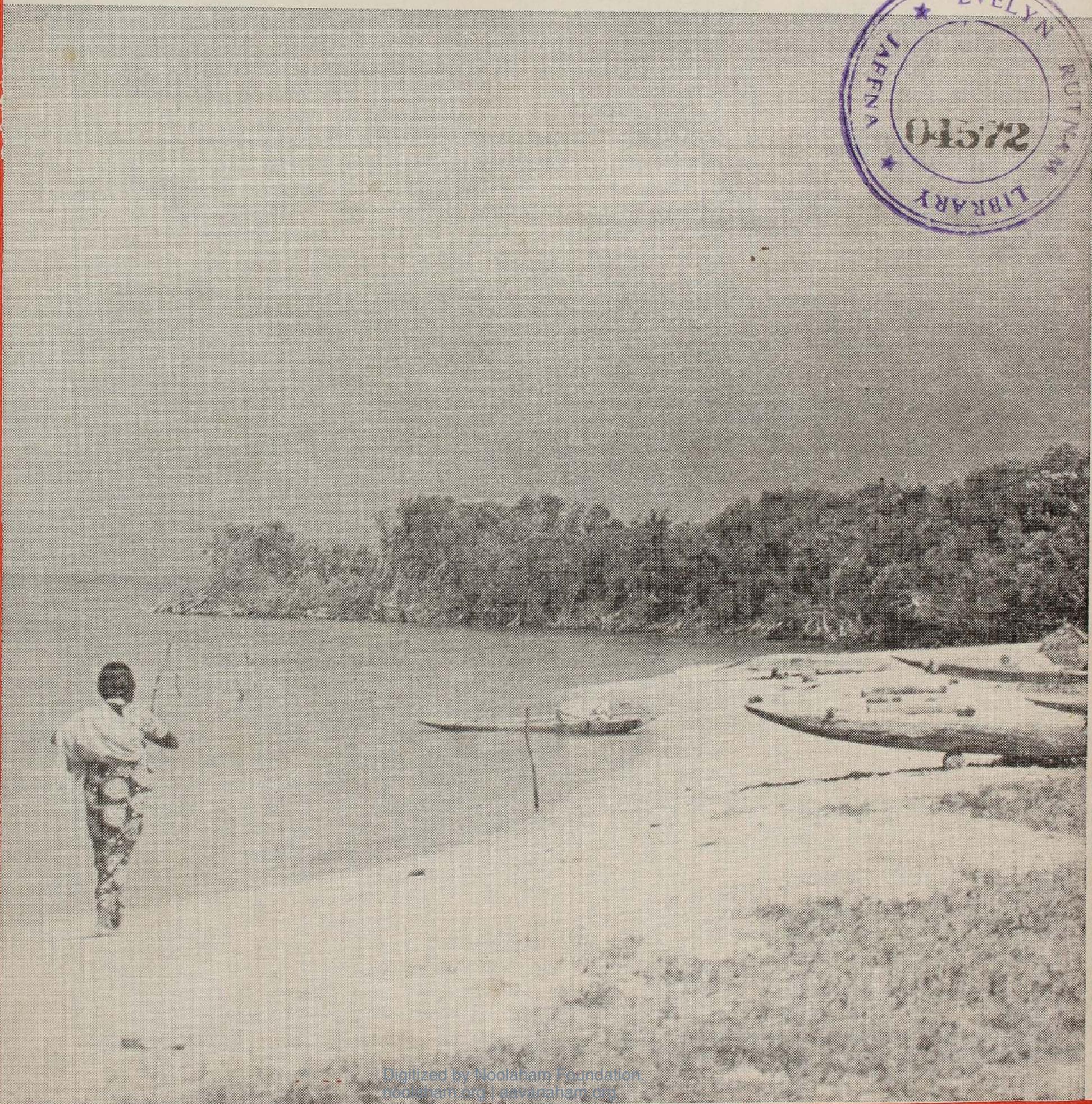


# TRIBUNE



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## Letter From The Editor

IT IS NOT OFTEN that the Editor of *Tribune* gets an opportunity to have a worm's-eye-view of massive governmental projects on his own terms. Such an opportunity was afforded to him last week-end together with a few perceptive journalists from other papers who were able to make the trip. The terms laid down by *Tribune* and fully endorsed by the other journalists were that: (i) that the trip should not be a Cook's-type (packaged) tour conducted by the multitude of media consultants and media men who have now over-run the Mahaweli and created a growing communication gap between the press and the people on the one hand and the Mahaweli Ministry, Board and Authority on the other; (ii) that the itinerary would be drawn by the journalists with allowance for zig-zags and variations in the schedules; and (iii) that the discussions on the trip would be off-the-record to enable the journalists to shift reality from propaganda in their talks with officials. The Central Engineering Consultancy Bureau of the Mahaweli Complex—a unit that is today playing a key role in the construction sector—agreed to provide an opportunity for some of us to view the progress of work in the Accelerated Mahaweli Plan. It was not possible for most of us to be away from our desks for more than a couple of days and it was therefore not possible to see all of the Mahaweli Project in one trip. For this voyage of discovery we chose some of the construction sites for a start—Miiipe Aicut, the Transbasin Channel, Uthitiya Dam Site and the Ratkinda Dam Site on the first day and Victoria and Kattmale on the second day. The other construction sites, like Maduru Oya, would have to be done on another trip together with incursion through the new settlement areas which may need extra time because it would involve talking to people. This is the rough overall plan that was envisaged. When we ventured on this trip; and we hope that the whole programme will be completed without undue delay. One official from the Ministry and one from CECB accompanied us—they answered questions and entered into discussions that were sparked off at every turn—but they made no attempt to indoctrinate propagandist bul yho or hide what could not be hidden. Being an off-the-record odyssey, no punches were pulled and there was free and frank discussion on all matters. The officials did not attempt to lecture—although they had all the facts and answers on their finger tips—and more often than not were at the wrong end of an argument. And the discussions were not confined to dam construction or the pros and cons of the Mahaweli Project. It ranged from environment to archaeology from history to proto-history—in fact, everything about the areas we visited or traversed.

(To Be Continued)

# TRIBUNE

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## Fisheries

**WE HAVE CHOSEN A PICTURE ON THE COVER** to tell a story about the Ceylon Fisheries Corporation which is perhaps the only Corporation which has so far been able to stage a dramatic clean-up to produce spectacular results within a short time.

"The Ceylon Fisheries Corporation from its very inception in 1965 ran at an annual loss of over Rs. 16 million. In October 1980 Mr. Festus Perera, the Minister of Fisheries, dissolved the Board of the Corporation and appointed the Secretary to the Ministry of Fisheries Mr. Anura Weeraratne as the Chairman of the Ceylon Fisheries Corporation. In addition he appointed a Board consisting of Mr. C. Wijetunge as Managing Director, Mr. M. Somasunderam of the Treasury, Mr. D. Amerasinghe of the People's Bank, Mr. Brian Forbes of the Bank of Ceylon and Mr. A. Rangunathan of the Colombo Dockyard. The Minister gave instructions to the new Board to put the Corporation's matters into order within 3 months. The new Board paid off the excess workers, introduced new techniques of management and divided the Corporation into various profit centres. Yesterday it was announced that the Corporation had made a profit of over Rs. 1 million for December only. As promised the Minister of Fisheries on Thursday the 8th of January distributed 50 percent of the profits of the Corporation to the workers at Mutwal, Galle and Tangalle. Some of the employees received as much as Rs. 3000/— as their share of the profit for the month of December only. This profit sharing scheme which has been introduced by the Board of Directors of the Ceylon Fisheries Corporation along with rigid discipline has been instrumental in bringing about this very quick transformation of the Ceylon Fisheries Corporation from a losing concern to a profit earning venture. In addition, the Ceylon Fisheries Corporation is now achieving the two major objectives for which it was established: (1) Giving a reasonable price to the producer (the fishermen) so that they will be protected from the clutches of the Mudalali and (2) selling the fish at reasonable prices to the consumers.

"The Corporation has now commenced achieving both these objectives. In fact, as the Fisheries Minister stated yesterday the profits of the Corporation earned during December were not by keeping excessive margins. The Corporation is allowed to keep only a 10 percent margin between the purchase price and the sales price of their fish. In fact, this profit has been due to a 500 to 600 percent increase in turnover of the Corporation's activities within a short period of time.

"Mr. Festus Perera, the Minister of Fisheries, addressing the gatherings at Mutwal, Galle and Tangalle said he was forced to resort to a drastic measure in scrapping the former Ceylon Fisheries Corporation Board and handing it over to Mr. Anura Weeraratne, the Secretary to the Ministry, to make it a viable venture as he was very dissatisfied in the manner that the Corporation's affairs had been handled previously. He was very proud that within a very short space of time Mr. Anura Weeraratne was able to turn the Corporation into a profit earning venture.

"Dr. Dahanayake, MP for Galle, Mr. Jinadasa Weerasinghe MP for Tangalle and Dr. Ranjit Atapattu, Project Minister, Colombo Group of Hospitals and MP for Beliatta, congratulated the Minister of Fisheries for the success he had achieved in the Ceylon Fisheries Corporation in such a short period. The employees of the Fisheries Corporation said that they are sure that if His Excellency, The President, were to hand over all losing Corporations to Mr. Festus Perera, the Minister of Fisheries and to Mr. Anura Weeraratne, these too could be made into very profitable organisations in a short space of time."

**The way the Fisheries Corporation has been cleaned up and made to work profitably should be followed by other Corporations.**

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### EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

## Kalawana Postscript

Colombo, Jan. 20,

The UNP did well to persuade Abeyratne Pilapitiya to submit his resignation, and also other UNPers not to raise the question whether the vacancy created by Pilapitiya's resign-

ation should not be filled by nomination under the provisions of the 1978 Constitution. Such a move would have come up against the point raised by Mr. R. Kahawita in the *Tribune* of January 3, 1980 (Vol. 25 No. 24). He had drawn attention to the fact that when A. B. H. Pilapitiya was nominated to be an MP in September 1979 the Gazette notification had stated that was to be "the member for the Electoral District No. 159—Kalawana—in the First Parliament". Mr. Kahawita very correctly had stressed that Pilapitiya had not been "reinstated to the Second parliament, the second in the present term of office." If this argument is correct, then the nomination was bad *ab initio*. When the Supreme Court held that the 1977 election was null and void, it can be further argued that a vacancy (which could be filled by nomination under the 1978 Constitution) had not in fact arisen. All these questions will certainly have been canvassed in our Courts if Sarath Muttetuwegama had not been able to take his oaths on January 20—pending the Referendum. But Pilapitiya's resignation and UNP's acceptance that the seat should go to the winner of the by-election on January 12, has brought a "happy ending" to an episode that had threatened to undermine the growth of genuine democratic traditions in this country. This is a way out *Tribune* had suggested several times in recent weeks.

The news about Pilapitiya's resignation last week-end had come as an anti-climax. Everybody had been keyed up to the holding of the Referendum. Speculative theories had begun to float around. What if, out of pique, people had voted "no"? *The Journal* (UNP) of Friday, January 16, in a front page lead had stressed THE NEED FOR A REFERENDUM. "There has never been a greater need for a referendum than at the present moment, particularly after the results of the Kalawana by-election. President Jayewardene explained this explicitly to the Government Party recently when he said that the Third Amendment to the Constitution was brought to allow the person elected at the by-election to take his seat in Parliament. The Bill was referred to the Supreme Court, which ruled that it would be law after it was passed by a two-third majority in Parliament and also referred to a Referendum. The Government had decided to abide by the ruling of the Supreme Court . . . ."

On Saturday morning (Jan. 17), the *Sun*

had a splash that Pilapitiya would resign and thus resolve the Kalawana tangle. The *Sunday Observer* went to town with this story, but the *Sunday Times* and the *Week-end* had lower key spreads on the first page, but Migara in his column *Men & Matters* left no stone unturned to unravel the less known aspects of the Kalawana melodrama. All the papers published the Pilapitiya letters—to the President, to the Speaker and the Secretary-General of Parliament—all dated January 15. In a speech on Saturday at Kollupitiya Junction, the President gave a brief resume of the Kalawana events—as he saw it. According to the report in the *Daily News* (19.1.81) he is reported to have said: " . . . . . They need not therefore be surprised about the results of the Kalawana by-election. Mr. Lionel Gunasekera had told them that he would have won the seat if he had come forward as the UNP candidate. He asked for UNP nomination but Mr. Pilapitiya was already there as MP. He had been appointed under the new Constitution according to which there was no elections. When a vacancy arose and the party which held the seat filled it on the Commissioner of Elections informing them of the vacancy. President Jayewardene explained that about two years ago Mr. Pilapitiya had met with an accident, received injuries and entered hospital. He had failed to ask for leave. A vacancy had arisen and the Commissioner of Elections had asked the UNP to nominate a member to fill the vacancy. They nominated Mr. Pilapitiya. It was lawful. It was therefore that on an election petition Mr. Pilapitiya lost his seat in Parliament which seat he won in 1977. But Mr. Pilapitiya was not disqualified from contesting. They therefore had the election campaign according to the law. A date was fixed for nominations and a date was fixed for election. The UNP met for several weeks to decide on a candidate. Mr. Lionel Gunasekera, Mr. Pilapitiya and some others sought nomination. It was at this time that when Mr. Pilapitiya entered Parliament someone had raised a question and the Speaker had ruled that Mr. Pilapitiya was a Member of Parliament.

"President Jayewardene said: 'A Member of Parliament cannot contest another seat. We were thus placed in a difficulty. Kalawana had a Member of Parliament in Mr. Pilapitiya. But there was also a vacancy for Kalawana as Mr. Pilapitiya's election in 1977 had been declared null and void. We were then won-

dering what to do and decided that we were not contesting. Mr. Lionel Gunasekera has told you how the Communist Party acted at the election. He has shown you that if he had the support of another party he would have won. A leader of the Communist Party was elected and he hopes to come and sit in Parliament when it meets on the 20th. Fortunately, Mr. Pilapitiya he is a patriot and one who loves the Party—has resigned—without creating trouble and without the need for a referendum. The Speaker can therefore now permit Mr. Sarath Muttetuwegama who was elected to Kalawana to take his oaths and perform the functions of a Member of Parliament', the President said....."

