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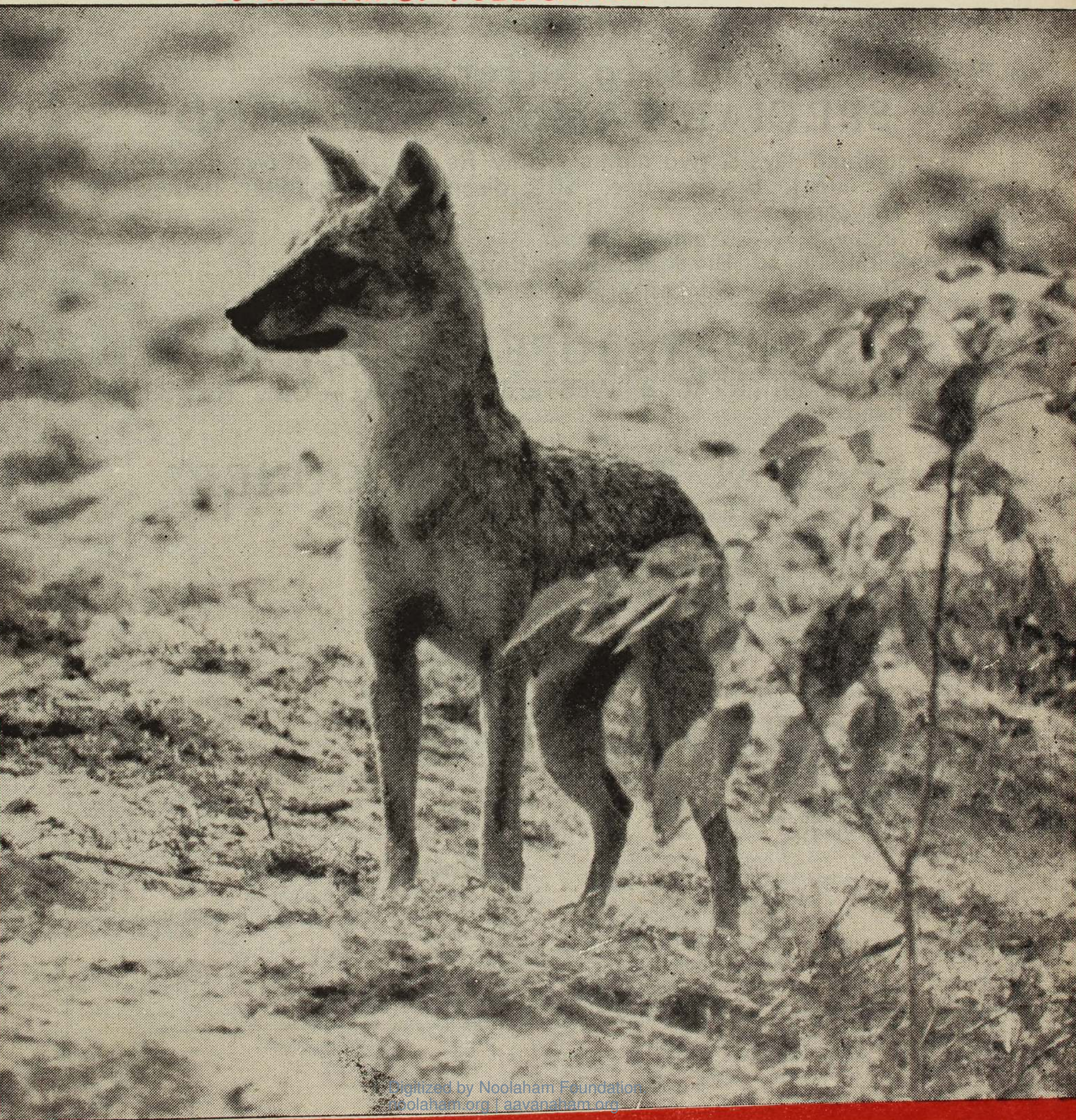

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

THE BUDGET IN SRI LANKA this year will be under the benign umbrella of REAGANOMICS—President Reagan's credo which has inhibited international agencies like the IMF. What is Reaganomics? President Reagan and his aides have repeatedly offered explanations of what it means. But what do the Marxist-inclined Left in the USA think about Reaganomics? We publish below an extract from an editorial note from the *People's Tribune* of Chicago of September 28. entitled "WHY REAGANOMICS CAN'T POSSIBLY WORK": "..... Reaganomics or 'supply-side economics' has been put forth as the theory that will save US capitalism from the bankrupt policies of the past fifty years. One of the reasons that Reagan was elected was that he was able to convince enough people that he had the answer to the economic problems plaguing the country. Reagan's strength was his ability to condemn the 'liberal Democratic' policies of the past and promise something that sounded new. The problem is that supply-side economics' rests on a fundamentally wrong premise: that the economic stagnation that plagues modern capitalist society is based on insufficient production of commodities which is in turn based on insufficient capital in the hands of manufacturers of goods and services. These people don't have enough capital, the theory goes' because of too much taxation of their profits, too much regulation, excessive wage demands by their workers etc. If we just let business keep more of the money that rightfully belongs to it, and let 'free enterprise' operate—the theory goes—the natural tendency of capita to expand will create more and better industry, increased jobs, raise living standards and lower inflation. What is wrong with this is that insufficient 'supply' is not the cause of economic stagnation in capitalist society. The exact opposite is true. There is *too much* capital *too much* wealth, too many commodities in relation to the ability of workers to buy them. There is too much wealth on the side of capital, too much poverty on the side of consumption, and the gap is constantly widening as more workers become unemployed. In the last ten years real wages (after inflation) have fallen, while the ability of industry to produce more commodities has constantly risen. Under these circumstances, to speak of giving industry more ability to produce while giving the working class less ability to consume is ridiculous. But that is exactly the essence of 'Reaganomics'. It is true that traditional 'New Deal' liberalism, 'the Welfare State', or 'Keynesianism', was and is bankrupt..... The 'welfare state' was never the answer to the basic problem of modern capitalism—the tendency toward stagnation and massive unemployment. But neither is 'Reaganomics.' It is only a latter-day rehash of the unbridled 'free enterprise' and robber baron' activity which brought us the stock market crash, the Dust Bowl, and the Great Depression and the New Deal.... The only solution is to do away with the entire system of private ownership of capital which, in search of maximum profit, brings with it greater and greater wealth on one side, and greater and greater poverty on the other. 'Reaganomics' after barely seven months in power, is showing itself to be rotten to the core, a pygmy with feet of clay. Not that what it replaced was fundamentally any better...". The *People's Tribune* may be a "small" paper compared to the giants like the *New York Times*, but the little Davids often prove mightier than the Goliaths. Sri Lanka has to be very careful not to be carried away by Reaganomics. It will be difficult enough for a developing Third World country to keep afloat in the maelstrom that Reaganomics has churned in the global economic scene.

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COVER

Jackals

ON THE COVER we have a picture of the much-maligned Sri Lankan jackal or *Nariya*. It is a predatory beast that hunts in packs. It thrives on carrion and is a parasite that serves the useful purpose of scavenging the jungles thereby ensuring environmental cleanliness. But because of its mean ways and devious cunning, the *nariya* is despised as a denizen of the forest that must be kept at arms length. There are also humans who are regarded with even greater abhorrence. President Jayewardene drew attention to a new breed of human jackals now befoulig the Sri Lankan atmosphere. The *Ceylon Daily News* reported on its front page on October 7, 1981 under the heading COMMUNAL DISTRUBANCES—UPSTARTS BEHIND SOME OF THE INCIDENTS as follows: "There is evidence that some of the recent communal incidents were the work of rich elements similar to the "teddy boys" in England who have no regard for the law, President J. R. Jayewardene told the government parliamentary group yesterday. The President said they consumed expensive liquor, rode around on motor cycles and earned about Rs. 70 to 80 per day. Even influential persons appeared to be in their pockets. President Jayewardene said they were investigating to find out who were behind these disturbances. They had to prevent this movement gaining ground as that type of law-breaking and violence had no place in a civilised society, he said...." The *Sun* 4/10/81 reported the same presidential disclosure thus: "The recent spate of violence was the work of certain organiced gangs, President J. R. Jayewardene told Government MPs yesterday; They were like the. 'Teddy Boys of England. They did not respect the law. consumed liquor and conducted temselves in a disorderly way, he told the meeting of the Government Parliamentary Group. Investigatigns were now underway to find out who used these groups President Jayewardene said. Members of the group had been paid Rs. 70 to 80 per day. The President said that they had to prevent this movement gaining ground as this type of law breaking and violence had no place in a civilised society.

The *Sun* in the same issue, under the heading PRESIDENT ASKS TULF ALSO TO GUARD ITS TONGUE stated: "The TULF delegation which met President J. R. Jayewardene and other UNP leaders on Monday has been asked to insure that its members also refrain from making provocative public statements. President Jayewardene is learnt to have told the TULF delegation led by A. Amirthalingam that statments made by V. Yogeswaran, MP for Jaffna, in an interview with the *New York Times* amounted to encouraging violence. He wished to know whether the TULF subscribed to that view and if not what action it proposed to take. President Jayawardene is learnt to have explained how action had been taken against Government MPs recently for certain statements they made. Meanwhile Mr. Yogesvaran in a statement issued yesterday denied he told *New York Times* in an interview that the Front could envisage the use of violence to achieve its political objectives. "I have been reported out of context and I deeply regret that the report conveys what I did not intend to convey", he said in a statement, Mr. Yogeswaran said: "The TULF is a democratic poitical party and non-violence is a central article of its political faith. Although I have suffered greatly as a victim of violence, in conformity with party discipline, I have always and will continue to work within the framework of its policy of non-violence ..." The *Daily News* had-also reported that: "President Jayewardene also explained the circumstances leading to the withdrawal of statements made by certain government MPs in Parliament and also the disciplinary action taken against the MP for Panadura, Dr. Neville Fernando and MP for Ratnapura Mr. G. V. Punchinilame. The President said that when the MP for Panadura made a speech criticising the government, the executive committee of the United National Party summoned him and asked him to explain. He then withdrew the statement and apologised. Subsequen tly Dr. Fernando had made another speeeh at Panadura to the effect that it was because of the dilly dallying of the government in tackling the terrorist situation in the North that the people took the law into their hands. He further criticised the President's speech to the party's executive committee. The disciplinary committee of the party summoned Dr. Fernando again and asked him to explain the statement. Dr. Fernando in his explanation had only changed the word 'government' to "government officials." The working committee had then decided to expel him from party. He said that under the new constitution Dr. Fernando could appeal to the Supreme Court or to a Select Committee of Parliament about his losing his Parliamentary seat. He stated that Dr. Fernando could not appeal against his expulsion from the party. As regards, Mr. Punchinilame MP for Ratnapura a committe of the party is now looking in to his conduct for not being present when he (the President) and the Prime Mjnister visited Ratnapura to inspect the damage caused in his electorate during the recent distrubances."

With our jungle areas getting smaller, jackals are fewer. The farmers' guns have got most of them. But, the concrete jungles in our towns have increased Two-legged jackals have proliferated and have begun to cause major law and order problems. They have brought a spirit of lawlessness to spread

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through all human settlement in the island. Revolvers, shot and machine guns and petrol bombs have become as common as the mosquitoes that torment the people. Robbery, arson, looting, rape and a total disregard for limb and life have become the order of the day among a small but dangerous section of our population. For the survival of man as *homo sapiens* in this blessed emerald isle, the jackals in our towns and urbanised countryside must be brought under control. This can be done if the socio-economic and political causes responsible for the emergence of this anti-social outcrop in our midst are eliminated. This can and must be done.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Reaganmania & Sri Lanka

PRESIDENT JAYEWARDENE and other Ministers have hinted that there will be a further pay rise in the next Budget for middle bracket wage-earners. But this was before the scourge of *Reaganomics* descended on the IMF and the World Bank. Countries like Sri Lanka cannot expect even temporary accommodation from the IMF to meet foreign exchange shortfalls until the prevailing shadow of Reaganomics is lifted. This country now has to depend a great deal on private commercial bank loans at the skyhigh Reaganomics interest rates and bilateral loans and investment capital from countries like Saudi Arabia, Japan, West Germany, France, the USA, UK, Switzerland or the Netherlands. How Sri Lanka will tide over the budgetary deficits and balance of payments shortfalls in the next budget is yet to be seen. In the era of its new liberalised market economy this country is slowly slipping into the economics of high-pay countries' but so far down in the list that comparisons will make any self-respecting Sri Lankan blush.

