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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

THE PRESIDENT, IN SPITE OF HIS HEAVY AND ONEROUS COMMITMENTS, must spare a few minutes to issue a directive on a matter of grave national concern. In recent weeks there has been a great hullabaloo about planting trees especially fruit trees. But we have on many occasions pointed out that our fresh fruit industry is languishing. Our production is low and the quality poor. And the reasons for this are not far to seek. Practically all fruit trees in the island have either been infected with some virus or the quality of their produce is so poor that their value, especially for export, is low. Nothing has been done in regard to the virus or quality because no sustained or purposeful research has been done in this country either by the Department of Agriculture or Faculties of Agriculture in our Universities. It is said money was not available for such research. Countries like India, Thailand, Malaysia, Pakistan and Indonesia, in our region, have by research improved the quality of all fruits—mangoes, oranges, papaw, lime, pineapple, grape, rambuttan, durian, jak, banana, in fact, everything grown in *this* country. It is a pity that no practical effort has been made to derive any benefit from such research done in other countries. It will not be easy to get the best planting materials from some countries through official sources. Thailand, for instance, has banned the export of seeds and planting materials of certain high-export quality mangoes, oranges, grape, apples, pineapples etc. etc. because they get a big income from the export of these fruits. Compared to the horticultural produce of other countries in the region, Sri Lanka does not have any export quality fruits. We beat the big drum about exporting fruits but our produce fetch only prices for low quality. Apart from total lack of research the State Farms and even the Department of Agriculture Experimental Stations have not maintained proper records of the fruit trees they have grown. The Department has failed to check the spread of virus disease and has made no concerted attempt to develop better quality and higher yielding fruit trees. Unfortunately, the Department of Agriculture, which has the monopoly of importing seeds and planting materials, has jealously guarded this monopoly and prevented private farmers from importing high quality seeds and planting materials from abroad. The seeds of nearly all varieties of fruit trees are on the totally banned list so far as the private farmer is concerned. Whilst this ban continues, there is no ban on the import of high-priced oranges, grapes, apples and preserved fruits. *Tribune* is aware that one single importer had placed an order for Rs. 2 1/2 lakhs worth of dried prunes. He had done so with trepidation, but the whole stock had vanished within a few days. Now he has placed an order for Rs. 5 lakhs and he thinks he will sell the whole shipment without difficulty during the forthcoming Christmas season. These imported fruits are far too expensive except for a small elite of the very new rich and the expatriates in our midst. The fruits for the common people can be grown only by local farmers who are now being compelled to tail behind the Department of Agriculture. And, here they face another blatant act of discrimination. The Department of Agriculture, it is learnt, has agreed to give permission to a Japanese firm that wants to grow citrus and strawberry to import planting material. Both items are in the banned list for Sri Lankans. Why should Sri Lankans be discriminated against in this way? Why can't they import the same planting materials certified virus-free by recognized international institutions as the Japanese are allowed to do? Good fruit trees planting materials are also required in vast quantities for the settlers in the Mahaveli and also throughout the country?

Water

ON THE COVER we have picture of the water from a tube-well running to waste. There is so much talk about water conservation and management that it is a crime not to utilise the water that comes up from underground pressure through a tube well. The reader who had sent us this picture was heart-broken that the water was overflowing into a channel twenty four hours a day, and that the attempt to block the outflow was not very successful. Tube wells cost money and it is not everywhere that they can be sunk. Politicians are fond of quoting Parakrama Bahu's words that not a drop of water should go to the sea without first being utilised for cultivation. The other cliché which is also frequently quoted is that drops of water make a mighty ocean. Is it not time that the authorities paid more attention to the question of preventing waste of water not merely in urban areas with expensive pipe-borne schemes but even in distant rural areas where groundwater has been tapped and brought to the surface?

Many seminars have been held and many more will be held about water management. But officials who now spend many thousands of fruitless man-hours at seminars, workshops and other jaw-jawing sessions should be asked to stay in their rural stations and help the farmers, among other things, to utilise available water in the best possible manner. Seminars have become a scourge in this country. They are now a menace that prevent purposeful work. Government must restrict them, and if necessary place a total ban on them, especially those organised and funded by international organisations which have become the breeding ground for a peculiar kind of corruption that is eating into the vitals of the administrative system in this country.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Tourism - Dangers

There is no doubt that tourism has come to stay. The cumulative arrivals for the first six months reached a total of 189,974 which was an increase of 29,198 or 18.2% compared with the corresponding figure of last year. The table below prepared by the Ceylon Tourist Board gives the cumulative arrivals by market areas, January to June:

Market areas	1980	1981	Total Change	% Change
Western Europe	106,384	127,250	20,868	19.6
Asia	37,434	44,564	7,130	19.0

North American	7,810	8,264	454	5.8
Australia	4,042	4,096	54	1.3
Eastern Europe	2,672	2,670	- 2	-0.1
Others	2,436	3,130	694	28.5
TOTAL	160,776	189,974	29,198	18.2

Western Europe and Asia, it was pointed out continued to be the largest contributors of tourist traffic during the first six months. These two regions together accounted for 90.4% of the total traffic and substantial increases were recorded from each region. The increase in arrivals from North America was moderate while Australasia improved only marginally. The table below gives a breakdown of traffic by purpose of visit:

Purpose of visit	1980	1981	Total change	% change
Pleasure	12,420	13,766	1,346	10.8
Business	2,216	1,772	- 444	- 20.0
Others	446	1,298	852	191.0
Total	15,082	16,836	1,754	11.6

THE TABLE shows that the largest group of tourists were those who came for pleasure purposes. This category alone accounted for 81.8% of the total traffic, with a moderate increase. Those who came for business accounted for 10.5% of the total. Like in the previous month, there was a drop in this category of tourists. The balance constituted those who came for other purposes like visiting friends and relations, pilgrimages, cultural etc. This sector recorded a substantial increase, both in relative and in absolute terms. In an editorial on Tourism, the *Sun* on October 17, said: "In company with other developing countries we look to tourism as a major earner of foreign exchange. Hence the Tourist Board, hence the Hotels Corporation, hence so many other support services to the tourist industry. Lanka has much to offer the foreign visitor. Her scenic beauty, her beaches, her flora and fauna and of course her ruined cities. The access to these tourist places must be made easier and the roads more comfortable to drive on'. But the editorial went on to draw attention to the dangers and pitfalls the tourist industry had to avoid: "But we must sound a few words of caution to the authorities concerned lest in the flush of the immediate and considerable gain they lose sight of long term harm that may be done to tourism itself by the exorbitant charges now being levied by hoteliers in a hurry to recoup their investments. All tourists are not Pukka Sahibs. Most of them travel on their savings and like all prudent people look to stretching their pound or dollar as far as it would go. If the service is not up to the standards the high charges imply one can be sure they will soon spread word around and dissuade their friends and others from holidaying in Sri Lanka.

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By levying exorbitant room rates certain hotels in the South Asian region have priced themselves as well as their countries out of the tourist trade. We must be watchful that it does not happen here."

We have ourselves spotlighted the unconscionably high prices charged by some hotels, eating places and hosteleries that cater for tourists. The *Sun* also referred to another danger which the government cannot ignore: "Some tourists here are whose only purpose in travel is to eat of the forbidden tree. They are the dregs from whom we have to save ourselves. We can deter them from coming here by imposing deterrent punishment for those found guilty of perversion and corruption. Whilst we must welcome the tourists we must also ensure that by so doing we are not endangering the fundamentals of our own culture and civilisation." **Narcotics and prostitution, in homosexual and bi-sexual flesh, appear to have attracted a certain class of tourists.**

The *Far Eastern Economic Review* of October 16, 1981 has a special supplement on Sri Lanka in regard to tourism, after pointing out the salient features of its growth, the *FEER* said: "It is somewhat surprising that the previous SLFP government—inward-looking and anti-foreign in commercial policy—continued to promote tourism, particularly since feelings against it, like those against foreign capital seemed to be based on fears that it would increase Sri Lanka's dependence on foreigners and would benefit the foreigners most. Moral deterioration—prostitution, drugs, nudity, commercialism—was also a great concern. Even today it is very easy to find a city intellectual who has strong objections to tourism on these grounds. This correspondent got the impression that moral deterioration from tourism was not serious compared to other East Asian tourist destinations (though he did not visit beach resorts which are allegedly the most contaminated areas). One does not yet hear of Japanese sex tours to Sri Lanka, if that is a consolation." The note went on: "The government has always emphasised the economic benefits of tourism; in 1980, net receipts amounted to about US\$ 100 million making it the fourth biggest foreign exchange earner among industries. Tourism advocates point out that trade has diversified the structure of foreign currency earnings which has depended too much on tea, coconut and rubber—thus adding stability to the country's balance of payments. It is also claimed that the import content of goods and services provided by the tourist industry estimated at 20-25%, is much lower than that for the manufacturing industry at over 50%." The note concluded: "Although critics are sceptical, the government seems aware of negative feelings that exist about tourism. Hence, it has set up certain guidelines to conduct an in-depth review of policy once arrivals reach 500,000 (expected in 1984) and to keep the tourism sector's output, as proportions of gross national product and total foreign exchange

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earnings, below 5% and 10% respectively. Another interesting guideline, not always adhered to, was to keep the height of buildings on the coast line below the palm trees lining the roads. As elsewhere in the economy, tourism is rapidly running short of accommodation and embarking on building plans that are unrealistic. According to one set of figures, there were 5,934 hotel rooms on the market—1,486 under construction and 3,961 approved but not off the ground—at the end of 1980. Another projection made at end-June 1981, showed that there were plans for 184 new hotels with about 20,000 rooms. It is not clear when—if ever—all these buildings will come up. But experts say that such international chains as Ramada, Taj, Hilton and Sheraton are definitely coming to join existing Oberoi, Inter-Continental and Holiday Inn groups".

THE FACT that big chains like Ramada, Taj, Hilton and Sheraton are coming in may be a source of comfort to those who want to see more tourists coming into the island. Such multinationals or transnationals (TNCs) groups can create new problems for the country. In the September 1981 issue of *South* Marcel Barang raises some very interesting questions about *Transnational Tourism* on the basis of a recently issued Report released by the UN on TNCs in the international tourist industry: "The domination of hotel industries in Third World countries by transnational corporations has long made access to the lucrative tourist trade difficult for local businesses in the South. But a recently released report by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission's Centre, suggests that Third World countries can use these corporations to further their own economic development schemes. The transnationals have all sides of the tourist market covered according to the report, with a 'high degree of market concentration and vertical integration' and controlling a global network of tour operators, airlines and hotels. Their involvement in the industry takes the form of contractual arrangements, as opposed to the equity investments which are the norm, for their participation in the manufacturing industry and raw material sector. Instead of sharing capital risks with equity investment, the transnationals favour those management contracts which enhance their control and reduce their risks. Sixty five per cent of the hotels in the South are tied to multinational corporations by management contracts'. While it is true that the flow of tourists to Third World countries has increased, receipts from tourists in the South now represents a sizable proportion of total foreign earnings. The *South* goes on: "The UN profile of the tourist industry in the South reveals that at the end of 1978, 72 out of 81 multinationals active in the non-communist world hotel industry originated in the North. These 72 were associated with a total of 1,025 hotels outside their country of origin, representing 18.5 per cent of the estimated total domestic and foreign rooms of the 100 major hotel chains. US-based corporations accounted

for half of the transnational-associated hotels abroad and for 56 per cent of the rooms in those hotels".

