

# GUARDIAN



Why the fish get away

JR breaches China wall

Ilangaratne on UF debacle

Multinationals: pollution exporters

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# **LANKA GUARDIAN**

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### **Cover Picture:**

A Fisheries Corporation fish stall in a city market

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## **Letters**

### **Refreshing approach**

I do not agree altogether with some of your views and interpretations. Nevertheless, Lanka Guardian displays a refreshing and courageous approach in its first two issues. Good luck.

Kegalla. **Tissa Wijeyeratne**

### **Nebuchadnessar, again**

Now that Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike is interested in Nebuchadnessar, your readers may like to know of the interpretation and fulfilment of Nebuchadnessar's dream as told in the Book of Daniel:

"The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnessar; and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles feathers, and his nails like birds claws..."

It is interesting to note that Nebuchadnessar, while driven from men, was fated to eat grass, not plant it unlike an equally famous "king" in our little kingdom sometime ago.

Colombo 5. **Mathew P.**

### **Pragmatism**

Shame on Dr. Costain de Vos for invoking 'Leninist pragmatism' as an excuse for the LSSP! The histories I read don't tell me that Lenin joined the Kerensky government and connived at the shooting and torture of 'ultra-right' insurrectionists whom he later discovered to be ultra-left.

Colombo 5. **Reggie Siriwardena**

### **Leninist practice**

After congratulating R. Siriwardene for "savaging" Colvin, Costain

de Vos chides him for quoting Lenin on matters literary.

De Vos then says that "turning 180 degrees is a recognised principle of Leninist pragmatism". Could Mr. de Vos give us some examples from Leninist practice so that we could judge his own authority to speak on matters Leninist, leave alone literary.

Colombo 7. **L. Gunawardene**

### **Gay Baba?**

I was pleased to see the review of the book on Satya Sai Baba - *This God is unisex*, P. 18, Lanka Guardian, 1, 3 (I am sure Kovoov too would have been.)

Are we not being too harsh on the man (or God as he is claiming himself to be)? If Baba was Krishna himself then how could he be 'moral' in his conduct? In this era of 'gay liberation' and all the other 'liberal' stuff, Baba is, perhaps, only trying to be a modern version of the 'original' Krishna who restricted himself to the fair sex.

Peradeniya. **S. S.**

### **Evening daily**

A silver Jubilee of a newspaper is no doubt a great occasion for both its readers and its makers. The occasion becomes greater when the newspaper happens to be an evening Sinhala daily.

When the JANATA celebrated its silver jubilee recently two writers (one in the 'Daily News' and the other in the 'Janata') claimed it was the first evening Sinhala newspaper. This is factually incorrect.

Lankadipa was the first evening Sinhala paper and was published as a tabloid on 27/10/47 under the editorship of Julius Lanerolle. It became an eight column morning daily on 16. 5. 49 with D. B. Dhanapala as editor.

Panadura. **V. K. Wijeratne**

# Disarmament bungle

A report on the Foreign Ministers' meeting in Havana published in the highly reputed and conservative *Hindu* (Madras) suggests that the UNP government which is not too well acquainted with the institutional intricacies of contemporary diplomacy and with the modalities, in particular, of the non-aligned movement is poorly served by its experts.

The *Hindu* says that President Jayewardene's proposal for a World Disarmament Authority came as a "surprise to many delegations".

The *Hindu* also states that many delegates wondered why it was not placed first before the preparatory committee of the UN special session. It further adds that a similar proposal made by the Netherlands was rejected by the non-aligned group.

The *Hindu* reports that there was "little enthusiasm" for the Sri Lanka idea and contrasts sharply with reports in the local press.

Whatever the intrinsic merits or demerits of the proposal itself, this kind of 'grand design' needs the most painstaking groundwork, lobbying, canvassing and explaining, amendments and adjustments in the light of critical responses and reservations. Only when majority backing is certain does any experienced government come out with the idea. And then timing and the proper forum are of the essence. Otherwise, the country and the proposer are needlessly embarrassed.

In the Bandaranaike regime too, there were officials and over-enthusiastic members of coteries who tried to curry favour by coaxing signatures to grandiose schemes. After some time, Mrs. Bandaranaike's sheer experience held to avoid such situations. Once again the *Hindu* report also reflects the state of the national press. The Government's initiatives, local and foreign, observes an Asian diplomat, are thrown into the air like those multi-coloured balloons in the Kandos chocolate advertisement!

## Interview

### Why the fish get away

Mr. Festus Perera, the Fisheries Minister, reaches for a chart. That's his instant reaction to any interviewer who wants to discuss the soaring price of fish and the public outcry that the Ministry and Corporations under him are doing very little to improve things.

"Look at this chart" he says with a bland smile as if he has harpooned an argumentative interviewer with his first shot. The chart shows that in 1972 fish imports (canned, dried and maldive etc) totalled 85,480 tons (wet weight-equivalent). In 1975 31,820 tons and in 1976 15,716 tons. Last year it was about 9000 tons. Since total fish production in 1972 was 100,110 tons, imports amounted to over 40%. Last year our production was 135,000 tons and imports were a small fraction of this figure.

**Q. The steady reduction in imports was motivated by a need to conserve foreign exchange in a tight situation?**

A. Yes, I grant that. Imports came down from 92 million rupees in 1972 to less than 30 millions in 1976. But one has to accept the fact that the basic cause is the gap between supply and demand.

**Q. How about general inflationary conditions, poor local production, maldistribution, inefficient management, corruption and so on? After all, even the President thought the matter of sufficient public importance to refer to the price of fish in his Convocation address. He said there was fish available at a fantastic price in private stalls, while the Corporation stall was empty. Imports don't explain that away... does it?**

A. Yes, all those factors are relevant. And I am ready to take them up one by one. We have nothing to hide we have been here just 10 months and we have not been idle...

Let me tell you what happened just this morning...the corporation tells me that it has bought 30,000 lbs of fish in Galle but cannot transport it to Colombo...there was no vehicle available the vans with adequate refrigeration facilities were needed here and the others were out of operation...you see everything's being run down...several years of neglect, waste, no planning... there was a breeding pond built at heavy cost in the electorate of an important person where you had to carry water up the hill, like Jack and Jill...

**Q. But still the main question of local production and its expansion remains...?**

A. Quite right, but I am trying to give you a full picture. I must tell you about the day-to-day problems which can be tackled quickly, and how we are doing that...the main question requires a long-term plan of development...The Corporation is running at a loss wages have gone up and yet the men trained for the trawlers were never looked after...no incentives...the managers were doing nothing, the engineering and technical divisions were idling...the operational costs of the trawlers were too heavy, the cost of bait alone for the tuna boats made the whole exercise uneconomic and yet the Ministry before my time had signed an agreement for 8 Norwegian trawlers costing millions of rupees given as aid by Norway... I have cancelled that but I have to pay compensation for the construction work already done... something like 19 million rupees down the drain...

**Q. To get down to the everyday situation that concerns the consumer, how do you account for the fact that the service given by the Corporation is so poor compared to the private trader... whether it is price or quality or availability of fish...?**

A. About prices, which is the real cause of agitation, I should mention, beside the supply-demand situation, another factor. Most people, many of them for religious reasons, prefer to eat fish, and recently there has also been an acute shortage of meat and eggs...

Q. But hasn't there been a per capita drop in consumption of fish?

A. Yes but mainly on account of the drop in imports, of dried fish particularly. From 32 lbs per capita in 1972 to 24 lbs in 1976...

Q. Still, fish remains the chief animal protein in the Sri Lankan diet?

A. That's correct. Almost 70% Our 24 lbs per capita should be compared with 84 lbs per capita in Thailand.

Q. As a nutritional problem too, the expansion of production is of national concern?

A. Certainly...but I told you, I am tackling the problem in 2 ways, — immediately to clear the mess I inherited, and then to launch a planned program.

Q. To start where it really begins... on the beach. Everybody knows there are rings of mudalalis who control purchases, manipulate prices, and dominate the whole trade to make the Corporation look silly...

A. We have to compete with these rings, and if necessary break them through commercial competition in order to keep prices down, and help the consumer... but please remember this. I have to carry the large overheads of the Corporation...I can't reduce staff...in fact I have to provide more employment...at the same time, the corporation must be economically viable...and while doing all this, I must push down prices...

Q. How do you propose to tackle it?

A. I have already got down to that job. On the beach, my men will be given new incentives... say a few cents for every pound of cheap fish purchased on the beach over a fixed amount like 1000 lbs, and over say...I am trying to enable them to compete with the rings...while the system that pre-

vailed gave them no incentives nor discretion, the mudalalis and middle-men were quick to corrupt some of our officers...I have also given strict instructions that the fish must reach the stalls by 7.30 in the morning...a few days ago I interdicted two men for delaying deliveries by three hours... yesterday I got large deliveries made to Price Park and other stalls in time and prices not only came down, but the private stalls had to compete with us... a new flying squad will check our stalls and anybody found corrupt, inefficient or discourteous will be promptly punished then there is the problem of ice production...look at these figures (the minister produces another chart) see how production has gone down during the past few years...

Q. About your long-term plans...?

A. First we must have a proper survey of resources and future supplies. I was hoping to get the foreign trawlers to do that but I had to cancel permits of two when they started poaching on our coastal fisheries reserved for our own people. The coastal fisheries is the biggest source of supply but there are several difficulties to be tackled. I have now identified many of the problems.

Q. Such as...?

A. Delays in issue of boats to co-operatives, the failure of these co-ops to receive boats under hire-purchase, construction costs, timber shortages, lack of exchange for fibre-glass, poor output of local assembly plants, need to import more outboard motors, low production of certain types of mechanised boats, problems of fishing gear, high tariffs, and many other factors...

While exchange for imports will soon improve the supply-demand situation, I am not unmindful of these basic problems, and I am particularly keen on improving inland fisheries, with foreign expertise...Chinese, Indian etc. Within a year or so, this government will show the people a planned development of our fisheries...

