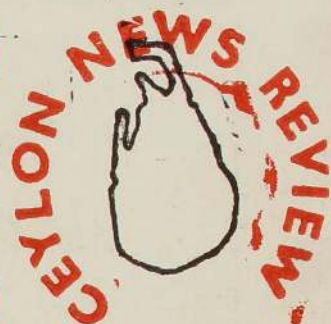


TRIBUNE



26TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION



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26-03-81

Letter From the Editor

THE TIME HAS COME for Government to pay more attention than it has done to develop animal power for agriculture and for short-haul transport. Poor countries like Sri Lanka cannot any longer afford fossil fuel driven tractors, water pumps and other equipment, especially in the small-scale farms now dominant in the rural agricultural sector. Even large-scale plantations, producing commodities for export, have to exercise greater frugality in the use of such vehicles and equipment. This country has no such large-scale farming in paddy or subsidiary foods crops, but without large-scale units Sri Lanka will neither be able to produce enough food for herself nor be in a position to export food items as she very well can. The Government should immediately take concrete steps to introduce large-scale farming—private, state, cooperative or even collective. This country can no longer depend on the existing farm structure to produce food crops adequate even for domestic consumption, let alone for export. If the present state is allowed to continue, Sri Lanka will have to import more and more food which can be easily grown here. As to the most viable size and structure for large, medium, and small farms, a committee of knowledgeable persons (not merely “experts” or technocrats) can best determine the details. But it is for the Government to make a major policy decision on this matter—and there is no time for delay. Small farms and the small holdings (home garden type) of those who work in the large farms can contribute to the total production but they cannot solve our problems.

And, for a realistic agricultural policy and programme to succeed, and even for the present structure to get out of the doldrums in which it is now stagnating, livestock of every kind—particularly buffaloes and neat cattle—are absolutely essential. (The word “neat” is used to distinguish them from buffalo cattle). In the last two decades Sri Lanka’s cattle population has been very nearly decimated and unfortunately the excellent work that was done by the NLDB (National Livestock Development Board) since this government came to power in 1977 has, in more recent months, been disrupted and retarded for a variety of reasons which we will not discuss at this juncture. The dairy milk industry has been reduced to shambles and the proposed total sell-out to a foreign multi-national (creating a dangerous monopoly) will do untold damage to the best interests of the country. In this context the decision of the Mahaweli Authority to start a Draught Animal programme must be commended. It is a step in the right direction. Farming in the Mahaweli region—big, medium or small—can succeed only with livestock. The Mahaweli Settlement Programme will become a meaningless exercise—as many colonisation schemes have turned out to be—without livestock (draught and milk).

Sri Lanka still has enough professional and administrative expertise to make a success of state or private enterprise undertakings. If the right people are put in charge, everything will go well even in the public sector, but square pegs in round holes will bring disaster as in the case of the National Milk

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Board. It is also essential that Government must take urgent measures to induce the good administrators and technocrats still left in the country not to join the Brain Drain. One measure to stop an exodus is to increase the ceiling of salaries payable to chief executives in government undertakings—at least an increase of a thousand or two thousand rupees—which we would consider a minimum. Unless this is done without delay we can see a further drain of talent out of the country—people who want to be here but who just cannot afford to live here any more. If the salaries of peons, security guards, branch managers and other personnel in banks could be increased 300 to 400 per cent—creating a small high-wage island in a vast ocean of poverty—why cannot the ceiling of the remuneration paid to top men who can deliver the goods be raised by 30 to 40 percent?

To come back to livestock, **Tribune** proposes to examine the draught animal programme of the Mahaweli Authority while continuing to focus the spotlight on the National Milk Board and the dairy industry in this country. In this situation, livestock should have the top priority, just as rural agriculture should also receive the same high priority. There is no doubt that the Government has done a great deal of development work in the three and a half years it has been in power, but as we have often pointed out, priorities have been mixed and some of the most important among priorities have been submerged by others of lesser consequence and national importance. Our indefatigable commentator, R. Kahawita, continues to stress that priorities have been mixed up in the Accelerated Mahaweli Plan, but he too now feels that it is no longer possible to undo what has been started. However, the emphasis on the basic priorities he has always insisted on should be kept in mind to secure the maximum benefits from the Accelerated Programme.

Vigilant and constructive criticism is essential at all times to keep any government on its toes. The success of Mahaweli will ultimately depend on the utilisation of the lands which will receive water, and whether they be small peasant holdings or large modern farms, livestock is a must. This is why **Tribune** has always paid such attention to livestock—as one of the basic ingredients for success in agriculture.

ON THE COVER we have a picture of animal power in paddy production. The sooner people

realise that the age of the tractor is over for countries like Sri Lanka the better it will be for the future of this country.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Violent Crime -- Why?

THERE HAS BEEN A GREAT DEAL OF NOISE recently about terrorism. President Reagan has indulged in a flurry of hot-gossiping about political terrorism. He branded the PLO as terrorists, criminals and kidnappers. He described all national liberation movements as "guerilla terrorists." Then he performed a somersault and praised the guerillas and insurgents in Afghanistan as national heroes. This only shows that it is only the subjective way one looks at anything that determines one's avowed attitudes. Reagan has made so many pontifical statements of a subjective nature on a wide variety of subjects—some of them unfortunately most infantile but delivered with the ex-cathedra authority as the incumbent of the White House—that he will be compelled to do many double somersaults as the days go by. One can forgive him for most of his pronouncements during the election campaign except a few which betrayed ignorance which a child of ten would be ashamed of. Readers will recall that in his enthusiasm to debunk environmentalists who wanted to protect trees and forests, Reagan had told an audience that one of the greatest sources of pollution was a forest of trees which produced poisonous vapours. He backtracked on this but not very successfully.

Another obsession bordering on schizophrenia centres around Reagan's hatred for governments and countries that do not toe the US line especially those that have been given US aid including food aid. But he is not the least concerned with the violence, repression and terrorism practiced by those governments that say "yes" to Washington at every turn. With promises for support from Reagan, General Zia of Pakistan has embarked on a personal dictatorial rule—suicidal for Pakistan and which will soon boomerang on the US.

It is not for us to preach sermons to Reagan and others of his tribe in the US. It is not for us to predict doomsday for the

new upsurge of aggressive imperialism in the US. It is for the American people to deal with the man they have elected as President. But we are entitled to ask Reagan and the US Administration to remove some of the ills in the US itself before venturing to cleanse the rest of the world of the kind of "terrorism" he does not like.

There are no doubt many happy and welcome features in the United States. As the richest nation of all time, it has evolved a way of life that has many attractions. But the people who live in that country appear to have serious problems that call for immediate remedial action. Much has been written about various such problems afflicting the US, but the *Time* of March 23, 1981 had a cover story entitled **VIOLENT CRIME IN AMERICA**. We shall cite a few excerpts for the benefit of readers who may not have read it: "Day by day, American's all too familiar crime clock ticks faster and faster. Every 24 minutes, a murder is committed somewhere in the US. Every ten seconds a house is burgled, every seven minutes a woman is raped. There is some truth in the aphorism of Charles Silberman, author of **Criminal Violence, Criminal Justice**, that 'crime is as American as Jesse James. But there is also something new about the way that Americans are killing, robbing, raping and assaulting one another. The curse of violent crime is rampant not just in the ghettos of depressed cities, where it always has been a malignant force to contend with, but everywhere in urban areas, in suburbs and peaceful countrysides. More significant, the crimes are becoming more brutal, more irrational, more random -- and therefore all the more frightening.

"The nation's top jurist, Chief Justice Warren Burger, warned last month about the 'reign of terror in American cities' and bitingly asked: 'Are we not hostages within the borders of our own self -- styled enlightened, civilized country?! Some criminologists answer that the fear of becoming a victim of crime is greater than the actual risk, but no one denies that the fear is real. Proclaimed the **Figgie Report**, a privately funded study of crime in the US: 'The fear of crime is slowly paralyzing American society'. Observes Houston Police Chief B. K. Johnson: We 'have allowed ourselves to degenerate to the point where we're living like animals. We live behind burglar bars and throw a collection of

door locks at night and set an alarm and lay down with a loaded shotgun beside the bed and then try to get some rest. It's ridiculous'. The chief knows whereof he speaks; he keeps several loaded guns in his bedroom!!

This is only the opening paragraph of the 12 page article. The first piece has a subtitle "A Pervasive Fear of Robbery and Mayhem Threatens The Way America Lives". But this is not all. The introductory "Letter From the Publisher" in this issue of *Time* reveals a fearsome situation: "The curse of violent crime has touched many American families, including our own. A surprising number of the *Time* staff members who worked on this week's cover stories have themselves recently been victims of crimes. Senior Writer Ed Magnuson, who wrote the main story, was mugged at knifepoint as he put the key in the lock of his front door earlier this year. He lost \$32 and his credit cards. A few months before that Magnuson's apartment was burglarized. 'The only evidence they left behind was a pair of shoes', he says. 'They weren't even my size.' Associate Editor John Leo, who wrote the assessment of crime's impact on American society, is a two-time burglary victim. Says he: 'All US cities are in danger of becoming unlivable. For a parent, the fear for your children is never very far from your mind'. Correspondent David Jackson awoke early one morning in his Chicago apartment to find a robber pointing gun at him. The man took \$5 and fled. Says Jackson: 'Despite all the stories I had done about truly violent crimes, I was still unprepared for the clammy, hand-trembling fear that comes with being a victim'. After a neighbor was brutally murdered in his Manhattan apartment building, Correspondent Robert Geline agreed to assist in the investigations. He was hypnotised by police in order to help him recall details of the crime. Says Geline sadly: 'Eight months later, the murder remains unsolved'. Last month *TIME*'s Marc Levinson had his Atlanta home broken into on two consecutive weekends. 'I was not at home either time', says Levinson. 'But I felt the anger and a true sense of violation that come when someone has ransacked your property.' "Last week Deputy Art Director Irene Ramp, who was working on the presentation of this week's cover stor-

ies, was the only customer in a Manhattan clothing store when two men walked in, drew pistols and demanded money from the cashier. Ramp remained silent in the dressing room, where she had been trying on a shirt, until the men had made their getaway with about \$ 300. 'If I had surprised them, anything could have happened' she says. Ramp emerged from the ordeal unscathed-- but \$ 25 poorer. 'After watching the whole thing, I felt obliged to buy the shirt'. Assistant Picture Editor Sue Considine, who gathered the photos that accompany the cover stories, lost \$ 120 from her pocketbook in a Greenwich Village restaurant. Says she: 'Now I know to keep it on my lap'. The most frightening thing, perhaps, is that it has all become so commonplace. But one crime, certainly, has left a lasting scar of frustration and loss on the entire staff. Time photographer Paul Keating was shot to death on a Manhattan street last year as he attempted to stop a mugging."

No comment is needed. But we cannot do better than conclude with a few extracts from a part of this cover story that appears as a boxed item entitled IF IT HAPPENS TO YOU: "You are walking alone on a deserted street late at night. Suddenly a stranger steps from the shadows and jabs a sharp object in your ribs 'Gimmie your wallet,' he demands. What should you do? Do not resist, immediately hand over your wallet, your jewellery and anything else the mugger wants. That is the primary survival tip given by law-enforcement officials across the nation to potential victims of armed street criminals. Says officer Michael Sansky of the Los Angeles police department: 'If he's got a weapon, you go along with whatever he says. You're not going to gouge out an eye or kick out a knee if he's armed'. "Even if you are carrying a gun or a can of Mace, advise police officials, don't try to use them. By the time you have reached for your pocket, an armed robber will have had time to kill you. For much the same reason, do not attempt to use karate or judo against the mugger. Even expert fighters are not skilled enough to disarm a mugger unless the element of surprise is on their side. Admits Gerry Armstrong, wl, of Miramar, Fla., a martial-

arts instructor with 19 years of experience: 'If someone pulls a gun and tells me to hand up my wallet, he can have it. A bullet travels faster than my foot' Do not attempt to negotiate for some of your belongings: the longer you delay the mugger, the more impatient and more violent, he is likely to become. If you are held up in an isolated area, do not scream. Chances are that no one will hear your cries for help, and, they will only enrage -- the mugger. Do not make any sudden moves when reaching for your wallet or purse: a jittery mugger may misunderstand and attack you instead, tell him in advance what you plan to do and then move slowly. Always carry some cash with you. If your pockets are empty, some muggers will turn violent out of sheer frustration. Says Detective Ray Southerland of the Dade County public safety department: 'Never give an armed robber the excuse he is looking for to work you over!.....'"

Various suggestions are made how to deal with a rapist, but the advice is this. "...however, a woman may have no choice. Says Klaus. 'If I saw it was hopeless, I'd submit rather than be brutally injured.'..." And the final advice is. 'The best defense against muggers and rapists is to avoid places where they might luck. Common sense says never to walk alone at night or to pick up hitchhikers. If, however, you do suddenly feel a gun or cold knife against your neck, stay as calm as possible. 'Try not to panic, says Captain Ephirne F. Leija of the Houston Police department. 'Do the best you can under a difficult situation, above all, don't try to be a hero'..."

