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# Letter From The Editor

IN THE DAYS OF ANCIENT SINHALA KINGS, proclamations, pronouncements and decrees from the ruling monarch were delivered to the appropriate places by high-ranking ministerial or feudal dignitaries mounted on ceremonially-captisoned elephants. The picture on the cover is symbolic of a royal message to his subjects. The people have recently received such a message from our rulers in the NSA: that the country will henceforth be governed under a new Constitution. Unlike in kingly or colonial days, we do not have to accept, without question or discussion, what our masters hand down to us. Today, we have the power, however laborious and cumbersome it may be to exercise it, to bring about amendments and changes. The Draft Constitution before the nation now and which is under active discussion is an interesting document. It is an attempt at constitution-making which is unique in many ways. Those who have drawn it up have borrowed from the democratic parliamentary systems that prevail in several countries in a courageous attempt to fashion something that will suit Sri Lanka and her people at this juncture of her history. We have drawn a great deal from the Westminster Model of the British—(separatism, of powers, the rule of law, the independence of judiciary etc. etc.)—we have prepared a mix from the American and French systems of presidential executive power, we have devised a system of proportional representation very close to what obtains in the Federal Republic of Germany and we have procedures and measures which have grown out of the efforts of the people to govern themselves in a democratic way in the contemporary era. There are a few provisions in the Constitution Tribune would have liked were different. For instance, the President, we feel should have the power to appoint Ministers from outside the legislature. This American way would have enabled the Chief Executive to draw on talent that usually does not find its way into the legislature. In our view, there should be greater safeguards to ensure the security of tenure of office of the judges of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal especially at times when there is a change of government. Judges of the highest tribunal can be really independent only if they were assured that they will not be thrown out everytime a government is changed. Nobody can have any regrets that the much-lamented Constitutional Court will be abolished. When the story of the legal process in the Felixian era from 1972 to 1977 comes to be written the Constitutional Court will provide material about what should be avoided if a Judiciary is to discharge its functions in the way it should. There are whispers that the Presidential Commission will be called upon to investigate the functioning of the Constitutional Court, but there are also other Courts and Departments (e.g. the Bribery Court and the Bribery Department) which must be probed thoroughly. Representations have, we believe, been made to the Presidential Commission on the "interference" with the Judiciary and the Judicial Progress in the period 1970-1977 and this is bound to bring to light a much of what has been talked of in whispers for a long time. The New Constitution will be catalyst of change. Proportional Representation will bring a new breed of parliamentarians into existence. District Administration and District Ministers will change the whole concept of local government.

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## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

### One Year After—4

Sri Lanka's welfare system has been attacked by people from outside and inside the country. It was pointed out, quite rightly, that the country could not afford it. The whole question has been critically examined in an article in the special number of the *London Financial Times* entitled **WELFARE SYSTEM UNDER ATTACK**.

"The present extent of Sri Lanka's welfare system can be illustrated by the price of tickets on its bus transport network. It costs just Rs. 5, that is less than 25p, to travel from the capital, Colombo to the hill resort town of Kandy more than 70 miles away. And as if this effective subsidy was not enough the buses leave at 15 minute intervals most hours of the day. The welfare state and its free or subsidised goods and services have become so developed in Sri Lanka that vast sections of the economy depend upon it. Apart from bus and train tickets, until recently nearly every family has benefited from a generous rice ration. Wheat, though rising in price, is also subsidised. Sugar is available on ration to children, and milk food for infants is supported by the State. Most medical and dental services are free, as is education right through to and including the tertiary level. There are generous loan facilities available to the farmer for growing rice, and fertilizer is provided at 25 per cent of its real cost. Almost uniquely outside the Middle East, petrol and kerosene prices remain artificially low. A gallon of fuel for the motorist costs about 45p. The total value of the subsidies was estimated by the finance Minister, Mr. Ronnie de Mel, in his budget speech

last November to be worth about Rs. 7bn (£250m) and on those parts of the system where the subsidy was most easily quantifiable, the figure was Rs. 3.2bn. The change in attitude towards subsidies by the Jayawardene regime from that of Mrs. Bandaranaike was evidenced when Mr. de Mel pointed out to Parliament that if this total had been available for development they would realise how many hundreds of thousands of people would have been employed on productive schemes in agriculture irrigation and industry of lasting benefit to the country. Although opposition political groups accuse the new government of a harshly Right-wing attitude to subsidies, there is no evidence yet that the Government wants to rid itself entirely of the subsidy element and pursue what would be considered a distortion-free economy. President Junius Jayawardene insists that health and education will remain free but hints that the flour subsidy will have to be considered and notes that the transport subsidy depends on the price of petrol. Far from being a planned programme of phasing out the subsidies, there seems to be an attitude almost of naivete about how the subsidies might eventually disappear. After last November's budget the rice ration is now only available to those who earn less than Rs. 300 a month. Even so this accounts for a large minority of the 14m population. At least a quarter of the potential, 4½ m labour force is unemployed and therefore a recipient of the ration. However, President Jayawardene says simply that the rice subsidy will automatically disappear with more employment. The precise extent of new employment opportunities will only emerge about now with the return from Europe of Mr. de Mel, where he has met the Consortium countries.

"The Government hopes that the development of the extensive Mahaweli irrigation scheme will provide employment in the canal, dam and settlement projects. President Jayawardene says this should break the back of the unemployment. In addition, he says, 150,000 new jobs have been created since last July as part of the previous regime's budget are implemented. Ticking off the various schemes, Sri Lanka's long-standing unemployment problem almost evaporates in thin air. Around 100,000 jobs are expected to be created by a 10 per cent increase in vacancies in governments and private industry—the 10 per cent apprentice scheme. Also each member of the National Assembly will send the names and qualifications of 1,000 unemployed constituents to a so-called job bank. Using the central bank computer it is intended to match the person with the vacancy—and almost instantly another 168,000 jobs are created. This scheme is in fact a refinement of the previous state of affairs—the chit system—where the signature of the local National Assembly member was required before a constituent could find a job in a public corporation.

"Substantial unemployment however, is likely to remain, and it is equally likely that any protest against this continuing state of affairs will come, as in 1971, from the student population. Even after the defeat of their Left wing parties in the elections, the students remain a vanguard of those who lose out in Sri Lanka society. According to the recently created Secretary for Higher Education, Dr. Stanley Kalpage, of the 4,000 graduates expected this year, all those from the engineering, medical and agricultural faculties can be expected to find jobs, as well as most from the science faculties. But for the arts graduates he admits



there will be problems. Precise estimates were not available but it is doubtful whether many of the 2,000 probable graduates in this category will find employment of their choice. When account is also taken of the 27,000 qualified candidates hunting for the 4,800 university places, it is not hard to see how Sri Lanka's problem of highly qualified unemployed has emerged.

"Although at the present the tension associated with the Tamil-Sinhala differences appears to outweigh the student-based potential for trouble, there have already been problems. The universities have been closed several times in the past year, and even schools had to be shut over one weekend because of Government fears of disturbances. This trouble and the legacy of disturbances left over since 1971 have led to a radical change in thinking by the new government about how Sri Lanka's universities should be structured. They have decided that centralised universities do not work, as present organised into six campuses, and their ultimate objective is therefore to organise their education to include what are called rural universities. There will be one or two such establishments in each of the 22 districts into which Sri Lanka is administratively divided. It is apparent that Government members have complete contempt for the lawlessness and anarchy which they consider had virtually taken over the university system. They talk of left-wing domination and bullying and admit almost with pride that student supporters of the ruling United National Party have been told to 'hit back'. They consider that the students were creating a sick society, that the basis of it was the residential universities, especially those containing arts students, and they

can move with confidence now because they have the silent majority on their side. Dr. Kalpage says thorough searches are made in the halls for explosives and weapons, and although extremist meetings are still held they are much more vigilant. The test of the Jayawardene Administration may be whether it can make changes in the welfare system without allowing the Left and the students to exploit resentment and opposition."

**It is only after July this year that the bigger onroads have begun into the subsidies. It is yet too early to say what the effect of the withdrawal of the subsidies will be on the "masses of the country," but the government is making a concerted attempt to cushion the withdrawal of subsidies with jobs in the FTZ, Mahaweli, the Greater Colombo Development Scheme, and the Housing Construction Programme.**

*Tribune* has, from the time this Government announced its new policies and programmes, stated that Sri Lanka was a guinea pig for the latest Trilateral-inspired IMF policies. This is amply borne out by newsreports in several local papers, but it would be sufficient to cite one from the *Ceylon Observer* of July 6, 1978: "Seven and a half million people continue to enjoy their rice subsidy following the recent changes in the rice rationing scheme introduced by government, final statistics prepared by the Food and Co-operative Ministry reveal. The number of persons who had their ration books invalidated was placed at 5.7 million. The Food Ministry has also identified 2.3 million children under 12 of families with an income below Rs. 300 per month as eligible to continue receiving

the subsidised sugar ration. A recent report prepared by the Food Ministry noted that the massive exercise of re-validating the ration books involving the country's total population was achieved 'without serious public uproar or other dislocation in spite of the barrage of opposition political propaganda'. The Acting Minister of Food and Co-operatives, Mr. Sarath Chandra Rajakaruna, has said in the report that the opposition propaganda directed against the changes in the rationing scheme in fact 'amounted to the incitement of people not to surrender their ration books.' The Acting Ministry says that the completion of this massive task without any serious problems have deeply impressed the World Bank and the IMF. Teams that came to Sri Lanka subsequently have informed us that they intend making a study of how this operation was done since 'it was their feeling that many lessons could be learned from it for use in other areas of the world.'

**The interesting and important point is that the World Bank and the IMF teams would be studying the "experiences" in Sri Lanka to use the lessons learnt in other areas of the world. Sri Lanka is admittedly a guinea pig for the World Bank and IMF, but what would happen to the guinea pig if the experiment fails or the pig turns obstinate and intransigent is yet to be seen. The treatment the IMF has meted out to certain other countries which did not respond to its "medicine" in the way the IMF had hoped they would is part of contemporary history and if Sri Lanka is to suffer such a fate, it is the UNP that will pay the price for it.**



The Minister of Finance, Mr. Ronnie de Mel, has only one theme in all his speeches—"cut all subsidies if Sri Lanka is to progress". Subsidies or jobs is the slogan. The President first raised this slogan, and it is repeated by members of the Cabinet. But the burden has fallen chiefly on the Finance Minister to push this slogan to the utmost limit. So far he has plugged this line before the NSA, Trade Chambers, middle-class cultural Associations, Professional Associations and the like. It is only the President who has ventured to push this line at public meetings.

The Finance Minister has also proclaimed that people must switch from wheat to rice and reduce the import bill. This is something *Tribune* has been urging for over fifteen years, but this Government like the last increased its wheat imports on a massive scale. This Government has also permitted the setting up of the "biggest flour mill in the East" at Trincomalee—the bran will be exported by the foreign company, but the wheat flour will be Sri Lanka's. What is this country to do with this flour? Export it in a world where more and more countries are buying only whole wheat!

Mr. de Mel's arguments are interesting. Very late in the day, he sees the virtues of promoting rice production by offering a better price for locally grown paddy. This is at least a welcome departure from the past (and even the present) when officials worked out the "cost of production" at rates and prices two years behind time (especially tractor charges, labour wages etc.) and fixed the "guaranteed price."

Mr. de Mel in a speech to the Muslim Culture Home on July 5 had said: "that the whole question of whether the local price of rice should be depressed had to be reconsidered. While the world

market price of rice is Rs. 5 the local price is somewhere round Rs. 3. He saw no reason why the local farmer should have to contend with this depressed price. The Minister said that Sri Lanka imported 700,000 tonnes of wheat flour. 'We have also had a bumper harvest, the biggest since independence and negotiations are now on to export 100,000 tonnes of rice. By the end of this year this might even be 500,000 tonnes', said Mr. de Mel. It was in this context, that the question of rice and flour imports had to be considered the Minister said. Perhaps the country would have to switch from wheat flour to rice flour. He hoped that public opinion would be created on the matter. Mr. de Mel was however confident that the country would be able to forge ahead following the liberalisation of the economy and the massive aid that was coming in. He said that Sri Lanka had a golden opportunity when it was granted independence. It was the only oasis of stability in an otherwise strife-torn region but we had let that opportunity pass. Now a massive effort was called for to revive the economy run down by seven years of family misrule. The aid that was forthcoming had to be complemented with a full mobilisation of resources in the country. He called for hardwork and co-operation from the people in this effort to rehabilitate the economy."

In an address to the Survey Draughtsmen's Union on July 7, the Finance Minister, Mr. Ronnie de Mel said: "The government could not give free rice every day, import wheat flour at Rs. 2 a pound and provide it to consumers at 80 cents or continue to provide fuel at half the import cost. Mr. de Mel further said the Government could no longer continue to subsidise bus and train fares. He pointed out that even

in socialist countries such as China and the Soviet Union nothing was provided free. In China, even to enter the zoo and the Museum one had to pay. We must follow their road to economic development if we are to provide more jobs, he stated. The Finance Minister stressed that the country could not achieve rapid development without some sacrifice made by the people. **However the Government will not slash all subsidies and impose hardship on the masses notwithstanding the demands of the World Bank and the IMF Mr. de Mel assured.** He observed that Sri Lankans employed abroad had a reputation as hard workers in those countries. 'Why can't they work as hard in their own country', he asked. **Any Government would like to raise wages but without economic growth this cannot be done", Mr. de Mel said.**

It is not clear whether the Development Programmes of the Government would do so well in the next one or two (or three) years to be able to cushion the increase of prices on the one hand and the removal of the subsidies on the other.

If one attempted a new price list for Sri Lanka on the basis of the IMF diktat, the figures would be staggeringly frightening. Train fares should go up double—only the free holiday warrant government servants will derive any benefit by this. Bus fares must go up three times. Petrol should cost well over Rs. 20 to Rs. 25 a gallon and diesel and kerosene should cost proportionately more. As it is, prices of everything should go up twice to five times from the 1977 pre-July figure by 1980/1981, but the question is whether the real incomes of people will go up proportionately to keep pace with the increase.

Only time will show.



## BETWEEN THE LINES

BY SERENDIB

### India's Experience

A great amount of euphoria has been let loose on Sri Lanka about the great potentialities of the IMF-sponsored loans, grants and assistance to Sri Lanka. Everything will turn out well if Sri Lanka is able to make good—that if it is able to register economic growth, end or reduce unemployment, increase the real income of wage-earners and also pay the interest charges and meet the repayment schedules of the IMF.

There is wishful thinking in UNP political circles in Sri Lanka that even if Sri Lanka does not make the grade, many of the rich leading Western countries will not be too hard on this country in order to keep it away from Communism and also because it upholds the democratic principle of free elections to change governments.

How far this wishful thinking is based on realities cannot be determined at the moment, but it will be useful to know just what would happen if the IMF and its Western sponsors turned sour—that is if the re-payment schedules were not maintained. The IMF has so far in other countries been mainly concerned with collecting the interest and capital of "donor" money-lending countries and the programmes for economic growth which debtor countries are anxious to pursue. It will be pertinent not only to know why the IMF lends and approves the lending. But the important question is what action it will take when borrowers default.

