

# CHRISTIAN WORKER

On working out a settlement

## The Thimpu Talks



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SECOND QUARTER 1985

**COVER:** Pictures of a Thimpu landmark, Premier Rajiv Gandhi with President Jayewardene and Minister Athulathmudali, the E. N. L. F. leaders and Uma Maheswaran of the P. L. O. T. E.  
(Courtesy: Frontline, India of 13-26 July)

Cheques in favour of  
**CHRISTIAN WORKERS FELLOWSHIP**  
39, BRISTOL STREET,  
COLOMBO 1 — SRI LANKA  
TELEPHONE : 27708

Annual Sub: Rs. 20 (Local)  
Asian: U.S. \$ 5.00  
Others: U.S. \$ 10.00

Quarterly of the Christian Workers Fellowship  
**CHRISTIAN  
WORKER**

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## From our readers

### Two Letters From Abroad

(1)

.....I must congratulate you, in particular, on the high professional standards you have maintained in the magazine published by the Fellowship—**The Christian Worker**. I found the material presented in the recent few issues I came across to be of an extremely high quality, most readable, and above all, to be a journal capable of expressing a value stance without being narrowly partisan or polemical. Your magazine's discussion of the Ethnic issue was a case in point and I consider this to be one of the most informative and insightful presentations of this complex and sad issue that I have come across.

Sri Lanka, I believe, urgently needs journals like yours which can present for public discussion the kind of informed and critical writing the **Christian Worker** has been able to publish.

I wish you and the magazine well in your future endeavours and I eagerly look forward to reading future issues of the magazine.

With kind regards.

Sincerely,

**Prof. Laksiri Jayasuriya A.M.,**

University of Western Australia,  
Department of Social Work &  
Social Administration  
Nedlands, Western Australia 6009.  
30.05.85.

(2)

Greetings from New Delhi!

This note is to congratulate you for the good works you do and your efforts to communicate them through your esteemed quarterly **Christian Worker**. CWF may be a unique organization in the field of religion and an ideal for inter-religious efforts. I sincerely congratulate your inspirational initiatives.

Just two days before I have sent the copy of **SAR News** which carries

the report on the 25th Anniversary celebration of the May Day Workers' Mass. The Workers' Mass is a beautiful service that you do not only to the Sri Lankan workers but also to the humanity at large. Let people learn from CWF that religion is not a barrier for fellowship.

I have some suggestions for the fast communication of CWF activities. As soon as any CWF activity takes place, for example seminars, symposiums, Workers' Mass or any event in which CWF involves, you can send the reports to me, so that I could push the matter into our early despatch. Another suggestion is to increase the periodicity of **Christian Worker**. It will be fine if it can be made a monthly.....

With prayerful regards,

Yours sincerely,

**Joseph Chittilappilly**

SAR News Correspondent.  
W. 128, Greater Kailash II  
New Delhi 110048, India.  
6th May 1985.

## A "Christian" Brick (bat)!

Ref: **Christian Worker**

1st Quarter 1985 pages 38-39

Isn't there enough guidance in the Bible for the **Christian Worker** why this mix-up with Karl Marx?

The Christians or a Christian either listen to Jesus Christ **OR** Karl Marx, is there a middle way? Can you serve two masters?

Colombo, 3  
7-5-85.

**A Christian**

P. S. There are many things Christians could do to help the oppressed, sufferings of the poor worker, according to the teachings of the Bible without aligning to 'isms.' What have you all done? To help them?

## An Evangelical Christian's Response

Dear Brothers in Christ,

I have been one of your readers, and I appreciate the spiritual and physical help you have given to fellow brethren in this present day strife torn country of ours. As to all brothers in Christ, the Bible is the only anchor for achieving our ultimate goal of peace in our strife torn Island of Sri Lanka. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. The birth of the Incarnate Prince of Peace has reconciled all fallen mankind with God. The Word of God says: Fear not O land be glad and rejoice for the Lord will do great things. (Joel 2:21). Christ reconciled the Jews and Samaritans. Christ said be of good cheer I have overcome the world. It is harvest time in our country for our co-workers especially to gather the sheep amongst the goats and lead them in to the fountains of Living Water and achieve eternal peace in our country. These fallen goats should follow the good Shepherd by the means of building God's spiritual law—love thine enemies but hate evil. People all these years have been deceived by the worthless shepherd (Satan) and we must lead them to the Light of the World. It is also time to uplift the conventional churches which have been built on a faulty foundation shot through with

appalling evils, which cannot stand. Christ said I will build my Church where the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. So lets re-create and enlighten fallen fellow brethren and lead them to paths unknown through the Living Waters. If we all live by the Word of God, the holy scriptures, we won't be living the way the rest of the world exists, for with the power of the Holy Spirit, we can live a self-mastered life. Today in the midst of a great revival with signs and wonders following the preaching of God's Word, we are expecting great things from our Lord, who has also shown us that he will save this nation from the hands of Satan. God has been faithful to us, and if we believe that, we will all continue to pray and support all of us. We can expect truly great things in time to come to this sick Nation.

God's blessings and peace,

Your fellow brother  
**C. J. Hoole**

31, Sujatha Avenue,  
Kalubowila,  
13.07.85.

## Jaffna Public Library

Dear Sir,

A comment in the 3rd quarter 1984 issue of the **Christian Worker** referred to "The destruction of century old Hartley College Library by the Security Forces" as a serious act and goes further to say: "In June 1981, the Jaffna Public Library with an invaluable collection of books suffered a similar fate and the Lionel Fernando Commission's recommendation of a payment of Rs. 10.2 million as compensation has yet to be implemented."

Now the Jaffna Public Library so destroyed and later restored and reconstructed to serve the public has faced yet another blow from the same quarters. There was a bomb blast at the library on Saturday, May 11th 1985. Although much damage has not been done to the building or its fresh collection of books, the Municipal authorities have been ordered by the security personnel to shift the books and furniture from there (vide **Eelanadu** of May 15th 1985) before May 17th 1985.

The Jaffna Public Library although run by the Jaffna Municipal Council is considered to be a National Library of the Tamils and serves the entire Jaffna District. That is the reason

for building the library at a central spot in the city and quite close to the Central bus stand in Jaffna.

There is no other suitable building anywhere in the Jaffna city to house the collection of all the books of the Public Library. Branch libraries have been opened in different parts of the city to extend the library services to reach the people of the city. But people who are the reading public residing out of the Municipal limits are affected.

A public library attempting to restore and reconstitute its loss-collection has an uphill task to perform. So how could such a library be expected to decentralise its Reference Library? Educationists and the student population of the district are greatly agitated over the move to shift the Reference Library books in a haphazard manner.

Properly speaking, it is not the Jaffna Public Library but the new Army Camp set up in the Jaffna Old Fort that should be shifted. To assure the security of the new army camp set up in the Old Dutch Fort not only the Jaffna Public Library but even other public buildings such as the Jaffna Post Office, Jaffna Telecommunications building, the Town Hall and Veerasingham Hall should all be demolished or in the alternative occupied by the army.

For the protection of the above public buildings, the best thing to do under the circumstances is to shift the new army camp from the Town Centre rather than destroying the Jaffna city and its beautiful buildings.

On the eve of the fourth anniversary of the destruction of the Jaffna Public Library (June 1st 1985), I request you Sir to drive some sense in the minds of the authorities by urging them not to lay hands on the beautiful buildings of the Jaffna city just for the sake of assuring the security of the new army camp and persuade them instead to shift it to some other secure and remote area away from the Town Centre.

Thanking you,

Yours Truly,

**S. Kandasamy.**

Eachamodday,  
Jaffna.  
15.05.85.

## Fundamental Institute Soup

About 15 years ago a scientist of Sri Lankan origin working in the USA made the headlines in some local newspapers. The reports hinted that he was on the verge of creating life (no less) in his laboratory in the USA from a kind of "primordial soup" derived from simple chemicals like water, carbon dioxide and ammonia.

Thereafter we were regaled with more publicity about him whenever he set foot on his native land, perhaps on his vacations. For instance, we remember a much publicised meeting on Ayurvedic medicinal plants at which the aforesaid scientist took centre stage, and emitted much sound but little light. Some local newspapers reported then that he was taking loads of gotukola to his laboratories in USA to examine the curative properties of this unostentatious herb. The world of science waits with breathless anticipation the outcome of his researches on "gotukola soup".

Next it was the Dambala Institute, and top-level meetings on Dambala. Assertions attributed to this scientist, to the effect that "Dambala Soup" (or something similar) had been included in the menu of astronauts sojourning in space have appeared in local newspapers, signalling the entry of Sri Lankan science into "Star Wars".

Those cynical people who thought that this scientist's vacation performances were merely for local publicity, or for the benefit of his USA employers and for tax exemptions there, soon got a rude shock. Angered by some innocuous question put to him by a local scientist during a meeting with them, the oracle from USA made a fierce riposte. Addressing the local yakko as "Hey, man!" he proceeded to divulge that he had agreed to take on his present onerous tasks only because President Jayewardene had asked him to do so—and in spite of the fact that his "experiments in USA were now at a crucial stage", as they had been even

15 years ago. We felt unbearable grief that the creation of life had to be put back by an year more (perhaps two, if he got an extension here) due to one man's patriotic fervour (PF).

Let not the juxtaposition of a few queries here be construed as an attempt to detract from this scientist's noble PF. I am tempted to raise these queries because of the assertion made by one Deeptha Leelaratna, "Media Consultant" for the Institute of Fundamental Studies (IFS), that this Institute runs on a "shoe-string budget" (Island, 28, April). Perhaps Deeptha Leelaratna, or the Minister for Finance and Planning could supply authoritative answers.

1. What are the total monthly emoluments the present Director of the IFS is paid for his services to Sri Lanka?

2. What other benefits, if any (eg. official vehicle, official residence, travelling and subsistence within and outside Sri Lanka, tax exemptions here etc.) does he enjoy?

3. What part of his emoluments, if any, is paid in foreign currency?

Hardly had we grasped the enormity of the sacrifices made by this panjandrum because of his PF, when one Buultjens burst upon the local scene, sponsored by the IFS, causing some members of his audiences to gasp for breath by the apparent range of his punditry. Forays into Buddhist Philosophy of the the kind Podi Sadu in our Local temple preaches regularly (but preached in English by Buultjens for city consumption), advice on the ethnic question of the sort which any unprejudiced and reasonably intelligent "A" level student ought to be able to work out for himself, History and Politics, and now, Humour in Politics. After local newspapers had helped to blow up the Buultjens balloon initially, a correspondent in **the Island** has recently claimed that the IFS does not even have a curriculum vitae of this "Professor". This probably explains why the IFS was able to "procure" Buultjens' "services..... free of charge" (IFS

"Media Consultant", **Island** 28 April).

Writing in **the Island** of 31 March, Nanda P. Wanasundara asserts that Buultjens has "weighty information to give", and Deeptha Leelaratna (IFS "Media Consultant") laments that many of us have missed the profound "central theme" of Buultjens' lecture on Humour in Politics, which is, according to him, "the seriousness of humour and its use as a weapon in political conflict". For my part, I became convinced of the profound nature of Buultjens' views after reading an account of his diatribe (**Island**, 28 March) — especially his references to "toilet paper mentality".

If Buultjens has been correctly reported, remarks like this ought to give the likes of Nanda and Deeptha enough "weighty" material for at least a month of intense cerebration, and his humour should provide those city ladies with a partiality for risqué jokes many spasms of laughter.

To those of you who may have missed Buultjens' lecture on "Humour and Politics" I say, you may not have missed much. They could tead the book by Michael Rogers entitled:

**Political Quotes: A Collection of the Wit, Wisdom and Folly of Politics.** Those who attended the Buultjens lecture in question should also find the comparison interesting and revealing.

Buultjens' profundity on "toilet-paper mentality" has brought the Institute of Fundamental Studies, appropriately I believe, as close to the fundament as makes no difference. So after the long-broiling "primordial soup", gotukola soup and Dambala Soup, we now have the Fundamental Institute Soup.

The IFS is reputed to be the President's creation. Here is a suggestion for a prayer for its Director, Media Consultant and its "best brains" I like Buultjens: "Thank Thee Lord for This Timely Sucker".

Yours faithfully,

**Colvin Goonaratna.**

Galle,  
29-4-85.

# On working out a settlement

### The Preliminaries

Events have certainly moved fast since the appearance of the last issue of *Christian Worker*. A ceasefire on June 18th followed by peace talks commencing on July 8th between representatives of the Government and those of Tamil militants too along with the TULF representatives. After a near breakdown of the talks following allegations of ceasefire violations on the part of the Government and the counter charge by the Government's representatives of an alleged attempt on the part of some members of EROS to assassinate President Jayewardene in Colombo on July 11th (dismissed by the militants as stage-managed by the Government)) and the outright rejection of the Government's proposals on regional councils by the Tamil representatives as not even remotely meeting their aspirations, the intervention of Indian Foreign Minister Bhandari at the instance of Premier Rajiv Gandhi has obviously helped to restore sanity and the next round of talks have been put off until August 12th (Hartal Day) with an expected extension of the present cease-fire to enable the palaver to be resumed in a more relaxed climate.

The top leaders of the militant groups now united in the Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF) and comprising the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) led by V. Prabhakaran, the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO) led by Sri Sabaratnam, the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) led by K. Pathmanabha and the Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students (EROS) led by Balakumar Sangar, as well as the People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) led by Uma Maheswaram, which has not joined the Front, did not attend the talks themselves but sent representatives adequate to meet those that the Government for its part sent. Obviously the top leaders of the militant groups would be there if President Jayewardene is also there and a meaningful devolution of power can be worked out to satisfy Tamil aspirations.

### Jaffna's Reaction

The commencement of the Talks at Thimpu was however also marked by a full day hartal in Jaffna and big demonstrations of youth voicing their opposition to the Thimpu talks and affirming Eelam as their avowed objective. These demonstrations were apparently meant in a sense to strengthen the bargaining position of the militants at Thimpu and a demonstration to the Government of the necessity to take the aspirations of the Tamil people seriously if a settlement was to be reached. It reflected also a total lack of con-

fidence in the *bona fides* of the Government. After all the struggles, hardship and suffering these people had been through, something substantial had to be achieved by any talks and how could one be certain that the Government was not simply playing for time? Besides, the very composition of the Government's delegation (with not a single responsible Minister on it) was not exactly one that could inspire confidence. Indeed the leaders of the militants themselves were reported by the Indian Press as having said that they were sending representatives to Thimpu only out of deference to Premier Rajiv Gandhi. Even Uma Maheswaran who unlike the other groups now within the ENLF, readily agreed that his organization, the PLOTE, would attend the talks, has been reported as saying: "This is the first step for us to get international recognition as a political force. At the same time we are also interested in a ceasefire so that we could concentrate on people to build up our network especially among the working class. During our struggle, we have been unable to do so. . . . . We do not expect very much (from the talks). Actually, under the present Government, we cannot expect anything." (*Saturday Review* of 13th July). This strong note of diffidence or scepticism about the success of the talks should not surprise us. After all, the present crisis is the result of the Tamils losing confidence in the Sinhala leaders and the several governments they represented. A long line of broken promises and defeated hopes as seen in the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact of 1957, the C. P. de Silva-Chelvanayakam understanding of March 1960, the Dudley Senanayake-Chelvanayakam Pact of 1965, and the more recently the failure of President Jayewardene to settle Tamil grievances, his disowning of Annexure 'C' which was the result of his discussions with Mrs. Gandhi and his withdrawal of the Government's own Roundtable (All Party Conference) proposals have contributed much to this serious lack of confidence and distrust.

The reports that we have received from Jaffna indicate that while there is a great feeling of relief after the ceasefire that people can get about their normal business, this would seem to be mainly because the Security Forces are generally confined to barracks. "The Boys" on the other hand walk about freely arms in hand, but their presence is not resented or feared since they have built up an image for themselves as protectors of the self-respect of the Tamil people. There are of course still a few lamp-post executions, hijacking of vehicles, robberies and the like but these are sometimes the work of splinter groups of separatists or of plainly lawless elements seeking to take

advantage of the situation. (As for splinter groups of militants, it is reported that there are no less than some 35 separatist factions in existence today). There was however the brutal murder of Mr. C. E. Anandaraman, the Principal of St. John's College, Jaffna, said to have been by the LTTE, for the "crime" of having agreed to permit his schoolboys to play cricket with the Army inside the Fort after the ceasefire, which event was apparently televised and used as a public relations move by the government. Schools in Jaffna are reported to have closed for a day as a mark of respect for the late principal and as a protest against his murder. There is no doubt that in Jaffna and among the Tamil people there is an overwhelming desire for a settlement where they could live in peace and honour as citizens of Sri Lanka on just terms with the Sinhalese. **In short what the Tamils of Jaffna want are equal rights and not just concessions thrown to them by a "master-race."** In fact the cry for Eelam could well be said to be an articulation of the politics of frustration and despair on the part of the Tamil political leadership at what seemed to be an intransigent Sinhala chauvinism fostered by governments. Agreement is therefore in our view still quite possible on the basis of an **adequate regional autonomy within the framework of a unitary state**—an objective that *Christian Worker* has consistently advocated in the face of severe criticism from both Sinhala chauvinists and expatriate Tamil separatists. In the context of preserving our sovereignty as a small island and not becoming a plaything of foreign powers (which will be our fate if dismembered), we are more convinced than ever that there is no other way out for us as a self-respecting people. It has been our considered view too that devolution of power from the centre to the provinces is required not only to solve the Tamil question alone but also to counter the strong authoritarian trends that we have been witnessing in our land more recently.

In the meantime it behoves us to do all we can to create a proper climate in which a just settlement could be worked out. It is time also that we soberly and realistically evaluate the more recent happenings of the past to enable us better to avoid the mistakes that have already been committed as we search for a way out of the present impasse to which our country has been so tragically brought.

### Government's Big Talk

National Defence Minister Lalith Athulathmudali at one time strongly deprecated braggadocio ("kaiya and "kaivaru) on the part of persons however exalted in dealing with the ethnic question and the role of India in particular (see *Christian Worker* 2nd Quarter 1984). We are sorry to note however that he too has been guilty of this same sin in more recent times. Braggadocio is not only unbecoming: it can be positively harmful and lead to quite different results from what was intended, besides also affecting adversely the credibility of the speaker. Into this category would fall the remark made by Minister Athulathmudali around the time of the ceasefire which received considerable publicity especially over the air, to the effect that "the terrorists obviously felt they could

not ultimately succeed against the Forces," as well as all the other exaggerated accounts made earlier of resounding military successes in the North and East.

While we certainly do not wish to harp on such matters, a mere reminder of some of the events that have occurred since the last appearance of our journal should suffice to expose the absurdity of the claims made. Only two days before the arrival of British Premier, Margaret Thatcher, in our island, we had the destruction of the Police Headquarters in Jaffna after attack by the militants. Then an attack was reported on the Karainagar naval base, said to be repulsed by the navy who also suffered casualties. On May 10th came the attack on and destruction of the Mannar Police Station. And as if successful attacks on Armed Services and police fortifications in the North were not enough, Tamil militants were also able to strike with impunity at targets within "Sinhala" territory as was evidenced by the attacks on the Manampitiya Police in Polonnaruwa in May and even earlier in the attack on the Medawachchiya Police Station and the People's Bank at Nikaweratiya.

### The Anuradhapura Massacre

But what nailed the lie for good and showed people in the South how vulnerable in fact they were despite all Government's boasts over the mass media, was the tragic massacre at Anuradhapura on May 14th in which some 70 innocent civilians were killed and over another 100 injured by a gang of Tamil militants. Having shot people in the old bus stand and market site, the gang even went up to the Sacred Bo Tree and in their shooting killed 2 Buddhist monks and 4 Dasasil Mathas in the Temple besides damaging a small Buddha statue. Itinerant vendors and beggars outside the Temple premises were also victims. What made things worse was the fact that the security authorities had prior intelligence information that an attack on Anuradhapura was to be expected. The conduct of the Police at Anuradhapura and Nochchiyagama was to say the least shocking, for as the Prime Minister himself put it they did not even try to shoot at a tyre of the vehicle in which the attackers were making their getaway but instead decided to attend to their own security at the expense of the public! The same armed gang of Tamils is then reported to have gone through Nochchiyagama and entered the Wilpattu National Park leaving 14 Wild Life Department officials dead. And despite a dragnet set for them by the Army, Navy and Air Force combined, the gang was not apprehended. So much for the much vaunted successes in the military plane and the big talk about security!