Below we publish a table (for 1980) from the US Bureau of Labour Statistics which has cautioned that the figures are not and cannot be precise. They represent total hourly compensation—cash plus fringes—for production workers in manufacturing:

HOURLY COMPENSATION

Production Workers in Manufacturing

(Figures are in dollars)

	1970	*1975*	*1980*
U.S.	4.18	6.35	9.92
Canada	3.46	6.11	9.06
Japan	0.99	3.05	5.88
Belgium	2.07	6.60	13.18
France	1.74	4.63	9.46
Germany	2.35	6.24	11.94
Italy	1.76	4.65	9.01
Netherlands	2.14	6.60	12.18
Sweden	2.93	7.18	12.60
Great Britain	1.48	3.27	7.07

IT WILL BE SEEN that the average US manufacturing worker's hourly pay was lower in 1980 than his counterparts in four European countries. The four high-wage countries were in descending order Belgium, Sweden, the Netherlands and West Germany. The United States now stands a little above the average among the 10 rich countries, ranked by average compensation — with Great Britain and Japan at the bottom. High wage rates, economists have pointed out, does not necessarily mean an unusually strong economy, any more than a low wage rate — for example, Japan's — means a weak or unstable one. But these changes in the standings in recent years reflect powerful trends in the international economy that deserve attention. US pay scales were at the top of the list through the early 1970s. But in 1975 three of the European countries went higher, and the gaps have widened, since then. The change reflects, among other thingst higher productivity growth abroad. The measuremen of the fringes is a prolific source of statistical uncertainty. How does one compare the United States, where fringes commonly include health insurance, with Britain and Canda, where the taxpayer provides it? Foreign wages are difficult to calculate because when converted to the local currency at market exchange rate, distortions appear. Conventional exchange rates are not always reliable guides to purchasing power at home. The Japanes worker lives at a higher standard than this table might suggest while the West German, despite his high wage, still does not live quite as well ae the American. But as a general guide the figurs outline an interesting pattern. Wages tend to ries during a period of inflation, but this would nse matter if there is a corresponding increase in produot tivity, Unfortunately wages have kept rising" c-Sri Lanka in the last three years without even in minimal increase in production or productivitya These increases have only tended to accentuate the inflation.

THE QUESTION before the economic planners. and the Government of Sri Lanka is whether this country should adopt the full-blooded monetarist policeis of Reagan and the half-baked version of Mrs. Thatcher. Reagan's propaganda machine is working overtime to praise the virtues of his economic policies, and secure some measure of popular support, but it has not been easy. A perceptive commentator in the *People's Tribune*

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of Chicago, pointed out that even millionaires were "skeptical" and that the REAGAN VOODOO FAILS TO WOO WALL ST. This is how he began his analysis. 'We're mired in a sort of aimless drift', said a marketing analyst for a major steel company recently, summing up business' view of the first seven months of Reganomics. High interest rates and tight money are causing feelings ranging from nervousness to panic on Wall Street and in corporate head quarters throughout the United States and the Western world. It is becoming clear even to Reagan's staunchest defenders that his 'supply-side' policies of tax cuts coupled with tight money and massive increases in miltary spending are, not going to perform the promised miracles of low inflation, high employment and a balanced budget. Instead, the country faces ever-greater budget deficits (as much as $ 100 billion by 1985) continuing high inflation, and economic stagnation as industry fights a losing battle with murderously high interest rates and a country of consumers increasingly unable to come up with the bucks to buy industry's products. After seven months, Reagan has failed miserably to convince even the millionaires—the capitalist class—that his economic program will work. So, over Labour Day weekend, he tried talking to 'the workers' promising them "jobs, jobs, jobs and more jobs' if they would only believe in his economic program. 'A job is the best social program there is, he said. May be. The problem is, *Reaganomics* isn't going to provide jobs....."

THE COMMENTATOR went on: "The economic news is almost all bad. Factory orders for machine tools, which are good indicators of the level of future industrial production, dropped 38 per cent between June and July and 37 percent from the previous July. Steel orders are down due to sluggish demand, and domestic aluminium producers, according to the *Wall Steel Journal*, 'worried by high interest rates, are slashing production and curtailing or postponing expansion projects'. The official unemployment rate for black teenagers rose from 26.4 percent to 45.7 percent in one month (July to August), setting a new record. Norman Robertson, chief economist for Pittsburgh's Mellon Bank, summed it all up: 'Wall Street has grave doubts about President Reagan's program. I don't think any single action is going to change the gloomy attitude.'

"WHAT IS THE PROBLEM? The immediate cause of economic slowdown is the 20 percent interest rate companies have to pay banks to borrow money for new equipment and other necessities. Money is simply too expensive and thousands of manufacturers are either cutting back on production plans or else going bankrupt. The Reagan program of 'tight money'—having the Federal Reserve Board cut down the growth of the money supply—was supposed to lower inflation, and with it interest rates. But this hasn't happened. The main reason interest rates haven't gone down is that the Federal government is having to borrow heavily from private banks in order to pay for the new Reagan budget deficit caused by his tax cut on the one hand and the huge increase in military spending on the other. By borrowing so heavily the government is increasing the overall demand for money, thus driving up its 'price'—the interest rate. "What's causing nervousness among the capitalists themselves is the fact that the numbers on which the hoped for Reagan economic miracle is based aren't adding up. In order to achieve what he has promised—four percent inflation, lower unemployment and a balanced budget in 1984—yearly economic growth must equal from 4 - 5 percent per year, not counting inflation. Reagan's 'supply-side' tax plan—the tax cut, more incentives for business, deregulation of industry' getting government off our backs'—is supposed to raise production and increase jobs by putting more capital at the disposal of industry and allowing it to expand. But most corporations are not planning anywhere near 4.2 percent expansion that the Reagan plan needs to get going..... Actual growth, if it takes place at all, is certain to be for less than what is projected in the Reagan scenario. All other predictions—a balanced budget, three million new jobs, low inflation and interest rates—hinge on rapid economic expansion. When that doesn't happen, the whole plan comes unglued. Inflation and interest rates will be much higher than Reagan's predictions as the government scrambles to borrow more money to pay for military-caused deficits and money lost through tax cuts to business. High interest rates wil mean that more federal money will have to go to pay interest on the national debt, unbalancing the budget even more. With the economy caught in the crunch of high interests and near-zero last year...."

IT IS NOT ONLY LIBERALS, RADICALS AND LEFTISTS who are opposed to Reaganomics, but even hardcore capitalists are also bitterly critical to policies. The *Time* magazine of September 28 had a cover story REAGANOMICS MAKING IT WORK: ".... Even before the program's first tax cut was to go into effect on October 1, doubts about Reganomics were proliferating, notably on Wall Street and among Congressmen, aided and abetted by some economists and editorial pundits..." The *Time* had gone on: "....despite the disquiet—even near panic in some sectors—the economy overall is doing surprisingly well in a number of ways. Near record interest rates have hampered growth but most experts do not foresee anything like a major drop in the economy. To the contrary, after a period of sluggishness, industrial production is

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expected to rebound sharply. *Time's* Board Economists which met last week in New York City predicted that by the second half of 1982 business would be growing at a robust 4% annual pace,.." Reagan claims that his policies would bring prosperity in the long run, and that his critics were near-sighted—"worried about re-election next year, brokers buying and selling stock minute by minute, businessmen who need loans. For now, though, attention is focused on current troubles rather than on latent and later—possibilities. Millions of families cannot afford loans for new homes or automobiles Thousands of small businesses are going bankrupt.."

The *Time* also pointed out that: "Wall Street's main concern is the bulging federal deficit, which is $ 55.6 billion this year and rising. Government borrowing weighs heavily on credit markets already strained by brisk demand for business loans, including the huge sums to finance megabuck corporate mergers like that between Du Pont and Conoco. The Administration has predicted that the deficit will shrink to $ 42.5 billion in 1982 and disappear altogether by 1984. But those targets are fast slipping away. The Congressional Budget Office forecast last week that the deficit would be $65 billion in 1982 and would total an extra $50 billion in 1984..."

The *Time* offered an explanation for disillusionment that had set in. "The President himself sowed many of the seeds of the current disillusionment by his boundless campaign promises and earlay, far too rosy economic paredictions. Rather than adopting a Churchillian posture and admitting that it would take sacrifice and patience byall Ameircans to set the economy right, Reagan has steadily underplayed the pain involed. During last year's presidential campaign, he pledged that strong growth, less unemployment, lower inflation and a restoration of American military might were all just over his supply-side horizon. Once the new Administration was in office, the happy talk continued. When the supply-side Reaganauts were preparing to unveil their economic plan last February, they used imaginative new computer models to project what would happen when their tax cuts took effect. The results were absurdly Pollyannish. Growth in 1982 was going to surge to 7%, while inflation would fall to 6.5%..." And then: *"The reality of the new Administration's economic program, of course, turned out to be far different from Reagan's campaign speeches and his Government's early projections. Tough industrial production and investment were somewhat higher than most economists expected in view of the high cost of borrowing money the specter of those larger-than-expected budget deficits soon began to cast a shadow over the whole Reagan Program..."*

The *Time* magazine of October 5 under the heading ROUGH WATERS AHEAD: THE PRESIDENT DECIDES TO TRIM THE BUDGET AGAIN, RATHER THAN HIS SAILS SAID that the most publicised policy imperative of Reaganomics was the cut on Social Security: "....On many issues, Ronald Reagan has a well-deserved reputation for stubbornness, if not downright inflexibility. But last Thursday, in a rare retreat, he said of Social Security 'Our feet were never embedded in concrete on this proposal'. Besiged by mounting pressure from within his own party and a fire storm of increasingly effective rhetoric from Democratic leaders, the President decided to shelve any major reforms of the all-but bankrupt Social Security system as part of his second round of budget cuts...." And as the President was buffeted by the contradictions inherent in Reaganomics, trade unions, Civil Right Committees and other organisations began to mobilise popular support for a nation-wide campaign against Reaganomics.

In the United States itself, Reagan will have to stage many retreats, but he certainly will be able to impose Reaganomics in its most brutal form on the developing countries and the Third World through the IMF and IBRD. Sri Lanka must be ready to meet the consequences of less (or no) aid and also a Reaganomic onslaught on UNP's ambitious plans for accelerated development. The bottom will soon drop out of Sri Lanka expectations to obtain cheap and easy credit from the leading countries of the West by paying subtle homage to their political susceptibilities. Grandiose programmes had been worked out by all developing countries in the era of MacNamara who had tried to sustain the free enterprise system by incorporating Rooseveltian New Deal strategies in IMF/IBRD/IDA programmes.

But the situation is different today. The US President and a powerful band of his Reganauts (a popular cliche in Washington now) have begun to assail the international lending associations with Reaganomics and the indications are that they will succeed in blackmailing (by threatening to withdraw US support) these institutions to perform double somersaults which will completely undermine the policies and programmes for economic development evolved by these countries over the last two decades.

How will Sri Lanka meet the challenge of the Reaganomics?

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JOURNEY TO AFGHANISTAN—1

The Invitation

By S. P. Amarasingam

Early in August this year, I received an invitation from the Baktar News Agency in Kabul to visit Afghanistan. Journalists from a number of countries had been invited to spend a fortnight there starting from the anniversary of the National Day of Independence on August 19. The fact that last year I had written and published the book *From Havana To Kabul* had no doubt prompted the invitation. In the contemporary avalanche of news reports, commentaries, books, films and radio broadcasts' damning everything that has happened in Afghanistan ever since the Saur Revolution of April 1978- my contribution was directed towards a realistic understanding of events in that country looked at from the angle of a Sri Lankan involved in the Non-aligned Movement from its inception.

The invitation came at a time when propaganda against the regime in Kabul was at fever pitch. Lord Carrington's mission to Moscow on behalf of EEC countries had, as anticipated, turned out to be a dismal failure. And with this, the BBC and other western agencies had stepped up the volume and the venom of their campaign to obliterate, if propaganda can do it, the Afghanistan that was slowly emerging into a new statehood. Day in and day out it was made out by the media that Afghanistan was a beleagured country where the so-called "rebels", admittedly trained in camps in Pakistan and China, were in control of most of the country outside of a few towns; and that in towns like Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Jalalabad and Mazare-Shariff life had become intolerable with the "rebels" keeping the government (and the Russians) permanently on the run.

