

INTERVIEW

The roots of Tamil violence

— Neelan Tiruchelvam, D. S. S. Mayadunne

LANKA

GUARDIAN

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... in MAY DAYS Past

The long-gone trade union militancy

— Rev. M. Anandan, Hector Abhayavardhana

after massacre and carnage

Who's afraid of Rajiv Gandhi ?

— Mervyn de Silva

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J. R.'s CALL

At a UNP seminar in Karadeniya, President JR has urged all "democratic parties" to cooperate with the government to combat terrorism. His resignation or that of his government cannot help resolve the crisis. Nor will a general election, he said, adding that elections will be held only after the crisis is over. There may be a need to go before the people once again and seek a referendum until terrorism is wiped out. He had no intention to betray the trust reposed in him by the people. A resignation at this time would amount to cowardice and folly.

This is the first occasion on which the President has mentioned the matter of 'resignations' and spoken so plainly about his government's plans for the future. This is also the first time he has mentioned a 'referendum' on terrorism in the context of the general elections due in 1989.

DEFENCE PACT

Evidently Foreign Minister Hameed poooh-pooohed the idea of a 'defence pact' by Sri Lanka with countries whose names were not mentioned when Mr. Lakshman Jayakody took up the issue in Parliament. Did the Parliamentary Consultative Committee on Foreign Affairs discuss the question of a 'defence pact'. Mr. Hameed didn't say 'no'. He dismissed it blandly, calling it an 'academic exercise'.

But Prof. Bhabani Sen Gupta, a leading foreign affairs analyst attached to the Centre for Policy Research in Delhi, has written a controversial article to the *Hindustan Times* in which he argues that India must reconsider its stand on the Sri Lankan issue in the light of a growing US-Pakistani understanding.

In a prompt response to the question, U. S. Ambassador James Spain explained in great detail that the frequent visits to Colombo of Seventh Fleet warships and P 3 "Orion" military aircraft had no "defence-oriented implications. Pakistani military assistance — weapons, instructors, and training facilities in Pakistan — were ap-

parently independent of any U. S. actions.

US-SOVIET

Answering a question by the C. P. MP Mr. D. E. W. Gunasekera, Mr. Hameed said that the IOPZ conference could be held in Colombo next month if there was "no superpower discord". The conference has been postponed 5 times. While the Soviet Union is keen on holding the conference, the US insists in linking it to the Afghanistan issue, which the UN special negotiator Mr. Diego Cordovez is desperately seeking to resolve through negotiations, and has recently reported progress.

Mr. Lakshman Jayakody said that the Afghan problem and the Iran-Iraq war were "too lame and unconvincing" excuses that Washington is trotting out to postpone or scuttle the whole project. Sri Lanka, said Mr. Hameed, may host the Conference next year (the UN resolution says 'not later than 1988') in the first of a two-stage exercise.

ABDUCTION THREAT

The SUN reported on its frontpage (21/4) that the security services had information, according to Dr. Ananda Tissa de Alwis, the Minister of State, of a Plan by terrorists to kidnap ministers. The government had taken a decision not to pay ransom. The police were now providing "special security" to all Ministers.

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TRENDS
+
LETTERS

NO ISLAND IS AN ISLAND ...

It is most unfortunate for Sri Lanka to find itself marooned in the stagnant waters of "Sinhala-only" militancy 30 years after the '56 election.

What started in the 1910's as the good intention of resurrecting an ancient and dignified Sinhalese - Buddhist culture from the overweening influence of western imperialism has become by the '80's a rotting albatross slung round the neck of the country. Narrow-mindedness permeates every aspect of Sri Lankan life: language, literature, art and politics are poisoned by the diseases of withdrawal and self-obsession; self-pity and a baseless self-satisfaction which finds excellence in mediocrity.

"Export or Perish" is not only an economic shibboleth. It has other ramifications. If the Sinhalese succumb to a further prolongation of their introversion, like the Japanese of the 18th century, they will be rudely awakened by outside interference.

Nathan Wild

Kotahena

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COVER

Our cover picture shows a GCSU demonstration led by Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne, a prominent GCSU figure, well-known Sinhala writer and later Cabinet Minister in Mr. Bandaranaike's Government. A portrait of the GCSU martyr Mr. Kandawamy is held high. The bonds of trade unionism, among urban worker and middle class, were stronger than racial or religious allegiance.

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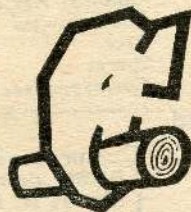
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SIX DAYS THAT SHOOK SRI LANKA

NEWS
BACKGROUND

Mervyn de Silva

On the seventh day, the curfew (an incredible 9 a.m. to 5 a.m.) remained in force. On the sixth, there had been some incidents, disquieting but no cause for real alarm. Some looting in the predictable places (Pettah, Maradana etc) and some cases, here and there, of assault. However, no arson and no killings reported. With memories of July 1983 still fresh, Tamil shopkeepers especially in the sensitive zones had any in case closed up for the duration.

The only ominous sign of an '83 re-play was the riot in Welikade, the scene, perhaps, of the ugliest barbarity in those four days of blood-letting. The timely and decisive action of the Prisons Commissioner Mr. C.T. Jansz in moving out the Tamil prisoners ruled out all chances of a gruesome re-enactment even on a small scale.

A student demo led by monks at the General Hospital morgue may have sent some shivers down a few spines (shades of 1956 and 58, the spectre of a revitalised, militant Sinhala-Buddhist JVP?) but it only took tear gas to disperse the marchers.

The government kept the lid down on Colombo and the suburbs... and earlier on Trinco, after the Good Friday massacre on the Habarana-Trinco road. There was no repetition, and the credit goes to the government.

The same 'credit' however may help reinforce an old thesis of the cynical school. There is no such thing as a spontaneous race riot. Localised may be, but never countrywide. In Sri Lanka, the cynics say, spontaneous combustion is State-sponsored. Or encouraged, or at least tolerated.

Anyway whoever dunit (DPA reported an EROS spokesman saying it was an EROS operation, and EROS does specialise in bomb-attacks on urban and economic-commercial targets) would not have known that this powerful device planted in a car in the Pettah bus stand would also explode 'the backlash theory'.

No More Referendums

— Mrs. B.

Former Prime Minister and SLFP leader, Mrs. Bandaranaike lashed out at a statement by President JR that elections cannot be held until terrorism has been eliminated. She was commenting on a report in the SUN.

"1982 was 1982 and this is 1987... the UNP cannot pull any 'referendum' stunts today. The people have lost their patience with this government. They cannot be robbed of their right to elect their MP's for a second time. In any case, why can't elections be held if a referendum can be? The statements by UNP leaders show that they want to cling on to power and enjoy everything that power brings by using terrorism as the excuse. It should now be clear to our people, and even the world outside that the UNP is not seriously interested in finding a solution".

Of course there, was no backlash after Anuradhapura — a massacre of 145 innocent civilians, men, women and kids in the holiest of Sri Lankan cities in the month of Vesak.

But Anuradhapura is far away. Colombo is here and now — in the Pettah for all to see, on TV screen the same night.

So credit to the government and the UNP machine in the city is also a compliment to the planners of 'Operation Thunderbolt', a city security plan in the event of a 1983 July type 'thunderbolt'.

The reason I start with what did NOT happen is because I visualised a radically changed situation if a backlash did take place. What has in fact followed the six days that shook Colombo, and several major towns, if not the whole island, is a radically changed situation in the government and its policy on the conflict.

In the absence of an explosive Sinhala reaction, it would be foolish however to ignore the fact that Sinhala anger had reached the point of explosion. How far this mounting indignation was anti-Tamil and how far it was anti-UNP is a question that has to be discussed and examined separately. There is, I suspect, a great deal of over-lapping and some important areas of divergence too.

The MP is a political animal even if he happens to be some dictator's pet dog, cat or canary and the country's parliament or state assembly is some stationary circus or city zoo. The Sri Lankan parliament is certainly NOT that, though the present parliament, equally surely lacks the basic characteristics which make a lively forum of sharp and vigorous exchanges between diverse points of view. The numbers determine the character of our "long" parliament (10 years) denying it

the personality of its predecessors. With the TULF's exit, the Opposition's ten MP's face UNP phalanx of over 140 in an assembly of 168.

The Opposition will argue that it is only the Referendum (Dec. 1982) which accounts for the UNP's overwhelming five-sixths

Chuck it, Sirima

— J. R.

Referring to a 'direct action plan' by Mrs. Bandaranaike to "topple the government", President JR said it will never succeed, the *Daily News* reported. The report added:

"What is the use of bhikkus sitting on the roads, marching in the streets, and members of parliament being carried out? Is it to show the government cannot defeat the terrorists militarily or succeed politically? Is it against India or world opinion? Do they wish to embarrass the government and help the terrorists and the JVP insurgents, their old opponents who tried to kidnap Mrs. Bandaranaike. She was saved by a UNP'er who disclosed the plot to the Governor-General. Come, come, Mrs. Bandaranaike, do not hide behind others, but proclaim to the world your 'direct action plan' to topple the government. You will not succeed. Chuck it, instead!"

majority, and it is right. But that point is completely irrelevant to the present situation. The numerical strength of the UNP in parliament is its weakness, its vulnerability to Sinhala opinion. With the exception of the Eastern province MP's and Colombo Central, every UNP MP represents a Sinhala-dominated electorate.

They get the backlash, the Sinhala opinion backlash. The greater the distance from Colombo, the more exposed the UNP

MP to Sinhala sentiment which in the days after the Good Friday massacre soon became a tidal wave.

The change in 1978 from the Westminster-type to the so-called Gaullist constitution saw the Executive President leave Parliament to make his Prime Minister become the party's leader in the House. Thus, the Prime Minister is far more susceptible to party rank-and-file and grassroots constituency pressures, channelled through the MP, than the President. Besides, Mr. Premadasa has been the most consistent UNP critic of the Indian leadership from Mrs. Indira Gandhi's time. His position has been that India, unhappy about post-1977 trends (the defeat of Mrs. Bandaranaike and the establishment of a UNP government with a decidedly different economic and foreign policy orientation) was determined to "de-stabilise" the UNP regime.

The political debate on the Sri Lankan conflict has seen, broadly speaking, four schools of opinion.

(a) The problem is fundamentally political in nature and therefore requires a political solution, while every effort must be made to contain and curb violence.

To facilitate such a process, we need Indian help, certainly after August 1983 when the TULF MP's, the elected representatives of the Tamils of the north, went into exile in Madras, India, largely because of Tamilnadu and the presence there of Tamil refugees and the TULF leadership and more so the armed Tamil groups, shares a common interest with Sri Lanka in a reasonable and lasting solution. It is in Indian interests to have a stable (and ideally, friendly) neighbour on its southern flank when its land borders (the northern flank) are matters of such acrimonious dispute that these have led to many wars with Pakistan and China.

(2) The realists who argue that the basically political con-

flict requires a political settlement and for this purpose Sri Lanka needs Indian assistance, whether such help is well-intentioned or not. Indian hostility or even a negative attitude would aggravate the problem.

Both (1) and (2), sometimes with varying emphasis, regard a military solution neither possible nor desirable.

