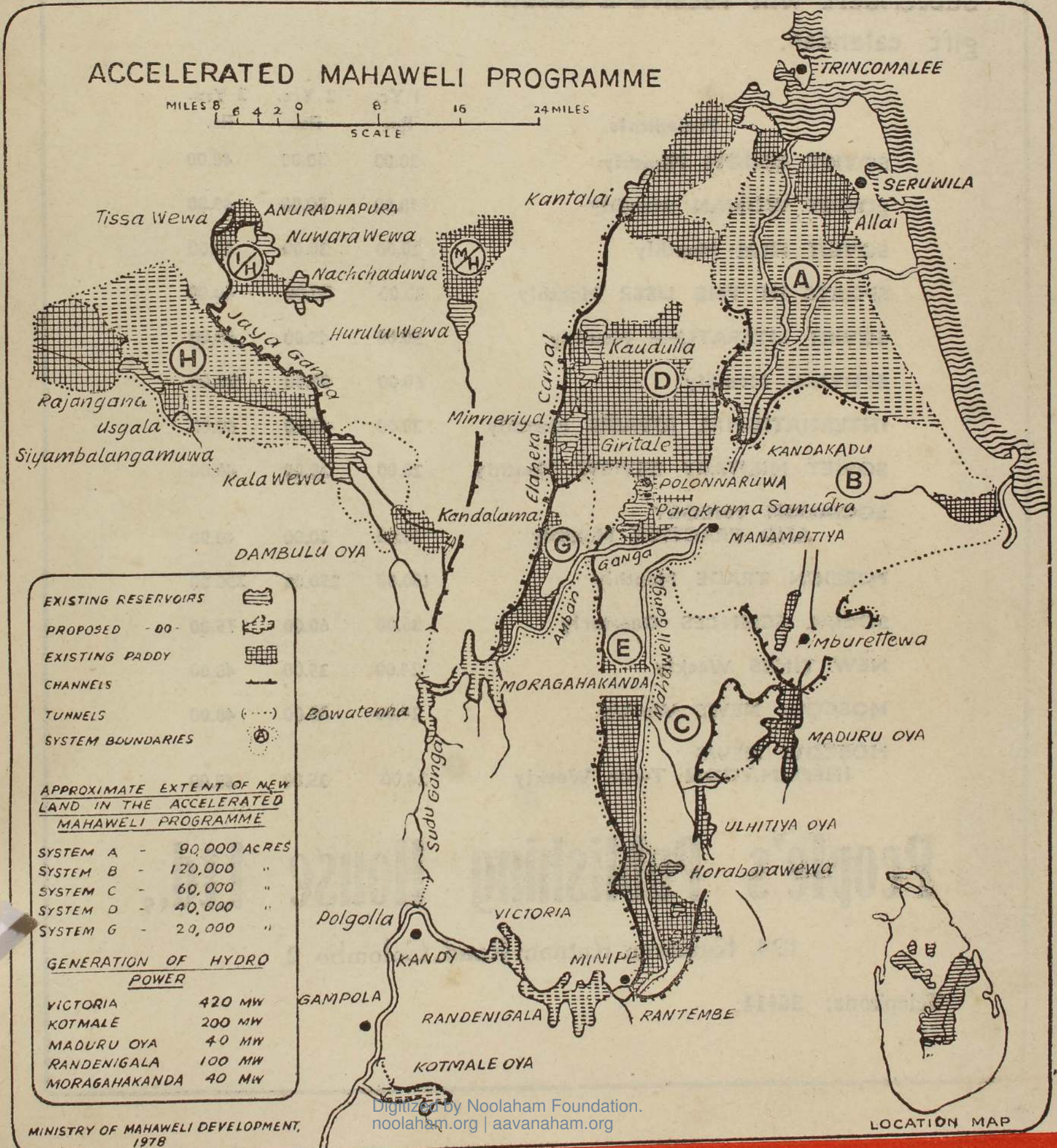


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Letter From The Editor

THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE of the Non-aligned Countries which concluded its sessions in New Delhi on Friday February 13 ended on a more constructive note than was the case with some recent meetings of the Non-aligned Movement. There were, no doubt, controversies and sharp exchanges on about half a dozen items on the agenda, but there was total unanimity on several dozen items of a political, economic and cultural nature. In the existing information order it is not surprising that the world press should pay attention only to the contentious issues and virtually ignore those which enjoyed unanimous support. Even on the controversial issues the participating countries were able to reach consensus, and the fact that the contending parties had, as usual, filed reservations does not detract from the consensus achieved as the highest common denominator of acceptable understanding among the ninety six member-countries.

It has been customary to group member countries as rightist leftist and centrist. In the complex world of today, this classification is a gross over-simplification. It is also misleading because a very large, if not most, of these countries adopt postures which savour of all three trends on different problems. This is understandable because every question is measured by each member-country by the yardstick of its own national interest, individually and/or regionally. And the sharpness of the different attitudes was reflected in the discussions on the controversial issues and in the difficulties that arose to reach consensus. But whichever way one looks at it, the term non-alignment is only negative terminology to assert the inalienable right of independence and sovereignty.

Why the founders of the movement chose the negative term "non-alignment" is hard to say, but if one wants to understand why the non-aligned movement is the force it is today one must not lose one's way in semantics. Non-alignment is simply independence, and if this is understood all the doctrinaire controversies of its definition can be avoided. The simple position is that the non-aligned movement is an association of newly independent countries. As the veteran Indian journalist and political commentator Chalapathi Rao has pointed out (vide *Link*, 15.2.81, Vol. 23. No. 27): "The non-aligned countries are mostly former colonies, and they are against colonialism. Most of them are not well-armed, and they want disarmament. They cannot afford to fight wars and they want peace. Almost all of them are underdeveloped or developing, and they are interested in a share in development. One of the important conditions of their existence and future is that their sovereignty should be respected, and they want the principle of equality and non-interference observed in their affairs." In all the discussions on even the most controversial issues like Kampuchea, Afghanistan, Egypt, the Camp David Agreement, the Iraq-Iran war, the Indian Ocean, and practically every matter

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on which differences existed, one can detect the common thread of the quest for independence running through the debate. As Chalapathi Rao, one of the persons closest to Jawaharlal Nehru for many years stated in the same article: ".....The common thing about the non-aligned movement, with which the third world is equated, is that it should not be aligned with either military bloc as long as these blocs exist, that it should work for detente, peace and disarmament, which alone can make the massive development, shared by the developing and under-developed alike."

Afghanistan and Kampuchea provided the Western press with opportunities to predict the imminent doom of the Movement, but in retrospect, detached observers are all agreed that the Movement at New Delhi showed a greater degree of flexibility and strength than at any time before. No member country thought it fit to threaten to walk out of the Movement as some had done in Colombo and Havana. Another significant factor was that member-countries showed an unmistakable desire to want their problems settled with the Movement itself and that is no doubt the reason why Sri Lanka's proposal for a machinery to solve disputes received such enthusiastic support. Even Iran has displayed a welcome willingness to accept Non-aligned mediation. These are clear indications that the Movement is gaining in strength—and not the other way round as some Western circles wishfully hope.

In the multi-polar world of today where the two super-power blocs system has become defused with the growth of new great power centres, alignments and confrontations, the Non-aligned Movement has acquired even greater validity than before. But the two power blocs—NATO and WARSAW—still exist, and the Reagan administration seems intent on making this confrontation the most dominant. Detente between these two super power blocs in the seventies had reduced the confrontation and this had led to a seeming weakening of the spirit of Non alignment—or at least there was confusion as to its meaning and role. Some had even mistaken it for neutrality whereas non alignment was at all times a struggle for independence and emancipation. As Chalapathi Rao explained: ".... It was the Soviet Union that had first recognised non alignment as a factor for peace

and welcomed it. The United States gradually welcomed it, thinking that nonalignment was better than more and more countries joining the Soviet Union. And he went on to say: "... If peace and development remain the dominant aims of the non aligned world, their differences can be solved within or without the framework of the United Nations."

It was in the fitness of things that the New Delhi meeting (considering the fact that the term "non alignment" grew out of contemporary Indian polity whilst the concept itself was a product of the global movement for emancipation) should have become a new watershed in the history of the Movement. Whereas in the period of the Algiers, Colombo and Havana Summits, left radicalism, in the context of global complications, had played a dominant, if not aggressive role, in shaping the destinies of the Movement, in New Delhi this year the centrists, or those called the "moderates", came to the forefront. There was no attempt however to dismantle what the radical upsurge had achieved earlier in the political, economic or cultural sectors (on the contrary there was a further forward radical thrust on all non-controversial matters). But in the contentious issues like Kampuchea, Afghanistan and Egypt the moderates were able to persuade the Right and the Left to preserve the unity of the movement on the basis of consensus, often full of contradictory sentiments.

In New Delhi, the left was on the defensive mainly because of Afghanistan, and the right (vociferously led by Singapore) was isolated because its cold war cries failed to evoke adequate support even from other ASEAN countries like Malaysia and Indonesia. If there was one sentiment that dominated the New Delhi meeting it was that the unity of the Non-aligned Movement had to be preserved at all costs, and this enabled the centrist group to bring the left and the right to accept consensus that paid homage to the principle of independence and sovereignty. The detente which the Non-aligned Movement of 1961 had brought into being has now almost vanished. Twenty years after the Bel grade summit, the Non-aligned Movement has an even greater and more imperative role to play to revive the spirit of detente in the present dangerous times.

Mahaweli Journey

THE EDITOR had gone on a two-and-a-half day tour of some of the construction sites of the Accelerated Mahaweli Project in the second half of January this year. He had started writing his impressions on the trip in the *Letter From the Editor* column and the first two appeared in the *Tribune* of January 24 and 31, 1981, (Vol. 25. No. 27 and 28). He could not however continue this series as he suddenly left for New Delhi on February 2 to cover the Ministerial Conference of Non-aligned Countries (February 4 — 12). The series will now be published in this column, but some interested readers have suggested that the part already published be included for the sake of continuity. We have done so. ON THE COVER we have published a plan to the Accelerated Mahaweli Project to spotlight this series on some of the Construction Sites.

It is not often that the Editor of *Tribune* gets an opportunity to have a worm's-eye-view of massive governmental projects on his own terms. Such an opportunity was afforded to him recently together with a few perceptive journalists from other papers who were able to make the trip. The terms laid down by *Tribune* and fully endorsed by the other journalists were that: (i) the trip should not be a Cook's-type (packaged) tour conducted by the multitude of media consultants and media men who have now over-run the Mahaweli and have created a growing communication gap between the press and the people on the one hand and the Mahaweli Ministry, Board and Authority on the other; (ii) that the itinerary should be drawn up by the journalists making allowance for zig-zags and variations in the schedules; and (iii) that the discussions on the trip should be off-the-record to enable the journalists to shift reality from propaganda in their talks with officials.

The Central Engineering Consultancy Bureau of the Mahaweli Complex — a unit that is today playing a key role in the construction sector — agreed to provide an opportunity to some of us to view the progress of work in the Accelerated Mahaweli Plan. It was not possible for most of us to be away from our desks for more than a couple of days and it was therefore not possible to see all of the Mahaweli Project in one trip. For this voyage

of discovery we chose some of the Construction sites for a start — Minipe Anicut, the Transbasin Channel, Ulhitiya Dam site and the Ratkinda Dam site on the first day and Victoria and Kotmale on the second day. The other construction sites, like Maduru Oya, would have to be done on another trip together with incursions through the new settlement areas which may need extra time because it would involve talking to people. This is the rough overall plan that was envisaged when we ventured on this trip; and we hope that the whole programme to study the entire project will be completed without undue delay.

One official from the Ministry and one from CECB accompanied us — they answered questions and entered into discussions that were sparked off at every turn — but they made no attempt to indoctrinate propagandist ballyhoo or hide what could not be hidden. Being an off-the-record odyssey, no punches were pulled and there was free and frank discussion on all matters. The officials did not attempt to lecture — although they had all the facts and answers on their finger tips — and more often than not were at the wrong end of an argument. The discussions were not confined to dam construction or the pros and cons of the Mahaweli Project: It ranged from environment to archaeology from history to proto-history — in fact, everything about the areas we visited or traversed.

A visit to a few construction sites of the Accelerated Mahaweli Development Scheme revealed that work was going on at a satisfactory pace within the time schedules envisaged — well ahead in places and a little behind in others. It was a pleasant surprise to those of us who had entertained doubts about the validity and viability of what is called the Accelerated Plan to see so much done in three of the five projects outlined in the Project. The fact that two of the five have been temporarily dropped — because of finance and other practical difficulties like raising counterpart funds in Sri Lanka to meet the "conditionalities" stipulated by foreign lenders — showed that the criticism that five major projects in five (or six) years was too much for Sri Lanka to chew all at once was justified.

But this is not the time for "we-told-you-so" postmortems. The main burden of the construction work has been shifted to the shoulders of foreign contractors. It is for them

to minimise waste and to ensure profits. Our trip to these Mahaweli Construction sites was not a fault-finding odyssey. It was only a familiarisation tour — because some of us had either never been to these places or were there many many years ago when the Mahaweli Scheme was only a hazy blue-print in a government pigeonhole. On the overall view, the cost of the construction projects we visited was frighteningly massive, and the worm's-eye view of the common man was clouded by the constant chorus-like refrain emanating from certain quarters that the same work could have been done cheaper by Sri Lanka governmental agencies.

But most people have become so impatient with the delays, inefficiency, corruption and thievery rampant in government departments and corporations that they are today willing to reconcile themselves to foreign contractors who claim they can deliver the goods on time. Taking into consideration the conduct of human affairs, it is perhaps impossible to totally eliminate thieving, mismanagement and inefficiency in massive construction works, but foreign contractors appear to have established a tight control of security checks and local contractors and sub-contractors seem to be slowly following suit.

But from all accounts the Mahaweli Board and Authority have many lessons to learn from some foreign contractors, starting from simple matters like the care and maintenance of vehicles. The failure to check the lighting system of one of the vehicles in which we travelled before it was taken out of its garage in Colombo caused a delay of several hours en route. But even more stunning was the reception we received at the Circuit Bungalow at Hassalaka which we were told had been specially arranged to accommodate the party. THE RECEPTION we received at the Hasalaka Circuit Bungalow (CB) which had been specially arranged for us can only be described as cold. This CB is run by three departments under the same Ministerial umbrella. The tripartite Authority — if we are not mistaken, the Irrigation Department, The Mahaweli Board and the Mahaweli Authority — would do well to spruce up the running of this well situated, well appointed and well furnished CB at Hassalaka, near Mahiyangana.

