown itself as being more a phenomenon than a party. It never had any ideological base. The much-vaunted "Anna principles" of duty, dignity and discipline are just principles of human good conduct and can never be substitutes for political or ideological policies. But the

party has had an amazing growth because its mass-base guaranteed it the status of being an "alternative" to the Congress regime.

The mass-base itself has been the outcome of its "make-believe" image as the forum of the poor. In creating this image, MGR has had a major role. Therefore in the show-down the film star has carried with him the party's non-ideological cadre force which still has fanciful notions about the DMK emerging as some kind of a Communist movement wholly dedicated to the uplift of the toiling masses.

In other words the DMK's upper middle-class leadership which has amassed wealth and influence in the last six years of the party rule is for the first time re-discovering the party structure based on such a filmy and loose foundation as the romanticism bereft of an iota of realism.

The fact that a film star, however, deified he may be, has been able to effortlessly knock the foundation of a party which has managed more than a two-thirds majority in the legislature, is something that has never before been witnessed anywhere in the world.

But there was nothing artificial about the collapse of the DMK's foundation. As soon as the deified star was removed from the

party, the rank and the file as well as the masses which voted for the party, rose in massive revolt. The DMK establishment was left only with the police personnel to act as the party cadre. It was forced to clamp down prohibitory orders to suppress mass hysteria.

THOUSANDS of demonstrators were arrested and thrown into jail. Throughout the State students cut classes to demonstrate their support for the martyred (politically, of course) film star. Four young persons reportedly committed suicide. Hundreds of letters signed in blood, were received in the film star's office, threatening self-immolation. And there was genuine and pervasive pressure on the film star to resurrect the DMK, "ridding it of the influence of the Karunanidhi establishment."

MGR had to revise his priorities. He is not any more a mere film star taking a side-line interest in the DMK. He has been told that his film career should subserve this basic interest. He formed the Anna DMK.

MGR could not have done anything else, especially when it was clear that he accounted for the overwhelming cadre-support of the existing DMK. The hiatus between the DMK supporters and workers who have had no visible improvement of their lot under the DMK rule, and the party functionaries who had acquired

palatial houses, cars, control of co-operatives in the villages and towns, had already created widespread disgust. This has suddenly found political articulation when MGR yielded to pressure from below and formed a new party.

Sri Karunanidhi uttered a truism, perhaps unwittingly. He described the struggle in the party as one between those who benefitted from the party rule and those who contributed everything to place the party in power. The Anna DMK's strength should not be assessed in terms of its capacity to secure defections from the DMK legislature party led by Sri Karunanidhi. So far six MLAs have joined the new party. Another 59 MLAs are known to have secretly assured MGR of a "correct decision" a little later, probably when the Assembly session is called. MGR, as well as the leaders of the CPI and the Swatantra Party, have demanded the convening of the legislature session probably because of the drama in-the-making. But there is one major factor that seems to rule out mass defection as prelude to the fall of the Ministry.

THE KARUNANIDHI establishment has hitherto seen to it that the benefits of the party rule percolate at least at the levels of the MLAs. Most of the party MLAs have been accommodated in the co-operative and credit institutions. One outcome of

this is the placement under obligation personally to Sri Karunanidhi of a majority of legislators.

Correspondingly, Sri Karunanidhi is in a position to know and has known the weakness of his partymen whose support he needs to remain in power. The "personal file" on legislators with Sri Karunanidhi is something that no Chief Minister ever before had collected and Sri Karunanidhi is not the person who will shy away from using his knowledge and official position to his exclusive personal benefit.

The DMK legislators are in real difficulty. None of them is able to meet his constituents; the electorate, the party workers who ensured his election to the Assembly. The entire cadre is ranged against each of them, every where. At the same time, they are prisoners of the "Karunanidhi Government."

Only a few legislators who have derived no benefit whatsoever have taken the decision to join the Anna DMK. Others are waiting in the wings hoping that some dramatic development would compel Karunanidhi to step down and give them the corresponding freedom to act in their enlightened self-interest, based on the "local situation" in their constituencies.

Will a dramatic development take place? There are all kinds of reports and rumours. For instance it

is stated that tax raids in recent days have covered Ministers, their wives, their close friends and relatives. From the house of a Minister's second wife the tax officials were reported to have recovered a lot of unaccounted currency and jewels, while records of unaccounted financial transactions were seized from another Minister's house. There have been raids in the districts. Statements have been obtained from many seemingly "unconnected" persons to the effect that huge amounts seized from them really belonged to certain Ministers.

