

TRIBUNE



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Letter From the Editor

ON THE COVER we have a desolate scene on our coast showing the ravages of erosion and man's greed. Coral stone has been indiscriminately carried away for making lime and the trees that once adorned the sea-front have been cut for firewood. Minister Festus Perera, among his other activities, has caused some excellent work to be done in the matter of conservation of the entire coastal belt. Legislation to implement the proposals will soon be on the Statute book. A good start has also been made to grow more trees and replant our illicitly denuded forest reserves. Unfortunately, not enough attention is paid in the media to the rehabilitation of our forest cover. Platitudinous feature articles and rhetorical exhortations to grow more trees are not enough. The destruction that still goes on must be spotlighted. But the media distracts itself with red-herrings like "ganja"—thrown in by international vested interests masquerading under UN auspices. Unwittingly, Sri Lanka signed a "convention" in 1961 that made ganja a "narcotic". This cut the ground under ayurveda and opened the door to the drugs and medicines of western multinationals. To combat the evils of branded medicines, anti-biotics and other harmful patent drugs, many countries, including Sri Lanka, have had to set up Formulary Committees and take refuge in generic names. We will revert to this in a subsequent note, but for the moment we must point out that the mistake in signing a Convention that made "ganja" a "narcotic" must be corrected sooner or later. Policemen, law enforcers and smugglers (who parade as evangelists) are not the people to decide whether ganja is a dangerous narcotic. Scientific and medical opinion, both here and abroad, do not regard ganja or marijuana as a narcotic. That is why many States in the USA and a number of countries in the Caribbean and South America have "decriminalised" marijuana as a way of circumventing the 1961 Convention. Sri Lanka should examine the question of getting ganja out of the "narcotic" list in the Convention and also "decriminalising" it until that is achieved. The colonialist denigration of ganja is on par with the classification of arrack as dangerous. Arrack was made a dirty word and controlled as a "dangerous" beverage to be sold under special licence in special places in unsavoury settings. This was no doubt to boost the sale of foreign liquor. Even today it is illegal for a person to transport more than two bottles of "arrack" though anybody can openly carry thousands of bottles of foreign liquor. In the same way, the possession of an ounce of ganja today can land a person in jail but a lorry-load of LSD or pethydyne can be carried without any equal hazards, though they are a thousand times more lethal than ganja. Elsewhere in this issue, Mr. R. Kahawita has made an earnest plea to legalise ganja to help our tourist trade and boost an export-oriented agriculture. The fact that a few low-budget hippie-type tourists prefer a cheap low-potency stimulant like ganja to an expensive high-key alcohol like whisky is no reason to fall for the anti-Third World logic of the hundred million dollar funded international (western) Narcotic Bureau.

TRIBUNE

Ceylon News Review
Founded in 1954

Editor: **S. P. Amarasingam**

Every Saturday

Vol. 25

No. 42

June 6, 1981

43, Dawson Street,
Colombo 2.

Telephone: 33172

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Man-Made Mess

Colombo, June 1: Though the results of the DDC elections will be known by the time this issue of *Tribune* appears on the newstands, it will not be possible to offer any analysis or comments on the developing trends in the political situation in this issue. The UNP want the maximum out-turn of voters not only to show that the mass of the population accept the new Constitutional changes devised under the Jayewardene dispensation but also to establish that the voters endorse the policies of the Government. As we have said, the only contest worth speaking about is in the North and the East. But the situation, especially in the Jaffna district has been complicated by an outburst of political terrorism by a group that has grown from within the political bosom of the TULF. Undoubtedly this group thinks that TULF participation in the DDC elections will detract from the fight for Eelam and appear anxious to nip in the bud the Amirthalingam thesis that the way of promoting the Eelam cause under the present circumstances was by participating in the elections. The terrorist group, however, want a violent communal confrontation. Immediately they want a cancellation of the elections or to frighten people away from the polls. Ex-M.P. Thiagarajah, the UNP organiser for the Jaffna district, was shot dead at one of his election meetings. But this did not lead to a cancellation or postponement of the election even in the district. Then four policemen were shot at a TULF meeting in the heart of Jaffna (one was killed and three injured—one critically). **It is significant that the TULF leadership condemned the assassination of Thiagarajah. This is the first time that TULF leaders had condemned any act of terrorist violence in the North, and Amirthalingam had even pointed out that the ballot and not the bullet was the best way forward for the people.**

The CPSL has endeavoured to spearhead a boycott of the DDC election on a countrywide basis. The SLFP and LSSP adopted the same line after the two parties could not agree on a joint list or even on a pure SLFP list. The

Forward, which had formerly described itself as a "progressive weekly" and which now calls itself "the view of the Left", in its issue of May 15, in a front-page appeal DON'T VOTE ON JUNE 4 stated: "In addition to the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, the SLFP has now officially called on the people not to vote on June 4th in order to register their protest against the DDC fraud. Similar developments are taking place in other parties that have boycotted these rigged elections. What is wanted now is that these parties should issue a joint appeal and conduct a united campaign to ask the people to boycott the elections. As Nepal has shown, such a joint boycott can destroy the credibility that the UNP Government wants to give the anti-democratic polls. The CPSL has already suggested such a course of action. Let us hope that the other parties will also agree. The UNP government already shows signs of nervousness that a boycott may expose its fraud for what it is. Its newspapers and President Jayewardene himself are appealing to the people not to stay away from the polls but to perform their 'sacred duty' by voting. Its Police have been told to refuse permission for public meetings by any parties or persons other than those contesting the polls. Restrictions on posters and the distribution of leaflets advocating a boycott are being enforced. This is being done in defiance of the law in which appeals to vote or to refrain from voting are equally allowed. But nevertheless the people's determination to boycott the polls on June 4th grows, and will continue to swell." **The SLFP's call for a boycott was lukewarm and half-hearted. It will be interesting to see what the turnout will be on June 4. It must be remembered that a large number usually categorised by political analysts as the "uncommitted" and "floating" voters may not go to the polls not because of the CPSL or SLFP appeals but because they are plainly disgusted with the lack of choice and options before them. Some of them may turn to the JVP.**

IN THE MEANTIME, the power crisis has become worse in spite of marginal rains in the area of hydrel reservoirs. The present reserves, as at the time of writing, are said to be enough for "12 days" at the present level of utilisation,

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concessions, tax-holidays, easy credit, easy land lease etc., are given to those who want to participate in the tourist bonanza. The whole of Colombo sea-front is being dug up, buildings are demolished, trees are uprooted, roads deviated and widened, to erect luxury rooms, to fleece the tourist. Everything his money can demand is being done.

It is, therefore, unfortunate that some of our guests are brought before our courts for tasting "the other side of what the Orient can offer to the tourist". This particular incident interests us because the three of them were in their early twenties. They were not in big money. They were in Sri Lanka because it is "dirt cheap" to holiday here. So to get involved in escapades to get a Taste of Paradise is unfortunate. If it is not to get this experience, why should they come here?

Ganja is a common herb in this country. It is a very important ingredient in some of the "native doctors" decoctions. So it is grown widely though secretly, whether the demand is there or not by the German lads and lasses for a momentary taste of paradise. We are ignorant of the kind of paradise they transcend after a smoke of ganja. It maybe similar to "The Confessions of An Opium Eater", a classic nobody reads today; maybe because one could experience the dreams, rather than read about them.

BUT WE KNOW the herb is cultivated very widely irrespective of the ban. Years back when we were interested in locating a dam site in Ulhitiya Oya basin, we ran into a beautiful ganja garden. In our innocence we thought it was a garden of "Cosmos flowers". We were soon put wise when the two gardeners disappeared into the thicket surrounding the garden. On another occasion we were interested to know why a river gauge reader had undertaken to do the job for a miserable salary of Rs. 10/- a month. He had to take the readings twice a day and had to reside at the site. When we went to meet them one day, there was his garden of ganja not far from the gauging station. He never claimed it. Some one else was doing the cultivation and for good company it was located near the gauging station where the gauge reader had to reside permanently, to earn his Rs. 10/- a month.

The business of growing and marketing of ganja will go on, whatever we do to prevent it, and with an expanding tourist trade the cultivation of ganja will expand faster than our efforts at traditional and open agriculture. What you and I can pay for a puff of this "elixir of life", the tourist can pay ten times over. His currency is gold, ours is paper. So the "rich clientele" will increase and the cultivation too will expand (supply and demand). It is like bootlegging. Prohibition creates the business, means growth.

Is there any reason to prohibit ganja when we encourage and subsidize growing of tobacco? What is the difference? We have never heard of our Police hauling before courts a ganja smoker for being boisterous, indecent, being a public nuisance or even starting a fight. We imagine a puff of ganja sobers the smoker and puts him into a state of mind outside this world and he is at peace with the mundane. Likewise, cigarette smokers are harmless, and may be a smoke makes them passive and calm. Though the propaganda is on to say smoking is bad, that it is a health hazard that it can cause lung cancer, high blood pressure and heart disease, all the same, its sales are pushed up through the mass media to giddy limits. Thy smokers seem not to care. Let what mae come, smoking will go on.

FOR US IN SRI LANKA the manufacture of cigarettes is a most important industry. Our Treasury boys have their "emergency kitty" in the Tobacco Company. When they are hard-pressed for cash to pay the 400,000 public servants, they increase the duty on a cigarette by a couple of cents and dip their hands into the Tobacco Co., kitty, to draw the money to pay the wages and salaries of the Government servants.

Every time a couple of cents are added to the price of a cigarette, we expect consumer resistance to stiffen and force the Cigarette Company to put down their shutters. They do not do this. Instead they increase the incentives to the growers and expand the acreage under tobacco cultivation. Our government now thinks that the pace of expansion is slow compared to what the Treasury boys need to collect from this source, so the Government had invited the "Imperial To-

bacco Co., of England—a multinational'.—to a joint venture on very attractive terms to the "Imperial Organisation". We really want to place them on an "Imperial" pedestal so that we can depend on them for our welfare as we had done on the Imperial Government in days gone by. Injury to the health of the nation by smoking as testified by medical men is a slow and long process and it is yet to be conclusively established.