We arrived three to four hours behind schedule — partly because the lights on a vehicle had failed as we started to climb the

heights of Kadugannawa — to find the place closed and in total darkness. A tolerant moon shed its light outside as we struggled to wake the Caretaker and his staff by tooting the horn and banging on the doors. By my watch it took 17 minutes to get the front door open. It was no doubt true that it was after 11 p.m., but the Caretaker had no excuse for shutting up shop in the way he did. A charitable view would be that he thought that the trip had been cancelled, but he said he had prepared the dinner.

The electricity had failed, he said, and there had been no lights for two days. But what struck us as unbelievable was that he had made no effort to provide any alternative lighting. "Why did you not get a few candles?" asked one of the officials who accompanied the party. The reply was curt: "We have received no instructions from Colombo to buy candles or provide kerosene lamps in case the electric lights failed...." We groped our way inside to a few chairs and waited in darkness until the CECB jeep (well maintained and looked after) that escorted us went to a boutique some miles away and brought a packet of candles. After this, a Petromax lamp turned up mysteriously from somewhere.

It was altogether an inauspicious start as we struggled in our rooms to wash the dust off our faces and get into sarongs, all by candle-light. But journalists are not so easily daunted and soon we had picked up our spirits and sat down to a cold cold dinner. The President of Sri Lanka and the Minister in charge of Mahaweli looked down on us at the dining table, but even their photographic presence did not make the Caretaker think it necessary to warm the food before he served it.

We retired long after one in the morning — well behind schedule. We were supposed to be on our way by 6.30 a.m. to the old Minipe Anicut, but we knew we could not make it. Anyway, we were on the road by 8.30 a.m. Before we left we had asked a few questions from the officials with us about the progress of work in Minipe, Ulhitiya and connected projects. We were assured that work at the Construction sites was ahead of schedule in most places and that where it was a little behind it would not be difficult to catch up in the next six months. From what we saw during the day this statement about the progress at the Construction sites was correct. If at all, the report the officials made was an understatement,

Frankly, we had not expected to find so much already done in this short period. And all the journalists who were on this trip had experience of other projects where actual performance had lagged far behind the proclaimed progress.

The day was cloudy and there were intermittent spells of light drizzling on this Saturday morning when we set out to see the Mahaweli in the Mahiyangana valley. The old Minipe diversion channel built around the fifth century AD was a marvel of engineering even by modern standards. The Mahiyangana valley and region through which the Mahaweli flowed to the sea was once a Yakka stronghold and this channel was attributed to Yakka engineering, although the Nagas who lived in adjacent territories were also famed for their hydraulic skills.



In a sense, the diversion of the Mahaweli had begun way back in the mists of time, and what is being done today is only an enlarged extension of the same kind of utilisation of river waters to meet the needs of the day. The new barrage and dam, a little higher than the old Minipe Anicut will, as far as we could gather, be completed well ahead of time. This small storage reservoir at the point the Mahaweli tumbles down to the plains will secure the maximum water for Ulhitiya Dam a little further down.

As we drove through the lands of the old Minipe Colonisation Scheme of D. S. Senanayake's days it was abundantly clear that the cultivation of paddy as well as other crops was neither intensive nor scientific. Most paddy fields—in spite of the availability of water—were full of weeds (there were only rare exceptions of weed-free fields) and other crops were conspicuous by their absence. With the present costs of production and the unimaginative and minimal government floor prices, intensive and scientific cultivation of paddy or any other agricultural produce to obtain maximum yields was simply not possible for the ordinary colonist or peasant with no liquid cash reserves. He had to be satisfied with a subsistence level low yield harvest, whilst he sold his own labour power elsewhere to the mudalali or to government at construction sites. Nobody spent time or energy to grow subsidiary food crops, fruits or vegetables on their allotments because the produce could not be marketed at anything like reasonable prices.

The paddy lands in the old Colonisation Schemes can, in fact, produce three times or more if proper cultivation methods are adopted. And subsidiary food and other crops can be multiplied several times if proper marketing facilities are assured. This is the situation in all the old colonisation schemes throughout the island and the settlers in the new Mahaweli areas will face the same problem. Unless the Government is able to solve the problem of marketing, agricultural production will lag—even with all the water in the world.

The access roads to the Ulhitiya Dam site were as impressive as the long reservoir bund that is nearly complete. As we finished our walk round the dam site it began to rain. We were already well behind schedule for what the programme had described "a late lunch" and so we put off for another occasion the inspection of the controversial Transbasin Tunnel (which will take Ulhitiya waters to augment the Maduru Oya scheme). Some local engineers had said that an Open Channel would have been cheaper and more useful for the development of the area than a Tunnel, but the foreign consultants of donor countries had insisted on a Tunnel.

(To Be Concluded)



FILM FOCUS

Actor Reagan

A remark once dropped light heartedly by Actor Gamini Fonseka that "films call for more intelligence than politics" amused me no little, but it has been proved now that one has led to the other. I refer of course to Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran and President Ronald Reagan who rode across the silver screen to gather the highest plum of office in their respective countries. While a controversy rages whether M. G. R. said what and what not at the recent Madurai Tamil Conference with relevant tape recordings of his speeches being available to settle the debate, President Reagan has taken over the reins of the most powerful country in the world, to reaffirm its superiority after the Carter spell that had America beaten to its knees more than once. Shooting straight off the hip, Reagan is pledged to regain-

ing the prestige that America had lost temporarily, and a bout of sabre-rattling and brinkmanship must be forgiven him as he sets about the business of state rule in a more serious role than that he played in films.

All this of course is politics and this column would rather do without it, but it owes it to *Tribune* reader to give them a pen picture of the Hollywood career of the American President, with a winning smile and more, that has got him into the White House almost effortlessly. President Reagan has behind him over 50 feature films in his movie career which commenced in 1937 with a Warner Brothers Production *Love in the Air*. Reagan rose to stardom in the forties with *Kings Row* and followed it up *Santa Fe Trail*, *International Squadron*, *This is the Army*, *The Hasty Heart*, *Storm Warnings*, *Law and Order* and *Tennessee Partner*. After a spell with the US Marines in World War II, he resumed acting for a decade, before stepping into the political arena, just before which, he was a radio commentator and a sports reporter.

In 1957 on a visit to Los Angeles, he came under a chance contract with Warner Brothers and was boosted up as another Robert Taylor, who was riding high in cowboy films at that time. He married actress Nancy Davis in 1954 after divorcing the Oscar winner Jane Wyman, from whom he has a son and a daughter. Reagan and Nancy have two children. In 1965 he published his autobiography titled rather prophetically *Whereas The Rest of Me* not aware perhaps that the best chapters of his life were yet ahead of him.

GODFATHER (PART II) English: This Paramount production does not sustain the interest that was maintained in Part I of the series, were Marlon Brando strode like a colossus through that film to claim the Best Actor's award. This sequel however, pales like "Hamlet" without the Prince of Denmark, although it reaches out to embrace a wider spectrum of the doings of the Coreolini Clan that migrated from Sicily to America and spread out its Mafia connection, with at least one tentacle reaching out to make inroads into the American Presidential elections as well. Marlon's earlier role as Vitto Don Coreolini is taken over in flashback by Robert de Niro who appeared colourless in comparison to the maestro. His stepping on American soil as a youngster in the aftermath of the decimation of his family in Sicily, his efforts

to keep on the level, to be ultimately dragged into the underworld of crime, is shown through the Freudian mind of his youngest son Michael (Al Pacino), who grows with an onrush of hatred that becomes part of his fierce personality, spewing verbal venom throughout this 3 1/2 hour film. The Mafia gangs that he presides over and the brutal killings that flow from them, together with the added patronage of a Nevadan Senator who in his clutches and a Cuban coup in which he dips a finger of guilt are eventually surfaced before a high-powered U.S. Commission, where he holds up his blood sodden hands with a lily white innocence, and wriggles out of the indictments. A dialogue that kept low in volume, with the absence of subtitles at appropriate moments, and the sudden cuts and takes of the flashback sequences where Michael matured in the shadow of his father with one generation merging into the other, caught the audience unawares frequently, and got them into a maze of words. The intended impact of Maria Puza's best seller was lost too technically in the woods for complete cinematic enjoyment and relaxation. Serious cinema addicts could however make a go at it, for reportedly it sports no less than 6 Academy Awards—yet I would bet that they would have to fight hard to keep boredom at bay. In one key sequence, Michael's wife screams "our whole marriage was an abortion" as she walks out on him—a rather cryptic remark which in my opinion, rather aptly classifies the whole film! To say more would be superfluous.

THISAI MARIYA PARAVAIGAL (Birds That Changed Course) Tamil: Sporting a title full of meaning and directed by S. Jegadeesan, as I sat this film out, I was reminded of the predicament that once faced the Indian Harijan leader Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who decided to move his followers out of a caste saturated Hindu society to a Christian one but changed course due to the divisions that prevailed among the latter, and opted to lead them on to follow the footsteps of the Enlightened One. All this is by the way, but the story of this absorbing film is headed by a couple of new stars in Sarath Babu and Sumalatha, revolving around the caste canker that corrodes Hindu India. A couple, so much in love, are put asunder, when a difference in their social scale is dug up by conservative elders, before the attachment reaches fruition. The depressed

Juliet of the piece of lower origins seeks shelter in a nearby Catholic convent and embraces the religious vows of a Nun with self sacrificial motives of spiritual peace, consequent on the accident of her birth. She 'scooters' daily, tending to the needs of the outcasts on her daily rounds. The heartbroken Romeo pledged to a single life, becomes a Police Officer and the paths of the lovers cross once again under different circumstances, which I do not wish to reveal. The story is steeped in sobriety and is at pains to bring up the misery that overrides a caste conscious milieu. The shots in the convent come off best—even the beautiful ceremony of becoming a Bride of Christ and pledging to follow his footsteps are taken in by the camera very tastefully. The photography is good and so are the several renderings of devotional songs that hit one in the pit of the stomach, carrying scorching lessons on the plight of Harijans. A crispy film on a serious theme that cries for redress, which should be seen by everyone, for this problem masquerades in Sri Lanka society as well.

THREE BULLETS FOR A LONG GUN

(English): If one was looking for a successor to Clint Eastwood of the "Dollar" type Westerns, well he appears to have arrived in Acto Beau Brummel, who rides through this film story as a rough riding cowboy, nicknamed Major who villy nilly joins hands with one Lucky—a new star Keith Van Der Wat who reminds one of Elli Wallack also of the Dollar westerns—who is the half possessor mentally of the wherabouts of a cache of gold, while the other half is on a scrap of paper with the Major. This symbiotic attachment grows as the pair ride on, sharpshooting their way through renegades who are also on the same trail. The climax comes as a surprise, but this well photographed Western, packs action space all the way. The hoof beats are hitched on to a catchy number "Its a Wonderful Day", that trots on musically in the background. For Western fans, a film that should satisfy.

BEDDEGAMA (Sinhalese): A brilliant film by Master Director Lester James Pieris, Watch out for detailed review in this column next week.

(+)

NGUVU

Accounts

By Bwana Rafiki

Monday morning it was and so the bus was full, the time 5 a.m. when it stopped to pick me up and it was not long before we were jammed in tight, the bus crammed full, until we were right in Colombo. I was so weary I slept at my desk in my father's home most of the morning leaving me just enough time to get a job done and some business seen to before lunch, some of my Mother's music, the EPF, and my accountant about our taxes. Then I dozed again in the afternoon and I was lucky to get in some exercise and that kind of relaxation afterwards among friends which is what life is all about. The English discoverer of the Nile's source, Lake Albert Nyanza, Sir Samuel Baker, refers to it on the Horton Plains, that hour of conversation in a make-shift house by the fire after dinner before a very early bed, as the sequence of a long day's hunting. It comes somewhere in one of his two books about Ceylon. I left another party early to go with a friend to his sanctum outside Colombo.

In *Nguvu* some time back I mentioned the arrival of a cousin from England and I contented myself with that bald statement. She was very indignant when I referred to her as a relic of another age, the last of her generation to quote the words I used, and she insisted that her generation was very much alive, and named me as one of them for which kind thought I was quite flattered. Yet the fact is that though we may be in years only a short distance apart, there is a whole war to separate us, for she played a very active part behind the lines ending up in Air Transport Auxilliary for which she flew aeroplanes, whereas I never got beyond the training stage of a footslogger, albeit jungle training, in the two wars that comprised World War II. All this is rather beside the point, for what I want to say is that I was hoping to get my father's car on the road before the end of her unexpected visit to remind her of old times when we had a car. This car has been off the road for more than a year and it was with gratification that I found I had driven it safely to the house yesterday.

Though I started late doing it, virtually the whole of the following day was taken up with preparing balance wages, transcribing the days worked from the pocket check roll

into the big check roll, and also the advances paid out each week from the advance book, the coconuts given to the staff at a nominal fee, and any debts incurred through loans, and, of course, payments by the staff to their provident fund, six per cent of their wages. I find it convenient to do the employer's contribution at the same time, nine per cent of each man's salary. Just as I wrote this I remembered that I had failed to allot one of our men his enhanced rate of pay, a voluntary gesture of mine to take cognizance of the fact that he is also a carpenter although I have not given him any carpentry to do for a long time. Luckily I was not able to get to Colombo this evening and so I shall be able to attend to the matter now. The correction can be made neatly in the check roll.

What a day! It drained me in every way. Rs. 200/- lost from my room not by me but by someone with whom I share it. At first I was given to understand he had lost it all in the morning. Then after he had learnt that someone had deposited a sum of Rs. 100/- in the bank this year, all in the morning became lost in two instalments, both from the identical place. Lastly from being one of four hundred rupee notes it became from a sum of one hundred and eighty rupees, thirty of which, incidentally, I had given him as an advance. He explained it satisfactorily if not quite convincingly by saying that the other money, for he had said he had no money when he took the advance, was not money he could touch. But the only man or boy who could have stolen his money, me excepted that is, had an equally satisfactory answer, or at least his father had, as to how after buying some articles of wear, giving his father money, and saving some, he was still able to go on leave.

For all this, the trip excepted, came to about what I had given him as his balance wages for last month, leaving him no money left over to go some miles on leave. The answer his father had ready was that the boy had with him the money I had given him the month before that. It was a good explanation which left his accuser at fault, for the accuser had changed his story concerning his loss three times as I have said, whereas the boy and his father had been consistent. It left me feeling as if I had a temperature, because if my man was lying, it was no simple lie but an appalling one of manufacturing a situation of accusing a boy of theft and therefore not a safe person to have around. I felt especially bad as if this

was allowed to go on, I might have to sack many others too. Anyway, I sent the boy back with his father, banishing him from the house without docking his pay.