In this connection we reprint below an article from the New Delhi fortnightly *Secular Demo-*

*cracy* entitled IMF-WORLD BANK AID FOR AUTHORITARIANISM. This article was introduced by a note which read: "Many in the present establishment are happy over the brightening prospects of aid from the Consortium. Our Economic Correspondent points out that such aid has been available in ample measure to authoritarian Indira regime, and, in fact, to most dictatorships. The aid givers are only interested in securing control over the economies of the receiving countries."

The rest of the article is worth citing in extenso:

"The Aid Indian consortium of the Western countries and Japan at their Paris meeting, has pledged \$ 2.3 billion aid for the year 1978-79. This is 200 million dollars more than what was 'funnelled' into India last year. The World Bank will account for about 1.2 billion dollars of the pledged aid and the balance is to be made up by bilateral arrangements. According to our official economic experts, this bounty is the outcome of better appreciation of India's 'case for continuing aid', despite the fact that the country has foreign exchange reserves totalling over Rs. 4,500 or 5.5 billion dollars and foodgrain stocks of over 20 million tonnes. The aid pledged would thus provide additional foreign exchange to the extent of about half of our own reserves.

"What is India's case for continuing aid? The Indian economy according to the donor nations and our own aid experts, is still very much susceptible to the vagaries of the uncertain world economic situation and fluctuations of the weather. We are vulnerable, exposed as we are to the fall out from the world economic crisis and must be willing to pay the price for the benefits of 'interdependent growth'. Any effort to insulate our economy against the crisis in

the capitalist world would amount to following a selfish policy of autarky and would be against the set rules of the game. A dreadful prospect indeed!

"The consortium of 13 countries have found much for satisfaction in the Indian situation. David Hopper, Vice President of the World Bank (South Asia), has certified that the Indian economy is now 'strong and buoyant'. It is according to him, a 'far cry from the dark days' of the sixties and the early seventies when the outlook was so different. The same David Hopper, hopping through New Delhi in April, had felt 'encouraged' with both the Union budget and 'the vision presented by the new plan.' He discussed with government leaders and officials 'how the Bank might, in its programmes with India, be instrumental in assisting Government in the (Plan) objectives.'

"The World Bank was no less generous in its praise. In its report prepared for the consortium a few days earlier it gleefully endorsed the recent changes in sectoral allocations which would bring the country's economy to a more dynamic growth path. With hard headed realism it laid down that the new strategy would 'advance the date when the growth of the economy will once again be resources-constrained.' The report forecast that the trade deficit and the current account deficit would reach high levels during the second half of the current Five Year Plan. The flow of external assistance will once again become an important factor 'in equilibrating savings and investment as well as in balancing the external payments.'

"Thus the current economic situation and the new direction to growth the Government has been trying to impart, are well received by the Bank and the Aid India Co-



nors. They are particularly eloquent in their appreciation of the official concern for the rural poor incorporated in the Sixth Plan and other assorted programmes. What do the Aid India donors really feel about all this? To the economic experts of the consortium, the Indian strategy of rural development and giving a boost to agriculture, is only experimental. They are not convinced that it would be able to generate employment on a scale envisaged by the Indian authorities. More importantly, the donors are not satisfied with the Government's policies for boosting up the corporate sector to play its role. These reservations will not be lost on the eager aid seekers who can be counted on to 'rectify' the shortcomings with alacrity. (It has already been commented in these columns how Indian big business is pressing for more concessions in the context of the new strategy).

The massive pledge, however, has been presented, with the usual fanfare, as a tribute to the successful husbanding of the country's economy by the Janata Government. It is indeed, as much a token of the appreciation of the World Bank-IMF Combine and the donor nations of the government itself as of its policies. The donors are by no means idealist do-gooders. They are interested in their pound of flesh and know where praise and funds are good investment.

**"It may not be very flattering to the crusaders of freedom at the helm of affairs in the country to know that praise and funds were let loose by the same Bank-Fund combine and the western donor countries to the dictatorial regime of Indira Gandhi during the emergency.**

"The record of the did flow, is in fact very revealing. Net transfer of resources to India from abroad fell to about 0.8 per cent during

1970-73 when the country was trying to assert its independence of action in the management of its national economy and internal affairs as well as in foreign affairs. That was the time when the Fifth Plan was being prepared with a distinct socialist thrust and policies were adopted to streamline the production and distribution apparatus (as in the case of the foodgrain takeover) and close bilateral economic links were being forged with socialist countries. That was a period when India needed aid the most facing as it was, the massive influx of refugees from then Pakistan, the obligations of the Bangla Desh War and succes-

sive years of drought. West was angry with India and showed its annoyance.

"The turning point came in 1974 when the government began dismantling its earlier policies. The foodgrain trade was denationalised, and the architect of the grain takeover policy exiled to Moscow. With him went the other policies notably the finalisation of the Plan on the original pattern and efforts at strengthening of our economic relation with the Socialist countries in a bid to diversify our overall relations with other countries. The World Bank and Western lobby was articulate and powerful once again and the

## THE OPPOSITION—THE CONSCIENCE OF THE PEOPLE

(Text of a speech delivered by Fr. E. Crowther, S.J. at a recent public meeting in Batticaloa to receive Mr. Amirthalingam and other members of the TULF)

I will be brief as there are many speakers. I wish to congratulate and welcome Mr. Amirthalingam as the Leader of the Opposition. In a sense the Opposition and its leader are even more important than the governing party and its leader, the Prime Minister, who are usually called the Government. In reality, the Government consists of the house of representatives, with the party in power exercising one function and the opposition another. The Leader of the Opposition is the conscientious check of the whole body, its conscience in short. He is the conscience of the whole body and thus of the whole country. Lord Acton said: 'All power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. This is true not only of individual but also of political parties. But both can be saved from corrupting themselves and others by conscience. And in politics conscience is provided by the opposition and its leader. In private as well as in public life conscience can cause acute discomfort to a man or group enamoured of power. In both cases there is always the temptation to ignore or stifle conscience, and even to kill it, to put it out of existence. But true conscience never yields because it is the voice of God. Though it is a still, small voice, it will never yield to that other voice which loudly claims to be the voice of God the voice of the people, through a conventional constitutional fiction. I wish Mr. Amirthalingam to be the authentic voice of the people of Sri Lanka, of the whole of our island, unflinchingly to the end, as the friend of my boyhood did, the late Mr. S.J.V. Chelvanayakam.

Mr. Amirthalingam is also the Leader of the TULF. This is only one of his functions as leader of the Opposition. He will win credibility for the TULF only if he fights injustice wherever it is found?

**E. Crowther S.J.**



government soon enough began its attacks on the working class and repressive measures against the people. These policies led inevitably to the imposition of Emergency in June 1975.

"Let us see how the Western countries reacted to those developments. The United States—though its relations with India were supposed to be under strain—came out with Rs. 129 crores aid in 1975-76, about Rs. 60 crores more than in 1974-75. West Germany went a little better with disbursements totalling Rs. 160 crores. The IDA—the soft loans affiliate of the World Bank—pumped in an impressive Rs. 430 crores. The net inflow of foreign aid, to recapitulate, was going down from 1968-69, reaching the low figure of Rs. 159 crores in 1972-73. It began to rise sharply thereafter to Rs. 404 crore in 1973-74 and by a further 75 percent to Rs. 711 crores in 1974-75. Net inflow of aid rose to a record figure of Rs. 1153 crores during 1975-76, the year of the Emergency which far from inhibiting aid, only helped to stimulate it. In fact, the World Bank in its report to the Aid India Consortium in May 1976 revealed itself tellingly. Supporting the policies under the Emergency it said: "To support the Government of India's efforts to accelerate the rate of a economic development the aid community must continue to respond to India's needs with no less vigour than was displayed during the recent crisis year." The outcome was a pledged assistance of Rs. 1977 crores in 1976-77. The same kind of solicitude of the Western capitalist countries is evident in the endorsement of the present government's policies and the pledged bounty.

"Their hope is not merely back seat driving but a direct control of the economy. The operation calls for quite drastic policy measures; control of wage levels, dis-

ciplining of labour; exports on a selective basis and on stipulated terms, high interest rates, untrammelled opportunities for foreign private capital penetration and free licence to the private sector. This is the set pattern followed by the World Bank IMF axis *vis a vis* the developing nations. We deservedly qualify for the prize, witness our record of labour-baiting including wage-freeze, lockouts and killing; scuttling of all assets which sustain self-reliant path of development, adoption of low technology and stifling of heavy and basic industries; preferential position given to the private sector, especially the Big business; neglect of the public sector; concessions and subsidies given with growing liberality to the more entrenched sections in the production process and the readiness of the authorities to resort to law and order machinery to solve the consequent economic and social problems.

"It is the last component, namely resort to authoritarian measures to prop up the perverted economic system, that is the crux of the pattern of aid provided by the Bank-Fund agents of the Western exploiting nations. The record speaks for itself. About a year before Indira Gandhi imposed the emergency, the IMF announced that it agreed to the purchase by the Government... 'in support of Government programmes to reduce the rate of inflation, adjust the balance of payments and the economy as a whole'. Indira Gandhi reportedly obtained an IMF loan "by promising to freeze wages, increase interest rates, spur private investment and increase exports", according to her chief economic adviser, P. N. Dhar. To quote a perceptive commentator, Jeremiah Novak, the result of this agreement was that, in the next 12 months, Indira Gandhi imposed

economic policies that spurred severe unrest and led her to declare a dictatorship one year later. The example was by no means unique. Many dictatorships in the developing countries are today supported by the "Western run world economic systems personified by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund." Not just that; the "dynamics and policies" of the IMF-World Bank systems and other agencies such as the Export Bank, foster dictatorships as Chile, Iran, South Korea and the Philippines. Most aid to dictatorships comes from the international lending institutions, according to quite revealing data provided by the Centre for International Policy—94 percent of aid in the Philippines and 78 percent in South Korea, James Morell, an associate of the Centre testified before a US Senate sub-committee last year; 'In practice, the international lending institutions have a marked preference for governments willing to implement tough austerity programmes, to hold down labour unrest and to throw their countries wide open to foreign investment. When these policies are adopted, foreign aid (from the World Bank) increases. But these policies hit most directly at the poor.' Novak sums up, 'chances are the current regime (in a developing country) is in power because of IMF and World Bank support'. It obviously does not make much difference to the Bank-Fund axis what label the authority carries—Indira-led Congress or the Jana Sangh-BLD led Janata or what lofty ideals they profess—socialism or freedom. India, in the reckoning of the ruthless shylocks, continues to ripen towards a regime which gives them total control...."

There are many lessons Sri Lanka can learn from the Indian experience.



# POLITICS OF THE WEEK

BY NARADA

- New Constitution & TULF
- SLFP's Pekingwingers
- Sri Lanka's Diplomats

**CONSTITUTION**—The debate on the new draft Constitution is the topic of the day. All that can be said about the various aspects of the Constitution have been said many times over. And they will be repeated many times more, now and in the future. Amendments will be suggested, proposed and insisted on. Some may be accepted, but many will be rejected.

How long the new 1978 Constitution will be in force or be acceptable to the people it is difficult to say, but there is no doubt that it has greater chances for survival than the 1972 Constitution. The SLFP-UF Constitution of 1972, no doubt marked an important phase in the constitutional and political history of this island. It formalised and regularised the Independence of Ceylon. To commemorate the change, the colonial brand name of Ceylon was replaced by the emotionally-charged near-chauvinist *Sri Lanka*—(why *Sri* no one can say?). The links with the British Crown were formally cut, but the new Republic stayed inside the Commonwealth for obvious trade and other advantages. But the 1972 Constitution had obvious built-in flaws which predestined it to an early demise. *Tribune* has dealt with these flaws many times—from 1972 onwards.

In the current debate on the 1978 UNP Constitution in the NSA all the possible objections and flaws will be highlighted. In the absence of Marxists and Leftists

in the NSA, the traditional "class analysis" of the Constitution will not be made on the floor of the House, but *The Socialist Nation* and the *Forward* will amply expound this point of view. The occasional JVP journal *Red Power* will no doubt publish a rigidly "Leninist" point of view.

But all these criticisms cannot prevent the UNP from adopting the Constitution with a two-thirds majority. For some years, at any rate, we have to learn to live with this Constitution, bourgeois in concept and bourgeois in purpose, but nevertheless with a populist "socialist democratic" tag.

Only the TULF has, up to the time of writing, not made its attitudes known. Even if the matter was discussed at the TULF meeting (where the new office-bearers were elected at Vavuniya on July 15-16), the results were not made public. Is the TULF accepting the new Constitution? Or is it rejecting it *in toto* because it does not concede Eelam? Or will it give the Constitution conditional support because the pre-1974 (pre-Vaddukoddai Eelam resolution) minimum demands of the FP are more than met in it? If so, will the TULF consider, whilst maintaining its separate identity as a party, joining the Government Parliamentary Group, which will enable the President to appoint TULF MPs as District Ministers or even to other ministerial posts? Is there any truth in the "rumour" that behind-the-scenes negotiations have taken place and that the nut that the negotiators have found had to crack is the District Ministership for Trincomalee?

Speculation cannot go on for much longer. Even before this issue is out, the TULF position may be known.

**NEW PARTY FOR CLOSER LINKS WITH SLFP.** *The Nation* of Friday, July 14, 1978, had the following paragraph as a boxed-item on the front page: "The *Nation* reliably understands that the majority wing of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka (Marxist Leninist) is soon to announce the formation of a new political party based on Marxist-Leninist principles which will work towards 'the worker-peasant alliance which is capable of uniting all the progressive, anti-imperialist forces in Sri Lanka.' Some other political parties are expected to unite with the new party. The new party is expected to be led by Mr. H. L. K. Karawita who is the President of the 20,000 strong Sri Lanka Progressive Trade Union Federation. Mr. Karawita appeared as a representative of the CP(M-L) on many election platforms of the SLFP during the last general election. A spokesman for the new party, referring to various left adventurist groups which advocate an immediate transition to socialism, said "Those who advocate importing readymade revolution from abroad will ultimately end up by supporting imperialist and hegemonist Powers at the risk of endangering Sri Lanka's independence".

This is not an unexpected development. The Peking-wing faction inside the SLFP which was connected with all the pro-Maoist CPs in Sri Lanka outside the SLFP is now reforming and re-structuring itself to set up as a new party to be allied to the SLFP.

After the election debacle, and after the collapse of the pro-Maoist movement in Sri Lanka with the elimination of the Gang of Four in China, the Karawita group and a few well-known pro-SLFP Pekingwingers had operated as a faction within the SLFP. Readers will recall that before the July 1977



elections, Karawita had published on the *Sunday Observer* a series of articles to "prove" that according to the tenets of Marxism-Leninism (Maoism), the SLFP was the most "revolutionary" of all the political parties in Sri Lanka.

Much water has flowed under the bridges of Peking-wingers in Sri Lanka. The Shan's CPC has damned the Hua regime as revisionist and characterised Hua's *Theory of Three Worlds* as something un-Maoist. Shan now agrees with the Albanian line. So do many former Peking wingers! There have been defections from Shan's party to a new group which is willing to accept Hua Kuo-feng as the new Pope of Maoism. There have also been breakaways from Karawita's group by those who still have faith in the Gang of Four. The Peking-wingers of the PDP are ploughing a lonely furrow, whilst the (SLFP) Janawegaya has vanished into thin air.

