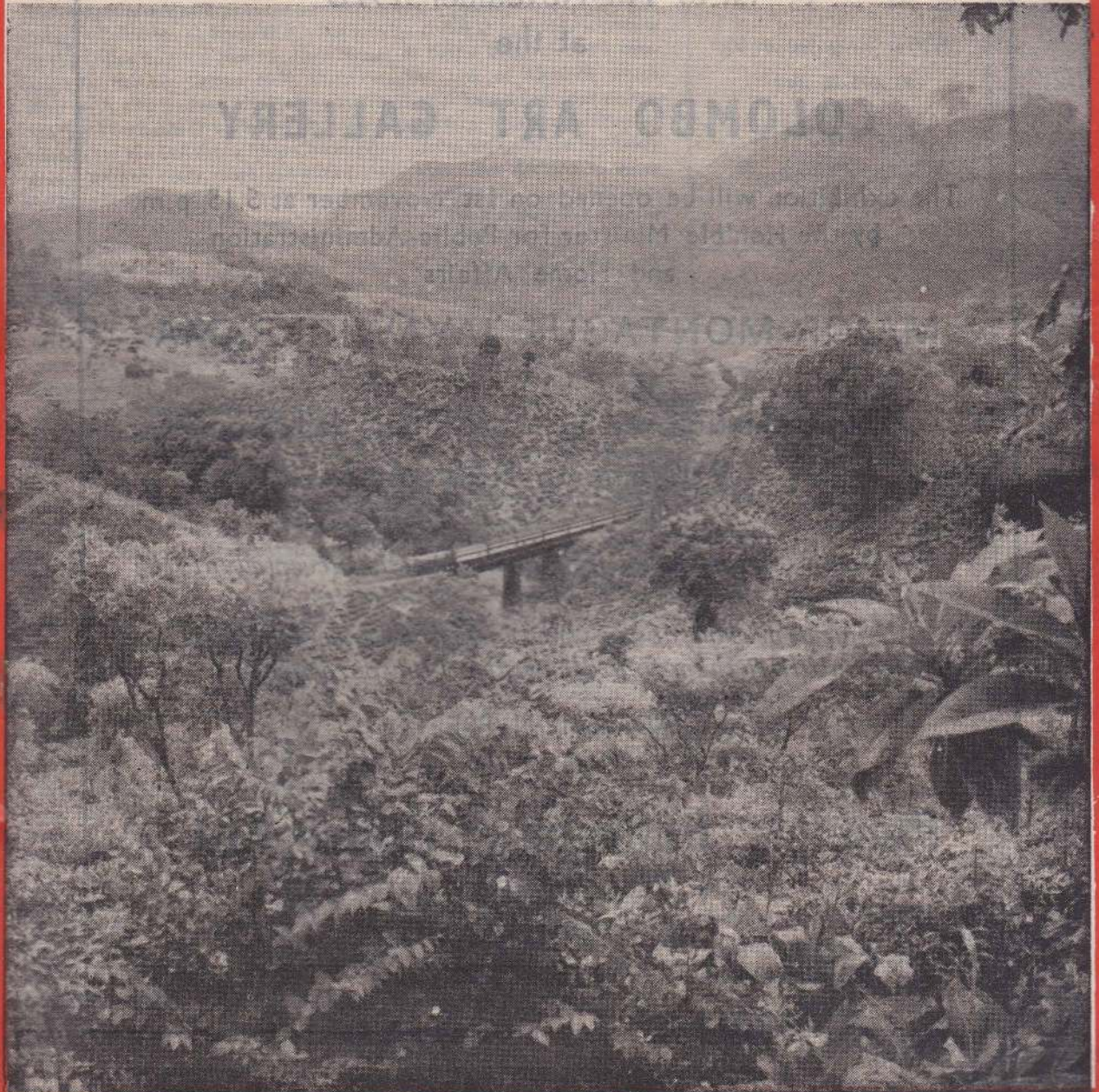


# TRIBUNE







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# Letter From The Editor

CHIKMAGALUR is very much in the news with a sensational by-election scheduled for November 5 in which Mrs. Indira Gandhi is participating in a bid to stage a parliamentary comeback to the Centre of Indian politics. This by-election has aroused great interest in Sri Lanka, and the question that is on everybody's lips is whether Indira Gandhi will win and, if she does, what her future is likely to be. Elsewhere in this issue we have published reports from some Indian periodicals which have interpretatively analysed the salient implications of the Chikmagalur by-election. There is no doubt that Indian politics has been the poorer because of the absence of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and if she wins the by-election, as many people expect her to do, she will emerge as the new Leader of the Opposition. It is difficult living in Colombo, to know all the fast-moving currents and under-currents of the Indian political scene and we cannot do better than refer to a comment in the prestigious New Delhi weekly *Link* of 15-10-78 which dealt with this matter: "Everything Indira Gandhi has said or done during the last 19 months is beginning to fall into a pattern with her decision to contest for the Lok Sabha from Chikmagalur. As in the past, she has deftly drawn up her every move and timed them well. Her decision to enter Parliament has come at a time when the ruling party at the Centre is tottering and conditions in the country, according to her estimate, are ripe for yet another pseudo-revolution. In just about nine months from January last, when she split the Congress, Indira Gandhi has recaptured the party which she had nearly lost together with the power and authority she had held for 13 years. . . . Mrs. Gandhi parted company with only about 25 or one-sixth of party MPs from the Lok Sabha and one third of the AICC members on her side. In just nine months she has successfully turned the small minority into a majority with enough strength in both the Houses of Parliament to enable her to become the leader of the Opposition. Outside Parliament, the mass mood has swung back in her favour to a considerable extent, though a very large number of people seem to know that she is no real alternative to the Janata Party, in which they have lost all faith and confidence. . . . Today, she can claim to have won over a majority of Congress workers to her side in most States. Many others who have stayed back seem to be preparing the ground for mass desertion when a proper opportunity appears on the scene. Several factors have enabled Indira Gandhi to regain much of what she had lost after the last Lok Sabha poll. Perhaps, the foremost reason is the total failure of the Janata Party to retain the popular support the masses had reposed in it in the last election. Everything that has happened in the party and that it has done has turned out to be just as she had predicted and secretly hoped. Indira Gandhi's central campaign theme during the last Lok Sabha election was that the Janata Party is not a party in the real sense of the term but a mere conglomeration or irreconcilable interests and discordant personalities. Even during the election campaign she had predicted that its leaders would not be able to stand together for long. That is exactly what happened within months of the party coming to power. Discord took hold of the party from the very first day. Over the months, the internecine warfare has come to the open. It has caused severe revulsion in the public. What has disillusioned the people most is the utter failure of the Janata Party to harmonise liberty with order. . . . Her success in rallying masses around her has swung ever larger number of Congressmen to her side. . . . From all available reports it is likely that she will win the election, but no national daily in India has ventured to suggest it.

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## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

**:: Jayewardene**  
**:: Premadasa**  
**:: Amirthalingam**  
**:: Thondaman**  
**:: Wijeyaratne**

**PRESIDENT JAYEWARDENE**, as expected, has hit the headlines in India and has been given a right royal welcome. The fact that he chose to go to India on his first official visit after his assumption of office as Executive President on February 4, 1978 has evoked a very warm response in India. There are no bi-lateral problems especially of a political nature between the two countries, but a great deal can be done to further extend the scope of economic co-operation and technical assistance. There is also the unbridgeable gap in the balance of trade which must be reduced as much as possible—a start may be made by increasing the intake of tourists from India to Sri Lanka. President Jayewardene's discussions with Indian leaders are more in the nature of goodwill talks which may lay the foundation for co-operation between the two countries than anything else. For the rest, his stay in India and Nepal will be mainly as a pilgrim to Buddhist shrines.

Though President Jayewardene's trip to India has been welcomed by the people of Sri Lanka as a gesture of goodwill to our nearest and biggest neighbour, there is growing puzzlement in political quarters that he has gone out of the island without appointing the Prime Minister to act for him as provided in the Constitution. Such an appointment is in the sole discretion of the President. With

India so near (not more than 3 or 4 hours in a fast plane from the furthestmost point), Mr. Jayewardene may not have thought it essential to make such an appointment.

Section 37 (1) of the Constitution reads:

*"If the President is of the opinion that by reason of illness, absence from Sri Lanka or any other cause he will be unable to exercise, perform and discharge the powers, duties and functions of his office he may appoint the Prime Minister to exercise, perform and discharge the power, duties and functions of the office of the President during such period and may also appoint one of the other Ministers of the Cabinet to act in the office of Prime Minister during such period: Provided that if the office of Prime Minister be then vacant or the Prime Minister is unable to act, the President may appoint the Speaker to exercise, perform and discharge the powers, duties and functions of the office of President during such period."*

The question that is being asked in political circles is why the President did not form the "opinion" by reason of his absence from Sri Lanka that it was necessary to appoint the Prime Minister, Mr. Premadasa, to act as President and also at the same time appoint one of the other Ministers of the Cabinet to act in the office of Prime Minister.

A number of reasons have been suggested as to why the President did not take any steps under Section 37 (1) but what nearly everybody concerned with this problem has stressed is that whilst the President would have had no difficulty in appointing the Prime Minister, Mr. Premadasa, to act as President, he would have run into serious difficulties in trying to choose a Minister to act for the PM. All the so-called "senior" ministers, Mon-

tagne Jayawickrema, E. L. Senanayake, M. D. H. Jayewardene, M. H. Mohamed, etc., are of the same vintage and calibre, and it would have been hard to justify the choice of any one of them in preference to others. And if the President had tried to by-pass the imperatives of seniority by picking a younger (and more capable) man, he might have been confronted with many problems he need not have raised now. And some knowledgeable circles also feel that the President would like to give Prime Minister Premadasa a little more time to gather the "moss" of experience in different fields and also learn to keep clear of controversial issues like the recent allegations that he had received the gift of a house which he denied in the Parliament on 19.10.78.

### ANATOMY OF RUMOUR.

Fortunately for Mr. Premadasa, the rumour of a gift of a house did not gain currency and credibility in the political circles which make public opinion in the country. The rumour had also not circulated much beyond the environs of the city of Colombo, and Mr. Premadasa, as one paper so aptly put it, decided to shoot it down with his statement in Parliament on 19.10.78—but this gave the rumour a national dimension. This is what he had said:

*"It has come to my notice that a mischievous rumour is being spread to the effect that I have received a gift of a house. I wish to state categorically that at no time have I been offered or have I accepted such a gift. In fact, I have sold a house property of mine in Colombo this year and purchased another. I have under the provisions of Section 3 of the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Law No. 1 of 1975 made a declaration of my assets and liabilities as well as those of my wife and children to the proper authority. I may also add that I have kept*



the proper authority informed of every change in my assets and liabilities and those of my wife and children as and when such change occurred since my original declaration. I have followed this course of action although the law requires that the next declaration be made only after the lapse of five years from the first declaration."

There is no doubt that, on this occasion, the public did not lend any credence to this rumour—though often false rumours are accepted as true for no rhyme or reason—but the whole episode is a warning signal which a serious politician like Mr. Premadasa cannot afford to ignore. According to *The Independent* (27/10/78), Mr. Premadasa had insisted on taking serious notice of the rumour which was characterised as "vicious", baseless and totally false". Some Cabinet colleagues, *The Independent* said, had counselled the PM to ignore the rumour because more the notice taken the more it would spread. Though the PM said he would not go against the wishes of the Cabinet, he, according to *The Independent*, felt that this was a matter "affecting his personal integrity" and that "his enemies were deliberately spreading this story to tarnish him politically". He had therefore made the statement with the President's consent.

Mr. Premadasa no doubt feels that that his "enemies" concocted and spread this story to tarnish his political image, but our own view is that, in this instance, Mr. Premadasa has to blame his "friends" rather than his "enemies". *Tribune's* investigations into the origins of this rumour show that it had arisen from remarks made by persons and vested interests regarded as Mr. Premadasa's "friends"—persons who are constantly endeavouring (and with some measure of success) to show that

they are the real power behind Mr. Premadasa's throne. And these vested interests maintain a small band of helpful hangers-on to do every bidding of Ministers and politicians. And through a series of clever "actions" they have been able to persuade members of the bureaucracy and thereafter the public that they wield more influence with the PM than anyone else. Evidently, the PM is not aware of the damage that is being done to his political reputation by the name-dropping indulged in by these "friends" who specialise in whispers that make people believe that they are so powerful that they can get anything done in the Palace.

This is not something that afflicts only the Prime Minister's Establishment. The President as well as every Minister (and in fact every person in authority) has to contend with this kind canker, and the wonder is that so many who should know better continue to tolerate such parasitic contact men whose activities will ultimately destroy the integrity of the Party and denigrate the credibility of the Government. Funnily enough, this kind of danger from "friends" has, in the dharmista era, first struck at the Prime Minister, who has done such excellent work as to create a good image and he will therefore do well to take proper and adequate steps to deal with this writing on the wall. If the PM wishes to preserve and safeguard his image, in our view, he must cut down to size those "friends" who are known to make use of the Establishment for business advancement and profit or get unfair advantage (or are able to exercise undue influence) through the technique of dropping names coupled with whispers of how much they had done for the PM (which places him under deep obligation to them). At this

juncture, it is not necessary to name "names" or detail the "whispers." Every politician has "friends" as well as "enemies" (and "rivals"). It is for the politician to see that his "friends" do not provide his "enemies" with ammunition (mainly through boastful talk) to shoot him down. Such boastful talk by "friends" in bars, drawing rooms and cocktail parties does more harm to a politician than all the "vicious", baseless and totally false" stories spread by "enemies".

In this connection a WARNING TO POLITICIANS by Gamini Navaratne in his *Sun* column *Power & The People*, 28/10/78, could not have come at a more timely moment. This piece is a homily which every politician must take seriously. It is on the text: ARE THOSE FRIENDS IN NEED REALLY PROVEN FRIENDS INDEED? This sermon in print is worthy of record: "This warning has been sounded before and it should be repeated. Politicians, especially politicians in power, must be wary about the people they gather round them. It is natural that any politician in power would need, and be surrounded by, other politicians, advisers, officials, party-men, journalists, trouble-shooters, 'catchers' etc. It is also natural for people, politicians included, to have ambitions of various sorts. But the problems arise when people around politicians in power, in order to achieve their own ambitions, do things that should not be done, in the process sometimes placing their benefactors, in compromising situations, even dragging their face in the mud or causing their ruin. This sort of thing happens in every country where the game of politics is played. It has happened in Sri Lanka before; it seems to be happening now, too, if one were to believe some of the spicy stories current in political circles. It may be that political opponents are deliberately putting into circulation mischievous ru-



mours to cause embarrassment to those in power. This is to be expected. It is part of the game of politics.

"What sometimes makes the public believe even a baseless story is that the conduct of persons around a politician is suspect: at times, it may be the politician's own conduct that is suspect. The root of the problem is that most politicians tend to gather round them persons who are noted not so much for intelligence, ability and sincerity as for family relationship, party affiliation and sycophancy. Flatterers, toadies and sneaks succeed in getting a politician's ear more often and more readily than those who may want to tell him the truth of things, that is, what is really good for him, but who are deterred because they feel they would not be believed or would even be despised. The worst type of "friend" that a politician can have is one who, sensing his future chances of victory, stands by him in adversity. Once in power, he is obliged to help such people although they may have been motivated by the sole idea of advancing their own interests. Politicians of the day would be well advised to sit back and think how many such people are gathered round them. Some may have none; others may have too many. A politician's greatness rests largely in his ability to distinguish his true friends. Politicians who cannot do so have only themselves to blame. Such politicians may have to lament, as did a former Prime Minister, 'Save me from my friends!' . . ."

Gamini Navaratne has done well to sound this WARNING TO POLITICIANS, and all politicians in this country, including the President, Mr. Jayewardene, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Premadasa, can profit from this warning. Though every one of them will say that they are aware of this danger and that they do not tolerate flattery and sycophancy, they

are often blinded by obsequious attention garbed in an aura high altruism that succeeds in keeping out grass-root realists away from Ministers and politicians and from the Palace.