The last morning about which I write was a red-letter day for Ceylon for the Daily News carried a long article of a speech made in 1928 by Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan against the franchise. He rightly did not equate franchise with freedom, rather like the coming referendum, for I would unseat the nominated candidate and call for an election, perhaps the word is by-election, after naming a new day for handing in nominations. I write this on the eve of by-election day, for my vote in the referendum is going to be decided solely by who gets in. In that way a referendum would be fair, for if everybody used my criterion, not looking at the matter dispassionately but deciding solely by who gets in or which party or independent candidate, then the decision as to what kind of person should represent the electorate will be transferred to the nation as a whole, which to my mind in the circumstances would be quite right and proper.

Govt.



Notice

Notice Under Section 7 Of The Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 Of 1964.

Ref. ඉඅ No./5/287

It is intended to acquire the land/lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 130 (Part III) of 27-02-1981.

Schedule

Situation : In the village of Waulagoda Ward No. 4-Kirahandigoda within T.C. Limits of Hikkaduwa, D.R.O.'s Division of Wel-laboda Pattu (South) in the District of

Name of land : Ulugewatta Pelawatta Bandara-watta Tuduwegodawelkobella addaraowita
Plan and Lot No : P. Plan No. Gaa/1532 Lot 1-10

W. Somadasa

Acquiring Officer, Galle District.
The Kachcheri, Galle. 27th January 1981.

A Watergate for Our Wildlife-2

By Prof. Hilary Cruz

Head of the Dept. of Zoology,
University of Peradeniya

THE TIME has come to examine in depth some of the more specific ways in which the Committee of the WNPS attempted to justify their anti-Secretariat stance. These include representations in their October 1980 Newsletter that:—

1. The Secretariat as proposed in October 1978 had a questionable funding structure.

As described in part one of this article, the expenditure of \$ 150,000 on research was not an automatic outcome to establishing a Secretariat in Colombo. The only funds whose allocation was under screening at the time the WNPS first opposed such establishment, were the \$ 23,000 for the Secretariat itself. An evaluation of whether this was justified was a matter for IUCN/WWF alone, and certainly was no business of the WNPS, especially as already noted, *no funds for exclusively Sri Lankan activities were involved.*

The Committee sought to stimulate further a sense of financial outrage in their readers by presenting the fact that consultancy fees to Dr. Olivier would account for over 60% of project funds as somehow unacceptable. To whom? The WNPS? Again this is none of their business, and solely that of IUCN and WWF. With this in mind, it is worth noting that payments to Dr. Olivier over three years would absorb less than 5% of WWF's elephant funds available in 1980, and these are increasing all the time. A very different picture to the one painted by the Committee.

2. The WNPS was not adequately consulted

Dr. Olivier *did* consult the former WNPS President on plans to set up the Secretariat in Sri Lanka when he was here in August 1978, as has been proved to me. However, the Secretariat's funding structure was indeed not discussed then simply because (a) this was none of the WNP's business and (b) it was not even worked out until late October. As I pointed out in part one, the Action Plan was not shown to the past President on that

occasion either, as it also had not even been written. On that first occasion Dr. Olivier quite properly, in my opinion and that of all right thinking people, consulted with Government officials regarding possible components for Sri Lanka's Action Plan. After all the WNPS is *not* the Department of Wildlife (despite the fact that some of its office bearers apparently delude themselves to the contrary), and the resulting Plan, as I have shown, was anyway to be a document open to all for comment. So why all the fuss about lack of consultation? I subscribe to the answer given by "Loris" in his article (*Tribune*, 10/1/81)—personal pique on the part of the former WNPS President.

3. The Secretariat had questionable terms of reference.

This is implied particularly as regards its role vis a vis the Action Plan for Sri Lanka and the "\$ 150,000 Research Project". The explanations given in part one, and above, debunk these as cause for concern.

4. The competence and suitability of Dr. Olivier to head the Secretariat was questionable.

This is now the Committee's main and most forceful justification for its stance. It is also arguably the most hollow and despicable. It is achieved by casting aspersions on almost all relevant aspects of Dr. Olivier's character by representing him variously as:—

a. ANTI-CONSERVATIONIST

To do this the Committee quotes out of context from a paper written by Dr. Olivier in January 1977, and which they had all read. As such it pre-dates by 21 months any proposals for a Secretariat, and any Action Plan, and yet the impression is given that its contents have direct relevance to them. They do not. The paper concerned was an eight page document entitled "Study of pocketed elephant herds in Sri Lanka with reference to solution of the problem." It was and is unpublished, and was produced solely for IUCN/WWF at their request, and from whom it subsequently won high praise. Nevertheless Dr. Olivier was good enough to send a copy to Mr. Hoffmann to keep him informed. In this paper, as the Committee tells us, Dr. Olivier concluded that pocketed herds "are not a conservation problem". This is used to project Dr. Olivier as an anti-conservationist.

On this point Dr. Olivier has written to me as follows:—

“Had I ever dreamt that my little January 1977 paper for IUCN would be used against me in the way it has, there are several things I would have rephrased. For example, rather than stating that pocketed herds were “not a conservation problem”, I would have written they were “a development problem.” Of course they are a conservation problem, but in writing that paper for IUCN it was my sincere hope to persuade IUCN/WWF, before pouring funds into Sri Lanka’s pocketed herd problem, to try *first*, themselves to persuade the Sri Lankan Government to give its Wildlife Department the financial and material support it so desperately needed and deserved.

Being consequent to haphazard development, I *still* see such pocketed herds as largely a local Government responsibility, rather than that of the international conservation community, particularly as they are not “last representatives.” However, the problem has become so acute, and Government support for the Department still falls so short, that we are now making an input to the pocketed herd problem, and this has my support.”

b. A CALLOUS DESTROYER OF ELEPHANTS

The Committee successfully creates this impression by quoting in full, but again out of context, the section headed “Extermination” from the same paper (Incidentally, these are not the first instances in which senior WNPS members have sought to debunk Dr. Olivier by quoting him out of context, as Mr. Hoffmann’s article in the Dec. 1978 issue of the WNPS journal “*Loris*” and Dr. Olivier’s reply in the Dec. 1979 issue, show). What the Committee has neglected to inform readers of their Newsletter was that “Extermination” was included in the paper as one of six major options, in a dispassionate, objective, and impartial, review of the various alternatives available to managers. We are also not told that this review was introduced with these words: “The best solution sought is complete removal of the trouble, with as little loss of elephant life as possible. *Ideally* the elephants should be able to continue life elsewhere in the wild.” Obviously such words are not compatible with the image the Committee sought to create of Dr. Olivier, and were therefore deliberately not passed on to their readers. For the record. Dr. Olivier has written to me as follows:—

“The reason destruction received as much attention in the paper as it did, is that the then Director of Wildlife was very concerned about animals over 7 ft., and the destruction options were only described with such animals in mind.”

I myself have something to add to all this in showing that the entire issue is a smoke-screen (or “red-herring”) deliberately put up by the Committee to destroy Dr. Olivier’s image, and it is simply this. Even if Dr. Olivier were intent on destroying all our elephants, does the Committee seriously mean to suggest that he could merely walk out into our forests and start shooting, or that the Director of Wildlife would meekly implement such a recommendation without question? Of course not!

I would further ask: is the memory of the Committee so short that it has forgotten its own Past President’s calls to destroy large numbers of buffaloes? Here are his own words: “*It is, therefore, all the more necessary to ruthlessly weed out all escaped village buffaloes inside all national parks, in order to maintain and regain a pure wild life stock. Various methods have been tried, all unsuccessful, and I am convinced that only the systematic shooting of these animals, with rifles, can provide the answer.*”

The irony of it all is that the suggestion quoted appeared in a memorandum to the Government’s Fauna & Flora Protection Advisory Committee, in which the Past President had lambasted “so-called ecologists who have become the pundits of conservation” for making “recommendations which may have disastrous effects and which are frequently based on superficial, biased and selfishly motivated ‘research.’” One such example, according to Mr. Hoffmann, is “so-called scientific wildlife cropping.” Cropping simply means reducing numbers by killing off, which he himself had unwittingly recommended in the case of the buffaloes at Yala. Unless of course he did not know the meaning of “cropping.”

The last sentence of his paragraph dealing with “so-called ecologists” reads thus: “From the little one has heard of it, the work and outcome (if any) of the Smithsonian Ecology Project must be criticised on these grounds.” Obviously, the past President’s allergy to all scientifically based, and scientifically sound projects, especially if they are funded by

prestigious bodies such as the Smithsonian Institution, the WWF, IUCN, and so on, is a long-standing malady.

Another example of the Past President's subtle *modus operandi* in wildlife conservation advice in this country is shown by what he has written about the use of phosphate fertilizer in our national parks. To quote again from the same memorandum: "Under no circumstances must plants be grown, fields be ploughed (e.g. 'pasture development'), channels be dug, pumping systems be installed or forests be cleared." So far, so good, Mr. Hoffmann! But you go on to say: "If the quality and quantity of grazing in open spaces needs improvement, this could be achieved in a completely natural way by applying ground Rock Phosphate, which is a natural fertilizer."

In fact, the Department of Wildlife Conservation seems to have been having a rather protracted liaison with Messrs. A. Baur & Co. Ltd., Colombo, of which Mr. Hoffmann is Managing Director, in obtaining 'donations of such fertilizer for experiments, conducted by Mr. Hoffmann himself, in the national parks (see Department of Wildlife Conservation, Administration Reports for 1960/61 (p. 30), 1961/62 (pp. 30 & 31), 1962/63 (p. 23), 1963/64 (p. 46). **This is the marriage, with a vengeance, of national wild life conservation and multinational commercial interests. That was in the good old days!**

I therefore fail to see any moral, ethical, or scientific differences between the hypothetical destruction of buffaloes and elephants, or between interference with the environment with Baur's rock phosphate fertilizer and other sorts of interference that may be recommended by non-commercial scientists.

c. A SELF-SEEKER

This is implied by creating the impression that Dr. Olivier was "feathering his own nest" by including a research programme with Higher Priority in the 1978 Action Plan, and then subsequently declaring his wish to help carry out such research.

If one takes the opposite point of view to that assumed by the Committee, that such research is *important and valuable* (as I and Olivier still believe) then we would say to the above "well why not?" After all Dr. Olivier is a fully qualified and experienced wildlife ecologist. Is he then supposed to betray his training and his employees (IUCN—who des-

cribe themselves as "the world's only independent scientific organisation dealing exclusively with conservation of nature and natural resources") by not pointing out a need for scientific research where he sees one and where he feels he could play a useful role, *simply for fear of appearing "self-seeking"?*

When one remembers that the Past President once wrote to me "I do, however, distinctly dislike foreign teams of the Smithsonian and other types to come here for their own personal ends (mostly)," then the Committee's answer to the above question would presumably be "Yes." One gets a distinct impression of "paranoia" somewhere in the Committee.

d. A DECEIVER

This impression is given by including a quotation apparently from a letter written by Mr. J. C. Daniel. In fact Dr. Olivier never told Mr. Daniel that he (Dr. Olivier) was strongly favoured by the President of Sri Lanka (as quoted in the Newsletter). What Dr. Olivier in fact told Mr. Daniel was that *conservation*, especially of elephants, was strongly favoured by the President of Sri Lanka.

e. INCONSISTENT

This impression is generated by expressing surprise that something once declared as "not a conservation problem" should somehow get included in the Action Plan. With a proper understanding, (a) of the context in which that remark was first made, and (b) the nature and intent of the Action Plan, this apparent inconsistency can no longer be seen as such, and is no longer remotely "surprising."

f. INTRANSIGENT

The Newsletter creates this impression by stating "Both Mr. Edwards and Mr. Senanayake being unable to attend at the shortest notice, the meeting of the IUCN/SSC Asian Elephant Group on 20th and 21st August intimated their inability to do so, but their offer to be represented by other members of the General Committee was not acceptable to the Organiser of the meeting."

With such words Dr. Olivier, who organised the meeting, obviously receives no credit for inviting (at the same notice given to everyone else), Mr. Edwards and Mr. Lalith Senanayake to attend. Before he had received replies from either, he received a telephone

call from Mr. Nanda Senanayake who asked if he might attend. Dr. Olivier explained that he had already invited the President & Hon. Sec. to represent the WNPS at the meeting. Mr. Nanda Senanayake said that he thought neither would be able to attend. Dr. Olivier replied that as and when he heard this from the two gentlemen concerned themselves, he would then reconsider Mr. Nanda Senanayake's request to attend. Later Dr. Olivier indeed received written regrets from both Mr. Edward and Mr. Lalith Senanayake that owing to work pressures they would be unable to attend. *However neither suggested that Mr. Nanda Senanayake (or anyone else) should take their place, and Dr. Olivier never heard from him (NS) again.*

On the question of intransigency it is notable that neither Mr. Edwards nor Mr. Lalith Senanayake attended a social function to celebrate the establishment of the Secretariat in Sri Lanka, to which they had received separate invitations. Nor did they have the courtesy to express regrets at their inability to attend (the invitations were "Regrets only") Perhaps because at 6.30 p.m. "pressure of work" would no longer have been a valid excuse.

Some of us remember Dr. Olivier's closing remarks at the Society's May 1980 AGM when he said "Now.....I hope I have convinced many of you that there are no technical grounds for opposing what we hope to do here and, I am afraid, from the documentary evidence at my disposal, the opposition to this whole exercise has been largely on a personal level, and this is very much to be regretted....." (See *Tribune* 25(8) page 19).

As I hope I have demonstrated in these two articles, the WNPS Newsletter provides additional documentary evidence of a most forceful nature to support Dr. Olivier's contention. This is indeed something to be "Very much regretted" by the general membership of the WNPS in particular, and the country in general.