Nearly everyone to whom I mentioned that I had received this invitation, blurted out, "How can you go to that country? Will you be safe? Do you think it is worth it? ...." Esmond Wickramasinghe who had only then returned from an extended trip abroad, including a visit to Alabania, told me "You must go. It is a country that should be visited *now*," I asked him about the Baktar News Agency. Esmond is the Chairman of Sri Lanka's news agency *Lankapuwath* and he has attended most, if not all, global and regional conferences of news agencies in recent times. The Baktar News Agency was "professionally run" by "excellent men", he said. He had met some of them at these conferences. "You shouldn't miss this opportunity to visit a country that is very much in the news". I asked Sarath Amunugama, Secretary to the Ministry of State in charge of Information Broadcasting and Tourism whether I should make the trip. He is a much-travelled person who has met delegates from all countries in the region, including Afghanistan. "Accept the invitation and see whatever you can of that country", he told me. Another compelling reason for accepting the invitation was that my longtime friend Dr. Perumal Pillai, a livestock expert with the FAO for 20 years, was in Kabul. He had been there for over two years now. He was in Sri Lanka in July 1980 and from that time he has been wanting me to visit Afghanistan. Recently he had written several letters urging me to go to Kabul before he left the country (this is his last FAO posting before retirement). His daughter Jeeva had gone there in July before she went to take up an appointment in Papua New Guinea. He was expecting his other daughter Usha and husband from Australia and his younger son from London in August. All this he mentioned in letters to persuade me that it was quite "safe" to go to Afghanistan. Perumal Pillai's letters helped to allay the fears and apprehensions in the family circle about the hazards of going to a country allegedly in the inertnational "danger" zone.

It is a strange irony (or is it karma ?) that nearly all the countries I have visited on invitation were outstanding victims of media imperialism—Mao's China in 1958, Nasser's Egypt in 1960, Castro's, Cuba in 1965 and 1979. And now the invitation to Babrak Karmal's Afghanistan. The fact that after Mao and Nasser, China and Egypt had turned full somersaults to become temporaty darlings of imperilalist propaganda did not either detract from the realities at the relevant time or provide a guarantee that the wheel will not turn the full circle once again.

Invitations, especially to journalists, from Governments are always suspect. Such invitations are generally regarded as reward for services rendered or as bribe to insure partiality in the future. Whatever that might be, the simple fact is that for many in Third World countries, especially for the chronically non-affluent tribe of journalists, travel to distant countries is possible only on such invitations. Must one refuse them for fear of being accused of writing sunshine stories as *quid pro quo* for hospitality? Most Governments are now careful not to impose conditions ("you are free to write what you feel" is the usual formula), but suspicions prevail that secret strings are quietly attached during the trip. It is true that such invitations are not always intended to produce immediate propagandistic write-ups, but that they might well be for the purpose of building a permanent lobby inside a country. I have always been concerned about the ethics of accepting such invitations. I have declined many

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invitations. Those I accepted were from newly emergent countries that fascinated me because of the socio-economic and political upheaval taking place there.

In the introductory note on the series "Journey to Egypt" in the *Tribune* (from February 17, 1961), I had set out some of my thoughts on this matter. "An invitation to visit Egypt now known as the Southern Region of the United Arab Republic—stirred my imagination more than anything else had done for a long time. Egypt was the land of the lost Pharoahs, of the unbelievable magnificence of the tombs of Luxor, of the fabulous relics of Tutahkhamen, of the Pyramids and Sphinx. It was also now the land of Arab awakening, a symbol of the Afroasian struggle for political and economic freedom, a heraldic beacon of resurgent Africa and the country which has produced the mighty Nasser

One accepts officially-sponsored invitations with trepidation. The charge of brainwashing during officially conducted tours is one of the arguments adopted by professional media folk to discount first-hand impressions which do not suit the policies of the vested interests that employ such propagandists. Travel to distant countries is today impossible for writers or journalists unless blessed with an inheritance of a few millions invested in different countries that allow free exchange and movement of money. Or, they should be under contract to rich publishing firms willing to advance money for travel in particular regions.

"Each mode and manner of travel, open to a writer or a journalist, is susceptible to attack by insinuation that the person concerned was 'influenced' to slant his writing. But an official invitation has, at least, the merit of an influence' publicly known and acknowledged, whilst the travel promoted by rich publishing firms, newspapers and other organisations whose real objectives are not disclosed is based on a more subtle and insidious kind of 'influence'. What is important, however, is that the writer should have the freedom to express what he sees, feels and thinks—and also that the publishing firm or the newspaper will print what he writes. It is a fact that journalists always 'tailor' their writing, consciously or unconsciously, to suit the requirements of the publisher or the newspaper. Even the millionaire who travels on his own, and who has the sensibility to see things and the competence to write about them, has to find a publisher or a newspaper willing to present his impressions and views to the public. When I accepted the invitation of the government of the U.A.R. to visit Egypt, I was happily conscious that I did not have to fashion my writing to satisfy the inhibitions of any particular publishers that I, at least, had the freedom to write what I thought was the truth in the *Tribune*.

"Moreover, my own bias—everybody has a bias in respect of the actualities of the contemporary world—is something I have always willingly admitted. My bias is very much in favour of the under-privileged seeking emancipation in every field of human activity, political, social and cultural. Colonialism and imperialism have sat heavily on the people of Ceylon, as in the entire Afroasian-Latin American region, and a resentment against such exploitation, amounting to hatred, is the core of my bias. What I write about my visit to Egypt—in instalments in the *Tribune*—will undoubtedly bear the imprint of my bias which I am proud to share with countless millions in Asia, Africa and Latin America who have felt the impact of colonial exploitation, Although I made extensive notes of my impressions, almost in diary form, during the course of my two-week stay in Egypt, I was able to sit down to transform these contemporaneous impressions into coherent reportage only four weeks after I returned to Ceylon. This delay in giving shape and form to my impressions has brought a welcome perspective to what might have otherwise been only spontaneous reactions provoked by far-too-tight-a-schedule during a crowded programme of visits, meetings, interviews and excursions. I have begun this account of my visit to Egypt with what might seem a long apologia. But, this is only to take my readers into my confidence, particularly when I propose to write an intimately personal story of my visit".

I have delayed the writing of my trip to Afghansitan for nearly six weeks after my return. I had to collect my thoughts and get my impressions into some kind of order. I have also done a lot of home work. I have read a great deal of material from many sources now made available to me. I have also accumulated a large amount of books, pamphlets, articles and commentaries. I will use them as I go along. Besides I have a formidable personal collection of press-cuttings from the time of the Saur Revolution of April 1978. I have also brought back with me tapes of interviews with President Babrak Karmal, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, Anahita and a large number of officials in key positions. In the meantime, I am on the lookout for a book "Afghanistan" by Luis Dupree, (1980 edition) and an English translation of "Avesta" a pre-Islamic and pre-Greek classic of early Afghan religion contemporaneous with the Rig Veda. To weave a readable story out of the mass of such

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material infusing into it the impressions I gathered during my visit in the context of my avowed bias and sympathies, without doing damage to truth and reality, is not easy.

I have done this kind of writing in my series "Journey to China", "Journey to Egpyt" and the two series on Cuba, one in 1965/66 and another in 1978. The present task seems to be more formidable because of the heightend cold war and the ensuing global propaganda barrages in print, sound and vision.

To be continued.....

FILM FOCUS

Amity

"Amity" was the keynote at the Presidential Awards ceremony this year which was so colourfully enriched by a Cultural Programme, blending the best in Kandyan Dancing and Bharatha Natiyam to give it the flavour that was the need of the hour. Th.s column will cover this occasion in the *Tribune* in its next issue.

BANDURA MAL (Sinhalese) : Directed by Gamini Fonseka, this film has its settings in one of our luscious tea estates, intermarry, and live in complete amity, and accord. Even the language and religious divisions are no encumbrances, in this milieu, where the sensitive values of both races are accepted with no politician in sight to foul them up. Gamini is the Arachchi at this Keeraithotam, while Tony Ranasinghe roles his younger brother, managing a small tea kiosk close-by. Into their lives enters the beatiful Bandura Mal in Veena Jayakody, a virtuous village belle of mixed parentage who lives with her hardworking and widowed father (Dharmasiri Munasinghe). While the brothers pine and palpitate for her heart, the younger gets first to the winning post for her hand. The elder brother accepts the loss sentimentally, resigns his badge of authority in the estate and leaves the village, his brother succeeding him officially. Before long the inevitable corruption of power takes a hand to propel the young arachchi into the arms of a destitute Mal, a twiner who had led a bed to mouth existence in adversity with her mother (Shanthi Lekha), the father (Somi Ratnayake) serving a sentence in Jail. Repentently the latter returns, to sit in judgement over the miscounduct that had prevailed in his absence. Sinhalese and Tamil were used liberally throughout the story to depict the oneness of the people with a Hindu wedding ceremony being highlighted to drive the message home. The acting all round was a delight to watch, the only regret being that it was bereft of colour which would have certainly enhanced the scenic settings a great deal. For all lovers of good cinema and amity in this country, a film worth going a long way to view. It makes its points firmly, and is yet another feather in Gamini's cap.

SILVER STREAK (English) : This 20th Century Fox Production, directed by Arthur Hiller is one of those exceptional films that mix and stir evenly a pot pourri of explosive action and adventure, sandwiched with measured doses of romance and comedy. The title refers to a sleek luxury passenger locomotive which makes its periodic run from Los Angeles to Chicago, but seldom arrives at the terminus without intrigue, mayhem and a few dead bodies dropping between the stops. On this particular journey is Gene Wilder, on his once-in-a-way train journey on business, which is interrupted by a light partition, on the other side of which is the attractive Jill Clayburgh. They meet over a meal and from one sip of whisky to another are led on to the forbidden fruits, between the cup and lip of which drops a dead body across the flitting landscape and that is when the plot curdles. The bumped off victim is a Professor Schreiner, a expert in the field of fine arts, to whom Jill is the private secretary. The villain is played for a change by Patrick McGoohan who racketeers in fine art forgeries. A puzzled Gene who is the chief and unanticipated witness to the crime is now caught up in the vortex of the plot and is pushed off the train more than once in his efforts to save the secretary whose life is constantly in danger. As the passenger train gathers momentum through the eye-catching Candian Rockies, a decapitation is also in store. before, the train, now out of control crashes in a spectacular climax, through the Chicago terminus right into the hub of a crowded and business shopping complexes sequence going. The film is fast paced and action heavy. Jill Clayburgh wears that amount of oomph which won for her the coveted characterisation of Carole Lombard in the Clark Gable-Lombard story. As for Gene he spins neatly between light and serious moments of the story to make it a gripping one from start to finish. Keep a date for this film.

JAMES N. BENEDICT.

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SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

Sept. 27 - Oct. 3

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

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

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27: What is happening to the thousands of Sri Lanka passports issued by the Department of Immigration and Emigration each month? Are these travel documents being used to seek employment in West Asian sheikdoms or for travel overseas? These are some of the questions baffling the authorities. President J. R. Jayewardene will take part in the fifth Vap Magul cermony at Yapahuwa on October 12; an Agricultural Exhibition and a Cultural pagent will mark the event this year—*SO*. Interpol's narcotics sleuths have warned Sri Lanka that Colombo's General Post Office has been used by a powerful group of drug traffickers to smuggle hard Indian narcotics into the American and European continents—*ST*. Government has called for a full scale probe following evidence that radical organisations are recruiting members and conducting indoctrination classes particularly within the sites of major development projects in the city; this follows intelligence reports that members of a "cell" formed in a project worksite in the south were found to be holding duplicate keys to nearly all heavy vehicles and even stores in the premises; a link has also been established between members of this cell and a well-armed "dacoit" type group which has been operating from a jungle hideout within a few miles from the site.—*WK*. Attempts will be made to recover the sea cost regions lost as a result of the Katchativu Pact; arrangements are being made to hold official discussions with India in this connection—*C.M*