He then went on to explain that: ".... the UNP was not against it. It was the UNP and its leaders that obtained adult franchise for this country. It was the UNP that obtained a democratic form of Government and for 23 years protected democracy. The Communist Party was not such a Party. Whatever they said or published if there was a Communist Government—there were such governments in other countries—he wished to ask whether it would permit a meeting like that? Would they allow any other political party to work. In which communist country had they allowed any other party other than the Communist Party to indulge in political activity, put forward candidates and face election as an opposition and continue a parliamentary system? Was there a leader of the Opposition in those countries. Those were questions they had to ask themselves.

"A single Communist getting elected did not matter but if the Communist Party came into power will they allow an Opposition Party to contest elections and form a Government? The UNP Government was not like that. It gave full freedom to the Communist Party candidate to come forward for election. Now Mr. Pilapitiya has resigned his seat to enable the Communist Party candidate because he was elected by the people, to perform his function as a M. P. That was the difference between the UNP and the Communist Party. He therefore could not understand the reason why the SLFP—which party protects democratic rights—supported the Communist Party candidate. He also could not understand how the TULF which spoke of struggling to divide the country and to set up a separate state (Eelam) and also claimed they were using Parliament

for the success of that goal joined hands with the SLFP and supported the Communist Party candidate. These were matters which they should think about in the future. They could say however, that as long as the UNP lasted the democratic rights of the people would be protected. But if the UNP became weak or broke down he had doubts as to what would be the future of this country's freedom...."

The President thus tried to explain the context in which the Kalawana result should be understood. In the meantime, some *Tribune* readers had pointed out that this column commenting on Kalawana last week had erred in saying that Sarath Muttetuwegama had this time polled 2,500 votes more than he and the SLFP candidate had polled in 1977. It is true that an arithmetical error had unfortunately crept in—the correct figure is 1,600 odd votes.

But the more serious criticism was that the *Tribune* verdict "that Kalawana is a major defeat for the UNP and the Government" was not a correct evaluation of the victory scored by the Communist Party (backed by all Opposition parties).

We shall deal with this and other allied matters in this column next week.

(To Be Continued)

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## FILM FOCUS

### The Queen

One of the focal points of the celebration connected with the 50th Anniversary of the success of the democratic processes in Sri Lanka would be the arrival of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of England to grace the occasion, and make it a regal and colourful one. On the last occasion she stepped on our shores, the country did go gay and everyone seized the opportunity of having glimpse of the Royal personality on the many routes she drove by, charming the crowds with an affectionate wave, and a smile. Ever since Great Britain furled its flags and left our shores, there has lurked in the hearts of a good many Sri Lankans, a secret attachment for Queen Elizabeth and a corresponding admiration for the role that she has played, as her country moved from crisis to crisis.

To my knowledge, there are scrap books in many homes here, where the Queen's photographs are religiously pasted, fondly referred to and glossed over. When the Silver Jubilee celebrations of her marriage to Prince Philip were full swing, a few years ago, the *Newsweek* mentioned "Twenty five years ago, when she first came to the Throne, the British hailed the advent of a new Elizabethan Era—not much has gone right in Britain since then, but its Queen, now a serene and self assured woman of 51 (now 53) has retained the respect and affection of her people". Quite aptly added a distinguished historian, the Countess of Langford, that "whatever we've lost, we've still got the queen."

There was a film shown around this time in commemoration of the Jubilee at the Regal Cinema, but it was not advertised well enough and the movie had a short run. I made representations to the State Film Corporation then, through Ceylon Theatres Ltd. for a re-release of the film, but for some reason or other, my request did not materialise and many were left disappointed. Now that the Queen will be in our midst, I hope the National Film Corporation would have this film revived to keep tuned to Her August presence in October this year. My review of this particular film at that time received a Royal pat from Buckingham Palace and Her Majesty's Secretary wrote to me by a letter dated 14.7.78, that the Queen was grateful for the way the review had been presented. It is with pleasure therefore, this column reproduces the review in question for the benefit of *Tribune* readers.

#### **25TH ANNIVERSARY IMPRESSIONS:**

This documentary in colour which runs for 90 minutes endeavours to span the "Silver Jubilee" years of Queen Elizabeth II, with glimpses of her regal personality, by using her broadcasts and speeches which form a silver lined backdrop in sound, throughout the film. The poignant moments when she was recalled unexpectedly from a holiday to take over the reins of the Kingdom, her request for papers her people for wisdom and strength to serve them all the days of her reign, as she ascended the throne, are portrayed vividly. Emphasis is heavily laid on the 36 member British Commonwealth of Nations of which she remains the ceremonial Head, with her frequent travels to these countries and the warmth and hospitality that they lavished on

her visits, when the red carpet is rolled out for her, binding this unique family of nations together while our ex-Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike walks ahead of the Queen at one such confabulation, Prince Philip is always at hand—a few steps behind—to add a domestic touch to all her public engagements. Queen Elizabeth, horsemanship takes over between her speeches, and with the confident trots, flashbacks focus the major happenings of these eventful years—the Moonwalk, President John Kennedy, Cuban gamble, the exit of Nixon, the technical milestones of this period, the gradual shedding of the lust vestiges of a proud Empire and the first four minute mile of Dr. Roger Bannister. "I am for marriage" she stresses at her Silver Jubilee Wedding celebrations with a glamorous glint in her eye aimed at her husband to the titters of those, present and expressing surprise at the swift passing of a happy 25 years.

**GREASE:** (English): A Paramount production which has netted over 210 million, the film features that popular Discomaniac John Travolta who teams with Olivia Newton John to set a furious pace of music and dance from the word "go". As co-eds drawn towards each other at the Rydell High School, they lead the whole institution a merry dance to the tunes of popular numbers like "Hopelessly devoted to you" and "Grease Lightning". Its the exuberance of the youth that holds you in its spell, leaving a generation far behind, but for a "beat" that tends to bridge the receding gap. Whatever your age may be, your reflexes could get into resonance with the characteristic Travolta step if you try and besides, I am inclined to think that this film has the edge on "Saturday Night Fever" its recent predecessor.

**THE FIVE MAN ARMY** (English): A MGM production, that brings together five tough mercenaries from varying walks of life to oust a Bolivian tyrant in Power—and how? The film is power packed from the word "go" with Bud Spencer to whom local picture-gers have taken to in a big way drawing the magnetic applause. An above average film, reviewed rather late in this column, as I decided to conserve both time and money, rather than commute from one end of Colombo to the other, till it was shown at the Roxy Theatre—a very much improved cinema now—not many yards away, when I made it. The packed houses have come as a surprise to the management, on the film's second run.

**THE BIG BOSS** (English): The late Kung Fu, King of the Martial Arts, Bruce Lee is the star attraction of this Carlo Ponnampalam release, that has had youngsters storming the New Olympia theatre for some weeks now. I was able to squeeze in only a few days ago, although the intricacies of this painful and noisy art were never down my street.

I settled down to the story however, in Hong Kong settings, where Lee as citizen Ching troops into the town job seeking and tied down by a peace pledge to his uncle by a talisman which virtually strangles him under grave provocation. In the ice business he gets employed, heroin pockets and cubed corpses of his cousins keep melting out and he wily goes into action ripping his talisman that tied him down. The action thereafter is both uproaring and bone cracking. For Bruce Lee fans, an obvious treat that would have them on their toes—but the slaughter just left me cold and clammy.

James N. Benedict.

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SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

Jan. 10 – Jan. 15

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

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

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 10:** From February 1, all vehicles entering Colombo will have to pay a toll; it will be fifty cents for every motor bicycle, one rupee for a motor car, three rupees for a van or bus and five rupees for every lorry. School children will receive free-text books for the second year in succession, when the new school terms begin on Monday. Mannar is likely to be declared a diseased area, under the Quarantine and Preventable Diseases Ordinance, a decision will be taken during the week end. State Minister Anandatissa de Alwis said yesterday,

that the tourist industry was doomed to crash and there would be only debris in its place, if those who run the industry do not see the greater noble human element in it. Mr. Eric Gonsalves, Foreign Secretary (East) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs India will arrive in Colombo on Tuesday for discussions on the forthcoming Non-aligned Foreign Ministers conference in New Delhi—CDN. Measures to prevent developed nations from exploiting the wealth of the economic sea zones of the developing nations will be key topic at the conference of Ministers of Fisheries of non-aligned countries that will be held in Cuba in the last week of this month—CDM. The Government yesterday decided to abandon plans for holding the National Day celebrations in Colombo on February 4; this decision was taken at a top level conference held yesterday at the Presidential Secretariat. Inspector General of Police Ana Seneviratne flew this morning to Jaffna to conduct a personal review of the security situation in the northern peninsula. The Jaffna Tamils have no policy and they are a selfish lot; while they are suppressing the minority Tamils in their own country they attempt to advise us, said Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran lashing out at the TULF at a ceremony connected with the 5th Tamil Conference—SU.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 11:** The Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs, Mr. Cyril Mathew has made a strong case before Government for greater protection for indigenous industries in the face of the overwhelming influx of foreign goods into Sri Lanka; the Minister's case is based on a wide-ranging survey of the impact of imported goods on local industries carried out by the Ministry. The death occurred on Friday of Rev. Fr. Ignatius Perera a Western Classics scholar, musician and radio engineer; he was 65. The Kalawana by-election takes place tomorrow; the campaign ended at midnight on Saturday—SO. Is there a Naxalite movement in the Northern Province similar to the movement in South India? Defence Ministry sources yesterday expressed fears that a highly militant type of movement appeared to be taking shape in the North—ST. The TULF "Youth Front" which met last morning at the party headquarters have decided to organise a boycott during the Prime Minister R. Premadasa's visit to Jaffna this month; President J. R. Jayewardene will head a special Board which will

administer and run the proposed Institute of Fundamental Studies—WK.

**MONDAY, JANUARY 12:** The Ministry of Public Administration is working out a scheme of double increments for good work and regular attendance as an incentive for public servants; Senior Officials will be responsible for making recommendations for the additional increment; the Ministry is at the same time laying down work norms for public servants; the imbalance between those loaded with work and those whiling away their time will be corrected. The United Nations International Cultural and Educational Fund (UNICEF) has undertaken a massive health improvement program in rural areas at a cost of over US \$ 1,130,000. The Water Supply and Drainage Board has to date cleaned 91,000 feet of pipeline in the City. This is the first time the pipelines have been cleaned since they were laid, some 90 years ago; Mr. Anthony Fernando Publicity Officer of the Ministry of Local Government said yesterday—CDN. A referendum would be held on every issue which the executive and the Judiciary cannot hereafter determine; so said the Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa, opening Kiranadogama, the 72nd Model Village under the Village Re-awakening Movement at Nivitigala—CDM. The signature markings on nearly fifteen bullets found at Kurumbasity, Jaffna where a gang machine-gunned bystanders killing two last Wednesday are expected to be the key to tracing those responsible; police sources said yesterday that this was because one of the guns used by the gang a sub machine gun, could be a weapon stolen from Police by a northern terrorist group in 1978. Sri Lanka's first major transport centre incorporating the country's entire transport service will shortly be established in Colombo under a multi-million rupee project of the Urban Development Authority—SU. Mrs. Indira Gandhi made her opening address on Saturday the last day of the fifth Conference of Tamil Research held at Madurai; "Tamils need not fear that the tamil language will be removed; Hindi will not be forced on people who do not speak Hindi" said Prime Minister Indira Gandhi amidst applause from lakhs and lakhs of people gathered around—DP.

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 13:** An attractive National Pension Scheme for the self-employed as well as salaried persons will be inaugurated by the Bank of Ceylon on February

4 to coincide with Independence Day and 50 years of Universal Adult Franchise. Mr. Sarath Muttetuwegama of the Communist Party won the Kalawana by-election held yesterday; Mr. Muttetuwegama's majority over the nearest rival Mr. Lionel Gunasekera (Ind.) was 2,403—CDN. Police investigations into the double killing and robbery at Kurumbasity near Jaffna last week now reveal that one or more of the gang members allegedly responsible had disguised their features with the aid of masks; the use of these masks and the manner in which the Sterling sub-machine gun was used by the gang indicate that they may have had training abroad, police said. Two more cases of cholera were reported from the city of Colombo yesterday, after the city had been free of the disease for nearly three weeks. Sri Lanka is to set up an advanced airborne surveillance system to protect its territorial waters; the system formed by the Air Force will be backed up by Naval units with a view to patrolling Sri Lanka's 200 mile economic zone for contraband control and for fisheries protection—SU.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14:** The Government yesterday decided to permit people in the Jaffna peninsula to possess and use firearms as a measure of self-defence against criminals, and protection against the rising trend of crime in the North; with several cases of violence and robbery reported since December last year, police suspect a resurgence of terrorist activity; the government's duty is to ensure public safety, a police spokesman said yesterday. Savings is the answer to inflation, Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel yesterday called for the promotion of greater savings this year in a bid to curb inflation in Sri Lanka; unless inflation is curbed it would go out of hand and all the economic and development gains achieved in the past three years would be fitted away, Mr. de Mel said. The United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) has organised two important investment promotion meetings for Sri Lanka to be held during the later part of this month in Zurich and Vienna—CDN. Eric Gonsalves, Secretary to India's Minister of External Affairs arrived here yesterday on an overnight visit during which he was expected to discuss a variety of matters with his local counterpart W. T. Jayasinghe. Mannar will be declared a diseased area with effect from Friday, the Health Ministry announced yesterday; this

is a being done in a bid to curb the outbreak of cholera. The Defence Ministry will next week begin the re-issue of firearms to licence holders in the Jaffna district; these were withdrawn after the declaration of Emergency in July 1976—SU. The Government has decided to implement a certain proposal this year to provide various facilities to farmers on their merits; this proposal is to be implemented with the assistance of the World Food Organisation to grant better facilities to farmers who grow more—DP.