ANOTHER REPORT said that one important leader of the DMK, who is known for crude and tough personal vulgarity against his critics, is unable to explain how he came to possess Rs. 30 lakhs without an ostensible means of livelihood, although his first explanation is that "partymen out of affection have made the presents to me."

However, Sri Karunanidhi addressing a press conference in Madras on October 26, denied reports published in a section of the local press about CBI raids on houses of certain Ministers or their relatives. He said no such raids had taken place "according to my information".

Also, there is a case pending against the Chief Minister as a second respondent in, the Supreme Court. Sri E. P. Royappa, former Chief Secretary to the Tamil Nadu Govern-

ment, in his petition has made several allegations against Sri Karunanidhi. He has sought reinstatement and the Supreme Court's verdict would have a large bearing on the turn of politics in the State in the coming months, rather weeks.

Meanwhile Sri Karunanidhi has taken to the offensive. He has threatened "a deluge" if his Government is "toppled", even if it falls because of its own dead-weight and a serious rift in the party.

The DMK won the 183 seats out of a total of 234 in the State Assembly in the 1971 mid-term elections on the slogan of "supporting the progressive policies of Smt. Indira Gandhi". The Congress and the CPI were its principal allies. These two parties have now broken off relations with it. The Muslim League and the Forward Bloc are still supporting the DMK, but they too would be on the look out whether Sri Karunanidhi continues to represent the DMK.

The progressive front headed by the undivided DMK secured about seventy five lakh votes, twelve lakhs more than the Syndicate sponsored front. Now that the Congress and the CPI have openly demanded the resignation of the Ministry, the "mandate" given to the progressive front as a whole can no longer be a mandate given to the DMK alone. In

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DMK TO ADMK

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any case, the DMK has the democratic obligation to prove that its alliance with Smt. Gandhi's political platform has had no bearing on its own popularity.

Meanwhile, the Anna DMK is getting into strides. In Chingelpet district, MGR addressed about 40 meetings, all attended by huge crowds, contrasting with poor attendance at Sri Karunanidhi's meeting a day earlier. The crowds were responsive and politically sensitive.

The new party claims a primary membership of ten lakhs. This does not appear to be an exaggeration. There are more than 20,000 MGR "Manrams" with a membership of at least thirteen to fourteen lakhs. The DMK branch units in the villages have switched their loyalty to the Anna DMK. It is patent that whatever there is of the DMK today is accounted for only by MGR's party, the ADMK.

In the next two months, there is bound to be a big change in Tamil Nadu's mercurial political behaviour. What Union Steel Minister Mohan Kumaramangalam predicted in March seems to be happening already.

WEST GERMANY

Victory for Brandt's Ostpolitik

By A. Special Correspondent

Berlin,

CHANCELLOR Willy Brandt's calculated risk has paid off, and handsomely. The Federal Republic of Germany has unambiguously endorsed his coalition Government's Ostpolitik—the new "eastern policy"—of practical measures to secure East-west detente in Europe.

THE OPPOSITION Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Christian Socialist Union (CSU) have been forced to acknowledge that the majority of West Germans do not subscribe to the policy of confrontation and cold war. For twenty-three years since the inception of the FRG, they had lived with the fear of a future full of uncertainties. On both sides of the great divide between the capitalist and socialist Europe, the people had gone through an agonising period of uneasy peace. Enormous resources were wasted on arming the NATO in the West and strengthening the Warsaw Pact Organisation in the East. On several occasions, on the question of access to West Berlin, for instance, Europe was led to the verge of a calamitous war.

The victory at the polls of the coalition of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) of Chancellor Brandt and the Free Democratic Party (FDP) of Foreign Minister Walter Scheel, augurs well for a thorough reversal of the old CDU policy. It has opened up the possibility of the FRG becoming an essential link of fruitful inter-European co-operation, while refusing to be a proving ground for a general confrontation. It has been the victory of the positive policy pursued by Chancellor Brandt's Government since it was formed in 1969.