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28: A giant oil rig is now in place ten miles off-shore in the Gulf of Mannar, and work will begin in the next few days on "Pearl-I", a test well to be sunk in the Indian Ocean as the search for oil resumes within Sri Lanka's teritorial waters; the prospector is the well known US multinational, the Cities Service Corporation CITCO, which under an arrangement with the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC) will carry the huge expenses involved in the search for oil. The United Nations Industrial Development Organsiation (UNIDO) investment promotion meeting in Colombo from October 19 too October 23, will be attended by 19 countries including two from the socialist bloc. "It is the biggest ever investment meeting in Sri Lanka and one of the biggest in the Third World", said Mr. Gilbert Jayasuriya, Chairman of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka yesterday—*CDN*. President J. R. Jayewardene yesterday for the second time toured the Ratnapura district to assess the damage caused following the recent disturbances in the country; he also inspected various relief measures taken especially with regard to the rehabilitation of estate employees who suffered tremendously in the district. The All Island SLFP delegates committee and the Executive Committee summoned by the Maithri-Anura Group met at the New Town Hall, Colombo yesterday; Mr. Maithripala Senanayake was elected President of the group while Mr. Anura Bandaranaike was elected Deputy President; Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike was elected party leader—*CDM*. special airlifts of personnel and equipment from a US oil firm began arriving at the Air Force Base at Katunayake for drilling operations in the Gulf of Manner, the Sri Lanka side of the cauvery basin; the exercise has got underway as India's Oil and Natural Gas Commission reported the discovery of oil deposits on its side of the area; the OCGC said oil has been struck in the first test well on the South Indian coast off Nagapatnam and was yielding 1,500 barrels a day. A four fold increase in import duties for seventy items will be effected this week; these will include all imported rubber goods, several electrical goods, some items needed for carpentry and construction works, newsprint and printing ink and several domestic items. Police intelligence reports reveal that the latest ruse being adopted by the Northern anti-Government elements abroad is to plead insanity after having allegedly committed acts of violence; latest reports also state that two Northern youths are now being charged in London for having thrown petrol bombs at the Sri Lankan High Commission in the UK—*CO*. President Jayewardene told victims of the recent violence in the Ratnapura district not to be afraid and that he would give full protection; the President visited Balangoda, Rakwana, Nivitigala and Ratnapura for the second time yesterday and consoled those affected by the violence—*VK*. The UNICEF has set aside three million rupees in aid of the development of small schools here in Sri Lanka. The Prime Minister and Mrs. Premadasa were welcomed at Melbourne (Australia) Airport by the Minister Iyan Maxi of Austrlia—*LD*. The Minister of Health Gamini Jayasuriya has arrived in Malaysia

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oday. He will hold talks on Health Services and how to improve health services—*DV*.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29: A high powered official committee chaired by Mr. B. Mahadeva, the Director-General of Planning, has made a series of far-reaching recommendations to government on means of raising additional revenue for government by direct and indirect taxes and levies; the report which has suggested ways and means of raising nearly Rs. 1,500 million is now under study at the Finance Ministry; in view of the forthcoming budget, and the yawning gap between government income and expenditure even on the current account, observers believe it offers useful guidelines on the direction the 1982 budget is likely to take. The People's Bank will shortly set up a Merchant Bank in collaboration with Guiness Peat and Co. Ltd., the internationally-known British firm of merchant bankers. Balkan Bulgarian Airlines will commence operations in Sri Lanka next month; it will be the first airline from a socialist country since "Aeroflot" to operate through Colombo—*CDN*. For the first time the Hingurana Sugar Factory has established a record by producing 12,000 tons of sugar in eight months this year; the target for the year is 17,000 tons—*CDM*. Country-wide tax raids have been resumed by Inland Revenue officials in a bid to recover more than a billion rupees in arrears; the exercise with only five weeks to go for the government's fourth budget, is being pursued "very effectively", Commissioner E.M.G. Tillakaratne said yesterday. Lands and Land Development and Mahaveli Development Minister Gamini Dissanayake yesterday accused certain politicians of "fouling up" agricultural and land settlement schemes. Gramadoya mandalayas of the Development Councils are to be given extra power to raise funds and implement development projects—*SU*. About 250 Sri Lankan seamen are stranded in the Ports of Karachi and Bombay, according to Police Intelligence reports; many of them are from the north and live in hovels; they are destitute and have only one meal a day; some succumb to the drug traffickers and try to go westwards, but ninety percent of them according to the Central Narcotics Bureau have been caught at ports and airports in Europe—*CO*. Minister of Rural Industrial Development and leader of the Ceylon Workers Congress said at Nuwara Eliya yesterday that the plantation workers cannot any further live away from national life and that they should understand their rights and adjust themselves according to such rights—*VK*. The CWE will import 500 tons of red and Bombay onions; this decision has been made as the price of onions has gone up—*DV*.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30; The SLFP leader Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike has described the rival group which includes Mr. Maithripala Senanayake and her son Anura, as "stooges of reaction". A blanket reduction of import duty on all raw materials mported by local industries is expected to be announced shortly by the Presidential Tariff Commissions; the import duty at present varies from 5 to 25 percent; the new uniform import duty will be five per cent. Trade and Shipping Minister Lalith Athulathmudali returned home from Europe yesterday has successfully negotiated an increased garments quota for Sri Lanka with Count Otto Graf Lambsdorf, Germany's Minister for Economics—*CDN*. A three-member committee of Secretaries has been appointed by the Govenment to report on the question of providing quarters for public officers; the Committee consists of Secretaries to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of local Government, Housing and Construction and Ministry of Finance and Planning—*CDM*. The break away Maithripala Senanayake-Anura Bandaranaike faction of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party faces expulsion from the party; the Party's politbureau at a special meeting presided over by its leader Sirimavo Bandaranaike yesterday appointed a Disciplinary Committee to inquire into their conduct; the comittee will also probe the conduct of 11 others who are all members of the Politbureau—*SU*. A tax will be levied on cement produced at Kankesanturai when the product is sent to districts outside Jaffna; this tax will be imposed by the Jaffna District Development Council; a final decision to this effect was taken at the monthly meeting of the Jaffna District Development Council today—*DP*.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1: Cabinet yesterday reviewed the government's existing job bank scheme on a memorandum submitted by President J. R. Jayewardene on the subject; it was decided to continue the scheme and to insist that Departments and Corporations must show cause why people sent from job bank were not recruited to fill vacancies. On a recommendation of Mr. M. H. M. Naina. Marikar, Acting Minister of Finance, Cabinet approved a loan of 12 million US dollars from the Asian Development Bank and a loan of a million US dollars from the International Fund for Agricultural Development. President J. R. Jayewardene has agreed to open the National Television centre—Rupavahini on February 5, 1982 the Minister of State said yesterday. The Ceylon Petroleum Corporation is currently losing about Rs. 12 million a month on the sale of its products but no petrol (or other fuel) price increase is on the cards authoritative governmental sources said yesterday—*CDN*. The Asian Development Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development have agreed to loan Rs. 240 million and Rs. 180 million respectively for the development of the coconut industry; the

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loan from the ADB is repayable within 40 years including a grace period of 10 years while the loan from the IFAD is repayable within 50 years including a grace period of 10 years; both loans are interest-free but subject to service charge of one percent per annum—The Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting was formally opened today by Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser who declared that of the issues facing both developed and developing countries in the Commonwealth the foremost was the future relations between those countries now termed the North and the South. Investigations into the recent violence in the country have raised the possibility of a South Indian connection and a toplevel team has flown there for investigations—*SU*. Television will be provided to schools in the country; the Members of Parliament have been authorised to provide them out of the allocation made under the decentralised budget scheme—*DP* The government has decided to give employment to 11,000 people who have applied to the Job Bank; all those with qualifications will be given jobs.—*DV*.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2: The Commissioner of Elections has been directed by the government to explore the possibility of allowing postal vote facilities to Sri Lanka's citizens living abroad; at present postal voting facilities are allowed only to public servants, many of whom are on elections duty; about a lakh of them are currently entitled to the facility—*CDN*. Foreign nationals comprise 70 percent of the tour guides in Sri Lanka; this was revealed in a survey conducted by the Ceylon Tourist Board and Sri Lanka Tourist Association on tour guiding for the last year according to submissions by the General Secretary of the Tourist Guides Association, Mr. Bertie Balasuriya; the report states that this is not permitted in any other country—*CDM*. Sri Lanka is to step up its sales of rubber to China under the bilateral trade pact for 1982; consultations in this regard are underway between officials of the Ministry of Trade and Shipping and the Embassy of China. Agricultural Development and Research Ministry Secretary Ranjan Wijeratne said yesterday it would be fruitless to spend so much of the country's resources to complete the Mahaveli project if proper measures were not taken to channel the water to the farmers. Several millions of rupees are being drained out of the Government's coffers through an organised piracy of the country's public utilities; illegal tapping of electricity, gas, and irrigation and drinking water has now reached distressing proportions with the state losing up to a million rupees daily from this—*SU*. The Mininstry of Education has decided to re-employ retired teachers; at the same time, the Ministry is considering a proposal to employ English qualified housewives as teachers on a part-time basis—*VK*. The Ministry of Plantations has decided to set up a development project to help about 50,000 small-holders of rubber estates; the Minister Mr. Montague Jayickrema will be the chief organiser of the project—*DV*.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3: The Elections Commissioner is not expected to make an immediate decision on which SLFP—the Sirima group or the Maitri group—he will recognise; political circles believe both groups claim to be the SLFP and have sent in lists of their office-bearers to the commissioner as legally required; they have also sent in their party constitutions. An armed gang of terrorists entered the Agriculture Department farm at Wattakacchi in the Kilinochchi town, on Wednesday night and got away with a jeep belonging to the farm, after having threatened the watchers. The Government has allocated Rs. 1.5 million for an international Buddhist conference scheduled to be held in Colombo next year—*CDN*. The government will shortly sign Investment Protection Agreements, with Belgo-Luxemburg Economic Union, Canada, Japan, Netherlands, Yugoslavia and Romania, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali Minister of Trade and Shipping signed a similar Agreement with Switzerland this week—*CDM*. Brigadier T. I. Weeratunga has been promoted Major General by President J. R. Jayewaredene; on October 14 he will take over command of the Sri Lanka army.—*SU*. Kuttimani alias Selvarajah Yogachandran and Jehan alias Ganeshanathan who were arrested earlier on the suspicion that they were involved in the terrorist activities and murders in the North were identified yesterday; they were identified at an indentification parade held the Fort Joint Magistrate's Co.rt—*DP*. President Jayewardene told the Working Committe of the Hindu Conference that all cooperation will be extended by Government for the conference to be held in Colombo; the President also said that several leaders and intellectuals will be participating in the Conference and that arrangements are being made to make the Conference a sucess—*VK*.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

September-27-October-3

SOUTH ASIA

INDIA: The Indian Oil and Natural Gas Commission has successfully struck oil near Nagapatnam in in Southern coast of India. India has denied allegations that her forces were involved in an attack on Bangladesh border outposts. Indian attempts to get

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a 5.7 billion IMF loan early has been delayed by US insistence on tough conditions for such loans. Five knife-wielding extremist Sikhs who belong to a Separatist group hijacked an Indian plane with III passengers to Lahore. Pakistani commandoes captured the hijackers and freed the hostages. Indian President Sanjiva Reddy thanked Zia for freeing the hostages. Indian Foreign Ministry said that tribal people from Bangladesh have been crossing the border into Tripura (India) and this was assuming alarming proportions. At the Melbourne Summit of the Commonwealth Prime Minister's, Indira Gandhi said that the world was threatened by the rebirth of confrontation between the two super powers and the increase and spread of conventional and nuclear weapons. *PAKISTAN:* Pakistan has denied reports that it was involved in a multi-nation operation to supply arms to Afghan guerillas fighting the Soviet troops. Pakistani commandoes, disguised as labourers, captured the hijackers of the Indian plane and freed all hostages in Lahore. *BANGLADESH:* Bangladesh government accused the Indian government for luring thousands of Bengali tribal people to flee Bangladesh.

EAST ASIA :

SINGAPORE: At the Commonwealth Summit conference in Melbourne, Prime Minister Lee Kuwan Yew supported the militarist policy of Reagan. administration, including arms supply to Pakistan This was necescary to contain Soviet expansion in Asia, he said. *THAILAND:* The Thailand Government has imposed new restrictions on non-nationals who enter Thailand to practice Buddhism. They have been now considered to be a security risk to the country. The ousted Kampuchean Khemer Rouge leadership called India a Soviet satellite. *CHINA:* Marshal Ye Jianying, China's de facto head of state, offered new proposals for the reunification of People's Republic of China with nationalist China (Taiwan.) The proposals advocated direct negotiations between the two parties and said that Taiwan could keep its own armed forces and social and economic system. The Chinese secret military manoeuvres along the Soviet Border was put on Television on the 32 anniversary celebration day of the founding of Communist rule in China. The military parade at the conclusion of the manoeuvres was witnessed by Communist Party Vice Chairman Deng Kioping in military uniform. Political analysts believe that the Chinese offer to Taiwan is also meant to prevent any further US shifts towards Taiwan that may prove to be an obstacle in the furture. *HONG KONG:* The Asian Students Association said that the imposition of higher fees and other restrictions placed on overseas students will restrict the benefits of higher education to the rich in the developing countries.