### The "Military Solution"

It is worth recording that there are now no less than five Ministers in charge of this subject of security and Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel has said that we spend 16 million rupees a day on defence (a ten-fold rise since 1976). In fact the defence spending of 5-6 billion rupees during 1985 is said to have even turned the country's 1.7 billion surplus budget

into a 4.1 billion rupees gross deficit ! This military spending has also generated unsavoury elements at all levels who have not scrupled to make a fast buck on the sale of such military hardware. On June 21st, Maharagama M.P., Dinesh Gunawardene raised a query about a businessman who had supplied arms to both sides !

#### The cost of ethnic Violence

In July this year it will be two years since the holocaust of July 1983 generated by ethnic violence. As revealed by a news item in the *Sun* of June 26, the "repair bill to reconstruct the damage caused by the July 1983 ethnic violence is Rs. 133 million." But this is quite apart from the cost of human lives and the untold suffering caused in purely human terms for many people, among whom were innocent men, women and children.

It has been said that the Anuradhapura massacre was in retaliation for a massacre of some 72 Tamil youth on May 9th and 10th at Valvettiturai, and a warning that the Sinhala armed forces could no longer kill Tamil civilians with impunity. But while this was the first mass killing of Sinhalese civilians **outside the North** by Tamil guerrillas, in December 1984 LTTE cadres had massacred about 250 Sinhalese men, women and children at the Dollar and Kent farms and then Sinhalese fishermen and their families in the villages of Kokkilai and Nayaru. However as a reprisal following the Anuradhapura massacre, several Tamils in Anuradhapura town were killed by infuriated mobs that very day. On May 18th, passengers in a regular launch ferry in Delft in the North were said to have been butchered by the Navy perhaps in retaliation for the Anuradhapura guerilla massacre, although the National Security Minister has stated that "there is no evidence to show who was responsible." It would appear from a sober examination of the facts available that many of the military "successes" were in fact reprisals against innocent Tamil civilians by the Security Forces following attacks upon them. This is borne out not only by reports published abroad but even on the admissions of excesses on the part of the Security Forces that have been made by Government leaders themselves. For instance in *Island* of 16-06-85, Minister Athulathmudali himself admitted that the Government had "taken disciplinary action against many members of the security forces. Over 300 of them have had their services terminated." This position would appear to have been highlighted all the more forcefully in the violence that took place in the Eastern Province where Tamil-Muslim clashes were reported towards the middle of April and external elements and police commandos were accused of being responsible for the violence, according to even reports made by some Government members, not to speak of the report of an inquiry conducted by Dr. Frank Jayasinghe soon after on behalf of the Citizens Committee. All this indeed would also serve to confirm the sober warning of Major General Nalin Seneviratne, the present Army Commander that no military solution was possible (*See Christian Worker* 1st Quarter 1984).

#### Colonisation Plans

Yet another unforgivable piece of braggadocio was the arrogant assertion of some Government Ministers that they would plant 250,000 Sinhala peasants in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, giving them a training in weaponry and arming them as part of "the war against the armed terrorists." This was tantamount to inciting a state of generalised fighting between the two ethnic groups. (Already the action of the Security Forces by their reprisals against civilians in Jaffna, Mannar and Mullaitivu and those of the Tamil guerillas in their attacks on Sinhalese civilians in Kokkilai, Nayaru, Anuradhapura and elsewhere had led to an escalation of violence). **That a Government which could not in the prevailing situation even afford the protection necessary to re-settle the Sinhala fishermen who had fled Nayaru and Kokkilai following guerilla attacks on them, could successfully embark on such a policy of colonisation was not only unrealistic but downright ridiculous.** It apparently only had the effect of increased attacks on Sinhala civilians in these areas, resulting tragically in a mass displacement of Sinhalese from the East as well, where they had so far been living in appreciable numbers. In the Eastern Province where Sinhala, Tamils and Muslims had lived together in amity over a long period of time, we have now had a destruction of whole villages and the members of all three communities ending up as refugees !

In this connection, Opposition Leader Anura Bandaranaike has called on the President to take steps to "re-settle in their traditional homelands before negotiations for the resolution of the ethnic issue, the thousands of Sinhalese affected in the Trincomalee district." (*Sun* of 15-96-85). What Mr. Bandaranaike and others like him should even now understand is that with all the army protection that is promised, these Sinhalese would be as likely to go back as the fishermen of Nayaru and Kokkilai who continue to languish in Negombo, **unless a negotiated political settlement is arrived at, which alone would enable them to go back and live in peace and safety.**

#### "National Security" and Martial Law

If people in the South taken in for the most part until then by Government propaganda, began to realise in the wake of the Anuradhapura massacre that a military solution was futile, **the President and Government for their part sought to utilise the incident to push their "National Security" ideology to its logical conclusion** by the threat of "martial law" courts to deal with what the President called "a breakdown of law and order" (*Daily News* of 17-05-85). President Jayewardene even sounded war drums against his political opponents when he said that in the State's war against terrorism, no opposition could be brooked. Said he ; "The Prime Minister, other Ministers and I are giving this matter serious consideration, **with regard to those who are not with us and thus against us. Should such people be allowed to speak, write and associate**



freely and weaken the government ?' He said very soon the Government would announce what it intended to do in regard to such persons.' (*Daily News* of May 24th).

President Jayewardene also said he planned to **vest members of Parliament with executive powers with regard to security** in their areas, and particularly with regard to the police, home guards etc. This would have meant that the M.P., by these means could entrench himself further in his electorate to cow down his political opponents and make a mockery of the democratic political system. Already the informal relations of influence that have grown up between most M.P.s and State Officials working in their electorates are far from desirable and with the added powers given to M.P.s their local supporters could well take the upper hand against opponents, leading to an increase in lawlessness and thuggery.

The raising of armed guards was yet another dangerous move. The setting loose of such an odd assortment of armed and undisciplined men soon had its repercussions for the press reported no less than 7 alleged murders in the Anuradhapura, Wennappuwa and Minneriya electorates in which Home Guards were involved, apart from an increasing incidence of law violations by them. The President himself himself was compelled to order that home guards or armed civilians should not be deployed in any security operations, unless accompanied by the police ! (*Sun* of June 29th).



Picture of the Mahanayaka Theros at the meeting with political parties on June 4th (Left to right) The Ven. Palipana Chandananda Mahanayake Thero of Asgiriya, the Ven. Sirimalwatte Ananda Mahanayake Thero of Malwatte, Also in the picture is the Ven. Madihe Pannasiha Mahanayake of the Amarapura Nikaya. (Picture from *Daily News* of 5th June)

### The Sangha's Response

Meanwhile the Maha Sangha too had begun to react to the Anuradhapura massacre. This reaction was symbolised by a 'Satyakriya' staged by the Sangha when they sat cross-legged in a silent protest by the side of the road leading to the Parliamentary

building where M.P.s had met to debate the Emergency. On May 20th the Ven. Palipane Chandananda Mahanayake Thero of the Asgiriya Chapter convened a meeting in Kandy at which the Mahanayakes of other Chapters and Sects and leaders of the SLFP, LSSP, CPSL, SLMP and MEP were present. Only the UNP, though invited, did not attend. A second round of discussions was held at Ratmalana on June 4th at which the representatives of all three Nikayas, leading Buddhist organizations and the same political parties were present and presided over by the Mahanayakes Theros of Asgiriya and Malwatte. While the SLFP was ready to back a proposal for a "National Security Advisory and Co-ordinating Committee" headed by the Maha Sangha and with representatives of opposition parties too as members to advise the official Joint Operations Council on how best to conduct the war against terrorism, the LSSP-CPSL-SLMP alliance was totally opposed to this move or to any other in the direction of a "military solution." The Conference decided to ask the Government to refrain from imposing martial law or delegate executive or military power to M.P.s or to create an auxiliary force outside the regular armed forces.—(*Daily News* of June 5th). It was at these discussions too that it was agreed that a negotiated political settlement should be pursued with all sections of Tamil opinion including the TULF and the guerilla groups both here and abroad. The adoption of this position by the Maha Sangha in association with the major opposition political parties is truly a great step forward and augurs well for the future, for it was on these lines too that the prospect for a real settlement of the vexed Tamil question had to lie. *Christian Worker* especially welcomes this development since it is a position that we have consistently underlined in these columns, more so since peace and a negotiated settlement was unrealistic without the participation also of the combatants, namely the youthful militants.

It is in this context therefore that the "second coming" of Indian Foreign Minister Romesh Bhandari to Colombo towards the end of May must also be viewed together with the subsequent negotiations arranged at Thimpu in Bhutan with the assistance of the Indian government, which again brings us to the role of India in the present conflict.

### India's Intervention

Time and again, we have drawn attention in these columns to the unfortunate tendency on the part of our Government's leaders to make attacks on India instead of seeking to utilise the good offices of our great neighbour to our advantage. This may be attributed mainly to the pro-Western stance of the U.N.P. and the efforts of the Government to align itself closely with the USA and its interests. But as was to be expected, the USA was certainly not disposed to intervene in our affairs and antagonise India in the process. India for her part could hardly remain silent in the face of the large numbers of Sri Lankan refugees on her soil and the feelings generated consequently among some 50 million Tamilians in South India. The

Anuradhapura events, however tragic, helped in this context to create a climate in which a negotiated political settlement became imperative and India's intervention in this respect even welcomed. We are happy to note that now our Government leaders have struck a more friendly note when speaking of India. Even "Don Mithuna" of the *Weekend* who used to denounce India in such strident tones for "harbouring terrorist training camps" (as if there weren't any in Sri Lanka!) now writes: Intelligence has shown a marked shift of camps and hideouts from Tamil Nadu to North and East Lanka!—(*Weekend* of July 7th).

### The Way Forward

The Government and the "national" press are now loud in their praises for Rajiv Gandhi. But Rajiv Gandhi will not be able to help indefinitely if we ourselves do not seize the opportunity to work out a **proper settlement which will be honoured and implemented by this Government**. While a completely satisfactory resolution of our National Question is not likely to be achieved by the present Government or indeed by any other which is bound up with capitalist and neo-colonialist structures, a way must be found in the meantime for the masses of this country to come together regardless of differences in language, race or religion. This becomes all the more important because oppression and exploitation of our people along with their attendant tensions and conflicts really stem from the entire system of neo-colonial domination of under developed countries like Sri Lanka. So only this way, can we as a small country and united as a Sri Lankan people, hope to achieve true liberation by overcoming neo-colonialism and its local agents. The alternative would be national disaster.

### As other see us

"India has to get involved because Sri Lankans are incapable of solving their own problems," says one Western diplomat in Colombo. "The government is paralysed by internal fighting and local politics, and some outsider is going to have to knock some sense into them....."

.....In any case, the ageing Jayewardene is widely expected to retire when his current term runs out in 1989, and his assumed lame duck status already has provoked a backroom power scramble in which anything that might smack of cozying up to the Tamils is regarded as tantamount to political suicide. "Nobody in the Cabinet is looking for the best solution to the Tamil problem," says veteran Sri Lankan socialist leader Colvin de Silva. "They are not thinking of Sri Lanka's future, but of their own."

So far, the only Tamil policy the Sri Lankan government has managed to agree on is the one most palatable to the Buddhist majority—namely, military suppression of the rebels. The result has been a series of gory atrocities carried out against Tamil civilians by an army that is inadequately trained and notoriously undisciplined.....

Ironically the ragtag Army may turn out to be a greater threat to Sri Lanka's stability than the Tamil rebels it is supposed to be fighting. "Jayewardene is now talking of imposing martial law," says Maj. Gen. Prakash Pasricha, Deputy Director of India's Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. "What he doesn't realise is that in small countries like Sri Lanka, the Army can easily take over."

It's not likely that the wily Jayewardene will be mouse-trapped by a coup. If he can break the web of political complacency, Sri Lanka could get a new lease of life. If not, it is already well along Lebanon's ruinous path.

—U.S. Magazine *Newsweek* of June 17, 1985

### QUERY IN THE HOUSE

## Govt. & terrorists got arms from same businessman — Dinesh

Maharagama MP Dinesh Gunawardene yesterday told Parliament that the private businessman who supplied arms to the government had also supplied them to the terrorists.

Mr. Gunawardene was speaking during the debate on the extension of the emergency.

He called upon the government to table the report pertaining to current investigations into the issue, in Parliament.

Though the Crime Investigations Department (CID) revealed some details pertaining to the supply of arms to the terrorists, it is moving lazily in taking action against the offenders, he said.

The MP said he brought the issue before the House because of this lethargic attitude.

Charging that the CID had waited till it heard from Interpol to take action, he

called upon the government to table a full report, pending the conclusion of the investigation.

Many soldiers, police officers and civilians have lost their lives due to issues connected with arms. Therefore a report is necessary, he added.

Mr. Gunawardene said: "The same people who supplied arms to the government also supplied them to the terrorists. The gravity of the issue lies there. The same businessman supplied arms to the government from one hand and to the terrorists from the other. The government should bear the responsibility for the deaths and destruction resulting from this situation."

"Please don't conceal the harm done to the people and the security of the state by those who received commissions from the arms deals."

"I will not mention his name. It is a name known to everybody. We know who his friends are and what his connections are. We also know the sort of pressure being applied to secure his release."

He asked whether the government would deny this.

Publication of information pertaining to this issue has been stopped due to pressures from top positions, Mr. Gunawardene alleged.

"Can you reveal the name of the Sri Lanka envoy? After the arrest of the son of Lanka's High Commissioner in Singapore it was revealed that he had used diplomatic privileges to supply arms to terrorists. I hear the word "Gunasingham" from the government benches themselves", he said.

In what office is Gunasingham serving now? The government should reveal that. After he returned to the country he is holding one of the highest state posts. The person who was taken into custody might still be holding the DPL passport of Sri Lanka," he added.

(Sun of 22-06-85.)

# Seven years of the 'free' market

## The Strategy : 1977—1984

The unprecedented majority obtained by the UNP in July, 1977, the election of the President to a second term in office and the extension of the life of Parliament via a referendum 'has enabled the Government to pursue its open economy policies continuously for the past 7 years.. In an attempt 'to resuscitate the stagnant economy., the UNP Government initiated a programme the principal features of which were the unification of the exchange rate ; the liberalization of imports ; and the abolition of price controls on most commodities.

### Import Controls

The Government aimed to eliminate 'public sector import monopolies with respect to food, fertilizer cement and certain other items and to confine prior licencing of imports and exports to a bare minimum..

### Subsidies

Fiscal policies were designed 'to shift resources from consumption to investment and 'made a determined effort to reduce the remaining subsidies and transfers. In the case of food subsidies the food stamp scheme was introduced in September 1979 for the poorer sections of the population and 'certain subsidies available to the entire population were withdrawn. This scheme is now being reviewed 'in order to rationalise the recipients. 'Price adjustments and transport fare increases were made so that the subsidies were kept to a bare minimum.'

### Producer Incentives

'On the revenue side, the government initiated a number of tax reforms with the objective of (i) providing adequate incentives for savings and investment ; and (ii) simplifying and rationalising personal and corporate taxation.'

In the area of producer incentives 'the procurement price of paddy has been gradually increased alongside progressive increases in the fertilizer subsidies and flour prices.'

'import liberalization and an enlarged role for the private sector have helped to increase the availability of inputs and reduced transport and distributing margins.' 'The Government also introduced floor prices in a number of commodities, reduced export duties on tea, reduced taxation of coconut products, increased re-planting subsidies for tree crops and eliminated the export tax on minor crops.'

'The G.C.E.C. provides substantial new incentives for foreign investors in industrial ventures in Sri Lanka. The extension of lump-sum depreciation, the reduction in corporate tax rates and specific tax concessions have gradually improved incentives outside the free trade zone

The above summary statement of the strategy adopted by the present government is drawn from a review of the Sri Lanka economy 1970/77 and 1977/84 which prefaces the 'Performance' Report for 1984 published by the Ministry of Plan Implementation. We propose to examine the impact of these policies on the economy as a whole and on the less privileged segments of society in particular.

### An Assessment

What have we to show after seven years of these policies pursued unhindered with the active support of donor agencies and the banking systems of the Western world ?

### The G.D.P.

The same document sees a 'strong response to the new policies in the changes in the G.D.P.' which are tabulated as follows ;—

### Changes in GDP and its composition 1977, 1984

	1977	1984
Gross Domestic Product	16,078 (100)	24,097 (100)
Agriculture	4,299 (27)	5,625 (23)
Manufacturing	2,357 (15)	3,319 (14)
Mining & Quarrying	515 (3)	808 (3)
Construction	619 (4)	1,022 (4)
Service	8,288 (51)	13,323 (56)

The new policies however have failed to change the structure of the economy as a whole as the figures added in brackets of the above table show.

### Imports & Exports

Another table drawn from the same document give the following figures in respect of imports and exports. The figures are expressed in million SDR as well.

	1977		1984	
	Rs. Mln.	SDR	Rs. Mln.	SDR
Exports Total	5265	529	37006	1423
Agricultural	295	297	21929	843
Industrial	1882	189	11948	459
Gems	198	30	706	27
Others	134	14	2423	94
Imports Total	6007	604	47047	1809
Consumer	2534	255	11953	459
Intermediates	2648	266	21929	843
Capital	746	75	12459	480
Others	79	8	706	27
Trade deficit	-742	-75.0	-10041	-386

### Agriculture

The remarkable increase in value of the agricultural exports was the product of the high prices which prevailed in 1984 and which have since declined. This occurred despite the fact that the annual average production of the major export crops for the period 1970—1977 and 1977—1984 declined ;—

### Production of Major Export Crops (Mln. Kgs. Annual Avg) 1970-1977 1977-1984

	1970 - 1977	1977 - 1984
Tea	2098	1988
Rubbr	1469	1400
Coconut (Mln Nuts)	2325	2182

## Industries

As for industrial exports, figures are available only for the gross value of the exports. It may be presumed however that the net export earnings in respect of garments, petroleum products, and items other than those based on our raw-materials such as fish products, fruits and mineral products would have been low if not negative. The Central Bank and the Ministry of Plan Implementation who were both silent on this point have an obligation to publish the relevant information. It might be noted that the bulk of the capital and the intermediate goods would have been used as inputs for the production and manufacture of our exports.

### Manufactured Exports

	1977		1984	
	Rs. Mn.	SDRRs. Mn.	SDR	
M/factured Exports (Total)	941.1	95	11,948.7	459
Petroleum Products	597.0	60	3,275.2	125
Garments	143.0	14	7,358.2	283
Fish & Fish Products	85.1	9	599.3	23
Others	116.0	12	716.0	27

Even in 1984, the boom year for our exports, our debt service ratio was as high as 17%. We are yet to reach the critical years for the repayment of Capital and interest in the massive loans obtained by this government, the bulk of which have already gone back to donor countries in the purchase of goods and services, quite often at above world prices.

## Nutrition

The burden of carrying these adjustment policies has fallen on the poorer segments of society. The document on 'Public Investment' (1985/1989) published by the Ministry of Finance & Planning in May this year reports 'increasing concern that the benefits of economic growth have not percolated down.'

That document reveals that by 1982, 37.5% of pre-school children were suffering from chronic under-nutrition (stunting) and 13.1% from acute under-nutrition (wasting). The proportion of households unable to satisfy their minimum calorie needs was as high as 50% in the urban sector and 43% in the rural sector. The estate sector was relatively the best off with 33%. The upper classes increased their level of calorie intake while the rest of the population found themselves compelled to do with less. Overall, the calorie availability per head declined between 1977 and 1982 by almost 10%, and despite the boasts of self-sufficiency in rice, total cereal availability per head fell by over 15%.

## Health

The government has declared its commitment to provide 'Health for All' by the year 2000. Current policy however appears to be more in line with providing health for the wealthy now.

The leading causes of mortality and morbidity have been found to be the result of lack of portable water and sanitary facilities and poor housing. Malaria has become endemic in many districts of the country with parasite incidence rising sharply from 2.3 in 1982 to 9.5 in 1984.

Despite severe unemployment we have failed even to recruit and train important cadres to maintain our health services at the level of attendants, public health inspectors, midwives and staff nurses. The health manpower position in 1984 was as follows:—

Category	Required Number	Deficit
1. Medical Officers	2416	749
2. A MP/R MP	1443	328
3. M.L.T. ( Medical Laboratory Technicians)	1144	661
4. Staff Nurses	12500	4953
5. Midwives & Family Health Workers	7767	3453
6. Public Health Inspectors	2020	1103
7. Hospital Attendants	9249	5593

What's happened, then, to our celebrated physical quality of life which in the pre-'77 period showed the world that, contrary to prevailing theories of development, it was possible to achieve high levels of health, nutrition and education despite modest but stable rates of economic growth.

