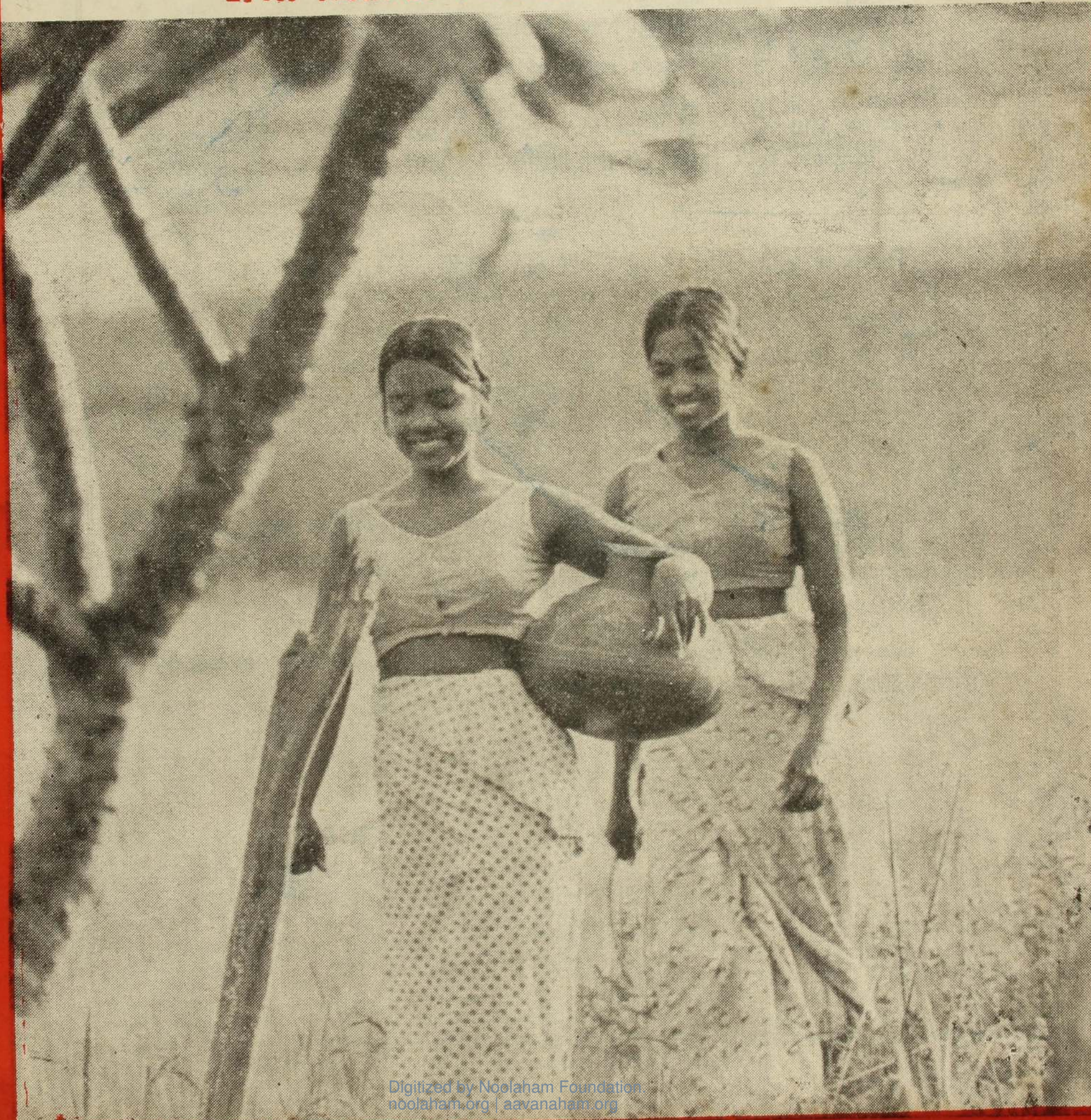


TRIBUNE



27TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION



TRIBUNE

IN 1982

There is a big demand for a better, brighter and if possible a bigger **Tribune** in 1982.

With the General Elections coming up in 1983, there is no doubt that 1982 will have all the hallmarks and tempo of an election year.

Readers want us to add to our features on different aspects of Sri Lankan life — some of which **Tribune** has neglected in the past. They want more investigative stories exposing corruption, inefficiency, incompetence and graft. They want the truth about the development projects of the Government. And more than anything else, they want the news behind the news on the national and international scene.

All this calls for reorganisation and preliminary groundwork. To enable us to get a little breathing time to do this, the next issue of **Tribune** will be on January 9, 1982.

We take this opportunity to wish all our readers a happy X'mas and a prosperous New Year.

TRIBUNE

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Colombo 2.

Tel : 33172

TRIBUNE

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

THE SLFP M.P. FOR ATTANAGALA, Mr. Lakshman Jayakoddy, must be commended for drawing pointed attention to the BTT on books and periodicals during the Committee stage of the Budget Debate. The *Weekend* on its issue of December 6 had raised the question of the BTT on books—in its *Insight* column. The paper had sought the views of a number of people qualified to speak on the subject: “..... ‘The application of a turnover tax on books is the unkindest tax of all’, says H. A. I. Goonetilleke, internationally recognized bibliographer and former librarian at the University of Peradeniya. ‘If the government values the role played by education in advancing development, it will have to explore some urgent means of making the raw material for the education—the printed word—less difficult of access. Although we boast of our high rate of literacy, the objective of producing not merely a literature, but a well-informed population, is being defeated”, he said. Mr. Goonetilleke and several others interviewed by the INSIGHT TEAM pointed out that the application of this tax was a contravention of UNESCO’s Florence Declaration of 1950 to which Sri Lanka was a signatory. The declaration pledges commitment to the free flow of books, to regard books as cultural products and not as pure merchandise, and to grant them complete freedom from taxes and duties in International trade. Professor A. W. Mylvaganam, Professor Emeritus of the University of Colombo told INSIGHT “I am dead against any tax on books’. He said that he had no objection to subsidies being removed from other goods to subsidise books. Books are absolutely essential for the upliftment of our people’, he said. Libraries, on which all students have become more and more heavily dependent, will be adversely affected not only by the 5 per cent tax on the books they buy but also by the 5 percent tax on any gifts and donations of books they may receive, said M. A. P. Senadheera, Librarian at Colombo University. ‘Because of Budget limitations, libraries are constrained to cut down on the books and periodicals they get down each year—although the publications, particularly in fields like medicines, science and technology—are increasing space with the latest discoveries and advances that continually being made. Ten years ago the Medical Faculty subscribed to 400 titles of periodicals, today they subscribe to only 125. Some 30,000 medical journals are being published, of which about four thousand are important for the students’, he said. ‘The prices of books will nullify the government’s trust towards improving the standard of English. Motivation to read is a major factor that is lacking among those who need to be taught English’, he observed. ‘It is like administering antibiotics on the one hand, and injecting germs on the other’.....’ The paper published other interviews from educationists in a similar strain. Mr Lakshman Jayakoddy pointed out that the BTT has been imposed for the first time on books and periodicals. It is one thing to impose the BTT on advertisements published in the big newspapers. A BTT on the circulation of big monopoly profit-making newspapers can be justified under certain circumstances but to impose the BTT on non-profit making periodicals like the *Tribune* (and most journals of this kind are non-profit making) will sooner or later compel these publications to close down. Cost of production have escalated to the point that the effort to keep afloat has reached the point of no return. The Government has also imposed some restrictions on advertisements in “new” newspapers (which are not government sponsored or run by political parties). This is a transparent device to deprive *The Island* and the *Divaina* of advertisements. This is perhaps not the first time a newspaper has been deprived of advertisements as a punitive measure. *Tribune* has been penalised in the past, and it can happen in the future. But whatever mistakes and stupidities *The Island* may be guilty of—*Tribune* is the only paper that has consistently pointed them out—the way to deal with such lapses not by denying government advertisements which every paper or periodical that is read is entitled to get.

The Code and Gossip

The Government has once again drawn attention to the Rules made by the Sri Lanka Press Council setting out a Code of Ethics for Journalists under Section 30 (1) (a) of the Sri Lanka Press Council Law No. 5 of 1973 and approved by Parliament under Section 30 (3) of the said law. This Code was duly published in Gazette Extraordinary No. 162/5A of 14th October, 1981.

1. These rules may be cited as the Press Council (Code of Ethics for Journalists) Rules 1981.

2. Every journalist shall:—

- (a) use all reasonable means within his power to ascertain prior to publication the veracity of the contents of any article written by him for publication;
- (b) refrain from reporting or causing to be printed or published any matter which he knows or has reason to believe to be false or inaccurate;
- (c) refrain from distorting the truth by any act of commission or wilful omission;
- (d) take all possible steps to correct within the shortest possible space of time any inaccuracy or incorrect information in any report or article for the writing or publication of which he is responsible; and
- (e) refrain from publishing or causing to be published any matter which may offend public taste or morality or tend to lower the standards of public taste or morality.

3. Every journalist shall use all reasonable means at his command in any report or article he writes or causes to be printed or published to draw a clear distinction between any statement of fact on the one hand and any expression of opinion or criticism on the other.

4. Every journalist shall observe secrecy regarding any source of information unless the person who gave him such information authorizes the disclosure of his identity.

5. Every journalist shall respect the reputation of an individual and refrain from reporting or causing to be printed or published any information or comment regarding an individual's private life unless the publication of the said matter is in the public interest as distinguished from public curiosity.

6. (1) In reporting or causing to be printed or published accounts of crimes or criminal cases, a journalist shall not—

- (a) name victims of sex crimes;
- (b) name any young person accused of criminal offence who to his knowledge is below the age of eighteen and to his knowledge a person who has no previous convictions; or
- (c) name any person as being a relative of a person accused or convicted of a crime for the sole purpose of informing the reader of the relationship between the person so named and the person charged, unless the public interest would be served by the publication of the said matter.

(2) In reporting or causing to be printed or published accounts of matrimonial causes or actions, a journalist shall refrain from reporting or publishing any offensive details.

7. A journalist shall not commit plagiarism.

8. A journalist shall not present any matter in a manner designed to promote sadism, violence or salacity.

9. A journalist shall not report or cause to be printed or published any matter that is obscene unless the public interest is served by the publication thereof.

10. A journalist shall not report or cause to be printed or published any matter for the purpose of promoting communal or religious discord or violence.

11. Every journalist shall safeguard the dignity of his profession. He shall not accept any bribe in money, kind or service for any matter connected with or incidental to his profession.

This is an excellent Code, but it will be good to know how far the Fourth Estate in Sri Lanka is observing this Code, and if not what steps are being taken to implement these rules. But even more important is to know what the Sri Lanka Press Council has done or proposes to do about making the Code part of the journalistic ethos in this country.

Every paper and periodical can easily become guilty of violations of the Code, wittingly, and more likely unwittingly. Looking through our back numbers over the years, we detected several lapses on the part of *Tribune* so far as the Code is concerned. It is not enough to make resolutions to adhere to the code strictly. It is essential that readers should point out every time *Tribune* has broken any rule in the Code. We will then examine these columnists or strictures—and if an explanation is called for publish a statement of justification or regret. Frivolous

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complaints will be thrown into the waste paper basket.

Apart from vigilance on the part of readers of *Tribune* and other newspapers, it would help if periodicals (like the *Lanka Guardian*, *Forward*, *The Nation*, etc.) draw attention to such lapses in the big national dailies. *Tribune* proposes to draw attention to such violations of the Code, and this week in our *Confidentially* column one such matter has been spotlighted. It is too much to expect the big daily newspapers to permit its own hawk-eyed columnists to point to such violations of the Code in other daily newspapers. But it will be a good thing if different papers (including the big daily papers) publish from time to time critical examinations of the contents of other newspapers. Many prestigious newspapers and periodicals in the world regularly publish articles about "The Media".