No military solution

— Gandhi

The All India Radio last night quoting Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said there could be no military solution to Sri Lanka's ethnic problem.

AIR quoted the Indian Premier as saying that in the interests of all concerned the killing should stop.

Mr. Gandhi who was addressing the bi-annual conference of Army commanders in New Delhi yesterday, called up on the parties concerned to begin negotiations on the basis of the December 19 proposals.

AIR further said the Prime Minister had expressed concern over the involvement of outside forces in Sri Lanka and the increasing visit of naval vessels from other countries.

Meanwhile India's External Affairs Minister, N. D. Tiwari told the Rajya Sabha yesterday that the Indian government would pursue its objectives of resuming the dialogue between the parties concerned in the coming days, the report said.

— Island

(3) The militarists who say that a military solution is the most desirable. And it is possible. Even if it proves impossible in the end, we must at least embark on that path, come what may.

(4) A negotiated political settlement is the most desirable goal but by that very logic, the

government must be able to negotiate from a position of strength, militarily, in order to get the best deal.

While Group 4 does not entirely trust India or regard its offer of "good offices" as purely altruistic, it still maintains that some advantage is to be gained by keeping India "involved" — it is only India which, via Tamilnadu and MGR, can pressure the armed rebel groups, and it is perhaps only through Delhi that negotiations can be conducted or the ground for talks prepared. Sri Lanka must get as much help from India as possible, but never accept its dictates. We must keep talking to, and arguing with India, and never switch off the dialogue.

Group 3 argues for a concerted campaign, here and abroad, to embarrass and expose India, propaganda and diplomacy, and thus neutralise, if not eliminate the Indian factor. Some advocates of this line would even go to the extent of inviting greater assistance (military hardware, expertise etc) from other sources, especially those not too friendly with India. (See TRENDS)

On this matter one of the most interesting statements was that of Prime Minister Premadasa on his recent visit to Pakistan. He said "It is in time of trial, that true friendship is tested. Sri Lanka and Pakistan have both passed that sternest of tests".

At the end of the "six days", the parameters of the debate have been re-drawn. The discussion is totally dominated by (3) and (4) and it is within the government that the debate is sharpest. What happens on the ground (military) and in the Indo-Sri Lankan dialogue (diplomatic) will determine which "line" will prevail to become undisputed Sri Lankan policy. If things really get bad, then the debate may once again cross these boundaries to enter the (1) and (2) terrain. Much will depend on the Indian reaction, diplomatic and otherwise.

SOUTHERN THREAT

In the week before the 'Good Friday' massacre, the JVP made a dramatic entrance on the main stage of Sri Lankan politics. A raid on an army camp in Pallekelle by a group of unidentified youths dressed in military uniforms who got away with assault rifles and sub-machine guns started a train of events which obviously left the UNP

MGR's Gift to the "boys"

The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Mr. M. G. Ramachandran told the Tamil Nadu Legislature yesterday that he would allocate US dollars 3.2 million to "Freedom Fighters" in Sri Lanka to be used for food, clothing and medicine.

Mr. Ramachandran said, he would not channel it through the Sri Lanka Government, but give it to Sri Lankan Tamils in Tamil Nadu to be distributed in Sri Lanka.

This money is from the Rs. 50 million collected in Tamil Nadu for the "Freedom Fighters" in Sri Lanka, he said.

Meanwhile, senior government sources told "The Island" that this was "... a clear case of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran coming out in the open with direct military assistance to the LTTE".

The sources said the voting of such considerable funds "supposedly for humanitarian relief purposes could only deceive the very naive. However, we will wait for the formal approach by Tamil Nadu to the Sri Lankan government on this issue".

— Island

quite shaken. For a whole week the spotlight was on police investigations into what the press described loosely as "JVP activities". Robberies — money and arms — conformed said top police officials to the WEEKEND to a "pre-1971 pattern". But far more worrying to the UNP were reports of "infiltration" into the

armed forces. 37 young soldiers were served with quit notices by the Army High Command and several hundred new recruits are being "re-screened" by the intelligence apparatus.

The re-emergence of the JVP in the frontpages of the national press is a political phenomenon which should be studied in the context of (a) its proscription by the UNP for alleged complicity in the July 1983 violence (b) the fact that is forced by the ban to undertake clandestine work and engage in 'open' politics only through 'front' organisations and via allied sympathetic groups, (c) its ideological and policy shifts — virulently anti-JR, anti-UNP rather than anti-SLFP as before, and its equally vehement anti-Eelam, anti-India, and militantly pro-Sinhala-Buddhist line, and (d) the impact of current UNP economic policies on the lower-middle class and labour, especially on disaffected youth and students. (The prolonged unrest on the campuses is a striking symptom of the current malaise affecting Sinhala youth of the poorer sectors of the population).

The demonstrations in Colombo and Kandy by several hundred monks and students show where the disturbed areas of the Sinhala constituency lie. It should not be forgotten that Mr. Wijeweera obtained 275,000 votes in Oct. 1982 nor must the May Day crowds he attracted from 1978 onwards be ignored.

The democratic parliamentary opposition led by the SLFP is also active again. It has even recovered its fight-back spirit. Its own "demo" in Parliament showed suprising spunk and initiative in the light of its recent past. (See SLFP'S NEW SPUNK)

Both have had an immediate impact on the UNP. President JR has asked for a closing of ranks by all democratic forces, while Prime Minister Premadasa has launched a bitter attack on Mrs. B.

Sri Lankan crisis : Foreign perceptions

Sri Lanka was the top priority issue when the Indian Political Affairs Committee of the Cabinet, the country's highest policy planning body, met on the 24th, with Prime Minister Gandhi in the chair. Reports and commentaries in the leading Indian newspapers, regardless of their editorial policy vis-a-vis the Gandhi government on the Sri Lanka conflict, focussed on the "strategic" consideration, rather than on the Tamil problem.

In the only published statement of the government, External Affairs Minister N. D. Tiwari told Parliament that in the Indian view "any attempt at achieving a military solution would prove short-lived and illusory".

Reacting to the events here, and to Prime Minister Premadasa's speech on 24/2, the P. A. C., Indian press reports said, had concluded that the Sri Lankan government had "foreclosed the political option".

The response of US officials and analysts was described by Reuter as one of "despair".

Sri Lanka, now a source of despair to U.S.

WASHINGTON, April 26

Violence-wracked Sri Lanka, once regarded by Washington as a model developing country, is now a source of despair for a U. S. government that says it is powerless to help.

U. S. officials and private analysts told Reuters that an explosion of major violence in recent days that killed several hundred people there had made it difficult to see how a solution could be reached to the ethnic violence.

"The events of the past few days have discouraged everyone. We are back at square one," said one official.

The depth of the sense of hopelessness was perhaps best reflected in the fact that during the visit of Deputy Indian Foreign Minister Natwar Singh to Washington last week the subject of Sri Lanka was mentioned only in passing.

Washington believes India is the only possible mediator in the Sri Lankan conflict between largely Christian (sic) Tamil separatists and the Buddhist Sinhalese majority and has backed New Delhi's efforts strongly in the past.

But the only mention of Sri Lanka came in U. S. urging that India continue to try to bring the two sides to the negotiating table.

The officials said they saw no role for the United States in such mediation efforts, if only because India, whose relations with Washington have long been delicately poised, would feel such efforts an intrusion.

They said Washington had consistently pressed the government of President Junius Jayewardene to avoid imposing a military solution, while reinforcing the message by refusing to sell him arms he sought.

But neither the officials nor private analysts saw any prospect following a Tamil massacre of Sinhalese bus passengers, a Tamil rush hour bomb that razed

Colombo's main bus station and government retaliatory air strikes on Tamil guerilla camps.

They saw the Tamil attacks as attempts by the most militant organisations to undermine any possibility of renewed negotiations.

Through so-called "lamp post killings" of alleged collaborators, the Tamil militants had thoroughly cowed Tamil moderates who might be willing to talk, they said.

Thomas Thornton of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) said the problem was that, with the Tamil militants becoming so extreme, talks were out of the question.

Like officials and other private analysts he did not absolve the Sri Lankan government from blame for the violence and increasing militancy.

"Now, it's got to the stage where from this distance it's impossible to see how these two communities can live together again," Thornton said.

Selling Harrison of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace complained that the American media focused entirely on the Tamil violence without paying attention to Jayewardene's inability to make peace.

"He has made concessions in Indian-brokered negotiations, but in the face of protests from hardline elements, especially in the military and the Buddhist hierarchy, he has backtracked", he said.

"This is a situation in which the majority group has to be able to make concessions to deliver the minority. Jayewardene has not shown either the ability or the courage to control his hardliners."

— Reuter

Foreign hand

Speaking to his own party's heirarchy recently, Mr. Gandhi

(Continued on page 13)

CMU statement on violence

The Executive Committee denounces those who perpetrated this crime as being cold-blooded terrorists, having no regard whatsoever for other human beings in the pursuit of their ends, whatever they may be.

Certain groups of the Tamil-speaking youth engaged in armed conflict with the armed forces of the State in the North and East of this country have unfortunately resorted to murderous attacks upon harmless and defenceless men, women and even children in some villages and settlements inhabited by Sinhala-speaking people. Such groups have also killed dissidents and members of other groups holding different views, who have been engaged in the armed conflict in the North and East. Hence, it is not surprising that, whoever may have committed the terrorist atrocity of 21st

April and similar recent atrocities involving ordinary people as victims, those atrocities are being attributed to one or other of those groups of Tamil-speaking youth.

The admission of responsibility by one such group for earlier terrorist crimes perpetrated with explosives in Colombo, as in the case of the explosions in the Telecommunication building and in the premises of Ceylon Cold Stores Limited, is an additional reason for the same group to be suspected as having been responsible for the latest and most atrocious crime perpetrated in Colombo.

The Executive Committee declares that it cannot accept that there is justification for any such terrorist crime, even if it may be in retaliation for acts of terrorism that have been and are being perpetrated on the

civilian population in the North and East by the armed forces of the State, including bombing from the air and shelling from land and sea. In any case, such terrorist crimes will not serve to promote the interests of the masses of the Tamil-speaking people in the North and East, but will only serve to provide the Government with a pretext for continuing its war policy in the North and East, under the plea of wiping out "terrorist bases" in those areas, without negotiating a political settlement, as it has professed its willingness to do. Furthermore, it will also provide the Government, as it has already done, with a pretext for continuing the State of Emergency and to suppress democratic rights and civil liberties throughout the country thereunder.

Bala Tampoe
General Secretary

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71 entries from Lanka Guardian in Norwegian Research Publication

The 'Daily News' published a news report recently from Reggie Fernando in Stockholm (see below) on a letter circulated by the Sri Lankan Embassy in Sweden about a bibliography prepared by PRIO, the Norwegian Peace Institute. According to the Embassy letter, the book had 71 entries from the L.G., 28 from the (SLFP) Forum and 36 from the *Saturday Review*. The Sri Lankan Ambassador in Stockholm is Mr. Kurukulasuriya, a new comer to the foreign service from the Justice Ministry, and the *Daily News* correspondent is his press Attache / Consultant, also a new appointee.