All this is no doubt excellent advice for survival -- in the US today. But no sane person will want such a state of affairs to arise in Sri Lanka. There are many who rightly fear that if we carry the American (and Singaporean) craze for personal profit and quick (and easy) money too far, this country will also end up like the US, an "unlivable country" where we will be compelled to live like animals" always "hostages within the borders of our self-styled enlightened civilized country"

It is easy to sermonize to the Americans on the Time magazine's revelations. But that is not our business. It is for the

Americans to get out of the mess they are in. All that we can say is that if this life of violent crime is the acme of the system of private enterprise in its most successful and blessed form, then countries like Sri Lanka must tread warily in pursuit of this free enterprise system.

Big time and violent crime is on the increase in this country, the land of dharma. There is also no doubt that crime has increased after the country was launched on the mad scramble for profit (in the fond belief that it will bring plenty for the masses). The latest hold-up where two policemen were shot dead and Rs. 8.1 million was whisked away by six gangsters is only the spectacular example of what Sri Lanka is fast slipping into. Apart from smuggling that has increased by leaps and bounds (to use a cliché), forged currency notes running to millions have surfaced. What has so far been discovered may be only the tip of large iceberg of forged currency notes circulating in the country. In addition, ordinary theft and armed robbery have increased many times after the philosophy of free enterprise was adopted and glorified. Police statistics reveal that offences to grab the property of other people during 1980 have reached staggering proportions. Matters are not likely to improve in 1981 -- they will probably become worse.

Is it not time that there is a serious re-thinking about the way of life and living in Sri Lanka?

Postscript :

The above was written before the attempted assassination of President Reagan on 30th March. The *Time* magazine's expose of violent crime in its issue of March 23, could not have come a day too soon. Assassination and violence are despicable ways of resolving any kind of difference, let alone political. Four Presidents of the USA have been shot dead by assassins--Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield, William McKinley and John Kennedy. There have been other political murders in the United States, that of Robert Kennedy for instance, brother of John Kennedy, who was shot dead while he was campaigning for the Presidency in 1968.

Franklin Roosevelt had escaped an assassination attempt in 1933 between his election victory as his inauguration as President. Harry Truman too escaped in 1950 when Puerto Rican nationalists had tried to kill him. In 1975, there were two attempts to kill Gerald Ford both by women in Californian cities. When Ronald Reagan was elected last November, many recalled a 140-year-old jinx. Since 1840 every President elected in a year ending in a zero has died in office--all four who were assassinated plus three who died of illness.

In the United States, it is not the assassination of Presidents that according to the *Time* make the country "unlivable", but the minute-to-minute crime and violence that now stalks the land.

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REAGAN - CRONKITE INTERVIEW EL SALVADOR

In a one-hour interview on March 3 with Walter Cronkite, who retired last month as the long-time anchorman for CBS television news, President Reagan set out his views on current problems. From the transcript of the interview furnished by USICA, we publish excerpts on important subjects of international significance; This week's instalment deals mainly with El Salvador.

Mr. Cronkite: Mr. President, with your administration barely six weeks old, you're involved now in, perhaps, the first foreign policy crisis, if it can be called a crisis yet--it probably cannot be--but it's being much discussed, of course--much concern about El Salvador and our commitment there. Do you see any parallel in our committing military advisers and military assistance to El Salvador and the early stages of our involvement in Vietnam?

The President: No Walter, I don't. I know that that parallel is being drawn by many people. But the difference is so profound, what we're actually doing is at the request of a government in one of our neighbouring countries helping--offering some help against the import or the export into the western hemisphere of terrorism, of disruption, and it isn't

just El Salvador. That happens to be the target at the moment. Our problem is this whole hemisphere and keeping this sort of thing out. Now we have sent briefing teams to Europe, down to our Latin American neighbours with what we've learned of the actual involvement of the Soviet Union, of Cuba, of the PLO, of even Qadhafi in Libya and others in the Communist bloc nations to bring about this terrorism down there.

Now you used the term military advisers. You know, there is a sort of a technicality there. You could say they are advisers in that they're training, but when it's used as advisers, that means military men who go in and accompany the forces into combat, advise on strategy and tactics. We have no one of that kind. We're sending and have sent teams down there to train. They do not accompany them into combat. They train recruits in the garrison area. And as a matter of fact, we have such training teams in more than 30 countries today, and we have always done that—the officers of the military in friendly countries and in our neighbouring countries have come to our service schools—Westpoint, Annapolis and so forth. So I don't see any parallel at all. And I think it is significant that the terrorist, the guerilla activity in El Salvador was supposed to cause an uprising that the government would fall because the people would join this aggressive force and support them. The people are totally against that and have not reacted in that way.

Mr. Cronkite: Well, that's one of the questions that's brought up about the wisdom of our policy right at the moment. Some Latin Americans feel that President Duarte has control of the situation. The people have not risen. This last offensive of the guerillas did not work, and therefore aren't we likely to exacerbate the situation by American presence there now, therefore sort of promoting a self-fulfilling prophecy by coming down there and getting the Guerillas and people themselves upset about "big brother" intervention, and therefore losing the game instead of winning it?

The President: Well, no, and we realize that our southern friends down there do have memories of the great colossus of the north and so forth—but no, his government has asked for this because of the need for training against terrorist and guerilla activities, has asked for material such as helicopters and so forth that can be better at intercepting the supply lines where these illicit weapons are being brought

in to the guerrillas and this is what we have provided and some of these teams that have been provided are also to help keep those machines in the air and on the water—patrol boats and so forth, to try to interdict the supply by water of weapons and ammunition. They need help in repair. They get laid up for repairs and they don't have the qualified technicians.

Mr. Cronkite: What really philosophically is different from our going down to help a democratic government sustain itself against guerilla activity promoted from the outside or Soviet and Cuban aid, as we believe it to be—your administration says it is, and Afghanistan? El Salvador is in our political sphere of influence. Afghanistan, on the border of the Soviet Union is certainly in their geopolitical sphere of influence. They went in with troops to support a Marxist government friendly to them. Why isn't that a parallel situation?

The President: I don't—well, I don't think there can be a parallel there, because I was in Iran in '78 when the first coup came about and it was the Soviet Union that put their man as President of Afghanistan and then their man didn't work out to their satisfaction. So, they came in and got rid of him and brought another man that they'd been training in Moscow and put him as their President and then, with their armed forces, they are trying to subdue the people of Afghanistan who do not want this pro-Soviet government that has been installed by an outside force.

The parallel would be that without actually using Soviet troops, in effect the Soviets are, you might say, trying to do the same thing in El Salvador that they did in Afghanistan, but by using proxy troops through Cuba and they had hoped for, as I an uprising of the people that would then give them some legitimacy in the government that would be installed—the Communist government. But the people didn't rise up. The people have evidenced their desire to have the government they have and not be ruled by these guerrillas,

Mr. Cronkite: Secretary of State Haig has said that we'll not have a Vietnam in El Salvador because the United States will direct its action toward Cuba, which is the main source of the intervention, in his words. But Cuba is a client state of the Soviet Union. It's not likely to stand by and let us take direct action against Cuba, is it?

The President: Well, a term "direction action," where are a lot of things open: diplomacy, trade, a number of things and secretary Haig has explained the use of the term, the source with regard to Cuba means the intercepting and stopping of the supplies come into these countries--the export from Cuba of those arms, the training of the guerrillas--as they've done there and I don't think in any way that he was suggesting an assault on Cuba.

Mr. Cronkite: An intercepting and stopping means blockade. And isn't that an act of war?

The President: Well, this depends. If you intercept them when they're landing at the other end or find them where they're in the locale such as, for example, Nicaragua and informing Nicaragua that we are aware of the part that they have played in this using diplomacy to see that a country decides they're are not going to allow themselves to be used anymore--there's been a great slow down. We are watching it very carefully--Nicaragua--of the transfer of arms to El Salvador. This doesn't mean that they're not coming in from other guerilla base in other countries there.

Mr. Cronkite: You've said that we could extricate ourselves easily from El Salvador if that were required at any given point in this proceeding. I assume at any given point. How could we possibly extricate ourselves? Even now, from this initial stage, how could we extricate ourselves without a severe loss of face?

The President: Well, I don't think we're planning on that-- I think, to extricate ourselves from there, but the only thing that I could see that could have brought that about is if the Guerrillas had been correct in their assessment and there had been the internal disturbance, well, then I would be a cause of we're there at the behest of the present government. If that government is no longer there, we're not going there without an invitation. We're not forcing ourselves upon them and you'd simply leave and there aren't that many people to be extricated.

Mr. Cronkite: Even if the Duarte forces begin to lose with whatever military material assistance we give them, whatever training advisers we give them, are you pledging that

we will not go in with fighting forces?

The President: I certainly don't see any likelihood of us going in with fighting forces. I do see our continued work in the field of diplomacy with neighboring countries that are interested in Central America and South America to bring this violence to a halt and to make sure that we do not just sit passively by and let this hemisphere be invaded by outside forces.

To be continued.....

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FILM FOCUS

Anti-Crime Films

IN THE EARLY FORTIES, two significant films that made quite an impact on the problem of Juvenile Delinquency were released in Hollywood. These films titled "Boys Town" and "Men of Boys Town" started that versatile and Oscar winning actor Spencer Tracy and pint size Mickey Rooney who was a child star then. While the former roled a Catholic priest, Father O'Flanagan, who grappled with the problem of the so-called dead and kids, who became the crime prone flotsam and jetsam from broken homes; the latter personified a youngster who while on the road to perdition; was plucked off it just in time by the priest, to become a juvenile nucleus in the building of a 'Town' for pricks of love, that was to transform them into acceptable citizens. This film; can remember, created quite an impact at that time as Father Flanagan worked on his pet conviction that there were no delinquent youth. only delinquent parents and this contention was conveyed convincingly through the vlsual media.

To return to the local contemporary scene, in our country, it is becoming increasingly clear that many youth of the land, sadly, lacking in proper guidance and direction, are turning to crime on a considerable scale. The daily crime reports continue to-ticker tape the escapades of the younger set who are being attracted by the sophistry of the more modern methods of

grabbing another's property, more for keeps than for ticks. As the Inspector General of Police pointed out at a recent seminar, these youngsters on the teen age line or just over, are equipping themselves adequately to cock a snook at the law and get away with some of the dastardly conceived robberies, that have been reported. They operate in small well knit mobile groups, and leave no clues behind. And what is more surprising is that a good number of them hail from respectable homes—probably ripped apart by a widening generation gap, filled by a lack of understanding and love, in the impressionable stages of their upbringing. It is the view of this column that if parents and teachers combine with purpose to redirect children towards the proper values in their green years, then the Police would have lesser crime to cope up with in later years.

If you wonder why this column has digressed from its normal run, it is also to keep you informed that the Police Crime Prevention Bureau at Kollupitiya, under the direction of D.I.G. Police, R. Sundararajam, too have joined in the crusade of moulding the minds of school children, by using the cinematic media between daily lectures in Sinhalese, Tamil and English on crime prevention, to spotlight all its evils. Quite unfortunately, however, there is a dearth of Anti Crime short films and this column would urge the Government Film Unit to supplement them, as they did in the short presentation titled *City Sharks* a few months ago—as a matter of priority. There is no more powerful medium than the visual to win our youth over to a righteous way of life. It is heartening to learn that many schools are cooperating in a big way in this rejuvenated drive to zero down the crime curve.

KAVERI MAAN (Tamil): The title of this film refers to a species of deer that sets a very high value on its self, respect, so much so that even if it loses a single hair on its person, it feels abjectively humiliated and reacts revengefully even to a point of self immolation. This, then is the backdrop to this absorbing film, directed by S. P. Muthuraman and into which main role steps in with consummate ease Maestro Sivaji Ganeshan, who becomes the human embodiment of all, the moods and moments the

little implies. As a happily married I.A. S. officer, who holds his office, as a Secretary for Development in the Indian Finance Department, head and shoulders above graft and corruption, he is shockingly overtaken by a moment when his attractive wife (Pramila) two times on him and stands exposed when he returns unexpectedly from an official trip abroad. He momentarily shakes free of his highly principled moorings, forgets the respectability of his family background which fails to restrain him and in a fiery rage kills her—but in full view of his little daughter who had stolen in on the gruesome scene in hysterics. He takes the legal sentence without a murmur not divulging the circumstances, and when freed eventually walks back to a cold family circle which had been trying hard to live down the humiliation and disgrace that had been brought on by Shivaji's spell in the cooler. Hurt and pained in mind, he steers clear off his cherished kin—an ex-governor father with a sixth sense, a loving mother in deep conflict, a brother (Sundararajan) who is a legal luminary, and another (Vijayakumar) who has carved out his happiness in an unconventional mixed marriage—but is again faced with an unavoidable situation, where is unforgiving daughter's (Sri Devi) happiness and chastity are trapped in the wily wicked web of a roving philanderer. What follows is for you relish in this excellent film, that has the 'Pilot Premnath's cast (shot in Sri Lanka) at their very very best. Together with them there was the attractive Pramila as Shivaji's wife, who like Eve, in the Garden of Eden was all for pecking the forbidden fruits that come her way, and Sekhar as the playboy who ran into foul weather! Shivaji Ganeshan never placed a foot wrong as the varying moods caught him in their coils every step of the way. The key song in Ilayarajah's musical repertoire, was "poophole" which hauntingly hovered over the story. The Adults only tag has been aptly tied on to this film, for in the midst of the splendour it radiated colourfully, many red signals were flashed to mature audiences only and their human frailties that speeded many a chain reaction on to a collision course, and to ones of remorse and regret. I enjoyed this film thoroughly and I am confident you will do likewise.

