

# TRIBUNE

CEYLON NEWS REVIEW



27TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION





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**TENDER NOTICE**

**MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, AND CONSTRUCTION.  
BUILDING DEPARTMENT.**

Tender for the completion of Balance work - 20 Houses per Electorate Scheme, Ratmalana will be received by the Chairman, Tender Board, Department of Buildings, Colombo 1, up to 10 a.m. on Wednesday, 18th November, 1981.

02. Tender forms could be obtain from the Chief Construction Engineer, Ratmalana before 4.15 p.m. on 16.11.1981 by registered contractors or "Trial Letter" holders of Department for Rs. 1,000 000/- and above on production of Tender Deposit receipt for Rs. 250/- issued by Buildings Department, Colombo, or any Kachcheri outside Colombo.

03. Any further particulars could be obtained from the above Engineer.

Colombo 1. 3rd November, 1981.

**K. C. Samaraweera**  
Director of Buildings



# TRIBUNE

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## Letter From The Editor

PEOPLE OF ALL COMMUNITIES, from all walks of life in this island are deeply thankful to President Jayewardene for having, under the most difficult circumstances, engaged the TULF in a dialogue that has brought fruitful and happy results. The TULF too must be congratulated for adopting pragmatic and realistic attitudes and for seeking solutions within the realm of the possible. If the TULF will stick to its determination to help develop the districts in which Tamils have traditionally lived within the concept of a united Sri Lanka, it will be a landmark in the political history of this country. For the last fifty years, from the time of the ill-conceived and illfated boycott of the Donoughmore Constitution in 1931, Tamil politics, as we have so often pointed out, has been bogged down in the quagmire of boycott negativism. Today, for the first time, President Jayewardene has made it possible for Tamils to co-operate in nation building through the Development Councils on terms of equality. There will be forces that will seek to disrupt this new accord, viz., unthinking extremists or chauvinists in both communities. Men and women of good will in all communities must fight this danger until development brings such prosperity and happiness to people that extremism will not be able to do the mischief it has been able to perpetuate in the last twenty five years. It is in this context that the communique issued on Tuesday, November 3, by the Government Parliamentary Group must be read and understood: "President J. R. Jayewardene told the Government Parliamentary group today that the Tamil United Liberation Front leaders have agreed to cooperate with the Government in wiping out terrorism in the North and elsewhere, promote peace and evolve solutions to problems faced by the Tamil people. The President outlining to the Government MPs the nature of the discussions he had with TULF leaders said that a rapport has been reached in order to preserve peace and stability and push ahead with the development activities of the Government. The TULF has agreed to have discussions with the Government once a month. He told the Members of Parliament not to be misled by certain elements who are out to disturb the peace and be cautious not to harm in any way the good relations that had been established with the Tamil leaders. They were trying to usher a new era forging communal amity. The Government, said Mr. Jayewardene, was against Eelam. In view of this the TULF leaders did not even touch on the matter in their discussions with them. The TULF, he believed, has no relationship with the so called 'Tiger' movement. They have condemned the violence that has occurred in the North. If the TULF in any way does not co-operate to tackle it the Government would have to think afresh. There were millions of Tamil-speaking people who do not agree with terrorist acts and wanted peace. They have to win their co-operation and solve the problem facing them without separatism. Under the constitution every citizen irrespective of community or religion enjoy equal rights and the Government is committed to implement this provisions. Answering questions from certain MPs the President said that it was wrong to assume that only Tamil officers are holding high posts in the Northern and Eastern provinces. The President gave the name of GAs, AGAs, DIGs, ASPs, District Judges and Magistrates working in the Northern and Eastern provinces and said that there were many Sinhala officers serving there. He said he was of the view that it would be convenient to the people in those areas if persons who worked there knew Tamil. He said that some elements opposed to the carrying out of the development work would try to rouse the people on the new rapport reached. They tried to do so when the Government introduced the Development Councils, but the campaign failed. The government is committed to a unitary form of government and it has stood firmly by this policy". We can only hope that this new spirit of co-operation will bring the dawn of a new era.



## Mahaweli & Marketing

ON THE COVER we go back to a pair of working buffaloes. In the last two decades most of them have found their way to the slaughter house. The farmers attracted by cheap tractors and cheaper fuel had little or no use for the ubiquitous buffalo or even the working bull. With the disastrous and suicidal way Land Reform was implemented livestock in the coconut triangle also went to the butcher in such a rapid fashion that today our national herd has been halved whereas it should have more than doubled. Now with global inflation the prices of tractors have gone up skyhigh and fuel prices even higher. And a new interest has grown in working buffaloes and bulls. The increasing need for livestock not only for meat and milk but also as an adjunct to good farming has evoked a plentiful crop of seminars, newspaper supplements and ministerial pep talks. But for a farmer to be able to take a real interest in livestock he must be successful in farming and get more than a mere subsistence return from his land.

Ever since this country had a measure of independence and self-government with the grant of adult franchise fifty years ago, all governments have sought to foster and encourage non-plantation agriculture in all parts of the country primarily to produce food crops. In the colonial era, the non-plantation sector had been totally neglected and the country became totally dependent on imports for all items of food including rice. Much water has flown under the bridges since the first Board of Ministers under the Donoughmore Constitution had started functioning and had initiated many agricultural schemes in the Dry Zone. And, today the country is on the verge of a green revolution that can not only make this country self-sufficient in food but also make it a major exporter of vegetables, fruits, pulses and other food items including grains. Taking into consideration the amount of money invested by the government in the non-plantation sector together with the time, effort and manpower expended during the last fifty years, and more especially in the thirty years after Independence, this country should have long ago become a major food producing and exporting country in this region.

Many reasons have been set out by the pundits as to why our non-plantation agricultural lands, including lands under irrigation under the major tanks, are under-utilised and have not yielded the dividends expected. In our view, however, as we have so often explained, the critical factor has been, and still is, the failure of the government to provide adequate marketing facilities for farmers to sell their produce either under its aegis or with the help of a

responsible private sector. Experience has shown that the small farmer who is not able to sell his produce is driven to the wall and is compelled to become a seasonal agricultural labourer and a below-subsistence cultivator. The big and rich farmer, unable to sell his produce at reasonable prices, finds it more profitable to restrict agricultural productions and devote his money and energy on activities other than farming. This is the reason why the foreign experts describe our non-plantation sector as a "subsistence sector that deals mainly with food production", and go on to say that it differs distinctly from the plantation sector in terms of the scale of the operation and the objectives of production. They have pointed out that "the farm units in the subsistence sector are small and production is geared towards the consumption needs of the family. These experts have also found that the non-plantation subsistence sector was confronted with (a) a high rate of growth of an already large population; (b) a high proportion of the labour force in agriculture and (c) a concentration of low income groups in agriculture. Development strategies to transform this subsistence sector have been formulated by every government in power, and although some improvement has been achieved, production and productivity still remain low and incomes are even lower.

In our view, all governments have directed their strategies towards attaining self-sufficiency in food crops and have paid insufficient attention to marketing. Without the incentives of a ready sale at a reasonable price, agriculture must fail. Governments were content to organise bureaucratic organisations like the Marketing Department, Markfed, the Paddy Marketing Board, Multi-purpose Co-ops etc. etc. only to curb the profit-making and exploitative excesses of middlemen and mudalalis but not to provide an alternative service to the people. But these government institutions have all failed to deliver the goods. Adding one or more governmental or semi-governmental institution to those already in existence will not be of much help. Apart from organising the producers who are now on a take-off point not merely into self-sufficiency but also into a vast export potential. Government must bring into the scene a responsible private sector that can compete with and complement the existing public sector in this field and also teach the mudalalis a lesson in fair marketing practices. At the moment it will be virtually impossible to persuade the old time mudalalis and middlemen to play a more responsible role—they are happy to use and subvert the governmental organisations like the Marketing Department and thus dominate the market.

Government must, therefore, as we have often stressed whenever we have pointed out the sad defects of the Marketing Department, bring in another segment from the private sector into the picture, namely the produce brokers and export houses

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which have so far handled only traditional export items like tea, rubber, coconut and spices. As we go to press, we learn that Minister Gamini Dissanayake has taken the initiative in this matter. He has invited some leading firms of produce brokers and export houses to enter the field of marketing Mahaweli products. We are happy that he has been able to take the lead in an area where no other Minister has dared to tread so far. If the produce brokers can be brought into the scene with their sophisticated methods of marketing, the nonplantation sector will soon cease to be a subsistence sector. Export prices will induce greater production and this will bring the overflow into the local bazars and polas where market forces will help to bring down prices for the local consumer. With the new Mahaweli areas coming into production, better marketing especially in the export field, is essential if the new lands are not to suffer the fate of the earlier irrigation and river valley schemes which still continue to be under-utilised at subsistence levels. The Mahaweli Authority should avoid the temptation to set up another bureaucratic marketing organisation, but should utilise all the existing marketing facilities in the public and private sectors—the Marketing Department, the muda'alis and the big produce brokers.

Undoubtedly, a market survey on scientific lines is the first essential to assess the potential for the successful marketing of the commodity. A report to the Mahaweli Authority from a leading firm of produce brokers, Forbes & Walker Ltd., on the question of *Marketing of Mahaweli Products and up-country Vegetables* states: "The market survey is essential because it may be that the product itself may be wrong, that is, the wrong type, the wrong quantity and/or the wrong cost of production. Either one or all of these factors will nullify the effects of any marketing system. Further, to establish which would be the best manner of marketing for the different products necessitates a market survey as well. We therefore feel that a proper market survey setting out and analysing the supply and demand aspects is the first priority.

"The market survey would have to cover the following aspects: (A) SUPPLY: (i) Commodities, (ii) Quantities, (iii) Regularity of Supply and (iv) Cost of production and (B) DEMAND: (i) Demand sources; (ii) Demand patterns—seasonal, consistent, sporadic etc., (iii) Quantities and (iv) Price. Having obtained the above information, we will have to relate the supply factors to the demand possibilities and establish whether there is a marketing potential to make the cultivation of the various commodities in the quantities specified, at the cost involved worthwhile. Should the results of the market survey indicate a positive potential, then the next step is to devise a marketing system which would ensure optimum competition so as to achieve the results indicated by the market survey.

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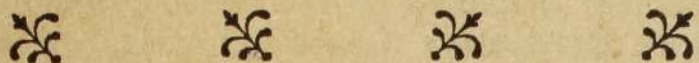
"To enable us to carry out the necessary analysis on the demand side of the market survey, we wonder whether we could have complete and accurate information on the supply position. The following is, therefore, solicited in respect of each product: (1) The list of commodities; (2) The total extent of land under each product and the number of individual homesteads or farms cultivating it, together with the geographical locations of the units; (3) The total envisaged production figures of each commodity; (4) The distribution of the production cycle, i.e., which months of the year will the different crops be available for marketing; (5) The unit cost of production of each commodity.

"The second step would be the marketing systems. We would not be able to deal with this aspect in detail until the results of the market survey have been evaluated. However, broadly speaking, the marketing systems would fall into one of the following categories: (a) Forward selling of a fixed quantity against established prices and standards—this is useful for a product where the demand is concentrated around a few large outlets and the availability is fixed and regular; (b) selling of a product by auction in open competition with all the market forces—this is useful for a product which is extremely diverse in its marketing outlets and also a product which is diverse in itself, i.e., various grades and qualities; (c) Direct trading on prices to be established after the product is harvested—this would be a useful avenue for a product where the supply and demand is fairly regular but where the importance of a forward contract may not exist for the buyer or the seller, or both, depending on the supply and demand pattern of the commodity. It could also be resorted to when demand generally stems from only one or two sources thus nullifying the advantage of an auction system. Of course, in devising the different marketing systems certain infrastructure requirements such as warehousing, transport, finance, etc., will be necessary must be gone into."

This outline of a market survey for Mahaweli products and up-country vegetables is angled from an export angle. But an even more important aspect of the market survey, in the first instance, is an estimate of the local requirements of vegetables, pulses, grains and all other food items including meat, fish, eggs and milk. This task may not interest big produce brokering firms, unless they are inclined to enter domestic marketing, but there is every reason to request the new Development Councils to undertake Market Surveys of food items in each district—what the requirements are and what is being produced. Surplus production of particular items can be "exported" to other districts or abroad and arrangements can be made to increase production of what is short or import what cannot be grown or produced profitably in that district. This is a matter in which the Prime Minister, who has overall charge of the Development Councils, and the entire Cabinet of



Ministers should, take an abiding interest. Any such increased production effort by the Development Councils will fail unless the proper and adequate marketing facilities are provided—by the public and private sector organisations. Now that the Mahaweli has taken the lead, it can blazon new trails for others to follow.