One of the items cited from the L.G. is Ambassador Kurukulasuriya's address to the PRIO-sponsored seminar in Oslo, which was republished in full by the L.G. and featured on its cover of Jan. 15, 1987: Whether the Ambassador's viewpoint qualified as "pro-Eelam" or "anti-government" is for the reader to decide.... or the next government.

Lal Kurukulasuriya on Devolution Drugs and Big Banks and U. Karunatilake's "JUDAS"

Embassy slates Janavegaya leader's pro-eelam stance

Former Janavegaya leader Kumar Rupasinghe, presently Director, Sri Lanka Human Rights Project at the International Peace Research Institute of Oslo has published a bibliography on the "Negotiation in Sri Lanka" which has been severely criticized by the Sri

Lanka Embassy in Stockholm for the completely one-sided and biased presentation of the country's ethnic problem.

The Embassy's letter points out that the bibliography is little more than a compendium of Tamil Eelam propaganda literature.

Having examined the entries in the bibliography against a source index, the Embassy has pointed out that: "The source index will prove beyond any doubt, the manner in which the

Sri Lanka human Rights Project (PRIO) has sought to cover up the atrocities of Tamil extremist terrorist groups in Sri Lanka, directed against innocent men, women and children of all communities and faiths.

It is well known that it was Rupasinghe's associate at the peace research institute in Oslo — Mr. Asbjorn Eide — who was behind the Amnesty International and Argentine draft resolutions at the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva recently, both of which were rejected out of hand by the commission.

Mr. Eide has since left the peace research institute in Oslo to become the head of the Norwegian Human Rights Institute.

In its letter, the Sri Lanka Embassy has stated: "The publication is totally unacceptable as a balanced and representative presentation of the issues involved in or the material available on the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka and the ongoing negotiations for achieving a political settlement and that the authors have displayed a lack of objectivity and fairness, which raises un-settling questions of purpose and motive."

The letter further states that the bibliography contains 47 entries from the Tamil Eelam lobby's propaganda journal — "The Tamil Times" — and just 6 entries of documents published by the Sri Lanka government.

In addition, there are 28 entries from "Forum", 71 from "The Lanka Guardian" and 36 from "Saturday Review" almost all of which echo the Tamil Eelam or anti-government view points.

The Embassy has also stated that it is a matter of much regret that none of the documents published by the government of Sri Lanka dealing with the numerous atrocities committed by Tamil terrorists on innocent Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims alike have found a place in this bibliography.

SLFP's new spunk

There was pandemonium in Parliament as Opposition members repeatedly disrupted Prime Minister, R. Premadasa's speech during the resumed debate on the Emergency, compelling the Speaker to order the forcible removal of some MPs.

The disturbance, which lasted for nearly 25 minutes and resulted in parliamentary proceedings being suspended thrice, arose when the Deputy Chairman of Committees Edmund Samarawickreme informed SLFP's member for Baddegama. Amarasiri Dodan-goda, who was on his feet that the time allocated for the Opposition for the debate, was over.

When the Prime Minister stood up to begin his speech, Mr. Dodan-goda continued with his, disregarding the order from the Chair and in the ensuing confusion, a number of Opposition MPs asked Mr. Samarawickreme to be silent and demanded more time for their speeches.

The speaker, E. L. Senanayake took the Chair at this stage, and informed the Opposition that the time set for Opposition speeches was agreed to at a meeting by party leaders and since that period was over it was time for the Prime Minister to make his speech.

This led to more shouting by Opposition MPs, and in the ensuing heated cross talk the Speaker named the SLFP Member for Akmeemana Richard Pathirana and recessed Parliament for five minutes, so that he could be removed. Mr. Pathirana was forcibly carried out of Parliament by Police officials thereafter.

On resumption, the same situation arose resulting in Mr. Dodan-goda being carried out by Police, but the pandemonium continued when sessions resumed for a third time.

Lakshman Jayakody — SLFP Attanagalle:

The National Security Minister spoke about resignation of Govern-

ments and he used a number of examples from England to support his statement. A call for resignation of the people must come from the people and the people have realised that this Government cannot solve the country's problems. A group of Buddhist monks have written to the Government asking it to resign. I have a copy of that request.

(Interruption from the Opposition).

Speaker:

You can fling, you can abuse each other. But this is a very serious situation, which I hope will never arise again.

Prime Minister R. Premadasa:

I request everyone not to interrupt as I have to reply him.

Lakshman Jayakody:

I would like to table this document.

Speaker:

You cannot table anything with reference to the conduct of the head of the state.

Lakshman Jayakody:

A newspaper named Sri Lanka - International has said the Government has violated the democratic process.

Speaker:

You cannot speak on the conduct of the head of the state.

Lakshman Jayakody:

This is about the Government — this is not about the head of the state. If I want to speak about the President, I will do it outside.

The National Security Minister made a very national speech, in spite of the fact that all members of his party are not keeping to the same views. We know about the December 19 proposals, the fuel embargo in Jaffna and others like the cessation of hostilities but members of his own party — the Rural Industrial Minister has ideas

contrary to them. The Rural Industrial Minister, during a visit to India has issued a statement to the "HINDU" which goes against the policy of the Government. In the statement he has said he (Rural Industrial Minister) would request President J. R. Jayewardene to remove all restraints on the Tamil people and that the fuel embargo was of little use.

Suddenly the country has plunged into panic — and things are not going to stop with this — things are going to follow on.

It was apparently a 25 kg bomb which was placed in Pettah. How did it come there? What was the source, the basis and was it prepared in Colombo or in the North. Are there arsenals within the city of Colombo? The Government must find out — otherwise they are in a serious situation. The Government must open its eyes now. Someone must take responsibility for what is happening in the country.

We know what happened in Habarana, where over 30 soldiers died. Was the attack aimed at soldiers or civilians?

What happened in Pallekele was an international disgrace. These was an armoured Corps and a group of civilians came and took their guns and went off and the Sinha Regiment had to take over. I learnt that some of the destructive work is being done by Sinhalese working with the CWC members.

It is easy to say that the JVP did it but it is easy for anyone to make trouble in the central hills.

It is time you took a positive stand. You must not try to hide anything from the people. The whole world knows what is happening in the country before people within the country know it.

(Continued on page 28)



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MAY DAY

There will be no May Day processions today. Not even meetings. The government decided to ban it after the Cabinet met on April 22. "Strictly a security measure" said a top UNP spokesman.

In any case, what has happened to the working class movement and to trade union militancy. In the past decade, the crowds have swelled but the working class spirit has quietly vanished or weakened or subsumed in a perahera-Mardi Gras carnival revelry, with ruling party shows advertising the government's achievements rather than working class solidarity.

LSSP theoretician, Mr. Hector Abhayavardhana traces it to the state's confrontation with the working class post-1977 in a brief comment published in this issue. "To so much as parade in a May Day procession became the height of militancy" he notes.

The Peradeniya lecturer, Dr. Laksiri Fernando, in a paper he prepared in 1983 has examined the impact on the urban working class of the 'open economy'. Written before July 83, it did not pay attention to the effect on the ethnic issue. Basing himself on that study Rev. M. Anandan has contributed an article published below.

May Day — post 1977

Hector Abhayavardhana

The first of May was designated International Labour Day by the founding Congress of the Socialist International (Second International) in 1889. So two years hence, on first May, 1989, we shall be observing the centenary of this festival of the international working class. One hundred years is a long period of time, especially in a world that is changing as rapidly as our planet. A ceremonial occasion that sprang out of bitter and long-drawn-out battles of European and North American workers against oppression and exploitation by their ruling classes would not always reflect even in the same countries, the same revolutionary ardour and militancy. In other conditions other moods would be uppermost. But for that reason consciousness need not change. Workingmen would continue to retain their perception of divergent interests in relation to their rulers. Their class consciousness would find expression in moods appropriate to the time.

The beginnings of May Day in our own country were entirely within the working class. First A. E. Goonesinha and then the Marxists, with the formation of the LSSP in 1935. The participants were working men and women, including white-collar employees. Ardour and militancy increased from year to year. But not all of it came out of class struggle and opposition to imperialism. May Day was also an occasion for competition among rival participants in demonstration of organisational strength and mass support. There was also competition in militancy.

With Mr. Bandaranaike's MEP Government came a big change. May Day became a public holiday and the people in general were brought into the celebrations. The workers still played a large part on the streets. But the Government and the state were also in them prominently. The competition between political

(Continued on page 13)

**The Hero Of
Your Dream Knows, That
"Early to Bed And
Early to Rise,
Makes Him
Healthy, Wealthy
And Wise !"**

*And Those Who Believe
In A Goodnights
Rest Always Visit*

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Comfortable
Mattresses and
Pillows !**

Working Class and Their Future

Rev. M. Anandan O.M.I.

Since the post-world war era, successive governments have been pursuing a capitalist development strategy. The open economic policy introduced in 1977 was intended to realise this objective with a greater force.

The decade old strategy has generated its "Impacts". From the working class perspective, one could observe the following trends: there exists in the main, a new proletariat due to the expansion in the labour force. On the other hand, these policies have failed to generate the most essential distributive Justice. It means that those who own the means of production are entrusted with all opportunities of earning enormous sum of money, totally disproportionate to that of the working class despite the fact that the latter's income level has also relatively increased.

Within this context, it is imperative to make an inquiry into the aspect of power and influence of the trade union movement. Its growth has not accelerated and then there is obviously a decline in the level of class consciousness. An attempt must be made to account for this historical phenomenon.

Some writers have argued that the urban sector working class has experienced "significant shifts and changes in its economic condition, internal class structure, cultural orientation and political behavior". (2) It is attributed to factors such as the open economic policies, the new international division of labour and the migration of labour to the Middle East. However, they believe that the plantation sector has remained not only unaffected by such factors but has experienced more hardships than before.

(The writer is a staff member at the Centre for Society and Religion.)

I am indebted to the paper "The open-economy and the urban working class" by Laksiri Fernando, presented at the occasional seminar held at the University of Peradeniya. Any shortcomings, however, remain as my responsibility.

A new proletariat came into existence in the post-1977 era with the export promotion zones (EPZ) being installed in the country in response to the new international division of labour.

It has shifted its production process from the advanced capitalist countries (the metropolitian centre) to the peripheral capitalist countries in the third world, in order to evade the higher labour cost and the loss of tax incentives. Such industries are, in the main, producing garments, electrical goods and so on. The Greater Colombo Economic Commission, since its inception in 1978, had approved 179 projects.

The total number of employees amounted to 26,602 till July 1983. The Foreign Investment Advisory Committee (FIAC) had approved 628 enterprises in which employment can be generated for approximately 78,655.

A significant feature of the new proletariat is the presence of women workers. More than 85 per cent of those who worked in the EPZ are women who are below the age of 25 years and unmarried or single. This is true of many Asian countries as well.

The next factor that induced the expansion of the working class is the rate of growth in the sectors like trade, banking, private transport, construction and commerce. Trade has absorbed a large amount of urban labour as sales workers, porters

and so on. Under the private transport sector, there are 7,000 vehicles and those employed were approximately 20,000. Those who work under the construction sector are those who are keen to earn quick money as the duration of the employment is of a short term. The number of employees have exceeded more than 150,000. All in all, it is estimated that more than 1.5 million workers have given employment since 1977.