With this disarray among the Peking-wing Leftists (the situation is only a little better in the CPSL and LSSP), the Karawita effort to consolidate the Peking-wingers is not likely to meet with much success. What is significant is that *The Nation* should have made this announcement with a great deal of enthusiasm welcoming the formation of the new Marxist-Leninist Party as an ally of the SLFP at a time when there is a great deal of antagonism to what is called the Peking Gang of Four Syndicate inside the SLFP and which is said to control the party office, machine and the press. This announcement by *The Nation* is bound to increase the tensions within the SLFP.

**DIPLOMATIC APPOINTMENTS.** Some of the recent appointments by the Government to important diplomatic posts in some of the leading capitals of the world have not inspired confidence among the sane-

minded and intelligent people of the country. If loyalty to the Party must be rewarded, then there are other ways of doing it. Even if the government has reasons for not trusting the career men of our Foreign Service to present the Dharmista image of the Jayawardene government abroad, there are many talented people in Sri Lanka, who could have done a more competent job at these diplomatic posts.

But, it is not the appointment of the new untrained political appointees to high diplomatic posts alone that has caused concern in knowledgeable circles. Some of the shifts that seem to be contemplated have also created anxiety. There are rumours that Mr. Arthur Basnayake, one of the most distinguished of our career men, and who was only recently sent to New Delhi as the High Commissioner is being down-graded to Rangoon which has always been a place to which a Buddhist was always sent as an ambassador as an ornament of the Buddhism of Sri Lanka.

Basnayake had acquitted himself well as our Ambassador in Japan, and then as the Director General of Foreign Affairs in Colombo. From all accounts he had done an excellent job of work in New Delhi in the short time he was in the Indian capital. Why this sudden shift?

**EAST TIMOR.** Whilst the inside news about the Belgrade meeting of the Non-Aligned Foreign Ministers is yet to come in, diplomatic circles in Colombo are agog with the news that Sri Lanka has taken a stand at the UN on the East Timor question which is likely to upset not only Indonesia but also ASEAN and other countries in the region. Whatever the merits and de-merits of the East Timor problem, the Indonesian occupation of East Timor was a fact ac-

compli that has now been accepted by all the countries in the region (ASEAN, Australia etc.). It is a political question and not a legalistic one. Indonesia, no doubt rightly felt, that for strategic and political reasons, East Timor must be part of Indonesia.

India had taken the same kind of action about the Portuguese enclaves like Goa, and this was accepted by most countries as a political decision which could not be questioned. As far as we know, the majority of countries had accepted the incorporation of East Timor in Indonesia. It is too late in the day for anyone to take up legalistic postures that Indonesia should have Accepted a UN referendum giving the residents of East Timor the right of self-determination.

Most East Timoreans appear to have accepted the merger with Indonesia, but there is always a lunatic fringe that wants self-determination and independence even for microscopic small units of territory. If Sri Lanka supports self-determination for East Timor, can they blame any country or anyone for supporting the demand for a Tamil Eelam?

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## IN DEFENCE OF THE THIRD WORLD

### IMF's Diabolically Dangerous Role

by Jeremiah Novak

In recent months, many of those who support third world programmes have met a barrage of criticism against governments in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The governments are repressive, we are told, any general programme proposed by them must be equally repressive.



The Carter Administration's human-rights programme, in particular, has taken the initiative from third-world supporters. Posing as the champion of human rights, the Administration has condemned the Government's of Uruguay, Ethiopia and Argentina and by doing so, has forced the world to look at human rights as the main issue, and not to look at the broader picture of global social justice, which asks deeper questions.

Other writers in this attack-the-third-world school have attempted to charge the Third World as a whole with making its call for a new world economic order nothing more than a weapon to demand reparations from the rich nations. These writers would have us believe that the new international economic order is no more than a political trick. Nevertheless, the issues raised by the new anti-third-world coalition that centres around the Carter Administration, *Commentary* magazine and the Trilateral Commission must be answered. They contain some truth, but not the whole truth.

What the critics never speak about is the link between the establishment of dictatorships in the Third World and the role of international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, which are controlled by Western governments. Indeed, we do not like to believe that third-world dictators are creatures of the present international economic order. Moreover, we do not like to believe that the torture practised by these regimes originates here in the West. Let us examine the charges individually and determine if the present order is not related to the criticisms raised by anti-third-world forces.

There can be no doubt that the Third World is a sea of dictatorship: Brazil, Argentina, South Korea, Indonesia, Bangladesh and the Philippines are cases in point. Moreover, these dictatorships are more repressive than our newspapers report. Jailings, beatings, torture mass arrests, suppression of the press, corruption and violence are often integral instruments of third-world governments.

*Such is the reality. Who is to blame? In large part, we in the West forget that, except for the Marxist countries, many third-world dictatorships are supported by the Western-run world economic system personified by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.*

*What is not widely understood is that the dynamics and policies of the IMF-World Bank system and other agencies, such as the Export Bank, foster dictatorship, and these dynamics lead to such capitalist dictatorships as Chile, Iran, South Korea and the Philippines. Indeed, the recent debate in the Congress on HR 5262, the human-rights proviso of the World Bank replenishment, emphasises this link by calling attention to the need for the World Bank (and, as we shall see below, the IMF) to be aware of its political impact whenever it lends to 'dictatorships'. For most aid to dictatorships comes from the international lending institutions.*

Only 6 per cent of the aid the Philippines receives comes from Congressionally approved allocations, 94 per cent is provided by the international lending agencies. For South Korea, 22 per cent comes from Congress, 78 per cent from the international institutions. In all 69 per cent of all aid to the Third World comes not from Congressionally approved

funding, but from the IMF-World Bank and the Asian, Latin American and African Development Banks and Export-Import Bank. Another 25 to 30 per cent of total financing is provided by multi-national banks. These data, developed by the Centre for International Policy, place the burden of support for Third World dictatorships on the international lending agencies and the private banks, not on the US Congress.

The reason is not only the huge sums involved (in 1976, 24.9 billion dollars flowed into the Third World, 18 billion dollars from the big international financial institutions), but also the fact that before giving aid, the IMF and the World Bank insist that the Third World nations follow certain economic policies. These policies have a fixed pattern. The recipient nation must control wage levels, increase exports, maintain high interest rates, open the door to foreign investment, practise population policies and unleash private enterprise. The IMF is the prime mover in these policies, with the World Bank reinforcing the agreements. The system works as follows.

Most Third World countries constantly import more than they export. To finance their trade deficit, they must obtain loans from the IMF, the World Bank or private Bank, or they must attract private investment. Usually, they obtain foreign exchange from all these sources. However, before private banks, the World Bank or private investors will provide credit, the IMF insists on a "stabilisation" policy. Before receiving a loan, recipients must follow policies consonant with IMF guidelines.



The IMF basically gives three types of loan. The first are unconditional loans, of up to 25 per cent of a country's quota at the IMF. These account for but a small percentage of the funds a Third World nation needs to borrow. Second are conditional loans, equal to the other 75 percent of the quota. These loans are subject to IMF regulation 102-52/11, which reads: "The Fund's attitude towards the position of each member should turn on whether the policies the member will pursue will be adequate to overcome the problem. The Policies, above all, should determine the Fund's attitude."

What this means is that, before the IMF grants access is financing, the country must present a plan that that conforms to IMF policies and that takes account of the nation's total economic policy.

For example: one year before Indira Gandhi imposed dictatorship, the IMF announced in a press release (IMF-No. 74-23) that "the Fund agreed to a purchase by the Government of India...in support of Government programmes to reduce the rate of inflation, adjust the balance of payments and the economic as a whole..." In other words, Indira Gandhi obtained an IMF loan by promising to freeze wages, increase interest rates, spur private investment and increase exports, according to P. N. Dhar, her chief economic advisor. The result of this agreement was that in the next 12 months, Indira Gandhi imposed economic policies that spurred severe unrest and led her to declare a dictatorship one year later.

But regulation 102-52/11 is not the harshest kind of terms the IMF demands. If a nation needs to borrow more than 100 per cent of its quota, it is subject to a "stand-by" arrangement, which mandates ruthlessly strict conditions and allows the IMF to assign an

observer to the country to see that the policies are followed. This is what happened in Zaire when after long deliberations, the IMF announced that a study by arrangement had been concluded in January 1977, calling for the appointment of an IMF observer. (This is what is happening in Sri Lanka today—Ed. Tribune).

These conditions are written into a letter of intent from the country to the IMF and then are forced on the economy. The IMF's power to set a nation's price and wage levels and to raise its interest rates is so great that, in effect, IMF manages the economy. Though the "price" of an IMF loan is high, there is often no alternative. The Philippines had no alternative in 1972, nor did India in 1974 or Zaire in 1977. For the IMF stabilisation plan is used by the World Bank as a sign of "credit worthiness". And, when the World Bank agrees with the IMF, big private banks and private investors are willing to grant loans. For many Third World nations, the choice is between compliance with the IMF and bankruptcy.

The Philippines is an interesting case, because Ferdinand Marcos was the elected head of state before he declared martial law in September 1972. Four months earlier, the IMF warned the Philippines that unless it changed its economic policies radically, credit would be cut off. President Marcos acted decisively in September, assuming dictatorial power and implementing tough austerity programmes. A few days after martial law was declared, an IMF-World Bank team came to the Philippines to draw up a major plan for the economy along Western lines. Marcos, who had been elected on a liberal and nationalist programme, had succumbed to IMF pressure. Had he not, someone else might have wrested away control.

President Marcos faced a crisis not uncommon in developing nations. To attract desperately needed aid, the government is forced to impose "austerity" in the form of frozen wages, higher interest rates, increased foreign investment and export promotion. Such austerity is widely unpopular, giving the government's opposition a handy weapon. Those in power must yield to rivals or opt for dictatorship, most leaders choose the latter, partly because the opposition, if it wins, will face the same choice.

As James Morell, an associate at the Centre for International policy testified before a US Senate sub-committee on April 6, 1977: "In practice the international lending institutions have a "marked preference" for governments willing to implement tough austerity programmes, to hold down labour unrest and to throw their countries wide open to foreign investment. When these policies are adopted, foreign aid (from the World Bank) increases. But these policies hit most directly at the poor.....!"

Consequently, the link between the IMF-World Bank group and dictatorship needs to be thoroughly studied. And before we criticise Third World nations, we had better be aware that chances are the current regime is in power because of IMF and World Bank support.

But this is not the whole story.

As noted above, the Carter Administration is aware of this link and has asked the Congress to include in the bill to increase World Bank funds, a proviso that would forbid the US representative on the World Bank to vote aid to regimes that torture their citizens or violate other human rights. But the Carter proviso, as praiseworthy as it is, makes no attempt to require the re-



cipients to practice democracy, social justice, free speech or freedom of the press. As a result, the proviso would do no more than halt flagrant abuses of criminal arrest.

This approach leaves intact regimes that either cease the use of torture, arbitrary arrest and prolonged detention, or that can hide these abuses. The Carter proviso does not provide a way for a government not willing to conform to IMF guidelines or that demands that the West make structural changes in IMF lending policies. Radicals who demand a true change in IMF-World Bank policies are treated with contempt. And the Carter campaign on human rights is unlikely to change the pattern of dictatorship at all, because "human rights", as defined by Carter, only prevents torture and political arrest, not dictatorship itself.

But so that this lesson is driven home, the IMF does not grant "random" standby arrangements. In all, 315 standby arrangements have been made since 1960. Most of these, over 80 per cent, have been made in the Third World, and most of the dictatorships are located there, as well.

The data presented here suggest that the suppression of human rights is not a Third World phenomenon, but a result of the present international economic order and of the IMF and the World Bank, the two critical institutions of this order. Human rights require radical change in these institutions, and Third World has said this repeatedly.

One of the repeated errors about third-world thinking is that the Third World is demanding a new international economic

order to recompense it for colonial policies. This charge grows out of a meeting held in 1975 in Lima, Peru, when the non-aligned nations included it in their Lima Declaration. What first must be sorted out here is that the two concepts retribution of colonial misrule and the new international economic order, are not related.

The action paper for the new international economic order is not a product of the nonaligned nations, but of a second third-world group known as the Group of 77. The latter group does not express itself in Marxist language and make no attempt to demand retribution from the former colonial powers. Moreover, the documents of the new international economic order, that is, the resolutions passed by the sixth and seventh special sessions of the United Nations in 1974 and 1975, the Declaration of Economic Rights and Duties of States, passed by the United Nations in December 1975, and the Manila Declaration of January 1976, make no mention of retribution from former colonial masters. Article 16 of the Chapter of Economic Rights and Duties of States lays claim on present and future acts of colonialism, but not to past acts.

Similarly, the preamble of the new international economic order passed in May 1974 emphasises present and future acts of colonialism, not past acts. Indeed, the Manila Declaration, which is the most complete statement of third-world thinking, specifically makes demands of the Soviet Union and the nations of Eastern Europe equal to the demands on the Western nations. On May 22, 1976, *The Washington Post* carried an article that clearly spelled out how the Third World was making stern demands on the Soviet Union at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

(UNCTAD). And, in Section VIII of the Manila Declaration, the Third World spells out in four pages its demands on the Soviet Union.

What is crucial here is that the new international economic order, as it has been presented, makes no demands for retribution on the West, but rather, as we shall see below, makes a sensible demand to alter the structure of world trade and capital movements; it is distributive, not retributive. Nevertheless, a few members of the Third World do believe that colonialism is the root cause of their poverty, and this issue deserves historical study.

Despite adequate efforts in the United Nations and elsewhere to explain itself, the Third World's proposal for a new international economic order is still believed to be a "radical" document. P. T. Bauer, writing in *Commentary*, says that the new international economic order is another approach for the Third World to use to demand reparations for the colonial abuses of the past.

Nevertheless, as shown above, the new international economic order is not related to the demand by the Marxist nonaligned nations for retribution. On the contrary, it has been proposed primarily to modify and reform the workings of the IMF, the World Bank and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT,) the three key institutions of the Bretton Woods agreements of 1944. Indeed, the Third World is trying desperately to show how these institutions, as James Morrell has said, prefer capitalist dictatorships for granting funds. The Third World sees these institutions as threats to their national sovereignty.

Moreover, the new international economic order is not against multinational companies. On the



contrary, it graphically outlines the ways in which these companies can contribute to economic development by processing raw materials, contributing to exports, and providing jobs and technology.

What then, is the call for the new international economic order?

First of all, the call on the part of the Third World for a "new" order is not new. The Group of 77 has presented a call for a new world, not once, but seven times since 1964. Moreover, it has repeated its call for a character of economic rights and duties of states seven times in the past 13 years. The first call was made in 1964 at UNCTAD I, and repeated at UNCTAD II, III and IV, at the sixth and seventh special sessions of the United Nations, in 1974 and 1975, and at the north-south dialogue in Paris in 1977. Although the plan has been greatly elaborated and perfected, the basic outline and rationale of the plan have remained the same since UNCTAD I when Raul Prebisch, the first Secretary of UNCTAD, made a speech in Geneva in March 1964 entitled: "Toward a New Order."