James N. Benedict

CHINA

GIVE UP THIS BLINDNESS — An Appeal to our pro-Chinese Friends by Haider Akbar Khan Rano. Translated from the Bengali by G. Mostafa, published by Gono Mukti Prakashani, Dacca — 2. Price TK 200.

The success of the revolution in China, led by the Communist Party had a far-reaching influence all over Asia. The People's Republic of China played an important role in establishing a close understanding between the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa. The Bandung Conference held in Indonesia in 1953 with the participation of countries like Indonesia, India, China, Egypt, Ghana, Sri Lanka and others was a landmark in the history of our times. The principles of Pancha Sheela propounded at this Conference established the guide lines to many countries that become independent thereafter. These principles gave birth to the Non-aligned Movement which has become an important force in the world today. Unfortunately, China has moved away from such radical policies in the last two decades. The friendship and understanding that had existed between the major countries in Asia, i. e., China, India and Indonesia, were disrupted by the policies of China's leader in the 1960s. China had also abandoned solidarity with the socialist camp, and became hostile to the Soviet Union, the other socialist countries and even National Liberation Movements.

The implications and outcome of this political and strategic line of the Chinese leaders have been examined in the little booklet written by Haider Akbar Khan Rano, a leading Communist of Bangladesh, who was very much under the influence of the Chinese leaders when Bangladesh was still part of Pakistan as East Pakistan. This booklet is really an appeal to the pro-Chinese elements in Bangladesh, who have today become splintered into various groups to regain their revolutionary bearings.

China, it will be recalled, attacked India in 1962. It had become very close to the military dictatorship of Pakistan. This together with the hatred for India led China to take an antagonistic attitude towards the struggle for

national liberation in East Pakistan. The Chinese had even influenced a section of the Communists there to oppose the national liberation struggle. Peking gave full support to the West Pakistan military dictator. However, the people of East Pakistan established their own independent state, Bangladesh. China, thereupon opposed the admission of this new state to the United Nations. It took China a long time to recognise Bangladesh. Many Bangladesh Communists, who had much faith in the Chinese leaders earlier, became disillusioned.

Haider Akbar Khan Rano says that towards the first half of the sixties, hundreds of revolutionary minded Communists in Bangladesh had declared themselves as "pro-Chinese". He was also one of them. What had attracted them was their belief that China was totally opposed to imperialism. China then had characterised the Soviet Union as an ally of US imperialism following revisionist policies. China had proclaimed that the main objective for all Communists was to oppose US imperialism, Rano does not enter into a discussion about the validity of the Chinese charge against the USSR but he rejects it. But Rano has raised an important question: if the Soviet Union was said to be cooperating with US imperialism because of negotiations on the question of war and peace, what is the position today when there are accusations that China had joined hands with US imperialism? Rano points out that China now openly supports the geopolitical strategies of the US and other Western countries and is denouncing the Soviet Union as the number one enemy of the world. It is not difficult to show that current Chinese policies on international affairs are in harmony with those of the United States.

The author has also emphasised that economically China is today very much in with the capitalist world. Her socialism has been submerged in a floodtide of capitalist resurgence. She has today invited all Western capitalist countries, specially the United States and the most powerful multi-national corporations, to invest in that country. It has guaranteed the right to remit profits. Rano has also drawn attention to the fact that China has isolated itself from the socialist world, and that it is pursuing development policies heavily dependent on the capitalist world.

This pro-Western policy of China is not confined to the economic sphere alone. It has

been extended to the military sphere as well. The author cites numerous examples to prove his point. China, he says, justifies its stand by propounding a novel theory: the so-called three world theory which divides the world into three categories. The first consists of the two major powers, the United States and the USSR. The second is made up of the developed capitalist countries. The third category consists of developing countries including China herself. For some peculiar reason, the Soviet Union is regarded as the main enemy and China calls on the third world and the second world to unite with the United States against the Soviet Union. The author points out that China was also against the National Liberation Movements in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia etc. and has been on the side South Africa and Western powers. China's attitude to the Arab world and the Palestine question, states the author, has been equivocal and ambivalent tilting heavily on the west. The Chinese attitude to Chile is the subject of adverse comment. In September 1973, the government of Allende was overthrown with the help of US agencies and China immediately recognized the Pinochet government and granted loans to it. Chinese policies towards Iran, Afghanistan and Indo China have been identical with those of the US and other Western powers.

The Chinese attitude towards the socialist world, says the author, is determined solely by its hatred of the Soviet Union. Take for instance the distinction China made between Yugoslavia and Romania on one side and the other socialist countries on the other. Because of certain differences that exist between Yugoslavia and Romania with the Soviet Union, China tries to make capital out of the situation. According to China these two countries are Socialist while the Soviet Union is described as "Social Imperialist". Even Hoxa, says Rano, the leader of Albania, has broken with China because of China's deviation from what the Albanian leader considers to be the Marxist position.

The writer also has something to say about the internal situation in China. He raises an interesting question. "It appears from the utterances of the present Chinese leadership that since the days of the cultural revolution, there has been little progress in production. What is the reason for the stagnation in the socialist progress? In the modern world industrial development and economic progress in complete isolation is impossible to achieve.

There are two alternatives in this regard. One has either to be integrated with the Socialist world or choose to come within the orbit of the Capitalist world. China has isolated herself from the Socialist world. The author is not opposed to economic relations with the capitalist world, but he is apprehensive about the outcome of this total dependence. Rano quotes from a letter written by the Albanian Party to the Chinese Party on 29th July 1978. "The great ideas of the Great October Socialist Revolution and Marxist-Leninist ideology were not properly made the example for the pillar and the compass of the Communist Party of China in the concrete conditions of the country. This accounts for the fact that the Marxist-Leninist nucleus of the party shifted into dangerous eclectics which gave use to a chaos of an unbridled struggle for power between factions and groups holding various non Marxist-Leninist views, something which seriously hampered the laying of the foundation of Socialism in China"

In conclusion the author appeals to the Bangladesh pro-Chinese comrades to do some serious re-thinking and return to the correct revolutionary path based on revolutionary internationalism. It is an appeal essentially directed to the Bangladeshis, but in the confused world of today, this book could be read with benefit by all those who believe the illusion that the present leadership of China is still playing a progressive role.

Calcutta,
March 10, 1981.

H. M. G.

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. 1802.50	Rs. 1805.50
Sterling Pound	Rs. 4046.75	Rs. 4052.75
Deutsche Mark	Rs. 861.20	Rs. 862.80
French Franc	Rs. 364.65	Rs. 365.35
Japanese Yen	Rs. 8.5230	Rs. 8.5370
Indian Rupees	Rs. 318.80	Rs. .31920

Hope For The Future

by HAIDER AKBAR KHAN RANO

THE CHINESE PARTY with its numerous ideological weaknesses and shortcomings undertook the task of building socialism in a very backward country which is also the biggest country in the world as regards its population. As a result certain weaknesses existed in its socialist reconstruction, for example there still remains the problem of unemployment. One of the main aspects of socialist economy is to complete the task of industrialisation in the very beginning, giving preference to heavy industry.

At the time of the revolution in Russia, though she was much advanced compared to China, she was lagging behind the imperialist countries of the West and was very backward compared to them. In the post revolutionary Russia there was a great debate on the issue whether to give priority to basic and heavy industry. Later on the Soviet leadership expressed their opinion in favour of basic and heavy industry. Thus the Soviets solved the problem of unemployment. But China adopted a different policy. And that is why after so many years they are now talking about modernisation. And that is why the foundation of socialism in China remains weak to some extent. So even after so many years there exist unemployment, the labour problem and peasant agitation.

There is no reason to believe that this economic problem is a recent problem. It definitely existed during the period of Mao Tse-tung. Unemployment as well as people's agitation also existed at that time, But the agitation did not burst out in this way. What is the reason of it? **The reason is that the great personality of Mao could inspire the Chinese nation with a new ideal the main substance of which is to sacrifice and suffer and not to consume and enjoy.** At that time, the instances of great sacrifice for the purpose of construction used to be focussed highly in Peking Review. There had often been descriptions of how a certain worker took a great risk and ultimately lost his life while constructing a road in a certain inaccessible hilly area. They were always given the honour of a hero and a martyr.

Such kind of heroism and sacrifice was encouraged. There was need of highest form of sacrifice for the interest of revolution for the cause of overthrowing the oppressor class. But in a peaceful period of the reconstruction of the country the sacrifice of life can never be an ideal thing to be followed. The value of life can never be less than that of the construction of a road or a project. The main substance of Bakunin style of barrack Communism is to work more and consume less. Marx and Engels criticised such attitude. During the period of Mao Tse-tung the predominance of such one-sided outlook can be noticed.

The present leadership, however, has taken a new and a bit realistic attitude. They brought the question of material incentives. However the bad side of it is that socialist ideological feeling is declining and economic demands are becoming predominant among the people. Having failed to face such a delicate economic situation the new leadership has taken shelter with Western imperialism. This may temporarily solve the problem to some extent, but ultimately it may lead the Chinese economy to a greater disaster and even her socialist structure may be seriously endangered. Internationally it is a matter of further danger that in order to carry out the programme of modernization China is collaborating with the US imperialism in all points of her foreign policy. In reality, China has turned out to be NATO of the East. It is a great fortune for imperialism to get back a vast country like China in the era of her downfall and at the same time it is a great misfortune for all of us.

Still, finally I would like to say that I am not a pessimist. Whatever is happening in China, I believe, it must be temporary. China is passing through a critical juncture: In spite of many faults and deviations the Chinese economy is still in the main Socialist. The Chinese people will soon realise that imperialism will not come forward to help China, rather the Western capitalist countries will come only to plunder her resources. Through experience China will know that for the purpose of modernization and advancement of socialism in China what is needed is the closer co-operation with other socialist countries.

However, because of the anti-Soviet propaganda continuously carried on for a long time,

unfriendly and hostile feelings against the U.S.S.R has been fostered among people in China. It will therefore take some time for China to get away from the dangerously slippery path she is following at present. But there are also indications of other lines of thinking inside China. In 1979 one of the wall papers, while criticising the US imperialism said, "How can we depend on President Carter for the democracy in China? Can US leaders do anything for the good of the Chinese people and for the socialism in China? If they did anything at all, the whole purpose of it would be to use China against the Soviet Union". In another wall paper it was suggested that, "Our government should start negotiations with the Soviet government or accept the Soviet proposal".

It is my strong belief that good relations between China and the Soviet Union will definitely develop and China will be forced to give up the policy being tied up with Imperialism. But it is not possible to say right now how this will take place and which leadership will do that. Yet in the near future the socialist camp will be re-unified. Socialist China will return to a correct socialist path.

Concluded

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PANADURA

GETS A NEW BRIDGE

by W. Lionel Fernando

WITH THE CONSTRUCTION of a new road parallel to the railway track from Moratuwa to Panadura and a new bridge over the Panadura river, the twin fisher-villages of Koralawella and Egodaunya, neglected for generations, will spring into new life. Till the advent of the Donoughmore Constitution and adult franchise, these two villages remained a non-man's land, not even forming part of the Urban Council administration, breeding pot-bellied dark-skinned children with the annual visitation of typhoid taking away the lives of many, without proper medical care or nourishment.

Koralawella, or known then as KoralaWella, provided all the fish for Salpiti Korale and with proper development of the industry Koralawella even today can provide much of the island's requirements. Fishing is a full time job here, season and out of season its beaches

provide a haven both for drag-net and outrigger canoe fishing.

A first visitor to Koralawella from the Moratuwa end inevitably gets the impression that Koralawella is Roman Catholic with its many large churches flanking the existing road and few Buddhist temples visible to the eye. Both Koralawella and Egodaunya, on the contrary, are largely Buddhist. There are no religious or caste feuds here, for both Christians and Buddhists, living in these twin villages are connected in some way or other to one another by caste. Majority of them belong to one caste.