TO CONCLUDE, it is well known that it was the past President of the WNPS who first attacked the proposal by IUCN/WWF to set up their Asian Elephant Secretariat in Sri Lanka, and indulged in an extensive, obstinate, and vituperative correspondence with those organisations (including Dr. Munro, then Director General of IUCN, and Sir Peter Scott,

Chairman both of the WWF and IUCN's Survival Service Commission). *What is much less well known however, is that although this correspondence was started in September 1978, it was not until a Committee meeting in February 1979 that Mr. Hoffmann even designed to advise his Committee of these developments and the stance he had taken on this matter in their name and the name of the Society.*

Thus wherever the words "Committee of Management" occur in the recent Newsletter, these should be substituted by the words "Mr. Hoffmann." Presumably in approving the issue of the Newsletter in their name, the present Committee of Management are not only trying to perpetuate their Water-gate-type "coverup" for the unnecessary and unjustified obstructionist attitude adopted by the past President, which had not their prior sanction and which directly led to the severance of relations between WNPS and WWF, but are also endorsing Mr. Hoffmann's unsavoury, libellous, and thoroughly deplorable, personal crusade against Dr. Olivier.

I therefore feel that members of the WNPS have renewed and forceful grounds on which to base and express extreme dissatisfaction and no-confidence in their Committee of Management (which includes the past President). Furthermore, the recent Newsletter provides the strongest possible evidence that the Committee (with one or two exceptions) are still blindly following Mr. Hoffmann, and that the present leadership are mere marionettes in an old colonial-style conservation puppet-show.

I would therefore urge the general membership of the WNPS to endorse any forthcoming motion of no-confidence in the Committee and so rid the Society once and for all of those conceited elements who consider wildlife conservation in this country to be their sole preserve, and themselves the country's sole wildlife custodians. Only in this way can the international disgrace this affair has brought on us be absolved, and the Society turned from a Hoffmann Protection Society back into a Wildlife and Nature Protection Society.

(Concluded)



Prop. H. A. de S. Gunasekera

—Committed Scholar—

I first came to know Alfred Jeyaratnam Wilson, the distinguished interpreter of Constitutions, in 1953, the same year in which his teacher H. A. de S. Gunasekera (Hades), my friend from 1940, became his friend too. The triple alliance we forged was to last till Hilary was felled by an untimely stroke on January 5th this year. Reading Willy's affectionate and moving tribute in the *Tribune* of February 14th to the man who shared so many joys and sorrows, ecstasies and slumps, stirrings and successes of academic life in Peradeniya over nearly three decades, the sadness of his departure was alleviated by the flood of shining memory.

To be young and alive in Peradeniya in the 'fifties and even 'sixties was to taste the heady wine of academic freedom and the intoxicating vigour of dialectical discourse, unhampered alike by the cramping confines of political sycophancy and the debilitating pressures of an academic mafia moving in malevolent ways its backstairs intrigue to perform. It was still a place for the independent and disinterested study of economic virtues and vices, and the fearless scrutiny of the prevailing values and orientations of society. It was a democracy which thrived on dissent, and made no pretence of its responsibility to produce critics and consciences of society prepared to give leadership in ideas. Hilary stood out like a prima donna in a community which encouraged the breeding of protagonists instead of the spawning of choruses—a role it performs to near perfection today.

As Prof. Wilson relates it, the famous Battle for the Chair of Economics became in its immediate setting and in retrospect a contemporary morality play in the amphitheatre of the Peradeniya hills—the echoes of the long-drawn conflict remain to steel the mind and illumine the lingering nostalgia. Hades defended the vital bridge with his motley band of supporters and triumphed against all odds. After the smoke of battle had lifted in the grove of academe, and the whine of grape-shot ceased to rattle amidst the ivory towers, he emerged to seize the prize, which had long been denied him by deceit and collusion. It marked the zenith of

his academic career and everything that came after was merely the delayed icing on a superlative professional confection. He moved inevitably into the position of Dean of the Arts Faculty with competence and an easy distinction, and when politics called him to serve the national interests, he accepted each challenge whether as Chairman of the Peoples Bank or Secretary of the Ministry of Planning and Employment, with his characteristic self-discipline and a disarming fervour. He was no obstinate ideologue, or dyed-in-the-wool bureaucrat, but was ready to be realistic and reasonable without negotiating his principles.

The long period of public office from 1970-77 in a critical context of significant economic transformation and tumultuous social and political change, took heavy toll of his health. But when he returned to the academic life he loved he was by no means a spent force. The flame of intellectual defiance continued to burn bright and the sword of professional integrity was ready to flash in a sadly polluted environment of political bluster, academic trickery and bureaucratic subterfuge. He succumbed at the outset of yet another sordid skirmish, relishing the taste of struggle in defence of justice and right conduct.

Prof. Gunasekera was, perhaps, one of the last representatives of that distinct generation of Thurstan Road intellectuals who were prepared at all times to engage in the true discipline of dissent within the university and outside it—most others have resigned, migrated, retired hurt, or pre-deceased him. The increasingly politicized systems of the university bureaucracy, cloaked with alternating shades of brief authority, demand conformity and persecute those who decide to differ. His example will remain to dog the purblind and enoble the downtrodden.

H. A. I. Goonetilleke

15 February, 1981

TWO SEMINARS

Dambala vs Soya

By R. Kahawita

THE MONTH OF JANUARY has been a very significant month for the farmers and Agriculturists. There was a shortage of fertilizer and a massive price hike quite out of propor-

tion to the ruling prices of the produce, and the other was two high level seminars on "Winged bean" followed by "Soya Bean". The former was ushered in with an International flare, while the latter was in a minor key; may be because there is already a well built building complex, even though it may be empty, as a research centre at Gannoruwa, Peradeniya. There is something to show for years of work. So there is no point in beating the "soya drum", where as Dambala has none. So the seminar on Soya Bean was more to highlight the building achievement than to discuss the progress and problems of its cultivations, and prepare research and extension programmes to popularise it with the peasant. The "Winged bean" which the peasants and their ancestors have been growing as an "emergency vegetable", compared to other bean varieties, for several generations is new and has become a discovery to the scientists.

This bean has several names—Four-angled bean, Asparagus pea, Manila bean, Princess bean, Goa bean etc., and to us "Dambala". It is a native of East Africa, introduced to these parts by the Portuguese—that is why it is known as "Goa bean" in India.

WE ALSO HAVE BEEN GROWING Dambala as a freak bean so my children named it "Filly beans". We had a couple of these creepers about five years old covering almost a quarter of an acre, on the ground and on anything that stood. This "jungle of Dambala" was there till the Land Reforms Commission came along and took over the farm and destroyed the Dambala plants together with every thing else that was necessary to work a farm. No one can excel this authority in vandalism. Even now we have a few creepers, but the problem is to discipline it to contain within its confines and give a yield in proportion to the three dimensional space it occupies.

The seminar has spotlighted the importance of Dambala to our health and well being. It has taken the same dimensions of interest as a sudden finding of a "gem" in the back garden. Every one was crowing about it from the house tops. "We have found a Wonder Bean far superior to Soya to fight national malnutrition". Wonders of Dambala has become a legend over night. We hope the Seminar will result in an aid programme for another brick and mortar complex at Gannoruwa.

Soya bean was picked up by the Americans and in the heyday of its introduction to the farming world, they developed over a 1000 cultivars in two main groups—yellow bean seeds and black seeds. The American interest was not as a vegetable or to produce Soya Sauce or to produce substitutes for milk, meat, etc., Their interest was to cycle it through their cattle and hogs to produce a succulent steak. We even remember subscribing to a quarterly journal called "Soya Digest".

They got the cash for this kind of publicity and to produce a bean to feed their animals. Our main concern is to produce the same thing to feed our people. Fortunately American animals are not in Sri Lanka to compete with our humans. We have to feed ourselves with nutritious food before we can spare something for our animals.

We have half our population "ill nourished". It is going to be worse with escalating prices of basic food items, nutritious or not. We hold a theory that ill-nourished people produce more babies—propagation of the species. So our population will jump to such numbers that we will not be able to produce soya beans fast enough to feed them—as it is today. We cannot produce sufficient rice to feed them. But for the rice-rubber deal with China our population would have been reduced to what the soil can maintain.

Dambala is still in the semi-wild state. There are not many cultivators compared to other civilized varieties of beans. A botanist, friend of ours gave the name "Psophocarpus Songependunculatus" for it. What a long pedigree for our vulgar Dambala in our back garden that does not know how to behave with its "Cultured neighbours"? Now that the Scientists have shown an interest in it, they may coin a catch word to be used in the market place.

THESE TWO SEMINARS which gave promises and programmes to put out people back to health on Dambala and Soya, we ask what is the difference between Soya and Dambala in their respective food values—Dambala against Soya bean? To us there is very little difference. Our scientists have been very busy to find out the nutritional values of the two varieties of beans—we tabulate these for the benefit of our readers.

	Dambala	Soya Beans
Water ..	14 ml	8 ml.
Protein ..	33 g	35 g
Fat ..	16 g	18 g
Carbohydrate ..	32 g	20 g
Fibre ..	5 g	4.5 g
Calcium ..	Nil	200 mg
Iron ..	Nil	7 mg
Vitamin A ..	Nil	Negligible
Thiamine ..	0.08 mg	1.1 mg
Ribo-lavine ..	Negligible	0.3 mg
Nocotinamide ..	Negligible	2 mg
Ascorbic Acid ..	Negligible	Negligible

Now what is there to say "take to Dambala in preference to Soya"? We think our soils lack calcium; Soya bean seed has this mineral, and to us Soya is to be preferred to Dambala—a reason why Soya is an important feed item to animals. *Why not push on with the Soya development project and abandon chasing clouds for a better Dambala: which can be taken up later—after we have pushed Soya bean far enough to form a regular farm crop with our peasant cultivators.*

This "putzche" for Dambala by our experts, may be—they are fed up with the air conditioned comfort at the Soya Research Establishment, and what they could have done has been already done by the Americans. So they do not want to play the second fiddle.

Let us not fiddle with Dambala on which no one has researched so far. It may be like ipil ipil of yester-years. It was Ipil Ipil all the way down the lane, animal food, firewood, quick growing timbers and so on. At the end like Raymonds lowering the corpse for a dear one to its last resting place to the strains of Lead Kindly Light, Ipil Ipil of the Water Resources Board has been laid to rest.

We suppose the Winged bean, Princes bean etc. of many names will get into the obituary notice before the year is out. If it does nothing better could happen to conserve our scientific efforts to pursue other avenues of scientific research much more urgent to improve the life style of the seven million people hanging below the starvation line.



SOVEREIGN PEOPLE

Or Cinderellas?

By T. W. Rajaratnam

THE DECISION the Government made recently to allow the free export of eggs and vegetables without any restrictions and without limiting periods of export can further increase the prices of these two food items and cause greater hardships among a suffering people. On the other hand the government committed to a policy of export development and a free market may have honestly believed that such a decision will be an incentive and encouragement to the vegetable cultivator and the poultry farmer to produce more.

Our experience and performance in the past, however, make us doubt whether this is a wise decision. The real test will be the lessons we can learn from our future experience and performance. We know what the price of eggs and the price of different vegetables are today and in other seasons. If there is a steep rise in the prices of these food items before the 16th October 1981 which happens to be the World Food Day and the main reason for the price rise is the said decision to export eggs and vegetables without restrictions, well then, it will be the moment we can reflect on the wisdom of this decision and perhaps even the motives and philosophies of the advisers to our policy makers.

The exposure published in the *Ceylon Daily News* last week (14.2.81) reveals the most distressing state of affairs as far as the vegetable cultivators were concerned. Cabbages rot for lack of transport and marketing facilities. It does not fetch even 5 cents for a pound. In other parts of the country other kinds of vegetables and fruits rot for the same reasons. It is a middleman's paradise. There is perhaps something rotten not only in the vegetable kingdom but also in the State of Sri Lanka.

It is strange that the Marketing Department authorities had to wait for this exposure to pull up their socks and act. Are they ignorant of what is happening in the country? It will be interesting to find out how they are acting even now. Are they seeking the cooperation of the middleman? We hope they have enough facilities and enough drive to tackle this

TRIBUNE, February 28, 1981

problem at once. The public and the people have a right to know.

SRI LANKA faces two problems which need urgent solutions. To find employment and to make such employment meaningful. More than 80% of our people are below a decent subsistence level whether employed or unemployed. It is in this context that it is said to find our cheap labour advertised at a dollar a day! One hour of work means one pound of bread with a 5 cents borrowed. A day's work is full employment, but day's wage does not mean a full stomach for the bread winner and his family. Our labour is not only cheap, it can be advertised that our labour can work with a half empty stomach. One wonders whether there can be development with empty stomachs.

On the other hand there is money in circulation, jobs galore and buildings in plenty. The question is how is this of any immediate relevance to 80% of the people? How long can they be fed on religion and language? A medical survey will amply prove that our people are under-nourished and our children suffer from Malnutrition. A very distinguished visitor to the island recently was surprised to see our undernourished stunted children after three years of development. He wondered what their condition would have been before this development process.

Our waters abound with the sea food we require for our people. We can grow all the vegetables, fruits, cereals and rice we need. Is it a wise policy to export any kind of food before ensuring adequate food for our people? Should it not be the first priority to conserve adequate food and keep it within the reach of the people? Should food be ever allowed to be exported without considering the present plight of the people?

THE EXPOSURE in the *Ceylon Daily News* reveals how over production does not help the producer, who becomes more dependant on the middleman. Has the government sufficiently examined this question before allowing unrestricted, unlimited export of vegetables and eggs? We cannot ignore the fact that the Sri Lankan people with their low wages and devalued rupee are driven to starvation by their inability to compete with the tourist and now the foreign consumer.

We cannot be too sure if the rising cost of living can be explained only by global inflation and the higher cost of fuel. Certainly these are two factors which cannot be controlled by any government. When uncontrollable factors however, contribute to hard living conditions for our people, it becomes all the more a matter of duty for a government to examine the controllable factors before opening the flood gates for exports. It has a duty in any case to watch the interests of the people which include the interests of the 80% of them who live almost on a sub-subsistence level.

It may be useful to remind the government of the directive principles of State policy and fundamental duties enshrined in our Constitution in Article 27 (2) (c) which says that the State is pledged to establish a democratic Socialist Society, the objectives of which include "the realisation by all citizens of an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families including adequate food and again in terms of Article 27 (13) the State shall promote with special care the interests of children and youth, so as to ensure their full development physical, mental, religious and social and to protect them from exploitation and discrimination.

The Constitution recognizes the inalienable sovereignty of the people and it is not too much to expect the State which exercises the Sovereign powers of the people not to treat more than 80% of the people as the sovereign Cinderellas of the Nation.

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TRACTORISATION—1

In Coconut Lands

Dr M. L. M. Salgado,

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RECENTLY the Government of India, under the Indo-Ceylon Aid Programme, gifted 300 Khillari cattle from South India to the National Livestock Development Board. Although Khillari cows are poor milkers, the bulls are well known for their strength and speed and are used for the cart and the plough in India. These animals, 200 Heifers and 100 cows have been sent to the Cattle upgrading Centre at Welikanda for its multiplication Programme.