## Education

'Public Investment' reports that in 1981/1982 250,000 children of primary-school age did not attend school at all and about 330,000 of this age group leave school before completing Grade 8. Indications are however that these figures are gross under-estimates and that 50% drop out by Grade V. It also reports that many students who do not attend school do not reach a level which would ensure functional literacy and, together with those who leave school early, lapse into illiteracy. In 1981, 10% of young persons between the ages of 10 & 19 years had declared themselves illiterate. Despite this we have quite recently had the Secretary to the Ministry of Higher Education and Senior Ministers urging children to learn English.

## Private Investment

The government has made good on its promises to reduce export duties and 'reform' personal and corporate taxation. Export duties declined sharply from nearly 10% of G.D.P. at current market prices in 1978, to a little over 2% in 1984: import duties remained the same: income taxes increased from 2½% to 3½%: selective sales taxes declined from 4½% to 4%: indirect taxation which affect everybody increased sharply, B.T.T. revenue going up from 2½% in 1979 to 5½% of G.D.P. in 1984: the middle and lower income groups got hit once more.

Despite all the incentives provided to capital, the share of private investment has declined from an average of 52% under the previous government to 40% under this government while public investment increased from 48% in 1970/77 to 60% since.

The bulk of the investment made by the private sector has been in trading. A survey published in *South Magazine* (May, 1985) reveals that 'there is a much greater degree of foreign ownership in the Sri Lanka corporate sector than elsewhere in the region.' Ceylon Tobacco (U.K.), Ceylon Trading Corporation (Denmark), Lever Brothers (U.K.—Netherlands) Harrisons & Crossfield (U.K.), Shaw Wallace & Hedges (India), Singer (U.S.) and Union Carbide (U.S.) are among the major foreign owners (their investments have been very small relative to turnover) who dominate business in this country. Among the others are the Maharaja Organization, C. W. Mackie & Company, the Hayleys Group and Aitken Spence & Company.

#### Who foots the Bill ?

We have seen how the government's development package has put the development of the poor into reverse gear.

Income distribution studies have shown that the poor have become poorer while the rich have grabbed a larger slice of the cake than before. The bottom forty per cent of the people have only about ten per cent of the national income, the top twenty per cent appropriate nearly sixty per cent.

Wage earners in the middle and lower categories have had to pay even more substantially than rural folk to stimulate Sri Lanka's 'stagnant economy.' Although wages have more than doubled for most groups, for wage earners in the clerical and other subordinate grades and for those in the manufacturing trades, real wages have declined by up to one-third since 1977.

That is not all. Even their savings are being appropriated by the government in its vigorous pursuit of a policy which has led to conspicuous private consumption (by public persons as well) and on unprecedented waste of public funds, most of it borrowed and lying in wait for the next few governments to pay back.

The government has been exploiting the savings of wage earners. The Employees Provident Fund in which are gathered contributions totalling well over Rs. 4 billion since 1977, accounted for 28% of government borrowing during this period. 64% of the members contributing to the EPF receive less than Rs. 1,000/- per month and 33% less than Rs. 500/- Interest rates payable on these contributions now stand at 12.5% per annum—well below the rates paid on long term savings deposits in the NSB and other banks. The Employees Trust Fund too had collected Rs. 617 million by the end of 1983, and now pays 13% interest.

At the same time, in a single year from 1982 to 1983 Trade Unions lost fully 500,000 members—almost one third of the membership.

And what of employment ? With all these incentives and molly-coddling, what has the private sector delivered ? Between 1977 and 1973, the private sector generated less than 80,000 jobs most of it in construction, which is essentially unstable, in tourism, which has suffered a heavy loss of jobs in the last two years, and in the services sector.

Employment in agriculture has declined in absolute terms between 1971 and 1981. In manufacturing, the GCEC which according to 'Performance 1984,' was expected to generate 81,105 jobs, had in fact created only 28,705 jobs—just 35% of the expectation.

In the meantime the public sector had created 235,000 jobs, a large percentage of which would have been basically unproductive.

Not to be outdone by the 'Performance 1984' of the Ministry of Plan Implementation, the National Planning Division in 'Public Investment 1985—1989' has come up with some curious figures ;—

	1970	1977	1978	1982	1983	1984	Annual Growth		
							71 - 77	78 - 84	
Employment	000	3550	3854	4065	4836	5355	5504	1.2	5.2
Unemployment	000	747	1284	1193	1059	945	896	8.0	5.0
Labour force	000	4296	5139	5259	5893	6300	6400	2.6	3.2
Unemployment as a % of Labour force		17.4	25.0	22.7	18.0	15.0	14.00	-	-

The change from column to column is as follows ;—

	1970-77	77-78	78-82	82-83	83-84
Employment	304	211	771	549	149
Unemployment	537	-91	-134	-114	-49
Labour force	843	120	634	407	100

How did employment, job creation and the growth of the labour force register such startling fluctuations ? We are asked to believe that the increase in the number employed having averaged 192,000 per year from 1978 to 1982 suddenly leapt to 519,000 in 1983 ; and that those entering the Labour force each year, (around 158,000 between 1978 and 1982), leapt to 407,000 in 1983 (a massive baby-boom in the last years of the previous UNP government ?) and collapsed to 100,000 (' provisionally !') in 1984. All very nice for the figures on the rate of unemployment, but figures must be cooked intelligently—even for the World Bank and the Aid Group.

These figures in well-got-up publications don't create new jobs—they do keep those who concoct them employed. The unemployed stay : they will not stay put !

# Tamil Youths' Radicalism

— Suresh Canagarajah

*At a time when youthful militants dominate the political scene in Jaffna, the following articles taken from THE MORNING STAR (a Christian Weekly published in Jaffna from 1845) of 10 - 17th May this year, should be of special interest to our readers.*

He who clung to his text books and kept his eyes glued to their pages now holds a submachine gun greedily observing the movement of Khaki uniforms and trucks. He who treated his parent's word as sacred, now deserts his home and decides the destiny of his elders. He whose sole aim was to enter a good profession, earn a fat dowry and settle down to a comfortable living, now, dreams of shedding his last drop of blood for the creation of a just society. He who walked bare bodied to the temple after a fresh bath and shivered at the sight of the Gods, now sneers at the lifeless idols and calls religion a farce.

This is transformation indeed. But this change in the personality of the Tamil youth is neither sudden nor strange — contrary to general opinion. There is a visible strand of radicalism running through the history of the Tamil youth ; this came into prominence earlier in the activities of the Jaffna Youth Congress in the 1920's. But this radical spirit is neatly interwoven with another thread that runs through his tradition — the image of the Tamil youth as bookish, apolitical and conservative. An understanding of the latter tendency would explain better the periodic emergence of his radicalism.

The fact that the sun scorched peninsula's aridity held no prospects for cultivation, and its lack of natural resources promised little industrial development, denied the Jaffna youth of gainful employment in the farming and technical sectors. So with his eyes focussed on the professions, he was inevitably driven towards his books. The cleverest and most hard working would find themselves comfortably seated on a desk in the Civil Service wearing a clean white collar. It was obvious that the Tamil youth did not value education as an end in itself but as an instrument for other pecuniary motives. For the parents their children's education was an investment that would yield rich dividends in their old age. Jaffna's colonial heritage of good schools naturally lent themselves to be exploited by the Jaffna man to fulfil the above ends.

## Jaffna's caste-bound Society

Though Jaffna too saw the advent of the three, successive colonial powers, yet this caste-oriented Hindu, feudalistic society was little affected by the completely different value systems and social institutions of these liberal Christian Europeans. There is evidence that the Europeans too recognized the distinct culture in the North and incorporated codes such as the Thesavalamai in administering these

regions. The fact that the caste system could survive the challenges of the colonialist administrations is evidence enough of the resilience (persistence ?) of Jaffna's (tradition bound) social order.

Born in this tightly knit environment the Jaffna youth could not afford the luxury of challenging his elders or questioning his Gods or scrutinizing the values handed to him by tradition. He was an obedient child who kept indoors, read his text books, passed the tests, married with a thumping dowry, minded the affairs of his own family, and lived in perfect conformity with the norms of his society. His was a colourless, narrow, self-centred world.

## Jaffna youth movement's early start

But in 1924 with the inauguration of the Jaffna Youth Congress his shell was broken and he was freed to breathe the air of radicalism : ironically, one of the reasons for his change was his prized education which rose up quietly behind him to subvert his world. With whatever attitudes he approached education, anyhow his ability to read widely in English opened the windows of his personality to the social upheavals in other parts of the world, especially to Mahatma Gandhi's mass uprising against the British imperialists next door in India in this very period. Jaffna's emotional closeness to India infected the Jaffna youth with Gandhism, and even Nationalism, much earlier than the Sinhala youth. The fact that it was the Youth Congress that was instrumental in Gandhi's visit to this island in November 1927 again proves Gandhi's distinct influence in Jaffna youth's baptism into politics.

The liberal values and the spirit of dispassionate inquiry and free discussion inculcated by the westernized Christian schools in Jaffna too radicalized the perspectives of the Jaffna youth. A random selection of names associated with the founding of the Jaffna Youth Congress shows the background of the movement — Handy Perinbanayagam, K. Nesiah, S. J. Gunasegaram, A. M. K. Cumaraswamy, S. Kulendran. Drawn mainly from schools like Jaffna College and St. John's and belonging to Christian families, they initially drew the charge that the Youth Congress was a purely Christian organization with sectarian motives. But its stand on various issues proved this an unjustified criticism.

## Radical Influences

For about a decade the Youth Congress took the peninsula by storm. They unleashed a strong opposition to the rigid caste system by insisting on equal seating in the school class rooms and achieved a regulation to this effect. Through inter-dining too they sought to give flesh to their pronouncements against casteism. They had to brave violent protests by orthodox Hindus against their reforms. The Youth Congress was

also one of the earliest organizations in the island to call for the use of the mother tongue in education. They were possibly the earliest organization in the island where the English-educated circle used one of the vernaculars in the official proceedings of the organization. Men of such calibre as Swami Vipulantha called from its ranks that importance should be given in the curriculum to the indigenous classics, at a time when the average school boy could quote a dozen lines from Shakespeare or Milton extempore, but none of Thiukkural.

The Youth Congress' most blatantly political struggle was the organization of the boycott to the elections to the State Council in 1931. Though opponents to the idea of boycott in the North later interpreted its motive as a protest against the reduction of Tamil representation under the Donoughmore Constitution, the Youth Congress was never communal. They always stood against sectarian politics and the exploitation of communal prejudices to win votes. The real motive of the boycott was to call for total independence to the island. The fact that Jaffna alone boycotted the elections substantiates the fact that the radical youth of Jaffna were one of the earliest in the island to call for Swaraj against the British, and very much ahead of their times.

It is interesting that the Jaffna youth enjoyed a head start on radicalism over the other communities, that it was the Jaffna Youth Congress that tried to pioneer the creation of similar organizations in other parts of the island. It was partly on the initiative of the Jaffna Youth Congress that the All Ceylon Youth Congress was formed in Colombo in May 1931. The stature of the Jaffna youth and their influence over the youth in the rest of the island can be judged from **Philip Gunawardene's letter to the press from London**: "I longed for the day when the youth of Ceylon would take their place by the side of the young men and women of China, of India of Indonesia, of Indo-China, of Korea and even of the Philippine Islands in the great struggles of a creative revolution against all the mighty forces of old-age, social reaction and imperialist oppression. During the last few years the Jaffna Students Congress was the only organization in Ceylon that has been displaying political intelligence. . . . Jaffna has given the lead. They have forced their leaders to sound the bugle call for the great struggle for freedom — for immediate and complete independence from imperialist Britain. Will the Sinhalese who always display supreme courage understand and fall in line?"

### The Rise of Militant Youth

But with opposition mounting against the boycott and the 'elders' deciding to seek election to the State Council playing the communal flute, the Youth Congress spluttered slowly to a halt. It is important to understand the causes for the waning of its influence in the mid 1930's. As its membership was drawn mainly from the educated westernized middle classes, the Youth Congress lacked active support from the wider masses. Its class character also limited the scope

of its activism: with a white collar job in the Government Service, steady income, and social status the members could not sincerely say "We have nothing to lose but our chains." The "bookishness" of its members too tainted its activities. The Congress being a liberal fringe of the educated circles was good at holding discussions and issuing declarations on social disabilities and cultural rights, but lacked a clear programme of action and organizational strength to carry out a protracted physical struggle for its claims.

So after a decade of adventure in radicalism, the Jaffna youth retreated again into his cozy cocoon, his secure shell. Even the uprising of Sinhalese youth in 1971 in the south failed to disturb him from his books and a political slumber.

But once again it was his education that rose behind his back to break his shell, in a different form. His successes in the educational field and the resulting domination of the professions earned the envy of the majority Sinhalese. With the Sinhalese middle classes vying for a greater share in the small national cake of this tiny underdeveloped country, gradually discriminations in employment opportunities and University admissions were introduced under the guise of "redressing the balance." But with these regulations the Sinhalese governments rubbed the Tamil youth on the wrong side, they rudely intruded into his cosy educational cocoon.

Interestingly enough, the middle class Tamil youth only retreated further into his shell and intensified the competition within his community for the few places still available in the University and professions. The time consuming game of politics was safely left in the hands of the parents while the children went for tuitions. The children of the moneyed families could also go abroad for their education and employment. It was only the youth in the lower classes, who were defeated in the rat race in their own country and had no prospects of going abroad, who were prepared to take the bull by the horns.

### Militant Youth Explodes

But what broke the shell completely and channelled the energies of the Tamil youth from books to guns were the political developments since early 1970. The Tamil political elders having been taken on a jolly ride of pacts and agreements which were never honoured by the successive governments, and seeing the community in a worse plight in the 1972 Republican Constitution now intensified their demands from Federalism to the Right of Self-determination. Seeing the youth too getting impatient by the delay in finding redress to their grievances they played on their emotions by promising them "Eelam." The youth meanwhile became suspicious of the merry-go-round of parliamentary politics that their elders were playing, where the communal issue was only a convenient slogan in the hands of bourgeois politicians on both sides to earn votes and seat themselves in the parliamentary benches. They began to consider extra-parliamentary forms of struggle.

Meanwhile the Sri Lankan security forces having tasted blood during the JVP uprising now turned their eyes on the youth of the North and East. Under cover of the emergency regulations of the Sirimavo governments, they arrested Tamil youth involved in non-violent democratic forms of protests, detained them without trial and carried out sadistic experiments on their bodies. The form of oppression too changed from cultural and economic discriminations to "State Terrorism." Since the tragedy of the I.A.T.R. conference in 1974 the Sinhalese security forces directly participated, or indirectly encouraged arson, looting, rape and killing of Tamil civilians. With not just his books but his very life threatened, the Tamil youth was naturally driven to extra-parliamentary and armed forms of struggle.

It is interesting to compare the differences with the Jaffna Youth Congress to understand the progression in radicalism in the contemporary youth activism. Whereas the earlier phenomenon was a transplantation from the Indian soil, in the form of Gandhism, the present awakening springs from the socio-economic conditions of Sri Lanka itself. The contemporary youth's conscious commitment to Marxist socialism is also quite a difference from the Youth Congress' Gandhism idealism with its attendant spiritual and utopian connotations. Gandhian non-violence too has been rejected by today's youth as a viable mode of struggle. The fact that the present youth movement consists mainly of the lower classes whereas the Youth Congress was composed of educated westernized bourgeoisie also creates further differences. The present movement is deeply rooted in the (deprived and under-privileged) masses, has a clear programme of action, boasts of organizational strength, and is not tainted with "the arm chair politics" that slightly coloured the Youth Congress.

Thanks to the increasing ruthless repression by the security personnel, the Tamil youth's conversion to radicalism has been near total. He once again inspires respect from the progressives in the south. He has almost completely taken over the responsibility of the political destiny of the Tamil Nation into his hands from his sluggish elders. The change in his personality is so revolutionary that many cherished traditions of the Tamils have been swept aside. He has had to desert his home as his struggle is extra-legal. His religious outlook has been dimmed by his cool Marxist materialism. Even girls have broken their conservative chains to join the armed groups. We are witnessing the creation of a radically new culture and a different set of values in the very process of the struggle for liberation.

But the disruption of the ordinary level examinations, robbing of Temple property, kidnapping of Tamil businessmen for ransom, certain unjustified summary executions of civilians — all this raise the frightening question whether this radicalism will only end in anarchy, whether the new culture will be only dermissive. The image of a reckless idealistic gun-trotter looms menacingly. But it is hoped that when the Tamil youth comes through this fiery ordeal he will emerge refined, balanced with a healthy synthesis of the dual strands that have characterized his personality through history.

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"Reconciliation of Tamils and Sinhalese will depend not on constitutional guarantees but on the goodwill, commonsense and humanity of the Government in power and the people who elect it"

—Foreword to *Ceylon A Divided Nation* by B. H. Farmer, (Oxford University Press, 1963).

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## W C C Statement on Sri Lanka

*This statement was issued on 22 May by Emilio Castro, general secretary of the Geneva-based World Council of Churches.*

With the rapid escalation of violence in the last few weeks, the situation in Sri Lanka is fast deteriorating. More than ever, it has become urgent to seek a political solution to the ethnic problem.

The world Council of Churches is profoundly concerned about the continuing violence and increasing loss of lives. Excesses have been committed by both sides in what is becoming virtually a civil war. We deplore these excesses which have resulted in large-scale killings of civilians,

The recent tragic escalation of conflict has to be attributed largely to the exclusive reliance on a military strategy to deal with the problem and the acknowledged indiscipline of the armed forces. All attempts to find a military solution have only increased the cycle of violence.

To resolve this problem within a united Sri Lanka, the government should now offer a political solution which would ensure the necessary autonomy of the Tamil areas. The announcement of a plan of action along these lines would instil confidence among the Tamils and de-escalate violence. We urge the government to take this bold initiative to respond to the legitimate aspirations of the people for justice and peace. Any further delay is likely to make the problem intractable.

Our thoughts and prayers are at this moment with all the people of Sri Lanka. We earnestly hope that ways will soon be found to end the suffering and fears of the people and to rebuild a society in which all citizens can meaningfully participate. We especially remember the churches in Sri Lanka as they continue their efforts for justice for all.





Buddhist monks from the Colombo University atop a lecture hall roof protesting against the Amended Universities Act which came into effect on 18th Feb. — Daily News of 22 February 1985

# The Universities (Amendment) Act

— Batty Weerakoon

With the lifting of the press censorship from July 17th we are able to print the following article which was totally disallowed by the Censor in the last issue of **CHRISTIAN WORKER**.

We invite our readers to judge for themselves if anything in the contents warranted the treatment the article received at the hands of the Competent Authority.

The writer, Batty Weerakoon, is a lawyer, besides being the General Secretary of the Ceylon Federation of Labour, has made a special study of all University regulations as Counsel appearing in the Court of Appeal in 2 Writ Applications which challenged the right of the Colombo University to associate itself with education that was imparted for a fee.

The **Universities (Amendment) Act**, which was approved by Parliament in January this year has run into a storm of criticism which quite naturally has its centres in the Universities themselves. Up to now the Government has made no candid attempt at all to answer the criticism that the effect of the new law will be the abolition of free education at the higher educational levels. The haste with which the Bill was taken through Parliament giving members barely three hours of debate has had the effect of giving to the criticism added validity.

Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe, Minister of Education and Youth Affairs, has made an attempt to meet the allegation that neither the Universities nor Parliament were given an adequate opportunity to study the Bill. Mr. Wickremesinghe states that when this Government enacted the **Universities Act No. 16 of 1978**, it was expected, and an undertaking had been given, to bring before Parliament what amendments are thought necessary to it, and further that these needed amendments have been before the country for quite a long period of time in the form of proposals.

Mr. Wickremesinghe cannot be referring to any proposals other than those which were contained in

the Government's White Paper published in 1981 under the title **Education Proposals for Reform**. These have been the only proposals made public between the enactment of the **Universities Act** in 1978 and the Amendments just enacted. Taking Mr. Wickremesinghe at his word, this article will proceed to show that the Hon. Minister's defence only confirms the basic criticism that has been made about the Amendment. On Mr. Wickremesinghe's view of the matter the provisions in the Amendment can be regarded as the measures necessary to implement the proposals of the White Paper in regard to higher education.