THE MAGAZINE then dealt with an important question: "But how does a transnational gain initial control of the market? Part of the answer lies with Third World governments. Local businesses are encouraged by their governments, its cheap finance and tax incentives, to build hotels, and the transnationals are then brought in for their experience and sophisticated marketing techniques. Besides managerial contracts, they can gain control by hotel leasing agreements, franchise agreements and technical service agreements in which they act only as consultants to the hotel owner, supplying knowledge of managerial systems, markets and technology". The UN report also pointed out that: "More knowledge and experience, better access to technology and foreign markets, centralized purchasing practices and an ability to achieve economics of scale in their operations give transnationals an edge over local tourist enterprises." And then said, "Host governments—says the UN report—should make sure they determine both the role played by the transnational owned hotel chains in their tourist industries and the policies needed to prevent transnational participation working against their overall economic development goals. The report stresses that through research and development activities, host governments will be able to move foreign management experience out of the manufacturing sector. In theory, indigenous firms should be able to supplant the multinationals in their tourist industry as they gain experience. But it will be a difficult stranglehold to break". The UN report had suggested a number of concrete ways in which the transnational domination of Third World tourism can be contained, and the *South* concluded: "One thing the UN report only touches on is whether it really is wise for a Third World country to concentrate on tourism as a quick way of increasing revenue..." Depending on their clientele, transnational-associated hotels may introduce cultural as well as economic problems. Those who can afford such hotels have substantially higher incomes than the local population. This may create an enclave having economic and cultural characteristics vastly different from local ones. Such an enclave may be disruptive to the cultural pattern and values of the local population". **Sri Lanka is still far away from an overwhelming TNC control of its tourism, but it is wise to be forewarned.**



JOURNEY TO AFGHANISTAN—3

On The Way

By S. P. Amarasingam

I HAD ONLY TWO DAYS to get ready and catch the afternoon flight to Madras on the first lap of the

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journey to Kabul. It was a rush until I reached the airport, then everything slowed down. The plane was late but it reached Madras in time for the connecting flight to New Delhi. It was past ten when I reached the Indian capital. I was met and taken to the Afghan Embassy for my visa. It was well past midnight before I was in a hotel room to snatch a few hours' sleep. I was at the Palam airport by six in the morning. The Indian Airlines flight to Kabul was scheduled to take off at 7.15 a.m. It was a little over 12 hours since I left Colombo but in that time I had read a great deal about recent development in Afghanistan. The Saur Revolution of April 1978 has fascinated me just as the revolution in Iran later that year did. I had anticipated the latter, but not the former. The Tanjug correspondent in Colombo, Rafaelovich, was on a busman's holiday in Kabul at that time and he had lived through the days which had brought Tarakki to power on the crest of a Parchami-Kalq coalition. On his return he had given me a graphic picture of the revolution that had come as a surprise to everybody. He also gave me a bundle of his day-to-day—at times hour-to-hour-despatches—from Kabul during the fateful fortnight that changed history in an important region in Asia with shattering repercussions throughout the world. From what Rafaelovich told me and from what I learnt from his despatches it was clear that the coup that had thrown out the Daud regime was not a 'coup' in the strict sense of the word. It was not premeditated and had not been carefully planned in advance. It was in a sense a unique accident of history. Neither the Soviets nor the Americans had expected it. It took the Yugoslav, Chinese, Indian, Saudi and other embassies in Kabul by surprise. But the group that found itself in power through a strange quirk of history was socialist, near-Marxist and pro-Soviet. It consisted of two factions that bitterly fought each other even as the Revolution progressed. I will come back to this part of the story later, but on the plane I read press cuttings and articles about the more recent developments in that country. I have, as I have mentioned earlier, gathered a vast collection of press cuttings and articles from Sri Lankan and foreign papers about the April Revolution and the events that followed it. I used some of them for my book *HAVANA TO KABUL*, but I still have many large scrap books with cuttings. I have built up files of articles, studies and commentaries about these changes in Afghanistan. The cuttings after May this year were still loose and these I took with me. They were mainly from western sources and a few from India and even fewer from socialist countries.

One report that caught my attention, datelined Islamabad June 16, read: "*The Russian Embassy in Kabul, the nerve centre of the occupation of Afghanistan, came under rocket attack by the Mujahideen. Meanwhile, the Red Army has launched a big operation to dislodge Hazara tribesmen from the Paghman mountains overlooking the capital for fear of attack on the occupied forces*". I recalled reading such

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reports about similar attacks on the Soviet Embassy on two previous occasions. I made searching inquiries in Kabul and I was told by all people at official and unofficial levels that there had been no such attacks. There had been attempts to hold demonstrations before the Embassy early in 1980, but since that time there had been no trouble in or around the Soviet Embassy. After my return, towards the middle of September, there was a fresh report that there was a rocket attack on the Soviet Embassy in Kabul. Pakistan's *Dawn Overseas* of September 16, published an undated New Delhi item that read: "Reports reaching here from Kabul said that a portion of the Soviet Embassy was damaged after a rocket attack on it, according to the BBC. Quoting usually reliable sources, the BBC said the rocket attack was launched on September 15 after which both sides exchanged fire for several hours. The sources said the Soviet Embassy premises in Kabul which house several offices and residential buildings had been the target of several unsuccessful raids by the Mujahideen. Reports said that chief of the Commercial Department of the Embassy was killed and several others were wounded. The Commercial Office of the Embassy suffered serious damage". Later press reports stated that visitors could not detect any damage to the buildings and hinted that repairs might have been carried out overnight. The Bakhtar News Agency categorically stated that no such rocket attack ever took place and that this story was a total fabrication. Letters I have received from some friends in Kabul confirm this

LOOKING THROUGH THE CLIPPINGS from May onwards it was evident that there was a lull in the Western propaganda barrage after the announcement that Lord Carrington was scheduled to go to Moscow early in July to present an EEC plan to solve the 'Afghan problem' and secure the withdrawal of Soviet troops. What was this EEC proposal? John Palmer of *The Guardian* on July 5, 1981 had explained: "The Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, is to fly to Moscow on Monday for talks with the Soviet government about Common Market plans for an international conference on Afghanistan. . . . It would be held in two stages, the first being exclusively concerned with foreign interference in Afghanistan and the second to the future internal regime in the country. . . . There is no intention of inviting the Kabul government to the first stage of the conference. But Lord Carrington will tell the Soviet government that the Kabul regime might be included along with other representatives of Afghan 'opinion' to the second stage of the conference which would deal with implementation of international guarantees of Afghanistan's future status as a neutral and non-aligned country". The main thrust of the plan was to replace the Babrak Karmal government with a new coalition acceptable to the West and also to pressurise the Soviets to withdraw their troops with a promise that there would be no "external interference" there-

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after. *One does not need to be a pundit or a prophet to know that this plan would not take off the ground. And that was what happened.* A report in *The Guardian* July 12, 1981 from Jonathan Steele in Moscow gave a first-hand account of the outcome of the Carrington mission. "The Soviet Union told Lord Carrington politely but firmly on Monday that the EEC proposals on Afghanistan were not realistic". According to British sources the Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr. Gromyko criticised the composition of the proposed international conference and the absence of Afghan representation in the first stage. Later Lord Carrington said he was 'not surprised but disappointed'. Shortly before leaving Moscow he told a press conference at the British Embassy that the Afghan question would be 'a natural talking point in the months ahead, for example at the United Nations General Assembly'. Until it was solved there could be no real normalisation of East-West relations. Afghanistan was the essential issue. . . . Mr. Gromyko told a small group of reporters as he emerged from the second round of talks: we deny the right of any one to intervene. The Afghans themselves must decide this. The question of the regime is solved'. Asked if he would give further consideration to the EEC proposals, he said 'I cannot say this. What we said in reply is that we don't consider this proposal is realistic. This is the core of the matter. It is not realistic.' So Lord Carrington returns to London with the gap between Western and Soviet perceptions as wide as when he came. As he said, 'They don't include the Soviet Union among the intervenors. I said the Soviet intervention was the root of the problem'. He had also told Mr. Gromyko that the present government was not acceptable to the Afghans. One had only to look at the two million refugees in Pakistan to see that'"

The New Delhi paper *Patriot* on July 12, 1981 published a report from its correspondent in Moscow. Vinod Taksal about Carrington's *faux pas* "British Foreign Secretary, Carrington, on his own admission has returned home from his 24 hour working visit to Moscow a disappointed man. He poured out his grief to a few pressmen at the British Embassy just before emplaning for home. His disappointment must have begun with the cold reception he received on arrival, in contrast to the warm and friendly welcome Willy Brandt, who does not hold any post or power in FRG government, received a week earlier. Even Cyrus Vance got a better welcome. His views, expressed at a session of Palme Commission and a press conference later, were reported by Soviet mass media as those of a 'prominent political figure' of US. No such courtesies were extended to Carrington. . . . For Moscow's perceptions on the Afghan issue had crystallised long ago, and it was made known repeatedly that it could not agree to any proposal that did not conform to the basic Soviet—and Afghan stand that a solution to the Afghan crisis lay only in an end to the American war by proxy against

the Kabul regime, and firm guarantees against future intervention, and with the participation and consent of the Afghan government. Carrington's proposal has not only skirted both these basic parameters, but evidently ran counter to them. It sought an international conference of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, including China, Pakistan, Iran and some other Islamic countries'. India's name was thrown in only as a ruse because New Delhi's position is well known. In essence, it meant a conference without any guarantees against future Sino-American intervention, and also to ask Babrak Karmal to share power with counter-revolutionaries. Predictably Gromyko termed Carrington's proposal as 'unrealistic' and 'impracticable' and within two hours of the British visitor's departure from Moscow, Tass described it as a 'diversionary ploy' aimed at distracting world attention from the true western, chiefly American, designs of Afghanistan.... and raised a hypothetical question of London's reaction to an 'international conference' on Ulster, from which Britain and Eire were excluded. The EEC proposal was silent on such imperatives as Reagan's readiness to openly supply arms to Afghan rebels, Sino-US agreement to back the rebel gangs, and Washington's arming of Pakistan. According to Tass, there was 'no sensible alternative' to the Kabul regime's offer of direct talks with Pakistan and Iran on a broad constructive basis' and guarantees for these agreements by the US and the Soviet Union. The Agency hinted that Pakistan would have long ago accepted the Afghan offer but for US pressure...

Taksal Vinod had gone on to say that "Carrington had hanged the solution of all intricate issues bedevilling Soviet-American relations on Afghanistan solely. East-West relations could improve and even the current Madrid conference would yield positive results, but it all depends on Afghanistan", he said. What he did not say but apparently had at the back of his mind was that the Afghan issue could be solved if the US, and thereby Britain and other allies, are willing to get into serious dialogue with the Soviet Union on 'all matters and at all levels' as Brezhnev had sought it. That Afghanistan did not pose a hitch to the East-West dialogue was unwittingly admitted by Carrington himself. He told newsmen that the EEC had not expected Moscow to accept its proposal in its present form, and had forwarded it only to see Soviet reflections on it, and that, after all, its formulations and components, disagreeable to Moscow 'can be changed'.... The impression Carrington gave was that amendments to the EEC proposal were not tied to the Afghan issue, but with the overall US policies and attitudes towards Kremlin and could be tailored to suit the needs of times at the beck and call of Washington. If the US and its allies were to adopt a confrontationist attitude towards Moscow, Afghanistan could be made an issue. If, however, the West were to find detente and cooperation with the Soviet Union inevitable, Afghanistan could be

thrown overboard and left to 'local settlements'.... As the Soviet Union assessed it, any 'international conference' of the type mooted by Carrington and backed by the EEC, with Afghanistan barred from it, would turn out to be no more than a forum for academic discussion on Afghanistan. For, though Pakistan and Iran, and the US and the Soviet Union would be present, the absence of the aggrieved party, Afghanistan, would frustrate a solution. Any stable, peaceful solution from such a conference would be further precluded by current realities in Iran, whose commitments in an agreement cannot be guaranteed either by the US or the Soviet Union and then there is Pakistan, which is equally entrenched in both the Chinese and American camps, and whose geopolitical interests, while subserving, do not wholly coincide with those of either the US or China in the region. Without tying up those two loose, but vital, ends, which essentially affect Afghanistan first, how can any 'international conference' succeed in safely putting the Afghan issue away? This was the question Carrington failed to answer convincingly in Moscow, and returned home disappointed at the prospects of seeing his 'second initiative' like his first, doomed to be a non-starter. He is disappointed because he failed to put the ball in the other court".