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

### \*Budget \*Upali's "Island"

BUDGET DAY comes on Thursday, November 12, and Tribune can only hope to deal with it in our next issue dated November 21. In the meantime, we can set out some of the highlights of the Estimates tabled in the House on November 3. It shows a substantial increase in government spending on both the current and capital accounts. According to these figures, the deficit in the current account next year will be Rs. 1.7 billion (against Rs. 232 million the previous year.) The overall deficit will be Rs. 21.2 billion against the previous year's Rs. 13 billion. The estimated expenditure for 1982 is Rs. 38.9 billion, while the estimated revenue is only Rs. 17.8 billion. Recurrent expenditure next year is estimated at Rs. 19.4 billion. The estimates as presented reveal a decrease in planned expenditure by Rs. 1.2 billion over the figure mentioned by the Government earlier. This is the result of Treasury efforts to trim expenditure in the face of what a Finance Ministry spokesman described as an "impossible budgetary situation" in view of the difficulty of raising additional revenue. The Government had earlier indicated that foreign aid totalling Rs. 12.4 billion was likely for budgetary purposes, while it was proposed to raise Rs. 3.7 billion in domestic loans. This would bring down the deficit to Rs. 6.5 billion.

A breakdown of the Budget Estimates shows:

Recurrent expenditure	Rs. million	Original
Recurrent expenditure	19,499	15,782
Capital expenditure	19,492	12,739
Total expenditure	38,991*	28,521
Revenue	17,809	15,550
Deficit Current (4-1)	1,690	232
Deficit Overall (4-3)	21,182	12,971

\*Includes Public Debt—Recurrent Rs. 5,412 million  
Public Debt—Capital Rs. 2,761 million

BUT THE HEAVIEST EXPENDITURE arises from the need to service debts. The biggest single item

of Government expenditure in 1982 will be on the "management of the public debt" which will absorb Rs. 8.1 billion, or nearly a fifth of total planned expenditure. The break down of this expenditure is as follows:

#### Recurrent Expenditure

Interest payments on rupee loans	Rs.	4,320,390,000
Interest payments on foreign loans		1,131,442,000
Loan floatation expenses and management charges		50,323,000
		<hr/>
		5,412,155,000

#### Capital expenditure

Amortisation payments of medium and long term rupee loans	Rs.	2,022,828,000
Repayment of medium and long-term foreign loans		737,967,000
Other repayments		20,000
		<hr/>
		2,760,815,000

The expenditure on the "management of the public debt" in the current year is expected to be Rs. 4.8 billion, so that next year's expenditure will represent nearly a 60 per cent increase. The public debt itself stood at Rs. 51.6 billion at the end of 1980, of which the foreign component was Rs. 22.2 billion. Since then there has been a further increase through new loan commitments, both local and foreign.

The Ministry of Mahaweli Development with a Rs. 6.5 billion capital vote for next year against this year's Rs. 3 billion, will be the biggest capital spender accounting for about a sixth of the total capital votes. The other big capital spender will be the Minister of Local Government, Housing and Construction which will spend Rs. 3.3 billion next year against the 1981 figure of Rs. 1.9 billion. Other Ministries spending over Rs. 6.5 billion capital will be: Power and Energy—Rs. 0.8 billion, Plan Implementation—Rs. 0.9 billion, Lands and Land Development—Rs. 0.9 billion, Transport Boards—Rs. 0.6 billion, Agricultural Development and Research—0.6 billion and Posts and Tele-communications—Rs. 0.5 billion. The big recurrent spenders are Education (Rs. 2.1 billion), Public Administration (Rs. 1.1 billion) and Defence (Rs. 8.0 billion).

THE DRAFT BUDGET estimates also reveal that the fixed wage earners may get a sizeable salary hike. The Finance Ministry whose capital and recurrent allocations stand at Rs. 12,282,258,000 is entrusted with the task of paying salaries to the

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450,000 strong public service will get the largest allocation of funds obviously to meet an increased salary bill. Last year the Finance Ministry received an allocation of Rs. 8,486,730,833.

**The overall deficit of Rs. 21,182 million for 1982 indicates an increase by Rs. 8,211 million over 1981 which recorded a deficit of Rs. 12,971 million. A table showing the recurrent and capital expenditure for 1981 - 1982 have been published in the daily papers and a great deal can be learnt from a close and critical analysis of the figures. The big question mark is how the big overall deficit of Rs. 21.2 billion is to be met. How does the Finance Minister propose to do this? He will reveal his secrets and his methodology on November 12, when he presents the budget.**

ALREADY HE HAS PRESENTED two Bills which were approved by Parliament last week, viz the new Business Turnover Tax and the new Import and Export Tariffs. The BTT will now be levied on practically all business undertakings that have a turnover of over Rs. 25,000 a quarter i.e., Rs. 100,000 a year. The trades exempted will be at the discretion of the Minister of Finance. With the new Import tariffs, it has been pointed out by critics, that the Government, was moving away from a 100% free trade open door policy to one of selective protectionism to help certain local industries and trades. This was welcomed by them.

The Minister of Finance has also received the happy news that the IMF has granted Sri Lanka the balance SDR 70 million (i.e., approximately Rs. 1,622 million) from the original SDR 260 which was originally granted under the Extended Fund Facility. Last week SDR 35 million was released and the final instalment of Rs. SDR 35 million will be released later this month. *The IMF has also congratulated Sri Lanka on its economic performance. The IMF has also noted that measures adopted had brought the rate of inflation from 35 per cent to around 18 per cent and the deficit in the balance of payments had also been reduced.*

BUT ON THE DAY THE ESTIMATES were tabled on November 3, a new drama was unfolded in Parliament when the Minister of Trade and Shipping introduced the new Companies Act which was welcomed by all Parties. Speaking on the Bill, Ronnie de Mel, Minister of Finance and Planning stated: "I must first congratulate the Minister of Trade on the presentation of the new Company Law. He has at last been successful in breaking the hoodoo with regard to company legislation in this country. Our Company law based on the British Act of 1938 had become as old as the hills, antiquated, moth-eaten, obsolete, quite unsuitable for the development of a healthy private sector, a socially responsible

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private sector, which we all like to have in this country. This Government encourages the development of the private sector. We give the private sector a great deal of freedom to invest, to grow, to expand and to develop the country and to create more and more employment in this land. But this does not mean that we give the private sector the freedom of the wild ass as it were, freedom to exploit minority shareholders, freedom for directors to ride roughshod over the interests of poor shareholders who may have invested their last cent on their last rupee from their salaries or their pensions in the shares of a public or a private company.

"I am happy that the Minister of Trade has been able to introduce this law which is based on modern thinking in Britain, in Singapore, in India and in many other countries. I was extremely keen on certain provisions regarding disclosure and inside dealings which my Colleague has introduced in this bill. I hope that these new provisions regarding disclosure, regarding inside dealings, regarding the protection of the rights of minority share holders will be strictly enforced by the authorities that will be called upon to administer this law. The law is one thing, administration is quite another. The Department of the Registrar of Companies must be strengthened. I know there are some very able officers in that department but the department must be strengthened in order to implement this new law in the spirit in which this Bill has been conceived and introduced in this House. For long years minority shareholders have been at the receiving end of everything that is evil in the company system that existed in this country. People have fought shy of investing their money in public companies. There is a lot of money in this country, but how many people are investing their money in the share market of this country? The share market of this country is almost as dead as a dodo because the people have no confidence in the company sector of this country. The people of this country love to talk of the model of Singapore. I am myself very conscious of the differences between Sri Lanka and Singapore. I have always said so. that I admire Singapore as a model. Still, I am very conscious of the differences. We are a country; Singapore is only a city. We are a country of villages, we are an agricultural country. Singapore is a little city state based entirely on an entreport which we do not have. Singapore is run by a non-indigenous hardworking Chinese population. In this country we have an indigenous population whether they are Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims or Burghers. And there are many dissimilarities in the economic set up of Singapore and Sri Lanka. So that Singapore cannot always be the model for Sri Lanka in my opinion.

"But these are two aspects in respect of which Singapore could serve as a model to this country—its efficiency and its discipline. And also its freedom



from a great deal of corruption that exists in many Asian countries nay in many countries of the world, even the developed countries. Singapore's private sector has been developing largely because the Government of Singapore insisted on the private sector being run on healthy lines. Singapore would never have tolerated a private sector like the private sector of this country. Singapore would never have tolerated a share broker's association like the share brokers' association of this country. Singapore would never have tolerated a share market like the share market of this country. We know the case of the Haubar. Even the most influential multi-billionaires have been found guilty in Singapore under the Singaporean company laws. That is why the private sector in Singapore is developing so well. I am glad that my friend has at long last taken the necessary corrective steps.

"Then I wish to specially bring to the notice of my colleague certain representations which have been made to me by minority shareholders of two public companies in this country who have been at the receiving end of gross mismanagement and gross oppression. These are matters of such public importance that I want to place the grievances of these shareholders before this House. They have been oppressed for nearly seven years. I am speaking of the Perak River Coconut Co. Ltd., and the Lower Perak Coconut Co. Ltd., They are two companies incorporated in Sri Lanka. They are Sri Lankan companies with Sri Lankan share-holders. They hold coconut and cocoa plantations in Malaysia. They were managed by Gorden Frazer and Co., Ltd. till 1973..."

Thereafter Mr. de Mel gave the details of the complaints of the minority shareholders which he said called for full investigation. *Tribune* will go into the matters connected with manipulative jugglery of the two companies on a later occasion. *But for the benefit of readers, who may not know the behind-the-news intricacies of this statement made by the Finance Minister, it must be said that it was directed against Mr. Upali Wijewardene, the Sri Lankan international business tycoon who is also head of the GCEC and who has made no secret of his political ambitions. He has also recently launched a newspaper venture and has from October 4, published a Sunday paper in English—The Island—and in Sinhalese "The Divaina".*

Printed on the latest of printing machines, *The Island* is an easy-on-the-eye publication with more reading matter than any other comparable Sunday paper from the main newspaper groups. Its claim that it is already has the "largest circulation" of any paper because the "print order", it claims, has jumped from 40,000 to 90,000 in four weeks. This is no doubt an attempt to draw in more advertise-

ments and also increase its rates, but the gimmick about the "print order" is well known in newspaper circles. The "print order" is one thing, but sales and circulation is another—with the unsold going to the old paper merchant for re-cycling. *This is a gag that newspapers in Sri Lanka had stopped playing after the whole racket was exposed in the sixties.*

The attempt to renew the print order 'gundu' now, in the eighties when a new generation may not know about it, may have succeeded for a time if *The Island* did not start on the campaign to denigrate important political personalities through gossipy chit chat about happenings at certain levels. The main thrust of this campaign has come in a column called the *Anuradhapura Diaries* and it has been variously credited to "Robert Knox", "U NO WHO" etc. etc. But it is no doubt the work of one or more persons who have put it together under the inspiration of a presiding genius. I attempt to adopt an allegorical style, but it does not have the consistency of a stylist.

The column has hit out all those who have crossed the path of Upali Wijewardene's ambition to "leap-frog" into the topmost echelon of the UNP. The first week, the anecdotage in *Anuradhapura Diaries* was amusing; the next week intriguing and the third week it was stale. At all times it has a touch of vulgarity. Journalism of this kind has not been known in this island since the days of *The Searchlight*. But, those who seek to enter the higher portals of politics cannot afford to indulge in such scurrilous ampooning of rivals—the publishers of the naughty sensational papers like the *News of The World* will not aspire to be Prime Ministers of Britain—especially if one lives in a glass house containing several cupboards full of skeletons.

The first stone out of the *Anuradhapura Diaries* has been flung and the first skeleton put out on view. What next ?



