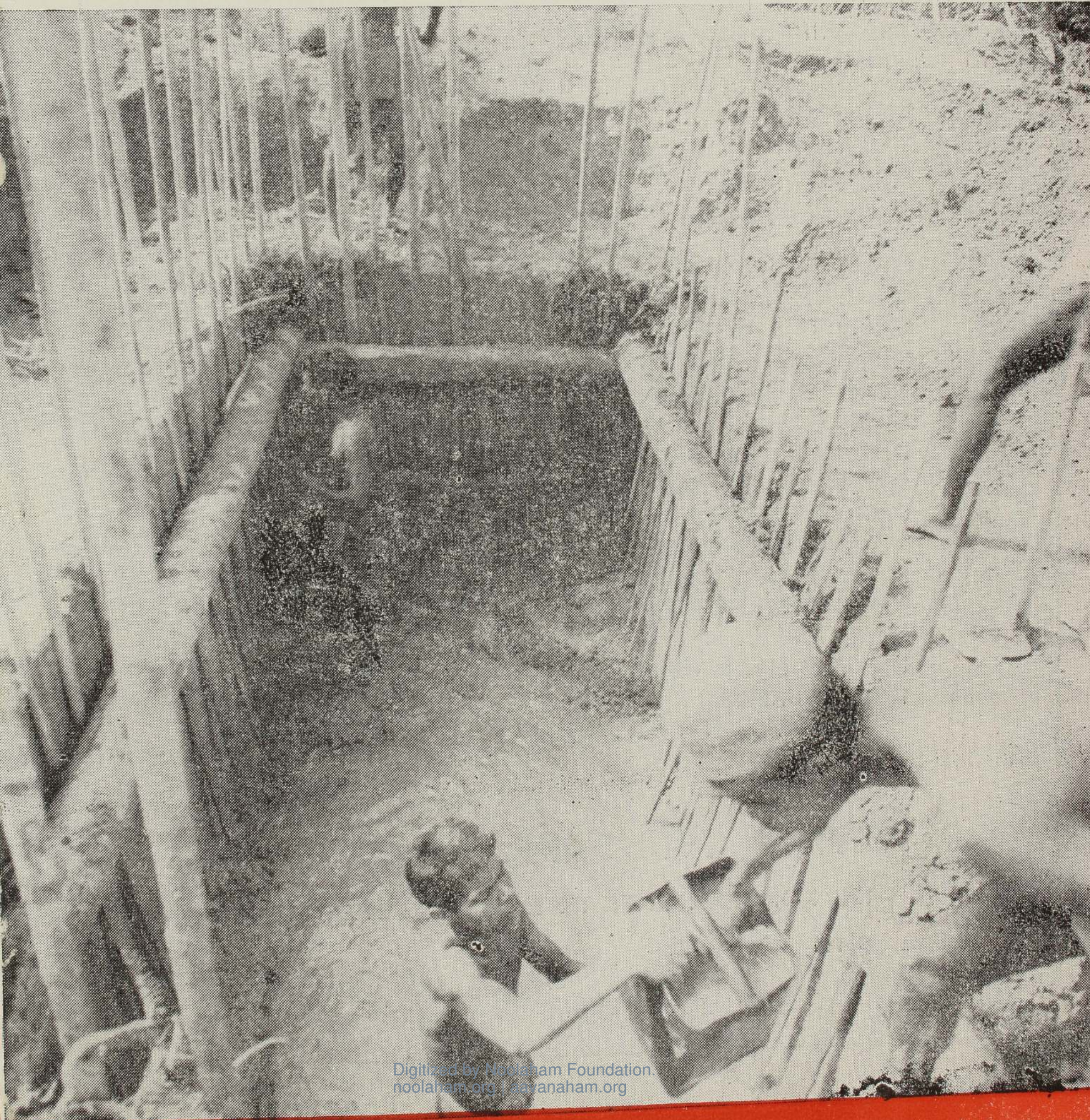


TRIBUNE



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Letter From the Editor

NOT SINCE COLONIAL TIMES have the the people of this country witnessed an official act quite so pointedly and- native and anti-Buddhist as the seizure by the Customs of the book, **A Buddhist Spectrum**. The auther of this book, Marco Pallis, as Justice, Minister, Nissanka Wijeyeratne, explained in Parliament, is not merely a Buddhist writer of eminence, he is also a universally respected exponent of the Theory Knowledge (to use the Minister's words) by which, as we understand it, he means that this writer is one of the few great exponents of The Perennial Philosophy or Sanatana Dharma, and indeed he was named by Ananda Coomaraswamy as such. Not only Buddhists therefore but followers of other religions too, stand to gain by reading his new book on the Buddihst point of view. And yet, despite the fact that its attention was drawn to the matter on 22 January, the Government took no steps to see that the books were released.

Not only the educated public but the man in the street who has followed the intervention in Parliament is naturally asking why this book was impounded and held for so many weeks. This question is being asked because we have not really been told. We know that the Principal Collector of Customs is empowered by law to seize any any book which, in his pinion, contains references insulting to any religious teacher or to ohis teachings. but we also realise that it is extremely unlikely that so great a writer, and so devout a Buddhist as this author is said to be, would insult the religion which he embraced many ago with deep conviction. Inevitably, the public suspects that there is some other, possibly extra-legal, reason for the seizure; what, therefore, we ask is the reason? We do want to know. Let us approach the question form another angle. For example, the Principal Collector is supposed to forfeit all books of an excessively salacious nature. Does this necessitate his reading every juicy novel from cover to cover lest a four-letter word be found lurking in some corner? Surely not. The Principal Collector, if he is a literate man and reasonably well educated, when he takes up a piece of erotica will soon perceive whether or not it goes beyond a certain limit. If he is doubtful at first sight, he will clearly need to detain the book for more careful examination. But he will hardly require the assistance of a sexologist to decide whether the book should be banned and certainly he will not need several weeks to make up his mind. While there is no apparent connection between religion aud pornography, the blasphemous like the salacious can usually be detected at a glance! What in Marco Pallis' serious book did the Principal Collector see that made him think the book may be disparaging of the Buddha or his teachings? Will he please tell us? If he will not tell us, will the Minister of Finance please hold an inquiry and then take the public into his confidence? The public simply must be told the facts, and the public

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must not be ignored or be pushed aside with palpably unconvincing statements. The public have the right to know the truth, and no platitudinous speeches about democratic freedoms can be a substitute for that right.

It is invariably held that, in a democracy, a citizen who suffers an injustice at the hands of the authorities has the means of obtaining redress. He can, it is said, go before a Court of Law. But we know that in practice this is very largely untrue because few people particularly in a society such as ours, can afford so expensive a proceeding. The gravest injustices are committed by callous bureaucrats who take cruel advantage of the helplessness of the majority of citizens. The Institute of Traditional Studies (co-publisher, with the prestigious British firm of Allen & Unwin, of **A Buddhist Spectrum**), its patience exhausted, finally went before the Court of Appeal for a Writ of Mandamus on the Principal Collector of Customs. Should any organisation, particularly one devoted to such noble purposes as the study of traditional values and comparative religion, be thwarted in its commendable activities and be put to the expense and inconvenience of taking such a step? If we are not shocked by this state of affairs, it must be because we are indifferent to the erosion of our fundamental rights which, as we are frequently told, are guaranteed by the Constitution.

Immediately after the petition was filed, the Principal Collector wrote to the Institute informing them that they could have the books but, a few days later, when the Institute's clearing agents called to remove the books, the Customs again refused to hand them over! Is further evidence needed of the arbitrariness of the initial seizure? A bona fide, legal detention of goods can surely be recognised for what it is; if the whole episode concerning **A Buddhist Spectrum** does not reek of the mala fide, then what does? Will the Government take appropriate action? Will they?

COVER ON OUR OWN

ON THE COVER we have a picture of gemming in the traditional way it has been done over the centuries. Modern machines and sophisticated technology can no doubt do gemming faster, more thoroughly and more completely. But we have to import equipment for millions (may be billions) of rupees and thousands of human beings will be thrown out of employment. With the methods which are called "primitive" by entrepreneurs from the West, Sri Lanka is producing enough gems to get good prices. Over-production with the help of modern technology will lead to a glut. With the current tendency to over-invest in and over-exploitour gemming lands, the market has become saturated. The much publicised International Gem Auction, held recently in Colombo, turned out to be a flop. Buyers had said that the gems had been over-priced. The real truth is probably that the local and international market has a glut of Ceylon (Sri Lankan) gems. Our primitive methods of production with the average level of investment capital would probably ensure the best prices for our gems.

Many people in Sri Lanka had been over-enamoured with notions of what the IMF could do for Sri Lanka. The IMF has already done a great deal, but there is a limit to everything. And the fact is that in the three and a half years that the IMF had Sri Lanka under its credit umbrella, this country has not been able to push up its production to levels commensurate with the investment. Except for a marginal increase in paddy (marginal considering the investment and subsidies), agriculture, both plantation and subsidiaries, (which are the economic mainstay of this island) have failed to respond to the inducements and incentives the government has offered.

In the meantime, the IMF has begun to apply the screw. We are told that we have overspent without getting quick returns. We are warned that the economy has become over-heated and that it must be cooled down. But many people do not seem to know that the IMF itself is in trouble. An **AP** report from Washington dated March 14, stated: "The International

Monetary Fund is running out of money. Although insolvency for the 141-nation institution is not a threat, the money shortage is forcing the IMF to the wall in an attempt to find new funds to help its member countries. IMF's managing director, Jacques de Larosiere, has been trying for nearly a year to negotiate a multi-billion dollar loan from Saudi Arabia, one of the few IMF members with surplus cash to spare. So far, his efforts have been unsuccessful. "While negotiations are continuing, and there is some optimism a deal may be near, IMF sources say there is not much time. 'A decision has to be made soon' an IMF source said, 'either we will cut a deal to get the cash, or we will have to take some other action'. IMF's other options are unattractive. One would be to borrow on world financial markets, which would be a controversial move. Another would be try to raise the money from all members, including the United States.

"The negotiations with Saudi Arabia became deadlocked last year because of Saudi insistence that the Palestine Liberation Organisation be admitted as an observer at IMF meetings. Recently while the PLO issue remains unresolved, the negotiations also have bogged down to the amount of an increase in voting strength Saudi Arabia wants in return for its help. The IMF's minimum need is put at about seven billion dollars a year, and it hopes to get as much as 4.9 billion dollars from the Saudis each year for two and possible three years. That would be supplemented by 1.2 billion dollars a year from other oil-exporters, such as Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, and 1.2 billion dollars from industrial nations. Such a fund would total 14.6 billion dollars for two years and 21.9 billion dollars for three. One major IMF programme known as the supplementary financing facility, has only about one billion dollars left in uncommitted funds, while demands for IMF loans have mounted sharply because of deteriorating economic conditions in much of the world".

All this makes it more urgent than ever for Sri Lanka to depend more and more in its own resources. Or would it not be better for Sri Lanka to conclude direct bilateal agreements with the Saudis and other oil producing states in West Asia?

Govt.



Notices

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

Reference No, ATH 17/403

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No: 134 (Part iii) of 27.3.1981.

Schedule

D. R. O's Division : Nugegda
Situation : Ward 6 within the M. C limits of Kotte
Village : Pitakotte
Name of land : Pelangahawatte
Lot No. : 1 and 2.
Pian No. P.P, Co. ; 5414

H. C. Gunawardane
 District Land Officer,
 of Colombo District,

The Kachcheri,
 Colombo,

Date:--25th February, 1981.

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

Reference No. 3/2/4/8/827

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 134 (Part III) of 27-03-81

Schedule

A. G. A's Division : Minuwangoda
Village : Galoluwa.
Name of Land : Kolain Kumbura, Ketakela-gahawatta.
lot Nos. : 1,2 and 3
Plan No. P.P. Gam : 134

A. L. S. Malwenna
 District Land Officer
 of Gampaha District

Kachcheri,
 Gampaha.

Date:-- 02-03-81

TRIBUNE, March 28, 1981

EDITOR'S NOTE BOOK OF ONIONS

In the interview published in **Tribune** last week (21/3/81) the Prime Minister, Mr. R. Premadasa, had made some comments about agricultural production which needs further clarification. The question we had asked was: "Mr. Prime Minister, has the Government considered the fact that its appeals in the last 3 years to increase production in agriculture and other sectors has not produced any significant results? Are any remedial measures contemplated? If so, what?"