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 15:** The small investor, wage earner and housewife will soon have the opportunity of investing in valuable company shares; a two-member team from the International Finance Corporation, (IFC) Prof. S. Robbins and Mr. Faustine Garza who are in Sri Lanka to advise the Government on the setting up of a securities, money and capital market had a day-long discussion yesterday with state and private sector business leaders to encourage the issue of company shares to the general public. Industries and Scientific Affairs Minister Cyril Mathew will inaugurate work on the massive Rs. 600 million third stage of the Kankasanturai Cement Factory tomorrow morning—CDN. The Minister of Lands, Land Development and Mahaweli Development Gamini Dissanayake informed the Cabinet that the government of India would send a delegation of Indian engineers to work in Sri Lanka—CDM. All casual and temporary employees who were recruited to the public sector to fill the vacancies created by workers who participated in the abortive general strike of July 1980 are to be made permanent, Government has decided. The Director General of the powerful Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Fund) warned yesterday that it would be a mistake if developing countries continued to assume that OPEC could provide a solution for all financial problems; "most developing countries are doing little or nothing to check the menacing growth rates of population, to curb their military spending, to avoid expenditure on prestige projects or to rationalise patterns of consumption in their societies", Dr. Ibrahim Shihata told the 16th annual Conference of Governors of South-East Asian Central Banks which began at the Hotel Lanka Oberoi in Colombo yesterday—SU.

## ASEAN

### Japan's New Priority

Tokyo, Jan. 1,

Japanese Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki is going on a tour of ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) capitals early this month and much is being made here of the fact that he is visiting South East Asia before undertaking a trip to the United States or for that matter any where else.

*Nothing like this has happened before. In the past all Japanese post-war Prime Ministers have gone to meet the US President before meeting any one else. Mr. Suzuki's visit to ASEAN will break that tradition. But his tradition-breaking journey to Asia does not mean the US has slipped a "notch down on the totem-role of Japanese priorities." The US is still at the top.*

But the decision was almost unavoidable. Instead of waiting for the new US President to settle down in office, the Prime Minister decided to go some where and chose ASEAN refusing to be bound by a tradition which has lost all its early significance. Besides serving to demonstrate what ASEAN has come to mean to Japan it also affords Mr. Suzuki time to size up Mr. Ronald Reagan before seeking a meeting with him.

Japan's interest in ASEAN is extending into other areas too. His political talks will perhaps go deeper than former Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda's exchange of views with the region's leaders in 1977 did. Fukuda had tried to explain why Japan must aid Vietnam's economic development and argued that this country's economic relations with Indonesia would also benefit ASEAN. But that was before Kampuchea. Now Mr. Suzuki, following his predecessor's policy, wants to reassure ASEAN that nothing has changed since Mr. Fukuda. He is going prepared to add a new dimension to the existing purely economic relations Japan has with ASEAN. —PTI



## Why The Revolution?

By **Nikhil Chakravartty**

The author went to Iran in August for an on-the-spot understanding of the extraordinary developments in that country. He stayed there for four weeks. On his return, he wrote a series of articles for different journals including *Times of India*, *Indian Express*, *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, *Mathrubhoomi* and *Illustrated Weekly of India* and also for *PTI Features*. This special report is a complete piece out of all these contributions to different papers.

### WHO CONTROLS THE ARMED FORCES?

To scores of people I have put this question. The only thing one could hear is that the Iranian armed forces are badly decimated by desertion and purges. Although the Imam announced a general amnesty which included even the Savak, there is little doubt that the much-boasted Shah's army is in shambles today. An Iranian Government directive sacking all officers who had served under the Shah for fifteen years or more, led to the cashiering of nearly 20 thousand of them. The Western press has publicised the formation of an Iranian Liberation Army but in Tehran, this is not regarded as a major force, though its existence is not denied, nor the fact that some of the sophisticated planes of the Air Force have been hijacked to Iraq by deserting pilots.

The abortive coup of July 9 has further fragmented the armed forces; the coup was given out as having been engineered by Bakhtiar's men, which led to an assassination attempt on Bakhtiar himself now in retreat in France—a stroke of irony this, since the Imam himself spent the last year of his exile in the same country.

If the armed forces constitute an uncertain quantity in Iranian politics today, this cannot be said of the revolutionary Guards which came up during the Revolution. Called Pasdarans, they put on shabby battle green not as spruced up as the regular soldiers; but they are highly political. You meet them at the airport itself and quite often in your rounds. They number about 90 thousand as I could

make out, getting professionalised now, as they bear the brunt of the fighting in outlying regions, since the regular armed forces are engaged in action with the Iraqi troops on the western front. Recently, the chief of Pasdarans has been changed, and the new man is a trusted man of Dr. Beheshti's Islamic Republic Party. In fact, this party counts the Pasdarans as its own armed force, though I am told there are Pasdarans in many places who have formally nothing to do with the party.

While the Pasdarans got bouquets in the euphoria of the Revolution, one hears nowadays of many complaints of high-handedness and corruption against them. A very observant correspondent reported what a peasant in a paddy field said: "The Imam is a good man; he sleeps on a blanket just like me. But I don't like the people around him and the Pasdarans are ruining our life."

THE US COMMANDO ATTACK, known in Tehran as the Tabas incident, has left its mark. While it ended in a fiasco for the Americans, the more far-seeing Iranians take it as a portent of what may appear tomorrow. The official PARS news agency gave wide publicity to Jack Anderson's disclosures that the Pentagon was planning further action before the American Presidential election in November. But such a military action by the US would only help to rally the people despite all their discontent, round the Imam.

Many talk glibly about coup, and if one goes by reports of Brzezinski's unwisdom, one cannot rule out the Pentagon inciting one. But the officer corps, though an embittered social group in Iran today just as the rising middle class, is totally divorced from the people. In Tehran in the affluent circles one certainly hears a lot of discontent: if you go to Hilton even with the ban on alcohol and floor shows, you can see the super-rich upper set of the Iranian society. Terry Povey, one of the few foreign correspondents still functioning in Tehran, put it very aptly: "There is a widespread myth that all the prosperous Iranians have fled, but this is not so. Many families are split, with some members left in Iran minding the property and others in Europe or North America worrying about the exchange rates".

ISFAHAN NISFI - i-JAHAN—Isfahan is half the world! In the soft morning breeze driving down Isfahan's chinar-lined empty streets, with the magnificent dome of the Masjid-

i-Shah visible in the distance, the old driver of the car suddenly with a wide sweep of his hand and pride glowing in his eyes exclaimed that this city, his own, embraces half the world. For me, it was a flash-back into history.

This is the city of Shah Abbas the Great, his was the age of the immortals—Akbar, Elizabeth I, Sultan Sulciman and Charles of Spain. Isfahan nestling in a green valley encircled by rugged mountains, is a beautiful city whose walls have seen the cavalcade of Time. As I went up the balcony of the Ali Kapu Palace, with its slender columns of solid timber and looked out, it was like being in the presence of History. From this balcony, Shah Abbas would look out and watch below his favourite polo match in the Meydan-e-Shah, now despoiled by car parks and an iron-grilled enclosure encasing a tank. I tried to recapture the scene four hundred years ago: here in front of me, in this Meydan—seven times the size of Venice's Piazza of San Marco and twice as large as Moscow's Red Square as the guide book tells me—would come caravans from all over Asia and beyond; the Venetian would be rubbing shoulders with the Arab, the Englishman would be anxiously seeking audience of the Shah. It was indeed half the world, this Isfahan.

Round this Meydan, stands not only the Palace but the Great Mosque, now renamed Masjid-i-Khomeini, though the Isfahani still calls it after Shah Abbas—Masjid-i-Shah—and the smaller but still more exquisite Lutfullah Mosque facing the Palace across the square. At the far end, you come to Qu'sariyeh, the Royal Bazaar, bustling with life where you can buy everything from Persian carpet to fresh fish and all-round runs a two-storeyed arcade. I remembered Wilfred Blunt's words: "To spend an hour in the Meydan and the buildings that about on it is to get closer to Persia than by reading a hundred books."

A chance meeting with two Pakistani boys from Karachi, brought to me, as if in a flash, what Isfahan means to me personally coming all the way from Hindustan. This City of History is one of the fountainheads of my country's great civilisation; from here has gone out across the centuries, the stream of Persian culture to enrich what has emerged as the cultural heritage of India. The grandeur and the beauty of the Mughal architecture, from the incomparable domes to the intricate designs, the panels of

the walls, the inland work by master craftsmen—all this I could see around me as I spend hours in Isfahan. Isfahan is the city of blue tiles, while we have marble and red sandstone.

The quadrangle of the Madrased-i-Madari-Shah (the Madrasa named after the mother of the Shah) with the imposing ivans and the sanctuary surrounding it, has the unmistakable air of a centre of learning that it has long been; from the rooms around the quadrangle, one could hear discourses and discussions going on. At the other end of the town I saw the most impressive Masjid-i-ami (the Friday Mosque) built and extended over centuries, each of which has left its mark on this huge complex. Earnest young men perched on scaffoldings are engaged in renovation work. Isfahan is a city of bridges across Ziy-andeh-rud, the half hidden river that runs through the city. The most beautiful is the Khawaju Bridge with its pavillions and sluice gates. On one of the pavillions, I was told there was an inscription, no longer to be seen, which said: "The world is truly a bridge: pass over it. Weigh and measure all that you meet with on your passage. Everywhere Evil encompasses the Good and transcends it."

To look at Iran today from this bridge-head of civilisation at Isfahan is perhaps the best way to get into the essence of this amazing revolution that baffles all definition. The Iranian has long been known for his refined culture, his soft-spoken manners, his leisureliness; how could he rise in millions to bring about a revolution? Contrary to what has been put across by the mass media around the world, this was not a ghastly upheaval of barbarians. The impulse behind the mass rising of the last two years in Iran is the urge for freedom and the pride in one's heritage.

TO GRASP THE INNER URGE of the Iranian people, the urge that set masses in motion against the Pahlavi raj with all its borrowed plumage, one has to sense the intense self-respect of a proud Persian. That self-respect of the nation was hurt by the American suzerainty that had been imposed upon Iran in the last three decades. The virtual extra-territorial status that the Americans were enjoying offended the dignity of the Iranian people, reared in the heritage of Shah Abbas, proud of the glory that he had left behind.

The dethroned Shah with his worship of the Dollar put up a grand show, tracing his descent from the forgotten emperors of Persepolis, a Tamasha in 1971 which struck no chord in the mind and heart of any Iranian patriot, for whom History begins at the Lifahan of Shah Abbas. Isfahan was ignored by the short-sighted Shah, whose court wallowed in the vulgarity of wealth in Tehran—a court which was propped up with unspeakable cruelty by the CIA-trained terror police, the SAVAK. The Shah's idea of modernising his people was to go in whole hog for groveling imitation of the West, and one of its ghastly achievements was to turn a large section of the youth into drug addicts, which a well oiled drug racket prospered, at the head of which was the Shah's blessed twin sister. This culture thus rose on no solid foundation in the history of the Iranian people who are reared in the majesty of the Persian culture.

*Imam Khomeini and the Ayatollahs who stood against the Shah might have been inspired by the calls of Islam, but deep down in the mind of the common humanity, the response, the unprecedented response that they evoked is a strange mix of faith and nationalism. The Ayatollahs may be emphasising the power of faith in building a new order of society on the debris of the satanic regime of the Shah as they looked at it. But in the new Iran the pull of nationalism is no less powerful. What we are witnessing today in Iran is the power of nationalism long humiliated by the trappings of a vassal to the new imperial power that is America. It has found expression in the upsurge of religious fervour, because the men who led it and are still leading it are ardent devotees of Islam, inspired by the dream of a Shi'ite millennium making the world ready for the advent of the Twelfth Imam, the Mehdi.*

*The Shi'ite approach to worldly problems to state-craft, for instance, has got all the elements of an anarcho-syndicalist outlook. This is reflected in the new Constitution of the Islamic Republic which has set up an extraordinarily cumbersome system, in which the President and the Majlis, both directly elected by the people, can virtually veto each other's decisions, while the entire corpus of law is entrusted to a body of learned theologians charged with ensuring that the new revolutionary society is guided by the letter and spirit of Islamic jurisprudence.*

Here comes the source of potential conflict with the modernists, who though trounced because the Shah's entourage itself claimed to belong to this camp, are by no means eliminated. Iran today is the theatre of intense debate, mainly ideological. Some of the modern minds—Ali Shariati who died three years ago at the early age of 44 was perhaps the foremost among them—have been striving hard to bring about a synthesis between the tenets of Islam and the imperatives of a modern society; perhaps in no other country in the Islamic world so much of intellectual ferment has been generated in the attempt to build a twentieth century structure on the tenets of seventh-century Islam. Today in Tehran and many other centres of intellectual life from Tabriz to Shiraz, from Qom to Meshed, the learned are debating whether private property is permissible under Islam and if so what should be the limit; how interest on loans can be transformed into service charges; what should be the principles on which the education system should work in an Islamic Republic. From President Bani Sadr to the former Prime Minister Bazargan, to academicians in the University and theologians at Qom, the foremost centre of Islamic scholarship in Iran today, these questions are being discussed at a level of seriousness rarely to be seen.

(To Be Continued)

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CUBA AND AFRICA — 3

## “Cuban Aid To Africa Should be Welcomed.....”

By Robin Hallett

This is the third and concluding part of an article which appeared in the *Bulletin of the South African Institute of International Affairs*. Vol. 4 No. 2 1980

THE OTHER AREA OF MAJOR CUBAN INVOLVEMENT in Africa is, of course, Ethiopia. To understand the reason for this involvement one must look briefly at recent Ethiopian history. In 1974 the old Emperor, Haile Selassie, was overthrown by a movement that developed into a full scale social revolution. A military regime took over and

had come by 1976 to proclaim itself Marxist-Leninist in character.