The capitalist growth is attributed to the increase in the gross national product. It means that the rich merchant, business and the industrial class are elevated to a higher position in that they are also associated with the foreign capital. It demonstrates the fact that there exists an inequality in the distribution of income among the different groups. To illustrate further, the share of income of the top twenty per cent has increased while the share of the rest of the eighty per cent have declined.

The necessary corollary that ought to emanate from this analysis, to the eye of an ordinary person, is that a resurgence must dawn on the working class the experience however, demonstrate a contrary story in that, there prevails a profound de-moralization and decline in the level of the working class consciousness.

It may be over-simplifying to state that the repressive, authoritarian, one party rule is the ultimate cause and no other. Some are of the opinion that the dis-organization of the new proletariat and de-moralisation of the organised industrial working class could be attributed to the factor of class-differentiation.

In the post-1977 era both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie had the freedom to amass wealth. The worker in the private sector

began to earn more than those in the state sector. For instance a bank clerk earns thrice the amount of salary of a government clerical servant. A skilled worker's income is greater than that of a clerical worker in the government or the private sector. Under the impact of the open economy the clear-cut differences of the white collar and blue collar workers in terms of income appear to be a farce. The class differentiation moreover, can be attributed to the labour migration to the Middle East countries, which has increased since 1976 from 526 to 9424 in 1979.

The trade union movement experienced several set-backs in the post-1977 period. The strike waves of late 1976 and early 1977 were directed against the policies of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) government, which in effect, facilitated United National Party (UNP) to win the general election. As a result, the bulk of the working class were at a critical stage. The Joint Trade Union Action Committee (JTUAC) initiated the most vulnerable strike wave in July 1980. It was a failure due to the detention of the workers under the emergency regulations, the non-participation of the plantation workers and those from the essential services. The deep recession that the trade union movement experienced is manifested in the figures relating to their registration and functioning, which had declined over the years from 175 in 1977 to 74 in 1982 and 1636 in 1977 to 1,241 in 1982 respectively.

The decade is lastly characterized by several ethnic pogroms. The most notorious of all was staged in July 1983, in which according to certain speculations the participation of the new proletariat had been visible which can attributed to the fact of they being inadequately politicised and organised. The anti-Tamil consciousness has permeated the newly emerged proletariat and perhaps could have influenced the organised working class as well.

What can be observed during the post 1977 period is the so called industrial peace, wherein the working class have been transformed into instruments of labour for the all-powerful few to maximise the necessary profit, and that operates, perhaps, under the pretext of rapid development, modernization, national security and so on. The working class has lost at this hour, all avenues to voice out their grievances.

Their consciousness as a class has declined in an unprecedented manner since 1983, though having gone through different phases, it has now reached the peak of what is called the "false consciousness", originating from the folly of a willingness to collaborate with state capitalism. The re-juvenation and re-radicalization of the future proletariat of our country invariably is dependent upon the integration of the newly surfacing factors such as the class differentiation, women workers and the ethnic question.

May Day — post 1977

(Continued from page 11)

parties still continued, perhaps even more prominently than before. But the arena was not confined to the working class but extended to all classes. The middle class had a notable role.

In 1977, however, began a new era. It was the era of state confrontation with the working class. Trade unions were smashed or substituted by spurious unions installed in offices and workplaces by the Government. Civil rights were suppressed. Serving employees were replaced by Government nominees and harassed in numerous ways. **To so much as parade in a May Day procession became the height of militancy.**

Sri Lankan . . .

(Continued from page 6)

sounded suspiciously like his mother's echo. He blamed "external forces" which were trying to de-stabilise his government and the India's parliamentary democracy. "The foreign hand is always present" he said. "When we are strong, it is invisible but when we are weak, it is seen prominent. . . we are being attacked day in and day out, and this is part of wider conspiracy to de-stabilise an elected government".

Soviet view

Comment on the Sri Lankan conflict in the Soviet Union's two important newspapers, *PRAVDA* and *IZVESTIA* are quite rare.

In a commentary published by the *Izvestia*, the state paper, V. Kondrashov wrote:

"While Sri Lanka's neighbour, India, is trying to help end the conflict, some circles in the West are bent on taking advantage of the ethnic conflict. Washington's aim is to strain relations between Sri Lanka and India. The US policy pursues a far-reaching objective — to detach Sri Lanka from the nonaligned movement and turn it into a strategically important American military base'

Pointing out that the Indian press had linked the recent railway disaster in Tamilnadu to Tamilnadu separatists, the commentator noted that "this act of subversion was a new attempt by India's enemies to weaken the country, incite disunity there and make it play a less active role in the international arena. The ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka hampers its social and economic development and makes it vulnerable to imperialist intrigues. Aware of this all progressive forces, inside and outside the country, call for a ceasefire in the north and east, and demand a political settlement in the interests of both communities".

Postscript on the Ethnic Problem

U. Karunatilake

“It was an English Society that lived in Nuwara Eliya. President Jayewardana recalled that his father and the late Mr. D. S. Senanayake and the late Mr. F. R. Senanayake were not allowed to play golf at the golf links of the white men. It was when the Sinhalese were suffering such harassment under the British that men like Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, D. S. Senanayake, F. R. Senanayake, Sir James Peiris, Anagarika Dharmapala, D. B. Jayatillake, E. W. Wijewardana, D. R. Wijawardana and others got together and formed the Ceylon National Congress and started the National Movement. It was from the Ceylon National Congress that the U. N. P. was born”.

Ceylon Daily News of April 9th 1982 reports the President's speech delivered at Nuwara Eliya on Wednesday April 7th.

In uncontrolled flashes of insight J. R. the student of history gets the better of J. R. the politician and the truth comes stumbling out. He has summed up the last seventy years of the political history of Lanka in one frank statement which presents a psycho analysis of the Post Colonial ego and a rationale for the behaviour of ruling groups in the developing countries.

It also explains why post Colonial economies either follow same pattern of dependant growth, or lapse into stagnancy, as the golf sticks change hands, and the mass of people continue to watch a game they never really understood or found any excitement in.

The cry against feudalism raised by the same politicians even now is not simply a bogey popping out of an overheated parochial

imagination. It is the war cry of a class — the class that emerged with the breakdown of feudalism in Lanka the class so well represented on roll of honour read out in the President's speech.

By the turn of the last century the British had made all the use they could of the feudal chieftans who had handed over power to them in the expectation of a continuation of a monarchy under white kings and queens instead of the Malabar rulers. They did not know that in Britain the rulers were not the kings and queens but the bankers and industrialists who spearhead Colonial expansion. These Empire builders would not be content with the poor returns of a feudal economy. The chieftans soon found themselves betraying the people further by turning over their feudal domains to the white plantation barons. A new type of exploitation had begun. They also found that they had outlived their usefulness to the new rulers and were being shuffled around harmlessly as dis-sawes and Ratamahatmayas. With the breakdown of this feudal hold on the people a new class had emerged collaborating more actively with the Colonial administration, business and plantation interests.

These were just small fry at the start servile contractors who undertook to clear land plundered from the people for plantations contractors for transporting estate produce, contractors for supply of local requirements of the estates building contractors and various other lackeys who had moved from feudal serfdom to anxiously waiting upon their new white masters. At the same time they were carefully pocketing the commodity that soon set them apart

as a social class—money. By the fourth quarter of the last century, this class while still remaining servile to Colonial interests had begun to invest its money in the Colonial economy — buying land and setting up plantations on their own, exploiting cheap labour in the same style as their Colonial masters, using the profits to build mansions in Cinnamon Gardens, Kollupitiya and Panadura, acquiring fleets of bullock carts and barges for transport of estate produce, timber and other building materials, acquiring plumbago mines and oil mills. They brought up their children to ape the Englishmen, sent them to schools and universities in England, and saw them into the various professions that the Colonial set up had a need for. Those who did not have enough brains to enter the professions tried their hand at trade but found it almost impossible to make much headway in a field which was initially dominated by other communities. This was the first contradiction they came up against within their own class, which they tried to resolve with the riots of 1915. The new class that colonialism had bred had brought forth a generation that was willing to collaborate but wanted a bigger hand in the exploitation of the people. They were ruthlessly ambitious behind their Oxford and Cambridge masks, and their professional sauveness. They were not going to be content with entering the Colonial Civil Service, living in Cinnamon Gardens, or fleecing poor villagers in the practice of their professions. They wanted to get right into the shoes of their Colonial masters, play golf, play the Pukkha Sahib in the Board rooms and clubs and above all have the political power that would give them the say of life

and death over the masses of their poverty stricken countrymen. The Imperialists were astute enough to realise that this class would continue to serve their interest indirectly. So they served up constitutional changes in measured doses while pulling the strings from afar. At this the brown puppets went through their legislative exercises helping decade by decade to consolidate the hold of Western Commercialism over the people

In 1915 the new class experienced its first internal contradiction. Looking back at those times it appears that the Colombo Town Guard proved an outlet for the frustrations of the youngsters who could not make the grade in the professions. In the Town Guard they took sides in the riot between Sinhala and Muslim shop keepers and were hauled up on disciplinary counts which had a questionable undertone of bourgeois patriotism. Thus they were cast overnight in the role of heroes and martyrs and snapped up for popular projection by the emerging capitalist class and their priestly mentors.

Apart from the contradiction in trade between immigrant and indigenous business men these was the growing rivalry between the native Christians as favourites of the powerful missionary sects and the Buddhists prodded to come into the rat race by the so called religious revival of this period.

While the Buddhist leaders took the stance of waging an anti-Colonial struggle they were actually resolving contradictions within their own class. Their response to missionary indoctrination was to transplant all the traditions of Colonial education into their own schools—from the English nursery rhymes in the Kindergarten to the old school tie, the scout troop and the cadet battalion. This was the Buddhist revival which took the basics of Western missionary culture from a small but powerful Christian social stratum and spread it throughout the expanding local bourgeois and middle class in the name of Buddhism. After a period of

forced dormancy the Mahavansa ideal of the identity of religion and race was surfacing in various unexpected ways. They first climaxed in the riots of 1915 which spewed out the first bourgeois leaders. They strode the stage as popular heroes, while the British quietly contemplated the new situation and came out with their constitutional ruses to transform the new lions into lackeys. It worked only too well. The inhibitions and traditions of Oxbridge and the Inns of Court did only a part of the trick. The main trap was the greed and ambition of the local bourgeoisie once they tasted the fruits of collaboration.

Very soon the Tripitakas were following the Bible into the arena of capitalist exploitation. During the city working class struggles of the 1920's and the plantation strikes of the forties the increasing stridency of the race and religion cry was used to alienate the mass of our peasants and petit bourgeois from the expatriate working class. While sowing the seeds of working class discord it also thrust a large mass of Sinhala educated poor, peasants, teachers, Ayurvedic physicians into the hands of a new class of local capitalists who had got pushed out in the race for collaboration because they were Sinhala educated. As was to be expected this cry swept power from the hands of the Oxbridge top hat and tails men into hands of the Oxbridge banian and cloth men in the fifties. Naturally once again there was a spread of power into new strata. The bannian and cloth leaders had to become the new champions of capitalism and here the Tripitakas had to replace the Bible.