Second, the Third World is not calling for aid or gifts. The basic argument for the new order is not for more aid, but for a complete restructuring of the Bretton Woods agreements of 1944, which established the IMF, the World Bank and GATT. The third world believes that these institutions need to be reformed and restructured so as to give the poor nations of the world a better chance to compete. "Trade not aid" is their battle cry.

They base their call on two obvious facts. The first is that, in the 27 years of Bretton Woods, per capital income in Third World has increased by 120 dollars, while, per capita income in the rich nations increased by 2,000 dollars. As Gamani Corea, the present

Secretary General of UNCTAD put it: "The Bretton Woods system did not work in its heyday of the 1950's and 1960's and it will not work now." Corea argues that the rules of these institutions favour the rich nations and take no account of the needs of the poor nations. This, he believes, is proved by the disproportionate increase in per capita income in the rich nations.

The second fact is that the Bretton Woods system collapsed in 1971, as Raul Prebisch (as well as many Western economists) said it would, when the United States raised tariffs and went off the gold standard. By 1972, the crisis, which is still with us, was recognised even in the West.

Consequently, even Western nations have called for a new order. Richard Cooper, new Under Secretary of State of Economic Affairs and one of six Trilateral Commission members in the Carter Administration, called for a new international order in an article in *Foreign Policy* magazine. Indeed, the Trilateral Commission issued a pamphlet called *Toward a Renovated International Order*, which deals with the same issues that occupy the pages of the Third World plan. In fact the two plans are alike. This effort to find a new path to a world order by both the Third World and the Trilateral Commission indicates that the Third World is as concerned about the world economy as are the rich nations. Where the two plans differ is in their point of view.

**The Third World does not want the new order to operate like the Bretton Woods system—it wants a greater voice in its operation and it wants to make sure that the rules operate in such a way as to give the poor nations a better chance.**

**The rich nations naturally do not want to give up their dominant position and this is the difference, the fundamental difference between the two plans.**

Unfortunately, there has been a tendency to downplay the Third World's plans. For example, when group of 77 held its ministerial meeting in Manila, the major US media all but ignored the Third World Plan. At the Paris conference, the Third World plan received scant attention, while US newspapers gave wide coverage to Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance's proposals. As a result, the US population is ignorant of the depth and rationality of the Third World's position which has been worked out by some of its finest economists.

Moreover, the United States is almost ignorant of Jimmy Carter's plan to reshape the world order. This is because, in its last strategy paper, the Trilateral Commission eschewed presenting a "grand design" and, instead, opted for a strategy awkwardly labelled "piecemeal functionalism".

In other words, the Administration does not intend to outline its whole plan as the Third World has done, but to propose changes one at a time. Nevertheless, the Carter Administration has proposed that the World Bank be strengthened, that the IMF be strengthened and given new powers, and that GATT be reformed. It has announced these changes piecemeal, and yet the changes are intimately related, as all three institutions are chartered in such a way that they have to interact.

The issue is whether these institutions will remove the imbalance in the world economic system and further democracy, social justice and human rights, or whether, as Carter purposes, the changes will only promote human rights. There-



fore, there is a need to see that the Third World has presented a plan developed over 13 years by competent economists; that they, like the rich nations, believe the world economic order must be reformed; that they, too, are interested in social justice and democracy; and that they resent current "stabilisation" policies that force them into dictatorship. Indeed, this latter issue relates to all proposals to modify the IMF.

Third-world observers note that there is a gap between the upper classes of Third World nations and the vast majority of the people. Because of this gap, many people who otherwise would support the Third World, feel that our help will not benefit poor.

On June 5, 1977, the World Bank announced that it was changing its policy and would from now on direct aid to the poorest members of society. Robert McNamara, the President of the World Bank, said: "Economic growth cannot change the lives of the masses of the people unless it reaches the people." By changing its policy, the World Bank admits what others have known to be true; that, in the part, the aid of the Bank reinforced the small upper classes of society. This admission emphasises again the reasons that the Third World has called for a new order. For, in the past, the World Bank did consort with the rich.

What is now to be seen is whether the new policy will make a change. There are many who doubt it. Money spent in the promotion of roads and water-works will only find its way back into the hands of the rich through spending and taxes. Indeed, as one observer said: "If the rich remain in power, with dictatorial control, then the

rich will set the rules and the poor will end up paying the rich. There can be no social justice without a reform in social structure."

Until the IMF changes in fact and action, there can be no hope of changing the income gap of the poor nations. As James Morrell said: "The lending policies of multilateral financial institutions actually encourage the spread of authoritarian regimes." One must reform the IMF and the World Bank before one can bring about change in the Third World. One must attack the cause.

Critics of the Third World must sit back and ponder their critiques. Who is to blame: the Third World or the world institutions?

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#### IN RETROSPECT

### Fish, Fowl And Flesh

by R. Kahawita

These days we hear hell of a lot about fish, meat, eggs. These protein rich basic foods of our people are not available for the love of money; we all have money for without it we cannot buy our food. But here in Sri Lanka, even if you have the money, fish, fowl or flesh is not there to buy. They are scarce and if and when available it is beyond the value of the money in hand. So our people go without them to breed a minus C grade nation, not fit for anything left with just sufficient breath to beg. So from election to election, decade to decade we go on breeding and increasing an undernourished mentally deficient population.

Why election to election to land mark our physical health progress? During every election campaign we are promised this and that, cheaper living, more food and clothing, better employment

opportunities, security of life, more wages etc. under various ideologies, communism, socialism, social democracy or vice versa whichever way you wish to choose this brand of-ism, right, middle, left, left of the centre as right of centre, extremes and ultra extreme; and this kind of hair splitting-isms goes on, while you and I and every body else classed the proletariat keep on peering at the horizon searching for the silver lining we voted for.

Where is it? Oh where is it? I hear a voice muttering "It is in the pockets of our representatives. They have lined their pockets once they were put their increased 'wages', allowances for each sitting in the NSA subsidized meals, transport and all, what the commercial world call "fringe benefits". While keeping these for the benefit of the members of the NSA, they want to abolish it in other employment areas, or tax in such a way, not only to remove the fringe benefits but cough out a part of your wage that may help you to buy your fish, fowl or flesh whenever they are within your reach.

The Tribune carried on a tenacious attack on the Fisheries Ministry to change its policy of earning foreign exchange while starving our people to death due to malnutrition. The Tribune has achieved almost the impossible under the earlier regime.

**FISH.** In a comment published by me on the UNP policies and principles, just before the elections, I said that a Fisheries Corporation will create fishy and putrid problems and recommended that the Corporations and its subsidiaries like the canning factory, dry fish project, trawler business, Ceyfish distribution system should be scrapped and handed over to the private sector which was handling the "fishing business" with hundred



per cent efficiency, even if they were accused of black marketing. Then, the black market seer fish was Rs. 3/- a pound compared to the official price of Rs. 15/- today. If the Hon. President wants to reduce the cost of fish to the average consumer, that is the wage earner who earns seven rupees for an eight-hour day, the Fisheries Corporation should be closed down, its assets auctioned and organize the Private sector for "catching, processing, wholesaling and retaining etc. Simple argument for this is: Fish is a highly perishable commodity in any form, frozen, iced, fresh, canned, dried or salted. All operations have to be done, when they have to be done. Working time nor overtime is the criterion. When the net has to be cast, it has to be cast, whether on a hungry stomach, or at the end of a working day. The fish is not going to wait till everybody had a siesta. This is what is happening in the Corporation and that is why there is no fish. The corporation officials are waiting to catch the big who drift to our shores with bigger Trawlers. The arguments and examples given in the *Tribune* editorials would make it quite clear to any one why we have no fish.

Yes, I witnessed a couple of weeks ago in a small Indian town a similar episode to our price of fish. The Trawler business here has encroached on to the livelihood of 20,000 fisher folk. They say, the trawlers have not only encroached on to their fishing grounds but by their methods upset the marine life balance in the breeding and foraging grounds, with the result the fishermen have no fish to catch with their traditional methods. Now there is no fish for any one to catch so the

trawlers are expanding their areas of activities, irrespective of the small fisherman's rights.

To open the eyes of the Establishment, there is a continuing hunger strike, right now, in front of the Assembly. These fishermen understand their democratic rights and acting in a manner that government must take cognisance of a situation created by ill advised policies. I do not suggest that we too must do the same. There is ample evidence and statistics fished out for the Hon. President to take a second look at the corporation and close it down as it is not pulling together to set up the Dharmista society. He promised to wipe out corporations that were not good to the National well being.

**FOWL.** This is a private sector business. It has become foul not that there is any foul-play—even if there were; it has become so competitive, the people involved in it cannot play foul with the consumer. It is so competitive that the "poultry farmers" do not want to organize themselves, even to demand their rights from the government managed corporation, on whose efficiency integrity and management, depends the success of the Poultry Farmer. They fear, if they get together, the elements of competition will be lost together with the high profits, and the small farmer will predominate at decision making, of course this is being selfish and if they are not so they will not be in business. These days we hear so much of private sector enterprises being economical and unconscionable etc.

If that were to be the motivation to be in big business, they would set up monasteries and

develop that kind of consciousness by monastic action. Man is not that so far. So, like in every other business, we have in the poultry business too the type of Tycoon, avaricious and politically powerful as described by the *Tribune* in **CONFIDENTIALLY—FRDB and EGGS.** This kind of story will not fulfil the needs of the consumer. What he wants is an egg or a chicken at a fair price. And what is a fair price? A price within his seven rupees a day or Rs. 200/- a month and we have seven million souls living on less than this.

Officials have given number of reasons why eggs and poultry meat are scarce and prices only within the reach of the higher bracket incomes. But they avoid the most important cause. Shortage of feed, quality of feed to meet the specifications of suppliers of breeding stock. If one has to survive in the poultry business, then one has to act in the way described in "FRDB AND EGGS" story in the *Tribune*. But all poultrymen are not FRDB. Those who were not, went out of business long ago, so we have the FRDB success story.

**LIVESTOCK.** It may sound strange, but the truth is that animal husbandry has failed so far in Sri Lanka due to the *Oils and Fats Corporation* which controls the most vital items needed to achieve success in the poultry business, feed and veterinary medicines. A more corrupt, inefficient and mismanaged, unresponsive to consumer demands establishment is hard to find. The feed they produce—and they have an almost monopoly of the provending business in the country—is not to any standard and quality. No one knows what goes into a mix, nor can the buyer get any data on the mix so that he could add the missing ingredients. The breeder becomes aware of the quality of the feed he buys only when his produc-



tion drops, may be in eggs or broilers. Then it is too late. He is on the way out of business. For the average breeder it is next to impossible to get his requirements of feed from the Corporation, without forms to be filled, certificates from Grama Sevakas, livestock officers, veterinary surgeons, may be letters from the MP line during the FRDB days. Having cleared all these obstacles, one is not sure whether the feed is available or not in the quantity specified in the permit. When available one has to take whatever rubbish the corporation issues as feed, may be poultry, cattle or pig feed. There is no quality control nor guarantee that the specified ingredients are in the mix.

While the genuine breeder is harassed, feed is available around the area. For every worker in the factory—and they are multitudinous—is issued a ration at a subsidized price. If one gets hold of the correct link, then there is no problem.

The distribution of the feed is so disorganized, that even with a permit, often the quantities are not available at the retailing points. I know of an individual who got only a part of his ration and it cost him Rs. 600/- for the transport of Rs. 400/- worth of feed. If this kind of thing continues, how can the cost of eggs and poultry meat come down?

Some time back, in my ignorance of the ways of business and business motivation I made an attempt to organise the poultry and egg producers into an association with the objects of securing a reasonable price to the producer and at the same time a fair price to the consumer. This was the time when eggs were selling at twenty three cents, and there were a large numbers of small scale farmers who had taken to poultry farming with loans from Banks, Co-operatives

etc. They were badly hit, several meetings were held, discussions initiated with the Department of Agriculture, Oils & Fats Corporation, Planning Ministry and steps were taken to set up a Public Company for marketing of poultry products. Lot of headway was made and there was plenty of goodwill and support from the small scale farmers and a number of franchise agents and large scale producers. Against this there was another "big business" group that smelt danger in the scheme which would have put the "smaller man" on to his feet again and the disappearing visions of a monopoly in the Poultry trade. So the Ees and the Jees got together and set up a counter move. Delay in the first move pushed the smaller man to the wall. The ultimate result is described in CONFIDENTIALLY of the Tribune of 27th May, and today the consumer pays seventy five cents for an egg and Rs. 8/50 for a pound of poultry meat (it is now Rs. 10/75 lb!—Ed.) In fairness to the producers who got on to the correct side of the fence are not reaping the profits they expected. Prices of feed etc., have skyrocketed so high that even at the above prices it is difficult to remain in business.

**For poultry produce, there is a very good market locally, very good openings for self-employment with a small capital outlay, and employment opportunities for trained personnel. Solution to the problem is not in importing poultry items as suggested by the officials. This is a myopic approach. By all means do it to save the present situation, if it could be done to bring these basic items within the reach of the average consumer. It is individual we have to look after.**

In the meantime we must find a permanent solution to it. To achieve this, the government must take the following measures which I will list in order of priorities: Export of all ingredients that go into animal feed must be banned i.e, coconut produce, gingelly poonac, cotton seed meal, ground nut cake, wheat bran, pollard, rice bran etc.; only the primary products like coconut oil, gingelly oil etc., should be allowed to be exported. With the drive for self-sufficiency in food, growing of corn, sorghum, ground nut, gingelly, sunflower, soyabean, cotton millets etc, should form an extensive programme for the food drive and give the same incentives as for paddy.

Import of veterinary medicines liberalised and free from import duties. Manufacture of animal feed should be thrown open to the private sector and import of ingredients allowed freely, by law composition of feed mixes should be given on the package and heavy penalties imposed if any sample is found to be below standard. The permit system now in vogue to obtain supplies from the Oils & Fats Corporation should be withdrawn and feed made available freely at several retailing points. Price of feed should be printed on the package. Increase production at the Corporation mills by re-organising the factory and working of the factory. Reconstitute the Board of the Corporation and include in the Board an animal merchant specialist non-official Veterinary surgeon, private sector representatives interested in animal husbandry, a cost accountant in addition to the officials. It must be a Board to look after the interest of the live stock industry as a whole and not a Board to cover the interests of the officials.

The Government too have set up all kinds of corporations and



Boards to boost up the live stock industry as a part of its programme to reduce cost of living, increase employment opportunities provide nutrition food to the people and for this end the government is also making large capital investments.

But what is the use if the primary need—animal feed is not available; Loans are raised freely, and is received unasked, gifts of animals are accepted and so forth. What is the use of all these if we cannot organize ourselves to produce the animal food we need to make good what we receive or invest. Therefore, production and processing of animal feed must be set up on a firm footing, organise the industry in such a manner that feed in quantity and quality is freely available. This is the way the government can fulfil its obligation to reduce the cost of living.