In 1977, Ethiopia was invaded by Somalia. Relations between the two countries had always been bad. A tradition of Christian-Muslim conflict in the Horn of Africa goes back a thousand years. In the 1890s, an expanding Ethiopia came to dominate and annex the Somali-populated Ogaden. The Ethiopian revolution seemed to Somalians living in Ogaden an ideal opportunity for seeking to liberate themselves from the yoke of the hated Amhara, and they could count on the fervent support of their brothers in independent Somalia.

Up to 1977, both the Soviet Union and Cuba had enjoyed close and cordial relations with Somalia. Indeed in the mid-1970s some observers were prepared to describe Somalia as a Soviet satellite, but in the early months of 1977 the Russians did a dramatic *volte face*, abandoned Somalia and began to give wholehearted support to the Ethiopians.

Shortly before this change in Soviet policy, Fidel Castro visited the Horn of Africa. He hoped to persuade the three radical states of the area, Ethiopia, Somalia and South Yemen to come together in a grand confederation. The scheme was a bold one but one which took no account of the political realities of the area. Castro then swung round to support the Soviet line—but not completely. In 1977 the Ethiopians were fighting two wars—one against the Somalis, the other, a long drawn-out guerilla campaign, against the dissident Eritreans. Castro was prepared to help the Ethiopians counter the Somali threat. After all, the Somali army had crossed the frontier as an invader. However, in Eritrea where the most effective of the three guerilla movements was the staunchy Marxist Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front, the situation was very different. The Cubans sent fifteen thousand troops to counter the Somalis. There is no clear evidence that Cuban forces have been employed against the Eritreans.

CUBA HAS now more soldiers in Africa—20,000 in Angola, 15,000 in Ethiopia—than any other foreign power. This is an astonishing development and one that no observer would have predicted a decade ago. How long will the troops remain in Africa? Even if the Soviet Union provides most of the equip-

ment the Cubans need, the cost of maintaining such large forces overseas must be a heavy one for the Government at Havana. As the wars in Angola and Ethiopia drag on, there is bound to be a steady trickle of Cuban casualties and this can lead to criticism and disillusionment at home. Nonetheless, foreign adventures can also be a source of pride and there is no doubt that many Cubans derive some satisfaction from the fact that their small country is playing such a large part in African affairs.

However, are Cuban activities in Africa likely to increase—and in particular are the Cubans likely to play a significant part in the struggle over South Africa? The idea that South Africa is a country ringed round by Marxist enemies is one vigorously propagated by the advocates of "total strategy" in Pretoria. This is not a view of the Southern African situation that stands up to critical examination.

According to a report issued by the British Foreign Office in 1979, when the guerilla war in Zimbabwe was at its height, there were 100 Cuban advisers with the ZAPU forces in Zambia, another 200 Cuban soldiers in Mozambique and an equal number of civilians; not a very impressive presence. And one recalls the remark made by Fidel Castro when he visited Mozambique in 1977: "We believe that the struggle for independence is primarily the task of the local people themselves". Of course the ANC and SWAPO will be able to count on the fraternal solidarity of the Cubans and, of course, the Cubans will be willing to give advice on the strategy of a guerilla war, but it seems totally unrealistic to imagine that events in Ethiopia and Angola will repeat themselves on the highveld of the Transvaal.

NEVERTHELESS, there can be no doubt that as long as Fidel Castro remains in power—and he is still a relatively young man in his early fifties—the Cuban voice will be heard in world affairs, for Castro is a man of immense forcefulness, magnetism and political skill. In the course of 1979 he scored two singular personal triumphs: in September a Non-aligned Conference was held at Havana under Castro's Chairmanship. The Conference was attended by sixty Heads of State from countries as diverse as Lesotho and Nepal, Zambia and

Jordan. Whatever tensions and divisions may have appeared in the course of the Conference, the occasion was one that put Havana on the world map more firmly than ever before. A few weeks later Castro addressed the United Nations in New York, where he received one of the most clamorous ovations ever accorded a Head of State.

It is worth quoting Castro briefly from these two speeches: "We don't impose our ideology on anyone. We are radical revolutionaries but we don't try to impose our revolution on anyone else, especially in the Third World. You say we are friends with the Soviet Union—Yes we are. Of course we are friends with the Soviet Union. Look at America, look at the NATO powers—what have they ever done to help the liberation movements? They have never helped a liberation movement. The Soviet Union has, we have—of course we are friends (Havana)."

And again in New York: "I have not come as a prophet of the revolution nor have I come here to ask or to wish that the world be violently convulsed. I have come to speak of peace and co-operation among its people. I have come to warn that if we do not eliminate our present injustices and inequalities, the future will be apocalyptic . . . . We aspire to a new world order, one based on justice, equality and peace, one that would replace the unequal system that prevails today. Wealth is still concentrated in the hands of a few countries whose wasteful economies are maintained by the exploitation of the labour and the exploitation of the natural resources of Africa, Asia and America."

FIDEL CASTRO is certainly not a popular figure in the developed world, nor in white South Africa, but the rapturous applause that greeted his speeches in Havana and New York confirmed his status as a world leader. He has become a legend in his lifetime and though he can be criticized for many of his personal qualities—he is clearly a prickly, abrasive, mercurial, egocentric individual—he possesses the immense asset—an asset totally lacking in most of the world's leading statesmen—of being deeply in touch with the fundamental aspirations of the majority of the world's population. He can talk as he does because he is the leader of a Third World country, painfully conscious of the humiliations of its dependent status, a country that has tackled

the problems of development more seriously and vigorously than most countries in the world.

Cuban aid to Africa should be welcomed, rather than deplored—for Africa needs all the aid it can get and the Cubans can bring with them a range of practical experience that comes from making do with scarce resources, of a kind not easily found in the richer countries of the developed world.

It is an immensely difficult task for anyone who lives in a non-Communist country to gain a balanced view of a Communist state—and the difficulty becomes all the greater when the term "Communist" becomes loaded, as it does in South Africa, with such sinister and dangerous associations. But students of international affairs must deal with hard facts and basic realities not with myths and propaganda. Above all, they must make the effort to look at the world from many different points of view.

For those who are lucky enough to live in the more privileged sections of the world community, to look at the world for a time through Cuban eyes is at once a disturbing and a stimulating experience.

*Concluded.*

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RE - THINKING THE ROLE

## Of Rural Development Societies

By Dr. Hans-Dieter Roth

Resident Representative For Sri Lanka  
The Konrad-Adenauer Foundation.

The Rural Development Society (RDS) is supposed to function as the People's Organisation within each village for discharging the work of planning, control of plan implementation as well as the co-ordination of different project activities. It may be mentioned that, even now (though unfulfilled), the functions and aims of the RDS are: (1) to harness the enthusiasm and efforts of villagers for rural development; (2) to link up people's organisations with extension personnel of government departments; and (3) to exert a closer co-ordination of government projects for development at the village level.

The Government has officially given the RDS a key role to play in the rural development movement. In the wake of a massive campaign, over 11,000 Societies have been registered up to the middle of 1980. At this point, therefore, it would be appropriate to take an interim look at the RDS.

**Major shortcomings:** In its present shape, the RDS does not seem to be an ideal focus for village development work. However, it is believed that it represents the type of organisation which can be most easily transformed into a comprehensive and effective village level development organisation. The critical points can be subsumed under several headings. Some of the issues discussed are to a certain extent self-explanatory for the insiders of rural institutions in the Sri Lankan context. Nevertheless, it still seems necessary to elaborate upon some of the points to be raised subsequently.

**The Problem of Leadership:** The majority of the farmers are poor. The informal village-leaders are generally the well-to-do farmers. An inherent contradiction exists between the interests of the upper and lower income brackets (rich and the poor). Very often, the poor farmer is to a certain extent dependent on the "goodwill" of his affluent neighbour, who may be the Irrigator, the Branch Manager of the Co-op Society or have some other public function. This dependency inevitably helps the "informal leader" to be elected even as the president of the RDS.

The omnipresent pooling of power certainly cannot be ruled out easily, but a better and more democratic participation in the leadership of the RDS can be ensured by enacting a solid framework of by-laws. In view of the relatively high standard of formal education, even among the poorer segments of villagers, there should be no constraints to integrate them into the ranks of RDS-leaders.

**Party politics and Political Interference:** Undoubtedly, the most serious and pervasive factor reducing the effectiveness of RDS has been, and is, party politics. Though politics, in the correct context, can play a very constructive role in development, it can be detrimental when dragged into the activities of the RDS, which is purely a basic village development organisation of the people.

As it is, party politics at RDS-level leads

to a polarizing of power, thus creating a monopoly over the official functions, which in turn result in patronage, favouritism and nepotism, discouraging the villagers to mobilise their efforts for their own development.

**Link:** If leadership in the RDS is based on common party politics, it amounts to a discontinuation or interruption of development work, since the leadership pattern changes with alterations in the political scene (as it has often been the case) during national elections.

Consequently, politicians and parties should understand that a village development institution is not a playground for petty party politics, as it weakens both the effectiveness and credibility of a village-based people's organisation.

**RDS and District Administration:** A considerable lack of administrative support at all levels towards RDS can be observed. In spite of many able and well-motivated officials at district and divisional administrations, they are so overloaded with work that it is not possible to give any particular attention to the RDS. The attitude of most administrators, towards the role of RDS in rural development, reveals itself in the platitude "Let them do social work!"

Accordingly it is extremely difficult for the RDS to convince that they can successfully and effectively mobilise the development potential of the village. Therefore, it is imperative that steps be taken to give a status to the RDS, enabling the administrators to recognize the RDS as the vital link to the grass-roots. This, in turn, needs the RDS to be legally installed as, for example, the Agrarian Service Centres, without however eliminating the character of voluntary self-help.

**Lack of Co-ordination:** In a "process of top-to-down" decision-making, there is a considerable lack of co-ordination in the chain of implementation. This is more so in the field of rural development, which encompasses almost every facet of village development where a multitude of government, semi-government and non-government institutions are engaged in equally numerous and different operations. The normal approach is to co-ordinate this work from the "Top", with the result that at the actual level of implementation there is practically no co-ordination.

At least in some areas of work, it is useful to introduce a co-ordination "from below" giving more authority to the people or their representatives who are better aware of the problems. This system of grassroots co-ordination is also fully in line with the declared policy of the Government. The co-ordination achieved at district level has, unfortunately, not yet passed down to the village level.

**Finances. Only Community Development:** So far, it appears that the RDS are focussing their attention more on community development, thus under-rating the importance of enhancing the productivity of the traditional farming sector. For the benefit of villagers—who are mostly farmers—the RDS should change its philosophy and transform to a comprehensive rural organisation, performing services in addition, or if other service institutions fail in their functions or cannot effectively provide the services. There are several instances where RDS has entered this area of activities and has proved successful.

The type of service functions or projects implemented by the RDS depend to a great extent on the specific socio-economic situation of the village as well as of the villagers, and no prescriptions can be given in this regard. Generally, however, the RDS should envisage to promote projects to strengthen the productive capacity of the villagers without any sector-wise or service-wise restrictions.

**Monetary Constraints:** Being a purely voluntary body, the RDS receives no regular income, and, hence the activities have to be financed through contributions from the villagers or through external funds. Mobilising contributions from villagers to implement projects is often an uphill task, due to meagre financial resources of the rural population. On the other hand, access to outside funds is limited by various factors. Thus, most RDS are engaged in irregular contract-jobs or sporadic "food-for-work" projects.

To function as a viable development organisation, it is imperative that the RDS must have a stable financial framework. Providing revolving funds for approved and well-designed projects, a regular project competition or bank credit facilities secured by the collective guarantees of the membership—are only a few out of many possibilities.

**The Training Component:** At present, the training given to RDS emphasises the as-

pect of leadership and mobilisation of self-help capability by creating problem consciousness. The crucial question is, however, whether the leaders trained are the right multipliers for this task. In this background, it would be more effective to bring the trainers to the village in order to mobilize the target groups themselves, rather than relying on a more or less doubtful snowball-system.

The training imparted should not have a pre-determined or standard character. It should be individually tailored to the specific needs and problems of the respective trainees and their villages. The trainees, together with the villagers, should identify the needs of the village, draw up a plan and define suitable projects. Otherwise, it will be not possible to overcome the apparent deadlock in the further development of the RDS to function as a true grassroots development organisation. In order to utilise the potential of hither to 11,000 RDS in the process of development, and to make the RDS more viable, the points mentioned below should be given due consideration: Redefining the role of RDS as a participatory, self-help and comprehensive village organisation; (2) Administrative link of the RDS with the Development Councils at village and semi-urban level, as well as with District Secretaries; (3) Provision of agricultural service a village/sub-divisional level through Agrarian Services Centres, via RDS; (4) Enacting proper by-laws to give the RDS a new legal basis and the necessary recognition by the administration; (5) Strengthen the financial structure of the RDS; (6) Mobilize villagers by on-the-spot and in-service-training of target groups; (7) Define a broad catalogue of projects which can be planned and implemented by the RDS, allowing adequate flexibility for individual societies to select and change according to the felt needs of the people; (8) To give highest priority to projects which yield the highest returns, in terms of a direct and lasting improvement of the life of villagers, and aim at enhancing their productive capacity; (9) Establish a monitoring and extension system to guide the RDS.



## CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT STATEMENT

### Kalawana

THE CURIOUS CONFUSION over Kalawana is easily resolved if looked at on the basis of simple democratic principle. CRM pointed out, and the Supreme Court held, that to give the Kalawana seat two MPs would be an interference with the franchise and an infringement of the sovereignty of the people, and that therefore a Bill which would bring about this result requires to be passed by a referendum. CRM's position however is not that a referendum should be proceeded with, but that the Bill should be withdrawn, as it is basically undemocratic.

Universal franchise is of little value unless there is also provision for a fair distribution of votes, geographically and population wise, throughout the country. For this purpose we have had, and have, constitutional provisions for independent Delimitation Commissions to demarcate electorates and distribute seats. For democracy is not just "one man, one vote". It is "one man, one vote, one value."

