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# Price of Rice Not Yet Decided

## "Ceylon has no Ground for Stampeding"

### says Sir Oliver

"THE recent statements in some newspapers about an increase in the price of rice do not represent Government decisions," said the Minister of Finance speaking at the opening of the Colombo District Savings Week.

Continuing, he said: "This question, together with connected matters, are now under consideration and will be discussed with the Government Parliamentary Party and eventually placed before Parliament. When we do make up our minds, we will inform the public of our decision and of the measures to be taken to help the country from financial bankruptcy. We do not intend to avoid the issues that have recently arisen. Our answer to them will be based on the interests of the whole community and not of small sections."

It is understood that the financial situation and the need for measures to cut the food subsidy bill will come up for examination within the next few weeks. Those directly concerned in tackling the problem are the

Minister of Finance and the Minister for Food.

A significant statement was made by Sir Oliver Goonetilleke.

"Anybody's guess may be right either as to the possibility or the extent of an increase in the price of rice..... Ceylon, of all countries, has no ground for stampeding."

He said: "The question whether there will be any increase in the price of rice or any reduction in the rationed quantity of rice and similarly of flour, has not yet been finally settled by me. After I have reached decisions in these matters my proposals will be submitted to the Cabinet through the Prime Minister."

"Most people in Ceylon are aware of the increasing price of rice and flour at their source and the difficulty in finding supplies. But the real problem facing the country is not confined to the particular subject of rice. The increasing cost of imports, as compared with the steady and appreciable decrease in

the price of our exports, have created almost overnight the problem of a rapid reduction of our external balances.

"Whilst the deterioration has been sudden our external resources are sufficient in my opinion," Sir Oliver emphasized, "to make it unnecessary for the Government to act hastily and without the fullest possible consideration."

#### CUT IN SUBSIDY?

"It is no secret," he continued, "that the Finance Minister is actively considering the whole problem, with reference not only to a reduction in the food subsidy but also with regard to other methods that are available in order to correct

an adverse balance of payments."

"In the circumstances anybody's guess may be right either as to the possibility or the extent of an increase in the price of rice. These are essentially times when all concerned must consider financial and other problems without losing one's sense of proportion. Ceylon, of all countries, has no ground for stampeding."

Sir Oliver foreshadowed an intensive food drive with particular emphasis on paddy cultivation. Appealing to all concerned to devote their attention to ensure a maximum possible acreage of sowing with paddy, he stated that it was a matter in which a substantial advance could be secured and that he would be formulating proposals in the near future.

## New Sources of Taxation

By A. S. Morrison

CONFRONTED by a colossal food subsidy bill (which is likely to increase further) the Government is placed in a terrible quandary. One effort to get out of it is the increase in the price of sugar. What else can be done to raise more revenue without hurting the already attenuated living standards of the masses?

If the Government finally decides to increase the price of rice, it means that this is a desperate remedy necessitated by a desperate situation and it is hoped that the citizens of this country will bear with such a step patiently since such an increase in food prices is likely to be a temporary expedient to give the Government time to find alternative resources of revenue. We in this country should remind ourselves of the appalling hardships the people of Britain have had to put up with, not for two or three years but for twelve years (ever since the last war broke out in 1939). It is because of their willingness to endure these things that they are a great people. Now that Ceylon is an independent country it is incumbent on its citizens to realise that independence involves tremendous responsibilities not only for the governors but also for the governed. While it is the duty of the Government to temper the wind to the

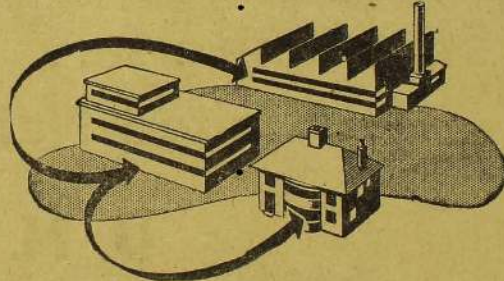
shorn lamb, it is also the duty of the citizens to be tolerant of measures which the Government is compelled to introduce and which appear to be avoidable but which, if we knew all the facts, are perhaps unavoidable.

Now, it would appear that the increase in the price of sugar and a possible increase in the price of rice are harsh attempts to resolve the financial crisis created by the tremendous rise in the food subsidy. But would the public be justified in rushing to the conclusion that the Government is deliberately increasing the burdens of the poor in order to protect the rich against further taxation? With a Premier of the calibre of Mr. Dudley Senanayake at the head of affairs, would that be a justifiable conclusion? No doubt, at the forthcoming debate on this subject in Parliament when it re-assembles on September 23, all the circumstances confronting the Government will be placed on the table and the people's representatives of all parties will be enabled to judge of the fairness of the Government's measures to overcome the crisis—a crisis not caused by the Government but by circumstances outside its control.

Meanwhile, taking long-term view of the country's need for tapping fresh sources of revenue, there are some new and untried avenues through which additional revenue might be brought in. Not being either an economist or a financial

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# NEW SOURCES OF TAXATION

(Continued from page 1)

expert, I can only make these suggestions tentatively in the belief that the spectator sees most of the game and may, therefore, be able to throw fresh light on it, not being hampered by the textbooks and the fear of leaving the beaten path.

For instance, there is one source of revenue which has not been tried but which can be counted to add several millions at the Government coffers. I refer to the tremendous appreciation in land values which occurs when the Government or a Local Authority carries out some scheme which results in opening up private land for settlements or for some purpose which would not have been worthwhile but for the action of the authorities in building a road or extending the water supply, or in land reclamation which indirectly or directly benefited land which was not itself reclaimed. When the official authorities do anyone of these things or something of analogous benefit to an area, the private land-owner reaps an immediate reward in the increased value of his land, whether he sells it or not. Where he decides to sell he reaps an immediate cash reward. Why should he be allowed to reap this reward as a result of official action without the State or a local authority benefiting also in the shape of revenue from a land purchase tax tacked on to the selling price of the land thus sold?

At the present time and for some time to come, the various schemes of development which the Government

is undertaking are bound to be of great financial value to a vast number of private land-owners. Wealthy land speculators are already busy buying up plots of land all over the country in areas where official schemes are mooted or are already in operation with the expectation that in the not distant future these lands could be sold for many times their present value. Why should these get-rich-quick men be permitted to amass further wealth as a direct result of what the Government has done or is doing, or is going to do without the State's coffers raking in some of the shekels? **There is not the slightest doubt that, if the Government were to introduce a special land tax on the sale price of all lands sold in areas where official schemes result in the provision of amenities which raise the value of land, the revenue would be enriched by several millions of rupees a year.** And nobody can gainsay the fairness of such an impost. In areas where the Local Authority operates schemes which have the effect of raising land values there is similarly no reason why a similar levy on land sales should not be imposed for the benefit of the local authority's revenues.