So in the fifties we had the sacred ritual of Pirith vulgarised in Government offices, airports and even at Army Headquarters. The Bible and Sword theory was being crudely readapted. The sword came rapidly in to the picture in the fifties and sixties, the March to Kandy, Emergency of fifty eight, the Bandaranaike Assassination (a robe and dagger job to eliminate all second thoughts about local capitalist expansion).

Certain contradictions lingered in to the sixties. The last ditch struggle of the Oxbridge (Royal-Thomain) class against the Oxbridge (Ananda-Nalanda) class as manifested in the reaction to the take over of missionary schools, the attempted coup of 1962, the dismantling of benign missionary infra structure like the nursing nuns and convents with no alternative social discipline and dedication.

These contradictions saw shoot outs in the Civil Service. The Diplomatic Corps, the professions, with increasing use of racial and religious weaponry. They arose from competition of increasing numbers of the new strata released by free education for the limited outlets in a post Colonial pickle of capitalist welfarism. The new class of cloth and bannian capitalists and middle class parents had spawned new generation of shirt and slacks candidates for the professions and the plums of administration. This was a ruthless generation who used studied Buddhism in schools to pass examinations while they flirted with Marxism in the university merely as an experiment in the power game.

This spearheaded the insurgency of 1971 which saw the crack up of the left both old and new. Worse still this revolution to end all revolutions saw national bourgeois which emerged with the cloth and banian show of the fifties closing ranks with the comprador class of the past colonial period to usher in the new colonialism of late seventies and the eighties with its open economy liberalization of trade and industry, and abject collaboration with multi nationals. To the blare of new colonial trumpet, the Pirith ceremony has now moved into the Free Trade Zone along with the Bell, Book, and Candle.

With the closing of ranks between the national bourgeoisie and the compradors has also occurred the closing of ranks between the City and Central school elite., Oxbridge is now only a general term which covers the fields from

(Continued on page 22)

Is the USA cheating on treaties?

FOREIGN
NEWS

K. Subramaniam (Director, Institute for Defence Research & Analysis, Delhi)

In spite of the USSR continuing with its unilateral test moratorium and the appeal of Delhi Group of six nations, the US government conducted its first nuclear test of 1987 at Nevada test site on Feb. 3rd, 1987.

The Soviet Union has already given notice that if the US conducted new tests in 1987 it would also be compelled to resume testing to ensure that it did not fall behind in the development of weapons and permit the US any undue advantage that might upset the strategic balance. Though the USSR as of now has not resumed its tests there is general expectation that it will do so at an appropriate time in future — probably after the international Moscow Conference to discuss the nuclear weapon-free world is concluded. Countries like India, Sweden and Greece have regretted the US action in resuming the tests. It is hoped that though the Soviet resumption will be understandable the USSR would exercise some more patience to permit the new US Congress to make itself felt on this issue. Last year US House of Representatives came out against nuclear testing and it is appropriate to give a chance to US Senate to act along with the House this time, though it is extremely doubtful whether the Congress will be able to override the Presidential veto.

However reprehensible it may be the US policy has been consistent. The US administration believes in the legitimacy of the use and threat of nuclear weapons, having been the only country having used it, believes in cartelised possession of nuclear weapons in the hands of a few nations threatening the security of the whole world, does not accept any obligation to abide by any international treaty it signs on nuclear armaments and hopes

to reassert its technological lead on the rest of the world — both military and civil, vis-a-vis friends and adversaries, through SDI. They are confident that even if the USSR resumes testing of weapons the US will be able to reestablish the kind of supremacy they had in the forties and fifties.

The US signs the ABM treaty and now wants to break out of it through deploying SDI. US signed Salt-1 accepting limitations on the number of launchers in the hope that it would keep a ten year lead on missile technology and consequent superiority over the USSR. They did not ratify Salt-2 and it have now broken out if its limitations. They offered zero option on Euromissiles and now that the USSR offers to accept the proposal they find new reasons to torpedo it and continue with the deployment of them in Europe.

But the most outrageous example of hypocrisy of having a treaty without any intention of abiding by it is the so-called non-proliferation treaty. The treaty has been used as a license for unlimited proliferation of nuclear weapons by nuclear weapon powers. Not only they have been proliferating nuclear weapons in numbers, they are spreading them into all oceans of the world, onto the soils of so-called non-nuclear weapon countries along with the command, control, communication and intelligence infrastructure for nuclear war fighting. They have been continuously carrying out vertical proliferation through qualitative improvements and horizontal proliferation through qualitative improvements and horizontal proliferation through delegated authority to units of armed forces (particularly in the case of submarine borne weapons). Weapon grade fissile materials have

been abstracted from nuclear weapon countries and used to fabricate a nuclear arsenal in Israel.

Since the Soviet Union did not challenge any of these violations of the NPT but went along with the United States, the latter now proposes to weaponise the space as well as all oceans and territorial space of the so-called non-nuclear weapon nations. The NATO nation object to proposals put forward at Reykjavik for a nuclear weapon free world and assert their right to have nuclear weapons on their soil and yet call themselves non-nuclear weapon states.

The US does not fear Soviet competition in development of new generation nuclear weapons on SDI. Therefore all Soviet pleas for test bans, stopping of field testing of SDI or elimination of nuclear weapons will not work. The only thing that will work is for the USSR to threaten that since the US has broken out so many treaties and does not abide by the so called NPT it will no longer consider itself bound by the NPT and it will not attend the next review conferences unless the US agrees to comprehensive test ban and stop testing the SDI outside laboratories. The NPT alone of all treaties has been made a fetish in the consciousness of the people of the US. Only a threat to abrogate that treaty will have an effective impact on the US Congress and media.

The US administration, because of the vast hold of the western media over the world sets away with its charge that the USSR had been violating treaties. The time has come to shock the world into realising that it is the USA which has been consistently cheating on the treaties starting with the so called NPT.

(Continued on page 22)

The Third World Ignores the Arms Race at Its Peril

Jonathan Power

LONDON

The voice of the Third World has been remarkably silent during the current discussion on whether the SALT treaties are dead or not.

Has the Third World, preoccupied with its own economic crises, upheavals and political transitions no time for what it sees a quarrel between the superpowers.

Nuclear war will be fought mainly in the northern hemisphere. The Third World lies mainly in the south. But this is no cause for complacency. Frank Barnaby, the former director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, recently observed that the superpowers have many bases in the south, ranging from airfields to intelligence gathering centers. In a major war these will be targets for nuclear attack.

The United States has bases at Subic Bay and Clark in the Philippines, in Diego Garcia, South Korea and Guam and a satellite tracking station in the Seychelles. The Soviet Union has military bases on Dahlak Island in Ethiopia, in Aden and Socotra in South Yemen and in Vietnam at Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay.

Moreover, communications ships nuclear armed submarines and surface vessels are all over the world. There are also important nonmilitary targets in the Third World — for example the oil installations in the Gulf states, Nigeria and Venezuela.

The military impact is only a part of the problem for the Third World. Even more devastating in the long term, as a result of nuclear war, would be the loss to the southern hemisphere of the north's centers of finance, transport, scientific, technical and medical knowledge.

The south would also lose its most important markets. Two-thirds of the Third World's exports, worth over \$300 billion a year, go to the north. Investment by the north in the south is around \$70 billion. Aid is another \$36 billion. Add to this the loss of oil supplies. Most Third World nations import the major part of the energy needed for their industries.

Likewise, the Third World imports large amounts of grain — Africa depends on imports for a quarter of its grain and Latin America, Argentina aside 28 percent. At least as damaging as the shortfall of food would be the loss of fertilizer and pesticides. One third of these come from the northern hemisphere. Thailand, Asia's main rice exporter, imports 91 percent of its fertilizers, for example.

But the most severe impact of all on the Third World would be the "nuclear winter" that would follow a nuclear exchange — the effect of the vast amount of smoke and dust erupting into the atmosphere which would prevent most sunlight from reaching the earth's surface. Even on modest assumptions the south would be badly hit. Temperature drops of tens of degrees centigrade could hit the northern subtropics and possibly the equatorial zone. Streamers of smoke and dust might induce episodes of sub-freezing temperatures.

Rain forests are particularly sensitive to climatic extremes. Freezing temperatures lasting more than a week would destroy all the vegetation in a such an environment. Destruction of such a major component of the ecosystem would have enormous consequences — they are home for almost half the earth's wild animals, plants and birds and provide much of the raw mate-

rials needed to make modern pharmaceuticals.

In the northern subtropics — China and India in particular — the disruption of rainfall patterns and the possible failure of the monsoons would virtually eliminate any chance of crop surviving.

Elsewhere, farther to the south, crops would grow but only with sharply reduced yields. Everywhere there would be the growth of what biologists call "opportunistic" species, which could thrive on the limited energy and sunlight available — greenfly, locusts and rats they would kill crops and spread disease.

In January of last year, the leaders of Argentina, India, Mexico, Tanzania, together with those of Sweden and Greece, signed the Delhi Declaration. The statement said: "Nuclear war, even on a limited scale, would trigger an arctic nuclear winter which may transform the earth into a darkened, frozen planet, posing unprecedented peril to all nations, even those far removed from the nuclear explosions."

The signatories to that declaration have done little, it appears, to follow up their belief's with decisive action and calls for effective superpower arms control agreements. But the Third World has as much stake in the future of SALT as the superpowers and the Europeans.

If, like Ronald Reagan, Third World nations feel that ditching SALT will clear the decks for a better nuclear arms deal they should be honest enough to say it. But if, as is now likely, they are appalled, it's time they joined their voice to that of western Europe and told the White House that they consider this a major step backward for the whole of mankind.

— *International Herald Tribune.*

Injustice and violence — the nursery of the militants

Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam, former Member of Parliament for Vaddukoddai was interviewed by D. S. S. Mayadunne

Question: *What is your view of the present Government's democracy?*

Answer: Some members of the Government have described it as a 'five star democracy'. This description does not cover the effective disenfranchisement of the Tamil people by the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution. As a result since 1983 (for almost four years) the people of the North and the East have no representation in Parliament. The District Development Councils in the North and the East are almost entirely defunct and the local authorities are not functioning. We have, also firmly resisted the extension of the life of Parliament by the referendum, and other undemocratic measures against opposition political leaders such as the deprivation of civic rights, the proscription of political parties under the emergency. Even a simple political act, such as printing a poster, or distributing a leaflet requires the prior permission of the I.G.P. or someone deputed by him. This symbolises the limits of our rights and freedoms.

Question: *To what extent have the Government's anti-democratic practices contributed to the growth of the rebellion in the North and the East?*

Answer: The recent struggle of the Tamil militant groups is an act of a fundamental disillusionment with the type of democratic politics practised in Sri Lanka. Our party does not believe in

the use of violence as a means of resolving conflicts and is firmly committed to non-violent methods. However, it is extremely important to understand the political context in which the struggle of the Tamil militants has emerged. There are two important reasons for it. Firstly, it is a reaction against the major Sinhala political parties competing with each other for the chauvinistic political constituency with a view to using the Tamil problem as a political foot-ball to be kicked about. I need not repeat the history of different political pacts which were opposed and set aside by the parties in opposition. It is tragic that despite all the tragedy that we have experienced some opposition political parties and elements within the Government continue to engage in the same kind of 'opportunistic politics'.