There is no justification whatever to now give Kalawana, a rural electorate with no special features to distinguish it from the many others of its kind, two MPs instead of the one rightly allocated to it by the last Delimitation Commission. (In any event, in a multi-member constituency both M.P.s are elected and the electors have two votes; that is not what is being introduced here.) If the nominated member is to retain his seat along with the newly elected one, then whatever the result of the current by-election there will be a serious infringement of democracy. If a pro-Government candidate wins, then the voting power of the Kalawana electorate in Parliament will be out of all proportion to that of the other seats—Kalawana will have two votes in the legislature, seriously devaluing the votes of every other electorate in the country. If, on the other hand, the Opposition candidate wins, then the Kalawana votes in Parliament will cancel each other out, effectively disfranchising all the voters of Kalawana.

It is clear that Kalawana should properly have only one member. The question then is, should it be the one nominated by the party which appeared to win the seat in 1977, but which election has now been set aside, or the

one to be elected at the by-election now in progress? One needs no more than the ABC of democracy to come to the obvious conclusion.

In CRM's view the legal position is clear—the Speaker's ruling was incorrect, the seat is now vacant, it will be filled by the candidate to be elected on Monday, 12 January. There can be no doubt whatever that this is also in accord with the spirit of the new Constitution. The Constitution provides for only elected members. Nomination by a political party is provided for when it is clear that that party was chosen by the people, and where a vacancy occurs due to some subsequent event such as death or resignation or being absent without leave. In such an event nomination by the party does not contravene the principle of elected representatives because the nomination is by the political party in which the electorate has already expressed its confidence. (CRM pointed out at the time the new Constitution was being debated that this principle was not appropriate as regards the present Parliament, and that every vacancy in it should be filled by a by-election, but that is another matter.) "Where however, an election is set aside, one does not know in which party the electorate placed its confidence, and so no political party can claim a vested right to fill the vacancy. A by-election is the only solution. This is the pattern and the spirit manifest throughout the Constitution in both its main and its transitional provisions.

If, however, the government feels that this clear and logical spirit has not been given effect to in the phrasing of one section of the Constitution, and feels that there is some legal or technical difficulty in bringing about the only result consonant with democratic principle, then the obvious solution would be a suitable amendment of the law. A suitable amendment would be NOT to seek to "accommodate" the elected member while keeping room for the nominated member, but to provide that there shall be only one member for Kalawana, and that shall be the member elected at the by-election. Alternatively, the Government could refer the matter to the Supreme Court under Article 129 of the Constitution for an advisory opinion. CRM cannot comprehend why the Government does not take either of these obvious steps.

CRM urges the Government to resolve this issue in keeping with the principles set out above, and not to divert enormous human and material resources into the exercise of holding a nation-wide referendum on a Bill which seeks to create an undemocratic and unique anomaly out of the constituency of Kalawana.

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9.1.1981



## CHANGES

### In Colombo City

By R. Kahawita

Today getting into the city through the new Kelaniya bridge is surprisingly colourful, pleasing, and the prospect is clean, orderly, and tidy. It is a contrasting change to what it was. We hope we will be able to maintain as such always. It gives one the feeling that the city is ours, it belongs to us, we live in it, therefore why not strive to keep and maintain our city as a picture book scene.

When we get to the other side of the bridge and move forward to the round-about, on the right there is an eyesore, belonging to the Ceylon Electricity Board; the area fenced off for the "Kelanitissa Power House". It is a disgrace to the Board, with rank vegetation, almost creeping up to the switch yard and the transformers, stores and equipment are seen scattered all over and exposed to sun and rain. The impression one gets is that the area has been abandoned; even the sign boards are standing on one leg. This, of course, is the general standard of maintenance of any State property. We are far too busy fashioning a just Society to give thought to such mundane affairs as "keeping the clothes clean."

On the opposite side are the squatters earning a miserable living by cultivating "Kira"—the cheapest vegetable of the poor men today—on land that do not belong to them. Yet, in their poverty, they maintain their small plot—far better than the premises

of the C.E.B. with all the resources available to a state corporation. The attitudes are different, the Kira cultivator is conscious of the fact that it is this small plot of land that gives him his bread and butter—The C.E.B. officials get theirs whatever happens to the property in their charge.

At the round-about there are two roads, one going towards Borella via Welikada Prisons, and the other a link road—what used to be "Prince of Wales Avenue" today renamed Sirimavo Mawatha. This branching off of roads is a guessing game to find out what leads where. Nobody grumbles about the confusion. A proper directional Sign Board should help to sort out the traffic to its correct destination.

During the Pre-1977 days there was a central feature at this roundabout—a caricature statue of one of our Leaders also once a Prime Minister during the Pre-Republican days—S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike. After the last General elections vandals damaged this statue and only the bottom half of the figure was there for some time—reminiscent of the type of summary justice meted out by our kings of the past. However may be in penitence, we have removed the stump of the damaged replica and a grove of colourful foliage plants have taken its place. This may be a deliberate change in keeping with the present day politics. Nevertheless one cannot deny the fact that he was the architect of a rival political party to the U.N.P., born of our arrogance after Independence.

He named his party "Sri Lanka freedom Party" and in 1956 he coalesced with a weakling group—Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (M.E.P.) to win the elections and drive us into the wilderness. Their 1956 success was an eye-opener and an indicator of the mood of the people, then towards the U.N.P. even the two leaders of the coalition were surprised at their resounding victory.

Have we been able to change that mood today? "All that glitters is not gold", power corrupts green, blue or red. This hybrid party seized the opportunity to consolidate their grip on the masses to match any other contender for political power. They are that today and we have experienced a see-saw game in politics in the past.

We are not interested in this aspect. But while he was the Prime Minister, he adopted a garb for his political followers, a sort

of Political Uniform. White cloth, long banian with long sleeves and a dark blue scarf. It was his symbol of Political authority, the authority to be taken to grass-root level. The current U.N.P. regime also has adopted this same costume for the first time in its history; the dark blue scarf was discarded but not replaced it with a green scarf-white and green do not go together. Aesthetically it is jarring—may be the reason why we abandoned it, or may be a quick change is possible. Those in the other Political parties and C.P. (Moscow or Peking) are in mongrel costumes. They are honest and sincere, may be even convinced that changing the form of dress is not going to change their ideologies nor can the people be cheated to the belief that a costume underlies political ideologies. Their tactics are more purposeful and objective than what underlies a costume.

The Statue that was desecrated by the vandals was garbed in the costume he adopted as his symbol of his political humility. The person who moulded the statue had caught his cynicism much better than "a Da Vinci" to betray his political insincerity and his contempt for his political supporters—the end proved the means. **Any way we hope this Statue will be recast in a more permanent material and will be re-erected above the colourful bushes that have sprung up on the round-about.**

We must respect and honour what the S.L.F.P. leader attempted to do for our people and a good section of the people accepted him for that. It would be a good gesture on our part to erect the statue in this round-about again when all the decorations and beautification is over. It would be timely too. It was by popular wish of the "party voters" that the effigy was put up. We are a democracy. So let us demonstrate it by deeds.

The original designer of this uniform expected all and sundry to adopt it as the "National Dress"—a movement started somewhere in 1923 or so. Like all new innovations many took to it then. But today it is conspicuous by its absence except in the House. Today the so called National Dress has given way to black pants and shirts of various descriptions. This is the current and popular dress among the young generation irrespective of sex or age; urban or rural. *It is progress.* **NOW LET US GET BACK to the highway**

at the round-about. In modern cities at all entrances to the city proper there are direction boards to indicate where a particular route leads to, this is a way of canalizing traffic in the city to their correct destinations. It helps to prevent congestion within the city.

**A well designed Direction Board should satisfy everybody—particularly the Tourist—our number one V.I.P. "with pockets full of money" for whom the whole country is striving hard to help him loosen his purse strings. Like vultures, shamelessly, we hover around the tourist to get his dollar. In that all third world countries may be guilty of after liberation. If we put a similar effort to feed and house the seven million brethren below the starvation line we may hope to stay in power or attain Nirvana. Looking after the Tourists will not help us in that. They will only help us to eat what little we have.**

WITHIN THE CITY there is visible change; Roads are being widened, new avenues constructed, street crossings have been developed into roundabouts with foliage and flower plants, fountains and moulded figures spouting fountains eventhough some of these figures are grotesque and ugly, nonetheless it is a concerted effort to beautify the city. When one is whizzing past these ugly spots, one has no time to look at them critically—the main thing is, something is being done to generate, "an awareness of ownership". It is this kind of motivation that can make a city beautiful and preserve it that way.

As we leave our great city through the same bridge—may we take the liberty to name this bridge "Kothmale Bridge" as it was he who initiated its construction. The other bridge is called "Victoria Bridge". So, why not remember this Leader by his handy work? We come face to face with the camouflaged structure put up by the last regime to hide the beginning of a fly-over bridge commenced by the 1965-spell of the U.N.P. Some say it was done to hide Monty's folly. But the last Government had a premonition of their fates so they painted the blank wall with elephants to tell the people "we are out—the elephants are coming."

The fly-over had a prestigious plan as such structures go, to regulate traffic entering and leaving the city. If the work were completed, it would have opened up a speed way

to the North of the country, a bye-pass to the Central and Eastern regions as well as to develop the marshes on the right bank of Kelaniya to satellite towns to ease off the congestion in Colombo North. Except for the filling for the road formation, all other permanent structures have been completed in 1970 replete with a commemoration pillar, road culverts, railway over-head crossing, bridges across drains and eas, and of course the partly completed fly-over.

*Before the U.N.P. had time to complete the scheme we were edged out of power and they stand as massive monuments to our partisanship and political rivalry within. In silence they also speak as to how each Government squanders public money—loans, aid or outright grants—yet a burden which the masses of this country have to bear compared to our 169 members, who participated in this squander mania. Worst still, we pay them for doing this. Of course they, have the excuse of "global inflation" to blame for not being able to make ends meet—for you and me. All the same a great city must be built.*

The skyline too is changing, high-rise buildings and who can say the vista from the sea may rival Singapore, or even Manhattan, what matters if our people may be admiring these cloud kissing structures with hungry stomachs—yet they are ours both the people and the structure. In silence they watch as the changes and beautifications are moving on. May be with the same cynical smile caught in the effigy at the entrance to the city—"At the end we who decides" may be their inner dictum.

**Nevertheless our Premier City is getting a massive face lift. Can we maintain them in good repair and service while 16,000 families are living in hovels? That is another question—Today the city is beautiful. So forget the here-after.**

## BOOK REVIEW

### Current Affairs

**HAVANA TO KABUL** A Sri Lankan Non-Aligned View By S. P. Amarasingam (Tribune Publications, Colombo 1980 Rs. 12/50).

**HAVANA TO KABUL** is a commentary and critical expose of U.S. imperialism at work

after its debacle in Vietnam. The main focus of the book is centred on the attempts, diplomatic and otherwise of the Carter government to break the collective decision and solidarity of the Non-aligned Movement to allow communist Cuba to host the Sixth Summit Conference at Havana in September 1979, to destroy the Iranian revolution and to destabilise the Afghan government in Kabul. As could be seen, these postures and carving of trouble spots are neat contrivances by American foreign policy makers to detract the American people from capitalist economic collapse at home and also to bolster the dwindling Carter image to drum up support in the then ensuing Primaries. The information contained in the book is the converse of the conventional and familiar barrage dished out by the Western news media and faithfully reported in the newspapers of the reactionary press in many of the Third World countries. In this respect the book is very revealing and most welcome. In terms of presentation, because of years of perceptive observation as a journalist and as one who gathered the ongoings from the vantage point of the Summit Conference in Havana, the author moves comfortably back and forth between imperialist designs and Non-aligned commitment to provide an intelligent and convincing analysis of a facet of imperialism which otherwise would lie buried. The book on this score is a vital supplement in the area of practice to the existing literature on the theory of imperialism.

Though bourgeois scholarship claims the end of imperialism with the break-up of the colonial system in the late 'forties, in reality however new structures and institutions in the GATT, IMF, IBRD etc. had been devised already for the economic domination of the newly independent states even before any retreat of open political domination. Hence the new states came to take their place in a world order created by the rich for the rich and for the continued chaining of the new states to the chariot wheels of imperialism. Prof. Thomas Bulogh made this explicit when he wrote in 1962: "neo-imperialism does not depend on open political domination. The economic relations of the U.S. to South America are not essentially different from those of Britain to her African colonies. The International Monetary Fund fulfills the role of the colonial administration in enforcing the rules of the game."

The gusto of the Non-aligned Movement in the contemporary phase has galvanised itself to break-up this unjust world order which is patently inimical not only to its progress but even to its survival. This has positioned the NAM in a confrontational course with imperialism. Hence the imperialists interest in breaking or weakening the collective solidarity of the Movement which reached a new height in the Havana Summit. But both in this and in its earlier position as a force for the articulation of political independence, the Non-aligned Movement has found in the Soviet Union and the Socialist block of countries a natural ally, as it were.

The author traces the first signs in the confluence of views leading to the emergence of the NAM in the stirring call made by Jawaharlal Nehru in the late 'forties: "We believe peace and freedom are indivisible, and the denial of freedom anywhere must endanger freedom elsewhere and lead to conflict and war. We are particularly interested in the emancipation of colonial and dependent countries." The precursor to the First (1961) Non-aligned Summit in Belgrade were the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in 1947, the Asian Prime Ministers' Meeting in Colombo in 1954 and the Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955. It was however at the First Belgrade Summit that the principles of Non-alignment—anti-colonialism, meaning the right of the oppressed people to have their nation state and anti-imperialism, meaning fight for economic independence were enunciated and Membership of the Movement was extended to states which have consistently supported movements for national liberation.

According to the book the imperialist attempt to break-up the Havana Summit failed to materialise. The author states: "Concretely, the first issue in the strategy to break-up the Sixth Summit was the Kampuchean question. The second was Egypt. The third was the charge that Cuba was seeking to re-orientate the Movement to make it an appendage of the Soviet Union. But none of these either broke up the Summit or even held up its work.... Only Singapore's Rajaratnam openly peddled the old cold war line against the "Commies" and "fellow travellers", brought up to date by Brzezinski's theory of "proxy wars"; to indict the USSR, Cuba and Vietnam. The red menace bogey proved to be a damp

squib than the Kampuchean and Egyptian issues. Even cynics have had to admit that though the possibilities of division and quarrels exploding and shattering the non-aligned movement still exist in theory, in actual practice a common set of interests prevailed to hold the movement together—interests which made all members to close their ranks on the basis of compromises against a common enemy, namely, imperialism which stood in the way of a new order, especially a New International Economic Order.

