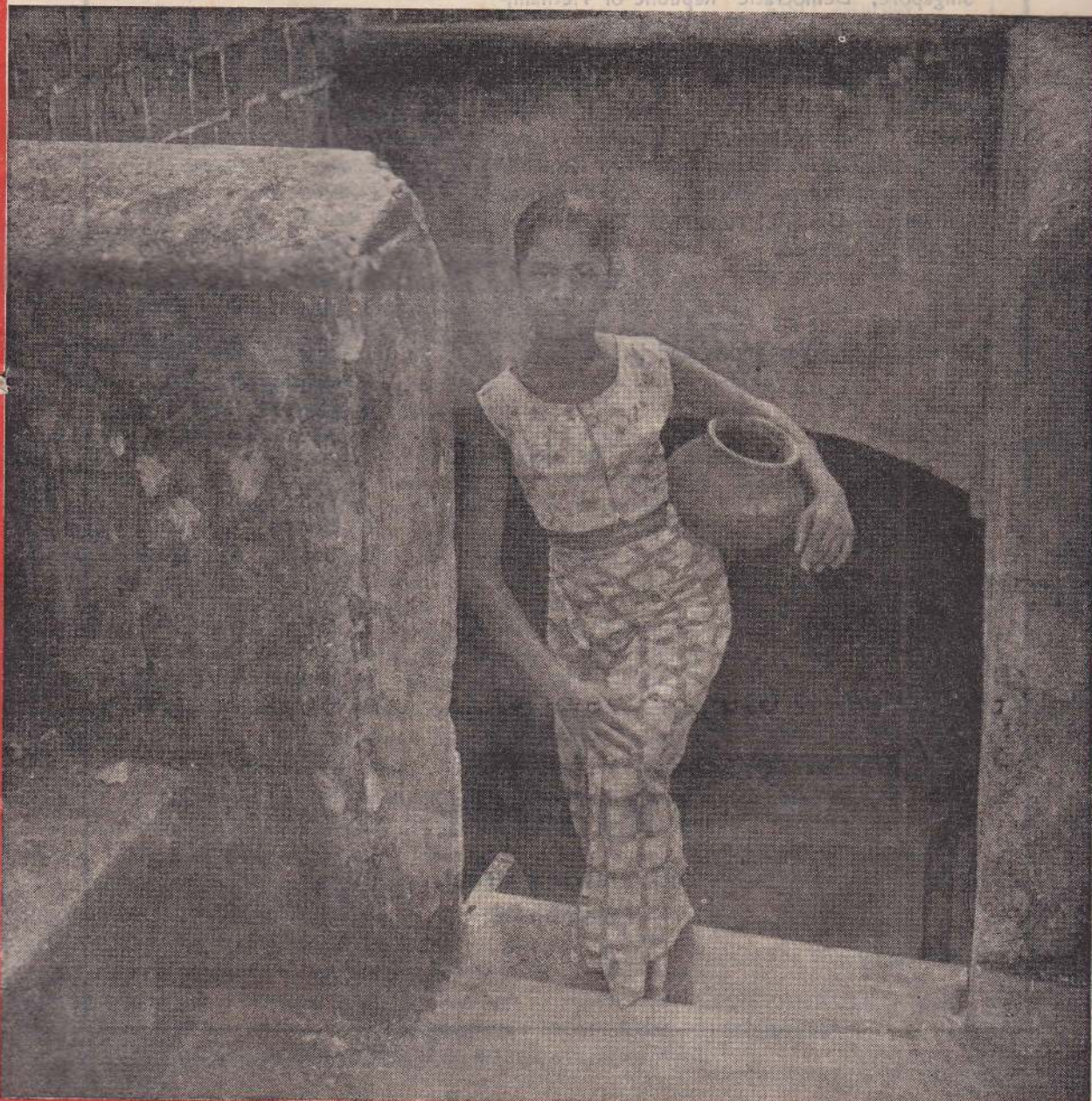


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# Letter From The Editor

PRESIDENT J. R. JAYEWARDENE, in a speech at the 40th anniversary celebrations of the Kelaniya Sri Dharmaloka Vidyalaya on Tuesday, October 3, outlined the Government's new policy on education and re-iterated that English must be studied by all school children from the age of six. He said that English would thus be made the international language for study alongside the official language which is Sinhala and the national language Tamil. The Government, he stated, had decided that whilst Sinhala will continue to be the medium of instruction for Sinhalese children and Tamil for Tamil children, Sinhala students should be made to learn Tamil and Tamil students to learn Sinhala, and that all students should learn English as a foreign language. He went on to say that while a knowledge of English as a foreign language was extremely essential, the circumstances in the country demanded that the people of the two communities, the Sinhalese and the Tamils, should learn each other's language. Stressing the need for a knowledge of English among the young students of today President Jayewardene said it would be a crime to deny children a knowledge of the English language which was very useful in the conduct of international affairs and also to have access to information and knowledge not ordinarily available in the national language. During the Bandaranaike era they gave up the importance earlier shown to teaching English. This was a foolish move and the UNP had opposed it. He also recalled that it was when he was the Member for Kelaniya in the State Council and in Parliament that he had taken the initiative to move a resolution that Sinhala should become the official language. It was true that nobody found any difficulty to learn in Sinhala, but he asked whether a knowledge of only Sinhala was sufficient? It was not sufficient, he said, and that was the reason why he placed such stress on an international language. In the old days Pali had opened the doors to Buddhism. It was for this reason that he wanted all students to have a knowledge of English. The only hitch was that there was a lack of sufficient teachers, but every effort was being made to overcome this shortcoming. He also emphasised that the study of English was a duty as well as a responsibility of the present Government and that this will give a new dimension towards improving the future quality of life of the people of Sri Lanka. A knowledge of English would also give the students greater opportunities for employment in the industries which local and foreign investors will set up in this country shortly. The President, Mr. Jayewardene, has now once again spelt out the three language policy adopted by the present Government in detail but such re-iteration and repetition is necessary and useful in the context of current developments. We have drawn attention to this speech of President Jayewardene because *Tribune* has from its very inception in 1954 advocated a three-language policy for this country. During all the years of the Bandaranaike era when Sinhala Only fanatics had rejected English and sought to force the one language policy down everybody's throats, *Tribune* had not only resisted this vigorously but had also persisted in continuing publication as an English-language journal. We were told that the days of the English language were over in Sri Lanka and that we should drop English and publish only in the national languages. Much as we would like it, we have neither the facilities nor resources to publish our paper in all three languages. It will take the country a long time to get out of the cultural genocide that was inflicted upon it by the short-sighted language policies of the Bandaranaike regime.

## TRIBUNE

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## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

### The Press In Sri Lanka—1

ONE OF THE PROUD CLAIMS OF THE DHARMISTA GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT J. R. Jayewardene is that the fullest freedom has been given to the press even to indulge in the most virulent criticism of the Government as long as such criticism did not transgress the law. This is certainly something that had not been permitted during the seven years of the United Front government not only through the operation of the Press Council Law and the many and suddenly-imposed Regulations under the Emergency Law but also through various administrative flats and actions of various high-powered gentlemen of the Establishment. Apart from frequent arm-twisting of editors and journalists there were other ways in which attempts were made to control newspapers, newspaper owners, editors and journalists and to minimise their effectiveness. Only the papers that became part of the Establishment or turned somersaults to act as willing sycophants were allowed to flourish and to make profits on unlimited government and Private sector advertisements. The quality and content of these papers had degenerated to the point where they lost all credibility.

The story of the press in the years from 1970-77 is a story in itself. During this time, the *Lake House* was taken over and the *Times* was propped up from total collapse by artificial respiration that robbed it of all validity as a newspaper organisation. The *Sun/Dawasa* group was shut down under the Emergency Regulations, and even weekly papers like the *Tribune*

managed to exist only by careful observance of the more important Emergency Regulations and by confining criticism of the Establishment to very narrow limits. It is not the purpose of this note to review the history of the press in Sri Lanka during the years 1970-77 or to recount the tribulations of *Tribune* in those years. This is a task which historians and researchers must undertake. We will make references to some aspects of this phase of Sri Lanka history from time to time on appropriate occasions.

**The current situation of the Press in Sri Lanka is an even more important matter for review and examination. Is there freedom of the press now? Has the Government fulfilled its pledges to make**

**it possible for a free and democratic press to flourish in this country? Are the conditions conducive to the growth of a free and democratic press?**

It is necessary, at the very start, to refer to one matter on which the leaders of this Government had much to say in its early days, viz the distribution and allocation of Government advertising. There is no doubt a change in that all the big newspapers are now flooded with government advertisements and the private sector usually follow the governmental lead (this is because the private sector feels that if the government does not shower its blessings on a newspaper for whatever reason it would be unsafe for the private sector which is fighting for licences and contracts to advertise in such

#### COVER

#### ENGLISH

**WILL THE YOUNG LADY ON THE COVER** this week do better with a knowledge of English? How will it help her? Will it only help to stabilise her in her habitat and environment? There is no doubt that as long as English was the monopoly of a ruling elite, it had a baneful impact of many people, but if it is only one of three languages that every child must study it will help to stabilise this young person in a growing area of maturity. It will also enable her to reach out to knowledge that has been denied to several generations in this country by denying them competence in an international language. The same kind of elitist monomaniac arrogance that the "English-educated" had exhibited in the days of British colonialism had begun to kindle in the minds and hearts of a small coterie who took advantage of the suicidal policy of Sinhala Only. This small and aggressively arrogant elite had strutted around like petty demi-gods in the dark days of one language chauvinism. In many ways this elite manifested far worse anti-social tendencies than the worst English-educated Brown Sahibs had one in the days gone by. Today, in Sri Lanka and a large number of other countries, once part of British Empire, English is no longer a language of the conqueror and or Brown overlord who refused to recognise or use the national languages. English in Sri Lanka today is only an international language. This country needs an international language and it will be easier to make English one of the three basic languages of the country rather than attempt to take over any of the other international languages like French or German or Spanish or Russian. Once everybody learns the three languages this country will be a different kind of place to live in—an enlightened country where harmony prevails.



papers) But in spite of the governmental promise that there would be a fair distribution and allocation of public sector and governmental advertising, nothing has been done to make this promise real so far as the smaller papers and periodicals are concerned.

In India, for instance, every newspaper and periodical—daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly and even occasional publications—are allotted government advertising on the basis of circulation and readership as a matter of right without owners and editors having to wait at the offices and doorsteps of bureaucrats and politicians to get their quota of advertising. This was done to ensure that a vigorous and virile press of smaller newspapers flourished to prevent a total monopoly by the bigger highly-capitalised newspapers which usually arrogate unto themselves the nomenclature of being “national dailies”. Democracy will become real only when a large number of national, regional and local newspapers exist and are allowed to flourish. And, in the context and the circumstances of the capitalism of the mixed economy of a developing country, smaller papers and periodicals cannot possibly exist unless they get a reasonable share of advertising. As we said earlier, private sector advertising usually follows the public sector and governmental blessing—this will be so until a democratic press becomes a living tradition and a reality when private advertisers will not be afraid to buy space in papers critical of the government and the administration. For a free and democratic press to exist and to grow in the kind of economy and society that prevails in Sri Lanka today, the Government must take the initiative to ensure a fair distribution of all advertising it controls and thereby help the growth and stability of a large number of papers

especially the smaller ones in the capital as well as on the regional and district levels.

The Indira Gandhi government was criticised for the misuse of this democratic principle during the dark days of the Emergency between 1975 and 1977. In this period, governmental advertising in India was used to arm-twist papers that were critical of the regime and in fact to drive some of them to the verge of financial bankruptcy by cutting revenue they had legitimately enjoyed earlier. One of the promises of the Janata Party during the election campaign and immediately after the new Government was formed was to ensure a free press and to see that there was no further discrimination in the distribution of governmental advertising. Whatever else has not been done in India, this was done by the Janata government: and the earlier system of fair and purposeful distribution of government advertising to all newspapers and periodicals was restored.

In Sri Lanka, there has so far been no tradition of a system of fair distribution of governmental advertising to ensure the growth of a free and democratic press. Here such advertising went by favour of governmental patronage. Smaller newspapers were totally ignored or were occasionally given crumbs if sufficient lobbying was done. Government advertising was not given to newspapers, especially the smaller papers, which made public opinion, critical of the government. It is one thing to deny advertising to newspapers and periodicals which violate an unwritten code of journalistic ethics, but it is a totally different matter to discriminate against newspapers which are critical of the government

and administration even on constructive lines.

A truly democratic press has not grown in this country mainly for this reason. It is also essential that Government should insist that a newspaper should ensure that a reader has a fair percentage of space devoted to reading material in the form of news, features and comment. In Sri Lanka, from the time the Lake House was taken over by the last Government, more than sixty to seventy percent of the space in their publications have been devoted to advertising. (In the days gone by all those who wanted to democratise the press, including the UNP, had clamoured that advertising should be only about twenty-five percent of the space and never more than forty under any circumstances).

What is the position about government advertising today?

No sooner this Dharmista Government came to power, proud declarations were made that a free press would be ensured and as a concomitant it was said that governmental advertising would be distributed on a fair basis to all newspapers big and small. There was, we believe, a Cabinet decision to this effect, and nearly all newspapers were placed on the approved list. Only a few journals which some politicians and administrators thought were outside of the pale of decent journalism (wrongly in our view) were placed on the black list. It is necessary to draw up a code of journalistic ethics and papers and periodicals should be blacklisted for purposes of government advertising only if they violate the Code—with a right of appeal to a Press Council (a new one) to adjudicate on the decisions of bureaucrats. The right of placing advertising should not, as now, be totally in the hands of politicians and bureaucrats without pro-



per rules to determine the method and manner of allocation.

Today, on Sri Lanka, every newspaper in the approved list is qualified to get government advertising but this has, so far, been only an empty slogan or a promise. It cannot be anything else without a proper system of distribution and allocation. The *Tribune* is on the approved list but it has so far not got any government advertising other than a few and occasional notices from the Government Printer—a kind gesture from the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (the Government Printer is under this Ministry) no doubt to show that the Governmental boast was being implemented.

Inquiries reveal that though a paper is on the approved list, advertisements are still distributed as under the old SLFP Bandaranaike regime, on the orders of the Ministers overlooking particular Corporations and Departments (that have advertisements to place). As in the days of Srimavo, Felix NM & Co, the Minister, his Bureaucrats and the Advertising Agency (private and governmental) decide which papers are fit to receive advertising. The one test applied is whether a paper is or will be critical of the Ministry and the Departments it controls or whether it treads (or will tread) on the corns of friends and supporters of the Minister and his favoured Bureaucrats. The Advertising Agency also has its whims and fancies about the papers they should favour—and all in the game know of the sordid story of kickbacks, rebates and other favours done or extracted.

The situation today, therefore, is no different from what it was in the bad old days of the SLFP so far as government advertising in newspapers and periodicals are concerned. No democratic or free press will grow in Sri Lanka in the

present jungle where advertisement revenue goes only to those who are willing to toe the line with some politicians, their favoured bureaucrats and their ad-agency men. The "exposures" stories in some publications of the favoured class seem to have the blessings of one or more the dominant groups within the Establishment.

But papers like the *Tribune* which have from its inception been critical of the wrong policies and actions of all governments and administrations are left out in the cold from the governmental advertising system. We are not the only paper to be discriminated in this way, but we mention this as an instance of what is happening today. We had, no doubt, entertained high hopes that the Dharma Government of J. R. Jayewardene would set an example in this matter and thereby enable a truly democratic press to grow in this country. So far, our hopes have been doomed to disappointment.