And the Prime Minister's answer was: "I do not think your assessment is correct. It is not that appeals only have been made. We have provided real financial incentives for production, especially in agriculture. In paddy production particularly, we have done extremely well both with the high guaranteed price and with an even higher open market price. Over the three years, our production in rice has shown considerable increase. In subsidiary crops like onions, for example, I found on my visit to Jaffna that production has increased so much that the farmers are clamouring for a support price. There was a time when the price of onions and chillies reached impossible levels. Today, it is the other way round. Owing to a glut in production, the farmer says that he cannot even get the price of 80 cents for his onions. This obviously shows that production has increased. It is in the plantation sector that we have not been able to achieve significant increases. The reasons for this are somewhat complex and I believe well known. Plantation agriculture had a long period of neglect and disorganisation, with nationalisation and its aftermath. We are now trying to get out of the woods."

We will not take up the question of the plantation sector in this note, except to say that we have at all times pointed out that Land Reform and nationalisation—especially the way it was carried out—was a disaster. But we have also pointed out that matters have not improved after the present Government came to power. On the contrary, the plantation sector has gone from bad to worse. And the customary excuse about the periodical drought cannot cover all the sins of commission and omission in the plantations.

In regard to the general agricultural sector, the Prime Minister had said that he thought that our "assessment" was not "correct". We have a few comments to offer on this matter. We agree that there has been an increase in paddy production, though we feel (and have said this often) that the increase in productivity per acre and total paddy production should have been much higher for the amount of money spent and the energy expended on paddy cultivation. The money spent by government, more often than not, never reaches the farmer, and the increase in the guaranteed price has always been too late and too little—with the result that it is the middleman and the trader who got the benefit of whatever increase there has been.

After saying this, the Prime Minister went on to make a rather sweeping statement that on his visit to Jaffna he had found the production of onions had increased so much that farmers were clamouring for a support price. He went so far as to say that owing to a glut in production, the farmer was not able to get even a price of 80 cents a pound for his onions. "This obviously", he stressed "shows that production has increased". From this, this presumably expects the public to draw the conclusion that all other subsidiary foodcrops were also being produced in plenty.

We do not know on what data the Prime Minister came to the conclusion that onion production had gone up to the point of over-production. The Prime Minister was in Jaffna on February 28 and for a few days after that. At the time the farmers in Jaffna were unable to get 80 cents a pound for onions (this was much earlier than 2312), consumers in Colombo were paying Rs. 2 to 2.50 a lb. for the same. In the smaller outstation towns the prices were higher. But to understand this problem in its entirety one must examine all available data and statistics. **What are the actual figures of production for subsidiary crops like onions, chillies, potatoes etc. for 1980?** These figures have not yet been released by the Ministry of Agriculture. Nor by the Department of Census and Statistics which gets its figures (unfortunately) from the Ministry of Agriculture. In the past, and in 1978 and 1979, these statistics were released quarterly, but in 1980 there has been a total blackout. The production of subsidiary food crops had registered a sustained drop

RITBUNE, March 28, 1981

in 1978 and 1979, and all indicators had shown that production would drop still further in 1980.

Is this the reason why the statistics have been withheld? Suspicions have already arisen in responsible quarters that an attempt may be made to "doctor" the figures. The Prime Minister will do a service to all interested in the welfare of the country if the correct statistics are released for public information.

Tribune has made many efforts to get them but has failed. The Prime Minister should call for these figures and examine the 1980 figures in light of import statistics for that year. We have been able to get them for three crops: potatoes, onions (red and bombay) and dried chillies;

IMPORTS

	1979	1980
Potatoes: Metric tons	7,607	10,980
Rupees (millions)	34.6	50.8
Onions (Bombay and Red)		
Metric tons	9,519	17,191
Rupees (millions)	29.3	82.0
Dried Chillies;		
Metric tons	8,887	13,262
Rupees (millions)	106.0	174.9

These figures show that the import of potatoes, onions and chillies have gone up considerably in 1980 as compared to 1979. Farmers were unable to get a fair price for these crops in 1978 and 1979 because of imports and many of them had been compelled to go out of production in 1980.

What had hurt the farmers most was that these imports were dumped on the local market at the time the local crops were being harvested. This depressed the prices and enabled the middlemen and traders to purchase the local produce literally "for a song" - to sell them at higher prices outside the area of production and at even greater profit during the off season. The present price of red onions in Colombo is Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 3.75 per lb and Bombay onions are Rs. 6/- a lb. Dried chillies (poor imported quality) are Rs. 15.00 a pound. In 1981 government has to import more because local production will be even less than in 1980.

Unbiased investigation will show that a syndicate of importers, middlemen and profiteering traders have combined to virtually destroy production of subsidiary food crops. The importers and traders

benefit — they will make bonanza run-away profits — but the country suffers.

The Prime Minister is pragmatic and is a realist. He should call for the actual production statistics of the three crops — potatoes, onions and dried chillies for 1980 and as we have suggested examine them in the light of the import figures. He should cause them to be published to enable critical scrutiny. Would there have been any need for increased imports in 1980 if local production had gone up? The complaint of farmers mentioned by the PM that they are not able to get 80 cents a lb. for the red onions they had produced was, in fact, true only for a few days just after the last harvest in December and January because prices had been depressed by merchants who released stocks of imported onions which they had acquired earlier. The government policies about imported stocks being released on the market only during "off season" is a fiction. Though the CWE may in theory make such releases, the bulk of the stocks so released "off season" are grabbed by the traders who hoard them, and later release them during the local harvest to depress prices. Has anyone made a study of the retail prices of items like onions, potatoes and chillies during the year and compare them with the prices farmers get.

The import statistics for 1979 and 1980 should make anyone sit up and think. In 1979, the import of these items had cost Rs. 169.9 million. In 1980 they had cost Rs. 306.8 million — very nearly double. The quantities in metric tons had also gone up proportionately — nobody can say that world prices had moved up.

If the Prime Minister was really aware of the correct statistics, we are sure he would not have rushed into the statement that there was a glut of local production in onions. The position about other subsidiary food crops (except cowpea) is much worse. Cowpea is still enjoying the hang-over of the Anamaduwa by-election boom. The production of cereals (other than rice) has virtually collapsed. Neither the Prime Minister nor the Government can take a complacent view of the situation nor turn a blind eye to it.

We will await the statistics of production for 1980 before making any further comments — although Tribune investigators have brought

in reports of many farmers who have stopped producing these items and have shifted to other (exportable) crops (in some cases Garji).

In the fond belief that there is a glut in the production of vegetables, fruits and subsidiary crops -- free exports of these items is to be allowed. Exports will put up prices and ensure a guaranteed market, but the immediate sociopolitical consequences may be disastrous. More important than exports is the need to break the unholy tie-up between governmental buying agencies (like the Marketing Department), the Pettah merchants, Fourth Cross Street traders and the powerfully placed importers -- who are cheating the consumers and robbing the producers. But the real tragedy is that producers are being pushed out of business!

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MAHAWELI

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

R. Kahawita

Last week when His Excellency went on a fact finding tour of Victoria Dam site, what was spotlighted was, "We are building the Highest Dam of its kind, East of Suez". Also he was given a hawk's eye view of the magnificent 6300 acres of the fertile valley of Dumbara region, that will be inundated by the waters behind the 380 ft. high dam. "The East of Suez" was a popular manner of comparing the Occident with the Orient by the Western World. In the good old days, it was a very colourful and proverbial description of some thing unique happening in these parts. We have a similar achievement of this description in Tulhiriya Textile Complex. When that was started it too was described as "The largest textile complex under one roof, East of Suez". Our experience is different. It may be described as the worst East of Suez.

Of course East of Suez falls flat to the present generation, because they do not go that way any more. However, it is one way of looking at it--a small nation, like ours, is building the largest Dam in this part of the world. We will not contest this, lest we hurt our national feelings. We like to maintain that pride like the inspirations we draw of our greatness in reading "The

Mahawasama". The wonder of it all is, we are achieving the fantastic with the rupee which is not worth the colourful paper on which it is printed. Something to be proud of.

The other important fact brought to the notice of His Excellency was the inundation of 6300 Acres steeped in tradition and Sinhala culture--What need is there for Sinhala culture today when we are fast imbibing a "Thuppai Culture" as described by one wing of the Left to run down the other wing to gain political superiority? Such things are permissible in the dirty game of politics.

In a small country like ours, 6300 Acres is a very significant area to peasant farmers particularly in the Wet Zone. It may be that we will be losing around 10,000,00 rupees of agricultural produce annually. Well when we compare this with what we hope to produce, a hundred fold of that amount, when Mahaweli is completed, it is just peanuts. The present generation can sacrifice that ten million. After all, how long are they going to live to tell the tale of what they sacrificed to make the future generations prosperous? We do not know what the builders of Parakrama Samudra or Minneriya suffered and what privations they endured to enable us to enjoy a full plate of rice today. "A nation achieves greatness on sacrifices."

Rice is not important at Victoria. We are going to produce millions of Watt hours of energy to illuminate the country and move the wheels of industry. But we are undergoing hardships and power cuts now because our rivers are dry and there is not sufficient water to irrigate and turn the turbines! We might have to tolerate longer power cuts, in spite of the high dams and pondage Dams are expensive but our rainfall patterns are such that the reservoirs may be empty for 150 days in a year which will make the "firming up of power generation" more a fiction than a reality. Suppose we cut down the height of the dam and storage capacity to what Mahaweli can yield and regulate flow to generate firm Power and invest the balance of the capital expenditure in thermal power just to look after the vagaries of our monsoon rains; will it not be economical in the long run from an investment point of view? Whatever it may be, we have to accept the reality and be prepared with counter measures.

This may yet be another way of looking at the present problem of power shortages and irrigation difficulties, Mahaweli and its adjoining river basins have limited water resources changing with the mood of the sun's spot so they say. While the demand for power and water increases, the quantum available for management will be limited and so management will be increasingly difficult. We seem to be developing faster than what we thought we would need year by year. It is to the good, but we must be prepared for it. We did suggest some action as a counter move last year, when we had a "Power Crisis" during the same period. If it were accepted, the problem may not be what it is today.

It may be, we get obsessed often with fixed ideas and over-look the essentials. Dam building, Hydro-generation, giving up valuable land for water storage etc. may throw other essentials out of focus to the detriment of an ordered economy. Our focal point is the completion of 30 year programme in five years. We made this decision when we were ignorant of the problems ahead. We have already discovered that it is not possible. So why steer the same course, when we could do better by deviating from that set course? We have done much during the three years gone by. How much has been done, is being studied by the Editor of the **Tribune**; but we have not reached that point yet to construct the 3 inch outlet to the peasant holding of 2½ acs. and tell him "Go ahead and produce like hell". (We hope the Family Planning Experts will be there to give the correct interpretation to "Produce like hell")

We have to start deriving benefits for the money we have spent so far. We know it is enormous, but we do not know yet "How much"? Costs cannot be controlled in "a Gold Rush"---The nugget" is the target. What it costs to get it, is no concern. Into this situation, introduction of a Cost-benefit ratio has no meaning. A measure we still hear, being used to evaluate the economic feasibility of various systems.

Cost Benefits has become pure academics. We passed that stage in 1960 when we were trying to convince the International Financial World to finance the projects. Then money, commodities, goods, machinery, materials, and equipment had relative values and the Bankers

were able to evaluate Cost-benefits. Even we in our country understood the mechanics of price fluctuations in the world markets. They got value for their money, even though that money was a pittance left to them after the colonial masters left us. Today our people cannot understand why at bottle of lamp oil we burnt in 1960 to ten cents are asked to pay Rs. 3/50 for the same bottle after Independence, while our quantum of production per unit, remains the same or less? Today cost-benefit of an investment like in Mahaweli has no meaning. probably our policy makers and planners understand much less this financial year's stick. It had its day like a "Mae West" entertainment. Let's forget it and get down to realities.

Reality is truth. "The truth and logicity of developing Mahaweli basin itself" before developing the other systems was priority number one in 1956; the year we (UNP) lost the General Elections and were driven into the wilderness. Then Randenigala was the most Important storage point in Mahaweli technically and for resources management. The change took place during 1956 — 1965, when we were a mute opposition. We painted the true picture of what happened during our second sojourn in the wilderness, in a series of articles in the **Tribune** commencing in 1970.

Everybody claimed paternity, whether the alliance was legitimate or otherwise. There also surfaced many a dreamer who dreamt and conceived the project in their dreams and staked a claim. These are common incidents in any society; developed or undeveloped therefore pardonable and the truth will prevail.