THIS ARTICLE, I thought, summed up all the nuances of the Carrington mission on Afghanistan in a succinct and admirable way. The mission was a damp squib from the word "go". However there were reports from London that Carrington's visit had not "been entirely wasted". It was said that some of the EEC leaders still believed that the Soviet Union was desperately trying to find a way to beat a strategic retreat from Afghanistan. *The Guardian* in a comment on July 12, 1981 had pointed out: "The Soviet leaders, on this thesis, were anxious to begin extricating themselves from the Kabul adventure which had proved a military and political fiasco. Our Foreign Secretary, studying the secret cables from beyond the Khyber Pass, thought it worth trying to prise a little movement. There was no real movement this week. If Afghanistan is an 'internal affair' of the Soviet Union and if, most damningly, realism dictates that Mr. Babrak Karmal sit around the initial conference table as a Head of State and crucial party to all talks, the basic perception is wrong (or ahead of its time) and Russia remains unready to make the vital half-steps that could begin a regional solution to the problem; Afghanistan a kind of medieval Finland. That, as Lord Carrington said, is disappointing. But it is not necessarily a permanent disappointment, as Mr. Karmal—in the maelstrom of Afghan politics—is not necessarily a permanent President. When the Russians grow tired of holding his collapsing regime together, they may yet start to look round for a better way. Lord Carrington's shuttle endeavour was in no sense wasted if it has indicated to his hosts that a

range of better ways are now on offer." The Soviet Union reacted strongly against this suggestion that it was only wanting to find a graceful way of quitting Afghanistan. The Soviet News Agency *Tass* on July 17, 1981 issued its sharpest attack to date on the EEC initiative on Afghanistan, predicting it would end in dismal failure. "The 10-nation EEC continued to press forward with the settlement plan to justify, 'gross intervention of the reactionary forces led by Washington and Beijing' in the internal affairs of Afghanistan." British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington, *Tass* said, by pressing for the idea of an international conference on Afghanistan, only sought to turn Afghanistan's internal development into an international problem. THE SOVIET UNION has also criticised the allocation of additional funds by Washington to Afghan rebels. In a commentary the *Pravda* said that the United States and China have used the funds supplied as "aid" to Afghan refugees, both in the past and now, for establishing and maintaining "scores of secret camps" in Pakistan and some other countries. In the camps Afghan emigrants are trained and assembled into "terrorist gangs" which are subsequently sent into the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. Washington and Beijing were turning Pakistan into their military base to work up tension in that explosive region and as a "springboard of aggression" against the neighbouring countries. *Pravda* said the latest moves to finance the plans of the militarisation of Pakistan, to scale up interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and other countries of the region, demonstrate that "imperialist circles have not abandoned the realisation of their peace" endangering plans. And yet it is high time—in the fourth year of the existence of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA)—they understand that this is futile. This is evidenced by the "notable consolidation of the local power of the people which showed itself in the establishment of the National Fatherland Front of the DRA—the most representative mass organisation of the country", and by the growing international prestige of the Republic", the daily added". **The failure of the Carrington mission brought a new upsurge of anti-Soviet and anti-Babrak Karmal propoganda in the entire western media.** From the middle of July, reports of fighting in Afghanistan proliferated with suggestions about an imminent collapse of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. But at Palam airport on the 19th of August 1981 there was no excitement among the passengers waiting to take the Indian Air Lines Boeing 737 to Kabul. Most, if not all, of them were non-Afghans—merchants, technicians and officials—returning after a holiday or a business trip. There were also many women and children. The plane was full and it carried the maximum load of cargo. I was probably the only one going to Kabul for the first time.

To be continued.

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NAMIBIA

Invasion of Angola

By R. Sivaganeshan

On Wednesday 29th July a South African invasion force comprising an infantry brigade, two battalions of mercenaries and South African mobile infantry battalion, armoured troop carriers equipped with mortars including the 155mm extended range gun, marched into Angola from Namibia supported by air cover and set up command posts in Mulenba, occupied six towns in the Angolan province of Kunene and encircled the provincial capital of Njiva. Though the South Africans say that they have now pulled out the Angola government denies this to be so and this contention of the Angolans is supported by the African nations which met in Nigeria recently to discuss the situation before calling for sanctions against South Africa. Under the title of South West Africa, Namibia became part of the German empire following the Berlin conference in 1884-85. After the first world war Germany was divested of its colonies and South Africa received the territory to administer under the League of Nations mandate in 1920. The only condition was for South Africa to submit annual reports to the permanent Mandates Commission of the League which could discuss and criticise the administration but not terminate it. After the second world war, and the establishment of the United Nations, South Africa refused to submit its mandate to the Trusteeship Council and demanded the full annexation of Namibia. This was refused and after long legal arguments the UN terminated the South African mandate in 1966. Under International Law, Namibia is now sovereign. In 1971 the International Court of Justice upheld this decision and condemned South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia. It also called upon member-states of the UN to refuse any co-operation with the unlawful administration. In 1976 the UN General Assembly accepted the South West African People's Organisation as the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people and granted it official observer status in the General Assembly. The Assembly and various UN agencies provide direct fundings with further arms and support supplied by the USSR, Cuba, East Germany and North Korea. The Western powers known as the "contact group", Britain, US, Canada, France and West Germany have been working for a settlement since 1977. The proposal of this group for a peace plan involving UN monitored elections was accepted by the UN Security Council in September 1978. The plan known as the Security Council Resolution 435 to hold UN monitored elections has formed the basis of all subsequent negotiations. The conference held in Geneva in

January 1981 under this resolution was brought to an abrupt end by South Africa encouraged by a change in the administration in the United States.

Namibia is a large country covering an area of 842,269 sq. kilometers—four times the size of Britain stretching from the Orange River in the South to the Angolan border in the North. Though the area is vast the population is small, about one million, making Namibia one of the most sparsely populated countries in the world. Windhoek is the capital and the importance to the East of Namibia is crucial, due to its vast mineral wealth, diamonds and uranium apart from its location in regard to the Atlantic Ocean. There are eleven tribal groupings in Namibia unlike in Zimbabwe where there are two. The tribes differ in culture and language.

The whites in Namibia comprise of three races English, German and Afrikaners who are also divided politically unlike the whites in Zimbabwe where the whites are united. The SWAPO is pledged to the liberation of the country from South Africa under its leader Sam Nujomo who leads both the political and military wing of the organisation. He has mass support. The Democratic Turnhalle Alliance is Namibia's ruling political party which assumed power in elections held under the patronage of South Africa. The elections were boycotted by the SWAPO and large sections of the indigenous population when it took place in 1978. The Democratic Alliance was formed in 1977 and is led by Dirk Mudge as Chairman and Peter Kalangula as President, the former an Afrikaner and the latter a black Namibian who can be likened to Ian Smith's Muzerawa in Rhodesia before it became Zimbabwe. At present Dirk Mudge heads an executive body called the Council of Ministers and as more powers are handed over to him the Administrator-General appointed by South Africa will transform from an executive head to a figure-head. Mudge depends politically and economically on South Africa and cannot survive without its military support. Encouraged by Pretoria he has had meetings in Western capitals in an effort to secure the withdrawal of SWAPO's UN status as the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people, before complying with Resolution 435. To legitimise Mudge, attempts to make structural changes to apartheid so that blacks will look for an alternative to SWAPO is the plan of action.

But conservative white interests resist any such attempts at change for the fear of losing the privileges they had so far enjoyed at the expense of the people of Namibia. The only alternative is to suppress SWAPO with the help of Western VETOs in the UN and create a buffer zone between Angola in the North and Namibia in the south so that SWAPO which has bases in

Southern Angola is pushed up further. This would justify future intrusions into Angola much deeper in the context of the lobbying in Congress to repeal the Clark Amendment to the US Arms Export Control Act which bans specifically the export of arms to the FLNA and UNITA, the CIA and South African backed forces opposed to the legal government in Angola. The lobbying to supply arms to be used against Angola is an off-shoot of the Reaganite outcry about International Terrorism, in other words a technique of drumming up support for militarisation of the economy coupled to an aggressive foreign policy to present an image about a "resurgent America" the main purpose of which is to serve the wealthy and multinationals by cuts on social services in the name of combating inflation and to provide subsidies to that sector of the economy to earn profits through a guaranteed market by the production of high technology waste for a senseless adventure, for combating communism. The FLNA is now disbanded but under Jonas Savimbi the UNITA continues to operate to parts of Angola damaging supply lines to cause food shortages in order to sow dissent against the government to destabilise it. The position in Angola should be seen in the light of the American statement on the South African invasion viz., that "the invasion of Angola should be understood in the context of the presence of Soviet Advisers and Cuban troops there", but of course to mention why the Cubans came to Angola or why the SWAPO is fighting a guerilla war from there let alone the presence of Soviet Advisers would be to give the game away.



Next Week

- TERMITES OR DAMBALA ?
- PAVEMENT HAWKERS
- LAHORE HIJACKING
- EGYPTIAN FABLE
- EURO-LOAN SDRs

October 11 - 17

**DIARY OF EVENTS IN SRI LANKA
COMPILED FROM DAILY NEWS-
PAPERS PUBLISHED IN COLOMBO**

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

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11: About 15,000 Sinhala Police officers, below the rank of ASP will begin learning Tamil from 15th October; IGP Ana Seneviratne has sent instructions to Superintendents of Police in charge of the 24 Police divisions in the country to make immediate arrangements in every headquarters station to conduct Tamil classes—*SO*. More austerity measures have been ordered by the Government; ministries were asked to axe expenditure for next year and to stop the purchasing of new equipment machinery, vehicles and electrical appliances—*ST*. The government has sought the backing of the International Monetary Fund to continue till 1985, the liberalised economic policies launched in 1977; top level negotiations are now underway in Washington between IMF officials and the Sri Lanka delegation headed by the Minister of Finance and Planning, Mr. Ronnie de Mel. A multi-million dollar supply base to provide services and facilities to countries in the Asian region undertaking oil exploration work will be set up in Trincomalee—*WK*. The Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) yesterday launched an initiative to forge a united front of all anti-UNP parties to fight the next elections, defeat the UNP and form a government; the LSSP has drawn up what it calls 'the essential basis of a programme for a Government' which it believes could be formed by parties and forces opposed to the UNP—*IS*. It is understood that secret arrangements are being made to organise a sort of insurrection like the one that took place in 1971; an important minister has brought this to the notice of the government; it is understood that the minister has informed the government with sufficient evidence that classes of indoctrination are being carried out in the country—*CM*. President J. R. Jayewardene has instructed the Inspector General of Police to take immediate action against those who were involved in the violence between May 31 and June 2 in the north—*VK*. The Insurance Corporation had decided to give life insurance facilities to the disabled in Sri Lanka; the Minister of Trade and Shipping Lalith Athulathmudali has given orders to the Chairman, Insurance Corporation Mr. Hemasiri Rodrigo to see that this plan is implemented—*SLDP*. The Ministry