It is now up to the new Minister of State in charge of Information & Broadcasting to take up this matter and formulate a system of rules and regulations that will take the allocation of government advertisements out of the arena of the tender mercies of the personal whims and fancies of Ministers, their favoured Bureaucrats and the Advertising Agency Houses. The Minister of State will also do well to create a new Press Council which can adjudicate on disputes and which will also lay down rules about the percentage of space that must be devoted to reading matter. (As it is, in the *Daily News* one has to wade through a labyrinthian jungle of confused advertising to detect a few pieces of news and an occasional feature that is readable—as for worthwhile comment it cannot exist in the seventy percent advertising that

floods every issue of the *Daily News*. But we will come to this later).

*Tribune* has so far existed without a splurge of advertising all these years but this has been possible only because of a combination of favourable circumstances which cannot continue for ever—and when this happens *Tribune* cannot operate or even exist, in the way it has all these years, free and independent within the possibilities and limitations of human endeavour. This note is not being written to beg for charity or favours in the matter of government advertising for *Tribune*, but because we feel that as a matter of right smaller papers like the *Tribune* which make public opinion (as they have done for many years) are entitled to a fair quota of the available government advertisement. And that we should be able to obtain this quota of advertisement without having to woo bureaucrats and individual politicians or pay homage to ad-agency houses.

Today, the government-owned and sponsored *Lake House* and the *Times* get the bulk, if not the entirety, of the advertising together with the *Dawasa* group which is only another adjunct of the UNP (even though it indulges in critical exposures and comment for the better health of the UNP and the Government and a better circulation.) But all these daily papers carry far more advertising than would be allowed in any democratic set up or would be tolerated by any reading public in a truly democratic country with a vigilant Fourth states. Sri Lanka is now in the Estate, where more newspapers have to be encouraged to start, exist, grow and flourish if democracy is to be stabilised. But as a first step the existing papers—including the journals published by the different political parties—must be given opportunities to grow. In India journals



of even Opposition political parties have the same right as the commercial papers to a share of the government advertisements and this is a tradition Sri Lanka will do well to follow if it is serious about a democratic press.

This question of the fair allocation of government advertising is one of the challenges facing the new Minister in charge of Information and Broadcasting and we hope that he rises up to the occasion and lays the foundations for a truly free and democratic press in this country.

Before we go on to examine the anatomy, conduct and behaviour of the existing newspapers in this country today there is another matter to which reference must be made. This Government, especially the President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and the Prime Minister, Mr. R. Premadasa have stated very often that the Government welcomed criticism—no doubt on constructive or meaningful lines. And there is no doubt that they have welcomed such criticism even when it was not constructive or meaningful. What is more the President, the Prime Minister and a few other younger Ministers have been healthily responsive to criticism. They have not dismissed all criticism as *mala fide* as Governments, Ministers and Bureaucrats have done in the past, and as some Ministers and their hangers-on still do.

This welcome and healthy trend must grow and this can grow only with the growth of a free and democratic press. It cannot grow in the present spineless sycophancy and total journalistic incompetence of the Lake House newspapers. It can grow only if the papers of the Opposition parties like the *Janadina*, *Dinakara* and the *Aththa*—and others independently rooted—can be persuaded to come within a democratic code of journalistic

ethics (a code not designed to help papers like Lake House to flourish as a monopoly or to enable corrupt politicians and bureaucrats to find a cover for their nefarious activities). This is another matter to which the Minister of Information & Broadcasting must address his mind and find an early solution.

Whilst the President the Prime Minister and some enlightened Ministers accept and respond to constructive and meaningful criticism however hard-hitting, there are bureaucrats (especially from the new breed of political hangers-on now on the presidential or ministerial bandwagon) who resort to thuggery, intimidation and worse whenever a newspaper publishes a critical report.

In the last six months, reporters, commentators, and editors have been threatened with physical violence by a few highly-placed thugs who now parade as part of the President's men or as Ministers' confidants. Many reporters, commentators and even editors of big daily newspapers have succumbed to this kind of intimidation and terror, but there are some staunch journalists and editors who have stood up to this kind of thuggery. There is one particularly vicious individual who goes about bragging that he will crucify anyone who who stood in the way of his progress to Felixian power by criticising him in a way as to make others see the real clod he is. This individual does not hesitate to misuse the telephone by asking the weaker sex to convey his threats to the persons concerned using four-letter syllables which today will provoke a strike even in a plantation in a remote area.

The President, the Prime Minister and all the Ministers must warn such "thugs"

not to indulge in such activities because it can only lead to another Presidential Commission within a short time. The most notorious persons who had indulged in such tactics in the last Government are now facing the publicity in the Presidential Commission and the Government of J. R. Jayewardene will remain Dharmista only if the undesirable activities of some men who nows exercise direct administrative authority and indirect political power are curbed.

One has only to ask real journalists (there are many unreal ones now in the Lake House and Times) to know the kind of pressuring and intimidation they have been subject to in recent times. Many of them will not talk lest they lose their jobs but they will certainly speak before a new Presidential Commission. A very large number of them have applied for jobs abroad and when they go we will not only have a servile press but also a dead-duck of a press. The owners and editors of the *Dawasa* group extend a kind of necessary protection to their reporters and commentators, but the new thugs in high places will soon employ other methods to have their way. And if the President, Prime Minister and other Ministers do not take early steps to nip this trend to suppress the freedom of the Press in the bud it will be a bad outlook for the press in Sri Lanka. There are many little Felixes and Ians now springing up in the Dharmishta Establishment who are becoming a plague upon the nation and its free institutions, that the President and his Cabinet of Ministers must take serious note of them.

Having set out a few salient features under which the press in Sri Lanka has to function today, we propose to examine the main characteristics of the newspapers



that exist in the island today. Understandably, our approach will be the way *Tribune* has always examined the other newspapers of the Fourth Estate, critically but friendly. Dog does not eat dog, but it is permissible for one dog to describe the behaviour and conduct of other dogs without malice in the hope that critical analysis will help to build a better world.

It is not possible in the scope of this article to list or examine every paper or periodical published in Sri Lanka, but an endeavour will be made to refer to all papers which have big circulations and also those which though they do not have big publicised circulations make public opinion (and have a readership far more than their mere numerical circulation and print order—each copy being read by a large number of people).

Among the so-called “national dailies”, we have the *Lake House* publications, the *Times of Ceylon* publications and the newspapers of the *Dawasa* group (*Independent Newspapers Ltd.*) The *Lake House* and the *Dawasa* group publish papers in all three languages whilst the *Times* publishes a paper in Sinhalese beside its English paper. The *Virakesari* publishes a Tamil daily of national consequence, whilst the Tamil daily *Eelanadu* is the only provincial paper we have—it is published in Jaffna with a fair circulation in the North and East outside the peninsula. Apart from these, there are three party dailies: the CP's *Aththa* is the oldest, with the LSSP's *Janadina* coming next, and finally the post-1977 SLFP's *Dinakara*.

Then we have the party weeklies and fortnightlies—we will take only those published in English into consideration here though references may be made to the national language counterparts for purpose of analysis or comment.

The CP has recently revived its *Forward* as a fortnightly, whilst the LSSP continues with its *The Socialist Nation*. The SLFP has its *The Nation*. The UNP's *The Journal* has not been seen for some months. The JVP has a new monthly called *Red Power*. The CWC has a fortnightly called the *Congress News*. Religious bodies and organisations have their own periodicals: the *Catholic Messenger*, the *Morning Star*, the *Hindu Organ* and a whole host of Buddhist publications. Many of these are monthlies or quarterlies or annuals. Though they make public opinion in their own way among their readers, these papers and periodicals are not being scrutinised in this note which is being confined to the more politically significant publications.

Among the non-party periodical press in the English language pride of place must be given to Reggie Michael's *The Independent* and Mervyn de Silva's new fortnightly *Lanka Guardian*. Though we have referred to the *The Independent* in these columns on many occasions, we have as yet not noticed the birth of the *Lanka Guardian*. We had not made any reference to the *Lanka Guardian* so far, not because (as some have suggested) we wanted to blackout a potential rival but because we had nothing to bite on in the first eight or nine issues—of the paper. But in the last two numbers, Nos. 10 and 11, the *Lanka Guardian* has begun to take shape from the anomalous nebulosity it had manifested at the start (much of the hangover still persists) and something of the flesh that Mervyn de Silva is capable of giving any paper has begun to emerge. Issue No. 12 may be out before the second part of this note appears and we hope that it will be better than No. 11, but for the present we will confine our comments to the issues up to No. 11.

There are many pitfalls in undertaking a survey of this kind. Sometimes dog is tempted to eat dog at least for the sake of saying something clever or witty. There are many similar pitfalls to be avoided if a fair and just analysis is to be written.

*Tribune* has always been willing to correct or rectify any mistakes in factual analysis or even comment (if based on incorrect premises) and we look forward to receiving comments from our readers and fellow members of the Fourth Estate to help us paint a true and realistic picture of the current state of the press in Sri Lanka in this series.

(To be Continued)

—O— —O— —O—

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

### The USA And The Non-Aligned

by Kautiliya

IT IS A TROUBLED WORLD TODAY. Fighting erupted again in Lebanon and is doubtful whether the latest ceasefire will hold again especially with Israeli, in an exultant Camp David mood, threatening to march to Beirut if Syria and the Lebanon Arabs behind her do not back down. Israel wants to have a “safe” Lebanon, has a neighbour with a Right-wing Government based on the Maronite Christians whilst Syria wants the Leftwing associated with the Arabs to dominate the country. This can only result in a division of the country which Israel is in a position to enforce. Observers have noted that Syria accepted the Israeli march to the River Litany to out the PLO guerrillas



without a murmur and without a fight and this has certainly encouraged Israel to take an aggressive posture vis a vis Syria in Lebanon. And with Israel's impending separate peace treaty with Egypt Israel is in a yet stronger position to insist that the Christian Maronites (who rely on Israel) to have sovereign rights over territories Lebanon in which they are in a majority.

In the meantime, Iraq has called for a summit of all Arab states to persuade Egypt not to pursue the Camp David agreements to the point of signing a separate treaty with Israel. Iraq has suggested that a multi-billion dollar Fund be inaugurated to help Israel out. Only the five rejectionist Arab states have not so far shown any willingness to attend this meeting to which Egypt has agreed if the meeting was held in Cairo. Other Arab States seem willing to attend such a meeting. This will open a new dialogue in the Arab world that will tend to isolate the Rejection Front. In the meantime a team from Egypt will go to Washington this week to participate in negotiations with Israel under the good offices of the USA to pave the way for a peace treaty between the two countries.

There is no doubt that the understanding arrived at between Egypt and Israel at Camp David and which is likely to lead to a separate peace treaty between the two countries has changed the entire situation in the Middle East—since the time Nasser built the Arab Front. A unity of sorts had been maintained on the Arab Front although it had not been able to make Israel return the Arab lands it had occupied. Egypt had borne the brunt of the fighting and the "sacrifices." whilst the oil-rich Arab states had doled out conscience money to keep Egypt afloat. But how long can one country

depend on this kind of charity especially when it saw no way of resolving the confrontation militarily with the Super-powers behaving the way they did?

Sadat therefore the pragmatic way out although it meant the end of the Nasserite Arab Unity Front which was already in shambles even in the last days of Nasser. Whether the Camp David accord and a separate peace treaty between Egypt and Israel will bring peace to the Middle East is problematic, but Sadat has expressed a keen desire not to push ahead too far without taking the other frontline Arab states with him. Whether he will succeed in this is even more difficult to predict. But even a limited kind of peace between Egypt and Israel will set in motion a chain reaction in the Middle East that will change the whole pattern of geopolitical alignments in the region.

This break-up of the Arab Front in the Middle East, (which some Arab States led by Iraq are trying to repair), has naturally aroused serious apprehensions in the camp of the nonaligned. In the special Nonaligned Foreign Ministers meeting in New York on the first of October, special attention was paid to the question of nonaligned unity.

A PTI despatch from the United Nations, datelined October 2, set out the highlights of the Indian External Affairs speech at the same meeting:

"The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee urged at a meeting of non-aligned Foreign Ministers held at short notice here to-day that efforts should be directed towards containing bilateral problems from vitiating the solidarity of the non-aligned movement. He said that as they looked forward to the summit meeting of non-aligned leaders to be held next year at Havana, they should make resolute efforts 'to replace con-

flict by co-operation and harness our energies towards the attainment of prosperity for our peoples who have been exploited too long by foreign interests.' He said bilateral differences within the movement should not be allowed to be used by these interests to the detriment of the solidarity of the non-aligned movement.

"The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Sri Lanka to review the outcome of the Belgrade conference and to discuss the common stand to be taken by non-aligned countries on issues coming up before the current session of the General Assembly. About a dozen Foreign Ministers who are here for the Assembly session attended the meeting. Mr. Vajpayee's unity plea was directed at some of the bilateral disputes like those between Somalia and Ethiopia, Algeria and Morocco over Western Sahara, Vietnam and Kampuchea and the Cuban rule in Africa that drew strong criticism. Mr. Vajpayee said: 'We did not fight shy of frankly discussing some bilateral issues that have created differences within our group and this we did in order to see whether it was possible to resolve those differences. But we certainly did not allow them to disrupt our unity or otherwise come in the way of our onward march towards realising our common objectives. We also rescribed guidelines derived from the fundamental principles of the movement for defusing tensions arising out of our mutual differences.' Mr. Vajpayee said that after the Belgrade conference that took place two months ago there had been significant developments in relation to Namibia and West Asia. On the economic front, there was no progress in the negotiations with developed countries on most of the key issues. The North-South dialogue through the General



Assembly Committee of the Whole had not got beyond the stage of interpretation of its mandate.

'We have stated our positions on these and other issues at the Belgrade conference, and we maintain them. What is important now, particularly at this session of the Assembly, is to co-ordinate our actions so as to present a united front and thus make effective contribution towards the solution of these problems', he said.

But what neither Hameed nor Vajpayee thought politic to mention was that most non-aligned countries believed that the USA was the culprit responsible for all efforts to break up the non-aligned movement.

There is no doubt that the USA has recently shown extreme caution in all matters connected with the non-aligned, but her strategy has become crystal clear. The USA now makes a big noise about her desire to support the movement whilst at the same doing everything to split the movement and thereby prevent it from adopting active postures against US policies. This has been the line pursued by the USA from the Colombo Summit in August 1976 right up to the recent Belgrade Conference of the Foreign Ministers of non-aligned countries.

The US President welcomed the Belgrade session with a message of greetings which some Western quarters described as a turning point in Washington's attitude to the non-aligned. It was claimed, in effect, that the USA was now willing to enter into a dialogue with the non-aligned on all major political and economic issues. Yet even prior to Belgrade and during the Conference the United States sought to discredit the movement's leading members—Algeria, India and particularly Cuba, which were the most staunchest supporters of the struggles against neo-

colonialism and racism in Africa, Asia and Latin America. According to a Paris-based magazine *Afrique-Asie* Washington on the eve of Belgrade sent messages to 15 non-aligned Heads of State and Governments calling on them to sway the Belgrade Conference to "condemn" Cuba and to move the IV non-aligned summit from Havana elsewhere. By this throwing in "the Cuban issue" the USA was anxious not only to discredit Cuba and other radical non-aligned regimes but also to forestall criticism of the United States for its recent aggression in Zaire, occupation by the US forces of Puerto Rico, Guam and South Korea. Only a negligible minority is known to have voiced American anti-Cuban ideas at the Conference, mainly conservative Arab regimes and some members of the West African Defence pact (CEAO). The majority did not support the anti-Cuban scheme and the non-aligned have displayed commendable wariness of the US political manoeuvring: the Conference also reaffirmed Havana as the venue for the IV non-aligned summit.