Another tax which the masses would welcome would be a heavy tax on luxury imports such as limousines (as opposed to the lower-priced utility cars), station wagons, wristlet watches (with which the country is flooded), imported jewellery, clocks, etc., while there should be a prohibitive tax on imports of electro-plated nickel silver-ware which compete with the local silver industry. Such a tax would amount to a protective measure for the local silver industry which should be encouraged in every way—both from

the artistic point of view and from the aspect of creating more employment.

As regards private motor vehicles already in use in this country, there should be a horse-power tax on all cars and station wagons with a horse-power in excess of 12 h.p. Such a tax would affect only those who own the luxurious limousines, the presence of which in large numbers in a poor country give the poor the impression that the Government favours the rich since so many wealthy people can afford to run such expensive vehicles. Most people forget that these cars are a hang-over from the gladsome days of 1950-1951 when the soaring rubber and tea prices made possible the import of such cynosures. Nevertheless, a horse-power tax on these vehicles and a much higher rate of import duty on luxury cars and luxuries in general would have a splendid effect on the masses, who would then be reconciled to increased prices of sugar and rice. **On the other hand, to increase the price of rice without taxing luxuries to the uttermost would be a capital blunder on the part of the Government and would play straight into the hands of the Pluto-Marxists who love the poor not so much as they love their own assiduously amassed properties.** It is absolutely imperative, therefore, that if a rise in the price of sugar and rice is unavoidable, then a heavy tax on all luxuries should go with it.

As regards a further increase in income tax and excess profit tax, as one who is at present taxable for neither, I might not be found fault with if I contend that a further rise in these taxes is likely to do harm rather than good in that it

would tend to kill the spirit of enterprise at a time when such a spirit needs to be encouraged in the interests of general employment and the elevation of the national income to higher levels. Whatever the Pluto-Marxists may say, in a democratic society, there definitely is such a thing as killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. But at present most Ceylonese capital is utterly unenterprising and this is a spirit which the State should discourage in every way by providing the enterprising capitalist with worthwhile incentives such as complete exemption from income tax for a period of five years.

In this connection, the State could actively discourage the unenterprising capitalist who lazily buys up tea or rubber estates put up for sale by foreign capitalists instead of contributing to the country's wealth by starting a new enterprise. One method of discouraging this type of local capitalist "spiv" would be to impose a land purchase tax on all tea and rubber estates. This would have also the valuable effect of compelling Ceylonese to form limited liability companies to buy and run such estates and would to a great extent eliminate the kind of individual Ceylonese capitalist who buys estates which he, in many cases, proceeds to exploit in a ruthless manner in order that he might sell it later when he has sucked it dry. The highest interests of the country's estate economy would be safeguarded if most Ceylonese-owned estates are run by limited liability companies. Estate Staffs have already testified to the damage done to valuable European-owned estates once they had passed into the hands of individual Ceylonese.

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# C. PLAN TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION SCHEME

## Ceylon's Contribution Rs. 1,772,000

THE total contribution under the Technical Co-operative Scheme by all countries in the Colombo Plan is £8,000,000. This scheme is now extended over a period of seven years and coincides with the further economic development plans. Seventy per cent of the £8,000,000 is contributed by the United Kingdom and Australia; 10 per cent, by India; and the balance 20 per cent, is distributed among the countries in the Colombo Plan. Ceylon's share comes to about three or four million rupees and the amount voted in the estimates for 1952-53 namely Rs. 1,772,000, is this year's contribution. Not one cent of that money is spent outside this country.

### BASIS OF THE SCHEME

The whole basis of the scheme is as follows: There are aid-giving countries and aid-receiving countries. The latter have the right to get experts to come into their countries; they have the right to send their own citizens to be trained in the aid-giving countries; they have the right to get training classes set up for the training of their own citizens in their own countries. The aid-receiving countries do not bear one cent of the expenditure, either of the passages of their scholars going to the foreign countries, or of the passages of experts coming to their own countries, or of setting up training classes for trainees coming to their countries. All that expense is met out of the £8,000,000 fund. Out of Ceylon's contribution, rural centres have been put up, and if any scholars come from any other countries to Ceylon—say, India wants to send some students for training in Ceylon, or say Burma wants to send some students—they will come here at our expense, they will be fed at our expense; and this money will go to meet those expenses. But not a cent goes out to countries which are normally accepted as aid-giving countries such as England or Australia or Canada. Students do not come from those countries, but from aid-receiving countries in South and South-East Asia, such as Burma or Thailand or Borneo. Ceylon has to pay all their expenses in connection with their passages, they stay here and their training. That money goes out of the money that has been voted.

### EXPERTS AND TRAINEES

Ceylon has received 25 experts, and arrangements have been made for training 121 Ceylonese abroad. Negotiations are now proceeding for a further 32 experts and training facilities for a further 171 Ceylonese. There are a large number of Ceylonese in Canada, in the United Kingdom, in India, in Australia and in New Zealand who are being trained free of charge. Their passages to and from Ceylon are paid; their expenses are paid; their allowances are paid; they receive full

training like Ceylon's dental nurses in New Zealand, or the large number of educational officers who have gone to Australia, or the Customs officers who have gone to Burma or the fisheries officials who have gone to Canada. The scheme is now extended to take in private firms. There are private engineering firms in the United Kingdom who are offering opportunities to Ceylonese young men to be trained there in various scientific work at the expense of the Commonwealth Technical Co-operative Scheme. In addition to the training scheme monetary gifts have been incurred. The Australian Government has given a gift of £50,000 worth of equipment for schools, for factories and for agriculture. For 1951-52 Australia has given £300,000 worth of flour, which is being used to establish T.B. clinics in every province.

### GIFTS FROM NEW ZEALAND AND CANADA

New Zealand has contributed \$250,000 for the first year and that sum is being utilized to finance the Dry Farming Scheme at Maha Illupalama. Canada has given for the first year a sum of Rs. 5,000,000 which is being used to assist in the rural electrification of Ceylon by the Gal Oya Project and also to establish a pilot project in rural development where a thousand families are to be benefited. America was giving money under the Mutual Security Act for Colombo Plan purposes. Under the Security Act, America has allocated large sums of money for distribution to various parts of the world. South and South-East Asia get the money for Colombo Plan development work. Sir Oliver Goonetilleke had discussions with the American Government, and the result of the discussions will undoubtedly be made known when the other officials come back from America. Apart from these sums which are only the beginning of the contributions from the aid-giving countries, action is being taken to develop the anti-T.B., Orthopaedic, Cardiological and Radiological services by establishing centres in each of these in each of the provincial capitals. All this is being done under the Colombo Plan.

### SELECTION OF EXPERTS

The procedure for selecting experts is that there is a Technical Co-operative Bureau in Colombo. They have lists of experts in various countries in various categories of work. If a particular country wants an expert of a certain type, say a chemist or an engineer—application is made to the Bureau and the Bureau will select the required type from available countries like the United Kingdom or Canada or Australia. Then the two countries get in touch with each other and the Bureau ceases to exist as far as the two countries are concerned. Arrangements are made between the two countries. The Bureau is purely a collecting agency or a forum where various countries keep statistics of experts who are available.

SENEX.