The second reason for the emergence of the armed struggle of the militants is the repeated waves of mob violence in 1977, 1981 and 1983, the arbitrary arrests, torture in detention, killing of civilians which had gone unpunished, whatever Government be in power. This has resulted in a feeling that any kind of violence can be practised against the Tamil community with impunity. There was no effective legal or political redress against such injustice, and there were very few members of the Sinhala middle class who are willing to stand up and say

'These are citizens of our country. You cannot commit such crimes against them.' These are the two main reasons why the Tamil militants had increasingly taken recourse to arms.

Question: *Your views about the Election Commissioner's report on the referendum?*

Answer: As I mentioned earlier we were most unhappy about the manner in which the referendum was conducted and, with the Government's basic decision to hold the referendum. Our objection to the referendum was based on a fundamental principle. We felt the referendum clause in the constitution could be legally invoked only where the Parliament had been elected on the basis of proportional representation. We felt it was wrong for the Parliament which had been elected on the basis of a different system of representation (the 'first past the post system') to perpetuate itself on the basis of a referendum. It was wrong for a Government through the device of a simple majority in a referendum to extend for a period of six years its 4/5th majority in Parliament.

We were successful in the North and the East in this campaign. Almost all the electorates in these areas overwhelmingly rejected the referendum. The Civil Rights Movement has recently drawn attention to a number of irregularities in the conduct of the referendum. I have also received and reviewed the report by the Commissioner of Elections. We feel that these are matters that should be given the most serious consideration by a committee selected from all political parties with a view to bringing about urgent reforms to the

election laws of this country. The Select Committee of Parliament on Election Reform is not representative of all the political forces in Sri Lanka. These are issues which should be debated in a wider forum. But the most important safeguard which should ensure against electoral abuses is an Independent Commissioner-General of Elections and a concerned citizenry. When there is so much of apathy in our society in respect of gross violation of human rights, it is no surprise that there is so little concern about the abuse of democratic practices.

Question: *If it was an unfair and anti-democratic referendum, your comments on the legitimacy of the Government?*

Answer: There is a procedure by means of which the legitimacy of the referendum could have been tested. In my view it should have been possible for any political party or persons to legally challenge the validity of the referendum on the ground that it was not conducted in accordance with the principle laid down in the Referendum Act of 1981 and that such failure affected the result of the referendum. It doesn't appear to me that any such legal challenge to the validity of the referendum has been instituted. The Referendum Report of the Commissioner of Elections has been invoked by some political groups in the country who have called for a general election. We do not however believe that it is feasible or practicable to hold a general election when there is a de facto civil war in the North and the East. We therefore do not support the call for a general election until there is an overall political resolution of the national question.

Question: *If the existence of the Government is anti-democratic will the Pradeshiya Sabha elections which it expects to hold be legal?*

Answer: I am not entirely convinced that the Pradeshiya Sabha elections will take place in the manner anticipated in some news-

paper reports. It seems most unlikely to us that any such election will take place in the North and the East until a political accord is worked out and normalcy is restored. Although from time to time the Government talks about such elections, it is more as a political ploy, rather than out of genuine conviction.

Question: *Will the TULF participate in elections to Pradeshiya Sabhas?*

Answer: This question does not arise in view of my reply to the earlier question. However, there is no question of the TULF participating in the electoral process at whatever level until and unless there is an overall resolution of the national question.

Question: *Your views about the necessity of a joint effort by anti-Government parties to defend democratic freedoms?*

Answer: There is undoubtedly a crisis where there can be solidarity among opposition political parties with regard to the erosion of democratic rights. However, the national question has divided the opposition forces, while our party consistently opposed the deprivation of Mrs. Bandaranayake's civic Rights, some members of a leading political party have argued that further disabilities should be imposed on the TULF leadership under the Sixth Amendment. Given this kind of contradiction, there is no real hope of any kind of unity among opposition forces.

Question: *What prospects are there for the TULF to regain the initiative in the politics of the North and the East?*

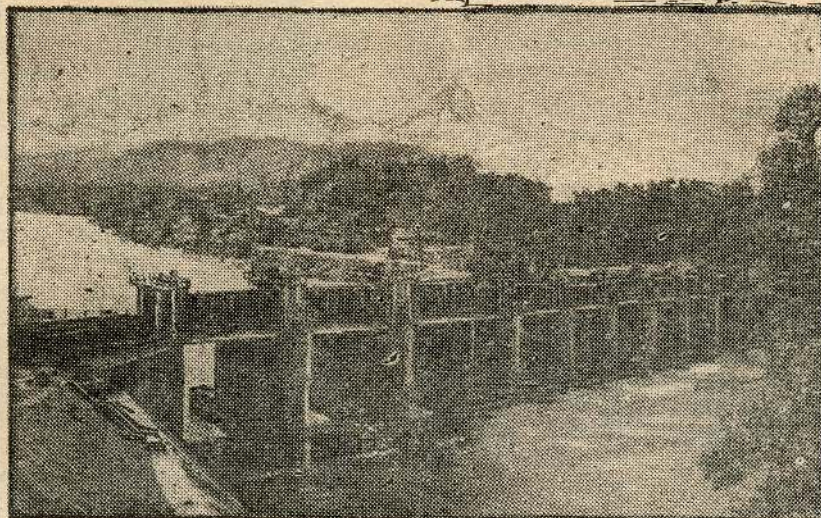
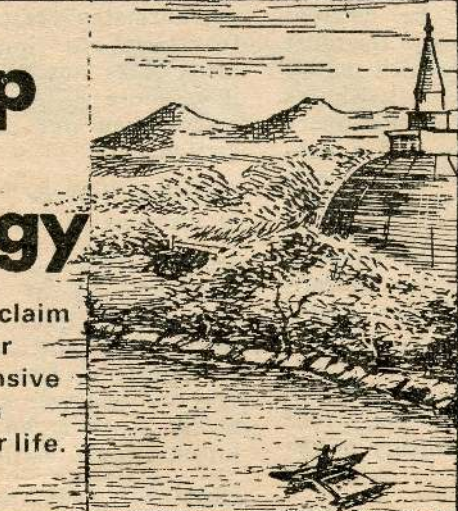
Answer: In the last decade there has been no real democratic alternative to the TULF in the North and the East. In the 1977 Parliamentary elections, we were returned to 14 of the 14 seats in the Northern Province and to 4 out of the 5 Tamil seats in the Eastern Provinces. In the DDC elections, we had an absolute majority in all the four Districts of the Northern Province and in two out of the

three Districts in the Eastern Province. Until March 1983 when the last local Government elections were held, we also dominated all the local authority elections. The Government of Sri Lanka, however, after July 1983, pursuing a policy of victimising the victims, effectively expelled the TULF from Parliament. Since then when the violence escalated there was no effective role that a non-violent political group could play during a civil war. The militant groups were in the forefront of the struggle. Today the LTTE has asserted its dominance over all other militant groups on the ground, and it is also seeking recognition at a political level as the sole negotiating party on behalf of the Tamils. The TULF has always believed that the militant groups should be involved in the political exercise if we are to have a lasting political solution. We cannot, however, subscribe to the view that the LTTE should supersede the TULF in the political exercise. We believe the TULF still retains a substantial measure of popular support despite all the recent events. Electorally we are still a formidable force although we may have alienated a large measure of youth support. But if the party is to re-emerge as one of the most important political parties in the country, I would personally like to see certain basic changes effected. These are my personal views and not that of the party. Firstly we must reaffirm our commitment to a socialist future for Sri Lanka. Our thinking about the transformation of social relations and the economy of the North and the East must be animated by a socialist vision. And this vision must also encompass the economic future of the people who live throughout the island. Similarly we must take note of the fact that there is a fundamental process of social change now taking place in the North and the East. These relate to inter-generational conflict, transformation in the caste structure, and a new con-

(Continued on page 28)

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COLONIAL AGRARIAN CHANGE

Pauperization and Proleterianization

S. Sathananthan

In his essay on 'Colonial Agrarian Changes and Underdevelopment', Shanmugaratnam displayed an awareness of the growth of a commodity economy in colonial Sri Lanka (p.7-8). But he argued that the colonial economy did not have a proletarianization effect on the peasantry.

He is, of course, correct in that proletarianization of the classical variety did not take place in Sri Lankan agriculture. However, as argued above, a process of distorted proletarianisation has given rise to a class of small-scale commodity producers who, despite their low levels of accumulation, are no less bourgeois. This may have not have created wealthy capitalist producers readily identifiable by their scale of operation; but the existence of bourgeois relations of accumulation, namely, money rent or wage labour, cannot be disputed. It would appear that Shanmugaratnam has confused the scale of operation with relations of accumulation as a result, the absence of large-scale producers engaged in capital intensive production seems to have led him to conclude that CMP did not take root in peasant Agriculture. He supports this conclusion by asserting that a class of wage labourers did not emerge and that labourers observed by other researchers are in fact pauperised peasants.

A concentration of ownership of means of production is not a necessary condition for the existence of a CMP. Instead, mobility of land becomes possible only after it has been transformed into a commodity, that is, after the CMP has taken root. The degree to which ownership is concentrated is an indication of the degree to which simple commodity production has developed into capitalist production.

This is the third part of a review essay on "Peasant Agriculture" a publication of the Social Scientists' Association, edited by Charles Abeysekera.

In other words, the CMP cannot be defined by the existence of wealthy employers who run large enterprises, a notion which had been rejected by Lenin;¹⁸ instead, it is characterised by the existence of forms of bourgeois accumulation, which do exist in a commodity economy composed of small-scale entrepreneurial farmers.

Moreover, since pauperization is an intermediate stage in proletarianization, the existence of pauperised peasants indicates that market forces impelling a type of proletarianization have been at work. But if, as implied by Shanmugaratnam, this process of class differentiation has been 'switched off' at the stage of pauperization, then market forces are not operative beyond this stage. Shanmugaratnam fails to deal with this theoretical absurdity. Indeed, he detracted from it by laying claim to a metaphysical 'institutional solidity of the conquered society' and by advancing the unconvincing argument that pauperization is separate from proletarianization; in other words, that pauperization is characteristic of underdevelopment whilst proletarianization is a process of change integral to development of capitalism. He compounded the issue further by building an ahistorical and non-dialectical model of a 'vicious circle' of pauperization: dispossessed peasants did not enter the free labour market because producers were by and large able to regain access to land as sharecroppers or tenants.

However, as argued above, the prevalence of free wage labour

is not a defining characteristic of the CMP; instead, it indicates the degree to which simple commodity production has developed into capitalist production. Therefore, the lack of wage labour does indicate that capitalist production is less developed; but it does not imply that a CMP is absent.

Moreover, Shanmugaratnam's claim that proletarianization was on the whole absent in peasant agriculture appears to have been a misreading of distorted proletarianization in paddy cultivation and of a survival of rent in kind. However, concern over proletarianization was first raised in respect of paddy producers in Batticaloa and Hambantota. What is more, the area of land under other 'cash crops' was far greater than the area under paddy; and indeed, tenants who pay money, rent and employment of wage labour have been widespread in the production of 'cash crops' (including that of paddy in certain regions of the island).