Our medical profession so far has not put the finger and said: "Death is due to excessive smoking". Probably ganja also comes within the same class when looking for causes of death. But the same cannot be said of alcohol.

It is imported freely and is brewed and manufactured without restriction. The universal palm is tapped at the expense of the nut consumer to expand the legal brews. The blessing of our Government has been given to a multinational investment programme for manufacturing alcohol. On the other side there are the illegal brews like the famous "Dudlege Sudiya" which has greater sales than the approved and legal products. Legal or illegal brews cause our Police boys endless trouble. There does not pass a single day without a number being brought to the dock for being a public nuisance, starting a fight, using obscene language, driving under the influence of liquor etc. There are murders, serious accidents, breaking up of homes, due to drinking of alcohol, yet it is sold openly all throughout the day...

THE EFFECT OF ALCOHOL on human behaviour is much worse than smoking of ganja, yet it is not outlawed. One brings in revenue and the other does not (as the law stands today). Neither tobacco nor ganja has not caused anybody's death, not even that of the addicts. Their health may be impaired. But who cares as long as others are not affected by their behaviour. Yet there is an open warfare against the smokers of ganja. Ganja plantations are destroyed, cultivators are mercilessly thrashed and stocks are seized and burnt. Cigarette smokers receive a different kind of treatment—warnings from doctors are respectfully held out before them but they are not tormented even by an occasional

sermon about the immorality of tobacco smoking.

Why do the tourists come here? Is it not because these tropical ganja and tobacco plants do not grow in their own countries? Is it not in search of health or relaxation from the rat race they have to keep pace with in their country to survive? They come for cheap thrills and experience. We said earlier that it was to taste the other side of the "orient", where they can have experience outside ordinary entertainment, to partake of pleasures outlawed in their own countries. To experience these pleasures in their own countries is far beyond the means of the average tourist whom we receive with "red carpet receptions".

They are good fellows, they work hard, and earn and save to have a flying trip to the other side, just a diversion from their humdrum life of working, drinking, cooking, washing up, going to sleep and getting up the next day to repeat the operation, rain or sunshine, day in day out. They need a break, at least for a couple of weeks. What can they do except to taste something different; so they come to these parts, and unfortunately their footsteps are dogged by touts, pimps, ganja peddlars, hashish smoking dens, and the kind of entertainment that we do not like our people to be involved in—not that we are prudish, not that we want our citizens to be models to the rest of the world.

TOURISTS SUBVERT our cultural background. This kind of infiltration is to be expected when we plan to make money from a tourist trade. This was anticipated by the Grand Old Man D. S. When the first Tourist Board was set up after independence, we remember how the first Director of the Board—one of our best Civil Servants went to meet him with a grand scheme to boost up the tourist trade. D. S. listened to the flawless scheme, and when the recital was over, he smiled and said: "Francis you are Sinhalese. I am a Sinhalese too, you want me to finance a scheme that would destroy the Sinhala people and their culture? As a matter of fact, you have painted only one side of the picture in very luminous colours. You have not seen the other side—what will happen to our boys and girls with

the impact of an alien culture and a permissive way of life? There are other ways of making this country rich; you know what they are? I have given the guide lines, go ahead and move fast to develop our resources and to increase production a hundred fold. That is the answer to our economic ills".

When we read about the doings of some of our guests and see them in action and the types that come to be entertained in our five star hotels, we begin to realize the wisdom of those thoughts, reproduced as memory could record, admonishing a senior Civil Servant of the good old days.

However, we are committed to go along with the Tourist Trade to earn what we have lost in other avenues of foreign exchange earnings. India too was in a similar plight with her prohibition laws. With prohibition in full force India could not offer the tourist a cup of cheer to sip after inviting him to have a good time. An intoxicant must follow other forms of entertainment which are also dollar earners. The answer was "Permit Rooms". A tourist on arrival in India can present his passport, declare himself a liquor addict, and obtain a permit to purchase and consume liquor in the permit room of a hotel, restaurant or any eating place licensed to set up "a permit room". It is in operation today like other "approved vice dens".

WE HAVE FAILED in our efforts to build up export products as deemed by D. S. As a substitute we have embarked on a massive development programme to attract the tourist. They come by the thousands and the type that come are not interested in sleeping in air conditioned cushioned beds in a five star hotel. They come with haversacks on their backs. They sometimes patronize the starred hotels because a dollar or a pound sterling takes them a long way in our poor country. If they spend a pound, we have earned Rs. 46/- three days wages for a plantation worker. We need the pound more than the rupee. So we barter our culture and dignity to give the tourist a Taste of Paradise according to his vision of Paradise.

What is the alternative to the episode enacted in the Trincomalee courts? Take a

hint from India, let us set up "**G. Booths**" in every approved tourist establishment, levy a fee "in dollars only" to spend an hour in the Booth. In that hour let him also pay for what he consumes in the Booth. Let every Booth be manned by Excise men to collect the dues and control "occupation"—there will be an admission fee and a charge for what is consumed, a double income-excise duty and the collection. Both may be more than the duty we collect from the import of liquor. To boot ganja is a hundred percent national product and there will be a boost to our agricultural activities.

We can forget about tea, rubber, coconut etc., as sources of foreign exchange earners. Nor will it be necessary to pay subsidies for replanting, for fertilizer etc. Let them die a natural death, as it is happening after the Land Re-forms. In its place we have (a) employment opportunities in manning the Booths; (b) a new breed of cultivators on small plots of land to be developed on the same lines as the Ceylon Tobacco Co.; (c) an enormous saving on subsidies and replanting of the traditional crops and (d) a continuous stream of tourists occupy and make use of the Hotels all through the year.

One flaw we see is that the locals will not have a chance to occupy these establishments, at cut-throat rates during off seasons. There will be no off-season. Anyway it is a sacrifice worth making by the locals—one more sacrifice will not break their back, We are now used to make sacrifices in the interest of our progeny and for the VIP to have fling in other climes, while we toil and moil in darkness and in the heat. There is one consolation. There are seven millions (below the poverty line): so we have company.

In short what we say is "legalize ganja cultivation" like "toddy tapping" on licences, establish "G. Booths" like the "Permit Rooms" in India, regularize the growing, marketing and consumption of ganja. We see no harm in placing ganja on a par with tobacco. Of course we will have to be outside the "International Narcotic Bureau" or have ganja declared a non-narcotic drug.

Ganja is really not a narcotic in "scientific" terms. But "legally" it has been made a narcotic and a dangerous drug from 1961. For whose benefit?

These days the Haves can be persuaded to do anything to help the Third World to earn a little money on their own and not follow them with a begging bowl, asking for more. Ganja is an excellent way out for Sri Lanka. Or can someone advise the Haves how to spend their money and still save something to pay *"the beggars of the Third World"*.



ISLAM

And World Peace

by N. M. M. I. Hussain

This paper was read at the Asian Christian Peace Conference that met in Colombo 1980 on the theme "Theological Basis for Co-operation With the Living Faiths for Peace with Justice". This is the fourth and concluding part of a paper entitled "The Response of Islam to The World Struggle for Peace with Justice."

NOW COME to what is usually regarded as the most difficult problem confronting Islam and the other world religions, namely communism. The problem is that communism of the Marxist variety is atheistic. Perhaps we would reply to Marx's dictum that religion "is the opium of the people" with the remark of an eighteenth century English Bishop that "Everything is what it is, and not some thing else." But it is more important to note the sentences preceding the dictum, which are far from being disrespectful towards religion: "religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation". If I understand these sentences correctly, they seem to recognise that religion

need not be identified with a conservative political establishment, and that it can sometimes serve revolutionary purposes. It certainly did through the Puritan Revolution under Cromwell, as Marx surely knew, and it also inspired abortive revolutionary uprisings through the millenarian movements from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries in Europe. In the Islamic world religion inspired the Zanj slave revolt, the revolt of Babek, the revolt of Ismail and most notably the movement of the Qarmatians, who have been called the "Bolsheviks of Islam". Religion need not be conservative, and Islam is consistent with socialism. We have also to note the semi-religious aspects of Communism, a familiar point for many decades. Marx who, in terms of his determinist view of history, thought that a bourgeois could not but be a bourgeois nevertheless cast anathema on him in a rage for justice, just like a figure out of the Old Testament. He was of the seed of the prophets. I would like to bring to your attention the book "Evolution in Religion" by the Roman Catholic scholar Zaehner, who seeks to explain Teilhard de Chardin's sympathy for Chinese communism and Aurobindo's preoccupation with socialism in terms of the mystical experience of unity-in-diversity. The importance given to "community" in Islam should make some important aspects of communism sympathetic to the Muslims.