## CAN THE OPPOSITION BE DEMOCRATIC IN THE FUTURE?

By K. Alahakkone

THERE is no doubt that a democratic Opposition will be preferred to a dictatorial one. As it is always an active democratic Opposition that will promote the proper functioning of a good government. It was an appeal made by the Hon. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene to the Hon. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike to form a democratic Opposition. He made this appeal in the course of his speech

during the meeting held to celebrate the "Triumph of Democracy." It is a noble appeal, however.

It may be that the Leader of the Opposition is democratic, but the other Members of the Opposition are not. Even to the Leader of the Opposition to be democratic is rather difficult, as he himself is in the midst of a Marxist environment. It is very pertinent to quote Dr. N. M. Perera here. "We stand for a

(Continued on page 7)

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# FACTS ABOUT THE SOVIET ATTITUDE

## The "Peace" Campaign

ANY assessment of the Soviet attitude to war and peace must obviously take into account the attitude of the Soviet leaders to the "peace" campaign, the campaign which they themselves sponsored and to which they have given so much prominence in the last five years.

People living outside the Soviet orbit are apt to regard the various appeals of the "World Peace Movement" only from their own point of view. It is necessary to consider how they appear to people living inside the Soviet orbit.

To people of the Western countries, for example, these appeals mean that in the cause of peace they are asked to press their governments to make concessions to the Soviet Government, oppose conscription and evade military service, and condemn the manufacture of armaments and even, when possible, sabotage their manufacture and transport. Do the appeals mean the same thing to people in the Soviet orbit?

Official statements in the Soviet Union and the satellite States and the declarations of the "Peace Movement" itself, make it clear that they do not mean at all the same thing. There has never been any suggestion from these quarters that the Soviet Government ought to make concessions or reduce its armed forces or curtail armaments manufacture.

On the contrary, the political leaders in the Soviet Union and the satellite States have insisted on the need to increase their countries' war potential, and their exhortations to this effect have not only been made while the "peace" campaign has been in progress, but have been directly linked with the campaign and represented as part of the struggle for peace.

If the peoples of the N.A.T.O. countries follow the instructions intended for them, while the peoples of the Eastern bloc follow those intended for them, the result of the "peace" campaign will be to undermine the defence preparations of the non-Communist world while increasing the military potential of Russia and her allies.

### (a) PEACE PROPAGANDA FOR THE WEST

"We should state that one of the essential duties of the Defenders of Peace is the refusal to work on and produce war material in all capitalist countries. The working class is in the forefront of this activity."

(Louis Saillant, General Secretary of the Communist-dominated World Federation of Trades Unions (W.F.T.U.), during the Stockholm "Peace" Conference, March, 1950.)

"The dockers of European ports are gallantly refusing to unload American armaments."

(From a speech to the Soviet Peace Congress on 16th October, 1950, by Tikhonov, President of the All-Union Committee for the Defence of Peace.)

"To acquaint all working people with the decision of the Second World Peace Congress."

"To organise even more resolute action of the working people against the transport and production of armaments."

"To draw up and put into effect a plan for a powerful movement to hinder the rearmament programme."

(From instructions issued by the Executive Bureau of the W.F.T.U. to international and national trades unions after a meeting in Bucharest on 9th December, 1950.)

"The movement against the danger of a new war, for consolidation of peace, must go hand-in-hand with all-round struggle against the armament drive....."

".....The demands for the extension of the programme of the peace movement correspond to the interests of all peace-loving peoples. These demands resound ever louder at numerous meetings and rallies of

working people in the U.S.A., Britain and other countries. They are supported by direct action of the working-class in France, Italy, Belgium, Holland and Australia, who have refused to submit to the diktat of the American imperialists, refused to unload the American arms shipped to their country, to bear the monstrous burden of the armament drive and the militarisation of all spheres of economic life in their countries. They have the support of the American, British, French, Belgian and Yugoslav youth, who are evading military service, and who are protesting against the extended service."

(For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy (Journal of the Cominform), 22nd September, 1950.)

"The biggest lie of all is undoubtedly the lie about 'peace through strength'."

(R. Palme Dutt in the British Daily Worker of 13th October, 1951.)

### (b) PEACE PROPAGANDA FOR THE EAST

"We must not slacken if we want to go on strengthening the forces of peace in the world. Not only must we not slacken, but, on the contrary, we must increase our production...."

(President Gottwald, of Czechoslovakia, on 10th September, 1950.)

"Behind every signature should be a living human being, ready to work for peace and the Six-Year Plan and unreserved in his hatred of world incendiaries and the enemies of Poland."

(Appeal of the Polish Peace Committee before the National Peace Plebisite of 17th May, 1951.)

"The All-Union Council of Trades Unions has appealed to all trades unionists, to all men and women workers, engineers and technical workers, and all intellectuals and office workers of the Soviet Union, in support of the decision of the Soviet Peace Committee, to launch in the Soviet Union the collection of signatures to the World Peace Council's Appeal for a Five-Power Peace Pact (reports Moscow radio)....."

"The Council calls on all trades unionists, all working people of the Soviet Union, with one mind to sign the World Peace Council's Appeal, and with new force to demonstrate their indestructible will to preserve peace and to develop still more Socialist emulation for the fulfilment and over-fulfilment of production plans."

(Tass, 6th September, 1951.)

"Through devoted and enthusiastic work our people are creating the most peaceful structure of their history. They see the guarantee of permanent peace in the new social order in the Socialist system in which the world forces have also their proper place. A noble mission in the service of world peace is fulfilled by our People's Army."

(The Czech Minister of National Defence on 8th October, 1950.)

"Naturally, this fight is not just weak pacifism, not a formal refusal of force nor an unmanly retreat from war..... The fight for peace is not directed theoretically and generally against war."

(The Hungarian paper, Szabad Nép, of 6th November, 1949, on the "Soviet fight for peace.")

"The tasks of building up a strong and efficient army, police, and People's Militia, are not contradictory to the tasks of the fight for peace. On the contrary, the stronger and more efficient our armed forces, the stronger and mightier the world front of peace."

(President Gottwald, of Czechoslovakia, speaking in Prague on Army Day, 6th October, 1951.)



# Transition from Junior to Senior Schools

## Education Minister Clarifies Situation

GREAT concern has been expressed as to what is going to happen to students in Junior Schools after the Selective Test for transition to the Senior Schools. The subject was recently discussed at the Seminar held at the All-Ceylon Teachers' Union Conference at Matara, when the education policy was criticised and the Selective Tests were doomed to failure.

During the debate in Parliament when the book issued by the Information Department entitled 'Schools of the Nation' was discussed, this Selective Test was described by certain members as the "burning educational issue before the country." It was alleged that the test sought to cream off those students who are thought to be fit for secondary education while abandoning, not safeguarding those who are fit for vocational education.

### ANCIENT CHINESE POEM QUOTED

A member of the Opposition, the fair Member for Akuressa, referred to two opinions that existed about the desirability of being intelligent and quoted an ancient Chinese poem written hundreds of years ago in Chinese, the translation of which was read. It is called "On the Birth of the Son."