## White Paper Proposals and the Amendment

The White Paper proposed a single University to start with, and admission to that University through a collegiate education which is removed from the education given up to and including Grade II in the Secondary schools. On these proposals the bulk of the students are, at the end of Grade II, put into a stream the highest point of which are the institutions named there as Professional Colleges. From these proposals it is clear that it is these Professional Colleges and their ancillary institutions that are expected to attend to the larger bulk of post-Secondary school education.

These proposals give new meaning to the provisions of the **Universities (Amendment) Act**. The Amendment preserves the Recognised Institutions for which provision was made in the 1978 Act. It is through a utilisation of this provision that the private Medical College was established. As was proved by the case of this Medical College these Institutions have come to

constitute part of the University educational scheme. They are, like University Colleges — which were also provided for in the 1978 Act — part of the University which recognises them.

The Amendment adds to these Institutions and Colleges further bodies named Institutes or Centres for Higher Learning. In the interpretation section these bodies are placed on par with Universities. And Section 46 of the 1978 Act is amended so as to allow room for these bodies to be affiliated to Universities. This means that these institutions can function either as bodies enjoying an equal status with Universities or as bodies that are part of the Universities.

The Professional Colleges in the White Paper proposals are described there as bodies with a status comparable to the Universities. These it states, "may be established in either the public sector or the private sector." The institutes or Centres provided for in the Amendment are in all the circumstances the equivalents of these Professional Colleges. We have thus a situation in which these Institutes or Centres can be established both by the State and by private parties. Private parties will not of course be imparting free education through their enterprises. Nor is the State bound under these provisions to continue in these bodies a system of free education. In that under the White Paper proposals the bulk of higher education will be through these new bodies there can be a situation in which the bulk of students going into higher education are made to pay for their education. This would mean an abolition of the free education system as we have it. The new provisions introduce not only paid higher education by private bodies but also the opening for such payment in bodies established or sponsored by the State. Both positions are new to us and are a radical departure from what exists or what did exist up to the time of the establishment of the private Medical College.

Another major criticism of the Amendment is a possible lowering of University standards as a result of the new provisions. The 1978 Act had by means of a seemingly harmless proviso made provision for the conferment of degrees and other academic distinctions by bodies other than Universities. The bodies that could do so were however limited and were expected to adhere to certain stipulations imposed by the University itself or by the U.G.C. The Amendment with its provision for **Degree Awarding Institutes** has reduced the situation to absurdity. These are bodies that come into existence by the mere act of recognition by the Minister. He does this by his own order and these are supervised by authorities named by him. It is also possible that these can cease to exist once the Minister withdraws his recognition. What then, it may be asked, is the worth or quality of a degree conferred by a body with so ephemeral an existence?

The White Paper proposals were clear on the subject of the academic distinction of a degree. It states at paragraph 113 that the Professional Colleges will award only professional certificates and Diplomas. This despite the status equivalent to a University being

given to these bodies in the proposals. Why then this variance and the consequent "cheapening" of the degree? For an explanation one has to recall the opposition that was shown, by students especially, to the White Paper. Students protested that the bulk of them will be herded into so-called technical and vocational education in which not even a degree was available, and that these will have to content themselves with professional certificates and diplomas. As an answer to this protest the Amendment has not only upgraded the professional certificate and the diploma but it has also provided for a plethora of degrees through these Degree-giving bodies. If it is a degree you want you shall have it, no matter from where you get it!

## University devalued

The Amendment devalues the University itself in many senses. The 1978 Act calimed ostentatiously to reintroduce University autonomy by allowing the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor by the University Court. It also provided for a degree of participation by University teachers in decisions of internal administration. As to students it provided for Student Assemblies which were elected bodies with powers to administer their own facilities. Students were represented also in the University's Court. The Amendment has taken all these away. The Court in which teachers and students were represented and which elected the Vice-Chancellor stands abolished. The President appoints the Vice-Chancellor, and the levers of University administration have shifted from the University to the University Grants Commission which is itself a politically appointed body. These provisions subject a University to a great deal of political control and it can be assumed that such control can have a decisive effect on a University's standards and aspirations. This is at the level of the University itself. It can be greater at other levels. The Degree Awarding Institutes which exist at the lower reaches of higher education have certainly not helped in removing the dismalness of the picture.

The Amendment when viewed thus against the background provided by the White Paper proposals becomes meaningful. Its provisions explained clause by clause but not in their totality in the introduction to the Bill take new meanings. These are meanings which were closely examined when they emerged in the White Paper which was decisively rejected by those sections of the public that showed concern in them. To have permitted a fuller discussion of the Amendment before it was passed in Parliament would have meant a second rejection. But was this avoidance a wise course for a Government to have taken? His Excellency the President who is also the Minister in charge of Higher Education has stated publicly that he is willing to reconsider this piece of legislation if that becomes necessary. This is a course in which saner counsel can prevail. And for this discussion should be free and opposition should be made public without the interference of a news censorship. The first step in that discussion can perhaps be Minister Lalith Athulathmudali publicly debating the Act with any one of the students whom he has challenged.

# Workers' Struggles

## Sangha joins peasant protest in Vellassa

The alienation of land to multinationals in Vellassa for sugar cane cultivation has met with considerable resistance by the peasants especially in the Moneragala - Siyabalanduwa areas and even held up the actual clearing of the land sought to be taken over for this purpose. The issue of alienating several thousands of acres to multinational companies for sugar cane cultivation with scant regard to the needs of the peasantry and ecological effects, has already been covered fully by **Christian Worker** (see 3rd Quarter 1984). But despite the local agitation in these areas, the authorities did not perhaps bargain for actual defiance on the part of the peasant cultivators here. While the lands in the direction of Wellawaya have already been cleared and the resistance of the peasants overcome for several reasons such as economic hardship and the nature of the land-holdings there, progress in the other areas has been impeded due to peasant resistance. The agitation on this issue was further highlighted by an action in support of the peasants by the Sangha recently.

### Satyakriya

This took the form of a perhaps unique "Satyakriya" when on June 28th morning members of the Buddhist Sangha sat by the side of the road leading to the Moneragala Kachcheri where a District Development Council meeting was being held at which all the M. Ps and officials of the Moneragala District were present. The monks demanded a discussion with the authorities on the question of the land alienation to foreign companies, and since such a discussion was granted only at 2.00 p. m. that afternoon remained seated by the roadside till that time, even partaking of the dana (midday meal) where they were seated.

After this meeting of the Bhikkhus with the District Minister, the M. P. for the area and the Government Agent, at which the authorities undertook to have a meeting with the peasant Unions in July, those present to support the bhikkhus in their protest were invited to the Kachcheri premises to hear the M. P. for Moneragala speak on the representations that had just been made. The M. P. cut a sorry figure when he upbraided the peasants for not making complaints to him personally at his office (and this despite

the petitions and protests going on for months under his very nose!) The M. P. was effectively answered by a spokesman of the affected peasants. The crowd then led by the monks wended their way in procession to the Bo-Tree in the middle of the town where a religious observance was held followed by speeches by members of the Sangha who pledged their fullest support to the peasants in their just struggle.

Representatives of all the peasant Unions were present and also of other supporting organizations including several members of the Christian Workers Fellowship. There was also a large crowd of peasants from the affected areas.

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## The nurses' strike Workers' Rights Vs. Government Might!

The Strike Action and Work to Rule resorted to by the Rajiya Seva Eksath Heda Sangamaya (i.e. the Trade Union of Nurses in the State Sector) in July reveals clearly some significant and alarming features in the present Government's trade union policies.

It is of course true that the nurses in the State Sector constitute an essential service and that any strike action on their part does involve inconvenience and hardship to the sick and ailing in society, especially to those in the poorer sections of the population. However, what is most regrettable is not so much that the members of the Nursing profession went on strike but that those in power allowed a situation to arise where the members of such an essential service were compelled to resort to such action, and that too on issues which could well have been resolved by negotiation. What makes matters even worse is that this particular Nurses' trade union (whose President is a Buddhist monk, the Ven. Muruttettuwe Ananda Thero) has as its membership the overwhelming majority of the nurses in Government service who number over 6000, while a rival union sponsored and virtually controlled by the government (The Public Services National Trade Union Federation) can really claim the membership of only a very small number of nurses judging from the support given to the former union in response to its call for trade union action. The two main demands put forward by the nurses can in no way be regarded as being excessive and prohibitive as far as the financial implications involved for the government are concerned. One was for an increase in the yearly

shoe allowance from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 200/-. The other was for an increase in the rate of overtime pay from Rs. 3/- to Rs. 15/-.

The previous Government had already granted an enhanced shoe allowance of Rs. 100/- but this too was only belatedly and grudgingly implemented by the present government after union protests and pressures, causing much discontent and dissatisfaction among the nurses. What has now transpired in the course of the present agitation and direct action by the nurses is that the government authorities have conducted negotiations with the government controlled union and then announced an increase of at first Rs. 50/- and later of Rs. 100/- in the shoe allowance, while as far as salary increases are concerned, new entrants are to get a monthly increase of Rs. 90/- while the old entrants are to get only a monthly increase of Rs. 10/-. It is also said that overtime rates too are to be increased. Thus the might of the government prevails through the agency for "trade unions", which are nothing but the appendages of the governing party.

What is clearly revealed by these facts is the manner which the government is seeking increasingly to pursue a Trade Union policy by which it sets up unions sponsored and controlled by it, and which in

effect become the only Unions recognised by it in their respective spheres. This trend is ominous for government is seeking to use the entire trade union movement to strengthen its political clout. It would appear that this trend is in line with the policies that some strongly right-wing and especially dictatorially oriented governments are pursuing in other parts of the world. In this connection we would like to draw the attention of our readers to what is taking place today in South Korea. (See item on South Korea reproduced elsewhere in this issue).

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## Reinstate 1980 Strikers!

### Call to Govt. on 5th Anniversary of Strike

July 17th marked the fifth anniversary of the 1980 General Strike in the public sector, and was commemorated by Trade Union meetings held in Colombo. Trade unions and workers' organizations addressed messages to the Government urging that those strikers who still remain locked out following the defeat of the strike, be reinstated. The Christian Workers Fellowship too despatched telegrams in this connection to the President and Prime Minister.

## World Affairs

# Peace in the Punjab

### Rajiv - Longowal accord: — a generous act

The pathology of Sinhala chauvinism stands full revealed by its reaction to the Memorandum of Settlement of the three-year old conflict in the Punjab that was signed on 24th July by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Akali Dal President Harchand Singh Longowal. None of the Sinhala or English newspapers have published the text of the Memorandum or even a summary of it. As a result few people in the country have any real idea of its nature, though we are told the Memorandum has been published by most Tamil newspapers. This ignorance, perhaps, accounts for the buffoonery apparent in a pompous news paper attempt to debunk the Rajiv-Longowal accord by Anura Bandaranaike, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament. In most high Sinhala-chauvinist circles, incl-

uding the highest in our land, the thought of the Punjab problem being solved has spread gloom and self-pity, rather than relief at getting over a nasty situation!

Looked at from the narrow angle of how much was demanded by the Akali Dal and how much conceded by the Rajiv Gandhi Government, there can be little doubt but that the 11 clauses of the Memorandum constitute a signal triumph for the Akali Sikhs. The substance of their principal demands - control of gurdwaras (temples) outside the Punjab by the SGPC which runs them in the Punjab; transfer of Chandigarh to the Punjab; redistribution of Hindi and Punjabi speaking territories; redistribution of waters from the Ravi and Beas river-system; greater autonomy

for the Sikhs—has been conceded. But what is more significant is that the **Rajiv Gandhi Government has not been afraid to be generous where only generosity could have made the agreement a genuine attempt to overcome misunderstandings and heal severe wounds:** ex gratia payments to the families of all innocent people killed since August 1982; compensation for damaged property; rehabilitation of discharged army personnel and merit as the basis for army recruitment; trial by Special Courts only for offences of waging war against the state and hijacking; promotion of Punjabi language etc.

The importance of the Memorandum of Settlement is the testimony it also bears to the absence of paranoid attitudes in Indian nationalism and to its greater maturity. The Akalis have always constituted a brand of politics that is linked with religion. The Akali Dal or "Immortal Force" began as a volunteer corps

## PHILIPPINES

# US steps up political intervention

of the elected committee of Sikhs (SGPC) set up by a movement to take over the management of Sikh temples from the individual priests who, thanks to British backing, utilised the vast revenues of these temples for their personal well-being. Created in 1920, shortly after the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh (which is itself but a stone's throw from the Golden Temple in Amritsar), the Akali Dal had to experience great hardship and sacrifice over many years before the British accorded official recognition to the SGPC through the Sikh Gurdwara Act of 1925. In complete control of the gurdwaras and their revenues and personnel, the SGPC became after 1925 the dominant institution in Sikh politics. From being an appendage of the SGPC, the Akali Dal soon became the dominant organized force within it. Among Sikhs the Akalis were the equivalent of the Church Militant in Christendom.

The extension of the SGPC's authority to gurdwaras outside the Punjab, without doubt, extends the authority and jurisdiction (since this is to be done by legislation) of the SGPC to all Sikhs throughout India. Its immediate impact must, therefore, be to strengthen religio-communal attitudes and identities among Sikhs generally. But it is easy to exaggerate this. It is just not true that all Sikhs subordinate everything else to their basic communal belonging. A vast middle-class intelligentsia has developed in their midst imbued with bourgeois values and professional outlooks. There were many Sikhs among those who planned and executed the military assault on the Golden Temple. After this operation many Sikhs were decorated for valour of the highest order. Bhindranwale's brother, who belongs to the Army, was the man who identified the slain fanatic's body. Further there has been at least one Sikh on every Court Martial after the Golden Temple operation. Bhindranwale terrorism had its principal roots in the vast numbers of unemployed youths among a Sikh peasantry contriving to subsist on shrinking and fragmented mini-plots of scarce land. If the spreading cancer of communalism can be contained, the ground would at least be cleared for urgently needed consideration of such economic problems.

"The US wants a strong, stable, democratically oriented, pro-US Philippines."

"The US does not want to remove Marcos from power to destabilize the GOP (Government of the Philippines)".

"Our (US) support is one of Marcos' largest remaining strengths."

"We need to be able to work with him (Marcos) and try to influence him.....to set the stage for peaceful and eventual transition to a successor government whenever that takes place."

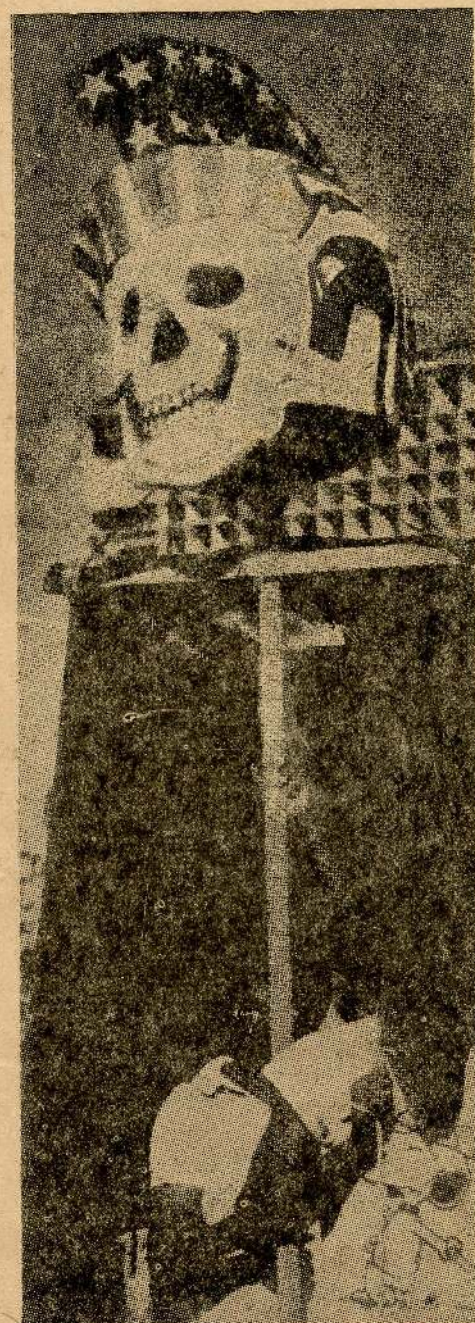
"1984 to 1987, that is, from the 1984 parliamentary election to the 1987 presidential election may be a major transition period."

The above quotes come from a secret document which leaked out from Washington last March. Dubbed as probably the most explosive document in US-Philippine relations in the last decade, the secret government report extensively outlines US steps in escalating political and economic intervention in the country.

"The USSD: US Policy Towards the Philippines" is an outcome of an 18-month study by an inter-agency task force of the US government established in the aftermath of the assassination of Benigno Aquino in August, 1983.

The inter-agency task force included members from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Pentagon, State Department, Treasury, Congressional Research Service, and private consultative firms.

In a related development, CIA Director William Casey had just concluded a three-day visit to the



Death's - head with US colours on helmet : a protest symbol seen in one of the Manila rallies this year protesting US imperialist domination in the country.

Philippines reportedly to convince Marcos of US interest for an early test at the polls. Presidential and Vice-Presidential elections are scheduled in 1987 but many believe that polls may be called sooner.

In the past several months US moves in the country have become more open and brazen. Strong public and private statements were issued by the US through high ranking officials. A full scale policy speech was delivered by Assistant Secretary of State, Paul Wolfowitz. Following these were letters from President Reagan stating US concerns and policies, delivered to Marcos in Manila last January 16 this year.

The US has given Marcos \$105 M military aid package for 1985 and accelerated the disbursement of \$425 m of the \$900 m "rent" for the bases which will all go to Marcos' armed forces. The US also continues to send streams of military advisers to the Philippines; train Filipino officers in the US; and hold joint military exercises annually.

The measures and methods used by the US and their purposes are spelled out more clearly in the NSSD document.

Essentially, US strategic goal is to preserve the semicolonial and semi-feudal system in the Philippines and to maintain its political, military and economic interests in the country.

Tactically, the thrust is to effect a smooth transition from the current dictatorial regime to an elite democracy. A corollary aim the US hopes to achieve is to render ineffective politically the revolutionary movement and achieve in a swift way, decisive military victory over it.

### Strategic Objectives

In presenting the US dilemma with the Philippines crisis, the NSSD paper of the US inter-agency task force stated that "the US had extremely important interests in the Philippines."

If it loses the Philippines, the US suffers the humiliation of a big power losing a long-time neo-colony and will find its hegemony in the Southeast Asian region greatly weakened. The US also loses its two big military bases, Clark and Subic, which together have proved effective in the past decade as a springboard for US military aggression. These, apart from super - profits of American big businesses obtained through export of capital and unequal trade. The US policy paper (NSSD) fully spelled out these interests:

-Politically, because the US nurtured the independence and democratic institutions of our former colony. the Philippines must be a stable, democratically oriented ally. A radicalized Philippines would destabilize the whole region.

-Strategically, continued unhindered access to our bases at Subic and Clark is of prime importance because of the expanded Soviet and Vietnamese threat in the region. Fall-back position would be much more expensive and less satisfactory.

-A strong ASEAN that includes a healthy Philippines allied to the US is a buffer to communist presence in Southeast Asia and a model of what economic freedom and democratic progress can accomplish.

-Economically, we benefit from a strong investment and trade position."

The paper points out, "Our assets could be lost if we come to be seen as favouring a continuation of the Marcos regime to the exclusion of other democratic alternatives." US approach would be to push for "a more open political system."

Elite democracy, the power-sharing arrangement among the local elite, in particular between the Marcos faction on one hand and the pro-US reformist opposition on the other hand, entails, in the US plan, continuing support to the Marcos regime while easing him into retirement.

It states "that while President Marcos at this stage is part of the problem, he is also necessarily part of the solution. We need to be able to work with him and to try to influence him through a well-orchestrated policy of incentives and disincentives to set the stage for peaceful and eventful transition to a successor government whenever that takes place. Marcos for his part will try to use us to remain in power indefinitely."

As for the reformist opposition, the paper underscores: "We have sought to support those Filipinos who have been on the cutting-edge of moderate reforms or change."

US will ensure compliance by Marcos through what the policy paper calls "no-sale" option and "nonfeasance" option. This means withholding aid to Marcos if he does not agree or if he agrees but fails to comply with US policies. The premise of these options is "that (US) support is one of Marcos' largest remaining strengths."