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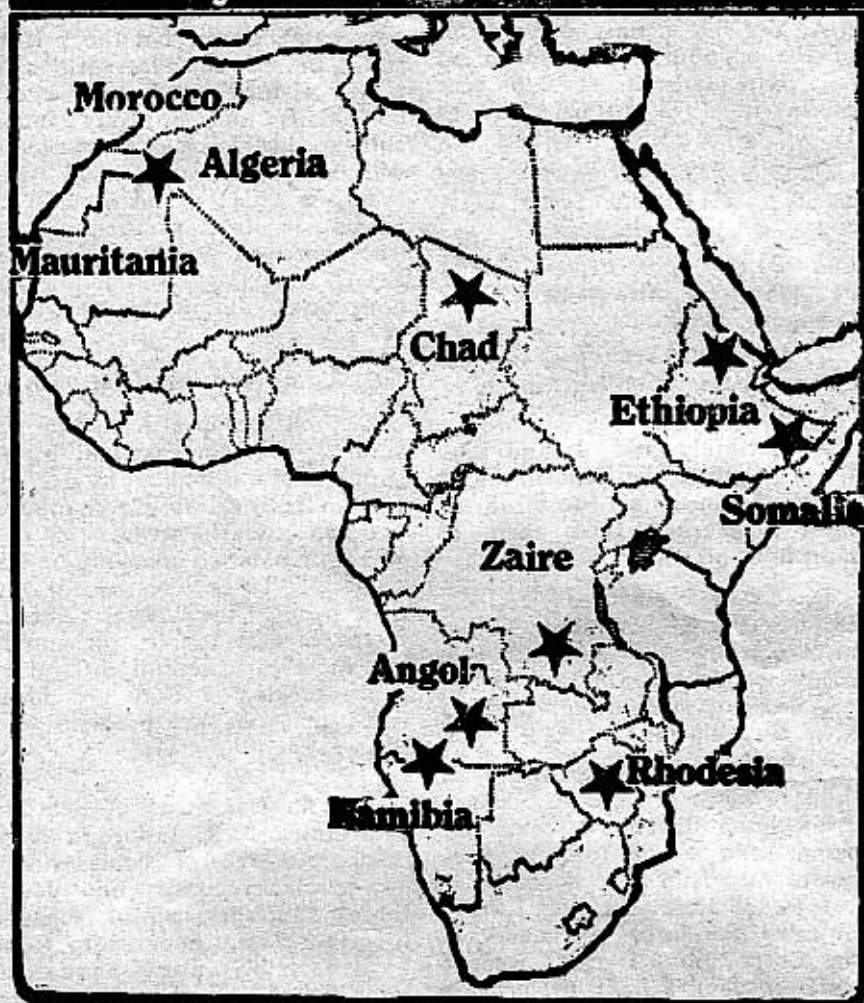
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# The struggle in and for Africa

A 'posse' of African 'peace-keeping' units have been hurriedly put together to save the beleaguered regime of President Mobutu of Zaire. Conducted largely under the patronage and prodding of France which of all the old colonial powers has huge interests in Africa and extensive political influence, this exercise was the main outcome of the recent Paris meeting of the US, France, Britain, West Germany and Belgium. The Paris meeting itself was a byproduct of the NATO leaders conference in Washington the previous week, where President Carter set the tone with his Chicago speech on the Soviet-Cuban involvement in Africa. (Castro summoned the most senior US official in Havana — in the Swiss Embassy's 'special interests' section — to deny personally the charge of Cuban engagement).

Though the corrupt, repressive and inept Mobutu regime in a nearly bankrupt Zaire is an embarrassment to the West ('The West's

## Military Conflicts in Africa 1978



### Colby on Angola

*Question: If the CIA had not been involved in this latest operation in Angola, would the Cubans have gone in?*

*Answer: No, they wouldn't have had to because the MPLA would have won.*

The admission above comes from William Colby CIA director during the civil war in Angola in 1974-75. It must add fuel to the Western debate over the crisis in Africa. For one of the CIA's own men, John Stockwell has now charged that it was the United States that provoked the crisis, by deliberately seeking confrontation with the Soviet Union in Angola—and then running so incompetent an operation there that the West was bound to lose. And Colby confirms that Stockwell's charges are "substantially correct." — *Sunday Times*

dubious ally' is how the 'Sunday Times', London, called him), but it has no option but to intervene. Its economic interests are enormous, and new strategic considerations have emerged as the decolonisation process and the black-white confrontation assume sharper, unpredictable and violent forms including armed liberation struggles.

With its 25 million people, Zaire (former Belgian Congo) is the second biggest African country. Its

mineral resources and raw materials (copper, cobalt, diamonds, palm oil, coffee etc) make it one of the richest, if not the richest, countries on the African continent.

Situated in the heart of the continent, the conflict in mineral-rich Shaba province in the south (the mines there produce 70% of the nation's copper) can easily spread to neighbouring, basically pro-western Zambia. Like Angola, another of Zaire's neighbours, Zambia is one of 5 front-line coun-

tries supporting the liberation struggle launched by the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front of Mr. Robert Mugabe and Mr. Joshua Nkomo against the Smith regime in Rhodesia. These leaders who have denounced the 'internal settlement' in Rhodesia as phoney independence have repeatedly said that they would be forced to turn to Soviet and Cuban support if there is no genuine black rule in Zimbabwe.

Since Mr. Smith forestalled the US-UK plan for a transition to black majority rule, the West is caught between "moderates" like President Kaunda who recently visited Washington and the "radicals" who are increasingly seeking Soviet and Cuban help for their liberation movements.

The conflict in southern Zaire could also have a bush-fire effect on the explosive situation in southern Africa—Zimbabwe, Namibia on south Africa's border, and South Africa itself, NATO's strongest bastion.

The massacre of whites in Shaba gave France and Belgium the ne-

### The gendarme of Africa

When a country's citizens are being massacred, as in Kolwezi, few people would question a government's right to make every effort to save them. President Giscard d'Estaing's policy, however, goes considerably further. He would argue that the non-interventionist policy of the U.S. since Vietnam has left a vacuum, at its most serious in Africa, that somebody else has to fill. France sees itself as the defender of large parts of Africa against fragmentation and subversion, on behalf of the West as a whole. If such a posture also helps France's economic and political interests, so much the better.

Critics of French policy would argue that no European power, nor for that matter Cuba, has any business interfering in Africa in the post-colonial period. More specifically, they would condemn the use of external military power to support corrupt and unattractive regimes like that of President Mobutu. In the case of Zaire, there is the additional suspicion that France is poaching in what has up to now been a predominantly Belgian preserve.

— *Financial Times*



VIEW FROM WASHINGTON: a bearded, bearish Castro walks away with the African elephant's ivory while Carter feeds it peanuts!

cessary justification for intervention, with France giving another example of "paratroop imperialism". France has already intervened militarily in Chad and Mauritania. (See *Gendarme of Africa*).

A bigger massacre however took place in March when Katanganese rebels who belong to the Lunda and Baluba tribes of Shaba (once known as Katanga) invaded the main towns from Angola where they took refuge in the late 1960's after Mobutu crushed the secessionist movement of Katanga, led by Moïse Tshombe. In March Mobutu's troops invaded Shaba and brutally quelled the rebel Lunda and Baluba tribes. In the capital itself Mobutu Sese Seko (his assumed name means "bold and mighty warrior") executed 13 top army officers who belonged to tribes other than his own. The rebel movement is led by one of his few rivals, General Nathaniel Mbumba, who has escaped summary execution.

General Mbumba's Congo National Liberation Front which has delivered a deadly blow to a shaky Zairean economy by invading the mining town of Kolwezi and "clearing" it of white technicians, has now crossed back to Angola, Zambia or simply found shelter in the bush. He says the fight has only just begun.

Sergeant Mobutu, hand-picked by the US in the 1960's in their

move to oust the charismatic radical leader Patrice Lumumba, was used by the west in the three-cornered struggle in Angola just as Portugal's African empire was collapsing. UNITA, and FNLA were variously supported by western powers, South Africa, local pro-western African regimes like Zaire, and according to the MPLA leader Dr. Neto, China. The FNLA leader was Holden Roberto, Mobutu's brother-in-law, who received covert US aid via the CIA. (See Colby on Angola). When the tide of war was turning against him, Neto, now president of Angola, invited Soviet and Cuban help. The Cuban forces are still in Angola and the Katanganese rebels are said to have been trained in camps supervised by Cuban officers.

The Angolan experience is as much a constraint on the Carter administration as the legacies of Vietnam. US public opinion and Congress will not permit direct US intervention. While some Carter aides have been grumbling about "over-learning" the lessons of Vietnam, the White House is not only trying to construct a new "Africa policy" but seeking a greater foreign flexibility that would allow the US to respond more firmly to what it perceives as a Soviet challenge.

During the NATO meeting in Washington the air was so thick

with anti-Soviet and anti-Cuba propaganda that columnist Joseph Kraft recommended "discriminating responses, not blunderbuss rhetoric — a little light music not Beethoven's ninth symphony".

The US made two major counter-moves. First the Paris meeting, with France as stage-manager, and France's African allies, Morocco, Senegal, Gabon etc as players. Next, Dr. Brzezinski played his favourite "China card".

While Taiwan is still a big stumbling block in Sino-American relations, Brzezinski made sure that a Carter visit to Peking this year would be welcome. On a trip to the Great Wall, he looked northwards and made several references to "the polar bear" (Teng Hsiao-ping's code-word for the USSR). At the end of the trip, Carter's top adviser happily announced that their "shared interests outweighed differences".

A few days later Foreign Minister Huang Hua was in Zaire denouncing the Soviet-Cuban involvement in Africa and promising assistance to Mobutu, who is also being bailed out by the IMF and a consortium of US banks led by Citibank.