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

The 1956 concept was that Mahaweli water should not be diverted to the adjoining basins until and unless the riparian rights of its basin dwellers are satisfied. Our protests were like dribblets on a duck's back compared to the steam roller majority of the powers that were. The priorities were changed to accommodate political and parochial interests. We had the opportunity in 1965 to put back the whole Mahaweli in its correct perspective. But we paid heavily to gain a foothold in the seats of power in 1965, so we continued with what we inherited, being too weak to take a decisive step in the interest of the country. It may have been done in 1977, but we got committed to an "Accelerated Programme" which replaced technical acceptability to a speed test.

However, there are signs that some kind of re thinking is being done. This may be due to various problems confronting us today — both financial and technical. Or may be because we refused to face the truth — 'Mahaweli cannot be developed in five years'. "We said it could be done, so the truth has become elusive."

Even at this stage, we have not understood the functions of Moragahakande reservoir. The parameters of this reservoir were determined by two main factors — its own water resources and the quantum that could be diverted at Polgolla — Surplus Mahaweli water from Victoria and Randenigala does not effect Moragahakande. The question is how much is available for storage at Victoria and Randenigala after diversion at Polgolla? This problem confronts us today because in 1956 we ignored "the logic of developing Mahaweli basin itself. From 1956 to 1965 thinking was done for us, like in many other things we have become dutiful followers of that thinking. They give the lead we follow.

We must remember that the quantum of water available in Mahaweli is limited though it may be available at the same place year in year out, but not in volume. If we prepare a balance sheet of water requirements in the regions already ear-marked

for development, there will be no water left to take to the North. This may be technically feasible and thus give hopes to the North. But we may never be able to meet their needs.

For the present we may have to forget the Northern system — not that we want to deny the Northerners a right to Mahaweli water. There will be no water to send to the North. In that situation, is it worth developing a system to the North, if that system may function once in five years or so? There is no politics in this. There is no justification in promising something which is beyond our reach. We have heard promises being made to bring "rice from the moon" to feed our people or currently "we will finish in five years". The people found us out long ago. We discredit ourselves if we go on repeating what the people already know is not possible. To them, the truth is not elusive. It may be that we wish the truth to be elusive — not for them. Their reminder of truth is the pangs of hunger.

Our question today is "How can we provide our people with a human existence"? How can we salvage the seven million existing below the starvation level and ensure them with a single meal a day? Whether the truth can be seen until all is known, we will follow up.

To Be Continued

Next Week

CHRONICLE

-Held Over

PANADURA

-New Bridge

QUIDNUNCS

-Phones, Robberies

MORE CRIME

-Why?

MORE HEALTH

-For Less Money

TRIBUNE Marh 28 1981

SOME THOUGHTS

ON CHINA - 2

MAO TSE-TUNG

by Haider Akdar Khan Rano

AMONG ALL THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES only in Russia socialism took place as a result of the class struggle developing upto its full maturity. In case of East European countries, Communist Parties gained strength through anti-fascist struggle and later on, during the Second World War, they could be able to win the victory mainly because of the advantage they had due to the presence of the Red Army of the Soviet Union. That is why it is established that there were inadequacies even in the field of ideology, not to speak of political and organisational fields. That is why the counter-revolutionary forces in Hungary or Czechoslovakia could rise up so easily, even though those were temporary phenomena. The Chinese revolution was also not a direct socialist revolution. The Chinese revolution and the Chinese party developed mainly through national struggle and the struggle of the peasantry. There was also no scope for the direct leadership of the proletariat. Here proletariat's leadership was ideological and was realised through their party. For a long time the main party leadership and the centres of revolution were completely separated from the areas of the working class.

Of course by this I have no intention to say that the Chinese party was wrong. The Chinese party was compelled to get into such a situation. Because of these circumstances, there were obstacles in the way of attaining ideological maturity in the field of Marxism. That is why it is necessary for the leadership to be mature, conscious and alert. In my view the Chinese party suffered many deficiencies in this respect.

Proletarian internationalism is one of the main fundamentals of Marxism. In case of the Chinese party there was no solid foundation for establishing this fundamental imperative. Rather the influence of nationalism, which could be detected even in the later period, was predominant within the Communist Party. Enver Hoxha, the leader of the

Albanian Party, at one time a very close friend of China, complained that the Chinese Party never placed Marxism-Leninism or the October Revolution as the ideal of their party. Though we cannot agree with many statements of Enver Hoxha, we think there is some truth in this statement.

MARXISM-LENINISM is the world outlook of the international proletariat. Marxism developed through the international experiences of the working class. Bolshevism was born and developed under the leadership of Lenin, and from the very beginning it acquired an international character. Regarding this, Lenin wrote, "On the one hand, Bolshevism arose in 1903 on the very firm foundation of the theory of Marxism. And the correctness of this and only this revolutionary theory has been proved not only by world experience throughout the nineteenth century, but particularly by the experience of the wanderings and vacillations, the mistakes and disappointments of revolutionary thought in Russia. For nearly half a century... advanced thought in Russia... sought eagerly for a correct revolutionary theory and followed with astonishing diligence and thoroughness each and every last word in this sphere in Europe and America. Russia reached Marxism, the only correct revolutionary theory, through... verification and comparison with European experience. Thanks to the enforced emigration caused by Tsarism, revolutionary Russia, in the second half of the nineteenth century acquired a wealth of international connections and excellent information on world forms and theories of the revolutionary movement such as no other country in the world possessed".

The Chinese revolutionaries were unfortunate to be deprived for a long time of such kind of international experiences. Marxism entered China and was spread there at a particular period as a result of which it got mixed up with bourgeois nationalist ideas in various ways. That is why one can see that in reality the Chinese Communist Party rejected Marxism-Leninism and placed Mao Tse-tung thought as the only ideal of the party. At present, though they have withdrawn the Mao Tse-tung thought, they are not trying to establish Marxism-Leninism. By taking away the portrait of Marx, Engels,

Lenin and Stalin from Tien An Men square, they made their intention quite clear.

MAO TSE-TUNG THOUGHT is not a complete philosophy. Not only this, many trends of thoughts can also be found in Mao Tse-tung who often mentioned the leadership of the working class, still we see that even in 1939 he said: "What role have China's young people played since the May 4th Movement? In a way they have played a vanguard role - a fact recognized by everybody except the die-hards. What is a vanguard role? It means taking the lead and marching in the forefront of the revolutionary ranks".

Here Mao Tse-tung admitted the vanguard role of the Chinese youth, and not of working class. It can be observed that at the time when he said this, the Chinese Communist Party was quite strong and they had already established an alternate state in the north of the country. In the history of the Chinese revolution, the working class practically could not play the role of a leader. Tendency to Chinanisation of Marxism is also noticed and can be found in the works of Mao Tse-tung. This criticism of Mao Tse-tung is fully justified in spite of his great contribution in many respects. For example, there can be doubts and questions in connection with the non-antagonistic contradiction, as stated by Mao Tse-tung, between the working class and the bourgeoisie in the post revolutionary China.

On top of everything, in spreading Mao Tse-tung thought, there is a feeling of national pride which is alien to proletarian internationalism. National chauvinism and the absence of proletarian internationalism have led China to a dangerous situation. China is gradually taking herself away from the socialist camp. Ideological polemics between the Soviet Union and China started in the beginning of the Sixties. But later on the struggle was confined to the ideological field. Standing on the position of national chauvinism, China called the Soviet Union a social imperialist state and withdrew herself from all the international progressive organisations. The final outcome of this is that today China has taken the side of imperialism and has come against the socialist camp.

To be concluded.

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IN U. S.-THREE WEEKS AGO

EMERGING ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT

Washington, March 6,

Disturbed by increased United States military involvement in El Salvador, fledgling anti-war movement is emerging in the US--and it is drawing support from veterans of Vietnam war protests a decade ago. On campuses and at churches, the new peace movement has conducted teach-ins and vigils to protest the sending of more US weapons and military advisers to El Salvador's embattled junta. A hunger strike and "day of solidarity" are planned for later this month. In May, the hallmark of the anti-Vietnam war era will return: a march on the Pentagon. "There is a tremendous awareness that this (US involvement) looks like what happened around Vietnam", said Mr. Heidi Tarver, Coordinator for the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador. "People are saying, 'we are not going to be taken in again'". Mr. Ron Kovic, a former leader of the Vietnam veterans against the war, said hundreds have been attending West Coast Campus teach-ins against President Ronald Reagan's Salvadoran policy. Because of the Vietnam experience, he said, opposition to growing US involvement in El Salvador "has been very sophisticated and has come very quickly."

Mr. Janet Shank of the North American Committee on Latin America said initial teach-ins on El Salvador's civil war attracted mostly members of religious groups or others with longstanding interest in Latin America. But she said the 'second wave' of those attending the teach-ins consists of "people who are middle aged now, but were active in the Vietnam era." Sister Pat Haggerty says her Maryknoll Order of the Roman Catholic Church has been flooded with requests for speakers on El Salvador. The talks have been attracting "a wide cross-section of people", she said. Critics of the US policy plan to stage a demonstration in Ottawa during Regan's visit to Canada next week. (They did - Ed)

Some protest groups are also coupling their opposition to increased military aid to El Salvador's junta with attacks on President Reagan's proposed cuts in social programmes, "US—hands off El Salvador: money for jobs, human needs, not for the Pentagon", reads a flyer for a 3 May march on the Pentagon scheduled by a group called the People's Anti-war Mobilisation. The newly formed group is a coalition of student and civil rights groups, liberal and left-wing religious leaders, and former anti-Vietnam war activists. Among the sponsors are anti-war figures Daniel and Philip Berrigan, Harvard professor George Wald and author Noam Chomsky. Earlier this week, nearly the entire leadership of the US Catholic Church called for a cut off of US weapons shipment to El Salvador, favouring instead a negotiated settlement to the civil war.--AP,

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NGUVU

CAR, FIRE & NUTS

by Bwana Rafiki

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE I have a car at my disposal. It was off the road for a good eighteen months in various garages. The car is a mere twenty years old and again looks smart with the engine in running order. I renewed the insurance policy and the car license and after a little delay got her out of the garage. Then there were, of course, teething troubles like a flat tyre but they were sorted out, and all that is left now to attend to is a badly leaking water tank which I want to test a little longer to see just how bad it is before having it repaired or replaced. So yesterday when I took her out there was no flat tyre to hold me up again but only what a friend of mine, an expert on cars, called a jam. We had to put the car in third gear and rock her backwards and forwards to clear the jam.

Something got me day before yesterday, and I had written the first paragraph of this article a day early before I discovered my mistake. We were honoured with a visit yesterday by a man who as some readers of **Nguvu** may remember came here once

to make trouble, a former employee, who was drunk, who almost manhandled me and refused to go away. More recently he came on to the land on the other side of the road to assault the watcher as the watcher had reported him to the police for picking coconuts and by some extraordinary good fortune was caught in the act of trespassing by the very policeman who had come to investigate the theft earlier. This time, on his visit to the bungalow, he was all dressed up, hair cut, and it was quite like old times when he first came to work on the estate. The contrast was certainly in answer to a prayer. He came to report the watcher for stealing bamboos, and sure enough bamboos had been cut and the matter not reported to me either by the watcher or by the superintendent.

The time is two and a half hours after midnight and so I really write about events of day before yesterday but picking my subjects in the light of what happened a day later. I was in Colombo in the morning and I went for my usual run on a football field and playground. A row of temporary cadjan houses overlooks this field, and in one of them lives, or lived, a young friend of mine, a young man who is a versatile and clever artist, and in another of these houses a woman who comes to work at my sister's. My run is more to stretch my muscles and exercise my wind and keep in trim for another sport, and after running up and down thrice, I would drop in at my friend's to see if there was a new painting and I would often be given a cup of tea. This time I did not go to his house as I had been there two days earlier,

My father visited the estate after months, and as on the previous occasion he went first of all to the property on the other side of the road by the river. My nephew drove him up in a shooting break and with them came an Australian girl and a man to attend to my father. I think the visit has done the staff good especially my domestic staff for they seem more settled and less inclined to play truant. I returned to Colombo with the visitors and I was fast asleep during the drive through Colombo at the very hour my artist friend's house was going

TRIBUNE, March 28, 1981

up in flames. An hour later I was on a bus which passed in full view of the scene of the fire and as I was standing I saw nothing. After having my exercise, somebody heard what sounded like a fire engine and spoke of the fire and by questioning him about its location I realised what had happened to a whole row of cadjan houses, shan-ies, according to the professional journalists, which had been put up by the authorities, had gone up in flames.