**PREMIER PREMADASA'S TRIUMPHAL TOUR.** Whether by design or accident, Prime Minister Premadasa was away on a four-day tour in the Eastern Province from October 25, and he was, therefore, not at the airport to see the President off on October 26. As no protocol ceremony

was fixed for the departure of the President on his foreign state visit, the Prime Minister could do no better than fulfil his appointments in the Eastern Province. And it is a good thing he did, because it focussed attention on the dilemma within the TULF in a way that could not have been done otherwise. First, a few TULF MPs, contrary to the directions of the High Command, attended all the functions in connection with the Prime Minister's visit at which the respective District Ministers were also present. This

## ROAD AND RAIL

### COVER

ON THE COVER we have a picture of a scene from our beautiful hill country. A bridge and a lonely railway train on it can be seen in the far distance—if one strains one's eyes. It will soon be 500 days since the Government came to power, and all the initial boasting about the miracles of re-organisation that would be effected overnight in the CTB and CGR have vanished into thin air. People are tired of being asked to wait for new buses, new carriages, new waggons, new locomotives and above all more spares. The question people ask is why better use is not made of what we have. In the CGR, the Ratmalana Workshop, the Running Sheds and other facilities have not come up to scratch. In fact, in many ways they seem to be worse than they were before July 1977. Mighty promises were made about a wonderfully new stream-lined Catering Service in the CGR. For three months now, the entire service has been shut down and the Hotels Corporation which was to have taken it over (together with the new Retiring Rooms in some big stations) has done nothing. It is not a better service now but no service at all. The Ministry of Transport has failed to fulfil its promises about the Catering Service and has passed the buck to the Hotels Corporation which is in deep hibernation—ring up the Information Desk at the Corporation to know the full reality of the tragic situation. In the CTB matters were a little better a few weeks ago when the IBRD team was investigating it for the purpose of granting a development loan, but even before the survey was over, everything seems to have slipped back. The Daily News of October 26, 1978 had a frontpage banner CTB GARAGES FAR BEHIND SCHEDULE: SIXTY PERCENT OF MAINTENANCE WORK NOT DONE IN TIME. This is what we had frequently pointed out many times, and more recently in our CONFIDENTIALLY column on 28.10.78. Whilst the CTB has been able to get the promise of a small development loan from the IBRD-IMF-ADB complex, it does not look as if the CGR will qualify for one—the way the CGR is run can impress no one. You can't even get a cup of tea on the CGR now—and the saviours from the Hotels Corporation have not been able to make a start for months. Why did they agree to take over if they can't do the job? Aren't there other caterers in the country if the CGR can't run its own service?



symbolised the first open revolt of the TULF MPs of the Eastern Province from the Jaffna-FP-dominated TULF. One of them, Mr. Ganeshalingam, MP for Padirippu, had stated from a public platform that the TULF should co-operate with the government. Second, Prime Minister Premadasa plugged the national unity line in a way that has captivated the imagination of the Tamils. He made a 15-minute speech in Tamil from a platform in Batticaloa and this proved to be a roaring success. Besides the President, it is the Prime Minister who has done the most to heal the wounds between the Sinhalese and the Tamils and bring them together.

Apart from this, Prime Minister Premadasa added to his charisma (it only gets dim when certain vested interests in Colombo succeed in making it appear that he is "their man") by his references to the press and its role in national affairs. At Batticaloa he is reported (CDN, 28/10/78) to have said: "The press can play a vital role in the development of the country. The press should point out any shortcomings by us and we will endeavour to rectify such shortcomings spotlighted by the press. We always welcome such constructive criticisms for we know by paying heed to such criticisms we can develop our country to suit the needs of the nation." Then speaking in lighter vein he said "I invite pressmen to go round the country and pinpoint any shortcomings that they come across as I want the participation of the people in all government activities. At the same time they must keep the masses informed of the happenings as and when they occur." Mr. Premadasa said the government wanted everybody to participate in governmental activities. "We extend our hand of goodwill and we want every, shade of opinion to come

from all quarters. We don't believe in suppression as our Government is wedded to democracy and follows humanitarian policies. Even here we belong to different political parties and have come here to discuss matters of mutual interest and to arrive at solutions as we believe in solving problems through consultation" he said.

If all Ministers, Parliamentarians and Bureaucrats develop the same approach to the press as Mr. Premadasa and if the Fourth Estate in Sri Lanka—daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly and quarterly—critically analyses and comments, in a bona fide spirit of constructive patriotism, on all matters of public interest, the future of this country will be better assured than if a servile press bootlicks members of the ruling establishment. *Tribune* is personally aware that the Prime Minister Premadasa means what he says of the press, and this some of his officials know to their cost. This alone shows that Mr. Premadasa is on the right track.

**DISINTEGRATION OF THE TULF.** As anticipated by the *Tribune* on many occasions, the disintegration of the TULF has begun to gather momentum. The process had begun when it, in the most inappropriate manner and at the most inopportune moment, in August 1977, tabled an Eelam Amendment to a Throne Speech that promised major concessions to the Tamils in the form of Constitutional Rights on language and other fundamental freedoms. The provocative TULF speeches made during that debate—some of them echoes of the viciously anti-Sinhalese speeches made during the election campaign—provided the chauvinists with an opportunity to trigger the communal holocaust of August-September 1977. This led to the total defection by gra-

dual stages of the CWC from the TULF, but the Amirthalangam High Command was too shaken and weak to take any action against the CWC even when it supported first the Second Amendment and later the new Constitution. The TULF was also not in a position to sack the CWC when Thondaman joined the Cabinet.

The refusal of the TULF to accept a Constitution no sane person in the present circumstances would reject brought further disintegration to the TULF when all the MPs south of Elephant Pass disagreed with hardline Jaffna-TULF policies. This process began to crystallise when the TULF MPs for Vavuniya and Padirippu threatened to resign rather than follow the negative "boycott" policies of the High Command. In the Batticaloa district, last week during the visit of the PM, this revolt became open.

What will the TULF High Command do in the present state of its animated suspension with its "leader" out of the island from the third week of August. During his stay abroad, Amirthalangam has made matters more difficult—for those who want some form of co-operation between the TULF and the government—by indulging in infantile rhetorical outbursts about Eelam, in London, New York and other places. He has delayed his return and it is now whispered he has timed his return via New Delhi and Madras in the hope that he will be able to meet President Jayewardene in India before the inevitable confrontation on his return here.

What will Amirthalangam say? Has he tried to make his peace with the ex-patriate Tamils who have financially contributed lavishly to the TULF and Eelam cause? Has he made peace with the hardline sponsors of the Eelam cause living comfortably abroad and to



whom Tamils in Sri Lanka are only expendable fodder to achieve the dream of Eelam.

As for the President, he has given Amirthalingham and the TULF enough rope to suspend themselves politically in mid air until they expend themselves. The day of reckoning is at hand, and the question now is whether Amirthalingham (and what is left of the TULF) will be able to escape the noose of political oblivion? The game of politics revolves around harsh realities and the TULF is likely to learn how true this is very soon. Rhetoric and emotional slogans are no alternatives of pragmatic and realistic thinking and action. The policies of boycott and negative non-cooperation from 1931 has shut up the mainstream of the Ceylon Tamils in a cul-de-sac of their creation. Can they break out of it in the way Thondaman and the CWC have done?

**MINISTER THONDAMAN** deserves the biggest bouquet ever for what he has achieved so far. The last price increase for milk producers was at the close of 1974. Since that time all items necessary to make dairying an economic field of activity had risen sharply whilst the price paid to the producer has remained constant. It had therefore been no surprise therefore to hear of our few select herds going to the meat stalls. Mr. Thondaman has pulled off probably the most significant victory in the field for a long long time. According to a press release, the producer will get 30 cents more for every pint of milk; the cost of feed has been reduced and the producer will thus benefit by a further 10 cents a pint giving him a total benefit from November 1 of 40 cents a pint.

There is no doubt that with this dairying will come into its own after many years of neglect and lethargy. Without this price in-

centive to producer, all plans to increase milk production would have been only empty talk. Mr. Thondaman must be congratulated on the bold and resolute steps he has taken to make the livestock and milk industry viable. This will inevitably lead to increased liquid capacity, more jobs for the traditional and non-traditional animal husbandrymen and more activity in the field of feed substitutes other than poonac. To ensure that the producer gets the benefit of this price increase, the Minister must ensure that (a) the veterinary service is streamlined (without private practice eating into the producer's income); (b) the stock position improved and accelerated and (c) the cost for the transport of milk controlled (if need be even by law). From press reports it would appear that Minister Thondaman has also taken a number of other steps to ensure that the livestock industry is placed on a sound footing. There may be a little grumbling that the consumer has to pay 30 cents more on every pint, but in the long run it will be cheaper than paying the price we do for imported milk powder.

In retrospect, it must be said that Minister Thondaman in less than two months succeeded in doing what other Ministers have not done in years. Further, with the reduction in the price of poultry feed, the poultry industry too will receive a boost it has not got for many years. We can look forward to a time when we can have the satisfaction of eating Sri Lanka produced broilers—even exporting them to nearby countries—rather than importing them from far away America or China. Must we import what we can easily produce here—even for export?

Once again, we say that Minister Thondaman deserves a big bouquet and we hope that he will earn more in the near future.

**MINISTER NISSANKA WIJERATNE**, on the other hand, deserves to be hit with a big brickbat. Shortly before he took off for Paris for the UNESCO Conference he had issued under the 1972 University Act (still in the extended transitional period) that English medium students in Peradeniya had the option to enter any faculty they chose whatever be the marks scored by them. In our issue of October 7, we had stated that a conspiracy of this nature was brewing and we had given publicity to a story about a book-makers daughter in the hope that the mischief that was contemplated would be nipped in the bud. Instead of taking due heed of this warning, Minister Wijeyeratne had launched an unwarranted attack on *Tribune* in Parliament on 19.10.78 with a circumlocutory statement on University admissions with a feeble plea for the poor long down-trodden and neglected English-medium students. This statement (we have dealt with it elsewhere in this issue) was only a prelude to this directive he issued just before his departure. (According to the *Janadina*, he and his entourage took nearly Rs. 400,000 as foreign exchange for expenses to attend the UNESCO tamasha. Must this country spend so much for Ministerial travels—whatever the pretext?)

The aftermath of this Nissankan directive (at a time when the new Universities Bill has been tabled and in which the Minister enjoys no such power) led to a Cabinet decision reversing the Minister's action. The *Daily News* of October 26 in a rather low-key single column report on page one under the headline **VARSITY ENTRY: OLD SYSTEM TO CONTINUE** stated: "The government has suspended the implementation of a directive that special concessions in the choice of courses be allowed



to students who have entered the University in the English medium. According to this decision the admission to the University will be on the old procedure. The government took this decision to suspend this directive following protests from the Peradeniya Campus UNP Students' Union that if the directive was implemented it would be unfair. 'If the University complied with this directive, certain students whose aggregate of marks at the GCE A Level examination would not entitle them to follow courses like medicine, would be eligible to follow these courses, these students'....."

The Sun, 27/10/78, which had evidently been caught napping (the Daily Mirror had headlined this Cabinet decision on October 26) made amends on October 27 with a prominent front page box entitled CABINET RESCINDS NISSANKA'S ORDER reported: "The Cabinet on Wednesday rescinded a directive by the Minister of Higher Education, Dr. Nissanka Wijeyeratne, that special concessions be granted to students who have entered the University of Sri Lanka in the English medium to choose their own courses. The Ministers, at their weekly meeting presided over by President J. R. Jayewardene, decided that there should be no special privileges to students in the English medium. It has been decided that the procedure which existed before the Ministerial directive was made should be adopted. Before departing for a UNESCO meeting in Paris, the Higher Education Minister has sent a written directive to Professor P. P. G. L. Siriwardena, Vice Chancellor of the University of Sri Lanka, that students in the English medium should be given the choice of the course they wished to follow. The move drew protests both from the University Committee of Admission as well

as student unions. One union alleged that the move might have been meant to accommodate the offspring of a leading personality in the central hills."

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## IN THE TUB by Diogenes

### Alexander Weeps

Alexander pondered over and over again the words of Diogenes. He wept his eyes out when he saw that he had built his own personality at the expense of the men in the city. Around him he could see spineless men crawling before him begging for this office and that honour. They were all prepared to lose their self respect to gain the respect of others with their petty exercise of brief authority. He found that some having crawled before him licking the dust off his shoes were strutting about the city instilling fear here and dispensing favours there in their pursuit of the profitable national business of tale-carrying and torch-bearing.

"Diogenes is right, I have been a fool" exclaimed Alexander, "What is more I see these spineless ones. When they are out of my sight they strut about like so many little Alexanders surrounded by more wretches losing their spine to them. The whole city is full of these wretches who have got something out of me. Their only claim to preference is loyalty which is a noble selfless virtue among dogs and bitches but very often a selfish trait among men and women. See how they parade with their stupid wives feeling so important puffing out their pigeon chests as though every brick in this city has been laid by them. These miserable creatures have nothing in their

heads except ambition for their own little selves and intrigue against others. They have no love for the people who have received nothing from me, though it is they who keep me in power. I was providing them with free bread and circuses. I now provide them only with free circuses but they have to pay for their bread more and more. Far from making the city great, I have been preoccupied with my own greatness. I have made ten millionaires but I have also made ten thousand paupers in this little city. What a fool I have been. The city is teeming with ruins and the vitality of a nation underpaid and unemployed has been progressively sapped by indebtedness and malnutrition. The quality of the people and their sense of values are being destroyed. I can never blame Diogenes. He is not mad when he carries his lantern lit walking the streets of Athens looking for a man in broad daylight. I can see no man in this city. I am not great. I am not a conquerer of conquerors. I am now awakened. I shall from today make this city great. I will teach the men in the city the dignity of man. I shall teach them self respect and human virtues. I have realised that I have been but a fool. I have conquered myself. Only Diogenes is great."

While Alexander was weeping in his palace, the Master was meditating in the Tub with indifferent amusement. He was heard to say "Caligula, makes his horse a consul, but Alexander is Great he makes his ass a consul."





## IN RETROSPECT

**Bookmaker's Daughter**

—and university admissions—

The *Quidnunc* story in the *Tribune* of October 7, 1978, entitled "BOOKMAKER'S DAUGHTER AND THE UNIVERSITY" has led to the most curious repercussions. We had no official refutation of the facts set out in the article, but the Minister of Education, and old reader and friend of *Tribune*, chose to have a swipe at us in Parliament, on Thursday, October 19, 1978. He did not dispute the facts, but dismissed the whole story as "vulgar" and preached a sermon on "high ideals" newspapers should maintain.

The occasion for this verbal onslaught by Minister Wijeyeratne was a question by Mr. Harindra Corea, MP for Chilaw, at adjournment. The question was as follows: "Sir, my question is addressed to the Hon. Minister of Education. I would like to ask him the position with regard to university admissions since July last year. I think we all know that a few new campuses have been opened and students have been admitted to these campuses from various parts of the country. But I would like to have a statement from him in regard to admissions and future policy. The other matter I would like to raise is this. There was a report in some newspaper with regard to the G.C.E. (Ordinary Level) Examination, that there had been some thought given or a decision is to be made to abolish the G.C.E. (Ordinary Level) Examination and to have a district examination. I personally think this is a very good idea simply because I have found in the poorer parts of the country, poorer parts even of relatively well-off electorates like mine, the facilities are such that it is with a lot of struggle and heartburning and spending a lot of money, that

those students can sit the G.C.E. (Ordinary Level) Examination with a degree of success. Personally, I would think that the idea is to abolish the G.C.E. (Ordinary Level) Examination is a good one and I would like to know how far the Hon. Minister is going with regard to that" (*Hansard*, pp 659, 670, 19/10/78 Vol I, No. 7.)

Mr. Wijeyeratne in his answer set out a new formula for admissions—a combination of merit and standardisation. Then he took the opportunity to berate *Tribune* without any attempt to meet the allegations made in the *Quidnuncs* article. And thereafter he proceeded to provide an "excuse" and "explanation" why the neglected English-medium students should be given concessions—almost confirming what we had suggested in our article.