**MEAT.** Flesh is also in a similar predicament but in a higher timber. Production of meat at a price to fit into the average income of our people there must be extensive grazing land or land to spare to raise fodder grasses and crops. Such land is available only to the State today and that land is badly administered and managed by the State. This is the root cause of our problems in meat supplies—even if we are thinking of meat supplies to the urban population only. Supply of milk too is connected with this problem and this problem is acute in the rural areas. Raising of meat or milk animals on concentrates only is beyond the price you and I can pay for milk or meat. To meet the consumer ability to pay for these commodities, eighty percent of the feed has to be in the form of graz-

ing and fodder grazes. This is the criterion in cheap production of meat and milk.

In the western countries a good beef steak is available ready to eat at \$ 3.50 (US Dollars) which compares very well with the minimum wage level at \$ 8.00 per hour. In Sri Lanka a pound of beef is around Rs. 6/- with a daily minimum wage of Rs. 7/- a day. This clearly shows the absurdity of the situation to bring down the cost of living with the present government policies and plans.

It is good listening over the SLBC or to read the morning Paper at a wayside boutique that the Chairman of such and such a Corporation flew to Denmark to select 300 cows to improve our milk supplies. But it is not good home economics nor practical animal husbandry. This is what I read in the Sun about four months ago—Chairman of the National Live Stock Board flew to Denmark to buy a herd of milking cows. This kind of thing has happened often since Independence, yet meat and milk are beyond the average consumer. He is the yardstick of our success. For him there has been a worsening outlook, controlled Independence with a Queen or a Republican Independence with a President. Thinking on our problems is the same and we are getting deeper and deeper into our problems.

Even if it is granted that importing of milking cows is the solution to our problem, we must be ready to receive the cows and maintain them in condition—housing, grazing and fodder, quality feed and concentrates, painstaking attention, etc. must be there and these cannot be produced overnight. So we meet with disaster as happened under the previous regimes. This is why I said we have not

changed our thinking in tackling our national problems. In contrast, I remember the extent of preparation done in 1950 to import breeding animals to stock Ambawela Farm. The development of this farm was undertaken by the Irrigation Department. It was two years before things were ready to receive the animals. The moral of this narrative is: Let us not be too hasty to improve our milk and meat supplier in our span of six year stewardship. Let us lay a sound foundation to build up a lasting live stock industry by good counsel and prudent policies.

The foundation of the Livestock Industry must be based on the stocks we carry in the country mainly in the private sector and in the "village cattle". These stocks should be up graded both for meat and milk—not forgetting the need for draught animals, a vital component for the peasant farmer whom we are attempting to equip with a tractor which he does not understand. There are no mechanical break downs in a pair of well-cared bullocks. An upgraded local milk cow is within the capital outlay of a small scale farmer compared to a Rs. 3,000/4,000 imported cow whose performance is still to be tested under local conditions in the hill, mid and low country.

In the process of selective breeding a large herd of culled animals can be built up to supply quality meat. Farming for the market should be a part of the live stock industry. There are several ways of doing it profitably under our conditions, if our officers only put on their thinking caps and see how it could be done, instead of importing so called experts and allow them to think and mess up our country. If any messing up is to be done, let us do it and leave the satisfaction of attempting to do something for our country.

Importing our live stock has been going on for decades. Cattle farms



at Ambawela, Bopattalawa, Polonnaruwa, Ambepussa, Nikaweratiya, Sapuduwa, Weeraketiya etc., were established for this purpose. If the department continued with the then set programmes we would not be in a position like today; criticising the previous regime for the previous ills and the present for the previous ills and so on.

*This has been the bane of our political and economic life up to the year 1978. Let us change these attitudes now and get about earnestly to build up an A One nation on good wholesome food. Let us develop the resources we already have in fish, fowl and flesh in the way our farmers knew and with the small means they own and possess. Let new technology creep in imperceptibility and replace their traditional ways.*

*We have already baffled them with sophisticated mechanized fishing, animal husbandry, artificial insemination, when he still prefers the old way. This kind of sophistication should be for the Departments, Researchers and experimentors who after having understood and learned the techniques can take them to the farmer level and marry the new technology to the old.*

*\* This is the kind of aid we should give the farmers and not loans, and more loans to make him a hard hearted taker and not a giver in return what he has taken. We have destroyed his concept of "give and take", the language he understood in the village society. What is the use of the loans we give if we have destroyed his conscience in the process? Also be an economic drag in our society?*

Montreal.  
15.7.78

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## FOLK TALES OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE—2

### Walrus, FTZ, Girls And The Seminar

by Glucorasa

"Good morning Sir":

The disturbance was as explosive as the Acid Bomb Explosion. I had been working on a paper that I had to give by that evening. I am a worker and as such am subject to certain time schedules that do not apply to those higher up. My Assistant was making his entree and right behind him was the inimitable George Marzipan.

"Come on George. A very good morning to you. If you had not come in today, I would have come in search of you" I said. I ignored my Assistant, who left behind on my table some ledgers and the usual travelling claims of my field staff. These fellows will be at my throat if the travelling claims are not signed and sent back so that they can draw the money and disappear for the day. I called back my Assistant and very charmingly asked him for the claims and signed them all up. He took them away, very sheepishly I thought.

"Marzipan, why are you standing. The chairs are meant to be used. Sit down old chap and tell me what you have been doing about the Family Planning Seminar"

"Sir—you mentioned that if I had not come in you would have come in search of me. Any problems? Can I be of some help?"

"George, I only needed some entertainment and I could not have thought of another"

"Surely you do not think I am an entertainer, Sir"

"Sit down first and then we will start talking. I have just had

my cuppa and I insist that you should have one—immediately." I said.

Obviously my Walrus had seen Marzipan coming in, and before I could ring for another cuppa, Walrus placed one most courteously before George. I have not told you who Walrus is. This was the name George Marzipan had thought appropriate for my cook. Today, Walrus was most sparsely clad. My own view is that if our stupid civilisation did not insist that every human being, pardon me women excluded, should be completely covered, Walrus would be like a Greek god with his fine torso. Today, I was delighted because Walrus did just that. George could not take his eyes off Walrus, much to his embarrassment.

Marzipan clearly enjoyed the tea and took one Black & White from the packet which I had pushed towards him earlier. I held the lighter and George Marzipan began to talk.

"I have had a most delightful day, Sir. I have just returned from the FTZ, and I felt I should report to you first."

"What is FTZ George—is it the Free Tea Zone". I had such a close rapport with George, that I could tell him the most offensive things and George would not be offended.

"Well—I am generally found in the Free Tea Zone, but today some chaps took me to the Free Trade Zone. I found everybody busy. The free traders and the free wheelers. All getting organised to make a fast buck. There was some talk of multinationals. What does that mean Sir? If for instance a Samoan, a Sri Lankan, an American and Russian get together and form a company, is it a multinational?"

"George, since you are so interested—else you would never



have gone to the FTZ, let me explain to you. Quite simply these are big business conglomerates. Like for instance Shell, ICI or Phillips".

"Please explain this further, because I intend to impress some of my Union members with my knowledge rather than of my known ignorance".

"Well—my dear fellow, multinationals fall into 3 categories..." Marzipan had taken out his Parker ball point and the notebook he always carried with him. He was taking down notes most avidly. I went on.

"As I said, they fall into 3 categories" I had to go slow for Marzipan was writing every word I said—therefore I had to be cautious myself.

"First the 'ethnocentric'—like Krupps, firmly run from their home countries staffing overseas subsidiaries with their own countrymen. Next the 'polycentric' like Phillips, with strong subsidiaries run by local managers still with firm control from national HQ. Then there are what are called 'geocentric', like Shell or IBM, which ignore frontiers, find managers in any country and move them around the world and whose HQ can be anywhere".

"Thank you very much Sir, I am going to publish a paper on this subject and trust you will help me".

"I certainly shall Marzipan, but you should do a little reading yourself before you make an attempt."

"Do you know sir, that while I was looking around the FTZ, I was reminded of what I had read in the newspapers. It was stated that the area of our FTZ was the same as that of Singapore. So I thought, why not do a transplant".

"What do you mean, my dear chap—transplant what?"

"Singapore itself. Our technological skills are second to none

in the world. If we could land a few paratroopers right round Singapore we could possibly succeed" "That's a capital idea, my dear chap, but let's leave that aside and get back to your Seminar—Family Planning."

Marzipan had noticed that my desk was placed in a very strategic position—my Assistant had seen to that. There was a window right behind and I only had to do a 45 degree turn to see what was outside, in the garden. Sometimes, when I felt bored and sick of life itself, I stay by this window and watch the passing scene along the road that runs close by. I used to wonder why girls like to look like boys and vice versa. I must confess it is most difficult to identify, unless you are very interested in such identification, I was not. But it is nice to see the young ones happy, carefree and looking forward to happy times.

"The Seminar—I think I can manage it. I put it to the membership, which has a preponderance of the female of the species. Before I said Family, the girls shouted Planning. So the Union settled for a Seminar on Family Planning. And Sir, I have brought some of them with me today. Would you care to look across the window, please?"

I did as I was told. I was aghast. There were quite a number of females of all shapes and sizes. It was clear to me that they were very definitely in need of this Seminar to learn the tricks of the trade. "Look George, what am I supposed to do with them—and where are your usual catchers?..." "Call them in for a discussion—(George knew that Walrus was in)—and they will convince you of the need for this Seminar." "George, I do not need any confirmation now, having seen them" I said. "Please Sir, call them up since

I have already assured them that you would meet them. Please do not let me down. I will lose all their votes next time" moaned Marzipan.

"Right, we'll call them in". I stood up and got across to the window, with Marzipan right behind me. To my utter surprise and consternation, these dames started singing "For he is a jolly good fellow." I ducked and crept under my desk. Marzipan stood still, as if he were taking the salute. There was confusion in my office. My Assistant came running up, he usually needs a bull dozer to make him even walk, to find me under my desk. "Are you alright Sir". "Yes I am, but for God's sake get those dames to stop their singing at once—at once, do you hear." By the time my Assistant got out of my room there was silence and George resumed his chair and I struggled back to mine.

"George, why on earth do you do this to me?"

"I am sorry, Sir, but I thought, you would be happy to hear female voices where only males wander around."

"What do I do next Marzipan".

"Call them up. Then we go. We shall never forget you Sir."

"Go and bring them along and make sure they do not start singing 'Georgie Porgie Pudding and Pie' inside my office".

There were nearly 15 of them. I had only 5 chairs and some of the girls, in their state of health, seemed to prefer to stand. So we all stood. Marzipan started "Venerable Sir", "Stop George, I am neither venerable nor vulnerable, just tell me your business and make it short." I said.

"These ladies, here assembled, are members of my Union of which I am the Hony. Secy. They all have family problems—Family Planning



problems I mean—and insist that you help us to run a Seminar on Family Planning”.

“I agree—we will look into that. This room is a bit stuffy so why not walk across to the canteen for a nice cuppa.” “You are a wonderful person Sir — exactly what the Hony. Secy. told us. And believe us, we have not even had lunch.” I nearly collapsed. Did this mean I have to stand George and his dames lunch? Checking my purse, which is generally empty, we all walked across to the canteen about 1/4 mile away. I allowed Marzipan to lead the way, because he knew where the canteen was, and I lagged behind. I did this on purpose. If Marzipan went in first, he would have to order the snacks and tea and therefore settle the bill. As we neared the canteen, most politely Marzipan stood deferentially aside, indicating that I should go in first. The girls also waited. I had to go in and did so with aplomb. “Well friends would you care to have some snacks, it is too late for lunch.” “Ofcourse, Sir, some snacks. And a big thank you.” “Go ahead then and refresh yourselves. Take it easy”. By the time they finished, there was nothing left in the canteen. I settled the bill. “Well George, let’s call it a day and allow the girls to get to their homes and their Family Planning.” I had thought Marzipan would go along with them, but then he seemed to prefer my company.

“Marzipan, you brought these dames to discuss Family Planning. All they did was to sing and have tea! Anyway George, do not give up on this Seminar business. Let’s talk it over some other time—so long George and good luck”.

“Yes Sir, some other time. I am a trifle tired. These girls bore me to the death. I wish to get back home to get some sleep.” I was relieved and delighted.

“Yes Marzipan—sleep is wonderful—balm of hurt minds, great nature’s second course, chief nourisher in life’s feast”.

“These are fine words Sir, I will note them down. Who wrote these?”

“Shakespeare, my dear fellow”.

“You mean Dr. Shakespeare, FRCS who was in Sri Lanka, during the bad old days.”

“No you fool—William Shakespeare”.

“Ah—yes that man who wrote BISMAG”. I could not even laugh.

“George you are mixing it with MACBETH. You are obviously exhausted. Run along my dear fellow. And next time you come, leave those dames aside and bring your usual catchers”. “I am sorry Sir, for all the trouble I have caused you, for the expense, and for wasting your precious time.”

“Not to worry Marzipan, no trouble at all, the pleasure of entertaining was entirely mine, and time is not such a precious commodity in government service”. “Good night Sir and sweet dreams”. “Good night Marzipan, the sweet dreams will be all yours tonight George, I am certain. Come again.”

\* \* \*

## LETTERS

### Link-Language

Sir,

The language issue has been the cause of lot of bloodshed, ill feelings and Tigerism, not to mention the economic stagnation, that has taken the toll of the whole country. The purpose of the Official Language Act of 1958 was to take the Government to the people. To conduct the affairs of state in the language of the ordinary man was a welcome gesture, but this Act in its wake over-looked the other common

man’s language Tamil and also the impending calamities that were to take place in the political arena. Today, as we view it objectively the Sinhala Only cry has given birth to the two nations, one country theory. Perhaps justifiably for the Sinhala speaking nation does not understand the Tamil speaking nation. More than one score years of separatism thanks to the absence of a link language we are confronted with about 65% of the population that are under 30 years of age unable to understand the hopes and aspirations of each other simply because they have been made to dislike if not hate each other for lakh of communications vis a language.

The creators of the Sinhala only policy in their fervour to attain power and keep it or in their shortsightedness to use a benevolent expression for their lack of objective viewing of the future, have perhaps divided the nation for good. Let us be optimistic and say no we could still unite the country. But how are we going to achieve same? Is it through learning each others language or is it through a third language English, that makes lot of country-men belonging to the old school still reminiscence the past, where man spoke man to man less conscious of his religion or mother tongue.

The answer undoubtedly lies with English. It may sound unreasonable to the educationists who think about the short supply of staff and to the zealots who in their fanaticism of extoxing their culture and language, forget the reality of the otherside.

Psychologically the Sinhala and Tamil peoples, who have been aroused by the politician’s penchant for puerile oratory to satisfy his language and culture for two decades and more, naturally have been made to think of each other as enemies. Now today we are



going to get down from that rabid platform of communalism and preach co-existence. Can twenty and more years of antipathy that has been instilled since childhood be erased by those magic words like Dharmista. The answer is yes and no. Yes if we go to the once common bond or link-English. No if we go to learn each others language Sinhala and Tamil. It is not because Sinhala or Tamil does not have their equivalents or peace, love understanding or tolerance, it is just that what went on in the name of Nationalism has left behind sordid memories. It is true that his social revolution of 1956 reduced the Social (not economic) gap between the ruler and the ruled; between employer and employee and the Corporation Director and bus conductor but it also prompted one third the nation composed of minorities to doubt the majority's intentions. The result? A nation in economic slumber that woke up only to hear rhetoric about the greatness of language and Race.