FILM FOCUS

## Grapes of Wrath

A RECENT NEWS ITEM sent my mind racing back to the years when actor Henry Fonda adorned every film role he made. It read: "Henry Fonda was voted an Honorary Award by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which called him the consummate actor, who has made brilliant accomplishments and enduring contributions to the art of Motion Pictures". He still holds the spotlight as a fine character actor as in his recent films like *Swarm*

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and *Meteor* where he roled a scientist and the United States President respectively. His children Jane and Peter have followed in his footsteps. The former has already collected a couple of Oscars as best actress besides remaining a stormy petrel on the American political scene. Getting back to Dad Fonda, what had projected him into the limelight in his early years was his excellent performance in *The Grapes of Wrath*. The John Steinbeck Book dealt with a period when the greed for the vast land spaces available in America knew no bounds and spread its tentacles to root out the indigent, and swept them about like so much hay in a storm. I was also to refresh my memory on this perennial at the invitation of the United States International Communication Agency recently. This 20th Century Fox Production portrays the odyssey of the Joads—a family of Oakies who are driven from their homestead in the Oklahoma dustbowl in the great depression. They journey Westward in a battered old Ford car to the promised land of California. A youthful Henry Fonda is featured as the wonderlust son Tom Joad with Jane Darwell—who won an award as best supporting actress—as his never say die Ma, both of whom give heartbreaking performances. John Ford who directed this film won the best Director's award, and notched a remarkable milestone as a film maker of repute, in linking symbolically the human values of a people, their families and their lands that were wrested from them by writ, giving birth to the new 'isms' that were looming large on the horizons of that grim and dark period of exploitation in America.

**GURU (TAMIL):** This is an I. V. Sasi film and has box office appeal. It hugs the old formula line. He picks his stars from the crest of the popularity wave and has of late been swinging between Kamalahasan and Rajani Kanth or both. The film under focus, on the M. G. R. formula, but with a lot more cribbling from English films. *Guru* like the *Zorro* films leaves tell tale marks of the hero with vaunted bravado and mixes the gimmicks of James Bond, Jesse James and the Pink Panther. Kamalahasan takes on this role as an anti-colonist's son, with his father (Muthuraman) in hiding, and as a fugitive from justice after gunning down his mother's killer. He leads a double life maintaining an orphanage from the funds that he reaps from robberies in Robin Hood style, with a Helicopter on his trail. In the midst of his escapades, he meets baby faced Sri Devi, outsmarts her, and conquers her heart. The film is very flashy and so full of action that it left me with a headache—but there are so many who would get aches without such film fare. Watch out for A.E. Monoharan who appears to have deserted the local pop scene for tough roles in South Indian films.

**ANJANA (Sinhalese),** An excursion by Director Yasapalit—a Nanayakara to the colour era, the camera

makes up on the scenic roundabouts, as a cover for the story sequences which turn heavily on a story lacking conviction, and is flippantly portrayed. Comedian Freddie Silva is the pacemaker, steering the story lightheartedly. But for him the story might have collapsed altogether. As friends, with a meagre day to day turnover, Vijaya Kumaranātunga and Freddie, strike gold when they recover the payroll of an Estate Superintendent who had been robbed near the Bank. In permanent employment us as reward, Vijay is caught up between the lovelorn pals, in Geetha Kumarasinghe and Swarna Mallawaratchi the boss's daughter. The latter is seduced by an estate executive i Robin Fernando and a paternity puzzle creates complications that are sorted out with fisticuffs. All the worn out grimmicks of the old formula are packed in for gallery appeal. Colour and the hill country prove the only savers. Its acceptance for release in the prestigious fifth circuit therefore remains a riddle.

**NOT NOW DARLING: (ENGLISH):** Actor Lesley Philips of the *Carry On Series* fame pilots the cast of this British Production, with a surfeit of naughty situations, marital indiscretions and double entendre which loosen the stiff upper lips of Englishmen these days. Leslie roles the senior partner of Bodin and Crouch (Ray Conney), who selects his firm for a bit of two timing while his wife is away. Expensive Mink coats exchange hands in the hilarious mixups for a song, and a modicum of pleasure. In the Hip and lip situations that follow, are the topless Julie Edge and the top heave Barbar Windsor who duck for cover in the altogether. Newcomer to such slapstick is Connery as Crouch who uses his roving hands freely to save his senior partner and also to dump any scanty-party evidence out of the window. More double crossing couples get into soup and are caught out at curtains before they could *Carry On* further. Its for adult laughter. If you are feeling dull, this film will help you.

**THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY (ENGLISH):** This United Artist Production bears the exclusive stamp and style of Michael Crichton who besides wiring the novel and screenplay, has also directed the film, brilliantly photographed in Panavision and colour. To assist him in the stellar role all the way is the suave and debonair Sean Connery, (the one time Ian Flemming 007 character as James Bond, the Secret Agent), maintaining the rascally poise and pose that the role demands. He masterminds a daring train robbery in the mid-eighties, which with all its incredibility, is so directed to keep the audience spellbound from the word "go". Hand in glove in this ingenious plot is partner Donald Sutherland whose versatility is beyond question, as the 'hit man' who makes his nimble fingers twirl in a wax as he gathers the requisite impressions of four keys for the grand slam. Every step of the operation is cloaked with



precision and the Achille's heels of every bank and railway official taped, and clocked with rare precision. As the train steams out on D-day the countdown for the dastardly plan gets under way from stop to stop with Connery atop the speeding locomotive. "The Betsy" temptress Lesley Ann Downs oozes that amount of oomph which forms part and parcel of the diabolical weaponry that Connery draws upon heavily to prove that human weakness make crime to pay. Do not miss this film.

**GEETHIKA (SINHALESE):** Within the first few minutes of this Yasap litha Nanayakkara directed film, a bell did tinkle in my mind to a similar setting and like story in a Tamil film by the same Director. I refer to the Tamil film "Anuragam". This dual enterprise needs commendation. Malini Fonseka is in the title role as a bathing belle at the base of a cascading waterfall, and comes between the brush and the canvas of a roving painter in Vijay Kumaranatunge. The idyllic setting, sets their hearts aflutter and results in a grave indiscretion on a stormy night. A parting of the ways and the reunion tied up in a series of paintings, that provide the clues for the final link up. This is an above average film, with ear-catching songs, Wimal Kumar de Costa is the confused villain who becomes a cropper at curtains. You will enjoy this film, leaving the children behind to their books.

**THE HUNTER (ENGLISH):** A Paramount Production that struggles hard to live up to the dynamic title it sports. It attempts to cash in heavily on the fame of the late Steve Maqueen who is rather stiff and tame in a role that calls for more action. As a beauty hunter who brings in fugitives from justice within the pale of the law, the story is based on the autobiography of Ralph Thompson, a professional bounty hunter who apprehended 5,000 evaders in three decades in his life time, and probably did much more than what is depicted in this sagging film. Maqueen does not live to his earlier roles and the film peters out with a whimper.

**JAFFNA THEATRES:** The Windsor Theatre, Jaffna, has at last been recognized as the best maintained cinema in the Peninsula and been awarded the Presidential Certificate of Merit. This column has often expressed surprise at this cinema being bypassed earlier for this award. A resurrected Regal Cinema too has assured immaculate proportions. I remember visiting the old Regal during my school days nearly four decades ago with my classmates, escorted by the History teacher—the film I recall was titled *Queen Victoria* and based on her role in British History—and what stands on the identical spot today after the wear and tear of the years gone by is a modernized cinema whose facade and interior decor metamorphosed beyond recognition.

Messrs W. M. S. Thampoe and Robin Thampoe, the father and son team, who produced films of note at one time are the architects of this remarkable change, with several innovations that even Colombo cinemas do not boast of.

James N. Benedict.



## The Legacy

No leaf stirred  
There was no leaf to stir,  
No bird sang  
There was no bird to sing,  
That was the day of the black swans flight  
And you returned to the womb of night.

No footsteps echo in the marble halls,  
Terror twists your face  
And petrifies  
Contorted limbs,  
That was the day of the molten flood  
Which seared the flesh, and burnt the blood.

Life was precious once,  
And worshipped in stone  
Its green shoot sprang  
In a caring soil,  
Now's tis naught but a brittle toy  
And man no more than a mindless boy.

Death no longer bursts  
In a blinding flash,  
Reducing man  
To a heap of ash,  
That was the day of the mushroom cloud  
In the name of peace, you were given a shroud.

No voice is heard  
There is no voice to cry,  
No eyes to see  
The cities stretched against the sky,  
For this is the day of invisible death  
Life melts in the air like a wintry breath.

**P. Amerasinghe**

Anniewatte,  
Kandy.  
14.9.81.

TRIBUNE, November 14, 1981



**October 25 - 31**

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25:** Mr. Gamini Dissanayake, Minister of Lands, Land Development and Mahaveli Development, said yesterday in Kandy that arrangements will be made to send Queen progress pictures of the Victoria Dam project in Kandy every six months; the Queen was so impressed with what she saw of the on-going work on the giant project that she said she would like to see its progress every six months; the dam is expected to be ready by 1984; the project is funded by Britain—*SO*. A group of representative Tamils in Colombo and Jaffna have started a Police-Army Victims Fund to help the dependents of those who died in recent incidents in the Jaffna District; this morning a cheque for Rs. 75,000 will be handed to Major General Tissa Weeratunga, Army Commander,—*ST*. Allegations of big kick-backs in multimillion dollar tenders has led Government to give top priority to the implementation of the Public Contracts Law; the law which will be introduced in Parliament shortly will crack down on all state officials who are alleged to be skimming off huge sums from public contracts and tenders. Security forces strengthened by the recall of army units released earlier for duties in connection with the Royal visit are now carrying out a "sector-by-sector" combing, out operation of the jungles in the Vavuniya area in search of the group which killed a soldier during the recent robbery—*WK*. Police yesterday claimed that the identity of the killers of the soldier in the Kilinochi bank hold up was known; however, they anticipated much difficulty in apprehending the wanted men, a top Police spokesman said; some of the soldiers who were engaged in the gun battle with the terrorists had identified them, police said—*S*. Tamil representatives in Colombo discussed the situation prevailing in the country at present; a special committee was formed by these representatives to meet the President and urge for action to enforce law and order in the country—*CM*.

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 26:** The IGP, Mr. Anura Kumara Senarathne, yesterday sent out a countrywide police alert directing his men to act firmly and swiftly against persons inciting acts of violence or lawlessness; the IGP's message went out to all Superintendents in charge of police divisions; Mr. Senarathne has drawn attention to provisions under emergency law which are applicable to the offences mentioned—*CDN*. Police were given special orders yesterday to crack down on rabble rousers; this new move, soon after the departure of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip at the end of a five-day visit, came following intelligence

reports of organised attempts to unleash violence and other acts of lawlessness in the country this week. Probably one of the proudest and happiest men in Sri Lanka today is 69-year-old Ramoo Sinniah—he was richly rewarded for years of dedicated service to more than five British High Commissioners in Sri Lanka, when Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II presented him with the RVM (Royal Victorian Medal)—Silver, an Honorary title—*SU*.

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27:** The Agricultural Research and Training Institute which conducted a base-line survey on some of the major irrigation schemes in the dry zone, says there has been a complete misdirection of investment into mechanical power in some of the schemes. Customs have decided to keep a close tab on all gift parcels sent by Lankans living abroad following investigations which have revealed that in many cases the senders' addresses were fictitious, official sources said yesterday—*CDN*. Colombo's Telecommunication system becomes modern from today with the opening of the Electronic Switching System; Post and Telecommunication Minister D. B. Wijetunge will officially declare open the multimillion sophisticated telephone system this morning. A massive village level food production drive will be implemented under the Gramadoya Mandala scheme to fight inflation in the country; so said the Prime Minister, Mr. R. Premadasa at a Press conference held yesterday at the Ministry of Local Government, Housing and Construction—*CDM*. Selected private sector rubber shippers will be allowed to export rubber to China from next year; the private exports have been agreed upon following preliminary talks in Colombo between officials of the Trade and Shipping Ministry and the Chinese Embassy; the talks are a prelude to next month's discussions in Peking to renew the Sino-Lanka trade pact for 1982—*SU*. The Trade Ministry's Duty Free Shop, opened only three weeks ago at Kollupitiya, has proved a tremendous success and earned nearly four and a half million in foreign exchange already—*CO*. Army personnel will be given intensive training in the use of fire arms; they will be trained in the proper handling of fire arms and firing without missing targets; this arrangement has been made to bring under control the well trained terrorist in the country—*DP*.