At the Belgrade Conference, the US-inspired anti-Cuban smokescreen aimed to save the United States and other Western countries from being sharply criticised. The Conference denounced the USA, France, and West Germany for their co-operation with Israel and South Africa. It expressed deep concern over the growing imperialist pressure on some non-aligned nations particularly in Africa, designed to destabilize radical regimes including the use of armed intervention and mercenaries. These grievances were aired by Ethiopia, Benin, the Seychelles, Madagascar.

The Conference also expressed its opposition to the so-called Pan-African peace-keeping force which the United States and France had tried to organise under NATO

sponsorship and thus bypassing the OAU. Washington had not expected Arab countries to adopt at the Conference a united position on the Middle East and Palestine demanding a special session of the UN General Assembly to approve agreed sanctions against Israel including her expulsion from the United Nations.

It is that that some of the Belgrade decision are rather vague, but on the whole the participants in the Conference were unequivocally willing to intensify the struggle against neocolonialism. In such a situation the USA can be expected to continue in her efforts to destabilise the movement and in first instance seek to prevent the next Summit being held in Havana, in Cuba, in the Centre of the Americas.

The USA is once again pursuing aggressive policies in foreign affairs to establish her leadership and in this it is her interest to destabilise the non-aligned movement to weaken in its fight against neo-colonialism and imperialism with which American and West European (and Japanese) big business and banking are associated.

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#### SNIPPETS

A little philosophy inclineth  
man's mind to atheism; but  
depth in philosophy bringeth  
man's mind about to religion.

—Francis Bacon

To see a world in a grain of sand  
And heaven in a wild flower  
Hold infinity in the palm of  
your hand  
And eternity in an hour.

—William Blake



## THE WORLD TODAY

# Iran, Middle East

### IRAN: REVOLT AGAINST SHAH SNOW BALLS

THE TREACHEROUS SHAH HAS STRUCK treacherously. After the sly manoeuvre of changing the government and making some gestures of conciliation towards the opposition and talk of dialogue with moderates in an effort to divide the rising tide of people's revolt, the Shah has clamped down the emergency, declared martial law and promulgated curfew in twelve towns including Teheran. It was said that the military rule will be in force for a period of six months. Immediately after the imposition of martial law, on September 8, the reign of terror began. Tanks and machine guns and automatic rifles were used against the people and firing went on in the streets even at night. On September 10 the authorities had admitted having killed 88 people but western correspondents were reporting that this was gross under-estimation and that more than 200 and may be several hundreds had been killed mercilessly in the very first wave of armed terror now unleashed and many thousands have been wounded and arrested. Agencies reported on September 10 that strict censorship had been imposed on the press. Many opposition leaders had gone underground including some journalists. But even western observers pointed out that the Shah's regime was now completely isolated and acting in desperation and the latest perfidy will have the effect of further uniting and galvanising the opposition against the dictatorship.

Why this sudden turnabout after the sweet talk of liberalisation and democracy and dialogue, why this "bloody confrontation with the people", as the British paper *The Guardian* called it. Just a few days earlier on Id-ul-fitr day on September 4 half a million people in Teheran and thousands in other towns demonstrated peacefully. There were scenes of mass fraternisation of the people with the army and the police. People were shouting: "we are against the Shah's tyranny", "you are our brothers", "why shoot at us". One military man with loudspeaker was heard saying: "We are on duty, we have orders to shoot, but we shall not do: continue your peaceful agitation."

Then on September 7 a general strike all over the country was called and it was a big success. Tass report on September 8 said that one million had been on the streets in Teheran quoting Iranian sources. It said participants carried posters, "do not kill your brothers." At first the demonstrations were peaceful. When the police attacked they used teargas bombs and fired in the air. Similar demonstrations were held all over the country in all the important towns. The fraternisation, the scenes of flowers being offered to police and soldiers by the people were too much for the regime. The same evening an emergency meeting was held by the government and martial law was proclaimed and the reign of terror and massacre began.

Why has the opposition taken such a religious character in Iran? Under a regime where for 25 years nearly all freedom of expression and assembly and political parties were banned the discontent of the people was inevitably carried into mosques and religious assemblies. Thus the assemblies of believers became

more and more politicalised. The degenerate life style of the court feudal gentry and the newly rich upper middle class and "westernisation" in its worst sense of decadence, immorality, nudity and pornography imported from the west and all in the name of modernisation patronised by the regime shocked the susceptibilities of the people.

But the religious opposition is not homogenous. There are many currents in it. Some can be called progressive, some call themselves Islamic Marxists or Socialists, others are more conservative and orthodox. There are secular political currents as well. Tass report from Teheran said that among these the most important is the National Front whose leader Karim Sanjabi has spoken out many times. He said that the Shah was carrying out a policy of terror, oppression, mass killings and was all the time flouting the Constitution and his own promises. The purpose of the genocide was only one, that is to strengthen the despotic rule. Sanjabi said that he stood for the unification of all the national forces of opposition. He said that the demonstrations of September 4 and 5 had shown that the nation was alive and demanded freedom.

Another National Front leader Dariush Ruhar said that the nation had woken up. He confirmed that the National Front had taken part in the mass demonstrations and had tried to keep them peaceful. People had been demanding that the political police SAVAK be disbanded and political prisoners be released. A former premier Ali Amin who had led the government in years 1963-64 has declared that he was prepared to build a bridge between the people and the Shah. The situation was insupportable, he said.



But the Shah preferred to burn all bridges. On September 10 the iron fisted Prime Minister Shariff Emami had the temerity to declare while presenting his government to the so-called parliament that even under martial law the Shah's programme of "liberalisation" would continue. Individual rights and freedom of expression will be allowed and the course of the so-called national unity would be followed. While he was saying all this with a straight face, several members walked out shouting "you have the blood of hundreds of Iranis on your hands." The National Front has said that the Shah's regime will not be able to root out corruption as it was inherent in it, nor could it democratise the country.

The central committee of the Tudeh Party of Iran (Communist Party) has called for national coalition of all forces against the Shah. It calls for the abolition of monarchy, unity of all opposed to dictatorship and for democracy. It calls for dissolution of the senate and assembly and all organs controlled by SAVAK, free elections to constituent assembly and a new constitution.

National control of oil resources, end to pillage by consortiums, expulsion of American advisers from the army, withdrawal of Iranian troops from Oman, rupture with all military alliances and following strict nonalignment, are the party's other demands.

Events show that people must unite and co-ordinate their actions to end the dictatorship, the central committees of the Tudeh Party said.

Iran is a multinational country but for the last 25 years the Shah has been following a policy of oppression and forced assimilation of the considerable minorities. For this purpose statistics have also been fabricated.

But it is known that Persian speaking Iranis are about half of the population. There are Azerbaijanis in the north who with other close linguistic groups make up to 25 to 28 per cent of the population. Then Kurds, Luris and Bakhtiaris in the west and Baluchis in the south-west make up about 18 per cent.

There has been a national movement for linguistic and cultural rights and autonomy all these years which has at times led to uprising. The big democratic movement in Iranian Azerbaijan was suppressed cruelly in 1945 but it has not died. Similarly there was an uprising in Iranian Kurdistan which is contiguous to the Kurdistan in Iraq.

The recognition of Kurdish rights in Iraq and now recognition of national rights of Baluchis in Afghanistan across the border have strengthened the case for autonomy for these people in Iran.

The Shah has tried with an iron hand to suppress the Azerbaijanis, their language and culture. As a contrast to all this is the flourishing Soviet Azerbaijan where not only Azerbaijanis but also Kurds have their books and publications, freedom to develop their art, culture, music and literature.

—Masood Ali Khan in *New Age*,  
New Delhi, 24/9/78

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## IRAN: SOCIAL BACKGROUND

Throughout the past week the world press has been paying much attention to the events in Iran where mass-scale popular unrest mounted throughout the country.... The social background of the events in Iran is obvious. The thousands of millions of dollars in Iran's returns from oil exports have not eased the position of the

working masses, but have only widened the gap between wealth and poverty. The foreign press notes that the policy of "open doors" with regard to foreign capital and the massive arms purchases in the United States have resulted in thousands of millions of petrodollars flowing back to the western, above all, the US monopolies. Up to three thousand million dollars are annually pumped out of the country in the form of profits, dividends and other returns of foreigners alone. Besides, nearly a thousand million dollars a year are spent on the maintenance of tens of thousands of American advisers working in various sections of the government's machinery, particularly in the army. One of the acutest social and economic problems is the mounting unemployment in the major Iranian cities. In the past few years the city slums have been mainly inhabited by peasants who left their native places following the transfer of land to the village rich and the agro-industrial trusts which have close links with foreign capital. Speaking in the Iranian parliament Deputy Manuchehr Azdi said that the rightlessness, violations of the Constitution and the government's lack of attention for the needs of the population, corruption, abuse of power and other factors have caused the extensive popular dissatisfaction. All this, coupled with a number of other factors are the cause of the current events and the fact that the most diverse political and ideological forces, ranging from the Moslem clergymen to the Left-wing, are acting jointly among the opposition.....

—Arkady Maslennikov in *Pravda*  
APN, 20/9/78

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## MIDDLE EAST: WEST EUROPEAN DOUBTS OVER CAMP DAVID ACCORD

After the initial euphoria of the Begin-Sadat accord at Camp David, the West Europeans in a sombre retrospective mood are waking up to the realities of the chasms in the Arab world. Obviously, the real victor of the Camp David parleys is President Carter, who has scored a personal triumph which his battered Presidency badly needed. Britain has embraced the Camp David package in full measure—and nobody expected it otherwise—but in France and West Germany senior Government officials have private reservations about the course of events in the Arab world. What Egyptian President Anwar Sadat has agreed to is a five-year period of transition to some loose form of local autonomy to be supervised by Israeli military presence. This then is the heart of the matter. That Mr. Sadat's Egypt is now no more a party to the ideals of pan-Arabic unity and the goal of nationhood for the refugees of Palestine comes as a rude awakening for Arab intellectuals. President Nasser persevered after and sacrificed for this ideal for nearly two decades—what has happened to all that under Mr. Sadat's leadership?

A politically weak and isolated Egypt trying to come to terms with a Western backed jingoistic and militarily powerful Israel, confirms permanent Western presence and influence in West Asia. The radical Arab States, the Palestinians and the Soviet Union cannot just afford to sit on the ring-side of this unfolding scenario. And that is why there are so many "ifs" about the final outcome of the Begin-Sadat parleys at Camp David, which is merely a personal accord. In fact, this is the very reason which prompted Mr. Sadat's

Foreign Minister Mr. Kamal to resign on the spot at Camp David. Mr. Kamal's predecessor Mr. Mohamed Riad resigned when Mr. Sadat made his first journey to Jerusalem to address the Israeli Parliament. Mr. Sadat's solo diplomacy and peace initiative has so far cost him two Foreign Ministers and loss of prestige in the radical Arab world. Will his present quest for another solo peace treaty with Israel cost him his career? This is the apprehension his admirers in the West have about his future.

Western analysts wonder how Mr. Carter will cope with the Arab rage. On the face of it, as the Western world sees it, Israel has shown good faith by making so-called concessions on Sinai and the West Bank. But there is no mention about fulfilling the true aspirations of the Palestinian people. The suggestion—which Arab radicals think is ludicrous—at Camp David was that any final status for the West Bank and Gaza would be worked out jointly by Israel, Egypt, Jordan and the elected representatives of the Palestinians. The Palestinians one talks to here say that the local Palestinians in the Israeli occupied West Bank will not take part in any elections. Because of Israeli military presence, some form of elections may perhaps be stage-managed but how can Egypt and Israel sell the outcome of such elections to the rest of the Arab world?

The Arab oil kingdoms like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, who for the past nine months have effectively sat on the fence, while becoming more and more agitated at the widening divisions in the Arab world and growing isolation of Mr. Sadat, will soon have to decide on a new course of strategy. The City of Jerusalem is regarded as holy and sacred by the Saudis. Israel is in no mood to give up its

sovereignty on Jerusalem. Can the Saudis accept this as "fait accompli?" The Palestinian agitation in the Arab world, coupled with their brain power and influence in the oil States, could have far-reaching consequences in the traditional and conservative Arab kingdoms. This is why to contain the Palestinian challenge, the Arab Kings on balance could possibly decide that Mr. Sadat is a greater liability to their national interest. This then could be the final undoing of Mr. Sadat.

In Egypt, a great deal will depend on the honesty, efficiency and capability of the Ministers and civil servants to fulfil the rising aspirations of the people for a better standard of living. The widening gap in the lifestyles of the 'instant' rich Egyptians and the poor teeming millions in Cairo is a sad commentary on aspects of Mr. Sadat's brand of socialism.

Today's Cairo is a far cry from late President Nasser's Cairo—for better or worse only posterity will tell.

—Batak Gathani, London in *Hindu*  
September 27, 1978

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## MIDDLE EAST: FUND TO WIN EGYPT AWAY FROM ACTP

Iraq tonight urged the establishment of a multibillion-dollar Arab fund to win Egypt away from the Camp David summit agreements and also offered to send forces to Syria to help confront Israel. The move was announced by the Iraq News Agency (INA) in reporting a resolution passed by the nation's Ruling Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). In Beirut the support of Iraq's 180,000-strong armed forces was seen as an important boost for Arab opponents of Egyptian-Israeli peace moves—but Baghdad's



offer was rated unlikely to be accepted in the near future. There is a deep-seated ideological dispute between Syrian and Iraqi leaders of antagonistic wings of the Baath Party. Baghdad has repeatedly refused to join the Syrian-led Arab "Steadfastness Front" established to frustrate Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's peace initiative. Iraq has called the front's policies too moderate.

Iraqi criticism of Arab attitudes toward the Camp David agreements as not being firm enough was viewed in Beirut as a clear indication that Baghdad was maintaining its radical stand and that Iraqi troops were unlikely to move against Israel unless there was a fundamental Syrian policy change. Iraq's RCC called on the wealthy Arab states to set up the fund to help Egypt if it gave up the Camp David agreements, INA said. Under the Iraqi proposal, the agency continued the fund of at least nine billion dollars a year over 10 years would provide Egypt with five billion dollars a year—if it changed its summit stand—while the rest of the money would go for military requirements plus financial aid for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Palestinian Arabs in Israeli-occupied territory. The appropriations could be increased in the light of the "requirements of the battle", Iraq said, also calling for an Arab summit to discuss what it termed effective action against the Camp David accords.

—PTC-Reuter, Baghdad,  
October 3, 1978

#### MIDDLE EAST: SEVEN STATES BACK IRAQ'S CALL FOR ARAB SUMMIT

Jordan, Saudi Arabia and five other Arab states have supported a call by Iraq for an urgent Arab

summit to discuss the Camp David framework for Middle East peace. Arab diplomats said yesterday that the prime objective of a summit would be to dissuade Egypt from signing a separate peace treaty with Israel provided under the Camp David accords. Official sources in Baghdad told Reuters that the call for an Arab summit had been supported so far by Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Oman. Iraq, in calling for the summit, suggested a nine-billion dollar fund to woo Egypt away from its commitments to the American-sponsored camp David accords. But the sources said Iraqi President Ahmed Hassan Al-Bakr on Monday received a message from Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad reflecting "a positive stand towards common Arab action to face Zionist challenges." Iraq's Vice-President Saddam Hussein, following up the Baghdad summit call, yesterday held talks with the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, and his Prime Minister, Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah. Mr. Hussein arrived in Kuwait from Saudi Arabia, where he showed up unexpectedly on Monday for talks with Crown Prince Fahd.