The basis of the SPD-FDP Ostpolitik has been an all-out effort for normalisation of relations with Eastern Europe. It buried fathoms deep the notorious Hallstein doctrine which proclaimed FRG's enmity with any country establishing full diplomatic relations with the other Germany—the German Democratic Republic. In fact, the Hallstein doctrine had been the cornerstone of the foreign policy of the CDU Government under three Chancellors—Adenauer, Erhard and Kiessinger.

However, no policy of reconciliation can be successful unless both sides agree

to it. The socialist countries of Eastern Europe have themselves been working for a detente for several years now. And thus, came about the FRG's historic treaties with the Soviet Union in August and with Poland in December of 1970. But it took nearly another year and a half, in May 1972, to get them ratified by the Bundestag. Chancellor Brandt had to face tremendous CDU-CSU opposition in implementing his Ostpolitik. FOR THE FIRST time, these treaties laid down the FRG's recognition of realities in Europe—the inviolability to the existing frontiers shaped after the Second World War. No doubt, the Four Power Agreement over West Berlin, prepared in September 1971 and signed in June this year, had been of tremendous help in combating CDU-CSU opposition to the Brandt Government's foreign policy.

But the crowning piece of Chancellor Brandt's Ostpolitik has been the initialling of the FRG-GDR Treaty early in the month, on November 8. Coming after a number of agreements between the two countries on travel, communications, and steps for better relations, the Treaty finally ends the unnatural situation existing since the end of the Second World War. It recognises the sovereign state status of the GDR as also the international frontier between the East and West Ger-

manys, Chancellor Brandt has already announced his decision to visit Berlin, the capital of GDR, to formally sign the Treaty.

The two Germanys have now decided to seek UN membership as two independent states. They have received endorsement of this decision from the four Occupation Powers in Germany, which derived this authority from the Postdam agreement of 1945.

It is not accidental that the CDU-GSU Opposition tried to revive the slogan of "One Nation, one Germany" during the election campaign, hoping to activate national sentiments. However, the younger generation in the FRG have totally belied their hope. The new election law lowering the voting age to 18, had added 4.8 million new voters to the list. It is, in fact, the younger generation which has so definitely tilted the balance in favour of Chancellor Brandt and detente in Europe.

THE OPPOSITION parties also raised the issue of a high degree of inflation in the FRG, resulting in shooting prices of essential commodities. It was as high as 6 per cent in the pre-election period, but still lower than in many European countries. But the SPD-FDP campaigners successfully turned the tables against the Opposition on this score, too. They said it was the result of the past policy of wasteful rearmament, restriction

on trade with Eastern Europe and generally forced political isolation from natural economic partners. on the other hand they fully exploited the Government's proposed reforms in regard to increased social security benefits and redistribution of assets of large firms to their employees.

There is hardly any doubt that the impact of the West German elections will be felt in all world capitals, and most in Europe. Many Governments will feel the need to readjust their European policies in the light of the changed circumstances.

No doubt, it is too early to say how soon and in what concrete forms the expected changes in Europe will take place. But one thing is certain—the result of the November 19 elections to the West German Bundestag has finally ensured the holding of an all-European security conference early next year. The key figure for its success was the FRG. There can possibly be no reason now for Chancellor Willy Brandt to delay the holding of such a conference after having done all that was necessary for it.

Two world wars had started from Europe, and particularly Germany. There fore, detente and peace in Europe is the desire of all peoples in the world. They will watch with great interest every move of Mr. Brandt's Government in this direction.

SCIENTIST ON THE MOON

By
STUART AUERBACH

It was a clear example of Jack Schmitt, Geologist, taking over from Jack Schmitt, astronaut.

He was being ordered to press on—to leave the rim of Van Serg Crater “immediately if not sooner” as capsule communicator Robert Parker put it.

But Schmitt, the first professional geologist ever to explore the moon, had spotted some gray soil that he said “may be the youngest mantle that was ever thrown out of the craters.”

“We can’t leave this” he told Parker. “Bob, we’ve got to take five more minutes.”

Mission Control isn’t used to that kind of talk from astronauts on the moon: generally the word from the Manned Space Craft Centre here is law. Schmitt, indeed, realized this, he commented to fellow lunar explorer Eugene Cernan that “Bob’s mad at us.”

Nevertheless, Schmitt continued with his sample-taking explaining, why all the while: “Bob, there’s a possibility here that this upper six inches of gray material is the latest mantling in the area and the light coloured debris may be what’s left over from the impact.”