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28:** A sizeable chunk of locally produced alternative energy will be available in Sri Lanka from early next year, when a company in which the State has a considerable stake comes on stream in March; Charlanka Ltd a joint venture between the State Timber Corporation, the Ceylon Tobacco Company and Enterprise Development Incorporated of the USA it will convert waste wood in the Mahaweli area and elsewhere, into charcoal—and help trim the country's



energy bill which gobble d up 47 per cent of export earnings last year—*CDN*. Security forces investigating the recent spate of violence in the north believe that the last seven killings of Police and Army officers had been carried out by a group which returned to the country recently after training abroad; the group headed by the original leaders of the proscribed Liberation Tiger Movement who had been trained in Lebanon and Kampuchea, is said to be totally committed to military solutions to achieve its goal of separation. President J. R. Jayewardene yesterday met Opposition Leader and TULF Secretary-General A. Amirthalingam to discuss the situation in the country in the wake of the recent killings of three Army officers by terrorists; following last afternoon's conference attended by Deputy Defence Minister T. B. Wera-pitiya Colonel C. A. Dharmapala, Major General Tissa Weeratunga, P. B. Menikdiwela and Mr. Sivasithambaram, statement was issued by the TULF stating that the killings of the three soldiers called for the strongest condemnation from all peace loving people. A private flying school to train pilots for the national carrier Air Lanka and also to train private pilots will be established next month in Colombo—*SU*.

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28:** Penalties are to be imposed under the Wages Board Ordinance and the Shop and Office Employees Act on employers who pay short wages. What appears to have been a calculated attempt to either use the name of Mr. Nanda Mathew, Deputy Minister of Mahaweli Development, to clear a consignment of contraband through customs or smear his reputation, is causing concern in the highest governmental circles. A runaway locomotive travelled 12 miles on the coast line on Monday before it was brought to a halt at Lunawa. On the recommendation of the Prime Minister Cabinet decided to set up a Road Development Authority; this original proposal was dated 1 October 1980—*CDN*. The President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene told the Cabinet yesterday that he was happy to note that throughout the country large groups of people were coming out against terrorism. One hundred and fifty persons alleged to have been involved in creating trouble and inciting people in the country have been taken into police custody; these people have been arrested following incidents created in Kandapola in the Nuwara Eliya police area, Panadura, Negombo, Veyangoda and areas around Colombo—*CDN*. Milling operations have been started by the Paddy Marketing Board to release 18,000 to 20,000 tonnes of rice a month to the open market, through co-operatives and PMB buffer; the government recently decided to release the 80,000 stock of rice to arrest the unnecessary price hike of rice—*SU*.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30:** Poaching by foreign fishing fleets within the 200 mile territorial limits of Sri Lanka

is causing grave concern; this fact was established recently when a team comprising high officials from the Defence Ministry, the Foreign Ministry and the Department of Civil Aviation circled the entire coastal waters round the island in a specially equipped aircraft. Sri Lanka's first Private Flying school will be officially opened at Ratmalana Airport on November 1; the school has been set up by Air Taxis limited, a government licensed charter operator which does charter flying and offers aviation management services—*CDN*. Army Commander Major General Tissa Weeratunga yesterday flew to Jaffna to personally check on the security situation in the area. All reports pertaining to violence will now be subject to press censorship, the Competent Authority under emergency regulations announced yesterday. The electronic digital telecommunication system will be extended with the installation of a second computerised exchange next year. Government will shortly announce a general transport policy; this general transport policy will outline the role of the state and private sectors in the working of the country's transport services, and make provisions for a better coordination between these two sectors—*SU*. When police personnel who stood guard at the Naga Vihare in Jaffna opened fire at about 1 a.m. yesterday, another police constable who was engaged in security work was injured and removed to the Jaffna Hospital where he was admitted—*VK*.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31:** Significant changes in the pattern of "sun and sand" tourism in this region will begin with the Maldivé Islands now ready to take direct tourist traffic from Europe, informed travel trade sources said yesterday. Pyrethrum, the most potent natural insecticide, particularly against flies and mosquitoes, will soon be grown in the hills of Sri Lanka; a large foreign firm that grows pyrethrum in Kenya has been asked to start a pilot project by the Minister of Agricultural and Research E. L. Senanayake—*CDN*. All branches of the People's Banks are to be guarded round-the-clock with immediate effect; this directive from the Defence Ministry to the People's Bank follows the recent ten million rupee robbery of the Kili cchchi branch in which the major part of the loot were pawned articles of jewellery—*CDN*. Government has introduced intense security precautions against any possible attempts at hijacking or acts of sabotage; this follows intelligence reports of the possibility of a major strike in the wake of the expected relaxation of security following the departure of the Queen. A long-term socio-economic development project for women plantation workers and their families, estimated to cost more than half a million US dollars will get underway shortly—*SU*. King Khalid of Saudi Arabia is due to visit Sri Lanka in December; President J. R. Jayewardena invited the monarch during his visit to the oil-rich kingdom in September—*SU*. Production at Government factories



in the North have decreased by 60% the Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs is contemplating to close down such factories if the production continues to decrease—DP.



WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

## October 24 - 30

### EAST ASIA

**CHINA:** "If the Asian countries can sustain their family planning programmes they can stabilise their population in the next century. Unfortunately, the emphasis was not universal and uniform in certain countries", said Rafael Salas, Executive Director of the UN Fund for Population Activities. Joint or co-operative ventures have brought nearly 700 million dollars of foreign investment to China. The Chinese have stated that USA still remained a stumbling block to any major breakthrough in the ongoing North-South dialogue **Vietnam:** US, Argentina, Thailand, Japan, Canada, Britain and West Germany, have blocked a UN World Food Programme aid worth 5.3 million dollars to Vietnam. The aid was sought by Vietnam to feed workers building an irrigation project in the Tay-Dinh province. It appears that the US was behind the move to punish Vietnam. US contribution to WFP budget for 1981-82 was nearly 220 million dollars which was one-third of the budget.

### SOUTH ASIA

**INDIA:** The Atomic power plant at Kota (Rajasthan) has developed a radiation leak. The Indian State of Uttar Pradesh has decided to set up Special Courts to try its bandits: the state government has found that 11 of its total 54 districts were bandit infested. India has extended the ban on secessionist organisations by another two years. Indira Gandhi questioned the wisdom of President Zia ul Haq of Pakistan for suggesting a non-aggression pact nearly 22 years after India first proposed such a pact. Even the current move was made when Pakistan was accepting massive arms aid from the US and was also indulging in anti-Indian propaganda said Indira Gandhi. The Iraq government has agreed to consider risk allowances to the Indians working on various projects because of the continuing war with Iran. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi asked the Indian Air Force to be more vigilant than ever as the security situation has been deteriorating. **Pakistan:** President Zia has warned that Afghanistan should not indulge in acts provoking her patience. Tension between India and Pakistan escalated as both sides violated ceasefire along United Nations administered line of

control in Kashmir. Pakistan will receive 50 million dollars worth of food aid from US. **Bangladesh:** Bangladesh will receive 50.5 million dollars worth food aid from the US next year.

### WEST ASIA

**IRAN:** The Iranian Parliament has approved the nomination of Foreign Minister Hussein Moussavi as Prime Minister. **Saudi Arabia:** Saudi Arabia described the approval given by US Senate for the sale of AWACS planes as a victory for the Kingdom and a defeat for Israel. **Israel:** expressed its utter dismay over US Senate's approval for the sale of AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia. Premier Begin said that the Jewish state now faced a new and grave danger. Israeli Defence Minister Ariel Sharon said that the US has been supplying arms and ammunition to Iraq through Saudi Arabia and Jordan.

### AFRICA

**EGYPT:** Investigators into the assassination of President Sadat now feel that there was a nationwide conspiracy to stage a revolution like that of Iran. Egypt has welcomed the US Senate decision to sell AWACS to Saudi Arabia as it would be a boost for Middle East peace efforts. Egypt will receive 275 million dollars of the 765.5 million dollars worth US Food Aid programme for 1982. Egyptian security forces have arrested 553 members of an underground movement suspected of conspiring to kill Sadat and taking over the administration of the country. **Libya:** Col. Gaddafi stated that if American AWACS planes approached anywhere near missile range they would be destroyed. **South Africa:** South African government denied Angolan charges that her troops had again attacked South Angolan towns. The combat Group of five western powers have begun fresh talks on Namibian independence with South African leaders.

### EUROPE

**UNITED KINGDOM:** Nearly 100,000 demonstrators participated in an anti-nuclear march organised by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). This march was the biggest in twenty years. This was a follow up of similar marches held in Paris, Brussels and Rome. The Irish Republican Army has commenced a fresh bomb attack aimed at civilian targets to disrupt pre-Christmas shopping. The Prince and Princess of Wales were hooted and jeered when they began a tour of Wales. Mrs. Thatcher survived a censure motion and pledged that she would continue her present economic policy. **Spain:** The European Security Review Conference resumed their deliberations this week in Madrid. **Poland:** Polish Communist Party leaders have decided to call in the troops to carry out distributory functions in the event

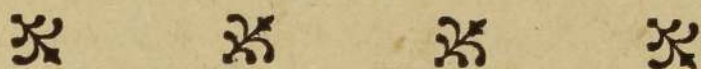


of a strike. Millions of Polish workers belonging to the Solidarity Free Trade Union struck work for an hour on Wednesday. However, the leaders of the Solidarity Union called for a halt to wildcat strikes. *Romania*: President Nicholas Ceausescu has called for the withdrawal of Soviet nuclear weapons from Europe. He also appealed to the NATO to revoke its decision to moderate nuclear weapons which would otherwise mean the annihilation of the entire European continent. *Finland*: Nearly 120,000 Finns staged an anti-nuclear demonstration in Helsinki. *Soviet Union*: British Chief of Staff Edwin Brammall's visit to China would lead to an increase in China's military capabilities said Soviet News Agency Tass. At a dinner for North Yemen leader Ali Abdullah Saleh, Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev renewed his appeal for an international conference on Middle East. *Sweden*: Sweden was perturbed when a Soviet submarine ran aground in her territorial waters. The Commander of the submarine said that they were in an emergency situation. However there were suspicions that Warsaw Pact countries may have been spying in Swedish waters. *Switzerland*: Saudi Arabia's insistence on stabilising oil prices has paid dividends; militant members of the OPEC have climbed down at the meeting in Geneva and the price of crude oil has been fixed at 34 dollars per barrel for light crude and 38 dollars for petrol-rich grades.

## AMERICAS

*UNITED STATES*: Contrary to previous charges that Soviet ships were getting ready to ferry Syrian troops to Libya, Washington had received reports of Americans flying Libyan planes with Libyan troops to Chad. On his return from Cancun President Reagan said that all participants recognized the fact that economic prosperity in any country or group of countries depended both on individual countries' own efforts and their close economic cooperation. Former US Ambassador to the UN, Andrew Young, was elected as Mayor of Atlanta in a straight contest against White State legislator Sidney Marcus. The US Senate voted 52-48 in favour of AWACS sales to Saudi Arabia: this was considered to be a crucial political victory and a first major foreign policy success for Reagan's administration. President Reagan overjoyed by the Senate's approval of the sale of AWACS defence system to Saudi Arabia said that the "Senate has acted with statesmanship, with foresight and with courage". But he assured Israel that "the United States will maintain its unshakable commitment to the security welfare of the State of Israel recognizing that a strong Israel is essential to our basic goals in that area". US will provide 765.5 million dollars in food aid to twenty five countries in 1982. A Congressional Committee voted against funding Reagan's MX missile plan. *United Nations*: The political committee of the UN General Assembly

has endorsed a draft resolution calling on Israel to "desist forthwith" from all excavations especially near Al Aqsa and Dome of the Rock Mosques—as they would endanger the religious sites. Only US and Israel voted against the resolution. UN will send a team of experts to Thailand to investigate allegations that chemical weapons have been used South East Asia. UN Security Council has failed to nominate a candidate for UN Secretary General post. The present candidates, Kurt Waldheim and Tanzanian Foreign Minister Salim Ahmed Salim, have failed to get a majority support in the Security Council. On the other hand each had been vetoed. China vetoed Kurt Waldheim six times and US Salim Ahmed Salim. *Jamaica*: Jamaica broke off its diplomatic relations with Cuba when the latter failed to return three of Jamaica's most wanted men remaining in that country.