The Saudi government, in a statement on the talks, referred to the necessity of joint action to convene an Arab summit conference as soon as possible. Arab diplomats said Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states were confident Egypt would accept the call to attend the summit. But they said invitations would not specifically refer to the Camp David accords. The diplomats said either Saudi Arabia or Bahrain was expected to issue the summit invitations. But authoritative Bahraini sources said later their small Gulf state was not likely to take such a leading role. The Bahrain government

yesterday held an extraordinary session and reasserted its belief in the need for a summit. Bahrain was the first to call for an Arab conference after Camp David. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states have objected to Egypt's single-handed attempt to solve the 30-year-old Arab-Israeli dispute and its apparent willingness to sign a separate peace with Israel.

—PTC-Reuter, Bahrain,  
October 4, 1978.

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#### MIDDLE EAST: THE CAMP DAVID PEACE TALKS

**ISRAELI VIEWPOINT.** Throughout the weeks that preceded the Camp David talks the Egyptian media dealt extensively with the meeting, but very little information of any substance was disclosed. In view of the effective blackout imposed by the Egyptian leadership on the preparations for Camp David, the media limited itself to discussing mainly basic attitudes. One of the best summaries of the Egyptian perception of the different parties' positions could be found in a mid-August article by Anis Mansur, the editor of the weekly *October*, who is considered to be a *confidante* of President Sadat. Mansur summed up the basic positions of the three parties to the Camp David talks as follows: The essence of the Egyptian position is adherence to UN Resolution 242. This stipulates, according to Mansur, Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967. Minor modifications may be made in the borders along the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, but, says Mansur, Egypt's sovereignty on her land is not negotiable. Within the framework of a peace agreement Egypt would grant Israel full recognition and establish normal relations, but this would be implemented only gradually "due to the psychological and practical considerations."



The Israeli position, according to Mansur, is based on a rejection of Resolution 242 and a conception of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as "liberated territories". Nevertheless, says Mansur, whenever Begin is obliged to refer to withdrawal from these territories, he insists, on only partial implementation so that Israeli forces would remain in the area. The Palestinians would be granted a kind of self-administration, for a period of 5-10 years, to test the seriousness of their intention to live in peace with Israel, and only afterwards would it be decided whether Jordan or Israel remained in charge. The settlements in the territories would remain intact, including those in Sinai's Rafiah area which would be defended by Israeli forces. According to Mansur, Begin does want peace—but only on his own terms and in accordance with his "dubious religious belief."

The American position is described as essentially similar to that of Egypt, for it is also based on Resolution 242, though somewhat lacking in determination. President Carter, states Mansur, has a new political and diplomatic style which is different from those of Nixon or Ford: he is absolutely sincere in his desire to realize—but his capabilities are limited. The position of the presidency has been weakened by the Nixon affair and the Vietnam war and it is more susceptible to political pressure. According to Mansur, Carter wants "to cross the river without getting wet"—to get things moving in the ME while, first not antagonizing either Israel, Jewish lobbyists or pro-Israeli congressmen, second—not inviting confrontation with the Arabs, their oil, their economies and their pro-Western regimes, and lastly—not endangering detente with the Soviet Union. In spite of these limitations, Mansur maintains

that the US has become a "full partner" in the peace negotiations and it would submit its own proposals at the appropriate moment.

Both the US and Israel, concludes Mansur, are aware of the fact that war "or other hostilities" can be resumed at any moment. And they know that President Sadat had repeatedly pointed out that the October deadline is rapidly approaching, that (according to the Egyptian version) the Sinai II agreement expires then, and that the continued presence of UN units in Sinai is contingent upon Egypt's goodwill. Mansur claims that notes have been exchanged recently between the US and Israel concerning three cases of high-level Egyptian Army alerts.

If the threat implied in Mansur's article represented the "stick" component of the pre-Camp David Egyptian position, there were also "carrots". Prior to Sadat's departure for the US, the Egyptians disclosed that they might agree to a declaration of principles based on the "Aswan formula", i.e. the participation of the Palestinians in their future, without insisting on the establishment of a separate Palestinian state or on self-determination as such. There were also hints that Egypt had prepared a new plan for Jerusalem which would somehow maintain the city's unity. Above all, Cairo stressed its readiness to establish an elaborate system of security arrangements and guarantees parallel to a phased Israeli withdrawal. As evidenced previously, in the Egyptian proposals submitted to Israel on July 5, it is this last point that Cairo regards as the main *quid pro quo* for Israeli evacuation of the territories.

To the more specific ideas aired in the international press on the eve of the Camp David summit there was hardly any Egyptian response. Cairo did not endorse

the idea of stationing American troops in the West Bank nor did it react to a proposal to divide control of the West Bank during the interim period among Jordan (to be in charge of internal security and immigration, among other things), a representative council of the autonomous Palestinians and the Israeli military authorities. This plan, which circumvents the sovereignty stumbling block, is designed to bring about a gradual reduction of the Israeli military presence.

Jordan thus remained the key factor, as it had indeed been in Cairo's July proposals as well. Many observers regarded the intensity of possible contacts with Amman as the best gauge of progress or stalemate in the Camp David talks. For King Hussein's condition for getting involved in the peace talks had been clearly proclaimed: an Israeli declaration of readiness to evacuate the West Bank and recognize the Palestinians right of self-determination. There is little doubt that Amman has no desire to precipitate the emergence of a separate state for the Palestinians but would prefer that they be granted only limited authority—so that the West Bank and Gaza could eventually be re-integrated into a Jordanian framework.

This seems to constitute the Egyptian position as well. From Sadat's point of view the main consideration is not the *finesse* and exact formulation of a verbal declaration of principles, but rather that practical arrangements be made in order to reassure Hussein of the real prospects of his return to the West Bank. The open question was whether Sadat could maximalize his position so as to meet the minimal line of Hussein's demands.

—Middle-East Intelligence Survey,  
Tel-Aviv, 1/15 Sep. 1978  
Vol. 6 No. 11



## ACID BOMB EXPLOSION — 18

## Chapter Eighteen

# On The Eve

By James Goonewardene

Events began to move swiftly in the weeks that followed. On the surface life moved along the customary grooves. There was nothing to indicate that anything out of the ordinary was about to take place; people went about their tasks as they always did, but the calm was an uneasy one. Everyone had got wound-up—the clerk at the railway station was abrupt, the shopkeeper curt, the bus conductor abusive and his passengers restless and flying easily into a temper. Something was in the wind—of that people felt certain, but whatever was going to happen was still underground and invisible. This little town on the western traffic belt felt the impact of all this like a seismograph registering the first tremor of an on-coming earthquake.

The first visible sign of change was a sudden increase in callers at the resthouse—among them army and police officers who stopped at the resthouse for a brief rest and a bit of refreshment. A truck load of soldiers would stop for water or a jeep full of officers for a meal. It created business for Ariya, but the more business it brought the more uneasy he felt. Something was about to burst, but nobody seemed prepared to tell him what it was. He had tried to talk to some of these officers when he got the chance, but they would be tight-lipped. They would stare suddenly back at him or snap back some curt comment that discouraged any further attempt to probe. They were nervous and jumpy it seemed like all the others, or they were too filled with their own importance.

A jeep load of men drove up one morning and out of it stepped out a young lieutenant. He sent a couple of bottles of beer to the men in the jeep and ordered one for himself. He poured himself a glass of the beer and began to sip it moodily. Ariya approached him as he had done with the others.

"It's a hot day," he said.

"It's hot," said the young lieutenant lifting his eyes momentarily. "A cold beer helps on a hot day." The lieutenant lifted his eyes and let them drop again and made no reply. "There has been a lot of troop movement—they have stopped here as they went; I wondered why there was this sudden activity."

"They have stopped here—have they—all of them going by here?"

"Oh yes, they have, at least some of them have—all going south; didn't know how far south they were going."

"As far south as Hambantota, I think, at least I am going there. I don't know about the others."

"Opened a camp there—so many truck loads of them going by the last week or so—what's happening? The young man said nothing for a moment. Then suddenly he looked up.

"A bit of trouble—we are expecting trouble."

"Trouble?"

The officer suddenly reached out for the bottle and emptied it into his glass.

"How much is it?" he said. "I must go—sorry—no time to talk."

He met a middle aged police officer one morning who talked a bit more. He wasn't frightened.

"At last someone's taking notice," he said. "The guns and banks being robbed seemed like a joke—but they are now taking notice."

"You think its all connected—the guns and the banks, I mean—the same crowd doing it all?"

"Oh yes, without a doubt; its the same lot. We have been telling the authorities this for a long time, but no one took notice. Its these fellows they call the *Che Guevara kalliya*—its them all right. In a jungle not far from my station we discovered one of their hide-outs—full of acid and petrol bombs—deadly weapons; they fill empty condensed milk tins with nails and bits of broken glass; its no joke if you are the one who is at the receiving end of these crude weapons—they don't kill all the time, only mutilate and maim."

This was the first clear picture he had of the nature of the trouble. He however, kept calm; the deployment of troops would, discourage anyone who was thinking of starting something but what did worry him was the thought that no troops were being stationed in his own area; there was just the small police station with a few men and an inspector to deal with anything that could break out.

Deva was having his own share of problems. His fishing companion, Armanis had been arrested by the police. He was not told what crime he had committed only that he had been arrested and could be bailed out. A homeless drifter like Armanis, had little chance with unimaginative and short tempered policemen. He had to go—he couldn't ignore the appeal.

Deva had met Armanis several times more after that first meeting by the river. Armanis had brought him a fishing rod as he had promised, and together they had been to the river several times. He had found him on better acquaintance to be quite unique, a born story teller, besides which he could do things with his hands. He had



been a mechanic and the circumstances he found himself in had not caused him to lose his skills. He would make toys—out of cast off thread spools and bits of plywood, and an assortment of wooden animals and carts would be the result of all this.

The police station was an ordinary domestic habitation they had converted. It had blue wooden windows and ornamental gables and a porch and it was surrounded by a weed-ridden garden, enclosed by a hedge. It stood on the edge of the main road, isolated from the other houses with a stretch of scrub jungles.

Deva was received at the station by a policeman seated at a broad desk in a little ill-lit room. On the left of the desk was a single lock-up inside which Armanis was seated on an iron cot. Armanis rose at once and came to the iron, grilled door.

"I have come to bail this man you have arrested."

"You know him?" said the policeman.

"Yes, I know him."

Deva was not invited to sit but was subjected to a long scrutiny.

"You are a lawyer?" he said suddenly.

"No, I am a school teacher."

Deva glanced at Armanis and noticed his swollen lip and a half-closed eye.

They had beaten him.

"You are a school teacher?" asked the policeman.

"Yes, I teach at the local Vidyalaya."

"At the Vidyalaya here, uh?" said the policeman. "What's your name?" Deva told him his name and the policeman checked the name with a list he brought out of a drawer and then looked up at him.

"How do you know him?"

"I came to know him recently—he and I have gone fishing."

The policeman frowned with astonishment.

"Fishing?" he said, "with him?"

"Yes, that's right."

"We caught him with bottles of pot arrack and equipment for making other types of moonshine. He can go to jail for that. We are rounding up all the undesirables around here—he's a bad egg, your friend. We don't like bad eggs like him."

The policeman, a man of about thirty, of middle height and the colour of burnt clay seemed a bit out of his depth in the situation. A large, police records book lying on the table, he drew towards him, fiddled with it a moment and pushed it away again; then he started to rock his legs and pick his teeth.

"You are from the Vidyalaya?" he asked once more.

"Yes," said Deva.

"You have trouble makers in your school."

"Trouble makers—I do not understand."

"Doesn't matter—we are watching your school, don't worry. You want now to bail this man out. You'll have to wait till the inspector arrives."

"When will that be?"

"Don't know—you better come later."

"Can I speak to Armanis?"

"No—you come later. We'll find out whether you can bail him out and then we'll see; you come later."

Deva nodded and went out, carrying the smells of the disinfectant that they had used in the lock-up. He went to one of the eating houses in the bazaar and had a watery cup of tea—in a smelly, dingy eating house and then light-

ing a cigar he wandered about until it was the time to return to the station. He gave the policeman all the time he needed to sort out the business of the bail, and half an hour later he went back. The policemen had the paper ready. The inspector had been in and approved the bail and had left again. When Deva had signed the papers Armanis was let out and the two of them walked out of the station, and out on the road Deva stopped to have a better look at Armanis's injuries.

"What did they do to you?"

"They beat me up."

"Why did they do that?"

"They thought I made the kasippu they found in the house. I just occupied a room at the back. How was I expected to know what went on in the house, but they wouldn't believe me. I kept my nose out of their affairs—I didn't poke my nose in there; they were a bad lot, but what they did was not my business. They just gave me a room at the back—that was all. They just gave me that room and I kept my nose clean, but the police wouldn't believe. They kept asking questions. I don't know, I said, I don't know. When the police raided the place the men had got a tip-off and had vanished. They got me, the only man in the house. They wouldn't believe me when I said I knew nothing. They just kept beating me up. I told them what I knew. I told them who ran the house—that's all I knew, but they wouldn't believe me. I kept my nose clean. It was not my business what they did in the rest of the house—that's the truth. I kept my nose clean, but they beat me up. You are a liar, they shouted and hit me. The police knew I was jobless and that I used to hang about the bazaar—that was enough to make them believe I was in this thing. They rounded up the others



at the bazaar too. They are rounding up everybody. The policemen have got jumpy suddenly; so they are getting anybody they can lay their hands on. First they throw us out of work and then they round us up. The policemen are jumpy. Everyone's jumpy."

"It's a crazy business," said Deva. "The police—they are getting nervous."

They are jumpy—that's what it is, they are jumpy. Something's got them frightened. The government's pushing them to do things and they have become jumpy. They have mucked up the law and the judges and the courts and the police and set political stooges up everywhere and things have gone wrong—that's what it is, and they are now jumpy."

"What do we do now? You cannot return to your room or be seen hanging about the bazaar. I'll tell you what—we'll go to the resthouse; my friend will let you stay there for a while."

"That'll be a great help. They will go for me everytime they see me. They will go for anyone whose face they don't like. If the Mahataya there doesn't mind it will suit me. I'll have to keep out of their way for awhile and the resthouse will suit me fine."

Deva saw that everything was all right for Armanis at the resthouse and then stayed and talked with Ariya, and it was on his return to his room that he found this urgent note from Sedaraman, asking him to come to his home at Delhena. It was a hastily written scrawl. It just said that it was most vital that he should come. Another call for help that he couldn't ignore.

The house was buried in silence. It was as if a chill of sorrow had touched the walls and windows. The front door was opened the moment he knocked. It was Kamala

looking distressed but trying to repress her feelings in order to show her pleasure at seeing him. She lingered a moment in the doorway and then suddenly overcome by embarrassment she turned and let him enter. The moment had been long enough for Deva to notice the change that had come over her. The sparkle and brightness of her face was gone. It bore the weight of her distress and anxiety, her hair in disarray and her mouth held tight.