It is nice for the Sinhala speaking nation to think in terms of spreading its religion, culture and language which by themselves are worthy of telling the world about. But the medium of conveyance could be English spread of Buddhist philosophy of the Sri Lankan culture does not necessarily be through Sinhalese. We fear English because we see it in terms of christianity, Britain or the Capitalist world. In the process we forget that it is not the English language that has to be blamed but the Christians, Britain or Capitalism for shortcomings in our country—if any, due to their influence. In our 'crusade' against the above forces we also tend to overlook the positive contributions of the above forces.

Today, we don't have enough books in Sinhala about transistors while integrated circuits or 'chips'

have taken over electronics; we do not have enough books on Newtonians physics when quantum physics is being learnt all over the world; In technology may it be regards to ship building, or solar energy we are decades behind thanks to our love for our language. We have lot of unemployed youth who can find employment abroad if they can communicate in a foreign language for our needs English fits the deal.

It is much appreciably that the present government is taking steps to reintroduce English in a big way. It could go further by making it a national language. Why not if Singapore and Switzerland among others have four national languages—English, one of them? English will prevent our burial in the abyss of relative ignorance and also relieve us of the most felt physical factor hunger-through employment, will mother Lanka and its rulers wake up to the crying need of International rapport? We await with hope Junius!

**S. A. M. Azhar Ahamed**

148, Matale Road,  
Akurana.  
23.06.78

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## DIPLOMAT

Sir,

At the Select Committee sitting for the screening of Ambassador-designate to the United States, Prof. W. S. Karunaratne, Head of the Department of Buddhist studies was quizzed by the Hon. Prime Minister : what is the origin and meaning of the word "diplomat"? To which Prof. Karunaratne responded as follows :—

"I think it has come from the French. Etymologically it is connected to the factors of authorisation and accreditation. Part of the same

meaning is conveyed by the word "diploma" where you authorise a person to claim a particular standard of knowledge."

It may be of interest to your readers to know what Sir Harold Nicolson born and bred in the British diplomatic service has to say on this subject. The word is derived from the Greek Verb "diploun" meaning to fold. In the days of the Roman Empire all passports, passes along imperial roads and waybills were stamped on double metal plates folded and sewn together in a particular manner. These metal passes were called "diplomas". At a later date this word diploma was extended to cover other and less metallic official documents especially those conferring privileges or embodying arrangements with foreign communities or tribes. As these treaties accumulated, the imperial archives became encumbered with innumerable little documents folded and endorsed in a particular manner. It was found necessary to employ trained clerks to index to decipher and preserve these documents. Hence the profession of archivist arose and with it the science of palaeography—the science of verifying and deciphering ancient documents. These two occupations were, until late in the 17th century called "diplomatic business", namely the business of dealing with archives, or diplomas. It should be remembered that the use of the terms "diplomacy" or "diplomatic" as applying not to the study of archives, but to the conduct or management of international relations is comparatively recent. In England, it was not employed in this sense until 1796 when it was so used by Edmund Burke. And it was only after the Congress of Vienna in 1815 that the diplomatic service was recognised as a profession distinct from that of the statesman or politician or that it acquired indefinite form its own rules, conventions and prescriptions. The expression "diplomacy" was



thus for many years associated in men's minds with the preservation of archives, the analysis of past treaties and the study of the history of international negotiations.

In the modern context, diplomacy, according to Sir Ernest Satow's definition, is the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between the governments of independent states. Diplomacy has long been accepted as an indispensable and respectable method of defending one's international interests. It has been regarded by many as a necessary evil rather than a positive force. Its indispensability has never been completely recognised and its respectability is still not fully acknowledged. Wrapped in unnecessary mystery by its own practitioners, its purposes, functions and methods have seldom been fully grasped.

Some three hundred years ago the Duke of Tuscany complained to a Venetian official that the Venetian Ambassador in Florence was stupid. The official said he was not surprised since there were many fools in Venice. "We have fools in Florence too", the Duke replied, but we take care not to export them."

Lalith De Mel

26, De Fonseka Road,  
Colombo 5.

10.07.78.

\* \* \*

## All Smiles

Sir,

To herald your new volume 23 the *Tribune* photographer had made a good snap of a young lady (a *Tribune* reader) for the cover of Vol. 23, No. 1. Your editorial too had very relevant comments on the smiles of the young lady on the cover. I am sure you and your readers would like to know a few comments made by young and old ladies from a village in

lower Uva. This village which has a major problems of the availability of water for drinking and daily use has only four wells (private wells) for 125 persons from 30 families—two of these wells run dry during the drought seasons of August-September and February. All these four wells are more than 40' deep. And the tiny, young and old ladies have to walk about half a mile or more for water and more than quarter of the day these village ladies are with a big "kale" on their hip, filled with water. Some "kales" hold as much as 5-6 gallons and it is pathetic to see these women carrying such a weight—such a long distance.

I wonder whether the young lady whom your photographer snapped for the cover of volume 23/1 has ever carried half of this normal weight, half the distance, I have mentioned above. Anyway some village ladies saw this particular picture of your young *Tribune* reader with a "kale" full of smiles and one asked whether she was carrying a kale filled with water or an empty one, another asked whether that was a girl from another country going for water, and some said that the young lady was getting set for a 'kale gedi natum' (a dance with the kale) and came a tiny girl who asked where this doll (bonikka) is from. Two village ladies in their middle age and am sure with the experience of kale and water for more than 3/4 of their lives said angrily that the young women from this city are making a big laugh of the difficulties of their counterpart in the rural areas, and these two very confidently said that if this young lady lives with them for just one day, that smile on her face would have to be imported. And one could think why they said so. Well lastly a father of three young girls whispered to me and said not to show the picture to his daughters

because they may also get this madness of mod-dresses and if that happens he may have to pawn himself to satisfy the demands of his daughters. And I decided to keep this volume of the *Tribune* away from the fellow villagers—specially the village women!

Loghead

Lower Uva.  
10.7.78

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## "PM's Speech" Hardy Technical Training Institute, 1971

Sir,

On turning out a drawer the other day, I came across a *Daily News* of Thursday, 18th February 1971, and on looking at it, I found the full text of Mrs. Bandaranaike's speech delivered the previous day at the 20th Conference of the SLFP at Amparai. Glancing over it rapidly, I at once thought it would make good matter for an article to the *Tribune* and so I put the newspaper aside at once instead of throwing it away.

This evening I had an opportunity of reading it right through, and late though the hour is, I have decided to put some thoughts about it down on paper without further delay. I happened to be near Amparai at the time of the Conference, and on my way back to Colombo along the road which goes through Bakiella, hitch-hiking as I always did at the time, several of the delegates passed me in their cars, on their way back too. So seven years later, I find I have a somewhat personal interest in what was said at that time. My interest is particularly strong in what Mrs. Bandaranaike had to say six weeks before the revolt of the youth



which started on April 5, 1971. It will save time if I quote directly a few passages from Mrs. Bandaranaike's speech: "The Sri Lanka Freedom Party...was ceremonially inaugurated on September 2, 1951 by our beloved leader to chart out a middle way between capitalist reaction and totalitarianism. This is the eleventh year of my leadership of the SLFP which has symbolised the aspirations of our people. It is now eight months and twenty days since our Government was established...Reactionary interests are again getting ready to activate themselves, masquerading in different guises. They seek to mislead and disorient our youth with promises of money and by means of other techniques...The biggest problem that confronts us now is the economic problems...our economic policy is to provide the means of an equitable distribution of the national wealth among the people by trimming our expenditure in terms of our national income and ensuring a more equitable distribution of personal incomes we hope to ensure economic equality and success in the development effort."

A more equitable distribution of personal income, was exactly what the United Front Government failed to do, and which the present government has gone a long way in doing already. Also, I think I am right in saying that trimming our expenditure in terms of our national income, or rather the threat of it, is the reason why the National Government of Mr. Dudley Senanayake was thrown out and gave way to the United Front government. Youth have only one life to live and they are prepared to wait to see a golden age dawning in their old age. So much for economists and their theories!

"By the end of May 1970 our foreign debt was Rs. 1,522,000,000/-. In 1965 when we relinquished power

the foreign debt was Rs. 446,600,000/- and at the end of May 1970 our domestic debt stood at Rs. 6,583,400,000/-"

With that I shall stop quoting from the speech.

What went wrong? I happened to have been given a lift by a trousered young man who must have been driving his own car from General's Lake Road to the Bo-tree at the beginning of Flower Road in Colombo. It was just before the General Election of 1970, and I asked him, as I always do of people at times like that, what he thought would happen. He predicted a land-slide victory for the United Front and he then added, emphasizing the point with his fingers, that they were going to give the government just two years to implement certain reforms, and throw them out if they did not. If he or they had waited two years they would certainly have succeeded. That is why I think the whole Youth Revolt was a sort of Guy Fawke's gunpowder Plot, and the revolt was brought in a year so that it would fail.

Anyway, the whole idea of a Youth Revolt succeeding was so alarming that as the then Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Defence and Foreign Affairs, Mr. Arthur Ratnavale was reported in the newspapers as saying, France, Russia, Australia, China, Great Britain, India and the United States of America, all rushed to the defence of the Sirimavo Government. The figure of 15,000 youth dead, was bandied about almost on the day after the revolt started. It was always that or a multiple of it, such as 30,000 or 60,000, but I think that the figure the then Prime Minister happened to give months later, was correct, that the dead was not much more than 2,000. The larger figure of 15,000, I cannot help feeling was a part of an international conspiracy to

blacken the name of Ceylon. If, by a fluke, the youth had won, the tale would have been, another fine black country gone communist. With the government winning, it was a case of, see how black governments shoot down their own people. Very fortunately, these internationalists were denied even that pleasure. Something for them went awry and the shooting stopped. Who these internationalists were, I would rather not say, for at the best, like Kennedy's murder, it can only be conjecture. Anyway, as reported recently in *Newsweek*, Johnson told Kennedy that he had Edgar Hoover to thank for his becoming President. Hoover and the internationalists were not very far removed while Hoover was alive, I should think.

The interest in Mrs. Bandaranaike's speech is in relation to the Youth Revolt that was to follow so soon after; in fact the present government has reached a point in time that Mrs. Bandaranaike's government had, when she made her speech in fact it was a good speech and yet her government failed so dismally politically. In spite of a good speech, she failed to make the grade in the eyes of the people.

**Are her government and this government going along two identical parallel paths?**

Camelot, which was put in at the Lionel Wendt in May, has a lesson for us. It is that personalities are more important than policies. It was Lenin and Trotsky who made the Russian Revolution what it was, and Stalin who consolidated it. Stalin died an old man. Mao and Chou-en-lai were the leading figures in the Communist Party in China as long ago as the middle forties, and they were both old men when they died, and firmly in the saddle. Stalin was a bureaucrat and Mao was a theorist and Chou an administrator.



Why did Lumumba fail, and Nkrumah and Obote? Why is Mobutu successful and Idi Amin? I think it is because the internationalists, which I find a convenient term to describe the people I mean, for they are internationalists of a sort, while at the same time being strongly nationalist, failed to back the first three named, and have done all they could to keep the last two in power. Even the Russian and Chinese Communist leadership had their backing, although it would have cost more than the internationalists were prepared to sacrifice, to have said so openly.

Even personalities must have policies, which can be good or bad.

The first revolutionary policy for us would be to abolish birth control and the sale or distribution of contraceptives. The second would be to see that everyone born in this country is a citizen and to make no exception in the case of Indians. As regards the stateless, we have outdone the Israelis. The third is to realize the impracticability of a fifty-acre land ceiling, and to abolish the ceiling. The fourth is to realise that any work worth doing in this country can be done by hand, and that there is no need to be indebted to foreign capital or loans. The fifth is recognise people's wish to travel, both on the part of the foreigner and of our own people. The sixth is to realise that provincial governments is the only way to break through regional or racial differences. The seventh is to realize that a new society must mean a new way of life, new groupings, industrially, plantation-wise or what you will. The eighth is to encourage people to use all their latent talents and the ninth is grant that people have the freedom, all other things being equal, to make up their own minds about what they wish to do.

"Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say, we prophesied, cast

out demons, did mighty works. You evil doers!"

Simon Vannia

Colombo.  
5.6.78

#### ACID BOMB EXPLOSION—8

### Chapter Eight

## Uda Kandey Baas

by James Goonewardene

#### THE STORY SO FAR

Deva, an England-returned artist, failed to get a response from the art world of Sri Lanka. He found himself a job as an Art Master in a Maha Vidyalyaya in a remote area by the sea. The Principal, Piyyaratna, is a figure from the old world of Sri Lanka's educational system, while Ariya, the manager of the local resthouse with whom Deva has struck up a friendship, is sensitive to the disturbing realities, even the underground trends, swelling up in the country at this time. In a discussion, after Deva's appointment, Ariya reveals that he was perturbed about many strange things that have happened in the neighbourhood recently. Deva gives up his rooms in Colombo and asks his brother, a highly successful money-spinning architect to look after his collection of unsold sculptures. The brother, aghast at the thought that Deva should waste his talents in a rural village school, offers him money to enable him to go back to London to resume his career as a sculptor and regain his former popularity wealth and success. Deva refuses because he has no desire to escape to London and what the world regards as fame. Before leaving Colombo finally, for the village Deva wanted to contact an old friend who though an important bureaucrat, was a sensitive man. In the government office where he had worked he found a strange new atmosphere where the newly elevated peon and a revolutionary sounding clerk told him that his friend had been thrown out as a reactionary. With his ties with the old world he had known snapping, Deva returned to the village. Back in the village, Deva looks for a lodging as he does not want to stay in the school hostel. He cannot afford the resthouse. His friend Ariya, the resthouse manager found him a room in the house of the village sub-postmaster whose wife was a school mistress. In the first day at school, he learnt a little more about Piyyaratna, the Principal. He also met a teacher in the school who spouted fire and thunder against imperialists and colonialists and spoke of socialism.

He was glad at the end of the day to get out of the school and be on his way home to his room. On the bridge he stopped a moment, leaned over the railing and looked across the river. The sandy stretch in the near distance, bare and desolate, was caught in a heat

haze and in it everything was blurred and was full of the white heat of the sun. A pond heron came over the screw-pine, against the glare, balanced itself with its wings for an instant and disappeared into the trees. There was a great stillness here now and he felt united



with it—no past, no future—just the perfectly motionless scene caught in the heat haze. He straightened up after a while, gazed once more at the slow moving river and the sandy beaches and started off again, back to the room. He looked briefly at the resthouse as he went past it, without any desire to turn into it. He went up the rise in the road, dragging his left leg after him. He reached the boarding and let himself in. He stripped and went and stood at the window. A breeze blew in from the sea. There was the smell of the sea in it and it blew coolingly over his chest. He turned round after a moment, lit a cigar and drawing a chair close to the bed so he could put an ash tray on it he stretched himself on the bed. When he had settled in he began to draw up his sarong until it came to about the middle of his thigh and he looked at the old scar from the motor cycle injury, raising himself on his elbow to do so, feeling it with his hand and pressing it with his fingers.

It had hurt as he walked up the road. The hurt here had continued to return; it reminded him of the accident—it always would—it would remind him of the accident in London when he crashed into the truck—the truck coming in suddenly from the side road. It had killed his young wife who was riding on the pillion, hurling her nearly twenty feet away. All he himself had suffered from it was this leg injury which he had felt earlier in the day as a twitch as he climbed the staircase at the school, and, once more, coming up the road.