One thing must be made clear that "gossip" need not necessarily be kept out of the paper if it has a purpose to fulfil. We had occasion to refer in the *Tribune* last week (December 12) to an essay in the *Time* magazine of October 26, 1981 entitled "The Morals of Gossip". A few extracts from this essay will help to make clear the point we wish to make: "... Large claims have often been made for homely old salacious gossip—the sort of assertions, one might think, that sweating pornographers used to make in court about the 'redeeming social value' of their work. All story-telling, hence most of literature from Homer onward, rises from gossip's fertile lowlands. Even the deepest primordial myths are essentially gossip. ... The highly vulnerable Oscar Wilde went so far as to say that all history is gossip. Such gossip, unlike history, tends to evaporate. ... Gossip is certainly an instrument of power; Lyndon Johnson understood the magic leverage to be gained from intimate personal details, artfully dispensed. He made it a point to know the predilections of friends, the predicaments of enemies. He orchestrated whole symphonies of power upon the Moog of his own ego. Conversely, gossip seems to cherish a democratic, even subversive impulse; it likes to knock down authority a little. That is why royal families make their servants sign oaths not to write (gossip) about what goes on in the private quarters. In the late 20th century, technology has immeasurably complicated the business of gossip. Television, radio, the pages of newspapers and magazines have all conspired to create international class gossip. This macrogossip detaches the usual human tale-telling from its local roots. ... But microgossip—the myriad back-nipping, back fence, kitchen-table, men's room exchanges all over the world, the low animated buzz of dirt-dishing that emanates from the globe—is the kind of gossip that may perform a kind of social mission. Microgossip keeps rumbling in like the surf, a Pepysian lounge act: routines about Sylvia, about

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to be fired, and Karl, who can't get a divorce, and Dorothy's valium".

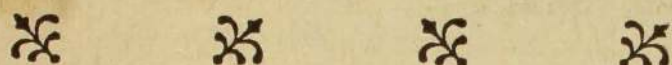
After saying this, the Essay goes on to discuss personal gossip between individuals and at parties. Every human being is entitled to gossip in this way, but the question is whether such personal gossip about the sex life of people should get into print in newspapers and periodicals. The Sri Lanka Code for journalists is totally against such gossip that is only for "public curiosity".

"Perhaps most of the world's gossip—both macro and micro—is done for the interest and entertainment of it," continued the *Time* essay. At certain dinner parties in Georgetown and Beverly Hills and East Hampton (cannibals' picnics, nights of the long knives), the gossip is a combination of dispassionate vivisection and blood sport; reputations are expertly filleted and the small brown pits of egos are spit decorously into spoons and laid at the edge of the plate. Gossip goes in for the negative, not the positive. It is no doubt mean-spirited. 'If gossip favours even enjoys, dirt (the failings of character), wrote the critic John Leonard, 'it is because we suspect ourselves, and the suspicion is a shrewed one'. Yet, oddly, people do not seem to object to being gossiped about as much as they once did. After all, as macrogossip has instructed, any gossip is a form of attention, a sort of evanescent celebrity. Even gossip works to keep away what Saul Bellow called 'the wolf of insignificance'. Privacy is not the highest priority; on the contrary, a certain emotional exhibitionism has been gaining ground. Of course, it can get out of hand; a man happy enough to be gossiped about as the office philanderer might grow queasy at learning that gossip is calling him a sadomasochist."

"If much gossip is retailed merely for the enjoyment of the exchange, the simple human interest in the passing pageant of follies, it also has subtler purposes. Gossip—which concerns people, while rumour concerns events,—is usually an instrument with which people unconsciously evaluate moral contexts. ... If that is so, the gossip (whatever its individual destructiveness which can be awesome—ask Othello) also serves as a profound daily act of community. In her novel *Happy All The Time*, Laurie Colwin has a character who prefers to call gossip 'emotional speculation.' Tight. Through the great daily bazaar of bitchiness (men can be just as bitchy as women) passes a dense and bewildering parade of follies. They involve sex and money and alcohol and children and jobs and cruelty and treasury mostly variations on the seven deadly sins. Gossip is a safe way of sorting out this amoral brawl. It is a form of improvisational day-dreaming, 'Both the virtue and vice of gossip', write Sabini and Silver, 'is that one doesn't confront accusers or demand proof. ... Gossip is

transitional between things merely said, or even half said and positions taken in the public domain. Gossip is a training ground for both self-clarification and public moral action'. Gossip is the layman's mythmaker and moralist.....

Such gossip goes on daily. The picture on the Cover shows an exchanges of such gossip by a village tank. Is it in "the public interest" to publish in print the sexy gossip that the two damsels may indulge in about some important people in the village?



FILM FOCUS

Handling Films

It was the aberrations in the sound track of the film FAME that set me thinking of how haphazardly films are handled when despatched from one cinema to another, or from the National Film Corporation stores to the outstations. The spools which are packed in circular containers are often loosely arranged in large aluminium or tin boxes—quite often dented by overuse and transported as railway luggage, and I have witnessed how they are handled roughly from the moment of taking over at a railway station to the time of delivery at its destination. To the Railway bureaucrats on wheels, a film Box is just another parcel for hurried delivery on schedule, and it is quite often that it is shoved out and dropped on to the platform with considerable damage to the reels and more to the sensitive sounds track of a film. When one considers the cost of many of these films, it does seem a blunder that such films are despatched without a NFC employee accompanying it.

This column feels that there should be some re-thinking in the matter by the NFC and would request the Chairman to address his mind to it. It is also admitted that the movie-goers in Colombo and a chosen lot in the field of film entertainment, for they get the first opportunity to view a new film generally before it goes on a rattling journey to the other parts of the country, at the end of which it is a mess of celluloid with a cacophonous sound track that competes with a dialogue or a scare in a film. This is unfair to say the least by the outstation film fans who pay the same ticket fate as their favoured counterparts in Colombo. There is yet another villain which contributes to the pathetic condition of a new film and that is the deteriorating projectors in many cinemas, handled by amateur operators. When a good film has finished its run, it is spun through such a projector, there are several tell tale marks and crude signature streaks that are carried over, and this progressive damage leads to the ruin of many a good

film, that is shown at the outstation cinemas. Thus the picturegoers in the provinces grin and suffer in silence and have no choice but to put up with the distorted entertainment dished out. Over to you NFC—and please begin by taking a closer look at how these reel containers are received and despatched from your end.

FAME (English): A M.G.M. production directed by Alan Parker that boasts two Oscars, for the best song (The Body Electric) and best original music score, but paradoxically rendered effete and anaemic by a spluttering sound track which neutralises the glory of the bouquets it has earned. Fame contains a veiled story of 8 students who enter a New York High School to be trained for an orchestral future in dance, drama and music. They are put through their paces by an older generation of teachers who do not resist the temptation to blend the old classical strains with that of the more modern popular music, which the youth strain for. And while the four year course moves on, the camera takes a peep at the private lives and loves of the undergraduate when on the spree, off stage, which spell out several adult situations. The rapid takes, cuts, and switchovers are done with a novel and unique precision, which is hard to come by and beckoning deep audio-visual concentration. The film strains hard to tie up the old with the new and weaves through the time gap rather neatly. Music is its hard core and being defined as the most difficult profession, the film interperses the dialogue with four lettered words which are silenced by the Censor, although the lisping of them were clear, leaving very little to the imagination. This stimulating cine effort caters to a particular class only, and there were many walkouts during the film with some others grinning and waiting for the grand finale which was inevitable, with the final graduation ceremonies. And when that hour arrived, a hundred piece school orchestra was activated, by 150 student musicians closing in on the award winning song. Fame floundered at the Box Office for more reasons than one, for as I mentioned at the outset, the sauce in it was spilled by a protesting sound track which did not stand by the painstaking film makers. You have been warned and the choice is yours!

SIRITTHU VAALAVENDUM (Live with Laughter) Tamil: Director S. S. Balan has handled this Tamil version of the Hindi film ZANZEER which was a box office draw, when screened locally a few years ago. The charismatic appeal of actor M. G. Ramachandran is in full play and so is the tight formula, which M. G. R. revelled in, on his road to a political summit, from where he preside over the fortunes of Tamil Nadu as its Chief Minister. In dual roles as a Police Officer and a Muslim tough, the tragic demise of the parents of the former after the severing of a drug connection, projects the story on. Forgetting his early years, but for a galloping white steed that strides

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into his dreams, the Police Officer lays down the law firmly, and treads the paths trod by Indian Statesman of the Calibre of Gandhiji, Nehru and Annaduari (M. G. R. s. guru) till his path is crossed by an attractive witness in Lata, who sets about crossing his heart too thereafter, While tearing apart the outer fabric of an organised gang trafficking in drugs, he gets a glimpse and a clue to his galloping nightmares, that points to the arch villain (Nambiar) who murdered his parents. Both M. G. R. and his bete noire appear comparatively young which suggests that this film had hit our screens many years after its release. It sizzles however with enough action and entertainment. There were no less than seven costume changes in one particular song, but such was the stuff that lowered the political realms for M. G. R. If you have any anti-M. G. R. prejudices, shed them and sit this coloured film out for a worthwhile escape while it lasts.

TREASURE ISLAND (English): There are many among us who have leafed through the pages of Robert Louis Stevenson's novel "Treasure Island" and filed it in our memories as our fresh steps to further literary treasures—yet this E. M. I. Production fails by a long chalk to do justice to this great Novel, and has been hooted out, after a week's run in the city. There were the few who come along to refresh their memories, to leave disappointed by their presentation, which was more blah blah than an effective link to the novel. Even Orson Welles, that versatile Shakespearean actor as long John Silver, did not gather the prose or performance convincingly. You might as well give this treasure a miss—there was only a spoonful of R. I. S. in it!

Note This column being a weekly finds it difficult to keep pace with the whims of picturegoers in Colombo who unconsciously manipulate the hold overs at the box office, resulting in many films having shorter runs in the Metropolis. It will however persist in reviewing as many films as released for the benefit of the outstation *Tribune* readers.

JAMES N. BENEDICT



HOUSING POLICY

The Urban Poor in Sri Lanka

By Florian Steinberg

THIS THESIS entitled "The Urban Housing Question in Sri Lanka—Perspectives of Housing Policy for the Poor" is dealing with the problems of slums and squatter settlements (— 'shanties') in urban Sri Lanka mainly in its Capital Colombo where up to

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60% of its inhabitants live in slums and shanties. These slums are the result of a systematic neglectance of those working class rowhouses which were built by speculators and entrepreneurs around the turn of this century. The shanty settlements—erected on squatted private or public land—originate mainly from the time since independence and are mostly simple makeshift huts of rather semi-permanent character, in most cases having been built by their inhabitants. In both settlement forms one finds a variety of social strata consisting of small artisans, small-scale petty commodity producers, street vendors, casual as well as regular wage labourers, small shop owners and even small entrepreneurs—as well as a high percentage of unemployed or underemployed. With the exception of the petty-entrepreneurs and the small shop keepers this slum and shanty population is on average facing a rather insecure and instable social and economic situation. Either being a part of the temporary or casual workforce or only a member of the labour reserve army, either being heavily underpaid in their activities of small-scale trading or production, most of these people—whom I call the "urban poor"—are experiencing a hard life of poverty missing the fulfillment of their basic needs (food, clothing, shelter, sanitation, education...) . This overall situation is also contributing to their housing situation: The urban poor are not in an economic position to articulate their housing needs on the 'free' housing market; i.e. they have to rely on a cheap (or almost no-cost) accomodation and living in the slums and shanties. The high unemployment or underemployment and the social "marginalization" resulting in a definite underpayment of the labour of the "urban poor" are factors demanding a very specific view of the "housing question": It has to be seen in relation to the "social question" with regard to a better and more just distribution of social wealth, i. e. the social surplus product.

The relevant and effective elements of the housing problem in general can be found in the commodity character of the house and in the social, i. e. economic misery of wide strata of the srilankan society who have no access to the existing social wealth. These characteristics of the commodity. "housing", produced and exchanged in a society dominated by the rules of the capitalist mode of production are hidden by the facts(a.) that the commodity 'housing' mostly appears as a use value and not as an exchange value thus covering the various interests of capital valuation of the builders ('developers', of building contractos, of building material producers, of land owners, of finance institutions etc., and by the fact(b.) that the very differentiated income situation determines the effective demand on the housing market. All statal housing policy is geared to follow a number of objectives which can be named separately as follows: (1) the production and supply of housing

for those strata of society on whom the state and its functions are mostly reliant—i.e. public servants and other members of the middle classes, as well as the most qualified (and privileged) parts of the working classes: (2) the creation of conditions for an encouragement of private house building (i.e. building laws, taxes, loans, provision of land etc., ...) that serves the house builders direct needs; (3) the creation of conditions for capital valuation of those fractions of private capital and entrepreneurship which seek profit as developers, as building contractors, building materials producers or property owners.