The fire spread rapidly to all the houses because the wind was blowing in the right direction to enable it do so. I visited the scene in the morning and the whole line of houses, a double row of houses, back to back, was flat, everything burnt out. In my friend's house or site, the only thing not razed to the ground was part of the iron of a bedstead. A few yards away was the house of the woman I know, although I had never been there, and she lost her sewing machine with all the rest of her possessions. All that my friend's family saved were two bicycles and the clothes they stood in. It was so with all the other families. I must say they all looked quite cheerful. The families were sheltering in a sports pavilion and a school. Cadjans were already lying around, bundles of new cadjans, to put up the houses anew. I had to visit a Labour Office that morning miles away. My visit there seemed to go remarkably well, but the officer is determined to visit us again.

The next morning I set off for Chilaw. The pick, picking of coconuts, is now on, and as I did not want to write this at 4 a.m. this morning after just walking six miles to the estate with the pick on now I shall have to leave off writing this again till later in the day, which is now 11 p.m. The pick has been disastrous, the land on the other side of the road giving us half as many coconuts as we had in the worst year of the corresponding pick, which was five or six years ago. Hardly any coconuts have fallen since the last pick, and there were very few nuts on the trees. The question is, has there been wholesale thieving? I heard the case of a man who is managing a division of a government-owned estate, the division alone being many times the size of our own combined estates, who was

in remand for two months because a watcher on his division had killed a man by shooting him, when the man was stealing coconuts. The man was seated in front of me and did not deny the story, a pleasant well-behaved young stranger.

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POLAND

AFL-CIO "SOLIDARITY"?

By Gennady Gerasimow

A special issue of *Free Trade Union News*, the bulletin published by the Department of International Affairs of the AFL-CIO, has appeared in Polish. This is an indicator of far-reaching concern. Once, in 1975, an issue of the bulletin was published in Russian, to honour the arrival of one of the so-called dissidents in the United States. A point worth noting is that particular bulletin didn't contain a word about trade union issues. The AFL-CIO's current interest in Poland's Solidarity Trade Union Association, which includes the establishment of an "assistance fund for Polish workers", is naturally determined by political and not trade union considerations, and constitutes interference in the internal affairs of another country rather than an expression of working class solidarity. This can be easily discovered when thumbing through the English file of the bulletin and in general, when we get to know the natural of the international activities of the American trade Union bosses.

But we should begin with the provision that the organization cannot claim to be the spokesman of the American working class on international issues. First, the unions affiliated to the AFL-CIO have a total membership of some 13,500,000, which is a small minority of American workers. Second, the rank-and-file do not, because of a tradition which has been established, or rather imposed by their union bosses, pay much attention to external affairs. This creates the opportunity to sell the opinion of the AFL-CIO brass as the opinion of American workers, which is not quite the case. As for AFL-CIO international policy, at bottom it is to defend capitalism. The ideology of "corporate

unionism," which is also called Gompersism after the first AFL president, was not to allow dissent to turn into political protest. Everything threatening the idea of class collaboration was declared anathema.

That is why the AFL, for example, supported the intervention against the world's first workers' and peasants' state. The AFL Executive Committee protested against the establishment of diplomatic relations with the USSR in 1933, calling President Roosevelt's logical step an act of treason against the American people. The AFL-CIO Executive Council tried to make the USA reject the Final Act that President Ford had signed in Helsinki. The 12th AFL-CIO Congress in 1977 expressed regret at the growth of American trade with the socialist countries. And so on,

The history of the AFL-CIO leadership's international activities is full of scandals -- during one of them their close contacts, with the CIA were exposed. The AFL-CIO is not a government organization, nevertheless, it gets money from the Treasury especially for international activities. The American journalist, Sidney Lens, a scholar of the trade union movements, wrote in one of his books that the AFL-CIO leaders have in the post-war years been engaged in what could be termed "subversive activities abroad." In essence, they interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign states without reporting back either to Congress, the American people, or to the American working class. In the interests of the administration, the AFL-CIO does anything the government cannot do because that would be flagrant interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and anything the CIA cannot do because it would arouse suspicion. The AFL-CIO prefers to establish mass organizations which it uses as an effective weapon "against communism". But if these methods fail to produce results, the AFL-CIO leaders do all they can to encourage military intervention and coups, says Lens,

A host of examples can be cited to confirm Lens' assertions: hatred of the Cuban revolution; hostility to the Popular Unity government in Chile; solid backing for the US government's aggression in Vietnam; aid

to overthrow the Arbenz Guzman government in Guatemala in 1954 and the Cheddi Jagan government in British Guiana (now Guyana) in 1964. Current AFL-CIO boss Lane Kirkland, a loyal disciple of the late George Meany, is now starting to express concern for the interests of Poland's workers. Isn't this like the kiss of Judas? - APN

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NAMIBIA

WHY THE GENEVA TALKS FAILED

The ceasefire negotiations held in Geneva as a prelude to U.N. supervised general elections in Namibia has failed to achieve its purpose. When the negotiations commenced there were expectations that South Africa may become amenable to a peaceful transfer of power to Namibians. This was not to be and therefore the SWAPO President Sam Nujoma declared that "If the enemy refuses to sign a ceasefire and by so doing end the war and suffering on both sides, we are left with no alternative but to intensify the armed struggle and bring the war to its logical conclusion, that of total and genuine independence for Namibia." This declaration was made immediately after South Africa sabotaged the ceasefire talks.

Namibia is the last vestige of colonialism in South Africa if we exclude the blacks within the South African Republic struggling for self rule. This mineral rich territory was ruled by the South African regime as a mandated territory of the League of Nations from 1920 and for the last thirty four years in defiance of U.N. trusteeship. After years of struggle the U.N. began to take more active part in Namibia by setting up various committees and recognising SWAPO as the authentic and legitimate voice of the Namibians.

As the movement for liberation became intense in the face of world-wide support for the liberation forces of the SWAPO, a Western contact group consisting of U.S., Canada, England, France and Germany began to negotiate between the South African Government and SWAPO. This development was compelled by other reasons too. The

gradual but steady support received by liberation forces in Angola, Mozambique from the socialist bloc, especially from Cuba, caused alarm. The Western Contact Group countries holding heavy investments in the mineral rich Namibia feared the loss of such valuable raw materials if the socialist bloc were to take the initiative in the matter. Thus the economic realities of Namibia in which the multi-nationals of the Western Contact Group countries have a stake actually underline the foreign policy interests of the Western countries in the political liberation of Namibia.

Besides other interests of the U.N. in the matter, the recent negotiations were held to comply with the U.N. Security Council resolutions Nos 385 and 435. Resolution 385 unanimously adopted by Security Council in January 1976 embodies the following guidelines. It calls for a free elections held under the direct supervision and control of the U.N. Unlike the South African design of creating ethnic Bantustans, U.N. resolution held Namibia to be one political entity. In the event of an election all preliminary arrangements--administrative and military--to be made by the U.N. Once the elections have been completed, South African regime will withdraw and actual power will be transferred to people of Namibia. This plan was acceptable to all contending parties to the conflict - SWAPO, the U.N. the internal parties of Namibia and South African Government. The frontline States of South Africa, i.e., neighbours of Namibia gave their blessings to the Western/U.N. plan. Following resolution 385 the Security Council in 1978 adopted resolution 435 which provides for the detail plan to implement resolution 385. This provided for ceasefire between South African forces and SWAPO guerillas, introduction of U.N. forces etc. Though this was a hard bargain for SWAPO yet it compromised in deference to U.N. resolutions.

Following the above resolutions during the last five years several negotiations were held between U.N. and South Africa and SWAPO. But the uncompromising stand taken by South Africa had at each time postponed the issue of liberation further. Last month's negotiations too had suffered similar fate. It is interesting to seek answers as to why

the negotiations have failed? At the outset it may be surmised that though South Africa agreed for a U.N. plan it was not sincere in her guarantees to abide by the plan. Because ever since resolutions were adopted, South Africa has increased her forces in Namibia and had terrorised the suspected supporters of SWAPO within Namibia and followed them into Angola and Mozambique. Much to the annoyance of U.N. and SWAPO, South Africa unilaterally held elections in Namibia and installed in power the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, headed by Dirk Mudge, a white planter. The Constituent Assembly was soon turned into a National Assembly and a Council of Ministers was appointed under Dirk Mudge. One should recall that in 1978 South Africa indicated to the U.N. that once South African supervised elections were completed U.N. will have to negotiate with the Government in Windhoek. From the way each party to the conference conducted themselves at Geneva one could easily discern the motives of each of them assembling there.

The South Africans demanded that the head of the D.T.A. (Democratic Turnhalle Alliance), the puppet regime installed in Windhoek by Pretoria, should be treated on par with SWAPO to represent the voice of Namibians. They threatened to leave the negotiations if this demand was not met. Secondly at Geneva, D.T.A. Group tried to impress upon the world that there is already a Government in Namibia with whom U.N. officials and SWAPO could negotiate. This reminds one of the short-lived Muzorewa's regime in Zimbabwe. The demand for recognition of the local parties inevitably therefore led to the demand for U.N. withdrawal of the recognition given to SWAPO as "the sole and authentic representative of the Namibia." SWAPO not only enjoys this recognition but also benefits from the funds allocated to it from U.N. regular budget for helping liberation movements.

The above developments clearly showed that South Africa had not come to Geneva for any serious negotiations. South Africa's anxiety was to win constitutional recognition for puppet parties which may otherwise get drowned in the popular flood of SWAPO. The victory of Sam Nujoma of the SWAPO,

like that of Mugabe in Zimbabwe, is a foregone conclusion. Therefore South Africans were in fact interested in postponing the real issues until such time they could build up and stabilise local parties and regimes. It is because of this they stepped up their terrorising activities within Namibia and beyond her borders in Angola and Mozambique, during and the aftermath of the negotiations. By gunning down each SWAPO soldier Pretoria hopes to destroy both the political and military base of SWAPO. Once SWAPO has been destroyed militarily, Pretoria thinks that it would enhance the moral and power base of the local regime, which it could manipulate to her advantage.

There are also others who blame the Western Countries for the breakdown of the conference. Contact groups have been accused of playing a double game. "Though authors of the U.N. Security Councils Resolution 435, on which U.N. plan is based, they are blocking all international initiatives to get Pretoria to stop resisting the implementation of their plan. The London **Daily Telegraph** for instance, wrote that failure of the conference "is not to be regretted," that "can indeed be positively welcomed." South Africa may be also expecting sympathetic response from Reagan's administration.

This is quite likely to happen in view of the fact that Reagan's administration has been considering a revision of U.S. policy in this area. The Reagan administration is seriously studying the possibility of helping the rebels against the present Angolan Government. The administration may very soon request the Congress lift to a ban it imposed in 1976 on sending cash or arms to opponents of the Angolan Government. Secretary of State Haig himself had blamed this policy for the success of nationalist Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

While Sam Nujomo plans to intensify the armed struggle, African countries are seeking a comprehensive U.N. sanctions against South Africa including an oil embargo. To what extent this embargo will pressurise South Africa one cannot say now. The past experience shows that Western Countries, and even other Countries have continued to circumvent the embargo by various subtle ways.

The negotiations have failed, but that does not mean South Africa has scored a victory over SWAPO, much less over U.N. South Africa cannot hope to buy anymore time. The pendulum will very soon swing back towards an international settlement. The South African regime should seriously study the history of their own neighbours. OMEGA

A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE?

REAGAN'S BUDGET

by Paul W. McCracken

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IT IS JUST POSSIBLE that the President's economic program and the inexorabilities of developments in recent years will combine actually to produce a fundamental change in the direction and pattern of the economy. This is possible. It is also far from certain—as people in Washington, at the grass roots in the United States and others in Europe and Japan are constantly reminding us. Fundamental changes in the direction of national policy have not occurred often in our history and that has been a source of political stability and strength. A "change of government" at the White House or on the hill (Congress) has usually meant a change of emphasis between parties, both of which were in pretty solid agreement about the fundamental rules of the larger game.

Ours has not, for example, been the experience of Britain, whose change to a Labour government meant a nationalisation of the steel industry, followed by the Tories who denationalized it, succeeded by the Labour Party who renationalized it—the primary result of it all

being a steel industry gasping for survival. Nor have we had to face, as French voters did at the last major election, a coalition of socialists and communists as the alternative government.

There are times, however, when a more drastic change of direction is in order. In the middle of the last century (1846 to be precise) an England whose prosperity was increasingly based upon industry and foreign trade finally repealed the Corn laws. These protectionist measures had been bastions of the nation's economic policy with roots extending back to the 12th century, but economic developments had outpaced these laws, and they were finally jettisoned. A half-century ago the American strategy of economic policy finally brought us to 1933. The approach of cleansing the banking system of all "unsound" banks and tightening monetary policy to protect the dollar's international position was orthodox enough, but it also had the result that by 1933, 40 percent of the banks had been extinguished, and 25-30 percent of the work force was unemployed. A fundamental change in the direction of policy was obviously required, and it occurred. (The great depression was, of course, the logical result of the policies we pursued, not a condition inherent in the nature of the economic system).