### Snap Elections

There was no mention of a timetable for the transition in the policy paper but it linked the process to the presidential elections.

The recent visit of CIA director Casey indicates that Washington may be accelerating its timetable for changing the chief executive of its client government. The intelligence chief's reported suggestion of snap elections may mean putting Marcos' term on the line before 1987 or designating a Vice-President earlier than scheduled and replacing Marcos later.

### Last Card

The US plan does not confine itself to political and economic measures, for clearly it is not confident that these measures alone would suffice or even work out. As the NSSD paper states: "An overriding consideration should be to avoid getting ourselves caught between the slow erosion of Marcos' authoritarian control and the still fragile revitalization, being made hostage to Marcos'

# 25th Anniversary May Day Mass

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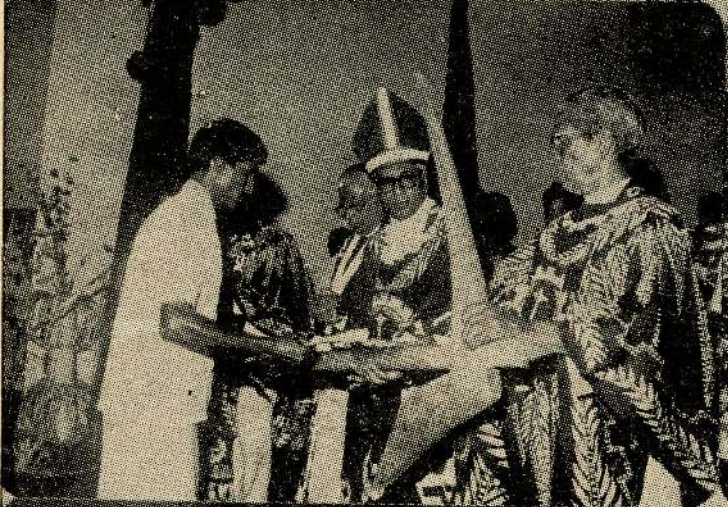
On April 30th evening the 25th Anniversary of the CWF May Day Mass was celebrated at the YMCA Gym preceded by a Procession from St Peter's Church, Fort. Pictures here show the Procession in progress with drummers, dancers and workers carrying the Red Flag and implements of work. Clergy drawn from all the major Churches headed by Bishop Andrew Kumarage of Kurunagala and Methodist President Revd. Somasiri Perera lead the people in singing the Workers' Litany.

25 Anniversary  
May Day Mass

25th Anniversary  
May Day Mass







*The Workers' Mass starts with the blowing of the conch shell and the sounding of festive drums, followed by the singing of the Magnificat. These pictures show the Mass and participants at different stages: the start of the service, the singing of the Gospel, the sermon in playlet form, the colourful offertory, the Breaking of the Bread and Communion of the people.*

*This Workers' Mass has been drawn up and arranged by lay folk in a Sri Lankan cultural context to be meaningful to the working people especially.*

## Other important C. W. F. events

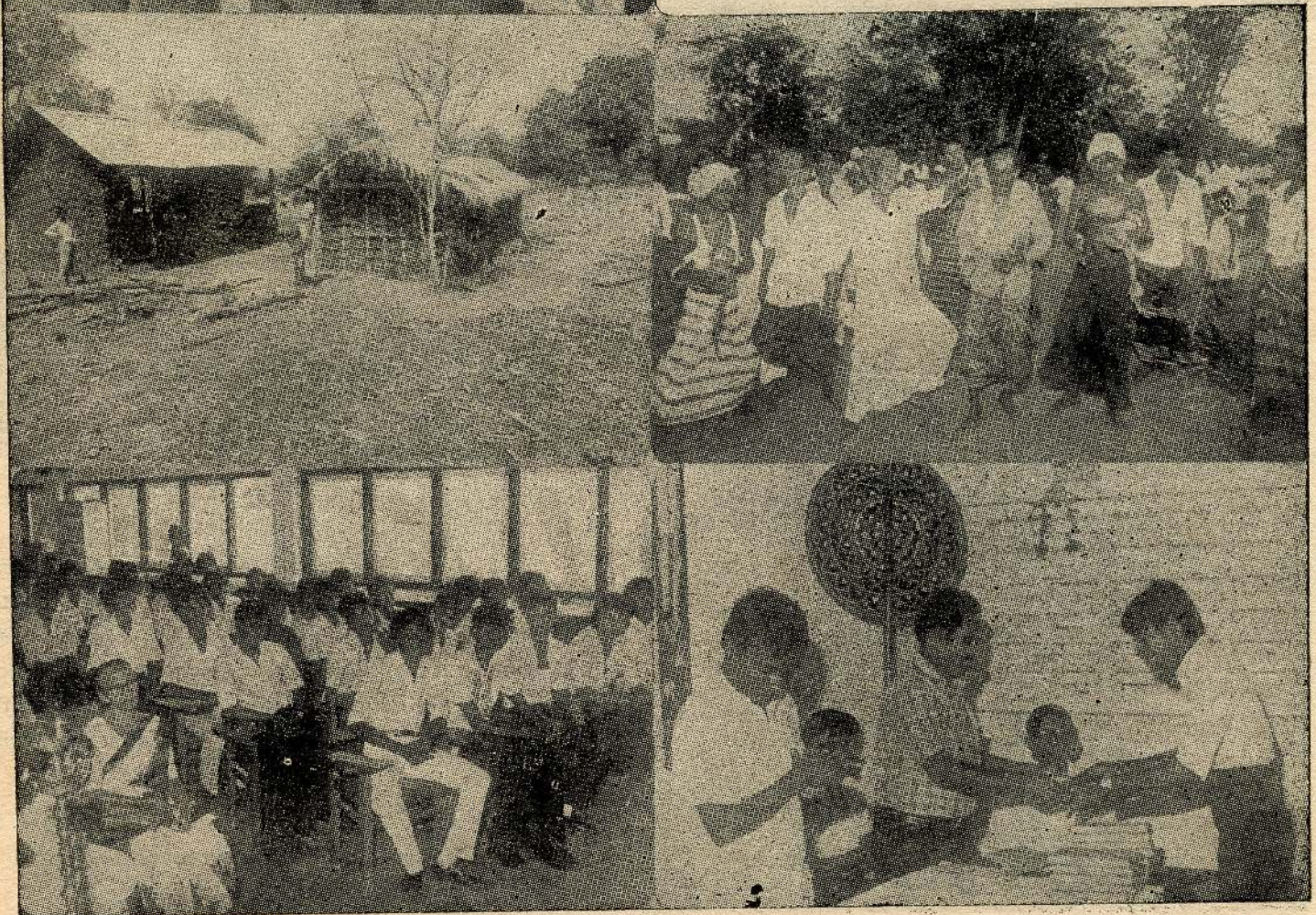


**Left :** HATTON - Scene from the Workers' Mass celebrated on May 4th.

**Below :** ANURADHAPURA - In the village of Vannipulgollawa, a house newly constructed after cyclone destruction seen alongside an old hut still standing, and villagers dancing during their celebration on May 10th.

**Bottom :** RATMALANA - Workers' School 'graduation' ceremony scenes.

For accounts - see **Fellowship in Action** inside.



political fortunes...or tagged with the success or failure of individuals in the moderate leadership. A strong case can thus be made for security assistance..."

US fears the New People's Army (NPA) threat and takeover which the paper defines as "a distinct possibility in the mid-to-long term and possibly sooner". It goes further to say that "Marcos is not uninformed about the

NPA threat or the deficiencies of the AFP to deal with them. However, he is probably unwilling to admit (these)...because to do so would be an indictment of his nearly twenty years of rule".

Thus a vital part of the plan called for "dramatic measures" for the US to directly supervise the upgrading of the Philippine army for counter-insurgency. Included in these measure

are: "(the) restoration of professional, apolitical leadership of the Armed Forces in order to deal with the NPA threat", "improved training" and "enhanced military assistance". The plan also stipulated converting military credits to outright military grants.

Courtesy: **Liberation** (Official publication of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines) May - June 1985.

## Who promotes global terrorism?

We reproduce here without comment two news items taken from the front page of the state-owned newspaper **Daily News** of July 11, which will help you to correctly decide this question!

### Reagan cites Sri Lanka as victim of global terrorism

In a major policy statement on global terrorism on Tuesday, President Reagan singled out Sri Lanka as one of the victims.

Training his heavily-loaded guns on North Korea, Reagan said that what is not readily known or understood is North Korea's wider links to the international terrorist network.

To cite one example, the US President said North Korea's efforts to spread separatism and terrorism in the free and prosperous nation of Sri Lanka are a deep and continuing source of tension in South Asia.

In what was considered one of his major addresses on terrorism, he told the American Bar Association that terrorism is part of a pattern—the work of a confederation of terrorist states.

### 'Close Schools for terrorist', world pilots urge US

The International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Association (IFALPA) has demanded the immediate closure of 'mercenary schools' in the United States, where training in terrorism and sabotage techniques is being given.

In letters to the US Vice-President, George Bush, Indian Premier Rajiv Gandhi and Captain D. R. Rose, Managing Director of India's international air carrier Air India, the President of IFALPA, Captain R. H. J. Smith, expressed shock and concern over the crash of the Air India jumbo on June 23 last, off the Irish coast.

While offering full co-operation in the investigations of the crash

IFALPA deplored the existence of a 'mercenary' school, especially the Reconnaissance Commando Mercenary School in Alabama, where Amarjeet and Lal Singh, sought by authorities in the U.S., Canada, India and elsewhere in connection with sabotage attempts on civil aircraft, were allegedly trained.

In his letter to Bush, the IFALPA chief said that regardless of whether or not the particular individuals concerned were in any way responsible for these events, the existence of such private training facilities within the U.S. made a mockery of their attempts to bring the menace of terrorism under control.



Cartoon: From **Daiiy Naws** of 4th July 1985

In his letter, Captain Smith said "whilst we deplore the willingness of any government to permit such training to be carried out for ideological reasons, it is quite unacceptable that any civilised country should allow it to be done for private financial gain."

The communication was made to the U.S. Vice-President who is in charge of a special group set up in that country to tackle terrorism.

IFAPLA, in a cable to the U.S. Secretary of State, George Shultz, made a similar demand for the closure of private mercenary schools imparting training in terrorism and sabotage.

# Right - Wing involvement In Drug Trade - John Ross

Washington (PNS) - Recent attempts by U. S. officials to blame "international communism" for the U. S. drug problem have been shown to rest on flimsy evidence. Far stronger evidence points to widespread involvement of right-wing interests in the drug trade.

The campaign to link 'communism' with the flow of drugs into the United States has been spearheaded by U. S. Sen. Paula Hawkins, chairperson of the Senate Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. "The party-goer in Georgetown doing a line of coke, the Wall Street broker copping a snort in the men's room on lunch break, and the junior high school child at recess must realize they are tools in a geopolitical movement designed to perpetuate totalitarianism and spread Marxist insurgency throughout Latin America", declared Sen Hawkins in April. Hawkins and her conservative allies have singled out Cuba and Nicaragua as chief culprits in the conspiracy.

However, despite a network of 300 international specialists working for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in 41 countries, the efforts of the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics Matters, and intelligence gathering by the Defence Department and the CIA, hard proof of drug trafficking by left guerrilla groups or governments has not been presented.

On the other side of the ledger, the DEA acknowledges that anti-Castro Cubans have long been associated with cocaine distribution in the United States. Furthermore, the 1980 "Mariel boatlift" brought a second wave of professional criminals. Many quickly connected with the existing drug network, according to studies by police forces in the states of Nevada and Florida.

The Sandinista government is fiercely opposed to drug use, not least because it reflects the corruption of the previous regime run by former

dictator Anastasio Somoza. According to a 1972 CIA report, the Somoza government was the "transfer point for heroin shipped to the United States."

In reality recent international trafficking seems most heavily concentrated on the right-wing end of the political spectrum. In several Latin American countries there is ample evidence linking right-wing interests and governments to the cocaine trade.

Shortly before the Salvadoran elections in March, U. S. customs agents stopped Francisco Guirola, attorney for right-wing candidate Roberto D'Aubuisson. Guirola, in the company of three men known to the DEA as drug pilots, was apprehended at a Texas airport with 650 pounds of small-denomination U.S. bills totalling \$6 million the largest amount of cash ever seized on its way out of the United States. Despite suspicions that it was cocaine money, Guirola was allowed to plead no contest to a charge of failure to declare the money - a crime that will net him a maximum five year's probation.

Paraguay's right-wing leader, Gen Alfredo Stroessner has been reluctant to destroy 43,000 gallons of chemicals used to refine cocaine which were seized by his country's customs officials at the DEA's behest.

During the government of Gen. Luis Garcia Meza in Bolivia (1980-81) drug trafficking was so widespread among government officials that U. S. drug enforcement agents decided to leave the country and wait for a change of government before launching further efforts there. The interior minister, Col. Luis Arce Gomez, was especially active in the cocaine trade and reportedly set up paramilitary squads to protect traffickers.

In Colombia, the world's major cocaine supplier, the drug mafia is widely known for its ties with right wing groups. In 1981, the drug mafia helped establish a death squad known

as Death to Kidnappers (MAS) which has strong links to the armed forces and has been responsible for many extrajudicial killings and disappearances.

Right-wing extremists in Honduras have also been linked to the drug trade. After confiscating 760 pounds of cocaine discovered in an aircraft that landed on a tiny airstrip in Florida last November, the FBI discovered that those detained in connection with the shipment were involved in a plot to assassinate elected President Roberto Suazo.

Ironically, the most deadly current source of narcotics entering the United States seems to involve one of Washington's most-favoured "freedom fighters," the Afghani Mujahadeen, who have received at least \$700 million in U. S. funds since 1979.

According to testimony by Cusack of the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and David Melocik, a DEA congressional liaison, the Mujahadeen and their supporters in refugee communities along the border continue to traffic in vast quantities of opium and morphine base which is converted into heroin in Pakistan for shipment to the northeastern United States.

The DEA estimates that these traffickers move between 150 and 335 tons of raw opium in any given year. It calculates that two tons of the refined heroin are smuggled into the United States annually, nearly half the supply for the nation's half million addicts. According to official estimates, this link accounts for 80 percent of the heroin on the streets of New York.

Despite U. S. congressional charges that Moscow is directing drug traffic, the U. N. International Narcotics Control Board reports that during the last five years the Soviets and their surrogates in Kabul have destroyed many tons of opium inside Afghanistan.

Latinamerica Press 13 June, 1985  
(Excerpts)

## XIIth World Festival of Youth Students

The Twelfth World Festival of youth and students being held in July-August this year, will draw representatives of different youth movements in Sri Lanka including those of both Government and opposition political parties. The delegation from Sri Lanka on which the Christian Workers Fellowship too is represented has already left the country for this Festival.

We set out below a message of greeting issued by representatives of youth and students meeting at Matara in June and the message sent to the World Festival by the Christian Workers Fellowship.

### Message of the Youth Students Representatives

We the representatives of the youth and students of Sri Lanka, assembled here in the Ruhunu Capital of Sri Lanka, in a festival of youth and student of Sri Lanka, on this day of the 23rd of June 1985, send greetings to all the youth and students of this beautiful planet who are

engaged in the preparatory work for the XIIth World Festival of Youth and Students, to be held in Moscow, this summer, for the successful completion of their preparatory work and also for their determination to take forward the banner of "FOR ANTI-IMPERIALIST SOLIDARITY, PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP." We the representatives of the youth and students, take this message of peace with a determination to fight for the best cause of humanity, disarmament, peace and progress,

We are sending this message of peace with overtones of solidarity and friendship to all the youth and students of the world who are involved in an anti-imperialist struggle for national and social emancipation, and for removing the threat of a thermo-nuclear catastrophe from the face of this earth.

We assure the youth and students of USSR, who are at present involved in the great task of preparing to host the XIIth World Festival of Youth and Students, that our participation in the Moscow Festival will also contribute positively for the success of the common hope of all the peoples for total disarmament, world peace and ensuring in this beautiful planet, a bright future to the human race.

## BEFORE WE GROW OLD

Before I grow old  
Will the sea be clean  
The air be pure  
Will the hills be glad  
The trees stand proud

Before I grow old  
Will wild creatures live  
Unfearing of people  
No longer tormented  
For profit or sport

Before I grow old  
Will folk have returned  
To the ways of Earth  
To care for our Mother  
With wisdom and love

Before I grow old  
Shall I have birthed  
Free loving children  
To run through the trees  
And play in clear streams?

Before I grow old  
This must be my task  
To help clear the Earth  
Of the poison and filth  
We have strewn in our greed

Before we grow old  
Let us share in the task  
Let us all clear ourselves  
Of our poison and greed  
Let us work for a New Age together

Nicols Miles  
Courtesy:

Transnational Perspectives  
(Switzerland) No. 1, 1985

## C W F MESSAGE

As an organization committed to the cause of anti-imperialist struggle, peace and friendship for the past twenty seven years we send warm fraternal greetings to all participants at this Festival. We also wish to thank the local Organizing Committee for making it possible for a member of our Working Committee to attend the Festival in Moscow, U.S.S.R.

We rejoice in the fact that we have just celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the defeat of Hitler's fascism in Germany. Yet we remain alert and alive to the dangers of a fascist menace knocking at our own door in Sri Lanka. The emergence of this danger is deeply linked to the crisis of dependent capitalism in our land, to the demands placed upon us by monopoly capital from the West and Japan as well as to the militaristic option being pursued by our local elites in collusion with the U.S.A. The effort to create a Zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean has been sabotaged so far by Western vested interests and Diego Garcia poses a threat at our

doorstep. Peace and friendship in our Island have been deeply ruptured through the intensification of racism and the recurrent bouts of racial violence. Trust and understanding between the Sinhala and Tamil communities has broken down to an alarming extent. The polarised situation cries out for a just political solution which alone can create the conditions for peace with justice.

These challenges have thrown all the democratic and peace loving forces together in a common effort to overcome imperialism and build an indigenous socialist society in the near future.

The struggle will be long and hard but we take comfort from the international support and solidarity which this Festival assures us of. We look forward to a real learning process through the experiences shared at the Festival.

With the assurance of our best wishes and prayers for the success of the 12th World Youth and Students' Festival.

## Bhopal Gas Leak: Deadly after-effects

The ghastly mass-murder of thousands of people in Bhopal in India by noxious fumes emanating from the pesticide plant of the US based multinational Union Carbide on 3rd December 1984 made headline news throughout the world. The deadly after-effects of gas-poisoning however continue. The BUILD Documentation Centre (Bombay) **News for Action** of June 1st gives the following information:

● Of the 3,000 babies born in Bhopal after the gas tragedy 200 were still-born and another 400 died later. As many as 60 per cent of the pregnant woman went for abortions, many on the recommendations of doctors. Even now thousands of women in the gas-affected areas are pregnant. A survey report on pregnancy in Bhopal after the tragedy, prepared by doctors at the instance of the health ministry has been submitted to government which has not yet found a place in the official findings. However, an Indore daily **Nai Duniya** has published the findings of the report in an exclusive story. The report said most of the children born after the tragedy were still hanging between life and death and would be physically or mentally handicapped in case they survived. Many children had lost their eyesight. Not one among all the surviving children was a normal healthy baby.

● Particles of the dead methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas which leaked from the Union Carbide Factory in Bhopal are still found in the blood of the people in the nearby

areas, a team of doctors from Bombay reported. The doctors from KEM Hospital Bombay who surveyed the localities affected by MIC gas as well as areas which are 8 km away from the factory found increased levels of MIC in water sources in Bhopal. After the leakage an unusually high number of women have aborted and many were complaining of unexplained white discharge. The doctors said the government should insist on institutional deliveries to have a detailed study of the effects of MIC in pregnant women. The team which examined 741 patients, found that injury had persisted in almost all the cases in spite of treatment received by MIC victims.

● 28 out of every 100 survivors above the age of 14 in the vicinity of the Bhopal Union Carbide factory have damaged lungs following exposure to the MIC gas leakage according to a new medical survey. The survey was carried out by Dr. Ramesh Duravasula, a lung expert at the Baroda Medical College, as part of a detailed study sponsored by Medical Friends Circle, a voluntary organisation

## Vietnam's barren mothers

What is the value of a child in a family, especially in a Vietnamese family.?