After a while he began to think of the day's events—of his encounter with the teacher, and about all the other things, about a dead-beat old school that had this smell of decay. It had no future; of that he felt sure. A place of

false hopes. No doubt it had had its heyday, with its crop of bright students. Now it was nothing, gripped by something that was creeping up from underneath like a terminal cancer in a sick man. The question now—what was he going to do about it. Was he going to stay here and get involved in its conflicts or not?

He came to the end of the cigar, crushed it out in the ash tray. His mind went blank then. He rose, lit another cigar and then went and stood at the window. It was a dull day, the sky thick with clouds—the sun breaking through only in fits and starts, but the day continued to stay warm, and the sea, to look dull and grey. He looked at it now, through the gaps in the coconut trees, to where he could see the waves break on the shore. It seemed so free out there, beyond the trees, but among the trees where the shadows were deepest it was as if there were a wall, an invisible wall that was slowly coming up round him, and one day the iron gate would finally clang shut and he would be here for ever, abandoned, forgotten. He would die here and rot, and they would find his bones bleaching on the sea sand and not know whose they were. He felt a sudden wave of loneliness sweep over him at that moment.

It frightened him. It was a day dream and it frightened him. Only once before had he felt like this, and that was when he was recovering in hospital, after the accident, and he felt himself alone, totally and entirely alone in this vast city of London. He had felt trapped then, just like now, a tiny insect crawling in the centre of a jungle of steel and concrete buildings, with a twenty ton truck bearing down on it. The same feeling of being trapped and powerless to help himself was suddenly there now, and then as he stood gazing

out there, suddenly, among the trees, moving slowly, on the beach, was his wife, the image of his wife, moving as if in a mist. It was hazy, but there she was with the characteristic alertness with which she used to walk when alive, her long, black hair swept back and tied with a ribbon that fluttered back with the wind, along with the fall of her saree, and she moving slowly, content within herself, along the beach as if she had no need of him anymore, and at the same moment he saw himself out there, trying to catch up with her, calling her and she going on, not hearing him, not needing him, until she reached the edge of the sea. The illusion was gone then as suddenly as it had appeared. He was still there, however, like some castaway washed up on the shore, staggering along with outstretched hands, calling, wringing his hands and calling after the image that had disappeared over the waves.

He continued to stand at the window and stare at the spot where he had seen this brief, terrifying vision. There was nothing there now, only scattered pieces of dead wood and other bits of rubbish that ordinarily get cast up on shore. It took him a long time to recover from the shock he had experienced. He moved wearily away from the window. For a long time he continued to remain under the spell of this thing he had seen. This was the dead past coming back to him however hard he tried to put it behind him and forget it. Everytime he felt threatened by some new situation it all seemed to come back, this feeling of being pushed into a corner and trapped and rendered powerless. He, suddenly, felt restless. No doubt, this fear of new traps being laid for him came from an over-charged brain. His recent experiences had all been too much for him, and this first day in school—



it was not a good beginning, but things would improve. The first thing to do now was to get out of the room—get into the open.

A few minutes later he was dressed and heading for the resthouse. At least, out there he had a friend. There were many things still left in the place that were good. He could respond to those with advantage, but what, however, mattered was how to respond to the bad things. 'Sit loosely on life—do not resist' that was the advice that some wise men had given. So when the unpalatable things happened the thing to do was to sit loosely. One got hurt only when one resisted them. This was the thing to do. When the adverse winds started to blow all one had to do was to sit lightly and drift. The habitual thing to do was to fight. This was what he had learned to do from the time he was a child—fight everything. He had to change all that. A life time of habits had to go. They had to be tossed overboard. All the bad habits had to be taken lock, stock and barrel and thrown over. This was, probably the resthouse manager's secret of survival.

The sun was now in its downward descent. It shone from behind a bank of clouds with a subdued luster. The road was deserted but for a solitary bullock cart that rumbled slowly along, with an old man sitting inside it with one of his legs cocked up and the other tucked under his buttocks—a shrivelled up old man, with a grizzly stubble of beard, swaying with the rhythm of the cart, his old cart and his old bull brought into service again as the motor cars and lorries began to go off the road.

When he was still some distance from the resthouse he knew suddenly what he was going to do. This was no time to go disturbing anyone. He would borrow his

friend's fishing rod and go out onto one of the boulders and fish. If his friend was asleep, as, no doubt, he would be at this hour of the afternoon, he would get one of the waiters to fetch the rod for him. Ariya had told him about the rod and how to get it, and now a waiter did get it for him, and armed with the rod and an empty tin full of worms he was soon squatting on a boulder, dressed in his shorts.

He had not been fishing here long before he observed the other man, further down the river, squatting on the bank of the river, and like himself, fishing. It was not the time of the day when the professional fishermen were accustomed to fish. They selected the cooler times of the day. He knew nothing about fishing anyway, and it was possible the man out there knew nothing about it either. Anyway there they were, fishing, both of them—a couple of novices, fishing because they had nothing to do or for some other less obvious reason.

The man had been turning his head in his direction from time to time to look at him. He had a vaguely familiar face, and there he was, in his rags, fishing, like himself, alone, confined to his isolated world, squatting there and holding his rod and seemingly unconcerned with what he was doing. Deva tried to forget the man and get on with his fishing. He lifted his rod and discovered his bait was gone. He had to get another bait on, but putting a hook through a wriggling worm was the difficulty. He felt squeamish about it. It was comic. Here he was, bravely fishing here but unable to get his bait on. The man out there—he would, probably do it for him for a bit of money, and just at that moment the man rose and started to wander in his direction. Suddenly he knew where he had seen

the man. He was one of the bums he had seen squatting by the bus stand a, lean man of middling height and about thirty years old, with a stubble on the chin, dressed in an old khaki shirt, torn at the shoulder and exposing his arm. His sarong, a much worn piece of material, was torn at the knee.

"You won't get any fish from there," said the man, addressing Deva as he came within talking distance.

"Why not?" asked Deva. "I am further out in the river, on this boulder, than you."

"Yes, but the sun's boiling the water out there. The fish don't circle around there at this time of the day. Its better where I was, in the shade."

"Have you caught any fish?"

"No, its not the proper time of the day to come fishing."

"Then why do you fish?"

"Because I have nothing to do. Its better to fish than to do nothing."

"So wherever we are there's no fish at this time of the day."

"Yes, that is possible, but if there's any fish you'll get them in the shady places."

Already Deva was feeling better. He had got over the bad mood he was in earlier; that was the important thing. He leapt off the boulder and came to where the man was standing. The man peeped into the tin and saw the worms.

"You've got worms in there."

"Yes, that's right. What do you fish with?"

"With a few small fish and prawns. I got that from a fisherman at the market. I'll let you have a few of that. No good fishing with worms."

"All right, I'll give you money for the prawns."

"No, you don't have to give me money. We'll both use my



bait. When that's finished we'll fish with your worms."

"But prawns and your small fish—that's not easy to get."

"The fisherman at the market gave them to me. I didn't pay money for them. We should now go back to where I was first—in the shade."

So Deva went with the man. The man's body was clean, he observed, only the clothes were dirty and gave out a musty odour. Deva didn't like smells on a man's body, but this man's body didn't smell, only the clothes did. He would have to get used to the smells while he stayed here and fished with the man. He couldn't help that. When they had been fishing for a time Deva said, "If you come with me to where I live, after this, I'll give you an old shirt and a sarong."

"Will you?" said the man, incredulously. "That will be good. I need some fresh clothes. Its difficult to keep one's clothes clean when its the only thing you have."

"Yes, I understand that."

They sat silently, watching their lines stay perfectly still in the water. The man had a rod as good as the one he had got from Ariya, made from the branch of a kitul palm, the classic rod with any amount of flexibility and strength. It could take the weight of a fifteen pounder easily.

"Don't keep drawing your bait out so often. Let it lie there", instructed the man.

"Shouldn't I?"

"No, you shouldn't."

They continued to sit there and fish. Deva had been a bit self-conscious at the start. He had lost that feeling. He didn't mind the man being there. It was good to have someone with whom one did not have to make conversation.

"I make some money making rods and selling them. If you like I can make you a rod."

"Can you?"

"Yes, I can."

"Well, then will you make me one."

"Yes, I will make one for you, but you have a rod already."

"This is not mine. I borrowed it from my friend in the resthouse."

"Yes, he's your friend. I know that."

"You knew that?"

"Yes, I knew it. I remember the first day you came to this town, carrying a bag. I was there with the others, and we knew you were a stranger."

Deva felt a tug on his line and he grew still.

"You've got a bite?"

"Yes," said Deva lifting a finger to quieten the man, and he waited, but that was all. He started to draw the line away a little to entice the fish, but nothing happened. He relaxed and started again. This was just a game, he thought—the two of them just squatting there and pretending to fish, that was all. It was an interesting game. It taught you patience and how to quieten your mind. This, probably, was what had attracted the other man to the river, in the first place. Here you were legitimately doing something. People got suspicious only when you were doing nothing, and yet continued to stay in one place. Also people's minds, ordinarily, rattled away like pistons, thinking, worrying, doing anything but lying still. But when you fished you could stay in one place and have the silence round you and concentrate on your fishing. It was probably why the man came here to fish. Here, he didn't get in the way of other people. He just sat there with his rod and fished. If there was a fish then it was good; if there wasn't one you just continued to sit there and wait.

"How is it you are not doing any work?" asked Deva turning to the bum.

"I used to work. A mechanic in a garage until I decided to have a little place of my own. It was the mistake I made. The government started to take people's land and houses, and many of them had to give up their cars: garages began to have less work. Motor car spare parts disappeared—you found them only in the black market, and people now can't afford to repair their cars. Garages started to close down then. It was hard going for people like me. People started to lift parts from peoples' cars and sell them. I couldn't do that. Lots of fellows I knew became crooks, experts at lifting car parts. One came to distrust one's own brother—thought he was a crook too. If he was a mechanic you thought he was a crook. It was the way. You couldn't help it. You took the spare part from someone's car and put it into someone else's and told the other one he needed a spare part for his car. So you get money from both. I couldn't do that. When there was no more work I came here, to this place and looked around for work. There was no work. Things just got worse. That was all."

"Where was your garage?"

"In another place, further away."

There was an honest ring in the man's voice. One felt that one didn't get short change from him, but he was in rags now, and where did one go from there.

"What's your name?" asked Deva.

"They used to call me Uda Kandey Baas. Everyone knew me as Uda Kandey Baas, but my real name's Armanis Singh. That is my real name. You can call me Armanis."

"When we've done fishing you come with me and I'll give you a shirt and sarong."

"Yes, that would be good. It would be nice to have a clean shirt again."



They fished for a while more and having caught nothing they decided to give up.

"There's no fish here," said Armanis. "It will be better in the morning. If you come early you'll get your fish."

"Yes, I think I'll do that. On Saturday, I can come in the morning, as you say."

"Yes, it will be better in the morning. If you come early you'll catch fish anywhere along the river here."

They tossed whatever bait there still was in the tins into the river and they went.

"You come with me to where I live and I'll give you the shirt and sarong," said Deva.

"Yes, that would be good. I can do with another shirt and sarong."

Next Week

ROBBERY AND THE UNDERGROUND

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**Notice under section 7 of the Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) as Amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964.**

**Reference No. ATH 17/318 (2)**

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka.

No. 329 (Part iii) of 04/08/1978

**Schedule**

D.R.O's Division: Nugegoda  
Situation; Nugegoda North, Ward No. 8, within the limits of Kotte U.C.

Village; Nugegoda.

Lot No.; 1-68

Plan No. P. P. Co; 5024

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

The Kachcheri,  
Colombo.

Date; 21st July 1978

**SRI LANKA CHRONICLE**

**July 4 - July 6**

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

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

**TUESDAY, JULY 4:** The minimum qualification to become a teacher, will be the GCE 'A' level; the present practice of recruiting teachers with the GCE 'O' level will be done away with; the new scheme will come into effect from January 1 next year. Mr. Taha Muhiddin Marouf, Vice President of the Republic of Iraq accompanied by Mr. Sadoon Hammadi Minister of Foreign Affairs, Iraq and seven other top ranking Iraqi officials arrived yesterday on a three day visit to Sri Lanka. Farmers have earned over Rs. 840 million on paddy sold to the Paddy Marketing Board during the last Maha season; from January to the end of June 1978 the PMB has bought 21.2 million bushels of paddy from farmers at Rs. 40.00 per bushel. Victims of motor accidents—persons who suffer bodily injury or death in accident involving motor vehicles—will be protected by the Motor Accidents Insurance Act to be shortly tabled in the NSA. The Minister of Trade has decided to introduce an incentive scheme for the staff manning the various sales points of the Marketing Department, the CWE and the Salu Sala—CDN. The government's ambitious

Rs. 2000 million plan to build 100,000 houses during 1978-82 is hampered due to the lack of technical personnel caused by the brain drain as well as competing demands arising from new investments in parallel sectors of the economy—CDM. Sri Lanka is to gear itself in line with the electronic age; the government last week approved the setting up of a unit for the maintenance, repair, testing and calibration of all electronic equipment in the laboratories of the CISIR. The NCGE has been officially equated with the GCE 'O' level examination with immediate effect. The Ministry of Education has drawn up plans to conduct 20 holiday camps for students during the schools vacations. A group of Vietnamese refugees on board a ship in the Colombo harbour have been refused permission to land; this group numbering 23 had been picked up on the high seas by a Hong Kong-owned vessel; the engine of their boat had failed and they had been drifting for two days after leaving Vietnam—SU. The Minister of Justice speaking at the welcome afforded to the Minister of Fisheries in Batticaloa said that the TULF was doing false propaganda about the Maduru Oya Scheme by saying that a large number of Sinhalese were going to be settled there—DP. The Rs. 50 special allowance for unemployed youth will be given to the Head of the family and not to the youths—DM. The prices of all locally produced paper has gone up in price by 50%—ATH. The Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs has decided to establish a saline manufacturing factory. The National Health Workers Union has complained to the Minister of Health that poor patients do not get treatment from specialists after private practice was allowed—D W. The Ministry of Food and Co-operatives has launched a new drive to train employees in co-operative stores with particular reference to salesmanship and customer courtsey—



—IDPR No. 4. The Minister of Transport has decided to provide a quicker train service to the public by replacing the present signal and tablet systems with modern systems prevailing in developed countries—IDPR No. 5. The West German Embassy will present to the Minister of Education books worth over Rs. 370,000 for use in university libraries in Sri Lanka—IDPR No. 6. The crisis in the ruling Janata Party worsened yesterday with General Secretary Rabi Ray's resignation from the party in support of ousted Home Minister Charan Singh. Savage fighting between Syrian troops and right-wing Lebanese military men in Beirut died down late last night after Syrian President Al Assad ordered his forces to cease fire—CDN. The US Vice President told Israel last night that no middle east peace could be achieved without an Israeli withdrawal in the Jordan west bank and Gaza. Israel agreed yesterday to meet Egypt at a new conference of foreign ministers in London—CDM. The growing Janata crisis took another turn last night when External Affairs Minister Vajpayee told newsmen that he was prepared to quit his ministerial job to work for strengthening the party. China today halted all its aid projects in Vietnam blaming Hanoi's treatment of Chinese therefor the break but also possibly in retaliation for its new membership of the Soviet block economic community. Farmers throughout India were urged to join in a mass rally in New Delhi on July 17—opening day of a new parliamentary session against the ousting of home minister Charan Singh—Britain's Prince Charles has plunged into open conflict with the Catholic Church through remarks apparently criticising its doctrine—SU.