## THE KOHOMBA TREE

It grew inside the temple yard  
 opposite our home,  
 a classic ayurvedic tome  
 of goodly root and bark,  
 of fruit and leaf and seed.  
 It was no god  
 or even shrine of god  
 but votaries of woodpeckers came to  
 crimson backed and scarlet,  
 worshippers of flowerpeckers came to it  
 and barbets,  
 mynahs, parrots, parakeets,  
 tailor birds, sun birds, lorikeets  
 and orange minivets.  
 There was, O such paternal largesse in its girth  
 I perfect host for nests.  
 insects homed  
 and multiplied  
 upon its ample chest.  
 What more fitting place than temple  
 for its worth?  
 Yet we saw  
 a Devadatta, Protector of the Law  
 destroy the tree  
 inside this very sanctuary.  
 And when we asked His Lordship why,  
 "To saw and sell" he made reply.  
 Well, I guess  
 these modern custodians  
 of our traditions  
 have new dynamic roles to play  
 in this present age and day—  
 transacting business !

Suvimalee Karunaratna

TRIBUNE, November 14, 1981



# NOTICE

## NATIONAL FILM CORPORATION

### Sale of Unserviceable Items

Sealed quotations are hereby invited for the sale of the following items at Taran-gani office.

- a. Damaged Film Boxes - 250 Nos.
- b. Used Angle Iron - 332 L.ft
- c. Used Wire Mesh - 133 Sq.ft

Quotations should be sent for each item for each the undersigned on or before 2.00 p. m. on 19th November, 81 with envelopes marked on the Top Left Hand Corner "Quotation for sale of Unserviceable Items".

### GENERAL MANAGER

NATIONAL FILM CORPORATION  
OF SRI LANKA

224, Bauddhaloka Mawatha,  
Colombo 7.

W.F.C/409/M

TRIBUNE, November 14, 1981

## Soviet Military Power

By Gennady Gerasimov

THE PRESIDENT OF THE USA, Ronald Reagan, announced measures to build up the American nuclear arsenal on October 2. They plan to build every year at least 100 MX ICBMs; launch a new Trident nuclear submarine, equipped with the D-5 strategic missiles; develop and build the new B-1 strategic bomber, with the simultaneous deployment of cruise missiles, and so on. The new programme, which includes manufacture of all three US strategic arms will cost in five years an estimated 180,000 million dollars. It testifies to Washington's obvious desire to achieve military supremacy over the USSR. The American Department of Defence published their booklet SOVIET MILITARY POWER on September 29, just three days before—to soften up the public. The perfect thing to justify the militarist orgy in the Pentagon by presenting it as a reply to Soviet actions. The purpose is to weaken the peace movement in Western countries. The Pentagon booklet was put out in perfect accord with the standards and requirements of advertising. The "Soviet Military Threat" is fully illustrated with diagrams and photographs showing Soviet bombers and missiles darkening the skies—all in glorious technicolour—aimed straight at the United States.

The image of a Soviet tank factory projected on a map of Washington and stretching the length of Pennsylvania Avenue, from the White House to Capitol Hill—is quite impressive. I don't think I ever heard such gibberish—at least not since the days of Forrestal, the American Secretary of Defence during the cold war who dealt with these tanks by jumping out of a window. The booklet panders beautifully to the demands of sensationalism. The preface was written by no less than Casper Weinberger, Secretary of Defence, himself. To advertise this publication of the booklet he held a press conference, which was broadcast to Europe via a communications satellite—all at taxpayers' expense. It is now being translated into German, French, Italian and Japanese. "The Pentagon propaganda machine" (as William Fulbright, former Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee called it) has laid its latest and most fashioning egg. However, readers who follow such events will find the book a letdown because it lacks originality. This was the point made by G Labelle, the AP correspondent, to fellow journalists. The booklet contains considerable data on Soviet military production. All the information is, of course, pure invention. And we can judge how wide they are off the mark by looking back on previous "gaps", those heoretical shortfalls, in Western



arms, for example, the "bomber gap" when President Dwight Eisenhower was in office, to the "missile gaps" under John Kennedy, or the "anti-missile gap" under Lyndon Johnson. The present "gap" is of course the most terrible for it stretches right across the board. However, every single earlier "gap" was later officially admitted to have been a mistake.

But even if we do believe the figures quoted they do not mean very much unless compared to American production figures and to contributions from Western Europe and Japan. These figures are conspicuous by their absence in the book. Gene Larocque, Rear Admiral, Rt. Director of the Centre for Defence Information in Washington, gives his opinion as follows: the Pentagon report completely ignored the military contribution to the defence of the West and Japan. The report implies the existence of Soviet military power only and in a dramatic way. The purpose of this booklet is obvious to frighten the American people and US allies, said Gene Larocque. We add that the booklet lacks understanding of Soviet defence needs not taking into account her geographic location and foreign policy. However, the book's main fault is the author's deliberate assumption that what is possible is probable. First, the Soviet military capabilities are deliberately exaggerated, and supported by these capabilities, the Soviet side is set on a course of using them: if the USSR has so many tanks, then they must be expected soon at the cliffs of Dover. This progression from capability (maliciously exaggerated) to actual intention is called the "worst case scenario" in the Pentagon. These hysterical fears are directed at the public in order to cause panic as to the present Soviet intentions. All this at a time when the world grows more anxious at the realization of American intentions—obvious from the American President's latest decisions.—APN.



SOVIET VIEW

## U. S. Oil Strategy

By Alexander Guber

PEOPLE usually look askance at those who preserve their own stock and use others'. Occasionally some people give this quality its due. The situation gets worse when the greedy person assumes the role of a leader concerned with other people's interests. 64 percent of oil consumed in the developed capitalist countries is imported. One-third of this import goes to the United States. Experts claim that the possible deposits of oil in the United States are twice as big as those already prospected. On top of this can be added more than 30,000 million tons of the so-called

heavy oil contained in shale. Washington does not conceal its intention to continue importing oil while leaving national deposits for "the rainy day". Let us see what this strategy leads to.

Tensions at the world petroleum markets grow. The USA buys large quantities of oil which other countries, for instance, West Europe and Japan cannot do without. Any specialist will understand that the current surplus of oil will be shortlived. It is linked with the slump in business activity of the capitalist countries and the presence of piled stocks in some of them. According to most Western forecasters two new exacerbations of the power crisis are expected in the 80s, and primarily a shortage of oil. Plans connected with import presuppose Washington's resolution to go to any length of the rope to keep it high, even to start an armed intervention in the oil-bearing regions and establishing control over the transportation of this fuel. These intentions are a direct threat to international peace. Among the victims we can mention American taxpayers: it is from their pockets that the Washington Administration intends to extract about 55,000 million dollars for carrying out their programme of building up a strategic stock of one billion barrels of oil in subterranean "warehouses". It is natural that the oil policy of the US Administration finds an increasingly smaller amount of supporters outside the White House. Few people believe that any policy, detrimental to American citizens and allies, threatening peace and undermining the fundamental decisions concerning the solution of the power problem, can be regarded as sensible. Egocentrism is not a commendable feature, especially if one claims the role of the champion of the common interest of the "free world".—APN.



THE POOR

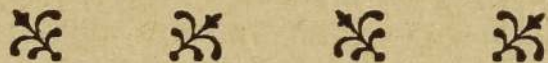
## Shouldn't Get Poorer

*Moscow, October 25:* The international food conference held seven years ago in Rome declared that by 1984 not a single child would go to sleep hungry and that not a single family would be thinking of the morrow with fear. That concerned above all the developing countries, the economic "outsiders" of our time. These forecasts, however, proved to be overoptimistic. Nearly 1,000 million people (with nearly 80 per cent of them women and children) in the Third World countries today are continuing to suffer from hunger or malnutrition. The unemployment level in these countries has exceeded the 450,000,000 mark, agricultural and industrial production is not making any headway and monetary reserves are exhausted. Is there a way out of this impasse?

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US President Reagan, speaking in Philadelphia on the eve of the "North-South" meeting in Cancun, went out of his way to persuade the developing countries to expand private enterprise as much as possible and to bring about an atmosphere favourable for foreign investments. His logic was as follows: the poor countries will be living all the better, the more diligently they are providing services for the rich West, the more privileges they offer to the transnational corporations of the imperialist world. This is most obvious economic egoism, the unchanged policy pursued by the industrialised West in its relations with the Third World countries. Because capitalism's economic giants are not interested at all in the real problems that face the developing countries. Their goal is super profits. Today 70 percent of Western aid is offered as private investments and, consequently, the dominating interests are not those of the receiving country, but those of the donor companies. Statistics show that the transnational corporations net 2.4 dollars per each dollar they spend. While in 1970-78 the USA invested some 9,000 million dollars in the economy of the developing countries, it pocketed 39,000 million dollars. "Recipes", the Reagan style, can hardly be of any use for the Third World countries. Only joint and concerted efforts against any manifestations of neo-colonialism and imperialist exploitation and for the building up of a new just economic order in the world can pave the way to a future without poverty for these countries.—APN.



MOTHER OF TWO

## And The Queen's Visit

By R. Kahawita

"Preparing for the Queen at Kalawewa" so captioned a news item in the *Ceylon Daily News* of Friday, 16th October. A correspondent toured the area to ascertain the reactions of the "local residents" to the Royal visit to their countryside. The highlight of the Royal tour was a visit to the world famous Aukana statue sculptured out of the living rock as it was, where it was and where it is. It must have been a magnificent sight, standing there watching the prosperity of a people with a serene expression of peace, until over-enthusiastic devotees attempted to protect the statue and restore what they thought was the background and the protection designed by the sculptor to his masterpiece; a symbol he created to perpetuate our culture, thousands of years old. Her Majesty the Queen is making the second visit to the area hallowed by the "sadhush" of our ancestors. Not a second visit but a thousand visits may not be sufficient to satiate one's yearning for eternal peace.

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The correspondent even ran into a "Gaja Banda" who well remembers waving to Her Majesty when she visited the shrine on the first occasion. He seems to treasure that memory of waving to Royalty though that waving may be like the waving to a soaring hawk up in the sky. It is the memory that matters, not whether the Royalty saw and recognized the waving of "Gaja Banda". May he live long to wave for a third visit. In the course of the questioning the residents, the *CDN* correspondent ran into "A Mother of Two" who did not identify herself but said: 'If more Queens and statemen would visit our area, the entire District could be developed much faster. Otherwise, we are forgotten lot'. We wonder how many readers took note of this statement by a *Mother of Two*! We are compelled to take note of these observations because during the same week we got stuck in the mud literally, on a V. C. road to our abode. This road has not been maintained over decades. Governments come and go, but our road remains the same. We got a couple of villagers to get ourselves out of the mud and after we recognized their good samaritanship to a beleaguered way-farer, they started throwing mud at our VIPP and politicians. And one even suggested that we should organize a "tamasha" and invite a VIP or a politician into our area, then the road that has suffered neglect for years would be like "the *Galle pase para wage eliwena isella*", meaning "before dawn the road will be like the Galle Face Drive". The sentiments of the Aukana mother and this good samaritan of Ennoruwa are the same. We are the inhabitants of this country. Anything is good for us. "We are a forgotten lot." However they hold the whip-hand. They have the vote and they can decide who should be what.

They are scattered in the eighty percent of our population who endure life in a neglected ruralia. This observation of "the *Mother of Two*" should not be discounted. Such utterances are indicative of the mood of the people today. We do not see them, we do not hear them because of the window dressing we do to receive a VIP into our area. In our enthusiasm to push through what we have set our hearts to do, we have lost touch with "the common man" who matters to us at the end. There are many like the *Mother of Two* who do not get an opportunity to express a view of our stewardship. They will express it at the voting. Should we wait till then? We experienced this in 1956 and thereafter in 1970. We claim we canvassed three million votes at the last election and we assume we are well away. Yes, the problem is to keep that three million with us and ally those who are not with us or enter the voting field by the next election. Allegiance do not remain the same forever. It changes. The people also understand the P R. system and know by now to get what they want. We should not rely too much on our last performance. They have trusted us and given a chance.



They may have endorsed our development programmes. But they also expected to get "their daily bread" with what they can earn. We have failed them in this. We read in the *CDN* of 27.10.81. "How the children went for the milk". Manners mean nothing to a starving people, so is allegiance to a political party.