WEST ASIA

JORDAN: Israeli Prime Minister Begin has suggested the establishment of a confederation between Israel and East Trans Jordan. Jordanian Foreign Minster Abu Odeh ridiculed the idea as "pure nonsense". *ISRAEL:* The five UN experts appointed to study Israeli nuclear armaments were not sure whether the country possessed such weapons, But they were convinced that it has the technological skills and expertise to produce nuclear weapons at short notice. Israel persisted in opposing AWAC-sale to Saudi Arabia despite the Reagan administration not to interfere in US foreign policy. *IRAN:* Iranian troops scored a surprise victory over Iraq's forces around Abadan compelling them to abandon the area. Iranian airport authorities have ordered that all women entering Iranian airports, irrespective of their religion should wear the Moslem veil. A member of the Mujahedin guerilla group killed another Iranian religious leader who was also a Member of Parliament. Since Bani Sadr was ousted in last June more than 2150 Iranians were executed. Of them 1,800 were members of the Mujahedin organisation. Iranian exiles in France including former President Bani Sadr and Mujahedin leader Massound Rajavi have formed an Iranian government-in-exile. Kurdish rebels killed 58 government troops when they tried to recapture the town of Bukaw. Iranian planes bombed oil installations in Kuwait. There is a doubt whether Iranian pilots misjudged their targets in Kuwait for Iraq's. Iranian government believed that it was a canard perpetrated by American imperialists to discredit the Iranian Islamic Republic. Iranian Defence Minister Musa Namju, acting Chief of Staff, Air Force Chief and several others died when a C—130 Hercules plance crashed near Teheran. *IRAQ:* Iraqi forces withdrew from the Western bank of the Karum river but said they would return whenever it is necessary. *OMAN:* Oman has reduced the price of its oil exported to Japan from 36.50 to 34.00 dollars a barrel. *SAUDI ARABIA:* Saud Arabia belives that it was in the best interest of US to sell the AWACs radar aircrafts to her. Saudi Arabia has rejected a US proposal to provide upgraded planes if Saudis will agree to allow them to be manned by joint Soviet and US crews.

AFRICA:

EGYPT: Egypt believes that most of the Arab countries will draw near to her once Israel withdraws from Sinai in April next year. President Sadat's repeated solemn appeals made to US to sell AWACs aircrafts to Saudi Arabia may help to bring moderate Arabs to recast their atitude towards Egypt. *LIBYA:* Libyan leader Col. Gadhafi visited East bloc countries of Hungary and Romania to gain support for hardline

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policies of the radical group of Arab comntries In Belgrade Gaddafi said that Super-powers should be deprived of the outdated Veto privilege enjoyed in the UN Security Council.

EUROPE:

ITALY: Italians staged a 25 km. peace march. This was organised by pacifists group and had the support of Left wing parties, trade unions and youth groups. *SOVIET UNION:* According to Tass the publication of a 99 page booklet on Soviet might by US Defence Ministry was intended to "confuse, intimidate and misinform public opinion" *POLAND:* Lech Walesa was re-elected as Chairman of Poland's Solidarity Trade Union. *UNITED KINGDOM:* Mr. Denis Healey of the right wing group in the British Labour Party was re-elected as deputy leader. Mr. Benn, who had the support of active leftwing radicals and campaigned for Britaln's withdrawal from the EEC and nationalisation of industry and banks, lost the post to Healey by 0.85 per cent. Prime Minister Thatcher said that Britain did not hold meetings with PLO because of its association with terrorism. Following printing disputes in *Sunday Times* its daily publication *Times* too was suspended. The next Labour Government was ordered to take Britain out of the European Economic Community (EEC). The resolution to withdraw Britain from the EEC received 6,213,000 as against 782,000 votes at the Labour Party Conference. *FRANCE:* The Socialist International has condemned the production of Neutron bombs by the US. *SWITZERLAND:* The Secretary General of the UNCTAD has warned that if the expectations of the literate population of the Third World countries were not met it would lead to social and political tensions in the Third World countries.

THE AMERICAS

UNITED STATES: Sandra Day O'Conner was sworn in as the first women Justice of the US Supreme Court. The Reagan administration finds its difficult to persuade the Senate to use its "common sense" and approve the sale of AWACs to Saudi Arabia. The US government has released a book on Soviet Military might and threat in order to convince and persuade her European allies to suppport her new arms build up. US has strengthened its coast patrol in order to stop illegal immigrants entering the country. This does not apply to political refugees, specially from South East Asia. This order appear to have been directed at immigrants from Haiti who had been trying to escape the impoverished conditions at home. *UNITED NATIONS:* The Non-aligned Nations at the UN have decided to support the candidacy of Tanzanian Foreign Minister Salim Ahmed Salim for the post of UN Secretary-General. At the UN, Foreign Ministers of non-alinged countries blamed the US for blocking the negotations for a new world economic order.

REAGAN'S

Salvador Policy

By Jim Lobe

Washington, September 26: As the Reagan administration comes under fire on both domestic and foreign policy issues for the first time since coming to office, a change in policy on El Salvador may be in the offing. Though El Salvador is not the administration's major problem at the moment, the Senate's imposition this week of conditions on future military aid to the civilian-military junta has made it clear how little public support Reagan's Salvador policy enjoys. This may lead to a rethink. The administration launched a major lobbying campaign which included the visit here by Salvadorean President Jose Napoleon Durate. But the Senate voted twice to condition aid to the junta on presidential certification that the Salvadorean government was making substantial progress in curbing human rights violations by its security forces, in implementing economic and political reforms, and most important, in demonstrating a willingness to negotiate with the opposition for a peaceful solution to the conflict there. Further though the State Department later announced that it could "live with" these conditions, the dismay occasioned by the Reagan administration's first defeat on the floor of Congress on any issue since January could not be disguised.

Until now, Washington has said it would support negotiations between the junta and the opposition Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR) and the Faramundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMIN) if they were limited to conditions under which elections, currently scheduled for March 1982, would take place. This position has been opposed by the Mexican and French governments (and now the Netherlands—ED.) which last month said they recognised the opposition representative political force in El Salvador and encouraged negotiations between the junta and FDR-FMIN on all issues which separate them. Nine Latin American countries denounced the French-Mexican initiative. But the Socialist International and the Non-aligned Movement at the United Nations yesterday endorsed the initiative. Coupled with the Senate's action this week, the Reagan administration appears to be

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isolated in El Salvador, according to observers here. Facing a Wall Street full of sceptics of its economic policy and an uphill battle to sell Saudi Arabia an 8.5 billion dollar military package waiting in Congress, observers here say the Reagan administration may wish to jettison one piece of heavy political baggage in El Salvador. Further despite administration claims to the contrary, Pentagon, CIA and State Department officials privately admit that the rebels have the initiative and that the Junta's forces are taking high casualties.

Rumours here suggest that Washington is interested in sending an "Inter-American force" to El Salvador on the pretext of monitoring the elections. But some observers believe that such a solution is not politically feasible, particulary in view of the growing international support for the French-Mexican initiative, "They have a choice," says one knowledgeable State Department official. "This administration can escalate the conflict or negotiate and the Senate has just served notice that escalation would be very unpopular". Thus, special attention is being paid to hints that the administration may be looking in another direction. At their recent meeting here, Reagan reportedly asked Duarte whether he could foresee a role for Mexico in negotiations in El Salvador. Regan had just returned from Grand Rapids, Michigan where he had met with Lopez Portillo the Mexican President. Thursday, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, Thomas Enders, told a houses of representatives foreign affairs sub-committee that the United States would not increase the number of military advisers—now 50—in El Salvador in the next year. In answer to questions later, Enders said the United States was prepared to act as mediator with other nations, if necessary, between the junta, the FDR and other parties in El Salvador to discuss the basis of elections, Ender also confined himself to a discussion of current issues on the Salvadorean domestic scene and refrained from denouncing Soviet and Cuban aid to the Guerillas. Whether these events single a new policy turn, or merely a holding action while the administration reassess its position in view of the senate action and its many other troubles, will probably become clear within the next two weeks.—*IPS—Lankapuvath.*

INDIAN OCEAN

Mauritania or Mauritius?

Washington, October 10: Recent reports that the Central intelligence Agency planned a covert action "somewhere in Africa" first thought to be Libya and later Mauritania, were incorrect, the *Washington Post* reported recently. The target of such an action was Mauritius, an Island nation in the Indian Ocean several thousand miles south-east of Mauritania, according to the *Post*. The *Post* attributed the confusion between the two countries to the fact that they are "relatively obscure to Americans". News of the alleged covert action surfaced last month when reports surfaced that the Senate Committee responsible for overseeing the CIA was dissatisfied with the Agency Director's appointee to Chief of Covert Operations, Max Hug. Hugel allegedly approved of such a plan, details of which prompted the Senate Committee's protest. *Newsweek* magazine then reported that the action was designed to over throw Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Ghaddafi intricate details of the alleged plot were included in the *Newsweek* account, which the Reagan administration later denied. Unnamed sources quoted by the *Post* several days later said that it was not Gaddafi who was the CIA's target, but the Government of Mauritania. 'The sources". the *Post* wrote, declined to disclose. the nature of the operation except to give the location as Mauritania, a poor, Moslem and military' ruled West African nation. The allegation that Mauritania may have been the target was given credibility by reports of an attempted coup by Morocco against Mauritania that had taken place a few weeks before. Morocco, still embroiled in a war with the Polisario Front, has complained about the Mauritanian complicity with Polisario since 1979 when Mauritania and the Guerrilla group signed a separate peace.

The *Post* now says that it got it wrong, and that the real target of CIA activities was Mauritius. *The Wall Street Journal*, it admitted today, wrote it correctly when, in the midst of a long feature on the vistit of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, the journal wrote that the "administration's concern about Mr. Gaddafhi is so great that key Congressmen have been briefed on a cover US operation planned to check Libyan influence in Mauritius, an island in the Indian Ocean that the United states feared could become a Soviet naval base" Today, "informed sources" cited by the *Post* indicated that "the plan involving Mauritius did not involve cloak-and-dagger action but was mainly a quiet CIA effort to slip money to the government there to help counteract financial aid being supplied to forces opposing the government by Libya's radical ruler..." In the meantime, the *Post* notes, the entire episode has done little to improve relations between Mauritania and the United States. Nouakchott remains suspicious, says the *Post*, and US officials indicate that they are having a hard time convincing Nouakchott that it was all an innocent error. The true target of the alleged covert action may never be known.

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So long as Washington-based journalists reply on "unnamed sources" to uncover the secret workings of the CIA, they may well be at the mercy of the CIA itself. —*IPS—Lankapuvath.*

PENTAGON'S

"New Military Strategy"

Moscow, October 10: In keeping with the "new military strategy" being worked out by the Pentagon, Caspar Weinberger, the US Defence Secretary, has issued a directive on increasing the strength of the armed forces by an additional 200,000 troops in the coming five years and on making available billions of dollars to the military—industrial complex for the production of latest arms. In his programme directives to the armed forces, Caspar Weinberger has ordered to "acquire the necessary capability for a retaliatory blow at the Soviet Union with the use of conventional weapons, if this gives an advantage to the United States.' The Pentagon dilates on some sort of "retaliatory blow" at the Soviet Union. But what is concealed behind this? Yet another aggressive concept. Commenting on the new concept as interpreted by the Pentagon's officials, *The New York Times* says that the armed forces will be preparing for a world war, in which operations in some particular region are to be planned in combination with operations on other theatres, adding that this will make it possible not only to repulse a Soviet offensive in some place, but also to deliver a retaliatory blow elsewhere, that is, where the US will have superiority. Putting it plainly, it is not defence, but attack bashfully named as a "retaliatory blow". It is not the localisation of a military conflict, the possiblity of which is being considered by the Pentagon's militarists, but its expansion to global proportions. Not a settlement of conflicts by peaceful means, but fanning them.