And when he finished his sampling, he showed that he could be just as good an astronaut as anyone who has flown to the moon.

He and Cernan quickly made up the time they lost with the extra sampling and reached their lunar module in plenty of time.

Schmitt’s insistence on continuing geological sampling may have annoyed flight controllers in Mission Control, but it delighted the scientists who depend on the astronauts to return with significant samples of lunar rocks and soil to help unlock the secrets of the moon—and from that the early geological history of the earth.

The scientists have fought since Apollo 11—man’s first landing on the moon three and a half years ago—to have a scientist astronaut included on a moon landing crew.

Space officials have insisted that getting to the moon comes first—and it is more important to have two men who are pilots first and geologists second in the lunar module to perform the difficult landing procedures.

Schmitt apparently filled both bills. The scientists

were universal in their praise of him as a geologist. And flight controllers said he performed as well as the lunar module pilot as any other astronaut that landed.

Most important, as far as the scientists were concerned, was the way that Schmitt always managed to choose the right spot to find a significant sample.

He has the instincts (that) a person who grew up and lived geology would have,” said John Wood of Harvard University’s Smithsonian astrophysical observatory.

It is the same instinctive knowledge that a person like Cernan—who has been a test pilot most of his life—would have for flying.

This instinctive knowledge said geologist Farouk el-Baz, steered Schmitt to perhaps the most important discovery made on any of America’s six moon landing missions—a band of orange dirt that proved that the moon had a violent volcanic past.

“Schmitt’s personal observations as a geologist and a scientist were far superior to anything we have known in past moon landings” said el-Baz, who has taught geology to the astronauts.

“I have been afraid that what we fought for, had worked for, had bumped our heads on the wall for, had cried for—to get a scientist on the moon—would not have been worth it”, he continued.

OF MISUSING ANTI-BIOTICS

By
MORTON MINZ

Washington,

The great majority of the medical profession was accused of needlessly imperiling the health of the public and the health, and sometimes the lives, of millions of patients by massively over-prescribing and mis-prescribing antibiotics. The grave indictment was handed down by the Food and Drug Administration, by a specialsit in the treatment of infections and by a former Assistant Secre-

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"If Jack had only added a few scientific terms, nobody would have been impressed and it wouldn't have done any good. Today I feel proud to be a geologist like Jack Schmitt."

It was both the depth and breadth of Schmitt's observations that impressed his fellow scientists. He was able to make geological observations while doing other things—something other astronauts couldn't do—and these observations were far more specific than those made by other astronauts.

In a mundane way, this showed up in the piles of transcripts that NASA provided of the dialogue of the moon walks. The transcribers fell hours behind trying to keep up with the astronauts' observations.

tary of the department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Testifying before the Senate Monopoly Subcommittee, they also urged drastic reforms to deter physicians from prescribing antibiotics for diseases against which they are ineffective and for diseases for which safer therapy is available.

Dr. Harry F. Dowling, the infections specialist and a former Chairman of the Council on Drugs of the American Medical Association, cited FDA data indicating that doctors prescribe 10 to 20 times as much antibiotics as is medically justified. "It is doubtful that the average person has an illness that requires treatment with an antibiotic more often than once every five or ten years", he said.

The most popular antibiotics include the penicillins, effective against a narrow range of infections. erythromycin, effective against a medium spectrum, and the tetracyclines and chloramphenicol, effective against a broad spectrum. The threat to the public health in excessive use of antibiotics arises from the fact that in killing certain strains of bacteria they permit other strains to flourish. Some of these strains resist treatment by

known antibiotics, setting the stage for possible epidemics.

In one of the latest incidents of this kind, said Dowling, Professor Emeritus of Medicine at the University of Illinois, a strain of typhoid bacilli has been found to be resistant to ampicillin. "A few years ago, we were resting secure in the knowledge that we had two effective drugs for use in typhoid fever: chloramphenicol and ampicillin" Dowling said: "Then a strain of typhoid bacilli was found that was resistant to chloramphenicol, and now one is resistant to ampicillin. Where is our security now", he asked. "Before too long, we may be back to the 1930s when we had no effective therapy for this disease and could only stand by and watch 10 to 15 per cent of the patients die while others suffered through weeks of serious illness", Dowling warned.