We are publishing below Mr. Wijeyeratne's statement in full from the *Hansard* (pp 675-681) to help our readers to know the Minister's point of view not only on the question of admissions to the University but also his reactions to our *Quidnuncs* story.

**"Mr. Nissanka Wijeyeratne—Minister of Higher Education:** Mr. Speaker, the question raised by the hon. Member for Chilaw (Mr. Harindra Corea) relates to the matter of University admission. The other question refers to the GCE ('O' Level) Examination. In regard to the admission to the University, the entire House is aware that the raw marks system that had prevailed many, many years ago was abolished and that this led to a great degree of uncertainty among the members of a certain part of the Island who are normally given to uncertainty in life. The Government found itself in the midst of a serious controversy. There were people who wanted standardization, which it-

self was the growth of ad hoc measures taken over a period of time, while there were others who felt standardization added to their insecurity. I think in any country it is imperative that a system be evolved to draw the best talent irrespective of their racial origins. The Government therefore decided on a policy which I was happy to implement, namely, the restoration of the raw marks system. But, as we made clear to the House, we decided that no student who would have gained admission to the University, had there been standardization, would be deprived of admission to the University owing to the abolition of standardization and that special consideration will be given to students from areas which were underprivileged in terms of educational facilities. Apart from it, we decided to expand the campuses and we were able to lift the total of 3995 students who were admitted to the University in 1977, that is the last year of the previous government, to 5058.

"The raw marks were applied to the vacancies that existed before the government came in but by arbitrary expansion, with the Universities being made to burst at the seams, relief was granted to those who over the years had lived in the hope that standardization would give them some opportunity. At the same time we decided that the areas in which special consideration will be given to students should be those underprivileged in terms of educational facilities and they would cover the following deficient or underprivileged areas: Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Hambantota, Badulla, Moneragala, Mannar, Trincomalee, Vavuniya, Amparai, Nuwara Eliya. And we introduced Batticaloa which very strangely, had been forgotten by the earlier Government.

"Apart from that, we decided that in the case of Pure Science



and Applied Science the number of places available for each course, after selecting students on raw marks and standardized marks, be allotted to these 11 districts so that each district will have a minimum of students for each course. The actual minimum we determined were: Medicine and Dental Surgery—9; Biological Science 9; Engineering 6; Physical Science 6. We went further in a liberal way for Arts students and even in the remote areas of Jaffna, Vavuniya, Mannar, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, as much as remote Sinhala areas, Arts students were given places up to a certain complement to enable a graduate element to emerge in a district.

"Now, I have found that while this principle is being applied there has been serious criticism expressed openly and sometimes brought up at conferences that underprivileged sections of the community may find educational opportunity being deprived them; for instance, that one of the more important communities among the Sri Lankans, namely, the Muslim community, is placed at a disadvantage. They have various problems. I have expressed on the floor of the House that in promotions we will bear in mind the ethnic composition of the Muslim community, and if they are 10 per cent, I shall see to it that they get 10 per cent in the promotions granted in the Education Ministry.

"**Mr. M. H. Mohamed:** We have full confidence in you.

"**Mr. Nissanka Wijeyeratne:** I have also told my Tamil friends that in respect of their ethnic composition we shall bear in mind a due share in promotions for them. We have said this. And I am happy to express that the Leader of the plantation workers of Indian origin and other people of recent Indian origin, who is now a member of our Government, has expressed

satisfaction if we apply that principle in regard to the people whom he has represented over the years. Now a demand is coming that consideration be paid to underprivileged people in the Jaffna, Trincomalee, Vavuniya and Mannar areas. The minority Tamils have asked for a certain degree of recognition. I think the House will have to apply its mind to the question of how best equity and fair play could be achieved in the midst of a pluralistic society.

"I have also gone further and I mention this in particular in view of the vulgar comments that were made by a paper which hitherto maintained the highest of standards under a gentleman whom I considered a gentleman who was able to check his facts before he allowed anything under him to rear criticism of other people, namely, Mr. S. P. Amarasingham and the **Tribune** paper. His paper said recently that in admissions to the university attempts were being made to influence the Minister—that Minister being myself—in order to ensure that a book maker's daughter would get admission to the university. Believe me, Sir, whether it is a book-maker's daughter or a "බිත්කරනායක's" sister or friend, whether it is Burandeen or Bakthilingam, it is immaterial to me. I need not speak of how certain important people in previous times had revisions and corrections made to enable their daughters to enter for courses in the university and also how that disease spread to the SLFP from the LSSP. In fairness to those children I do not mention their names, but I think it is most unfair that responsible papers should make vulgar criticism. (emphas's ours)

"I chose to explain this point because it is relevant to the matter the Member for Chilaw (Mr. Harindra Corea) brought up and as I may not get the opportunity to express it in the coming months due to my absence at the UNESCO

Conference. The English-medium educated children of this country had an advantage which was broken over many years. In fact the destruction of the English-medium stream by the last government was a courageous step and many of us who indirectly brought to the notice of the last government the need to make that decision are proud of the fact that the English medium was changed and that national media were accepted, namely, Sinhala and Tamil. We cannot forget that the dying out English medium stream children cannot be allowed to be frustrated. We have allowed English as an international auxiliary language to be recognized as a compulsory subject. The expatriates to whom we are saying, 'Come back to Sri Lanka; this is your country' have been told to bring their children back, and I have unilaterally permitted such children to follow the English medium course under special arrangements until they familiarize themselves with the national languages. That means entry to those schools without an entrance test or entrance qualifications because those children of parents abroad are children of Sri Lanka and valuable assets for our future. Similarly, English medium students, a dying-out stream, had their cases examined for redress.

"I did not act unilaterally. In that case I summoned the authorities and discussed their problem and expressed my policy. Against the background of that policy they said that the mechanics of it had to be worked out. Now an attempt is being made by a section of the press to denigrate that policy decision on the assumption that the mechanics cannot be worked out. The mechanics can be worked out. It may take three months, six months or one year, but certainly the mechanics will be worked out. After that I have publicly



held out this assurance at a conference of university children's parents when I said that the dying-out stream of English-medium students will be catered for in a special way. I had the courage to express that opinion outside the house and I am proud to do so in the House.

*"It is one of the tragedies in this country that newspapers that start with high ideals ultimately rub their noses voluntarily in gutters of their own choice.*

"As far as the issue taken up by the hon. Member for Chillaw (Mr. Harindra Corea) is concerned on the O'Level Examination, I for one, though I have been fairly successful at competitive examinations (unlike many of my critics,) do not feel that an examination should be a barrier for education.

**"Mr. Harindra Corea:** For entry into the House too!

**"Mr. Nissanka Wijeyeratne:** Some of the greatest figures in the world did not pass examinations, men who are cleverer than us, men whose contribution has been great. Examinations are an artificial barrier introduced as an unavoidable constraint in peculiar circumstances. In England they have been forward-looking. A child who is educated and competent can pass on to higher examinations even if he does not succeed in the O'Level Examination. The large mass of our children, some of them straining with bottle-lamps, straining without books, children who can contribute to the development of the country, children of parents who eke out an existence, children of peasants and labourers—I think in all fairness they should be looked after. Therefore it is my earnest view that no examination barrier should stand in the way of the capable student from flowering in the field of learning. The open university is one measure at a

higher level. I shall be examining this question in consultation with the United Kingdom authorities when I go there after the UNESCO Conference. And it is my hope and it is my plea that all Members of this House support me on this issue that these artificial barriers on the children of our country should be removed in the best possible manner. How we do it will be decided upon after further discussion. If anyone has an idea, I am open to it.

"I am proud to say that with time, I find a general sympathy for the changes made in the Education Ministry and for that I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to every section of the Opposition as well as for the encouragement that has already been given by hon. Members on our side of the House."

**All that we were tempted to say after reading this exhilarating performance was "Amen" and to add a prayer that the Minister should dip into a dictionary, preferably the Oxford Concise, or Shorter Oxford, to refresh his memory about the meaning of the word "vulgar". It is not for us to say anything more at this stage: but, we will, do so at the appropriate time. It is for the residents of Kandy and the Peradeniya Campus to tell the Minister what they feel about our *Quidnuncs* Story. It is for the whole country to decide on the virtues of the new scheme of university admissions.**

On Wednesday, October 25, the *Ceylon Observer*, however, had a front page spread (Manik de Silva reporting) under the banner headlines: ENTRY FOR ENGLISH-MEDIUM STUDENTS TO DO MEDICINE: MINISTRY ORDER CAUSES FURORE. The report read:

"A volatile situation is building up in the University of Sri Lanka over an Education Ministry directive that special concession in the choice of courses be allowed to students who have entered the University in the English medium. If the University complies with this directive, certain students whose aggregate of marks at the GCE 'A' level examination would not entitle them to follow courses like medicine would be eligible to follow these courses. The University's Committee of Admission which met this week to consider this directive has recorded its opposition to the order that has been made. Some members of the Committee said that if admissions are made on this basis, there was no point in their continuing to be members of the Committee. The *Observer* reliably understands that the President of the Peradeniya campus has been told to admit certain students who had sat their GCE 'A' level exam in English to the medical course. Although they had secured admission to the University, their marks have not been good enough for medicine.

"The President of the campus, it is understood, has been told to summon the parents of these students and give them a date on which they could commence their medical course. This had been followed by a directive to the Vice-Chancellor that English medium students be allowed the course of their choice. 'This is manifestly unfair to those students who sat the exam in swabasha (Sinhala or Tamil) and were unable to get admission to course of their choice on a competitive basis. If the English medium students are given this right, they will gain an advantage even with a lower aggregate of marks than some of the swabasha students who have not got medicine' an angry don said. Asked whether this would mean that an



English medium student who offered Arts subjects and secured admission to the University could ask for medicine or engineering, he said 'Even an absurd thing like that is possible.' Schools do not normally permit children of Sinhalese and Tamil parents to follow courses in the English medium. Children of mixed marriages and those of non-Sinhala or non-Tamil parents can sit for their exams in the English medium but facilities for studying in the non-swabasha medium is not freely available in most schools."

All that we need to say is that the "directive" referred to by the *Observer* of 25.10.78 was anticipated by our *Quidnunc* on 7.10.78. To refresh the memories of our readers and to place it in the proper setting the relevant *Tribune Quidnunc* story read: "BOOKMAKER'S DAUGHTER AND THE UNIVERSITY. "A *Tribune Quidnunc* from Kandy has sent us a note with a tale about political skulduggery in the hope that a little publicity might help to nip the scandal in the bud. Here it is. The daughter of a bookmaker extraordinary had recently succeeded in gaining admission to the University to study biological sciences at Peradeniya. She had entered in the English medium as she was entitled to do as her mother was Indian though her father is a Sinhalese. This young lady, it would appear, has developed ambitions of studying medicine like her sister who is studying medicine in an Indian University.

"What stands in the way of her doing medicine at Peradeniya? She had come too far down the list to qualify for medicine. The Biology stream is way down, well below Dentistry. Vet. Science and Agriculture. Now, how does the father set about doing the job? Simple says our *Quidnunc*. Get the UNPERS in town. Papa has way

with politicians. He was a great favourite of the SLFP hierarchy in days gone by and now top UNPERS are eating out of his hand. What do these UNPERS in the bookmakers bag do? They are making a bid to get the Minister of Education to issue a directive to the University that all students who enter in the English Medium be allowed to choose the facility of their choice irrespective of their position in the list. If such a directive is issued, the bookmaker's daughter will get what she wants on the basis of a 'rule' and everything will appear above board. This is a great refinement on former Minister Mahmud's directives to the University to admit particular students by juggling the standardised marks.

"In effect what would such a new directive amount to? Nearly 70 students in the English medium can opt to do medicine. A new Medical Faculty, teaching entirely in the English medium, for the children of the privileged, has to be set up. The Medical Faculty at Peradeniya refuses to do this. Already, the Medical Faculty has doubled its intake for this year and are at their wit's end to find staff and laboratory space for them. And now, out of the blue, they are being asked to take in another 70 English medium students which is the number accommodated at the Jaffna campus and more, than at Galle. The demand is that a Faculty of Medicine in the English medium be created at a week's notice. This is a repeat of the 1960 episode when a new Arts intake was ordered at Peradeniya to accommodate the son of a VVVIP. The SLFP succumbed to that sort of pressure from much higher quarters. Now the UNP seems to fall in for pressures from a mere bookmaker.

"Our *Quidnuncs* reports that Professor Kalpage has stood firm in

the face of pressures. Then the pressure turned on the President of the Peradeniya Campus and the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine there. And now, the power lobby has moved to Colombo to get at the Minister of Education to issue the abovementioned directive. The present quip in Peradeniya campus circles is that Dharmista Society is being drowned in the Kandy Lake? Does President Jayewardene know the story of the University and the Bookmaker's Daughter? It is no Cinderella story or a Fairy Tale! He should call for a report from Professor Kalpage to see whether our *Quidnunc* has gone off the mark. What is at stake is the credibility of the Government and the validity of the dharmista way of life."

The story does not end there.

The *Ceylon Daily Mirror* of Thursday October 26, had a six-column frontpage headline, CABINET SUSPENDS ENGLISH MEDIUM STUDENTS PRIVILEGE, to report: "The Cabinet yesterday suspended the special privilege granted to students in the English medium to gain admission to the University Campus, Peradeniya. This is a sequel to representations made by the Samavadi Sishya Peramuna, the UNP-affiliated students' union of the Peradeniya Campus to the President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene against the new rules relating to admission. Meanwhile, the government will at the committee stage of the debate in the National State Assembly, amend the clauses of the Universities Bill which are inconsistent with the Constitution. The two inconsistent clauses are those pertaining to powers to dissolve a student assembly and the auditing of accounts. As far as student assemblies are concerned the Bill would be amended to make it read that in case of violation of university rules the university could withdraw recognition of the



assembly. The question of amending the Bill arose because it was not drawn up under the last Constitution and was found to be inconsistent with the new Constitution."

We are not at the moment concerned with the new Universities Bill, but the fact that the *Observer* and *Daily Mirror* reports completely vindicate our *Quidnunc* story. The Minister (or Ministry) of Education had issued a directive to help English medium students to gain admission to the Medical Faculty even though their marks were far too low. And the sequel is that the Cabinet, no doubt, on the initiative of the President, has reversed this directive by suspending its operation.

In the face of this, does the Minister of Education, the Hon. Mr. Nissanka Wijeyeratne, not owe an apology to *Tribune*, and should he not reconsider the use of the term "vulgar" to describe our journalism. There are occasions when one has to descend to "vulgarity" to deal with some of the activities of our politicians (thank God Minister Wijeyeratne has not yet qualified for this), but our Kandy *Quidnunc* story did not have the slightest touch or tinge of vulgarity. The *Quidnunc* had only called a spade a spade, and a bookmaker a bookmaker. If we had thought the *Quidnunc* story vulgar we would not have used it or altered it suitably. But we did not think such a change necessary.

In this connection, we must mention that bookmakers and othe of the same ilk have been the bane of politics and politicians in this country. Readers of *Tribune* will recall the number of top and distinguished politicians and bure-

aucrats from the 150s who were brought low owing to their connections with bookmakers. The image of many political parties has been ruined owing to their involvement with bookmakers. The UNP in Kandy will be well advised to keep clear of bookmakers and night club tycoons even if they operate under the shadow of the mighty temples and the self-proclaimed blessings of God.

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## THE WORLD TODAY

### Background Reports

—Namibia, Saudi Arabia—

#### NAMIBIA: WESTERN POWERS DILEMMA

Though the full details of the compromise formula agreed upon between the contact group of Western Nations and South Africa are not available to us at the time of writing, yet what has filtered down about this formula through the news agencies are sufficient to perceive the turn the Namibian independence has taken. Briefly the compromise formula is that a) South Africa will hold elections in December with the view of transferring power to Namibians; b) UN will consider this as null and void and will hold elections in the middle of next year for the same purpose.