"The Summit reaffirmed in its Final Declaration that the essence of the policy of the Non-aligned was the struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, apartheid and Zionism, opposition to all forms of foreign occupation and domination and hegemony: the struggle for peaceful co-existence among states and non-interference and non-intervention in the affairs of other countries."

Carter's diplomatic and economic offensive was aimed at intimidating the weak and pliant Central and South American countries. The author writes as follows on this: "The US carrot and big stick policy for the Caribbean was really intended to intimidate Central and South American countries and to tell them that if they played ball (or banana) with the US they would get a few carrots, but if they were tempted to go the Cuba way, the big stick of punitive action would descend on them. Carter further disclosed that the Havana Summit (and the refusal of the majority of members to discard Cuba and the New International Economic Order) had compelled the US to take world-wide measures to protect its security: "The United States has a world-wide interest in peace and stability. Accordingly I have directed the Secretary of Defence to enhance further the capacity of our rapid deployment forces to protect our own interests and to act in response for help from our allies and friends. We must be able to move our ground, sea and air units to distant areas—rapidly and with adequate supplies. We have reinforced our naval presence in the Indian Ocean. These steps reflect my determination to preserve peace, to strengthen our alliance and to defend the interests of the United States."

In Iran, it was the U.S. governments policies over the years, firstly in installing the Shah

(Mohammed Reza Pahalavi) and, in sustaining his despotic rule and a repressive apparatus—all for the benefit of U.S. imperialism, the Shah family and the ruling class that eventually brought about the anti-Shah revolution and the anti-imperialist seizure of the hostages. On the Iranian crisis, the author observes: "The next, the 'Iranian crisis', was also actually engineered by Washington. This time more artfully. The White House, it can be said, provoked events in the Iranian capital, knowing that warm hospitality toward the former Shah of Iran in New York would result in serious repercussions in Tehran. Nevertheless, Washington took the risk. The Carter administration knew that the US embassy in Tehran and the hostages would be seized—if the Shah was permitted in the US."

On the Afghan question, the author surmises that the Carter government had won over Hafizulla Amin in order to destabilise the socialist Saur revolution of 1978 and that imperialist designs were forestalled by the presently ruling Babrak Karmal faction which quickly took over and called in Soviet intervention to consolidate itself. The book also contains a critical and realistic appraisal of the zig-zagging of the Maoist and post-Mao policies of China both in regard to the aspirations of the Non-aligned Movement and in regard U.S. imperialism.

The criticism directed against US foreign policy dovetails in every respect, with the views of radicals in the United States itself. However, it is seldom that US foreign policies have been realistically evaluated from the stand point of the need to maintain world peace by a Third World writer and to this extent the book provides a refreshing insight. The adventurous content and the buccaneering belligerence in which US foreign policy decisions have been made as revealed in this book would cause any reader concern for the future when Ronald Regan enters the White House on January 20.

**Satchi Ponnambalam.**

London,  
January 24, 1981.



## ANECDOTE

### Was It Love?

By **Buvasundari Buvasundaram**

Dusk was fast gathering, and the traffic had ceased. I stood at a lonely halt, awaiting impatiently for the sight of the red and silver ramshackle which they call a bus. I had said, I would be home by six, and it was well past. I glanced at my watch, frowned, shifted from one foot to the other, and then frowned again. I could always cook up an excuse for being late, but to stand at a lonely bus halt, situated in a lonely street, wasn't very inviting.

A sleek silver automobile took the bend dangerously, skidded and came to a stand still in front of me. A guy with a mop of black hair, beautifully styled, and well cut features (obviously a boy whom the teenager would have called groovy) stuck his head out.

"Hi sis! Want a lift?"

Much as I was used to "passes" from the opposite sex, this took me quite by surprise. I gave him the coldest look I could muster (but I admit it didn't have any effect on him) and looked the other way, finding the setting sun a most absorbing scene. (Something which I usually hardly took any notice of—after all, the sun had to set, hadn't it? And who cares if it turns the sky into multi-coloured ribbons while doing so). The boy laughed, accelerated, and the car shot off at a speed that would have made a policeman's head turn hundred and eighty degrees. No doubt, he offered lifts to almost every girl at a bus halt. Had probably discovered an oil well in his back yard! I smiled cynically as I recalled a couple of lines from a current hit by Billy Joel.

"Don't you know about the new fashion honey,

All you need is looks, and a whole lot of money."

The sound of a bus, ended my thoughts and I spent the next twenty minutes elbowing my way in, hanging onto the pole, so that I wouldn't be thrown out of the bus, while the driver experimented on his new brakes; and finally not forgetting the flying leap out of the moving bus, ('cos the driver wouldn't oblige by stopping at my halt), which resulted in me finding myself sprawled on the pave-

ment, and looking a complete fool. Anyway, as I said, it was dark and not many people about. So you could imagine my surprise, for as I got up from the dusty pavement and tested my limbs for fractures—a voice said:

“Excuse me miss, you have dropped something”.

I looked up into a pair of dark black eyes, recognising him immediately, since he lived two doors next, in fact he had just moved in last week.

“Oh, er.....thanks”, I said as I took the purse which he extended to me.

“Did you hurt yourself?”

“No.....just a little shaken.....thanks”. I had no idea why I kept thanking him!

“You stay at Horton Place don't you? Would you mind if I walk home with you?”

Now how was I supposed to tackle that? I racked my brains, trying to remember the last romance book I had read, and what the pretty heroin did in similar circumstances.

“Oh....er....I don't mind. You are welcome.”

He fell into step beside me, and we walked in silence. I couldn't think of anything that might have helped to make conversation. What should I say? Should I ask him what his favourite programme on TV was? And what if he didn't have a TV set? Or maybe I should comment upon the weather: the monsoon showers are delayed or.....

“You go to Ladies' College don't you?”

“Me? Oh....er....yer”.

He smiled—a strangely charming smile; something that warms one's heart—I am sure you know what I mean.

“You must have been badly shaken. You seem almost nervous”.

I bit my lips. Nervous indeed! Did he want me to tell him that he was the first guy who had walked home with me? And that it was he who made me uncomfortable? Anyway he invited himself, and I wasn't enjoying his company in the least. Or was I? I shrugged my shoulders. Better with a companion than walking home alone at 7 p.m. We rounded the bend, and reached my house. Unlatching the gate, I stood uncertain, not knowing what to do. I certainly couldn't invite him home. Bringing a boy home might

send the mater crashing through the ceiling, and the pater to hospital with a heart attack!

In the Mills and Boons, the boy bestowed the girl with a good night kiss. If my companion had done so much as peck me on the cheek, I guarantee that I would have fainted over the gate! He seemed uncomfortable too.

“Er....well, I hope I see you again.... soon. Goodnight, he said.

“Good night”, I replied.

He turned and walked quickly down the lane. I stood watching him with a mixture of odd feelings. I felt lonely, guilty and glad. He was nice....yes.. and decent too. He stopped at his gate, turned around, raised his hand in farewell, and disappeared inside. I opened mine, slipped in and leaned against it. I felt a little breathless. Had my heart accelerated its beat? What was in him, that made me like him? God said, “Love thy neighbour”, but he hadn't said “and his son too” in his commandment. But anyway....was it, love?



## TRIBUTE

### Prof. H. A. De S. Gunasekera

Professor H. A. De S. Gunasekera's sudden death was a shock to the intellectual community of the Universities because it removed from the University scene one of the eminent economists of the early University vintage. Prof. H. A. De S. Gunasekera, known to his contemporaries and colleagues as H. A. De S. and to his large student clientele as Had ya was one of the best products of the then University of Ceylon, and he was the first to obtain a First Class in Economics. He served the University for nearly 37 years and it was during this long spell of academic life that he achieved distinction both in his own right as the leading economist of the Universities and as an eminent member of the academic community.

H. A. de S., as one of the best University teachers in Economics, pioneered in the teaching of Economics in Sinhala, and took all pains to popularise the subject in the Universities. His appointment to the Chair in Economics in 1964 represented a landmark in the teaching of this subject in the Universities. He, de-

bunking the reactionary English educated elite's oft-repeated argument that Economics cannot be taught in the Swabasha, successfully pioneered in the teaching of this subject to a new generation of economists who now hold important positions in various walks of life in the country. In the field of research, his record is outstanding. H. A. De S. unlike certain dons who indulge in the manipulation of data in colonial documents and write both historical gibberish and economic and political rubbish, did not subscribe to this form of research, the assessment of which is done on the basis of quantity and not the quality. His contributions to international publications, including the work edited by Prof. Sayers, were definitive studies on the subject of Banking and monetary problems. His post-graduate research, primarily his doctoral dissertation on 'From Dependent Currency to Central Banking in Ceylon' has been treated a definitive study on the subject and it, according to Prof. Sayers, deserved H. A. De S. a Ds.C from the London School of Economics.

Prof. Gunasekera's association with left wing politics of this country became such an eye-sore to some of the academics at Peradeniya that his election to the Deanship at Peradeniya in 1965 became a great battle. He, despite the opposition based on academic jealousy, caste, creed and politics, was elected Dean and this position, irrespective of the forces he fought, was never utilised for his personal advancement and to cut the threat of his fellow colleagues. Above all, he never used his position as Dean for the benefit of his kith and kin, and never wanted to convert the Faculty of Arts into a 'personal nindagama' of the incumbent of the Deanship. He saw to the development of the Faculty and the Department of Economics and Political Science; the courses in this field of study were modernised to meet national requirements and international standards and invested an effort to obtain a well trained cadre in the Department of Economics and Political Science. The Department of Economics and Political Science therefore, became the most important centre of teaching of Economics and Political Science in the Universities, the credit for which must go to H. A. De S. for his unfailing initiative and dedication.

In addition to his distinguished academic career at Peradeniya, H. A. De S. was able to give the benefit of his knowledge and expertise

to the process of decision-making in economic matters of the country. In the short period in which he functioned as the Chairman of the Peoples Bank, he made an effort to popularise banking in the rural sector. In the period 1970-77 H. A. De S. in his capacity as Secretary to the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, made several innovations in the field of development planning. H. A. De S., though he occupied this prestigious position in the administrative apparatus of this country, did not lose his basic interest in academic matters and his commitment to teaching underwent no change, and it was this dedication which prompted him to take a courageous stand on the salary issue of the University teachers in July, 1980. This courageous and bold stand was given a political interpretation by the arrogant bureaucracy (which remains totally politicised) which sees permanency in their very temporary Olympian positions. Prof. H. A. De S. opted to serve at the Colombo University purely on grounds of health; in spite of which he was again transferred to Peradeniya with effect from December 1, 1980 and this, in his view, was a deliberate attempt at victimisation and I boldly share this point of view of my former teacher and colleague. No amount of Senior Common Room gossip and face saving talk can conceal the damage done to this nation and the community of intellectuals in this country. Intellectuals are now under attack and the freedom of the intellectual is at stake. The great mass of intellectuals lost H. A. De S. at a time when we need to prepare ourselves to fight and destroy intellectual facism, academic thuggery and intellectual hypocrisy.

**Prof. Wiswa Warnapala**

Department of Political Science,  
University, Peradeniya.  
10.1.81

## SOVIET VIEW

### Suzuki's Asean Visit

*Moscow, January 10,*

As the Japanese Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki began his tour of the five ASEAN countries on Thursday, he is not only setting a precedent but also setting himself quite a stiff diplomatic task. Suzuki's ASEAN initiative makes sense because Japan is, in many

ways, the major power with the most visible and pervasive presence in the Asian region. The long-time Japanese insistence on separating economics from politics in foreign policy is dead.

When the former Prime Minister, Takeo Fukuda, toured the ASEAN capitals in 1977 he enunciated the "Fukuda doctrine" for Japan's relations with South-East Asia, the first time that any Japanese leader had so clearly articulated Japanese regional foreign policy objectives since the end of World War 2. Now, in at least two ways, Mr Suzuki can be expected to bring that doctrine up-to-date

WHILE JAPAN will pursue a comprehensive national security policy, he says, it will not rely on military power alone. If the ASEAN countries continue to have misgivings about Japanese defence spending—most recently boosted by 7.61 per cent for 1981, rather than by the 9.7 per cent urged by Washington—these must be corrected during the Prime Minister's tour.

In 1981 Suzuki is more likely to praise ASEAN for its stand against what it sees as aggression against Kampuchea. The Japanese, partly under ASEAN prodding, have chosen to halt their aid programme to Hanoi and to come down forcefully on the ASEAN side at the United Nations and elsewhere, and to insist, like ASEAN, on the need for an international conference on the Kampuchean issue. These shared objectives will no doubt be reiterated as Suzuki visits each of the five ASEAN capitals.

There are several ways in which Japan-ASEAN ties are getting significantly stronger. The hard fact remains that for nearly every plus there is minus, so far as the spectrum of ASEAN attitudes towards Japan are concerned. The Japanese are often still suspect for what are often seen as their hard-headed, not to say ultra-sharp business methods.

The ASEAN countries, generally do not want Japan to become too dominant. ASEAN countries are also not happy now that Sino-Japanese amity and co-operation have been increasing. The anxiety here is that a growing Sino-Japanese economic relationship could be at the expense of the Japan-ASEAN relationship. It was at its height in the wake of the signing of the peace treaty between China and Japan in 1978. Amidst the euphoria

engendered at that time, the South-East Asians saw Japan buying more oil from China than from the ASEAN region, switching its investments in China's directions, and generally helping to develop its industries which would then undersell ASEAN products in the world market.