The plumbago boom in the early part of this century brought luck to these villages and turned many of its de Mels into millionaires. Koralawella has many de Mels. Some of the best known among them like the late Sir Henry de Mel's family, Jacob de Mel's, Robbie de Mel's, R. A. de Mel's and so on had their origin in Koralawella. The family of the late J. L. Fernando, the well-known Lobby Correspondent of Lake House, had their roots in Koralawella. It also produced Chrisantha de Mel, M.A.D.V. (Doctor of Divinity), now in charge of the Gurutalawa Divinity School, who had donated all properties inherited from his father, the late Hubert de Mel, including his ancestral home "Mel Ville", to the Church,

Egodaunya had also its share of business magnates during this period. Bai Mudalali's same (as he was popularly known) is yet remembered. He was one of the pioneer Sinhala business men who had a thriving business in Bankshall Street in Colombo. His ancestral home still exists in Egodaunya. Another great name in the business world also had his roots in Egodaunya. E. P. A. Fernando of Bogala Graphite fame owned some of the biggest graphite mines in this country. Above all the present generation of Egodaunya remembers the Dharmabandus and specially T. S. Dharmabandu the well-known novelist, short-story writer and poet. He is best remembered for his book on the history of the Kaurawas.

THE PLUMBAGO BOOM and the money that came in its wake, also made these rich folk change their ways of life and went in search of new land in the big city of Colombo leaving behind in Koralawella the large mansions and churches put up with plumbago money. St. Peter's Church

in Egodaunya are monuments to the philanthropy of men like Franciscu de Mel and Johannes de Mel of the forgotten past. While most of these rich men abandoned their place of birth for the big city of Colombo, one de Mel decided to bury his bones in his ancestral soil and to live with the Juan Appus and his fisher-folk kinsmen of Koralawella, earning a name for his family and the village which brought him up. H. E. P. de Mel still lives in his ancestral home in Koralawella, still dabbling in industries which benefit the poor in this region. He once represented Talawakelle in the State Council but continued to look after the interests of his poor relations of Koralawella by providing them employment in his match manufacturing enterprise in this little hamlet. H. E. P. was a pioneer in the match industry and had his hand in several industries in Koralawella from hosiery to matches and has no regrets that some of them went to the rocks. H. E. P. still serves his men.

With the opening of the new road and the bridge at Panadura, the old bridge at Digarolle, at the Moratuwa end, will be relieved of most of its traffic. This bridge had been constructed in 1921 and an earlier narrow bridge which had existed at the Panadura end had been abandoned by the Portuguese causing the neglect of these two villages ever since. A ferry service existed at Digarolle and the British Government had plans of erecting a bridge where the old bridge had existed during the Portuguese times, but was thwarted by an enterprising business man who lived at Horekele on the other side of the river. Sinnoappu Baas who later became famous as Mudaliyar Simon Fernando Sri Chandrasekere, was a fascinating character. He was supposed to be the person responsible for the government to change its decision to have the bridge at the Panadura end and selected instead the Digarolle site.

It is said that when once the Governor was passing through Moratuwa on one of his official tours, he was stopped for tea by Sinnoappu Baas and on the site where they had tea sprang a tea kiosk which till recently carried a board "patronised by the Governor". He had offered to finance the construction of the entire bridge at Digarolle which was a few fathoms from his home. Whether the Government accepted this offer or not, it changed its earlier decision to construct the bridge at the Panadura end.

Fascinating stories are woven round this fascinating character who started life as a timber merchant and later became a fabulously wealthy planter. It is said that when rickshaws were first introduced to this country, he had gone to one of the European Agents for a rickshaw, but was ridiculed by the salesman who saw a man in cloth and coat wanting to buy a rickshaw. Instead of one rickshaw he bought the whole consignment of twenty five rickshaws and came home to Horekele riding in one with the other twenty four following him. Sri Chandrasekere Fund for Buddhist Education stands in his name. He was wellknown for generosity.

EXPERT CARPENTERS of a by-gone age came from these two villages with Moratuwa forming an outlet for their wares. Even today, the children of these expert craftsmen practice carpentry in their homes in these two adjoining hamlets as well as in Moratuwa and Panadura, the two adjacent towns.

Governor Sir West-Ridgeway, who visited Moratuwa in early 1903 for a prize distribution in a Sunday School had occasion to refer to the self-help policy of the men of this region. He said on that occasion (from the *Searchlight* of Jan. 31st 1969), under headline "Moratuwites and their Kshastriya Counterparts": "Moratuwa has always been a town of self-help as Sir Joseph West Ridgeway, the then Governor of Ceylon laid stress on during his visit to the town in 1903. It is natural that I should take a deep interest in Moratuwa, because here is the embodiment of that self-help which I have always preached consistently and persistently ever since I came to the island.....and it is here that you people of this town set such an excellent example and teach such valuable lesson to others... I am confident that the youth of this town, brought up under the shadow of this institution (Sunday School) have learned the lesson of self-reliance, have instinctively breathed the atmosphere of independence and have realised how much more valuable is the life of a man who exists and rises by his own exertions and not by favour or patronage. And to that subtle influence no doubt, is due the successful careers of so many men belonging to this town".

Colonel Joseph Wedgewood, Cabinet Minister in the United Kingdom (1921) referred to the Moratwites as a "virile race". He said: "An admirable section of the intelligent folk of Moratuwa, Panadura and Ambalangoda have

been engaged in woodwork like their Rajput counterparts in India. As in the art of building houses and ships, carriages and furniture at the present day, the Wadu Nilames in ancient times known as Stapathi were engineers and architects who built fortifications, encampments, bridges, ships and were in charge of all other wooden artwork and architecture necessary for the army and the navy. Moreover their lives of craftsmanship, the pride in expressing themselves as craftsmen, as also their having taken pride in their creations of art craft, had created a deep impression”.

The new bridge which is to be opened shortly is 45 feet wide and its runway is over 900 feet long. It was estimated to cost one million rupees then and the new approach road from Moratuwa was estimated to cost Rs. 60 lakhs. It is one of the most artistically built concrete bridges in the Island and is a masterpiece in modern bridge building, the foundation of which was laid by Mr. Maitripala Senanayake on one of the many occasions when he acted for the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike during the last regime.

GRAMA SASTRA-39

Scribblings On Uva

Of Muttu Banda And Maternity

by Gamiya

Some cynic said: “Classics are those books, the title of which everyone reads, the contents of which few have gone through”. May be, may not be, true. But there are those who having read the title: “*The Disintegrating Village*” have already felt they went through the book, and such may not wish to go through this little piece, for they would say: “What good can come from the village?”.

Muttu Banda, the man of stately mien and steady gait, is a modest man with a twinkle in his eye. When Tilaka’s third baby was born, he took the chance of visiting her a quarter mile away, and on his way, came and saw me as I visited a poor man: “I am an adept at helping mothers and I know. When a child is born, the mother must be

given three guli. She must take *thippili*, *sudu-lunu*, *gammiris*, *karabn neti*, *aba* and *inguru* and fry till a golden brown. Mix with *margosa* oil and make a *guli* the size of a *vel thibbotu gediya* and take with 1/8 tea-spoonful of *margosa* oil. If this is taken for seven days, the mother gets back her health after the ordeal of childbirth. Some young mothers are unhappy about the protruding ‘stomach’ even weeks after their childbirth day. Sometimes even months. But no problem. Swaddle the mother’s body in thin cloth or *kehel patta*, wrapping it ribbon-wise from breast to abdomen, and she must take a boiled concoction of *sudu-lunu* and *gammiris* (garlic and pepper) morning and evening, just a cup would do. Older people know these medicines; today’s people have to die. They have too many *asavas* (desire) and want only to earn and buy, earn and buy, earn and buy.”

Muttu Banda had big sons and daughters, 10 in all. He said so: and, “there she goes. that’s my wife, *Podimenike*. See, notice soon, she is as straight-stomached as she is straight-backed and am proud of her. I gave this medicine to her myself and she trustfully took it, see”.

“You see”, he went on, “we respect trees for medicine, for their medicinal properties. There is a special tree, whose name (as you know, it is our custom) I cannot divulge, but we first bow and worship the tree and only then pluck its leaves. It is very precious medicine, See we put sweets in glass jars, unmixed with flies, flour, dust. See it in any boutique. So too, we must guard our children as precious, that’s why we call them *Menike*, *Punchi menike*, *podu menike*. They are more to us than gems, pearls. But today, it is the other way about, the “menike” or pearl is regarded as the child. Everyone is running after gems. The white man ate the country (*rata keva*). They brought goods from there to sell here; and took our goods away to sell there, a ridiculous exchange. Everything, everything they did here was to suit themselves.

Muthu Banda’s mother is 86 years old and, now, somewhat feeble. But he knows how to take care of her

Another View — 2

by R. Kahawita

BY AN OVERSIGHT we missed the points regarding Kotmale Reservoir and its two stage construction programme. If the dam is to be built in two stages, it is providential it is so. It will give us time to study the effect of intercepting the free drainage of the thin soil mantel resting on bed rock, particularly above the reservoir water level, and according to the behaviour of the surrounding terrain under these changed conditions, the final height of the dam can be determined. As we always claimed that the area is geologically unstable.

According to our understanding there are no problems in building a dam in two stages, provided the base work has been done to accommodate a second stage. Nor will there be problems in hydro-power generation. It is just a design exercise to determine the turbine capacities for low heads and marry them to the subsequent high-head turbines. The two sets can be designed to be complementary to each other in operation. What we were thinking of is the storage capacity of Kotmale to assist in irrigation at a lower supply level of storage. This reservoir will have to perform a very critical function under the present "no priority no planning method of implementation". If Moragahakande had its correct priority and functions, in the development of Kala Wewe, Minneriya, P.S.S. region (Area G, D, H) then Kotmale serves purely for regulation, and the water could have been used for hydro-generation and thereafter the water stored at any desired point. Under the present conditions it has to take on the burden of supplementing irrigation in the above regions. Barring Bowatenne, which is merely a balancing and diversion point, there is no additional new storage available in the region.

The gross capacities available at Kandalama, Kalawewa, Rajangana and Siyambalangamuwa in that system; Minneriya, Kaudulla, Kantalai, Giritale in the other are almost three times what their own catchments can contribute, these two systems must depend heavily on Mahaweli Diversion which is limited to a maximum of 2,000 cuses. This quantum should have been increased when the master plan

and the priorities were changed, to enable the peak floods to be diverted for storage in the above mentioned tanks. Mahaweli, above Polgolla, has to carry storage now to maintain a 2,000 cusec diversion for longer periods during the low-flow stages in between the two flood cycles. This is tied up with what the capacity of Kotmale should be.

WE PRESUME that our experts appreciate that the storage capacity of a reservoir in a V bottom valley increases in a geometrical progression. That is to say, the upper slabs of storage increases rapidly foot for foot compared to the lower slabs. It means, there will be much less storage at Kotmale at the lower levels than at the higher levels to participate in hydro-generation and standby storage for irrigation. This is a new burden thrust on Kotmale due to "no priority no planning" theory accepted when deciding on the accelerated programme.

We expressed concern for the "purana farmers" and the new settlers in the areas H & H, (i) because they will be the worst affected till Moragahakande is implemented. Power requirements can be met from other sources, but when a farmer loses his crop, he cannot make good his losses, except to depend on charity. We are not spending millions in this region to settle beggars for the State to practice charity, but to settle viable farmers.

Our observations are not without reason. There are many, many instances where this kind of "low level thinking" has resulted in setbacks in the development field. Currently, according to a **Ceylon Daily News** report, Uda Walwe Scheme which should have over 65,000 acres in full production today is in the doldrums since 1970. There is a high powered Committee appointed to investigate into the cause of this mess, after a capital out-lay of over 400 million rupees, from 1965 to 1970. There is no point in blaming the past and the present administrations. It will not help the farmer. They are the people who suffer, not the administration. What is needed are policy decisions to maintain continuous actions to go into production as quickly as possible, and to prevent the need for appointing such investigating Committees. We hope what has been achieved so far at Mahaweli, will not go the same way.

in our earlier contribution on the subject, "we said let us get down to realities". What

are the realities"? Not the dams, not the channels and such other exercises to complete the dams in five years. The reality is, there are seven million plus who are condemned to remain poor and tighten their belts for survival. The prices of their basic food items keep on rising daily without any signs of coming down to the level of their earning capacity. We seem to judge the overall economic condition of the country by the line up of limousines at "high eating places where a meal cost Rs. 350/- per head or a tot Rs. 60/- in a Sinbad the Sailor' atmosphere". Their number is a minute vulgar fraction of the 14 million whom we see trying to survive under great odds. This minute vulgar fraction are the fruits of our policy decisions and priorities up to date, with an avowed desire to stick to them, though we have the power to change and throw a few bits of crumbs to the millions referred to above.