"It is very important to us in Vietnam," a Vietnamese doctor Nguyen Thi Ngoc Phuong told several dozen international aid workers at friends house in Toronto on May 11, 1983.

But hundreds of young women in Vietnam today will never have children. They developed cancer after living through the spraying of the countryside with defoliants by the US Air Force in the 1960s. And thousands more will have abnormal pregnancies.

"The US Air Force sprayed 185 million gallons of toxic chemicals on my country... including Agent Orange (which contains dioxin), which can cause reproductive abnormalities," Dr. Phuong explained.

"In my hospital, we have 30 beds for patients with abnormal pregnan-

cies, and 25 to 30 per cent of these will have cancer. Forty patients share these 30 beds.

Her hospital, Tu Du Obstetric Hospital, is in Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam.

"Among them are many patients who are 22 to 26 years old."

"When I'm taking care of them, I can't keep back my tears."

One of the reproductive abnormalities which has increased greatly after the spraying in Vietnam is hydatteriform mole, a growth in the uterus resembling a pregnancy. If it is not completely removed by surgery, cancer is likely to develop.

"We have not enough anti-cancer drugs for these young women, so we are forced to take their uterus out, to do a hysterectomy."

Credit : **Quaker Concern.**  
(**Ecoforum** Nos 4 & 5 1983)

## Death or Development ?

Here  
Intimations of death  
Hang  
Heavy in the air  
Everywhere  
there is the stench  
of decay and despair

The river  
strangled by  
exigencies  
of industrialization  
is dying....  
and nobody cares.

The fish  
in the river  
poisoned by  
progress's vomit  
are dying....  
and nobody cares

The birds  
that feed on the fish  
in the river  
poisoned by  
progress's excrement  
are dying....  
and nobody cares.

And so  
a once-proud village  
sustained  
for centuries  
by the richness  
of this river  
dies....  
and nobody cares

— **Cecil Rajendra**  
(Malaysia)

# Human Rights

## Presidential Commission had no files before it

*The death of Mr. Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike a prominent minister of the last Government on June 26, raises afresh in our minds the vindictive act of the government in depriving him and others, including former Premier Sirima Bandaranaike of their civic rights. We reproduce below from Forum of July, 1st. an excerpt from the proceedings of the Parliamentary Select Committee appointed to inquire into representations made by Mr. K. C. E. de Alwis, former Judge of the Court of Appeal and a member of the Special Presidential Commission, to the President regarding the conduct of the proceedings relating to the application No. S. C. Reference 1 of 1982.*

*These excerpts have reference to the Special Presidential Commission that recommended the deprivation of the civic rights of the former Prime Minister, and others.*

*The Honourable S. Sharvananda, was a member of the Special Presidential Commission, and he was a witness before the Select Committee referred to above; and Mr. Sivasithamparam, MP, was a member of the Select Committee.*

### The Excerpt:

**Mr Sivasithamparam:** Mr Sharvananda, there are just one or two questions I wish to ask.

**Hon. Sharvananda:** Oh Yes.

**Mr Sivasithamparam:** Now, when the initial allegations were

made or when State Counsel or somebody appearing on behalf of the State opened the case against a number of people, did you open files for each case? Was a file opened for each case? Now supposing, say, Mrs Bandaranaike's name came up — I think Mr de Zoysa made a series of allegations against a series of people—was a file opened in respect of her case?

**Hon. Sharvananda:** I cannot remember that.

**Mr Sivasithamparam:** Actually, Mr Sharvananda, you were on this Commission. Now, what was the brief that was placed before you when you started sitting on this?

**Hon. Sharvananda:** It was the evidence that was there.

**Mr Sivasithamparam:** What did you have in front of you? Did you have a brief or did you have any evidence?

**Hon. Sharvananda:** On the evidence of Mr. A. C. de Zoysa, what you call an adversarial question arose, whether it was inquisitorial or adversarial.

**Mr Sivasithamparam:** Never mind! What exalty did you do? That is what we want to know. Did you have a file in respect of each?

**Hon. Sharvananda:** We entrusted the preparation of a case,

the collecting of evidence and this and the other, because, as I told you, we did not want to have both the role of prosecutor and judge.

**Mr Sivasithamparam:** It is a very simple question I asked you. I do not want to waste time. What did the office do in respect of each person?

**Hon. Sharvananda:** This is like asking, "Have you stopped beating your wife? Answer yes or no". I cannot do that. I have got to explain myself.

**Mr Sivasithamparam:** Surely you and I have been long enough at the bar to answer questions? Well, it is a simple matter. What did the office do in respect of each person against whom allegations were made?

**Hon. Sharvananda:** You asked me first what was the procedure adopted. Now, we entrusted that matter —

**Mr Sivasithamparam:** I did not ask you about the procedure, please. What were the papers that you had before you when any matter came up? Now we will take Mr Fowzie's case. What were the papers that you had in front of you when the matter came up?

**Hon. Sharvananda:** I do not think I had any papers with me.

**Mr Sivasithamparam:** No papers at all?

**Hon. Sharvananda:** I do not think there were.

## Police massacre in the U. S. A.

Philadelphia, May 13 was the signature of the Reagan regime. Eleven black people were burned alive, including four children, when an army of cops cordoned off a house on Osage Avenue in West Philly and bombed it from the air, creating a holocaust that destroyed several blocks. It was mass murder against the Black MOVE group—an atrocity

carried out with none of the trappings of bourgeois legality. It was calculated racist state terror orchestrated at the highest levels of the U. S. government, and implemented by the city's black Democratic mayor Wilson Goode, who grotesquely continues to call his bomb an "entry device"! As Reagan's PATCO union-busting was intended to be a message

of intimidation to all unionists, so the Philly holocaust was a warning to all black people, and not just black people: don't get out of line, you could be next!

The MOVE commune, which has hurt nobody and wanted mainly just to be left alone, was the convenient target for a government "counter-insurgency" style massacre.

### Making the Victims into the Criminals

MOVE is, first of all, a black group, and one which has been the

target of a vicious barrage of racist propaganda painting them simultaneously as a "radical political" organization and as wild-eyed violent crazies, a sort of all-black analogue of the "Symbionese Liberation Army". In fact the eclectic MOVE group reflects a long American tradition of attempted non-cooperation with the state on moral/religious/political grounds, a tradition expressed in all kinds of examples, from the occasional Quaker pacifist who refuses to fight in a war to the right-wing nutcase tax resister. MOVE members see themselves as a family, a supportive social unit which seeks to withdraw in despair from the modern evils around them. The Soviet Union's **Pravda** nicely captured the intersection in MOVE of the utopian—commune tradition and the race question:

*"That religious sect was sharply critical of the 'boons' of industrial capitalism and preached man's return to nature. The outcasts of American soaicty, most of them blacks, as often is the case in the United States, were looking for an escape from their real problems in an unreal world."*

— quoted in **Philadelphia Inquirer**, 21 May.

So MOVE—which doesn't believe in killing animals, including roaches and rodents, or washing with soap—was "unpopular with the neighbours". But can anyone really believe that it was the neighbours' complaints that were the cause when 600 Philly cops mounted a massive murderous assault on MOVE in 1978? When MOVE defended their home and a cop got killed, the vindictive state slammed nine MOVE members in jail; they are still there. MOVE wasn't cowed; they continued agitating that their jailed comrades should be freed, including broadcasting from loudspeakers at night.

In the present climate of the Reagan gang's drive toward "strong-state" Bonapartist terrorism, insults to authority tend to be met with mind-boggling overkill. So for the "crime" of sanitary violations and unpaid utility bills, a bomb is dropped on MOVE: when they try to surrender, women and children are driven back into the inferno by a hail of bullets. The cops fire 10,000 rounds; deliberately, the raging flames are not fought until eleven people are incinerated, their corpses burned beyond recognition, and 61 houses are destroyed.

As we said, MOVE, is a black group and though they aren't centrally political the fact that they are black makes them a target of highly political state war which is both an ideological crusade and a campaign of physical extermination. **The state's war needs to make the government's most annoying perceived opponents into non-people to whom anything can be done. Then something horrifying is done to them as an unmistakable message of intimidation to all the oppressed. And racism is integral to the message.** Take the 1979 Greensboro, North Carolina massacre when five leftist demonstrators at a rally against the Klan were assassinated in broad daylight in an operation involving the K. K. K., the Nazis, the cops and feds. Black people all over the country understood the intended message that black lives are cheap, and foremost among those at risk are any "uppity" blacks who resist racist oppression (as well as "reds", the "extremists" who defend black rights). They are intended to understand the same message from the Philly holocaust.

— **Workers Vanguard** (U. S. A.)  
14 June 1985 (Excerpts).

## SOUTH KOREA

# A model dictatorship

A few years ago the American business magazine **Forbes** described South Korea as "a model for other less developed countries, who prefer to sit around blaming their problems on U. S. 'imperialism', multinational company rapacity or on a lack of raw material."

As Korean exports flowed out into world markets in the 1970s, American businessmen sang the country's praises. "Work as Koreans know it is not a hardship" acclaimed Roy Rowan in American business magazine

**Fortune**, saying that South Koreans are "the worst workaholics in the world, averaging 50.7 hours per week." Another magazine '**Forbes**' described with admiration the Korean car worker "at his post on the assembly line ready to endure noise, dust and fumes that would keep an OSHA inspector busy writing reports for a month". The lack of human rights under the Park dictatorship was apparently immaterial. "As flagrant as this repression can be", said **Fortune**, "it doesn't impinge heavily on the av-

erage citizen's life, so long as he's willing to forego certain forbidden activities."

Things haven't changed much since then. In 1983, in companies employing more than ten persons each, 157,000 workers suffered industrial injuries—1,452 were killed. In the mines alone in the first six months of 1983, accidents severely injured 1,035 miners and killed 43. The number of workers killed and injured in accidents in 1984 shows an increase of over 2,000 more than the years before.

## A Vehicle for Mutual Understanding

One of the elements of South Korea which must have inspired much



enthusiasm among international business-men was the country's tame trade unions. The sole legal trade union federation in South Korea is the Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU). It was set up after the military coup d'état of May 16, 1961 to reinforce the Park regime. The FKTU was meant to "work toward national security by eliminating all pro-communist and counter-revolutionary elements and establish a system of unified industrial unionism to overcome organisational disorder and to prevent undisciplined labour disputes".

When Korea went all out in the 1970s to attract foreign multinationals, the FKTU policy stated that it "supports the effort to attract multinational corporations, and will defer the organisation of a labour union for up to six months after the firm has arrived, limiting ourselves to setting up a vehicle for mutual un-

derstanding between labour and management". Korean workers were soon to understand that the FKTU was a body that acted for the management, not the workers. The FKTU also effectively blocked attempts by workers to set up independent unions. As one commentator, Matsuo Kei has put it: "The programme of the FKTU pleads for 'an improvement in the status of the workers'. But the actual movement results in the elimination of all labour union activity".

### The Kwanju Uprising

In late October 1979, President Park was assassinated by the Head of his own Korean Central Intelligence Agency. The assassination unleashed long suppressed demands from the population for democratic freedoms. When the military led by Chun Doa Hwan, who took over as President, showed no signs of loosening the dictatorship, in one South Korean city

Kwanju there was a popular uprising. With the apparent collusion of the US military commander, crack troops and paratroopers from the demilitarised zone, between South Korea and North Korea, were drafted south to put down the revolt.

Over 2,000 people were killed or disappeared. Despite the supposed human rights policy of Jimmy Carter, the US government backed the coup, and a fresh era of military dictatorship in South Korea. Under the new regime, labour laws have been tightened further. There is little free labour activity that is able to operate openly. Independent union activity is largely confined to individual plants. In spite of the continued repression, this year has seen an upsurge of civil unrest with a growing number of student and labour protests. Courtesy:

**International Labour Reports**  
Jan. - Feb. 1985.

## MANDELA'S REPLY TO BOTHA

### 'Your Freedom and Mine Cannot be Separated. I Will Return.'

This is the full text of African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela's response to the conditional offer of freedom made in Parliament by the State President, PW Botha of South Africa.

The response was read on Mandela's behalf by his daughter, Zinzi, at a rally in Jabulani, Soweto, on February 10th, 1985.

I am a member of the African National Congress. I have always been a member of the African National Congress and I will remain a member of the African National Congress until the day I die. Oliver Tambo is much more than a brother to me. He is my greatest friend and comrade for nearly 50 years. If there is any one amongst you who cherishes it more, and I know that he would give his life to see me free. There is no difference between his views and mine.

I am surprised at the conditions that the government wants to impose on me. I am not a violent man. My colleagues and I wrote in 1952 to Malan asking for a round table conference to find a solution to the problems

of our country, but that was ignored. When Strijdom was in power, we made the same offer. Again it was ignored. When Verwoerd was in power we asked for a national convention for all the people in South Africa to decide on their future. This, too, was in vain.

It was only then when all other forms of resistance were no longer open to us that we turned to armed struggle. Let Botha show that he is different to Malan, Strijdom and Verwoerd. Let him renounce violence. Let him say that he will dismantle apartheid. Let him unban the people's organisation, the African National Congress. Let him free all who have been imprisoned, banished or exiled for their opposition to apartheid. Let him guarantee free political activity so that people may decide who will govern them.

I cherish my own freedom dearly, but care even more for your freedom. Too many have died since I went to prison. Too many have suffered for the love of freedom. I owe it to their widows, to their orphans, to their mothers and to their fathers who have grieved and wept for them. Not only I have suffered during these long, lonely, wasted years. I am not less life-loving than you are. But I cannot sell my birthright, nor am I

prepared to sell the birthright of the people to be free. I am in prison as the representative of the people and of your organisation, the African National Congress, which was banned.

What freedom am I being offered while the organisation of the people remains banned? What freedom am I being offered when I may be arrested on a pass offence? What freedom am I being offered to live my life as a family with my dear wife, who lives in banishment in Brandfort? What freedom am I being offered when I must ask for permission to live in an urban area? What freedom am I being offered when I need a stamp in my pass to seek work? What freedom am I being offered when my very South African citizenship is not respected?

Only free men can negotiate. Prisoners cannot enter into contracts. Herman Toivo Ja Toivo, when freed, never gave any undertaking, nor was he called upon to do so.

I cannot and will not give any undertaking at a time when I and you, the people, are not free.

Your freedom and mine cannot be separated. I will return.

Courtesy: **Sechaba (African National Congress of S. Africa) April 1985**

# Nicaragua and the Vatican

### The Logic behind the Law

"How many divisions does the Pope have?" asked Stalin rhetorically. His wry humour was directed against the Vatican's Swiss Guards who deck themselves with silk garments, brandish ornamental spears and parade like girl guides. But the Russian leader little knew that in the Vatican's armoury there were weapons of high calibre capable of maiming those who belong to the flock with reflex effects on those who are not of the fold.

Such indeed was **Can(n)on 285.3** which Pope John Paul II ordered to be fired at Rev. Fr. Fernando Cardenal, the Minister of Education in Nicaragua, and at his other priest colleagues who collaborate with the Sandinista Government. It not only mutilated the local church i. e. the body to which these priests belong, but, by reflex effect, it also shattered the Catholic support without which the democratically elected Nicaraguan Government cannot keep the North American aggressor at bay.

Obviously, we are speaking here of Canon 285, para 3 of the New Code of Canon Law promulgated in 1983: "Clerics are forbidden to assume public office whenever it means sharing in the exercise of civil power." The paradox that will become evident to the reader as we go along is that this law, though meant to prevent priests from using political power, actually turned out to be a **political weapon** used by the church on behalf of the right-wing political bloc in Nicaragua!



Cartoon - Courtesy: Guardian Weekly (U K) of 17: 02: 85

The previous Code of Canon Law (promulgated in 1917 and valid upto 1983) was nearer to the nuanced Catholic tradition of centuries. Canon 139 of the earlier Code stated that a priest could not hold a public office of that kind "without Papal approval" (**sine apostolico indulto**). In other words, the compatibility of the clerical state with political office in one single person was never questioned in certain very special circumstances but was referred to the discerning judgement of the Roman Pontiff.

In the new Code, this proviso has been removed by a direct intervention of the Pope himself who refuses to admit any exception because **there can be no exception**. But the **one big exception that eludes understanding is that the pope himself exercises a double jurisdic-**

**tion** partly as the spiritual Minister to the universal church and partly as the secular head of the Vatican State (a few acres left over from the vast stretches of land over which, till the last century, the Popes wielded feudal lordship). **And so the Pope—for the sake of the "common good of the Church" makes use of the secular title of "Head of State" to establish diplomatic political contacts with other secular Governments of the world.** It must be noted too that **the papal nuncios are all bishops who are accorded political diplomatic status** in the countries where they represent the Vatican

Fr. Cardenal and his colleagues also appealed to the principle of the common good (**Bonum Commune**). This appeal has roots in the teachings of the church, specially in the second

Vatican Council. In conformity with Biblical Revelation where God's action in the world is all salvific and cannot be divided into 'profane' and 'sacred,' the Council too seems to have realised that Christian duties could not be neatly compartmentalised as the secular activities of the Laity and the spiritual ministries of the Clergy. In fact it says that the secular activities are certainly but **not exclusively** the proper domain of the laity (*Gaudium et Spes*, No. 43)

In the document on Priestly Ministry, No. 3, the Council insists that, while being witnesses to a life beyond this world, the priests should not alienate themselves from terrestrial concerns. The Synod of 1971 goes even further: The Priests, as also the whole church, should in every possible way look for precise modes of action in the world whenever fundamental human rights are at stake, when integral human development needs to be promoted, and when peace and justice have to be pursued with means that are evangelically proper.

This precisely is what the four Nicaraguan priests have been saying and doing. Fr. Cardenal goes a step further: If it is a mistake to admit an exception to this church-made (i. e. man-made, not God-made) Law, specially when the interests of the Poor demand it, as is the case in Nicaragua at this juncture, then it is better to make such a "mistake". As he put it to his superiors in Rome last year,

*If I make a mistake, I ask you to permit me to err on the side of the Poor. For centuries we Christians have been erring on the side of the Rich.*

### **Erring on the Side of the Rich**

It is in fact the Rich on whose side the church erred for so long, that supplied the ammunition for "Canon 285.3". This is what makes the Vatican intervention in Nicaragua suspect, as many Catholic periodicals have courageously averred.

The Vatican, of course, is not the Pope. The Roman/Italian diplomats in the Vatican are proverbially astute. In fact when the present Pontiff was confined indoors after a Turk's attempt on his life, the Cardinals Casaroli and Silvestrini handled the Nicaraguan crisis with political acumen and intervened wisely at a dialogue held in Rome between the Bishops of Nicaragua and the four priests in question. There was no Canon 285.3 at that time. And even the venerable man who could have fired it, was himself in bed with gun shot injuries. **The present impasse in other words is largely the doing of an ill-advised Pope.**

**This becomes clearer when the "Canon" fired at the four priest-Ministers of Nicaragua is placed beside the Cardinal's hat conferred on the Nicaraguan Archbishop Obando y Bravo, the Metropolitan of Managua. An year or so ago Mgr. Obando briefed reporters and businessmen in New York soliciting their support for his projects and assuring them quite unabashedly that he was the real Opposition in Nicaragua! Does he not deserve a Cardinal's hat?**

A few years ago a Nicaraguan friend showed me a copy of *La Prensa*, the right-wing Catholic paper

financed by the U. S. backed Firms in Nicaragua (where, let it be noted, the Sandinista government follows a mixed economy and tolerates Private Enterprise), I was shocked to see Mgr. Obando's photograph with birthday greetings 'to our beloved Archbishop' almost on every page and signed by various big private companies! Pointing to the names of these Firms, my friend complained "these are the people whose cause the Archbishop champions", and with his index finger on a picture of the Archbishop he continued: "and this is the man whose cause the Vatican champions". He said a mouthful.

This unhealthy association between private business and the hierarchy's pastoral vision is fortunately less common now than before. But the disease is too deep-rooted to be eliminated entirely.

For we know that in the neighbouring Guatamala, President Jacobo Arbenz's moderate reforms so infuriated the affluent sector that the Guatamalan Archbishop Roselloy Abellano imparted his (now photographically immortalized) blessing to the CIA backed National Liberation Army which ousted Arbenz and installed the present terrorist regime with its reputation for torture of dissidents, murder of the innocent and rape of nuns. Furthermore the popularly venerated (figure of) "Christ of Esquipulas" was declared by the church to be the spiritual Captain of this Army!