The parents greeted him as he stepped inside. They showed him to a chair and Sedaraman drew a chair close to him. The mother stood nearby; it was as if she had no wish to intrude on the deliberation that was better left to men to deal with. The father launched into the problem that was agitating them.

"It's about our son. He was here, in this house. I had hoped he would stay till you came."

He paused and looked into Deva's eyes. "I don't know how to tell you about all this. It's all mixed up in my mind. This boy—he's like a hunted man; at least he came here like one and stayed hidden in the house. He wouldn't put his head in the window for fear of being seen. It's why I had to write to you in such a hurry." He turned to his wife. "Am I saying this right?"

She nodded.

"We are living through one of the saddest times we have known. How is it possible to tell you how we feel about this? He comes in the middle of the night and knocks on the door, and we are asleep. Is it right that a young lad like him should come like a criminal to his own home, first making sure that the neighbourhood was asleep. He was free to come and go in this house. Then he disappears and returns like this, creep-

ing into his own home, like a dumb animal, refusing to speak, uttering not a word just staring at us and then hurling himself on his bed to lie on it and stare up at the roof. I have seen people struck by the devil looking like this."

Deva scarcely breathed as he listened to Sedaraman. He dare not interrupt this bewildering tale. "He stayed here the whole of the following day," continued Sedaraman, "sleeping it out most of the time. It was as if he not had food for days. He had not had food too it seemed."

"And he was so thin," said the mother. "When he could have had all the food and sleep he wanted; to disappear and come back to us like this—apoi, mona karumayakdha mey?"

"Did he tell you where he had been?" asked Deva.

"We asked him that, but he said nothing. That's something he refused absolutely to talk about. When we asked him about it there came a look of fear on his face—we were frightened to talk to him; but later our hopes rose one moment." He glanced at his daughter, here. She was startled to find attention was drawn to her. Her face pale and her eyes staring as if without sight.

"He had been talking to his sister. In the past too when he couldn't talk to either of us he would talk to her. He would tell her his problems. He had asked her whether the police would protect him if he surrendered. It had come so suddenly she had not known what to do. In the same breath he had said he feared it would be worse for him if he did so. The police would beat him up. He had always had this fear of the police. She had promised that we would speak to you to prevent any such thing happening, but all the same he had become nervous and frigh-



tened again. No one could protect him he had said. His friends would get him if he gave himself up. He had become frightened of his friends too. The best thing to do, he had said, was to go back. Like a man struck by a distiya he had been walking round his room—walking up and down. Kamala had not known what to do. He had asked her not talk about this to anyone; she wanted to tell us about it but she hesitated for fear it would drive him back to wherever he came from, but she broke her promise and came and told us. She couldn't do anything else. She told us and it was then we wrote to you. He had sensed, however, that we were trying to do some such thing. He got very angry and began to shout and rave, and before we would do anything he was gone. He was gone before we would get you here. If you had come in time maybe you could have spoken to him or done something to change his mind. Oh, we don't know what to do. It is a nightmare. It would drive me mad to think about it."

Deva heard a sob escape the mother; he wanted to help them but there was nothing he could do. The inevitable had to happen and those on the fringe of the tragedy—whatever it was going to be—could only look on with bewilderment and helplessness. They were going to start this killing—the thing that everyone had begun to talk about and did not know how or when it would start. Everyone seemed helpless to do anything now, and no one was going to be outside the killing and shooting and throwing of bombs. Everybody was going to be involved in this somehow or other. This family would be more directly involved than others. That was all, but those on the fringe of the action and those outside it would know some crazy madness had come

over the country infecting the boys of eighteen and twenty and twenty five with this madness and giving them the idea that they could do things that older men and women couldn't. This was the madness, and this village family struck by the tragedy had turned to him for help, and this girl, their daughter, with her beauty who had started to rouse and stir and excite him in his woman-starved loneliness had also turned to him for help and now stood there clutching her father's chair and looking at him with her large, black eyes and there was nothing he could do. He was the boy's guru, and the guru, in time of trouble, was always the adviser, and they had all now turned to him for help.

"Tell us, is there nothing we can do to help?" asked the mother.

"Is there really nothing?"

"Do you know where he is gone? We must find that out. Its all we can do. We must find out where he's gone to. If we know where we could go to him and try to fetch him back. We can go with the police, if necessary."

"This is what we do not know.

This is our trouble. I would go myself to bring him back," said the father, "but we don't know, we really don't know."

"How do you hope to bring him if you couldn't help to keep him when he was right inside this house; how do you hope to bring him back?" Deva glanced up at Kamala. Tears were about to break in her eyes. They were moist and her mouth seemed to tremble. He looked away with embarrassment. He felt like a man seeing a group of people struggling in the centre of a whirlpool and unable to go to their aid.

"We are sorry we have dragged you here when we ourselves have done nothing and can do nothing." "There is, perhaps, just one thing you can still do."

"What is that?"

"Go to the police. Explain the circumstances to them. Its important that they know what's happened. If nothing else they will know that your sor's will was not in this thing, whatever it is they are going to do."

"Can we do that?" said the father clutching at a straw.

"There can be no harm in that?"

"But they will know our boy is involved in all this. They will take a harsh view whether he is guilty or not. It is how it is with them." Kamala's tears had broken now and suddenly she turned and she was gone.

He came away from the house finally. It seemed like a long time since he was in this other country in relative peace and comfort of that country, and now back in his homeland there was chaos and disaster about to erupt and destroy every decent thing. He came away feeling like a man plunging slowly into a deep, dark pit and not knowing if he would hit the bottom.

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## CATHOLICS AND EDUCATION

IN SRI LANKA—2

## Historical Background

by Fr. Tissa Balasuriya O.M.I.

Among the *disadvantages* were that the educational facilities were expanded in a grossly uneven manner. Those who began schools got the government grants. The organized missionary groups, and later the Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim organizations began the schools. The English schools were mainly in the urban areas. The children of the elite who could pay the fees got the advantage of



better education—geographically the rural areas were neglected. Where there were Christians, the missionary bodies set up schools. Thus these areas advanced rapidly in education and hence in economic and social life. But even among Christians the poor were at a great disadvantage—eg. the children of fishermen or of slum dwellers. The villages stagnated. The estate areas were almost totally neglected by the churches. The children of the poor estate workers could not pay the fees. Hence they were uneducated. Only the children of the supervisors and superintendents got an opportunity of any education. This neglect of the education of the plantation worker's children is one of the biggest social evils of the century from 1870 onwards.

In the cities a segregated education system developed on a class basis. Those who could pay went to the fast developing prestigious schools. Over the decades the children in the growing slums, depressed areas and shanties were neglected and marginalized. The Catholic schools too fitted into the emerging class system. They helped to decrease caste and race prejudice but aggravated class inequalities.

The content of the education was almost exclusively academic and geared towards white collar administrative jobs. This was to be a cause of much future employment and underdevelopment of the country. The language media of English and vernacular and the levying of fees set up a dualistic educational system: one for the masses another for the elite. There may have been no (or few) students of Catholic schools among the 1971 insurgents; but the insurgency of 1971 had among its long term causes the irrelevance of this educational system and its creation of unemployment and unemployables.

The religious education of the Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims in the schools run by Christians was neglected. Children of other religions went to these schools for general education, but their religious education was not provided for, or they had to study Christianity. Christians were brought up in an earlier sectarian and intolerant theology, though with great dedication.

Due to this difficulty of religious education there was an agitation from the early part of this century led by the Buddhists for a State take over of the schools or for provision of religious education of children of other faiths in Christian schools. The Wace Commission (1905) recommended a positive conscience clause to safeguard the religious interests of the majority. As its recommendations were not effectively implemented, there was further agitation by the Buddhists and Hindus in the 1920s for the take over of the schools or for their own religious education.

After 1931 with internal self government there was much pressure for an expansion of the educational facilities in the rural areas. Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara, the Minister of Education, set up several Central Schools in the rural areas. These helped the brighter village children to have an education in English free of tuition fees. But the content of education was still academic and generally weighted in favour of the Arts. Hence it did not resolve the basic problem of education for employment and self reliant development.

The special Committee on Education of 1943 recommended free education from kindergarten to the University. No fees were to be charged in the schools and the State was to pay the salaries of teachers and give a grant for equipment etc. The difference was to

be mainly for the urban English schools as vernacular education was already free. The Catholic leadership opposed this scheme, till guarantees were given of a higher income for the elitist schools through facilities fees etc. Subsequently most Catholic English schools entered the free education scheme. Thus English education was available without tuition fees.

In the 1950's the debate was concerning the *swabasha* medium. The Governments pressed towards education at all levels in Sinhala and Tamil. The Catholic leadership put up a strong opposition at each stage. There was a step by step effort to retain English as the medium of instruction: first up to GCE (O) Level, then for science subjects; at the GCE (A) Level, at the University or at least in Science, Medicine and Engineering Faculties.

In the late 1950's there was once again a strong demand for the take over of the denominational schools. It was successful in 1960-61. The main reasons given by its advocates were the need to have a national system of education, to equalize opportunities for all children and to provide every child with an education in his or her parents religion. Up till then Catholics refused to allow other faiths to be taught in Catholic schools—due to the prevailing theology and the Church law. The Catholics, led by the Bishops, put up a strong fight against the schools take over law. They went up to physical occupation of the schools during six weeks. But they had to surrender eventually before the superior power of the State and of public opinion.

At this stage it was decided to make the grade I and II Catholic Schools private and non-fee levying. The argument was that what could be saved from absorption by the state should be preserved in order



to give Catholic children a Catholic education. Now for 17 years these schools have struggled on against great odds. Some have been handed over to the State. Those which continued have more or less consolidated their position by ensuring adequate donations from the pupils, and well wishers. These schools and their future have preoccupied the attention of the Catholic community during two decades; even though many religious and lay teachers are engaged in the State sector of education. In fact their sensitivity about these schools have been an impediment to even an open dialogue and assessment of the role of Catholics in the 1960s and 1970.

Important educational changes in the curriculum were attempted from 1972-77. The Catholic community was involved in them like the rest of the country without any significant specific contribution to their evolution, elaboration or evaluation. The Catholic leadership generally receded to the background in opinion from concerning education during the period following 1961. It was more concerned with a struggle of survival for the private non-fee levying schools.

**Present Challenges to Education.** In 1978 the country is at the cross roads in its educational policies—as also in its general orientation. The questions at issue are concerning the—Content of education, curricula; medium of instruction; structure and organization of schools; methods of education: active or receptive; systems of evaluation; examinations etc; education for national harmony; trilingualism, place of English; religious education; cultural education, value education; equalizing educational opportunity; education for employment, development and justice; adult education, workers, education, non-formal education;

mass media, mass culture, TV; expansions of university education; national service; work experience; etc. education for tourism, for employment in the free trade zone.

As a country we have to work out our identity in the modern world, and the education system is related to this. We do not want to be a colony of a foreign metropolis. We do not want a dictatorship of the Right or of the Left. We want to be a free, just, democratic and socialist republic. This is the national consensus expressed by all the major political parties and groupings. We do not want to be a bond slave of International Monetary Fund-World Bank combination; or a happy hunting ground for the great Multi-national Corporations supplying them cheap labour, cheap raw materials and free markets for their products. Nor do we want to be just a pleasure garden for rich tourists providing them cheap food, and prostitutes.

We want a development that is self-reliant, where the fundamental needs of all are met before a few are provided with luxuries. We want an authentic development with personal fulfilment and social justice. We want a society in which every person can grow to fulfilment and not be stunted, wasted and marginalized.

**Is Education a help or an Impediment?** It is important that we view education in the wider context of our entire social evolution and our growth as persons. Does it lend to employment or unemployment? Does it make unemployables or a people who were earlier self reliant and hard working? Does it reduce inequality or increase it? Does it foster the growth of talent away from the villages to the cities, and from this country to the rich foreign lands? Does it foster the growth of persons who can participate creatively in

the ongoing task of nation building? What is the type of formation that it gives? Does it foster service to others and a spirit of sharing or a snobishness that makes the "educated" look down on others. Does it provide opportunities of continuing education?

(To be Continued)

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## LETTERS

### Tirade On Tribune

Sir,

Since we are some who appreciate your lively and usually intelligent magazine, we were the more astonished to read Ariel's views on "Cater's (sic!) Cold War" and K. Arumainayagam's book review in your July 29, 1978 issue.

Re Jimmy Carter, whatever private views the members of any given administration might have, they should be fought out in private. Thus when Andrew Young makes so totally inaccurate a statement as that one about there being thousands of "political" prisoners in the USA he has not only let down his own political party and his own administration, but has seriously damaged confidence in the American Negro in addition to lying miserably. That apparent enemies of the United States, including yourselves, should gleefully believe such a lie shows that you have no judgment and no ability to distinguish between a genuinely ruthless dictatorship like Russia or China and a genuine democracy like the United States. You are quite literally biting the hand that feeds you, since the USA-led World Bank and Western Europe have just lent Sri Lanka—according to your own figures—nearly US \$ 1,000,000,000! Where would Sri



Lanka be without this money? Where else do you think you would get it?

What leads Ariel or the *Tribune* to believe that Carter approves of the way Civil Rights are going in South Korea, the Philippines or the USA, not to mention Tamil-frightened Sri Lanka? Simply because he makes more noise about the world's most vicious slavers, the Russians, why do you think he's not all too conscious of America's own shortcomings, far, far less stringent than Russia's though they may be? The polls show that Carter has slipped badly. This is standard procedure in any democracy because democratic governments, needing the will of the governed to proceed, move very slowly and therefore never progress as fast as the governed feel they should. Do you think for a moment that Mr. Jayewardene is as popular now as he was when elected? However the polls do show that Carter's popularity is way up on the single issue of getting tough with Russia.

How could Carter's human rights campaign impress the Third World, almost all of which is dictator-ridden?

Re Africa does the *Tribune* pretend for one moment that Russia and the communists are not interested in replacing Western Europeans in Africa? Or in Sri Lanka? By what standard do you think that communist Neto "represents" anything like the majority of Angolans? Who elected him? Will you tell us how anybody can accept Cuban troops anywhere? Does anybody ask what business a tiny little island like Cuba, with a population half that of Sri Lanka, has interfering anywhere? Does anybody ask how they can afford to interfere? Where does the broken-down economy of Cuba get the multi-millions needed to transport troops and munitions across the second largest ocean in the world

to fight on another utterly foreign continent? From Russia, naturally, since puppet Castro must dance when Russia calls the tune. Why wouldn't Carter and the west be concerned at Russian influence where there was none before? You don't want communism in Sri Lanka—or do you? But why would you welcome Russians when you've just ejected other foreigners, the British?

Ariel quotes Julius Nyerere as stating that any African state has the right to ask for Russian or western assistance. How then can Nyerere devote most of his "rhapsody" to excoriating the USA and western Europe for doing the same thing the Russians are doing, since both sides have been formally invited to interfere? Nyerere, for all his sincerity and brilliance, cannot take two completely opposed views at the same time, and neither can the *Tribune*.

Nyerere further errs sadly when he claims that "the Russian people overthrew their rotten regime." The whole world knows that a microscopic but well organized bunch of Bolsheviks seized power, were challenged for some time by the Mensheviks, but finally managed to out-murder their rivals and to hold the poor Russian people in the worst bondage the world has seen ever since. This is not even to mention what the Russians have done to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria. The Soviet dictatorship is only a worse regime than that of the czars.