The result of last November's election may represent little more than the momentary vexations of a citizenry exasperated by a diverse array of events ranging from Iran to the shortages of oil and peanut butter. Elections have been won and lost before because of such reasons. If so, the pattern of political and economic life may quickly settle back into what has been business as usual.

There are, however, persuasive reasons for thinking that November 1980 was a mandate for a fundamental change of direction. The poor performance of the economy was itself making the case. An economy which historically had delivered a doubling of the real purchasing power of pay envelopes every 25 to 30 years seems to have lost any capability for gains in real income at all, and the US performance in terms of gains in productivity seems how to be the poorest among major nations in the industrial world.

OUR CURRENT RATE OF INFLATION, which would double the price level in five

years, is two to three times that for Japan or Germany and has been accelerating persistently in recent years—this for an economy whose average rate of inflation in reasonable undisturbed periods (e.g. 1900-29 or 1948-65) has been about two percent per year. And an economy which historically has operated with an average unemployment rate of 4.5 percent to 5 percent (4 percent under Calvin Coolidge) now seems to be stuck with a floor of 6 percent to 7 percent. The President was not engaging in purple rhetoric when he asked "Can we who man the ship of state deny it is out of control?" The empirical evidence points dramatically to an affirmative answer.

Whether what the President put forward represents precisely the right mix of ingredients is of course something about which reasonable people will not completely agree. For an economy suffering from a productive plant that is too small and too old, a tax reduction package with more emphasis on capital formation would have been in order. Conventional depreciation procedures are understating the true current cost of capital currently expiring by close to 30 000 million dollars per year, and the extra taxes paid on this fictitious element of profits have been a major deterrent to needed new investment.

The absence of some action to slow down the overly rapid expansion of social security outlays was also a surprise. These might have taken the form of annual price-level adjustments, use of a price index less prone to exaggerate the true rate of inflation than the CPI (Consumer Price Index) or the inclusion of social security income (perhaps in excess of a special deductible amount) in taxable income. The time does come, however, when the important thing is to run effectively the play that has been called—rather than to remain forever in the huddle arguing about the details of what might be the perfect play (a reference to the US game of football).

Nor is there much to be gained in any arguments about the specific economic projections put forward in the program. Achieving within two years (in 1983) a seven percent rate of inflation and a 4.5 percent economic growth in real terms would be a major accomplishment. The President and his advisers cannot conclusively produce analytical evidence that the program will deliver these numbers. On the

other hand, the poor statistical track record in forecasting the division of the gains in the dollar volume of business activity between inflation and a real increase suggests that the rest of us are in a wobbly position to prove that their figures are wrong.

One thing about which there can be no argument is that a projection of the 1976-1980 trends to 1983 would bring us to a change in real growth at a five-percent per year rate and a 12-percent per year rate of inflation for the GNP (Gross National Product) price index. The President's program would at least start to point the economy in a more favourable direction. Questions about whether it would really bring us to a 4.5 percent real growth and down to seven percent inflation are about as useful as numerological arguments usually are. On this the President cannot be sure but neither can anyone else.

WHILE THE PRESIDENT puts forward an integrated program, all elements of which are important, the key to the program is regaining control of the expenditure side of this budget. The projections in President Carter's January budget message suggested a rise in federal outlays (including off-budget items) from fiscal 1980 to this fiscal year 85,000 million dollars to 100,000 million dollars. With a rise in state and local spending of 25,000 to 30,000 million dollars this implied a rise in total public sector outlays equal to 50 percent or more of the projected rise in the total national income.

If disinflationary pressure required for the whole economy were to be concentrated only on the private sector, and a public sector absorbing a growing share of the economy's resources were to escape, the pressure and dislocations in the private sector would be severe. This is the clear lesson from Britain's experience in recent years. Then even the results from tax reduction would be disappointing. The treasury would have to enlarge further its already large share of funds advanced in credit markets (36 percent in 1980), leaving that much less to finance capital formation, housing and auto sales.

There will be three formidable sets of forces deployed against this crucial effort

to constrain the growth in the public sector. First, there are those who have genuinely believed that more and larger government programs would be the route for bringing disadvantaged and lower income people into the mainstream of national life. It is increasingly clear that this strategy leads to disappointing results. Many of these programs have had a pauperizing effect on their own intended beneficiaries and have not been an exit from poverty and an entrance to the mainstream.

Then there are the vested interests of those with not so low incomes (in many cases quite fancy incomes) who have a personal and professional stake in persistently enlarging government. These will range from those making a comfortable living running these programs to legal groups feeding at the public trough to some members of Congress who enjoy the additional power from dispensing yet more public funds and having jurisdiction over yet more government agencies. The rhetoric will be the liturgical lament about what spending constraints would do to the poor. Their real concern will be the usual reluctance to see changes adverse to themselves. They in this modern drama will, therefore, be the true establishmentarians—even the reactionaries.

Finally we will be assured that the program will not really work. After the President's speech on February 18, for example, a Japanese newspaper carried an American comment that our economy is now simply mature and must be expected to grow more slowly. This may be true. It does, however, bear a striking resemblance to the mature economy thesis of a few decades ago when we were also assured that investment would be weak because in a mature economy profitable opportunities had already been exploited—when, in fact, we were then heading into an investment boom. Whether capital formation is vigorous or stagnant depends heavily on the policies we pursue, and that should be kept in mind as we plan for the 1980s. In spite of the impediments, the basic direction of national policy may still begin to undergo a fundamental change for the better. The President, like Truman, may find that no one supports him—except the people. — USICA

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**NO WATER
NO CHARGES**
IS OUR MOTTO

our rates
for
**DESIGNING AND
CONSTRUCTION**
of
TUBE WELLS
are competitive
and our competence
has no equal
in Sri Lanka

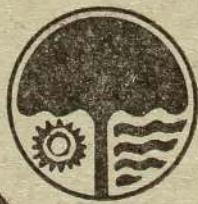
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And The End of Empire

By Richard Krooth

GIVEN AMERICA did not invent empire, but was born of it, we have the spectacle of President Ronald Reagan about to oversee, not its final end, but certainly its internment. For the American empire has been predicated on unity at home, and that is no longer possible in an era of the nation's loss of place in the world.

The hoped for popular allegiance to the established domestic goals set by American's ruling elite is destined to fail in the coming years of unsatisfied needs and demands. And repression will not be taken lightly by the American people. Not only will labour fight back for things economic, but its resistance will price US goods out of global competition. Envisioned expansion abroad will be shipwrecked on the shoals of German and Japanese advantages in foreign markets and resource areas. So the end of America's market empire is in sight. And the only remaining question is will the nation fight, not with goods, but with finances, alliances, connections, and, in a limited way, arms,

Here we speak of still unsatisfied needs. Then following we will deal with labour's resistance at home, and finally with the decline of America's position in global markets. The question really resolves itself in terms of the internal dynamics of the nation, rather than beyond its borders. And within the US, the relations between the population and workforce on the one side and the political and economic elite on the other are critical ones. To hold labour in check during hard times when inflation rages and wage benefits are kept in tow is to court growing uneasiness and discontent.

Can Reaganomics resolve the dilemma? Hardly so. The theory is too simplistic, too classical, in the present era of internal crisis, monopoly and oligopoly control over the market, and cartels fighting for position in

the world and using finance, connections and 'aid' to capture markets and resources. Its suppositions are that, within America, tax cuts will promote buying, which in turn will fuel production, thus creating the extended base for the collection of additional tax revenues from high wages.

BUT NOW CONSIDER an alternative scenario: Taxes are cut, but military expenditures rise rapidly, so that both consumers and government are competing on the market for the same goods and services, resources and labour power. Up go prices, creating inflation double digit style. Small farms already burdened with high costs now find themselves saddled with even higher ones, while, competing against giant cost-efficient companies, they cannot raise prices as fast.

If smaller enterprises go to the wall, the jobs they offer can only go with them. As well, cutting inflation by the classical techniques of higher interest rates, falling credit, slowed production and increased unemployment will not endear small companies or the workforce to the likes of President Reagan. *The Economist*, London, has foretold that in America "unemployment and bankruptcies will rise, and corporate America will throw a fit, just like corporate Britain after less than two years of Mrs. Thatcher",

But in truth it will not be all of corporate America in delirium. For the beneficiaries of military contracts will do very well in the new era of America, puffed up as world policeman again. As well, Reagan's promise to lift the hand of government regulation to free industry in the marketplace will also mean that Federal subsidies previously given small enterprises will be withdrawn at their peril. Only the largest companies will survive such changes in the established economic order, and the first to go into decline will be nation's small oil refineries, which since 1959 have enjoyed government subsidies as a way of keeping them "competitive" with the giants of the industry. The squeeze on their supplies of crude oil from larger firms by removal of the government-enforced allocation programme and the lifting of price controls set to keep the smalls in business is now likely—and with it the lifeline of the smalls.

If all this is not bad enough for the middling-size businesses in America, then interest rates set at the all time high of 21 per cent by the banking cartel will seal their fate. For many years, the late Wright Patman of Texas had documented and railed against the practices of this cartel by using his Congressional seats of power on major committees, including those covering banking. Patman had described how, at the apex of the cartel, the Federal Reserve Board had been placed in charge of setting these rates, had declared its independence from control by both the President and the US Congress and had gone along its merry way doing good for the giant banks. With Patman's passing from the American scene, no one in Congress seemed to be able to explain how it was that tight-money could drive the economy to a standstill any time the leading banks in America decided to use other critical events to rationalise their moves. The outrageous consequences in the US auto and housing industry have just now hit home: Not only can these industries not produce or employ, but they cannot borrow at a rate that will permit them to complete within the US market or any place else.

PRAY TELL how Reagan will turn this about, when he and his advisers themselves support the Federal Reserve's tight-money posture. The Reagan team also has the single solution and they will say it twice or more if the listener cannot understand: If interest rates go up and up, taxes and government spending must come down and down. The solution, if it is one, is designed to deal with the impending crisis of the present: a slowdown in investments and consumer spending, a fall in production and employment, higher interest rates (involving a credit crunch, stiff competition for available capital, and more interest rate hikes) and, finally, a growing Federal budget deficit and rising government 'off-budget' programmes which the State is locked into and will be forced to borrow more to finance with the new pressure forcing up interest rates yet again.

Reaganomics looks to three tactical, related ways of dealing with the dilemma; free the market from government restriction on oil prices, block all new Federal regulations on American business operations, and cut taxes and Federal spending. These are long-term solutions in terms of what

Reagan can (allegedly) accomplish during his four years in the White House.

The economic crisis, particularly unemployment, will, Reagan reasons, allow him to take the initial step of pushing Congress to enact across-the-board individual income tax cuts—a move he believes will stimulate demand and thus production, but which the Democrats will oppose on the basis that such tax 'give-aways' will prevent savings needed for investments in new production facilities. With smaller revenues clearly State spending must be pared.

If the Democrats should like yesterday's Republicans and the latter sound like the old Democrats, there is another, deeper reason for switch in roles: Government spending is seen by Reagan as excessive in the area of social services and welfare, but viewed by liberal Democrats as inefficient. The new President would like to eliminate the job and training programmes associated with the present Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) as well as the entire welfare apparatus.

TRADITIONAL THINKING in both the Carter and Reagan camps allows no other solution. Carter's economic adviser Bosworth has looked at the official unemployment rate of 7.5 percent in November (actually it ranges nearer 13 percent due to the massive unemployment of women, young people and Blacks), wage gains running at nearly 10 percent a year, and double-digit inflation and concluded that the Federal Reserve has had no choice but to enforce tight-money if inflationary pressures are to be held down, adding that it would thus not "finance any expansion of the economy". As well, two of Reagan's closest advisers, Representative David Stockman of Michigan (appointed by Reagan) and Jack Kemp (the new Chairman of the House Republican Conference) have advocated the same thing having warned Reagan of a Republican "Economic Lunkirk" and followed the President elect's leap in lending their names to a tax-cutting bill.

Reading like a 19th century political classic, these gentlemen have written that their review of the multiple challenges and threats lying in ambush contains an inescapable warning, If bold practices are not swiftly, deftly and courageously implemented in the first

six months (of the Reagan Administration), Washington will quickly become engulfed in political disorder commensurate with the surrounding economic disarray. The specific danger is this: If President Reagan does not lead a creatively orchestrated high profile policy offensive based on revision of the fundamentals -- supply-side tax cuts and regulatory relief, stern outlay control and Federal fiscal retrenchment, and monetary reform and dollar stabilisation -- the thin Senate Republican majority and the *de facto* conservative majority in the House will fragment.