## Egypt

# Open-door Sadat shuts window

The heady excitement of his historic Jerusalem journey swept the usually unassuming Anwar Sadat to such soaring heights of hauteur that he presented himself as an astronaut in the high heavens and his critics as dwarfs on earth. In less than six months the same Mr. Sadat has been so dwarfed by troubles at home and the prospect of total failure in foreign policy that he has been brought back rudely to terra firma.

The Egyptian parliament where Sadat has faced some rough passages has passed new laws which the recently resurrected Wafd party has denounced as an erosion of 'political freedom'. In protest, it has disbanded itself. Ironically, it was Sadat himself, in a characteristically courageous initiative to foster a multi-party system, who engineered the rehabilitation of this rightwing, religious-minded party.

While the Wafd claims that the new legislation is intended to cripple its spreading political activity, the crack-down has not been ideologically one-sided or selective. A broad, if not well-organised band of Nasserite loyalists who have always made unfavourable comparisons between their charismatic hero and his successor, has also suffered. So have prominent personalities of the left-wing Progressive party, loosely labelled communists in a gesture probably meant for the US on whom Sadat so naively relied on for the success of his now doomed 'peace' effort, and for American, IMF and the Arab aid-givers (Saudi Arabia and the Gulf sheikdoms) on whom Sadat depends for deliverance from Egypt's all-too evident economic mess.

## First casualty

As usual, the first casualties have been newspapers and journalists who have been posing too many awkward questions about both his much-advertised "peace" moves and his "open door" policy on foreign investment. Among the victims is the Arab world's most renowned commentator, Hassanein Heykal, Nasser's intimate aide and friend. Over thirty journalists working all over the Arab world have been asked to return home, an invitation they are not likely to accept.

If Sadat's peace move had achieved at least partial success, he might have stood up with greater conviction to the extreme charge of trying to sell-out Palestinian rights, the interests of his fellow Arab confrontation states (Syria and Jordan) and Arab pride in order to serve purely Egyptian needs. Israeli intransigence has

put paid to any such hopes. Though Congress has overcome the pressures of the Israeli lobby over the arms deal and Senator Scoop Jackson predicts an Egyptian-Israeli pact sometime this year, there are limits to US pressure on the Israeli government and Mr. Carter's ability to get Mr. Sadat the sort of deal which the Arabs and the Palestinians will not promptly denounce an Egyptian sell-out.

## Discontent

Whatever the faults of its ambitious pan-Arabist adventurism abroad and its internal regimentation, Nasser's 'socialist' regime cushioned the mass of the people with a system of welfarist policies and subsidies, notably food. A British correspondent in Cairo summed up the difference thus: "Egyptians were poor (gross national income per capita is still only a little over 300 US dollars) but at least it seemed almost uniform poverty and prices were stable. So when the government tried to raise the prices of stable commodities which had been maintained at an artificially low level there was a bloody and vicious outburst of resentment".

The food riots of January were an early warning. But the general effects of Sadat's "open door policy" were beginning to tell. Unrest among workers, students and a hard-pressed salariat spread quickly in a congested Cairo which suffers all the familiar ills of an exploding city.

These "initial effects" were described by the same correspondent, Roger Mathews in these terms:

"So far it has produced little in the way of private foreign investment in long-term industrial projects. But it has attracted the sort of venture that emphasises the plight of the impoverished masses: luxury hotels, foreign banks and a flood of motor cars. Linked to this there has been more vocal accusations of corruption among officials, and even friends of the President, some of which reached the newspapers. Local private investment at best has also tended to gravitate towards the most imme-

diately profitable ventures such as property development where substantial fortunes are being made..."

Dr. Abdel Kaissouny, the Deputy Prime Minister (Economic Affairs) did succeed in re-scheduling Egypt's massive foreign debt and in easing the debt-servicing burden. He was basically committed however to the IMF strategy of slashing subsidies, allowing freerplay for market forces, and attractive concessions to foreign capital and private enterprise. When inflation reached 25% and the propaganda campaign mounted by both rightwing and Left-inclined elements began to gain ground, Sadat beat a tactical retreat, and Dr. Kaissouny resigned. The logic of the new "open door" strategy cannot however be reversed. Hardships worsen, opposition widens.

#### Referendum

Sadat then enunciated 6 principles for "domestic harmony" and called a referendum. The government—claims that it received a 98.3% vote or over 9 million "yes" men to the amazement of most foreign observers who saw the deserted polling booths in Cairo during the nine hours of polling. All those who do not subscribe to the 6 principles are banned from politics and from holding high public office. The press must toe the line too. The country's Bar Association has called the referendum "unconstitutional, illegal and a blow to democracy"

So Anwar Sadat who opened the door is being forced to shut some of the windows that he himself bravely opened to free expression and democratic liberties.

#### Indo-China

**Let our people come....**

**W**hen the Vietnam-Kampuchea war broke out, well-informed western analysts dismissed as naive the theory that it was a Sino-Soviet war by proxy. When Peking launched its own war of words

recently against the infant socialist republic of Vietnam caught in the throes of national reconstruction after battling the Japanese, French and the Americans for 30 years, the propaganda blast not only suggested other causes of Chinese-Vietnamese tensions but revived old fears in the whole region about the de-stabilising presence of "Overseas Chinese".

Noting smartly that the first Chinese reaction came from O.O.C.A. (Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs) rather than the Foreign Ministry, the Hong-Kong-based journal "ASIaweek" wrote:

"For diplomatic analysts and South East Asian governments observing the quarrel with understandable fascination, the role of the O.O.C.A. and its use of terms like 'home' and 'motherland' made the confrontation not just a localised one but an all-Asia drama. For years China had been silkily insisting that Chinese communities abroad owed primary allegiance to their adopted countries and that the ancient doctrine of eternal Chinese citizenship still practised by the rightwing regime of Taiwan had no place in modern policy. Now Peking was brusquely asserting that upwards of 1.5 million ethnic Chinese in Vietnam had a distant 'motherland' after all".

From ancient times Vietnam harboured fears of "the north" but Chinese aid in the fight against the US-backed Saigon regime tended to erase inherited anxieties. However towards the end of the war Chinese aid was less forthcoming probably because of Hanoi's stubbornly independent position in the Sino-Soviet conflict. Engaged in the massive task of economic reconstruction, Hanoi must be deeply disturbed by what it sees as direct pressures and indirect pressures through Kampuchea and less successfully via Laos, at a time when the Vietnamese leaders are making a conscious effort to normalise relations with all states in the area. These fears, as ASIaweek notes, are shared now by other countries from Malaysia and Indonesia to Philippines, all of whom have a sizeable Chinese population.

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# Misunderstanding educational change

I refrained from commenting on Mr. E. H. de Alwis' article on Understanding Educational Change earlier because I fully expected Prof. Kalpage or Mr. Bogoda Premaratne to do so (and more competently than I could.) It is because neither of them has done this that I venture to express my own views. I do so with some trepidation since Mr. de Alwis is one of our foremost educationists. However, as Mr. de Alwis himself points out, economic theory is outside his competence, and in spite of his specific denial, his thesis touches quite largely on economic matters. Worse, Mr. de Alwis' politics is showing as is evident from his reference to the ruling party's manifesto and what he calls the theory of contraries.

Mr. de Alwis' approving references to 'welfarism' without any qualification or reservation at all betrays some naivete. Welfarism is a dirty word in modern 20th century communist states as well as modern 20th century free enterprise states. Even in developed countries like the UK and the Scandinavian countries which have gone in for welfarism in a big way the obvious direct social benefits have been accompanied by a host of unforeseen other consequences about which I need not go into here. The only point I want to make here is that, contrary to Mr. de Alwis' view, the experience of even the developed states that went in for welfarism is that it has not been an unmixed blessing.

Mr. de Alwis speaks with feeling of "all that the welfare state connotes". He should do well to ponder, also, on all that the welfare state denotes. A glimpse into this is afforded by the following extract from an article by H. M. R. Ellapola, a Senior Economist of the Central Bank: "In Sri Lanka even with massive redistribution programmes the authorities have at the best been able to make

only a marginal improvement in the living standards of low income groups. If the state were to raise the level of consumption and living of these classes into what could even be remotely called 'acceptable', massive doses of further welfare expenditure will be called for. Such a solution, while perpetuating poverty and discontent, will only remove the dignity and self-reliance of the large base in the population."

But all this is by the way.

Mr. de Alwis' argument may be summarised as follows:

1. The recent devaluation of the rupee drastically reduces the foreign exchange component of the appropriations for welfare services including text books and science equipment. The IBRD and the IMF do not view with favour the thought of giving financial aid to poor countries for the purpose of going in for the sort of welfarism that the rich Scandinavian countries can afford. (Mr. de Alwis does not explain why he thinks that they should). When those in charge of education raise the question "What does the country get in return for this vast expenditure on education?" it shows, according to Mr. de Alwis, that "the cost of education, not its quality, seems to be the paramount consideration." (Mr. de Alwis seems to be arguing that the greater the expenditure, the higher the quality of education and that the question of what the country is getting in return for its money spent on education is not a proper issue to raise.)

2. Student unruliness in the university, claims Mr. de Alwis, has not been of the sort that justifies the drastic step of doing away with residential campuses. This decision, he says, has been taken in order to reduce costs and to disperse student-teacher communities in a way that will make them more manageable units. According to Mr. de Alwis this is not a good thing for he goes on to say that the quality of

education will suffer but the affluent will not be affected. (These assertions are made as Mr. de Alwis ipse dixit without further elucidation.)

3. The concession of allowing students to choose English as a medium of higher education will result in the best talents choosing English for their higher education. This will (in some way or other not clearly explained) result in some campuses becoming elitist preserves.

Stated in these bald (but not I think distorted) terms Mr. de Alwis' case is so naive as to hardly seem to need an answer. To Mr. de Alwis the cost of education is an irrelevancy; student unruliness in the campuses is nothing to worry about; the best students should not be allowed to choose English for their higher studies because it would result in an elitist society. It is not an educationist who seems to be speaking but a politician. It is a pity Mr. de Alwis cannot see that it is not the affluent but the talented poor student who will be disadvantaged by his Procrustean prophylaxis against elitism.