Our good and generous friends all over the world are also feeling the economic pinch as hinted by President Reagan in his outspoken summing up of the State of Union Speech. Worse than that the United States experienced during 1930 Great depression is how he summed up the situation. As common to all humans, the giver is always conscious of his ability to dispense charity but it must begin at home first and others thereafter. The receiver is only conscious of his needs and expects to get it. If not, call him names, that is what has happened to us.

With the hope of getting all what we needed to implement on accelerated programme, we included everything under the sun that come to be within the "Mahaweli Region" irrespective of priorities, intergration of one phase with the succeeding phase, progress in technical studies and investigations etc. But with the cutback in aid, we can move onward only to limited areas with committed loans, aid etc. The question is, how best can we use "the committed aid" to give quick relief to out people.

Every political party, from 1963 had a hand in shaping, reshaping and ornamenting the Mahaweli complex in the preliminary studies, as to what should be offered to the nation without a complete and intelligent understanding of what was included in the complex. And now we have landed ourselves in a real "Pissigle Pala Mulla" so described by one of the local contractors working in Mahaweli area.

We have no wish that we should fail, but is it not prudent to face realities and take time to do a bit of rethinking and see how far we can go with the committed loans, aid etc? In the way we are not rushing, are we not wasting the scarce financial resources to produce sub-standard work that might lead to chaos?

To be continued.....

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SRI LANKA CHRONICLE

March, 16 - 22

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

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

MONDAY, MARCH 16: President J. R. Jayewardene said at a mass rally held at the Maha Vidyalaya grounds Anamaduwa on Saturday evening that it was the duty of the Government to apprise the people of the impact created on Sri Lanka by international problems. President Jayewardene said that the Tamil United Liberation Front stated that they had not abandoned Eelam and that they would fight to the last to divide Sri Lanka into two; the SLFP said that they would not concede Eelam if they formed a government; "then why are they getting together?" asked President J. R. Jayewardene addressing a mass rally after opening the Mahapola at Wijebahu Central College grounds, Maho, in the Yapahuwa electorate yesterday. Trade Minister Lalith Athulathmudali will shortly set up special villages to grow vegetables and fruit exclusively for export. Nearly 10 000 employees considered excess staff in the CTB can now retire from service and get compensation up to Rs. 20,000 each under a scheme evolved by the new Sri Lanka Central Transport Board

to prune the excess staff and turn the Board into a profitable concern. The Postal Department has already received over 200 applications for the proposed agency post offices which will commence operations within the next two months — CDN. The two government commercial banks — the Bank of Ceylon and the People's Bank — have told the Ministry of Higher Education they are unable to continue with the loans scheme to university students without Treasury support — CDM. The Northern Range Police yesterday spread a dragnet around Valvettiturai to trace three youths who destroyed vehicles belonging to a group of Tamil United Liberation Front MPs on Saturday night. The Government will hand over management of the National Milk Board's factories to the private sector; the move is in keeping with its policy of utilising private sector expertise to manage state concerns which have become economically not viable or are badly managed. Sri Lanka's population has increased by 30 per cent over the last decade, the preliminary count of the 12th national census on population and housing has revealed -- SU. The Dubai Bank Ltd., which opens a Colombo office in Bailie Street tomorrow hopes that its presence here will provide more employment opportunities for Sri Lankans in the United Arab Emirates in particular and the Gulf region in general — CO. A jeep belonging to a TULF MP in the north was set on fire; two more MPs' jeeps were stoned and damaged, the effigy of a member of the TULF was burnt at a famous junction in the North — DP.

TUESDAY, MARCH 17: Today is National Census Day, over 70,000 enumerators will between 6 p.m. and 12 midnight, visit every house and building in Sri Lanka, taking a final count of the population and housing and checking the information they have gathered during the preliminary census — CDN. The law to prevent Sri Lankans whose services are essential for the economic development of the country from leaving the island in search of lucrative jobs abroad comes into force on the 23rd of this month; a policy directive to enforce the law — Foreign Employment Act — is awaited by the Labour Department — CDM. The government yesterday offered Police protection to Members of Parliament of the Tamil United Liberation Front; the offer came from the Minister of Internal Security and Minister in Charge of Proscribed

Organisations, T. B. Werapitiya; the TULF response is being awaited before personnel could be posted for their protection, a Defence Ministry source said yesterday — SU. The amount of money paid by the People's Bank on the pawning of gold jewellery has been increased; so far only Rs. 550/- was paid per sovereign; this has now been increased to Rs. 1000/- and this increased amount will be paid only on the pawning of jewellery for extremely essential purposes — VK

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18: The value of exports of Sri Lanka's major products marginally increased by Rs. 49 million or half per cent from approximately Rs. 9,902 million in 1979 to approximately Rs. 9,951 million in 1980, according to provisional figures of the Department of Commerce, Finance and Planning Minister Ronnie de Mel said at the opening of the Bank of Dubai, Sri Lanka Branch yesterday that the country had received considerable assistance from Arab funds; there had not been sufficient appreciation of this fact, he said. The Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP) and the Federal Party (FP) will not get any financial assistance from the State at the next General Election; although treated as recognized political parties for election purposes, these two parties will not get a grant from the State at the next polls because they are the only two recognized parties which polled less than one per cent of the total number of votes at the 1977 General Election — CDN. Gazetted Police officers who are involved in any form of corruption will be demoted and face the consequences of a public prosecution; the Defence Ministry has decided to come down hard on corrupt police officials in view of the complaints of policemen being associated with various suspicious persons and apparently helping them in carrying out their nefarious activities. A youth described as one of the key police informants on the murder of Inspector Bastiampillai and three other CID officers who were found dead at Murunkan near Madhu Road was shot dead on Monday night around 7 p.m. at Kalyankadu, close to Jaffna town; Police said Selliah Thanabalasingham Alias Chetty has been shot at point blank range by two unknown gunmen — CDM. Government yesterday decided to allow the export of good quality sheet rubber by the private sector; at present, the Commissioner of Commodity Purchase is the sole exporter of RSS 1, 2 and

3 — a finer quality of sheet rubber while RSS 4 and 5 have been exported by the private sector. A further two hour power cut is likely to be introduced from next week; the eight hour power cut will entail an additional 90 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes at night to the existing six hour cut — SU. The Monetary Board will maintain an exchange rate and monetary policy devised to discourage imports and provide more export incentives as part of the government's policy package of holding the economy on an even keel, authoritative Finance and Planning Ministry sources said — CO. Government yesterday decided that elections to the Development Councils should be held before the end of May this year, Cabinet spokesman Minister of State Anandatissa de Alwis said yesterday. There will be enormous power deficits by 1983 and 1984 and even with Peak Hour Power shedding it will not be possible to cope with the situation; additional plant is therefore urgently required, Power and Energy Ministry sources said yesterday. The People's Bank made a donation of hospital equipment worth over Rs. 200,000 mostly for use in the Lady Ridgeway Children's Hospital yesterday. Indian Overseas Bank and the State Bank of India are to open branches in the provinces to orient their activities in line with national policies towards agricultural and small scale industry development — CDN. The Cabinet of Ministers presided over by the President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene yesterday decided to bring about a far-reaching change in the Newspaper Ordinance of Sri Lanka making it compulsory for each newspaper proprietor to make a monetary deposit while registering a newspaper — CDM. A 15 per cent rebate payable to Sri Lanka exporters of tea bags in an effort to vigorously promote Sri Lanka tea bags in very competitive and sophisticated international markets, has been recommended to the government — SU.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20: The Secretary, Ministry of Industries has recommended strong measures for the protection of local industries in a report to the Committee of Development Secretaries; the Secretary has recommended that steps should be taken to reduce import duties on vital raw materials required for local industries; where import duties are minimal on imported finished products which are a threat to local industries producing

quality products he has recommended that import duties should be raised substantially. The Airports Authority will be converted into a limited liability company and will take over from the Department of Civil Aviation services such as air navigation, communication, air traffic control and engineering official sources said yesterday. The Ministry of Higher Education will recruit about 178 qualified English Teachers on a contract basis to conduct the special Intensive English Classes for undergraduates of all universities during August and September this year. The North Colombo Medical College will commence in October this year with an initial admission of 120 students of which 100 be selected locally on the results of the Sri Lanka GCE (AL) Examinations and the balance 20 students from abroad with equivalent qualifications, prof. Stanley Kalpage, Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education said yesterday—CDN. There is strong lobbying within the SLFP to elect Mr. Maithripala Senanayake as its President at today's meeting of the Executive Committee; at present he is leader of the parliamentary Group; the decision taken today will have a direct impact on the future of the party particularly in regard to the next General Elections—CDM. A speedy mail delivery system is to be launched in May this year by the Postal Department. The emergence of another extremist terror group in the North has led the government to order a full probe into their activities; a special team from the Intelligence Services Division has been detailed to perform this task in order to ascertain the purpose of this group's activities, their connections and whether they maintain links with any foreign interests. The Jaffna University will reopen on March 23, the University Council decided yesterday—SU. Sheet rubber exports from Sri Lanka will shortly be permitted only in pressed bales and the traditional packing method of 250 pound bare-back bales in which sheet rubber produced in this country has long been shipped will be discontinued, authoritative governmental sources said today—CO. The Finance and Planning Minister Ronnie de Mel pointed out that faculties have been provided for the private sector to function independently; but certain private sector agencies have still not realized the value of independence and that they are more interested in quotas and

permits and that this should be totally eradicated-VK.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21: Trade Minister, Lalith Athulathmudali told the inaugural meeting of the Sri Lanka Fruits and Vegetable Producers' Association at the BMICH on Wednesday that government would consider very favourably requests for land in excess of 50 acres for approved export oriented agricultural projects. The Government has ordered severe cutbacks in Ministry spending this year in order to keep capital expenditure within the resources likely to be available, Treasury sources said yesterday. Sri Lanka's population stood at 14,849,295 on March 17, when the national census was taken; the population in the 1971 Census was 12,689,897; according to the results, there was a 17.1 percent increase in population over the 10 year period from 1971 to 1981 and the average annual population growth rate 1.7 per cent. At a tense and rather stormy meeting of the SLFP's All Island Executive Committee yesterday a sharp difference of opinion emerged on the question of Mrs. Bandaranaike holding office in the party; while some SLFP lawyers argued that Mrs. Bandaranaike could continue to hold office in the party others pointed out there was an element of doubt which could only be decided by the courts; as such the party was running a risk of not being recognized and that this should not be permitted-CDN. Fruit cultivation in Sri Lanka is to be expanded under a five year plan now being evolved: on the instructions of the Minister of Agricultural Development and Research, Mr. E. L. Senanayake: officials are formulating a scheme in this connection-C.DM. Sirimavo Bandaranaike appeared to be set to continue as leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party with its All Island Committee (Samastha Lanka Karaka Sadhawa) and Executive Committee (Vidhayaka Sabhawa) meeting meeting yesterday falling to make any moves to oust her. The Health Ministry will curb the exodus of doctors from state Medical institutions employment agencies seeking to recruit them for overseas jobs will be required to obtain prior clearance of the Department of Health. The reconstitution of the Janatha Estates Development Board and the State Plantations conversion of their regional boards into independent autonomous corporate boards has been recommended by a team of consultants of the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration; this team was specially

assigned by President J. R. Jayewardene to report on the economies that can be effected in the operation of the two state institution sand the SPC - SU. It is reliably understood that the number of members in the District Development Councils will be only one less than the total number of MPs in the whole district-DP. The Executive Committee of the TULF has condemned the disturbances created at Udupiddy during the village to village march by Federation members as an organised political conspiracy-VK.

SUNDAY, MARCH 21: The CTB is having trouble recovering the cars issued to certain former Chairmen and working directors of the regional transport boards that have now been dissolved-SO. Tough security measures will be adopted in the Northern province following recent breakaways by youth from the TULF and their attempts to discredit the party in the eyes of public with acts of violence; according to informed sources last week-end's burning of the jeep of the MP for Manipay at Udupiddy while the TULF members were at a closed-door meeting, clearly indicated trends in the North. All motor cyclists will have to wear crash helmets or face prosecution from April 1. The Government will it request Japan to meet the foreign exchange cost of the new Parliament complex at Sri Jayewardenpura, Kotte; the estimated foreign exchange cost is Rs. 500 million-ST. Elections to Development Councils will be held in the third week May of just after Vesak celebrations; an official announcement of the dates for receipt of nominations will be made at the beginning of next month according to authoritative sources. Scientists in the country's public sector want higher pay; this they have told President J. R. Jayewardene, is the only way to halt an exodus from their ranks to other sectors. WK.