In the 1950s, over-use of penicillin led to hospital epidemics of dread staphylococcus infection. The nick-of-time development of semi-synthetic penicillins brought the situation under control. The FDA has warned that over-use of the semi-synthetics could deny protection against new outbreaks. Dowling told subcommittee chairman Gaylord Nelson of a current related "cause for concern": resistant bacteria are increasing blood poisoning in hospital patients treated with antibiotics.

The former HEW official Dr. Phillip R. Lee, testified that a marked increase in the use of antibiotics merely in the last four years "is primarily due to irrational prescribing" intended to prevent infections.

Yet, said FDA Commissioner Charles C. Edwards and Dowling, antibiotics used to kill one set of bacteria sometimes create a so-called super-infection on top of a pre-existing infection or no infection at all.

Lee, now Professor of Social Medicine at the University of California in San Francisco, was "despairing" whether the profession will discipline itself. "I don't think it can continue to defend the privilege of the individual physician to prescribe drugs as he alone sees fit", he testified.

"The next round will belong to the consumer", Lee said. Specially, he said each package of antibiotics and certain other potent medicines should provide the ultimate user with an FDA-approved statement listing the diseases against which it should and should not be used, the proper dosages and possible adverse effects.

"The consumer has a right to know the risks he is taking", Leo told sub-committee chairman Nelson.

Commissioner Edwards, in prepared testimony read in his absence by Dr. Henry E. Simmons, Direc-

tor of the FDA's Bureau of Drugs, pointed out that no medicine is effective against the common cold and other uncomplicated upper-respiratory infections. Yet, Edwards said, a recent survey shows that physicians prescribe an antibiotic for 31 per cent of the patients who consult them about colds.

Among the two out of three of these patients who got penicillin, some will develop a sensitivity—meaning that future ingestion of that antibiotic can set off reactions ranging from skin rashes to death.

Even now, Edwards said, an estimated 2.5 million Americans have had immediate or delayed reactions to penicillin, including 100 to 300 fatalities annually.

Much testimony centred on the record of production, promotion and prescribing of chloramphenicol, introduced in 1949 by Parke-Davis as chloromycin.

Since, published warning have long stated the drug caused a fatal blood disease in users at a rate estimated at once in 24,200 to one in 40,500, depending on the dosage.

Yet by 1960 physicians had prescribed it for an estimated 40 million persons. FDA production date indicate that more than 600,000 Americans got it in fiscal 1972 alone.

Official FDA prescribing instructions have long warned physicians that chlo-

ramphenicol is the preferred drug only against rare typhoid fever and "must not be used in the treatment of trival infections or where it is not indicated, as in colds, influenza, infections of the throat or as a prophylactic agent to prevent bacterial infections."

Even so, the FDA's Simmons said physicians today prescribe chloramphenicol, "inappropriately" in an "overwhelming majority" of cases.

The FDA said that it began this week to set up a national task force on the clinical use of antibiotics, implementing a recommendation by its outside advisers on infections.

TREASURE FINDER

Treasure-hunting during holidays is all the rage in Western countries. Sensing an opportunity for profiting thereby, a group of Dusseldorf, (West Germany) engineers have designed a portable electronic treasure-finding set. It is waterproof and so can be used by divers, it consists of a small electronic device, sounding rod and earphones. Whether this invention will enrich diving treasure-hunters is not known, but the designers hope it will prove a treasure for them—the contraption is priced at 1,000 marks.

IN SRI LANKA

A Shocking State Of Affairs

By CANAX

IF ENOUGH people promise not to be shocked, I'll make my suggestion public; our Minister of Education should seriously consider starting a college course exclusively for public men, so they can be taught not to be so easily shocked. If the Minister finds himself speechless reading this, I suggest he do something about it—like enrolling himself as the first student for the course. If, on the other hand, he is speechless with rage, he must learn to count up to ten before he does anything, as Mother never tired of advising me, and join the class after that. (It doesn't take long, I know, for I could count up to ten and still thump my younger brother on the head so fast that Mother suspected I didn't count at all. She suspected right, sometimes.)

If the Minister won't start such a course, I promise I will. If that sounds like a threat, let me assure you it is. What I have in mind will be on the lines of, say, a Forward School for Backward Children, for when it comes to being shocked, our public men are worse than children. And goodness knows children don't shock easy these days.