If the United Nations succumbs to this phantasmagoria it will make a big blunder and the world will very soon witness the repetition of events of Rhodesia. The unilateral internal arrangements of Ian Smith, as did his unilateral declaration of independence, has plunged that country and the bordering nations into a carnage from which he himself is unable to escape.

The statements made by the South African Prime Minister Pieter Botha, and Dirk Mudge, the white leader of the multi-tribal party of Namibia belie the formula and confirms our fears. While having promised to persuade, whoever wins the election, scheduled to be held in Namibia in December next under the South African supervision, to work for a internationally accepted solution for Namibia, he is reported to have said in other places that he cannot guarantee that he can persuade anyone to accept the UN plan. South Africa, knowing full well the situation that might arise in the event of a United Nations supervised elections, does not want to take the risk about even suggesting such a course of action. South Africa fears SWAPO's accession to power in Namibia with that fund of support from UN, OAU and non-aligned countries not to speak of the Soviet Union and the Socialist countries. In the event of a UN supervised general elections, SWAPO is the hot favourite with fifty to fifty five percent votes.

Secondly, the statement of Dirk Mudge, of the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) that they do not accept the UN plan and they would boycott UN conducted election again will make matters worse for Namibia. Feeling confident that his party will capture power in the December elections (though indications are that Namibia National Front are the favourites) without SWAPO entering the hustings, had declared that whoever won in December would be able to veto Waldheim plan. These are premonitions which anybody dealing with Namibian problems must recognise.

To understand the nature of problems that confronts Namibia on the eve of her independence one has to identify the current political parties and their philosophies. Decolonization in today's context



means much more than what it was when countries in Asian Continent like India and Sri Lanka attained independence. Independence for India and Sri Lanka meant only the transfer of political power to local hands. The full transfer of economic, social and cultural independence has not yet been achieved. But what African countries on their very first bloom of Independence want to do is to do away with all types of Colonialism. Though this is not achievable within the short space of few years, yet the movements that hope to charter such a course of the affairs have ready-made blue prints and had spelt out the programmes. This is what worries South Africa, and also the Western nations. This also explains their anxiety to hand over power to such parties that would be amendable to their political and economic philosophies, besides guaranteeing the enormous investments made here.

There are both national and ethnic-oriented political parties in Namibia. But these could be grouped into four main ones according to the policies and programmes of each of them. Among them one could easily identify the right wing reactionary group of the AKTUR and HERSTIGE NASIONALE PARTY (HNP), the conservative DEMOCRATIC TURNHALLE ALLIANCE, the liberal Namibia National Front and the revolutionary SWAPO.

The AKTUR and HNP are parties committed to the restoration and maintenance of the *status quo ante*. They support the Bantustan policy of the South African Government which incidentally leaves ample opportunity for the Whites to maintain their political rights. This would actually leave half the country in the hands of ten percent Whites. An election on the basis of one man one vote is repugnant to them and therefore their poli-

cies are diametrically opposed to SWAPO. In any election they cannot hope to gain more than ten percent of votes.

The DST consists of several ethnic oriented political parties and spokesman of some tribal groups. This "Alliance strives for a political system which makes it possible for various individuals, language and population groups to maintain themselves in the cultural and material spheres and which eliminate domination by any group." They believe in a free capitalistic system and contained economic interdependence with South Africa. Being a party with ethnic oriented representations it is not averse to "homeland" policies. SWAPO and others suspect it to follow a camouflaged apartheid policy which is repugnant to the majority of the blacks. If SWAPO does not participate it may get a support of forty percent of the votes.

The Namibian National Front believes in evolutionary changes. Like SWAPO, they are extremely patriotic and relentlessly fight for the establishment and maintenance of a sovereign independent Namibia and for the retention of Walvis Bay as part and parcel of Namibia. It is against "homelands" and has proposed a unicameral legislature. Economic contents of its programme spells out free economy with less monopolistic conditions. It does not believe in a classless society nor in expropriating any property without reasonable compensation and expropriation will be undertaken only in public interest. It is totally opposed to revolutionary changes. In brief its contents and intentions may be characterised as social liberalism. As the DST has been weakened out the faction fighting which ended in the murder of Chief Clemens Kapuuo, leader of the National Democratic Orga-

nisation, one of the political parties which comprises the DST, NNF has an edge over the DST in any election boycotted by the SWAPO.

This leads us to the SWAPO, the most popular and internationally recognised political party of Namibia. SWAPO is totally against leaving anything that resembles South Africa and are therefore committed to a complete overhaul of the Social, economic and political life of Namibia. Its commitment to Marxist Leninist principles will necessarily lead it to bring about a balanced distribution of wealth and the establishment of a more non-racial and classless society. Though SWAPO has agreed to participate in an election conducted under the supervision of the UN, it is not at all pleased with the plan. There are several reasons for their reluctance. SWAPO would prefer to take over the control of Namibia as the undisputed and authentic representatives as did Neto in Angola and Machel in Mozambique. SWAPO, having fought hard to win recognition for Namibia in international bodies such as UNO, OAU and non-aligned movement and having been accepted as the legitimate representatives of the Namibians, may feel that their image will be harmed if they were to be considered as one among many insignificant political groups found in Namibia. Though it is not openly spelt, the change of heart to participate in a unsupervised election must have come over SWAPO largely due to the influence exerted by the Christian Churches in Namibia. The Lutherans, Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches are, not very happy about shedding blood to achieve national liberation if it could be avoided. When western Nations came out with the Peaceful solutions it was these three Churches urged the Namibians to accept the proposals. The prominent

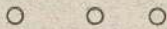


part played by the United Evangelical Lutheran Churches is of more significance and relevance here, because majority of the SWAPO belongs to this church, and it appears that SWAPO had been influenced by its pronouncement in accepting the western plan of peaceful transfer of power.

If a peaceful solution cannot be found and now it is certain that SWAPO will not participate in the December elections—unless all political parties participate in an election conducted under the supervision of the UN—the ball is in the court of the contact group of the Western five. Will they now at least at this last date compel South Africa, with the threat of economic sanctions, to accept their plan? Or will they drive SWAPO by their inaction to launch a war to capture Namibia by force, possibly with the help of Cuban forces? If South Africa cannot read what was already written in Mozambique and Angola, she is certainly then inviting her enemies to her own borders, much foster than otherwise.

Colombo.  
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K.A.



### SAUDI ARABIA: BEHIND THE SCENES FERMENT

Unlike various Arab states, including some autocracies in which at least some details of the regime's stability and internal struggles for power become known every so often—very little authoritative information pertaining to this issue in Saudi-Arabian politics is available. A highly secretive attitude on the part of the major royal princes, together with a very strict controlling apparatus have ensured that no external observers know much about the internal workings of Saudi-Arabian "high politics." Furthermore, since the

ruling family makes a special effort to present a display of unity among its ranks—the Saudi image of stability is even more solidified. This image is, in turn, amplified by a very sophisticated public relations machine whose wheels are oiled by almost unlimited sums of petrodollars. The resulting impression is that both relatively and absolutely—Saudi Arabia appears to be governed by a very stable regime, dominated by a small, but solid, royal elite.

The true picture of Saudi-Arabian politics is, however, very different. Pieced together from bits of authoritative information, together with careful analysis of other indications, that picture shows that not all is healthy and friendly within the inner circles of the royal family. Unlike a free society with its institutionalized political outlets for accumulated steam—in Saudi Arabia the pressure is caught within the walls of the royal palaces and accumulates there, only to nourish the internal, hidden struggle for power and influence within the kingdom.

At the end of April 1978, King Khalid returned to his country after an absence of about 10 weeks during which he underwent extensive medical treatment. While his health is clearly far from satisfactory, he has thus far been reluctant to give up the reins of government. At the beginning of August, Crown Prince Fahd returned to the Kingdom after an absence of several weeks. Officially, he was away from the country on official business authorized by the King. Persistent rumours had it, however, that by extending his stay abroad more than was actually necessary he wished to hint at his unhappiness with King Khalid's unwillingness to vacate the throne in his favour. Possibly, the same rumours said, Fahd's round of visits to various Arab

states (Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq) was not necessarily held because the King so instructed him, but rather in order to demonstrate to the Saudi and general Arab public that he, not Khalid, was the central political figure in Saudi Arabia.

Two foci of the Saudi power struggle can be discerned: inside and outside the royal family. Within the family, the struggle concentrates around two families—the Jilwa and the Sudayri both are named after wives of the legendary King 'Abd al-Aziz b. Sa'ud. Among the first are King Khalid himself and the Commander of the National Guard, Prince Abdallah. Among the latter are Crown Prince Fahd, Minister of Defence Sultan and five more brothers—Na'if, Turki Salman, Ahmad and 'Abd al-Rahman—who occupy important government positions. Hence their nickname: "the Sudyari Seven."

Once Khalid dies, the political centre of gravity is expected to move to the Sudayri family, thus climaxing a decade-long struggle for power between the two royal branches. In addition to this—central—point of rivalry, there are secondary struggles which are interrelated to the Sudayri-Jilwa competition. One such struggle is that between the Commander of the National Guard and the Minister of Defence. The first, Prince Abdallah, wishes to become First Deputy Prime Minister and Crown Prince following Fahd. Theoretically, being a Jilwa himself, he should have gained the support of King Khalid. The reality is, however, very different, for Khalid would not jeopardize his crown by supporting a known adversary of Fahd and Sultan, while the latter two, who should be expected to combine forces and form a united front, are in fact separated by considerable animosity. Sultan is the only member of Sadayri branch



who was not promoted after King Faysal was assassinated in mid 1975. Consequently, he may be bitter against his brother Fahd. If Sultan had hopes of recruiting the support of Turki, his brother and deputy, against Fahd, then Turki's recent promotion by Fahd may be an indication that Fahd is aware of such hopes and has moved to draw Turki closer to him.

Another prince involved in this struggle is the late King Faysal's son, Sa'ud Al Faysal, who wishes to revive the influence of the Faysal line of the family. Apparently, his major source of support is among the younger and more educated princes. His relatively young age (37) is potentially an asset in this context, but also a weak point in the overall hierarchical system

**The Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) as Amended by Act. No. 28 of 1964  
Notice Under Section 7**

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below for a public purpose. For further particulars see part III of the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 9 of 3/11/1978.

**Schedule**

**Situation:-** Situated in Madulla Village at Yatipalata Korale in Walapane D.R.O.'s Division of Nuwara Eliya District.

**Name of Land:** Madulla Estate.

**Plan & Lot No.:-** Lots No: 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317 & 318 in supplement No. 2 in F.V.P. 73.

**L. Premaratne**  
District Land Officer  
N'Eliya District.

The Kachcheri,  
Nuwara Eliya.  
17-10-1978.

in the Kingdom. Being rather young, Sa'ud is biding his time. He will join whichever camp satisfies more of his long-term wishes.

All these underground struggles and tensions could go on for some time without dragging Saudi Arabia into troubled waters. Yet, if one of the royal factions manoeuvres towards an alliance with an external, "non-palace" force, Saudi Arabia might face a series of dangerous convulsions. One such "external" power is, of course, the military. In addition to its very rapid acquisition of a highly sophisticated arsenal of weapons, many of its commanders have studied and trained abroad and could not but have noticed the difference between their own, traditional and undemocratic political system and those which exist in the West. The all too quick expansion of the military forces has led the government to deploy more and more officers—many of them not necessarily attached to the inner circle of the loyal princes—in sensitive positions of command. The airforce is a particularly important link in this context, and the acquisition of the F-15s, with the extensive modern infrastructure which they require, will undoubtedly have an important effect. Furthermore, the characteristics of this airplane—it is virtually an autonomous weapons system—could provide one single pilot with the means to change the regime in Saudi Arabia!

Several underground opposition organizations exist—including leftist and radical elements—which seek to revolutionize the distribution of oil income within the state. While for the moment these seem to be more vocal than they are a real menace to the ruling house, under different circumstances they too may prove to be an important source of instability.

All these inter-personal and inter-group tensions are played out against the backdrop of familiar Saudi apprehensions: from the growing Soviet penetration of the Horn of Africa, from developments in South and North Yemen, from China's overtures towards Iran and the Persian Gulf and from some recent sabotage actions in Saudi-Arabian oilfields. Single or together, they ultimately may profoundly affect Saudi Arabia's political system.

—Middle East Intelligence Survey  
(Vol. 6 No. 10)

Tel Aviv.  
30.8.78

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**CONCLUDING**

**The Press In  
Sri Lanka-4**

OF THE PERIODICAL press in the English language, of interest to students of politics, the non-party journals (apart from *Tribune*) are the weekly *The Independent* and the fortnightly *Lanka Guardian*. Of the party papers, the SLFP publishes *The Nation* weekly, the LSSP *The Socialist Nation* also weekly, the CP the *Forward* fortnightly, the CWC the *Congress News* fortnightly, and the JVP the *Red Power* monthly. We have not seen the UNP's *Journal* for sometime.

*The Independent* has been in publication for nearly two years—its issue of October 27 was No. 94. In another ten issues it will be two years old. *The Independent* is avowedly a paper of Tamil opinion. It has a nostalgic and sentimental approach to Tamil questions, and though in the earlier period it tended to be carried away by the

TRIBUNE, November 4, 1978



rhetoric of the TULF, it has in more recent times tended to adopt pragmatic and realistic attitudes even when it pleads for equality of opportunities on the basis of merit. *The Independent*, no doubt with justification, is bitter about every manifestation of communal discrimination.

*The Independent's* front page is usually devoted to a spot-news story (sensational, if possible) with some political punch. The editorial on the front page is always on some matter of political interest. The inside pages carry features and columns of the most uneven quality like all other papers in Sri Lanka. It has serialised a sex-interest autobiographical story about an Indian girl called Kamala Das. Of the other features of political interest the contributions of R. Varadarachai, the PTI correspondent in Colombo, have been noteworthy for their content, quality and significance. His analysis of the new Constitution and more recently his report on the visit of the Sri Lanka President to India are among the best that have been published in *The Independent*. Varadarachi's articles merit a place in any file for newspaper cuttings of this crucial period in this country.

One looks forward to *The Independent's* front page story or stories every week, and most times, one is not disappointed. In the issue of October 13, the story about Vaikunthavasani, who gate-crashed into the UN podium to shout about Eelam, was a scoop. In the last issue, 27/10/78, the story about Presidential and Cabinet anger about Amirthalingam's speeches in New York and also in other places reveals the growing crisis in UNP-TULF relations. *The Independent's* suggestion that Amirthalingam fired his blast in New York in order to appease local fanatics who had telephonically made it known

to him in the USA that his statements in Jamaica about the situation in Sri Lanka, (as reported by Lalith Athulathmudali), had displeased them is something worth taking into consideration in evaluating Amirthalingam and his future. Amirthalingam does not evidently know how to lead. But he seems to squeak every time he is pushed.

*The Independent*, for a long time, found it hard to develop a point of view. In the earlier phase it wanted to put a Tamil view in a "national" garb—and this created insoluble contradictions for the paper, because in Sri Lanka, nearly everybody tends to equate "national" with "Sinhala" and *The Independent* used writers with Sinhala names to plead its cause. One can sustain a posture, however commendable and praiseworthy, only on certain assumptions of an integrated society which does not still exist here. Latterly, *The Independent* has frankly set out to be what it is—a forum of Tamil opinion.

In retrospect, it must be mentioned that the Ceylon Tamils have never yet succeeded in establishing a press, especially a daily press, on a national basis. Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan's daily, the *Morning Leader*, did not survive for very long. This reflects the weakness of the Tamil community in this country as a component part of the polity of this country. They are as far from being a "nation" as the earth is from the sun.

The other non-party periodical is the fortnightly *Lanka Guardian*. It is a lavish publication with a very expensive real art-cover and equally expensive printing paper inside. It has a fair advertising line-up for a new journal. Without the 4-page cover, each issue has 24 pages inside of which about 2 to 4 pages are advertisements.

In effect, it has about 20 pages of reading matter.