Maybe, Weinberger's emphasis on conventional armaments means a lessening of the stress laid in the military-strategic doctrine of the present Administration on nuclear weapons? No, it's just the other way round. Washington is out to make additions to a first strike capability that is, to a nuclear attack capability it is building up, in the form of possibilities for unleashing a war at "lower", level with the use of non-nuclear arms. Further in accordance with the well-known concept of escalation stages and Carter's directive No. 59, "the inconceivable is being conceived": after a ocal conventional armed conflict, a tactical and then "limited" strategic nuclear war and, lastly, a wholesale nuclear-missile war. The military strategic concepts of the Pentagon's chief are fraught with danger not only to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Trained and armed for aggression with the use of conventional armaments, US troops will always be at hand for Washington to commit them to action as a means of "gunboat diplomacy" in relations with developing countries. The new bellicose strategy spells no lesser danger for US allies, particularly in Western Europe, too. Indeed, the Pentagon can spread a conflict, say, in the Middle East, to the European continent, or the other way round. Therein lies the essence of the concepts of "two and a half wars" and "global responsibility" of the USA. Weinberger's concepts are yet another proof that Washington's line is a line for confrontation—*Tass/APN.*

HAIG

On Poland

Washington, October 13: US Secretary of State Alexander Haig in an interview with the newspaper *Washington Post* has virtually confirmed that the Reagan administration intends to continue practising gross interference in the internal affairs of Poland by giving support to anti-socialist forces in that country. He in every way extolled "political changes" in Poland, expressing the hope that the progress that has already been made in terms of loosening and opening the society would crystallise still more. As is known, by "open society' in Poland the Reagan administration means giving a free hand to counter-revolutionary organisations of Kos-Kor type and to other anti-socialist groups which seek to seize power in the country and eliminate all the gains of socialism. In other words, the US secretary of state virtually urged those circles to further anti-government actions with a view to straining the situation in Poland still more and to excerbating the crisis it experiences.

In so doing Haig made it unequivocally cleat that in their provocative activities the extremist circles of 'Solidarity' in Poland can count on the backing of the Reagan administration. "We've got to help the people of Poland and we've done that", he said. The United States "has been the largest contributor to that effort". The Secretary of State also touched upon the question of the situation in Iran, talking about 'chaos' in that country in expressions insulting to the Iranian people. He stated plainly that the Reagan administration will do all it can "to contribute to an ultimate outcome in Iran which would be compatible with

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Western values and orientation." Thereby he virtually confirmed that Washington intends to continue to interfere in the affairs of that country in an attempt to bring it back to the road followed by the Shah's regime which was overthrown by the Iranian people. The head of the US State Department said he has always been in favour of deploying neutron weapons. Commenting on that pronouncement, the *Washington Post* writes that he has pretensions to playing a considerable role as the Supreme Allied Commander of NATO Armed Forces in Europe in the decision to start the development of the neutron bomb. Estimating Haig's pronouncements, the newspaper points out that the Secretary of State looks too cocky and too bellicose. The *Washington Post* emphasizes that all this is because Haig is an inveterate anti-Communist.—*Tass/APN.*

FOR THE RECORD

Trade Unionists on Trial

By Jayantha Somasundaram

THE TRADE UNIONISTS who were accused of violence on August 8th last year were committed for trial before the High Court of Colombo. The preliminary hearing before the Fort Magistrate lasted 70 days during which 200 witnesses provided evidence which ran into 500 pages of transcript. Two of the accused were discharged at the end of the preliminary hearing for lack of evidence. The ten who have been committed to trial are as follows.

Vasudeva Nanayakkara was formerly president of the Sama Samaja Youth Leagues, a member of the Central Committee of the LSSP and MP for Kiriella. He was detained for one year beginning April 1971 in connection with the insurrection, no charges were framed against him. In December 1976 he participated in the LSSP (New Leadership) Congress, was elected to the Political Bureau and made President of their United Federation of Labour. He is 42 years old and an attorney by profession.

Dr. Wickremabahu Karunaratne was elected to the Central Committee from the party, began the newspaper Vama Sama Samaja and formed the Left Faction of the LSSP. He was elected General Secretary at the Congress of the faction in November 1974. When the faction became the LSSP (New Leadership) in 1976 and later the the Nava Sama Samaja Party he remained General Secretary. A senior lecturer in Engineering Mathematics at the University of Peradeniya, he holds a doctorate from the Universty of Cambridge, He was interdicted in February 1978 for hoisting black flags in Kandy.

Alavi Moulana is the Joint Secretary of the Sri Lanka Independent Trade Union Federation and a member of the Political Bureau of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

G. I. D. Dharmasekera was a long-standing member of the JVP. He broke away from Wijeweera and was arrested after the attack on the US Embassy in Colombo on March 6th 1971. He contested the Beruwela seat in 1977. Dharmasekera who is Secretary of the Democratic National Front has been in remand prison since August 8th.

Gunasena Mahanama is the General Secretary of the Government Clerical Service Union. The GCSU has a long tradition of militant activity. One of its members, Kandasamy, was martyred during the 1947 strike. The GCSU is today the nerve centre of the national movement of solidarity with the dismissed strikers. Dry fish, pulses, rice etc. are bought by solidarity committees in the producing areas and transported to the GCSU. Small groups of strikers from Colombo and the suburbs make a living by going from house to house and selling dry rations.

Dayasena de Silva is a member of the Sri Lanka United Teachers Union and President of the Government United Federation of Labour.

Ranath Kumarasinghe is an Executive Committee member of the All Ceylon Industrial and Commercial Workers Union. Last July the ACICWU brought out on strike workers at Batas, Lever Brothers, Tobacco Company and Walkers. At Lever Brothers where the workers were reinstated as new entrants, fifty two branche union officials and activists were dismissed at the conclusion of their probationary period in February. Another 200 are on a further period of probation.

Sarath Wimalaratne belongs to the Ceylon Bank Employees Union. The CBEU has called out its members on strike both since 1972 and in 1978. The membership also participated in the General Strike in July 1980.

D. Karunaratne is branch secretary of the Sri Lanka Rajaya Lipi Karuwa Sangamaya. The SLRLKS is the Clerical Service union affiliated to the Communist Party.

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FROM MELBOURNE

CHOGM Highlights

By Beverley Roberts

September 28

Mr. R. Premadasa, Sri Lanka's Prime Minister, arrived in Melbourne for CHOGM on Sunday, the 27th. Mr. Premadasa was not feeling well when he arrived and had to cancel his initial meeting with the Australian PM, Mr. Fraser. The two leaders will meet today. *Mr. Shridath Ramphal*, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, who arrived yesterday, stated that he did not think the recent South African rugby tour of New Zealand will be a major issue at CHOGM. He predicted a reaffirmation of the Gleneagles Agreement but not a re-writing of it. President Kaunda of Zambia has expressed the same opinion. Mr. Frazer who is campaigning to prevent a show-down over the Springbok tour is relieved to hear that the African leaders will not higlight the issue at CHOGM. *Mr. Muldoon*, the New Zealand Prime Minister threatened to fight the issue of the Springbok tour of his country, if he was criticised. Mr. Muldoon, who was interviewed on T. V. last night in New Zealand, warned that he would pull-out of the Gleneagles Agreement and question human rights in some Commonwealth countries, if he was taken to task. He seemed angry that the Commonwealth Finance Ministers meeting had been shifted from Auckland to the Bahamas as a reprisel to the South African rugby tour of New Zealand. *Mr. Malcolm Frazer*, Australia's Prime Minister and host at CHOGM which starts on Wednesday, the 30th of September in Melbourne, delivered a scathing attack on South Africa's last night. Mr. Frazer who addressed the nation on television accused the South African Government of perpetuating racism and frustrating independence in Namibia. He said that the Namibian issue was a threat to world peace. It is predicted that Namibian independence and South Africa's policies in southern Africa will be among the main topics of discussion at CHOGM. *Mr. Walter Lini*, Prime Minister of Vanuatu, indicated to Mr. Frazer last night that he would not bring up the question of Australia's treatment of her Aboriginals, at CHOGM. Some Aboriginal leaders had petitioned him to raise Aboriginal human rights and land rights issues at the conference. However, Mr. Frazer convinced Mr. Lini that a lot had been done for the Australian Aboriginals in the past decade and that more is going to be done for them in the future. *Mr. Bill Hayden*, the Leader of the Opposition in Australia, criticised CHOGM as, "extravagent indulgence of little relevance to international affairs or Australia's role in the world". However, the Deputy-Leader of the Opposition disagreed with Mr. Hayden and praised Mr. Frazer on CHOGM. The differing opinions of Mr. Hayden and his deputy may have some repercussions in the Labour Party. *Female escorts and prostitutes* in Melbourne are protesting that the tight security for CHOGM is hindering access to the Wentworth International Hotel and the Melbourne Police checked the 195 massage parlours in Melbourne as a security exercise, in case some of the delegates to CHOGM want to visit them. *Mr. Frazer* met Commonwealth trade unionists today. They are members of the newly formed Commonwealth Trade Union Council and represent about 25 million workers in 40 Commonwealth countries. The unionists have come to Melbourne to lend support to CHOGM. The CTUC wants CHOGM to encourage human development projects and convene a meeting of Commonwealth Labour Ministers, at some future date. Mr. Frazer promissed to ask Mr. Ramphal to consider giving the union movement an active role in Commonwealth matters.

September 29

A TEAM OF EXPERTS has recommended that the Commonwealth leaders at CHOGM form a special advisory committee to investigate abuses of human rights in commonwealth countries. *Mr. Peter Katjavivi*, a senior representative of the Namibian Liberation organisation, SWAPO, arrived in Melbourne from London yesterday, to lobby delegates to CHOGM on matters concerning independance fo Namibie Right-wing elements in Australia and a former PM, *Sir William McMahon*, attacked Mr. Frazer's anti-South Africa policies. *Mr. Walter Lini*, Prime Minister of Vanuatu, will ask CHOGM leaders to call for decolonisation of all French territories in the Pacific. He will also raiee the question of a nuclear-free zone in the Pacific.

After talks with Lord Carrington, the British Foreign Secretary, New Zealand's PM, Mr. Muldoon has agreed to soften his attack on human rights in some Commonwealth nations. However, it is reported that he is determined to raise the human rights issues at CHOGM, anyway. Lord Carrington made a suprise visit to New Zealand on Saturday (26 September) to confer with Mr. Muldoon. Malaysia's Opposition Leader, *Mr. Lim Kit Siang*, has called upon the Malaysian PM to reconsider his decision not to attend CHOGM.

September 30

Blue battled grey for supremacy in the sky. A stiff breeze blew and the day was warmer than usual for this time of year when the Australian Prime Minister. *Mr. Malcolm Frazer*, officially opened