## The aims of education

In 1971 Ivan Illych published a slim volume called *De-schooling Society*. His thesis was that schools (or almost all schools) are unmitigatedly bad. But it is hopeless—a trap—to try to improve schooling by taking as a model the best schools. The 'hidden curriculum' of schooling, of any formal schooling, inspires the belief that certified teachers, bureaucrats all, can use scientific knowledge to impart humane and efficient education. It is a myth. The only remedy is to abolish all formal schools and, at the time, all compulsory education. Illych would put in its stead a reliance on self-motivated learning—upon the processes of self-education in freedom through natural association with those who already possess skills and know-

ledge or those who are willing to co-operate in a quest for them. This kind of thinking is too revolutionary for traditional educationists. In the third century after Christ the neo-Platonist Plotinus laid down three aims for education: First an outward education—civil and social; second an inward education—personal and self-revealing; finally a synoptic education that would allow the student to grasp (or maybe glimpse) the whole complex of human existence.

John Fowles, a modern sage, puts it differently. There should be four main aims in a good education. The first is the training of the student for an economic role in society. The second is teaching the nature of society and the human polity. The third is teaching the richness of existence. And the fourth is the establishment of that sense of relative recompense which man, in contrast to other orders of animate life, has so long lost.

In simpler terms, we need to fit the student for a livelihood, than for living among other human beings, then for enjoying his own life and finally for comprehending the purpose (and ultimately the justice) of existence in human form. The complementary objectives defined by Plotinus and Fowles cannot be achieved except by reliance on self-motivated learning.

Mr. de Alwis' approach to education will not serve such a purpose, but the Minister's bold decision to abolish residential campuses can be a first step in such a revolutionary direction. The decision is the first manifestation of courageous and original thinking from Malay Street in several decades. It shows a determination to break our students away from the web they are trapped in. Western-style modern residential campuses have led to the breeding of the Red Brigades in Italy, the Baader-Meinhof killers of West Germany and the Red Army of Japan. It is no good Mr. de Alwis claiming residential campuses are needed for the "quality of education" when all around us we see proof to the contrary.

## Press opinion

# ජනදින

## Reactionaries cornered

Concern about the Mahaveli scheme appears to have been more with the fruits it was going to deliver rather than with the hardships that it was going to bring on the innocent people of the Raja Rata who have been cultivating there for generations. Had the SLFP Ministers and MPs who represented this region been vigilant about the Mahaveli scheme the present destruction in this area may have been avoided. Even the present government, though it is trying to accelerate the development of the scheme within six years, does not appear to be concerned about the effects of the Mahaveli scheme. That is why we say the damage to the villages of Eppawela and Nuwara-gama are the responsibilities of both these reactionary parties.

# දිනකර

## Presidential blessings for permanent revolution

With the acceptance by Comrades NM and Colvin of President Jayewardene's invitation to visit the Mahaveli scheme the Samasamaja leadership appears to have come up with a new political concept for the solution of the problems of the masses, namely solutions via "Presidential patronage". Accordingly there is no need now for militant campaigns. All that is needed is an exchange of letters between NM and JR followed by a JR-NM joint safari. What the followers of these Sama-

samaja leaders should understand by this is that, however much they may shout anti-UNP slogans, there is now, at least at the personal level, a UNP-LSSP United Front.

## Taking revenge on the dead

The name of the Bandaranaike International airport at Katunayaka appears to have been quietly changed. The government's newspapers now identify the chief airport of the country as the Katunayaka International Airport. Whoever is responsible for this policy of taking revenge on the dead, it has to be pointed out to the President that this is not at all in keeping with the Ten Commandments he propounded lately.

# දැවැන්ත

## Why only luxury cars?

The next question is why after banning the import of luxury cars there is room for import of other luxury goods. Though there is no need to itemise them, their value and variety could be gathered by reading any capitalist newspaper today. Indeed the capitalist press today is filled only with such advertisements. Imported shirts at Rs. 300 are now found in the 'World Market'. A walk round the Fort reveals how the pavements are cluttered with 'imported' trivia. Are any of these items of any use to the city worker, the farmer and the clerk? Has the common man the wherewithal to buy such things? Does this not mean that the use of the nation's foreign exchange for the benefit of a handful is a national crime?

# The pollution exporters

Until the 1970s Third World leaders believed that growth of the gross national product through industrialization automatically promoted the economic and social development of their countries. Attracting foreign capital for investment—through, *inter alia*, transnational companies—was a goal that had to be attained at any price. Third World countries were willing to accept—in the words of Sri Lanka's Ambassador to the UN, H. S. Amerasinghe—'100 per cent of the developed countries' National Polluting Product, if by so doing they (could) diversify their economies through industrialization'.

During 1971-76, no less than forty-three developing countries imported more than 13,000 tonnes of a highly toxic pesticide which has never been used in its country of origin, the USA. Canned milk products are being sold throughout the developing world that contain quantities of lead which, to say the least, need urgent investigation. High-sulphur oil is being refined in the Caribbean because legislation in the country for which it is bound, the USA, prohibits the level of pollution reached during its refining. In their quest for gold, transnational companies are also leaving behind in the Third World the highly dangerous pollutant mercury, which is used to recover the precious metal. In these and many other ways the transnational companies are exporting pollution which should more properly remain the product of the industrialized countries.

## Black-box technology

Consider, first, the size of transnational trade. The 300 largest transnational companies of the USA, and their 5,200 foreign subsidiaries, are responsible for 28 percent of world exports, including 47 percent of the exports

*In a candid self-admission, Sri Lanka's UN Ambassador Mr. H. S. Amerasinghe once told the General Assembly that the Third World was in a mood "to accept 100% of the developed countries' National Polluting Product if by so doing they could diversify their economies through industrialization".*

*Now even Sri Lanka which remains relatively free of the uglier consequences of "rapid industrialisation" is slowly awakening to the dangers of pollution. The Prime Minister, Mr. R. Premadasa recently called for a serious study of the question and a seminar at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute has focused public attention. But who are the real carriers of pollution? They are the self-same transnationals which are being ardently courted by some Third World countries, writes Francisco Szekely. An engineer by profession. Dr. Szekely is Professor of Environmental Sciences at the University of Mexico.*

of primary products and 20 per cent of those of manufactured products. Two-thirds of the operations of transnational companies are carried out within the industrialized countries and the remaining one-third in dependent Third World countries.

Transnational companies generate extremely large sums of money. The value added for each of the ten largest transnationals amounts to more than \$3,000 million. Some transnational companies are therefore economically more powerful than many Third World countries, and as a result the decisions made when an association is established between a transnational and a Third World country imply privileges that are almost exclusively, if not totally, to the benefit of the transnational. This situation is obviously worsened by the substantial exemptions in customs duties granted to transnationals by governments that seek to achieve accelerated industrial development.

Unfortunately, this is more the rule than the exception, and when the type of technology to be supplied and the means for its administration are negotiated in the association of a transnational company and a government, the relationship is not on an equal footing. Since the transnational enjoys a monopolistic position, it is able not only to fix prices unilaterally, but also to establish

technological conditions in the same manner.

In respect of technology, one stipulation that transnationals always make is that their production techniques are technological secrets that belong to them and which they are not willing to share. From a market-economy standpoint based on productive competitiveness, this makes sense; however, its environmental repercussions are extremely serious. When it is not known what kind of technology will be used, it is difficult for a country to legislate on the use of such technology with regard to the environment. The information provided by companies is similar to a black box of which we can see only what emerges but never gain knowledge of what is in the box itself. Countries faced with this situation never know what it is that produces pollution and are consequently powerless to pass legislation that will remedy the situation properly.

In fact, most of the developing countries in which transnationals operate possess inadequate means for legislating against environmental damage. In Latin America, for example, only two countries possess governmental institutions directly responsible for legislating in the field of environment: Grenada, with its Ministry of Public Works, Transportation,

Communications, Sports and Environment; and Venezuela, with its Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources. Other countries in the region, such as Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico, have enacted environmental laws and designated institutions on the subministerial level to legislate in this matter. Nevertheless, effective environmental legislation in the region does not actually exist. Consequently, many transnational companies that have been shut down in their countries of origin have now changed their headquarters and are operating in countries in which environmental restrictions have not yet been enforced. Furthermore, certain products are being manufactured in industrialized countries to be sold exclusively to Third World countries.

#### Pesticides and milk

Such is the case of a transnational that produces a highly toxic pesticide known as Phosvel, which has demonstrated its toxic properties by damaging the health of sixty-five Egyptian farm workers and killing one in 1975. This pesticide, produced by the transnational Velsicol Chemical Company of the USA, is currently being investigated by that country's Environmental Protection Agency. This became necessary in December 1976 when a number of workers in the plant producing the pesticide in Bayport, Texas, were made ill by the product.

Phosvel is produced in the USA but is not consumed there. Since it is suspected that its application to agricultural ecosystems may

effect human health by producing a not always reversible loss of muscular control brought about by delayed neurotoxicity, the product has never been registered. The delayed neurotoxicity produced by Phosvel can result in permanent paralysis which, however, does not appear until some time after the victim has been exposed to the toxin.



Although Phosvel is not consumed in the USA, it has been aggressively introduced into other countries. In Colombia, for example, Phosvel is sold to be applied to rice, corn, sorghum, cotton, potato, tomato and bean crops. The tactics used by Velsicol to promote its product are questionable. A brochure in which Velsicol Colombia advertises Phosvel describes it as '1,470

times safer than parathion' - at least in terms of parathion's ability to induce cholinergic reactions, it must be noted. However, this refers only to a single aspect of the toxicity of these chemicals and does not mention the dangerous delayed effects produced by the neurotoxins they contain. Velsicol sells its product in Colombia by using this combination of arguments, even though the product's neurotoxicity has been substantially proven.