"Families when a child is born  
Want it to be intelligent.  
I, through intelligence,  
Having wrecked my whole life,  
Only hope the baby will prove  
Ignorant and stupid.  
Then he will crown a tranquil life  
By becoming a Cabinet Minister."

The Minister of Education, replying to the criticism, particularly those of the fair Member for Akuressa whom he described as one who has had a particular training in education and who has had considerable experience in the field of education, said that the point at issue was really the holding of the Selective Test and its result. There was no need to dwell on that point as

that subject was gone into in great detail by his predecessor in office who brought forward the amendments to the Education Act last year. In fact, the whole of the educational structure of the Island had undergone a fundamental change as a result of the deliberations in the Special Committee appointed for the purpose. Thereafter, the policy was debated and the question with regard to the holding of the Selective Test was settled. After considerable discussion regarding the age of the student when the Selective Test should be applied it was decided to hold it when the child came to the 8th Standard. At the same time it must be borne in mind, said the Minister, that admittedly a certain percentage of students in our schools were particularly suited for an academic education. It is intended to cater for those students who will profit by an academic or higher education not only in those subjects which form the academic subjects but also in others such as agriculture, metal work, home science, etc. There need not be any fear that those students who show an aptitude in a particular type of subject would be shut out from pursuing a senior secondary course. They would be provided for. In fact workshops are being put up in these Central Schools and all the senior schools to catch up that type of students and give them a practical education. Such subjects will form a part of the curriculum for the S.S.C. examination. The students who are left over will be diverted to the vocational schools. The agricultural school will be very helpful. It is estimated that about 50,000 students might sit for this examination to be held. Provision will have to be made for six to 8,000 in the vocational schools. That is the step Government intends to take. He did not think it wise to put the matter off from year to year till all the vocational schools and centres are ready. A beginning has to be made with the vocational schools that exist and as the scheme gets working the gap would be filled.

OMEGA.

# Key to Colombo's Traffic Problem

PROPORTIONS assumed by traffic congestion in the Pettah and at the railway bridge at Parsons Road near Lake House are so serious now that a permanent solution can never be found by such measures as staggering working hours while the very idea of trying to solve this business with barrels and courtesy cops armed with pieces of strings is most fantastic. Obviously the ultimate solution lies in new roadways, yet this is the one thing that receives least attention, if any.

A roadway through the middle of Slave Island skirting the Beira Lake over the City League grounds with a big bridge over the lake connecting Pettah and Slave Island had in fact been planned once. Owing to the gigantic expenditure that would ensue with the undertaking of such an improvement scheme the proposal might in many quarters have been regarded as "extremely visionary." Huge-scale acquisition proceedings of private land is involved in the scheme; besides much land would have to be re-claimed from the lake before the work on the new road could start. All buildings now standing in the area would have to disappear. Undoubtedly the implementation of such a scheme means the shouldering on of a very heavy burden. But self-searching caused must raise the question as to whether being content with an inadequate system of roadways is econo-

mically sound considering road safety and keeping our roadways in good condition. Inadequate road systems must be disastrous to the system itself resulting in heavy expenditure on maintenance.

The whole thing of handling the enormous traffic with our Police producing new fangled contrivances out of the bag from day to day is just out of this world. But what could the Police do? They should know that the most practical solution to traffic congestion anywhere is new roadways wherever it is required. That is as plain as the nose on your face. In the absence of these practical solutions they have now become so desperate that they resort to barrels which only lead to barrels and barrels of traffic jam!

Careful consideration of the financial implications of new roadways will not brand such schemes as "luxuries" and throwing cold water on them on the ground of cost. One thing is that employment on a big scale can always be found in such huge undertakings. Improvement in town planning, one of the matters in which we are yet far behind, is involved. Slave Island, for instance, with a roadway over the City League grounds, would have all that built area skirting the Lake, thoroughly altered with large parks and playing grounds between the Lake and the new road. The idea was to have a vast Pleasure Garden—a Cony Island! There is no reason to believe that the taxpayer would be strangled for developed

(Continued on page 7)



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### OPPOSITION CRITICS

The public meeting held on Galle Face to protest against the increase of the price of sugar and the rumoured possibility of an increase in the price of rice was a democratic form of making known the views of a section of the public on a matter of national importance. But useful and necessary as such forms of protest and public conferences are in a democratic State we had the now familiar technique of the Opposition Parties in Ceylon, who not merely state the case or criticise the Government but also make wild allegations and unworthy insinuations.

No less a personality than a Q.C. who once graced the Supreme Court Bench and later was Ceylon's chosen representative at New Delhi began the proceedings by setting the bad example of making veiled references to Government helping black marketeers. This was followed by other speakers who made no bones about the allegations that were made.

It was only the other day we went out of our way to point out that democratic opposition is a welcome thing and should be nurtured and developed in this country. But no one who understands the democratic way of life will expect abuse to pass currency as honest criticism. It is the responsibility of leaders to lead. They must remember that there is a sanctity attached to their leadership. If they value honesty and public morality they must

be honest themselves. Surely everyone of the speakers at the meeting should have known that the last thing they could say against the Government on the issue of the increase of the price of sugar is that it was interested in making known advance information to the black-marketeers.

This kind of lying may be very entertaining to the crowd and in fact these insinuations were loudly applauded. As we have pointed out before, lying as propaganda is effective for a time, but it boomerangs on those who use it.

Government has a very serious national problem to face and the national well-being is surely the concern of every political leader whatever party he may belong to. In a moment of national crisis sectional party advantages should be abandoned and the common factor of national well-being made paramount. As the Minister of Finance pointed out at a week-end meeting the countries from which we buy our rice are putting up their prices and it is not merely a question of continuing the subsidies that have been paid but the question of nearly doubling the present subsidy on rice owing to the rapid increase of the buying price of this commodity in the markets of the world. This is the problem. In such a situation people have the right to expect political parties to give serious thought to the economy of the country, to its stability and continuing strength, not merely scoring of debating points at the expense of the future untold misery of the people. Public criticism should be based on honest points of view and that honesty must be expected of the Opposition Parties if they expect the people to respect criticism and continue to listen to it.

## Third Reading of Budget Passed

THE Appropriation Bill "to make provision for the service of the financial year 1952-53 to authorize the payment by way of advance out of the Consolidated Fund of moneys required during that financial year for Loan Fund expenditure, and to provide for the refund of such moneys to the Consolidated Fund" which was presented by the Minister of Finance on the 9th June and read a second time on the 10th June was passed by the House of Representatives on Tuesday, the 19th instant.

With the passing of the last estimates when the House resumed from the Committee stage, the Minister of Finance said that he doubted whether in any other country the budget

was subjected to such a close and minute scrutiny as in Ceylon. He assured the House that the suggestions made by Members of both sides will be carefully borne in mind.

He then moved the Bill be read a third time.