HENCE, it can be concluded that housing policies and programmes for direct construction will always represent two aspects: one is the recognition and fulfillment of housing needs of the respective classes favoured according to their economic and social position; this is what I would call the specific "class nature" of housing policy. The other is the aspect that the state, as an overall representation of the various interests of capital, sets the conditions and the framework of capital valuation for all different (and sometimes conflicting) interest groups involved is the production, distribution and consumption of commodity housing. Till recently, the housing policies in Sri Lanka were mostly designed to serve the housing needs of the middle classes and of small, i. e. privileged parts of the working class: Complementary to the various public programmes of direct housing construction, to the provision of construction loans for the affluent house builders the state also introduces a wide set of legislative measures of rent control, of tenants protection of rent-purchase schemes and of provision to encourage private low-cost house-building while discouraging luxury house construction. Nevertheless all these measures contributed to some extent to the creation of more houses, to a better legal position of tenants and a reduced exploitation of them through their landlords—the housing problem of the "urban poor" was not really affected, all those measures did not make a dent in the improvement of their physical housing situation.

It was only in the 70's that a start was made to provide them with some better sanitary facilities, to make most of the slum units rent-free and to think about forms of slum and shanty improvement. Contradictory to earlier attempts to eradicate the slum and shanty "nuisance" through pure demolition without necessary provision of substitute shelter—thus shifting the housing problem of the urban poor only to other locations—the respective housing authorities started to formulate a policy of slum and shanty rehabilitation. This policy aims at a provision of a much cheaper housing by an upgrading of the existing stock of slums and shanties as far as it is possible (estimatedly in 50% of the slum and shanty cases)—thus renewing

and improving the existing stock instead of demolishing it. To reduce costs and to make this improvement more acceptable or affordable to the slum and shanty dwellers a self-help contribution is also envisaged and receives an important role especially in those cases where rebuilding of un-improvable houses or where resettlement of shanties and the construction of the so-called aided self-help houses becomes necessary. By the beginning of the 80's in Colombo some 4,800 slum and shanty units are in the building or planning stage of upgrading-executed according to the above described principles. Partly foreign aid (grants), partly local budget resources were sought to implement these pilot upgrading schemes, which are very few in number in regard to the problem of some and some 25,000 to 35,00 shanty units in Colombo.

DUE TO HIGH COST INCREASES following the "liberalization of the economy" after 1977 the presently executed upgrading programmes have become so expensive that they are no more economically 'viable'. This matter raises serious problems if the aim of the self-financing character of these housing programmes for the benefit of the poor is to be maintained. Cost increases have brought the comparatively cheap slum and shanty upgrading even out of the reach of the urban poor. Hence, it will be a matter of political decision pro or contra bigger state subsidies to maintain the original social target—to improve the housing situation of the urban poor. To prevent social segregation, between those who can pay for the upgrading of their housing situation and those who cannot, which will easily originate from the 'self-financing' principle within these schemes, slum and shanty upgrading demands a broad state subsidy in favour of satisfying the housing needs of the urban poor. This is also emphasized by the unfortunate trend of a permanent and absolute increase of poverty of the slum and shanty population who rarely benefit from the present outright capitalist development path but suffer from high inflation and the withdrawal of a number of public subsidies which earlier supported their income and their consumptive need. In addition to the problem of costs there are still a number of "constraints" which make the border realization of slum and shanty upgrading a problem: issues such as the land problem especially in the context of squatted land, the necessary income security for obtaining construction loans, the limited ability or willingness to participate in self-help house building need some more investigation and positive practical approaches to support the procedure of improving the housing of the urban poor.

What can be learned from the present features of housing policy for the urban poor in Colombo? It has become obvious that the Sri Lankan state wants to do something to alleviate the housing problem of the urban poor. But simply stated activities shall be limited and costs are to be kept low. In this context

The integration of self-help is seen as a useful contribution to reduce the costs and it will transfer some of the responsibilities to the dwellers themselves. Additionally, selfhelp and the creation of private property through dweller's participation is regarded as an ideologically positive element supporting the doctrine of a "home owning democracy" that Sri Lanka wishes to become.

AS THE "SOLUTION" of the slum and shanty problem, i.e. the housing question of the urban poor, it to rely on the principles a.) of providing cheap low-standard housing, b.) of a self-help component) and c.) of a need for repayment of big shares of the arising costs, it will definitely have a socially segregative effect: as in the comparable situation of the "free" housing market only those who can pay can benefit from this "solution" of the slum and shanty problem. Hence one can conclude that this policy for the urban poor is—realistically—only seeking a partial improvement of the housing situation of the urban poor. The improvement will be effective for those who have already found (or are about to find) relatively stable wage employment or self-employment which gives them higher purchasing power. For the remaining parts of the urban poor—not benefiting from the effects of capitalist modernization and additionally being underpaid—there remains only the meagre hope for more grants or subsidies to improve their housing. According to the objectives of the state, to support and mobilize the private sector, slum and shanty improvement can be interpreted as a policy in favour of some contractors but mostly of the building materials producers: Through the increase of overall building activities in the slum and shanty improvement process some construction skill is needed as well as materials which are consumed by the small contractors at work or by the self-building dwellers. This means that—especially in the case of shanties—the building industry and the construction materials industry is introduced into a new field of capital valuation which was formerly rather uninteresting. When considering the whole task of working for a solution of the housing problem of the urban poor one has to ask if a "solution" is realistic within the given framework. Especially the availability of financial resources is a focal point of discussion: As it is known there are wide income differences preventing the fulfillment of housing needs of the urban poor. But does it mean that the srilankan society is too poor in general to solve the housing question in such a way that every individual is provided some basic (minimal standard) housing, sanitation and proper environment?

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the private and public funds presently invested in the field of housing one can calculate that all these funds would be enough

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to provide a proper house to every srilankan family—by building no more luxury housing—it is just a matter of a redistribution of those funds that would lead to a general increase of the housing standards and to a fulfillment of the basic needs of housing. But if this calculation is regarded to be too unrealistic in the present conflict one could concentrate one's view on public budgets alone. Even the public funds would be enough to cover the costs for some crash programmes to upgrade all slums and shanties in Colombo. The public annual housing budget not only exceeds this amount of money several times, but there are huge construction programmes in the country, e.g. the building of a new parliamentary complex, which will cost many times more than the provision of low-standard housing for the urban poor would. It is the orientation of investment politics which contradicts to such an extent the use of existing resources for a fulfillment of basic needs...

This above discussed view of the so-called cost-problem underlines my position that the 'housing question' is mainly a question of distribution of social wealth. Thus the housing question is not a problem of 'absolute' but of "relative" poverty ! **This prime result of my thesis is especially interesting as Sri Lanka is regarded as one of the poorest countries in the world. As these elements and practices of the Sri Lankan housing policy for the urban poor should not only be seen in a national context. I want to finally consider the international debate about new strategies and their implementations with which one hopes to solve the housing Questions—which one also finds reflected in Sri Lanka.**

FOR THE LAST TWO DECADES there is a debate on policy reforms related to the housing of the urban poor in the underdeveloped capitalist countries. The central assumption within this debate were that a solution of the housing question for the urban poor will be possible within the context of the prevailing market economy. Accordingly this "solution" shall be achieved if self-help is used on a wide scale, saving a big share of costs, if resources are used carefully and if housing policy follows a more rational and socially orientated path which includes the redification of housing standards and of housing policy instruments. Practical experiences also have shown that the "new" housing reform policies are not fulfilling the housing needs of the urban poor but of the better-off part of the working class and the middle classes. Hence it can be concluded that today's capitalist housing policies—mainly consisting of the creation of small housing property in the hands of the working class—are only geared to tie workers to housing and employment. As the direct provision of housing is not a viable solution for capital, it is

to the advantage of the "new" housing policy reforms to transfer the unavoidable risk and costs of housing to the worker themselves. But the real benefit is the restricted mobility of the small house owner which favours capital

Large shares of the urban poor are not able to make a really meaningful contribution to improve their housing. Thus being excluded the "solution" of the housing question is not theirs. The most dominant problem of the urban poor is not housing but employment and social security. Hence all housing strategies for the urban poor have to incorporate and combine the social question and the housing question. Finally I want to state that—despite all my critical positions regarding the possibilities and chances of self-help housing—I cannot deny its effective contribution for an improvement of housing and for a general raising of housing standards. But according to the existing laws of capitalist societies—which are also valid in most of the underdeveloped countries—self-help is only an "emergency" measure and provides no perspective of a *solution* of the housing question for the urban poor.

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FROM THE "FORWARD"

China Lobby Washes Dirty Linen

Sri Lanka's China lobby has joined the UNP and SLFP-set fashion of washing its dirty linen in public. Although small and mainly centred around China's Embassy in Colombo the lobby is split from top to bottom between those still loyal to Mao and the "Gang of Four" and those ready to switch loyalties to the new CPC leadership headed by Deng Xiaoping. *A similar struggle seems to be going on within the Embassy itself.* Although outnumbered, the Mao loyalists are fighting back. They have formed themselves into an organisation which calls itself the "New Socialist Union of Sri Lanka."

Their first publication, which has been sent through the post to all who may be interested, is a broadside against the "revisionists" in the Embassy and among the local Maoists. "Be it known", the pamphlet declares dramatically, "that the most dangerous

enemies of Mao's thought in this country are Zhang Li and Wu Jiankang, alleged diplomats of the Chinese Embassy at Colombo. "They spend thousands of rupees on the bringing of pseudo-revolutionaries here and on discrediting those who continue resolutely on the road shown by Mao the Great. The Hsinhua correspondent, Li Zheng, is also dangerous as he is in a position to spread slanderous statements about us in many countries of the world".

The pamphlet names the chief exponents and "beneficiaries" of this anti-Mao and pro-Deng clique in the Embassy as "Gamini Yapa, A. Ramanathan, K. A. Subramaniam, V. A. Kandasamy and others". It continues: "They try to rally round themselves all those who have turned away from Mao's thought and agree with the revisionist line of Deng." It accuses both "the embassy and extra-embassy revisionists" of trying "to spread lies about the Chairman in order to break the rank of his followers and set up in the country a servile pseudo-revolutionary organisation which would proclaim the "merits" and "genius of Deng". It warns those who may be misled that, once Deng consolidates his position, "he will have no further need of revolutionaries, including those of Sri Lanka. He will drop them, as he has dropped Chairman Mao". The pamphlet ends with the slogans: "Down with Deng, the revisionist and agent of international imperialism! Down with his agents in Sri Lanka!" —December 15, 1981.

VENDORS

At the Market

The jaunty vendor at the market stall no longer hails me with his fruity talk of "Honey mangoes, madam, take and see" and "Today, I've got nice papaws, lady, very fine—first class ones!" For now his sights are set on pale, tall third-world-aid sellers, foreign expertise traders sprung up like high-rise buildings everywhere. "No thank you. I hate mangoes!" one declares "Give me some apples please and don't you dare diddle me or I will call the police!" And as she buys and leaves I hear him calling after her "Madam, Madam, I've kept for you some lemons here take and go—they're free" And he charged me only six rupees for three!