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CHOGM—the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting—at Melbourne's Town Hall, at 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 30 September. Security was as tight as a violin-string for the opening ceremony. Streets were closed to traffic and 4,000 police, troops and security-men swarmed the vicinity of the town hall. They lined the roads and kept watch from the roof-tops of nearby buildings. Security cameras scanned the area and helicopters buzzed overhead. At mid-day, CHOGM delegates and their spouses began to arrive under police escort along a route which was decked-out with flags. They alighted from their white limousines to a red-carpet welcome. The navy band played pop music and a crowd which had gathered on the opposite side of Swanston Street cheered. Whatever difference the CHOGM representatives may have nurtured on arrival in Melbourne (and there were many), were swept away by the razzle-dazzle of the spectacular occasion. The Heads of State were entertained to a luncheon before being led into a brilliant, flower-dominated auditorium for the opening ceremony. In his opening address, Mr. Frazer stressed the urgency of the North-South Dialogue and agreement on South African issues. He wanted CHOGM to send a "clear message of concern and commitment" to the rest of the world on issues concerning the disparities between developed nations and the Third World. He said, ... I am convinced that our generation of leaders will ultimately be judged largely in terms of their success or failure in reconciling the interests of the rich and poor countries of the Earth. On the southern African problems, Mr. Frazer was trying desperately to avoid a split between New Zealand and African nations over sporting ties with South Africa and a rift between Mrs. Thatcher and the African leaders on independence for Namibia. The British Prime Minister had stated earlier that CHOGM should not meddle in the work the Western "Contact" group (Britain, U.S.A. France, Germany and Canada were doing to gain independence for Namibia. The Australian Prime Minister's address was followed by speeches from *Mr. Ramphal* the Commonwealth Secretary-General; *Mrs. Thatcher; Mr. Mugabe* of Zimbabwe; *Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara*, Prime Minister of Fiji; President *Burnham* of Guyana; and *Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Mr. Ramphal* alerted CHOGM leaders to the fact that the world was on the verge of a massive economic crisis. It was a reiteration of an earlier warning was which criticised by Mrs. Thatcher. She had accused the Secretary-General of exaggerating the situation. The British Prime Minister, in her speech, said that the economic problems of the Third World could not be solved by a redistribution of wealth between developed and undeveloped nations. but only by the creation of wealth within the Third World itself. Mr. Mugabe attacked the American Government's growing friendliness towards Pretoria and urged the Head of State present to take a tough line on South Africa. The Prime Minister of Fiji stated that the wealthy exporters of the developed nations were making huge profits at the expense of the poor countries, thus inhibiting growth in trade between the rich and poor nations. He suggested a new and more equitable approach to international trade. President Burnham also slanted his speech towards North-South issues and Mrs. Gandhi seemed unhappy about the U.S arming Pakistan. She warned of the growing tensions around the Indian sub-continent and the rekindling of the Cold War in that region. Judging by the speeches at the opening of CHOGM, it seems quite obvious that the North-South Dialogue will predominate at the conference. Nambia will also feature prominently in discussion. However, progress on Southern African issues will depend largely on the New Zealand Prime Minister's attitude. He is a volatile man and it is feared that he may cause a flare-up with the African nations by demanding a clarification of the Gleneagles Agreement. Australia hopes that a row will not develop and so do we all. Well, we can only wait and see. Despite a lot of lobbying by Mr. Frazer to dampen a possible flare-up at CHOGM over the recent Springbok tour of New Zealand and the Gleneagles Agreement, and support towards that end by President Kaunda of Zambia, Mr. Ramphal and many African leaders, the issue has not been laid to rest by the New Zealand PM. *Mr. Muldoon* ignored Australian feelings on the matter and criticised Mr. Ramphal, the Commonwealth Secretary-General on his interpretation of the Gleneagles Agreement, The New Zealand PM called a press conference as soon as he arrived in Melbourne yesterday (the first press conference by a visting leader to CHOGM. Traditionally, the first press conference is given by the Secretary-General and declared that he would clamour for a clarification of the 1977 Gleneagles Agreement; thereby fanning the flames for a possible flare-up over the issue. *Mrs. Thatcher*, the British PM, jetted in and warned CHOGM leaders about making Namibian independence an issue at CHOGM, despite the fact that Mr. Frazer wants CHOGM to exert pressure in gaining Namibia self-government as soon as possible. Mrs. Thatcher warned the Commonwealth not to interfere with the work and progress of the "Contact" group of Western nations in trying to reach a settlement with South Africa on Namibia. Mrs. Thatcher's atttitude suprised Australian and African officials. She went on to attack Mr. Ramphal criticising him for his claim that the world's economy was on the point of collapse. A 29-page publication entitled, *"Background Paper On Aboriginals"*, has been published by the Australian Government and distributed among the CHOGM delegates. The, publication is a defence of Australia's policies on aboriginal matters and rejects any similarity between the condition of blacks in Australia and South

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Africa. The pamphlet goes on to criticise the controversial report on aboriginals by the World Council of Churches. Raising food production in Third World Commonwealth countries is an issue CHOGM leaders are expected to endorse. The matter may be one of the highlights of the conference. Night security measures for CHOGM are annoying Melbourne residents. People living in the inner suburbs of Melbourne have complained about the noise created by police helicopters circling Melbourne City at night. Ratu, Sir Kamisese Mara, Prime Minister of Fiji, warned that the struggle for independence in French New Caledonia was starting to be a "mini Algeria." New Zealand PM, Mr. Muldoon, has confirmed that he had twice refused a request by Mr. Ramphal to allow a New Zealander to join a Commonwealth human rights committee.

October *1*

Bangladesh's PM, *Shah Azizur Rahman*, will be encouraging a full-scale debate at CHOGM on the North-South issue. New Zealand's *anti-apartheid pressure groups* are urging African and Caribbean delegates to CHOGM ro take a firm line against Mr. Muldoon over the recent Springboks rugby tour of New Zealand. *Mr. Lee Kuan Yew*, Singapore's PM, is of the opinion that the Gleneagles Agreement problem is unsolvable.

October *2*

Aboriginal leaders are angry with African Heads Of State to CHOGM for their silence on Australian aboriginal issues. African leaders say that they will not make the Springbok tour of New Zealand or the Gleneagles Agreement an issue at CHOGM. While CHOGM delegates were in conference yesterday, their wives were entertained by Mrs. Tammy Frazer, the PM's wife. They were first taken on a conducted tour of the national Gallery Of Victoria. Later Mrs. Frazer hosted them to a lavish lunch and fashion show at "Rippon Lea" a historic mansion in Melbourne, which is set in beautiful and sprawling gardens. New Zealand's PM, *Mr. Muldoon*, defended the Spingbok tour of his country and challenged the other Commonwealth leaders to criticise him for it. Mr. Muldoon was speaking at the first session of CHOGM yesterday. A rumour that the *Nigerian delegation* refused to sit next to the New Zealanders swept through the Royal Exhibition Building, yesterday, at the start of the CHOGM conference. The rumour alleged that the Nigerians were offended by a remark Mr. Muldoon had made earlier. India's PM, *Mrs. Gandhi*, asked CHOGM leaders not to take sides in the rivalry between America and the U.S.S.R, but to remain neutral. Singapore's PM, *Mr. Lee Kuan Yew*, defended President Reagan's defence and economic policies. The Australian Council For Overseas Aid has asked CHOGM leaders to cut trade with South Africa.

October 3

The Queen sailed out of Melbourne at midnight yesterday, on the Royal Yacht Britannia. She was here on a short visit, which coincided with CHOGM. The Queen entertained the CHOGM delegates on board the royal yacht. *IRA supporters* in Melbourne heckled the Queen when she arrived for a function at the National Gallery yesterday. It was the Queen's last official engagement in Melbourne before she left. *Pik Botha*, South Africa's Foreign Minister, has made an attack on the Australian Prime Minister. He has asked Mr. Frazer and the Commonwealth to keep out of the Namibian issue. At the CHOGM meeting yesterday, Commonwealth leaders stressed the necessity of an early settlement of the Namibian issue. Sri Lanka's Prime Minister, *Mr. R. Premadasa*, supported the Australian proposal, put forward at CHOGM yesterday; that an expert group within the Commonwealth should be set-up to invest igate and advice on protectionism in trade with the Third World countries Mr. Premadasa went on to say that curbs on many processed and manufactured goods from developing countries must be lifted. He said that liberalised trade would help Third World countries get their goods in the markets of the developed nations. *CHOGM leaders* supported Australia's call to the Commonwealth in solving the economic ills affecting the developing nations. *Mrs. Thatcher*, the British PM, supported President Reagan's economic policies. Tanzania's Foreign Minister *Mr. Salim* flies into Melbourne tomorrow to join his country's delegation at CHOGM. It is rumoured that Mr. Salim will use CHOGM to lobby support for his bid to be the next Secretary-General of the UN. CHOGM delegates have gone to *Canberra*, the nation's capital, for the weekend. The delegates have gone with their spouses, but without their advisers, to a quiet retreat, where they will be able to discus their opinions and differences in private talks. They will be back in Melbourne on Monday to continue the CHOGM sessions.

October 4

CHOGM delegates have flown to Canberra for the weekend. Accompanied by only their spouses, the Heads Of State of the Commonwealth have descended on the picturesque, yet soulless national capital for relaxation and private talks. Here, unencumbered by battalions of advisers, the representatives of Governments can iron-out differences in the tranquility of Lakeside— a plush hotel. Their temporary departure from Melbournce has given harried police, security;men and the employees

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of the Wentworth Intertional Hotel and the Melbourne Hilton a welcome respite. The delegates will return to a blustery, yet smiling Melbourne, tomorrow (Monday, 5 October). They will come back to the now familiar surroundings of their super luxury hotels, and the comfort of the Royal Exhib tion Building which overlooks the colourful Exhibition Gardens—an oasis of peacefulness and floral exuberance in the concrete and macadamized city proper. So far, CHOGM appears to be a dress rehearsal for the 22-nation Cancun conference in Maxico, later this year. North-South problems have dominated the meeting and divisive issues like sporting ties with South Africa and the Gleneagles Agreement have not surfaced in any important or disruptive way. Even the question of Namibian Independence has been overshadowed by the North-South Dialogue. This is not to say, however, that Namibia will not emerge as an important topic of discussion at later sessions of CHOGM. A collective and strong voice on better economic relations between the developed nations and the Third World is what the Australian Prime Minister is setting out to achieve; and to that end Mr. Fraser's efforts seem to be successful. An untied committment by CHOGM to work towards a more equitable distribution of the world's wealth may jolt the tepid interest of non-Commonwealth industrialised nations to accelerate progress in the North-South Dialogue in Mexico. Futhermore, a concerted opinion from a forum as large and powerful as CHOGM is bound to have some effect on the Reagan Administration's disinterest in Third World economic problems. Canada's Prime Minister, *Mr. Pierre Trudeau*, opened the debate on the North-South question by stating that the economic problems facing the world today were enormous. He supported an Australian suggestion that the supply of food, finance and energy to Thi(d World Commonwealth nations must be increased. *Mr. Premadasa*, Sri Lanka's Prime Minister, who spoke after the Canadian Prime Minister, endorsed an Australian recommendation that a special team of Commonwealth experts should be formed to to advise on the effects of protectionism in agriculture on Third World countries. He called for a liberalisation in world trade and suggested that restraints on manufactured goods from developing countries entering the markets of the industralised nations must also be investigated. Mr. Premadasa went on to say, "since protectionism largely works against labour-intensive imported goods, it affects all of the developing countries. The need for urgency in tackling the international economic problem was stressed by *President Nyerere* of Tanzania, He criticised the attitude of some developed nations for their refusal to arrest the problems of poverty in the world. A condition that affected 800 million people. "To those of us", he said, "who are condemned by history to the management of poverty, poverty is an agony". *Mrs. Indira Gandhi* made a blunt statement to the effect that the widening chasm between the rich and the poor of this world will never be breached unless there was a complete reversal of policy in international economic and financial systems. She said development in the Third World was inhibited, "becauce the rules of the game are framed by affluent countries for their own beneift, but not necessarily in their own long term interest". The Indian Prime Minister attacked the super powers for their enormous expenditure on arms. She said the cost of an intercontinental ballistic missile could feed fifty million children, irrigate a million hectares of land or build, 65,000 rural dispensaries. "Instead", she caid, "what is being done intensifies economic disparities."

October *5*

In an address to the National Press Club in Canberra, yesterday, *Mr. Muldoon*, the New Zealand Prime Minister, praised the efforts at CHOGM of Mr. Premadasa. Mr. Mulddoon said that he was "impressed" by Mr. Premadasa's suggestion to CHOGM to investigate protectionism in trade on developing countries. CHOGM issued a declaration on the North-South issue yesterday. Termed the "Melbourne Declaration" the 16 paragraph document called for "determined and dedicated action" by all world administrations to bridge the gap between the wealthy and poor nations. Mr. Muldoon who has changed CHOGM into the "Muldoon Show", for want of a better term, lashed out at the "Melbourne Declaration" and the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr. Ramphal. Mr. Muldoon was addressing the National Press Club in Canberra, yesterday. He referred to the Declaration as "pious" and said that it was not strong or purposeful enough. He attacked Mr. Ramphal for criticising him over the Springbok tour of New Zealand and also for making the "Melbourne Declaration" public before letting him read the document. He said quite bluntly, that Mr. Ramphal should restrain himself to taking down minutes at meetings and not criticice Heads Of State or air opinions. Mr. Muldoon has upstaged the Australian Prime Minister, the host at CHOGM and become the figure of attention at the conference. *Mr. Mugabe*, the Zimbabwe Prime Minister, predicted that the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane next year will not be boycotted by African nations if New Zealand took part. Mr. Ramphal and the Commonwealth Secretariat are very upset at Mr. Muldoon's remarks. Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Efi, Prime Minister of Western Samoa, have discussed the treatment of the Australian Aboriginees. They brought the issue up at CHOGM.

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DEMYSTIFYING

The Energy Crisis

By Miguel Juarez Del Rio

Mexico City, October 14: Energy and an international energy strategy will be two of the major focal points for discussoin at the North-South summit to be held next month in Cancun, Mexico. But the Third World countries, and especially the oil exporting nations, are sure to insist on what they refer to as the "demystification" of energy problems. The common assumption in the North—and among many in the Third World is that the energy crisis was caused by the dramatic increase in oil prices beginning in 1973, which in turn led to the difficult economic situation facing the world economy today. That 70 per cent jump in oil prices unilaterally imposed by the 13 member nations of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), according to the industrialised nations, unleashed the inflation now plaguing virtually every economy in the world. But the oil producers and this includes more than just the OPEC countries—maintain that the artifically low prices prior to 1973 are the real cause of the crisis. Because that pricing policy, imposed by the oil companies, encouraged over reliance in oil and discouraged the development of alternative sources.

