

# Bones of Contention

By JERRY KLEIN

HONORS of all kinds were heaped on Queen Elizabeth as she made her tour of the British Commonwealth. But when she visited Ceylon she was absolutely forbidden to see a piece of discolored bone about two inches long.

The bone is the left wisdom tooth of Buddha, venerated by almost one-fifth the inhabitants of the world. But the Buddhists of Ceylon decided that since their Queen would not pay homage to this most sacred relic of their faith, she must not enter the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy.

The decision came after months of controversy among the island's inhabitants. Originally, Queen Elizabeth was to visit the temple and from it watch a performance of the famous Kandy dancers. But these plans finally were changed.

What the Queen did not see within the Temple of the Tooth is a series of shrines, encrusted with rubies and gold. Standing at the center on a silver table, above a lotus flower of gold, is the sacred tooth.

It was salvaged from Buddha's funeral pyre, and for many years was handed down in the dowries of Singhalese princesses. \$100 million was once offered for the tooth — and refused.

Today, some 400,000,000 Buddhists worship it. And every year thousands of pilgrims come to Kandy and lavish precious gifts upon it. They regard the tooth as one of the most holy objects on earth.

Smile if you will, but the Buddhists of Ceylon are not the only people ever to believe that a bone can be sacred. Such beliefs have been

held by practically every nationality and religion. A church in Nuremberg, Germany, for example, used to display as an object of reverence a tooth of Saint John the Baptist. Germany also was excited in the sixteenth century by reports of a seven-year-old child who lost all her teeth and then grew a new one — of solid gold. A professor of medicine at the University of Helmstadt declared that the Lord had sent this remarkable child to console Christians for their persecutions by the Turks. But a goldsmith who examined the child found her to have a "natural tooth artificially gilded."

Other bones have been assigned miraculous power, too. An early Hebrew scholar, Rabbi Joshua ben Hananiah, believed there was a small bone in a man's back from which his whole body would "revive again in the world to come." He showed the Roman Emperor Hadrian how this tiny bone would neither dissolve in water, burn in fire, grind in a mill, nor break on an anvil.

**N**UMEROUS miracles are attributed to Saint Anthony, whose bones occupy a place of honor in the Cappella del Santo of the Church

of Saint Anthony in Padua. And the skull of Saint Catherine is enshrined over an altar in the Church of San Domenico in Siena.

The bones of Saint Mark, founder of the Coptic Church, are venerated at the Cathedral of Saint Mark in Venice. These bones were lost when the church was destroyed by fire in the year 976. But in 1085, as the congregation offered special prayers for their recovery, stones fell from a pillar to reveal a bronze chest which contained the saint's remains.

Even today in the Church of Bom Jesus in Portuguese India, the remarkably-preserved bones of Saint Francis Xavier may still be seen in a glass case. The devout believe that the saint's remains have worked many miracles. And when the four-century-old body was uncovered last year, thousands of pilgrims kissed the saint's right foot in hope that the bones will come to their aid.

The little toe of this foot was bitten off years ago by an enthusiastic pilgrim from Portugal named Isabel de Carone. She later returned part of the bone and it was placed in a golden reliquary. The rest of the bone is still a treasured possession of Dona Isabel's family.

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# *Red Star* ★ *over* **IRAN**

BY PARVIS KHAN KHALILI

**E**IGHT MONTHS of mass jailings, house-to-house searches, terror, summary courts-martial, tanks at crossroads and curfews express "fear and unpopularity." The government, with an empty treasury, cannot last, and the Communist Party, the "Hesb-Tudeh," appears as strong as in the days when America decided last year to move into Iran.

In August, 1953, General Norman Schwartzkopf, who had been entrusted by Washington during the war with the training and organization of the Iranian gendarmerie and police, was once again charged with a mission to Tehran. It was necessary, in order to master the Communist avalanche, to get rid of Mossadegh at any cost, and back a "strong man."

Schwartzkopf's job was sure of success. Even before he started, he performed a master stroke. His achievement was getting the support of a young King who had neither power, security, nor prestige! The weak Shahinshah, acquainted with the politics of his

country only through court intrigues, favored a palace general, Fazlollah Zahedi.

Zahedi's background may be summed up quite briefly: playboy general at 25, prime minister at 56, and in between nothing but common court intrigues and receptions, and a new decoration regularly every two or three years. Zahedi became a general at 25 when the Persian Army could hardly be called a police corps. The only "wars" Zahedi fought were against two outlaws: Kuchik Khan, the Turkish bandit; and Ismail, the Kurdish brigand. His political past starts during the Mossadegh regime, to which he could pledge his dislike of the West.

To face his new command as prime minister, Zahedi could rely upon two supporters, the army and its symbolic commander, the Shah. The treasury was empty; army officers had not been paid for over a year; government employees fondly recalled a pay check as something belonging to the past. Washington's gift of \$45,000,000 in monthly in-