THE SOLUTION they propose is that President Reagan should declare a "national economic emergency", should ask Congress to forget about all other matters and spend 100 days on an Emergency Economic Stabilisation and Recovery Programme, and enact a programme and enact a programme based on the "principles" already mentioned, namely; spur output and cut inflation; lower taxes; stimulate investments by eliminating regulations; on business; cut budgetary outlays on social services; and cancel all controls on petroleum products and their allocations. For the moment, the authors insist, no pressure should be put on the work force in terms of belt-tightening, for "there is no point in antagonising organised labour during this critical period" -- clearly a backdoor agenda for lowering living standards in another way.

In the spirit of the Stockman-Kemp warning, incoming White House Chief of Staff, James Baker, declared that Reagan was indeed considering the declaration of an 'economic emergency' on Inauguration Day to dramatise the situation's serious roots and the Reagan Administration's determination to act. This would entail major executive steps, including controls on Federal spending and borrowing, though, Baker said, not anything "as drastic as closing the banks or even the stock exchange" -- pointed references to the measures taken by President Roosevelt in the 1930s.

And so America is poised for the grand entrance of the conqueror of ballot boxes and the coiner of clever phrases. What the new emperor will ordain at his coronation has yet to appear in print. But some say

he will speak of "the morals of America and the immorality of the world beyond that this most moral of nations will have to take account of itself and forego the good life for a moment to strengthen itself for a better life tomorrow, that the tile and dangerous places beyond American shores will have to be policed to keep American democracy safe and secure. But, should he say these things and try to bring them about, there will be many casualties -- and not only in America.

— With acknowledgements to *The Economic & Political Weekly*, Bombay, 24.1.81.

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A LITTLE COMMONSENSE

About Planning & Development

by Anura Weeraratna

Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries

This speech delivered by Mr Anura Weeraratne, Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries, at a Seminar on "Systems Approach to Development Planning" on March 6, 1981 is not only thought provoking but also reflects the experience of a successful administrator.

TRIBUNE is for the total elimination of the plethora (or diarrhoea of epidemic proportions) of the current affliction of seminars, workshop and other tamashas sponsored by international bureaucrats who know no other way of justifying their existence. This seminar-cum-workshop gimmickry has inhibited and emasculated all purposeful and constructive work in Sri Lanka. Officials, in the office and on the fields, in Colombo and in all outstation centres (down to the smallest hamlet), are nowa-days permanently preoccupied or occupied with attending or preparing for different seminars, workshops training programmes and other such impedimenta to work. We have said this before and we repeat it again that, if this country is to get down to work and increase production, the Government must impose a total ban on seminars and other diversionary side-shows. Unless this

is done Sri Lanka will go down to posterity (and permanent poverty) as the land of Perpetual Seminars.

Coming to Mr. Weeraratne's paper, an old reader of TRIBUNE had drawn our attention to a brief report about it in a daily paper. We thereupon obtained the full text and found that it merits publication. One does not need a Seminar to propound and propagate the words of wisdom contained in Mr. Weeraratne's speech. He successfully debunks the high falutin' gibberish which the multitude of "systems experts", now let loose in our midst to intimidate everybody with technical jargon intended to baffle, mystify and silence all except other experts of the same breed. —EDITOR

IN REGARD to the object matter of this seminar, 'A Systems Approach to Development Planning', I must admit that I am a layman in respect of both Systems Analysis and Development. I leave it to the expert participants to enlighten me. I would rather speak in a somewhat rambling manner on certain aspects of development planning as I see it.

The need for development of a developing country hardly needs any elaboration. Its people need to achieve, at the very least, a minimum standard of living to meet their requirements of food, clothing, shelter, education, health and other human needs. The real question is how do we reach these goals and when. Since the needs of a developing country are so enormous, both in relative and absolute terms even to meet a modicum of the above mentioned needs, planning is imperative. Even in most developed countries today of the western world planning of varying complexity and degree takes place. But for a developing country a Development Plan can no longer be considered a status symbol.

The countries of the developing world are themselves very diverse in character in terms of resources available, population composition, education levels and other parameters. Some of the developing countries have, in fact, already achieved a significant degree of economic growth in the last twenty years and may well reach developed

country status within the next decade. But for the majority of developing countries it would seem that for the foreseeable future a very hard struggle to achieve even the basic needs is the only prospect in sight. Development planners now employ sophisticated techniques. These techniques were in the main developed and are applied in developed countries. At this stage it would be relevant to question whether the techniques that have been proved in the developed world are indeed appropriate to a developing country are the concepts associated with these techniques. In many developing countries the institutional mechanism available for planning may be of a rudimentary nature or insufficiently experienced. The statistical data available may also not be very extensive. In such circumstances what is the nature of the development planning effort that could take place? Or indeed can a coherent development plan be even formulated? Despite these very fundamental weaknesses, non-the-less, some sort of development planning has to take place. It may be a short term plan for one or two years or a medium plan for five to six years. But the credibility of the whole planning effort will depend on the seriousness of purposes behind the formulation of the plan and the dedication which with that plan will be implemented.

OF EQUAL OR EVEN GREATER IMPORTANCE as the formulation of a Plan is its execution. Through what institutions and mechanisms could the goals of the plan be achieved. I believe that most countries now, through experience and maturity of outlook, tend to be pragmatic, irrespective of their formal commitment to a particular political philosophy. In certain areas of the economy public ownership is vital and may indeed be the only way of achieving the specified goals, specially in basic industry, provision of education and health services, development of the infrastructure of roads, harbours, communications, etc. While in other areas, with the proper use of price and market incentives and appropriate fiscal policy the private sector can be stimulated to play an active role and contribute productively and profitably and thus reduce the burden on government finance. **The Sri Lanka Government has adopted such**

a policy and in my own Ministry, the Ministry of Fisheries, the practical implementation of a policy of both public and private sector participation in the Fishery Development Plan has proved to be successful.

An important factor that is often overlooked with the consequent adverse effects on the credibility of the planning effort is the extent to which the people for whom the plans are meant participate in the formulation of the plan. No plan can be made to work, specially in a developing country, unless there is mass participation. In fact, I would suggest that "a priority requirement is the mass education of the people by propaganda using all available media on the concept, scope and the objectives of the plan being formulated. Too often a plan is formulated by meetings confined to a handful of officials. Even if one were to consider a plan for a certain sector whether it be industry, agriculture, roads, etc., the knowledge needed and the detail involved is so considerable that experience available in as wide a circle as possible should be consulted. As large a number of people with the required technical expertise who will be available outside the direct government framework as well as institutions outside the government departments should all be involved. It is only in this way that one can ensure that the data needed for formulating the plan are available and that the objectives of the plan in fact will meet the actual needs of that sector. In practice, however, sheer lack of manpower, time and energy probably compel officials to do such an exercise, to say the least, in a superficial manner without the necessary in-depth insight. It would therefore seem to me that no effort should be spared in ensuring the availability of a cadre of trained manpower capable of formulating plans not only at a central planning level but also in each sector of the economy and whose combined resources can be brought to bear when national plans are formulated.

FURTHER ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS in the formulation of a plan is a Strategy of Development. A strategy of development would, no doubt, reflect the political and ideological thinking of the government of the day. In addition, a good strategy should embody the

following requirements;- (a) A clear enumeration of priorities of investment; (b) Provide for linkage between the various sectors of investment; (c) Provide for manpower requirements needed for implementing the plan at all levels and (d) Provide the financial resources necessary.

A development plan would to a great extent merely remain a plan if these components have not been adequately identified and provided for. It may sometimes be the case that lobbying by one interested group or the other may influence decisions regarding the choice of priorities. Similarly, a particular political philosophy might also dictate priority areas. But either way, in the end, economic and development logic will have to prevail.

In many cases it has also been experienced that there is not sufficient linkage between the various sectors. For example if we need more houses then the capacity for producing more building materials will be needed. If agriculture output is to be increased the provision of necessary infrastructure such as water, fertilizer, farming implements, etc., must also be made available. In Sri Lanka we have experienced from time to time shortcomings arising from such planning deficiencies. Major development projects have suffered adversely in their execution due to lack of qualified personnel. Often expatriate experts have been found to be inexperienced and incapable of performing the tasks allotted to them. The future of development projects are sometimes at stake due to lack of adequate funding. Such shortages may be in the area of local finances which are an essential component for any capital project. Sometimes I wonder whether whatever techniques one may employ in the construction of a model an inadequate appreciation of the basic elements required for a good strategy is not the prime cause for the failure of many development plans.

I HAVE NOTED from the agenda that among the addresses listed from resource persons is one on "The possibilities of using Systems Approach for Energy Problems". The issue of Energy has become particularly critical in Sri Lanka today from two aspects. One is the continuing rise of imported oil and the other

is the very delicate balance at present maintained between installed capacity and demand. This has been further aggravated by the existing drought. In this connection on referring to the Ten Year Plan formulated in 1959 I observed that the installed capacity aimed for by 1967 was to be 387 Megawatts. A comparison with the Five Year Plan prepared in 1971 shows that the installed capacity in 1971 was 261 Megawatts planned to be increased to 387 Megawatts in 1976. The latter figure does not take into account The Samaanlawewa Scheme (120 Megawatts) which was scheduled to be in operation in 1977 of that time. I am highlighting this to indicate how two plans drawn up for the same sector shows widely different figures between plan and achievement. I wonder whether it would not be a useful exercise for this seminar to take this as a case study and determine what exactly went wrong with the planning for power requirements. Could a system approach have avoided this or is it only another technique which in the end cannot be a substitute for good judgement based on reliable data?

Another example which I would like to draw from Sri Lanka experience is whether our agriculture and industry sectors are adequately linked. I believe our primary objective is the development of agriculture. If this is to take place what are the industrial inputs required by the agricultural sector? What is the degree of local manufacture? What should be encouraged for local manufacture and what should be imported? If we rely entirely on imports for our agricultural inputs including farming implements do we have the necessary funding resources to maintain the volume of imports necessary? All these questions pinpoint the fundamental necessity for embodying a credible strategy in the development planning.

It would seem that in the current world situation today, the prospects for economic development of developing countries are gloomy. No matter what development plan is formulated it can be entirely vitiated by external factors totally beyond the government's control. In Sri Lanka today we are facing the problem of rising prices, increasing tendency for protectionism in the developed countries of the West, world-wide economic recession especially in those countries who are the principal customers of Sri Lanka and a

stagnant export sector. Under these circumstances is it at all possible to proceed with even a medium term development plan? Well, intellectually one has to subscribe to the necessity of such a plan even though in practice achievement may almost be impossible. None the less, we have to live in hope and continue with our efforts of development and development planning.

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IN AUSTRALIA

A MAN AND HIS LIBRARY

by Beverley Roberts

Victor Melder. The name is synonymous with Sri Lanka; in Melbourne at least. For, he has probably the largest privately-owned library of Ceylon books and periodicals outside the island. 1150 books and over 300 journals—all well catalogued and indexed—line the shelves of the neat library which is contained in a special two-room building at the rear of his Broadmeadows home. The greater part of his collection are books published after 1950. However, he has many first editions, too. And a few that are over 100 years old.

Victor migrated to Australia in 1968. His love for his motherland and the fact that he is an avid reader, combined to being the library: which has grown rapidly over the space of twelve years and is continuing to expand. "When I arrived in Australia", the genial-faced Sri Lanka said, "I was appalled to find that the average Australian knew nothing of Sri Lanka. Most of them thought that Ceylon was a town in India. I set about correcting this notion, immediately. Then came the millions of questions to be answered. I had to arm myself with facts. The result—a library"

Information about Sri Lanka is circulated all over Australia by Victor. Not only do the Australians benefit from his services—which incidentally, is free—but also the Sri Lankans here. 'The Melder News and Information Machine'—for want of a better term—keeps us in touch with the homeland. The library is even open to the public at weekends, for reference purposes. And at no charge.

"How do you get these books?" I asked. "Friends". He replied with a smile. "A few tireless individuals in Colombo ferret out books for me and send them over". "What are some of your prized possessions in your collection?" I asked. He pointed to a first edition of Reverend Selkirk's, "Recollections of 'Ceylon'", published in 1844. "And those". He said, pointing to two volumes of Tennant's "Ceylon" The New Series of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch) journals and the complete set of Dutch Burgher Union journals (1903-1968) are other publications he is the proud owner of.