Nyerere states that "if the West wants to prove...they should direct their attention to where the Soviet tanks are." (1) Some of them are in Angola, & (2) Wars are not fought by tanks alone.

Above all, do you think it is wrong for a world leader to fight for human rights? Are the Russians

doing it? Is the Third World doing it?

As for the book review concerning an obscure work written by an unscholarly medical doctor who hasn't even listed a bibliography, your reviewer shows an appalling lack of knowledge about the USA.

The black situation there is poor, but not bad, and it is improving by the minute. When a nation deals with nearly 30 million people (more than twice the population of Sri Lanka), progress can only be slow. Apparently your reviewer has no conception of how far the American blacks have come in the last 20 years. Let him study the black position in 1958 as compared with their position today. Many of the largest American cities have black mayors today. These include Washington DC, the US capital, Los Angeles, the largest city, Detroit, the major industrial center, Atlanta, the largest city in the South, and Cleveland, another great industrial center. Now just how could a black ever become mayor of a major city unless (with the exception of Washington) a majority of whites voted for him?

If blacks cannot vote in any but presidential elections, as our reviewer would have us believe, how do you account for such powerful black figures as Senator Brooke, Congressmen Julian Bond and Shirley Chisholm, and many others?

Who, incidentally, is "Edward" Hoover?

Finally, how does your reviewer think 11 million Chicanos (Mexicans or Mexican-deriveds), 2 million Puerto Ricans, 2 million Asians, etc. happen to be Americans today? They're there because no matter how bad it may seem for them in the USA, it's far, far superior to what they had in Mexico, Puerto Rico, Asia, etc. Does your reviewer know that any of these people or any native born American can leave the USA quite freely



at any time, taking with him all his money, his family and everything he owns? He can go anywhere in the world he pleases. Will your reviewer be good enough to tell us how many blacks or other minority groups are leaving the USA? Why is it that all over the world almost everybody wants to go to the USA not leave it? On the other hand, Russians, Chinese, Sri Lankans and many, many other people aren't allowed to go anywhere by their own governments—unless it's to Saudi Arabia to work as menials for the oil millionaires. Don't you find it odd that citizens of such communist paradises as Russia, China, etc can't escape, even when they want to?

Your reviewer might understand the black-white American problem better if he pondered your own situation here in Sri Lanka for awhile. Where, may we ask, are your Burghers of yesteryear? *This Month In Sri Lanka* draws our attention to "the tolerant, compassionate" Buddhist majority here in Sri Lanka—the very people who assassinated Mr. Bandaranaike a few years ago, and both burned and murdered 16,000 Tamils only a year ago. More people were killed than have lost their lives in the whole history of race relations in the USA.

Americans are doing much about their race problem.

What is Sri Lanka doing about hers? Tamil friends tell us they are worried sick that the Buddhists will attack them again!

It would seem that the *Tribune* and its staff would be much more informed if it and they did more basic research, and levelled its guns at the communist demons instead of at the people who, for

all their grievous flaws, are still the ONLY hope in this world.

Yours without much optimism,

**Rolf Satterlee**

c/o Woolman  
American Express,  
Colombo, Sri Lanka.  
September 15, 1978

○ This letter is a hangover from the dismal days of John Foster Dulles and brings back memories of the ugly American who knows what is good for the world and who insists that there is a 'Commie' behind every bush. Who's afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?—Ed.

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## On Karalasingam's Book

Sir,

It was indeed very kind of Mr. T. M. R. Rasheed to have provided such a warm review of his friend Mr. V. Karalasingham's book on the Tamil question in Sri Lanka. However I must raise a number of questions regarding the analyses that Mr. Karalasingham has made. It may indeed be true that the Tamil leadership becomes militant only when a left of centre government is in power and that the Tamils, by isolating themselves from progressive nationalist forces have dug their own grave. This analysis however conveniently ignores the sterling contribution made by the same left of centre government during the Seven Year Terror to the emergence of the Tamil separatist movement. And the Tamils were not completely out of this left of centre government either. There was after all those unimpeachable leftists Arulampalam and Thiagarajah who were members of the government. Despite their co-operation and support—not to speak of the various agents of

the Left parties in Jaffna—a reign of terror was unleashed in the north and the east of the island. Was it beyond the dialectical skill of the pundits of the LSSP to see that a further polarisation between Tamils and the Sinhalese was taking place, a polarisation that would perhaps be impossible to repair? If the future welfare of the communities in Ceylon did not animate the leftists in the coalition to protest, at least their presumptive commitment to socialism should have made them at least raise a voice of demurral? Surely the fact that the Tamil voters did not vote for the LSSP these many years was no justification for this criminal silence and willing participation in the war against the Tamils that one or other of the Bandaranaike's have been waging for sometime now? The stalwart Marxists who are now giving us learned discourses on the Tamil problem were too busy enjoying the perquisites of power and perhaps enjoying also the lesson being taught to the Tamils who have had the temerity and base ingratitude to avoid voting for the Left candidates.

Mr. Karalasingham however wants to put the blame on the Tamil leadership exclusively. Thus he avoids facing up to the havoc that the policy of coalition with a Nazi-type organization of royalists and racists of various kinds that was the SLFP had caused. A dialectician of Mr. Karalasingham's skill should have been able to recognize that merely because the Bandaranaike Klan claimed to be socialists, that they were the same kind of socialists as he was. After all, not to put too fine a point on it, Hitler also called himself a socialist, and a nationalist one at that. Such an evasion really brings the entire method of Marxist analyses into disrepute. Indeed historical-materialist analyses of the machi-



nations of the SLFP against the Tamil-speaking people of the country, of the truly Nazi-like moves against the Tamils resulting in their general delegitimisation as ordinary members of the polity, is long overdue. Perhaps a word too might be forthcoming about the deafening silence that those who claim allegiance to that martyr of principled politics, Leon Trotsky maintained while the country was being Nazified. In fact no word dissociating themselves from the Nazism of the SLFP is still available from the gentlemen who once felt socialism in one country was too limiting, indeed a betrayal of the international working class movement and formed the Bolshevik-Leninist party of India, Ceylon etc.

But no fear: Mr. Karalasingham has in fact produced in an earlier incarnation a tour de force of Marxist analysis. I have been a student of Marxist writing for a number of years now and there is hardly a match in the literature to Mr. Karalasingham's *The Politics of Coalition* (1964). The erudition, with necessary malice and the sheer logical rigour displayed along with the empirical supports is truly astonishing and certainly bears comparison to any other Marxist work published in Ceylon. Even that redoubtable Marxist, Colvin R. de Silva's work *Their Politics and Ours* (how ironic the title sounds today), pales into insignificance when Karalasingham's work is laid alongside it. Let me quote a few passages from it:

"Mrs. Bandaranaike clearly is not waiting till she is overwhelmed by a Ceylon variation or modification of the April Days: that is, a new upsurge of the mass movement directed against the government to resort to the method of the coalition government. She quite rightly realises that it is better from the standpoint of her class to seek agreement now be-

fore the storm breaks...her moves have a two fold purpose. Her primary object without doubt is to enlist in her government and on her terms, the leaders of the Left to perform those duties which they are especially hired to discharge, namely in the words of Lenin, to fool, divide and weaken

the workers, (p. 27, 28). Further on Mr. Karalasingham observes "certain ministers were put to special use, particularly those with big names" (p. 31). While this observation is about Tsereteli, leader of the Georgian Mensheviks, how neatly it summarises the devoted labours of the learned

## LETTER

## ONLY WHITE-SKINNED?

Sir,

It is hard to believe that this country is trying to promote tourism in the way people are handled at the State Gem Corporation in Fort. Why do they post people who have not even the rudiments of manners, leave aside good manners, at the door of this infamous place to try and hustle out anyone who isn't white-skinned? For they seem to suffer under the delusion that anything other than that doesn't qualify for the great name of 'tourist'.

We had the greatest misfortune to visit this place (it was our first and shall be the last) with a group of tourists from India, and were given this treatment. Why should we, in our own country be made to feel second class? Even if they try to tell us that it is only in foreign exchange that they deal there is a way of saying it. Politeness, alas has become very scarce these days. This individual demanded if we had come to buy (I wonder what he does when he goes into a shop?) which my friends had every intention of doing and said only tourists were allowed inside which they were. He was trying to carry on in this fashion when he was told in no uncertain terms where he got off. Leaving personal considerations aside, what is the impression the Indians, Pakistanis and other Asians whom we are inviting to our shores going to carry away and will they ever want to return?

Some may argue that this is an isolated incident but what is alarming is the increase in the number of these incidents. In tourist shops, in hotels, at the airport and in many other places similar incidents are becoming commonplace. Why do our people demean themselves so much, falling over backwards and even being prepared to lick the boots of white tourists to merely scrounge a packet of cigarettes or some such trifle? Have they no self respect? It really makes us sick watching them. Not so long ago, during colonial times we were treated as second class citizens in our own country being denied entry into exclusive clubs, hotels and the like. The very idea that we may soon be coming back to that in a slightly different form perhaps is horrendous to contemplate!

Something has to be done about it and fast! It may be difficult to do much about it in each and every place but it is high time someone woke up in the Gem Corporation and did something to stop this alarming trend. Otherwise, it will be the Deluge and after that a New Revolution.

Second Class Citizen (?)

Colombo.

4.10.78



men of the LSSP to the Bandaranaike Klan and class. A scholar of international repute and a thoroughgoing historical materialist produces a constitution that creates a Buddhist Republic of Sinhala Lanka, no less! As Karalasingham comments quoting Lenin "A most typical representative of the stupid and frightened philistines, Tseretelli was most 'conscientious' of all in swallowing the bait of bourgeois calumny, he was the most zealous of all in 'smashing up and subduing Krons-tadt without realising that he was playing the role of a lackey of the counter-revolution.'" Bravo, Karlo!

I cannot but conclude that Mr. Karalasingham has reissued the wrong book. The obvious choice for reissue was *The Politics of Coalition*, with an appendix entitled the SLFP-LSSP Pact: An Analogue of the Hitler-Stalin Pact. He could very well discuss the awesome consequences of senile coalitionism.

S. Prabakar

New Jersey,  
U.S.A.

15th September 1978

## Tamil Viewpoint

Sir,

Please publish this letter as it represents a viewpoint on Tamils, and is going to be quoted profusely in future. Your magazine carried a viewpoint by Narada on Tamils and TULF. Please understand that it was a diorrea (spelling not corrected-Ed) in print. The writer has exhibited his ignorance.

Mr. Thondaman had his reservations on the separate EELAM issue from the beginning. This remains unchanged upto now. The CWC backs TULF policy on separate state for north and east even now. Membership in the TULF executive committee is still re-

tained by CWC. Mr. T. does not carry any weight with DMK or ADMK in India. He was aligned with Congress and was anti DMK because of his closeness with Congress of Indira right from the beginning. Contrary to this FP has still a very close alliance with DMK as evidenced by it's ability to raise the issue of race riots in Ceylon during 1977, in Tamil Nadu state assembly and Lok Saba in New Delhi.

The so called Tamil Congress formed by Kumar Ponnambalam recently consists of onetime TC supporters who abandoned their leader Late Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam during his exile in Malacca. They were with SLFP's Alfred Duraipappah for petty favours. This writer had a long chat with G.G. in Malacca during this exile period. He was heart broken by their betrayal and was beginning to form his policy change to that of alliance with late S. J. V. at that time. I hope Kumar will remember this past history. Otherwise he will be eliminated from political scene like his father during 1970. FP was born against DS's more to disenfranchise people of Indian origin during later part 40's. From that time onwards it's view has been that Tamils of Ceylon are having one interest and one identity. This remains more relevant today.

Your opinion that thousands of Tamils in and out of Tamil EELAM are against TULF is highly imaginary. For last 22 years they have voted consistantly to a party which they knew will always be in the opposition. These people have not bartered their liberty for petty favours. This policy remains unchanged. Your feelings that our aim is not possible is to say least, one of imbecile conclusions that have been tragically recurring again and again in history. Just study Vietcong and Awami league. You will understand the hand of history. Regar-

ding your insinuations against our leaders, please understand that they acting on our wishes and not vice versa. We will act, while they will represent us in forums. Please understand our desire to co-exist with every one, but not at the expense of our heritage. Our aim is to achieve our policy peacefully but, it is well within our realm to act otherwise.

I have a long way to go and lot to do. Hence my desire for anonymity.

Z.

September 22, 1978.

● Though we do not publish letters not authenticated, we publish this "Tamil Point of View" for what it is worth.

—Ed.

## Livestock And Milk

Sir,

I am a regular reader of your journal *Tribune*, I have had occasions to think why you had completely omitted a very important subject like the MILK, the CATTLE, and the buffalo, when you correctly spotlighted various other matters that are required for day to day life. In fact your editorial and another article on National Milk Board elsewhere in the columns of Sept. 2, 1978 issue gladdened me and others interested in livestock breeding, because you had driven the nail correctly into the coffin.

I am a livestock breeder at Pankulam in Trincomalee District. For one or one and a half years our produce, mainly milk, was collected from villages like Pankulam, Kanbaketta, Nochchikulam, Retawewa, Ratmale and Ettabandi-wewa by the Livestock Breeders Association of Trincomalee and supplied to the Milk Board at Kantalai. The quantity supplied to the Milk Board had been more than



one Thousand pints per day. This supply represents only neat cattle milk. But there is a large quantity of buffaloes milk available and this has not been tapped at all. The suppliers who are mainly farmers from the villagers were financially benefitted and above all they upgraded their animals. These activities contributed a great deal of enthusiasm among the farmers and accelerated the milk development programme of the State. The Livestock Breeders Association for the last one year could not collect the milk as they had encountered difficulties in supplying the milk without spoilage.

The suppliers made several representations consequent to the closure of the collection centre to the higher authorities like the then Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Lands and the Chairman Milk Board without success. The *Sun* and its sister *Thinapathy* papers carried articles on this matter and no tangible action was achieved. The then Government Agent who came to know the precarious plight of the poor breeders made representations to open a milk Board at Pankulam and allocated more than 1 1/2 lakhs for the supply of electricity. It is very disheartening to learn that neither the Ceylon Electricity Board nor the Milk Board has commenced any work for the past several months.

Your editorial on diminishing of Cattle, Buffaloes and Milk, should of course wake up those responsible from their slumbers to tap all available sources and increase the milk collection by the Board with a view not only to assist the breeders but also to bring down the prices of milk food. The cost of local tin milk has shot up from Rs. 2/75 to Rs. 4.00 now. But the milk in villages is being wasted without proper marketing facilities.

Let those responsible for all this wastage stop from talking of past misdeeds and get on with concrete work and save the suppliers and the country by arranging to collect the milk at least by January 1979 as too much of talking has already been done. It is hoped that the new Minister Mr. S. Thondaman under whom this important institution is functioning, will now act to improve the conditions of the affected and to save foreign exchange.

Supplier.

Trincomalee 1978.9.15

## Muslims And Eelam

Sir,

Muslims in Sri Lanka are totally against division of the country. Every muslim is duty bound to do every thing in his or her power, individually and collectively to prevent dismemberment of our beloved Sri Lanka.

However, the question of Eelam is no longer one that can be ignored, or easily written off with contempt or indifference. Nor, is it one that can be solved by military actions and arbitrary decision.

It is essentially a political issue and a political solutions should necessarily be sought.

This is an issue for all the four major communities or nationalities, namely, the upcountry Sinhalese, the low country Sinhalese, the Tamils and Muslims or Moors to put their heads together and evolve a basis for a solution acceptable to all.