Today there is yet a "Tractor Mania" in Sri Lanka which has been developed and fostered by farmers (particularly paddy cultivators) big and small as well as by coconut estate owners of the pre-land Reform Era for ploughing their paddy fields and for ploughing and disc-harrowing coconut lands, quite irrespective of economic consequences to the nation, and the drain of foreign exchange not only by the capital investments involved, but more so by recurrent expenses arising from the cost of imported fuel, and the inevitable spare parts.

In fact the coconut plantations are no more "estates", but are now 50 acre "small holdings" which can hardly afford a 4-wheel tractor, and/or even a 2-wheel tractor today with the meteoric rise in capital costs following devaluation and the fuel price hike. Until the end of World War II, in 1945, tractors were not a blot on our agricultural landscape. Earlier in the twenties, some trials had been made with heavy Fordson Tractors (at Walahapitiya Group, Nattandiya) but the results of deep ploughing and consequent root damage was so alarming that tractors were not seen on any coconut estate for some considerable time until the recent decade.

THE NEXT DEVELOPMENT was the 2-wheel tractor which as a result of a surfeit at the end of World War II were dumped on the colonial market. These had been mostly used in the UK in market gardening particularly for the cultivation of potatoes to meet the acute shortage of high calorie foods to meet the acute shortage during World War II.

A local British Agency firm imported these machines and in the course of their propaganda campaign, arranged a demonstration at Bandiripuwā Estate at the Headquarters of the Coconut Research Institute at Lunuwila. I was then the soil chemist and on my suggestion it was that this 2-wheel tractor should demonstrate its superiority, (if any), over the animal drawn implements, by working side by side with the buffaloe-drawn Ceres and/or Victory light Plough (Mould Board Plough) as were used on coconut estates at that time. The results of the demonstration were obvious and while the buffaloes won the cultivation race by keeping to a straight furrow, the 2-wheel tractor got badly stuck on a husk pit or a drain and could not be manoeuvred.

It was somewhat later that such 2-wheelers appeared on our agricultural landscape, with the *Land Master*, which was a light manoeuvr-

able implement with its adjustable implements such as rotors, ploughs, and horizontally driven high-speed weed cutters and grass mowers, which also had the further advantage in that it could be coupled to work a well pump and also a lighting plant for a few bulbs in the Superintendent's bungalow. Even at that time the price was competitive and it had the further advantage in that it was manoeuvrable in the application of fertilizer round the coconut palms instead of applying in circular trenches. Even 100 to 200 palms in bearing could be manured per day with the use of the rotors depending on the soil being sandy or gravelly. The disadvantage was however that the rotors used to waste very fast on gravelly soils, and that spares were costly. These operations were at the expense of labour where labour was available in excess and also cheap, until the policy of establishing Village Expansion Schemes became a feature of Government policy, and village labour in these enclaves, found it more profitable to remain in their small holdings and manufacture a few bottles of Kasippu and / or deal in stolen nuts which became a regular feature as soon as nut prices increased and is a problem even today.

Other types of 2-wheeler tractors were soon on the market, mostly Japanese makes which were also offered at competitive prices. Most of these used petrol and/or diesel oil or even kerosene. At that time 2 decades ago the normal market price was between Rs. 5000 and Rs. 6000 whereas today's prices of these Japanese makes range from Rs. 22,000 to Rs. 24,250 quite beyond the resources of these same coconut plantations or paddy field owning peasants covering 2 to 3 acres of paddy land.

THE TERM PLANTATION is now a misnomer. Ninety nine percent of the coconut lands after the implementation of the Land Reform Act were reduced to 50 acre "small holdings." Even before the LRC Act came into operation 65 percent of coconut lands comprised Small Holdings, the definition of a "Small holding" being a land of extent 20 acres or below. (Vide *Census of Agriculture: 1952; Part III, Coconut Plantation*). Coconut estates (those above 50 acres) were classified as "A" estates and "B" Estates, "A" states being those which were 20 acres or more in extent, had 10 or more resident labourers and had their census schedules filled up in English by the Superintendent or person in charge while "B"

estates, which were 20 acres and over in which the number of resident labourers was less than 10 or which those in charge of a person not well acquainted with the English language.

Coconut "Latifundia", even before Land Reform was implemented were an exception, except for a few large family estates comprising over 1000 acres in Melsiripura and Bingirya, owned by a well known family of coconut plantation owners. These have been now vested in the National Livestock Board. The rest, comprising "Estates" as such, over 100 acres category. These "Latifundia" were converted to "Janawasamas" and one large estate to Usawasama, but now mostly managed by the State Plantations Corporation and/or the JEDB, Janata Estates Development Board.

A further attraction was the provision of small trailers which could be coupled to these 2 wheelers. These trailers have since of late, appeared for haulage, even of Street refuse and garbage collected by local bodies (the latest case being the Mount Lavinia/Dehiwela Municipality. Further these trailers are useful in transporting fertilizer bags etc., to the field during manuring. It is said to be able to carry up to 1 ton on normal estate roads, and operate at 3 to 6 m.p.h. (Vide Ray Wijewardana: *Mechanisation on Coconut Estates*. III: *Ceylon Coconut Quarterly* (1956) Vol. VII, Nos. 2/3, 3.10).

According to Wijewardana (Loc Cit), "The Japanese are reported to have harnessed their ingenuity into developing this machine further making it more suitable for use in mudded paddy fields, extending its range of usefulness with a wide range of versatile implements and cleaning up the bugs on the machine to make it as fool-proof as possible for trouble-free operation by unskilled farmers. Their objective was to make it simple enough to be repaired by the village bicycle mechanic and thus not require the expensive luxury of a call for service van whenever a breakdown occurred." For further details regarding the versatility of these Japanese machines, vide pages 5 and 7 of Wijewardana's paper (Loc Cit).

It was recently reported (*Ceylon Daily News* 20th August 1980) that the Agricultural Service Department, has decided to supply 4-wheel tractors with trailers to all Agricultural Service Centres in the island. It is stated that this decision has been taken with a view to supplying the requirements of farmers.

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE to state when the 4-wheeler tractors became popular but in the last decade over 10,000 such tractors have been imported into this country, both for work on paddy fields as well as for ploughing and/or disc-harrowing coconut lands, and also for haulage with trailer attachments.

Some of these were gifts and/or grants under Aid Schemes. In about 1956, or so, when Sir Oliver Goonetilleke was Minister of Agriculture, at a meeting of the Central Board of Agriculture held at Peradeniya, he referred to such gifts as "Gift horses in the mouth" and said that we had to start cemeteries for such tractors, which even at that time caused a severe drain on foreign exchange for the purchase of spare parts. In fact there was at Anuradhapura a Tractor Station called the Kangaroo Station (so named in recognition of the Government of Australia which gifted these tractors) which was the dumping ground of such unusable tractors.

About a decade or so ago there was the introduction of a well known British make of a 4-wheel tractor cum trailer which soon exceeded sales of over 10,000 and which by its well organised and efficient servicing arrangements, have established itself all over the island. The cost a decade or so ago was Rs. 17,000 exclusive of tools and implements such as tines and disc harrows, disc ploughs, ploughs etc., and sales were pushed up under the then UNP Government by a liberal income tax concession in terms of which the full value of the tractor was allowed as a deduction from Gross Income. Today the cost of this tractor exceeds Rs. 195,000 the implements alone costing Rs. 41,926 and today perhaps much higher.

On economic considerations alone, today, apart from the adverse effect of uncontrolled deep ploughing on coconut estates, Tractors even if they are accepted as gifts, are worse than Gift Horses in the Mouth: in fact they are more so Trojan Horses. Even the few large coconut estates and so few that remain over 50 acres in extent, where family units are established in terms of the Land Reform Act, can hardly afford to run these tractors. They were hired out for the ploughing of paddy lands, as also for ploughing and harrowing coconut lands.

But with the petrol and fuel price hike, the rates per acre charged by tractor owners which were no more than Rs. 250/- per acre

have now been raised to Rs. 400 for ploughing paddy fields and may rise even higher so that where cultivation is done for both Yala and Maha, this amount is a very heavy charge. With other inputs such as the escalating cost of weedicides and in spite of subsidised cost of fertilizers even at Rs. 40 per bushel as guaranteed price the margin of profit is marginal.

On economic considerations alone, Government should consider an almost total ban on the imports of these heavy tractors except under license for purpose of haulage.

To be concluded

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TODAY

This Way For A Shroud

Jayantha Somasundaram

NO WORTHWHILE APPRECIATION of Sri Lanka's economic crisis can be made without reference to the international economic and monetary realities. It is also important to relate it to the concepts of economic stability that have been accepted, and see to what extent these concepts have been negated by recent developments.

The market economy assures consumers sovereignty provided there is perfect competition. This means that if there is unlimited competition between producers, the consumers in an economy where prices are determined by the interplay of firms and households, will result in price stability, fair incomes and economic serenity.

Competition by its very nature however tends to drive the small producer against the wall. Mass production which technology continues to facilitate gives the edge to those in a position to amass capital, and make use of economies of scale to undercut their competitors. Progress and prosperity are thus coterminous with monopoly.

Once competition is killed, monopolies are able to rig prices at will. So long as producers were competing against one another as in the West for a hundred and fifty years before World War II, prices remained stable. Since the war however there has been a continuous and accelerating rise in the price level in the western industrialised nations. Inflation in the West has also been fueled since the war by the unsatisfactory monetary system.

In the aftermath of World War II the USA was able to impose an international monetary system in which the US Dollar was the universal currency, on par with gold. Thus US Dollars flowed into Europe, and into all other areas of resurgence, in proportion to their economic development.

The USA used this favourable balance of payments to become a heavy spender, commanding increasing amounts of the world's resources without having to earn it. Having invested heavily in US Dollars, Central Banks and Treasuries throughout the world keep buying up Dollars in order to prevent a run on the Dollar and a consequent collapse of their Dollar reserves. This has led to a "fantastic increase in international liquidity which is undoubtedly the biggest factor in triggering the worst global inflation in history" according to Robert Triffin in *Foreign-Affairs*.

THE PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS in the USA and the other Western economies were already climbing at 5 percent per annum in 1973 when OPEC put up the price of oil. In the previous decade inflation was only around 2 percent. Thus OPEC responded to Western inflation, they did not create it. Whilst inflation was moving up to double digits, there has been a corresponding downturn in the rise of real wages in the West — with a fall in real wages for nearly a decade.

The rise of monopolies and international liquidity meant that the Dollar prices of our imports have been continuously on the rise since the war. However, throughout the sixties and early seventies we succeeded in keeping the rupee prices of our import down by pegging our exchange rate high and effecting import and exchange controls. In this period not only were the Dollar prices of our imports going up, the Dollar prices of our exports, particularly tea, were coming down. Consistently unfavourable terms of trade had the potential to erode the purchasing power of the rupee and swamp us with a spiralling inflation.

In 1977 we dropped our fixed exchange rates and abandoned import and exchange controls. To allow the rupee to float against foreign currency in a situation where we had putrid terms of trade, were confronted by flagrant inflation abroad and kept having the real price of our exports fall, was to court disaster.

The impact was initially cushioned by a variety of temporary circumstances. Good prices for our exports had fleetingly strengthened our balance of payments. In this situation Finance Minister, Felix Dias had revalued the rupee making imports cheaper. The flood of goods, that had come in on CRA before the elections and the flushing out of goods into the market after the election also kept prices down for a short period.

Soon the rupee began to depreciate against its competitors. The export volume of tea dropped, the terms of trade showed no improvement and then the rupee could only float in one direction to the bottom of the currency barrel.

Essentials like drugs which were imported before 1977 at Rs. 7/- to the US Dollar, had now to be imported at Rs. 17/- to the US Dollar. One hundred and fifty percent devaluation. As inflation abounded speculation began. Land, housing, gold had their prices bid up as people scared to hold on to depreciating currency, exchanged their rupees for other assets.

Massive transfer of foreign funds to finance prestige projects like the Mahaweli put large sums of money in the hands of a few, who also kept bidding up prices. The plethora of foreign experts, with high rupee incomes, another outcome of the devalued rupee, could outbid Ceylonese for goods and services and thus syphon up the general level of prices.

We are lucky to have an inflation rate of only forty percent.

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LSSP—2

The Movement & Ourselves

by Dr. Colvin R. de Silva.

Commemoration address on the occasion of the 45th Anniversary commemoration of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party—17th December 1980.

THE UNP GOVERNMENT has no solution for the problem of inflation. Its panacea is the provision more widely of employment so as to raise family incomes. The direct relief given to a favoured few through the income-support policy (actually the dole) has been abandoned. But unemployment has kept rising

despite extensive overmanning in every sector of the economy. In any event, mass unemployment has continued to characterise Sri Lanka's economy and seems to have become a permanent feature of our social scene. Whether the true figure is fifteen lakhs, as referred to by the President, or nine lakhs, as claimed by the Ministry of Plan Implementation, the affliction, socially, is too burdensome to be borne in our little island. Society is sagging beneath the weight of this now perennial problem.

Regardless of the deterioration of mass standards of living under conditions of raging inflation and mass unemployment, the Government has also gone forward relentlessly with another aspect of its socio-economic policies, namely, the dismantling of the welfare state which this country built up in the thirty years of independence up to 1977. Announced propagandistically in the name of the needs of development, the dismantling of the welfare state is in fact a fundamental part of the Government's increasingly open service of the bourgeois interest in Sri Lanka. The welfare state has over the years steadily eaten into the financial reserves of the capitalist class in Sri Lanka, until it became too costly to be borne by that class. Started by that class in its political interest in conditions of expanding parliamentary democracy, the post-war history of Sri Lanka shows that the capitalist class early found itself under the necessity of limiting closely this drain on its resources.

The principal symbol of state welfarism in Sri Lanka, namely, state-subsidised rice, came under attack — as was to be expected under a UNP government — as early as 1953 (Mr. D. S. Senanayake, doyen of UNP leaders, had introduced rice at 25 cts. a measure only a bare one-and-a-half years earlier!) The Government was compelled by the masses to retreat from that measure on that occasion (the great hartal of August 12, and 13, 1953); but every UNP government returned to the task under various guises. But it was only upon the achievement of unchallengeable power in 1977 that the UNP could not only return to the attack on the rice-subsidy but also widen the front of its advance to a mounting attack on the subsidy system as a whole. The basket of commodities made available by the State at specially low prices is now part of history and not a current reality; and the consumer has been left on all fronts at the

mercy of the rapacity which has always characterised the private trader in Sri Lanka.