It is very difficult to avoid the conclusion that Shanmugaratnam's notion of pauperization is based on the observation that there is no significant difference in consumption levels between small-scale capitalist farmers, simple commodity producers and agricultural workers. The grinding poverty that is common to the vast majority of the agrarian population created a homogeneity of low living standards as between social classes. This shared poverty and the consequent poorly developed subjective elements (e.g. class consciousness) may mask the presence of classes; but they do not disprove the objective reality of the existence of a CMP and of social classes and modes of appropriation which correspond to it.

Underdevelopment of capitalism and ground rent

Underdevelopment of capitalism does not take place in a political

vacuum. In fact, the prospects for reproduction and growth of the emerging agrarian bourgeoisie are crucially determined by the balance of power within the State. In Sri Lanka, the political hegemony exercised by foreign capital and its local ally, the comprador bourgeoisie, effectively excluded the embryonic agrarian bourgeoisie from utilising the British colonial State to protect its class interests.

Rather than examine the class nature and role of the colonial State with respect to underdevelopment of capitalism, Shanmugaratnam invoked instead a 'disjuncture between profitability and productivity' which he said, could be observed in peasant agriculture and is 'uncharacteristic' of development of capitalism. But this is true only of competitive capitalism and for the most part in industry. Under conditions of monopoly, the development of capitalism not only displays this 'disjuncture' as a prominent characteristic but could also give rise to the con-committant feature of maximization of absolute surplus value. In agriculture, this 'disjuncture' is less relevant due to the existence of ground rent.

Land available for agriculture is finite in the sense that an investor who wishes to enter into agricultural production can do so only if he could gain access to land which is already owned or controlled by another individual or institution. This monopoly control gives rise to absolute rent which accrues to the owner of land and permits development of capitalism despite the existence of a 'disjuncture between profitability and productivity'. Differential rent arises due to differences in productivity in the broad sense between plots of land. Since it accrues largely to direct producers where money rent prevails, differential rent ensures that this 'disjuncture' is not an obstacle to accumulation by direct producers except by those who cultivate the least productive units of land.

Therefore, what needs to be examined is the nature and direction of the process of change, from simple commodity production to capitalist production, which is

peculiar to underdevelopment of capitalism. But, Shanmugaratnam adopted a static 'gap approach' to define underdevelopment of capitalism as the 'lack' of certain criteria which are characteristic of development of capitalism as a result, his analysis has focussed more on attributes of development which were lacking and less on characteristics of underdevelopment that were present.

Finally, although he set out to examine changes in class structure in agriculture, he has ignored the question of rent which concerned both Ricardo and Marx and surely is central to a study of the underdevelopment of capitalism in agriculture. ●

Postscript . . .

(Continued from page 15)

Peradeniya to Pittsburg and from Vidyodaya to Wisconsin. This is the servicing stratum. They are the quislings of the new Empire - choir boys singing hymns to new technology and consumerist culture. Many of them pulled the strings in 71 and still engage in the polemics that confuse the left, while other openly don the jack-boots and flaunt the slogans of class oppression and racial intolerance. Priest craft completes the picture.

The Mahavansa ideal of the unity of the Sangha and the ruling class finds expression in today's chronicles where some priests spend a lot of their time re-writing the history of events that closed the doors on all democratic alternatives, demonstrated the potency of violence and corruption, and placed us all at the cross roads amidst the crackling flames, the cries of rape and murder and the stench of death. While the capitalist class has displayed remarkable ability in patching up its contradictions except perhaps its current clash with the terrorist right (the historical monster that capitalism creates and loses control of) the working class remains as vulnerable it was in 1971, when infantile militancy exposed workers and peasants to repression and bloodshed.

Amidst this there have been recent attempts both by local politicians as

well as the Western news media to label local terrorism as left inspired in order to turn the drive against terrorism into a Coup against what is left of democratic procedures and rights.

A stark example of the parochialism of today's Sri Lankan human rights infringements as 'pro-Eelamist! On this basis our Election commissioner giving his report on the Referendum, a Supreme Court Judge giving his dissenting judgement on an Election appeal which was dismissed because the President had been cited as respondent a Constitutional lawyer questioning the validity of the multitudinous amendments to Constitution over its short and delicate life, are all pro-Eelamist. Really, the raw parochialism and intolerance of terrorist politics is only a projection of what ails all our elite? ●

The USA . . .

(Continued from page 16)

So long as the USSR refrains from challenging the US on the so-called NPT the US will justifiably assume that they can get away with all other violations including the weaponisation of space. After all the US is asking for the same kind of co-operative attitude from the USSR on SDI as they have been getting on the so-called non-proliferation treaty which they have been violating from the day they signed it by turning a blind eye on the abstraction of weapon grade fissile materials by Israel from Numecc Apollo, Pennsylvania.

So long as the USSR cannot threaten the US with penalties for non-compliance with the past treaties there is no way of stopping the US from carrying out nuclear tests or weaponisation of space. The USSR can invoke such a penalty only by threatening to abrogate the NPT. One hopes it may not ultimately be necessary to implement the threat (though to carry credibility one should be prepared to do it) but the threat itself should have an impact to reverse the present intransigent attitude of the USA. (APN)

Book Review

SUNIL GAVASKAR, an illustrated biography by Dom Moraes, published by Macmillan India Ltd. Price: Rs. 150.

When a poet-writer who's had a lifelong love affair with islands decides to write on a 'mountain', in this case the Everest of batsmanship, you secretly hope, 'Ah, at last a book on a sporting hero, through the eyes of someone who would not be carried away by facts and figures, who would not dwell into the mundane world of Gavaskar, the cricketer'.

Thus when Moraes gets cracking with the prelude — "The lugubrious clouds of June hang over Bombay, ready to weep. The monsoon is coming" — you assure yourself you're onto a good thing. You fasten your seatbelt, in a manner of speaking, convinced that this would be a forget-me-not trip.

Sadly, the book fails to take off. The author is blameless in that he confesses to being an enthusiastic cricket fan since he was about 10 years old. "I was particularly pleased to write this book because I have known, liked and admired Sunil Gavaskar," Moraes notes. It's thus not surprising he has fallen into the trap: non-cricket writers who are careful to write in a manner that gives you the impression they know the game and the subject. To be sure, the author knows Gavaskar and the nuances of cricket. But he, too, has fallen victim to the twin factors, namely the average fan knows quite a lot about Gavaskar the cricketer. Secondly, Gavaskar himself is an articulate man who has written a couple of books and is now a widely read columnist.

Moraes trudges up the arduous path bravely, trying to string into a book snatches of conversations he had with those who had been and who are close to Gavaskar. The result is a goulash, which in any case would not make the average fan sit and take notice.

The trouble with a subject as Gavaskar is, he's not all things to all people. Ever since he burst on the international cricket

scene some 16 years ago, he has been under the microscope, for such was his stupendous start as a 21-year-old. Inswingers, outswingers, cutters, yorkers, beamers and bouncers, knuckle balls and throat balls, rib tappers and thigh thumpers — well, the great little man has taken quite a few knocks in his career and emerged in one piece. Locking at him now, you're amazed how he escaped the psychiatrist's couch...

The soul of a poet demands that Gavaskar be dissected and his personality laid bare for the world to see and marvel at. Perhaps that's easier suggested than done.



Sunil Gavaskar

Fickle, sensitive, loyal, courtly, courteous and considerate, sensible, practical and perhaps Old Marble Nose, too — but essentially Gavaskar is perceived as an individual who knows what he's about, whether he is batting or dictating to his secretary at his office a suitable reply to a business query.

The book attempts to show you that glimpses of Gavaskar the boy can still be seen in Gavaskar the man. "As a child, we have seen, he had sometimes uncontrollable temper. He was also interested in mimicry and acting (is Abdul Qadir satisfied, the reviewer wonders), and appe-

ared in school plays, sometimes, because he was so short, in female roles. As an adolescent he earned the reputation of being quiet and withdrawn..." so on and so forth. Which is nothing extraordinary, anyway.

One of the better, and therefore readable, chapters is the one in which a piece on Gavaskar by Vijay Merchant has been reproduced in part. Merchant, who in his foreword calls the book a *magnum opus*, observes: "When I played cricket I never had a plan of action when going out to bat. As a matter of fact, during most part of my career, I never gave a thought to the match itself and particularly the bowlers. I went in to bat with a clear mind — and perhaps an 'empty' mind — only wanting to play each ball on its merit..."

Gavaskar's approach has been in no way different. And that brings us to another old-timer, Rusy Modi, who rates Ifirkar Ali Khan Pataudi as "the greatest Indian batsman I ever saw." That's fine, for it's a matter of opinion. But it's strange when Modi, who admits "I don't know Gavaskar well", launches a diatribe on one of sporting icons of the cricket world. A sample: "Look at Viv Richards and Greg Chappell: they made most of their runs against world class fast bowlers, and the way they made those runs were quite different from Gavaskar. They are several classes ahead of him."

The Modi balloon is pricked when you consider that Gavaskar, playing for traditionally one of the weakest teams, has taken 13 hundreds off the West Indian fast bowlers, and Richards, happily enough, has never had to face a Roberts, a Holding, a Garner or a Marshall. So what's the purpose of including Modi's views in the book? A sort of balancing act? Well, the author has yoked himself...

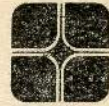
The timing of the release of this book: it was launched on the eve of the Jaipur Test, where Gavaskar got a first-ball duck against his name. He did oblige the fans at Ahmedabad, but the

(Continued on page 27)



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IGNAZIO SILONE

Ranjith Goonewardene

Born in May 1900, in a poor Italian village called Pescina, Ignazio Silone was involved by the age of 14 in political activity in defence of the oppressed peasants. Pescina was a poverty-stricken village, cut off from the outside world. The major political events and political movements which shaped the history of the country did not touch the lives of the poor peasants. They were passive observers and victims of political events and changes which were started by a city elite consisting of industrialists, shopkeepers and an opportunistic professional middle-class of lawyers, doctors and civil servants. The inhabitants of this village were exploited by the city and the rich landlords in their own village. Regular earthquakes reduced the village to a mass of rubble and destroyed entire families. Exposed to these constant natural calamities and extreme hardship of life, they developed a kind of fatalism, a tragic resignation to life.