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of Health is planning to give all Government Nurses a salary increase in January 1982; also the Ministry is considering giving them promotions—*RR*.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12: Compensation payable to sterling companies whose plantations and other assets were nationalised in October 1975, under stage 2 of the land reforms have been virtually completed; a payment of Rs. 25 million, representing the tenth and last instalment of Rs. 270 million settlement has just been remitted to the companies eligible for payment, a spokesman for the Land Reform Commission said—*CDN*. In addition to the export of pre-packed teas from Sri Lanka the feasibility of establishing a joint packaging and marketing venture is being examined by the Government—*CDM*. A District Service is to be set up shortly to meet the dearth of teachers in certain areas; a teacher appointed to the District Service will not be entitled to apply for a transfer to any other district. A livestock development project will be implemented in the districts of Trincomalee and Amparai from the beginning of 1982—*SU*. It has been proposed to appoint 5,000 new teachers under the District Service scheme; the Minister of Education Ranil Wickremasinghe has sought the approval of the Cabinet in this connection—*DP*. The Central Bank statistics show a loss for the year 1980 in the production of tea, rubber and coconut—Tea 7%, Rubber 13% and Coconut 15%—*ATH*. Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe has decided to distribute 500 Television sets to schools, next year; the ministry has also decided to give a training to students on how to use the TV. The Government is working out plans to improve the citronella industry; for this the government will lease out land on long-term lease to the private sector; 500 acres of land is to be leased in the Badulla district for the cultivation of citronella under the Ministry of Land, Land Development and Mahaveli Development.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13: President Jayewardene yesterday told a crowd of over fifteen thousand people who had gathered for the "Vap Magul" ceremony at the Dunupothagama field that it was imperative that farmers throughout the country should eliminate waste of all kinds from the time they break the first sod to harvesting and storage; otherwise self-sufficiency in rice will remain an elusive thing, Mr. Jayewardene said. Prime Minister R. Premadasa said in Singapore yesterday that Sri Lanka was greatly impressed by Singapore's development and had adopted some of those methods to develop Sri Lanka—*CDN*. The Government and Airlanka will together float a public company shortly to replace the Airports Authority; the State will own 95 percent of the shares while the national airline will hold the balance. The new Army Commander Major-General Tissa Weeratunga said yesterday the Army was not engaged in a battle with terrorists in the north, but its function there was to assist the Police to maintain law and

order—*SU*. Army soldiers who have completed 22 years of service and are retiring will be given other jobs in the army—*DM*. The Ministry of Health has decided to take an additional 150 students to the Medical College as there is a shortage of doctors at present. At present only 250 students are taken to the Medical College; but from next year 700 will be taken; doctors who have gone abroad are now coming back it is stated—*DV*.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14: Some leading coconut fibre exporters in the country have expressed the fear that Sri Lanka would lose her fibre market in Europe unless early steps were taken to ensure that only quality fibre was exported from here. The National Water Supply and Drainage Board has piled up a massive Rs. 33 million debt to the Electricity Board on account of power supplied and the CEB's best efforts to recover these dues have ended in failure. Major General Tissa Indraka Weeratunga will take command of the Sri Lanka Army today; he is the ninth commander of the Army and the seventh Lankan to reach this position—*CDN*. The first cases of ragging of freshers were reported from the University of Peradeniya on Monday night; in this connection two final year male students will go down on the mat for indecently ragging two male freshers at the Arunachalam Hall of the University of Peradeniya. The import of boxes of matches has been banned, as a result of the production of quality matches by three firms now—*CDM*. Several government trading organisations are likely to be converted into joint stock companies; a memorandum and articles of association on the lines on which these companies will function will be placed for Cabinet approval shortly by Trade and Shipping Minister Lalith Athulathmudali. The state of emergency is to be continued for a further month; a gazette notification extending the emergency regulations is expected to be issued on Friday night; this will mean that the countrywide state of Emergency declared on August 18 will continue for a third month. A shortage of 16,500 teachers in various subjects has been confirmed by a school census taken in March 1981; this scarcity is believed to be acute even in better off areas like Galle—*SU*. The Government has decided to stop all tourists holidaying in places which the Queen is scheduled to visit for next week; all guest houses, hotels and rest houses have been given notice not to accommodate anybody during this period. Government doctors are said to be leaving the country and getting employment abroad; due to this the hospitals are getting from bad to worse; out of 2,220 doctors now 1437 have gone abroad; while 20 to 24 doctors leave every month; only 3 or 4 come back from abroad; the cause of this is inadequate salaries being paid to them—*DV*.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15: The need for intensifying security along lonely stretches of road, particularly in the North Central Province, was stressed by Deputy Defence Minister T. B. Werapitiya at a security confere-

nce he chaired at Polonnaruwa yesterday. Some of the measures that will be adopted include joint military-police patrols, soldiers and policemen in mufti riding buses, special highway patrols and ambushes at vulnerable points. Six northern police stations the army has occupied since the terrorist attack on the Annaicottai police have been handed back, but are yet unmanned by policemen. The IGP, Mr. Anura Kumara Seneyiratne said those stations are Chankanai Kopay, Gurunagar, Pallai, Annaicottai and Pooneryn. Excessive budget pruning can lead to the risk of pushing the economy into recession, Finance and Planning Minister Ronnie de Mel has warned in a speech delivered before the Development Society of Cambridge University at St. John's College, Cambridge yesterday—*CDN*. Nearly 3,000 Gramadoya Mandalayas, the village level organisations of the Development Councils are expected to convene for the first time today to elect their respective chairmen. A private engineering college on the lines of the private medical college is to be set up in the premises of the Technical College at Maradana, to train persons needed to maintain infrastructure in the districts. A separate unit has been set up in the Attorney General's Department to deal with cases pertaining to terrorist activities; two senior state counsel and another state attorney have already been assigned to the branch; clerical staff including stenographers are being recruited—*SU*. The Cabinet yesterday approved the proposals made by the Minister of Education to appoint 500 teachers under the District Service Scheme to fill vacancies created by non-graduate teachers—*DP*. The price of red onions has gone up to Rs. 8.50 per 500 grams—*ATH*.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16: A high powered delegation from the State Tea Organisation of Iran was in Sri Lanka this week to explore the possibility of increasing its tea imports from Sri Lanka. The World Bank has announced a US dollars 30 million credit from the International Development Association, its soft loan affiliate, for small and medium scale industrial development in Sri Lanka—*CDN*. The United Nations Industrial Development Organisation for investment promotion will be meeting in Colombo from October 19 to October 23. Sri Lanka's Rubber-For-Rice delegation which visits Peking in mid-December will make a bid to get Chinese light industrial goods in exchange for Sri Lanka's rubber; this, according to Trade and Shipping Ministry sources, will be another bid to push Sri Lanka's rubber exports further—*CDM*. Thirty two prisoners in death row will have their sentences commuted to one of life imprisonment in terms of an amnesty the Government will grant to mark the visit of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip to Sri Lanka; the British Royal couple arrive here on October 21 on a four day visit. The Labour Ministry has launched a self-employment scheme for women in the agricultural sector; under this scheme land will be distributed to women to be cultivated and the profits obtained from the harvest will be distributed

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equally among them. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (Sirimavo Group) has called upon all its members of Parliament, local bodies and other organisations to boycott the celebrations in connection with the 50th anniversary of universal adult franchise in Sri Lanka; Queen Elizabeth will be the royal guest of honour at these celebrations next week. One army officer was fatally injured when gunmen opened fire on a group of army personnel at Jaffna last evening; the assailants two youths who came on bicycles fired on the group of five Army personnel who had got down from a jeep and were standing by the Kankasanturai road around 4.30 p.m.—*SU*. The University Grants Commission has decided not to take fees from Foreign Students studying in our Universities; the commission has asked all heads of universities to stop charging fees from foreign students in their Universities—*ATH*.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17: A policy decision to allow long-term leases of land for agro-industrial projects that would benefit the Sri Lanka economy has been taken by government; following last week's agreement with the British-based multinational, Guthrie, which has extensive oil palm and rubber interests to undertake a big oil palm project in the Mahaveli area, government has also approved a second similar project though on a much smaller scale. Two representatives from the Swedish International Development Agency who were here last week have indicated that it would be possible for SIDA to assist the National Committee on IYDP in small scale projects for the disabled. Sri Lanka's garment exports trade faces fresh challenges following threatened quota impositions by the USA and the EEC countries on new categories of readymade wear; Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg (Benelux Group) have announced quotas on Sri Lanka-made ladies' and gents' jackets for 1982 and 1983; also the US wants restrictions imposed on export garments at present free of quota. The IGP Mr. Ana Seneviratne, yesterday ordered a countrywide police alert following Thursday's killing of a soldier in Jaffna. TULF Leaders Mr. A. Amirthalingam and Mr. M. Sivasithambaram yesterday issued a statement condemning the killing of a soldier in Jaffna on Thursday—*CDN*. A cess on all handicrafts exported from the country together with a pension scheme for craftsmen are among the new measures to be introduced by government to improve the country's handicrafts sector; a bill to enact this scheme will be presented in Parliament shortly by Rural Industrial Development Minister S. Thondaman. Roadblocks have been set up and house to house searches are being conducted as Army and Police units engage in a massive manhunt in the Jaffna area for the gunmen who shot down two soldiers on the KKS road on Thursday. Government last night extended the state of emergency by a month and deployed more troops to intensify security; the

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move came as a second soldier and a civilian injured in Thursday's terrorist attack, succumbed to their injuries—*SU*.



WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

October 11 - 17

AMERICAS

UNITED NATIONS: In meeting US charges that the UN was spending far too much, Swedish Ambassador Anders Thunborg told the General Assembly's Budget Committee that the cost of 7 new strategic bombers would be sufficient to finance the 1982/83 budget. Much worse was that Americans pay as much for drinks as the world body and all its agencies receive. The Nobel peace prize for the year 1981 was awarded to the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). UN's FAD reported that more than 700 million people of the world are suffering from malnutrition and the international community is not doing anything to improve the condition.

UNITED STATES: Former President Carter and Ford said that Washington must talk to the PLO to establish peace in the Middle East. In responding to the remarks of the ex-President, Reagan said that this could be feasible only if PLO recognizes the right of Israel to exist as a nation. If US stops buying oil from Libya then someone else will buy and finance Gaddafi activities observed President Reagan. Professor James Tobin of Yale University, a Keynesian Economist, was awarded the 1981 Nobel Prize for Economics for his research on financial markets and their relations to expenditure decisions, employment production and prices. Secretary of State Haig said that US would assist Sudan but would not defend it in the event of an attack by Libya. Former president Carter criticised the Reagan administration for overemphasising on military strength. Amnesty International has questioned the role of FBI in the US justice system. It cited the case of Elmer Praff of the Black Panther Party and Richard Marshall of the American Indian Movement, who were convicted for murder on fabricated charges. It accused the FBI of using tactics that would discredit and demoralise and prevent the growth of movements that would unify the aspirations of the minority organisations. The proposed AWACS sale to Saudi Arabia was rejected by US House of Representatives, Republicans voted 108 - 78 against and Democrats 193 - 33 against the sale of AWACS. President Reagan said that massive transfer of wealth from rich to poor countries was not the solution to Third World problems, instead the third world should develop free economic measures to break the grip of poverty. US will send out nearly

2,000 soldiers and airmen to participate in a joint US—Sudanese and Egyptian military manoeuvres to be held next month. **CANADA:** The foreign travels of world leaders have become a subject of major controversy in many countries. Canadian Premier Trudeau, who visited 17 countries this year, made five trips and scheduled to attend North-South summit in Mexico, came under fire in Parliament. Canada has imposed visa restrictions on Indian nationals to stem the tide of Sikhs belonging to the Khalistan movement. **COLOMBIA:** US Vice President George Bush defended the El Salvadorian government and said it was a democratically elected one.