Suvimalee Karunaratna

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November 29 - December 5

DIARY OF EVENTS IN SRI LANKA COMPILED FROM DAILY NEWS- PAPERS 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; *IS*—Island; *IDPR*—Information Dept. Press Release

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 29: Eighteen Sri Lanka fishermen have been taken into custody by the Indian Navy at Rameshwaram for suspected smuggling activities, Police sources said. The Trade Ministry has ordered the special Investigations Unit of the Ministry to fully probe the blackmarketing of some essential foodstuffs which are distributed only to Cooperative Societies but are found in abundance in the open market and selling at more than double the stipulated prices. CID detectives have now indentified Uma Maheswaran the most wanted man by the Police as the leader and master-mind of the activities of the proscribed Liberation Tiger Movement, Police sources said yesterday. The fruit growing and processing industry here is to be developed with the aim of capturing the lucrative export market. A new limited liability company will take over all fruit processing and canning factories run by the Marketing Department—*SO*. A joint Army-Air Force police operation to nab the big ganja cultivators and mudalalis will be launched today; the entire operation was planned by a special team of experts under the Chairmanship of Deputy Defence Minister T. B. Werapitiya at the Defence Ministry on Friday. Plans have now been finalised to launch a massive development programme to make the ports of Colombo and Trincomalee two of Asia's harbours and put Sri Lanka on top of the shipping world—*ST*. The Government has ordered a probe on an organised attempt by separatist groups, to make an Unilateral Declaration of Independence for a state of Eelam on January 14, 1982; this move follows intelligence reports that secret meetings are being held in this regard in certain houses in the city and the suburbs—*WK*.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30: The Government is considering the implications on the personal freedom of individuals arising from recent airport incidents when the tax authorities wanted to stop two well known businessmen from leaving the country; one of them, Mr. Upali Wijewardene, the Director-General

of the Greater Colombo Economic Commission (GCEC) was allowed to take his scheduled flight after first being challenged at the airport; the other Mr. S. D. Gunadasa (Dasa Mudalali) had to take a later flight. Over 15,000 people have been flooded out of their homes by the downpour in the Jaffna district from Thursday to the time of going to press. The Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu areas were the hardest hit; the Colombo-Jaffna road is impassable beyond Paranthan—*CDN*. Almost 50 million rupees remain unaccounted for the year 1979 from various Kachcheries throughout the country as vouchers had not been rendered for auditing; the Auditor-General pinpoints these deficiencies in his report released recently; he also points out that over four lakhs of cash frauds had been reported—*CDM*. Saturday's shooting of the two terrorists in the outskirts of a dense jungle off Vavuniya has given Police and Army investigators a major breakthrough in their current probe into terrorist and separatist activity in the North; one of the persons shot dead by the Army has been identified as an explosive expert of the terrorist movement—*SU*. Vocational training programmes amounting to millions of rupees offered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Labour Organisation are being disrupted by the government's unsatisfactory provisions for infrastructural facilities and lack of inter-departmental coordination—*IS*. The two youth who were shot down by Army personnel in the Vavuniya and Periathampanai jungle areas have been identified as Pasupathi Nadesalingam (24) and Suppiah Kanagalingam alias Appan (26)—*VK*. The two youths who were shot down by the Army in the jungle areas of Thambapannai, it is claimed by their fathers, went to the jungle on a hunting game; the police have been informed accordingly; the Jeep that was discovered in the jungle was identified by the Manager of the Vattakachchi Government farm as the one belonging to the farm—*DP*.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1: The Foreign Ministry has been directed by government to make its proposals for clearing the snags now obstructing the continued implementation of the Indo-Ceylon agreement of 1964; the agreement, signed between Prime Ministers Sirima Bandaranaike and Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1964, and extended by a further accord of 1970, lapsed on October 30. Opposition leader A. Amirthalingam yesterday made a plea for enhanced pensions for former parliamentarians. Government will insist that foreign tour operators make a deposit with the Central Bank depending on the volume of business they transact each month in Sri Lanka—*CDN*. "There is a great advantage in our joining the ASEAN; it is a regional grouping of great strength with massive potentialities and one which makes this group have preferential trading," said Prime Minister, R. Premadasa in Parliament yesterday—*CDM*. The Colombo connections in an international

child trafficking operation was bared by Police yesterday; this came when the Kollupitiya Police raided a home which they believe is the "transit point" for Lankan infants who are being sold to foreign parents. The total number of disabled persons in Sri Lanka is 61,824 according to information relating to disabled persons collected during the census of populations and housing in March 1981. In one of the worst road disasters of the year, at least two people were killed and 25 critically when an express bus crashed at the Dehiwela junction late last night—*SU*. Police fired on four persons who attempted to enter the residence of the Member for Pottuvil, Mrs. T. Pathmanathan at Charles Place Kollupitiya around 2 a.m. on Monday—*IS*. A chain of multi-million rupee regional farms is being established throughout the country to meet the requirements of the burgeoning tourist hotel industry; informed sources said that the farms are being set up as planned by the Ministry of State; the program actively involves the Ceylon Tourist Board, Ceylon Hotels Corporation and the Tourist Hotels Associations of Sri Lanka—*CO*. As a result of the incessant rains prevailing at Kilinochchi area during the past few days, more than five thousand families have taken refuge in school buildings and government offices—*DP*. The opposition Leader Mr. A. Amirthalingam said in Parliament yesterday that proper investigations must be made into the incidents that took place during the DDC elections in the Jaffna District and suitable action taken. He also said that if such action is not taken, similar incidents disregarding the Commissioner of Elections and the Elections Laws will take place in the future; he also pointed that the post of Commissioner of Elections has been given special position in the Constitution because the Commissioner had to carry out his duties independently and that this should continue—*VK*.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2: The two-stage increase in fertilizer prices has had an adverse impact on smallholdings in the rubber, coconut and paddy sectors, a study by the Fertiliser Secretariat has revealed. A high-powered technical mission from Japan will be here this week end to advise the government on the production of power alcohol, the Agricultural Development and Research Ministry's Secretary, Mr. Ranjan Wijeratne said yesterday—*CDN*. Sri Lankans living in Britain have become the latest victims of racial hatred in that country; ultra-racist organisations such as the National Front have, for several years been launching terror campaigns against Indians, Pakistanis and other coloured people living in Britain. Telephone subscribers in Kotte and the Colombo 15 zone will have their lines switched over to the new digital electronic exchange system on December 5. Government has sought financial assistance from Saudi Arabia to go ahead with a 3.9 billion rupee project to develop Colombo Airport; a masterplan for this project which aims at the establishment of an ultra modern airport in Sri Lanka has

already been prepared—*SU*. Certain academics of the university alleged that they are discriminated against in the payment of the professional allowance; while in the public service and statutory boards and corporations a PhD and certain post-graduate librarian qualifications automatically entitles them for the professional allowance, the University Grants Commission has formulated rules which had resulted in academics being discriminated against, they allege—*IS*. All morning shows in the city cinemas will be banned from next year. This will be stipulated as a condition on licences to run cinemas, City Mayor Sirisena Cooray said today; Mr. Cooray said he had received complaints from several school heads and parents that thousands of school children cut classes to see morning films; earlier in the year, the CMC passed a resolution calling on the State Film Corporation to stop morning shows; the SFC however had not taken any steps to do so—*CO*. The M.P. for Manipay, Mr. V. Dharamalingam while speaking during the allocations set for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Parliament said that super-powers are seeking naval bases in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf and therefore it would be very dangerous for not only Sri Lanka and India but also for all West Asian countries, if facilities are provided for an American Company to set up an oil refinery in Trincomalee—*DP*.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3: President J. R. Jayewardene said yesterday that Corporations making profits should pass on the benefits to the workers' "If the State Printing Corporation is making profits they should go to its workers" he said. Cabinet discussed the increasing spate of fatal accidents particularly those involving vehicles of the Ceylon Transport Board; the most recent of these accidents at Dehiwala, was discussed and reports on it were presented to the acting Minister of Transport Mr. Harold Kularatne. A route costing study carried out by the World Bank shows that 68 percent of the present routes the Ceylon Transport Board is plying are uneconomical it has also found that about 25 percent of the routes are economically viable and on balance the board can break even official sources said—*CDN*. Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is likely to visit Sri Lanka shortly after the forthcoming visit of President Sanjiva Reddy in February; the proposed visit of Indian leaders to Colombo is part of a new diplomatic thrust that the Indian Government has embarked onto strengthen its relations with neighbouring countries. The sale of Sri Lankan babies to foreign foster parents is very big business but the laws were inadequate to deal with this disturbing situation, Social Services Minister Asoka Karunaratne, declared yesterday. A suspected terrorist, the driver of a tractor that was found in the jungles off Vavuniya, was taken into custody at Periyathampennai yesterday. President J. R. Jayewardene yesterday advised all his ministers to make every effort to attend

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Parliament; referring to complaints that ministers were not present to answer questions, President Jayewardene told them to remember that despite their pressing engagements, Parliament was the supreme and sovereign voice of the country and told them to make every effort to attend; this also included Deputy Ministers and MPs, he said—*SU*. President J. R. Jayewardene welcomed more exposures of government inefficiency and waste through newspapers to enable his Ministers to take prompt action to rectify them—*IS*.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4: The recent floods in Jaffna took the lives of seven people, left 22,000 homeless and destroyed fifty percent of the crops in the submerged areas, a survey team headed by Acting Minister of Agricultural Development and Research K. D. M. C. Bandara has revealed. Uma Maheswaran has given the police a detailed description of his activities both here and in India during the past few years; the pieces of the jig saw of terrorism in the North are falling into place according to police sources—*CDN*. Tourist hotels detected serving adulterated liquor will have their licenses cancelled immediately; this warning went out yesterday from the Ministry of State following complaints that some hotels had served liquors in various forms of adulteration to tourists.—*CDM*. Sri Lanka Freedom Party leader Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike is expected to make a public appeal this week calling upon the breakaway group of the Party to join them; the appeal is to be made in a statement she is expected to issue on behalf of the Party; according to informed sources the General Committee of the Party has already endorsed the "join hands" call of Mrs. Bandaranaike. Sri Lanka will sign a three-year contract with China for the purchase of base oil and wax; this deal which involves around Rs. 750 million for the three year period, was finalised by the Trade Minister Lalith Athulathmudali during Sino-Lanka trade talks in Peking last month—*SU*. The Inspector General of Police Mr. Ana Seneviratne yesterday ordered the Deputy Inspectors General of Police and Superintendents from all parts of the country to crack down on growing indiscipline among the ranks of the police force—*IS*. The M.P. for Trincomalee R. Sambandan stressed in Parliament yesterday that the facility allowed of 15 percent for selection of students from backward districts to enter universities should not be done away under any circumstance and that action should be taken to extend the facility for a prescribed period of time *DP*.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5: There will be no chain effect of the BTT announced in the last Budget on two basic essentials—rice and bread—authoritative government sources said yesterday. Minister Lalith Athulathmudali said yesterday that the government had taken a decision to develop

Trincomalee commercially; he said he had made this clear to the Government of India when he was in New Delhi recently—*CDN*. The Prime Minister R. Premadasa has initiated a programme for all District Development Councils to undertake food production activities on a large scale, with private sector investments—*CDM*. The Indian Government is fully satisfied that Sri Lanka has no intention of permitting an American base in Trincomalee, Trade and Shipping Minister Lalith Athulathmudali said yesterday; addressing a press conference after his return from China and India at his Ministry yesterday, the Minister said he had been present at the Lok Sabha when External Affairs Minister Narasimha Rao stated that the Indian Government accepted in toto Sri Lanka's position regarding this matter—*SU*. Plantation worker's unions yesterday rejected the offer of an increase of Rs. 2 per day to workers in the tea growing and manufacturing trades and said that they vehemently opposed "open discrimination" against plantation workers—*IS*.



WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

November 28-December 4.

SOUTH ASIA

INDIA: The Indian Foreign Minister Narasimha Rao told the Nepalese Council of World Affairs that neighbouring countries should not attempt to weaken or encircle India. A bomb explosion at the headquarters of the Sikh leader killed three people. Premier Indira Gandhi's Congress (I) Party emerged victorious in 7 of the 12 seats in State Assembly by-elections. Police arrested nearly 500 demonstrators in Assam for blocking highways as a protest against illegal immigrants. The IMF loan of 5.8 billion dollars was the subject of a heated 8-hour debate in the Indian parliament: the opposition parties expressed the fear that India may become the bonded labour in the IMF house. Premier Indira Gandhi said that it was inconceivable that her Government would accept loans from an external agency that dictated terms against national policies. India has expressed its concern over Sikh activities in Canada. Sikhs have established a "Consulate of Khalistan" in Vancouver and have been having secret military training in Canada. **PAKISTAN:** Pakistan warned Afghanistan that it would take appropriate counter-measures in the exercise of its right to self-defence if Afghan forces continued to violate the border and airspace between the two countries. In an incident this week five people were killed by Afghan helicopters.