The policy of passing on to the Sri Lanka consumer every increase in the international price of any commodity — a policy which the abolition of the subsidisation of consumer goods logically necessitates — adds to the burden this policy heaps on the consumer and also markedly to the inflationary process. It should be noted that the subsidy-withdrawal affects not only food and clothing but also transport costs, the health services and even free education, the last two of which are under attack in subtly-conceived ways. It is an offensive against the consumer by Government on all fronts and against all age groups, not excluding either the infants and children on the one hand or the aged and the sick on the other.

ANOTHER MASSIVE ASPECT of Government policy also has been presented in terms of the attack on the subsidy system, but is really an integral part of its policy of ensuring for private capital an unrestricted reign in Sri Lanka. In terms of that policy, not only the steady growth of the public sector of the Sri Lanka economy but also the very existence of that public sector is a scar on the face of capitalism. Accordingly, this Government has systematically, and often in subtly conceived ways, set about dismantling the public sector of the Sri Lanka economy.

The methods are broadly four: direct handing over of enterprises to the private sector is one (e.g., certain plantations): the conversion of public corporations into joint enterprises of state and private capital is another (the latest example is the Building Materials Corporation); a third method is to hand over to private sector firms the management of public enterprises (e.g., the Thulhiriya Textile Mill); the fourth is the opening of sections of the public sector exclusively reserved for the state to competition from private capital (the most crying example is the earliest major nationalisation formed by the mass movement, namely the Bus Transport Service. The private bus-owners skimming the cream of the business, are today eating into the very entrails of the Ceylon Transport Board, reducing to shambles many of its operations. The menace of this move of the government to their jobs has already been grasped by the Corporation's employees. They have reacted with violence against the private buses in

several places).

THE BASIC LINE OF THE UNP GOVERNMENT'S POLICY is the handing over of the Sri Lanka economy to private capital for unrestricted operation the so-called free economy. The question is not whether this is an attainable objective. The point is that it is being systematically pursued. And it is of paramount importance that the policy goes, no less for foreign capital than for indigenous capital; perhaps even more so for foreign capital than for indigenous capital. The outcome is the so-called open economy; that is to say a national economy open to the unobstructed operations of the international market and of foreign capital. A necessary incident of the open economy is a system of free imports and exchange free of serious controls and restrictions; all in the name of a competitive process which has long been overtaken in the capitalist world by monopoly processes.

Unrealistic policies, howsoever logically they may be pursued, lead to unanticipated results. And so it has been with the open economy policy. The sector of the economy to which this policy has given a genuine and strong impetus is that of the import trade. Our country has been flooded with a surfelt of imported commodities of the greatest variety which moved fast at the beginning but whose movement has slowed down in most cases to a point at which the financing has begun to break down because of the weight of unsold stocks and of unliquidated debts. Thus the import trade itself has come under new risks and dangers.

On the other hand, in the production branches of the economy, the manufacturing sector, especially the import substitution sector, has virtually collapsed with much of the capital formerly going into that sector getting diverted to the import and export trades. Small industry, the field in which the new mudalalies had most thriven, has been driven to the wall struggling for survival. As for big business in our country, where the big money is being made, most of it relies on becoming junior partners or simple agencies of foreign capital. In other words, the dependent character of our economy has been strengthened in new neo colonialist ways and the capitalist class of Sri Lanka is regaining its old compradors character on a new level. The process has been fortified by giving special constitutional

guarantees in Article 157 of the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

THERE IS MUCH MORE than can and perhaps should be included in this account of this Government's policies and actions in the period 1977-1980 ; especially of the impact on village agriculture of the inflationary increase in the cost of imports which, in the name of plantations agriculture has been accompanied by a decline in the volume of outputs. However, it is time we turned to other relevant aspects of government activity in this period other than in the field of economy.

As will be realised, and as is now becoming apparent, large sections of the people have begun to be not merely uneasy but to positively resent the adverse impact on their daily lives of the consequences of Government's above summarised policies. Government itself is not unaware of this resentment. How has it met the situation? Characteristically, by a hardening of its law and order policies. Characteristically also, it turned first upon the working class organisations whose activities were anyhow seen as an obstacle to the free functioning of the economy the Government was sponsoring.

No other section of the masses has moved against this Government during three and half years of UNP rule in the manner that the working class has moved. But the government, not unconscious of the possible reaction of the masses to the blows it has been striking, has engaged itself systematically in the same period strengthening its repressive apparatus and arming itself with various repressive laws.

The aim of the legislation referred to, such as anti-terrorist laws, which cast a wider net than is generally realized may be defined as that of passing into the ordinary law much of the repressive powers which previously were taken by Government only during declared emergencies. It is the steady strengthening of the repressive apparatus of the state against possible public disorder that is more striking. The police and armed forces have been doubled in these three and a half years ; they have been armed with deadlier modern weapons and trained in their use, not against any foreign foe but against the mass of the civilian population of their own country. The feared upsurge of the masses in desperation against their sharply deteriorating condition is what is being prepared against by the dispersal of armed centres of specially armed and

trained police, as also military units, throughout the country in preparation for instant action anywhere against any sign of mass action. Despite bold words from the President, this Government fears the masses they are oppressing.

(To Be Concluded)

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SCIENCE OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT—2

Export-Oriented Production

Prof. A. C. J. Weerakoon

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ment of Science,*

ANOTHER REASON that is often suggested for our failures to develop into prosperous nations, is the lack of scientists. It is correct that the 3rd World is short of scientists and technologists. But why have we not been able to remedy this condition in the long years since most of us attained our Freedom? We in Sri Lanka have had more than thirty years for the task — surely long enough to produce all the scientists and technologists we need. In any case, this shortage has been remedied, in India.

Independence there put Nehru in charge — a leader who was not satisfied merely to proclaim a belief in Science and Technology but who acted, early, to ensure that they were given their rightful place in decision making at the highest level. Soon, scientists and technologists were being produced in large numbers. Today India has a science and technology work-force of 1½ millions, the third largest in the world. And, as Dr. Pal, President of the Indian National Science Academy, told us 5 years ago, they have helped to fill India's granaries to overflowing, and to produce her Green Revolution.

And yet she continues to be an under developed country — with a per cap. GNP of a mere US\$ 180 as compared with example, New Zealand's US\$ 3,860 or Australia's US\$ 5,640. She has more than 250 million people existing on a food intake of less than 1,500 Cals/adult/day which means that almost 40% of her population are near starvation. Violence erupts, now here, now there. Even

as I work on this Address, comes news of demonstrators demanding to be given jobs or to be taken to jail. I am reminded of the slogans during the violence in Britain about 200 years ago, when peasants and unemployed workers rioted, burning manor-houses, wrecking factories. "Bread or Blood"; "Give us food or give us Death" — such were the cries then.

It is worth reminding ourselves that those were the times which led the economist Malthus to invent his Principle that men were ill-nourished, ill-clothed, ill-housed, because they bred too fast. It was all their fault. If they wanted to better their condition all they had to do was to cut down their birth-rate, reduce the population. The purpose of that "Theory" was to deflect the demand for radical change in the socio-economic system. And the purpose, today, of all the talk of population explosion is still the same — only now we have one of the UN Agencies, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities to organise and to fund this propaganda.

And I must say they are doing an excellent job of it. Almost all of us, administrators, politicians, publicists and scientists, can today be counted on to utter the proper fallacies about the population explosion and its effects in cancelling out all economic advancement. Unfortunately, the most efficient propaganda, in the most persuasive language — though it may sell us what we don't need or even what harms us — will not alter natural facts. Britain, with a population of about 7 million in 1798 when Malthus claimed she was over populated and hence poor, today has about 8 times that number of people within her boundaries; and she is not only not poor nor undernourished nor underdeveloped, she is one of the wealthy industrialised nations of the world.

Now, if all these — population explosion, race, climate, equilibrium of poverty, lack of scientists and so on — are not the reasons for the continuous 'poverty of the 3rd World, then what is? Before venturing to give you the answer it will be best if I examined briefly for their effects a few examples in which growth has been achieved in 3rd world countries.

In most underdeveloped countries of Asia there have been very significant increase in grain production similar to that in India which I have already mentioned. In Sri Lanka for example production of rice has increased from 0.88 million tons in 1960/61 to 1.94 million

tons in 1979/80 — doubling itself over the 2 Development Decades. This increase in grain production in the underdeveloped countries of Asia has been the outcome of many factors including extra acreage, cultural innovations, pest control and so on.

But to a very large extent it has been due to their production and use of high-yielding strains of the grain plants — the so-called "miracle strains". Today about 2/3 of all wheat-land and 1/4 of all rice land in Asia is shown to these improved strains. But, besides the greatly improved yields, averaging about 50% since 1960, there have also been other consequences. These improved strains have a much higher fertiliser demand — so much so that today 2/3rds of the commercial energy consumed in the rural areas of Asia consists of artificial fertiliser — and these fertilisers have, for the most part, to be imported from the industrial countries. Thus India in 1978 had to import 1.2 million tonnes. Indonesia, which has hitherto been unique in the Asian region in exporting fertiliser, has had this year to import nitrogen fertiliser.

All this means expenditure of Foreign Exchange. And fertiliser imports are not all that the increased harvest of our Green Revolution demand. More pesticide is needed, more agricultural machinery, like irrigation pumps and tractors and their spare parts more fuel oil — all of which not only push up imports for the country at large, and eat its foreign exchange but also push up input-costs for the individual farmer and makes him more vulnerable, particularly if he is a small farmer, to the results of crop failures and price fluctuations of imports and of harvest. The small farmers gradually succumb, so that landlessness has increased; with mechanisation rural unemployment has increased. And so the Green revolution has brought more poverty and lower standards of life to the underdeveloped world, despite a 50% average increase in food production and a 50% average increase in per cap GNP.

NEXT, let's look at the even more spectacular increases in production of certain foods for export, and the earning of Foreign Exchange — food like fresh and canned fruit, frozen fish and shell-fish, especially prawns, chilled fruit and frozen poultry. This export-

oriented Luxury Food Agri-business, began in Asia in the mid 1960s and it has grown so fast that today the Philippines is the World's largest exporter of pine apples and its 4th largest of bananas, whilst Thailand, starting as late as 1970 is today the world's 2nd largest exporter of pineapples. This luxury food business already accounts for 1/4 of the 3rd World's total exports of processed foods. Where does it all go? To Europe, America Japan — mainly to Japan which takes 3/4 of these exports from Asia.

Attracted by tax holidays and other fiscal concessions, and especially cheap labour, foreign business, especially US and Japanese multinational Corporations, have readily poured investment capital. Sometimes land is acquired for plantations, but generally the foreign organisation finds it preferable to work through local growers — companies or individuals — contracting with them to buy their produce, the unprocessed food, at pre-fixed purchase prices and providing in return, easy credit, fertilisers, pesticides and other necessary inputs.

These measures, together with their control of the marketing abroad of the processed foods, ensures that they control the industry and prices. Large profits are earned both by the foreign investors and the local growers considerable Foreign Exchange is earned by the host country — though perhaps not as much as it might seem, for almost all inputs needed for the processing factories and for the field stages of production, be they plantation, farm or fishery, have to be imported.

Moreover, the labourer and the peasant producer end up not being so happy; the labourer: because he is generally paid very poorly — for example the average daily wage of workers in the transnational banana business in the Philippines is about US \$ 1 per day, which places him below the Philippine poverty level; the small peasant-farmer; because frequent price fluctuations and unpredictable temporary gluts on the market ultimately force him first into heavy indebtedness and then, off his land.

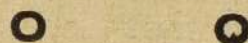
And the local consumer is not happy either. For those so-called luxury foods had, earlier, generally formed a necessary, though perhaps not regular part of his normal balanced diet — like the *ana-malu* bananas which are soon to

be exported by Sri Lanka to Japan; or the cheaper local vegetables which started going to the Middle East and elsewhere; or the prawns which even low income groups once ate but which today are a rarity on the tables of even the middling rich — because most of Sri Lanka's greatly increased catches of prawns have for some time now been exported, frozen, mainly to Japan.

But Sri Lanka is just at the beginning of this luxury food business, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines have been in it for some time; and today export about 80,000 tons of fish and prawns annually to Japan (about 37,000 tones being prawns) and, because of the consequent shortage of cheap fish for their peoples, have to import about 50,000 tons of canned fish, of poorer quality like the so-called "mackerel" from Japan.

We import this stuff too — only our misnomer for it is "salmon". Most of it is really excess tuna-bait-fish — now successfully catching 3rd World humans. As clever a process as that by which this export oriented luxury food agri business has converted perfectly ordinary tropical foods, which were luxuries in temperate countries, into luxuries for us.

To Be Concluded



SRI LANKA

Imminent Take-Off or Another IMF Experiment Gone Sour?

Neville D. Jayaweera,

(Formerly of the Ceylon Civil Service).

Vignette I

I drew up my car at a wayside boutique off a by road in rural Sri Lanka. I wanted to buy a packet of cigarettes. I was surprised to find the shop sold imported British cigarettes at the equivalent of 45p. a packet of 20! And the shelves were stacked with canned foodstuffs, all imported, such as one would find in any British grocery store. Somewhat surprised I asked the shopkeeper, "whoever buys these goods? Who has the money?" And he gave me a simple lesson in supply and demand economics — "If no one bought them would I be so foolish as to stock them? I cannot replenish my stocks fast enough," he moaned.

This, in rural Sri Lanka! And these same shelves were bereft of goods, imported or otherwise, just three years ago.

Vignette 2

The taxi I had hired was threading its way at four miles an hour through the throng of Colombo's morning traffic and I got so talking with the driver. "Everyone seems to be prosperous around here now," I ventured tentatively. He glanced at me in disbelief. "You must be visiting here?" he inquired. I nodded. "Yes," he replied. "There is a great deal of prosperity for some. The high government officials, the politicians, the foreigners and the businessmen are doing fine. But our misery no one understands. I have four children and a wife and we cannot afford more than one meal a day, and fish or meat only once a week. Instead of providing us with milk the government is giving us televisions and constructing skyscrapers."