**Such Ecclesiastical legitimization of unjust political structures has never been censured canonically. But in Nicaragua a canonical**

censure on the priests collaborating with a revolutionary government which has been returned to office by a democratic election, is the latest Ecclesiastical legitimization of a right-wing political opposition in Latin America. This makes the Nicaraguan story the greatest tragedy of our time.

Nicaragua's Somoza dynasty which the Sandinistas ousted in 1979 because it was a stooge of the North American Private Enterprise and a perpetrator of diabolical atrocities on the Poor, was always supported by the successive Archbishops of Managua, one of whom went to the ridiculous extent of conferring on General Garcia Somoza the title of "Prince of the Church"!!

When at last the FSLN (The Sandanista National Liberation Front) stirred the whole country to stand against the Somoza Tyranny, their leaders were assassinated in 1967 to the great satisfaction of the Auxiliary Bishop of Managua who thought that being Communists they deserved to die! Most church leaders sided with Somoza except towards the end when a decisive sector of the Capitalist class too fell out with the regime and formed what we might call the right-wing of the anti-Somoza agitation. Both during and after the revolution, Mgr. Obando and some members of the Hierarchy never swerved from their allegiance to this right-wing which, since the fall of Somoza, has turned its guns against the Sandinistas.

Surely Canon 285.3 has never been formulated with a view to curb the political affiliations of Bishops and priests who err on the side of the Rich!

## The Revolution that really matters

When the Marxists launched out a Revolutionary project for the whole of Latin America, the events of the kind described above had convinced them that their prime target, i. e. the people's principle enemy, were the oppressive regimes propped up by the Church and the Rich simultaneously. Thus in their mind, the church clearly stood on the wrong side of the projected Revolution.

This Marxist thesis changed slowly but surely as the Second Vatican Council began to bear its first fruits in Latin America. The turning point came at Medellin in 1968, one year after Pope Paul the VI issued his revolutionary social encyclical **Populorum Progressio**. There, the local churches of Latin America met as one body in the person of their Bishops and made their **option for the Poor**, an option rooted in turn in a more radical one, their **option to be Poor**.

The Medellin conference was a time bomb; so it revealed itself as **little churches of the Poor or "base communities" began to mushroom all over** and revolutionize the institutional church. **The first explosion was heard in Nicaragua where the base communities were responsible for Christianizing the revolution by revolutionizing Christianity.**

When this process began in the early seventies, Marxists feared that a radicalized church would make Marxism ineffective if not also redundant. Even "guerilla priests" (there

were only a negligible few) were viewed with suspicion by the Left. Was Christian radicalism a Trojan Horse within the Marxist camp?

Facts seem to suggest that in most revolutionary situations, the Marxists and the Christians indulge in an opportunistic alliance which is usually poisoned with the venom of mutual suspicion. This is true in the Philippines today. Or after a revolution, the Christians begin to display their ideological naivete and become retrogressive while the Marxists, accustomed as they are to view Christianity through ideological blinkers, tend to become insensitive to the religious aspirations of man. Did this not happen in Cuba?

This then is the backdrop against which the newness of the Nicaraguan revolution must be assessed. What is truly revolutionary there is not the substitution of an oppressive right-wing dictatorship with a Marxist regime. *What truly constitutes the Nicaraguan revolution is the mutual trust with which the Marxist and Christian Sandinistas collaborate in the post-revolutionary task of reconstructing the blood-stained Nicaraguan society in opposition to gigantic ideological and military counter-movements of the defeated class and its foreign allies.*

This is such an unprecedented event in the history of both Marxism and of Christianity that it is not only the Reaganists and the Romanists who refuse to believe it but even the Russians are baffled by it. It is too good to be true, they seem to think.

Whoever heard of a Marxist government offering its **key posts** to committed Christians? The Presi-

dent of the Supreme Court of Justice, the Ministers of Education, Culture and Foreign Affairs, the Ambassador to Washington and even Senor Luis Carrion, one of the nine commanders who make up the Supreme leadership of the Sandinista Front... are all convinced, devout, believing and practising Christians four of whom are priests!

Indeed which Marxist Regime would entrust to Christians those very Ministries which, from a Marxist point of view are geared to what is called "ideological production" such as the ministries of Education and Culture? This is as incredible as the hypothetical news of a Roman Catholic parish appointing Marxists as Catechists - something that has never happened and perhaps will never happen.

This is why Rome and Washington see it as a Marxist trap into which politically ambitious priests have walked without proper discernment. Hence, the application of Canon 285.3. Moscow, on the other hand, is even more apprehensive about Church Politicians being allowed to blunt the Marxist-Leninist edge of the Sandinista Revolution. But Moscow knows that Cuba will supervise the Nicaraguan venture; for Cuba, learning from her own mistakes, has begun to place hope on the new experiment.

As the Philosopher says; what is merely possible may not necessarily happen; but what has once happened is always possible. And this is what the Vatican and the Pentagon seem to fear. Nicaragua has given a precedent to the rest of Latin America.

### The Vatican Fears

By the turn of this century, the centre of gravity of Christendom will have shifted from the North to the Southern Hemisphere. Latin America will have, by then, more than half of the world's Catholic population and would be replacing Europe as the manufacturer and exporter of text books of theology and blueprints for pastoral action in the Third World. The conflict between

Rome and the Latin American churches with regard to Liberation Theology, as analysed in our previous article, is itself an indication of Latin America's impact on the universal church.

**If this is so, Nicaragua is bound to play a decisive role in World Christianity, since Latin America itself is going to be shaped by the Nicaraguan achievements unless, of course the collusion between Rome and Washington is allowed to succeed. For they know that the Theology of Liberation and the Nicaraguan experiment form the crest of a wave which is eroding into the sand on which West's imperialism and Rome's Eurocentrism rest.**

Like the Liberation Theologians, the Nicaraguan Catholics too seem to be wasting their breath explaining their new Christian experience to a deaf church leadership in the Vatican and a misguided President in the White House. We too wish to record some facts that Rome and Washington need to hear:-

The Sandinistas would not have succeeded in Nicaragua without a massive Christian participation in their project: In the battle against human rights violations; in the politicization of workers' struggles for just conditions of labour; and finally even in the Military uprising.

The two Cardinal brothers (the mystic Ernesto and the realistic Fernando) were responsible for internationalizing the just cause of Nicaragua. The political face of the Revolution consisted of the of the **Grupo de los Doce** (the group of the twelve) which included two catholic priests and six Christian laymen. That insured international legitimacy for the Sandinista Front and negotiated North American solidarity for the anti-Somoza agitation.

The Guatemalan author Mario Carpio Nicolle (to whom we owe these details) says that the mutual trust between Marxists and Christians grew through personal friendships,

though, not without initial suspicion. Both parties were compelled by a common enemy's inhumanity to meet each other on the common basis of their own humanity. Already in the sixties the Marxist Tomas Borge (present Interior Minister) and Fr. Ernesto Cardenal (now Minister of Culture) had broken all ideological barriers by allowing their warm human personalities to meet at the deepest zones of their being where love conquers fear. Such friendships multiplied to form an irresistible network of human solidarity.

However, as the new vision of society begins to be realised measure by measure, the Private Enterprise Sector together with that part of the church which leans on it, is loosing ground. **The people are distancing themselves gradually from a church leadership that relies on the Business class. It is this phenomenon that is presented in Rome as "Marxist Infiltration into Base Communities."**

The Christians were never the same once they acknowledged the Marxists' selfless dedication to the poor as a Christian virtue. The Marxists were never the same after they discovered the power of the Gospel and force of the Beatitudes operating in their Christian colleagues. As Christianity became radicalised by the Gospel, Marxism began to acquire a human face. It is this "Gospel sense" of the Catholic Sandinistas that saved the Nicaraguan revolution from being totalitarian and vindictive. No doubt some mistakes were committed by the new government but they are negligible compared to post-revolutionary liquidation programmes recorded in the history of certain other countries. The Marxists themselves have attributed this to the loyalty displayed by the Christians to the Nicaraguan revolution.

And there comes Reagan, the great Messiah who alone can redeem God's poor by leading the anti-Sandinista guerrillas back to power in Nicaragua. The old alliances

are being built up again. And so we ask apprehensively: What is the future of Nicaragua?

History repeats itself. If the philosopher is right, we can be sure that "what has happened once is always possible in the future". More than two centuries ago in Latin America Religion and Politics conspired against the colonizer and built up incohesive democracies in Uruguay and Paraguay thus anticipating a political system that crawled into Europe only much later. We are referring to the Jesuit experiments known as **The Reductions** by which the Red Indian population protected themselves from the powerful and greedy nations of Christian Europe. It was an effective way for Indian communities not only to be self-sufficient but to keep their youth from the slave-traders and to guard their

land and wealth from greedy merchants. But alas, the Pope could not resist the pressure exercised on him by the political bloc of the Christian nations who had colonial interests in Latin America. The Pope yielded to these forces and ordered the Jesuits to disband the Reductions. The Indians were scattered and their wealth plundered by the Christian allies of the Pope. Thus ended a great experiment in humanizing Christian oppressors through the Liberation of the oppressed.

The church still looks back on this event with shame and remorse. It was precisely John Paul II the present Pope who in 1982 extolled the Jesuits for the foresight and courage they displayed in forming those Reductions more than two centuries ago.

If Nicaragua suffers the same fate as the Reductions, the most we can expect is to hear another Pope somewhere in 2185 AD giving heroes' honours to the now penalised Nicaraguan priest-ministers for initiating an unprecedented model of a socialist-humanist society; that will be about two centuries after the present Pope will have demolished the foundation of that society by yielding to pressures from the leader of a powerful "Christian" nation who has colonial interests in Nicaragua.

And here we stop our lamentations which seem to be as fruitless as those of the founder of Christianity who wept over the eternal city that killed the Prophets (Luke 13:34) and later built monuments in their honour.

## Fr. Miguel D'Escoto explains

"Throughout my life I have tried to maintain a stance that emphasizes service. I perfectly understand that it is not usual for a priest to hold office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I never sought this job nor am I particularly interested in serving my people from this position. In the end, it doesn't matter what job I perform. However, what I am absolutely committed to is my people's struggle for peace and justice.

**There can be no contradiction between my obligations as a human being and a Nicaraguan and those I have as a Christian and a priest. And I will choose the position that allows me to follow my conscience as a Christian and as a priest just because I have assumed this job it does not mean that I have put aside my priesthood. Rather, I am trying to fulfill the demands of my priesthood within a very exceptional set of circumstances.**

Many times I have reflected on the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37), which has become

very significant for me. I have often thought of how both the priest and the Levite, in their journey to Jericho, saw a man who had been beaten up and left for dead on the roadside. The priest chose to put his appointment in Jericho first so as not to arrive late and thereby offend his religious superiors. The Levite, also a man of the church, acted in the same way. **But what the Lord teaches us in this parable is that if we desire salvation we must not make either our own agendas or the laws of the church the priority: Rather the Lord teaches us that our priority must always be the divine law of love for our neighbour.**

It is most likely that if the Levite would have stopped to help the wounded man he would have had problems afterwards. Perhaps no excuse would have been acceptable for arriving late for the Jericho appointment. But he would have had to take the risk because, in the final analysis,

it is our Lord to whom we must respond for our actions. That is why there is no conflict for me between the priesthood and my present role in the Nicaraguan government. I see clearly that in this moment, when my people are being assaulted and beaten up, the imperative of fraternal love, of charity, obliges us to put aside other considerations.

With all due respect for the Code of Canon Law against which we have nothing, **there are laws that cannot be subject to that code, that are above it.** Even more especially when legislators often appear not to understand exceptional cases in which the law should not be applied. Therefore, if I am asked to continue serving the cause of peace and justice, defending the right to life of my people and our right to determine our own destiny, I will do that, independently of what Jericho might think."

Father Miguel D'Escoto M.M.  
Foreign Minister of Nicaragua,  
in an interview with Latinamerica Press (14-3-85)

## ON THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH TODAY

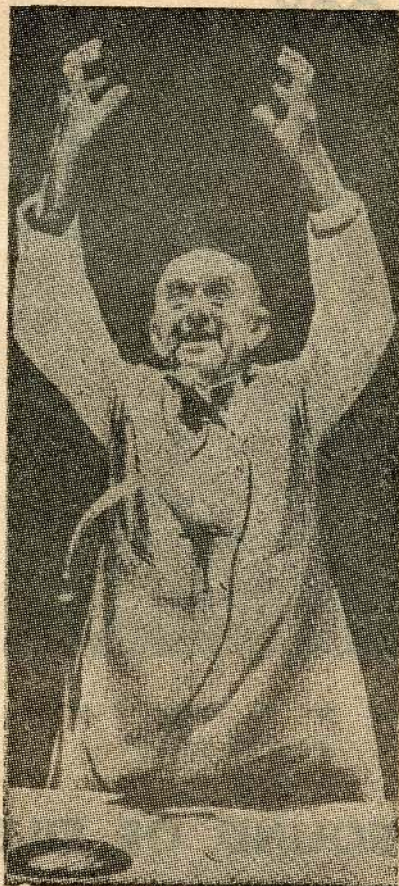
- Dom Heider Camara

I am an old bishop to whom God has allowed two very enviable experiences of church. I can truly say that both experiences were lived out with the greatest sincerity. At one time, not only the Brazilian bishops but all the bishops of Latin America thought that our duty as shepherds was to uphold authority; we believed that without authority there would be chaos. We were to help maintain the existing social order. In that phase, we were closely linked with the governments in power and with the rich. It is interesting (and I remember very well) that at that time no one accused me of meddling in politics. It seemed normal that Christ's church was helping to maintain the governments and the rich in power.

But when the United Nations proclaimed that more than two-thirds of humanity lived in less than human conditions, we began to ask ourselves how we could continue being one of the main pillars of a social order that was, in fact, much more an established system of disorder. So without ever preaching hatred or violence, we endeavoured to denounce injustice and to promote a more dignified life for those mired in inhuman situations.

During the first phase we worked for the people. But the Holy Spirit made us see that difference between working for the people and working with them. The difference seems small but it is really enormous. Today our major efforts go into showing that those beings living in less than human situations—situations more animal-like than human—are God's children.

God is the father of all. He does not want to be father only to a small group of people and stepfather to the rest of humanity. Christ said that he came so that all might have life and have it in abundance. And no one can tell us that he was referring only to spiritual matters, because when Christ comes to judge us he will say: "I was hungry, thirsty, naked..." And woe to those who have not



had eyes to see their brother or sister being trampled on and oppressed—the living Christ! Woe to those who refuse to be concerned about the situation of their fellow human beings, who fail to draw close to the oppressed...

— Latinamerica Press, 18-10-84.

### Schillebeecx opposes hierarchical model of Church

THE hierarchical structure of the Church was not willed by God and prevents the laity from sharing in the making of decisions, theologian and member of the Dominican Order, Fr. Edward Schillebeecx, suggested in a speech just before the recent visit of Pope John Paul to Holland. He said the current Roman Catholic view of the Church's structure derives from the 16th century.

"This view forgot about the working of the Spirit at the base of the Church and

claimed it for the hierarchy through the ministerial succession. It is impossible to talk sincerely about the equality of all the faithful while refusing to give it institutional form".

The Belgian born theologian also said that to limit infallibility to the person of the Pope was "from the Roman point of view a clear heresy, although it is one of the few heresies which has never been condemned by the official church authority".

If infallibility was transferred to the Pope alone, it would deprive "all other legal institutions of the Church, bishops as well as the community of believers, of their own original Christian authority", he said.

— Outlook (Australia) July 1985

## Loving

Blessed are the poor  
...not the penniless,  
but those whose heart is free.

Blessed are those who mourn  
...not those who whimper,  
but those who raise their voices.

Blessed are the meek  
...not the soft,  
but those who are patient and tolerant.

Blessed are those who hunger and  
thirst for justice  
...not those who whine,  
but those who struggle.

Blessed are the merciful  
...not those who forget,  
but those who forgive.

Blessed are the pure of heart  
...not those who act like angels,  
but those whose life is transparent.

Blessed are the peacemakers  
...not those who shun conflict,  
but those who face it squarely,

Blessed are those who are persecuted  
for justice  
...not because they suffer,  
...but because they love.

— P. Jacob.

(Taken from the May issue of 'Compartir, Santiago, Chile)

## LIBERATION THEOLOGY



Liberation theologian Leonardo Boff (right) and his brother Clodovis, removed from his teaching post by a conservative Archbishop.

## Vatican Rebuked

BRAZIL. Ten bishops have strongly criticized the Vatican's decision to silence liberation theologian Leonardo Boff.

"The measure itself, as well as the way in which it was applied seems not in keeping with the Gospel's spirit and is harmful to human rights and the freedom to engage in theological research," the bishops statement said. "It also is contrary to the witness of freedom and Christian charity, harms the progress of our churches and is offensive to the co-responsibility our bishops conference" shares with the Vatican.

The bishops were meeting in the city of Goiana when the Vatican announced it had asked Boff to refrain from teaching, lecturing, writing, giving interviews and editing the *Revista Eclesiastica Brasileira* for an unspecified period.

The bishops who made the statement were Goiana Archbishop Fernando Gomes dos Santos and Bishops Augusto Alves da Rocha, Pompeu Bezerra Rosa, Antonio Posami, Jose Gomes, Pedro Casaldaliga, Tomas Balduino, Celso Periera de Almeida, Antonio Batista Fragoso and Aparecido Jose Dias.

— *LatinAmerica Press*, 23 May, 1985

## THE SOUND OF SILENCE

The following poetic reflection was written by Brazilian author Alfonso Romano de Sant Anna and dedicated to the brothers Leonardo and Clodovis Boff. Leonardo has recently been silenced by the Vatican and Clodovis has been forbidden to teach in the archdiocese of Rio or in Roman universities.

FOR LEONARDO AND CLODOVIS BOFF

You cannot silence a man.

Take away his voice, and his name remains. Take away his name, and our mouths retain their old hunger.

Kill him, yes. You can kill a man.

But his voice, like a fish, swims against the stream, it generates new truths that move away from the river's mouth.

It's a lie to say silence denotes consent.

He who remains silent sometimes re-places himself. Behind the barriers of his teeth, a transparent word is taking shape.

A man is not silenced with a shot or a gag.

And threats only bring out the word that throbs within.

No one can silence another, because the unconscious exists.

Only those whose action is medieval are deceived.

How can you silence the wind when it whirls with the force of thought?

You can't hunt down a man's word the way you hunt the hide or horns of some wild animal, trapping it on the plains.

You cannot imprison the human voice the way you would a bird.

A jail is a prison only for those who fail to grasp the freedom of saying no.

If the word is a key that speaks of prison, then silence is a bird that sings in the darkness.

The absence of a voice is a discourse in itself. It is like an empty river, whose waterless banks describe its course.

In the beginning was the Word. Or we might say: in the silence was the Word and the Word of silence alone reverberated.

In truth, in truth I say unto you: more troublesome than the word of the wise man is his silenced wisdom, his meaning-full silence.

What to do with broken-off speech?

Is it hibernating? Held in, has it withered in his mouth?

Ah, silence is turned-about speech, a way of shouting out the forbidden word.

Silence, after speech, is no longer itself. It takes on double meaning. It is like forbidden fruit, eaten not by the mouth but by the hunger of our ears.

If the silence is too much, if it is the silence of two, double, greater than silence, it becomes dangerous. It becomes a form of noise.

That is why the silence of some consciences, when it comes to be heard is no longer silence: It is an explosion.



# In Step with Boff

It looks as though the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith (in the Vatican) may soon have to face the challenge of silencing a whole crowd of Boffs.

The story starts during the "colloquium" between the prefect of the congregation, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, and the Brazilian liberation theologian, Fr Leonardo Boff in September last year. Boff himself has circulated a typewritten account among his friends. The Brazilian cardinals present reminded Ratzinger of his promise to prepare a document on the positive aspects of liberation theology. The most important intervention, according to Boff, was that of Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns. He suggested to the congregation that for the preparation of the new document on the riches of liberation theology, invitations should be sent first to the "engineers" of this theology, that is, to the theologians who for years have been constructing it. In the second place, episcopates which have a popular pastoral strategy should be consulted, and in the third place the oppressed. Finally, the document should be prepared in the Third World, in Africa or Latin America, in contact with reality, because this would give "bite" to it and do justice to the cause of the oppressed.