EAST ASIA

JAPAN: Premier Zenko Suzuki's cabinet resigned en masse to enable him to reshuffle the Cabinet. **CHINA:** China accused the US of behaving like her arch-enemy Soviet Union in her dealings with Taiwan. That the US appeared to be following Soviet Union's "limited sovereignty" theory—it was with this theory that the Soviet Union justified Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. China made it clear that she has no personal prejudice against Secretary-General Waldheim but she was totally committed to supporting a Third World candidate as the next Secretary General.

WEST ASIA

ISRAEL: Israeli Foreign Minister Shamir said that the collapse of the Fez Summit of Arab leaders demonstrated that the influence of Saudi Arabia over Arab countries was only a myth. Premier Begin's government survived a vote of no-confidence motion in the Knesset. Israeli opposition parties charged that the new security pact with US against Soviet expansion in the Middle East was dangerous to Israel. The US and Israel issued a joint statement that the participants in the proposed multi-national force in Sinai after Israel's withdrawal would have to be based on Camp David Accord. This was a reply to European attempt to bring the PLO to the discussion table. **SYRIA:** A bomb blast in a crowded street in Damascus killed more than 64 people. The Organisation for the Liberation of Lebanon from foreigners claimed responsibility for the attack. Syrians blamed the Muslim brotherhood for the bomb-blast and said that it was an attempt to pressurise her to capitulate to Washington and its allies' Middle East proposals.

AMERICAS

UNITED STATES: The acceptance of \$ 1,000 honorarium from a Japanese magazine by White House National Security Adviser Richard Allen has caused embarrassment to Reagan's administration. White House Chief of Staff, his deputy and President's wife Nancy Reagan demanded that Allen be removed from his post. Richard Allen took administrative leave to allow the Justice Department to complete its investigation on the allegations levelled against him. President Reagan has sent Philip Habib to the Middle East to ascertain the feelings of the Arabs after the collapse of the Fez Summit. Richard Allen was cleared of any wrong doing in his dealings with a Japanese Magazine by the Justice Department. The Attorney General recommended that investigations need not be carried any further. Senator Alan Cranston told a foreign relations committee that the State Department has concealed from the Congress Pakistan's violations of safeguards against nuclear weapons production. US Defence Secretary Casper Weinberger

and Israeli Defence Secretary Ariel Sharon signed a security cooperation pact. According to *New York Times* Libya had sent 5 terrorists to US with plans to kill President Reagan or other senior administrative officials. According to Lebanese weekly *Al Hawadeth* the US had agreed to sell 3,000 million dollars worth of arms to Jordan. **CANADA:** Canadian House of Commons have passed a resolution requesting Britain to make changes in its constitution and patriate it to Canada. Britain will include a charter of rights and amending formula before sending it across for good. **UNITED NATIONS:** The UN Security Council deadlocked over the nomination of a Secretary General, considered the possibility of extending the term of office of Kurt Waldheim by another three years. There were also suggestions that Kurt Waldheim and Salim Ahmed Salim may share, one after another, the next term of office of the Secretary General. Israeli chief delegate to the UN Yehuda Blum said Ismat Kittani, the UN President is not qualified to preside over UN deliberations on Palestinian issue as he attended the Arab League meeting in Morocco. Because national origins will take precedence over his duties as UN president, Kurt Waldheim withdrew from the election to the post of UN General-Secretary. Salim Ahmed Salim too was expected to withdraw making way for other candidates. The President of the Security Council suggested to both candidates to stand aside to break the impasse caused by the vetos against both of them. At the UN, the African group and Secretary-General were dismayed over the reported release by South Africa of 44 mercenaries responsible for the attack on Seychelles Islands. "It represents a serious failure to apply the strong penalties which international community has urged governments to take against criminal terrorism and the hijacking of civilian aircraft", said Secretary-General spokesman. US Ambassador William Sherman told the UN General Assembly that his government would not accept the role of PLO in any Middle East deliberations so long as it is committed to the destruction of a member state of the UN.

EUROPE

SWITZERLAND: In Geneva US and Soviet officials commenced negotiations aimed at scrapping or limiting nuclear missiles in Europe. Both sides have decided to keep the discussions a secret. US Chief delegate Paul Nitze said that he was not interested in debating the issues via the media. Soviet delegation to the Geneva talks had promised to do everything that depends on it to make the negotiations a success. The delegations claimed several organisations and individuals have urged both sides to reach an agreement. **WEST GERMANY:** Foreign nationals residing in West Berlin staged a demonstration against a decree which could compel thousands of them to return to their native lands. **POLAND:** Gen. Jaruzelski, the Polish Communist Party leader

stated that he was planning to restrict the right to strike to avert a process of decay. **UNITED KINGDOM:** A former Conservative Minister Norman St. John Stevar warned that Britain's new political party, the Social Democrats have become a forest fire that could eventually destroy the Conservative Party. The Right Rev. John Girvan, head of the Northern Ireland Presbyterian Church criticised the maverick Protestant leader Rev. Ian Paisley for his fiery stand against Irish guerilla attacks. Rev. Girvan said: "Murder is murder from whatever source it comes, and I will encourage our people not to be led by anyone along that road at all". According to Finance Minister Sir Geoffrey Howe nearly 3 million people or 12.4 percent of the worldforce were jobless.

AFRICA

EGYPT: The 24 alleged Moslem extremists accused of conspiracy and murder of the late President Sadat pleaded not guilty before the Supreme Court. **LIBYA:** Libyan leader Muammer Gaddafi said that he was fashioning an American style rapid deployment force to face US intervention in the Arab regions. **SEYCHELLES:** Seychelles still haunted by last week's attack on government forces to topple its government announced that "unknown aircraft was hovering over its airspace. The Government warned the diplomatic missions based in Victoria that strict security measures were being taken in relation to this violation. President Rene said that he had evidence to show that South Africa was involved in the attempts made to topple his government last week. **SOUTH AFRICA:** Of the captured 44 mercenaries who attempted to stage a coup in Seychelles 39 were released and the other five were allowed bail. Opposition progressive Federal Party Parliamentary whip said that it was scandalous to charge only five of them. **NEW ZEALAND:** The general elections results in New Zealand left the parties with no clear majority.



THAILAND

Problem of Prostitutes

By John Laird

THAILAND, promoted by some as a man's world of easily available sex, is debating what to do about an estimated half million women who offer sex for sale. Some feminists are saying condemnation and harassment of prostitutes should stop, and war should be waged against corrupt police and agents who lure girls into brothels and keep them there

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against their will. Others have called for the registration of prostitutes, to protect them and control diseases "We should abolish all laws on prostitution. Let the girls be free. It's honest", said independent member of Parliament and former Deputy Education Minister Dr. Yupha Udoms Akdi. "Those who earn money from this work—let them do it," she said during an interview at a recent seminar sponsored by the National Council of Women here. Parliament's Social Welfare Committee last June called for opinions on the legalization of prostitution, generating seminars, questionnaires and prolific media comment. Committee Secretary Supatra Masdit, 32, said she believes that opinion is now more against men who live off prostitution, and less against the girls who have little economic choice. She said she thought a large majority of her 19-member committee favours registration of brothels, in the belief that would improve salaries and working conditions for women. "It is likely that the committee will not want to keep the laws on prostitution", Miss Supatra added. She acknowledged that educated women who share her views face a wary population, especially Thailand's 40 million rural inhabitants, who traditionally see such a profession as humiliating. "That people realize that no one wants to be a prostitute, and conservative people still think it's a bad thing. Most people cannot accept it and want to change back, but we can't. Society has changed."

THAILAND'S FIRST LAW on prostitution in 1909 called for prostitutes to register; in 1960, prostitution was outlawed. Women leaders note that government efforts to spur rural development in the past several years have not kept pace with increasing economic hardship, the most compelling reason girls turn to prostitution. A leading health expert estimates that the number of prostitutes is increasing by 10,000 a year. Miss Supatra said that the prostitution industry grew rapidly during the decade of the Indochina war when tens of thousands of high-spending US military personnel were stationed in Thailand. Sex for sale in massage parlors, nightclubs, hotels and brothels has long been part of male-dominated life in virtually every sizeable town. Bangkok has 118 registered massage parlors, according to police. The question of vice attracted attention in January this year, when some women and students protested against sex tours during the visit of Japanese Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki. In July police began a crackdown on late-opening bars, coffee shops and sex shows, but the anti-vice campaigns have done little to slow down the roaring night life. **The most popular women can earn as much as 30,000 baht (1,300 dollars) per month, while four who attended the women's council seminar said they average 7,000 baht (300 dollars) per month, of which 3,000 baht went back for their rural families. Women in the countryside can expect little more than 1,000 baht (44 dollars) for a month's labour.**

THE OFTEN-PALATIAL MASSAGE PARLORS are a far cry from dingy, illegal brothels some of which keep women locked up. Stories occasionally reach the newspapers of women being liberated during raids by police. One such raid last June in Thonburi, across the river from Bangkok, freed 72 women—three of them under 14. Dr. Yupha said that legislation pending in Parliament would drastically increase penalties against those exploiting women Pimps who detain and make a living off them would face imprisonment from 7—20 years at present. Those enticing women would get 8—20 years, compared to 1—5 years now. The legislation, which has aroused no organized opposition is to be taken up in Parliament next year. Supatra's committee recommendations, to be made after she has processed more than 300 letters received, may reach Parliament early next year. Women arrested for soliciting face a 300 baht (13 dollars) fine on conviction but most are concerned more about losing between one and seven days business while awaiting trial in jail. The alternative is to pay pocket money to the police. Sukanya Hantrakul, a consultant on women's affairs attached to the Prime Ministers office said that only one or two procurers are arrested for every 1,000 women taken into custody. "Brothel raids are sent from the Crime Suppression Division of the Police Department: local police don't make raids. They are all paid off", she said. A police spokesman said that during the first half of this year 2,766 women were arrested for prostitution, but he could not say how many pimps were arrested.

—*Courtesy, Chine Post, Taipeh.*



JOURNEY TO AFGHANISTAN—8

The First Outing

By S. P. Amarasingam

We had nothing on our programme for the afternoon of the first day in Kabul. Nothing could be fixed because it was a holiday. So we decided to take a drive round the city. Instead of going in two or three cars, we thought it would be better if the six of us kept together as a group so that we could ask questions individually, jointly and severally and exchange our impressions as we went along. A small luxury mini-bus was placed at our disposal and the six of us were able to stretch ourselves comfortably together with two of our Afghan friends. Our Japanese friends and the West German armed themselves with maps, and in three hours we traversed practically every road and by-way in Kabul the vehicle could enter. We did not stop anywhere

except at the very end at Babur's garden where we were keen to see the tomb of the man who had founded the Mughal Empire in India. He had begun his rule in Kabul and he is said to have loved the city so much that he had wanted his body brought back here for burial. On the grave is a simple marble tablet which is covered by the stone roof supported by four pillars. It is a simple memorial for a man who at one time, ruled most of what is now Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. Babur was a Chagtai Turk, descended from Tamerlane on his father's side and Genghis Khan on his mother's. The Shaybani Uzbeks had driven Babur from his father's throne in Ferghana to Kabul (in 1504). Babur learnt to love Kabul. He moved into India only when he was unable to regain Ferghana. In 1526 he fought the Lodi Sultan Ibrahim II and at Panipat Babur's mobile, aggressive army of 12,000 destroyed the ponderous Lodi military machine of 100,000. Though he had established himself in India, he had pined for Kabul and had written: "The climate (of Kabul) is extremely delightful and there is no such place in the known world". Babur died in Agra in 1530 and his Afghan wife Bibi Mobrak had fulfilled his wish to be buried in Kabul. Babur's garden which stretched below the tomb on the west slope of Sherdarwaza hill is typical of the gardens built by the Mughals in many cities in North India. This garden in Kabul includes a summer pavilion and a commemorative mosque built later by Emperor Shah Jahan.