Although the OPEC member nations now have a relative abundance of liquid assets, they are not rich and the slight increase in their rate of development is not at all equivalent to the value their oil has provided for western industry. The major Arab oil poducers, for example, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Libya and Qatar, have an excess of capital, but their per capita income in 1978 was less than 10,000 dollars But the OPEC nations lent over four per cent of their Gross National Product (GNP) to Third World oil importing countries between 1974 and 1979, in comparison to 0.35 per cent by the industrialised nations.—*IPSI Lankapuvath*.

WHO BENEFITS ?

Cheaper Oil

While selling the liquid fuel some $4 cheaper per barrel than the other exporters, Saudi Arabia saves $40 million daily or $14 billion annually for American oil companies with the present level of extraction, writes A. Vasiliev in *Pravda*. The Saudi leaders have long become part of the international financial oligarchy. Their foreign investments going through the channels of Chase Manhattau, Mhrgan Guarautee Trust and other Awerican banks and corporations have topped $118 billion. Riyadh's interest in the reliability of these investments and profits from them is dovetailed with its military and political dependence on Washington for securing the regime from revolutionary upheavals. It was not accidental that Washington officially announced its decision to supply to Saudi Arabia a new system of weapons, including flying radars and AWACSes. The decision was taken just after the OPEC conference in Geneva, where the Saudi Minister torpedoed the elaboration of a common stand and played into the hands of international corporations. Slashing prices of crude oil do not make it cheaper for the consumers, notes the newspaper. The Western European nations, for example, have to pay more for it, which means that the imports of this raw material cost more by 15-20% The cost of this fuel has also gone up in America, but for internal reasons: cancellation of price control. International energy monopolies, first of all, in America, stand to gain. The rake in the greater part of the final price of oil and oil products than last year. Meanwhile both the consumers and producers stand to lose.

The London-based *Times* wrote that it would be in the West's interests to break the OPEC. But the monopolies severely attack not only this powerful economic amalgamation of developing nations. They also want to ruin the hopes for just prices of other manufacturers of raw materials and technical crops, such as copper, coffee, rubber and chrome, and prevent them from taking collective actions. The OPEC's force in opposing the monopolies, stresses *Pravda*, has always lain in unity. Only preserving unity can this organisation efficiently defend its interests.—*APN*.

LETTER

TOMATOES

Sir,

Your editorial of 26.9.81 regarding the glut of tomatoes in Matale and the shortage of the same commodity in consumer areas is most unfair to all concerned. First, to the Department of Agriculture which provides the seeds and the extension services. You must appreciate, the time, money and effort that goes into this. Next the Marketing Department—much maligned souls stretching every sinew and flexing any muscale to link the producer with the consumer, never using the assistance of the Mudalali.

Finally the all-powerful ADA which with its tentorian voice booming out "anybody doing any-

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thing"—alas all too late. The stupid producer (fancy producing of tomatoes incredibly stupid and oh so naive) repeating the folly of yesteryear. So, you see, you have failed to blame the producer. He surely must shoulder the consequences of his lack of foresight, not forgetting the experience of the past. I am all for tobacco and even, as some of your articles suggest, "ganja".

Matale.
5.10.81

BITTER EXPERIENCE

Milk Board

COMPETENT AUTHORITY

IT IS NOT TRUE that whilst **Tribune** and many others breathed a sigh of relief when steps were taken, regrettably far too late, to change the managerial hierarchy of the National Milk Board, it is now a question of how long the newly installed Competent Authority would take to derive adequate information for corrective action? That already one month has gone by and news is beginning to filter in that the new authority is said to have a fetish for probing and thereafter analysing the answers? That what is reported to have emerged is that in take and out put figures are said to have remarkable variations, that replies to queries (previously glibly accepted) are now hesitant and uncertain ? That one exposure has led to another and that the rats have started "talking" presumably because skimmed milk stocks are over? That sales of by-products are being streamlined but that undoubtedly the competent Authority has many battles ahead? That a policy as **Tribune** suggested many times, based on national imperatives is required ? That what is required is a national policy not a multinational policy ? That the confidence of the staff and those who elect to stay and fight must be won over ? That an early declaration of policy (with incentives) is necessary if the confidence of the producers is to be gained and sustained?

Govt. Notices

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

My No. 3/42/Ma 105

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. for a public purpose. For further particulars, please see the Gazette of the Democratic No. 163 (part III) dated 08.10.1981 Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

SCHEDULE

Situation — Bowatenna Village, Ambanganga Korale, Naula Divisional Revenue Officer's Division (Now Asst, Government Agent's Divistion), Matale District.

Plan and Lot No :- 1 Lot in V.P. 534 Extract 3

Extent 2 Ac. 1 R. 30 P

The Kachcheri,
Matale
1 9 1981

S. K Annaraj
District Land Officer
Officer, Matale

The Land Acquisition Act (Chapter *460*) as amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No, *28* of *1964*-Notice under Section 7.(1)

Ref No. VA/030/39/18

It is Intended to acquire the Land/ described in the Schedule below. for a public purpose For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 163 (Port III) of 16.10.1981

SCHEDULE

Name of Land :- Galmaduwa Watte, Talwatte, Talwatte,

Situation — Vidurugewtte Gammedda Village Kundasale D. R. O's division Kandy District.

Plan and Lot No: — Lot 1 in P.P. Maha 2168 Lot 2 in P.P. Maha 2168 Lot 3 in, P.P. Maha 2168

Victoria Project Office
152 D. S Senanayake
Veediya Kandy.
28th Sep. 1981.

G. G. A. Malalgama
District Land Acquiring Officer
Kandy District.

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TENDER NOTICE

NATIONAL FILM CORPORATION OF SRI LANKA

TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF A CENTRALISED AIR CONDITIONING UNIT AT MAIN STORES, NATIONAL FILM CORPORATION OF SRI LANKA, 224 BAUDDHALOKA MAWATHA, COLOMBO 7

Sealed tenders are hereby invited for the Supply and installation of a centralised Air Conditioning Unit at Main Stores, National Film Corporation of Sri Lanka 224, Baduddhaloka Mawatha, as per specifications relevant to the Tender.

Sealed Tenders in duplicate should be sent to the Chairman, Tender Board, National Film Corporation of Sri Lanka, 224, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7, under Registered Cover or could be handed over to the General Manager not later than 3 p.m. on 30th October 1981, marked on the top left hand corner of the envelope "Tender No. NFC/81/10 —Supply and Installation of a centralised Air Contidioning Unit, Main Stores, National Film Corporation of Sri Lanka. If the Tenders are delivered by hand, a receipt will be issued. The Tenders will be opened immediately after the time fixed for the closing of tenders and those quoting can be present. Tender document could be obtained from the Office of the Manager—Supplies and Sales, National Film Corporation of Sri Lanka, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7, on payment of a refundable Tender Deposit of Rs. 250/- and a non-refundable tender form fee of Rs. 50/- till 3 p.m. not later than 29th October 1981.

Prospective Tenderers are hereby requested to obtain Tender documents before the date and time specified for issue of tenders. Tenders will be accepted only on forms issued by this Corporation. Further details regarding this tender co.d be obtained from the Manager—Supplies and Sales, Telephone No. 88773.

GENERAL MANAGER,
NATIONAL FILM CORPORATION
224, Bauddhaloka Mawatha,
Colombo 7.

N.F.C./301/M.

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CONFIDENTIALLY

Snap Election?

ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL REASONS why the UNP Government should rush into a snap election? That as far as *Tribune* can see there do not seem to be any? That the President has on more than one occasion declared that elections would be held only when they are legally due? That the President and the Government would function for the full length of their terms? That there has been no statement from the President or any senior member of the Government that a snap poll was contemplated? That in spite of this, political circles have been agog with talk about a snap poll? That several full-length scenarios had been outlined about it? That one scenario requires a Constitutional amendment to enable the Presidential election to be held before the parliamentary? That it is argued that the majority of the French Socialist Party had increased significantly after Francois Miterrand's victory and that if President Jayewardene were elected earlier the chances of the UNP would be better? That as matters stand today, whilst there is no one who can seriously challenge J. R. Jayewardene in a presidential election, the UNP will face an uphill task in the parliamentary election? That this is why, it is said, UNP strategists are tempted to have the Presidential poll before the parliamentary? That there is a great deal to be said for an amendment to the Constitution to make the timing of the presidential election more flexible?

THAT EVEN IF THIS HAS BEEN CONTEMPLATED in government circles, as suggested in some newspapers, it would be foolish to jump to the conclusion that a snap poll was round the corner? That all snap poll scenarios insist that the popularity rating of the UNP was daily going down and that it would be in the party's interest to have the parliamenrary elections before its popularity hit rock bottom at the point of no return? That at the moment the Opposition was in total disarray—the SLFP and the Left parties, individually as well as collectively, and the UNP, it is felt, would be stupid not to take advantage of it? That, finally the economic situation would be bad in 1982 and worse in 1983? That these snap poll scenarios are convinced that the UNP could win a majority only if the elections were held before the economic situation deteriorated further? That they were therefore certain that the UNP has no alternative but to go in for an early election? That certain political gossip-mongers keep hinting with an air of infallible punditry that the elections—presidential and parliamentary — will take place this year or at the very latest early next year? That if the Saudis helped the government to have even a distant facade or a mirage of a sunshine budget, the elections might be held even before the budget debate was over? That according to their calculations (political and astrological) the latest date for the snap election would be February 1982? That speculations have also been set in motion whether it would be possible to hold the presidential as well as the parliamentary elections at the same time—to save money? That this snap poll story has been taken seriously by foreign news agencies and correspondents for papers abroad and it has gained currency in the international media?

THAT THE FIRST ISSUE of the new Upali Group Sunday paper *The Island*, October 4, 1981, had a centre page feature entitled "A Snap Election?" by a colomnist who calls himself *Vijaya?* That it was a speculative piece that did not have depth or perceptive incisiveness? That nevertheless for a newcomer—the paper as well as the column — it was a refreshing contribution that drew attention to a number of important questions which government-owned papers refuse to touch? That the questions he sought to discuss were (1) Will there be general elections this year? (2) Will the SLFP split in two? (3) Will the TULF return to Parliament and adopt a more co-operative attitude (4) What will be the fate of Dr. Neville Fernando, the MP for Panadura? That on the snap poll matter after giving a number of reasons for and against, *Vijaya* went on to say: "..... But there is very strong possibility that a Presidential election will be held in the middle of next year (in June or July) thcugh the Constitution will need to be amended for this.... a Presidential Election in mid-82 would certainly mean that all UNP MPs will be able to work unitedly to re-elect the President. Also it would give an opportunity to the President to have a free hand with regard to nominations of people for the 1983 General Elections if he is assured of another six year term...." That *The Island's* columnist while accepting the posiblities of an early Presidential election, takes the position that the parliamentary elections will be in 1983? That he seems to be nearer the mark than many commentators in other papers? That the star reporter of *The Island* thought it appropriate to question the leaders of the two wings of the SLFP about their reactions to the possibilities of a snap polls? That the answer he got could have been anticipated? That what was forgotten is that the snap poll story had been mooted in whispers early in 1980 by Oppostition circles and had been prominently played by the SLFP press? That it is a fact that all parties in Opposition have from the time of Independence used the snap poll canard in the belief that it was an excellent propaganda gimmick to destabilise the government in power?

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TENDER NOTICE

PURCHASE OF LOCAL RICE
FOOD COMMISSIONER'S DEPARTMENT

Tenders are invited by the Government of Sri Lanka for the supply and delivery of Rice for acceptance at the Food Department Stores in Colombo, Kandy, Badulla, Galle, Jaffna and Kurunegala.

Tenders will be called weekly. Tenders should be on forms obtainable at the Office of the Food Commissioner at 330, Union Place, Colombo - 2. Tender Forms and Tender Conditions covering variety of Rice, Specifications etc. will be issued upto 4 p. m. every working day on payment of a refundable Tender Deposit of Rs. 100/-

Tenders will close at 11 a.m. on the following days :-

21st October 1981

28th October 1981

Any further information on this matter can be obtained from the Accountant, Bills and Tenders of the Food Department. His telephone number is 27267.

N. PULENDIRAN
FOOD COMMISSIONER,

Food Commissioner's Department,
330, Union Place,
Colombo 2

30th September, 1981.
wp./2. 24/9/81.

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