One result is that the USA will probably diminish its imports of Mexican tomatoes, since it has been reported that half these imports have been contaminated with Phosvel. Despite this, Phosvel is authorized for use in Mexico by the Office of Vegetable Sanitation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources.

Many countries are now consuming large quantities of Phosvel. The table shows some of the countries to which it has been exported and in what quantities. As can be seen, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, Guatemala and Colombia are using very large quantities.

Another product which is very widely distributed in the developing world by the transnationals is canned milk. There is widespread fear that it may actually be harmful to health. The problem of the concentration of significant quantities of lead in canned evaporated milk has been a concern of the scientific community since 1937. Thus, the World Health Organization (WHO) has established a maximum standard of 0.05 parts per million for the concentration of lead in drinking water.

Whether or not canned products exceed the lead standards suggested by WHO can be scientifically investigated. But in a study carried out by the US Food and Drug Administration in 1972 on canned evaporated milk of different commercial brands, lead concentrations varied from 0.25 to 1 part per million, showing an average of 0.5 parts per million. This at least demonstrates that the combination of certain can-

#### PHOSVEL IMPORTS, 1971 TO 1976 (tonnes)

Australia	57	Indonesia	944
Canada	124	Japan	377
Colombia	151	Mexico	151
Egypt (UAR)	3,027	Spain	56
Ethiopia	96	Taiwan	102
Guatemala	254	Turkey	55
India	76	Venezuela	52

Source: The Environmental Protection Agency and the Regulation of Pesticides Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure, Committee on the Judiciary, US Senate, December 1976, pp. 714-15.

ned milk products should be studied in detail.

### Caribbean pollution for US oil

The export of pollution by transnational companies to the Third World is not always carried out in an easily identifiable manner. For example, the Caribbean islands possess insignificant quantities of oil reserves. Nevertheless almost 2.7 million barrels per day were processed there in 1975. The oil refined in the Caribbean comes mostly from Venezuela and some Arab countries, and is refined there and not in the country of its final destination, such as the USA, because such oil has high sulphur content which, when refined, produces a level of air pollution that would not be permitted in the USA.

Some important transnational oil companies have established themselves in the Caribbean to carry out these operations. Since 1970, 60 percent of the production of refineries in the Netherlands Antilles has come from Venezuelan oil and 40 per cent from Middle Eastern and North African oil. The Texaco Company has been processing crude oil in Trinidad and Tobago by arrangement with Standard Oil of California. In 1974, Shell completed construction of a refinery in Curacao with a capacity of 800,000 barrels per day. Crude oil is brought to Curacao in supertankers, refined there and then shipped in small vessels to the USA. Exxon has established itself in Aruba for the same purpose.

The Pueblo Viejo gold-mine in the Dominican Republic, operated by the Canadian transnational company Rosario Resource Inc., has been exploited since 1975. The principal product of the company is gold. However, the technological process used in the mining of gold is based on cyanide and has mercury as a by-product. The cyanide is destined for tailing ponds; and the mercury, which is beginning to be recovered, is polluting the ground water in this region. This could have disastrous environmental repercussions,

as happened with mercury pollution in Minamata, Japan. However, the country's Environmental Protection Commission does not yet have executive power to legislate in this field.

Environmental deterioration means more than pollution. The concept also includes the irrational use of natural and human resources. In this sense, the transnationals have also had detrimental effects on the environment in the course of establishing themselves in the Third World.

### A recipe for unemployment

This is illustrated by the in-bond assembly plants that have been set up in Mexico along its border with the USA. In the mid-1960s, inflation in Europe and Japan constrained many labour-intensive industries to seek new locations where manpower would be cheap. This coincided with a historic moment in labour relations between Mexico and the USA. The Bracero Programme, which provided for migration of Mexicans according to a yearly quota for the exclusive purpose of working in the USA ended in 1964, causing great unemployment in the border zone. Faced with this problem, the Government of Mexico made arrangements with a number of transnationals that included granting customs concessions and exemptions in exchange for the job opportunities the transnationals would provide.

Such transnational assembly plants operate principally in the electrical, electronics, textile, food and leather industries. Ostensibly their operation does not deteriorate the environment. Nevertheless, natural resources such as water and electric power were obtained through concessions made by the Government of Mexico at very low cost. Furthermore, human resources, instead of benefiting, were severely affected in the long run.

In 1967 the first 67 in-bond assembly plants were set up, including, for example, the Motorola and General Electric plants. By 1969 this number had risen to

147, by 1972 to 273 and by 1974 to 655, providing employment to some 80,000 workers. In 1975, however, subsequent to a labour-union movement which assembly-plant workers demanded the same salaries and working conditions prevailing for equivalent work in the USA, the transnational companies began a rapid withdrawal, leaving in their wake much greater unemployment than before they had been established. This unemployment brought immediate poverty to hundreds of Mexican families.

### The response thus far

The response of the Third World countries has produced few positive results to date.

In South America the countries of the Andean region signed the Andean Pact, designed to unite the economic power of the six countries of this sub-region in order to negotiate with transnational companies. The pact stipulated that transnationals were to occupy a minority position with regard to ownership of companies they set up in the Third World and that they would be subject to restrictions with respect to their dependence on their parent companies. In fact Chile has withdrawn from the pact, Colombia has shown indifference to it and Peru has never enforced it. Latterly, the situation has substantially worsened, with the absolutely unconditional acceptance of the transnationals by the military governments of these countries.

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## Two poems by Parakrama Kodithuwakku

### LASTLY I PRAY...

*Blessed One, the adornment of the three worlds,  
and you, Lord God Almighty, who abide in the  
furthest sphere,  
and you, most holy, highest Brahma,*

*don't lift me, I pray,  
into your unfading,  
eternal,  
immortal hands.*

*To observe the disciplines  
to fulfil the perfections from life to life  
and by that power  
at the end of cycles and aeons  
to enter the deathless state of Nirvana:  
this I don't want to do.*

*To enjoy as a bodiless spark  
the supreme bliss of union with Brahma:  
this isn't my wish.  
To be a holy angel  
to go soaring into heaven:  
not for me.*

*Give me flowers  
don't give me the moon  
flowers are of my earth  
the moon is another world.*

*On this spot of earth  
where men have shed  
the tears of their eyes  
the snot of their noses  
the phlegm of their lungs  
the sweat of their brows  
there are flowers blooming breast-high  
don't you know it Lord?*

### WE MEET AGAIN

*After a full five years  
Vimaleey  
I met you  
unexpectedly*

*... under the mara tree  
near the second-hand bookshop  
at the Thummulla junction  
in the Pettah*

*incoherently  
we stumbled over words*

*like recollections of the past  
hundreds of mara flowers  
fall to earth  
strewn the street  
whitened by crows' droppings*

*Vimaleey you ..  
so .. Vimaleey we...?*

*I remember  
how we pasted up posters  
argued and wrangled  
over theory*

*I remember  
strikes demonstrations*

*Later  
Vimaleey I...  
-- lost my heart to a young woman  
fathered a sweet little boy*

*.. But you ..  
today as then  
in the thick of the struggle  
a bundle of party documents under your arm  
throw back your head and laugh*

*a bachelor through life  
a grey hair showing  
with a mind that knows no quitting*

*with eyes that know no regrets  
you stand upright like the clocktower  
alert  
throw back your head and laugh*

Translated by Reggie Siriwardena

Parakrama Kodithuwakku is one of the newer generation of Sinhala poets whose work is marked by a critical and radical social consciousness. His first volume of poems *Podi Malliya* (Little Brother) appeared in 1972. The two poems translated here

are taken from his second volume *Akeekaru Puth-rayakuge Lokaya* (The World of a Disobedient Son). Four other poems, translated into English by Ranjini Obeysekera and Reggie Siriwardena, have appeared in the international anthology *New Directions* 34.

# TONGPAN: The peasant as non-hero

One little ripple that has recently emerged from the stagnant waters of Asia's film world is a one hour 16 m.m black and white film from Thailand called "Tongpan". The work of a group of creative amateurs, "Tongpan" is not a commercial product nor a professionally made film in the conventional sense. It is also not a film in the style of what has come to be known as the 'New Wave Cinema', for "Tongpan" is not an art film if by art is meant something that is 'museumed' for wealthy connoisseurs. But precisely for all these reasons it is important that a film called "Tongpan" has been made. Indeed an important event has occurred in Thai Cinema. Important because it shows what is happening to the Thai people in the name of 'development' and captures for posterity the tensions and strains of an important period in Thailand's recent history.

## Unique features

There are certain unique features about "Tongpan". Those who made the film also had a part to play in the events that make up the film. It is a simple story told in a simple way by a group trying to work together in a spirit of solidarity. So, there is unity in the content and form of the film. For its makers the film was a means to continue their efforts to get closer to the village in order to understand its problems better. They also tried to make the process of making the film as participative as possible.

So, though the film had an identifiable director and cameraman, a group was responsible for producing it collectively. The screen-play, dialogue and various arrangements during the shooting were all handled in a spirit of togetherness, with individuals contributing their particular talents and skills. In other words, the film was not an ego-trip for any one person. Those who got the idea to make the film, and made it, also acted in it and were

participants in the string of events that led to the making of the film. Ultimately "Tongpan" turned out as a documentary on the life of Thai peasants as well as a feature story based on an attempt by certain Thais to break their alienation from the real Thailand of villages, tenants and sharecroppers.

In this review the story of making the film is so interwoven with the events narrated in it that it is difficult and, indeed, unnecessary to make a distinction between the two. Another unique, though tragic, feature of the film is that many of those who made the film and/or were in it, had to leave Thailand after the Military Coup of October 6, 1976.