Kabul is a colourful mixture of the old and the new, with the old rapidly giving way to the new. There are parts in the city which have changed little, or not at all, since the days of Genghis Khan. Mud houses and crawly crooked lanes still abound. But many of the old parts of the city with narrow winding lanes are being replaced by straight paved streets flanked by modern shops and dwelling houses. Whole sections of Kabul are being levelled and a modern city with apartment houses and shopping complexes are being built on top of the old. It was not in this building programme that we were interested in. All of us, foreign journalists, were anxious to find out how "normal" the city was. I have mentioned that the passengers—most of them old Kabul hands—who had got into the plane in Delhi for Kabul had not betrayed the slightest signs of nervousness one might expect from people going to a city supposedly besieged and under alien occupation. Soviet contingents were said to be encamped in some strength along the outer perimeters of the city but as far as we could see there were no Soviet personnel in evidence in the city. What struck us most on our first trip round the city was the total lack of tension. And we had no occasion to change this impression even at the end of our stay. Life appeared to be normal, the bazaars crowded: and there was little evidence of any military presence except at key points. And this presence was Afghan and not Russian. After

all the horror stories, none of us were quite prepared for this normality.

Many things surprised us. One among the surprises was that the United States, Britain, China, West Germany, France, Japan and other Western states continued to maintain their embassies in Kabul. As we drove along we saw these Embassies with cars, vans and people. None of these Governments recognize the Afghan Government headed by Babrak Karmal. On the contrary, they lose no opportunity to denounce the government at every turn and are also actively engaged in training and arming terrorists to subvert the young Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) from Pakistan's territory. If Kabul is to match the double-faced conduct of Washington and London and their allies which have made no secret of their hostility to the Afghan government, it has every reason to shut down these missions and send them packing home. But it has allowed these missions to keep their Charge de Affaires and function normally. There is no doubt that they are the principal source of the fantastic traveller's tales which are circulated by the western-controlled media to a brain washed audience. Jonathan Steele, writing about "News From Kabul" in the *Guardian Weekly* (July 20, 1980) said: "Western readers hear almost entirely from rebels who have their own line to push or CIA officers from the US Embassy in Kabul whose version of events appears in the Western press as though it comes from 'travelers'. The few Western reporters who have been into Afghanistan since the first few weeks after the invasion have either been with rebel raiding parties, in mountainous area or confined to Kabul airport and the capital city."

Another surprise was that along the main highways from the airport and the others that lead into the city were hoardings with eye-catching signboards—"Welcome To Kabul". Out of curiosity I asked who had put them up. Was it the Central Government, or the Municipality, or the Tourist Department? Not them. The credit for this courtesy to visitors went to the local company that produced and marketed *Coca Cola* under licence from the US parent company. Even the 1978 Saur Revolution did not banish *Coca Cola* or the *Fanta*. These two Yankee beverages can be considered the national drinks of Afghanistan. One Afghan friend told me "...the national bourgeoisie which produces *Coca Cola* and *Fanta* have not opposed the Revolution and so they have been permitted to carry on...." To understand the Afghanistan of today one has to understand the role of the "patriotic national bourgeoisie" which has done very well under Babrak Karmal (though for a time they had suffered many difficulties under Amin). Outwardly just as *Coca Cola* continues to be a national beverage of Afghanistan

there were no visible or distinctive signs of the convulsive change and turmoil which has overtaken Kabul in more recent times.

The only problem that everyone who knew I was going to Afghanistan had told me to find out was how "normal" Kabul was and what it was like being in the city. The implication behind this question was the belief that the city was passing through a dreadful period of instability, if not a reign of terror and counter-terror. The twelve days I spent in Kabul (and two days in Mazar Sharief) do not qualify me to speak with authority on the situation in Kabul or Afghanistan as a whole. But it was long enough to gather a fair idea of the conditions in the capital. For one thing, compared to most capitals, the cost of living in Kabul is agreeably low. A good single room with private bath room and breakfast in a first class hotel cost about £ 6 sterling: a meal in an Indian restaurant with a bottle of local wine cost less than £ 5 sterling: bus fares were cheaper than Colombo, Delhi or Bombay. Nor were there any conspicuous shortage of essential foodstuffs. Whatever criticisms are levelled at the Babrak administration, it has effectively held down the price line of the things that matter and the population looks well fed and well clad.

It is true that man does not live by bread alone—though he cannot live long without it. What many outside Afghanistan seem concerned about is "Freedom". As far as one can judge—after nearly a fortnight—there does not appear to be any constraints to "freedom". People talk freely. They seemed almost carefree; the market places were crowded. And no one looks over his shoulder to see if he was being followed. No one seemed afraid to talk, not even to make scathing criticisms of the Government.

One question that transpired in our discussion was "what is normalcy?" Are there any criteria by which it can be measured and tested? Unfortunately most such criteria are subjective. And even the rational are often relative. At the end of our stay, the six of us coming from different capitals or cities in the world agreed that Kabul seemed closer to normalcy than many a world capital we knew. But the cold warriors of the West proclaim that the Soviet presence taints everything. The Soviets are undoubtedly present but it is certainly not an obtrusive presence. They take no part in policing the city. They are there on the invitation of the Afghan government for the specific purpose of providing an effective safeguard against subversion and foreign intervention. The constant refrain is that the presence would not last longer than it is needed: that the best way to ensure

return to complete normalcy was for Washington and London not to encourage military intervention from the territory of Afghanistan's neighbours.

Before I left for Kabul I had been told (and I had read) that the "not normal" period starts in the evening, as the dusk turns to darkness, and the streets empty of pedestrians and motor traffic. The curfew is from 11 p.m. to 4 a.m. and in the stillness, twice or thrice during this time, one wakes to the roaring passage of heavy tanks in pairs travelling fast past windows. All these tanks' crews, we were assured, were Afghans. Some tanks we saw during the day at strategic points were manned by Afghans. During our stay we were usually out till very close to curfew time at 11 p.m.; and even after dark we did not see Russian troops. In the bazaars we often saw Russians (obviously soldiers) in civil clothes shopping quite unconcernedly like other shoppers. The Russians talked freely and were willing to retail gossip to the two in our group who could speak Russian. The Indian knew Urdu and this is a language many in Kabul (and even in Mazar Sharief) speak. Through these members of our team we were able to gain a "bazaar view" of many events and happenings in Afghanistan.

We returned to the Hotel a little dusty and very tired—not because of the motor journey but from the hangover of our plane travel to Kabul. At dinner we again reverted to the Soviet presence and debated the question whether it was invasion by force or intervention by invitation. In this connection, I cannot do better than refer to an article entitled "*The Truth About Afghanistan Crisis*" by an American, John Somerville, published in a New York journal and also in the Delhi Magazine *Mainstream* (July 1980—Annual Number): "Let us call things by their right names and practice what we preach. Let's begin with a few facts about Afghanistan. (1) Afghanistan and the USSR share an almost 2,000 mile border and an ideological orientation to Marxism. (2) Since December 1978 there has existed a treaty of friendship and cooperation between them, relating to economic, political and military affairs. (3) Under this treaty some 5,000 Soviet civilian and military advisers were openly in Afghanistan long before Soviet troops arrived. (4) The UN delegate (Ambassador) from Afghanistan under President Amin who continued to serve under President Karmal, officially confirmed to the UN that the Afghanistan Government had requested the troops. A civil war had been going on for more than a year. The rebel forces were increasingly aided from across the border with Pakistan, and the authority of Amin's leadership was clearly weakening. The same Revolutionary Council that had installed and removed Amin, installed Karmal, who, with Amin and Taraki, had been a leader in the Marxist-oriented revolution of April 1978. Even if we assume that Amin got a

raw deal from the Revolutionary Council in his sudden trial and execution, this is part of *their* system, and the USSR is *their* ally.

"One may well regret that any country choose^s to have foreign troops and foreign advisers. Think how many countries have chosen ours. But no one^e can deny that it is the legal right of all sovereign state^s to choose their own allies and make treaties involving military aid. We ourselves have 50 allies by treaty, and more than 400 important foreign bases occupied by many hundreds of thousands of our troops, and President Carter said in the UN on October 4, 1977 that we would use nuclear weapons against any 'conventional attack on the US, our territories, our armed forces or our allies'. For our Government to^r condemn Soviet troops in Afghanistan as a 'criminal invasion' is a classic instance of the double standard. Anyone who repeats the term 'invasion' in this context is clearly denying that Afghanistan and the Soviet Union have the same legal rights as other members of the United Nations. The American public is today being hoodwinked into using a word which is increasing the danger of an omnicidal nuclear war. I mean the word 'invasion' instead of 'intervention' in referring to Afghanistan. The difference between these two words is a qualitative one in every sense—legal, moral, and political, *Invasion* is by definition illegal and immoral, it is something that could not have been invited, and must necessarily be judged as criminal aggression. In contrast *intervention* can be legal and even moral: it can be invited, whether wisely or unwisely. The whole point is that a legal but possibly unwise intervention can be made to seem like a criminal threat to world peace only if it is fraudulently cried up as 'invasion'.

"The UN delegates were all well aware of these important distinctions when they passed their General Assembly Resolution of January 14. But our public had by that time been sufficiently brainwashed not to notice that the word 'invasion' was never used—neither in the General Assembly Resolution that was passed, nor in the Security Council resolution that was vetoed. The word 'intervention' was used throughout in both, in recognition of undeniable facts. The UN General Assembly not only refused to use the word 'invasion' referring instead to Soviet 'intervention', but its resolution also specifically refrained from 'condemning' the intervention, using instead the milder term 'deplore', although our delegation argued mightily for 'condemn'. In spite of these facts our Government goes on endlessly repeating the false claim that the UN 'condemned' the Soviet 'invasion' of Afghanistan. The reason for the persistence of this deliberate brainwashing is painfully evident. It is the best and quickest way to get the public to accept bigger military budgets, new foreign bases, draft registration, the 'tough'

images of shelving SALT II, scuttling detente, returning to the cold war resurrecting one-sided 'containment', declaring the Persian Gulf and its oil over national interest, threatening nuclear war to keep the Soviet 'invaders' out, and re-electing Carter, the man eager to apply this whole born-again policy 'around the world', as he stated in his Carter Doctrine address. What has thus become of first importance in Afghanistan is not the treaty-based military intervention of the USSR, but the way this intervention is being deliberately exaggerated and falsified in order to brainwash and stampede our public to the very brink of nuclear holocaust. To reject this brainwash and stampede is not to condone Soviet policy; it is to refuse to allow our foreign policy to be dictated by the Pentagon and implemented by the CIA. From the point of view of Justice, of respect for international law and concern for world peace, on what terms should we urge an end to the civil war in Afghanistan? Simply withdrawing the Soviet Troops would not end the war, but would only restore it to the original belligerents with each side receiving aid from across the borders. If we are interested in peace under international law why not urge entering into discussions with the Soviets on the basis of their offer to withdraw their troops if we will join in an international guarantee of Afghanistan's borders? If we are interested in preventing the mutual annihilation that would result from nuclear war in the Persian Gulf or any where

else, why not urge acceptance of the twice-made offer (1976, 1979) of the USSR to conclude a treaty of no-first-use of nuclear weapons? If the best basis for world peace is equality of rights and a single standard among nations, why not urge the withdrawal of our own Guantanamo forces from Cuba at the same time that we urge the withdrawal of the Soviet troops in Afghanistan? Let us practice what we preach, and call things by their right names."

But, how "intervention" became "invasion" is one of the "victories" of the propaganda war carried on by the West!

We had dinner and retired to bed early. I heard the rumbling of tanks on the street below a little past 10 p.m. and stood by the window watching two of them go by. I had read that during the night in Kabul there was always sound of gun shots, the rattle of machine gun fire and even cannon fire. On my first night I did not hear any. It may be that I slept too well. But none of my colleagues had heard anything. But some of our Afghan friends told us the next morning that there was desultory firing twice. There were terrorist pockets in some quarter of the city that had to be wiped out. Or they may have been only warning shots!

To be continued....

".... It is to the credit of the people of Ceylon that during two thousand years and more they obeyed this decree and continued to pay their homage to one who was a brave man and just and humane ruler".

—G. P. Malalasekera in *The Pali Literature of Ceylon* Colombo, 1928 p. 25.

THE TOMB OF ELARA

at

Anuradhapura

with Appendices and Notes

by

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REPORTAGE

Christmas Visitors

By Nimal Sarathchandra

The doorbell rang twice. There was a short silence and it rang again. There seemed to be some urgency in the call. After attending Midnight Mass, I returned home late. I may not have slept for more than four hours when the call bell awoke me.