WE CAN ESTABLISH common ground between a religion such as Islam and communism, but it remains that communism is atheistical. But what about capitalism? Lord Keynes, who used to be regarded as the saviour of capitalism, declared that "modern capitalism is absolutely irreligious..." The Catholic historian Christopher Dawson has repeatedly asserted that the culture of the West has become thoroughly secularised and that from the standpoint of religion, there is nothing to choose between the liberal democracy of the West and Communism as both are inimical to religion. Perhaps Islam should adopt a position of equi-distance or non-alignment between the West and the Communist world. The secularised West allows the practise of religion, but so increasingly do the Communist countries, and if that is correct perhaps the problem of accommodat-

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tion between Islam and Communism is not as serious as might be thought. **In drawing towards the conclusion of this paper, I have to question the extent to which Islam can really be expected to contribute to the world's struggle for peace with justice. It has hundreds of millions of adherents all over the world, it is growing particularly in Africa, and perhaps it has resisted secularisation more effectively than any other religion today. But the extent to which it can contribute to the world's struggle for peace with justice is still questionable.**

What bothers me is the fact that Islam inspired a great civilisation centuries ago and since then has lost momentum. I am enthralled to read the American poet Ezra Pound when he writes of Islamic civilisation in terms of "the obliteration of snobbism, Averroes, Avicenna, a beauty of philosophical writing, a dream cut finer than Plato's, the Alcazar, the Alhambra, a thousand mosques that Keats couldn't have over described, a sense of man and of human dignity yet unobliterated. In 1906 in Tangier, you could see it in the walk of the Moslem". Pound goes on with his paeon, "Contempt for poverty, the pride in splendours of the mind, a sense of intellectual riches held calmly by Frobenius' Arab botanist, outwardly a mere beggar". That is splendid, but Pound was writing of Islamic civilisation as it was centuries ago. It is not that Islam has ceased altogether to be creative since then, for we have seen in this century one of the glories of Islamic civilisation in Iqbal. But undoubtedly there has been a decadence, and the sense of this decadence inspired a modernising movement in the last decades of the nineteenth century, producing figures of great intellectual distinction in Afghani, Abduh, Ameer Ali, Taha Hussein, Iqbal and others. That movement became defunct decades ago, and now we are witnessing the attempt to re-invigorate Islamic societies through Islamic fundamentalism, through a return to the sources, the outcome of which is still uncertain.

WHAT SEEMS TO HAVE GONE WRONG is that the freedom of mind characterizing Islamic civilisation at its greatest disappeared, and the

Islamic mind became congealed in rigid orthodoxy for centuries. The rigid mind cannot be creative. Also, Islam became a religion of individual salvation, while society was left to the care of the wielders of power who were not always inspired by Islam. Perhaps what I am saying here could be relevant to other religions as well. However, even if Islam can make only a limited contribution to the world's struggle for peace with justice, its contribution should be of crucial importance. When we look at what are supposed to be the secular ideals of modern civilisation, the supremacy of Law, the rights of the individual, and the principles of socialism, we can see that they all have their roots in religion and they are integrally connected to the notion of the inherent worth and dignity of man. It is questionable, according to the religious view, whether those ideals can withstand the process of secularisation for long. There has been a tendency in modern civilisation to degrade man. He is viewed as matter and his mind as epiphenomenon, he is viewed as a machine, as a bundle of economic appetites, and nowadays—on the basis of the unscientific theorizing of the ethologists—as an inherently aggressive maniac. According to the Koran, man is the vice-regent of God on earth, to whom the angels were required to make obeisance at his creation. The secular ideals of modern civilisation have a much better chance of realization of man is viewed in Islamic terms, and perhaps the most important task of Islam and the other great religions in contributing to the world struggle for peace with justice is to preserve and promote a sense of the inherent worth and dignity of man, no matter how great the secular power exercised over him.

Concluded



May 1-16

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

FRIDAY, MAY 1: President J. R. Jayewardne in a May Day message advised the working people of the country that while forgetting ideological differences they must be united fraternally irrespective of sectional interest and endeavour to seek national prosperity. In Colombo seven May Day rallies will be held; rallies will also be held in the provinces where in some instances, a departure will be made from the usual pattern when shramadana campaigns will be undertaken—*CDN*. A maximum security check for May Day came into operation from midnight; police were instructed to search all vehicles entering the city for firearms, handbombs or sand-filled bottles; armed mobile police parties will patrol the city to prevent any clashes and check on the movements of suspicious persons who may create trouble—*CDM*.

SATURDAY, MAY 2: President J. R. Jayewardene told the massive gathering at the Galle Face Green yesterday that every voter should exercise his vote on June 4, when the country goes to the polls to elect the Development Councils. The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) leader Rohana Wijeweera told the May Day rally of the JVP held at the Colombo Town Hall premises that the JVP which was built up over the years was now the leading left movement in the country. Mr. Pieter Keuneman, deputy leader of the Sri

Lanka Communist Party at the United Workers May Day rally at Hyde Park yesterday hit out at Prime Minister R. Premadasa's statement in Manila to join ASEAN; he attacked what he called "US military, political and economic imperialist plans in the ASEAN region". Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, said at Campbell Park yesterday that none of the five political parties—SLFP, TULF, LSSP, CP and MEP had surrendered any of its party policies although they came together on a common platform as a joint front to celebrate May Day—*CDN*. A three-member ministerial team is to examine measures that will help bring down the cost of living. A definite easing of the power situation this week, has led to the cancellation of plans to enforce further power cuts. Poor performance in the plantation sector in 1980 has affected the country's economic growth rate, dipping it even below the macro-economic projection of six per cent—*SU*.

SUNDAY, MAY 3: A fire at the Kelanitissa power station, which provides thermal backup to Sri Lanka's critically low hydro-power capability early yesterday created new wrinkles on an already bleak power picture. The delicate operation to hoist a 12-ton generator by helicopter to the top of Pidurutalagala to energise the national television service which will provide islandwide TV is scheduled to begin tomorrow at Nuwara Eliya; a US navy helicopter is being used for this operation; the helicopter which arrived here on board a US aircraft carrier recently has already done some trial sorties over the area—*SO*. Sri Lanka is sandwiched between China and India according to the World Bank chart which shows countries in terms of per capita Gross National Product; in the year 1978 the World Bank places China with 230 dollars Sri Lanka 200 dollars and India 180 dollars—*ST*.

MONDAY, MAY 4: The fire at the Kelanitissa power station last Saturday will not lead to an additional power cut a Ceylon Electricity Board spokesman said yesterday—*CDN*. Village level institutions subordinate to the proposed National Development Councils will replace the existing Village and Town Councils; they will be set up at Assistant Government Agent divisions and will have as their main task the overseeing of development pro-

jects that are initiated by the Development Councils; the National Development Councils will be the overall executive body for these institutions. Ten private garment manufacturers are to be prosecuted by the Labour Department for forcing women to work after 10 p.m.—*SU*.

TUESDAY, MAY 5: Two high-powered US helicopters from the US Seventh Fleet carried equipment, including a six-ton generator to the top of Mount Pidurutalagala successfully yesterday; the equipment was taken to the Television Transmission site from Nuwara Eliya. The increase of Sri Lanka's Gross National Product by 5.5 per cent in 1980 was by any world standard satisfactory, Central Bank Governor Dr. W. Rasaputram told a press conference yesterday. The Asian Development Bank has agreed to reappraise the Lunugamvehera project before it summons a meeting to discuss the escalation of costs amounting to US \$ 35 million. Former World Bank Adviser Chelliah Loganathan died in Jaffna yesterday after a brief illness. He was 68. The University Grants Commission has appointed a three-member Committee to probe the recent disturbances at the Kelaniya University which resulted in damage to University buildings and property estimated at about Rs. 200,000—*CDN*. Dr. W. Rasaputram, Governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, spelling out measures to combat inflation said that budgetary discipline, cutting waste, good management at all levels, increase in savings and production and keeping to monetary targets was the answer—*CDM*. Police Chief Ana Seneviratne yesterday set up a special unit in the Intelligence Services Division (ISD) to deal with smuggling activities carried on by foreigners in Sri Lanka. Six students of the Kelaniya University have been suspended following an inquiry conducted by a three-member official team, into a series of incidents at the university last week—*SU*.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6: The Government has decided in principle to afford protection to local industries producing quality goods. Community forests area soon to be set up in every village to meet the timber and fuelwood requirements of every village lands. Indonesia has agreed to supply petroleum to Sri Lanka on a request made by Sri Lanka's Prime

Minister, Mr. R. Premadasa from President Suharto of Indonesia in the course of their official talks yesterday—*CDN*. Sri Lanka may either receive "observer status" or "dialogue status" in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), but will not join this South Asian group of countries as a member; speaking to a group of Lankan editors, Dr. Sinnathamby Rajaratnam, first Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore said it was not possible for Sri Lanka to become a member of the five-nation economic entity, purely because of its geographic location; the question of Sri Lanka entering ASEAN had been cropping up now and then, but there could be no optimistic trends as yet about these propositions—*SU*. Remittances from Sri Lankans working abroad have more than doubled between 1979 and 1980 the Central Bank Governor, Dr. Warnasena Rasaputram said yesterday; the bank has computed that the "private transfers" that helped finance the country's external resources gap last year had hit an unprecedented high of Rs. 2.5 billion last year—*CO*.

THURSDAY, MAY 7: Government yesterday decided to suspend the 15 per cent export duty on mattress fibre until the market begins to stabilise. Singapore's leaders are optimistic that Sri Lanka can make the grade and emerge as a modernised international economic power as Singapore is today. Efforts have been launched in the right direction by the present government; but hard decisions, sometimes unpalatable and sometimes unpopular, they stressed, must be taken for longrange benefits—*CDN*. Sri Lanka's three water-fronts—Colombo, Trincomalee and Galle—earned revenues totalling Rs. 710.5 million during 1980 of which Rs. 284.2 million was foreign exchange—*CDM*. As the weeklong boycott of lectures by students of the Kelaniya University spread to other campuses yesterday, the authorities at Kelaniya decided to begin the registration of undergraduates for the forthcoming July examinations today—*SU*. In a written reply to Parliament the Deputy Minister of Higher Education Mr. Rambanda Athanayake stated that 4,857 students have been admitted for university studies; out of this 3,837 students studied under the Sinhala medium and out of the balance, 990 studied through the Tamil

medium. Of this 830 were Tamils and 160 were Muslims—VK.