SOUTH ASIA

INDIA: The Reserve Bank of India warned the government of the widening trade deficit and not to be complacent over the increase in domestic production of oils. Scientists have not been able to offer a satisfactory explanation as to why thousands of birds fly into Jatinga village in Assam and then "commit suicide". Rajiv Gandhi feels that the secessionist movements in the country—Khalistan, Nagaland and Mizoram had foreign links. Scientists at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research have been working on the development of a computer that will respond to oral commands. Two Sikhs who belong to the Separatist Khalistan group gunned down three government officials of the Punjab State Government. **PAKISTAN:** Pakistani journalists held meetings throughout the country to demand an end to the press censorship imposed by Zia two years ago. **BANGLADESH:** Of the 72 candidates for the Bangladesh Presidential race 33 had withdrawn their nominations. According to PTI reports nearly 50,000 Bangladesh refugees have crossed into India.

SOUTH EAST ASIA

MALAYSIA: The trade relations between Malaysia and Britain has reached its lowest ebb since the former gained its independence 24 years ago. Malaysian Premier has decided that all further government contracts with Britain should be submitted for his personal scrutiny. It was also reported that all government ministries had been told to avoid buying from Pakistan. Indonesia has refused to accede to the request made by Malaysia for the right to hold military exercises in the Indonesian archipelagic waters with its other partners, Singapore, Britain, Australia and New Zealand. The Malaysian premier said that the needs of the nation and the people must always override the freedom of the Press. **BURMA:** Burmese President Ne Win will step down next month to allow a successor to be chosen as head of the state. **PHILIPPINES:** The OPEC countries will freeze oil in 1982 to allow the world's economy to recover from the ill effects of the recession. **THAILAND:** Indian Premier Indira Gandhi's statement that Thailand

sent troops into Kampuchea has angered the Thais. They charged it to be "inflammatory and extremely irresponsible" and could strain relations between the two countries. Heavy fighting between Kampuchean forces and Khmer Rouge regime occurred near the Thai border. **CHINA:** The rehabilitated Chinese writer Hu Feng was re-admitted to the Chinese Writers Association. He was disgraced as a counter revolutionary by Mao Tse Tung in 1955. In view of the flexibility shown by the US and PLO with regard to Middle East problems China feels that US should press Israel to make more concessions and compromises to device a comprehensive and just settlement.

WEST ASIA

IRAN: The Kurdish rebels may join hands with the National Resistance Council set up by ousted President Bani Sadr and the leader of Mujahadeen, Nassud Rajavi. Mujahadin groups claimed that authorities in Iran executed 100 school children for participating in a demonstration in Teheran. According to Amnesty International 3,350 people (of which 1,800 since Bani Sadr was ousted) have been executed in Iran since the Islamic Revolution. Iranian Authorities have said that King Khalid of Saudi Arabia may suffer a fate like Egyptian President Sadat. **ISRAEL:** Israeli Premier Menachem Begin said that Morocco's decision not to attend Egyptian President's funeral because of his presence was a hypocrisy because the King of Morocco himself had invited Begin to visit Morocco. Israeli soldier-politician Moshe Dayan died on October 16. He played a prominent role in Israeli affairs since its creation.

EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM: The Monday Club, a right wing pressure group of parliamentarians of the ruling Conservative Party has proposed that West Indian and Asian immigrants should be encouraged to return to their countries of origin. At least 200,000 should leave every year and they be granted 5,000 to 6,000 sterling as resettlement grants. Former Premier Edward Heath has called for open revolt against the economic policies of Premier Thatcher. At the annual conference of the Conservative Party, a Government Minister rejected the call for the repatriation of coloured immigrants as a fantasy. Britain's Finance Minister Sir Geoffrey Howe said that government would not retreat from the tough economic policies. The Nobel prize for Literature this year was won by Elias Canetti, a Bulgarian born writer. His writings were marked by a broad outlook, a wealth of ideas and artistic power. He is now a British citizen. **WEST GERMANY:** Nearly 250,000 to 300,000 anti-war and anti-rearmament pacifists staged a peaceful demonstration in Bonn. The demonstrators had harsher words against US rearmament policies than for Soviet SS 20 missiles. The organisers of this rally may form a new pacifist

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and neutralist political party in West Germany. Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev will visit West Germany on November 23/24. **SOVIET UNION:** During the 64th anniversary of October 7 revolution, the Communist Party paper *Pravda* devoted 21 of the 79 traditional slogans to urge the Soviet citizens to make special efforts to improve the economic performance of the country. Tass described the mass rally in Bonn as a milestone in the struggle for disarmament. The Soviet Union condemned US military build up in and around Egypt. Archaeologists, have unearthed the country palace of the Western Asian despot Tamerlane, who modelled himself on the Mongolian emperor Genghis Khau. He terrorised China, India and Persia in the 14th and 15th centuries. **POLAND:** Poland has continued to be plagued with strike threats, low living standards and challenge to communist authorities. About 12,000 women workers in southern Warsaw struck work demanding more food. **FRANCE:** The Secretary General of the Islamic Conference (a group of 40 Islamic States) said that the Arab country questioned the existence of Israel but they were not willing to extend gratuitous recognition without anything in exchange. **BELGIUM:** In an address to Belgian Institute of International Relations Mr. Zogladin, a deputy chief of the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee said that Soviet Union would withdraw its SS20 nuclear missiles aimed at NATO allies if the US was willing to reciprocate by giving up plans to instal more weaponry in Europe. The language issue may become a major issue in next month's general elections in Belgium. The order to close a Dutch language medium school has led to protest.

AFRICA

EGYPT: Egyptian security forces had knowledge of a plot to assassinate President Sadat three weeks before and in fact arrested some of them. CIA had been entrusted with the task of overlooking the personal security of Sadat and spent millions of dollars since he assumed office in 1975. Preliminary investigations showed that revenge and Islamic bigotry were the main motives behind the assassination of Sadat. The widow of Sadat said that she expected her husband to be killed for his forthrightness. All the Arab countries, excepting Oman, Somalia and Sudan, boycotted Sadat's funeral. US was well represented at the funeral by its Secretary of State Alexander Haig and three former Presidents Nixon, Ford and Carter. Israel was represented by her Premier Menachem Begin. The new leaders of Egypt including vice President Hosni Mubarak assured the leaders who gathered at the funeral that Egypt would continue Sadat's policies and his policy towards Israel would be maintained. Late President Sadat just before his assassination said in an interview with West German Der Spiegel that Moslem extremists may be

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a source of trouble once he was gone and Libya may attack Sudan. 18 army officials were dismissed for their religious extremism. Hosni Mghammed was chosen as successor to President Sadat in a nation wide referendum. He received 98.46 percent of the votes cast. US has sent two AWACS planes to do reconnaissance work along Egyptian border with Libya and they have gone into action immediately on arrival in Cairo. The AWACS are manned by Americans and are fully under US Control. **LIBYA:** Henceforth Oct 11 will be a public holiday in Libya to celebrate the heroic action of the assassins of President Anwar Ssdad of Egypt. Libyan officials were of the view that new President of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak would face trouble if he adhered to the policy of his assassinated President. PLO will stand by Libya if it were to be attacked. This came in response to Sudanese President's statetment that Sudan is prepared to serve as a launching pad for any US-Sudanese-Egyptian-united attack on Libya. **MOROCCO:** King Hassan of Morocco complained to world leaders that Sam'6 and Sam'8 missiles were used to shoot down an American made Hercules C-130 and French made Mirage F-1 fighter planes belonging to Morocco by Pollissario guerillas. **SOUTH AFRICA:** South African foreign minister Pik Botha said that the UN partiality towards SWAPO made elections under UN auspices in Namibia questionable.



POEM

DARK FORESTS GROW

Despair lies etched
On those hope-less faces
Dark forests grow
In radiant places.

Words may form
A string of pearls,
Or slither down
As balls of dung,

Which spatter minds
With foetid hate,
Nor does its stench
From your lips abate.

Anniawatte
Kandy
14.9.81.

P. Amerasinghe

A Critical Evaluation

By Alpha

WHEN PRESIDENT SADAT cracked down a few weeks ago on the entire spectrum of the political opposition in his country ranging from extreme Islamic fundamentalists to the moderates like Heikal who indulge in mild academic dissent, it was clear that he had reached the point of no return so far as popular support inside the country was concerned. Sadat, it will be recalled, had earlier suppressed all shades of Liberals and Leftists (Nasser had imprisoned only selected Marxists). Mild Fabians like Ali Sabri still languish in Sadat's gaols. This brutal suppression of political dissent—as the Shah had done in Iran—helped the growth of the Islamic fundamentalists and other extreme religious groups which like the Muslim Brotherhood had originally been fostered, encouraged and financed by reactionaries in the West and elsewhere in order to fight and eliminate the anti-Imperialists, socialists and communists. But, Islamic Fundamentalists have turned out to be vicious nationalists totally opposed to Western imperialism. So far they have dethroned the Shah, the biggest single agent of Imperialism in this era and shattered his empire, and have now been responsible for the assassination of Sadat whom Imperialism has adopted as one of its replacements for the Shah. Sadat grew up in the shadow of Nasser's Arab nationalism and unrelenting anti-imperialism. But, the slow process of economic development which he thought was due to the permanent state of war with Israel and continuing hostility of the developed world made the impatient Sadat (who wanted to do better than Nasser) turn to the US. He wanted quick and spectacular results. Slowly but surely he discarded Nasser's policies and programme and imprisoned his closest lieutenants. He broke with the Soviet Union and threw out over 20,000 Russians out of Egypt. All this could only lead to Camp David. He went to Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, the arch enemy of the Arabs. But he succeeded, temporarily at least, in selling Camp David peace to the Egyptians lost in frustration and war-weariness. Egypt had been a front line state since 1948 and had been involved in three wars with Israel. The Egyptian people were tired of a permanent war psychosis and a never-ending war economy. Sadat capitalised on this. His peace treaty with Israel had, at the start, the support of his own people although it was rejected by the overwhelming majority of the Arab countries. Egypt was thrown out of the Arab League. The majority of the non-aligned also condemned the Camp David Accords but they failed to throw Egypt out of the Movement. *But Sadat in his enthusiasm for the US went further*

than the Camp David Accords. He offered to be USA's gendarme in the Middle East. When the people of Iran threw out the Shah, Sadat gave asylum to the Shah and his family (what is to happen to them now?) and he re-doubled his efforts to become Washington's chief operative military arm not only in the Arab world but in the entire region. In spite of the terms of the Camp David Accords about Palestinian autonomy, Israel has kept on increasing its permanent settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza strip no doubt as a prelude to total annexation of the occupied Arab territories. There was nothing Sadat could do except to indulge in more shadow-boxing negotiations.