Sleepily I got up from the bed. At the door-step was a boy of eight years and a girl not more than two years older than him. The boy did not wear a shirt while the girl was clad in a dirty frock torn in several places. She held a plastic bag in her hand.

"Mahattaya, would you like to buy some Katurumurunga leaves"? she asked and pulled out two lean bundles.

We had no need of Katurumurunga leaves, especially on this Christmas Day, but I did not want to send them away disappointed.

I made them sit down, though they politely declined several times.

"Mahattaya, won't you buy these Katurumurunga leaves"? she pleaded again, while the boy scanned the house and was almost staring at the richly decorated Christmas Tree that stood at one corner of the drawing room.

"From where did you get these leaves"? I asked her.

"We have a small tree in our garden. I climbed the tree and picked these leaves this morning. From the money I get by selling these two bundles, I will buy bread for my brothers, sisters and myself" she said.

"How many are there in your family"? I questioned her sympathetically.

"We have seven in the family and nine with the cat and dog. My father works in the Municipality as a plumber. Every day before going to work he gives mother one and half chundus of rice to cook for our noon meals. Today he gave only one chundu and we had nothing for breakfast this morning".

Biscuits, Cakes and all other sweets we prepared for Christmas was served to them. Both of them stared at the tray. They undoubtedly liked everything that were there, but they could not decide which to eat first.

"Take these Cakes, they are tasty" I said, handing over two big pieces to them. Both of them took the Cakes but did not eat them. "Mahattaya, shall we take these cakes home? Our brothers and sisters are waiting for me for the bread".

"I will give you something to take home; first eat these cakes," I said.

They smiled, their white teeth shone in a flash.

Both of them looked pale and emaciated—more due to under-nourishment and lack of care and love.

Tea was served when half of the tray was over.

"Mahattaya, won't you buy these Katurumurunga leaves"? she pleaded again. "Mother is waiting for us".

"Can't your mother work somewhere"? I asked.

"How can she Mahattaya"; she has to look after five small children. Father does not like her going out of the house and if anyone comes to our house, father would scold her and beat her accusing my mother of infidelity".

"Do you live close by"? "Yes, down this same lane about one hundred yards away. We live in a small mud hut. There is only one room and a small kitchen".

I started visualising these children, their mother, father and pet animals, sleeping and living in this small hut.

My wife brought a parcel and gave it to the girl who took it shyly. A smile spread across her innocent face.

I gave a five rupee note to the boy. He crumpled it in his hand and said 'thank you' in a low tone. Then both of them left the house. The plastic bag with the Katurumurunga leaves still hung in the girl's hands. I watched them as they walked briskly along the gravel path and disappeared from view.

How many in this world are starved of food and love I pondered; and on this Christmas Day when the love of God towards man was explicitly shown, how many are still deprived of it.

I felt happy at heart that God had sent these two Christmas visitors, who actually needed our love and care.

Sri Lanka Ports Authority,
19, Church Street,
COLOMBO 1.

TRIBUNE, December 19, 1981

MEDICINE

Tomorrow's Doctors

By H. Mahler

Dr. H. Mahler, Director-General of WHO, has suggested that many of the world's medical schools need to carry out a radical revision of curricula, so as to produce doctors oriented to the real health needs of the societies in which they will practice. The following extracts from an address given by Dr. Mahler on 28th October 1976, on the occasion of the Centenary Celebration of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Geneva, Switzerland, indicate his ideas on this fundamental issue.

We are publishing this statement made over five years ago because of its relevance today.

A THOUGHTFUL OBSERVER of medical schools will be troubled by the regularity with which the whole educational system of these schools is isolated from the health service systems of the countries concerned. In many countries these schools and faculties are, indeed, the proverbial ivory towers which prepare their students for some high, obscure ill-defined, and allegedly international "academic standards" and for dimly perceived requirements of the twenty fifth century, largely forgetting or even ignoring the pressing health needs of today's and tomorrow's society. Most of the world's medical schools prepare doctors, not to care for the health of the people, but instead for medical practice that is blind to anything but *disease* and the technology for dealing with it; a technology involving astronomical and ever-increasing prices, directed towards fewer and fewer people who are often selected not so much by social class or wealth as by medical technology itself, and frequently focused on persons in the final stages of life. They prepare doctors to deal with rare cases which are hardly ever encountered, rather than with the common health problems of the community for cure rather than for care. They tend to forget that technical solutions most respond to social goals, not dictate them. Medical practice has become almost synonymous with curative medicine and doctors are trained predominantly to look at episodes of diseases, paying little or no heed to the whole man and to his interaction with society.

Many medical schools prepare for medical practice in which the "best" health care is assumed to be that

by which everything known to medicine is applied to every individual, by the highest trained medical scientist, in the most specialized institutions. But "quality" under this assumption can lead to a dangerous argument on the basis of which health interventions are constantly moved further up the professional ladder and medical education becomes insensitive to the health needs and problems of the community, being oriented instead towards expensive technology whose efficiency and effectiveness are conspicuously decreasing. We have to add to all this that, in many medical schools, education as such enjoys a rather low priority in spite of the lip service paid to it. It is evident even from this brief overview why a growing dissatisfaction is discernible with medicine in general and with medical education in particular. Sometimes even the cynical question is raised; does it really matter what kind of doctors we train? After all in spite of the drive for "quality" and "excellence", costs are rising so that even the wealthiest societies find them difficult to bear and global standards of health and well-being are declining; life expectancy, after reaching a peak, is now again decreasing; cancer rates are rising; cardiovascular diseases are rampant; drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and traffic accidents nowadays kill more people than did all the epidemics together in earlier centuries; the aged are overwhelmed with diagnostic tools and abstruse technology, but their psycho-social and mental well-being is left largely unattended and uncared for.

This uneasy feeling about today's medicine is widespread. The medical empire and its closely related aggressive industry of diagnostic and therapeutic weapons sometimes appears more of a threat than a contribution to health. The general picture is that out of a cost-explosive medical establishment catering not for the promotion of health but for the unlimited application of disease technology to a certain ungenerous proportion of potential beneficiaries and, perhaps, not doing that too well either. As a consequence of the present high technological pitch of diagnostics and therapeutics, the very attempt to diagnose and treat one ill may produce another, be it through side effects or iatrogenesis. Society, which, after all, foots the bill for all that happens in health, expects us to prepare doctors to fulfil a social purpose in response to the health needs and demands of the community which they are going to serve. The medical school is an integral part of society, an instrument which should prepare for work in and for society. I believe that public health activities can generate social awareness and can act as a lever for social development. I also believe that the protagonists of community health will be convincing in promoting social development and in protecting the interests of health promotion—and I stress the promotion of health and not the promotion—of health services—only if they are imbued with the social purposes of community health.

To this end we must first examine carefully the conditions that graduates will face when they leave medical school, and arrange an educational programme which prepares them for that role. To do this, we have to ask for a few searching questions: (1) *Do the graduates think and behave in terms of "health" rather than of "disease"? That is to say, do they apply techniques of prevention and health promotion and not only those of cure and rehabilitation?; (2) *Do the graduates think and behave in terms of family and community, rather than in terms of the individual sick patient?; (3) *Do the graduates think and behave in terms of membership of a health team consisting of doctors, nurses and other health workers as well as social scientists and others?; (4) *Do the graduates think and behave in terms of making the best and most effective use of the financial and material resources available? (5) *Do the graduates think and behave in terms of their country's patterns of health and disease, and the relevant priorities?

IF THE ANSWER TO ALL THESE QUESTIONS is in the affirmative, then the medical school is going some considerable way to preparing a graduate whose training is what I call "relevant" to the health needs of modern society. If however, some of the answers are not an unequivocal "yes" then there is urgent need to re-examine the whole philosophy and programme of the school concerned. Doctors, however, and other health workers tend to adapt to the existing health system even when they are trained for quite different tasks. Therefore, the health system will have to be changed first and then the doctors be trained for the system. What kind of health system am I talking about? A system which is accessible to all members of the community, which is concerned with the promotion of the health of the whole community and in which major decisions concerning health are taken and implemented by the community. A system in which the doctor is only one component of a team whose every member does what he or she has been trained for and which is oriented towards identifying and solving the priority health problems of the community.

Medical education, the development of health manpower, is only one integral element of the development of health services. "Health manpower" has neither meaning nor purpose in isolation; it is solely an instrument for effecting health care... and must be trained in terms of the health service which it will operate; it follows, too, that the health services will develop according to the type of manpower available to them. No country can any longer afford the haphazard growth of health services, with its attendant waste of human and financial resources, that we have seen in the past. Those services must be carefully planned, and the success of the planning will depend in large measure on developing manpower

appropriately fitted to every stage in the development of the health services. Obviously neither the pattern of the services nor the plans for their development can be the same for all countries. National or local health conditions and political and cultural systems will and must vary.—Courtesy WHO CHRONICLE 30/10-62 (1977).



SUMMARY

Amnesty International Report 1981

THE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT 1981: is an objective account of the use by governments around the world of political imprisonment, torture and executions, and of the struggle to stop these practices.

It has concise separate entries on 117 countries, containing information gathered by Amnesty International in the 12 months up to 30 April 1981, and reporting on the movement's work. The lack of a specific entry on any country may mean only that it was not possible to compile enough verifiable information on developments there during the year.

Also included in the report's 426 pages are regional introductions, analysis of human rights trends and problems, and explanation of the work of Amnesty International, which this year marked its 20th anniversary as the only worldwide movement which exists to enable ordinary people to press for the release of prisoners of conscience and for an end to torture and the death penalty.

The introduction to the report points out that it is impossible to determine whether repression is increasing, but that it is clear that public awareness of it is. It is now harder for states to hide repression, the introduction says, but it points to a disturbing "tendency among governments to regard certain abuses as more acceptable when committed by friends than by enemies".

"The hypocrisy about human rights must be ended," it declares.

The country entries, which make up the bulk of the report, are organized by region: Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe, Middle East and North Africa, it is a report that everyone interested in human rights should read.

TRIBUNE, December 19, 1981

SOVIET VIEW

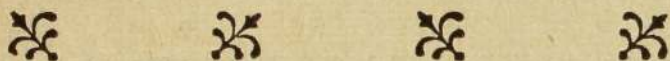
Yellow Rain

By A. Tolkunov

New York, November 25: Now it is a usual thing that somebody makes business and career on each of the new anti-Soviet fabrications in the United States. The fabrication to the effect that the Soviet Union and its allies are supposedly using toxic agents in Laos, Kampuchea and Afghanistan was no exception. This time journalist S. Seagrave, who had managed to write the 300-page book "Yellow Rain: Journey to Terror of Chemical War" was "crowned with laurels." The book appeared in stores literally a few days after the official "exposure" by Secretary of State Haig and his deputy Stessel was made. The timing was obviously not accidental. Much clamour was raised around the book. *The New York Times* praised it to the skies as a model of "journalistic skill." *The Wall Street Journal* devoted its editorial to the book. *Reader's Digest*, published in several languages, carried whole chapters from this work. Other publications had many references to it as well.

So, what sources has the author used when writing his "Yellow Rain"? He interviewed bandits, the counterrevolutionary rabble and adventurers. Thus he was told about the "use of chemical agents in Laos by a certain Jack Shramm who had crossed the Laotian border together with counter revolutionaries on more than one occasion. In his turn Jack Shramm made references to some Frenchmen—the suppliers of opium—who had described to him a mysterious "yellow rain"—a lethal aerosol with which the Meo tribe was supposedly destroyed. One lie piled on another. Without batting an eyelid Seagrave repeated the monstrous lie of the Pentagon's falsifiers to the effect that whole villages had supposedly been wiped out by toxic agents in the Soviet Union in the early years of Soviet government. Attempts are made to scare Americans and West Europeans alike. It is not accidental that extensive excerpts are made from the much-talked-of book of British General John Hackett "A History of the Third World War." It describes a horrifying scenario where a "defenseless Western Europe is chemically asphyxiated by the Soviets". How to avoid this? Only by carrying out the program of NATO's chemical rearmament at an accelerated pace, and deploying neutron weapons cruise missiles, Pershing 2's and containers with binary gas in Europe. Such is the message of the fabrication. Seagrave's "Yellow Rain" was clearly concocted on the orders of those influential US quarters who are ready to use any propaganda poison in a bid to justify the unheard-of militarization of their country, in part, the development of chemical weapons.