## Tongpan the peasant

"Tongpan" the film has Tongpan the peasant as its central character. The story is centered around a seminar that actually took place sometime in 1975 in North-East Thailand. The seminar which was held under the sponsorship of the Quaker International Seminar Programme, was organised by a group of socially conscious young Thais. Their idea was to discuss the relevance of the construction of the huge Pa-Mong dam on the Mekong River, by arranging a dialogue between government officials, foreign experts, intellectuals and farmers. That's how Tongpan came into the picture.

Some of the organisers, who later decided to make a film about the seminar, had met Tongpan in a border town. They discovered that he had a very chequered life. To start with he had lost his land when a dam had been built to straddle one of the Mekong's tributary streams. From then on he had struggled and suffered to keep his family alive, drifting along from job to job

as a pedicab driver, timber smuggler, prize fighter, besides other ways of somehow earning a minimum to live. In the film there are a series of sequences of the ebbing fortunes of Tongpan's life. Particularly effective are the scenes when he and his family had to leave their village and land and move to new pastures, and when he is shown in his new profession as a prize-fighter. It is so pathetic to see Tongpan the peasant from his green paddy field earning his livelihood by trading violent blows for the sake of some entertainment-cum-gambling syndicate.

Tongpan was understandably reluctant to come to the seminar as he wasn't convinced that it would do him any good. But eventually he decided to go. One night, recalled a fellow participant recently, Tongpan woke up in the middle of the night searching furiously for something in an obvious state of nervousness.

"Brother, what is it? what is the problem?" asked one of his room-mates (himself a farmer-cum-writer now living in exile in Sweden). As it transpired, Tongpan had been looking for his little fortune of 20 Baht (\$1) with which he had come to attend the meeting with so many intellectual big shots!

True to his fears, the seminar proved to be a waste of time for him. Not many of the participants really had any time for people like him or any real interest in his problems, dreams and hopes.

It became evident through the course of the film that except for two or three of the younger people, nobody was really interested to know that he and his family, having lost their land to the dam, were living on with the hope that one day they might

**BALJIT MALIK** is a free-lance Indian journalist who has recently spent two years in Thailand. This article was specially written for the "Lanka Guardian".

have enough money to buy a pair of buffaloes. With their buffaloes they could at least get back close to the soil, if only as nomadic ploughers on other people's land. Moreover, they would have a calf to sell each year and, who knows, one day, enough savings to be able to possess a little land of their own once again.

But such matters were of little concern to the expert, who also did not seem to have any answers to the few questions put to them by some of the other peasant participants. There was a scene in the film when the peasants' questions revealed a weird and widening gap between what the experts knew and what the peasants were most concerned about. Questions like:

"What can you do about our buffaloes being rustled away to be sold for supplying meat to Bangkok"?

"Can you do something to stop the concession trucks from running us over so that we may have the freedom to move around in our own territory"?

"We get arrested for cutting a few trees for survival's sake... but the contractors .... they cut down entire forests without anybody laying a finger on them".

#### Rustic reality

In contrast to the cool-looking neatly dressed experts, bureaucrats and intellectuals in the seminar, the film has a strong rustic reality running through it. Sometimes this comes out in the songs of the minstrels who roam the villages singing about the pain and suffering of village life:

This land is dry and poor,  
This land is a starving land,  
In the dry season the forest  
disappears,  
As the scorching wind blows  
from year to year,

Lacking home and shelter  
We pick leaves and berries  
Which we must eat instead of rice  
Our daughters they take for  
pleasure

And our wives they take away  
too.

Who is above the Law of the  
Land?

Sometimes the peasant's anger is not disguised in song or poetry but comes out in plain talking with friends over a drink, in quarrels with family members, or in emotional outbursts of deep resentment against their oppressors. In one such burst of emotion, Tongpan shouts-What on earth is this wholesale labour, they buy my labour wholesale... but pay later whenever they feel like it!

One of the most powerful moments in the film is when Tongpan is labouring away all alone looking after a rich farmer's chicken-run. He suddenly feels that he has come to the end of the road, that he can't tolerate his condition any more. There is no one around on whom he can lose his temper, so he goes like hell let loose on the poor chickens. Kicking and hitting them with anything and anyhow, running around like a frightened animal in a cage, he transforms the chicken-run into a graveyard. And there is no requiem for the poor birds except his furious cries-"Get out of here you damn chickens, the more I feed you, the more poor I am"

(Next: Twilight of liberalism)

#### Private view

## Insurance anyone?

Q. What does the Insurance Corporation insure?

A. It insures, or rather ensures, that only the hopelessly credulous and optimistic and those under statutory or contractual obligation to do so will buy insurance in Sri Lanka. Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali who inherited this floundering giant could not have been happy with the answers he had to give in Parliament on 4 May about the Insurance Corporation. The ques-

tions were: (a) How many business institutions covered by fire, theft and civil disturbance policies sustained major loss during the communal disturbances of August 1977 (b) How many of those who sent in their claims to the Corporation had received compensation? (c) Would the Minister give a final date when payment of compensation would be made to these persons who had sustained such heavy losses?

The answers were: (a) Total unknown. But 83 claims had been received for over Rs. 50,000 in value. (b) None. (c) As soon as investigations and adjustment of losses were completed.

The Minister in giving these answers felt obliged to add that he had asked the Corporation to expedite payment.

It is monstrous that 10 months after the losses were incurred the Corporation cannot inform its Minister even so much as how many insured institutions had suffered major losses or when it expected to pay off their claims. It is monstrous that 10 months after the losses were incurred the Corporation has not paid one solitary claim. The Corporation can get away with this kind of murder solely because of its unnatural monopolistic position. The sooner a rival Insurance Corporation is started the better. People who have had the prudence and foresight to buy insurance against their world suddenly collapsing about their ears should be paid their compensation within 24 hours not 24 weeks or 24 months, or in the sweet by and by.

#### One for Kovoar

Malachy O'Morgain (1094-1148) was Archbishop of Armagh, Bishop of Down and Papal Legate to Ireland. Later he was canonized. In 1139 he went to Rome for the Lateran Council under Innocent II and while there wrote and (so the story goes) deposited in the Vatican's archives a series of devices in Latin all of which were supposed to refer (in their chronological order) to all the future occupants of the throne of St. Peter from 1143 onwards. The devices refer not

necessarily to the character of the Pope concerned but to the most significant event of his pontificate or even to his coat-of-arms.

Malachy died at Clairvaux on his way home to Ireland and his prophecies, long forgotten in the Vatican archives, were rediscovered at the end of the 16th century.

If this is impossible to believe, then it becomes necessary to believe that someone forged these prophecies and published them in 1595. It is established that the prophecies were published at Venice in the *Lignum Vitae* by the Benedictine Arnold de Wion. Even if we believe they were forged in the 16th century, we should have to accept that the forger had the gift of prophecy. For these Latin devices, most of them consisting of only two words, are astonishingly accurate. True many of them are non-committal but some have an exactitude which cannot be explained as mere coincidence.

Pius VI (1717-1799) was the Pope who was driven from his realms by the French Revolution and spent the rest of his life a wandering fugitive. Malachy's motto for him is 'Peregrinus Apostolicus.'

His successor Pius VII (1800-1823) was imprisoned by Napoleon and was only freed on the tyrant's abdication. His motto is 'Aquila Rapax'. (The rapacious eagle was of course Napoleon).

Gregory (XVI 1831-1846) belonged to an order whose parent house was at Balnia in Etruria. His motto was 'De Balneis Etruriae'. Leo XIII (1878-1903) is 'Lumen in Coelo', light in heaven. His crest was a comet.

Pius XI (1922-1939) was a fearless mountaineer. He had 'Fides Intrepida'.

Pius XII (1939-1958) had the motto 'Pastor Angelicus'. He was well known as a devoted follower of Aquinas who was called "the Angelic doctor."

John XXIII (1958-1963) had 'Pastor et Nauta'. I do not know if in his youth Roncalli was a sailor. The best that commen-

tators have come up with is that he was "shepherd and navigator of the Ecumenical Council". It is, however, a curious fact that the original John XXIII (Baldassare Cossa) who was elected Pope during the Great Schism was a sailor all right — he was a pirate of the Sicilian seas. The present Pope (Paul VI, 1963) was given 'Flos Florum'. His coat-of-arms is of floral design.

According to Malachy's prophecies there will be only 4 more Popes: 'De Medietate Lunae' (from the half-moon), 'De Labore Solis' (from the toil of the sun) who will reign as Gregory XVIII, 'De Olivae' (Glory of the Oliva) who will be Leo XIV and finally the last Pope Petrus Romanus (Peter of Rome). After Petrus Rome will be no more, according to Malachy.

— Arden

## Putting on a play

First I wrote the play. That was one of the easy bits. Next I got together a cast and began rehearsals. Not so difficult. Then I booked the theatre. Easy as falling off a log. And that was when the smooth sailing was over and I came to the dangerous shoals.

I was told that I had to get the script OK'd by the Public Performances Board. In my ignorance I inquired at the Department of Cultural Affairs. Approving plays for public performance was not, I learned, a cultural affair. The PPB was in the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs. Respectful inquiries elicited the information that I had to submit 5 copies of the script to the PPB. I dutifully submitted them. Promptly I received a cyclostyled circular warning me that the PPB had decided, in terms of its powers (derived from some law whose name I cannot quite recollect.) that I should not publish any notice of my play without

the PPB's prior permission. To prepare the notice I had to wait for the script to be passed. I waited. And waited. I waited for close on two months. Finally, with the days going by fast, I decided a discreet inquiry might be in order.

I telephoned a high official in the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs. He was very kind and co-operative. The reason why the approval of my script had been delayed was that a member of the Board had thought that a part of the play was perhaps unsuitable. It may be that no one was willing to convey the bad news to me so they had just sat on it. It was just as well therefore that I had steeled myself and made the inquiry otherwise I should still be waiting. So OK, I said, tell me what part is objected to so that I may see if I can change it. The official, however, did not consider it proper that this information should come to me from him. Stalemate. Consternation and panic.