THE TROUBLE is we don't know what's good for us. (If we don't, the Government thinks it does, which is hardly a comfort). For if we did we would have taken adequate preventive measures to control the malady without letting it reach epidemic proportions. By letting matters slide, however, we are now faced with a terrible dilemma. No sooner a man becomes a public figure he loses his natural immunity and falls victim to shock. The things that shock him now are no different from the things that failed to shock him earlier, which leads to the inescapable conclusion that the built-in safeguards are somehow weakened or totally lost somewhere in the transformation from ordinary citizen to public figure.

You have probably noticed it yourself, the way Ministers, Junior Ministers and just plain MPs get shocked over matters that would leave you and me as unmoved as the Sigiriya Rock itself. What every ordinary man has come to accept as the way of life leaves our public figures dazed, but not altogether inarticulate. If they find themselves incapable of deeds, one can't honestly accuse them of being in-

capable of words. There's plenty of that, but don't make the mistake of reminding them that's the one commodity we're not short of, unless you want more of the same, words like capitalist stooge, reactionary, counter-revolutionary and so on. (So don't waste your breath, you'll need it just to stay alive.)

I MAY be wrong, but being easily shocked could well be a fashionable disease like suffering from 'slipped disc' was a few years back. It shows you've made it up the ladder, perhaps, even sets one apart from the ordinary, and if anyone badly needs such setting apart, our public figures do. (A gleaming 405 of 6 Sri vintage, plus a distinctive pack of 555s, helps one along a wee bit, but not as much as a Benz does, even without the 555s.)

If I'm walking down the road, for instance, and I see a queue, my first impulse is to join it. I've no idea what is being issued, or if anything is being issued at all, but no matter. The mere sight of a queue galvanises me into action. My step quickens involuntarily, so does my heartbeat, and I take my place in line happy at having beaten thousands of my fellow citizens to it. I live for the moment, but don't think even for that.

We're got so used to standing in one queue or another, or going from one queue to another

for the better part of the day that it is no longer in the realms of rational behaviour. A reflex mechanism seems to take over and I for one don't stop to think what will await me at the end of a queue before I join it. In a sense it's pot luck, though in my case it's invariably hard luck. No commodity seems to last long enough till I get to the top of the line.

AN IRRATIONAL orientation such as this is full of possibilities, mostly embarrassing, some comic as well. Like the time I joined a queue that stretched as far as my eye could see and looked promising. It moved pretty fast, as queues go, and I kept shuffling my feet forward every so often, dreaming all the while of many things, mostly hard-to-get. The one thing I didn't dream of was having to take a bus ride I didn't need to, to go to a place I didn't want to. But I did. It was too late by the time I realised what sort of queue it was, and the conductor didn't seem the type who'd appreciate a joke even if it was at my expense, not his. But the experience has proved profitable, having saved me, if only just, a pointless but more expensive journey to KKS.

The point about queues as I was saying before I got sidetracked into one is that you and I have learnt to live with them, even in them. We take

to queues, one might say like the proverbial duck takes to H2. But watch a public figure set eyes on one. No, he won't join it; he has no need to. He be shocked instead, and he'll give voice to his feelings with about the same innocence of discovery an old aunt of mine displayed when told that the weird and violent, angry and anguished meowing from the rooftop was clear proof that her she-cat was actually enjoying the mating game.

The latest public figure to join the ranks of the shocked is the Chairman of the Haputale Urban Council, Mr. S. B. W. B. Silva. He would do nicely as the first student in my School. (If the Minister of Ed. has managed to count up to ten, he can be my second.) The Chairman, it seems, is not suffering from any common-or-garden shock, which suits me fine. I'm so thrilled at the prospect, I can't wait for him to enroll and instead keep imagining how the first lesson will go. It goes something like this.....

WELCOME to the class Mr. Silva, and let's hear your shocking problem.. if you can bring yourself to talk about it, but take your time, take your time..

Mr. S: Well...er..it all started with my offer to donate an additional ward to the Haputale Hospital.....

That's good. Very good. This country needs more

people like you. I hope you were not serious?

Mr. S: What do you mean, serious? Why, I offered to do it at my own expense!

That's bad, very bad. Your first serious mistake, Mr. Silva, This is a free country, true, and if you feel like being a philanthropist go ahead and be one, but never try to be one at your own expense. Somebody — anybody — else's expense, yes, but never your own, remember. That should be your guiding principle. Think where all our businessmen would be if they decided to make money at their own expense ...terrible thought!...you've got to have a sucker, the more the merrier. You must have been plain crazy to make such an offer, but go on, go on....