BUT UNMINDFUL OF ISRAELI BACKTRACKING on the Palestinian question, Sadat did something which no Arab country would openly do today, namely, permit the US to set up bases on Egyptian territory and also provide facilities for USA's Rapid Deployment Force which even the pro-West Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States do not want. The *People's Tribune* of Chicago of September 24, 1981, had an interesting piece about PENTAGON'S OUTPOST IN EGYPT: "While cutting social services in the US, the Reagan administration is asking Congress for \$ 106 million to renovate a strategic Egyptian military base. Egypt's Red Sea military base, Ras Banas, could accommodate US fighter jets, B-52 bombers and a division of 18,000 troops. This coastal base will complement two other US bases in Egypt one of which was the launching pad for last year's disastrous "rescue attempt" in the Iranian desert. Every ton of weapons that the Pentagon ships to Egypt pushes the Middle East and the Horn of Africa closer to war. Three hundred and fifty Sidewinder air-to-air missiles, 600 Maverick air-to-surface missiles and over 40 F-16 fighter planes have recently been delivered to Egypt. Sophisticated Hawk surface-to-air missiles will arrive in early 1982, along with a new 'air defensive system'. All these new armaments are in addition to an agreement to sell Egypt two US-built nuclear power stations. Westinghouse has already drawn up plans for a nuclear power station near Alexandria. The Reagan administration is asking Congress to permit it to sell nuclear reactors and uranium fuel to Egypt. "The Pentagon is trying to create a formal anti-socialist block in northeast Africa and the Middle East to encircle Ethiopia. Ethiopia has responded by allying itself with South Yemen and Libya. The Horn of Africa will receive 400 million, or 39 per cent of all US military aid to Africa, in 1982. Ethiopia is, of course, excluded from this 'generous aid' and rightly feels that the firepower is aimed at its revolution. US allies in the Horn—Sudan Djibouti, Somalia and Kenya—surround Ethiopia. Egypt will receive a substantial chunk of the \$6.9 billion in foreign military sales to Africa in 1982. Sudan, which has recently moved back into complete

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alignment with Egypt, will be the largest recipient of US military aid to Black Africa, receiving \$100 million worth of arms in 1982 as compared to \$ 30 million in 1981. If US airbase facilities at Embakas, and Nanyuki airports in Kenya are included along with US Navy facilities at Mombasa, Kenya, Ethiopia is half-encircled by eight US bases. The bases and defence installations in Saudi Arabia complete the circle. Egypt is one of the main suppliers of US and NATO weapons to Somalia, using US-provided C-130 transport planes to make the deliveries. Egyptian military advisers are training Somali troops to continue invasions into Ethiopia's Ogaden region. US complicity in Somalia aggression is confirmed by the \$ 78.5 million in overall aid for 1982 and \$ 350,000 for military training programs put aside for Somalia in 1982. The recent two-hour meeting in Somalia between US Congressmen and the Western Somali Liberation Front demonstrates US support for this organisation. Egypt will gain congressional approval of funds for Ras Banas at a price. Previously both Carter and Reagan refused to expand Ras Banas unless legal title to the base was given to the US. Ras Banas will be available to the US military when necessary, whether it be for intervention, surveillance, gunboat diplomacy or full-scale imperialist war."

AT FIRST, Sadat had been apologetic about his role as a willing gendarme of the US, but in more recent times he adopted a brazen stance. At moments one felt that he had even thrown discretion to the winds. Take for instance his disclosure about the supply of arms to the mercenary Afghan "rebels" in Pakistan. The *Ceylon Observer*, 24/9/81, published a *Reuter* despatch datelined New York, September 23, under the heading: \$ 100M ARMS FOR AFGHAN REBELS. It read: "An American television network said tonight the US, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and China involved in a covert operation to send arms to guerillas fighting Soviet troops in Afghanistan. ABC television, which gave no source, said more than 100 million worth of arms had reached guerilla bases in Pakistan and the Reagan administration recently ordered the flow increased in an operation co-ordinated by the CIA. The report followed an interview by President Anwar Sadat of Egypt on ABC television yesterday, in which he said the US had been buying arms from Egypt for the Afghan guerillas since the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan 21 months ago. In Washington, the State Department declined to comment on tonight's report. ABC said the weapons involved—almost all of them Soviet-made and including SAM-7 surface-to-air missiles—were bought from Egypt and China with US and Saudi Arabian money. ABC said Egypt provided training and weapons to the Afghan guerillas and China has promised to allow American planes to fly over its territory and provide overland supply routes if the Afghan-Pakistani border is closed." On the next day the *Ceylon Daily News* published another *Reuter*

report: **SADAT REVEALS SECRET: US BOUGHT ARMS FROM CAIRO FOR AFGHAN REBELS.** "Egyptian President Anwar Sadat said on US television yesterday that the United States had been secretly buying arms from Egypt to send to guerilla fighting Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Asked for comment, a State Department spokesman in Washington said: "As is usual practice we do not comment on such reports". President Sadat told NBC television network's correspondent in Cairo that the covert operation had been going on since the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan 21 months ago. 'Let me reveal this secret', he said, 'the first moment the Afghani incident took place the US contacted me here and the transport of armaments to the Afghans started from Cairo on US planes.' He said the arms were Soviet-made, supplied to Egypt during its period of friendly relations with Moscow before the 1973 Middle East war. Mr. Sadat declined to say how the arms were sent to Afghan guerillas, but NBC quoted a high government official in Cairo as saying the arms were flown to Pakistan, where many of the guerillas are based. The official said the arms now being sent were Egyptian made replicas of the Soviet originals. The State Department spokesman said last night the bulk of the arms in Afghan nationalist hands had been obtained from indigenous sources: 'These include arms captured from the Soviets from defecting or cooperating Afghan army personnel and existing in local hands', he said, Mr. Sadat said in the interview that the United States had paid for the weapons. 'I opened my stores to them. But you (the United States) were very generous. You have also paid for the armaments', he said, He said the shipments would continue to assist his Moslem brothers and demonstrate his will to fight communism, 'I shall continue to do this until the Afghans get rid of the Soviets out of their country', he said..."

UP TO THIS TIME, Western propaganda had maintained the fiction that Soviet-made weapons in the hands of the "rebels" had all been captured from Soviet soldiers, Afghan government troops and defectors. Sadat's revelations have however given the lie direct to this propaganda myth the US has built up since the Saur Revolution. Why Sadat should let this cat out of the bag at this time is a puzzle? It is unconceivable that the US State Department would have wanted this "leak". Did Sadat open his mouth wide to show how he was not only helping "his Moslem brothers" in Afghanistan but also how close he was to the Americans in covert cloak and dagger operations. And this may have been intended as a curtain raiser to remind the Israelis during the continuing talks on the Palestinian question how much Americans were obliged to him in the pursuit of their policies in Afghanistan and elsewhere. But some knowledgeable observers correctly felt that Sadat had begun to slip. His isolation from other Arab countries had evidently begun to tell on him. Even Saudi Arabia

persisted in its opposition to the Camp David Accords and has taken its alternative 8-point Peace Plan to the UN. But what must have rattled him most was the growing opposition at home. He thought that it would be good to tell the Islamic fundamentalists in Egypt what a good Muslim he was because of the Russian arms he sent to the Afghan "rebels". But this did not save him.

For many months now, there have been "rumours" in different West Asian capitals that the days of Sadat were numbered: that he would fall a victim to rebellious dissidents in his own army. The end came sooner than expected. Those caught and identified as being responsible for the assassination are believed to be only a small tip of the iceberg of revolt extending deep underneath Egyptian society. The way the assassination was carried out is an indication that Sadat no longer knew who his friends or foes were—even his Intelligence and Security Departments did not know. When this happens, it is the end for any leader be in it election or in battle. Abroad, his only friends were a few Western countries especially those closely tied to the US. In the Arab world only Sudan backed him fully, and Somalia and Morocco only symbolically and half-heartedly. In the Non-aligned camp, the pro-West countries defended him when called on to do so by the US or France or the UK. They do not stick their necks out for him. At home there is no doubt he had lost ground. In fact the ground has been cut under his feet sometime ago. His Pepsi-Cola economy created by US advisers had brought economic distress to the majority of the people—only a small elite of the rich have become richer. Sadat's "economic" miracle had turned out to be a mirage. Isolated abroad and his popularity at home denigrated, he was an easy target for the assassins. The BBC reported that the murder of Sadat did not evoke any of the sorrowful scenes witnessed at the time of Nasser's death. Most Arab countries have maintained a sullen silence while sending routine messages of condolence. The hardline Arab countries are jubilant. Non-aligned countries did not react the way they did on the death of Nasser or Tito. Only the US and some other Western countries are genuinely sorry that Sadat had passed away. *The Western media has found comfort that representatives from 80 countries were present at the funeral. But the number of Heads of State or Senior Ministers were few. It was not the kind of funeral one would expect for the Head of one of the most important countries in the Third or Non-aligned world.*

Next: After Sadat, What?



FILM CORPORATION

A Rejoinder

Sir

I refer to the letter of "Bystander" in your edition of the *Tribune* of September 5th 1981, under the heading "Point of View—Film Corporation". A Commission was appointed in September 1962, as a result of intensive public opinion and agitation against the film industry regarding production, importation, distribution and exhibition of films. After hearing evidence from the public, the industry and Film Societies, the Commission recommended the establishment of a Corporation with wide powers. Based on the recommendations of the Commission, His Excellency the President, who was the then Minister of State, submitted a Cabinet Memorandum and obtained approval from Cabinet for the establishment of the National Film Board; this, unfortunately did not materialise due to a change of Portfolios. When the SLFP Government came into power, the Film Corporation was established by Act No. 47 of 1971. The Film Commission recommended extensive powers for the Film Corporation (page 112 of the Film Commission Report sessional papers II of 1965). The legislature however confined those powers to areas which would enable the Corporation to achieve the objects as laid down in para 4 of the S.F.C. Act. The subsequent amendments 45 of 1981 were introduced to rectify two omissions of the Main Act. (1) To supervise cinemas regarding adequate services and facilities necessary for the convenience and safety of patrons and workers in cinemas; this amendment is similar to powers given under the Consumer Protection Act and these provisions can only be enforced to safeguard the patrons and the workers in cinemas; (ii) to deal with the immunity of the servants and agents of the N.F.C. regarding the Bonafide acts. This statutory provision is found in most of the other government corporations.

Para 2 of "Bystanders" article states that the "NFC has not acted in the spirit of service to the people of Sri Lanka, but has placed the profit making mania at the apex of its sense of values". The following facts will belie this statement: (i) Prior to the Corporation coming into existence, about sixty new Tamil films were screened compared to the sad fact that only six to eight Sinhala films were released. However, after the establishment of this Corporation, this anomaly has been reversed and now we screen a minimum of 32 new Sinhala films and from next year, we hope to increase this number to 38 as we are introducing the 6th Circuit as from January 1982. This new circuit was possible due to the new cinemas that were built, and is being introduced only after

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consulting the Film Producers and Exhibitors' Associations. We agree that the Sinhala film producers have to wait a number of years before their films are released; that is because we have not controlled or restricted the production of new films. This problem will be eased with the introduction of the 6th Circuit. As for nationally produced Tamil films there is no delay in screening them, (ii) At present, the Corporation has increased the number of Tamil prints released from 3 to 5. Prior to this year only 3 prints of each Tamil film were imported; and released in Colombo South, Colombo North and Jaffna. This year 5 new Tamil prints were released simultaneously giving more opportunities to the Tamil speaking communities in the Eastern and Central Provinces to view new films without much delay. The Corporation has taken this action purely for the sake of service to the Tamil speaking people spread over Sri Lanka. The ordering of the two extra prints costs the Corporation an extra Rs. 700,000 at least per year for the films; (iii) The Corporation has given assistance to the National Film Industry by way of financial assistance as shown below.

Year	No. of films	Loans granted
1978	37	Rs. 3,668,173
1979	34	4,174,458
1980	48	8,528,359
1981	31	6,917,309

Our profits have certainly increased but that is by following good business methods. Our welfare work and revision of salaries to the Corporation employees exceed Rs. 2 million per year as from this year. We have given assistance and encouragement to local Tamil film production by way of granting of loans and organising seminars and competitions for Script Writers. Regarding the rescreening of old films in outstation cinemas, the "Bystander" should be enlightened of the distribution system that prevailed before the establishment of the Corporation. At that time certain outstation cinemas had to screen old films and films not in demand when they were not the favourites of the previous distributors. At present with the systematic distribution of films, outstation theatres do screen old films only during their gap periods and such periods when no new films are screened. To prevent the rescreening of old films the Corporation will have to import 50 to 60 prints of each film which would be a colossal wastage of money. In para 2, the "Bystander" has stated that the Corporation is in the practice of circulating damaged prints for screening in cinemas. Here again, we have to state that during the pre-Corporation era, there was no proper system of checking films and only privileged exhibitors were enjoying the right of screening undamaged films. The Corporation however made it obligatory on the Theatre owners to get condition reports before and after screening of films and strict check is main-

rained at the Corporation film stores too. Films will not be despatched to theatres if after screening condition reports are bad. However, there is a possibility of damaged prints being screened due to the fact that the theatre owners do not check properly the films after screening and that the film condition report does not indicate the correct position; this is beyond the control of the Corporation.