VISITING SINGAPORE last November, the Minister for International Trade and Industry, Bokusuko Tanaka, sought to diminish the ASEAN worries over Sino-Japanese relations. "Our trade and economic co-operation with China is not a matter of dichotomy between China and ASEAN," he said. "If we do show any such tendency we will be most ready to eliminate such factors." Suzuki will be required to give more such affirmations during his tour. It will be interesting to see if he tackles this triangular problem head-on, when he articulates the "Suzuki doctrine" in a major speech in Bangkok, as his trip ends.

Another tricky task facing the Japanese leader will be how he handles the point at which Japanese aid-giving matches with ASEAN performance as a co-operative body. At the ASEAN summit meeting in Bali (Indonesia) in 1976, the five nations agreed to five large-scale industrial projects, which would all benefit from the economies of scale provided by the unified ASEAN market. In 1977, during his ASEAN tour, the then Japanese Prime Minister, Takeo Fukuda, pledged dollar 1 billion Japanese aid (Mainly low-cost loans) to these five projects. To date, none of this aid has been forthcoming, because Japanese aid (mainly low-cost loans) never got off the ground. The Singapore project has been abandoned altogether. The Philippine project has been changed twice and is presently indefinite. The Thai and Malaysian projects are not yet past the feasibility study stage.

No less than other Japanese trade partners, the ASEAN countries will also be pressing for increased Japanese purchases of ASEAN manufactures, plus lower duties and fewer restraints on various ASEAN exports. The fact that Japanese imports from the region have been increasing recently is of little satisfaction, since these increases consist largely of primary products, notably oil. Thailand and the Philippines will be particularly inclined to complain about the substantial trade deficits they incur in their trade with Japan. ASEAN impatience on this issue stems in part from the belief that the products which Japan

should increasingly purchase from them are the items which, by now Japan should be ceasing to produce itself. So far, ASEAN frustration on this issue has risen quicker than any Japanese efforts to undercut it.

—APN



## LETTERS

### Disenfranchisement

Sir,

Mr. E. Seemanpillai's ex-cathedra pronouncement on *disenfranchisement* (*Tribune*, January 10), criticising your usage of the word, is quite wrong. I haven't had time to check his assertion that the OED 'gives it no currency' by consulting the original 13-volume edition in any of the libraries, but the Shorter OED (which is the next best thing) lists in the 1955 edition that I possess both *disenfranchise* and *disenfranchisement*. It also gives the date of the first recorded usage of the verb as an equivalent of *disfranchise* as 1664, so *disenfranchisement* can hardly be the 'noticeable departure from entrenched terminology' that Mr. Seemanpillai claims it to be. I suggest, Sir, that you may continue to use the word without being influenced by misguided pedantry.

Reggie Siriwardena

50/2B, Siripa Road,  
Colombo 5.  
10 January 1981

### Ministerial Junkets

Sir,

I am a regular reader of your journal and have found it most interesting at all times as you have always tried to give the other side of the picture.

Since "Veritas" has failed to give the name of another Minister who holds a very important Ministry namely the Minister of Industries & Scientific Affairs who could have engineered any number of trips has not done so. He also fits into the category of "AVOIDED travel abroad—a very rare characteristic". He has done two or three trips to India & one to U.K., be it private or official not in a period

of three years but in a lifetime. There may be others who deserve equal publicity.

The names of the two Ministers namely the Minister of State and that of the Minister of Fisheries should have appeared in thicker print.

D. Percy Pedris

197, Ward Place,  
Colombo 8.  
9.1.81

\* \* \*

### Kalawana

Sir,

All who value democracy, whatever may be their political affiliation, must rejoice that Kalawana now has a properly elected Member of Parliament.

The tragic-comedy of a costly referendum—costly both in time and money—could have been avoided if Mr. Pilapitiya had taken the simple step of resigning his seat. This would have been the honourable and patriotic thing to do. But then, these virtues are usually in short supply in our political life.

Fr. James Cooke O.M.I.

St. Joseph's o.m.i. Seminary,  
26, Green Path,  
Kohuwela, Nugegoda.  
14th, Jan. '81

\* \* \*

Sir,

### Compensation for Shareholders In Public Rupee Plantation Companies

The only Member of Parliament who has so far taken a genuine and sincere interest in the unbearable sufferings and hardships of poverty-stricken Shareholders in Public Rupee Plantation Companies, is the very well-informed and conscientious **Mr. P. S. Soosaithasan, M.P. for Mannar**. This is evidenced by the full text of his speech made in Parliament and recorded in Columns 4327 and 4328 of the *Hansard* of 18th December 1980. Mr. Soosaithasan's speech was as follows:

"The last thing is about the payment of compensation to Public Rupee Companies.

A total of 163 Plantation Public Rupee Companies were vested in October 1975 along with 83 Sterling Companies and 158 Private companies. The 163 public rupee companies had a total issued and fully paid capital of Rs. 300 million. The Companies were floated many years ago, and the total number of shareholders are in the region of 100,000, and most of them are Ceylonese. It is sad that though foreign shareholders of the 83 Sterling Companies have been paid compensation, not one red cent has been paid to the Ceylonese shareholders of the Rupee Companies although five years and two months have passed. It is said that a sum of Rs. 340 million was provided in the 1978 estimates to pay Compensation to the shareholders. But for some reason or other, the shareholders of the Rupee Companies have not been paid. We also understand that some VIPs and some influential people who owned private estates which were taken over, were compensated more than adequately. Does it mean that Private Companies and private enterprises take precedence over Public Companies and public enterprises? No, Sir. Most of the shareholders are old, some of them have died in absolute poverty and want in their old age, without an income to support them and their families and dependants. This is grossly unfair, and I request that action be taken to compensate them.

Another very important factor is that Compensation should be paid direct to the shareholders and not to the Agency Houses. This is what one of the shareholders had to say: "One of the very powerful and obstructive forces which have been sabotaging the early payment of full compensation direct to the shareholders of the Rupee companies, who are the real owners of the estates and the companies controlled by the Agency Houses, are the Agency House Directors and their stooge-company Directors, none of whom are real or genuine shareholders in these 163 public plantation Rupee companies, and they have always been wanting to swallow the compensation money payable to the shareholders. These Agency houses and company directors who are Members of the so-called Planters Association, have been secretly negotiating with Ministry officials and agreeing to accept Compensation monies due to the shareholders in 4 yearly instalments or even longer, so that they can sit on these compen-

sation monies for another 4 or 5 years and continue to draw their inflated and fudged Agents and Secretaries' fees, Directors' fees etc. etc., spread out to another 4 to 5 years or even longer periods, because it will suit them fine, the longer it is spread out! Therefore, please be kind enough to pay them as early as possible'.

They are really having a very hard time. Most of them are dead and gone, and only some are living and they are old and feeble."

**Mr. R. H. G. de Mel, Finance Minister:** "I want to clarify a point. The delay is not due to the Treasury or the Ministry of Finance. We are awaiting the Land Reform (Amendment) Bill of the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Research. The Bill has now been tabled and it will be debated in January. Once it is passed, the question of compensation for the Rupee Companies can be taken up, because the present proposal for compensation does not cover the Rupee companies. So whatever delay that has occurred is not due to any remissness on the part of the Ministry of Finance, but that the principle in regard to the payment of compensation to Rupee Companies had to be decided. Now, the principle has been decided and the Bill is before Parliament.

**Mr. P. S. Soosaitasan:** "Now Sir, what has shocked and surprised the long-suffering shareholders, who have been eagerly and anxiously awaiting the early passage of the Bill through Parliament, is the reply of the Honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. R. J. G. de Mel, wherein he has said that 'once it is passed, the question of compensation for the Rupee Companies can be taken up, because the present proposal for Compensation does not cover the rupee companies'. What exactly did the Hon'ble Minister of Finance mean by saying 'because the present proposal for compensation does not cover the rupee companies?' If the present proposal did not cover the Rupee companies, then what did it actually cover? What it only meant to cover only the influential and powerful VIP owners of private companies and estates, while discriminating against the poor and helpless Tens of thousands of shareholders in the 163 public Rupee Plantation companies, who have been suffering, starving and even dying in absolute poverty and want, during the last 5 years and 3 months ever since their Estates were vested

in the LRC by the previous Government on the 16th of October 1975?"

This mystifying and intriguing reply in Parliament by the Hon'ble Minister of Finance, which is reported in the official *Hansard* requires immediate clarification to allay the fears and suspicions of the suffering poor shareholders in Public Rupee Companies.

R. Wijaya Indra

10, Jaya Road,  
Bambalapitiya.  
5th, January 1981

## GRAMA SASTRA—34

—Scribblings On Uva Villages

### Virudhu And Genocide

By Gamiya

The bus moved off from Pelwatta, but the strains of music of the Virudhu man from Wellawaya were still fresh in the minds of the passengers, for, here, five miles, later a young man said, referring to a line from the Virudhu man:

*"ratak vatina raja daruvan maha maga  
ada duk vindithi"*

"How true, how true", said the man who remembered it for five miles: "Royal sons and daughters worth a whole country are today suffering on the highway", he said, for such was the virudhu man's plea in Sinhala.

Suffering is different in town and countryside: in the former, there is generally the abstract, academic approach to planning and planning even 'hell' for others. In the latter, it is the sufferer who is really at grips with the suffering.

The genocide of our peoples is now on. Dissa came to see me, in no small huff. His village was silently suffering, he said. The elders were angry that "Family planning had come so near, and that '*Rupiyal pansiya tanhavata oya okkoma karanne*:" all this is done for the sake of greed, for 500 Rupees". We cannot blame them much, for under the new economy, many of the poor destitute have hardly seen a hundred-rupee note, whatever rural banks may say, and here I speak of the very poor, the destitute (despite the non-aligned Summit clean-off of beggars and

the post-77 clean-up of the City). He had observed: "only one son in family one, and he got it done: 2 sons and a girl, and he too went to get it done. Today 21 went to get their Rs. 500/— each. Is this why we sent them to power? The gemming youth are glad to get this done, the others are furious, because a nation with its backbone wiped off cannot even sit on its haunches. We are old already. Muslims and Hindus say they have scriptures which forbid them, and so, while they increase because of their doctrine, we Buddhists decrease because we have no say in the matter. Oh, who will help us". I had no answer for the moment. My Virudhu man, there will be no more princes, royal sons and daughters (*okkoma rajavaru, okkoma boru*) to suffer, because they wouldn't be existing. And see what some from the country of the planners say:

**"Birth control programs are completely inadequate without simultaneously meeting the basic needs of Third World People. This cannot happen within their present political-economic & social systems, which to a great extent are supported and maintained by the United States of America and other industrialized nations. Americans who are interested in curbing population growth in poor nations must concentrate on trying to stop American support of oppressive social systems in the Third World. Population control projects, have not been able to take this approach because they are mostly financed by the Ford Foundation or Rockefeller interests and therefore are prevented from opposing the present political economic-social systems of the Third World" (Gowan-Lakey and others, *Moving Toward a New Society*, 1976, Philadelphia, p. 47)**

So, the pesticide-fungicide-insecticide people are also the genocide ones. Life is so cheap in rural Asia. Buses are easy to come by. One government can lower the flag with fanfare, the other government can send up several smoke rings and secret codes and the game is up. The To Let board is being prepared. The villager is assassinated by the elitist of the city, in certain countries.

## SCANDAL

# Nestle vs W.H.O.

Washington, Jan. 1,

Nestle has launched a widespread campaign to discredit critics of its baby food sales policy, documents obtained by IPS reveal. The giant food transnational is currently the target of a boycott, organised by groups opposed to its aggressive marketing of infant formula in the Third World. Such formulas are known to contribute to infant malnutrition in the Third World. And the World Organisation (WHO) is presently drafting a code of ethics to govern baby food sales in developing countries.

An internal memorandum from Nestle Vice-President Ernest Saunders to Chief Executive Officer Arthur Furer describes the company's strategy as "containment of awareness of the boycott campaign, without being ourselves responsible for escalating awareness levels."

Saunders also wrote that an article which appeared last June in the Prestigious *Fortune* magazine "must be fully exploited". This article entitled "The Corporation Haters" described the church-based boycott organisers as 'Marxists Marching under the Banner of Christ.' The same article was used under a new title by the "Ethics And Public Policy Centre" (EPPC). A conservative think tank, in a mail campaign to introduce community leaders to the EPPC.

Nestle last year gave 25,000 dollars to the EPPC. And Saunders' memo says that Nestle's US President "is somewhat" concerned that Nestle "should not be seen to be the dominant subscriber to the ethics and public policy center."

"Nestle's strategy for a long time has been to call the activists Marxists" says Leah Margulies, Director of the "Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility" (ICCR), and a prime mover of the boycott campaign.

The *Fortune* article, she points out "made no reference....to the strength and diversity of both people and programmes in the overall corporate responsibility effort." Douglas Johnson, Chairperson of the "National Infant Formula Action Coalition (INFACT), points to other instances of ideological attacks on Nestle critics. Oswaldo Balleria,

Nestle Brazil President charged boycott supporters with being interested in "undermining the world free market system" when he appeared in 1978 at a US Senate Health sub-committee.

Nestle is also involved in behind-the-scenes lobbying to shape the content of the WHO code of ethics, the WHO is convinced that breast milk is the best baby food, and worried that in Third World countries where the water supply is polluted, and mothers illiterate, dilutable infant formulas can be dangerous to babies' health. The code would regulate advertising, marketing and sales of such formulas in developing countries.

Leah Margulies claims that in an effort to sidestep this code, Nestle, has tried to persuade some Third World governments to establish independent codes which would be merely an "endorsement of current industry practices." South Africa, which has a severe child malnutrition problem has already enacted such a code.

Another internal Nestle document, leaked to the *Washington Post* last week-end classifies various WHO officials as either hostile or favourable to Nestle's position. Dr. E. M. Denaeher for example, a member of WHO's nutrition unit is noted as a "sure friend" and "we are certainly able to count on his support in the course of the negotiations."