Cardinal Ratzinger agreed with these points, though Boff suggests that he was a little hesitant. However this may be, his assent was acted upon. In Latin America, 144 liberation theologians have been hard at work, discreetly but speedily, on a most ambitious project: a **Summa** of liberation theology. More an entire library than a book, it is planned as a collection of 53 volumes. Among the authors are a retired archbishop (Helder Camara), a bishop (Pedro de Casaldaliga), a Nobel peace prize winner (Adolfo Perez Esquivel)

and many of the obvious leading lights of Latin American liberation theology, Protestant as well Catholic: Gustavo Gutierrez, Jon Sobrino, Enrique Dussel, Ignacio Ellacuria, Ernesto Cardenal, Sergio Torres, Juan Luis Segundo, Juan Carlos Scannone, Hector Miguez Bonino - plus a host of less well-known names.

The seven great sections of the **Summa** begin with the experience of God in the struggle for justice and love, via an account of the Church as a sacrament of liberation, to consider the three challenges to which the Church must respond, posed by the forms of social organisation, by culture, including Latin America's indigenous and Afro-American cultures, and finally "the religion of the people."

The Tablet (UK) 25 May 1985.

## Boff's Hopes

*In the following summarized interview that originally appeared in the Madrid daily El Pais, Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff speaks of his understanding of God and of his hope for the future of humanity:*

My God is certainly not the God so many use to justify the world's division into rich and poor or to defend the established order. That division is precisely why the whole problem of liberation has arisen. In my opinion, the only God we human beings can have is that Mystery who frees our existence and makes it more human. If God is not that, then the God to whom we give lip service is only an idol. In the theology of liberation we struggle for the emergence of the true God. The God of Pinochet who does not stop him from repressing and killing, or the God of Reagan who permits him to so facilely decide to build apocalyptic weapons that can destroy all humanity, is not the God of Archbishop Romero (of El Salvador) who was murdered for the sake of his people, or of Bishop Pedro Casaldaliga (of Sao Felix do Araguaia, Brazil) who continually risks his life in the infernos of the Amazon to defend the dignity of its inhabitants.

I hope each person can arrive at that minimum level of utopia which, allows him or her to eat at least once each day. There are 40 million people who die of hunger each year. In my country 300 of every 1,000 children die before they are three months old. To be able to eat is to guarantee God's most important gift to us, which is life itself. And after the gift of life, we must work to assure that all those other gifts can be appreciated in their fulness, including that of worshipping God out of tenderness, rather than out of fear. The means to bring all this about exist. It depends only on the will of those who are satiated, who even spend money to lose weight because they have eaten too much.

I do not want to die or witness an unclear holocaust before first having experienced women liberated as persons and all humanity seated around the table as brothers and sisters sharing the fruit of their collective labor in anticipation of that banquet God desires for all of us, for all time. ■

## A Prayer for Leonardo Boff

Dearest friend of Christ,  
they who have condemned you  
convoke in the cloistered  
calm-comfort,  
balm by a European springtime,  
maybe they should have  
convened  
in some stinking hell-hole  
of a parish in the Matto Grasso,  
where the words to be  
pondered over  
would be measured against  
the background  
of a Church militant,  
a Church all bloodied  
by current rows of crucified  
Christs,  
a Church that is scourged daily  
by the hypocritical  
establishment,  
crucifying on the six days  
and attending High Mass in Rio  
on the sanctified seventh morn.  
How could the grand inquisitors  
arrive at an unbiased judgment  
neath the glories of  
Michaelangelo?  
Perhaps the gory of Picasso's  
Gurnica  
would be a more suitable  
backdrop,  
but the long-dreaded sentence  
having now been finally spoken,  
another advocate of the poor  
joins the long prophetic line  
of the officially silenced.

Pat Mohen

Courtesy: Outlook (Australia)  
June 1985.

# Bishop Tutu's hope for South Africa

*This comment on the thought of Nobel prize winner Bishop Desmond Tutu as set out in a new book **Hope and Suffering** (Fount Paperbacks, 1984), is by Christine Jennett of the Political Science Faculty at the Australian National University. A Reuter news report of June 12 stated that Bishop Tutu and other anti-apartheid fighters were on the kidnap list of a 30-man squad employed by whites according to United Democratic Front sources in South Africa.*

Bishop Desmond Tutu sees himself in the tradition of the Old Testament prophets.

In **Hope and Suffering** he talks about the role of the Church as being always in the world but never of the world. The Church must 'always maintain a critical distance from the political set-up so that it can exercise its prophetic ministry.'

The source of his outspoken opposition to apartheid is the Bible. The God of the Old Testament and the New is the God of 'the downtrodden, the oppressed, the marginalised ones.'

The aim of the prophetic minister is to bring about reconciliation among human beings themselves and between them and the God in whose image we are all shaped. **But this reconciliation must be based upon justice. Therefore the clergy must be deeply involved in politics because the love of God is authenticated and expressed in and through love of our neighbour.**

Addressing the Eloff Commission's Inquiry into the South African Council of Churches in September 1981, he pointed out that when Churches question, oppose or dissent from the status quo they are accused of being 'political', but if they defend it this is accepted as proper and normal. He protested 'it is our Christianity, it is our faith and therefore our theology that are under scrutiny, and the central matters at issue are profoundly theological.'

For adopting this uncomfortable pro-justice approach, Bishop Tutu and the SACC drew criticism both from pro and anti-apartheid sources. In a time of high unemployment, the SACC helps to defuse an explosive and volatile situation through its Unemployment Project. For this it is on the one hand accused of undermining the stability of society but, on the other, it has often been attacked for delaying the bloody revolution through these self-help projects.

In answer to both Tutu retorts 'we play to no gallery, we do what we believe is right and in accord with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.'

He sees the Bible as the most revolutionary book there is, with the theme of liberation and deliverance being characteristic of the New Testament and the Old.

Western theology, says Tutu, is not more universal than any other brand of theology, despite its call for an ecumenical, universal theology based on its own teachings.

**'Theology is a human activity possessing the limitations and particularities of those who are theologising. It can speak relevantly only when it speaks to a particular historical and spatio-temporarily conditioned Christian community..... There is no final theology.....'**

Tutu says African and Black Theology must be concerned with liberation because this is seen in Africa as 'the inescapable consequence of taking the Gospel of Jesus Christ seriously.'

'Black Theology arises in a context of Black suffering at the hands of rampant white racism. And consequently Black Theology is much concerned to make sense theologically of the Black Experience whose main ingredient is Black suffering, in the light of God's revelation of Himself in the Man, Jesus Christ.

'It is concerned with the significance of Black Existence, with liberation, with the meaning of reconciliation, with humanisation, with forgiveness. It is much more aggressive and abrasive in its assertions, because of a burning and evangelistic zeal, as it must convert the Black man out of the stupor of his subservience and obsequiousness, to the acceptance of the thrilling and demanding responsibility of full human personhood, to make him reach out to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. It burns to awaken the white man to the degradation into which he has fallen by dehumanising the Black man, and so it is concerned with the liberation of the oppressor equally as with that of the oppressed. It is not so naive as to think that only economic or political oppression are what matter.

'But liberation must be understood in a total sense as removal of all that which keeps us in bondage, all that which makes us less than what God intended us to be.' (p. 77)

Tutu claims that Blacks are rapidly despairing of a peaceful resolution in South Africa.

He warns whites that they have to decide whether they want it all to happen by negotiation or through violence and bloodshed. He sets out four things which Mr. P. W. Botha has to do to defuse the situation and set the stage for negotiation by the authentic leaders of all the sections of the population (for Blacks those on Robben Island and in exile).

First, a commitment to a common citizenship for all South Africans in an undivided South Africa. Second, abolition of the Pass Laws, evenly phased to avoid chaos, and to lift all banning orders or charge those banned in open court and restore habeas corpus.

Third, to call a halt to all forced population removals, and fourthly, to establish a uniform education system.

The role of the Church in South Africa is primarily to worship and adore God but it can never use this as a form of escapism. Tutu stresses that when the Church succumbs to the temptation to identify with the powerful establishment, the Church will go down with the system 'as happened especially to the Roman Catholics in Mozambique, and the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe'.

In order to pretend to the world that South Africa has not got apartheid but self-governing homelands split up along 'ethnic' lines the government has moved nearly two million Blacks no longer needed in the South African labour force and dumped them in resettlement camps where they are starving. Tutu says they are starving because of deliberate Government Policy 'made in the name of white Christian civilisation.'

**The overall strategy is to split the Black population (80 per cent) up into different 'homelands' (20 per cent of the land) and further to distinguish these from 'some very specially blessed Blacks' (urban Blacks) who Tutu says will be co-opted into the system as a Black middle class 'to become a buffer between the have-White and the have-not Blacks'.**

Of the others, those in resettlement camps are starving, those who have jobs are subjected to the pass-laws, have to live in single-sex dormitories away from their families, are paid low wages and all blacks (including Bishop Tutu) live in a constant state of uncertainty.

What can the Church do? Tutu says the solutions are both long-term and short-term. The short-term strategy is to oppose all removals. Representations must be made to the authorities, all non-violent methods to hinder demolition of homes must be used.

Those in resettlement camps need physical and psychological rehabilitation. **The long-term solution must be political. 'Either there is going to be power sharing or there is not. If not, then we must give up hope of a peaceful settlement in South Africa.'**

He argues that neither the most sophisticated arsenal nor the best army or police force will give White South Africa true security. That will come automatically when South Africans, Black and White, know they count as of equal worth in the land of their birth, which they love passionately.

In all this harshness, insecurity and violence one can only agree with Bishop Tutu that it is 'a miracle of God's grace that Blacks still went to talk to Whites, to any Whites'. It is a miracle that so many

Blacks still say they want a non-racial South Africa, that they still want to avert a bloodbath.

**What sustains Bishop Tutu personally is his overflowing love for God, his fellow human beings and his country.** He draws strength from the international global fellowship which he experiences, e. g. when he lost his passport for the first time, he was overwhelmed by messages of sympathy and support from all over the world.

But nothing touched him more than getting from a group of New York Sunday school children 'passports of love' which he posted up on the walls of his office.

**He also follows in the footsteps of stalwarts such as Deans Palmer, Randolph and French Beytagh and others 'who had established a scintillating tradition of worship, music, preaching and social witness' at St. Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg.** He recalls his most cherished experiences:

'As I knelt in the Dean's stall at the superb 9.30 High Mass, with incense, bells and everything, watching a multi-racial crowd file up to the altar rails to be communicated, the one bread and cup given by a mixed team of clergy and lay ministers, with a multi-racial choir, servers and sidesmen - all in the apartheid-mad South Africa - then tears sometimes streamed down my cheeks, tears of joy that it could be that indeed Jesus Christ had broken down the wall of partition and there were the first fruits of the escatological community right in front of my eyes, enacting the message in several languages on the notice-board outside that this is a house of prayer for peoples of all races who are welcome at all times.' (p. 135).

Judging by the very conditional freedom that the South African authorities recently offered Nelson Mandela they are not in a hurry to recognise Blacks' equal worth. In **Hope and Suffering**, Tutu argued that Botha might as well throw in his lot with the reformers since however cautiously and compromisingly he moves he cannot win support from the far right as the last election demonstrated.

In his first speech as Bishop of Johannesburg he served warning on the authorities that if in 18 to 24 months apartheid has not been dismantled or is not being dismantled, he will advocate a pullout of foreign investment from South Africa regardless of the legal consequences for doing so (a long jail term is a distinct possibility).

Therefore the struggle continues and Bishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu remains a vigilant speaker and activist for God's love as manifested in neighbourly love and against apartheid and all less than truly human forms of social organisation.

As another who exercised a prophetic ministry Martin Luther King Jr. once said and Desmond Tutu repeats **'together we must learn to live as brothers or together we will be forced to perish as fools.'**

(Excerpts)

- Courtesy : **Outlook** (Australia) May 1985

# Fellowship in Action

## HATTON

The **May Day Workers' Mass** in the plantation areas was held on Saturday, 4th May (Vesak Poya day) at 10 a. m. at Kamkaru Sevana, Hatton (in the open air). The concelebration of the Mass was presided over by the Ven. Godwin Weerasuriya, Arch-deacon of Nuwara Eliya. A dialogue sermon between a Hindu plantation worker and a Christian priest, strongly sung Tamil lyrics and the use of Tamil cultural forms including a Bharatha Natyam Offertory Dance - was a feature of this Service. It was the 11th Anniversary of the May Day Workers' Mass in the plantation areas. The Service was followed by lunch and a discussion on problems in the hill country, at which about a hundred people were present from trade unions and voluntary groups, and including also Christian clergymen and Roman Catholic Sisters.

**A singing class** (in the Carnatic style) commenced at Kamkaru Sevana, Hatton on the 9th of June. Nine students are following these classes which are held twice a week.

**English classes** for Grade 10 students, adults and telephone operators (2 batches) continue at the Hatton Centre. Another Workshop for teachers of English was held on 22nd May. A series of five Workshops for teachers of English in the A.G.A.'s Division of Ambagamuwa Korale will commence on 1st September; these Workshops will be held primarily for new teachers of English in connection with the International Year of Youth, and in collaboration with the National Youth Services Council.

**A Health Workshop** for leaders on estates, including educated youth, was held on 16th June at Kamkaru Sevana, Hatton. It was conducted by Sirimal Peiris, a Government Health Educator.

The CWF organizer for Plantations work attended a **People's Forum** organized by the Urban Rural

Mission desk of the Christian Conference of Asia from 22nd to 24th June in South Korea. He later participated in the CCA's General Assembly as a visitor.

**A Women's Workshop and Seminar** was held after a lapse of about one year at the Hatton Centre. 17 women workers attended including some CWF members.

The C. W. F. organizer for Plantations, work spoke at two **Prayer Meetings** for Peace on 2nd and 3rd June at the Hindu Kovils in Hatton and Kotagala. These Prayer Meetings drew large crowds from people of all faiths and were organized by the Ceylon Workers Congress. It was a good mobilization of the masses, in the hill country and elsewhere in quest of peace with justice.

## RATMALANA

### May Day

Our Ratmalana members and supporters had a busy time helping with the arrangements for the C.W.F. May Day procession and Mass in Colombo on April 30th evening. Workers' children from the area participated in the lee-keli (stick dance), flower and kala-gedi (water pot) dances both at the street procession and at the Offertory in the Mass joined by pantheru (cymbals) dancers from Badulla and pahan dancers (with lights) from Hatton.

On May Day afternoon our members together with the youthful comrades from Badulla helped to distribute a very attractive handout published by the Bible Society entitled 'Our May Day' at the workers' demonstrations and rallies. This handout was very well received and we had over 500 requests for more information as a result.

### Workers' School

May 18th was a Red letter day for the Ratmalana Kamkaru Sevana when certificates were awarded to thirteen trainees who had successfully completed the one year intensive course at our Workers' School

machinists. Our Director of Technical Studies S. Yogaratnam and Director of Social Studies Henry Karunaratne, addressed the students, parents and well-wishers present on the importance of technical training and the contribution of the social studies to the development of a proper national outlook and commitment to a just society as future workers in industry. The Kamkaru Sevana organizer, a parent and a student also spoke, the latter making a surprise presentation of a wall clock for the workshop unit on behalf of the trainees who had passed out, as a token of their appreciation. A celebration lunch followed.

A special feature was the presence of the new batch of nineteen trainees at this 'graduation' ceremony. These new trainees have commenced their studies at the Workers' School. Their technical training at the Workshop is supplemented by classes in engineering theory, social studies, English and mathematics. Their spiritual dimension is taken care of in regular Friday evening worship (including discussion) and special programmes on poya (full moon) days and other festivals. Due to want of space for workshop activity, it is proposed to erect a temporary structure close to the Workshop for welding and to facilitate the handling of more commercial orders to help meet expenses.

### Educational programmes

On June 20th, we assisted in the proceedings at the Catechists' Conference of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Colombo by demonstrating the gospel procession as is done at our Workers' Mass and by the rendering of the Gospel in traditional Sinhals drama style. This was followed by a playlet which had replaced the Sermon at our May Day Mass. There was also a rendering of some of the C.W.F. chants. Our contribution was greatly appreciated by those present, including the Archbishop.

On July 12th - 14th, there was a study programme of the Christian Leadership Movement which was conducted by the Kamkaru Sevana organizer and other CWF speakers.

During the same month, a regular CWF study programme was commenced in Ratmalana and a study group also started in the Moratuwa area.

### Inter-religious observance of 'Sil'

For the first time there was a full-day observance of sil by Buddhists and Christians together at Kamkaru Sevana, Ratmalana on July 1st, commencing at 6 a.m. and ending at 6 p. m. About 60 persons including children and adults participated. Three Buddhist monks delivered discourses to those present; this was followed by an inter-religious discussion. Meals for the participants -morning and mid-day-were provided free by some parents of the children attending our pre-school and those of the young people attending the other classes at Kamkaru Sevana. This sil observance was a unique experience for those present and the occasion attracted considerable attention in the area and even in certain sections of the press.

### KATUNAYAKE

The short play staged at the CWF May Day Mass this year was the special contribution of the Katunayake CWF group to our 25th Anniversary celebration of this Mass at the Colombo YMCA Gymnasium Hall. This playlet was also staged at a cultural programme in Hatton held on Vesak Day (May 4th).

The group also staged two playlets entitled "Ibi Gamana" (on private sector transport) and "Abin" (on the drug menace) at the annual Festival of the SS. Peter and Paul Parish Church at Katunayake. Work with the young people at Pitipana has resulted in yet another drama to be staged at the Basiyawatte Parish Church festival.

On 28th July the group organized a Seminar on "Prabuddha" - their outstanding work of Sri Lanka's foremost modern poet Mahagama Sekera, which was very well attended.

Contact with the lagoon fishermen and 'Free Trade Zone' workers and their problems also continue to take the time of the group.

### GALAHA (Gami Seva Sevana)

The Gami Seva Sevana (Rural Service Centre) Choir presented a Vesak Bhakti Gee programme over the Mahanuwara Service of Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation. Other Bhakthi Gee programmes were also presented at two Buddhist temples in Haloya and Masgolla.

A "Prabuddha Adyapane Kavaya" (Prabuddha Education Circle) was inaugurated at Gami Seva Sevana, Galaha on June 2nd. Two talks on Mahagama Sekera's "Prabuddha" were given by Messrs P. Dias Gunawardena and W. M. Gunatilleke.

### ANURADHAPURA

#### An Unique Event

The villagers of Vannipalugollawa awakened as it were to new life with the celebration organized on May 10th to open a Shrine Room at the Village School. It will be remembered that the CWF through Gami Seva Sevana carried out a rehabilitation programme in this village including the building of houses destroyed by a cyclone earlier, with the active participation of the villagers. This is a very poor, backward and neglected village in the district and hemmed in by more prosperous Muslim villages. The building of the Budu Medura (Shrine Room) was done by the CWF with the villagers contributing their share of the labour in a shramadana and helping to also put up the roof. The Gami Seva Sevana full-time worker together with the Assistant Government Agent (who was also impressed by the progress made after the entrus-

ting of this village to the CWF) spoke to the Muslims in the adjoining village about this shrine room and the Muslim villagers responded by donating the Buddha statue for the Shrine Room. This image was handed over by the Muslim villagers to the Bhikkhus and Buddhist villagers present and conducted in procession to the school premises. It was a moving sight to find villagers spontaneously breaking into a dance while the image was being taken in procession headed by traditional Sinhala drummers.

At the meeting which followed the installation of the image the Senior monk of the Abhayagiri Rajamaha Vihare in Anuradhapura, the Revd Pandit Hirigalle Gnanaratana Thero, who presided, commended the example of the CWF who in this celebration had brought together adherents of 3 major religions (Buddhist, Muslim and Christian) as one that should be pursued on a national scale to bring together different communities in the sad divisive conditions of the present time. Others who spoke in the same vein included the Social Services Asst. Director and the Assistant Government Agent. A leader from the Muslim village also spoke, along with Sinhala villagers and representatives of the C. W. F. and Gami Seva Sevana. The Gami Seva Sevana organizer in Galaha and several CWF Working Committee members were also present.

#### Post-massacre Relief Work

The CWF Anuradhapura members and the Gami Seva Sevana full-time worker had a busy time following the tragic events in Anuradhapura the very next week. A relief group was formed to help the families of those killed by the massacre especially, whose plight was truly desperate. The relief and rehabilitation work begun by our members is co-ordinated by the CWF Treasurer and the Rehabilitation Committee of the of the National Christian Council which has contributed Rs. 20,000/- towards this work.

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