What is to be done? What is to be done is the central question they keep on asking in Fontamara. The living conditions described in this novel were taken over from the actual conditions in Silone's own village. Silone recalls his early experiences with the poor peasants in a short story called "Polykushka". "There was none to call me any more, and perhaps for that reason felt strangely attracted to those poor people who worn out by their day's labours, came at the summons of the trumpet, and I became involved in their meetings". In an essay titled "Emergency Exit" there is a more detailed account of his passionate involvement and identification with these impoverished peasants. "I was still a boy when one Sunday as I was crossing the square with my mother, I witnessed the stupid and cruel spectacle of a local young man of good family sickling his dog on a little seamstress as she came out of church. The poor woman thrown to the ground, badly hurt and her clothes were ripped to shreds. There was indignation throughout the village, but discreet indignation. No one ever understood where the poor

woman got the unfortunate idea of suing the young man, since it had the predictable result of adding the farce of official justice to what she had already gone through. She had the sympathy of everyone, as I have said and was secretly helped by many: but she could find no one who would testify before the judge nor a lawyer who would take her case. But the young man's lawyer and some bribed witnesses perjured themselves swearing to the grotesque version of the incident, accusing the woman of having provoked the dog. The judge, a worthy and honest man in private life, acquitted the young man and ordered the poor woman to pay the cost of the trial. There are other exemplary episodes like that of the dog of good family and the seamstress engraved in my memory".

Silone's feeling of horror and disgust produced by this grotesque incident of sheer brutality and inhumanity and the humiliation of an innocent woman by the power of wealth and power sharpened his social awareness and deepened his spontaneous love for the oppressed. The immediate sympathy for the victims of social, political or personal cruelty which was to remain with his all his life was undoubtedly shaped by the kind of incident he described.

Silone's concern for the poor, for the victims of social and political oppression figures as a major theme in his novels. He explores this theme with supreme honesty. He is never evasive. He does not slur over complex problems which his central characters face in their relations both to their fellow men and society. His strength as a writer lies in his refusal to underplay certain themes which are out of fashion and exaggerate others which are considered fashionable and progressive. He has never sacrificed his inner integrity for political or literary expediency. He has not pandered to changing ephemeral tastes of shallow reading public. Silone's work is practically unknown even among the so-called well-read among those who avidly read a book because it is in the fashion or represents a political or literary friend.

The term commitment or engagement is now quite fashionable. This term was formulated and made known by Jean Paul Sartre. According to Sartre, a writer cannot withdraw into an ivory tower or a private world of his own. Modern society has intensified its pressures on the individual. A writer therefore by necessity has to respond to the pressures of his age and be actively engaged against forces which threaten and destroy the dignity of man. But in Sartre's writing I find a good deal of wordy, often rhetorical proclamations on the concept of engagement. They are highly intellectual and abstract statements and Sartre fails to realise this idea in terms of lived and felt experience.

Silone in an article on the Sartrean concept of commitment observes that "the mistake most of those committed are prone to make is the mistake of identifying the ideal, the absolute, the good, true, or beautiful, with an institution — of identifying the cause of literature, of poetry or the cause of truth with a party or a church or a state". Silone further commented that the writer who is committed, who has a personal vocation in commitment, belongs to society and not to the state. Silone rejected the church and the Communist party because he felt that moral or political coercion impoverishes life and debilitates the mind. He has always opposed the religious and political institutions.

In the work of Silone one finds a kind of simple, spontaneous involvement which is very different from Sartre. Christina's spontaneous decision to risk her life to save the life of Pietro Spina in "Bread and Wine" comes not out of a neatly defined theory but out of love, simple love of one human being for another. Pietro Spina's decision to take the responsibility for a murder committed by the deaf mute in "Seed Beneath the Snow" shows how the idea of commitment comes out of lived and felt experience rather than out of a preconceived belief or an abstract concept.



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CRICKET

Hard Lessons

Dilip Bobb

It was India's Imranganate. In cricketing measure, no less scandal than the one engulfing the White House. A reputation in disarray, a leader lacking leadership, a team that acted in invincibility and a public in despair and disillusionment. Asia's Ashes. No contest so fierce, no stakes so high or public involvement greater. Yet, in the end, Kapil's deus were fallen angels, the cracks in a once-indestructible armour cruelly exposed to public glare and ridicule.

Indian cricket fans can forgive — and forget — most transgressions. But their Bible lists two Commandments. One; Thou Shalt Not Lose To Pakistan. The second and ultimate sin — Thou Shalt Not Lose To Pakistan in India. For 35 years, the second commandment has remained inviolate. And now, even that fig leaf has been ripped aside.

Perhaps for the first time, there was a visible sense of collective relief that a cricket series had come to an end, such was Pakistan's domination over the Indians. It was not that they had better resources, just that they employed them more judiciously. And, above all, were better motivated. In the end, that was the difference between winning and losing. As Imran observed: "The team that played here in 1979 was much better than the present one. It was the faith we had in the team and the effort everybody put in that made all the difference".

For Imran, it was a dream come true. For Kapil, a dream gone sour. Losing the Test series was wounding enough. It was the Pakwash in the one-day internationals (5-1) that was the final ignominy. Suddenly, the world champions of one-day cricket were pretenders to a non-existent throne. And, in the end, there was no pretender so

great as Kapil Dev himself. If Imran led from the front, Kapil led from the rear. His personal contribution was meagre enough. His best bowling figures in the Test series were 3 for 46. His best in the one-day series: 2 for 32. In six Test innings, his highest score was 66. And, in the crucial one-day series, his batting average was 19.25. But it was his captaincy — or lack of it — that was largely responsible for India's sad showing. In comparison to Imran, Kapil was clearly a poor second, limited in imagination and tending to crack under pressure.

And pressure there was in abundance. Ultimately, the series resembled nothing more than the relationship between the two countries: long periods of boring inactivity suddenly exploding into hostile life. Seldom has a series threatened to bestow Test matches with the kiss of death.

Even so, there were moments of distraction. The little man Sunil Gavaskar created the biggest storm when he flatly refused to play in the second Test at Calcutta citing "personal reasons". The real reason: the last time he had played there, he had been abused by spectators and his wife pelted with missiles. Sport-crazy Calcutta — and Bengali sentiments — were in uproar. Effigies were burnt, processions taken out, state ministers got into the act and the newspapers went to town. But the master remained unmoved, even though it was the first time in 12 years and 106 Tests in succession that he would not be representing India.

The next episode of the Gavaskar serial witnessed scenes of great jubilation in Calcutta when in his next innings in the third Test at Jaipur, he went for a duck. But Gavaskar then proceeded to knock the wind out of everybody's sails by arriving at yet another landmark — the first player to

reach five figures in Test cricket. The sight of the normally phlegmatic and unemotional Gavaskar punching the air in joy — and perhaps relief — when he scored his 10,000th run was, for cricket fans an equally historic occasion. It is unlikely that Gavaskar's feat will ever be duplicated. There are only three other international cricketers in contemporary cricket who have crossed the 6,000-run mark. Alan Border (6,917), David Gower (6,553) and Vivian Richards (6,447), all of whom are at the fag end of their careers. But even if anybody does, as Gavaskar remarked: "Many people have climbed Mount Everest. But those who have been remembered are the ones who got to the summit first."

The indefatigable Gavaskar wasn't quite finished with his leading role in the proceedings. In Bangalore, on a minefield of a pitch, he once again stood alone among the ruins of Indian batting to score 96 in an innings that will probably rank among the best ever played, even though India lost the Test — and thereby the series. For a player in his 38th year to end a Test series with an average of just under 50 is added testimony, if any was required, to his class and consistency. — *India Today*

Book Review

(Continued from page 23)

author has prematurely doubted whether Sunil would ever get to "break the record" of 10,000 runs. The truth, as every Gavaskar watcher knows, is every run he has scored past the Geoff Boycott Test aggregate is a 'record'. There's not a single batsman who has come anywhere near 9,000 in the history of the game, leave alone 10,000. Today, records chase Gavaskar...

As for the price of the book: well, even given the value of the rupee in the world market, its buying power, the book's is just too much. And this one dares say after feasting on some wonderful photographs reproduced from the Gavaskar family album and the artistry of Patrick Egar...

— K. N. Annad

What is Development?

What is development? Considering the diversity of human experience, the answer will be as objective as to the question 'What is artistic taste?'. Yet many of us subscribe to the view that there is an objective goal called development. This is the premise upon which many institutions are founded. This is the justification of pushing humanity into an ever increasing spiral of resource consumption. Yet how many of us pause to think that an increase in consumption often means a reduction in sustainability?

We agree that population control is an universal necessity, because it is obvious to us that a rapidly increasing population will require a rapidly increasing resource base, a situation untenable in the present world. As an illustration let us consider a hypothetical island which has enough water resources to support a population of a thousand people. Here, the people must be very conscious of their population size. If their population exceeds a thousand, the possibility of water crises becomes great and everyone in the future suffers.

What we seem not have considered in our rush for material consumption is the fact that this activity has very much the same effect as population increase. If we consider our island example; There are one hundred people living on that island. They need water at a certain rate but are now compelled to consume more for development activities until they reach the state that they consume over ten times of what they did before. This has the same effect as a thousand people consuming at the old rate. Soon, the probability of water crises increase until it becomes a part of reality.

Yet this activity of material consumption, which in many cases creates a larger depletion of resources than mere population growth, is promoted by the same agencies who strive to promote population control! This is not to say that controls on population growth are not necessary (any

measure that ensures the sustainability of our environment is valid), but rather to question the validity of the notion that increasing consumption per se can be equated with development.

There are many economic models that demonstrate the validity of increased consumption, but often the question of material vs data have not been clearly addressed. When we consider consumption there are two distinct categories of phenomena that we consume. One has physical and chemical properties and could be termed material the other is purely informational and could be termed data. While the real world is comprised of both, the modern international development agencies stress the need for increasing material consumption as development. To this end monies are loaned and the debacle goes on. The impact of increasing material consumption is as harmful to the future as the impact of increasing population growth, yet the issue remains unaddressed.

Development may be a valid concept, but much clearer criteria that those used to justify today's misnomer are needed. When the grip that the percentage parasites have on the decision makers are loosened and when the hypocrisy apparent in the current development projects are resolved into dedicated purpose, perhaps real human development will occur.

Ranil Senanayake

NSRC,
Mirahawatte.

SLFP's new...

(Continued from page 9)

The May Day should be used to have a demonstration. People can be given the opportunity to demonstrate against killings and show solidarity for a unitary government. Will you let us have such a demonstration?

**Amarasiri Dodangoda — SLFP
Baddegama:**

People are saying that the bomb was placed on the advice of Israel — not to put off May Day rallies but to put off having an election. In a few days you will say that it is impossible to hold elections under the prevailing conditions in the country.

This is the ultimate motive behind this. The common masses say that this is an inside operation, under Israel advice.

You always blame the SLFP but you have been there for ten years and you must take the responsibility now.

At our time the foreign debt was Rs. 850 million but now it has become Rs. 13,900 million.

You have caused irreplaceable damage to the country. You have taken the side of the US. That is why India opposes us.

Repeated...

(Continued from page 19)

consciousness in women. These important transformation must be reflected in the leadership structure and the organisation of the party. Finally it must shed its image, particularly among the majority community, that it is a chauvinist party mainly concerned with parochial issues. It must make clear that its struggle for social justice, human rights and democratic freedoms is one which can be shared by all progressive forces in our society.

Question: *Would you like to say anything about the remark made by a LTTE spokesman recently that they would not allow the TULF to re-enter Northern politics?*

Answer: We have not been able to verify the authenticity of this report. However, I would like to state that the political future of the TULF is one that has to be determined democratically by the people who overwhelmingly elected the Party at every Parliamentary, District Council and Local Government Council election held in the North and the East from the mid 1970's to 1983.

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