FRIDAY, MAY 8: Sri Lanka has been invited by Singapore to join in an international program to lay a worldwide underground telecommunication cable network—CDN. Be in readiness to take over the management as well as the ownership of the new company that will shortly be floated to run the estates owned by the Land Reform Commission; this announcement was made yesterday by the President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, when he addressed the seminar "Towards Self-Sufficiency in Food-The Role of the Agricultural Development Authority" at the BMICH. Seven hundred delegates representing the Indian Travel Trade will meet in Colombo tomorrow to discuss problems relating to the promotion of tourism in the South Asia region. A warm and impressive welcome was accorded to Sri Lanka's Prime Minister and Mrs. Premadasa when they arrived at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport from Indonesia this evening on a six day official visit at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Malaysia—CDM. Land is not properly utilised, tanks are in a state of disrepair, coconut and tea plantations are in a state of neglect and rubber is not properly tapped in some areas, President J. R. Jayewardene told officials dealing with Sri Lanka's Agricultural and Plantation Industry yesterday. Closed circuit television is to be introduced in the Port of Colombo in a bid to cut down on theft and pilferage—SU. The Foreign Ministry has been directed by Government to expedite a report on the position of Sri Lankans in Britain under the new British Nationality Law now before the Commons; a Ministry spokesman said yesterday that there were an estimated 30,000 Lankans currently resident in the UK. This was the largest expatriate community of Sri Lankans anywhere—CO.

SATURDAY, MAY 9: In the last three years, 538 engineers have resigned from Government Service, according to a study by the Materials and Manpower Resources Divisions of the Government Treasury—CDN. A feasibility study to determine the size, location and nature of investments, needed for the production of power alcohol, will be one of the tasks to be carried out by the

newly appointed Inter-Ministerial Committee for energy development from agro-based products; the Committee was appointed by the Government following a report submitted to President J. R. Jayewardene by the Secretary to the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Research Ranjan Wijeratne, on possible measures to overcome the country's growing dependence on petroleum products—SU. A code of conduct will be prepared for workers in Government Corporations, Boards and trading institutions—DP.

SUNDAY, MAY 10: The Government is seriously concerned about the distorted image of Sri Lanka being presented in the foreign media including television and this matter is now engaging the attention of the highest levels of Government; the immediate problem relates to a recent television production that has given an unfair and incorrect view of the position of Tamils in this country. Following a spate of complaints about the rigging of Trishaw meters, the Self Employment Project (SEP) which owns about 500 of the three-wheelers which nose their way in and out of city traffic has cracked down hard on its drivers—SU. A five-member Ministerial Committee has recommended that legislation be introduced in Parliament setting out the conditions under which strikes and lockouts could be launched in the private sector; the ministerial committee has recommended that trade unions in the public utility services that want to take strike action should give the employer at least 30 days' notice; at least 14 day's notice should be given in the case of the other services. The Government has finalised plans to set up a massive road transport pool that will far surpass the CTB in vehicle strength; a government spokesman said the main aim of the pool was to ensure that not a single government owned lorry, truck or trailer would ever ply empty on any road—ST. Sri Lanka's image as a paradise isle influenced by strong religious ethics and traditions is being damaged by the notoriety that Colombo is gaining internationally as a SIN CITY; the district of Colombo alone has an estimated 17,000 young girls and women engaged full time or part time in the world's oldest profession—WK. A lorry was held up at the Kadugannawa Pass at midnight and a sum of Rs. 500,000/- was removed by a

gang; the gang travelling in a taxi shot at the driver of the lorry and injured him: detective from Colombo rushed to the area immediately and the Kandy police are assisting in the investigations—VK.

MONDAY, MAY 11: President J. R. Jayewardene addressing the delegates at the 30th annual convention of the Travel Agents Association of India at the BMICH yesterday referred to the momentous progress made by Sri Lanka in the field of tourism in the country since he assumed leadership—CDN. Heart diseases have overtaken accidents as the number one killer in Sri Lanka; however the number of accidents have more than doubled in the space of ten years; this was what Dr. Merle Perera—a Senior Medical Officer at the Health Education Bureau disclosed at a seminar last week—CDM. Police chief Mr. Ana Seneviratne said yesterday that action has been taken to contain murders, hold-ups, robberies and smuggling in the North; he also said that he carefully scrutinized the security arrangements in the North during his recent visit there and that a defence proposal particularly prepared for the North is now being implemented—VK.

TUESDAY, MAY 12: US aid to Sri Lanka this year will exceed 100 million dollars, it was officially announced yesterday; despite the overall pruning of the Foreign Aid vote in the Reagan budget which was approved by Congress last week, US will increase aid to Sri Lanka, both in 1981 and 1982; Mr. Peter Macpherson, Head Aid in the Reagan Administration confirmed this in the discussion he had with Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel in Washington last week. The Government has permitted the export of coconut oil, copra and fresh coconuts with immediate effect; this is being done to ensure better prices to producers. Colombo and its suburbs experienced heavy rain yesterday morning, while there was cloudy weather in other parts of the island—CDN. Private and public sector organisations embarking on industrial and other development projects will be called upon to submit details to the Ceylon Electricity Board for approval; project proposals will have to be submitted well in advance of actual establishment of the project to enable the CEB to plan for the power demands of these projects—SU. The People's Bank and

the Bank of Ceylon have sought police and military assistance to provide arms training to their security personnel—CO. A quantum of work will be determined for workers in district secretariats and other government institutions and all workers will be expected to complete such quantum of work daily; a proposal to this effect is being prepared by the Minister of Home Affairs Mr. K. W. Devanayagam—DP.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13: Government has imposed a tight credit squeeze on commercial bank leading to the private sector and corporations in a move to stem the inordinate rate of increase in the money supply situation in Sri Lanka; haeds of commercial banks were summoned on Monday by Senior Deputy Governor Dr. Neville Karunatileke and told that there should be no further increases on the present levels of lending—CDN. Two separate Habeus Corpus applications were submitted to the Colombo Supreme Court yesterday for the production in Court of Selvarajah Rajaratnam Yogachandran and Thangadurai who were arrested at Manalkadu in the North—VK.

THURSDAY, MAY 14: A supplementary estimate for Rs. 200 million will be presented in Parliament shortly for the purpose of providing three additional gas turbines of 20 megawatts capacity each at a cost of 50 million French Francs from Messrs Alston Atlantic of France; these turbines will be used as back up support to meet the power crisis. Government agreed to extend concessionary tariff facilities for news and television transmission by satellite for a further period of three years; however the concessionary rate will be increased from US 180 dollars per month to US 200 dollars per month. Pope John Paul was hit by bullets fired by a gunman in St. Peter's Square today and rushed to hospital where he underwent emergency surgery, the Vatican spokesman said. Acting Minister of Finance, Mr. M. H. M. Naina Marikkar told the Cabinet yesterday that negotiations had been concluded for a credit equivalent of US \$ 30 million for a Village Irrigation Rehabilitation Project—CDN. Undergraduates of the University of Peradeniya staged a strike from 12 noon yesterday in sympathy with the Kelaniya University students who were allegedly taken into

custody—*CDM*. Sharply rising bank rates stood as the main reason that compelled the Central Bank to impose a credit squeeze on commercial banks and freeze their findings to private and public sectors, Dr. H. N. S. Karunatileke, Senior Deputy Governor of the Central Bank said yesterday. The Central Bank and two other banking institutions will henceforth be exempted from Business Turnover Tax, State Minister and Cabinet spokesman Anandatissa de Alwis told a news conference after the weekly Cabinet briefing—*SU*. Higher salaries for the Chief Justice, Supreme Court and Appeal Court judges announced by government last month will be effective from February 1, authoritative sources said—*CO*. Out of the 5000 Tutories in the country 3,000 have not been registered as required by law and the Minister of Education Mr. Ranil Wickremasinghe has ordered that these unregistered tutories be closed down immediately—*DP*.

FRIDAY, MAY 15: President of the largest Indian travel association, the TAAI, Mahendra Sanghi said yesterday that the time was now ripe for the highest in the tourist set up of India and Sri Lanka to map out reciprocity in the travel industry. The country's business sector criticised the Central Bank move to effect a credit squeeze claiming that this would throttle the industrial growth which the government itself had initiated with private sector assistance—*CDN*. Major steps to check prostitution in the country are being taken by the Government; draft legislation to prosecute boys and girls found loitering in hotels, restaurants, inns, guest houses, motels and any other place where living accommodation was provided, has been prepared by the Ceylon Tourist Board and submitted for approval of the Cabinet—*CDM*.

SATURDAY, MAY 16: There will be seven large Vesak pandals in Colombo a spokesman for the Police Department said yesterday. With one of the two gas turbines failing yesterday the power situation in the country has become critical once again; the approximate availability of water for power has now been reduced to 13 days. Twelve leading tea firms in the country have opted to enter the tea blending business, the brainchild of Trade and Shipping Minister Lalith Athulathmudali, to

earn added value and a diversified market for Sri Lankan tea—*CDN*. "Eelam" propagandists, advocates of the separatist movement in Sri Lanka, have spread their activities to Japan; this is revealed in a report submitted to the President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, by the Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Festus Perera, who visited Japan recently on his way home after attending the Ministerial level meeting on cooperation in the field of fisheries among Non-aligned nations in Havana, Cuba—*CDM*. Elections Commissioner M. A. Piyasekera yesterday finalised the countryside arrangements for the first National Development Councils Elections to be held on June 4 this year; he discussed and finalised procedural and security arrangements for the elections with the Government Agents of the seventeen districts where the elections will be held, at the Agricultural Research and Training Institute in Colombo. Several key members of the organisation alleged to have smuggled into Australia, a large quantity of compressed ganja concealed in coffee tables, have now been rounded up by the local Narcotics Bureau. Six new postal units are to be established in the city shortly to facilitate the speedy delivery of letters—*SU*. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party has decided that voters in the Northern and Eastern provinces should vote only for those opposed to the Government in other provinces should refrain from voting at the District Development Councils elections—*VK*.