We did ourselves real proud with our hospitality to a visiting royalty. We could not have done better. The receptions and farewells have now moved into "memory lane". Let us now gear ourselves to show hospitality to our people during the next two years. Let not a Friendship Society, distribution charity, witness again a hungry child "unceremoniously grabbing a glass of milk and gulping it down"—Never seen milk of any kind. It is beyond the means of the average "Lanka Mother". This is the message we have to understand today and get ready for tomorrow.



BOOST FOR REAGAN

## AWACS Sale

Alexander R. Sullivan

*Washington, October 29:* Nothing bestirs inhabitants of this capital more surely than a political contest pitting the President against the Legislative Branch, and President Reagan's showdown with the Senate over sale of aircraft to Saudi Arabia has been no exception. The 52 votes backing Reagan had no sooner been cast in the upper chamber, it seemed that politicians, ambassadors, journalists and bureaucrats were interpreting the results and predicting likely outcomes for future legislative confrontations. There are as many predictions of the effect the vote will have on Reagan's political future as there are persons pontificating, but no one can quarrel with the down-home assessment made on October 29 by James Baker of Houston, Texas, the President's White House chief of staff. Asked what impact the vote would have on Reagan in future contests with the legislative branch, he replied, "A lot more impact than a loss would have had. We're just one heck of a lot better off than if we'd suffered a loss". Baker called the vote—which defeated a resolution of disapproval of the sale—"a great tonic for the administration. . . . it should give us a political boost."

Reagan's last-minute lobbying effort with members of the Senate rescued what had seemed to be a faltering effort to sell to Riyadh five Airborne Warning And Control System (AWACS) aircraft. The House of Representatives had overwhelmingly approved a resolution disapproving the sale. More than half the members of the Senate had said at one time or another that the sale should be blocked.

A resolution of disapproval passed by both House would have halted the sale. Head counts made by White House officials and AWACS opponents in the Senate told a tale discouraging to the President: until the day of the vote, a majority of the Senate planned to stop the sale. "I think (the vote in the Senate) reflects the point," Baker said, "that the President retains his touch as far as his relationship with the Congress is concerned and we would argue forcefully that he has been the most effective President since Lyndon Johnson with respect to his relationships with the Congress and his ability to get legislation through the Congress."

Baker said the vote would not only signal other nations that the United States has a strong hand to play in the Middle East, but would also make the point "that the President was once again underestimated. It should give us a political boost." He said the episode would persuade members of Congress that the President could be relied on in future contests, even when the pressure mounted. As Baker phrased it, "It shows bipartisan political groups who go with the President that the President will stick with them, notwithstanding the odds. . . at a time when the contest looked almost hopeless. . . I think this indicates the President will be there for those people." Baker was more hesitant in predicting exactly how measurable Reagan's benefits will prove. He said he believes the President will now have less problem getting through the Congress arms sale one packages for such countries as Pakistan and Taiwan, not least because of the inter party teamwork developed in successfully pressing the AWACS proposal.

But Baker was less sanguine about the potential effect on Reagan's battle to persuade Congress that still more reductions must be made in the 1982 Federal Budget. Whatever benefits Reagan may derive from the AWACS vote, he could not have afforded a loss. His effort to shrink the size of the Federal Government, control the expansion of the Federal Budget and turn power back to the States is meeting with increasing resistance in the financial markets, in the public opinion polls, in the halls of Congress, and even within the confines of his own party. He is asking Congress to consider painful spending reductions and potential tax increases even as the Federal Government does less for the old, the sick and the poor. His plans for radically increasing defense spending are coming under more strident attack, and a house subcommittee has rejected his plan to build a new missile. In the sense that a defeat on AWACS might have emboldened his political opponents, the Senate's decision has given the President the opportunity to face the battles ahead as a winner and a persuader unequalled on today's political scene.—USICA.





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

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

Ref. No. 34/5/331

Reference No.

It is intended to acquire the land described in the Schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. No. 167 (part III) 13.11.1981

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. 167 (part III) 13.11.1981

#### SCHEDULE

*Name of Land* :- Naikandawatta  
*Village* :- Dodanduwa  
*D R O's Division* :- Wellaboda Pattu (South) Galle District.  
*Lot No* :- 01.  
*Plan and No* :- P.P. G 1659

The Kachcheri,  
 Galle.  
 October, 1981.

Acquiring Office,  
 Galle District.

#### SCHEDULE

*Name of Land* :- Mahawatta  
*Name of Village* :- Mudunakade in the Minor Division of Gandhaya South Korale  
*D. R. O's Division* :- Patahewaheta, Kandy District.  
*Lot No* :- 01.  
*P. Plan No.* :- Maha 1850

The Kachcheri,  
 Kandy.  
 October, 1981.

Assistant Government  
 District Land Officer  
 Kandy District.

#### TRANSNATIONALS AND

## Socio-Cultural Life

By Thalif Deen

*New York*: Transnational Corporations (TNC's) play a vital role in influencing the socio-cultural life styles in developing countries, according to a report recently released here by the UN Centre on Transnational Corporations UNCTC. The influence is felt most in four major areas: *commerical advertising, movies, television* and the *publishing industry*. The 30 page report says that of all the industries, advertising is most directly relevant to consumption patterns. The transnational network constructed by advertising agencies reaches back to before the Second World

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War. Today, this industry is thoroughly internationalised with agencies headquartered in the United States playing the most prominent role. Half of the total billings of the ten largest American advertising agencies were generated in 1979 by foreign operators. In the same year, 30 of the world's largest 50 advertising agencies had their headquarters in the United States (Japan followed with 11) and they accounted for the largest part of the international advertising market. The report estimates that while transnational advertising agencies have gained roughly half of the third world's market, they have captured over 90 per cent of the market in the Caribbean, over 80 per cent in Africa and nearly 60 percent in Latin America.

*The report says that the TNC's affect host country consumption patterns primarily through advertising and marketing techniques. These corporations*



concentrate the bulk of their advertising for Third World markets in food, food related beverage, tobacco, health and consumer goods industries—precisely the industries in which transnationals are most often accused of marketing unsafe or poorly made products. Further critics say extensive advertising creates its own market for products by suggesting new uses for them. Analysts of transnational corporate activity such as the UNCTC, often study to what extent TNC's help create needs rather than satisfying essential wants, especially in countries where there is a critical shortage of disposable income.

*The cinema industry, according to the report, is one of the first culture industries to become transnational on a larger scale, both in terms of production and distribution.* US exporters play a leading role in the international film industry, the report says, although a number of developing countries have acquired a prominent position in some regional markets, for example, India in East Africa. Films are not only an important medium for expressing and transmitting socio-cultural attributes says the report, they also have direct economic implications. The proliferation of products that are linked with important films are particularly noteworthy in this context, not only because they represent an important market but also because they expand the realm of mass culture. The report cites two examples *Star Wars* which generated more than 400 million dollars worth of by-products in less than one year and the *Saturday Night Fever Album* which sold more than 38 million copies world wide, half of them outside the United States.

*The television market is similar to that of film, according to the report. Programming in developing countries especially in popular entertainment, draws heavily on the successful series from the US market. A series like *Kojak*, for example, reaches audiences in over 100 countries. Major television companies of some developed market economies have a financial stake in a number of television stations in developing countries or are otherwise linked with them. In the publishing field, the first mass publishing products appearing on the international market were *comic strips*. The report cites the internationalisation of the comic strip "Blondie" which has been translated into 15 languages, sold to over 1,800 newspapers and have reached 150 million readers in 55 countries daily. The report says that while the domain of international magazine publishing is largely handled by US Corporations, that of book publishing is shared with corporations of other countries especially from Britain and France. The principal publishing houses of these countries have numerous foreign affiliates or other forms of associations. At times, books used in the educational system in host countries especially developing countries are supplied by transnational publishing corporations.—/PS/Lankapuvath.*

# NOTICE

## NATIONAL FILM CORPORATION

### SALE OF THE ASH OF BURNT UNSERVICABLE FILMS

Sealed quotations are hereby invited for the sale of the Ash of Burnt Unserviceable Films. Prices should be quoted per Cwt. of weight before burning. Highest bidder will be allowed to remove the stock of ash after paying the full quoted amount.

Quotations should be sent to reach the undersigned on or before 2.00 p.m. on 19th November 1981, with envelope marked on the Top Left Hand Corner "Quotations for the Sale of Ash of Burnt Unserviceable Films"

**GENERAL MANAGER**  
NATIONAL FILM CORPORATION  
OF SRI LANKA

224, Bauddhaloka Mawatha,  
Colombo. 7

N.T.C/401/M

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LARGEST PROFITS

## Energy Transnational

By Chakravarthi Raghavan

*Geneva:* The sales and cash flows of the major energy transnationals in 1980 far exceeded those of 1978. Energy TNCs emerged as last year's largest profit-makers, with year-end results up over 25 percent. This analysis is presented by the International Federation of Chemical, Energy and General Workers Union (ICEF) in its spring 1981 *Petroleum and Energy Industries Bulletin*. Of the eleven TNCs listed in the Bulletin, only two had less net income in 1980 than in 1978. *The TNCs, after their record sales and profits of 1979, had claimed that 1979 was an exceptional year that would not be repeated, but the 1980 figures show that sales and cash flow far exceeded those of 1979, proving it was no aberration. Worldwide recession and conservation measures had cut into consumption volume, but not sales revenue, since prices were simply raised to effect drop in volume and more.* "Conservation efforts which also began to lower demand in 1980 are likely to be rewarded by higher prices as long as the TNCs manipulate the game to maximise their cash flow", the bulletin says.

Declared profit rates of the TNCs in 1980 were lower than in 1979, but "only because they were measured against the high rates of the previous year and because corporations have become better at hiding their incomes from Governments". The TNCs lose money in high-tax countries by selling their oil or oil-products at high prices to their subsidiaries in these countries. Their cash flow is diverted from current revenue into depreciation reserves and new investments before declaring profits. Profits, if they turn up at all, do so in shipping subsidiaries registered in tax havens such as Liberia or Panama (two major countries giving facilities for flags—of convenience shipping. "Even with all the diversions, the energy TNCs emerged from 1980 as the largest profit-makers, with year-end results up over 25 percent. What is more the value of reserves in the ground is rising even faster than profits.—/PS/Lankapuvath.



FOR THE RECORD

## C.M.U. On World Food Day

RESOLUTION OF THE CEYLON MERCANTILE UNION ADOPTED ON WORLD FOOD DAY, OCTOBER 16, 1981.

THIS MEETING of members of the Ceylon Mercantile Union held on 16th October 1981, which  
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has been declared as "World Food Day" by the Food & Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations.

*Considers* that it is essential for the people of our country to realize that the problem of hunger in this country as in most other countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, is not in consequence of their being "underdeveloped" or of their peoples being "backward" or "lazy" but is as a direct result of the super-exploitation of the working people, both peasants and workers, and the mineral and food resources of these countries by transnational and national capitalist companies, with the active collaboration of their governments, as in the case of the present United National Party Government in Sri Lanka.

*Denounces* the policies of the UNP government whereby food subsidies have been stopped or severely slashed at the behest of Imperialist governments and agencies, like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, with denial of guaranteed food rations at prices that the people can afford, with the resulting steep rise in food prices and rapidly spreading malnutrition and hunger, particularly amongst infants and children.

*Condemns* the Government for the series of arbitrary increases in the prices of essential food commodities imposed by it in the last three years, capped by the most recent increases in the price of flour and bread, with consequent increase in the price of rice, and the failure of the government at the same time, to reduce sugar prices commensurately with the reduction in the price of sugar on the world market.

*Denounces* the treacherous subservience of the Government to transnational and other foreign companies whereby they are being granted large tracts of land in so-called Agricultural Investment Promotion Zones and elsewhere, with tax concessions and other benefits, for the productions of food crops for export, by the exploitation of the labour of agricultural workers and peasant small-holders.

*Further denounces* the concessions given to foreign and local companies for large scale export of sea food, milk products and vegetables at the expense of the limited food resources available to the people of this country.

*Demands* (1) a total ban on the export of any food crops, vegetables, sea food or milk food; (2) cancellation of all leases or sales of land to foreign companies and ban on the grant of any land to foreign or local companies for the production of any food products for export or for processing of foods products by transnational companies operating the local food market; (3) cancellation of agreements whereby milk processing, flour milling or other



operations have been handed over to transnational companies; (4) restoration of guaranteed rations of rice, flour and other essential food commodities to the people at prices that will ensure adequate food consumption for all people.