Many had expected far higher quality, content-wise, in *Lanka Guardian* with veteran journalist Mervyn de Silva at the helm especially at the price of Rs. 2/50 a copy. But the first nine numbers were frankly disappointing. Within the 20 odd pages, it set out to cover everything in Sri Lanka—politics, history, science, culture, cinema, drama etc. etc.—and in the pursuit of this impossible task the *Lanka Guardian* turned out to be neither fish, nor fowl nor flesh. It simply did not have anything really significant to say on any matter whilst it beat about the bush on every subject in the most studied non-committal fashion.

The *Lanka Guardian* has sat on the fence on most matters. Only on foreign affairs it cultivated a radical posture in an obvious attempt to give itself a left flavouring. Sadat's effort at Camp David was a "sell out" and the trial of Bhutto was a travesty of justice. From the realities of racism in Britain to the iniquities of the Junta in Chile and the horrors of the Shah's rule in Iran, the *Lanka Guardian* followed a radical non-aligned line. But these articles were not in-depth, probably because they were tailored to the customary daily paper feature-limit of 750 words. On domestic matters, it zig-zagged with sympathetic murmurs from the SLFP to the LSSP and from the JVP to the TULF whilst maintaining a patronisingly detached attitude to the UNP. This, under some circumstances, can boost circulation, but in Sri Lanka readers are not likely to fall for this kind of tight-rope walking.

It was only with issue No. 10, 15.9.78, that the *Lanka Guardian* began to take shape as a serious periodical. The issue had an overdose of Chile, but Godfrey Guna-



villeke's "New Concepts of Development" the note on "Do We Need Foreign Doctors?" and François Houtart's "Understanding Vietnam" were readable, topical and interesting. Mervyn de Silva's comment on the "New Constitution and the Stability Equation" skirted too much on the periphery of evasive over-generalisation and naive over-simplification to be of much value. From a professional writing point of view, *Lanka Guardian* seems anxious to achieve the readability of journalese with the trademark of academic profundity. Pseudo-professional pronouncements in diction exclusively used in certain academic "political science" journals from Coca Cola Campuses makes *Lanka Guardian* difficult to comprehend for most readers.

In issue No. 11, the articles by Ananda Jayawira on "Puran Appu, History Distorted", J. Uyangoda's "Tamils: Wijeweera Challenged" and Ranjit Mulleriyawa's "Why Farmers Default?" made interesting reading. But the meatiest piece so far in the *Lanka Guardian* was the note on the Mass Media in No. 11. Though it was a short article, it was an "in-depth" analysis of certain sections of our daily press, and *Tribune* quoted extracts from this in its series on the press. Issue No. 12 slipped back into sketchy tid-bits on Ealam, JVP, Trotskyism, Kovoor and SWRD with nothing that anyone would want to preserve—the test of a good periodical of the magazine variety is the desire to keep or file some of its contents, or even the whole paper.

*Lanka Guardian* has a long way to go before it becomes a "must" for students of contemporary Sri Lanka. Its articles on art, cinema, music, culture etc., are too arty-arty and are probably of interest only to the dwindling coterie of elitist intellectuals who sport semi-long hair and assume cynically pompous postures of superiority. The *Lanka Guardian*

must come down to the earth before it becomes part of the Sri Lankan soil and environment.

Of the party journals, the *Forward*, now published fortnightly, is the oldest, though it had ceased publication for the greater part of the period 1970-1977. It was revived only about 3 months ago and the last number on October 15 was No. 8. Of all English language party papers, the *Forward* is the most readable. It has a definite point of view, but so ingrained is the Keuneman line that one can anticipate what its comment and attitude will be on any subject or topic. The *Forward* also focusses attention on many items of political interest which the mass media tend to hide. But, after the first for issue of the resurrected *Forward* an ordinary reader, who is not a party man, finds nothing exciting in it. The *Forward* is written on the old traditional agitational style of the forties, fifties and sixties when the CP was in the opposition. The *Forward* does not seem to have realised that new horizons and new eras have dawned. The Bandaranaike era has disappeared for good and Keuneman logic has withered away. Old political assumptions, that were axiomatic ten years ago have become anachronisms that have no meaning today.

From the Everest to Comorin, from Pt. Pedro to Dondra, politics have undergone such tremendous changes in the last decade that it is necessary to evaluate everything anew and arrive at fresh conclusions. In India, there is a debate and dialogue unknown at any time before in the Marxist Left as well as in all other political circles—a churning of thought that has created a ferment in political thinking. This is, so far, absent in Sri Lanka. The old establishment Left parties

are solidly plugging their old United Front line but with a few qualifications (no truck with the JVP)—which failed them so badly in the years 1970-75 and thereafter—and without paying any heed to the realities of the new situation that has emerged.

The LSSP's *The Socialist Nation* is a party sheet and its readership probably does not extend much beyond party enthusiasts. It is not "readable" so far as the general reader is concerned. The paper now regularly carries the views of Dr. Colvin R. de Silva and Dr. N. M. Perera on current matters. Unless *The Socialist Nation* is able to harness new writers to expound new thinking—people had enough of Colvin and NM in the 1970-75 period—the new leadership of the (Vasu) LSSP will overwhelm them before long. A considerable section of the rank and file in the LSSP (New Leadership) have no use for *The Socialist Nation* or the views of the old leadership. The LSSP—New Leadership, popularly known as the Vasudeva Nanayakkara group—has come out into the open and at a Seminar on October 12 announced new journals—an English one called *The Leftist* edited by Dr. Kumar David. The first number has not reached us yet.

The SLFP's *The Nation* is more readably written than *The Socialist Nation*. Every issue has one or more exposures about the present government and Establishment. The stories very nearly always score a bulls eye. Apart from such exposures, there is not much for the serious reader. In *The Nation*, there is little or no news even about the SLFP and its party activities (the *Forward* even more regularly than *The Socialist Nation* publishes news about ULF meetings and activities). *The Nation* however suffers from one big disadvantage. Each time it exposes some act of commission and



omission on the part of this government readers are reminded of what the SLFP had done when in power. Recently *The Nation* raised hue and cry about a VVIP who was to be paid compensation of Rs. 80 or 90 million for 32,000 acres of a company-owned tea estates forgetting that it was the SLFP administration that had manipulated legislation to make this possible.

The CWC's fortnightly *Congress News* focusses often attention on important aspects in the plantation sector, but very carefully avoids comment on any controversial matters like CWC-TULF relations. This is understandable, but if the paper is to have validity as an organ of the CWC it must present the viewpoint of CWC's Political Wing on all current matters of significance. Recent issues have also tended to concentrate on a mini-personality cult of the leader and this detracts from its usefulness as a journal of a very important segment of the working people in this country.

Finally, it is necessary to refer to the organ of the JVP in English, *Red Power*. The latest (Sept-Oct) issue is No. 8. It is a polemical leftwing monthly of the orthodox version in the style and manner of the agitational press of the fifties and sixties. For the generations that had been denied Marxist "education" because English and other foreign languages were taboo under the SLFP and UF, what the JVP has to say now is revelation most youth find of absorbing interest. The desire to study English and other foreign languages is great. The Sinhala journal of the JVP is modelled on the same lines as *Red Power*.

Every issue of the *Red Power* has attacks on the SLFP. But even more bitter are the attacks on the LSSP and CP and the dissident ex-JVP groups. The JVP also has

no use for any of the 12 pro-Maoist splinter parties that exist in Sri Lanka today. The JVP glorifies Cuba and Vietnam, extends qualified support to the Soviet Union, but condemns the Hua regime in China for attacking Vietnam and the USSR. The JVP says that the "revolution" in China must be saved from the revisionists like Hua and Teng.

The most interesting articles in *Red Power* are its polemical tirades against the LSSP, CP, SLFP and other Left groups. These disclosures, taken in the context of the proceedings and evidence in the case before the CJC in which the JVP leaders were tried, the new revelations before the Presidential Commission and in the broader perspectives of what the LSSP, CP and SLFP have to say of the JVP, open a new window on the Left Movement in the country in the last 20 years.

The eight issues of the *Red Power* merit close study because there is no doubt that the JVP will soon be a force to contend in the country especially in the rural countryside. Provocative police gimmicks, eg. leaking false stories to certain papers to smear the JVP with a terrorist and bandit brush, will not work this time (as it did in the 1968-1971 period.) The JVP is now in the process of formulating an ideology and a policy. As a repository of the protest movement against all established parties, the JVP will go far—unless the other parties wake up to realities of the thinking of the young in this country. In any electoral process, especially with proportional representation, the JVP and its future allies will be major factors no student of politics can ignore.

We do not know what our friend whom we called a pillar of the Fourth Estate in Sri Lanka—who maintains that a paper has no right to evaluate the content, calibre and quality of other papers,

on the basis that dog does not eat dog—will have to say about the critical analysis of some of our contemporaries. We have undertaken this survey to stimulate a dialogue and discussion in the entire media to start a churning up essential for a renaissance. Only then can the Fourth Estate emancipate itself from the inhibiting factors that have restrained and hampered it functioning as a free press (vide *Tribune*, 7/10/78).

*Tribune* will be 25 years old next year. Archivists tell us that *Tribune* is the only periodical of its kind that has survived so long in this island. To mark our 25th anniversary we propose, sometime soon, to embark not only a self-critical analysis of our work in the last 25 years, but also to ask our friends and critics to evaluate our work and also point out the mistakes we have made, the errors we have fallen into, the occasions on which we had been led up the garden path and the unfair criticism in which we may have indulged. Frankly, we welcome criticism; we have never hesitated to publish criticism about ourselves which was printable.

#### DUMBARA

##### Ousted ?

Why did the very senior Professor who master-minded for four or five months the setting up of the Dumbara Campus as an offshoot of Peradeniya have to resign a few days before the ceremonial opening of the place on October 1st? Is it true that he had advised better provision of facilities in a non-residential campus and advocated delaying the opening till welfare and other arrangements and services could be strengthened, and was forced out for his conscientious pains?

Quidnunc



The Prime Minister and now District Ministers want the press to help the Government by writing frankly about the acts of commission and omission of the government which are not in the national interest.

How far will the press rise up to the occasion?

+ + +

IN INDIA TODAY

Chikmagalur

—significance and implications—  
compiled by The Recorder

The Chikmagalur by-election will be held on Sunday, November 5. Owing to the vastness of the area, the large number of voters and the fact that there are 28 contestants the counting will take a much longer time than otherwise.

Extracts from interpretative and analytical articles in Indian papers, have been published below to enable our readers to have an insight into the real significance and the true implications of the by-election.

Will Indira Gandhi win the by-election and stage a come-back?

TWENTY-EIGHT CONTESTANTS

Chikmagalur, Oct. 18,

The record number of 28 contestants in the prestigious by-election to Lok Sabha from Chikmagalur constituency is posing certain problems to the Returning Officer, besides the delay it is likely to cause in the counting of votes. Perhaps this is the first time such a large number of candidates are in the

field from any one constituency. There are 26 independent candidates besides the principal rivals, Mrs. Indira Gandhi (Congress-I) and Mr. Veerendra Patil (Janata).

Hindu

CPI NOT TO SUPPORT EITHER CANDIDATE

New Delhi, Oct. 18,

The CPI General Secretary, Mr. C. Rajeswara Rao, on Monday reiterated his party's stand that it would neither support Mrs. Gandhi nor Mr. Veerendra Patil in the by-election. "Our position is clear we don't vote for either. We have advised our State (Karnataka) unit accordingly" he told a press conference in New Delhi. Mr. M. B. Govindan Nair, leader of the CPI group in the Lok Sabha added: "In the present political context we are neither for Indira nor Janata." Mr. Nair said the CPI stood for a "third front". If Mr. E. M. S. Nambudiripad, marxist leader, and we joined that would have been the basis of that front, he said.

—Hindu

JANATA PLAYS INTO DMK HANDS

Madras, Oct. 22,

In the overriding anxiety to defeat Mrs. Gandhi in the Chikmagalur by-election, the Janata has played into the DMK's hands. On the DMK's dubious influence over the 70,000-and odd coffee plantation workers of Tamil origin, DMK leader Mr. Karunanidhi has extracted immunity from action against himself on various counts, it is reported. It involves, among others, shelving of the Sarkaria Commission inquiry. Income Tax notice for payment of tax arrears on Rs. 80 lakhs of suppressed income, and CBI cases relating to criminal charges in the aerial spraying fraud, it is alleged. Some

Janata men feel the party has paid too high a price for too little. Besides, by lending oral support to Veerendra Patil, the DMK has not sacrificed its overall strategy of cultivating the Congress-I.

The support of the ruling AIADMK to the Congress-I, too, is motivated by the object of driving a wedge between the DMK and Congress-I. What has principally worried Chief Minister Ramachandran is the outcome of the Madurai civil poll which has demonstrated that a DMK-Congress-I alliance can easily defeat the AIADMK alliance. Victory in the panchayat elections next year, with the Congress-I hold in the rural areas, is vital for Ramachandran's survival.

—Blitz

JANATA CLOSES RANKS TO FACE 'MENACE OF INDIRA.'

Banglore, Oct. 23,

It used to be said of the Janata conglomerate, that if nothing else the fear of Indira Gandhi coming back would force its warring factions to cling together for life. Something similar has happened here in Karnataka. That the party got a sudden boost to its tattered image by the final choice of its candidate, Veerendra Patil, was evident from the enthusiastic response to George Fernandes's "Padayatra" in Bangalore, when he collected about Rs. 1.7 lakhs in a day for the election funds. The gimmick is being followed up in other districts this week by lesser leaders. Chikmagalur has, however, yet to feel the heat of the campaign. The Janata is engaged in consolidating its forces. Its leaders are sounding out various parties, groups and religious and community leaders. Party workers in the capital as well as in the constituency have overnight been



whipped up to the reality with the sudden closing of ranks to "combat the menace of Indira". Even those who had been disillusioned with the state of affairs in the party and openly talked of the Janata standing "not a chance" are now more confident and assert that the "Janata will put up a good fight."

Certain other developments have also added to their new-born optimism. Veerendra Patil, as your Editor rightly pointed out last week, is a worthier choice than the worthless party he represents. He enjoys an unsmudged image. The fact that he belongs to one of the two major communities in the State, Lingayats, who also form the single largest group in the constituency numbering about 1.6 lakhs, gives him an added advantage. Though the next largest group, the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, are expected to vote for the Urs-Indira combine, the other major community, Vokkaligas, with over one lakh votes, seems to have divided loyalties, despite the fact that Chandra Gowda, who made way for Indira at the behest of Urs, belongs to that community. In the 1977 Lok Sabha elections, the Lingayats were said to have been solidly behind the Janata, while a majority of the Vokkaligas were supposed to have backed it. Janata leaders claim this time both communities will solidly back the Janata, if only because both share a common grouse against Urs, who has emerged as the leader of the minorities and ended their hold on power. A large percentage of the nearly one lakh plantation workers in the constituency with voting rights being Tamils, it was thought, that the AIADMK support to Indira would hit the Janata. But the AIADMK's own candidate here lost his deposit in the last elections. With the DMK and the CPM ranged

against Indira, it would not be surprising if the Janata cuts into a big chunk of the plantation labour. While these factors add up a fair case for the Janata, they certainly do not pose a threat to the formidable Congress-I candidate.

Indira Gandhi's appeal among the women voters who constitute a little less than fifty per cent of the electorate, and the following that Devraj Urs commands for her among the Scheduled Castes, backward classes and the minorities constitute the deciding factors. The talk of democracy versus fascism is too abstract for the rural folk. What concern them are the gut issues of food, shelter and clothing. The Janata's performance in in this regard is no patch on Urs' record, notwithstanding the charges of corruption, nepotism and favouritism against him.

—Blitz

### "THAT WOMAN IS BACK!" WHAT NOW?

New Delhi, Oct. 21.