Victor was born in Kandy and educated at St. Sylvester's College. He comes from a traditional railway family. When he left school in 1953, he worked for while at the Kandy Municipal Council, before joining the Ceylon Government Railways as an Engine Driver. He worked in that position until he left Sri Lanka. His employment at present, is Revenue officer to the Ministry of Conservation in Melbourne. He is married and has five children.

The work Victor Melder is doing in informing the Australian public about Sri Lanka and promoting her image, is to be applauded. Single-handed and free of charge. He has achieved far more than is known. Sri Lanka is surely indebted to his effort.

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

With The Foreign Minister of the Republic of Maldives, Mr. Fatullah Jameel

by HarshaGunawardene

Question: Mr. Minister, what is your assessment of the present state of relations between Sri Lanka and the Maldives and what are the possibilities of further strengthening the ties between two countries?

Answer: Well. I can describe the present status as far as our relations with Sri Lanka as exceptionally good. We have been able to identify a number of areas in which we can strengthen our relations. In the last few years and months, we have been working very closely with each other at the Officials' level. We have been discussing various areas of co-operation and finally, we have been able to identify these areas and we are going ahead with plans and work to implement and realise the effective measures of doing something in these areas. I can mention some of these. Of course, we have had recent negotiations on Civil Aviation, on Trade and also, to develop very close relations in the field of co-operation among youth. We are expecting a youth delegation from Sri Lanka shortly and this will be followed by similar exchanges in various fields.

We are quite happy about the progress we are making at the Government level. At the leadership level, our President and Your President have been in touch with each other very frequently and I have also met your Foreign Minister. These frequent contacts make it easier to us to work out an effective program of co-operation.

On the political side and especially as far as the regional questions are concerned, we have similar views. We also work very closely on international matters both at the UN and at other conferences level, and I think we are quite happy about the co-operation we receive from Sri Lanka.

Question: Mr. Minister, you recently returned from the Non-Aligned Foreign Ministers meeting in Delhi. There was speculation in the press both before and after the meeting that the Movement was heading towards a crisis and that there was an imminent split in the Movement. In your opinion, what was the main outcome of the Delhi Meeting and how true were these reports?

Answer: I think we have to face the realities of the day time. And we have to expect changes in the world and the success of any movement like the Non-Aligned depends on how well we ourselves adjust to these changes and commadact ourselves to the requirements of the times. Of course the world today

is different from the time when the Non-Aligned Movement was born and the movement itself in size has grown including a large number of countries which represent different social and political systems. Of course, while the principles of Non-Alignment and our targets remain the same, it is natural that when we come to specific issues there would be a wide range of opinions. It does not, at all, reflect any kind of crisis as such and it is not at all an alarming phenomena.

As we look at it, it is a natural symptom which we can expect to appear when the world itself is changing, when we are faced with new kinds of challenges. We never had the feeling that we are having a split amongst ourselves or we are faced with a crisis—but it is a matter of adjusting our thoughts, our methods of work—to the new requirements. And the way that we concluded our deliberations in the Delhi meeting gives us the assurance that the Non-Aligned movement itself is capable of facing these challenges and we were able to talk the same language at the end. We were able to achieve our targets and in cases where we had difficulties, we were able to reach a compromise. And this gives us hope and the assurance that the Movement itself is as healthy as before.

Of course there has to be an overall review in certain trends which are building up within the movement—which we can, with our sincere efforts—we can rectify these trends, which have, in fact, been there all the time, but sometimes it surfaces in greater magnitude and then disappears. It has been always there because we are fighting against the evils of the past, we are fighting Colonialism, we are fighting against the domination of the strong and we are fighting against the policies of power and strength in the world. We are trying to implement justice and peace. These things are still rejected by some powers which dominated the world in the past and which are still trying to maintain their influences, both in the economic field and the political field in the world...So, I don't think that we were that disappointed with the atmosphere and outcome of the New Delhi meeting.

Question: Mr. Minister, there is some degree of apprehension that the proposal to establish the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace, initiated by Sri Lanka, and the scheduled UN Meeting in Colombo this year might not take place...judging from the latest reports from New York. What are your views?

Answer: We were very disappointed that there have been some impediments in these deliberations. Actually, our views are even now that such a conference will be of great importance not only to the peace in the region, but also to international peace. Because we have seen in the last 2 years the tension in the area has increased and although the principles involved behind the call to make the Indian Ocean a Peace Zone remained as strong as ever. New dimensions have appeared in the international and regional arena, which require a more serious effort to be made towards the implementation of the Indian Ocean as a Peace Zone.

I am not able to say more at this time—our concern is to make this zone a peaceful one and we are quite open in our thinking, even to add whatever dimensions whatever components which may be necessary to make this proposal or this call a realistic and an implementable one.

Of course, we look forward to the co-operation of the major maritime powers as well—to make the desires of the peoples of this zone a realistic one

Because, we do not want to live forever in conflict, we do not want to live in tension. Instead of that, we want to give our attention for the development of our own peoples and their welfare. And, we want to eliminate the potentials of any dangers to our countries and to the world from the present situation of military and power rivalry in the region.

Question: Referring particularly to DIEGO GARCIA, Mr. Minister, for the first time the mention of Diego Garcia was dropped from the documents at the Delhi meeting could you explain?

Answer: Of course, there were a lot of circumstances involved in this matter. I don't know whether the time will be suitable to

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go into all the details. BUT, in general, I think it doesn't matter very much whether we mention Diego Garcia or mention the states concerned--the principle itself is clearly spelled out and we can always say its the military bases, whether it is in Diego Gracia or whether it is in any other piace--whether it is built by the Americans or the Russians or any other power

And as for ourselves, we even go beyond that and include also the MILITARY FACILITIES. We don't like our countries to be used as support to any kind of military activity--be it direct or indirect involvement. By doing that perhaps by reducing these presences or the support facilities even, we can think of a zone of peace from these presences and I think (of course, I am not an expert on those) as far as I read from the reports, the technology, has advanced to an extent you don't actually need the physical presence of naval or military bases in any region. Specially, the superpowers have built their technologies to such an extent that it is only something that keeps us in tension and in fear of what might happen if they are not there. As far as we know, the mention of the bases is not that necessary, but we can always come to the principlse of military presence--Whether in the form of bases, in Diego Garcia or in any other place, or the military facilities itself we have in many places. The military facilities are there, the harbours are there, the presence of military vessels and plans are there So, we are talking against all these presences, which, if we could reduce them, and certainly it is our belief that If we reduce the tension in general, we could create a more healthier climate for an overall world disarmament and peace.

Question: Finally, Mr. Minister, there appears to be a delay in the Law Of the Sea sessions and particularly in the working out of a formal document. What specifically are the implications of this "procedural wrangling", if I can put it like this, as the last sessions showed. for a country like Maldives ?

Answer: Well, we have been expecting some positive results to come out of the present conference. Actually, the issues involved are quite complicated. But the interna-

tional community has taken enough time to evolve new concepts which will suit the present situation as well as the future requirements of the human race in general, I think we have been working quite seriously on these concepts for quite sometime. And, as a small country, you know we expect something genuine, something effective to be reached before long.

Therefore, we were very much dissappointed that still things are not that easy in this Conference. Perhaps, some more sincere efforts on the part of the developed countries and the Third World will pave the way ahead to the conclusion of the Conventions that we are waiting for. I don't think there are much technical problems at this stage . . . the problems involved are more of a political nature and we hope and we urge that the countries which are still maintaining a rigid policy will realise the necessity of this work. And the timing itself is very important for us. Time itself is very valuable for the smaller countries. And, unless we conclude something at this stage, we are losing a very valuable opportunity to start a new stage of development. Not only for ourselves, but for a more interdependent and more co-operative atmosphere.

We are expecting to start this stage on development of international co-operation and it cannot be started unless we have a proper foundation for the dealings that are going to have between ourselves as nations. We are going to discover new resources in the Sea. We are going to establish new relations in our transactions as far as maritime dealings are concerned. in our legislations and even in our local activities, we have to think in terms of one universe, one globe and work together with other nations and share the wealth with other countries and benefit from the experiences of others in promoting our own conditions.

March, 23 1981.
Male
Republic of Maldives

AND JAFFNA COLLEGE

THE TAKE-OVER OF PRIVATE and denominational schools by the State, the introduction of Swabasha in Universities and standardisation of examination marks at University entrance level have all had their varied impacts on every sphere of activity of this country. The suddenness with which they were introduced and the blatant way in which they were carried out, with the least regard for traditions built up over a century pushed the educational system of this country into a chaotic state.

The euphoria created by pseudo-nationalists of this country to justify their actions have also taken a heavy toll of the bright future of several intelligent and resourceful youth of this country. These developments were later accentuated and worsened by the spiralling inflation. This has despoiled the country of its dedicated band of teachers and intellectuals. The effect of intellectual pauperisation in the country may not be precisely stated in monetary terms but it is glaring at the social level.

Eminent educationalists have expressed their views candidly on the teady deterioration of the educational system of this country. **Jaffna College**, at Vaddukkodai, which is one of the leading educational institutions of this country has been for the last few years discussing the matter in utmost unrest. The college itself underwent a traumatic experience when a satanic axe fell on the right arm and severed her of a valuable portion of activity. The college's higher education was paralysed when buildings, staff and library were taken over by the state en-masse. Now the buildings have been restored by the present Government and the college is again considering the role it could play in the changed atmosphere. Ever since the present government assumed power there is scope for institutions like Jaffna college to expand. The recent seminar held in Colombo on "Higher Education at Jaffna College" was meant to elicit opinion of the Alumni and friends of the college to re-establish an institution for higher learning.

The guidelines for the seminar was based on the speeches made at Jaffna College by

three eminent Professors: two of whom are from our own Universities — prof. K. D. Arudpragasam, Dept. of Zoology, University of Colombo and Prof. K. Indrapala, Dept. of History, University of Jaffna have been University teachers of considerable standing and products of post-colonial period. Their review of the educational experience of the recent past of this country cannot be overlooked. The suggestions made by them to fit Jaffna College once again to fill the gap created in the higher education of this country is worthy of attention and consideration.

The gist of Prof. K. D. Arudpragasam's speech may be summarised as follows:

i. The state system of education has been a colossal failure and has given rise to a gigantic tuition industry and parents have to spend large sums of money for instructions in these tuitions. *Hence there is no education in the country today but only teaching.*

ii. The huge state system of education has failed and the chief cause of the failure is the transferability of teachers. Good teachers are unable to wield respect and influence students under this system. Tutories are therefore successful because of successful teachers. There is an immediate need for teachers who can command the respect of students and teach with authority.

iii. Education should meet a much larger need than just a qualification for a job. Education should take seriously the cultural heritage of its people, its fine-arts and literature.

iv. We need to teach the new generation to demand less of nature and to live more in tune with the natural world around us. *Hence there is an urgent need to teach children to adjust to life in an increasingly difficult environment.*

Prof. Arudpragasam was present at the seminar and elaborated the need for an institution for higher learning. He pointed out that there is a mass of people who can enter the portals of higher learning. The Universities of this country can never expand to accommodate all qualified students. This problem will remain with us for a long period of time.

Because according to Prof. Indrapala, out of the 107,000 students who sat for the Advanced Level Examination in 1979, 30,000 were eligible for University admission but only 5,000 will be admitted". The question was then of finding place for qualified students and not for rejects. It was also pointed out by him that tuition industry flourished because of lack of confidence in teachers and the fear that syllabuses cannot be covered.

Prof. K. Indrapala's observations further confirm Prof. Arudpragasam's comments. On the question of tuition he observed:

i. that the tuition industry is now even trying to take over University education in the science and arts faculties. Present day students are entering the Universities with great deficiencies in education. The Universities cannot give the students the broad and general education that they have missed in school education due to the influence of tutorials. Several foreign scholars comment on the poor quality of the present day Sri Lankan graduates.

If we break in here to support Professor's comments we would vouch for the accuracy. Because it is our opinion that graduates who have joined the government services sometimes are very low in quality, their general knowledge being the less qualified clerks.

ii. Another very pertinent observation of Prof. Indrapala was that early specialisation has to be deplored. There should be a restoration of the humanities and arts in school curriculum, and such a curriculum should include the means for acquisition of knowledge and love of the creative arts.

In presenting the above guidelines to the participants who included University lecturers, members of the various professions, principals and teachers), Mr. Saelan Kadirgamar, Senior Lecturer, University of Jaffna, who chaired the seminar, emphasised that education is primarily the responsibility of the state. However, considering the limited role the state could play at the function, he concurred with the others that institutions of the type of Jaffna College should move into fill

the gap. The "missionary" motive (not religious) should be rekindled to serve the community in and around Jaffna College.