The Leader of the Opposition expressed the appreciation of all Members for the manner in which the Speaker had performed his arduous task. He congratulated the Minister of Finance on his Budget and expressed the thanks of the Opposition Members for the assurance that their criticism will not be forgotten.

When the question was put, the "Ayes" had it and so the Bill passed the Lower House, the first and most important stage of its passage into law.



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# Sinhalese and Tamil as Official Languages

## Present Position Explained

IN reply to a question raised in Parliament when the Government will make Sinhalese and Tamil the official languages of Ceylon, the Minister of Finance stated that he could not say when it would be possible to make Sinhalese and Tamil the official languages of Ceylon but he added: "We are trying to keep to the time-table as laid down by the Official Languages Committee which was accepted by the State Council, that is, that in 1957 Sinhalese and Tamil should be made the official languages. We are still five years away from that date and as we get closer we shall be able to give a very definite reply."

### THE POSITION EXPLAINED

The Official Languages Committee which reported in 1946, made various recommendations but did not suggest how those recommendations should be carried out. They had suggested the appointment of another Committee or Commission and a Commission with Sir Arthur Wijewardene as Chairman was appointed to carry out the recommendations of the earlier Committee. That Commission has issued three Interim Reports; the third being under consideration. As recommended in the first report an official Terms Committee was appointed and is now functioning and the words that it intends should be standardised will be made known to the public soon. With regard to the training of shorthand writers and typists in Sinhalese and Tamil is also being done.

With regard to the Second Interim Report the Commissioners have recommended that certain departments should carry out their work in Sinhalese and Tamil. The Cabinet accepted the recommendation and directions have gone out to those departments. The situation is being watched. The heads of departments have often reported that they find it difficult owing to the want of a sufficient number of men who know Sinhalese and Tamil. For example, the Department of Posts and Telecommunications notified that they have difficulty in sending out telegrams in Sinhalese and Tamil. It is not that there are no men who know Sinhalese and Tamil but that they have no machines which can transmit the particular phrases in Sinhalese and Tamil. In another instance the Inspector-General of

Police when asked whether in every police station complaints could be taken down in the language in which the complaint is made, replied that his officers did not know the language and were unable to record the complaints in the language used. He was now getting his officers educated in those languages, and carry out the directive of the Cabinet.

### THE IMPORTANT PROBLEMS

The important problem was to make both Sinhalese and Tamil the official languages. The Tamil community is very determined that Tamil should have the same right as the Sinhalese in every Province in the country. There are 200,000 public servants and it is not possible to think that there is a single public servant who knows both Sinhalese and Tamil—that is to say—knows both languages well enough to speak sufficiently, to read sufficiently and to write sufficiently. Unless a knowledge of both languages in that manner is acquired, no public officer of the staff class could perform his functions. Two further problems are involved in the question. One is to make them the media of instruction and the other is to make them the media of administration. With regard to the first it has been decided that from 1955 Sinhalese and Tamil will be media of instruction up to the 8th Standard. That is the policy adopted by the Government, going to the extent that Sinhalese be the medium for Sinhalese children and Tamil the medium for Tamil children. It has also been decided that Sinhalese children may learn Tamil and Tamil children may learn Sinhalese and that both Sinhalese and Tamil children should learn English as a compulsory language, thereby creating a new generation of Sinhalese who know Sinhalese and English and Tamils who know Tamil and English. English should be the common language. Tamil children would know Sinhalese unless they can learn Sinhalese as an optional language in school and Sinhalese children would not know Tamil unless they can learn Tamil as an optional language. The Government is determined to see that Sinhalese and Tamil are made the official languages sooner or later. The implementation must be made without causing any dislocation in the administration. The lack of knowledge of the languages would not only bring about inefficiency but also chaos in the administration, especially when the country is involved in a large development programme.

JURGEN.

## Can the Opposition be Democratic in the Future?

(Continued from page 3)

principled united front for the establishment of a workers' and peasants' Government." This indirectly meaning—a dictatorship of the Proletariat, as in Russia. It is clear that the leader of the Opposition and Dr. N. M. Perera differ immensely, the former preferring democracy and the latter a dictatorship.

Even in the future, if the Marxist Parties intend establishing a dictatorship there cannot be a democratic opposition. Therefore, the task of becoming democratic for the Opposition is left entirely in the hands of the Marxist parties now. It can be done by shedding their party colours and sticking to Mr. Bandaranaike's Party provided that it is a democratic party.

On the other hand, there is another opportunity of creating a democratic Opposition. This chance is entirely in the hands of the citizens of this country. If the voters at the next election cease to vote for the Marxist Parties and cast their votes for an Opposition democratic party, then the moulding of a demo-

cratic Opposition is undoubtedly assured.

The evil forces of Communism can be crushed if the people of this country prefer to do so. As the 19th century was the age of the middle-class, the 20th century is the age of the working class or the common man. Even in the future, if the common man wants a democratic Opposition he can easily do it.

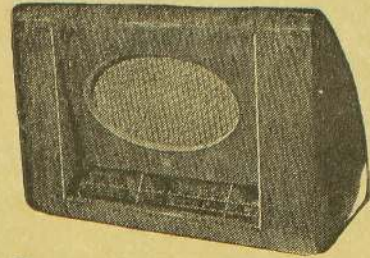
## Key to Colombo's Traffic Problem

(Continued from page 5)

areas bring in its wake higher land values. The road will always mean a better service for the area. The question should not be one of cost at all but whether the ultimate solution as roadways where required for traffic problems could be postponed now with an increasing motoring population. The fact that new road schemes as the Slave Island project and the maiden along Galle Road as part of Galle Road widening in Colombo have been discussed long before traffic problems became so appalling disclose the merit of these schemes as providing improved road facilities not to mention a better traffic.

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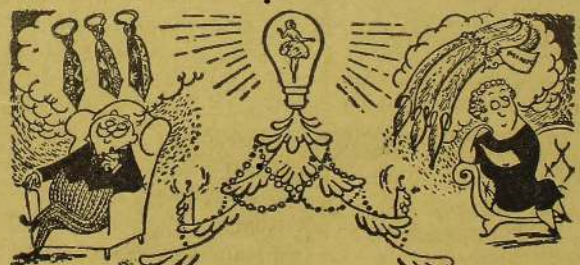
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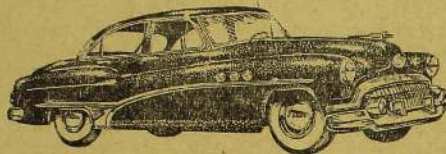
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# THE WORLD TODAY

WHAT the Chinese Communist regime says to its people at home and what it says to the world at large are obviously two entirely different matters.

The Communists' Red Cross summary report to the 18th International Red Cross conference here is, for example, in peculiar contrast to statements published not long ago in the Peiping "People's Daily." The summary report boasts that as a result of vigorous action begun soon after the Communist regime seized control of China in 1949, "all kinds of epidemics have long ago been under control."

However, the Peiping Communist daily revealed earlier this year that extensive epidemics were raging in several provinces of China, and the paper bitterly criticized the public health service as being either negligent or incompetent.