FILM FOCUS

Critics & Criticism

SO BADDEGAMA has made it to Cannes and those critics of this Lester James Pieris' production, who stretched out their reviews from two extremes towards the centre, where perched the fence sitters and the tight rope walkers, should be watching its progress there among 5000 international entries with quixotic interest. *Tribune* readers are aware that this column minced no words about its excellence and sticks to this assessment in spite of the many red herrings that have been

drawn by the many pundits who got down to the dissection with their pruning knives, petty prejudices, and calculated callipers! This column is aware that Lester once trod on the corns of many film critics a few years ago by a remark at a seminar that was mischievously extracted from its context— a statement that has coincidentally boomeranged on his productions thereafter. No holds were barred in the case of *Beddegama* by those who were caught up in the mystical moods of the dead novelist, and thought they were the reincarnations of Leonard Woolf, a fate akin to what overtook *Ganga Addara* when it was released last year by Sumitra, wife of Lester. But then, in spite of these see saw seizures of the reviewers, the people at large proved the ultimate arbiters and expressed their judgment with sweet revenge at the Sarasaviya Film Festival, where *Ganga Addara* glittered itself with the awards all the way. This column now predicts that no matter what happens at Cannes, *Beddegama* would have a smoother sail in 1982 when awards time comes around.

To deflect momentarily from such prophecies to facts on a slightly different plane, which brings out a parallel, I gathered from a recent Indian *Screen* issue which refers angrily to this malady of our times, that is emerging on the local film scene as well. Here are some excerpts under the relevant heading **Let's Grow Up**: "No sooner a big film is released; the rumour factories start spouting. The wilder the rumour, the more readily it is swallowed. Have you heard, tickets in the black for such and such a film are being sold at half the normal rates? Would you believe it, the manager of the cinema screening this film was seen standing at the gate, waiting for patrons?" Then come the following punch blows in the weekly: "It is ironic that in an industry in which nothing succeeds like success, failure is sought out with such enthusiasm—the other fellows failure, real but more often imagined, and a grudge is nursed each time fate deals him with the high cards. We are a great hearted people, but not in the dog eat dog world of film business, where it does not pay to be ruled by the heart. Oh yes, we need more cinemas, institutional finance, but first and above all we need to grow up". *Now swinging back to criticis on the high road of the local films scenario, would it not*

be in good taste for those with their pens poised on the sidelines, to jog an even pace and not make the ground slippery with wet blankets and motives that do not come anywhere near the fringe or the basics of constructive criticism. If this attitude were to persist when painstaking productions like *Beddegama* are released, the producers who foot the bills and recognized directors would fold up their tents, and leave the armchair critics to take over behind the cine-camera, which event would be a very sad day indeed, for all deeply concerned with our film industry.

SITU KUMARIYA (*Sinhalese*): Sisters in real life, the Fonsekas, Malini and Rasadhari, provide the delicious menu in this delightful film directed by Wijay Sri Dharmasiri. Running smoothly all the way, the tender story ties up with tears, the tragic events that overtook two sisters, Nimmi and Dhammi, who met a handsome bus conductor, Asantha (Sanath Gunatilaka), but of a lower social standing by birth and profession, on their daily trips to and from school. While the younger Dhammi lets her heart flutter on the CTB good looking, big sister Nimmi wags a disapproving finger on the developing affair. Asantha decides on a fateful morn, to chop off one sister from the other, and his mischievous "buzz" to the bus driver for an untimely take off, results in a nasty accident and a resultant amputation. The romance that sprouted innocently between the bus stops, turns sour from this point with pity overrunning love and tragedy follows. Malini Fonseka gave an effortless performance, while her sister gave her best performance to date. Sanath Gunatillaka—remember him as the dean in *Ganga Addara*—has only his good looks to declare, but becomes a cropper in the emotional sequences, with Wimal Kumar de Costa acting as a prop in such situations as in *Sathweni Dawasa*. This film runs for just 90 minutes and in that brevity packs a tender and convincing story that should go very well with the masses. There was never a dull moment in this absorbing and well directed film. I am certain you will return satisfied at the fare provided as I did.

RISHI MOOLAM (*Tamil*): My random efforts to get at the meaning of this film title has proved futile in spite of a feeble effort

that comes off in the story—so let's get on with the review. Directed by S. P. Muthuraman who did an excellent job with *Kavari-man*, he fails by a long chalk to steady this implausible story, and that too with Maestro Shivaji Ganeshan and the versatile K. R. Vijaya taking on the key roles as a husband wedded to law enforcement, but with a shady past, and wife whose unforgiving virtue respectively leads to an impasse on which the story keeps rocking precariously. This incredible and feeble plot rocked me to sleep too, till I stirred to the strains of that stimulating song "*Aimbathilum Asaivarum*" which hold out hope to the over fifties. There was the late comedian Surilirajan, to add a dose of nostalgia in the intervening light sequence but taken as a whole, even Shivaji and Vijaya could not retrieve the story from a tumble, with colour and costumes only being "Savers" for your money's worth. Well take it or leave it!

DR. JEKYLL AND SISTER HYDE (*English*): An out of the ordinary EMI production that is soaked in horror to the bizarre brim and a vivisection on R.L. Stevenson's famous novel that has been tampered with effectively. The deadly doctor in the film is roled by Ralph Bates who in his quest for the elixir of eternal life, becomes the whitechapel Ripper, who seeks out young damsels in the streets of London and butchers them for the requisite hermones. These, however, very much to his dismay lead to an unexpected sex change—portrayed for the first time on the screen—and Sister Hyde is born. These changes eventually get out of the doctor's control and the two in one personalities clash in their attitude towards a beauty in the upper floor in Susan Brederick, who ignorantly keeps cutting in on this physical conflict. I leave you here to sweat out the rest yourself. But comment is necessary on the "London" of the early eighties, which is captured by the camera in all its authenticity as conjured by Charles Dickens in most of his well read novels. Even the murky fog that hung over its streets is recreated to give cover to the killings as Dr. Jekyll stalks around for prey in top hat and tails. This film is one of the best of its kind and might keep you clammy, with Bates and Martine Berwicke chilling it down with cold characterisations.

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THE MAN FROM HONGKONG (*English*) Another well photographed Karate blockbuster, and a Carlo Ponnampalam production which in my opinion has an edge even over Bruce Lee films as neat entertainer for nothing is overdone, with the action pursuing a well knit story. Jimmy Wang Fu roles a police officer from the Hong Kong special branch, who flies to Sydney, Australia on an extradition assignment, in the wake of a narcotics racket, but overstays his welcome, very much to the embarrassment of his Australian counter parts, to root out the "connection" down under. Sparks fly as he sporadically hurdles the obstacles to close in on the archvillain of the organisation, taken as furiously by a six footer (George Lazely) both masters of the Martial Arts. I liked this one, although Karate in extremes is not my cup of tea!

DRAGNET (TV): An excellent series for our Lawmen, giving object lessons in Police Public relations, police interrogations and patient investigations that bear fruit and ferret out the culprits in Crime without much ado. This column wishes that the series is not being missed in the right quarters—and the many police barracks reinforced with T.V.

ROCKY (*English*): This United Artists triple Oscar winner for Best Director, Actor and Editing introduces that handsome and brilliant hunk of an actor Sylvester Stallone to Sri Lankan audience. Besides writing this novel, he takes on the title role too as an ex-boxer—Rocky—the Italian Stallion, who spivs and bums his way through the streets and sidewalks of Philadelphia till a coloured World Boxing champion throws him the gauntlet for a tempting tilt at the coveted Crown, with the cocksureness that he would make short work of him in the all important ring. It was a sluggish start in spite of Stallone, and after the slow build up, gathers pace as the challenger gets himself fit for the fray, and when the two fisted and bloody sport gets under way to a terrific climax, bringing recent memories of the final rounds in *The Champ*. It was Stallone who held the spotlight all the way, as he lived to the hilt, what he had penned for the screen. I remember a past *Newsweek* issue hailing him as an actor who would hold the Hollywood scene for a long long time and the present proprietress of the

Savoy Cinema where this film is being screened, confirms this prediction from her personal knowledge of him and his talents in the States—but not much of him has been heard now in Sri Lanka from the media that keeps flowing in. Perhaps a couple of his films more would bolster up his charisma further on the local film scene. Rocky of course is a rare film treat for boxing fans in particular and for those who keep their eyes ever open for the artistic and excellent photography that exudes it. It is certainly undiluted cinema at its very best, but not from a box office point of view.

EROS (*Pamankade*): Cinemas Ltd., who have a string of well managed theatres, will have much to regret soon about the Eros which is steadily deteriorating in maintenance and discipline. The management of this cinema seems to feel that its only duty is to sell the tickets, start the show and call it a day, leaving the supervision during the run of a film to the minor staff. Several other complaints have reached me and I could reveal them to Cinemas Ltd., if they get in touch with me. On the last occasion I was there, on a fairly crowded day, the only evidence of the presence of the Manager or the staff during show time was the presence of their children running about within the cinema, distracting and disturbing the audience. Over to you Cinemas Ltd., for once upon a time, not long ago, Eros was certainly one of the best maintained cinemas.

JAMES N. BENEDICT



IN A HELICOPTER—4

By S. P. Amarasingam

Animal Energy

WE WENT ROUND the 5,000 acres in the Kantalai Draught Animal Farm Project in four jeeps and a station wagon (the MP's). A police party accompanied us in two jeeps. The peripheral road built in the Sooriyaarachchi era was still jeepable. But there were some stretches that were broken and rutty

and others overgrown with shrubs, weeds and brush jungle. Extensive tracts of highland suitable for neat cattle were interspersed with water-logged lowlands excellent for water buffaloes. It was possible, we were told, to grow fodder on 2,000 to 3,000 acres of fertile soil. A few neglected herds of cattle—off-spring of imported Kilaris crossed with Wannai strains—grazed lazily. We spotted three or four small groups of elephants bathing where the buffaloes were lying dreamily in the water. One elephant which kept standing without any movement, we were told, was nursing an injured foot—hurt by the bullets of a poacher.