Anyone who visits Sri Lanka today, after an absence of three to four years cannot help being impressed by the staggering and ubiquitous evidence of economic activity. By the end of the ill fated "socialist" experiment of the Bandaranaike regime in 1977 the economy had virtually ground to a standstill. The unintelligent pursuit of seemingly egalitarian and welfarist policies, a sharp decline in agricultural and industrial production, low capital formation, an administration riddled with corruption and nepotism had, cumulatively, over a period of seven years, virtually brought the country to the brink of economic disaster. Evidence of this condition was ubiquitous — widespread shortages, lengthening queues, massive unemployment, a political insurrection of unparalleled virulence and the curtailment of civic freedoms.

Today, however, within three years of the assumption to power of Sri Lanka's strongman, J. R. Jayawardena, there has been a radical transformation of the scene—at least so it seems to the casual spectator. The economy is humming. Never before in the 33-year history of post-independent Sri Lanka has such a volume of activity surged through the economy as today. "Modernisation" and "developmentism" are being pursued with an enthusiasm that is almost demonic. Massive highrise buildings have transformed Colombo's landscape almost overnight.

A prestigious new capital city bearing the same name as that of President Jayawardane

is being constructed hastily. Foreign banks, newly opened, now dot Colombo's main thoroughfares. Tourists are pouring in by hundreds of thousands. Hotel rooms are booked out two years in advance. The largest development project ever undertaken in the history of the country, the diversion of Sri Lanka's longest river to provide irrigation to two-thirds of the country, has been telescoped from 30 years as originally planned by Dudley Senanayake, into a breathtaking six-year time schedule. Colombo is fast being transformed into another Singapore—at least that is the ambition and the make-belief. How did all this come about? And what is the reality that lurks behind this facade?

J. R. Jayawardena has always been the arch-exponent of the free enterprise system. He has never cared to conceal it. For three decades he waited patiently in the wings. By 1977, after 30 years of independence, Sri Lanka had finally exhausted her capacity for continuing with Keynesian economics and redistributive "socialism." There was nothing left to distribute. The economy had run aground. At the General Elections of 1977 the people gave their verdict unequivocally. The Bandaranaike party was reduced to a rump. The once awesome Trotskyite left was decimated. Jayawardena was given a three-fourths majority in Parliament, the most devastating victory ever secured by any party in Sri Lanka.

The scene was set for Jayawardena to get to work, to implement his economic philosophy. He hitched his wagon to the IMF star. He told them in effect "You do not have to tell us what to do. We want to do all that, and more in any case. Exchange control restrictions were lifted. The economy was thrown open to foreign investments. Trade was liberalised. Unlimited repatriation of profits and tax-holidays were thrown in. The rupee was devalued by almost 75%. The dismantling of the massive welfare structures built up by successive governments of both the left and the right, rapidly got underway. Trade Unions were silenced.

The administration was revamped with "loyalists" right down the structures. And using the overwhelming power of his majority in Parliament, legitimising every decision by recourse to "legality" and "constitutionality" he progressively rendered the expression of dissent impracticable or farcical. **Where has the Jayawardena experiment of IMF**

dictated development led Sri Lanka to? Let us assess the situation using only statistics put out both by the last Central Bank report and by the Minister of Finance in his 1981 Budget Speech.

Economic growth has fallen off from 8.2% in 1978, to 6.2% in 1979 to 5.6% in 1980. Agricultural output has fallen off from 5% growth in 1978, to 2% in 1979 and to 1.7% in 1980. The balance of payments deficit on the current account stood at 1 billion rupees in 1978. It rose to 3.5 billion in 1979. It now stands at 5 billion. These deficits have been financed principally by IMF SDRs and foreign aid.

Import prices have been rising by 52% whereas export prices have risen only by 9%. The volume of imports have risen by 23% whereas the volume of exports has risen only by 1%. Expenditures on imports rose by 38% in 1980 whereas earnings on exports increased only by 16%. The consumer price index which rose by 15% in 1979 increased by 32% in 1980.

The Minister of Finance says inflation is running only at 25%, but Central Bank officials admit privately that it is nearer 40%. The money supply increased by 11% in 1978 and by 28% in 1979. In a gross turn-over of 31.5 billion rupees, the 1981 budget shows a deficit of 15 billions. Of the overall budget, 40% is diverted to recurrent expenditure in sharp contrast to 13% on recurrent expenditure in India, 16% in Pakistan, 20% in Singapore, 23% in Malaysia and 19% in South Korea. But it is not recurrent expenditure that has absorbed the financial cuts needed to bridge the massive deficit. It is the development projects that have had their expenditure slashed by 30%. And unemployment is still running at 15% of the employable work force.

The reality is that the IMF oriented free enterprise dependent capitalism of Jayawardena has gone into a deep crisis. In an international situation of deepening recession, rising costs, spiralling inflation and mounting unemployment, Jayawardena has hitched his wagon to a falling star and the fortunes of his government are no longer within his means to determine. They will be determined by the internal dynamics of international capitalism in crisis.

The IMF is the conduit through which the convulsions of the global

capitalist system are being transmitted to Sri Lanka. Today Sri Lanka is dependent massively on external aid flows. She is the world's highest receiver of foreign aid. Sri Lanka receives \$65 per capita per annum which is one-third the per capita income GNP for the country. For how long more can Jayawardena expect to receive these aid flows? And when they dry up, as they will, what then?

At least one thing Jayawardena has proved. There can never be a return to the starry-eyed, economic, social-welfarism of the last 30 years. There can be no re-distributive socialism without socialist relations of production. The trouble is that socialist relations of production have never been established anywhere in the world within a bourgeois liberal-democratic political framework to which Sri Lanka has been incorrigibly wedded for the past 50 years.

Jayawardena has committed Sri Lanka irreversibly, for at least two to three decades to a programme of capitalist development. But capitalist development does not have to be of the dependent comprador variety to which Jayawardena seems wedded. It is well to remember what Eugene Black, one-time President of the World Bank said of US foreign aid programmes.

"Our foreign aid programmes constitute distinct benefit to American business. Three major benefits are: (1) Foreign aid provides a substantial and immediate market for US goods and services; (2) Foreign aid stimulates the development of new overseas markets for US companies; (3) Foreign aid orients national economics towards a free enterprise system in which US firms can prosper."

The next phase in Sri Lanka's development post Jayawardena may be to disengage from dependence on IMF oriented growth and to build up a truly indigenous capitalist base as a precursor to a serious socialist programme.

Soviet Foreign Policy

By Gennady Gerasimov

Moscow, Feb. 16,

The new US President's first invective remarks against the Soviet Union have caused anxiety about the future of Soviet-American relations. Ronald Reagan's statements at the January 29 press conference are based on hostile preconceptions of pseudo-analyses made by Sovietologists hidebound by cold war mentality. Specifically, Mr. Reagan said that he didn't have to think for an answer as to what the Soviets' intentions were. He bluntly said that the aim of the Soviet Union was "the promotion of world revolution and a one-world socialist or communist state." Moreover, the new American President said he was convinced that the Soviet Union would do anything to attain this goal and hurried to accuse it of supporting international terrorism. To back up his claim, President Reagan said that this alleged support was "more than once repeated by Soviet leaders in the various congresses."

The method of quoting from the original is commendable in itself, but the question is whether Mr. Reagan had time to study the records of the Soviet Communist Party congresses.

The first foreign-policy act of the Soviets in 1917 was the Decree on Peace. The Western powers, including the United States, replied to it by unleashing a war of intervention against Soviet Russia. The Tenth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, which was held in 1921, said this in its resolution: "For three years the capitalist powers tried to overthrow Soviet power by means of armed attacks." Nevertheless, the resolution said that every opportunity should be used to arrange new "relations between the Soviet republic and the capitalist countries on the basis of treaties and agreements." The Fourteenth Party Congress held in 1925 instructed the Central Committee "to pursue a policy of peace which be in the centre of the government's foreign policy and to determine all its main activities."

The Sixteenth Party Congress held in 1930 authorised the Central Committee "to continue to pursue a vigorous and consistent policy of peace." And so on up till now. The Twenty-Fourth Congress held in 1971 adopted the

Peace Programme. It was extended by the Twenty-Fifth Congress which took place in 1976. As a result of the implementation of the Peace Programme, the seventies brought about a relaxation of international tension. A series of agreements was signed between the Soviet Union and the United States.

The Twenty-Sixth Congress which is to open later this month will undoubtedly reaffirm the fundamental objectives of the Soviet foreign policy and map out new ways of promoting peace, international cooperation and freedom and independence of the peoples.

The Soviet Party congresses also express support for the progressive changes in the world. The American foreign policy is also concerned with change. It is the changes, however, that often cause tension in Soviet-American relations. Suffice it to recall Angola, for example. Many American university experts on international affairs advise that Washington "ride with the tide." The people in the American halls of power, however, seem bent on heeding only one adviser: it is their almost morbid fear of change. They are afraid of changes, since they can reduce the sphere of American control. Yet, changes are "in the course of human events," and the Declaration of Independence proclaimed one such change. The Soviet Union believes that the world is undergoing an objective process of renewal and that this process cannot be checked by any obstacles. At the same time, it cannot be speeded up by the "export or revolution," for example, since revolutions break out at the right place and at the right time.

To accuse the Soviet Union of seeking to create "a one-world state" by promoting world revolution is to ascribe to it the Trotskyist thesis about the promotion of world revolution by waging a revolutionary war against imperialism. Our Party has long overcome Trotskyist deviations in fierce inner-Party struggle, and to speculate about Soviet ties with international terrorism means to ascribe to Leninism the methods used by Nechayev, a terrorist whom Lenin condemned from the very start. According to the American journal *Foreign Policy*, the Carter administration was responsible for "disintegration of US policy toward the Soviet Union." The Reagan administration might have begun settling problems with the other nuclear power, in order

of their succession and importance, with heeding Moscow's signal indicating the Soviet Union's readiness to improve relations with the United States. It preferred, however, to adopt the "retro" style, as if the world has not changed since the fifties, a decade of misunderstanding and hostility—APN.

SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

Feb. 16 — Feb. 22

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

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

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16: The Ministry of Industries has obtained the services of four international organisations to upgrade locally manufactured products to international standards, Ministry Secretary, Justin Dias said yesterday; at the instance of the Industries and Scientific Affairs Minister Cyril Mathew, the services of the United National Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), British Executive Services Overseas (BESO), American International Executive Service Corps (IESC) and the Japanese Association for the Promotion of International Technical Cooperation (APIC) have been obtained for the purpose. Government has decided to enact legislation to prevent sale of private lands to non-nationals and regulate release of lands and building property to them; at present foreigners cannot be legally prevented from acquiring privately owned lands—CDN. The Minister of Justice, Dr. Nissanka Wijeratne, has proposed higher salary scales for the Judiciary on the recommendation of the Salaries Review Committee; the Chief Justice, Supreme Court Judges, the President of the Court of Appeal and Judges of the Court of Appeal will receive increases ranging from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1000 per month. The acute shortage of pasteurised and sterilised milk in the retail outlets is due to the purchase of this milk, in bulk, by com-

mercial enterprises for the making of yoghurt, ice cream, faluda, etc., some of these establishments also sell pasteurised and sterilised milk to ships at Rs. 8 a pint; this has been revealed in investigations conducted by the National Milk Board. Shramadana and voluntary assistance should be encouraged and sought in developmental projects in the country, the Committee of Development Secretaries who examined the utilisation of monies in the decentralised budgets have recommended. Two million rupees worth of cannabis safiva (ganja) has been uprooted and destroyed in the first two days of a massive joint operation carried out in the Galge area by the Police and the Air Force. Sri Lanka's second Tea Rehabilitation Project costing Rs. 1047 million to revive the dwindling tea industry in two key producing regions will get under way this year; the project intended to "arrest the declining trend in production" will cover upcountry and low country; it will be jointly executed by the Janatha Estates Development Board (JEDB), the State Plantations Corporation (SPC) and the Tea Small Holdings Development Authority (TSHDA). An exodus of engineers and technicians from the multimillion Lunugamvehera project (Kirindi Oya scheme) designed to bring under the plough about 32,000 acres of land — both paddy and highland crops — has tremendously slowed work on the project, a River Valleys Development Board spokesman said—SU. A power cut in Colombo will be enforced for 4 hours from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. from next Friday, a four-hour power cut will also be enforced in other areas from Friday but these will be at different times—CO. The earlier relationship between the Sri Lanka Freedom Party and the other Left parties is being renewed; political sources feel that this renewed relationship will result in the formation of a strong joint opposition front in the country—VK.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17: Transport and Transport Board Minister, M. H. Mohamed yesterday reconstituted the Sri Lanka Central Transport Board and dissolved the nine regional Boards; the new Transport Board, headed by the Secretary, Ministry of Transport Board, Dr. Gamini C. Wijesekera has been given six months to discipline the staff, eliminate corruption and show profits. Sri Lanka will receive 100 million US dollars the largest over project loan from the World Bank; negotiations are now on, due to be finalised shortly for this

aid package to System C of the Accelerated Mahaweli Project, sources in Colombo said yesterday —CDN. The role played by monetary incentives for sterilisations was clearly indicated yesterday, following the reduction of these payments for voluntary sterilisations; officials of the Family Health Bureau who used to handle an average of 50 operations daily, said that only two persons had come to the Bureau to get themselves sterilised yesterday; this follows the reduction of the Rs. 500 payment per person introduced in October last year, to Rs. 200 with effect from yesterday, February 16—SU.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18 : Sri Lanka's coconut fibre industry is in a state of near crisis with supply orders from abroad not coming in and local shippers drastically reducing purchases; effects of global recession and increased competition from substitutes point to a bleak future for the local fibre industry. A Trading House is to be set up by the Government either here or abroad to promote the sale of "Pure Ceylon Tea": this was decided upon at a recent Cabinet sub-committee meeting as one of several steps to be adopted in a tea promotional drive to be launched by the Sri Lanka Tea Board, Public Administration and Plantation Industries Minister Maj. Montague Jayawickrema said. Air Lanka's first fully-owned wide-bodied aircraft, the second Tristar L 1011 which was purchased from a Japanese carrier, will be flown into Sri Lanka by its Chairman Captain Rakita Wikramanayake in late March this year official sources said yesterday—CDN. Venereal diseases in the 10—19 years age group are increasing at an alarming rate and what is even more distressing is that 40 percent of these cases have had their origins in homosexual relations; this is what Dr. H. C. B. Premachandra Superintendent, Anti-VD Campaign told the press yesterday. The new Chairman of the re-constituted Sri Lanka Central Transport Board, Dr. Gamini Wijesekera, is facing a major problem; he is finding it difficult to raise the necessary funds to open letters of credit with the banks to import several million rupees worth of spare parts urgently required to run the Board's fleet of buses. The Minister of Finance and Planning, Mr. Ronnie de Mel and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, Mr. Cheorghe Delgu, discussed the whole range of economic cooperation between Sri Lanka and Romania—CDM. The Government is to introduce urgent