"THAT WOMAN" is back, make no mistake about it. Morarji Desai and the Janata complex would do well to accept this fact instead of indulging in wishful fantasizing about her defeat at Chikmagalur, and accordingly plan their strategy to contain Mrs. Gandhi before it is too late. Otherwise she will tie them up in knots, to confuse, confound and cut them down in the same cool way she did Yahya Khan and his cohorts. The fact should be plain by now that nobody expects Veerendra Patil to win, not even Veerendra Patil himself. An apocalyptic story has it, that the Janata candidate was persuaded to accept his nomination only after he had been assured of a governorship by way of compensation in the event of his defeat. During a brief visit to the Capital, I could already see Mrs. G's shadow lengthening across Rajpath to Vijay

Chowk, and thence spreading out to Parliament House and South Block. Once she gets back to the Lok Sabha as Leader of the Opposition with Cabinet rank, the only deterrent to her walking over to the Prime Minister's office could be a strong, reunited and ideologically integrated Janata front totally committed to the execution of a radical economic programme. Its present disunity lends itself too easily to destabilisation—nay, invites its own disintegration—by her proven genius in political scuttles. Her supporters have given me an inkling of their masterplan to bring her back to power. Once she enters Parliament she will assume the leadership of the 77 Cong-I members of the Lok Sabha (against the Janata's 297). Thereafter, she expects a sizable chunk from the Congress, around 20-30 MPs to start with, many of whom are presently sitting on the fence, to switch their loyalty to her party. Indications of the Congress split are visible in the different stands taken by leaders like Swaran Singh, Subramaniam and Yeshwantrao Chavan on the question of support to Mrs. Gandhi in the bye-election. While the first two appear to favour supporting her, or at least remaining neutral, Chavan insists on outright opposition. The latter's clandestine alliance with Morarji, which is bound increasingly to be exposed to Chikmagalur, is likely to isolate him from the leadership of dwindling minority group as he joins the Janata.

This leaves Mrs. Gandhi heading a group of more than 100 MPs in the Lok Sabha, with the assured support of 19 AIADMK and 7 CPI members. In the Rajya Sabha, of course, her party will command a clear majority. Possibilities of defections from the Janata complex, also, cannot be ruled out. Her leadership of a substantial and effective Opposition group itself



can lead to an erosion of the Ruling Party's strength and power. Already, there is more than one move within the Janata for a new party. The Rashtriya Janata conceived by the Charan Singh and Raj Narain faction remains a possibility; and now added to it is the spectre of another radical break-away led by Chandra Shekhar. Surely, Indira Gandhi cannot be expected to lose an opportunity of exploiting such a crisis, splitting the Ruling Party and playing one faction against the other to her political advantage. There is every prospect of her manipulating the situation to manoeuvre herself to the focal centre of power politics in the country in a desperate bid to get to the wheels. The seeds of this development are visible in the soft attitude so obviously and repeatedly displayed by Morarji Desai in dealing with the lady. Charan Singh, her stoutest opponent hitherto, might soon be forced to circumstances to do likewise. Balasaheb Deoras and the JS-RSS conglomerate, too, have often times displayed their sneaking political respect for her. All of which assures Indira Gandhi a key position at the power centre which, according to the Cong-I masterplan in operation, should enable her to drag the nation to a midterm poll by next spring or autumn, and she is confident of carrying her Congress, which by then would remain the only Congress, to victory in the Midpoll....

So much for Mrs. G and the Opposition. What is the Janata doing about it? The Prime Minister, facing his astrological *markesh* (political end), has gone in retreat to Sabarmati to seek guidance from his God and Gita for the belated Cabinet reshuffle. His Cabinet colleagues and party leaders consider this an unpardonable affront to the doctrine of consensus among equals behind the Janata merger.

They fear his detested stand on the Prime Minister's prerogative is once more raising its ugly head to create deeper splits and wider divisions in the Ruling Party at a time when unity, cohesion and discipline are imperative for its survival. Other leaders I met, all the way from Charan Singh to Jagjivan Ram are conscious of the lethal threat posed by Indira Gandhi's return. All—barring Morarji and the Caucus!.. That apart, how long can this tormented and ravaged land of ours suffer the escalating communal and caste carnages under a Home Ministry run by none less than the Prime Minister? The recent outrage at Alligarh, where the local Janata President's own son allegedly drew blood with his knife provides one of a dozen examples of communal warfare; and so do Villupuram in Tamil Nadu, Matan in Kashmir, Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh, of its equivalent in terms of caste.

Simultaneously, the States are running amuck. In the most sensitive of them, Jammu and Kashmir, Abdullah has set up his own private Sheikdom as a result of a war of sons and sons-in-law between him and his seniormost colleague Beg. From West Bengal and other marooned States complaints are rising that the Prime Minister could not spare one day of his Sabarmati retreat to bring them hope and succour. Government is practically at a standstill in most States with divisive and separatist movements assuming priority over social and economic problems crying for solution. Morarji, himself, has turned his back on the radical socio-economic programmes of his party to an extent that he would not permit adequate time or means for their discussion at the Janata Parliamentary Groups' three day session, with the result that the Party Chairman, Chandra Shekhar

boycotted the tamasha and Party Secretary Nanaji Deshmukh joined his colleague Madhu Limaye in submitting his resignation. What kind of a government and party are these headless robots with the Prime Minister in retreat, the crucial Home portfolio without a Minister to contain the communal and caste fires gutting the nation, the party President on strike, two of its Secretaries under resignation and the affairs of the Union literally running amuck! Quite recently, heads of industrial houses like Tatas and Birlas took the Prime Minister and his senior colleagues complaints of blackmail and extortion under threats of nationalisation of steel and like commodities by the ministers concerned to be reassured that there was no question of any such take-over.....

As if all this and more did not suffice to persuade our good people to look for an alternative, there is an ugly but unconfirmed rumour of an Intelligence watch being kept on a set of more active and vocal younger ministers because of fears of a coup d'etat in the offing against the elder leadership which has thoroughly discredited itself. After all, the electorate returned the Janata Party to power as a negative alternative. And now they are about to return Indira Gandhi with her caucus, dictatorship et al as another desperately negative solution. What else can they do? Where is the Third Force? Genuine Socialist of the Madhu Limaye brand must immediately seek counsel with the CPI, CPM, CPML and other radicals to evolve that force before it is too late; and by the end of the present year it might be too late. We shall have Indira Gandhi riding our backs again.

—R. K. Karanjia, Editor, *Blitz*

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## WHO WILL THE 5.30 LAKH CHIKMAGALURIS ELECT?

New Delhi, Oct. 21,

CHIKMAGALUR will hate the next generation of political chickens in India. Mrs. Gandhi's decision to return to Parliament, and the Janata Party's determination to block her, transcend the confines of a normal by-election. Though only 5.30 lakh Chikmagaluris will be actually exercising their franchise on November 5, the whole nation will be doing a similar exercise of the back of their minds. The thrust of the campaign, according to George Fernandes, would be to compare and contrast Mrs. Gandhi's so-called "dynamic decade" and the Janata's 18 months of so-called "second freedom". George has thrown the gauntlet: "A vote for Indira would be a vote for Fascism." He has also predictably, promised to exploit Mrs. Gandhi's SANJAY connection. As a man of bright ideas the Industries Minister has given notice that he would present to the electorate four persons born on the same day as Sanjay and ask them why they deserved less than him, who had been found by the Rolls Royce as unit even as a motor mechanic. To be sure, his proposal would tempt the opposite side to present double that number of persons born on the same day as KANTI DESAI and ask the electorate why they deserved less than him, who had been found unfit even as a junior clerk in the erstwhile Air-India. To the best of my recollection, none of Mrs. Gandhi's ministers had gone out of the way to defend the murky business of Maruti in Parliament. But in the Kanti business, George acquired the distinction for his brazen-faced defence of the nation's second son. The exponent of Kanti was sold on Kanti and sought to bale out his indulgent father from the wrath of the Rajya Sabha, when

Cong-I's Salve placed a 34-point chargesheet. George is surely inviting trouble on this score. In other words, in the current malady of "sonstroke" there is no choice for the electorate, or for nation as a whole, between Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Morarji Desai.....

On that bright morning when she triumphantly walked into the Lok Sabha in March 1971 after her landslide victory in the mid-term poll, Mrs. Gandhi had worn a red rose BLESSED by the late Pondicherry mother and flown with Nandini Satpathy. That rose, however did not bring the expected luck, witnessed by the disintegration of the Indira-Shahi during the Emergency. Not to Nandini, either, for she was dumped into oblivion by the Caucus. The disaster did not deter Mrs. Gandhi from visiting temples and mosques in a bid to cultivate the faithful. On the eve of her by-election, she is going from Sriingeri to Vindhya-chal. Not to be left behind, Veerendra Patil, the best candidate the Janata Party could have chosen, is also visiting most of the shrines she had been in. Naturally, therefore the Chikmagalur electorate have no choice, in this matter too, for both are wooing supernatural powers in an effort to influence the ballot-box. George is not lagging behind either, for he is making a belated effort to be a true Christian.

Another witness for prosecution of Mrs. Gandhi is Janata Party's secretary, Rama Krishna Hedge. He says that Mrs. Gandhi if elected to Parliament, would have a greater capacity to subvert the law from taking its own course. Is Hedge telling us that Morarji Desai was not subverting the law when he asked the Andhra Chief Minister to exempt the 3,000 acres of the Challapalli land from the Land Ceiling Law? He has to do much

more homework before he goes on padyatra in Patil's constituency. Another star campaigner will be E. M. S. Nambodripad, the General Secretary of the CPM. He has served notice on the Congress and CPI to prove their democratic credentials by voting for the Janata candidate. He has also said that the prospects of CPI-CPM understanding would solely depend upon the stand the former would take in the by-election. The basic argument of the Marxists is that Mrs. Gandhi is dictatorial and the Janata is democratic and, therefore, she should be defeated. A related argument is that she, if catapulted back into the gadi, would bring back the whole paraphernalia of Emergency with the consequent suppression of democratic rights, including press freedom. It is difficult to believe that EMS has forgotten that Morarji Desai, the then Home Minister of undivided Bombay and now the leader of the resurgent Democracy, had banned "New Age" and "Crossroads" of the then united Communist Party whose Central Committee member HE then was. This had been done without any resort to the emergency provisions in the Constitution. Mrs. Gandhi did not ban his "People's Democracy" even at the height of Emergency. The short point is that the margin between democracy and dictatorship is not as wide in those quarters as EMS is making out. Be that as it may, one will surely agree with many of the things the CPM says about Mrs. Gandhi and her style of functioning. Unlike her father, she has been a shifty politician with the word "gratitude" completely missing from her dictionary. The single fact that her organisation bears her name is itself a telling commentary that it was born in captivity and will continue to be so. There is no denying either that the Caucus will continue to call the tune.



As against this frightening phenomenon, we have a "five-headed moster" of the Janata, which has already lost the basic attributes of a ruling party, namely cohesion and discipline. Police-wise, it has become a plaything of the IMF and World Bank, which are calling the tune against industrialisation, against science and technology, against development of nuclear science with all their attendant distortions of foreign policy. These basic deviations apart, the ruling outfit has managed to disenchant the millions who had voted for it by its utter dishonesty in promising one thing and doing another. And worse, they are utterly disgusted with the pseudo-moralist homilies which Morarji Desai delivers day after day. *It is this wind of change in public opinion that is being exploited by Mrs. Gandhi.* People are swinging from one negative posture to another because they have no third alternative. Mrs. Gandhi, who had told Willy Brandt during his visit to Delhi that she had managed to keep the Communists divided, is extremely allergic to a third alternative. She is equally aware that if such an alternative is available, many sections of the Congress like the Antony wing in Kerala and the Sharat Chandra Sinha contingent in Assam and so on will gravitate towards it. As it is, the Swaran Congress is fast disintegrating. Many, who had been initially hesitant, are now reluctantly going over to Mrs. Gandhi.

If this nation is to be saved, the basic post-Independence policy framework, however defective it may be of independent development and no sellout, has to be restored. The defeat of the Janata at Chikmagalur has to be made a starting point of that process. History does not always repeat itself and 1979 cannot be 1975. The Emergency has undoubtedly

generated greater forces of resistance to authoritarianism. The way will be clear for the creation of a Third Force as men like A. K. Antony have claimed. So long as the dithering Janata jogs along, such a Third Force cannot come on the agenda, because a section of the Left like the CPM will continue to nurse illusions about it. What is imperative is a real churning.

—A. Raghayan in *Blitz*

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ACID BOMB EXPLOSION — 21

Chapter Twenty One

Attack On Police Station

By James Goonewardene

The next night the insurgents attacked the police station. The station had prepared for the attack, like the others; they were warned that they could not expect help. The Inspector, his assistant, a young Sub Inspector, a Sergeant and six constables constituted the strength of the police station.

An adequate supply of food was stocked; and bags were piled up against the windows and barriers erected. The weapons were checked and supplied along with the ammunition. Each constable was armed with an old fashioned rifle that took just a magazine of five bullets. The sterling, the sub-machine gun, the only one in the station, was to be used by the Sub-Inspector. The sterling had come the previous week and the officer had barely acquainted himself with its workings. The rifles were effective only at a hundred yards and beyond. At short distances the bullet could strike a target

more by accident than good management. If deflected by the smallest fraction of an inch it missed the intended victim by yards. The only weapons, really effective, therefore, at close range were the revolvers and the sub-machine gun. No one at the station had any illusions about their usefulness as a defence force. They were all equipped; numerically they were just as useless. The insurgents were expected to come in hordes to attack the different police stations simultaneously; when and how had been a mystery, but not it seemed, the signal had been given by the designed or accidental attack on the police station on the east coast.

They were a frightened bunch of policemen that waited in the dark, all huddled together inside the station. They had seven rifles, one revolver and one sub-machine gun. The men with the rifles had set their range at a hundred yards. The Sub-Inspector sat at the window with his sub-machine gun; the Inspector, along with the Sergeant and the constable Premaratne covered the other window. Two of the men with rifles had taken up positions in the barracks and were isolated from the rest, and were there to intercept an attack if possible and also warn the others.

The attack came at about nine. A warning was given at seven that the attack was to take place that night; just before it came, the signal they had arranged with a man was flashed. The policeman put the lights out and waited. The first grenade exploded just outside the south-side window. There was this flash of light and the shrill crashing explosion. The next moment debris was flying in all directions. There was a short burst from the sub-machine gun, and a rifle shot exploded from the direction of the barracks. That was all. When the dust sett-



led the men started to whisper in the dark; a torch was flashed and they found Premaratne lying dead below the window. The sergeant had been flung several feet away. He stood there holding his arm with this dazed look in his face. His rifle lay on the floor about a foot away. Feeling no pain the sergeant began to grope for his rifle with his good arm. A fraction of a second earlier the Inspector had moved and had been saved.

Silence descended inside the station; they were back at their posts. Suddenly the sub-inspector was at the shattered window firing into the dark. A howl of pain indicated he had registered a hit. The next instant a hand bomb was flung at the other window, but the man had ducked. This was followed by two others in rapid succession. They were falling short and exploding in the yard. A petrol bomb had started a fire outside. The noise was deafening and the smell of cordite was everywhere. The men moved round inside the police station, frightened to get to the windows.

They had never had a real plan of defence, but every second someone jumped to the window, fired blindly into the dark and withdrew. The Inspector cursed everyone, and decided he'll get to the window himself. The sub-inspector joined him here, and together they kept up a barrage of sterling and revolver fire, and from the other window the rifles started to explode rapidly. It was just noise without aim or direction, but it kept the morale of the men. Someone sobbed in the dark.

"You son-of-a-bitch stop being a child," cried the Inspector.

"Let me go out Sir and get them with my hands," said the sergeant.

"With your hands", groaned the inspector as he withdrew to load

his revolver. He was back at the window firing.

"Its useless, its useless. We are like cattle tied to a post," cried the sergeant. "Give me that revolver I'll go out and get them. I am useless with this arm."

"Shut up fool", shouted the sub-inspector. "Shut up, for god's sake. Its making everyone nervous."

They had all moved away from the windows and waited in the dark getting a breather.

"Look Sub, why don't you climb up the roof with the sterling? You will get them better from there."