*Resolve* that the Union should mobilise its own membership and act in concert with other unions as well as the Provincial National Committee for a Mass Worker's Party, for effective opposition to the reactionary food policies of the UNP government by all possible means.

**Bala Tampoe**  
*General Secretary.*

No. 2, 22 nd Lane,  
Colombo 2.

**NOTE:** The resolution reproduced above was adopted at a general meeting of the Ceylon Mercantile Union, held at the CMU headquarters on 16th October 1981, following a stoppage of work by members of CMU Branches in the Colombo district, in accordance with a decision of the General Council of the Union, to protest against the food policies of the Government and the recent increases in the prices of flour and bread in particular.



JOURNEY TO AFGHANISTAN—5

## Arrival Kabul

By S. P. Amarasingam

The Afghan countryside, seen from the air, soon becomes a monotonous vista of endless mountains criss-crossed with valleys. The novelty of seeing sheep grazing on craggy hill slopes, of camels trekking on lonely mountain tracks and of convoys of motor trucks wending their way on macadamised strips deep in the valleys, soon wears out. About two hours after leaving Delhi the steward announced the plane would be shortly landing at Kabul airport, about 9.30 a.m. by Indian (and Sri Lankan) Standard Time, and 8.30 a.m. by Afghan time. The outside temperature, we were told, was 32 degrees centigrade.

Most of the western press reports I had read said that the "rural countryside" was under "rebel" control. Take the article in *The Wall Street Journal* of New York on July 24, 1981 by Harry Kramer entitled *Afghanistan Tribesmen Fight Communist Army To A Stalemate And Rule Most of The Countryside*. I will cite a lengthy extract from it to show the kind of scenario western journalists were insistent on painting. It plugged the same kind of line that western media resort to denigrate popular Revolu-

tions in any part of the world: "... Afghanistan's Moslem tribesmen began their crusade after a Communist government took over in Kabul in the 1978 military coup. They have continued the fight against 85,000 Russian soldiers who arrived in 1979 to save the Communist government from the incursions of the Moslem warriors. The Moslems aren't winning against these odds, but diplomats and others observing the clash of the cultures describe the situation as a stalemate. They say the Russians appear to have decided to protect the cities and their military bases, leaving the countryside to the insurgents. The Kabul government hasn't any presence in 95% of the country, one observer says, and the morale of the mujahideen remains high. Even in the cities the Moslems have made some gains. The Mujahideen have taken control of large parts of Kandahar, the second-largest city, after hand-to-hand combat with Russian and Afghan troops. At night, diplomatic sources say, Herat and Jalalabad are in rebel control. The mujahideen can cut off major highways for days at a time, and many roads are passable only in the daytime by armed military convoys".

The only source Kramer referred to were "diplomats and others" in Pakistan observing the scene. On the "control of the countryside" Kannan Srinivasan in his article in the *Economic and Political Weekly* had this to say: "... It then becomes important to ascertain the extent of effective Soviet control in the country. Journalists have noted that rebel groups move about freely in the country; this does not signify very much in a country where there is practically no rural administration below the rank of Governor, and the government depends entirely on the co-operation of the local elite. Neither is the impressiveness (or inadequacy) of the 'leadership-in-exile a true measure of the Afghan resistance: at the very best the 'leaders are mere epiphenomena. They direct none of the combat, do not inspire their men; their role is to provide arms and their influence ends with the transaction, at the border...." The "rural countryside" in Afghanistan does not appear to be what it is anywhere else. It is one vast mountainous desert where the writ of government has never run. It was and still is a unique kind of No Man's Land. I shall come back to this later.

Harry Kramer also referred to the difficult situation among the mujahdeen and the "marvelous fight they are putting up against the Russians: "... But the various groups of the Mujahideen", Kramer said, "remain separate, disorganised entities, rarely coordinating their attacks. They pay lip service to unity, a Western diplomat says, 'but whenever they bury the hatchet, it's in somebody else's back..." Soviet troops are making retaliatory raids against villages that aid the mujahideen, refugees say, Scores of villages have been scorched by Russian artillery, jets and helicopter gunships following mujahideen am—

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bushes nearby, adding to the flow of refugees. More than two million Afghan refugees are now in neighbouring Pakistan, and up to a million more are in Iran, totalling 15 to 20% of Afghanistan's population. The Russian presence in Afghanistan has failed to stop the murderous infighting among the factions of the Afghan Communists or to broaden the base of the Government of President Babrak Karmal who was installed when the Russians invaded. 'Things have gotten to the stage where the majority of the Afghan people won't accept anyone who's acceptable to the Russians', a diplomat in Pakistan says ... Journalists who have accompanied the mujahideen inside Afghanistan say they suffer from the lack of advanced weapons, especially anti-aircraft weapons for use against the armour-plated helicopters that the Russians use with devastating effect against the Mujahideen. No one expects the Russians to tire of Afghanistan. In fact, they may hope to wear down the rebel's resistance...." Kramer again does not say where he got his information. And the only source he refers to is a "diplomat in Pakistan".

About "sources" Srinivasan says: "It is three years since the Parcham-Khalq coup and a year and a half since the Soviet invasion. The news from Afghanistan has been generally unreliable; the quality of information is important if one is to decide on the durability of the Soviet presence. There have been reports as the assassination of one or another leader who has later turned out to be alive: Anahita Ratebazad, for instance, was reported assassinated when in fact she was in Delhi. It is claimed with all confidence that US Ambassador Adolph Dubs was assassinated by the Khalq; others say Settam-i-Melli carried it out. There is nothing to show that either group was responsible. It is similarly believed, despite the Pakistan's sensitivity to Soviet realisation and the China's lack of demonstrable enthusiasm for the Afghan Maoists that they have been sponsoring large scale aid to the Afghan rebels. It is believed that the Afghans have risen as one man against the Soviet invader and that they have destroyed tanks numberless. It is assumed, on the other hand, that the Soviet Union is incapable of practising tribal politics". None of these stories or assertions were ever confirmed or followed up. The fact is that most reports and comments about Afghanistan in the Western media have turned out to be more fiction than fact. They seem to be only part of a clever cold war motivated mythomania

On the whole, it was a bizarre picture full of contradictions and palpable inexactitudes. If the reports of the Western journalists are correct—that the mujahideens controlled the entire countryside and also some of the major towns like Herat and Kandahar, especially at night—the only conclusion that could be drawn is that there was no government

worth speaking about in Afghanistan. But this did not seem to be the case. From the confusing picture that stemmed from the reports I had read about the situation in Afghanistan, all I could say is that a laboured attempt was being made to show that the insurgency in Afghanistan was now more widespread than what it was during the early stages of Soviet military intervention; that the Soviet troops as such were not engaged in any large-scale combat operations; that the Afghan army had been restructured and reorganised to carry out the punitive expeditions; that the Soviet forces generally provided them with air cover, beside conducting bombing attacks on suspected guerrilla hideouts in the mountains. But what was also abundantly clear was that reports reaching the outside world through various sources did not corroborate the Western allegations that the Soviet authorities had brought in more troops in substantial numbers to deal with continued and increased rebel activity in the outer provinces. But all the available reports revealed a rare consensus in the media that neither the Soviet occupation nor the alleged increased insurgent activity had disrupted the economic life of the people: that though the villagers in some remote outlying provinces sometimes experienced shortage of essential commodities like sugar and kerosene, the larger towns were at all times well supplied with food, fruit and other normal requirements. It was also accepted that the Afghani (the national currency) has remained quite strong, varying between 5 to 6 to an Indian rupee or 45 to 50 to a US dollar, the two main foreign currencies that are still the mainstay in the Kabul money market. The big cities and towns were admittedly relatively calm but all western reports add the proviso that "this surface phenomenon does not conceal the underlying tension".

If all that Western journalists and publicists would have us believe is true, then the Babrak Karmal government must permanently be on the hop capable only of defensive postures without being able to conduct its business in a normal manner. But the reality seems to be that the government is sure about its own position and that it has for sometime sought a political settlement more or less on its own terms to end the foreign intervention without surrendering any of its sovereign political imperatives. On July 14, Shah Mohamed Dost, Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan was interviewed by a *Tass* correspondent about the Carrington EEC proposals for a "settlement" of the situation around Afghanistan. He had said: "I would like to say that the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has not received from the EEC or any other body any proposal so far in connection with the so-called conference on Afghanistan". From reports of news agencies he said, it was clear that the EEC proposal was a repetition of the ideas which were earlier put forward



by the imperialist countries, and were in their essence directed at undermining the Afghan revolution. It provided for the convocation of a two-stage conference on Afghanistan allegedly to "ensure an end to foreign interference and guarantees of non-admission of such interferences in the future".

But the proposed composition of the participants in the conference and the agenda constitute open interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs. Mr. Dost stressed that the proposal sought to solve the 'Afghan issue' without the participation of the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. This stand was not only unrealistic, but was also totally unacceptable to the Afghan people. The Afghan Foreign Minister further said that there already was a realistic and comprehensive plan for a political settlement of the situation which had taken shape around Afghanistan and for the normalisation of relations between Afghanistan and her neighbours. This plan has been set out in detail on May 14, 1980 and was reaffirmed on May 13, 1981. The only way towards a political settlement Mr. Dost had said was to end the interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs from the outside. But unfortunately, such interference from Pakistan's territory continued to increase day by day. A number of states, including the USA, Britain and other Western countries and some Moslem reactionary regimes, helped gangs of anti-Afghan mercenaries to be armed, trained, equipped and sent into Afghanistan for staging brutal acts of violence against the population. Armed interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs had become the official policy of the United States and some other countries. The Afghan and Soviet governments had repeatedly declared that when an end is put to this foreign military armed interference against Afghanistan and its non resumption is firmly guaranteed, the Soviet Union will withdraw in agreement with and the consent of the DRA its limited military contingent from Afghanistan.

It was necessary, Dost pointed out, to start the whole process with direct talks between representatives of the DRA and Pakistan and between representatives of the DRA and Iran. Since May 1980 the Afghan Government has proposed at least six times at different levels that the government of Pakistan and Iran sit down at the negotiating table and draw up mutually acceptable agreements on a normalisation of relations on the basis of generally recognised principles of international law and the UN Charter. This proposal had also been put forward at the 35th Session of the UN General Assembly, on the eve of the 11th session of Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Conference Organisation in May 1980, prior to the meeting of foreign ministers of Moslem States in El Taiff in January 1981, and at the meeting of foreign ministers of non-aligned countries in February 1981. Mr. Dost also recalled that Pakistani leaders

themselves had on several occasions put forward the idea of a meeting between representatives of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Kabul received positive suggestions about a direct dialogue between the two neighbouring countries. And in order to assist in such a dialogue the DRA did not object to the participation in such a meeting of the UN Secretary-General or his representative, but the Pakistani leaders had several times changed their stand and gone back on their own proposal, apparently not without pressure from the outside. . . The government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan is now as before ready to start talks with the government of Pakistan. Objectively there are no obstacles. Only goodwill was necessary. Once again we call upon Islamabad to sit down at the negotiating table in the best of our countries." This statement by Mr. Dost certainly did not appear to come from a government that was weak or on the verge of collapse.

I was full of confused thoughts when the plane landed in Kabul and the questions uppermost in my mind were (a) whether there was sufficient normality in Afghanistan for it to pursue a political settlement to end the intervention, or (b) whether the war of intervention has to be fought to a military finish as in Vietnam or (c) whether the Afghan Revolution would be snuffed out and suffer the same fate as so many emancipatory revolutions in history. It would certainly not be easy to find the answers to the questions during my short stay in Afghanistan. But the brief opportunity to see for myself and speak to people in Kabul and elsewhere (if possible) would help me to understand the situation better.

The plane descended slowly and made a perfect landing. Kabul city is situated in a valley surrounded by high mountains. From the air the entire valley appeared to be fertile compared to the arid regions over which we had flown. Kabul city, according to an official brochure, was at an altitude of over 5,000 feet above sea level. "The city is dominated by two high hills, the Asmai and the Sherdarwaza, separated by a narrow gap through which flows the Kabul River. The hills are crested by the ancient walls which can be seen from many parts of the city. The old city of Kabul lies on the northeast side of Sherdarwaza between the hills and the river. The north bank of the city has undergone extensive renewal in recent years, and is now the heart of the modern city of Kabul. This section contains many hotels, restaurants, shops, officers and government buildings. To the southwest of the two hills lie the residential neighbourhoods of Karte-Seh, Karte-Char, Karte-Denau, and also Kabul University. To the north of Asmai Hill are Shar-i-Nau, the fashionable shopping district, and several new residential areas such as Wazir Akbar Khan Mina, and Micro Rayan".