A more suitable site for a draught animal project, it seemed to me, could not be found. The future of agriculture in Sri Lanka is dependent on animal energy. N. S. Ramasamy, in his brochure "Management of Animal Energy Resource—A National Need" (referred to in the last article), speaking of the situation in India, had stressed: "We have roughly 80 million work-animals—70 million bullocks, eight million he-buffaloes and a million each of horses and camels. In addition, there are donkeys, mules and elephants which are used as pack animals. Though no specific data are available, each bullock is capable of generating, on an average, 0.5 horsepower. This means that our work animals can generate 40 million h.p. which is roughly equal to 30,000 megawatts of electrical power. This figure compares well with the capacity installed for the generation of electrical power which is only 26,000 mw. now. To produce, transmit and distribute 30,000 mw. of energy at the millions of points of application may use an investment of Rs. 300,000 million. A work-animal may cost anything between Rs. 500 to 2,000. The investment today in work-animals and the adjust infrastructure may be of the order of Rs. 100,000 million. Not many are aware of these impressive numbers and vast sums of money involved. Part of the indifference is apparently due to the mistaken impression that the use of animal energy is a passing phase in development, and that modernisation of agriculture would mean the virtual elimination of work-animals. Well-meaning professionals have warned me that this project on animal energy may even turn to be a retrograde step, and that the replace-

ment of the system by mechanised modes should be encouraged. I am for replacement, where economic conditions are conducive for mechanisation. But that day is far off. Meanwhile, to accept *status quo* would be a mistake. Animal energy will remain an appropriate energy resource for this country's peculiar situation for 50 or more years and, therefore, let us evaluate the system after decades of *laissez faire* attitude. The bulk of our farming population consists of landless labourers and marginal and small farmers. Sixty millions of India's farms are less than two hectares, where tractors are uneconomic and only animals can be employed. Implements using animals have evolved to a state of simplicity, suitable to the situation. They have, however stagnated, outside the modernising influence of science. The beneficiaries of this programme for the redesign of agricultural implements generally would be the marginal and small farmers." **Sri Lanka, unfortunately, does not have a proportionate number of animals as compared to India. We have allowed our livestock to be unduly depleted, but that is no reason why a start should not be made to build up our national herd of buffaloes and meat cattle—for work, milk and meat (in this order of priority).**

MY TRIP AROUND the Kantalai Project was in the jeep with one of Sri Lanka's finest animal husbandryman, Arumugam. All his working life he had been with the governmental effort to upgrade livestock in this country. He had been with the Department from the heyday of D. S. Senanayake's initial efforts to improve livestock. He had seen the decline and the near collapse of the excellent cattle farms set up by the Senanayakes. He had then joined the National Livestock Development Board (NLDB) and had played a big part in the effort to rebuild the nucleus of a new national herd. When the dark shadow of neglect, incompetence and worse, unfortunately swept over the NLDB he had toyed with the idea of accepting one of the many jobs available abroad (for a person with his qualifications and experience) with remuneration and perks far more than what he was earning in Sri Lanka. But he had resisted the temptation. When the Mahaweli Authority offered prospects of meaningful and

purposeful work in livestock development, he had moved over as several others similarly placed are now doing. The jeep journey round the project area took a little over two hours, and in that time I picked Arumugam's brains and educated myself on the virtues and weaknesses of many breeds of cattle in the different districts of the island for purposes of work, milk and meat. According to him, for the dry zone, the off-spring of the Wannu animal crossed with a pedigreed imported Indian strain had proved the most suitable. Arumugam is not a mere cattle man. He is a true son of the soil and his knowledge of farming, especially in the dry zone, is something unique. By questioning him for nearly two hours I learnt much that I had either not known or thought of before.

WHEN I READ Ramasamy's treatise later, I found that the Indian expert had succinctly summarised much of what I learnt from Arumugam: "The effective utilisation of animal power would call for exhaustive technological, economic and social surveys and studies on a number of aspects of the work-animal system, the operations and implements which use animals and their economic and social efficiency. A massive R & D (Research and Development) effort should be immediately mounted. Organisation and Systems are to be introduced to put *Management of Animal Energy Resource* on scientific and humanistic lines. Some salient features of the situation are: (i) There is a shortage of energy for farming purposes; (ii) animal energy is available in plenty in the country. Technologies based on the use of animal power are well understood and practised widely. They are simple and easy to comprehend. The skills involved can be easily spread through non-formal literacy methods; (iii) animal energy can be augmented easily; (iv) crude petroleum has now to be imported at increasing cost, and the demand for power from coal and hydrel sources is not being fully met; (v) energy from the sun, the wind and the tide will have to be established in the laboratory and its viability proved before it can become available for mass application at economical rates; (vi) animal energy is underutilised and there is considerable wastage of power in transmission because of defective animal drawn equipments; and (vii) man is inhuman in his relation to animals everywhere in the country,

the deadly blast that is going to lay waste the future eco-environment of his mother land with a wealth of "ape anduwa" sense of patriotism! It is supposed to lurk in each and every fibre of his being.

BE THAT AS IT MAY, this subject has become blatantly patent; and that is environmentally to use a slang yet graphic expression denoting something hopelessly deteriorating and wasteful—we are going down the *pallam* (slope), sliding down our economic and environmental declivity. Like the proverbial ostrich we are following a blind-folded policy. This very significant chapter in our bumper tome of "development plan implementation" we have purposely glossed over with a wilful, studied elision. At least so it appears to be to the common citizen. Successive Governments have been consistent in having adopted this ostrich-like policy of shutting their eyes to the pressing events and needs so patently perceptible in nature's or derof events.

Of course it is not possible and not prudent to pin-point the issues and say: here lies the nub, and there is the rub. But then, how can a Sri Lankan, so patriotic in his affirmations and convictions, afford to lose sight of such an important and vital issue as: environmental deterioration and devastation that would soon transform this "pearl in the Indian Ocean" into a Dust Bowl—an ARIZONA? Perhaps in half a millenium or so this Isle of copper-coloured sandy beaches—Taprobane—as it was designated of yore, might become truly an arid zone and would *perforce* be renamed: ARIZONA.

WHAT A TRAGIC SITUATION man—thinking animal that he is—is faced with, in this land? Why not confront the problem fairly and squarely? But there emerges the question: Who is to face the music? And how best can the issue be tackled? Here is the situation as it does exist in East Sri Lanka. The cyclone of 1978 had devastated and destroyed over 80% of the vegetation including agricultural plantations: fruit trees, natural forests and reforested plantations, mainly of teak. More than 300,000 acres of natural forests and 30,000 acres of valuable re-forested plantations of teak were destroyed. In this sad plight in which the region was plunged, many

government agencies and other foreign organisations came in numbers to give aid to the affected people. In some areas the rehabilitation work is still in progress; but still, neither the government nor the foreign social service organisations have thought of improving the natural eco-environment by replanting and reforesting the cyclone battered region.

There is one aspect of cyclone rehabilitation that has shocked the people of Batticaloa, and that is, that the Ministry of Land and Land Development has almost virtually abandoned the notion of bringing back to pre-cyclone status the natural vegetational cover of the region. The attitude of the Forest Department is in no way encouraging. Despite the colossal damage and devastation to the forests and forest plantations, and the several reports that appeared in the news papers and the news weekly, the *Tribune*, to the effect that the Eastern seaboard is fast turning into a desert, there appears to have been no comprehensive plans, proposals and programmes of rehabilitation drawn and implemented by either the Ministry of Land and Land Development or the Forest Department.

The officers of the Forest Department are brimful of excuses for their apparent apathy. They trot out excuses of this sort: Say they: we do not have the necessary funds allocated for this very useful purpose of rehabilitating the damaged forests; we are almost broke; we do not have the funds needed for raising even a few plants for carrying on the much-flaunted "Tree planting campaign". This is the gist of the burden of their lamentation.

HERE ARE some approximate figures that might serve as a suitable comment. In 1979 the planting programme for the Batticaloa District was in the region of 20,000 acres; but hardly 100 acres were replanted. In 1980 the planting programme for Batticaloa was 20,000 acres; of this hardly 75 acres were reforested. In 1981, it appears, no money has been allocated to replant even one acre for raising plants for distribution to the public. It would appear as though the ministry has

affected a drastic cut in the minimum vote for the Forest Department, pruning it down from 16 million rupees to 5 million rupees.

Despite these stringent measures adopted by the Government a "New Director of Forestry Consultants" and other personnel are on the ascendant on the bureaucratic horizon. The people take it on faith that this new Director of Forestry Consultants is a specialist in that line a person who has the rare capacity of a Trimen or a Willis, to bring back the fast-fading greenery like an emerald pall dropped from the blues, in another decade or even less. It should be his bounden duty to rehabilitate and consolidate the cyclone-battered vegetation and bring back to pre-cyclone status the eco-system that is today in a shambles, and not merely to conserve ministry funds for less important and less urgent programmes.

The people are painfully and distressingly becoming aware of this: that the State Timber Corporation has extracted millions of cubic feet of superclass timber from the cyclone devastated area and used it to swell their coffers: that the STC is spending large sums of money importing machinery and equipment for the purpose of timber extraction, and getting it sawn into marketable timber. Can a small country like Sri Lanka afford to spend money on these sophisticated gadgets? That the fat "timber sharks" of the southwest coast, the affluent timber merchants, have been raping the forests in a wanton and wasteful manner governed by a rapacious craving for self and filthy lucre: that the STC has plans for the construction of an imposing building complex which might cost millions: that the Government has already given orders for the removal of the D.F.O.'s office that has been in Batticaloa—the Provincial capital—from early British days, to Amparai, and this to be done; i.e., the entire stock-in-trade and personnel to be shifted to Amparai: as on 10.5.81 and the Batticaloa office to be converted into a sub-office. This is certainly not a democratic action.

Isn't this a high-handed action? And the wonder of it is that it is going to take place without even a silent demur from the MPs and Ministers of the Batticaloa District.

Now, whatever be the outcome of these observations, it would have to be admitted that a truly scientific research body of eco-scientists will have to be set up embodying the Department of Forestry as its nucleus with a view to safeguarding the eco-environmental climate of the country as a whole: that a separate Timber Extraction Department or Corporation is an anomaly since it only performs destructive exploitation of forest wealth and nothing of a constructive nature.