A. H. M. Saheed

Chief Organiser

All Sri Lanka

United Muslim Party.

451/4, Havelock Road,

Colombo 6.

25.9.78

## When God Laughs

Sir,

The President of Sri Lanka at retirement receives a pension of Rs. 2,599/- p.m. but not free quarters. Prodigality? Not at all. Why? One of our clerics on voluntary retirement after the age of 65 receives nearly double as follows: authentic pension at retirement Rs. 750/- p.m. additional pension in the nature of stipend Rs. 1,599/ p.m. and free quarters which if advertised to let or lease will fetch over Rs. 2,000/- p.m. situated where it is. This is not to speak of other fringe benefits which metropolitan incumbencies carry and which were never before heard of. Cash presentation by the entire diocese skillfully manoeuvred on eve of retirement, is another benefit.

Similarly another cleric described as his contemporary and *mahapandama* (i.e. chief torch bearer or *pandankaraya*) who like Rasputin believed to have come from Siberia to St. Petersburg, the then capital, and swayed the destinies of both church and state is believed to be playing a similar role here receives a "prodigal" pension. Both retired voluntarily on pension at the retiring age and simultaneously received sinecures in the nature of metropolitan incumbencies "kicking out" the lawful incumbents, comparatively young clerics with wives and growing children to shelter, feed, clothe and educate who, under a new and strange dispensation, are made hewers of wood and drawers of water to favoured fossils without dependent children who are assured of a life of luxury, indolence and care at retirement until death—perhaps for another 2 decades.

As the Sinhala saying goes "Kaata kiyannathe"? The organ of this denomination as well as our news papers which are on the side



of the establishment appear to suppress criticism other than caco-phoney.

Mt. Lavinia.  
13.8.78

R.W.W.



SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

Sept. 28—Oct. 3

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

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

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28:

The government has, on the recommendations of the Minister of Plantation Industries, approved the implementation of a guaranteed minimum price scheme for tea small holders; this scheme will be brought into operation from 1st October 1978; under this scheme all owners of tea lands of 50 acres and under will receive a guaranteed minimum price of seventy cents per pound for the green leaf supplied by them. The government will seek the help of parents and the general public to decide on a permanent school syllabus and a curriculum for students. The Joint Trade Union Action Committee which called off early this week the token strike planned for today is threatened with a split. All work in Kachcheris and other government of-

fices in the province should be brought up to date within one month; this direction has been given by the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs—CDN. The Customs yesterday imposed a mitigated penalty of Rs. 56,559.67 on a businessman of Kalubowila for allegedly attempting to illegally import maldivian fish instead of dried fish. The Colombo Municipality will start a 'scooter show' service in competition with private taxis—CDM. Sri Lankan nationals abroad can no longer escape the long arm of the law by claiming immunity—diplomatic or otherwise—after committing grave offences. Sri Lanka earned nearly Rs. 200 million (12 million US dollars) in foreign exchange last year from remittances by migrant labour in West Asian countries, according to statistics prepared by the IMF. A massive ganja canning factory has been discovered in the Koslande area by the Narcotics Bureau—SU. The Minister of Agricultural Development and Research is planning to sell by auction 20,000 acres of land taken over by the last government—DP. The names of those who will be appointed as district ministers has been decided; the Muttur MP Janab M. H. M. Mahroof for Batticaloa and 2nd MP for Pottuvil for Batticaloa—VK. The Ministry of Education is taking steps to develop at least two schools in each electorate to the level of Colombo schools—DM. Crimes in Colombo have decreased by about 1500 an year and pickpocketing has decreased by 20% after the new criminal laws were implemented—DW. A number of co-operative societies which bought paddy from farmers on the advice of the PMB have been unable to carry out their normal business activities because the PMB has so far not paid the co-ops for the paddy they bought—DK. Soviet

Foreign Minister Gromyko blasted the Camp David and Sino-Japanese peace pact yesterday in a General Assembly speech. Rhodesian Military HQ's said yesterday that 43 more people had died in what has already become the blackest month of the six year guerrilla war—CDN. The Supreme Court yesterday suggested to the government that the former Indian PM Indira Gandhi and others be tried by the High Court for alleged emergency offences. The leaders of Syria and Jordan whose views on the Camp David Summit agreements are seen as crucial to peace in the Middle East held talks on the controversial accords—CDM. More than 13,000 political prisoners were released in the Central Java Capital of Semarang in a move seen in Jakarta as a result of government confidence that the communist threat to the country was declining—SU.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29:

President has assured the Ceylon Bank Employee's Union that he would find a fair solution to the problem relating to the 71 employees of the State Mortgage Bank sacked by the previous regime. 971 bank employees discontinued from service for being recruited on the eve of the elections and the haphazard transfer of bank staff after discussing them with the Minister of Finance soon. The World Bank will lend Rs. 160 million to the CTB. Tourists will be given VIP treatment by the customs and will only be searched in the event of there being a strong suspicion that they are carrying contraband said the Customs—CDN. The decision to put off the token strike which was to have been launched on September 28 was a victory for the workers against the politicians who controlled the unions said the President. The Minister of Rural Industrial



Development is expected to be appointed as District Minister for Jaffna. The Minister of Lands, Land Development and Mahaweli Development will leave on a goodwill mission to the USSR on an invitation from the Soviet government. A contract was entered into yesterday between the Post and Telegraph Department of Sri Lanka and Messrs L. M. Ericson of Sweden for the setting up of a 200 line international telephone exchange at the Overseas telecommunication service building in Colombo. The Minister of State has pointed out that tourism needs a new concept to prevent it from becoming 'something heartless, like statistics in the Central Bank—SU. The President said yesterday that any decision like strike which is directly connected to the workers should be taken by secret ballot and he said that the trade union laws will be changed in accordance with this—VK. The PMB has bought a record 18.9 million bushels of paddy and has supplied 1,35,000 tons of rice which is 144% more than last year to the Food Department in the first five months of this year—DM. There was 99% attendance yesterday, the day of the intended token strike. Businessmen in the North should in their signboards give prominence to Tamil; if they do not do so before the next Thai Pongal festival satyagraha will be performed in front of their shops; so said Mr. Vannai Anandan—DP. The Sri Lanka Foreign Minister recently paid an official visit to Bolivia on the invitation of the Bolivian government—IDPR No. 190/78. The Israeli Knesset approved the Camp David accords after a marathon debate; the vote was 85 in favour, 10 against and 16 abstentions. Kuwait's oil Minister warned that Arab oil producing countries could not continue tolerating the increasing erosion

of their oil revenue—CDN. Army contingents moved into five districts of India's West Bengal state yesterday to evacuate people marooned by fresh floods—CDM. Pieter Botha hardline defence Minister for the last 12 years was elected the new PM of South Africa. Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Congress (I) Party urged the former Premier to contest for parliament in a by-election in South India next month—SU.

#### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30:

The Department of Elections has sent out over one million poll cards in preparation for local government elections to 12 Municipal Councils and 33 Urban Councils; the elections to be held and concluded before February 4, 1979 will be to pick 520 members to local government bodies; these are the first local government elections after seven years. Pope John Paul leader of the world's 700 million Catholics died apparently of a heart attack last night after one of the shortest pontificates ever. The PM who paid a surprise visit to the Maduru Oya work site on Thursday complimented the groups of youth from the Colombo electorates for completing the work allocated to them ahead of schedule. The Employer's Federation of Ceylon yesterday paid a tribute to the President for 'the very sagacious handling of the threatened token strike.' The Dumbura Campus of the University of Sri Lanka will be opened by the Minister of Education and Higher Education. The government has decided to subsidise the cost of fishing gear by 35 percent; cost of engines for fishing craft by 50%; banks have agreed to grant credit for the balance costs upto 90%—CDN. Fourteen massive food stores with a total of 436,000 square feet of accommodation are now under construction at Welisar, Narahepita, Jaffna and Trincomalee. All Sri Lankans who stay more than six

months abroad will be given the special 'green light' treatment by the customs at the International Airport at Katunayake; their baggage will be subjected only to 'spot checks'. Bolivia is expected to set up giant industrial ventures in the FTZ shortly—CDM. About 20,000 acres of lands which were acquired by the previous government under the Land Reform Law are likely to be sold to farmers soon—SU. A new law which will be in operation in India soon will make MP's liable to one year's rigorous imprisonment for drinking—DP. Israeli Parliament's approval of the Camp David accords was praised by President Anwar Sadat's National Democratic Party a senior foreign ministry source said, peace talks with Israel would start in Ismailia within a week—CDN. Former PM John Vorster was elected South Africa's fourth President by both houses of Parliament. Foreign Minister Hua Kua Feng of China addressing the UN General Assembly in a new attack on Soviet policy last night asserted that Moscow was the major threat to world peace. Egypt today briefed the Soviet Union and other East bloc states on the Camp David West Asia peace accords. Israel's Industries Minister Horowitz resigned in protest against Knesset approval of the Camp David accords—SU.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1:** The government has further relaxed exchange control regulations governing the repatriation abroad of assets of foreigners lying frozen in blocked accounts in banks here; the Central Bank has authorised the commercial banks to increase the limit on remittances abroad of these funds from Rs. 10,000 to 100,000; such remittances may now be made without the prior approval of the Central Bank. An interim report of the Special Pre-



sidential Commission was handed to President J. R. Jayewardene at his Ward Place residence yesterday morning. The production of synthetic textiles is to be trebled; the Minister of Textile Industries has approved the expansion of ten big synthetic manufacturing industries and the setting up of 20 new medium scale textile industries—SO. Too many holidays and non-working days have been listed as one of the chief constraints on development work; the Sub Committee of Development Secretaries headed by the Secretary, Ministry of Plan Implementation has stated in its report. The private sector should change its traditional profit motivated outlook and put country before self in the conduct of business said the President of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce delivering his annual Presidential address. The government will shortly enact amending legislation to prevent the export of antiquities and other cultural properties whose origins is prior to March 2, 1815—ST. Future offenders of the laws of the land instead of serving a prison sentence on conviction could be required to serve a 'Community Service Order' directing the accused person to perform stipulated work in a state or state sponsored project; the duration of the Community Service Order is expected not to exceed a period of one year if the order is entered into by a magistrate and not to exceed a period of three years when the order is entered into by the High Court; this will be one of the new features that will come into force with the operation of the new code of criminal procedure 1978. The government will shortly ban the export of a series of consumer food items which is now in short supply in the country—WK. A few months following the appointment of district ministers, a new brand of

ministers called 'Plan Ministers' are to be appointed. The third channel of the SLBC—the Sports channel will start tomorrow—DP. The new speaker stated that important problems of the people should not be viewed in a political light but should be considered as national problems and solutions should be found for them—VK. The CWE will shortly take over the distribution of Lakspray—RR. A large number of Sri Lanka youths who have gone abroad in search of employment are in a number of European jails for drug peddling and shop lifting—SLDP. Thousands of people queued in St. Peter's Square to pay their last respects to Pope John Paul. The President of OPEC said he hoped that oil prices would rise after the OPEC ministerial meeting in Abu Dhabi in December—WK. West German President Scheel said 500 million people in the world are undernourished and made an urgent appeal for personal contributions to the World Hunger Relief Fund. At least 500 people are feared to have died in floods which have engulfed nearly half of India's populous West Bengal state—WK

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 2:** Sri Lanka will soon have a National Defence Academy; draft legislation for such an institution is now being prepared; it is planned to set up the Institution at Kaduwela estate belonging to Sir John Kotlawala who has indicated he would gift it for the purpose. The government has told state trading institutions including certain statutory boards to increase their contributions to the state Consolidated Fund this year or face closure. The Minister of Education and Higher Education speaking at the Dumbara Campus opening said that it was the policy of the government to broadbase university education; they wanted to improve

the campuses and expand the system to ensure that every competent child will have a chance of having a university education. The UNESCO has granted Rs. 100 million towards the restoration of historic buddhist dagobas and viharas in Sri Lanka—CDN. The Milk Board is in a quandary as to whether a consignment of 1000 metric tons of milk powder imported in May 1978 from New Zealand at a cost of Rs. 15 million should be rejected in full because it is partly weevil-infested or whether the un-affected quantity should be repacked for distribution. All public officers including teachers, corporation and other public institution officers who kept away from work on September 28, the day of the threatened token strike, would be considered as having vacated their posts. The world Bank has suggested to government that the mass exodus of qualified Sri Lankan doctors, nurses, engineers and other personnel be stopped and their services used locally. Three formidable trade union organisations in the public and private sectors—public service national trade union federation, Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya and Lanka Jathika Estate Workers Union have urged the government to introduce legislation to ensure that a decision to strike is taken only on a secret ballot of all the members of each union in order to eliminate politicians from taking such a decision—CDM. Employees Councils may soon replace trade unions in the corporation sector in terms of a new Government White Paper. The government is to increase the rates of subsidy paid as minor crop assistance and extend the scheme even to those in legal possession of land under lease etc. The salary payable to the President of Sri Lanka will be Rs. 5000 a month—SU. The Minister of Rural Indus-



trial Development said that in his forty years of trade union experience he had never supported unreasonable demands while on the other hand he had always supported reasonable ones; therefore the working class should co-operate with the government in its development efforts—VK. King Hussein of Jordan arrived in Jeddah for consultation with Saudi Crown Prince on the Camp David Peace accords which have been coolly received in both their countries. The Pacific Ocean state of Tuvalu became independent from Britain in a midnight ceremony. The UN decided on Friday to go ahead with its own independence solution for Namibia—CDN. Hundreds of people were feared dead in widespread flooding of India's West Bengal state as troops moved in to rescue tens of thousands of people marooned by high water. Thousands of mourners queued through the night in pouring rain to file past the body of Pope John Paul in St. Peter's Basilica where it was taken last night—SU.

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3:** Strikes in the public sector are totally unjustified because the people are the ultimate owners of the means of production, distribution and exchange in that sector; such strikes will only cripple the government's activities and retard national development said the President yesterday. The President addressing the Law Students Union said that under the new constitution and under his government not only will independence of the judiciary be preserved but they would extend it more, wherever possible. Politicians who dominate public sector trade unions as 'outsiders' controlling leadership will be ejected when the Employee's Council Law pulled from the White Paper on Employment Relations is written into the statute. The President

has presented a cheque for Rs. 1 million to the High Commissioner for India to be used for rehabilitating victims of the recent floods in India—CDN. Sri Lanka's rice imports dropped by 70% during the first seven months of this year; this was attributed to the availability of local rice after the unprecedented Maha Harvest. More than 15 children have contracted poliomyelitis in the SHS division of Colombo North alone during the past few weeks. Saudi Arabia has decided to grant a loan of 50 million US dollars to finance the hydro-power project of the Kotmale Development Scheme—CDM. The GMOA at a special emergency meeting last week decided to request the Director of Health Services to issue a letter of confirmation to every doctor who completes five years of compulsory state service. The President yesterday declared that as head of the government, he would lead the country to economic freedom. Army personnel will from next week be posted inside the customs zone of the Katunayake Airport on the instructions of the Co-ordinating Authority of the Ministry of Defence—SU. Mr. Rohana Wijeweera said that socialism was the only answer for this country and he appealed to the Tamil speaking people to give him full support to make this possible—VK. The Minister of State who inaugurated the third channel of the SLBC said that new buildings will be constructed with housing facilities for those working there—DP. Sri Lanka has appointed Mr. Arthur Basnayake as Ambassador to Burma—IDPR No. 199/78. The FAO in Rome has come forward to help the government in the silk industry—DV. Over Rs. 20 million worth of paddy stocked at warehouses imported recently from England are in danger of getting spoilt because of inadequate storage

facilities—ATH. President Sadat invited President Carter to visit Egypt to sign the planned peace treaty between Egypt and Israel. Syrian President Hafeez Azad bitterly condemned the Camp David peace agreements between Egypt and Israel and accused Egyptian government of giving up the fight against the Zionist enemy. King Hussein of Jordan toured Gulf states seeking support of moderate Arab governments of a common stand on the Camp David agreements—CDN. PM Menachim Begin said Israel would never accept an independent Palestinian state. President Carter made the first official acknowledgement by the US that it uses satellites to spy on the Soviet Union and other countries—CDM. The government controlled Cairo radio said that peace treaty talks between Egypt and Israel would start in Washington under a UN flag. British PM James Callaghan was locked in a bitter struggle over anti-inflation policy with trade unions and his own labour party—SU.