"Bystander's" next contention is that no legal action can be brought against the Corporation by an aggrieved party. In this connection, we wish to state that if the aggrieved party is prepared to establish the mala fide of the employees of the Corporation or if there is any breach of principle of natural justice, the aggrieved party has a cause of action in the Court of Law. "Bystander" states, "His Excellency the President has now given his consent to Liberty and Ceylon Theatres to import and exhibit KRS films". This statement is totally false and incorrect. I can categorically state that His Excellency the President has not given his consent to Liberty, Ceylon Theatres or any other party to import or exhibit any film or films. Only the NFC can import and distribute films in Sri Lanka. In para 4, "Bystander" maintains the position that most of the outstation cinemas have to wait in a long and tedious queue to get films. This happens under any system of distribution whether private or state. All the theatres in the Island cannot get simultaneous releases and during the pre-Corporation era, only a privileged lot were allowed to get films immediately after screening in the main centres. English and Tamil films as there were only a handful of Sinhala films produced then. Under the Corporation, a just and fair distribution system has been devised based on the precedence order and most of the theatre owners inclusive of all the Exhibitors Associations and the Producers Associations have approved and consented to the implementation of this precedence order. The precedence order is a list of cinemas prepared on the basis of aggregate marks received by each cinema. Local film makers have made representations that the importation of Hindi films is detrimental to the Local Film Industry and as the Corporation is duty bound to protect the Local industry, the Corporation had decided to import only quality Hindi films; on this basis "ANRUR" was imported and will be screened shortly. In para 5, the writer states that the Corporation is compelling theatre owners to run at a loss the locally produced films. The popularity of a film will be determined by the picture-going public and not by the theatre owner. Therefore, a theatre owner has no right to refuse a locally produced film before a fair chance is given by the public to determine whether a picture is popular or not. Films are not removed arbitrarily from theatres but are removed only if the stipulated holdovers (minimum collection) which

have been approved by the Producers and Exhibitors Associates are not maintained. If local films are not encouraged, it will be a national calamity and thousands of people engaged in the local film industry will be unemployed. I might also mention that no theatre has been closed down due to back of profits

Reference para 9 "Bystander" states that the learned Additional District Judge has passed strictures on the Corporation for not appearing in Courts. We did not appear in Court because we were not noticed to appear and this submission was made by Mr. Mark Fernando, our Attorney-at-Law and it was accepted by the learned Additional District Judge. In conclusion, we wish to state that all the rights and powers regarding distribution are exercised by the Corporation in consultation with all the Producers, Exhibitors and Picture-goers Associations of the island. We wish to categorically state that the powers we have are used in the most restrained and prudent manner in the interest of the National Cinema and the general public.

Anton Wickremasinghe

Chairman,

National Film Corporation.

October 9, 1981.



VISIT TO KOTTE

Parangia Kotte Gia

By R. Kahawita

A few days ago we were able to smuggle ourselves to the "Island" to see the "Parliamentary Complex" taking shape with creditable speed. It took us just fifteen minutes from Colombo Seven to get there. From Kanatte to Kotte the familiar countryside has been changed. If not for the signboard "Victoria Home for Incurables" we would not have been able to locate ourselves in the area. All the old landmarks—buildings, impressive trees, and the ubiquitous boutiques with bunches of yellow bananas dangling to entice a weary worker for a cup of "Kahata without milk" which we knew, have been obliterated from the scene as if in anger. Someone has daubed a pail of paint—an unique form of vengeance we see over the language issue on signboards. The area and approach roads look desolate right up to the security post at the entrance to the Complex. There is some charm in this desolation and the isolation of the peoples' "Supreme Legislative and Executive Body" from the people themselves. This was the kind of isolation the former kind of Kotte sought from the invading Portuguese. So that their strategy was to take the foreigners seeking an audience with the King along a detour to Sittawake and retrace their

steps after weeks of foot slogging, to the Audience Hall at Kotte. "Parangiya Kotte Giyawage" become a household word. It was not like that for us, and we hope it will be so to our people who want to seek an audience with their representatives, to end up in an epithet—"Singhalaya modaya"—Why? guess?

Even in its semi-finished stage, the concept is fantastic; an architectural composition well proportioned and balanced taking the viewer stage by stage to the central piece—"The National Assembly Hall—in tiers like a wedding cake with various arti-facts, flowing and cascading waters, rooftop arbours lawns and trees, stone paved pathways and parapets, which towers, to emphasise the grandeur that is within where our 169 representatives will deliberate, debate and decide, your and my future. We hope that this grandiose setting will always attract a full house without much gong ringing to find a quorum to conduct business. It is the rule today rather than the exception. We cannot blame our representatives for avoiding "the present House:" we did not conceive it. It was the idea of an Imperial Government from whom we wrenched power to be independent. However, we will be falling over each other to entertain the Imperial Head this month to an exhibition of what we have done since breaking away from the Imperial shoe-strings, and of course, ask a little more aid like Oliver Twist—"The Haves must glive to the Have-nots, otherwise what is the use of having, even if the having is behind a False Curtain". At the new Complex in "Jayanthi Duwa", we have a symbol of a new era, a new Constitution, and a new concept of a "King" whom the people will elect periodically—succession is not hereditary but how the "elected King" steered the ship of State during the preceding term of office.

The Complex has been conceived in the grandest scale to announce to the world what we wish to be even though our current external debt is running to 25,000,000 million rupees. Like infinity, this figure is beyond anybody's comprehension, so no one cares to question or raise an eyebrow in consternation. Monuments for the future keep springing up everywhere. "We, the Government, own and control the wealth of the Nation, what was with the Peoples now ours, so let us build to perpetuate our personality". This is what matters today. "Crumbs for the people whose wealth we confiscated and whose power we wield in their name, for our exaltation. The Complex is grandiose, we repeat. No grandiose conception was ever given shape overnight, but we have done it. So there are bound to be many short-comings, defects and errors of conception, mistakes in construction. Ruch means waste and sacrifice in quality and standards. Some concepts will not suit our life-styles. It is so vast, with several components to make, this plastic shape in concrete,

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glass and timber, it is understandably difficult to maintain a balance and be in keeping with the original vision of what it should be—encircled by sheets of water, flowering shrubbery, large trees in proportion to the structure, so that one does not dwarf the other—lawns of exotic grasses, “floating” gardens on roof tops, fountains and water-falls, pathways and lanes, collections of tropical rain water and discharging them to safety and so on. These are problems that will arise, like finding a fitting wall to hang the Portrait of a Mona Lisa, once the process of acquiring it is over. These and such other problems are what we have to find solutions to once “the acquisition is complete”.

Money may not be the problem, it has never been the case so far with us. The management and expertise will be the major issue. It has been so with the foreign contractor too who is doing his damnest best to maintain standards. It may be that many of us may not survive to see the shrubs in bloom, trees blossoming out, each a different colour each month, the lawns without zig-zag paths by unthinking strollers. These are not the considerations of the moment, like taking in the proportions of a Beaty Queen, let us not peer underneath. The whole is shapy and curvaceous, a beautiful composition off a painter’s brush, so to say, what is underneath will surface when in use. It may be even earlier, because there is no one to take care of what is completed and awaiting to be commissioned. As we mentioned, in the haste and rush to complete in time, many a detail will be missed or overlooked. It is now we have to look into these by those who are going to live with it and maintain it. All who are now involved in the creation will clean their tools and wash their hands and move out. Thereafter, what of maintenance, care and tending, oiling the wheels to move, keeping the colours fresh? It will not be like the story teller’s “Thereafter, they lived happily”—the toil and moil will start after the story ends. Are we ready for it? Though the picture is grand, the problem is to keep it that way for the future generations to draw inspiration from what we have created for their adulation and “service the loans we have taken to leave this legacy for them”!



FROM MELBOURNE

CHOGM End

By Beverley Roberts

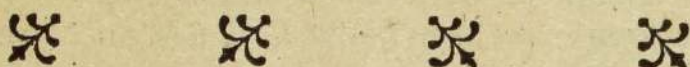
CHOGM HAS ENDED. The Commonwealth delegations have taken-off like a flight of flamingoes and are now beyond the sunset; leaving a vacuum behind in this fair city. However, we have sighed with relief. Once again, we can drive without hinderance, listen

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to bird-song in the Exhibition Gardens and relax over a cup of coffee at the Wentworth and Hilton hotels. No more will we be swooped upon by neurotic security men. The security force, too, can rest tired feet and calm frayed nerve. Melbourne—our conservation city of serene parks staid buildings and wide streets—has never experienced such a deluge of VIPs before. The effect has been overwhelming. And now tht CHOGM is over, the slow awakening from the razza-matazz of the event, is similar in effect to surfacing from a confused dream. In reflection we ask, what has the multi-million dollar Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting achieved? For Mr. Fraser, it has meant an elevation to the top ranks of world statesmanship; and for Australia an abundance of friendship and goodwill from Black Africa. Relations between Australia and the African nations have never been better. CHOGM’s achievements as far as the developing countries are concerned, are not so clear-cut. Despite the fact that North-South issues dominated the conference, the “Melbourne Declaration”—the end result of the debate—though strong and insistent on economic matters relating to the Third World, failed to prescribe any remedy to ease the pain of poverty and improve the ailing economies of the developing nations. The “Melbourne Declaration” which was attacked by Mr. Muldoon, the New Zealand Prime Minister, as “a pious declaration composed principally of platitudes”, did not offer any answers to Third World problems. The Declaration is no more than a protest document to the Cancun conference in Mexico, asking them to smarten-up their footwork. Thus, the onus of finding cures to Third World ills falls heavily on the shoulders of that forthcoming 22-nation meeting.

Even CHOGM’S final communipue is only a ‘paper tiger’. The pronouncements are strong. But pronouncements without even a hint of a suggestion for improvement, are practically worthless. The most the communique can achieve, is to jolt someone else into action; which usually never happens. The only positive measure taken by CHOGM, was the recommendation to form a team of experts to examine the effects of protectionism in trade on Third World nations within the Commonwealth. The suggestion which was put forward by Australia, was endorsed, and strongly supported by Mr. Premadasa. The communique called for prompt consultations on North-South issues to be held under the auspices of the UN; made a pronouncement against protectionism in trade; exhorted the Western “Contact” group to accelerate negotiations with South Africa for Namibian independence by early 1982; condemned apartheid, the invasion of Angola by South Africa and called for an arms embargo against the racist regime; urged for a nuclear free Pacific; and expressed concern at the growing tensions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The sentiments ex-

pressed are to be applauded. However, the impact of the communique would have been more careful if it contained some practical solutions, for some of the problems at least. The foregoing remarks should not suggest that CHOGM was a failure. On the contrary, it was a success. The conference retained its position as a powerful international forum and proved to be basically, a friendly and unified body, where views could be exchanged without causing deep divisions or unreconcilable animosity. For this achievement alone, the multi-million dollar expenditure is more than justified. Mr. Fraser should be proud of the fact that the Commonwealth emerged out of CHOGM, stronger and solid in unity. After all, it was his efforts that made it so, despite some unfortunate distractions.



MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR

Kick Back For Haig ?