It is interesting to note, in passing, that the summary report makes no mention of "germ warfare" which the Communists have long accused the United Nations of waging against the North Korean and Chinese people.

## DISCREDITED CHARGES

The full report, however, does contain a brief paragraph, buried near the end, which says that "germ warfare" has "failed to achieve its purpose."

Obviously, the Communists had hoped that this paragraph would go unnoticed in the rush of conference business and that the delegates would automatically accept the full report. This would have given the Red delegates the opportunity to chortle that the conference had "recognized" their already discredited charges. It would have given the Soviet bloc a new log for its propaganda furnace—already going full blast here.

The paragraph did not go unnoticed, however, nor did similar ones in the reports of other Communist delegations. Leopold Macaulay, Chairman of the Central Council of the Canadian Red Cross, called the attention of the conference's general commission to the obscure allegations. The conference then voted merely to "receive" the various reports, not to accept them.

The next day the Communist bloc launched an all-out attack based on the "germ" charges. Su Ching Kuan, the Chinese Communist regime's delegate, coupled the charges with accusations that the U.N. command in Korea had maltreated prisoners of war and "massacred" innocent men and women. Su presented a resolution calling upon national Red Cross societies to mobilize world opinion for an immediate cessation of "all the atrocities in violation of the Geneva Conventions."

The Polish representative repeated Su's remarks, followed by a nervous Kim Min San of the North Korean regime. Kim was patently unfamiliar with the lengthy prepared statement which he read. He lost himself several times and had to hunt feverishly for his next sentence.

Ambassador Andre Francois-Poncet of France, Chairman of the Commission, pointed out that Kim's statement was a "passionate attack of a political nature."

## REQUEST TO OMIT POLITICS

Francois-Poncet and other Red Cross officials have pleaded with the Communists throughout the conference to omit politics from the sessions here, but to no avail.

Francois-Poncet also told Kim: "You should say that you refuse to allow an official inquiry into your charges. That would have made a more useful debate."

The other delegates evidently agreed with Francois-Poncet. They voted down the Chinese Communist resolution 63 to 13.

There were many signs that the delegates' patience was wearing extremely thin as a result of the Communist bloc's efforts to saturate the conference with propaganda. The point had been reached where an almost audible groan could be heard

whenever a Communist member rose to speak.

The U.S. Red Cross delegate, James T. Nicholson, took note of this in a brief speech. He voiced the belief that "our patience has been sufficiently tried," and pointed out that the "proper place for political problems with which we have been deluged is the forum of the United Nations."

His views were seconded at a Press Conference by the head of the U.S. Government observer group, Charles Burton Marshall. Today, Dr. J. Heng Liu, head of National China's delegation, repeated previous warnings that the Communists were attempting to poison the conference.

Then Liu dropped a verbal bombshell. He told the Press that since the conference had been turned into a political forum by the Red delegates, his group was leaving.

There were some delegates who considered his "walk-out" somewhat drastic. But there was no non-Communist here who did not sympathize with him.

NEW YORK, AUG. 20

TWELVE years ago, a small-mouthed, sullen-eyed man walked out of a prison in Hungary, free after 14 years. Today that man—Matyas Rakosi—rules as warden over the prison that is post-war Hungary.

Rakosi became premier of Hungary late last week. Members of the national assembly named him to the post by "acclamation." They need not have bothered. Rakosi, as head of the country's Communist party, already was undisputed "boss" of Hungary.

Rakosi's dictatorial status has gone unchallenged since 1949. That was the year Laszlo Rajk, his rival, was ousted from high command of the party, "confessed" to being a spy and a traitor, and was hanged—conveniently clearing the way for Rakosi.

Since then every speech-making official in Hungary has gone to great lengths to praise Rakosi. He has been identified at every opportunity as "the great leader of our nation" and as "our beloved father." His portrait waves banner-sized next to those of Lenin and Stalin at public gatherings.

It might be interesting to examine the background of Hungary's "great leader." He was jailed in 1926 for his activities as an agent of the infamous Comintern. Released in 1940, he went to Russia—as a Soviet citizen—and became prominent once again in the Comintern, supposedly dissolved in 1943. He returned to Hungary with the Soviet army in 1945 and led the Communist party into a coalition with the then dominant Small Farmers and Social Democratic parties. Slowly, then, the heads of the two other parties were purged, and for all practical purposes their parties ceased to exist.

Two officials of the once powerful parties were retained as figurehead leaders. Sandor Ronai, a former Social Democrat, was permitted to sit as President. Istvan Dobi, of the now defunct Small Farmers' party, was premier. Last week, to make room for Rakosi, Ronai resigned and became speaker of the Parliament. Dobi was "kicked upstairs" to the presidency.

This action follows the pattern laid down a short time ago in Rumania. There, Premier Petru Groza of the Plowmen's Front party was "promoted" to the presidency, and Gheorghiu-Dej, a Moscow stalwart, became premier. At the same time Ana Pauker, Gheorghiu-Dej's rival, was ousted from party leadership for "crimes against the State." Mme. Pauler was to Gheorghiu-Dej what Rajk had been to Rakosi.

The manipulation of national front "parties through Communist co-operation" was described not long ago by Rakosi as "coalitionary Bolshevism."

In an amazingly frank—and revealing—statement, Rakosi termed such coalition methods "Salami tactics—demanding a little more each day like cutting up a salami, thin slice after thin slice."—(U.S.I.S.).



# RELIGION THE INVIGORATING FORCE

By Eardley Gunasekera

INNUMERABLE interpretations have been given to the world but most of them have fizzled out. Nevertheless the religious interpretation has still a powerful hold on modern thought. This interpretation itself has an overwhelming confidence of its immense power to render to life worth and dignity. But this confidence rests on certain hopes and assumptions. The moon, the stars, trees, rivers and mountains not forgetting human life itself, are all the creation of a Power understandable only by faith. Human interests rally round man's relationship to this power. This relative union is now moving apart thrusting life into an abyss of inarticulation. The deep thirst, the insatiable avidity is to regain the divine communion now no more, a goal which can only be achieved by a complete transformation of one's own inner life. Only by a moral overhaul in which the primary necessity is a love for that Power and an acknowledgment of his tremendous potentialities could it be hoped to achieve this end. Not only must he give religious fervour and devotion and carefully cherish the grace he has received but also must he be a faithful servant of God ready to establish his kingdom upon earth.

In beliefs of this type where the human mind only can pronounce a judgment is it fair for baseless politicians to thrust their opinions on others. Is it fair for them to attempt to introduce discrimination? Is it fair to give a religion State recognition in preference over others? Let not power thirsty politicians trespass on the province in which they reveal incompetence. Man as the express image of God stood in the very centre of reality;

It was around him that the wheel of the universe revolved. The conduct of all human beings taken collectively decided the fate of the universe to all eternity. Life, looking through the blue glass of religion, is not one of comfort and luxury but of care, trouble and unceasing pain. The contradictions and hideous realities of life are far too glaring to allow of any comfort and happiness. It was sometimes felt that religion tended to enhance rather than dissolve the miseries of the world. But just here the Divine Power intervened, lifting man above the region of misery and need into newness of life, allowing him to share in its glory, perfection and everlastingness and to attain a fulness of unimaginable bliss.