amendments to the Land Reform Commission law to make provision for all lands belonging to private owned companies to be vested with the Commission. Air Lanka announced yesterday that it would be introducing its first fully owned widebody aircraft a Tristar L 1011 on extended routes from April. SLFP leader Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike has offered to step down if there is any legal impediment to her continuing in office; she made this announcement at a public rally at Amparai last week—SU. Two different fares will have to be paid for travel in CTB buses from 1st March in that a separate fare will have to be paid for entering the bus; for travelling a single section (one mile approximately) the entrance fare will be 30 cents and the travelling fare will be 20 cents; for travel beyond one section, the entrance fare will be 40 cents and the travel fare will be 20 cents per section—DP. Out of the 400 students selected for entry in to the Medical Faculty of Universities only 93 are Tamils; last year 175 students were selected—VK.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19 : The Ceylon Petroleum Corporation has suspended fuel supplies to the Cement Corporation which owes the CPC about Rs. 100 million; the Fertiliser Manufacturing Corporation which owes the CPC around Rs. 170 million has asked for "a few more weeks" to pay up. The State Plantations Corporation and the Janatha Estates Development Board have set up a five-million rupee company Estate Products Ltd., to buy and sell here and abroad vegetable, fruit and dairy produce from the plantations. Ministers from five South-Asian countries have so far confirmed their attendance at the Ministerial Conference of the inaugural meeting of the 10-nation South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) which will be declared open by the Prime Minister, Mr. R. Premadasa at the BMICH on February 23. OPEC will give Sri Lanka a loan of Rs. 270 million of which Rs. 180 million will be Commodity aid, Minister of State and Cabinet spokesman Anandatissa de Alwis told pressmen yesterday at the weekly briefing on Cabinet affairs. The Independence Day parade will be held in Colombo on March 4, the day will be declared a public holiday; Independence Day celebrations on February 4 scheduled to be held in Anuradhapura were postponed due to an outbreak of cholera in the district. Special preference in promotions will be given

to graduates who join the SLAS on a recommendation of the Minister of Education, Employment and Youth Affairs—CDN. The Department of Census and Statistics has finalised arrangements for the preliminary Census of Population and Housing from March 1 to March 10—CDM. Five major political parties will hold a joint May Day rally this year; this was decided at a meeting of representatives of the five parties held on Tuesday at the SLFP headquarters at Darley Road—SU. The government has come forward to give financial assistance to Hindu temples and Hindu Organisations for the welfare of such temples and organisations—VK.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20: Health Minister Gamani Jayasuriya is considering a proposal to decentralise the anaesthetists' pool in the Colombo General Hospital to solve the problem of long waiting lists for routine operations in the Colombo Group of Hospitals—CDN. The construction of working class and middle class housing schemes will be given priority by the Government this year—CDN. The entire industrial sector and commercial establishments in the country will again have to face a tremendous increase in their monthly electricity bills from next month, the Ceylon Electricity Board warned yesterday that the fuel adjustment charges which are levied in addition to the charges for the electricity consumed would be increased by nearly 100 per cent. Students of the Jaffna University yesterday staged a demonstration against the admission scheme to the varsities. The Police and the Sri Lanka Bar Association at recent discussions have agreed on certain guidelines to which will stick in order to "improve" relations between the Police and legal community in the country—SU. The Deputy Minister of the Agricultural Development and Research Mr. K. D. M. C. Bandara said in Parliament yesterday the Land Development Act introduced by the previous regime will be used for the same purpose by this government as was intended by the previous government; he further said that there were certain shortcomings in the Act which will be rectified shortly—VK.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21: Deputy Minister of Higher Education A. M. R. B. Attanayake yesterday assured Parliament there had been no irregularities in the selection of students for admission to Universities; he said the University Grants Commission had to

work under tremendous pressure to finalise the admissions in view of the limited time the Grants Commission could not be blamed for any shortcomings. The District Court of Colombo yesterday dismissed with costs the application made by the Land Reform Commission to dissolve an enjoining order which the Court had issued in January 28 granting Grand Central Ltd., the management of 32,000 acres of tea and rubber land here. The Lunugamvehera project, which was estimated to cost Rs. 900 million; will now cost Rs. 1530 million because of escalated costs; this is a serious problem the government has to contend with; Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel told newsmen yesterday—CDN. An upward revision of the salaries of professionals, including doctors and engineers, is in the offing; according to informed sources this move is aimed at preventing the exodus of professionals to foreign countries; several Ministries have recommended a revision of salaries of the professionals—CDM. Young Sri Lankan girls have become the latest recruits of big-time drug smugglers bringing in hashish and opiates from the infamous "Golden Crescent" (region round Pakistan and Afghanistan) into the country customs sources said yesterday. Several State industrial concerns will be asked to use wood charcoal in a bid to curb the consumption of fuel; a top level government Committee is now studying the lines on which this alternative energy source should be introduced; a report from the Ministry of Lands and Land Development before the Committee lists the Ceylon Cement Corporation's factories at Puttalam and Kankasanturai, the State Plantations Corporation, the Janatha Estate Development Board and the Ceylon Ceramics Corporation as some of the state concerns where the use of wood charcoal could minimise the use of fuel. A White paper on the proposed establishment of Sanghadikarana Sabhas to sanction the state authority and the extension of the states' enforcement apparatus to ensure that the decision of the Buddhist Priesthood in connection with compliance with the Vinaya and Kathika watha Codes, was presented in Parliament by Cultural Affairs Minister E.L. B. Hurulle—SU.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22: The power crisis gripping the country is absolutely desperate and the Ceylon Electricity Board fears that a total island-wide blackout may overtake Sri Lanka after the first week of April, this will mean that water supplies, sewerage disposal

and all industrial activity will come to a complete halt. A warm welcome awaits the Crown Prince and Princess of Japan Prince Akihito and Princess Michiko when they arrive in Sri Lanka on March 2, as guests of honour at the National Day celebrations to be held on March 4, exactly six decades after the last imperial Japanese visit. The Surgical Intensive Care Unit of the General Hospital Colombo is to be re-structured updated and better equipped to cater to patients seeking cardio vascular surgery—SO. The Ministry of Textile Industries will strictly enforce regulations that all textiles imported by garment manufacturers should have the stamp “not for sale” in the selvedge of the fabric and also carry the name of the manufacturer. The Government is considering a proposal to set up an anti-Corruption Unit directly under the President; the unit will comprise the Auditor-General the Commissioner of Inland Revenue, the Attorney-General and Police Officers of the rank of Deputy Inspector General; the high-powered anti-corruption unit will be modelled on the lines of the unit operating in Singapore which is answerable only to the Prime Minister on all matters. A Swede proposes to manufacture Maldivian fish on a big scale in Sri Lanka in collaboration with a local entrepreneur; he proposes manufacture 100,000 lbs of Maldivian fish annually, at a cost of Rs. 1,045 million—ST. A collegiate level education will shortly replace the G.C.E. Advanced Level system; this new level of education which will fall outside general education and will prepare students for the universities and other higher academically oriented educational institutions. The Ceylon Electricity Board has been compelled to immediately halt the issuing of new power connections to fresh constructions in the city and the Greater Colombo area—VK.

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

CURRENCY	PER 100 UNITS	
	Buying Rate	Selling Rate
U.S. Dollar	Rs. 1812.50	Rs. 1815.50
Sterling Pound	Rs. 4239.00	Rs. 4245.00
Deutsche Mark	Rs. 845.70	Rs. 847.30
French Franc	Rs. 367.00	Rs. 367.70
Japanese Yen	Rs. 8.9150	Rs. 8.9300
Indian Rupees	Rs. 222.30	Rs. 222.70

Govt. Notices.



The Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 Of 1964. Notice Under Section 7

Ref. No: 3/61/203
03J.76 L.849

It is intended to acquire the Land/Lands described in the Schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 130 (Part III) of 27.02.1981.

Schedule

Name of Village etc.: Gangoda village in Mayurawathi Korale, Kuliyaipitiya D.R.O.'s Division, Kurunegala District.

Name of Land : Kotuwewela Kumbura
Plan and Lot No: Lot Nos. 4, 5 and 6 in Supplement No. 1 in F.V.P. 948

H. M. W. Chandraratne

District Land Officer, Kurunegala District.
The Kachcheri,
Kurunegala. 30th January 1981

My No. EA/3/327

The Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) As Amended By The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act. No. 28 Of 1964 Notice Under Section 7

It is intended to acquire the land described below for a public purpose. For further particulars, please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 130 (Part III) of 27-02-1981.

Situation : Situated in the village of Kuda Heenatiyangala in Ward No. Kuda Heenatiyangala and Ward No. 4 Basket Hall within the U.C. Limits of Kalutara in the D.R.O.'s Division of Kalutara Totamuna North in Kalutara District Western Province.

Name of land : 1. Welabodawatta assmt. No. 33 De Alwis IPlace.

2. Anikkawatta Assmt. No. 44/4 Marikkar Street, Names of lands No. 3 to 13 contd. in page 2

Lots & Plan No : Lots 1 to 13 shown in S.G.'s Plan No. P.P. Ka 1749.

Mahinda Gammampila

Asst. Govt. Agent, Kalutara District.
Kalutara Kachcheri, 12th February, 1981.

Confidentially

Plantations

IS IT NOT SIGNIFICANT that any comment on the plantations evokes a great deal of readership interest? That the reference in this column to the JEDB SLSPC on 17.1.1981 brought us many telephone calls and letters? That one came from a reader, Alan Ratnayake, from Nuwara Eliya? That we reproduce below some of the points he raised? "That your article about the SLSPC and the JEDB in your issue of the 17th Jan 1981 was no doubt interesting, but unfortunately certain essential aspects which should have been dealt with were not? That the 'shot-in-the-arm' grants of Rs. 120 million and Rs. 80 million respectively to the JEDB and the SLSPC were given for essential capital investment. But what happened? That the Rs. 80 million given to the SLSPC, no sooner it was lodged in the bank, was set off against the Rs. 357 million overdraft which the Bank had given to the SLSPC? That this Rs. 357 million was costing the SLSCP Rs. 5 million by way of interest per month? That when the present management took over in 1977 the SLSPC had Rs. 100 million in fixed deposits in the Bank earning the Corporation Rs. 15 million in interest a year? That within six months of the present administration taking over, the 100 million was withdrawn and spent and the overdraft began an upward rise like the thermometer on a hot Feb/March afternoon? That it is also interesting to know from the authorities as to how many years final accounts are in arrears since they took over and whether the annual administration reports of the Chairman have been published for the last three years? That the losses in the two organisations are fantastic and is mainly due to mismanagement and spending like nobody's business? That there appears to be no financial control of any sort? That losses are also due to thefts of tea, not in pounds and kilograms, but in lorry loads? That, some lorry loads were caught by the Police and had to be released on a telephone call from a V.I.P.? Central Bank has pointed out a drop in production in tea was 10% in 1979 and a further 7% in the first half of 1980% That drop in production of rubber is in the region of 11%

or so? That dozens of experienced planters in both organisations have resigned and some have joined the Mahaweli Project and others the private sector? That this exodus of experienced personnel from these organisations is a matter that must be investigated? That the cost of workers' cottages has been inflated so high that the number that can be built with the available funds is limited? **That if there is any inexactitudes or mis-statements in what reader Alan Ratnayake has written, we invite corrections or clarifications from others who know about the current developments in the plantations?**



ON FEB. 28

Father Pio Ciampo of Kahawatte has informed *Tribune* that the minority Tamil and plantation workers community in the Nivitigala-Kahawatatte electorate hope to present a memorandum to the President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene when he visits the area on February 28, containing a few "common requests." **Health:** The removal of the Rs. 3/50 per day to be paid for the plantation worker by the Manager and the increase of the government health grant, from the heartless Rs. 0.50 per year to at least Rs. 5/ per year (N.B. Health Ordinance of 1912: Rs. 0.35 to be paid to the Hospital by the estate, while the Government paid Rs. 0.50 per year for medicines. A few years ago the Rs. 0.35 was unilaterally increased to Rs. 3.50 while the Rs. 0.50 remains Rs. 0.50.) **Education:** The Tamil students in the Kahawatte area remain without a Tamil Vidyalam building. Hence they are compelled to use the building of the Junior Sinhala School in the afternoon, with much inconvenience and one hour of teaching per day, since the school begins at 1 p.m. and closes at 5.30 p.m. The appointment of 400 new Tamil teachers was promised last year for January 81. So far teachers have not been appointed and one teacher-for-five-classes still remains a sad reality in the former (E) State schools of the Plantations.

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A Competition Of French Songs

A Competition of French songs for non-French speaking countries has been organised by the Department of Cultural Relations of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Alliance Française of Colombo. This competition which will take place in this year (application closes on 1st September 1981) is open for writers-composers-interpreters of non-French speaking countries.

The participants of non-French speaking origin, are expected to write songs in French. The scores and texts of these songs must be original i.e. they have never been published or recorded before.

The organisers wish that the melodies of the songs to be composed in local rhythms (samba in Brazil, tango or bolero in Argentina, cumbia in Colombia..... baila in Sri Lanka etc.....) in order that these newly created songs be the expression of a true cultural dialogue.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

The applications close on 1st September 1981.

1. The writers-composers-interpreters must send the text, the score and the recorded cassette of their song to the Alliance Française of Colombo (54, Ward Place, Colombo 7) or to the Cultural Sections of the French Embassy in Sri Lanka (89, Rosemead Place, Colombo 7). Their name, nationality and full address will have to be written on the cassette.
2. Participation in this competition is free of charge.
3. Each writer-composer-interpreter is allowed to present a maximum of three songs.
4. The jury, composed of representatives of the Department of Cultural Relations, of the Alliance Française, certain number of personalities and specialists of the song world, will meet in Paris and announce the results by 31st December 1981.

PRIZES

According to the quality of the songs sent, one, two or three prizes will be awarded. They will consist of:

- A — A round-trip ticket from the country of residence to Paris and back.
- B — A 15-day stay in France (allowance of 500 Francs per day).
- C — The recording of the prize-winning songs by a record company and their broadcast by RTL.
- D — 500 copies of this record will be distributed to the Alliance Françaises throughout the world.
- E — This record will also be sent to the record libraries of the Embassies.

Ambassade De France A Sri Lanka
Service D'Informrtion Et De Presse

89, Rosemead Place, Colombo 7.

Space Donated