52, Angle Road,
Batticaloa.

LETTER

Foreign Service

Sir, after reading one of the most thoughtful, earnest and conscientious piece on Foreign Service by Serendib (*Tribune*, 2nd May 1981) written in a vocabulary which owes much to social psychology, I find myself troubled by the thought that one cannot really establish general guidelines on the kind of problem spelt out by Serendib. One might even hazard the guess that his analysis is not a computer printout from fed-in facts or between competing tenable arguments. But hunting the Foreign Office is never out of season especially when the UNP is in power.

The life of the Foreign Minister is spent tethered to an inclinable seat in the DC 10 viewing foreign policy through a Perspex window, peering nonchalantly at the planet below only to be disturbed by the slave maiden treatment of the airhostess. Sri Lanka's low rating in the world is not in any way due to the bungling ineptitude of the *Quangos* (political appointees) or the professionals but to the cumulative errors of our political masters of both the major political parties and our poor economic performance. What our diplomats of either category have done is to conduct a very effective rearguard action to conceal the degree of our folly and restore to some extent the dented image. There isn't much difference between a professional and an amateur. It is very much like changing the

Guards—even Caligula's horse will deliver the goods with a modicum of training. What is required is the quality of innocence so aptly portrayed by an obituarist in relation to the late Mr. Raju Coomaraswamy. I have visited two or three capitals in Europe recently and I was intrigued at the way a career diplomat was trailing three steps behind our Foreign Minister at the airport whereas *Quango* was walking alongside the Minister sharing a joke with him. There is a distinction without a difference. That really accounts for the preponderance in the appointment of career diplomats as head of missions. The career diplomats like the Singapore girl are great ones to lie in the classical Henry Wotton style. Whatever may have been the validity of this definition in the days of Sir Henry Wotton, it is not certainly not true any longer, even in today's vastly more permissive society.

It is interesting to note that the taxpayer is committed to a budgetary allocation to the tune of Rs. 100 million for keeping up appearances abroad. Take for example the question—What does the Sri Lankan High Commissioner to the Court of St. James is paid to do? The answer is that he represents Sri Lanka to the British people. This will be summarily dismissed as palpable nonsense by the average taxpayer. No Englishman however retarded would form his view of Sri Lanka from the envoy and change it with each new one. The right answer is that, apart from receiving Cabinet Ministers at the airport, making appointments to visit their counter-parts, sometimes going along on the visit and passing on routine messages, the Sri Lankan High Commissioner does nothing, not forgetting the offerings of Reggie Fernando in the *Sunday Observer*. If there is a matter of grave importance between the Government of UK and Sri Lanka, it is of course taken up directly between President Jayewardene and Margaret Thatcher. If it is not so important, it is left to our Foreign Minister. If it involves money, the Finance Minister Mr. Ronnie de Mel handles it with his opposite number. That is the pattern. What then is the answer to our problem? As rightly emphasised by Serendib, the diplomats of either category should have one ruling passing—"how to see and how to obtain investment". They should believe in it as Socrates believed in reason or Goethe in

nature. But alas that is not to be. Their main obsession is glamour and exotic horizons—schooling of their children in Oxford or Harvard and free medical checkups. We have a long way to go to justify the budgetary allocation. Perhaps we must muddle through. But of course, Serendib must keep his fingers crossed, even though he knows the Foreign Service from stem to stern, from top to bottom.

G. K. de Mel

Kennan Lodge,
Dewale Road, Nugegoda.
25 May 1981.

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GRAMA SASTRA—41

Scribblings on Uva

Agriculture & Officials

by **Gamiya**

TOP, BOTTOM AND IN-BETWEEN. A three-tiered cake is all right, provided no poison lies in my tier. The people may be 'below', the decision-makers may be 'above', and the officials may be 'in-between'. If they are *for* the people, they will be loved and they will be right, because the People are sovereign. *Jana-rajaya* (Republic) means that the People are the Crown. Hence, Crown-lands must first be the People's lands, and if Agricultural Officers corner land (this has to be studied and seen to), then they bring discredit on any existing government. If for flimsy reasons they "buy up" land for a thousand and sell for six and eight-thousand an acre, they must be hounded out of the place ruthlessly, for they bring utter discredit to a regime. Once, a peasant told me: "*Aanduwa rathran, niladhari mandalya ketha, kilutu, kunu vargayak, murgayan vage*".

It is high time the Government saw urgently to two sectors of officials: in some areas of the country, i.e. *Agriculture* and *Health*. I knew of an Officer (I will not designate him) who cornered 27 varieties of sugar-cane and started his own Nursery and gave up the official State nursery. The new one became

his private affair. Another chewed betel, sang *pel kavi* (watch-hut songs) but despised the people and even gave a man much to drink and got him to sign off a big portion of his land—"nobody sees us, nobody, bothers us and so we are far away and can do what we like", is their constant assertion to cuddle self. It is high time a Government that says it is interested in people, get down to this their prime duty. It is not too late.

Agriculture means Food, means Life. Health means restoration of that life when once it has been brought low. The Buddha's *bana* was food for the mind and heart; his *dana* was food for the person. He himself was health giver (*Maha ausadha panditha*, the great wise healer). What would he have said had he seen the low-down activities of some (may be very few) officials who are 'selling their side' and are a blot on the agricultural department escutcheon.

I once knew of a Health boss in a South Asian Buddhist country (lets call it Sri Lanka for the nonce), who addressed a large gathering at 2 p.m. The revered Monk of the area was present. This official was dead drunk, and several times he pointed to the kindly monk said: "I thank this mister (*mahattaya*) for having come here, for having come here, I mean this mister..." etc. It was a crude joke. The Buddhist faithful resented it. The monk tolerated it for a few minutes, perspired and walked away, because the basic civilities were not there, the politeness needed for a member of the Sangha was not there. But the man still goes on at his post, unseeing, unthinkingly, lord of all he surveys. No official who openly flouts the fifth precept of Buddhism should be allowed anywhere in Buddhist territory, least ways a *Health official*.



TASTE OF PARADISE

Salvadorean

When the Joint Trade Union Action Committee called a General strike in July last year, advancing among others a demand for

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Rs. 300 wage increase, the employees of Lever Brothers who belong to the All Ceylon Industrial & Commercial Workers Union struck work. The management re employed their workers after a short period, taking them on as new entrants on a six month probationary period. This period ended on January 31st.

On this date the management of Lever Brothers summarily dismissed 52 workers. This number includes all the office bearers of the union, the remaining members of the Working Committee and some members of the Executive Committee. In addition, the management has extended the period of probation by a further three months for over 300 other workers. Together, this compromises those who are active in the union.

The Labour Department has suggested a compromise formula whereby these 52 workers be taken back on a further three months probation. This was rejected by the management. Unilevers, the parent company, recently sent in a new Chairman to head the Sri Lankan Company. A British national, he has been in service with Unilevers in El Salvador.

Jayantha Somasundaram



NATO

Nuclear Weapons

Washington: NATO Foreign Ministers' meeting which concluded in Rome in the first week of May focussed considerable attention on negotiations with the Soviet Union with respect to mutual reductions in European-based NATO and Soviet so-called long-range "Theatre Nuclear Weapons". In 1979, Atlantic Alliance members agreed on what was, at the time, labelled a "two-track" approach to arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union looking toward potential mutual cuts in theatre missiles in Europe. "Two track" was another way of saying that, while several NATO members would accept planned deployment of new American-made weaponry on their territory, the US would commit itself

to explore with Moscow ways to reduce the number of such Missiles on both the NATO and Soviet sides. The planned deployment of new NATO missiles was itself decided on as a necessary response to new and more formidable Soviet weapons which were already in place.

The United States—as American Secretary of State Haig explained in Rome—has now reaffirmed its 1979 commitment to the two track approach. It will take steps to work with the Soviet Union on developing a framework for negotiations. Back in 1979, the assumption had been that such negotiations could take place in the general context of SALT III negotiations, which were then expected to follow Soviet American SALT II talks and the SALT II treaty. The SALT II treaty has not been approved by the United States Senate, but the US commitment to search for negotiating paths towards Theater Nuclear Weapon cuts in Europe still stands. As Secretary Haig noted at the end of the NATO meeting, the United States hopes that Soviet-American talks at the Ambassadorial level will lead to formal negotiations with Moscow by the end of this year. The Secretary added that just as important as the affirmation of this decision was the “strong consensus” that supported the decision. This, in Haig’s words, has reaffirmed “the indivisibility for our NATO alliance”. It must be pointed out, however, that American willingness to enter into such discussions should not be thought of as some sort of favour to the Soviet Union. Whatever is achieved will be accomplished in the context of western security interests. Nor should this commitment to European arms control negotiations be construed, in any way, as abandonment of US and NATO concern with the overall question of Soviet international behaviour. Commonsense clearly suggests that success in arms control talks in any category must depend to a significant degree on how the United States and the rest of the alliance continue to view Soviet policies and actions around the world—VOA.