From time immemorial this life satisfied men and afforded spiritual stimulus and consolation. But its authenticity has been closely linked up with the fact that its foundations have never been called in question. Doubts pertaining to religion must invariably break down even though their presence may not destroy it. It is this rudimentary doubt which has been constantly working in the world and proving increasingly formidable to the interests of religion. This doubt which manifested itself in criticism was directed against the doctrinal teaching of religion, and it derived its pungence from the vast storehouses of knowledge man had explored together with the new insight he had won into the interpretation of nature and history. This criticism would never have been able to hold its own or have any serious consequences if the force of faith and fervour were maintained. There was indeed a time when religion was the only invigorating force capable of imparting to life vitality. The world had nothing sublime to offer mankind, its spiritual existence seem doomed and it could only have recourse to another higher and enlightened world. Faith with utter confidence took this other world to task and brought it into close touch with human life, and constituted it the tribunal before which the visible world should approve itself and justify its existence. Human imagination helped to a large measure in this direction by giving form and colour to the Unseen. The opposition between human and divine was transcended and the truth which lies at the base of all religion manifested itself. It was the age that could change the whole face of existence, view the most difficult task as facile, treat the impossible as a matter of course and hold the Invisible as the most familiar of all real things.

Religion, in the midst of the greatest storms of protest and denial is still a recognisable force. We cannot afford to ignore its claims for under trying conditions it has given a solution to many perplexing problems. Its stimulating and invigorating hold upon life has to be heeded. To the modern man religion is more a question than an answer. It is itself too much a problem to interpret to us the meaning of life, and make us feel that it is worth living. Let us not be carried away by the various political "isms" as they are popularly called and the curious philosophies of individual people because it is only a universal deed as Religion that can help to illuminate the mysterious depths of life.



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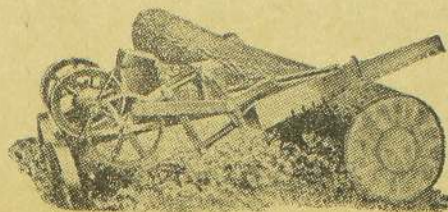
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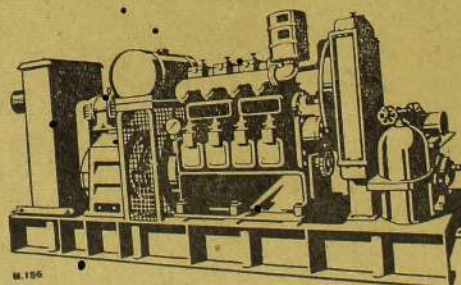
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# The People's Obligation to the Government

THE article from the English Press which recently appeared in the local Press, warning us that the Communists are on the watch, and that they will be working harder than ever to undermine the existing authority and order, is a fact which must be taken into consideration. The great victory of the Government and the prestige which it holds as a democratic organisation should not blind us to the fact that we have in our midst a set of persons who would use the first opportunity they get to undermine the existing democratic order.

Once democracy is established, it does not mean that the public has no responsibility beyond grumbling against the government, and creating unfair discontent. Many people seem to believe that the democratic freedom of speech means that a man in a free country should be free to say anything he chooses, and this kind of criticism he is bound to give just to demonstrate that he is enjoying the real freedom of democracy. But there is no doubt that a considerable degree of harm arises from this cause. We do not want the Opposition parties in this country to unfairly criticise the Government, without endeavouring to understand the situation as it actually exists. It is surprising, therefore, that people in this country who vaguely and pleasantly believe in democracy, but who do very little or

By *Quintus Delilkan*

nothing to understand what government is, are doing just what they condemn the Opposition for doing.

In fact, there are quite a large number of people who help the cause both of the Opposition and of the Communists in joining in the chorus of criticism that arises in various places when the Government's policy in some matter is not approved. The idea of most people is that the Government of a democratic country must be a perpetual and perennial dispenser of benefits to the people. No consideration should be paid to problems of finance, to the state of development of the country's resources by slow and steady stages, to the international position, and to other matters, but the Government must go on giving benefits so that the lot of the people should be made happy by leaps and bounds.

There is an utter absurdity in such a point of view. There must be a sense of responsibility first in those who uphold democracy and it is also then that they have the right to demand some kind of responsibility in those who oppose democracy. It is not always that a Government which has been generous to the people can continue such generosity. The Government and the people are like a family. They must face the vicissitudes of fortune together. A Government is bound to exercise prudence, caution, and judgment in the regulation and administration of affairs, and if there are difficult situations and hard times, then the people must realise

that they must not complain when some advantages they enjoy have to be foregone. When the economy of the country is restored, then these advantages can be restored to the people in an even greater measure than they exist today.

If the Government goes on spending more than it can, then the whole country will be involved in a position of general bankruptcy. The Government cannot head for such a disastrous condition, unless it has itself first lost all sense of responsibility. It is only fair that the people should understand this position, and temporarily accommodate themselves to such a changed situation. The service to the people by the Government should be met by a great deal of loyalty. To ask for more than can be given, because the people have been given before on a large scale, savours of ingratitude. The people of England made tremendous sacrifices during the war, and went through one of the great crisis of their history, and yet they are today enduring more difficulties and undergoing more privations than even the people who were defeated. Their government is interested in the people. But it must be evident that there has to be a further period of stringency among the English people in the matter of food supplies which are essential than there is among the people of Ceylon. And yet the English people because they are understanding and constitute a fundamentally fair democracy continue to put up with conditions of austerity living which

perhaps no other country would so heroically endure.