## The Tamils Of Sri Lanka And The Language Provisions Of The New Constitution

by N. Satyendra

A PEOPLE who desire peace and development must cultivate justice and the provisions relating to language in the new Constitution may rightly be regarded as a measure of the commitment of the people of Sri Lanka to achieve a fair balance in the area of language rights as well as a reflection of their felt need to secure justice as between the two major com-



munities that inhabit this country and who have come to regard this land as their home.

The language provisions of the new Constitution represent a watershed in the development and growth of the Sri Lankan state and therefore merit something more than passing consideration from each one of its citizens. NATIONAL LANGUAGE. Many years ago in 1958, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party Minister of Justice in the Bandaranaike Government when introducing the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Act in the Senate remarked that the "question of the official language itself has been occasionally misunderstood by people" and went on to point out, quite rightly, that "by official language is meant the language of record for public purposes." In a State where more than seventy percent of its people belong to the Sinhala community and speak the Sinhala language, it is perhaps, a matter of convenience that, as a general rule, the language of records for public purposes should be Sinhala and this the new Constitution recognises and section 18 provides that the official language of Sri Lanka shall be Sinhala.

But for the first time in the political history of this country the new Constitution recognises the existence of the Tamil community as a distinct nationality with a separate language and section 19 provides that the national languages of Sri Lanka shall be Sinhala and Tamil.

This is a step which previous governments have been unable or unwilling to take and the status afforded to Tamil as a national language in the new Constitution is by itself a significant step forward in the attempt to bring about a unity of purpose amongst members of the Sinhala and Tamil communities in this country and

thereby foster the growth of a truly national awareness and consciousness.

A Constitution is concerned with constituting and constitutional provisions are but the ground rules which constitute a State. It is wholly appropriate therefore that the Sri Lankan state should be constituted on the basis of the recognition of the Tamil community as a distinct nationality with its own language and culture and the acceptance of Tamil as a national language.

It may however be legitimately asked whether the status afforded to Tamil as a national language by section 19 of the new Constitution is merely an empty gesture devoid of tangible content.

*Is section 19 merely an attempt to placate sentiment? What are the practical consequences of Tamil being made a national language of Sri Lanka and to what extent do the new language provisions satisfy the rightful aspirations of a national minority?*

Answers to questions such as these must be found by an examination of not only section 19 but also of the immediately succeeding sections of the Constitution which relate to the use of the Tamil language in the legislative process, in education, in administration and in the courts and such an examination may most usefully be made in the context of an understanding of the legitimate rights of a national minority in the area of language.

BASIC RIGHTS. What are these rights and from where do they spring? The State exists to protect and serve all its people, irrespective of race, religion or language and it is on this basis that the people, in turn, give their allegiance to the State. It is this allegiance which cements the Constitution of the State. If a State seeks the continued loyalty of its citizens

it must treat them equally and this means that in a multinational state, a national minority cannot be required to change its language or speak in the language of the majority, as a condition precedent to the State rendering service or giving protection. No State can survive if there is continued discrimination against any section of its people on the ground that such section belong to any one community or speak any one language. Where such discrimination becomes a way of life, it will not be possible for people belonging to different nationalities and languages to live peacefully together within the confines of a single political state.

This is common sense and not surprisingly it is also a lesson of history. The recurrent claims of the French in Canada and of the Scots and the Welsh for devolution in Great Britain show the need to recognise that matters of language and culture are deep seated in the human consciousness and can neither be ignored nor suppressed.

It is said that in a democracy people govern themselves and this means that in a political state which consists of more than one nationality effective democracy will not be possible unless the members of each nationality are able to participate in the legislative process in their own language, transact business with the State in their own language, present their claims and disputes for adjudication in their own language and if they choose to do so educate their children in their own language. If these then are the basic civil rights in the area of language to what extent do the provisions in the new Constitution secure and guarantee such rights?

LEGISLATION. Section 20 of the new Constitution provides that a Member of Parliament or a Mem-



ber of a Local Authority shall be entitled to function in Parliament or in Local Authority in either of the national languages and section 23 requires that all laws and subordinate legislation shall be enacted in both national languages. This represents a distinct departure from the past when the right of a Member of Parliament to participate in proceedings in Tamil was a matter that was governed by the Standing Orders of the National State Assembly and were subject to alteration by the legislature by a simple majority. In 1960, for instance, there was much controversy in the House of Representatives in respect of the question whether Order Papers should be printed in the Tamil Language.

The provisions of the new Constitution secure for the first time in Sri Lanka a constitutional guarantee in respect of the fundamental right of a Member of a national minority to function in his own language in the National Legislature as well as in any Local Authority, wherever such Authority may be established.

These provisions give a new constitutional status to Tamil and protect and guarantee its use in the legislative process and taken in the context of the decision of the government to publish electoral registers in both national languages they may be understood as reflecting an intent to draw the Tamil community into the main stream of legislative and political activity in this country.

**EDUCATION.** Section 21 (1) of the new Constitution enacts that a person shall be entitled to be educated through the medium of either of the national languages. This section confers a constitutional right on a member of the Tamil community to be educated

in the medium of the Tamil language. In the past the entitlement of a Tamil pupil to be instructed through the medium of the Tamil language was subject to such regulations under the Education Ordinance relating to the medium of instruction as may be in force from time to time.

The right of a member of a national minority to be educated in his own language was not protected by the 1972 Constitution. Section 21(2) of the new Constitution goes further and provides that where one national language is a medium of instruction for any course in any University the other national language shall also be made a medium of instruction for such course. Taken in the context of the decision of the Government to abolish standardisation, section 21(1) and 21 (2) of the new Constitution may rightly be construed as an attempt to bridge the differences that have arisen between the Sinhala and Tamil communities in the area of education.

**ADMINISTRATION.** Section 22 of the new Constitution enacts that the official language shall be the language of administration throughout Sri Lanka but this is subject to the provision that the Tamil language shall also be used as the language of administration in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. The 1972 Constitution failed to give a constitutional guarantee in respect of the use of the Tamil language in the Northern and Eastern Provinces and restricted the right to use the Tamil language even in these areas to such matters as may be prescribed from time to time by regulations under the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Act. Section 8 of the 1972 Constitution further expressly enacted that any such regulation "shall not in any manner be interpreted as being a provision of the Consti-

tution," and even the validity of the regulations framed under the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Act were made suspect in consequence of allegations that these regulations were *ultravires* the Act. The new Constitution therefore gives, for the first time, constitutional recognition of the special status of the Tamil language in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, and guarantees its use as a language of administration in these two areas.

But this is not all. Section 22 also confers a constitutional right on any person, wherever he may reside in Sri Lanka, to communicate with, receive communications from and transact business with any official in either of the national languages. This section further provides that all notifications and official documents including circulars and forms shall be published in both national languages.

These landmark provisions seek to secure the basic right of a member of a national minority to deal with the State without any disadvantage in consequences of his lack of knowledge of the official language. They recognise the fundamental right of a member of the Tamil community to transact business with the State in his own language—a right which the Tamil community has sought in vain from previous government!

On the question of admission to the public service, section 22 of the new Constitution enacts that an applicant shall be entitled to be examined through the medium of either of the national languages. This is subject to the condition that the entrant may be required to acquire a sufficient knowledge of the official language within a specific period "where such knowledge is reasonably necessary for the discharge of his duties."



This section represents an attempt to achieve a pragmatic solution to the problem of public servants acquiring proficiency in the official language in the context of the circumstance that more than seventy percent of the people served by such public servants belong to the Sinhala community and much will depend, no doubt, on effective implementation.

**COURTS.** Section 24 of the new Constitution enacts that the official language shall be the language of the courts throughout Sri Lanka but this is subject to the proviso that the language of the courts in the Northern and Eastern Provinces shall also be Tamil. Here again for the first time constitutional recognition is given to the special status of the Tamil language in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

But even in other parts of the country where Tamil is not the language of the courts, section 24 enables any party or any Attorney-at-Law to initiate proceedings and submit to court pleadings and other documents and participate in court proceedings in either of the national languages. Again any party or any Attorney-at-Law who is not conversant with the Language used in any court shall be entitled to interpretation into the appropriate national language to enable him to understand and participate in proceedings before such court.

The new Constitution thus guarantees and protects the right of a member of a national minority to present or defend a claim and participate in court proceedings in his own language.

Finally, section 25 of the new Constitution casts a duty upon the State to provide adequate facilities for the use of the national languages as specified in the Constitution.

**NOT PAPERWORK.** This brief examination of the language provisions

of the new Constitution shows not only that Tamil has been given a new constitutional status as a national language, but also that the use of the Tamil language in the areas of legislation, education, administration and justice, has been secured by constitutional guarantees. These constitutional guarantees protect, in so far as constitutional provisions can protect any right or liberty, the basic and fundamental language rights of the Tamils of Sri Lanka as a national minority.

It is sometimes said that constitutions are but pieces of paper and that where liberty and freedom dies in the hearts of men, no constitution, no court and no law can be of any avail. Admittedly, the effective implementation of fundamental rights and guarantees depends more on administrative action than on laws; more on tradition, politics and education than on constitutional enactments. But constitutions also crystallise that which is in the hearts of men and are a reflection of the desires and intent of a people at any given time in their history.

Whilst it may be true that only the political culture of a country can preserve basic freedoms, it is equally true that constitutions and the placing of fundamental rights and guarantees in them, have something to do with guiding that culture. It would seem unwise and imprudent for any citizen of this country to dismiss the language provisions in the new Constitution as a mere exercise in paper work. Perhaps we should ask ourselves that if indeed this were a mere exercise in paper work, why it was that no such paper was forthcoming during the past several decades.

The language provisions in the new Constitution are not concessions granted as a matter of

generosity or wrested from the weak by a show of force. It may be more fruitful and constructive to act on the basis that these language provisions are the resultant of the desire of many sections of the people of this country that the time has come when we should pool our resources and work together in an attempt to find some answers to the pressing problems of economic development that faces Sri Lanka today.

The language provisions reflect above all, a strength and a willingness to enact that which is right and there may be a need for an answering strength from all sections of the people of this country to join together in the task of securing the effective implementation of that which has been enacted.

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#### POEM

### Lament For Humanity

The might is dark with not a star to light the way. I sit alone on a log and ponder on life—the worries troubles and pains a man endures. Why

does he have to suffer such agonies? Why

endure poverty, hunger, disease and frustration? Is there no salvation for the human race? Can it not grow, expand, reach beyond itself to see that there is something loftier than the cares of everyday life? I have no answers, for I am not even mere speck in the vast firmament, I am helpless, seeking and lost. Will I ever reach the stage of passing beyond

pleasure and pain or will I forever flounder in the dark?

Casava

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# Confidentially

## Eisenberg & Co.

IS IT NOT A FACT that there are hushed whispers in certain governmental and commercial circles about a company or syndicate or combine known as EISENBERG & Co. Inc.? That this Company has recently been doing its best to persuade certain circles in the Government to accept a private (international) commercial loan amounting to nearly US \$ 2 billion, that is US \$ 2000 million to cover the entire Mahaveli and other projects? That it was made out that such a commercial loan would take the load off the Sri Lanka Government to provide feasibility reports, project programmes, progress charts and a whole lot of red tape and paper work which the World Bank and the IMF usually wanted before releasing a cent? That it was also made out that once a deal was made with this private "CONSORTIUM" the international bankers through the good offices of EISENBERG & Co. (and their local agents the MAHARAJAH ORGANISATION) the money promised would be straightaway put into the account of the Sri Lanka Government to do what it liked with it? That the CONSORTIUM, it was also said, would provide all the plans, reports designs, etc. etc. required for Mahaveli—no doubt at a price to be paid from the loan? That no questions would be asked about how the money was used if the interest charges were paid on the dot and the repayment instalments on the scheduled dates as provided in the agreement? That this private CONSORTIUM, it was stressed, would not try to tell the Sri Lanka government what it should do and should not do—in the way that the IBRD and IMF seek to do? That it

was also pointed out that whilst IBRD loans would be released as and when required according to the project plans previously approved by the IBRD, the EISENBERG CONSORTIUM would hand over the entire money to Sri Lanka no sooner the agreement was signed? That this would make it possible for those who run the affairs of state to do a little "rolling" with this money to meet urgent liquidity problems?

IS IT ALSO NOT A FACT that the Sri Lanka Government has refused to bite the bait held out by EISENBERG & CO and their local agents the MAHARAJAH ORGANISATION? That there were several reasons for this? That the loans the private CONSORTIUM offered were "hard" loans at 7.5 to 7.9 percent interest compared to the "soft" loans of the IBRD and IMF at 2.1 or 2.2 per cent interest? That the World Bank loans did not pay commissions to brokers like EISENBERG & CO and the MAHARAJAH ORGANISATION and this was a saving for the country? That in case of the offer made by EISENBERG & CO, the commission payable to the local agents was estimated to be about 25 million (whether it would be US Dollars or Sri Lanka Rupees we have not bothered to inquire because the figure was so staggering that it did not seem to matter in what currency it was worked out)? That the commission for EISENBERG & CO may have been about ten times the MAHARAJAH booty? That there also seems to have been another reason why the Sri Lanka Government refused to consider the EISENBERG offer? That in more recent times it is said that the World Bank and the IMF have stood against governments of developing countries getting hard loans from private banking syndicates (which call themselves CONSORTIUMS) to confuse the

public by elevating themselves to the governmental Aid bodies operating under the auspices of the World Bank?) That disaster had overtaken several countries, notably Peru, Chile and the like, which had obtained private commercial loans from banking syndicates? That these countries had quickly found the high rates of interest very oppressive and this had led to default? That it was also found that the private bankers and brokers had corrupted the higher echelons of the government and administration and had encouraged them to play ducks and drakes with the money in their charge? That it is now known that when these countries were on the verge of bankruptcy and collapse, the IBRD and IMF had to step in to bale them out and virtually take over the running of these countries? That some allege that the IBRD-IMF had encouraged some countries to fall into the trap of the private bankers to enable the IMF to take over at a later date but there is no evidence to support this? That whilst in the past, the IBRD and the IMF had not raised objections against developing countries obtaining commercial loans from private bankers, there is no doubt that the IBRD and IMF have come to the point where they tell developing countries that they would refuse to assist them if they went in for commercial loans from private bankers as well? That *Tribune* will have more to say about this and other matters, connected with the IBRD next week, but in the meantime if EISENBERG & CO or their local agents MAHARAJAH ORGANISATION think that our account of this epic story does not conform with the facts as they know it, they are at liberty to send us their version and we will be glad to publish the same?

(To be Continued)