MRS. INDIRA GANDHI

The Soviet Union

New Delhi, May 27: Inaugurating a two-day national convention of the newly-formed Friends of the Soviet Union society in New Delhi, Mrs. Gandhi contrasted the activities of the Western countries with those of the USSR on issues like racialism, colonialism, apartheid as well as India’s economic development to emphasize the abiding significance of Indo-Soviet friendship. “It is untenable to interpret non-alignment as an equidistance from the super-powers”, Mrs. Gandhi underlined. “On the contrary non-alignment is something very positive. It means taking every chance to improve the outlook of peace and to adopt a clear stand on matters on which we have strong convictions”. In this context, she observed: “Did not the so-called democratic West take obstructive positions on decolonisation and apartheid? Even now looking at the support given to South Africa and Israel. Its record does not shine”. On the other hand, the “Soviet Union’s consistent stand on such matters has brought us closer together” she noted. She also clarified: “The position is not of our voting with the Soviet Union so much as the Soviet Union voting with the countries of Asia and Africa, and supporting freedom movements and struggles against colonialism.” Earlier, Mrs. Gandhi said amidst applause that she was attending the convention “not as a leader but as a friend of the Soviet Union”. Omdp-Soviet friendship, she declared, is “time-tested” one which has helped India in adverse circumstances. This friendship “need not be at the cost of friendship with others”. “Unfortunately, this has not been appreciated by some countries who take the view that either we are completely with them or we are against them. It has even been stated openly that non-alignment is ‘immoral’. That approach seems to persist, despite some change over to mere subtle phraseology. “This attitude makes them anti-India,” she said. Referring to the positions taken by the West and the USSR towards India’s economic development, Mrs. Gandhi pointed out: “It is not secret that the West did not approve of our developing heavy industry and achieving self-

reliance. It is to the credit of the leaders of the Soviet Union that they extended a helping hand at that most crucial stage of our development. Bhilai, Bokare and so many other projects are witnesses to this. She said India had 'tangibly benefited' from constructive cooperation with the USSR in the economic field. Mrs. Gandhi recalled how Mahatma Gandhi was dubbed by British imperialists as a Bolshevik agent in the twenties and thirties and Jawaharlal Nehru faced the same kind of malicious attack.

Mrs. Gandhi also mentioned the cultural links and interaction of Indian arts and artists with Russian and the tremendous impression of the Russian Revolution on India. The determination and courage of the Soviet people thwarting foreign designs also made a deep impact in India, which was fighting to shake off alien rule. The Indian independence, which shook the "coping stone" of imperialism, was fought by the common masses, peasants and poor people under the inspiration of Gandhi and Nehru. Mrs. Gandhi said India was no exception in being attracted to the Soviet social and economic experiments which had won the attention of Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore and many other Indians. The Soviet initiatives in national planning had specially been watched with great interest leaders like Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon and Mr. K. D. Malaviya played important roles in this regard. She recalled how Soviet planning and establishment of basic industries had considerably influenced Indian planning which however was different from that of the Soviet Union. Stating that India had drawn upon the Soviet experience Mrs. Gandhi said that she believed in adopting good ideas wherever they were found—APN.

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GOVT. NOTICES

My No. 3/42/Ma—99

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

It is intended to acquire the land described in the Schedule below for a public purpose. For further particulars see Part III of Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 145 dated 12.6.1981

SCHEDULE

Situation: Poyaranwewayah Village, Wagapanaha Pallesiya Pattuwa, Dambulla Divisional Revenue Officer's Division (New Divisional Assistant Government Agent's Division) Matale District.
Plan and Lot No: 1 Lot in p.p.Ma. 591.
Extent: 05 A. 00 R. 26 P.

Mrs. S. K. Annaraj,
District Land Officer.
Kachcheri, Matale.
21st May 1981.
Matale.

★ ★ ★

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

Reference No. ATH/2175

It is intded to acquire the land desribed in the schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 145 (Part III) of 12.6.1981.

SCHEDULE

D.R.O.'s Division: Colombo.
Situation: Ward No. 44 Kirillapneo, within the M.C. limits of Colombo.
Village: Kirillapone.
Name of land: Bulugahawatta (Assmt. No. 211 Polhengoda Road).
Lot No. 847
Plan No. P.P.C.: 5306

H. C. Gunawardene,
District Land Officer and Acquiring Officer of Colombo District.

The Kachcheri, Colombo.
Date:- 25th May, 1981.

CONFIDENTIALLY
Tea Board-2

IS IT NOT SIGNIFICANT that *Tribune* has received a very large number of letters and comments about "the pricing of the cost of manufacture of tea by the tea factory owners to small holders who supply them with green leaf?" That most of those who have written are either smallholders or those pleading for them? That whilst there may be an element of bias in their conclusions, there is no doubt that the facts they rely on are true—so far *Tribune* investigators have been able to find out? That we invite the Tea Board and factory owners to correct whatever is wrong in what follows below and we will be happy to publish their side of the story if they have one? That it would appear that in 1979, there was agitation from the Tea Manufacturers' Association stating that owing to the increase in price of tea chests and fuel a higher rate should be paid to them for the cost of manufacture that was being deducted from the price they paid for green leaves? That many meetings were held at the Tea Board office chaired by former Chairman Warusavitarne? That the Tea Board did not then have a Statistics Department geared to collect all data that was required and that therefore the Board was compelled to accept the figures given by the Tea Manufacturers' Association and the private sector manufacturers? That the SPC and JEDB never made any representations asking for a higher price? That planters of experience were not satisfied with the figures supplied by the Association whose members refused to table their certified Balance Sheets or accounts? That even in the absence of certified accounts, the price of Rs. 4/60 per kg. for manufacture of green leaf was arbitrarily agreed on by the Tea Board? That this sum is customarily deducted when green leaf is purchased from small holders?

THAT thereafter in 1980, after the price of oil and tea chests had gone up a little more, a fresh agitation was started by the factory owners for a higher price? That by this time the Tea Board had set up a Statistics Department to determine working costs with the cooperation of the JEDB and SPC and even privately owned estates willing to co-operate in this matter? That the Statistics Department

found that the average cost of manufacture was around Rs. 3/75-3/90 per kg. of made tea and that the price of Rs. 4/60 per kg. was a fair price, leaving the manufacturer sufficient to cover depreciation and a good margin of profit? That in September 1980, it is understood, agitation had started that this price should be raised to Rs. 5/60 per kg.? That by this time the Statistics Department of the Tea Board was collecting the figures for the cost of manufacture monthly from the estates of JEDB and SPC who buy green leaf from the small holders? That the average cost still remained around Rs. 3/75-3/90 per kg.? That these statistics were tabled at a Board Meeting? That though the cost was only Rs. 3/75-3/90 per kg, the majority on the Board, which included government officials, were persuaded to increase the rate to Rs. 5/60 per kg. when the cost was still around Rs. 3/75-3/90? That it is said that former Chairman Warusavitarne had protested against this increase and that this protest was formally recorded in the minutes? That it is significant that though the private sector firms refused to table their accounts (the state owned SPC and JEDB were willing to do so), the Board decided to fix the price at Rs. 5/60 per kg.? That this gave a margin of nearly Rs. 2/- per kg.? Which meant that the small holder was being grossly exploited? That even before the Board agreed on the price, some manufacturers had begun charging the small holder Rs. 5/60 per kg., and one of them, it is alleged, was a member of the Board? That inquiries made at the SPC and JEDB show that even now (in 1981) that they were taking in bought leaf and that the cost of manufacture was between Rs. 3/75 and 3/90? That whilst what has been set out above appears to be incontestable, *Tribune* is prepared to publish whatever anyone who has a different version has to say? That some of those who have written say that former Chairman Bertie Warusavitarne was a kind of nigger in the woodpile so far as the tea factory owners were concerned? That many small holders allege he was quietly eased out of the chairmanship (by the usual Sri Lankan technique of character assassination) mainly because he disagreed with the decision to charge exorbitant rates for green leaf manufacture? That whether this is true or not, it is not for us to decide, but what people say about it is a matter of public interest?

TRIBUNE, June 13, 1981

Vacancies in the Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka

POSTS OF ACCOUNTANT GRADES II & III.

Applications are invited from citizens of Sri Lanka for the above posts vacant in the Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka.

POSTS OF ACCOUNTANT GRADE II:

Qualifications & Experience:

- (a) Intermediate Examination of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, OR
- (b) Parts I, II & III of I.C.M.A. London, OR
- (c) Parts I, II & III of A.C.C.A. OR
- (d) Diploma in Accountancy with a minimum of 4 years of accounting experience of which at least 3 years should be after obtaining the above qualifications.

Age: Not less than 25 years.

Salary Scale: Rs. 1,350/- (8x50) Rs. 1,750/- per month together with Govt. approved allowances.

POSTS OF ACCOUNTANT GRADE III:

Qualifications & Experience:

- (a) Intermediate Examination of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, OR
- (b) Parts I, II & III of I.C.M.A. London, OR
- (c) Parts I, II & III of A.C.C.A. OR
- (d) Diploma in Accountancy with 4 years of accounting experience of which 1 year should be after obtaining the above qualifications.

Age: Not less than 25 years.

Salary Scale: Rs. 1,000/- (14x40) Rs. 1,560/- per month together with Govt. approved allowances.

NOTE: The selected candidates may be placed at a point on the above scales depending on their experience and qualifications.

Applications indicating age, qualifications, experience and other relevant particulars should be forwarded under registered cover to reach the undersigned on or before 26th June, 1981. The post applied for should be clearly indicated on the top left hand corner of the envelope.

Applications from persons in the State Sector will be considered only if the Head of the Department /Corporation certifies that the candidate can be released if selected.

**SECRETARY GENERAL,
Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka,
500, T. B. Jayah Mawatha,
Colombo 10.**

Vacancies in the Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka

POSTS OF ACCOUNTANT (SUPPLIES) GRADES II & III

Applications are invited from citizens of Sri Lanka for the above posts vacant in the Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka.

POSTS OF ACCOUNTANT (SUPPLIES) GRADE II:

Qualifications & Experience:

- (a) Intermediate Examination of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, Or
- (b) Parts I, II & III of I.C.M.A. London, OR
- (c) Parts I, II & III of A.C.M.A. OR
- (d) Diploma in Accountancy with a minimum of 4 years of accounting experience of which at least 3 years should be after obtaining above qualifications.

The selected candidate will be responsible for the foreign and local supplies functions, for procurement, storage, issue of equipment and materials ordered. Documentation relating to letters of credit, Bills of Lading etc.

Age: Not less than 25 years.

Salary Scale: Rs. 1,350 /- (8x50) Rs. 1,750 /- per month together with Govt. approved allowances.

POSTS OF ACCOUNTANT (SUPPLIES) GRADE III:

Qualifications & Experience:

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**SECRETARY-GENERAL,
Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka,
No. 500, T. B. Jayah Mawatha,
Colombo 10.**