TRIBUNE, November 14, 1981



About the history of Kabul the same book had said: "Kabul is one of the historical old cities of Central Asia. It is believed that the Kabha River mentioned in the Rig-Veda refers to the Kabul River and Vekerata appears as the name of Kabul itself in the Avesta. Ptolemy, writing in the second century AD speaks of Kabura, the capital of the Kabolitae on the Kophen River. The Kabul area has witnessed the coming and passing of many great empires during its long history. Alexander the Great passed by Kabul. Following the death of the Macedonian, Kabul was part of the Seleucid, Mauryan, Bactrian, and Kushan Empires in rapid succession. Arabs first introduced Islam to the region in the seventh century. Three hundred years later Kabul was part of the empire of the great Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni who ruled from Persia to India. In the following centuries, Kabul passed under the rule of the Seljuks, Chorids, Mongols and Timurids. Following the reign of Ahmad Shah Durani in 1747, Kabul became one of the foremost cities of the Kingdom, and after 1773, its capital. During the nineteenth century, Kabul was in a constant state of turmoil caused by internal strife over the quartering of a British garrison resulting in the two Anglo-Afghan wars. The British were finally defeated in 1879 and order was restored during the reign of Amir Abdul Rahman who ascended the throne in 1880... "

It is a brief summary of nearly four thousand years of history. I found out later from my discussions with persons familiar with Afghan history and also from books said to be authoritative that this short account, though oversimplified was essentially correct. I had also, in my student days, read about the Anglo-Afghan wars, but I could not recall details.

As we taxied along the runway, there were large number of war planes and helicopters parked at one end. They were no doubt of Russian origin. Through the plane window it was difficult to say whether the people I saw near the aircraft were Russians or Afghans.

*To be continued....*

## REVIEW

### DOSSIERS - A Novel Publication

DOSSIERS—a collection of published material on specific topics gathered from disparate sources, both local and foreign, and put together in compact form and made available at a nominal price—form a novel method of communication adopted by *The Centre for Society & Religion*. What makes these dossiers different from other such types of publications is that many of the articles contained in them are from sources which do not usually find a permanent place in any similar collections, such articles being mainly from newspapers and journals which are considered to be of ephemeral values, but which later turn out to be hard-to-get source material for reference and study. The fact that they are available in 'capsule' form facilitates those who are in search of material on a given topic to masticate such material in one sitting instead of running helter-skelter to every library or research institute. This has been

made possible by the professional manner material on various topics that have been put together into box files and made available in the Documentation Section of the Centre Library. What adds further value to the CSR dossiers is that papers presented at the various seminars it has been conducting periodically are sometimes included in them, together with reproductions of appropriate excerpt from official Bills, Acts, Presidential Commission Reports the Parliamentary Hansard, and even from the election manifestoes of Political Parties. In order to give them a historical perspective the origins of particular subject-matters discussed are recounted briefly.

ALTHOUGH THESE DOSSIERS may relatively lack the qualitative content of CSR's prestigious quarterly "Logos" or its sister journal "Quest", the wealth of material found in them would help students, researchers, journalists and even laymen in the pursuit of their respective studies, particularly on contemporary subjects of socio-economic importance. Perhaps, these dossiers are the only publications of their kind in Sri Lanka, which seem to meet such a long-felt need. Their value is further enhanced by the inclusion of useful statistical data that generally form a part of these dossiers. In order to give them a more attractive format they are often enlivened with a judicious admixture of pictures, cartoons and 'fillers' appropriately chosen.

Upto now the Centre has put out no less than 81 such dossiers each of which has been of topical interest at the time of their publication and whose value has not diminished since then. A random selection of these dossiers will give an indication of both their topicality and variety viz: Dependent Capitalism & Democratic Socialism in Sri Lanka; Foreign Trade Development Council; Trade Unions and the Strike—July 1980; Poverty and Income Distribution; The Long Trek—Saga of the Plantation Worker; Peasant Agriculture; Sri Lanka & Environmental Problems; Violence in Jaffna; Sri Lanka & the Energy Crisis. At this point of time, of these the last five deal with subjects of contemporary interest that have engaged the attention of the General Public. They should find a permanent place in any collection that deals with these subjects.

An added feature that lends these dossiers with a more balanced presentation is the diverse range of view-points represented in each of them. This does not however obviate them from maintaining a particular thrust, in keeping with the Centre's credo of social justice and integral human liberation. They have been often priced to be within the reach of those whose desire to acquire such dossiers. There is, however, a paucity of such dossiers in Sinhala and Tamil which could meet the growing needs of so wide a readership now starved of source material of this nature. These dossiers could fill in this lacuna in no small measure if made available in these languages too, which would earn the gratitude of the indigenous intelligentsia, be they decision-makers at the top or opinion-leaders at grass-roots level.

—Aravinda—



## Gimmick or ?

IS IT NOT TRUE that the discussion on Dambala will not be complete without referring to scientist Ranil Senanayake's article on the winged bean published in the *Sun* on October 7? That in this article, after a preliminary homily on the ethical dilemma faced by scientists to express an opinion on products like Dambala which has been "adopted" by First-World-funded organisations set up to sponsor new high-protein food crops for third World countries which will need the fertilisers and agro-chemicals manufactured by multinationals? That Senanayake went on to say: "In Sri Lanka we have had a beautiful harvest of conferences of international scientists. Scientists are looked up to because of the clear system of logic and reasoning that they use to describe reality. There is, however, one factor that can affect the statements or conclusions arrived at by this method of reasoning and logic, that factor being personal honesty. If one is a 'little dishonest' one can bend the data a little to suit any desired conclusion. This state of affairs does exist amongst some members of the scientific community, but the scientific method has not suffered for their cheating..."? That Ranil also suggested that "if a scientist utters dishonest statements he will soon lose his credibility or his potential to be believed. This is how society can defend itself from manipulations of the truth and this is how a scientific community defends itself from its dishonest members? That after this opening canter, Ranil turned to "the scientists who are attending the winged bean conference in Sri Lanka? That it would appear that this article was written at the time of the much-publicised conference but that it has found its way into print only on October 7? That on the virtues (if any) of dambala, Ranil Senanayake said: "Being erudite and well read men they must be aware of the controversy that rages over the attempt to institutionalize the winged bean in Sri Lanka. But there is more that we must examine. What is the ideal role for winged beans? It seems that all published reports rate it as a fine plant for the home garden. In Sri Lanka the winged bean is a common plant in home gardens, more the Sri Lankan variety is one that yields well in low light situations. This means that you do not have to clear fields for its growth. In its present form it does not require high fertilizer input nor pesticide input. It can grow on fences and hedges and can compete with weeds and wild plants. Is this the role, that is, one of a nutritious, easily grown, trouble-free crop suited for home gardens? Or do they want to 'develop' it to be a crop suited for large farm situations requiring a high capital and energy input?"

THAT RANIL THEREAFTER RAISED a very important question: "If Sri Lanka is going to invest capital or manpower in an institute to develop winged beans, we should be well aware as to whose interests it will serve"? That this is the crucial question? That he sought to provide the answer: "A politico has stated that there can soon be a powerful lobby against such an institute. A reasonable question is who? If the institute would 'develop' or keep the winged bean as a home garden crop, we can expect the lobby against the institute to come from the big money interests of agri-business who would want winged beans to become a commercial crop. If the Institute would develop the winged bean to become a plantation or energy dependent crop, that the lobby against the institute will come from people who are interested in utilizing our resources to assist the small farmer"? That he then went on to explain: "*The history of this controversy shows that it is the latter argument that prevails, and that the lobby against the Institute is comprised of a handful of local scientists and journalists. Why then should the politico state that this lobby is powerful? For they are mostly working people. Is there big money involved in these days when power means money? Surprisingly the power of this lobby is not in its financial strength. It lies more in their scientific and journalistic credibility....* There is another lesson to be learned from this exercise. Ultimately it will be small farmer, if indeed decisions are made in his direction, who will actually determine the success or failure of the winged bean endeavour. Under most circumstances, the third world subsistence farmer knows what is good for himself and his family if given the information as to the value of a new crops. Thus, instead of future conference, funds could be more wisely spent in providing seeds and information for the farmer who will, in the end, determine the value of the winged bean. The support required for a single conference delegate would buy large quantities of seeds which could be planted"?

THAT THE QUESTION that must be asked is one which we had asked at the beginning of the dambala exercise—is it a gimmick, or is it anything more? That it will be interesting to know what progress has been achieved in pushing the cultivation of dambala to make it the high protein food of ordinary people? That this high protein intake can be achieved only if the (very hard) mature seed is processed to make it palatable and eatable? That in the meantime the local hullabaloo for the wonder miracle "winged bean" has disappeared like the proverbial Cheshire cat? That the next time when funds become available for a seminar the Cheshire (Dambala) Cat's grin will come into view?



# MAHAWELI AUTHORITY OF SRI LANKA

## POST OF ACCOUNTANT GRADE II

Applications are invited from citizens of Sri Lanka for a Post of Accountant Grade II in the Mahaweli Authority. The vacancy is in the Head Office.

### Qualifications and Experience:-

(a) Intermediate Examination of the institute of Chartered Accountants.

OR

(b) Professional Part I of the ICMA or ACCA, Diploma in Accountancy with 1 year post qualification experience.

(c) Knowledge in financial Accounting and Book keeping will be an added suitability.

**Salary Scale:** Rs. 1350/- (8xRs. 50) Rs. 1750/- per month plus all other Government approved allowances.

Applications indicating age, qualifications, experience and other relevant particulars should be forwarded under registered cover to reach the undersigned on or before 30th November, 1981. The post applied for should be clearly indicated on the top left hand corner of the envelope.

Applications from persons in the State Sector will be considered only if the head of the Department/Corporation certifies that the candidate can be released if selected.

**SECRETARY - GENERAL**  
MAHAWELI AUTHORITY OF SRI LANKA  
No. 500, T. B. Jayah Mawatha,  
Colombo 10.



# CENTRAL ENGINEERING CONSULTANCY BUREAU REGISTRATION OF SUPPLIERS AND CONTRACTORS 1982

- (1) Applications are invited from Suppliers and Contractors for registration for Suppliers and Services to the Central Engineering Consultancy Bureau for the year 1982 for the undermentioned Items.
- (2) Applications indicating the name of Manufacturer Supplier/Contractor Registered Address, Telephone Number and item of Supply/Services should be sent by Registered Post to reach the undersigned on or before 04.12.81.
- (3) Separate Application for each category of item should be forwarded where Supplier wishes to Register for the Supply/Service of more than one Item.
- (4) The top left hand corner of the envelope of each application should be clearly marked "REGISTRATION OF SUPPLIERS/CONTRACTORS 1982" "Item No....."
- (5) The Bureau reserves the right in the selection of Suppliers/Contractors.

## CLASSIFICATIONS OF ITEMS

- (1) Stationery
- (2) Printing General
- (3) Date Stamps, Rubber Stamps, Steel Date Stamps & Brass Date Seals
- (4) Steel Cupboards and Steel Cabinets
- (5) Calculating Machines and Type Writers
- (6) Iron Safes and Cash Boxes
- (7) Office Furniture
- (8) Rugs, Brooms and Brushes
- (9) Soap, Disinfectants, Curtains, Detergents, Insecticides and Fungicides
- (10) First Aid Kits, Medicines & Drugs
- (11) Linen for Uniforms, Curtains, Dusters Etc.
- (12) Building Materials
- (13) Electrical Items and Units
- (14) Motor Spares, Tyre, Tubes and Batteries
- (15) Type Writers and Office Machines repairing and Servicing
- (16) Retreading of Tyres
- (17) Repairing and Electrical Items
- (18) Repairing and Polishing of Office Furniture
- (19) Binding of Books
- (20) Transport of Goods
- (21) Drawing Materials and Drawing Instruments

*Addl. General Manager*  
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