Mr. S: (eyes visibly tearing) They spurned my offer....

They did? How wonderful, simply marvellous,

Mr. S: (his voice rising at a rate comparable only to our COL Index) But they should have been grateful to a benefactor!

Get a hold of yourself, Mr. Silva, You are not abreast of the latest thinking on health services. Modern opinion on the matter is quite simple, if brutally so—more hospitals mean more patients, as our Minister Ariyaratne said at Bandarawela the other day. To create a healthy nation all we need do is abolish our hospitals,

From the Easy Chair

one by one. Why do you think we're allowing our doctors to leave the country? It's one of the lesser-known facets of our new Export Drive, though our medicos are hardly Minor by any means. We're doing it on the quiet, you might say. If other countries foolishly want more doctors, they're also going to be saddled with more patients, but that's their problem. Given a little time, we may be in a position to consider bulk orders for patients as well, but that'll have to wait until our newly formed Export Council finds its feet, to say nothing of its markets.

Mr. S: But you don't understand. I went even so far as to lay the foundation stone... what will future generations think?

Don't worry yourself to death over that, Mr. Silva. Posterity is bound to find itself pretty confused, anyway, when future archaeologists discover so many foundation stones about the place they'll mistake them for tombstones, only they'll know soon enough that what was buried under were the hopes of the people and not the people themselves. One more foundation stone won't confound the confusion, I assure you. But so far so bad... is that all you were shocked about?

Mr. S: Indeed no. To add injury to insult—

and this is what shocked me most—I got a notice from Inland Revenue demanding to know how I earned the money.

Truly, the unkindest shock of all. Well, how did you earn the money?

Mt. S: (apprehensively) What are you, a teacher or an Assessor in disguise?

Neither, if you must know. I'm just curious, but forget I asked.... Actually, Inland Revenue is stacked from top to bottom with a bunch of poor public servants struggling to keep their heads above subsistence level, but what they lack in cash they make up for with an impish sense of humour. They're forever playing practical jokes like that on everybody, though not many people think them funny. But they carry on as if their jobs depended on it. You're largely to blame, of course, making that stupid offer. Inland Revenue chaps can't resist an opening like that. I trust our first lesson has made you see where you went wrong. The realisation will help ease the shock..

Mr. S: Excuse me, but..

No, no, Mr. Silva, No 'buts' please. You must learn to face the ugly unpleasant truth. Look it right in the eye without finching. This School is meant to help you profit

by your mistakes, help you get over the shock of past ones and face the future with confidence..

Mr. S: But if I may....

There you go again! well, just this once, but what?

Mr. S: But..but I've got over my shock....

You have? Already? Why, this is better than my wildest dreams... just one lesson and you're already out of the woods....

Mr. S: But I got over my shock two years ago, and I'm quite confident about the future....

You mean you won't ever again make silly mistakes like offering to donate a new hospital ward at your own expense?

Mr. S: Well, I wouldn't rule out the possibility altogether. There's many an unknown factor that could turn me overnight into a potential public benefactor, even at the risk of being shocked again.

You must really have the milk of human kindness by the quart in every vein, Mr. Silva. But tell me, what possible unknown factor could make it flow so selflessly?

Mr. S: Well, like if the other side win the next General Election..

Class dismissed!

Truman Made an Indelible Mark on International Affairs

DEATH CAME to Harry S. Truman, the 33rd President of the United States, at age 88—two years short of the period he felt he needed to complete his life's work, despite his monumental accomplishment on the world scene. On his 80th birthday Mr. Truman told newsmen he hoped to live to be 90 because "a lot of work remains to be done at the Truman Library." The library, repository of state papers, records and memorabilia of his years in the White House, was his consuming interest and he spent much time at his desk there while his health permitted. The library is near the 15-room Victorian house in Independence, Missouri, where he and his wife Bess, lived since leaving Washington in 1953.

Mr. Truman was serving as Vice President when he succeeded to the Presidency April 12, 1945, on the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt. He served until January 20, 1953. Less than one month after Mr. Truman took office the Allies achieved their victory over Germany, ending the European phase of World War Two. Just 95 days after Mr. Truman became President the first experimental atomic bomb was detonated in the New Mexico desert in the U.S. southwest. He made one of the most difficult deci-

sions in history when he ordered the use of atomic bombs against Japan in August, 1945, thus ending World War Two.