—IPS



Official Exchange Rates of Commercial Banks to their customers for Telegraphic Transfers fixed on Tuesday this week were as follows:—

CURRENCY	PER 100 UNITS	
	Buying Rate	Selling Rate
U.S. Dollar	Rs. 1788.50	Rs. 1791.50
Sterling Pound	Rs. 4319.00	Rs. 4325.00
Deutsche Mark	Rs. 919.20	Rs. 920.88
French Franc	Rs. 397.15	Rs. 397.85
Japanese Yen	Rs. 8.8845	Rs. 8.8995
Indian Rupees	Rs. 229.05	Rs. 229.45

## Litigation And Peace

By Bwana Rafiki

BWANA RAFIKI HAS BEEN REPORTED to the police for assaulting the person who made the complaint. I must say the police have been very nice about it while being scrupulously fair to the complainant. They have not condoned the said assault and in fact expressed their severe disapproval whilst accepting at apparently its face value the truth of the matter without query and said the man had been sent to hospital. Not knowing the facts I would say they were joking. Bwana very foolishly restrained the man from leaving the estate on quite some other grounds ignoring for the moment that the man was on his way to the police station to attend an enquiry on another complaint of his about a matter which impinged on his integrity.

The rather abrupt ending yesterday of my second Labour Tribunal case was a surprise and more surprising was the result. There was no verdict or judgement the President of the Tribunal himself arranging or prompting the terms of an entirely voluntary agreement on both sides that the complaint be reinstated on a casual basis for a trial period pending confirmation of his suitability to be put on the permanent staff. It was as if the last thirteen months had never been and the man employed anew. He is not coming back in his old capacity but to a new job, one he was doing more or less when he first started on my place. He was not a bad fellow in many respects which is why I took him back, but a terror in others. My lawyer refused to accept a fee. We had gone there with photostats, diaries, check roll and other paraphernalia usual to these occasions. I was glad to have the complainant back.

A friend of mine, young, a neighbour was here at the crack of dawn to ask for our husks, what is left of what we have led out into the fields, and he said he was willing to hand over the money for them right away, Rs. 1000/—, Rs. 40/— a thousand, and he wanted twenty-five of them and thought he would find these thousands here. I was sorely tempted to sell them for the sake of the money, but I thought in the end that the estates would be the losers in this transaction and decided not to sell. I felt I had failed to do my friend

a favour. He was anxious to be away early from here for he opened the doors of his choir factory at 7 a.m. and the people would be kept waiting. I write this very tired. I have had a good sleep and got up to write this.

While on the subject of tiredness, may I say I have not felt as tired in my life, except perhaps when I was arrested by Congolese border police, as I have the last four hours. I lay on my bed after falling asleep in a chair while reading the British Observer after dinner and I just could not get out of bed to write this. Yesterday four of my estate staff had to go to the police station at 4 p.m. and I heard afterwards that the complainant failed to turn up. I was told that the police were all kindness and even the officer-in-charge was subdued. He was having a visit by an A.S.P. in mufti who took him away. My men were very late getting back due to buses and I fully expected to learn they had been put in cells because of the prevailing climate up to the time of their visit to the station.

The morning was a full one, several matters to be attended to all at the same time, none which would brook delay. There were plantains and coconuts to be despatched to Colombo by bus. The two men who were ready to go had to be kept back till the other matters were settled. They were doing this in their time and it gave them a chance to go to Colombo at my own expense. A man from some miles south of Colombo came to buy teak trees. I first sent him off with my factor, and then as he seemed interested in the trees and price I had tentatively suggested to him, I had to go myself. Lastly, the man who had had us in such a furore the last week was leaving the estate. He denied that he had told the police I had hit him and said they were capable of saying anything. Perhaps he told the truth, but I have been summoned to an inquiry.

In spite of our endeavours something went wrong. After coming all the way to the start, most of a wooden railing that the wheels of a rowing seat ran on had come loose and I sent both boats back to where they had come from to let the regatta committee decide what they wished to do. They despatched the boats of the next race to the start, and it was but a matter of minutes till the damage was put right and the boats ready for the second race, but the delay made us late in all

the subsequent races, especially as the crews of each race were not sent out on the water until the previous race was over. It was a good regatta and well attended. The last race was rowed totally in the dark, the course a thousand yards, and the race before that after twilight.

\* \* \*

THERE ARE DAYS when I leave the estate when dawn breaks to travel six miles to keep an appointment at 6.30 a.m. When I do this I cannot get back in time for muster. Yesterday was a day like this and I left detailed instructions as to what I wanted said, which was that I wanted the day treated like a holiday but with pay for those who had attended muster, the dairy staff to get two days' pay instead of the day off and for the monthly paid staff, the watchers, no change at all. The occasion was the commemoration of an important event. How can I describe it? It was to do with a human being who was the Mother of God, and to do with the time that she was conceived. For her conception was without original sin.

This year I have got on to Christmas much earlier than I usually do, and even then there is not much time left. I have bought some hand-painted Christmas cards, all that were available, and I left an order for some more. The woman who paints them works in the shop in which they are sold. One of the attractions of these glossily folded cards is that there is no wording, and one just writes what one wants. I shall not add any more about these cards in case I give away trade secrets for there is much more to it than I have said. I lost no time mailing them air-mail second-class, which is much cheaper than 1st class or rather, I have then ready for posting. Christmas is preceded by a whole month's liturgical preparation, as it should be too with the puddings and cakes.

Something has happened to the estate, and I noticed it as I was leaving two days ago while walking down the drive. My household staff were on the verandah to see me off and all seemed so peaceful, it seemed not only too good to be true, but quite alarming. My fears were not for the estate. I was worried, if at all, more about myself, but I shall leave the matters there. I wondered, too, about this peacefulness in relation to the estate,

and here I have no qualms about saying that I attributed the peace to the departure of a certain man. He had been with me two or three years. He had strange and fierce eyes. It was only quite recently I discovered that he had the reputation and the name of being a doctor of some sort, a sort of charmer and that he practised his trade.

The last three nights I have made rather a regular habit of giving into the slightest feeling of drowsiness and lying on my bed, and getting up once or twice, only to lie down again, and getting up finally to do my chores about 3 a.m. On the estate I can turn down the lamps and save kerosene, but there is no way of conserving fuel in Colombo and so it means that the electric light in one of my two rooms burns most of the night till about 4 a.m., which must be a colossal waste of money. It is amazing how one can get inured to the idea of this wastage, hardened to it just as one gets hardened to sinful habits so that it no longer pricks the conscience, as in unlawful methods of birth control, which nations, states and peoples come to take for granted without questioning. I met an official in Family Planning who agreed the methods used are morally wrong.

So I returned to the estates after sensing that great feeling of peace about the place. It was the day for paying advances, and I spoke to the man who had recently been watcher and told him that I had still not finished looking into his case. The man chose that moment to inveigh against the one who had taken his place and accused him of allowing stealing on his block every day. As usual there were two diametrically opposed stories that I had to choose between and I finished up by deciding nothing. I was getting late for a luncheon appointment in Colombo. With my factor away on the first of six days' leave, a cow that was said to be having difficulty calving, and a finely-bred Ayshire heifer that could not get up without help, and an acting watcher without credentials, it was with considerable misgivings that I was leaving at all.

A bus that would pick me up was a long time a-coming, and while I was on the road I was pre-occupied about the cow and the heifer, and quite the last thing I did before a motor-cyclist picked me up was to help get the heifer on its feet, which we had to do by passing a pole under its body, and asking the men present to take it back to near the cattle

shed while it was still on its feet and give it a little poonac at once. A young man had also come to see me about a job. I asked him to come back today but I missed him by about ten minutes. I gathered by asking about his conversation here that it had differed in several respects on matters about which I had asked him earlier, which is not a promising beginning, but the differences could be explained away. Last night I was really quite worried about certain estate matters and I nearly returned on the 12.45 a.m. bus. Here I am again.

## WORKING WEEK

### Britain's Poor Record

London, January 1,

As the Polish Trade Union Organisation, Solidarity comes again into conflict with the Polish Government over the length of the basic working week, and the workers' demand for a five day, 40 hour week, the British trade Unions Congress (TUC) has issued the results of a year-long campaign to reduce the basic working week in this country.

Britain's workers account for a greater number of working hours than those of any other country in the European Economic Community (EEC), and "the long hours worked by British manual workers is a major reason why" states the TUC. Britain has a working population of 26 and only five million full time manual workers, out of a total of ten million, have won a basic working week of less than forty hours.

The TUC report indicates that many of the groups which have not yet achieved a reduction on the 40-hour week have established working parties to examine ways of doing this. The TUC reports shows that workers in the transport and communication sectors work an average weekly total of 48.4 hours those in construction, shipbuilding and catering follows hard on their heels with upwards of a 47 hour week. The TUC objective is a 35 hour working week with six weeks annual paid leave.

The report finds some encouragement in the fact that settlements with managements have stressed no further increase in overtime working (work over and above the basic working week). The sizeable drop in the government's Department of Employment figures for

working hours in 1980 is accounted for in a reduction in average overtime worked in the country. In the EEC the UK is virtually alone in having no general legal limits on working time. In Europe hours laid down through legislation include, Austria 40, Belgium 40, Federal Republic of Germany 48, Finland 40, France 40, Iceland 40, Ireland 48, Italy 48, Luxembourg 40, Malta 40, Netherlands 48, Norway 40, Spain 44.

In many of the European countries which have a high limit, hours worked are well below the legal limit. The British TUC will be examining in detail the correlation, particularly in Britain, between high overtime and low basic wage, and the consequent use of overtime to bring up levels of earnings to reasonable standards. The co-existence of such overtime with high unemployment in the UK compared with relatively low overtime in Europe generally and not least of all the danger under the present Conservative Party Government that a general limit on working overtime might establish an undesirable precedent in other area of collective bargaining. —IPS

### MEXICO CANCELS FISHING ACCORD WITH US

Mexico City, Jan. 1,

Mexico has cancelled its fishing agreements with the United States signed in 1976 and 1977. The move came a week before a scheduled meeting between Mexican President Lopez Portillo and US President-elect Ronald Reagan. A message to this effect was delivered in Washington to the US Government by Mexican Ambassador Hugo Margain. The Mexican Government note said that it denounces the agreements because they ceased to accomplish the aims for which they were drawn up. The US has begun to prevent the operations of Mexican fishing craft on the Atlantic coast. According to the 1976 pact Mexico authorised US ships to fish in its territorial waters and the 1977 agreement authorised Mexican fishing craft to operate in US waters.

—PL (Pool)

# Confidentially

## Tobacco-1

IS IT NOT SURPRISING that Sri Lanka has been slow to respond to the world-wide call by governments and organisations to fight the growing menace of tobacco smoking? That health specialists in many countries have pointed out that smoking cigarettes is the most dangerous way of burning the noxious weed to the detriment of one's health? That apart from everything else cigarettes are the most easily available and are still the cheapest? That whilst it is true that smoking a few cigarettes can do little harm, it is a habit that grows and the number of addicts has proliferated rapidly? That to meet this world-wide campaign to bring home to people that smoking is a major health hazard (and probably one of the major causes of cancer) tobacco multinationals carry on in each country a vast advertising and public relations (pr) exercise to throw a smokescreen not only over the dangers of tobacco smoking but also over the fabulous profits earned by the Company? That these unconscionable profits are made at the expense of the nation's health? That in Sri Lanka this PR operation—extending over many years—has taken many forms? That sponsoring of radio broadcasts for Sports News and minute-to-minute commentaries of School Matches and Test Matches is only one of many of such exercises? That advertising in the newspapers is really intended to restrain proprietors from joining in a campaign to spotlight the dangers of smoking? That tobacco advertising is so massive and so lavish that owners—eager to secure maximum revenue—will veto the publication of comments (or even information) that might adversely affect the profits of the manufacturers of cigarettes? That more insidious methods have now been adopted by the Tobacco Lobby to build up a cushion of “public relations goodwill” through devices like sponsoring Mahaweli films on the TV? That although tobacco advertising has been banned on the TV, notices were inserted in all newspapers that the “Ceylon Tobacco Company invites you to view ‘The Awakening’, the story of the new settlers in the Mahaweli H9 area in colour on Tuesday 20th January at

7.30 p.m. on your TV”? That even on the TV it was made amply clear that it was the Tobacco Company that had bought TV time to screen this film? That it would be only a drop in the vast ocean of Tobacco projects for the Company to pay for the making of this film? That this is only one of the many devious ways in which the Tobacco Company in Sri Lanka tries to inhibit and contain any media, public or governmental campaign against the evils of smoking tobacco? That setting up of farms or orchid nurseries is another gimmick of the Tobacco Company to show that it is one of the promoters of the national development plans? That *Tribune* will examine the various methods adopted by the Tobacco Multinational to prevent the people of Sri Lanka from learning the real truth about health hazards involved in cigarette smoking? That this is only one aspect of the anti-national subversion of tobacco vested interests? That the latest publication of the Ministry of Mahaweli Development entitled MAHAWELI—PROJECTS & PROGRAMME has a section on “Environment and Heritage”? That in this it is pointed out that “With the start of the plantation economy by the British in the mid-19th century, and the introduction of the crown Lands Ordinance of 1840 and the Waste Lands Ordinance of 1847, forests in the up and mid country were denuded. The soil washed down in torrents, leaving bare the weathered rocks with a thin mantle of soil on the land. Muddy waters carried the soil in suspension only to silt the river beds below. This was the heritage left by the colonial administrators. Be that as it may, we would have to rectify the situation and prevent further deterioration. The growing of flue-cured tobacco is also causing severe damage to the surrounding jungle as the timber required for such curing is obtained from adjacent forests. The timber required to cure one acre of tobacco is estimated at 7 tons per season; if we take the 40,000 acres of such tobacco it would mean that 500 acres of forests per year are consumed by flue-cured tobacco plantations. This is a very serious problem facing the nation and remedial measures would have to be taken to prevent the destruction of our natural resources which is our national heritage. Our resources will have to be properly harnessed, sustained and maintained for the generations to come”?

(To Be Continued)



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by Walter S. Ross, a Reader's Digest staff writer, is editor of *World Smoking & Health*, an American Cancer Society journal.

This article which has been published by the *Reader's Digest* and other magazines will appear in the *Tribune* next week.

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