In his view, such an institution should not be just another private, denominational school but one should serve the community at large. Therefore, it should take the garb of a community project or institution. The Chairman as well as the participants decried the manner in which English education was neglected during the last two decades and praised the President, His Excellency, J. R. Jayawardane for giving due prominence for the study of English. English education would certainly break the insularity of the Universities and institutions for higher learning. Now the teachers and students themselves are in the same plane. While many of the participants insisted priority being given to English education Saelan Kadirgamar pointed out that while welcoming such a move, education should be bi-lingual. He decried the way in which foreign languages are being taught in Sri Lanka. If modern techniques are properly used one could master a foreign language in about six months' time. The intensive course methods adopted by Universities are not intensive enough and the period between Advanced Level examination and entry to Universities should be made use of to acquire English knowledge.

Mr Kamaldeen of the National Libraries Board said that he was disappointed with the way libraries have been maintained in the Peninsula. The inadequacy of libraries maintained in schools and the books found in the Public Library are a bad reflection of the intellectual atmosphere supposed to prevail in Jaffna. Education in Jaffna is examination oriented and hence the neglect of libraries.

Yet another valuable observation made by a lawyer on the question of dowry and its impact on the intellectuals of the peninsula deserves attention. The intellectual of the peninsula barter his knowledge for a handsome dowry. He pawn his own self to a lesser educated businessman and his daughter. Once the marriage takes place he surrenders everything including his intellectual pursuits. Hence the necessity to analyse the dominant (so rather dominating) role played by women in the intellectual climate of Jaffna. There was a time when missionaries thought of converting a woman to equalise with men. This is a field that deserves the attention of our sociologists.

On the whole, everybody agreed that as in the past, so at present context and in the future, Jaffna College has a vital role to play in the field of higher learning of this Contry. The London Advanced Level Classes, Technical Intitutes, the College of Farm and Study Institute and the several lecturers and discussions sponsored by the institute had awakened the community to the social commitment involved.

In the 1870s when the then Director of Public Institutions Laurice, suggested a Superior School for Jffna, the Alumni and friends revived the school. Jffna College today perhaps may be the only Institution today capable of meeting the demands of education. For the rest of the community today is frittering away hard earned money in so many wasteful activities Wether these could be harnessed to establish an educational instituton to meet the community's requirements is the big question of the day. political and economic climate of the day would certainly favour such a move.

As observed by Prof. Indrapala, "Jffna College always was conscious of the special needs of the community. Dr Daniel Poor was not cowed down by British Governor Barnes' restrictions on University education by missionary institutions. Dr Poor set up a seminary inspite of it, and when the seminary was closed down in 1855 the Alumini and friends revived it, in 1872. A return to the ideals of the founders of the College to revive Tamil culture and language and to emphasise simple living and service to the community should again take pride of place. Let Jffna garages train welders for middle east, but not students to the Universities.

K.A.

FILM FCCUS

O. C. I. C. Awards

As anticipated by this column, as among the best 10 for 1980, *Uthumaneni*, *Parithiyaga*, *Siribo Aiya*, *Hansa Vilak* and *Dandu Monara* carried away, the major Salutation Awards at the OCIC Film Festival, for the most challenging cinematic concept, most outstanding script, most cinematic camera art, most creative film editing and most creative performances (male and female) by Joe Abeyawickreme and Malini Fonseka respectively. Since *Dandu Monara* won dual awards, this column takes pride in partly reproducing what it said in the *Tribune*

of 2nd August 1980 about this film: "Joe Abeyawickrema who is by far one of our best natural actors and Malini Fonseka slips without much effort into her role--both to gather and deliver what director W Jeya Dharmasiri has had in mind. The hand to mouth existence that prevails amidst rural poverty, trembling so much between the cup and the lip all the time, to be given the coup-de grace by indebtedness has seldom been surfaced effectively as in this film. It provides much food for thought for the times we live in. It was not surprising that this fine effort in all its brevity won a Soviet Peace Committee Diploma at the Moscow International Film Festival of 1979. *Dandu Monara* is a gem of a film that shines in its simplicity, and is a clear pointer that the cinematic talent at our disposal is not being wasted and is swinging back into its own. It is family fare and if one feels that it would not be recognised at awards time, next year (1981) I am prepared to accept that bet". This column light-heartedly regrets now in retrospect, that there were no takers! I must also add that there were many in the audience who were shocked that *Ganga Addara* did not receive adequate OCIC recognition -- How come Father Ernest Porutota?

SATHWENI DAWASA (Sinhalese): Released in the wake of *Thavama* which wound its story around a wandering tribe, this film is photographed in appealing colour to bring out the garish gaiety of gipsy life in Sri Lanka. It is directed by Hemasiri Sellaperuma and has been received well by the local picturegoers, and many long queues are evidence of that. In the dictionary I possess, a gipsy is referred to as a member of a wandering Hindu race, living by basket making, fortune telling, and where the womenfolk are playfully mischievous and dark complexioned. This film remains quite true to this definition, as although the language spoken is a distorted Sinhalese, its Tamil overtones cannot be missed phonetically. There are the betel spitting sequences and the more serious moments when the Hindu deity Pillayar is their object of worship. Whether such gipsy tribes exist in Sri Lanka now in such numbers, or have been whiffed away with the winds of time is an academic question -- so let us get on to the story, which pleases the eye and the

senses, while it lasts.

The chief of this unsettled clan is roled by Ravindra Randeniya -- almost unrecognisably lost in his heavy make up -- leading his tribe on with an unswerving and severe code of life and conduct, till the ripples of a breakaway from his authority, like charity begins in his own family. A breakaway from the moorings of a fenced in life, while on the move takes shape on the horizon. His two pretty daughters (Malini Fonseka and Sonia Disa) and a son do their city incursions to earn their pennies by fortune reading (see **Tribune** cover of 14. 3. 81) but are drawn by the glitter of a more rooted society, which keeps beckoning them. While Malini succumbs to the heady wine which distracts her in the handsome form of a youngster (Sanath Gunatilake), who borrows time from his record bar to woo her persistently, the other sister, Sonia resists such temptations, but pitches incestuously for the overtures of her brother in law, and deserts her father to escape his fury. The son too wavers to breaking point, and decides to breakaway when his thieving bands are "boiled" by his father's unforgiving code of righteousness which spares none. Thus the disintegration of a family held together, more by fear than by filial love begins, and tragedy follows.

The camera in the expert hands of M. A. Gaffoor kept roving with the tribe to highlight the tearfully tender moments, as the caravan move on. Perhaps this role was Randeniya's most difficult characterisation in his film career, and I thought he rose to its stature without any reservation. Malini and Sonia shone as the carefree sisters, who hopped into town and made their living by the stars and the palm lines of others with a lithe and lissom gait. Tagging along was Wimal Kumar de Costa as the wiseguy whose sarcasm steady his record bar partner, before the latter takes his romantic plunge on a two wheeler. The film by its even onslaught at the box office right now, indicates that it will delight families for some time. Join the queue for an escapist evening

THE LAST OF THE HARD MEN (ENGLISH):
This 20th Century Fox Production is a Western of rare vintage, that rides from reel to reel to a shattering shootout at curtains, that will keep you on the edge of your seat. It is the story of two tough men,

Sam (Charlton Heston) a retired sheriff and a hard core convict Provo (James Coburn) who have old scores to settle and a ruddy rendezvous to keep. The moment Provo escapes from captivity and rides a bloodthirsty trail Sam holsters his gun, belts up and gets his riding boots on in the cocksure awareness that the former would be closing on him sooner or later. In the cat and mouse game that explodes with hour glass tension, the ex-convict goes one better by kidnapping Sam's daughter and holding her hostage (and how?) to draw him into his firing line. In a fierce confrontation under the cover of a bush fire, the tough as nails foes face each other for the kill, and it is for you to witness the climax, that will be in your mind for a long long time. In this classy Western, both Heston and Coburn are neatly cut out for their roles--particularly the latter who hopes about hawk-eyed, awaiting his silver haired quarry to show up in a battle of guts and wits, that will prove an appetising dish for western fans in particular--and other action lovers too.

PERFECT FRIDAY (English): This E. M. I. production has Ursula (Udessa) Andress using her physical attributes, to lay her hands on 300,000 pounds sterling in the UK National Metropolitan Bank -- having her indebted husband (David Warner) and the Deputy Bank Manager (Stanley Baker) in her seductive clutches to map out the foul deed. The planning and the execution of the robbery is done stylishly and with such ingenuity that a creeping tension will have you in its grip, before the film is half way through. It is not only the high precision plot that is slept upon meticulously by her two accomplices, but is kept ticking between bedsheets while Ursula is around! I will abide by the management's request and not divulge the surprise ending, but be assured that this is another excellent film that routes you to the Bank vaults and the millions, which after all are like diamonds a girl's best friend in the final analysis -- the alternative in this instance being an indolently indebted husband and a "bowler" hatted banker. Ursula switches on her deadly charms with such purpose, that even the Grand Slam at the Metropolitan looked so easy for a while. Do not miss this film -- BANKERS!!

James N. Benedict

TRIBUNE, March 28, 1981

CONFIDENTIALLY

Total Monopoly For Nestles?

IS IT TRUE that the National Milk Board (NMB) has decided to hand over two more NMB plants to the private sector? That in addition to reports in the press, stating that more NMB plants were being "sold" to the private sector, there are hushed whispers in parliamentary circles to the same effect? That the two plants are reported to be the powdered milk factory at Ambiwela and the liquid milk plant at Narahenpitiya? That the talk in government circles is that like the condensary at Polonnaruwa the private sector organisation picked to do the job is the joint company in which Nestle's has a 60% control? That we have already pointed out that this joint venture with Nestle's is unique because it is the only one in which the government of Sri Lanka has granted majority (60%) control to the foreign collaborator? That **Tribune** has no objection to a multi-national (in principle) as long as the multi-national operates within the laws and regulations of this country? That it is the accepted principle that the majority control in any joint venture should be Sri Lankan? That there is no reason why the rule should have been waived in the case of Nestle's? That what is specially disturbing is that there are special reasons why extra care should have been exercised in any collaboration with Nestle's? That Nestle's is also at the moment waiting a give-no-quarter battle against the WHO and other UN agencies which are seeking to safeguard the health of ordinary people, especially that of infants and young children? That it is true that the NMB had become a byword for mismanagement, corruption and inefficiency? That contrary to expectations the situation in the NMB has grown worse in the years after 1977? That over the years, MPs, national newspapers and **Tribune** had spotlighted glaring instances of corruption, mala practices and mismanagement in the NMB? That it has been pointed out honest and efficient officials in the NMB were driven out into wilderness so that the corrupt could reign supreme? That three and a half years of such wanton ineptitude (under two Ministers) has reduced the entire NMB to the deplorable situation where the billions (literally billions) of rupees

of tax-payers' money invested in the NMB's plants and equipment will be handed over to Nestle's to exploit this country on a 60 to 40 basis? That immediately after Nestle's was given the Polonnaruwa factory, there was a sharp (and unwarranted) increase in the price of all milk products - without a proportionate increase in payments to producers?

IS IT TOO LATE even at this late stage for government (because it is not able to set up an efficient public sector management) to find some Sri Lankan private company or a foreign collaboration venture (with at least 51% Sri Lankan control) to manage the Ambiwela and Narahenpitiya plants? That this will at least prevent a total Nestle's monopoly being set up in this island? That it is in the national (capitalist) interest of the country to see that Nestle's does not get a total monopoly grip on dairy industry in the country? That consumers and people of goodwill in many advanced countries have started organisations that not only expose the sinister Nestle's operations especially in infant foods and milk powder? That one organisation is the International Baby Food Action Network c/o INFACT (Infant formula Action Coalition) 1701 University Avenue, S. E. Minneapolis MN 55414, USA - and it publishes a monthly IEFAN news? That another is The Interfaith Centre on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) 475, Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115, USA? That these and other organisations have launched a boycott of certain Nestle's infant food products? That IFBAN and INFACT have led the boycott campaign? That the aim of the boycott is to stop Nestle's unethical promotion of infant formulas in developing countries? That after the boycott started, Nestle's employed the world's largest public relations firm of Hill and Knowlton to counter the boycott with an expensive and sophisticated public relations campaign? That in the national interest **Tribune** will publish all available information to compel this giant Swiss food company to stop its unethical practices at least in Sri Lanka? That the only way of preventing this is to see that Nestle's does not get a total monopoly? That this government has proclaimed more than once that it was opposed to monopolies-- public or private--and it is difficult to see how it can permit these entire dairy business in this country going a made private fiefdom of Nestle's?