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 5:** The foundation has been laid for a bright future for the people of Sri Lanka; we should all now work with a will and greater devotion

in the coming year, the President told the Government Parliamentary group which met yesterday; during the past twelve months the government prepared its plans for the country's development; the government was able to receive considerable aid from other countries as never before, because of its commendable blueprint for reconstruction he said. The next three to four years will be the most crucial period in the history of this country; this may be the last chance for Sri Lanka to achieve economic development and growth while maintaining parliamentary democracy and the rule of law; this warning was sounded by the Minister of Finance; he further said that the government's programme of action also aimed at providing 1.5 million jobs mainly to the unemployed youth within the next three to four years. Dr. Ranjit Atapattu MP for Beliatta has been appointed Minister in Charge of Colombo Hospitals. Foreign delegates who participated in the International Muslim Seminar praised the President and his government 'for the fair and just manner in which he is treating the minorities'. The PM appealed to all citizens of Sri Lanka irrespective of their racial, religious and other differences to contribute their mite to the rebuilding of our motherland when he spoke at the dinner for the delegates of the International Muslim Seminar. The biggest, most beautiful dagaba in Sri Lanka will be built to enshrine the portion of the Sacred Kapilavastu relics that India has decided to gift to Sri Lanka; it is to be built at the Sri Jayawardanapura Raja Maha Vihara at the special wish of the President said the Speaker of the NSA. The annual Kataragama festival starts today: it ends on the 20 with the water cutting ceremony at the Menik Ganga—CDN. The Minister of Trade gave a firm as-

urance in the NSA yesterday that it was not the policy of the government to flood the country with imported industrial goods or agricultural goods to the detriment of local production; he said this when the MP for Anuradhapura West raised the question of local produce such as Lanka dhall, cow pea, onions and chillies being hard hit as a result of the government's policy of permitting the importation of these consumer items; if there was no protection granted to local cultivators they would be badly hit he said. The President disclosed to the Government Parliamentary Group yesterday that in future the administration of all estates will come under the Ministry of Plantation Industries. The Iraqi Foreign Minister Mr. Sadoon Hammadi said yesterday that there was ample scope to expand co-operation between Sri Lanka and Iraq in a variety of fields such as trade, transport, industry and fishing. The deputy Minister of Defence Speaking in the NSA about the security provided for the former PM said that the cost of the security incurred by the army was Rs. 2,337,706.40—CDM. Sri Lanka, the current Chairman has been called upon to play a vital role in saving the non aligned movement from the present imbroglio; the majority of members have made it known that Sri Lanka with its pragmatic approach to international affairs and adherence to strict non alignment would be able to formulate a realistic compromise. A daring mid-day theft of special high power cable from the runway of the Katunayake airport—in full view of the police watch hut—is being investigated by the IGP. Tamil classes are now being conducted in 240 Sinhala medium schools and the Sinhala language is being taught in 139 Tamil medium schools in Batticaloa; Kalmunai, Jaffna and Trincomalee.



The Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs will lay the foundation stone of the 450 million rupee Nylon-6 plant at Sapugas-kande on August 10. Retired school teachers who are to be re-employed in accordance with a government decision recently, will be paid at a rate of Rs. 10 a period—SU. The Minister of Fisheries said that a modern fishing harbour and ice factory will be constructed at a cost of Rs. 32 million—VK. The Finance Minister said in the NSA yesterday that the World Bank and other foreign countries will not continue giving aid to us and that it was up to us to build up our resources by way of taxes internally, if this fails all our development projects will be affected he said—DP. The CID is investigating whether the Indian 'Anand Marg' sect has established a branch in Sri Lanka—DK. It has now been estimated that over Rs. 400 million has been spent due to the riots of 1958 and the Insurgency of 1971: this huge sum has been spent to strengthen security, pay overtime and other special allowances and to reconstruct damaged buildings—DM. The Ministry of Industries and Scientific Affairs is negotiating with foreign countries to explore for oil in the country; the first agreement is expected to be signed with Norway shortly and all costs will be met by that country—DM. The price of 80 page exercise books will be increased from 75 cents to Rs. 1.25 from next week—ATH. The government has decided to take over the rice ration book from farmers who do not pay back their agricultural loans—JD. Israeli opposition leader Shimon Peres will meet Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in Vienna next week the Israeli Labour Party said yesterday. Egypt's President Anwar Sadat agreed to resume peace talks with Israel which he broke off in January—CDN. The

ruling Janata Party took another tough measure in its current crisis today when the Party's Central Parliamentary Board asked Chief Minister David Lal of Haryana State to quit office. US Vice President completed his goodwill mission to Israel yesterday admitting he had failed to get Israeli leaders to consider pulling out of Arab land on the Jordan west bank and Gaza—CDM. A murder conviction against the founder of the Anand Marga sect which claims a world wide following of five million people was set aside today and his immediate release was ordered. Pakistan announced a 21 billion US dollar five year development plan to be financed by more than 75% from domestic sources. A prison officer assassinated the interior minister of the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan, a deputy minister and an aide, and shot himself a ministry spokesman said today. South Yemen said yesterday the North Yemeni forces were shelling the border and had siezed two Southern villages; South Yemen's Communication Minister said North Yemen had launched its attack after 16 states of the Arab league yesterday suspended diplomatic relations with South Yemen—SU.

**THURSDAY, JULY 6.** The Finance Minister said yesterday that the time had come for the people of Sri Lanka to take the hard decision as to whether they should continue to receive food subsidies or whether the more urgent problem of unemployment should be resolved; assessing the magnitude of the issue he said the removal of the food subsidy of Rs. 2500 million would mean providing employment to at least 100,000 persons. The government will soon launch a multi million rupee East Cost fisheries development program; the minister of Fisheries announced this during a three day inspection

tour of the Eastern Province. The Finance Minister told the NSA yesterday that the government had now liberalised the granting of exchange to students who could afford to study abroad irrespective of family and political considerations. Paddy production this year is expected to reach the 89 million bushels mark taking the country to the threshold of self sufficient said the Minister of Agriculture and Lands. Professional training will be provided for all untrained teachers; the scheme will come into operation beginning next January. Transport Minister Mohamed left for Karachi yesterday to participate in the first Asian Regional Islamic Conference summoned by the Muslim World League. All financial assistance given by the departments under the Ministry of Social Services has been increased with immediate effect in accordance with a decision taken

**Notice under section 7 of the Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 440) as Amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act No. 28 of 1964.**

**Reference No. ATH 17/318 (3)**

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka No. 329 (Part iii) of 04/08/78.

#### **Schedule**

D.R.O's Division; Nugegoda  
Situation; Ward No. 7, Pagoda,  
No. 8, Nugegoda, North  
and No. 9, Nugegoda  
South, within the limits  
of Kotte U.C.

Village; Nugegoda

Lot No.; 1-46

Plan No.P.P. Co.; 5014

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

The Kachcheri,  
Colombo.

Date; 21st July 1978



by the government. The cabinet has approved the export of 100,000 tons of rice said the Minister of Finance. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting will call for applications from the private sector for the setting up a TV network under the SLBC Act; the successful applicants will be permitted to operate closed circuit television on ultra high frequency. The Minister of Trade has evolved scheme to help private traders expand their business and deal in imported essential mass consumption items. Steps are being taken to ensure that actual public revenue and expenditure keep step with planned revenue and expenditure; all secretaries of ministries and heads of departments have been instructed by the Ministry of Finance to submit monthly reports to the General Treasury of the trends of revenue and expenditure in each sector in order to ensure that such data is promptly made available—CDM. The Central Bank has instructed all commercial banks that until further notice, they should not increase their advances to government corporations and statutory boards other than financial and lending institutions, over the level of such advances outstanding as at June 28, 1978; this measure has apparently been taken to restrict the money in circulation which had increased by 30%. Sophisticated radio navigation equipment will shortly be installed at the Katunayake airport and the airports at Ratmalana and Palaly to raise them to international standards. The government will negotiate with British companies in respect of the compensation payable for estate lands taken over from them under the Land Reform Law of 1975. Iraq and Sri Lanka yesterday pledged to safeguard the unity and solidarity of the non-aligned movement and resolved to make the forthcoming conference in Belgrade

a success; this was stated in joint communique issued following the three day official visit of Iraqi Vice President Mr. Taha Muhiiddin Ma'rouf and Foreign Minister Dr. Sadoun Hammadi to Sri Lanka—SU. The couple who were remanded indefinitely for allegedly sheltering one of the 'tigers' were released on bail yesterday—VK. The Foreign Minister speaking at the world Muslim Seminar said that Muslim in Sri Lanka were given the opportunity to live in self respect with all freedom and protection despite their being a minority—DP. Tea will be exported only from the Trincomalee harbour from August. The Secretary to the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs said that the government has decided to send workers who do not do a good job of work on compulsory leave—DM. The Ministry of Fisheries is taking steps to export 7.8 million Rs. worth of prawns to Japan in the first quarter of this month. The Central Bank report states that there is a clear increase in the earnings from gem exports compared to the previous month—DM. The Ministry of Education has begun probing into the financial transactions of government schools—LD. Pakistan's military ruler Gen. Zia Ul-Haq today replaced his Council of Advisers with a 22-member cabinet assigning it the main task of arranging early elections. South Korean President Park Chung Hee is headed for another six year term in an uncontested ballot by an electoral college in Seoul tomorrow. South Yemen troops have recaptured two border villages alleged to have been siezed by soldiers of North Yemen—SU. Ghanaian Head of State Ignatius Achempong resigned yesterday. Egypt has agreed to resume direct Middle East talks with Israel partly to commit the US to play an even more active role in the Peace negotiations, Egyptian

officials said yesterday. Parliament yesterday partially eased new Zealand's tough abortion law in response to widespread public criticism. Air traffic controllers in 42 countries were yesterday urged to support action which would effectively ban Ugandan President Idi Amin from their skies. Pratbah Ranjan Sarkar, leader of the Ananda Marga religious sect was cleared of a murder conviction by the Patna High Court yesterday. Italian Parliamentarians, casting their tenth vote in seven days of Presidential elections, again failed to elect a head of state—CDN.

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**Notice under section 7 of the Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) as Amended by the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act. No. 28 of 1964.**

**Reference No. ATH 3/582**

It is intended to acquire the land described in the schedule below. For further particulars please see the Gazette of the Republic of Sri Lanka No. 329 (part iii) of 04/08/78.

**Schedule**

D.R.O's Division; Nugegoda and Homagama  
 Situation; Colombo District  
 Name of Land; Assmt. No. 71 and 74, Madinnagoda Rd; Galagakotuwa, Kosgahawatta, Assmt. No. 160 & 184, M.D. H. Jayawardane Mawatha.  
 Village; Yakbedda and Kalapaluwawa.  
 Lot No. 1-6  
 Plan No. P.P. Co; 4414

**D. W. Abeywickrema**  
 District Land Officer of Colombo District

The Kachcheri,  
 Colombo.  
 Date: 20 July 1978

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# Confidentially

## In (Tea) Planterdom

IS IT NOT TRUE that all is not well with the top management sector of the Tea Plantation Industry? That a news item in the daily press indicated that a delegation from the Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents had made representations to the President not only about certain terms and conditions of employment but also other matters of national interest in the plantation industry? That *Tribune* does not as yet know the matters on which representations had been made to the President but there is one matter which *Tribune* has been made aware of that calls for prompt and human consideration? That many who have been to the plantation areas recently have come back to tell a story that bodes no good for the future of the tea industry or the country? That they found total disillusionment and disappointment among Superintendent (Periya Dorai—PDs) and Assistant Superintendents (Sinna Dorais—SDs) about the terms and conditions of employment that are being forced down on them? That the grievances about salaries and bonus are real and genuine and need rectification? That a governmental scale salary system, on grade and class basis, seniority-wise, for PDs and SDs, cannot meet the special requirements of the plantation industry? That it would be an act of unimaginative stupidity to pay a PD looking after a 2000 acre estate and one in charge of 250 acres the same salary on the approved "scale" on the basis of seniority? That on the grade-class scheme which the government wants to implement, the two PDs will get the same amount. That it is an even greater travesty of

justice, in the matter of incentive bonus, to pay the same quantum to two PDs unmindful of the different performance of each of them. That if one had produced an additional 50,000 lbs of high quality tea which fetched premium prices and the 4 other had only marked time to maintain the status quo, would it be fair to pay the same quantum of bonus to both of them? That whilst grouses like this can be remedied with a little Ministerial and Presidential common sense, there is a semi-invisible sense of frustration in regard to another matter of the greatest importance?

That it is the problem of managerial staff being able to live with their wives on the estate? That more and more of the Sri Lankan wives of Sri Lankan PDs and SDs do not want to stay on the estates? Tea in the bad old days of White Planter Raj, a large number of monetary and other perks were given to PDs and SDs and in order to have their wives live on the estates and make life tolerable? That the bankers and private capitalists who originally invested money on opening these lands discovered that the top management staff had to be induced to stay on these lonely outposts by being given special incentives? That wives too were given incentives for house-keeping and the like to keep house for their planter husbands? That clubs were organised in districts for the planters and their wives to have community life at least once or twice a week? That an allowance was given for entertainment and club expenses to keep the senior planter tied down to their estates and the clubs close by? That the life of a planter was a hard and tough one? That from muster at dawn to muster at dusk the planter was on duty? That he was up and about when the factory was working at night? That a planter had to work 365 days a year? That

for this reason it is wrong to compare the salary of a planter with that of a public servant? That in a year of 365 days, the number of government holidays is at least 166? That the number of working days for a government servant is, at the most, only 199? That very few government servants work the paid-for eight hours a day? That a planter has to work more than 8 hours on most days? That it was after a careful study of these conditions that hardened colonial bankers and imperialist financiers decided that managerial personnel had to be paid adequately to induce them to be on the estate at all times on all three hundred and sixty five days? That when a planter went on leave even for a couple of days there was an elaborate system of alternative arrangements and over-looking of the estate by a senior planter nearby? That today all the perks and inducements have been taken away? That salary scales have been governmentalised? That the result is that most wives are reluctant to stay on? That they cannot afford club life? That PDs and SDs are frustrated? That many of them are applying for jobs in Ooty, Kodaikanal, Assam, Kenya, Indonesia and elsewhere? That many have already left? That soon all would leave? That without senior and experienced managerial staff, our tea plantations will soon become jungle? That this is a matter to which the President and Government must pay immediate attention? That a town-dweller who enjoys a holiday on a estate bungalow once a year or once every few years does not realise the desperate loneliness in an estate bungalow (they are no longer fabulous) far away from anybody? That the nearest fellow planter may be many miles away? That is why wives of planters no longer stay on the estates but come to live with parents, relations or friends in towns?



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