His Presidency featured the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, both of which formed the philosophical core of American foreign policy for many years.

He also received global acclaim for the "Point Four Program"—a bold new concept to make the benefits of world scientific advances and technical progress available for the improvement of developing nations. It was a co-operative enterprise, a world-wide effort to achieve peace, plenty and freedom. "I believe", Mr. Truman said in his inaugural address on January 20, 1949, "that we should make available to peace-loving people the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life. And, in co-operation with other nations, we should foster capital investment in areas needing development."

THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE was a U.S. commitment "to support the cause of freedom wherever it was threatened", which at the time was in Turkey and Greece, both considered to be menaced by communist aggression. The Marshall Plan reversed the

economic disintegration of Western Europe by pouring 12,500 million dollars into the sagging economies of war-torn countries. The plan, with the doctrine, contained European communism within its 1948 boundaries. After leaving the White House in 1953, Mr. Truman made few public appearances but he retained the barbed and blunt manner of his Presidential years. On March 21, 1969, President and Mrs. Nixon visited Mr. Truman at Independence. President Nixon later told newsmen: "we

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GHOSTS AND SPIRITS

The English have always been proud of the spirits haunting their houses. One publican at Cranbrook, Kent, decided to make money out of it. He announced that regulars at his pub could join in a hunt for a ghost. And since spooks roamed only at night, he got a special permission to serve drinks until 2 a.m. Customers now drink till midnight and after midnight. The receipts are growing. But, it is true, none has yet seen a ghost.

The Official USIS View

discussed East-West relations, and I found Mr. Truman to be up on everything."

Harry S. Truman was born May 8, 1884, in a rural Missouri village, the son of a horse-and-mule trader and politician. His parents, unable to agree on a middle name for their child, compromised by giving him only a middle initial. He graduated from secondary school without special honours but well up in his class. Lack of money prevented his going to college, and he became first a bank clerk in Kansas City, then a farmer. During World War One he was an artillery captain in France in a unit that saw considerable combat. Shortly after his discharge in 1919 he married Elizabeth Wallace and went into the Haberdashery business in Kansas City with a wartime buddy. They went out of business in 1922.

THE KANSAS CITY Democratic Party organization asked Mr. Truman to enter the Jackson County (a political subdivision) election for judge. He did, and won, but two years later, in his first and last political defeat, he lost his bid for re-election. At the age of 50, he was elected to the U.S. Senate by a landslide majority of 265,000 votes. He was re-elected in 1940.

It was in 1924, too, that the Truman's only child, Margaret, was born. She is now the wife of Clifton Daniel, associate

editor of the New York Times. She has just written a biography of her father, based on family letters, diary entries and private memoranda. It is being published as a book and is being serialized in some U.S. newspapers.

His second term in the Senate was highlighted by his chairmanship of the Special Committee to investigate the National Defense Program. At the 1944 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Mr. Truman was chosen as President Roosevelt's Vice Presidential running mate. The Roosevelt-Truman team won. Only three months after Mr. Roosevelt was sworn in for his fourth term, he died of a cerebral hemorrhage, thrusting Mr. Truman into America's highest political office.

MR. TRUMAN had been President less than one year when in March 1947, he proclaimed the Truman Doctrine, setting a new course for U.S. foreign policy. He assembled a legislative package called the fair deal to distribute more equitably America's wealth and to guarantee civil rights to Negroes. Congress, however, stifled most of the proposals.

In 1948 Mr. Truman pulled one of the most stunning upsets in the history of U.S. Presidential politics. Almost nobody expected the President to defeat the Republican Party Nominee, Thomas E. Dewey. Yet voters gave "the little man from Missouri" a

solid plurality of more than two million votes.

During his second term his first major foreign policy initiative was the formation in 1949 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), an agreement among the United States, Canada and ten Western European nations (Greece, Turkey and the Federal Republic of Germany were subsequently admitted) to support the United Nations, to encourage economic collaboration, and to "agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all.

On June 25, 1950, some 60,000 North Korean troops invaded the Republic of Korea. Five days later U.S. ground forces entered the conflict, in what Mr. Truman called a "police action" for the United Nations. The war continued through the remainder of President Truman's term, finally ending July 26, 1953, six months after Mr. Truman had left office.

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