There is still another unseemly aim pursued by Seagrave and those who stand behind him. They are trying to make the world forget about what was really a lethal rain of toxic agents with which the Pentagon poison-sprayed Indochinese soil in the years of the Vietnamese war. Needless to say, Seagrave makes no mention whatsoever of well-known facts about the CIA and the Pentagon delivering toxic chemical agents to counterrevolutionary gangs in Afghanistan and the Salvadoran junta. "Our Government has irrefutable evidence of US deliveries of chemical weapons to the bandits. Grenades stuffed with CS gas and other toxic agents were found in different areas of Afghanistan. Not only servicemen but civilians as well are victims of these barbarous weapons," said Afghan Foreign Minister Shah Mohammad Dost, a participant in the work of the 36th UN General Assembly, in an interview with your correspondent. Seagrave's fabrication appeared at a time when the failure of Washington-launched provocative propaganda campaign around the alleged support of "international terrorism" by the Soviet Union and its allies became obvious. As *The New York Times* reported the other day, even the CIA could not present relevant "data" to the US Administration. Isn't it the reason why some people needed a new anti-Soviet lie?—*Pravda*.



PALESTINE

Another Failure

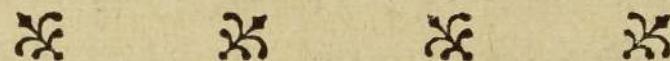
Beirut, November 20: Another round of the American-Israeli-Egyptian talks concerning "Palestine autonomy" on the Western bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip took place in Cairo. Judging by the concluding communique, the present meeting, just as many previous ones, has brought no results. This time the failure of the talks is obvious. The communique does not mention at all any "progress" and does not even name the date of another meeting. As was stated by Egyptian Foreign Minister Boutros Ali, "fundamental differences" still exist between Cairo and Tel Aviv. As for the Israeli side, Foreign Minister Shamir openly stated that "the Cairo round has failed."

Meanwhile, it is not a secret that it was Tel Aviv which had insisted on the earliest holding of this round and on a higher level than the previous one, that is on a ministerial level. At the demand of Israel, the adopted agenda included only one question, that of forming a "Palestine autonomous council. According to the schemes of the Tel Aviv leaders, this "council" (for the participation in which it is planned to find Palestinian collaborators) is to have only curtailed municipal powers, while real power will remain in the hands of Israel. This formula was

offered at the talks to Egypt. The United States and Israel want to bind Egypt as soon as possible (before the complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from Sinai in April 1982) by practical measures on "abolishing" the Palestine problem and substituting "autonomy" without any rights, for the self-determination of the Palestinians.

The Egyptian side did not agree with this plan. It demanded the setting up of a Palestinian body invested with legislative and executive functions. Though this position does not exceed the framework of the Camp David agreements, the representatives of Tel Aviv resolutely objected to it. The American delegation, which is regarded as a "full-fledged" participant in the talks maintained complete silence; it did nothing that could "rouse Tel Aviv's indignation." As a result another round of the discussions, which have been going on since 1979, has proved to be fruitless.

This round has again shown to the whole world undoubtedly to Egypt, too, that the Camp David "autonomy plan" was invented exclusively with the purpose of depriving the Palestinians of their legitimate national rights and perpetrating Israeli occupation. It is perfectly clear that absolutely different measures are necessary for a just solution of the Palestinian problem and the Middle East crisis as a whole. A real way for such a solution is an international conference on the Middle East with the participation in it of all sides concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organisation.



VOA COMMENTARY

Libya

The US Government December 10 announced President Reagan's call to all Americans now in Libya to leave that country as soon as possible. Also, travel by Americans to Libya will no longer be permitted. The President is further prepared to take over available legal measures to require Americans to leave Libya if such a step becomes necessary. The question of how to deal with Libya goes back a number of years, and certainly the advent of the Reagan administration. Simply stated, Libya for reasons that can only be clear to its own leadership, insists on maintaining a policy of what can best be described as diplomacy by subversion. The action announced by the Reagan administration is in direct response to Libya's efforts to undermine American interests and those of America's friends in the area, as well as Libya's continuing support for international terrorism.

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Libyan policies express themselves in many dangerous ways. These range from Colonel Qadhafi's sponsorship of violence as a political tool to deliberate efforts to destabilize other governments. They include efforts to silence Libyan nationals living abroad who dare to criticize Colonel Qadhafi. And certainly, a virulent anti-American attitude colours Libyas behaviour. Public denial of such policies—in the face of strong evidence to the contrary—simply cannot be believed. Against this background, and in view of the US Government's duty to protect its own citizens, there is no chance—in the Reagan Administration's view—but to bring to an end the American presence, no matter how small, in Libya. Beyond that, the US government will continue its assessment of all other aspects of Libyan-American relations.

No one should be surprised at protestations of innocence from Libya, nor should there be any surprise at Libyan claims that a large country is somehow bullying a small one. There may well be a noisy propaganda blast along those lines from Tripoli in the wake of the American action. But the US government is convinced that Libya's record of subversion against neighbours and endorsement of terrorism will be sufficiently clear to prevent acceptance of such Libyan pleadings. The US Government refuses to become obsessed with Colonel Gadhafi and his policies. But, it cannot ignore them. Nor can it avoid steps called for by reasonable prudence. —USICA.



TOWARDS WAR

Neutron Warheads

New Delhi, November 24: The SIPRI yearbook of 1981 recently released in Stockholm, lucidly states: "By the end of the 1970s, the borderline between conventional and nuclear weaponry was becoming blurred through the development of neutron bomb, although no decision on its deployment has as yet been taken. But the wording of various statements and forecasts indicated that preparations had been made to influence the public to accept nuclear weapons, that is, the neutron bomb, as a natural ingredient among the new anti-tank weapons deployed in Europe during the first half of the 1980s. The neutron bomb is referred to by the non-committal abbreviation 'ER-Weapon' (enhanced radiation) for example, in the following study. It is a basic premise of this analysis that the ER (enhanced radiation) technology is capable of being adopted to 155 NATO's weaponry. While the stated US policy it to refrain from producing of ER warheads, deployment of systems which could ultimately carry such warheads is nevertheless, on going".

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The United States has been implementing its scheme of turning Western Europe into a bridge-head for conducting a so-called 'limited' nuclear war. With the same objective the United States imposed its decisions to station medium-range missiles in Western Europe. The latest decision of President Reagan to order full-scale production of neutron weapons has also aimed at conducting 'limited' nuclear war in Europe. Moreover, the United States has decided to produce neutron weapons in another effort to acquire military superiority over the Soviet Union. It has practically shelved SALT-2 which seals the party in strategic weapons. In the meantime, it is hastily launching nuclear missile submarines of the Ohio type. At the same time, it is building more MX inter-continental ballistic systems the new B-1 strategic bombers and new strategic cruise missiles which can be launched from land aircraft and warships. They are building Pershing II ballistic missiles and perfecting their shuttle space system for military purpose. The Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) is being hastily set up. The United States is also setting up new military bases and military installations in different parts of the world. Their numbers have already reached 2,500 and their personnel total half a million officers and men.—Patriot.

Govt.



Notices

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

Reference No. 11/7/8/43

The Government intends to acquire the land described in the schedule below, for a public purpose, for particulars, please see the Gazette Extraordinary Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No 171/3 of 14-12-1981

SCHEDULE

District	: Anuradhapura
D. R. O. 's Division	: Nuwaragam Palatha South
G. S. 's Division	: No. 12.
Name of land	: Helambewawela, Helambewakela
Plan No.	: F. V. P 314 Sup. No. 1
Lot No.	: 9-67. 69—86
Name of Viliage	: Helambawewa

The Kachcheri
Anuradhapura.
1981 Nov. 24th

K. D. S. Nanayakkara
Acquiring Officer
Anuradhapura District

“Public Curiosity” ?

IS IT NOT A FACT that the Code of Ethics for Journalists under Section 30 (1) (a) of the Sri Lanka Press Council Law No. 5 of 1973 and approved by Parliament under Section 30 (3) of the said Law was gazetted on 14.10.1981 (No. 162/5A)? That it would be useful to refer to item 5 of the Code; “Every journalist shall respect the reputation of an individual and refrain from reporting or causing to be printed or published any information or comment regarding an individual’s private life unless the publication of the said matter is in the public interest as distinguished from public curiosity”? That our attention has been drawn by a reader to an item in the notorious Anuradhapura Diaries of the Sunday *Island* (December 6, 1981) that reads: “MONDAY: Sowing wild rice is the part-time in Anuradhapura, which is akin to the game played with oats by the Amazonians. Lekam Mahaththaya, though no young man, has developed this natural game with the mother of his Lekamwathie. While he has sent off his wife into the New World, and the father of Lekamwathie to sow tea seeds, he drives into the house and blows his pam! pam! and declares martial law to cover up his nocturnal activities with or without curfew....” That it is true no names are mentioned? That most people who read this were in the dark about to whom the item referred to? That telephones began buzzing and a person who claims to be close to *The Island’s* “U No Hoo” spread the word around as to the identity of the parties concerned? That this character assassination of a certain family has already begun to snowball in certain circles in Colombo? That even if there had been moral or sexual lapses on somebody’s part (nobody however is willing to vouch for its truth or otherwise—it is always a case of “we have on good authority” ... the police are working on it.... ‘Loka has heard’ and so on and so forth), our efforts to find out if the publication of this calumny through insinuation and innuendo was justified on grounds of “public interest” have failed? That it is not clear where the “public interest” came in? That as far as we can find out the publication of this item in *The Island* could only tickle “public curiosity” and that is a violation of the Code of Ethics For Journalists? That nobody can expect the parties affected by this character assassination “to fit the cap” and make a complaint to the Press Council? That in such cases, there should be some machinery where the Press Council *sui generis* can take the initiative and investigate this matter which in our view is a violation of the Code?

IS IT NOT TRUE that President Jayewardene in the course of his address to the 27th Annual Conference of the UNP said: “Let us stop growling at each other. Sit down together, meet the people who are not bothered about these petty quarrels and explain to them the difficulties the country faces and win their confidence for our programme and policy” That this advice is not for the UNP alone? That the SLFP and other opposition parties would do well to follow this advice? That the presidential advice however is especially applicable to the mudslinging quarrels inside the UNP? That in the *Tribune* of November 28, we had sought to preach a homily that “personal attacks under cover of high moral platitudes will not only denigrate the attacked but also the attacker. And those who live in a glass house, chock-a-block with cupboards full of rattling skeletons, should be extra-careful before indulging in any game of throwing stones. It does not matter who started the stone-throwing because in a war of character assassination battle lines disappear. The attackers and the attacked merge into the same conglomeration of the disgraced. Exposures of graft, corruption and waste in the public interest are essential in a democratic society but when they are persistently selective and deliberately slanted to pay off private feuds, they lose credibility—even if the essence of the allegations are true. In a government with 90 odd Ministers and Deputy Ministers, waste and corruption are not the monopoly of one or two... The moral of the Picture on our cover a pair of loving leopards, if Sri Lankan leopards can live in amity, why cannot UNP politicians do likewise? If they fight, as they are doing now, it is the species that will become extinct. The UNP stands in the danger of extinction if private quarrels become the order of the day. The UNP High Command will do well to stop the disgraceful squabble in their top echelons and get down to the job of developing this country as they profess to do. And if leaders offer the other cheek, in compassion and humility when attacked, great victories will be won....?” That those who knew the politics of this country are certain that Upali cannot become the Finance Minister only through the *A'pura Diaries* or by dropping the President’s name at every turn? That if the President mentions Upali’s name (not drop it), then he should have some cause for jubilation? That name-dropping is a device of the small time (and even not-so-small) contact men to get their contracts or their cut backs but not the high and mighty? That name-dropping often boomerangs on those who are playing for high stakes? That four years of such name dropping by Upali in the “international” and “national” press has not added to his reputation or credibility?? That political history has shown that such more dropping even just before an appointment is made has upset the apple cart? That it is not too late for him to stop dropping the President’s name at every turn and sail under his own steam in political waters for a change?

TRIBUNE, December 19, 1981

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