MONDAY, MARCH 23:

48,000 metric tons of sheet rubber, grades 1 to 3 have just been released by government for export sales by the private sector. About 40 industrialists and bankers from fifteen countries interested in investment opportunities in Sri Lanka will participate in a Symposium to day at the HMICH. Twenty - seven thousand widows whose husbands died while they were yet in government service will soon receive higher pensions; at present they receive pension cul-

culated on the basis of the salary the husband drew at the time of his death; in future their pensions will be calculated on the salary he would have drawn at the time of his retirement had he lived on. The ninth meeting of the Board of Directors of the Asian Clearing Union accepted in principle the need to make all payments through the clearing system obligatory and hoped that the member countries would make the necessary arrangements as early as possible — CDN. The Indian Police in New Delhi are looking for two Sri Lankan women who escaped from a courthouse, shortly after they were sentenced to jail; the women Swarna Arulappah and Chandra Perera were arrested by the Indian police last November for allegedly attempting to smuggle six kilos of silver bars from India to Karachi, in Pakistan. Six persons were admitted to the Galle hospital yesterday bringing the total affected by kasippu poisoning to 30, excluding the three deaths last week and another in a critical condition in hospital. The University of Jaffna, will reopen today, after its three weeks closure following clashes between some students and the public — CDM. Government has sought World Bank assistance to the tune of Rs. 1,000 million for the transmission of power from the proposed hydrel projects to the city of Colombo's grid. The country's public sector workforce will once again be liable for transfer following a government decision to examine the reintroduction of the annual transfer scheme from January 1982. — SU. Local fishermen are being adversely affected by foreign fishermen wrongfully encroaching our seas in the Talaimannar and Mannar areas. — VK

TUESDAY, MARCH 24: Ven. Sedawatte Dhammaruchi Thera died at the Cardiology Unit of the Colombo General Hospital yesterday evening; the Ven. Dhammaruchi formerly Corbert Jayewardent was 72; he is a younger brother of president J. R. Jayewardene. A Buddhist Dhammaduta mission to Jaffna, led by Deputy minister of Local Government, Housing and Construction and Highways, Mr. P. C. Imbulana, returned to Colombo yesterday and said that their mission to the North was a great success. A sum of Rs. 55,450,455 has been set apart for elections to Development Councils expected to be held be-

fore June next — CDN. The rubber — rice pact with China this year was concluded on terms most favourable to Sri Lanka; while Sri Lanka will pay 319 US dollars for a ton of rice, China will buy our rubber at a premium price over and above the world market price; China has agreed to pay extra .624 dollar cents for sheet rubber; this is in addition to 1.81 US dollar cents a kilo as handling charges; the 1981 pact covers 80,000 tons of rice as against 20,000 tones of rubber — CTM. A research team from the United Nations will shortly arrive in Sri Lanka to study the extent of cannabis cultivation and to develop eradication methods. Sri Lanka is to become the key terminal for transshipment caago bound for India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. SU. One of the country's biggest ganja detections in recent times was made at Matara over the week-end when a police party raided a premises at Kottegoda and seized 354 pounds of dried ganja. — CO

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25: Four thousand and six hundred and fifted persons including 2,058 females were reported missing last year, police said; among the missing persons were children and old people who had either been kidnapped or who had lost their way. The United National Party will give the Tamil United Liberation Front a run in the North and the East by contesting all seats in the Northern and Eastern Provinces at the District Development Council elections to be held in May — CDN. The remains of the late Ven. Sedawatte Dhammaruchi Thera will be cremated tomorrow at the Kanatte public cemetery; the body of the Thera, who died of a heart attack at the Cardiology Unit of the Colombo General Hospital on Monday, was taken in a motorcade to the Stlrvajiragnana Dhammayatanaya (Bhikkhu Training Centre) at Maharagama yesterday; the body will lie in State there till tomorrow — CDM. There has been a little rain over the two hydrel reservoirs during the past few days, Ceylon Electricity Board General Mannger, J. X. L. Phillips said yesterday. Sri Lanka's garments exports to US markets produced by the local private garment manufacturing industry will be reviewed next week by Sri Lanka and US government authorities. President Ronald Reagan has proposed that the United States government grant fifty one million

dollars as development assistance to Sri Lanka during the fiscal year 1982 - SU. A recent statistical survey compiled by the Accidents Department of Transport Board revealed that in 1978 the CTB had 33.09 accidents for every million kilometers logged by its far-flung fleet; in 1979 the rate had dropped to 19.72; last year it was down nearly two points with the figure at 17.75 - CO. The government has started a fund called National Health Development Fund with a view to assisting in the progress of the health services; monies will be collected for this fund not only from Sri Lanka but also from abroad - VK.

THURSDAY, MARCH 26: Government will decide shortly on the number of Transport Board depots to be managed by the workers. An agreement will be signed between Sri Lanka and GDR for cooperation in the field of television. A third Fertiliser Warehousing Complex will be put up at Polonnaruwa costing about Rs. 65 million and with a capacity of 18 tons the capital costs of this this complex will be met by the government of the Federal Republic of Germany. The new fully automatic soft drinks plant and factory of the Ceylon Cold Stores Ltd., at Rannala, Kaduwela constructed at a cost of Rs. 65 million will, be opened this morning by State Minister, Anandatissa de Alwis. A 28 member Investment Mission from Denmark will visit Sri Lanka from March 28 to April 5; the mission will be led by Mr. H. Hjerl of the Federation of Danish Industries - CDN. A Chicago-style shoot-out in which two policemen were riddled with bullets and the youthful gangsters getting away with the biggest-ever haul of cash totalling Rs. 67 lakhs were reported yesterday from Neerveli, Chunnakam; the gangsters used submachine guns to stop the People's Bank van carrying the cash opening fire as it halted; the People's Bank officials escorted by two Police constables were returning to Jaffna with the day's collections of the various branch banks in the Jaffna region, when the hold-up took place at about 2.30 p. m. yesterday; the policemen shot dead were PC 3847 Muthubanda and PC 9844 Abeyratnd of the Chunnakam police. With the Central Bank launching its activities into the outstations shortly, nearly 50 percent of national savings being deposited

in rural banks throughout the country will be harnessed for greater economic growth in those areas - CDM. The Greater Colombo Economic Commission is now examining the possibility of a private utility company to set up an independent power station to service the free trade zone; negotiations have already begun with three companies interested in this project and a coal or diesel fuelled power station to service zone industry with their electricity requirements is a distinct possibility - CO.

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WELCOME

Singapore Prime Minister

Anyone who has visited Singapore will agree that the Prime Minister of Singapore is a symbol of discipline; for there is discipline in every nook and corner the entire length and breadth of that country a thing seriously lacking in Sri Lanka.

Let us study a few aspects in regard to maintenance of law and order in that country. Quite apart from severe penalties imposed on trafficking in drugs and others crimes even public servants who come on duty improperly dressed have to face disciplinary action leading up to dismissal. A circular from the Ministry of Finance expects public servants to wear clothing and maintain a hair style that gives an appearance of neatness and decorum. They are also expected to avoid outlandish or flashy clothing and long and unkempt hairstyles. In respect of male officers, "Long hair" by definition means hair reaching below an ordinary shirt collar; or hair covering the ears; or hair falling across the forehead and touching the eyebrows. Sign boards in government offices say "No loiterers. Fine 500 Dollars"; and the government means it.

In all crowded areas yellow lines are marked on the roads reserving a reasonable space in the centre for traffic and on either side for pedestrians. Pedestrians can walk only in single file in certain areas reserved for them. In addition to overhead bridges pedestrian crossings are provided at reasonable (distances) some with traffic signals. Traffic signals are never violated by pedestrians are never violated by pedestrians as well as motorists as the lines in-

volved are very heavy. It is time that such road rules are implemented in Sri Lanka too to prevent road accidents and save unnecessary expenditure incurred by motorists by way of extra fuel and wastage of brakes and also their valuable time due to undisciplined and indifferent walking habits of pedestrians. One cannot drive through even a small town like Veyangoda without having to change gears or apply brakes several times owing to pedestrians' indifference to road manners. Singapore's streets and pavements are found clean because garbage is collected in dust bins which are required to be kept closed (leaving a dust bin open is an offence involving a fine). This obviously is the reason for not having crows or flies or dogs to be seen there. The observance of law and order has reached such an admirable level that a uniformed officer is rarely seen on the streets. If a foreigner tossed a cigarette butt on the street inadvertently from the taxi he is travelling, the driver would reverse the car, collect the thrown cigarette butt and put it in the ash tray fitted to his vehicle. The fine for throwing a cigarette butt on the road is dollars 200 (?).

Communal harmony is best observed in restaurants which have two sections; one run by Singaporeans and the other by Malays. These two sections are separated only by a vacant floor space of three to five feet between the rows of tables and chairs of the respective sections accommodated under one roof. The Singaporean section serves noodles, pork and other preparations plus alcoholic beverages like beer and stout while the other section serves Malay menus conforming to religious restrictions. A customer going to the Malay section for meal of food can order the waiter to bring him a bottle of beer or stout from the Singaporean section to his table. Whoever that started this restaurant system deserves credit.

Any foreigner conversing with the average man on the street for a few minutes in Singapore will not escape listening to at least a few words of praise in appreciation of their Prime Minister. I personally feel that Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew has achieved this position by serving the country with the sincere determination

to improve Singapore however that service may have been distasteful to the people at the beginning.

It is my wish that Singapore's Premier's visit to Sri Lanka would bring inspiration to the rulers of our country to serve with firm determination to bring about an active and disciplined nation, regardless of popularity or unpopularity that may fall upon them in such dedicated service.

As things stand today public have no sense of security in regard to their agricultural and other possessions. Other than those cultivators who protect their agricultural crops with round the clock vigilance or those who do agriculture on a vast scale with day and night watchers, the middle class persons including public servants who wish to devote their spare time for agriculture are seriously discouraged due to thefts. I am aware of a number of persons in this area and elsewhere who have completely given up cultivating minor export crops like ginger, turmeric, etc. and also other items such as plantains and manioc and even rearing a milking cow or chicken due to aforesaid conditions though they are keenly interested in food production to supplement their income. This situation has to be brought under control at whatever cost for the upliftment of the economy of our country.

Dr. T. G. D. Chandra Perera, J.P.
66 Attanagala Road
Veyangoda.

Held Over For Next Week

MORE HEALTH FOR LESS MONEY

by Dr. Florence Aluwihare

TRIBUNE, April 4, 1981

Musings From Sri Lankapore
SUNSET OVER 'RED CLIFFS'

Richard Lee travels by bus more often than not, and this ballad was pressed out of his battered Muse in a 112 bus on a post-Independence morning. More such nonsense is promised if the CTB continues to conspire with the Muse.

For Junius Jayawardene and Lee Kwan Yew
It was love at first sight, warm, thrilling and new;
They flew to "Red Cliffs" for a brief

honeymoon,
And walked hand in hand on the Mirissa dune.

The animals at Yala looked at them from afar,
As they pursued their idyll, crossed by nary a
star;

At Weligama next day, both gazed on a crowd,
Drummed up by old Monty who did them quite
proud.

At 'Bay Inn' much later, boats sailed into view,
And Richard Lion-Heart pledged to be faithful
and true,

To the precepts and practices of his Lion-City
friend,
Right up to the brink and the bitter-sweet end.

Bright fireworks lit up the romantic night sky,
While the Singapore hero stood quite
demurely by

And toasted his partner to another decade
Of repression, inflation and the bane of
Free Trade.

In the capital city Lee was taken to see,
A model of the accelerated Mahaweli;
There Gamini D. danced attendance in glee,
While the 'River of Life' flowed home safe
to the sea.

Pray, what was the cause for so sudden a
huddle,
Perhaps the state of our nation is a mess
and a muddle?

The political life-style of an old Chinese Hand
Seems a tempting prescription for this long-
suffering land.

If economic blizzard can bring close together
Two political bustards of so variant a feather,
A nest-egg unique in geo-political lore,
Will hatch out aborted in Sri Lankapore?

Stay awhile, however, and ponder the odd truth,
Is Singapore really a country forsooth;
With scant geography, less history and non-
descript culture,
A neo-colony prey only to commercial vulture.

So buck up, Sri Lankans, and gird up your loins,
As into the fountain you fling those false coins!
The day is acoming when our land will be free
Of Dharmista-mongers and the followers of Leel
5 February, 1981.

Richard Lee

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THE 26th CONGRESS

NEVER ANOTHER WAR

by K. P. S. MENON

Fomer Indian Ambassador to the USSR

WHILE READING the reports of the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, my thoughts went back to the 19th Congress which was in session when I first set foot in the USSR in 1952. That Congress had been summoned after a period of 13 years. The interregnum was caused by the fact that the nation was engaged in a grim struggle against fascism and nazism and, after the war, in an equally grim struggle to repair the damages of war. Brezhnev, who presented the principal report at the 26th Congress, was an active participant in both. His books, "Small Land" and "The Rebirth", gave us a concentrated glimpse of the war, from the first day to the last, and of the pace and fury of postwar reconstruction have almost become classics. Leonid Brezhnev concludes his experiences of the war with the following words: "If someone were to ask me today what was the most important conclusion I drew from the war, which I went through from the beginning to the end, I would say: "There must never be another war. There must never be a war again. That is what I consider to be the most important conclusion I drew from the experience of the war." That is the dominant thought which animated Brezhnev presenting his report at the 26th Congress.