In desperation I called at the office of the PPB. The Secretary of the PPB treated me with great courtesy and consideration. She explained that the PPB received on the average 20 scripts a month and naturally approval tended to get delayed. It was because I had suspected something of the sort, of course, that I had submitted my scripts so much in advance. However, she was able to obtain PPB approval for my script with the proviso that the Chairman of the Board should be shown a rehearsal. She also very kindly authorised my poster for publication.

I have related these events not as a complaint against the various officials concerned. Indeed, as I have been at pains to insist, I received nothing but courtesy from them. But if the PPB is to function without being an obstruction to the freedom of expression which is our constitutional right it is necessary that some guide lines be laid down for the way it does its thing. This, however, is perhaps easier said than done.

(Contd. on page 22)

# Stresses within the system

*Is Sri Lanka a 'development' success and a model for the Third World? Ann R. Mattis concludes her review of the workshop held recently by the Marga Institute in collaboration with the IFDA (International Foundation for Development Alternatives).*

**S**ri Lanka, a small Third World country with a population of approximately 13 million people and a per capita income estimated as US \$150 per annum, has managed certain commendable achievements in terms of the physical quality of life of its populace.

In rankings based on aggregate indicators of PQLI, the country has managed to score well above other countries with higher per capita income. Nevertheless, there are certain realities in terms of reduced infant mortality, increased life expectancy, reduction in income disparities, and so on.<sup>1</sup>

Turning the page, however, there is evidence that perhaps this was

only possible with the existence of certain dependencies. Externally, a burdensome supply of foreign assistance appears to buoy the welfare state in Sri Lanka. Internally, there is evidence of tremendous dependence on the centre, that is on the State, to provide for welfare. This is not to dispute the significance of the achievement. Equally, this is not to say that those services can or should continue to be provided in the traditional manner.

Signs of stress are beginning to appear within the system. Bursts of violence, massive unemployment, all point to an inconsistency between the social reality and the 'development success' which has often been used to describe the case of Sri Lanka.

The country has alternately been described by some citizens as being in profound crisis. The system has over the years generated certain expectations which the State is looked upon to satisfy, and in which case the political leadership, being unable to respond positively, results in, for example, violence among the youth which constitutes a large part of the unemployed workforce.

The crisis has also been suggested at another level, that is, the psychology at the village level. The sustained dependence on the State inhibits the potential for self-reliance in the village. Land reform has in many cases not managed to break the patron-client relationship at the village level. Participation at the village level does not appear to have extended to the essential, *access to power*. Perhaps the basis of power remains unchanged.

The country has been described as being "trapped" within a co-

lonial-influenced socio-economic framework which the economy has struggled to loosen itself. However, that struggle is described as having taken place within the existing socio-economic structures, at the local and international levels.

Nevertheless, the profound crisis referred to might be useful in that it provides an opportunity to search for radical, long-term solutions. Those solutions must obviously originate from an analysis of the process thus far. In this connexion, to what extent was the development model preconceived or a response to a set of demands? Would a new policy aim at replacing the present system, however that be defined, and what would be the choice of replacement?

The emerging question is then, what is contemplated for the future development of Sri Lanka - structural change or reformation? Obviously any answer is predicated on the definition of both those terms. If, as has been suggested, structural change refers to a change in production relations, in management and ownership patterns, in access to resources and to power as through the Parliamentary system, then perhaps structural change has taken place in Sri Lanka and the thrust would be for the maintenance and increased implementation of such changes. If, on the other hand, structural change refers to, for example, socialization of *all* of the major means of production, then structural change has clearly not taken place. How is the change which has occurred to be described? Is it structural change or not? Was it instead reformist, and as is sometimes indicated, not really having touched the base of the system? If in fact, it is true that even with land reform 50 per cent of the produce goes to the landowner under sharecropping relationships, then what does this describe?

1 "A provisional calculation of the incomes of spending units in constant prices for 1953, 1963 and 1973 reveals that the per capita incomes in the lowest decile increased by 103% during the 20 years - a rate of growth of approximately 3.6%. In contrast, the real income of the highest decile decreased marginally by .04%. The structure of income distribution had undergone major shifts during the 20-year period and has significantly reduced income inequalities in society. The top 10% of spending units in the country who had received 40.6% of the total income received only 28.03% in 1973. The lowest 10% had increased its share from 1.9% in 1953 to 2.79% in 1973. The share of income of the bottom half of society had risen from 20.9% to 26.7% during the 20 years, thereby gaining 5.8%. These figures represent the distribution of income before the imposition of taxes and do not take into account the impact of some of the subsidized consumption benefits available to the population, such as free health, educational facilities, subsidized transport, and subsidies on housing. The rough estimates of the income effect of subsidies that have been made reveal that the pattern of income distribution becomes much more favourable when the gains to households from the main Government subsidies are included in the calculation." Marga Institute, *Participatory development and dependence, The Case of Sri Lanka*, August 1977, p.10.

In the analysis of welfare it might be useful to return for an instant to the question raised earlier as to the manner in which development was conceived in Sri Lanka, the submission is that perhaps it is well to accept that the process of development that has so far taken place was in response to a set of priorities, to a crisis. Therefore, it is possible that no programme was prepared for implementation proposals past the stage of the crisis, which might explain some of the signs of stress.

An alternative view would propose, however, that the problems now being faced are attributable to low rates of growth of the economy. This school would further propose that that low growth rate is the direct result of public investment in social programmes. At present between 35% and 45% of the public revenue finances social programmes. However, there is very little to indicate that had the private sector in fact been assigned the task of major social transformation and had it been given the responsibility of taking the economy forward, this would have, or could have, been carried out. Further, it can be seen that the 'trickle down' theory does not function internally and social transformation would not have resulted through that mechanism. To say, then, that social investment withdrew resources from development is to conclude an all-too-simple analysis.

Some of the realities reflected at the time were that during the 1950s and 1960s Sri Lanka had rates of growth of up to 4½-5% which cannot really be termed low. At the same time the country traded in an international system with the island the victim of unfavourable terms of trade, thereby reducing appreciably its purchasing power. Even at that, the high unemployment visible in Sri Lanka was not reflected in other countries with similar rates of growth.

Does this then indicate that to satisfy basic needs as implemented in Sri Lanka, higher rates of growth will be required? Or does it re-

flect to a greater extent models of development operative at the time which urged investment in, for instance, high capital prestigious industrial projects and high cost irrigation schemes? That is, does the incompatibility between rates of growth and redistribution point up the malallocation of resources rather than the need for additional resources?

On the scale of redistribution and growth, there is perhaps a propensity towards decreased rates of growth initially. Equally, there is a maximum rate of growth and a minimum rate of growth. Below that, as a result of *political conditions*, there might be that tendency to lose control of the process because of an imbalance between expectations and the capacity to respond to those expectations. Approaching the problem on the side of demand, with traditional instruments-wage and price policies and taxes-a reaction will be provoked which is not followed by the same speed of response on the supply side. The solution might then be to turn to imports.

If the process of change underscores self-reliance and autonomy, then efforts will be required to reduce foreign exchange vulnerability. With foreign exchange as an important variable, the degree of dependence increases and influences decision-making ability. How then is it possible to design a strategy in terms of redistribution and growth which keeps control of balance of payments and therefore reduces vulnerability while at the same time making that compatible with the elaboration of national resources to improve the position locally?

Sri Lanka demonstrates obvious similarities with other Third World countries in transition. Solutions, be they in Sri Lanka, Peru, Chile, Tunisia or wherever the struggle towards a new type of development is being advanced, will be basically political. Solutions probably will not evolve from the web of details around pricing policies, traditional cost-benefit analysis and the like. Those solutions will be generated from political action.

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Tales retold

# Thalmaha and haalmesso

(Strictly for world affairs students)

Ah, I said to myself in a hoarse whisper as the darkest doubts flooded my mind. So the "Observer" was up to it again? The same "Observer" which made parliamentary history by fathering on the self-same Mr. Abdul Cader Shaul Hameed the juvenile gesture of speed-boating with actress Susan St. James by the deadly device of mixing up captions. Of course it was only Peter Fonda who was engaged in these amorous escapades while Mr. Hameed was doing his duty by his country and people inspecting an industrial complex in South Korea.

After such a *cause celebre* any self-respecting newspaper would have slunk shamefacedly into the nearest corner or at least given its readers a decent respite before presenting Mr. Hameed under a headline like "With the Minister sprats came first...." for a report where our formidable Foreign Minister is foisted with an opening line like "Sprats take precedence over international affairs".

Would the "Observer" dare? Or was it another 'innocent' mistake? Was it really Mr. Hameed who dug into Anne Almeida's bowl and gobbled up these *haalmesso bedun*—Hameed who usually digs, I am sure into Kautilya or Sun-Tze, Metternich or Clausewitz for a quick intellectual snack? Was he really at Observerman T. M. Deen's flat?

Perchance it was Robert Redford and Ali McGraw at Dino's? Or Sheik Yamani being served *nasi goreng* at the 'Ramayana' on Rockefeller Plaza?

True, Hameed is a renowned wit and humourist. May be not quite Churchill or Oscar Wilde but still good enough for a joke or two of the scintillating quality of "Why then is it History and not Herstory?"

## Sprats came first

"Sprats take precedence over international affairs", Foreign Minister Hameed quipped as he dug into a bowl-full of *haalmesso beduma*, shortly after he arrived here from Havana.

He was dining at former "Observer" staffer, T. M. Deen's digs, right opposite the U. N.

Sleepy-eyed, after a tiring journey from the South American island where he chaired a conference of Foreign Ministers of non-aligned countries, Mr. Hameed had still not lost that touch of wit and humour that are an essential part of his make-up.

"I say, Deen", the Minister looked up from his bowl of sprats, "it is time you took unto yourself a wife". This was prompted when Mr. Hameed looked in the direction of Deen vigorously stirring a pan of *parippu* on the stove.