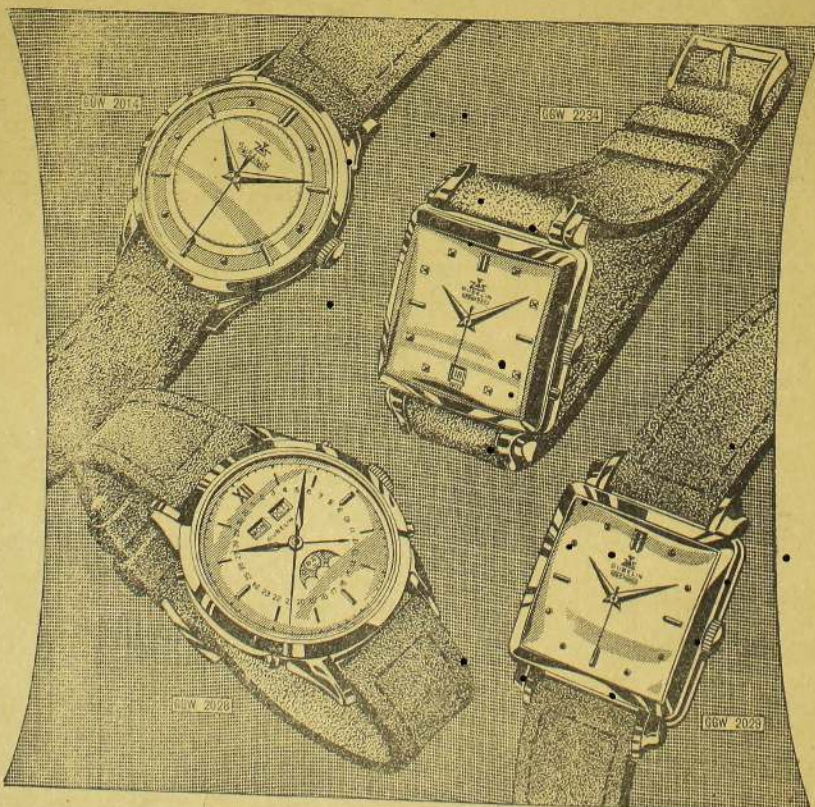
Slight increases in prices here and the proposed slight cutting down of subsidisation appears to have created a frame of mind in some quarters in which it is evident that there is no reasonable understanding of the position in which the Government is placed. The Government has made the food position for years the easiest in perhaps all the countries of Asia. This fact appears to have been forgotten completely. It is difficult to understand how so outstanding a fact can be left out of count.

There can be no doubt that the revolutionary elements in the country will be glad of the opportunity which has come their way to endeavour to rouse some feeling against the Government on these particular issues. It is inevitable that they would seek to exploit this factor to the utmost possible extent. The Government will have to face a certain amount of criticism over this issue, in spite of its many services to the people. But people should be on their guard against allowing themselves to be led by revolutionary propaganda in this matter. It is more to the advantage of the people to understand the reasons for the actions of the Government than to irresponsibly, give support, by intemperate criticism, to those who are opposed to the Government and the best interests of the people.

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Short Story

# THE LAST OF HIS VICTIMS

By Shirley J. Payoe

THE man sitting next to me yawned and resigned himself to a further wait and made it a profitable one by falling into a slumber. The minutes passed one by one and Time became a physical oppression—an acid that coursed through the veins driving me almost to insanity with the pain of having to wait and wait and wait. We had waited long enough. Not considering the irritability of the warm dull afternoon itself, waiting in a stationary bus, when it is nearly full and perhaps half an hour behind the scheduled time for its departure, is as annoying as it is uncomfortable. We waited, apparently, for a few more passengers.

Around us was the bee-hive activity of a provincial bustand; the excited rural folk trotting about almost aimlessly, the various hawkers, the tooting of horns and the changing of gears as other vehicles arrived and departed. To our left was a section of the Main Street and its row of prosperous-looking teakiosks, hotels and bakeries from which ready salesman called out invitingly to alighting passengers. One such boutique—with an energetic caller standing on the outside who, dragging a metal soda bottle-opener along the necks of a series of coloured bottles of saruwath that stood neatly upon a counter, would produce thus a little train of tinkling notes even as he shouts, "Ah, Enda, Enda, Saruwath beela yanda! Enda, Enda!"

At last the bus set off.

Among the last minute arrivals were a woman with her boy and an aged man who took a seat in front of me. The bus was crowded to begin with but, many of the passengers being short-distance travellers, soon a few of us had the vehicle to ourselves and we continued in comfort. Before long enervation and utter boredom were upon me. I fought back the creeping drowsiness and the growing heaviness of the head by making efforts to keep my interests fixed upon some observation, however trivial it may be.

The woman and the boy, I observed, had moved to a more comfortable seat behind the driver. She kept her mouth wide open like a dead fish and gazed vacantly before her, while her boy busied himself with peeling an immature orange with his finger-nails. Next to them sat a young farmer, who unconcernedly whistled the latest Sinhalese film tunes between his closed teeth. And before me sat the quiet old man; over seventy, if a day, and unsteady and weak he was.

The vehicle clattered across a bridge over a muddy river, and as we slowed, I saw below the frolicking bathers enjoying their afternoon dip. Elephants too there were—lolling upon their sides and spouting water with their trunks while attentive mahouts scrubbed them. An hour of travelling thus passed. The monotony of unrelieved travel became overpoweringly soporific and the swaying of the moving vehicle made matters worse, by rocking me, as it were, while the engine steadily hummed a lullaby.

"Welawa kiyadha, Sir?" the old man asked.

"Thunata kalai" I said.

As I said, the man who sat directly in front of me was very old. His close-cropped hair was truly white and so was the bristly growth on his leathery chin. He had a few long strands of hair on his ears. They were like the delicate springs of wrist watch. When the vehicle gathered speed and the passing wind played upon them with some force, they uncoiled but sprung back immediately into position as soon as the speed dropped. He wore the faded remnants of a blazer coat. It was flayed at the collar. The inner padding at one shoulder peeped through at a point where the stitches had given way.

Up the spine, along the seam in the middle of this coat, a small caterpillar crawled. Once it turned sideways and made its way towards the right arm-pit. But soon it was back at the centre and crawling up and up determinedly. Minute after minute, millimetre by millimetre, the restless caterpillar crawled. I was fascinated and watched its slow progress with much attention. It was scarcely discernible against the colour of the cloth, but I kept my eyes glued on it as it alone provided me with some much-needed diversion.

The bus spend on. The monotony of speed, the constant wrr... of the engine and the rocking of the vehicle was too much for me, now that my only point of diversion was removed so tragically. How like a soldier crushed beneath a monstrous tank the helpless insect seemed! Is it possible then, I reflected, that a God created Man knowing full well that he would spend the best part of his life destroying his fellow-beings—crushing them beneath tanks, shooting them to pieces and blowing them to smithereens with bombs and grenades? But no, not even such profound thoughts could hold my attention any longer. Drowsiness overcame me and I sank my head in my arms.



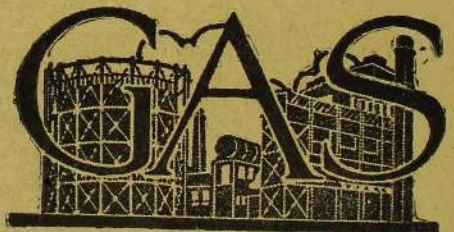
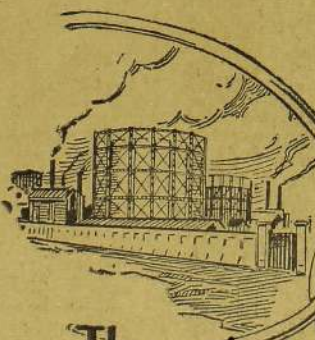
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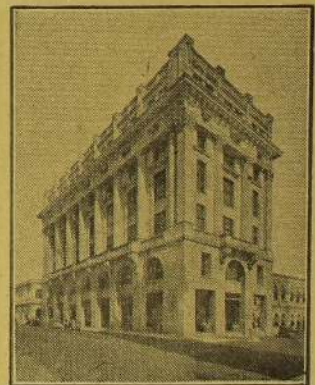
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