The Sub-Inspector, an athletic young man with a crew cut, sweating and a bit tired now after all that firing and tension at the window looked at the Inspector and then up at the roof.

A table, and a couple of chairs one on top of the other will get you to the ceiling, and then through the tiles. Its the only thing to do.

We can't all be sitting here, doing nothing. If I was younger I would do it myself?"

There was a deep, dark silence inside the station only disturbed by the occasional groan from the Sergeant.

They all turned to look at him.

"How are you Mudiyanse?"

"Feeling a bit weak Sir—if someone can help to stop this bleeding.."

"Here you, Silva, get the first aid kit and get the other man help you tie up the wound—you know to do it?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Then do it."

That done they turned their attention to the roof. They had forgotten Premaratne who had not been moved from where he had fallen. In the meanwhile there had come a curious lull in the

bomb throwing. The Inspector and his assistant, moved close to each other started to talk in whispers.

"Its too bloody quiet out there.." said the Inspector.

"What are they up to?"

"Let's take a look—don't put your face in the window—they might try shooting for a change. We don't know how well they are armed or what they are upto."

They moved to the window quietly and took a look. Nothing seemed to be moving out there.

"I don't like it—its too quiet out there. A single bomb will get us all in one go—we've got to do something—anything. If they get close enough they'll hurl some bombs through the window and we've had it. Look, some of us have to move out. The roof's no good."

"I was just thinking we should do that. I think, I'll move out".

"I'll go with him Sir," said the Sergeant. "Only give me a revolver."

"No, you can't manage Mudiyanse. You get inside that room and stay there."

"Oh no, I can't stay here. I'll go mad—I've got to be doing something."

The Inspector said nothing. 'Sub', whispered, "you going out."

"Yes, I'll go out."

"All right then."

"Let the swines think everyone's inside here."

The Sub-Inspector slipped out.

"Who's next?"

There was hesitation.

"All right Sir, I'll go," said Silva.

Once they got going they all started to slip out one by one. Each one for himself now. They'll all, perhaps, get to the barracks, thought the Inspector. If the Sub has sense, he'll try to out-flank them, but they are frightened,



they are frightened as hell—they were not trained to fight.

He was alone now with Mudiyanse and the dead Premaratne. He started to think. The lull had given him time to think. His wife and child, alone at home and he boxed up here shitting in his pants. He had told his wife he expected trouble, but she wouldn't know it had broken. They had a rotten job—a bastard's job—pleasing everyone, getting kicked in the teeth. Now these swine were throwing bombs—but why? Why were they going for the police? They should have worked out their bitterness against somebody else, not the police. It didn't make sense. They always got the dirty jobs. They were the monkey's paw pulling out the nuts. A sob came to his throat; he stifled it. He didn't want the Sergeant to hear him sob. He had to be the big, strong man even when these young upstart rebels were going to kill him and all the others in this station. He had to be the strong, brave man directing the fight against a horde of young men throwing bombs at them, acid bombs and petrol bombs that killed and injured and mutilated them—already the Sergeant had his hanging like a broken snake gourd; they would, no doubt, amputate his arm; what could a one-arm Sergeant do—go on pension and then start visiting the homes of his old comrades with a begging bowl, and that Premaratne, the poor son of a bitch—he was dead, dead as a dog run over and killed on the street, with pieces of broken tin and iron nails in his guts and chest. He was not going back home and someone was, no doubt, waiting for his return, waiting until she learned that a hand-made bomb had got him: that he had stood at the window of a small police station to defend the security of the state and had

gone with the first bomb they hurled.

Suddenly there was a short burst from the sterling—the Sub was still out there—then a couple of rifle shots. A bomb suddenly exploded—a moment later the sterling started again. The Sub was still there. He was a brave man—the Sub was a brave man—he loved him at that moment; he was great—he was doing his duty—a couple more of rifle shots, a little more distant now. They were moving out—the sterling again, and then followed silence—a long silence. They had pushed the attackers back.

He rose then—life suddenly coming back into his veins. The Sergeant appeared in the doorway. "They have got them on the run Sir."

"Yes, Mudiyanse—they've got them on the run."

He was smiling once more. He went to the telephone and tried to use it. It was dead. They had cut the wires. If he could get reinforcements he could go after them, but the telephone was dead; with help he could bring it under control, but there was no help now; all they could do now was to wait—they are gone now but they'll come back later—that's what they'll do—they'll come back later and start throwing their petrol bombs—the petrol bombs, they were deadly—everyone goes up in flames—you become roast meat, but it was quiet now, but they'll come again.

The lull, however, continued and the men were still out there. He wanted them to come back now—they could come back and regroup, and then they would have to wait until it all started again.

When the Superintendent came with help it was past twelve. He had, himself, tried to telephone and the line was dead, and he knew

then they had cut the wires. He had to get through to them, somehow. He had had orders to have all small stations abandoned and the police re-grouped at the one big station—that's how bad it was—no one knew how bad the attacks were going to be—so they had been asked to regroup at the big stations—that's how frightened the authorities had become of the insurgents—who were behind it—how much strength they had, no one knew; that's how bad the intelligence work of the government had been.

So the superintendent had got a lorry load of policemen with rifles and sterlings and come to evacuate the station, and by two that morning they took the lot with them, the dead constable Premaratne, the injured Sergeant and the families of the policemen and they went leaving the town to the insurgents. No one in the town knew they were being abandoned, but that's what happened. They evacuated the police station and left the town to the insurgents. Deva and Ariya knew nothing of all this either. They had heard the shooting—the sound had come across the river; Deva and Ariya had heard it all—the shooting and the bombs and they knew trouble had broken—this is what they had been waiting for—this what everyone secretly knew was going to happen, and feeling nothing, saying nothing they sat in the dark and listened.

"Someone's dying out there," said Ariya. "They are killing each other. They are not even enemies except what had been brought about through politics and mismanagement and false theories—they are dying, and the living got to come along and mop up the mess."

"Probably Armanis is there too, and Gunapala."



They sat up and waited until the shooting and the explosions died down, and lying down on mats in the resthouse verandah they tried to get some sleep.

In the morning Deva and Ariya went across to see what it was all about. They met a couple of men who like them had ventured out; cautiously, warily they went towards the bazaar. They met a couple of shopkeepers there who had crept out of their shops to look, but it was all quiet. The sun came over and touched the tops of the coconut trees, and the wind caught the branches and tossed them about. Then a man came across from the opposite side and told them the police station was empty, and it was then they became bold and went in the direction of the police station, still wary and cautious. It was as the man had said. It was empty, but it looked terribly battered—the windows all smashed and scarred.

They entered the building finally and saw the disorder there and then they saw the blood under the window. Then they knew they had to look after themselves, live like rats on scraps of food. They were all in the same predicament now.

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**CATHOLICS & EDUCATION IN  
 SRI LANKA—4**

## What Christians Can Do

by Fr. Tissa Balasuriya O.M.I.  
**WHAT CAN CHRISTIANS  
 DO FOR EDUCATION IN SRI  
 LANKA?** Evaluate the situation in a pluri-disciplinary manner: Evaluate sociologically and also in the light of the gospel values. Be

in touch with the best thinking and action in the universal Church today. Christians all over the world are becoming increasingly engaged in education and re-education; education for development, justice and liberation; education for personal, family and community living. More research and study need to be done on education by Christians in this country. We have several hundred full time teachers and educators at different levels. The religious sisters and brothers in education alone would be over 300-400 even now. We do not share our knowledge, search and experiences. The processes of communication are weak and poor. The efforts by the Catholic Board of Education were not encouraged in the late sixties. When a layman University Professor Cuthbert Amerasinghe was Chairman of the Catholic Board of Education, an effort was made to have a seminar on education with speakers from different disciplines. This effort was stifled by the authorities of the day. Two laymen on the Board resigned in frustration. This Board was unceremoniously reconstituted a few months later without some of its more keen members. Since education in different forms and at varying levels is a primary concern of the churches, much more serious attention must be given to its continuing evaluation and updating.

We must take a conscious, collective option concerning our values and goals in the given situation. We must be concerned with education for all especially the marginalized. We need to purify our collective motivations. Do we really want to serve all, or are we concerned with self service first? How far is the latter an approach that is truly christian? Preparation for examinations and even development of skills should be

secondary to the fostering of attitudes, values and relationships. We have made so many wrong judgments in the past that we need to be careful for the future. We should try to depend more on changes to be effected in Society through the co-operation of all including the State, rather than what we can do on our own, specially in relation to the marginalized in the slums, estates and villages. Our presence in these fields is essential, but overall public policy and programmes can achieve much more. Thus we can insist on the State providing better and more relevant education in the hinerland villages, plantations and slums.

Help create public opinion for desirable changes and values and participate with others in our common task of building a Sri Lankan nation and culture in a self reliant manner with dignity and justice for all. We need the widest ecumenical approach in this endeavour. Help, specially at the present time, in realizing national harmony. Christians can have a special and significant role in this as a unifying group in the country, with a dedication to justice and peace. We are present in every area and almost in every community in the country. We can foster inter religious action for education for racial harmony.

We can be areas of freedom, and experimentation for the common good; and join in the struggle for development with justice. We can help resolve the dichotomies between: oponness to world and authenticity of our own culture; mental and manual work; theory and practice; a largely urbanized elite, and the marginalized in village, estate and slum; development and the care for nature and the environment; formalities of religion and its basic message.



We can use the intra Church channels for an on-going dialogue and reflection. We must reflect together on the priorities flowing for education from the gospel message of love and sharing. We have several hundred of teachers, student leaders and catechists, the lay apostolic movements, the organizations of religions and dioceses can help in creating public opinion in the Church. The Catholic press can be a powerful means of communication and exchange.

In all this we must also set our house in order according to our ideals of justice and non-elitism. It is only then that we can participate fully in the on-going task of the nation. We have often times been part of the national problem and not merely part of its solution. Others had to help us understand the country and even free us from our over self-confident approaches. We have our own share of merit and blame.

We must be particularly careful about the *unintended effects* of our well intentioned works. Our good intentions may lead us to a dedication, but we may be unaware that in a given situation, we may be hurting the interest of some others. Thus the phenomenal development of urban elitist schools may go hand in hand with neglect of the poor and the weak. This can increase inequality and injustice in a larger community. We must evaluate our good work not only in themselves but also in relation to their function in the wider social structure and the network of class, race, religions and other relationships in the community, country and world. We must be able to acknowledge our weaknesses in a genuine religious manner.

(To be Concluded)

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## SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

### Oct. 16—Oct. 21

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.

#### MONDAY, OCTOBER 16:

Ministers, MP's and even I have taken office not for our benefit but to work for the benefit of the people; although I have the powers of a king, I am not a king but the leader of the people said the President addressing a massive crowd at Anuradhapura yesterday evening. Forty percent of the students who sat the GCE (Advanced level) examination last April have been successful on the results which are to be posted today. Hard work and effort were essential to develop the country the president said yesterday after he unveiled a plaque to declare open the new Galnewa town in the Kalawewa electorate, the first of the six new towns to be set up in the Mahawele Development Scheme. A draft proposals seeking certain amendments to the Muslim Marriage Laws is being prepared by the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs to be submitted to the Cabinet shortly; amendments are being sought in the form of tightening the existing laws as the government is taking a serious view of the number of persons from other religions embracing the Muslims faith in order to take advantage of another marriage—CDN. The

import duties on a large number of items such as biscuits, margarine, packing containers, lamps heaters etc. have been reduced. President yesterday declared that the government was striving to build a new country and a new civilisation, where one could live without fear of civil servants, MP's Ministers, PM's or Presidents; he called for a united endeavour by all, saying he did not see why people should not respond to such a call. The government has decided to implement the proposed pension scheme for farmers with effect from the coming Maha season—SU. The Minister of Trade has sought interviews with local Tamil writers and film producers with the idea of exporting Tamil novels, magazines and films from here to India—VK. Mr. S. Thondaman said that ignorant people were going round saying that the government had offered a ministerial post to Thondaman to make use of him and he wished to say to them that Thondaman was not a commodity for anyone to make use of—DP. About 74 families who were living in the Vallarnagar colony for many years have been ousted by the army; all these people are now refugees in Madhu—EN. An Executive Committee headed by the district Minister will be set up in all the districts to examine and Co-ordinate the development work in the area—DV. The Textile Corporation has decided to set up a factory at a cost of Rs. 250 million—LD. On the invitation of the government of India, the President of Sri Lanka will make a state visit to India from October 26 to November 9th, 1978—IDPR No. 212/78. The Political Victimization Investigation Committee that inquired into cases of political victimization during the period May 1970-July 1978 in respect of nearly 6,600 public servants has recommended to the government to extend the services of political victims in the



public sector whose cases have been established to sixty years provided work, conduct and health of such public servants are satisfactory about 1250 will benefit by this recommendation—IDPR-N. 42. President Boumedienn's disappearance from the public scene in the last three weeks have sparked a rush of that the Algerian Head of State had been overthrown in a coup—SU. US Secretary of State flew into Pretoria for crucial talks on the issue of independence to Namibia—CDN. Chinese Foreign Minister Hung Hhua has left London for Paris at the end of a four day official visit—CDM.

#### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17:

The government has asked the police high command to inquire into why investigations into certain big frauds in the Food Department have been mysteriously stopped halfway; these include investigations of the loss of 10,000 new ration books from the Barnes Place offices of the Department a few months ago and a Rs. 800,000 fraud involving a Food Department Storekeeper in the Mannar District. Intensive patrolling of major highways by the police in the US and France is to be done in Sri Lanka. According to the President of the Peradeniya Campus nothing can take place in the halls of residences without the knowledge of wardens who are resident there. Thirteen suspects were yesterday produced before the Additional Magistrate, Colombo by the Welampitiya police in connection with an alleged fraud involving millions of rupees at the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation at Kollonnawa. A new Cancer Unit comprising three wards, one clinic and a radiotherapy unit will be set up near the proposed new teaching hospital of the Ruhunu Campus at Karapitiya. The death occurred on Sunday of Mr. M. P. de Z. Siriwardene, former Minister of La-

bour—CDN. Proportional representation will be introduced to university student elections in terms of the proposed Universities Bill; this will enable such elections to be conducted on a democratic basis with one faculty not dominating the student assemblies that would be set up; provision for this has been made in the Universities Bill to be presented in Parliament shortly. Maternity benefits available to women employed in mines, factories, estates and certain prescribed institutions will be extended to all women workers except those in shops and offices according to a bill which is to be presented shortly by the Minister of Labour—CDM. The President has ordered a full probe on last Sunday's WK exposure on ragging at the Peradeniya Campus of the University of Sri Lanka. The Vice Chancellor of the University of Sri Lanka said that this was the first year when there was no serious ragging as there were only 13 incidents reported to him—SU. The leader of the Opposition in an interview in New York stated that Tamils in Sri Lanka were in a very unsafe situation and even during the Sirimavo Bandaranaike regime things were not so bad—DP. The Minister of Transport said in Anuradhapura that 32 engines will be imported to improve the railway service in the North, North Central and Eastern Provinces; also 400 carriages will be imported from India and this would improve the railway service throughout the island—VK. A woman has given birth to a child which appears to be half human and half a fish, in the Killinochchi hospital—EN. A special delegation from India will come to the island today to advise the country on the preservation of our cultural heritage—DV. The first sales Centre of the Gem Corporation will be set up in London shortly—DM.

Cardinal Karol Wojtyla of Poland was elected Pope and took the name of John Paul II. An attempted coup against president Abdallah Soleh of North Yemen was crushed today—CDN. Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko ended a 24 hour surprise visit to Romania after a public reaffirmation of friendship between the two Warsaw Pact countries. Algerian President Boumedienne previously reported not to have been seen since September 24 has left Algiers for a working visit to Moscow—CDM. The 1978 Nobel Prize for Economic was awarded to professor Herbert A. Simon of Carnegie-Mellon University in the US—SU.

#### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18:

The government has decided to ban strikes in the government service and Corporation sector the Minister of Lands etc said yesterday.

#### Notice under section 7 of the Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) as amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964

Ref. No. 02/3/260

It is intended to acquire the land/lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 9 of 3/11/1978.