In answer to his mother, Deen—the prodigal son—had said that taking a wife to New York would be like taking rambuttan to Malvana.

"Or like taking intellectuals to Akurana", the Minister had the final word.

Anne Almeida, a Montessori teacher, who had come to Deen's aid in preparing the Ministerial meal (the *haalmesso beduma*, incidentally was hers), drew the Minister into a lively discussion on the role of woman.

"Behind every successful man is a woman", Miss Almeida, who left the homeland ten years ago, said.

The Minister smiled. Why then, is it History and not Her story?" he asked.

A man of great wit and humour, Fidel Castro was equated by Mr. Hameed in this respect to "our own President, J. R. Jayewardene".

— Kirthie Abaysekera  
("Observer")

## Signal honour for Sri Lanka

It was a signal honour for Sri Lanka when foreign Minister Mr. A. C. S. Hameed, was called to the podium to propose the name of the Argentine Ambassador for the Chairmanship of the ad hoc UN committee on disarmament.

Mr. Hameed, who was called to the podium at so short a notice had to draft, type and lick into shape his speech, minutes before UN Secretary-General Waldheim finished his.

As chairman of the prestigious 87-nation Non-Aligned Group Mr. Hameed's tribute to Rosa before the crowded 149-nation Assembly carried much weight.

T. M. Deen  
("Daily News")

As I looked desperately for the relief of a few reassuring answers, the nagging doubts turned to the murkiest suspicion as the eye fell upon other headlines on the same page:

VICAR CHANGES SEX  
FISH KILLS JAPANESE,  
CHEF SENTENCED

ON THE HUNT FOR NAZI  
WAR CRIMINAL

CUBA OFFERS NKOMO  
ARMY ADVISERS

Well, well, well, so that was the game was it? The great game of nations, international affairs, war and peace, the global power struggle.

And the clue to the mystery, the whole gigantic plot, was right there.

Why did Hameed pounce so dramatically on that haalmesso? Did he have to go all the way to New York for sprats. True, he is not always at home these days for dinner, as the international airlines doubtless appreciate only too well. No. Hameed may be the poor world's Kissinger but patriot to the core was tipping the wink to his countrymen, Abeysekera and Deen, our own Woodward and Bernstein, and guiding them to the greatest scoop of the century.

I don't know about Anne (they don't teach these tales in Montessori) but every native child learns about thalmaha and haalmessas at his mother's knee..... whales and sprats, the Indian Ocean peace zone, the super-powers and the non-aligned, Diego Garcia and disarmament.....good heavens, Dean and Kirthie. Hameed was putting you on to the news story of your life,

Just look at the evidence, calmly. Hameed flies to New York from Havana after a 2-hour chit-chat with Castro. JR's Grand Plan for Disarmament offers the ultimate panacea for a war-weary world. Hameed talks about it to Castro who will be presiding over the non-aligned summit next year. The NATO leaders are meeting in Washington to discuss Soviet-Cuban involvement in Africa. Carter talks to Gromyko about Salt 2, the previous day.

In a flash it came to me, the whole sinister conspiracy. 200 KGB men in the UN. You did read that Reuter report, didn't you, Deen old buddy? What do you think they are doing by the East River? Training for the Moscow Olympics? I mean to say any organisation that can plant a bug under the US Embassy in Moscow is not going to ask you for permission, is it? Have you had a look at your fridge lately?

Yes, the one you bought at the Christmas Sale.....something wrong with the deep freeze, eh, Deen?

A momentary chill. Was I on the wrong track altogether? After

all, the CIA has tried to bump off Castro seventeen times.

I retrace my steps, and look at the facts again, Poirot-style. What has Castro and Hameed got in common? They are both men of wit and humour. Just supposing, as one humourist to another, Hameed sends a bowl of Anne's haalmesso to the maximo leader? And what is inside that innocent sprat but the latest product of bacteriological experimentation at the CIA's secret laboratories in Buffalo. Castro, in damn good humour after hearing the latest reports from Zaire, swallows one and his beard falls off. Gales of derisive laughter burst over the chancelleries of the world and the African bush, the Cuban forces are laughed out of Angola and Ethiopia, the non-aligned become the laughing-stock of the UN, disarmament turns into a sick joke and super-powers are back in business.

Campanero Kirthie, Deen thambi, you do see now, don't you? So let's have a resolution while the great man is around. "Re-affirming the principles of the UN charter, and in accordance with the recommendations of the Action Report of the non-aligned Summit conference Colombo 1976 (Chap. 3 Article 14) and taking cognizance of the intellectual density per capita of Akurana, population-wise and zero-growth not withstanding, this House resolves etc. etc....."

Kirthie, will you second that please? Anybody against? Anne, you abstaining?..... come on, girl, say yes, for once.....that's fine... it's carried unanimously.

"Speech..... speech"!! The cry goes out. The great man taken completely unawares, gazes at the Manhattan skyline and then before Kurt Waldheim on the 38th floor could say "Akurana" a volcanic explosion of Ciceronian eloquence rocks New York City, making the petrified natives and sundry tribes at the U.N. wonder whether, in the apocalyptic words of the *Daily News*, the next nuclear holocaust is upon them. Armageddon approaches, the only sound is of Deen, gracious host to the

last, burying the buriyani and Anne protecting her precious bowl.

## P.S

As a wellknown wit once told a friend of mine—Vanda de la Motte, if you must know—so what's the miss-tery? Vanda taught American kids the Montessori method. The methods the American kids taught Vanda is another story. But suffice to say, she carried much weight, afterwards and—that's herstory.

## Putting on...

(Continued from Page 18)

A possible solution is for the Board to pass everything that is within the limits of what is permissible under the normal statute law regarding defamation, obscenity and subversion. These are the limits within which those who publish books, periodicals and newspapers in this country operate. But such publications are not pre-licensed. So why should it be different in the case of stage plays? Is then a PPB really necessary?

Since I do not have much hope that my reasoning will find acceptance with those who have the power to decide on such things and the PPB is likely to remain a factor for playwrights to reckon with I should like to leave the PPB with the following thought: Most stage plays come alive with what the individual actors put into them. Such contributions from the players can give an added dimension to the script put on paper by the playwright. Actors by their departures from the text, even sharpened the effects of the lines of Shakespeare himself. The actor as a creative artist in his own right must be permitted his occasional ad libbing. If the PPB insists on approving a set text which shall not be departed from it is going to destroy an important element in the creation of a play.

— Nedra Vittachi

(Nedra Vittachi is a final year law student. Her play "Smart Ass" will be staged at the Lionel Wendt on June 16.)

# Cryptic Crossword No. 2

by Stripex

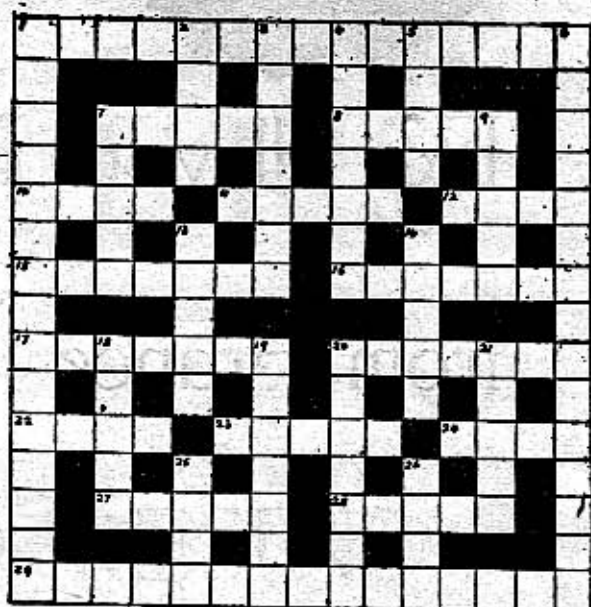
Across

CLUES

1. Objective attitude of those advocates of Eclat? (3, 8, 4)
7. The dark unfathom'd — of ocean (Gray) (5)
8. First rate overseer? (5)
10. Go into ecstasies about and ravage when the law officer goes? (4)
11. Les without six pairs of pants (5)
12. Loud about the game (4)
15. Picks bodies without the Spanish (7)
16. ... gentleman carrying weapon for 11 perhaps (7)
17. Meanwhile bury the cockney (7)
20. Paste chum down under without labour leader (7)
22. Not any woman under vow, we hear (4)
23. Blow your pipe there till you — (The Pied Piper) (5)
24. Some lad who became rich (4)
27. Frequently in the manner that characterises a number (5)
28. Pointless oyster is external (5)
29. What the IGP's peak-cap contains? (3, 4, 2, 6)

Down

1. Timid ghost drawn close to the witching hour (7, 8)
2. Envoy has no love for grudge (4)
3. Solutions as having all points right (7)
4. Possesses sound of small bell in a rush (7)
5. Stupid person (4)
6. Outpace it with little credit lacking exercise (7, 8)
7. Six in a state to be captious (5)
9. A different 28 way (5)
13. Vehicle in two directions at the same time can give you a fright (5)
14. Tend Benedick (5)
18. The last one in Paris was banned (5)
19. Lamented our mend order (7)
20. Discarded actors not up to standard (4, 3)
21. Beetle a tiresome person? Right. (5)
25. Pen point swelling (4)
26. Essential oil for Bismarck (4)



Solution to Cryptic Crossword No. 1

ACROSS — 1. Pieter Keuneman 2. Fading 8. Disunion  
10. Enclaves 11. Arctic 14. Gain 15. Polo 16. Locum  
19. Tinge 20. Egad 21. Afar 23. Ripper 25. Computed  
27. Convenes 28. Bourse 29. Broad in the beam

DOWN — 2. Induction 3. Tindal 4. Evil 5. Neutrals  
6. Moist 7. Freighter 9. Decoded 12. Cambridge  
13. Rotator 17. Cafeteria 18. Reverend 22. Aplomb  
24. Pinto 26. Mean

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