There is some resemblance between the international situation as it was on the eve of the 19th Congress and of the 26th Congress: In 1952, the cold war was already in full swing. Winston Churchill had played the overture in his famous iron curtain speech in Fulton, and

the tune was taken up with almost apostolical fervour by John Foster Dulles. The USSR was subjected to a virtual economic boycott. In 1981, too, the world is drifting, or has already drifted, into the cold war. Just as the period of allied solidarity during the second world war ended soon after the advent of peace, so also the period of detente in the seventies, of which the high water-mark was the Helsinki conference, has receded into the background. To some extent antics of the presidential election year in the USA, which resorted even to the farcical boycott of the Olympic Games by certain countries, were responsible for rhetorical and other excesses of 1980. Even Lord Killanin, the smooth-spoken president of the world Olympic games, said, in the course of his farewell remarks in Moscow, that it was for consideration whether in future the Olympic games should be held in the same year as the presidential elections in the USA. But even after the elections are over there has been little improvement in the tone or substance of the pronouncements of American leaders. Indeed presidential fireworks have become worse.

IT IS TO THE CREDIT of Brezhnev that he refused to be provoked by Reagan's vulgar vituperation, though Russian has a rich enough vocabulary for it. The world-situation is far too serious for responsible leaders to hurl abuses at each other. Brezhnev ignored even the charge that the communists were abettors of international terrorism. Pravda, however, pointed out that if national liberation were called international terrorism, George Washington would have to be dubbed an international terrorist. The revival of the cold war in the eighties is far more dangerous than it was in the fifties, for now the world is verily in the thick of the nuclear era. The first atom bomb, dropped in Hiroshima, caused 250,000 casualties in a few seconds. Now the world has a nuclear stock, equal in power to 130,000 bombs of the Hiroshima type. Today, more than ever, the only alternatives for mankind are coexistence and co-destruction.

Brezhnev's address was a masterly survey of the internal and international situation. In this article I shall refer only to one aspect, his passion for peace, reflecting his peoples' yearning for it. Analysing the world situation in various sectors, Brezhnev said, "at present nothing is more important than to maintain peace and to preserve the paramount right of

every human being, the right to life." But Brezhnev was not content with diagnosing the situation—he has indicated the remedies. The international situation has been particularly menacing in the region of the Persian Gulf. The USA has sought to meet the crisis by proclaiming the bellicose Carter Doctrine and by a massive display of force, including the rapid deployment force etc., in the Persian Gulf region. As against such remedies, which are no remedies but aggravating factors, Brezhnev has repeated the proposals which he made in the course of his memorable address in Indian parliament during his visit to India in December last. Brezhnev proposed that no foreign bases be set up in the Gulf or adjacent islands, that no nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction be deployed there, that force should not be used against the Gulf countries and that there should be no interference in their internal affairs, that their policy of non-alignment should be respected, that their right to their own national resources be fully recognised, and that there should be no obstruction to the normal trade routes or sea lanes in that area.

Brezhnev has also put forward a number of proposals for preventing a nuclear war. The Soviet Union has reaffirmed that it will not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries that do not permit their deployment on their territory. At the same time, Brezhnev has given a clear warning that to deploy them in Europe would result in "the certain destruction of European civilisation," and America would not be able to escape its consequences either. The objective should be to stop manufacturing nuclear weapons, and to begin reducing their stockpiles until they are completely eliminated. Brezhnev has proposed the convening of an European conference to discuss questions of military detente and disarmament in Europe. He has favoured the idea of setting up non-nuclear zones of peace in the Indian Ocean, in South East Asia, in the Mediterranean, in Latin America and elsewhere. He has proposed that a prestigious international Committee of eminent scientists be set up to demonstrate the vital necessity for preventing a nuclear catastrophe. For easing the international situation and avoiding war Brezhnev has suggested that it may be useful to call a special session of the security council. "The need of the hour," says Brezhnev, "is not to make preparations for war, which will doom

the people to a senseless squandering of their material and spiritual wealth, but to consolidate peace." APN.

X X X

LETTERS

A FOREIGN EXPERT IS ONE WHO COMES TO FIND OUT AND LEAVES BEFORE HE IS FOUNT OUT

Kotalawala. J. L.

Sir,

Being a regular and avid reader of your esteemed journal since my early teenage days, I like to comment on the above subject.

Lately, I have noticed a very distinct trend in Sri Lanka to pour scorn and ridicule on foreign expertise. This seems to apply, specially to former nationals living and working abroad. Also, it appears to be gathering momentum in all the air-freighted news media I receive. All this makes me think more than twice prior to commenting on my speciality; Poultry genetics and production. Why, you ask and I will endeavour to give an answer by relating a recent occurrence.

I read of a particularly harrowing letter by reader Chandra Kodituwakku of Kandy to you, Mr. Editor. It was on the subject of poultry feedstuff. Immediately I wrote a three page draft - letter, suggesting all manner of remedies, with my 18 years experience gained by involvement in the Australian Poultry industry - as a student and worker. When I re-read the draft the next morn, doubts began to gather in my mind, Would I be termed:-

1. A head-line hunting self-exiled upstart
2. A know-all suggesting impractical remedies
3. An ignorant outsider, with only theoretical knowledge of the Sri Lanka industry et al.

The nett result was I did not post the letter to you in Colombo. Instead, I went about my work, earning a living for our family.

Surely in Sri Lanka nobody in their right mind would query the considered

medical opinion of an Anthonia, Attygalle, Bartholemuesz, Cabral, Rustomjee, Sivasubramanium or Weinman? To so do may be fatal to the patient. In the same way, cannot the subject of foreign experts be considered in a more rational and educated manner, removed from the emotionalism of the banner-headline chasing subeditor or the shallow and slimy politician? Certainly there are experts and experts in this world. Would not the rogue and charlatan be easily out-numbered by the dedicated and knowledgeable individual? Need every one be tarred with the same brush?

Surely the oath taken by the young men of ancient Athens applies to very many, even today. "We will strive unceasingly to quicken the public sense of civic duty; and thus, in all these ways we will strive to transmit this city not only not less but greater, better and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us".

Aruna M. W. Fernando,

Steggles Breeding Unit,
Wallalong via Maitland,
N.S.W. 2321, Australia.

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SECOND INTERNATIONAL WINGED BEAN SEMINAR--KAHAWITA'S COMMENTS

Sir,

As one who had completed working on the "Nutritive value of Winged Bean" for a M. Sc. degree in Biochemistry under the supervision of Dr. N. S. Hettiarachchi (presently Visiting Professor, Dept. of Food Science, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign) and Prof. H. M. W. Herath (Dept. of Agricultural Biology, University of Peradeniya), I like to comment on the factual inaccuracies which had crept into R. Kahawita's review on the two recently held Seminars "Dambala vs. Soya" (**Tribune**, Feb. 28, 1981).

I wonder from which source Kahawita had obtained the nutritional value data of Dambala and soya beans! - the units of measurement have been inadequately mentioned, and the figures expressed for micro-nutrients (calcium, iron, thiamine, riboflavin and niacin) are in variance with

the recently reported figures of Alan Claydon (1978), published in "The Winged Bean". For the benefit of the readers I wish to compare the data provided by Kahawita and Claydon, which I quote.

Kahawita also had made a sweeping statement, "Let us not fiddle with Dambala on which no one has done research so far", which is also factually inaccurate

(1) As far as Winged Bean research in Sri Lanka is concerned, in the recently concluded Second International Seminar, a country status paper titled, "Winged Bean in Sri Lanka", authored by H. M. W. Herath was circulated. This report includes 17 references regarding the scientific publication and research communication on winged bean by Sri Lankan scientists, covering a brief span of four year period, 1976 - 1980,

Constituents	Kahawita		Claydon (1978)	
	Dambala	Soybean	Dambala	Soybean
1. water	14ml	8ml	8.7	10.2
2. protein	33g	35g	36.6	35.1
3. fat	16g	18g	15.3	17.7
4. carbohydrate	32g	20g	35.6	32.0
5. fibre	5g	4.5g	3.7	4.2
6. calcium	nil	200mg	230	226
7. iron	nil	7mg	10.8	8.5
8. vitamine A	nil	negligible	--	--
9. thiamine	0.08mg	1.1mg	1.05	0.66
10. riboflavin	negligible	0.3mg	0.33	0.22
11. nicotinamide	negligible	2mg	3.09	2.2
12. ascorbic acid	negligible	negligible	--	--

(2) Agricultural Information Bank for Asia (AIBA), Philippines had published an annotated bibliography on Winged Bean 1979, edited by Verona R. Aterrado, containing 133 entries.

(3) The 64 research papers presented in the First International Symposium on Developing the Potentials of the Winged Bean, held in Philippines (Jan. 1978), had been compiled into a voluminous 448 page book, under the title "The Winged Bean". This book was published by the Philippine Council for Agriculture and Resources Research, Philippines.

(4) A newsletter - journal (two issues an year) called "Winged Bean Flyer" is being published since May 1977.

Kahawita's another observation that "Now what is there to say 'take to Dambala in preference to Soya?'" is also unwarranted. As I also happened to be one of the Sri Lankan participants in this Seminar, I couldn't recollect anyone advocating the policy mentioned by Kahawita. Instead, most of the participants were inter-

ested in cultivating the Dambala as a supplementary crop to soyabean.

S. Sri Kantha

Dept. of Biochemistry,
University of Peradeniya,
10-3-81.

X

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Houses

Sir

Reference the letter to the Editor appearing in the Tribune issue of 14.03.1981 on the subjece "Houses".

2. Hon. Prime Minister's programme for the construction of houses is undertaken by the National Housing Development Authority and not by the Department of National Housing. That is by the way. More important is that no houses has been constructed at Karuwappaukerny as reported by your Reader. There is a Housing Scheme comprising 30 units at Sinna Urani in the Batticaloa Electorate and work on these houses is nearing completion. the basis for distribution of these houses would be on applications to be obtained through an ad-

vertisement from prospective Tenants for purchase under a "Rent Purchase" scheme. A down payment of at least 25% of the total cost of the house including the value of the land and infrastructure development would be made from prospective Tenants. 3. The housing scheme proposed at Karuwappankerny is under the Electoral Programme - 1981 where 30 - houses would be constructed on an Aided Self - Help basis to be distributed to persons of the Low-Income Group to mark the 4th anniversary of the Government in office. Selection of recipients is made from a list of persons recommended by the M. P. of the area. Construction work on this Housing Scheme will get under way soon.

A. K. Pathmanathan
District Manager

National Housing Development Authority
Batticaloa. 17th March 1981.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

US & Western Europe

THE UNITED STATES has again been caught napping. In the period before and after the Presidential election, Ronald Regan and his Republican supporters unleashed a barrage of verbal abuse against USSR, unprecedented even in the worst days of cold war. If this attack was necessary to boost up the morale of the Americans, Reagan's actions may be justified. From the Vietnam debacle right up to the Iranian hostage issue American foreign policy strategies had received a severe beating. Carter thought he could build up a new image through his human rights policy. Carter could not dictate but he tried to bully his allies into acceptance of American policy. But he failed and this caused a severe strain in the relations between Western European nations and the US.

The Americans now feel that their European allies are rather cold and are reluctant to be parties committed to American global strategy, their perceptions of and reactions to political events around the world differ sharply with that of America. This has understandably irritated Americans who contribute large amounts of money, resources and technical know-how for the defence of Europe. The crux of the matter is that Western European nations, except perhaps UK, are no longer interested in playing a "dominant role" in world politics. Having themselves been colonial masters for nearly three to four centuries, they have not yet been able to live down that stigma--though they are very anxious to do so. Their reactions to political events in Afghanistan, Middle East and South East Asia are different from Washington's. While Americans attach global importance to these events, Europeans are content to consider them as regional issues demanding regional solutions. Their support to American views have not been spontaneous; such support was extended reluctantly only after much "bullying" was done behind the scenes.

For the European allies of the USA any confrontation with the USSR is suicidal at this stage. The USSR is today powerful enough to march over Western Europe; her nuclear arsenals are not second to Western nations. Secondly, the economy of Western nations is inextricably wound up with USSR. The growing trade between Socialist bloc countries and

Govt



Notice.

Notice under Section 7 of the Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) as amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964

Reference No. 9/2/2/1290

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars, please see the Gazette of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 135 (part iii) of 03-04-1981.