#### Schedule

##### Situation:

In the village of Lelkada in the D.R.O's Division of Gangabada Pattuwa (South) in Galle District.

##### Name of land:

Delgahawatta

##### Plan and Lot No.:

Lot No. 1 in P.P.No. 053/1381

S. Panditha  
Acquiring Officer  
Galle District.

The Kachcheri,  
Galle.

23rd October 1978



day; the Minister said that two-thirds of the country's economy belonged to these two sectors and any interruption of the work there would have serious repercussions on the economy and ultimately it would be the poor man who would suffer. Sri Dalada Maligawa precincts in Kandy have been declared a sacred area by the government. On the invitation of King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, the President will make a state visit to Nepal from 4-6. The minister of Food and Cooperatives will bring in new legislation to make frauds in the cooperative sector a serious offence. Government and Corporation employees who travel daily to the city will be given better bus and train transport under a new scheme being worked out by Colombo's District Minister—CDN. The Attorney General has lodged a claim with the Singapore customs for the 100 bars of gold weighing 1,000 tolas and the 1,000 garuda wrist watches seized from aboard the Lanka Sagarika when the vessel was at Singapore on September 26. Undergraduates of all the campuses can make statements to the police on ragging or any sabotage in the campus and it will be treated in the strictest confidence nor will they be called upon to testify in inquiries or courts of law. Half the production of tea annually—100,000 tons will be transported by the railway from next year. 139 ambulances are expected to arrive in the island before the end of December to augment the fleet of vehicles in the department of health—CDM. The government yesterday assigned a top level Police team to probe the ragging at the Peradeniya Campus of the University of Sri Lanka. The President has called a halt to costly functions which corporations and statutory bodies are holding in connection with various activities; this fol-

lows the discovery that financial deterioration of some institutions were caused by the costly functions organised by them. The leader of the Opposition has stated in a press conference in New York that the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka was feeling 'very insecure' because of systematic persecution by the Jayewardene government—SU. Information has been received by the Police that four dangerous groups were operating in the North and that one of them was responsible for all the political murders and other acts of political violence; police suspect that members of this group were responsible for the blow up of the Avro plane at Ratmalana. The festival advance for plantation workers has been increased from Rs. 150 to Rs. 225—VK. The Ceylon Cement Corporation is soon to produce new type of cement to be sold at a low price—DP. The leader of the Opposition in a press conference in New York stated that the present government in Sri Lanka is purposefully settling Sinhalese in traditional Tamil areas; in these colonisation schemes which are being undertaken under the name of development foreign funds are being misused, specially under the Mahaweli scheme—EN. The Department of Housing with the collaboration of a French firm will build a complete town with 500 houses. The fish processing factory at Pesalai will re-start production in December when new equipment worth Rs. 8.2 million is installed—DV. Salaries of fourth and fifth grade Principals and teachers will be increased from next month—DM. Nine high-ranking army officers were killed in an abortive coup on Sunday against North Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The 1978 Nobel Prize for Physics was awarded one half to Prof. Photr Kapitze of the Soviet Union and the other half equally between

Dr. A. A. Penzies and Dr. Robert Wilson of the US—CDN. The surprise election of Cardinal Korol Wojtyla as pope was widely welcomed and was expected to provide a spectacular boost for religious freedom in Communist Eastern Europe—CDM. The 1978 Nobel Prize for Chemistry was awarded to Dr. Peter Mitchell of Gt. Britain. Pakistan President General Zia Ul Haq issued two decrees empowering his martial law government to ban any political party and banish its members from politics and public life—SU.

#### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19:

The payment of pensions to government teachers—one of the weakest areas in the administrative set up noted for long delays—is to be completely streamlined following a searching study made of it by a special committee appointed by the Minister of Public Administration. The Master Plan for the Rs. 15.5 million Sri Lanka-West German Fertilizer Project was presented to the Minister of Agricultural Development and Research by the Ambassador for the FDR yesterday. Special Presidential awards will be presented to Gate Mudaliyar A. C. G. S. Amarasekere and Mr. Sisira Kumara Manikka Arachi in recognition of their distinguished services to art and literature respectively. The President of the Paddy Miller's Association said that bureaucrats have bungled the whole rice supply system. A five year Project called the Course Grains and Pulses Development Project is to be undertaken with American aid to make Sri Lanka self-sufficient in coarse grains and pulses. The current restrictions on the issue of passports doctors is to be done away with following discussions between the Minister of Health and farmers—CDN. Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike when he was Minister of State sold eggs to the Marketing Depart-



ment for Rs. 3.16 million it was stated in the Special Presidential Commission yesterday. One of the suspects wanted in the blast of the Avro 748 was arrested by a top CID team last week. A new multi-million rupee State Mortgage and Investment Bank will be established tomorrow for granting loans for purchase of land, building and engage in the construction of houses; another development bank with a capital of 2,000 million to finance the industrial sector will be set up shortly. More doctors who have gone abroad have now expressed their willingness to return to Sri Lanka to serve their country said the Minister of Health. The Customs department expects a record revenue of Rs. 5000 million this year from Import and Export duties. The high powered police team probing the ragging incidents in the Peradeniya Campus continued their investigations yesterday. The Sri Lanka-born chartered accountant, Colin Kulanayagam, wanted by the British Government over a massive cheque fraud left for Britain yesterday morning accompanied by two Scotland Yard detectives—SU. The posts of District Ministers were not posts at all where the TULF was concerned but they were weapons said the Manipay MP—DP. The President addressing the Government Parliamentary Group told the newly-appointed District Ministers that a great responsibility devolved on them in pushing ahead with the development activities in their respective districts. A Committee has been appointed to investigate allegations the Southern Administration division of the CTB is using yellow coloured buses in defiance of CTB laws and trying to run an independent service—DV. A Training Centre to train carpenters, masons and technicians will be set up in each district—DM. The present government has taken Rs. 12400 million worth of foreign

loans in the last 9 months—DK. Western foreign ministers and S. Africa prolonged talks of the future Namibia a mid reports of a proposed compromise to salvage UN plans for the territory and avert threats of trade sanctions against Pretoria. Eight newspapers supporting condemned Pakistan ex-PM Bhutto were told to submit their copy to the government before publication—CDM. Arab notables on the occupied West Bank of Jordan and Gaza strip have turned down an Israeli offer for them to set up temporary councils to rule the area when Israeli military government there is closed down soon. Cambodia claimed its forces had killed a further 400 Vietnamese soldiers during the first half of this month in the continuing border conflict—SU.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20:** The Food Department has built up sufficient buffer stocks of rice, flour and sugar to meet any contingency the Food Commissioner said yesterday. President Jayewardene miraculously escaped serious injury when a jagged piece of plate glass from a lamp shade above his head came crashing down, missing him by inches; he was chairing a meeting of the Parliamentary Group at the Republic Square conference hall. The Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs yesterday ordered all GA's to take immediate steps to clear all arrears of work immediately as there had been a number of reports that a large number of letters reaching some offices had not been opened but were piling up. Unemployed youth who get a monthly allowance of Rs. 50 will be able to get 55 lbs of paddy instead if they so desire—CDN. A series of seismic surveys will be launched shortly to discover oil and natural gas off the shore of Sri Lanka; the surveys which will begin early next month will be carried out with Norwegian aid—

CDM. Police were called in yesterday to investigate the circumstances under which a glass pane of the ceiling at the President's office crashed when the government Parliamentary Group meeting was in progress in the forenoon yesterday. The MP for Manipay has said that it would be useless for the TULF to accept the District Ministership in Jaffna and Mullaitivu only leaving Trincomalee and Vavuniya and Mannar which as far as the TULF was concerned were important electorates of the proposed 'Tamil Eelam'. MP's will receive a salary increase of Rs. 250 from January next year. The Court of Appeal yesterday reserved its reader in the application for a Writ of Prohibition by the SLFP leader, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike against the Special Presidential Commission now inquiring into alleged misdeeds by members of the former government—SU. The PM speaking in parliament yesterday denied that he had received the gift of a house in Colombo and stated that it was a malicious rumour—VK. Ministers who do not possess vehicles will be allowed to import them for their own use. The Mahaweli Development Board has decided to start 20 industries recommended by a team of Japanese experts in the Mahaweli area—DV. Rs. 36 million worth of tractor spare parts are now being distributed among farmers—LD. Syrian troops withdrew from a few fortified positions in East Beirut as part of a security plan aimed at preventing renewed fighting involving Christian militias—CDM. President Carter has invited S African PM Peter Botha for talks in Washington provided the conditions concerning the holding of elections in Namibia are met. India's relations with China would not be normalised until there is a satisfactory solution to the boundary dispute, PM Morarji Desai said—SU.



**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21:**

The Minister of Fisheries has refused to pay a commission of Rs. 3 million to a Norwegian broker on a fishing boat transaction entered into by the previous government till the broker reveals the name of the former VVIP in Sri Lanka who has already received Rs. 450,000 out of the commission the broker now claims. Sri Lanka's external assets keep on increasing ever since the present government assumed office fifteen months ago; at the end of the July this year it stood at Rs. 6,513 million, an increase of Rs. 4804 million over the figure in July 1977. The Justice Minister said yesterday in Parliament that provision had been made in this year's budget to build more prisons and better court

houses. The Transport Minister yesterday invited the press, public and parliamentarians to cooperate with him and hold discussions to enable him to provide a better transport service to the people—CDN. The Minister of Finance said that the country's external reserves now stands at Rs. 6.5 billion the highest ever the country had in the past 20 years. A five year development plan for the 24 districts will be drawn up shortly which will cover the needs of each district said the PM—CDM. Sri Lanka's top rung bureaucrats are to be brought under the administrative control of the Cabinet of Ministers. The District Minister of Anuradhapura said that priority would be given to renovate all small tanks in the Anuradhapura district which had not been repaired for over 150 years. The Department of Valuation is to be decentralised into regional offices for development under District Ministers. A three pronged development scheme for the Trincomalee Port has been proposed by the government; this is intended to gear it to meet the requirements of container vessels—SU. The MP for Nallur stressed in Parliament that examination of houses during the night should be stopped immediately because householders were undergoing difficulties as well as humiliation—Members of the Tamil Ilaingar Peravai are now asking whether they have shunned the Eastern province and concentrating only on the North and whether the boundaries of Tamil Eelam have shrunk—DP. A team of experts from the ADB arrived in the country to help modernise tea factories and electrify them at a cost of Rs. 75 million. The government is now taking steps preliminary to form an additional work force to be used when necessary. The government is taking steps to supply chemical fertilizer free of charge

to farmers to increase their standard of living and to urge others take to farming—DV. The Ministry of Transport has informed the railway department that train fares will be increased by 75% from next month—ATH. An emergency plan for preventing renewed fighting in Beirut ran into trouble yesterday when Sudan reaffirmed that it would withdraw its troops from Arab peace keeping forces next week. Rhodesian forces made their deepest raid into neighbouring Zambia to strike at one of guerilla leaders Joshua Nkomo's main bases in Ngwerere twenty miles north of Lusaka. The US deplored Rhodesian military raids into Zambia and Mozambique. PM Ian Smith and Bishop Abel Muzorewa two members of the four man Executive Council governing Rhodesia defended Rhodesia's attack on guerilla bases in Zambia on the grounds that they were necessary for the country's defence. Church services were to be held around S. Africa to mark the first anniversary of the government's purge of apartheid critics. Pakistan's former PM Bhutto sent a cable from his death cell to the UN Secretary General about conditions of his detention saying that the military regime intended him to 'wither away'—CDN.

**Notice under section 7 of the Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) as amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964**

Reference No. ATH 17/322

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 9 of 3/11/1978.

**Schedule**

D.R.O's Division: Nugegoda  
Situation:

Ward No. 18, within the Municipal Council limits of Dehiwala - Galkissa.

Village:

Dehiwala & Galkissa

Name of Land:

Lot No.: 1-5

Plan No. P.P. Co.: 4619

**H. G. Gunawardene**

District Land Officer  
of Colombo District.

The Kachcheri,

Colombo.

Date:- 23.10.1978

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**OBITUARY**

**Michael P de Z. Siriwardene**, a former Minister of Labour. Mr. Siriwardene was for many years a Member of Parliament representing Minuwangoda. He was a leading member of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. Parliament mourned his death and the Speaker directed the Secretary General to send a copy of the relevant proceedings to the bereaved family.



# Confidentially

## Transport In A Mess—2

IS IT NOT A FACT that the experts' investigating team from the ADB or IBRD have not, so far, found the CGR to be a sufficiently viable undertaking to recommend a World Bank, ADB, or IDA soft loan to help it improve its services? That whereas there have been murmurs that a loan of some kind may be made available to the CTB, there is complete silence in regard to the CGR? That if our information is not correct on this matter and the Ministry of Transport has been able to persuade the ADB to grant a loan, we will be happy to publish it? That as far as our present information goes the investigating experts' team have taken the most pessimistic view of the working and the management of the CGR? That apart from the 400 (or 1000) excess staff the CGR carries, there are other more serious defects that need correction before any ADB loan can be considered? That we do not as yet have the reasons which have made the experts take such a dim view of the CGR but we can hazard, a guess about the matters that have led to the experts' lack of confidence in the present management and operations of the CGR? That as we mentioned in our last piece on this matter (vide *Tribune* 21/10/78), the experts were staggered by the fact that the only solution that present railway officials put forward to solve every malady that afflicts our CGR was *import*—from nuts and bolts to carriages, waggon and locomotives? That it would not have taken these experts long to find out, for instance, that from 1950 right up to 1970, the Ratmalana Workshop had

turned out nearly all the carriages and waggons the CGR needed? That the only exception to this was the "import" of Chinese passenger carriages in 1957/58? That these carriages had been obtained by Sri Lanka as a set off against the credit balance this country had *vis a vis* China in the operation of the Rice & Rubber Barter Agreement? That in this sense the Chinese carriages were more or less obtained "free" as a result of the surplus built up by this island by exporting rubber to China under this agreement? That, except for these Chinese carriages, all the other carriages and waggons had been built at Ratmalana? That in this period several first-rate railway postal vans (and used as travelling post offices) had been built at Ratmalana? That there is jubilation now that the CGR has been able to persuade Romania to supply seven (7) travelling post office carriages under the present Contract? That it will be recalled that many buffet and restaurant carriages had been built in Ratmalana until 1970? That the absence of any determined effort now on the part of the management to make Ratmalana to function as it did before 1970 must come as a rude shock to everyone. That in addition to the virtual shut down at Ratmalana the repairs and maintenance of all rolling stock is now minimal right through the CGR?

IS IT ALSO NOT A FACT that at every turn the investigating team had been confronted with the cry for "imports" and the money to import the same? That they must have been disappointed that the plans to rehabilitate the Workshop at Ratmalana and make it hum with activity was not concretised or implemented? That no foreign team could be expected to develop enthusiasm if the present management is not able to

restore Ratmalana to its pre-1970 glory? That there is a demand now for aluminium carriages? That the newspapers were recently fed with stories about the timber shortage and the need therefore for aluminium carriages? That any study of the files would reveal that the government in 1964 had made a Cabinet level decision to use aluminium coaches? That this decision was made not because of timber shortage but because of the Wilwatte (near Mirigama) train disaster? That in that case a simple accident had become a major disaster because the wooden coaches had telescoped one into another resulting in many deaths and even more injured? That once this decision was made nobody rushed in to "import" aluminium carriages? That designs were drawn up for such aluminium carriages and a prototype had been built to suit our railways especially on the upcountry run? That by 1968 the components for two trial carriages had been imported and that work on constructing them had begun? That it is believed that the two aluminium body carriages had in fact been built and had been put into service? That anyone can see that it was cheaper for this country to build these aluminium carriages on a minimum imports of components than to import such carriages?

That instead of presenting plans to make these aluminium-body carriages, the present management has only one cry—"import"? That even the import-export oriented IBRD and ADB would like to lend money only to countries and undertakings that are willing to help themselves by making what they can do themselves in their own workshops?

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