Berlin, October 18:

NATO sources in Brussels say US Secretary of State Alexander Haig, is assured of a multi-million dollar kick-back from the giant military air-craft contractor "United Technologies" as a windfall from President Reagan's new nuclear arms race. Mr. Haig was president of United Technologies just before he became Secretary of State. Armament experts of NATO and disarmament negotiators in Geneva are equally critical of Reagan's "new hike" of nuclear arms race announced last Friday. NATO critics, including top US military officer Gen. David Jones think that the "Carter Plan" to deploy 200 MX missiles moving in 4,600 underground shelters was "better suited for security" than the "Reagan Plan" for 100 stationary missiles based in reinforced concrete silos. But Geneva-based disarmament experts of socialist states told this correspondent in a telephone interview "Reagan's hopes to save US offensive nuclear weapons in concrete silos is as illusory as the Carter plan to protect them in underground mobile shelters. If there is no strategic disarmament agreement, the Soviet Union will quickly achieve a capability to destroy in war any hidden weapon that can attack the socialist countries or any other part of the world. History has seen Soviet deterrent to match any US build-up for annihilation. Meanwhile the Soviet Union has accused Reagan in the strongest terms for having "embarked on a sharp escalation of the nuclear arms race".

Mr. Reagan's announcement, coming as it did immediately after an agreement between Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko and US counterpart Alexander Haig to open arms control talks in Geneva on 30th November, has dismayed many diplomats.

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They say, the fictitious booklet on Soviet military strength released by Secretary of Defence Casper Weinberger on 29th September was aimed to confuse and frighten NATO allies in Europe and cover up and justify Mr. Reagan's plan for a new nuclear arms race. Experts in Geneva who studied the Weinberger documentation on Soviet military strength said "it is not a fair comparison—in fact there was no comparison. The booklet magnified some Soviet military capabilities, hiding at the same time US strength in the same field for direct comparison. It focussed on Soviet tanks in Europe, while playing down US air-superiority. It excluded many missiles already on pads in West Germany that can destroy many socialist countries right tomorrow". The Soviet Union has denounced the booklet as a propaganda exercise in disinformation and mis-information to confuse and intimidate public opinion. Disarmament experts of the West German Social Democratic Party are also concerned that Mr. Reagan, under the bogey of "Soviet military superiority" is going to spend 180,000 million dollars immediately to build MX missiles new B-1 bombers, Trident ballistic missile submarines, 700 more cruise missiles, radar and spy satellites and many more AWACs. The new arms race will enormously increase the profit of Boeing contractors of MD system, General Dynamics, United Technologists and other giant military industrial complexes of the USA. Boeing will get 10,000 million dollars in revenue under MD plan, United Technologies, from which Mr. Alexander Haig received 1.2 million dollars in just one year as salary will get at least five billion dollars business. Trident Submarine Builders, General Dynamics and Lockheed will also get a lion's share of Reagan's military budget.

Special Correspondent.



NGUVU

Way of Life

By Bwana Rafiki

After a lapse of a year and a half my father was able to go for a drive to Galle Face in his own car and for the first time in nearly a decade he was driven by his son. It was quite a red-letter day for the son. My grandfather never missed a week going to Galle Face, and until the day of his death he never missed a race meet. I am told and he died well over ninety. The finest years of his life were spent in the days of the horse and carriage but when the car came along he duly acquired one. Cars were a mixed blessing because I think it was probably from that time that he no longer stayed on his estates for he could do the round trip in a day quite easily and did so each week until my father took over. By then my grandfather was nearly ninety. My father too was very regular in his visits to the estates and he used

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to stay here with my mother several days at a stretch. It was only after my return to the island that his visits there became less frequent. One day the estate house was broken into and from then on my mother had the estate superintendent living there which was I think a great mistake. Until then the only person who had ever occupied it except for the family was a relation of ours by marriage who ran the estate while there. My long lost cousin who returned to the island after twenty-seven years had a long chat with me and thought that by my talking so much about community I had quite given up my worship of God. It came as a momentary shock to me his saying this. Family taxes took up an important part of my time yesterday.

Wednesday was *poya* and I found I had all but lost my voice when I got up. In fact my voice sounded so cracked I thought I had difficulty making myself clear on the telephone. My doctor put down my frequent feeling of tiredness to depression and treated both that and my throat. By evening I had almost a normal voice. There were signs of a threatening cold by then. Mr cousin's advice had been, get to bed with a couple of disprins, and he was probably right for I felt I had a temperature in the evening. I had refrained from taking the disprins for I was shortly to see my doctor. By the following morning my voice was almost normal and I felt as right as rain. Yet I slept in the bus to the estate. Anyway it was nice having an evening in bed, getting up only to write *Nguvu*. I slept deeply without a mosquito net. When I reached the estate yesterday it was 1 p.m. and I was kept busy till 8.45 p.m. I rested and sent the superintendent off for his dinner. By then I was hours late for a dinner appointment in Colombo, but I forlornly thought I must yet try to get to Colombo. When I had rested and my factor returned I went to the main road and within ten minutes what must have been an unscheduled bus turned up and took me six miles along my route. There was another bus there waiting to take me another fifteen miles on. By then I was on a major trunk route but there were no buses and so I signalled traffic for a lift. A government official turned back in his car and gave me a lift into Colombo. There had been thieving on the estate, six trees picked and some of the cattle were in a dreadful way with wounds.

The year following my return to the island seems to have been a very good year for coconuts if my memory serves me right as regards the records we keep. Then the months that coincided with the curfew in 1971 seems to have yielded enormous crops and that was generally the case everywhere. Now I know that people broke the curfew with impunity in country places, but it would have been quite a different story for them if they had been caught or shot stealing coconuts. In addition to the watcher's bullet they would probably have received another bullet in the head and no questions asked. This makes me wonder if stealing is the main cause of

poor crops. I have a feeling that stealing coconuts is as much a game as that of a poacher in England poaching, or a Masai tribesman in East Africa stealing cattle, being just a way of life and as much a battle of wits as that of a card player playing bridge. Friday I was in Colombo helping christening boats. As I usually do I got away very late to get to a place called Mankulam on the Jaffna Road. I missed the 3.15 p.m. train which would probably have got me there too late anyway and caught a Trincomalee bus which dropped me at Dambulla well after dark. I slept all the way. I had not long to wait before another bus took me all the way to Kekirawa, which actually is not so far off from Dambulla. Then another bus took me to Anuradhapura. I was in a quandary where to stay, both possible places being quite a walk but in opposite directions. I decided to go for the Anuradhapura Puliyankulam place and drew a blank there. A Medawaehchiya bus dropped me at the turn off to where I wanted to go. When I got back to the main road at nearly midnight a bus from Batticaloa to Jaffna stopped to pick me up and dropped me off at Mankulam. I was lucky to find a place to sleep at 2.30 a.m.

INDIAN OCEAN

Diego Garcia

Another round of the work to expand and modernise the US military base is beginning on Diego Garcia Island in the Indian Ocean. The aim of the project is to make it possible for the base to cater to nuclear bombers B-52 fully loaded with fuel and bombs. This shows once again that Washington, ignoring the resolute protests of a majority of the coastal states, does not intend to give up its plans to turn Diego Garcia into the main base for building up its armed forces in the Indian Ocean. Directly conniving at these plans of the US administration is the British government which has recently consented to the modernisation of the base situated on the island illegitimately alienated by Great Britain from the state of Mauritius and transferred to the Pentagon on lease. Washington is taking steps to suppress all protests in Mauritius against the use of Diego Garcia by the US militarists. The newspaper *Le Mauricien* reported that the Americans had a plan for the assassination of Paul Berenger, general secretary of the main opposition party, the Mauritian Militant Movement, which resolutely works for the abolition of the US base and the return of the island to Mauritius. What makes the modernisation of the Diego Garcia base particularly dangerous is the fact that this project is part of the unprecedented military preparations started by Washington in the Indian Ocean, disregarding the UN decision to turn it into a zone of peace. These preparations cover the construction of new bases, arms deliveries to regimes with agree, to the detriment of national interests to cooperate with Washington in carrying out its dangerous plans, and the creation of the notorious "quick deployment corps" - APN

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5th Floor, National Housing Secretariat,
Sir Chittampalam Gardiner Mawatha,
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CONFIDENTIALLY

Kahawita - on Dambala

IS IT NOT REFRESHING to receive a letter from the indomitable fighter for a better Sri Lanka, R. Kahawita, on Dambala, in regard to the inquiry now being conducted against a Scientist for 'bringing the government into disrepute' by publicly expressing his views on the dambala show-biz? That we cannot do better than reproduce this letter in full: "Once again Dambala has appeared in the 'News'. This time in the *Confidentially* column of the *Tribune*. From what we gather from this is that dambala is not so palatable a dish as promised by International Researchers who had hoped to push Dambala into the dietary patterns of our people. It has turned sour, at least to one of our Consultant Scientists for telling 'the scientific truth' about this much despised vegetable. Our village folk know more about it than all the scientists (pseudo or otherwise) put together. It is one thing to be truthful about what you know, it is another thing to be put on the mat with a threat to be sacked for being an honest scientist. A scientist must be honest if knowledge is to progress. It is this kind of a scientist who was able to put a human on the Moon. Those who say 'no' are thought to be lunatics today in some quarters. The need for, and validity of, the Dambala programme has not been decided by scientists but by a bureaucracy whose bread and butter depends on saying 'Yes' to everything. A forthright comment by a Consultant Scientist is said to have 'brought the Government into disrepute.'

How?

"GOD HAVE MERCY on our bureaucrats for leading the Government up the 'Garden Path' dangling a Dambala in front. We begin to doubt seriously the competence of our present-day breed of bureaucrats to run a Government. All this bungling and muddling cannot be due to political interference as alleged in an article in the *Sun* this week. If it is so, we cannot blame our politicians. They have a commitment, and to fulfil that they do not have the administrative experience, not the broad spectrum of what the country needs and how to achieve it. This has to be filled by an experienced and intelligent bureaucracy. Have we got them? Maybe because we have not got them that they want the scientists also to be just 'yes men' and follow the furrow of the buffaloes. We earnestly pray that our scientists do not fall prey to this kind of miasma. This country has to progress in spite of muddled thinking of the bureaucracy. Let the scientists be truthful and give correct advice to the politician. The choice is their's and if they do not accept the advise, the scientists will have the satisfaction of saying the truth and for doing so no sacrifice

is too great, even if this particular scientist has to don sack cloth and beg in the streets for a living. He need not do that. His knowledge and experience cannot be destroyed by waving a stupid bureaucratic magic wand. Today the work place of a scientist is the world. He has the open road. At the national level the whole 'Dambala episode' and the action taken by the Government undermines the confidence of the scientific world in the Government machinery. This particular A. R. which the bureaucrats have invoked to castigate an honest scientist is as old as the hills. During the colonial days it was invoked to get rid of a loquacious officer critical of the colonial government. Today it is not so. The present government is in because of your vote and mine. Under the Constitution we are supreme and we have the intrinsic right to criticise and expose the wrongs of a Government we have put into the seats of power. If the bureaucrat does not understand this, then the various Scientific Guilds should take up the matter at the highest level. In this context, individuals do not matter. It is the principle—'Should the expertise, experience and contributions to knowledge of a scientist be controlled by the bureaucracy?' Our own suggestion to the erring bureaucrats who have misdirected themselves behind the cover of an archaic Administrative Regulation is, 'Drop it and forget this Dambala episode. It does no good to the administration. The relevant 'A. R.' died with the end of colonialism in this country. Therefore why revive it, unless to pay off an internal vendetta. After uttering accusations and giving the highest publicity to such utterances, and then withdrawing them is the current practice in our highest democratic institutions. Following this precedent why not instruct this particular scientist too to "withdraw" though we do not advise him to do so. 'Truth' can be denied but it does not make it false', even if that denial is given the widest publicity."

THAT Mr. KAHAWITA HAS PUT FORWARD a "way out" to satisfy the requirements of the A. R. consistent with the precedent set out recently in high quarters? That *Tribune* however cannot see how a technical breach of an obsolete A. R., if there was one at all should call for a backtracking "convenient" apologia? That in our view the article in question *did* not bring the government into disrepute? That it would have added to the democratic image of Sri Lanka if bureaucrats did not rush into putting the scientist on trial? That it is not too late for the bureaucracy to make amends?



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