Name of Village: Kabillawela,

Name of Land: 'Windfield' Darmapala

Lot & plan No. lot No,239 Mawatha,
Supp. No.8
F.V.P.No. 33

Bandarawella Grama Sevaka Division, in the Divisional Revenue Officer's Division of Bandarawella, Badulla District, Uva Province.

The Kachcheri,

Badulla.

10-03-81

N.C. Harvie

Additional Government Agent
Badulla District.

Western European countries cannot be easily discarded for the sake of American prestige. Thirdly, western nations have different opinions of the role of Warsaw Pact countries. On the Polish issue European allies have been less excited than the Americans. While the US media went haywire with Warsaw Pact troops manoeuvres, governments of Western European countries remained silent on the issue. What is puzzling to many observers is the prominence given to Warsaw manoeuvres almost ignoring American troops exercises in the Gulf area and in the Atlantic.

ANOTHER REAGANITE propaganda campaign was the attempt to identify the "Communist menace" with international terrorism. This new theory of international terrorism and its alliance with communism is the brain-child of imaginative White House staffer Prof. Richard Piper. This accusation overlooks the fact that terrorism has, in fact, always been part and parcel of US policy. Not very long ago the **International Herald Tribune** wrote that "for the last 35 years, the US government has made regular use of terrorism as an instrument of foreign policy". This statement of course confirms what happened, among others, to Salvador Allende (Chile), Patrice Lumumba (Congo), Ngo Dinh Diem (South Vietnam) and Mujibur Rahman (Bangladesh). Piper is already under attack in the US for his unrestrained and provocative statements. Prof. Piper of Harvard appears to be very keen to prevent the European countries from accepting the hand of friendship offered by Brezhnev. Some Americans find it difficult to believe Brezhnev, because America has for sometime been talking about "teaching a lesson" to the Soviets. European allies heaved a sigh of relief when Brezhnev offered the olive branch and a Summit. But the Pentagon and the Thatcher administration want an excuse to re-arm. To do this another cold war is needed. Groups of diehard experts have been prodded to mobilise public opinion to support this new "tough" line -- not only against the USSR but against the Third World as well.

A recent issue of **The Economist** highlighted the findings of the German Society for Foreign Policy, the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, the French Institute of International Relations and the Royal Insti-

tute for International Relations on the subject "**Western Security: What has Changed? What Should be Done**". All of them agreed (a) what all the members of the NATC should spend more money on defences to rectify "a military balance moving steadily against West", and (b) that to protect the Gulf's oil pointed to "active European military participation on the ground and at sea in the Middle East", though the main burden should be left to the United States. Another report published after the above by the Defence and Overseas policy working group of the British Atlantic Committee was on the subject "**A Global Strategy to Meet Global Threat**". This report was much more forthright about the need for "visible deterrence-clear warning" in both Europe and Middle East. **The Economist** claimed that these reports clearly recognises the actual realities of the situation: "The balance of power has tilted in Russia's favour. Unless Russia is persuaded to do some disarming, the West has to do some rearming. And a Europe whose NATO members now have a combined national income larger than Americas has to do its share, both in Europe itself and in the region where most of Europe's oil comes from". The hawks in the West and in America have found an alibi in the necessity to safeguard the life line of the oil route and hence exert pressures on European Governments about the need to contain and confront the Soviets.

TO DATE, it would appear Europe has not been converted to this idea of confrontation. It is in such disappointment that Richard Allen, President Reagan's National Security adviser said on March 21 that "There is a re-appearing in other countries the contemptible 'Better Red than Dead' slogans of a generation ago." And also emphasised that US will negotiate from a strong position and therefore would modernize her weapons and deploy them whenever it seems necessary to contain Soviets. This leaves one with the suspicion whether Western Europe will be able to withstand US pressure. They have now been called upon to decide whether they will allow US to manage their foreign policy and defences: a reminder of the British pattern of paramountcy in India nearly a century ago. Europe had been advised to sacrifice her social welfarism and consumption and devote more to enhance her defences.

Western Europe had condemned Soviet role in Afghanistan, Middle East and South East Asia, but it had not gone hysterical over those issues. Western Europe is certainly not happy to revive Dulleserism in international relations. A UPI report from New York datelined March 24 stated: 'Dutch Defence Minister, Pieter Degeus, currently on an official visit to Washington, served notice that the Netherlands did not want the neutron weapons deployed on its soil. He is reported to have said that during talks with US Defence Secretary, Casper Weinberger, Degeus had said that the Netherlands cannot afford to discuss neutron weapons in the context of theatre nuclear force modernisation.

Will Reagan be able to pressurise the Netherlands and other European governments to do its biddings?

QVIDNUNCS

★ TELEPHONE BILLS BANK ROBBERIES

A QUIDNUNC, according to the Shorter Oxford Dictionary, is "one who is constantly asking 'what now?' 'what news?'" hence an inquisitive person, a gossip. The word comes from the Latin, **quid** (what) **nunc** (now) -- **what now?** and is defined in Webster's Dictionary as "one who seeks to know all the latest gossip." Our own era, especially in Sri Lanka, is admittedly the **Quidnuncs'** golden age. Gossip is now a marketable commodity. The stories our **Quidnuncs** bring are based on a substratum of truth and **Tribune** publishes them only if the fire from which the smoke has arisen has some kind of reality. Apart from a few kite-flying stories to provoke investigation, most stories in this column are enough for a daily paper to go to town with a banner headline.

★ **A QUIDNUNC** who is a telephone subscriber has sent us a frantic note asking us as to "how can it be done? He has sent us a copy of a "Notice" To Telephone Subscribers" from the Department of Telecommunications on the problem of "Payment of Telephone Bills by Cheque."

This is how the directive goes: "All cheques issued for payment of Telephone bills both local and Overseas should hereafter be drawn in favour of the Director of Telecommunications and NOT in favour of the Postmaster General as done hitherto. The payment order on such cheques should be as follows: 'Pay the Central Bank of Ceylon to the credit of the Director of Telecommunications No. 1 Account No. 267'. Such cheques should be crossed and forwarded to the respective Billing Units as indicated below or presented at a Post office and a receipt obtained". Then the follows the five addresses of "decentralized" offices to which the cheques can be sent. But the problem is not the five offices, but how the payee's name is to be fitted into the cheque leaf. To repeat the directive: "Pay the Central Bank of Ceylon to the credit of the Director of Telecommunications No. 1 Account No. 267".

According to our *Quidnunc*, the cheque books of the two Banks in which he has accounts -- the Bank of Ceylon and the People's Bank -- do not have the space to enter this payee's name. He says that he had entered an abbreviated version -- and hopes that the cheques will not be "returned". And once a cheque is returned for whatever reason, the Telecommunication Department will refuse to accept payment by cheque. And this subscriber who has telephones in two zones will have to make pilgrimages to two decentralised offices -- one in Lotus Road, Colombo 1 and also to Hotel Road, Mount Lavinia to make payments in cash.

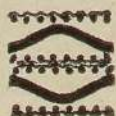
Will the banks increase the size of the leaves in their cheque books or will the Director of Telecommunications shorten his (banking) account name?

ANOTHER QUIDNUNC who has an account in the People's Bank wants to know why it is the People's Bank that

regularly gets robbed of vast sums not only in the North but also elsewhere in the island. He recalls the fact that apart from the highly publicised Police (which is for ever harassing poor indigent rural folk for growing a few ganja plants), the People's Bank (like the Bank of Ceylon) has the most highly paid Security Service (a security guard gets a pay only a little below that of the Inspector General of Police). Unfortunately, police Officers get only a fraction of what Security officers in the banks get, but it is the Police that gets all the blame for the robberies that take place -- and it is the policemen who lose their lives.

★ Our Quidnunc wants to know whether the Bank's Security Department could not have devised a more fool proof system when large sums of money are moved on any particular day? He asks a number of pertinent questions on this matter. Is the system the Security Department had worked out such that it makes a pattern for the underworld to prepare their plans for a top-notch killing? Should such a highly paid Security Service not vary the *modus operandi* of moving cash from day to day especially in areas where marauding gangs are known to be active? Is it not time that the Police and the Bank's Security Service stop worrying about small timers and small embezzlements and concentrate on big timers and the prevention of big time crime? Is there any point in crying over spilt milk? Prevention is better than cure!

Tribune had raised protests when the Banks had paid their employees salaries that had made them into little "pockets of affluence" in a vast ocean of poverty? That high emoluments have not made the Bank's Security Service function as it should. Such "high wage islands" - as some commentators have called them - are more often than not counter-productive so far as a country as a whole is concerned.



Is There No-One

Is there no-one to watch with me
 When the night comes?
 Weep for Gethsamane--weep for me--
 Each hour I count and beg the chalice pass
 Could pain be liquid fire or blood
 Congealed, hardening
 Consuming on a cross
 My life?
 I cannot weep--what good
 Would tears be in
 This arid waste of pain?
 Gethsamane, of dying trees, decay
 Naked branches, bruising
 Men turning--going away.
 A friend lost.
 And the night so lonely
 That the crackle of fallen leaves
 Deafen me.
 The pass, the joys, forgotten,
 Wraithlike--I stretch
 Crabbed hands unable to grasp
 The truth--that all is gone--
 Only this cup, this golden chalice
 Drained as grape-beautiful empty,
 Doused with vinegar--
 Gethsamane--
 I beg,
 Yet--is it a Word?
 A promise--
 Would you watch with me
 Till the morning comes?

Manel Abhayaratne

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TOBACCO OR GANJA?

IT IS NOT SIGNIFICANT that the Sri Lanka Medical Association had presented President J. R. Jayewardene (when he inaugurated the 94th anniversary sessions on 26/3/81) two books — one on rabies and the other on smoking? That he had said that he did not need them but admitted that they were useful? That he hoped that the Ministry of Health would soon go all out to wipe out rabies from the island? That in regard to smoking, according to the **Daily News** report: "he did not think he needed that book because he did not smoke. Smoking was of course something which was difficult to prevent. He hoped that through television, the radio and the press which gave large space to cigarette advertisements — he hoped they would be able to stop that, and that the Minister of Health would take action on the matter. They would then be able to prevent people killing themselves by unnecessary smoking. President Jayewardene said there were some doctors who had died due to heavy smoking. There was no reason why the Government should encourage or help to encourage smoking which brought such fatal consequences"? That it is a happy augury that the President should have endorsed medical opinion that smoking was injurious to health and declared that government would be able to stop cigarette advertisements in all media? That this only one aspect of the matter? That, in our view, government should also take steps, at least in easy stages, to restrict and then stop the cultivation of tobacco, not only for domestic consumption but also for export? That apart from health hazards, some of the best lands on which food crops can be grown are now under tobacco? That the cultivation of food crops will not only make this country self-sufficient in food, but the products can easily become excellent export commodities? That today only a portion of the tobacco grown is exported; but food imports cost the country many many times more than the inflow from tobacco exports? That not only does tobacco cover much of our best lands, the (flue) curing of the leaf destroys about 500 or more acres of forest each year? That at a time when our forests have to be

conserved, this rape of our forests to keep the tobacco curing depots working is to say the least criminal? That this vandalism cannot be hidden behind a smokescreen of orchid growing or agri-management services in a part of the Mahaweli?

IS IT NOT A TRAGEDY that whilst the media (inhibited by lavish cigarette advertisements) is silent about the evils of smoking so far as the nation's health is concerned, an unnecessary hue and cry is being raised about ganja? That by all standards and by every yardstick, it is less noxious than tobacco? That whilst ganja is an indigenous plant used for medicinal and culinary purposes from time immemorial, tobacco is a weed that came with the European conquest of this region? That at present tobacco and cigarettes are being banished from the West to the Third World countries and at the same time many western countries are legitimising the use of marijuana (ganja) in their territories? That, unfortunately, on Western advice, our Government is being compelled to destroy ganja plantations and to punish local folk who use it even in a small way? That there are whispers that Western experts want our government to punish those who have even an ounce of ganja with a fine of a million rupees or twenty years in gaol? That it is to be hoped that the government will not fall victim to this kind of stupidity? That it is good to realise that by the time USA and all western countries make marijuana legal (and is sold like Coco Cola), all ganja plantations in Sri Lanka and other Asian countries would have been destroyed? That thereafter the US multinationals that now control marijuana plantations in the Caribbean and Latin American countries will have a world monopoly? That Western experts will then advise our government that ganja was a harmless weed and that under the blessings of IMF's liberalised economy Sri Lanka will import ganja from the Western sources? That is a familiar story of Western commercialism which some people call imperialism? That the British had once fought wars to sell opium in China? That today Britain and other Western countries wage propaganda wars to compel Third World people to smoke cigarettes? That our government must examine the implications of the hysteria that has been induced against ganja? That among other matters government should find out whether some individuals are not making a fortune from the seized ganja?