

# ★ What I saw in Jaffna ★

Vijaya Kumaratunga

3rd Quarter 1986 Rs. 5.00 Quarterly of the Christian Workers Fellowship

# CHRISTIAN WORKER



Captain Kotalawala of the Sri Lanka Army shakes hands with "Rahim" of the LTTE at the Jaffna Fort entrance, while Vijaya Kumaratunga looks on.

## SETTLEMENT IN SIGHT ?

● **Privatisation** ● **Role of India**

— Hector Abhayavardhana

— Nirmalan Dhas

— Dr. Mervyn D. de Silva

● PHILIPPINES, NICARAGUA

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## The Reality

*"Both our Government which now looks to India for assistance as well as the Tamil militants who have sought to make Tamil Nadu a haven, must now reckon with India as the paramount power of the South Asian region. In this context the strength and ability of Rajiv Gandhi as a capitalist politician to enter skilfully into settlements with the separatist forces in his country, stands in marked contrast to our own. And Rajiv Gandhi can hardly permit a Tamilian South India of some 50 million persons to be disturbed for long by Sri Lanka's racial strife. He can as little permit separatist politics on an island bordering Tamil Nadu (itself rife with anti - Hindi and pan - Tamilian sentiments) as ignore anti - Tamil or anti - Indian moves on the part of its rulers. And indeed we have through our conflictive politics and the seeking of our petty chauvinist and capitalist politicians been brought dangerously close into becoming a client state of our big neighbour. The sooner we recognise this reality, the better."*

— Editorial Comment in *Christian Worker*, 3rd Quarter, 1985.

### Late News:

## Vijaya Leads Goodwill Mission to Jaffna

SLMP leader Vijaya Kumaratunga left again for Jaffna on December 3 evening but this time by bus to visit the two captured servicemen in LTTE custody with 10 members of their families in the hope of securing their release.

He was accompanied by several others who included 30 Buddhist monks, a representative of the Christian Workers Fellowship and party officials. The visit was described also as a mission of peace and goodwill to extend the hand of friendship to the people of the North and so help promote contact and dialogue between North and South.

The delegation was given warm receptions at Vavuniya, Paranthan and Chavakachcheri and large crowds lined the roads and cheered the convoy as it entered Jaffna city with an armed LTTE escort. The group visited the two prisoners and spent time with them and the monks chanted pirith for them at the LTTE camp where they were being held. At the discussions that followed, the LTTE leaders expressed their willingness to release the prisoners when the Government agreed to release two LTTE men in Army custody in exchange for them. Until then, relatives were to be permitted

regular visits to the two captives. In view of the alleged attempts to prevent the release of the two prisoners to him, Vijaya told the LTTE that he did not at all mind their release to anyone else including the President and Minister of National Security!

The group also toured the area. The full story of this visit to Jaffna will appear in our next issue. Vijaya's earlier mission to Jaffna is related in the pages inside.

In this context, it is significant that on November 9, the Commander of the Jaffna Fort, Colonel Ananda Weerasekera, Major Ariyaratna and Captain Kotalawala with 12 soldiers—all of them unarmed—had visited the two prisoners in the company of the LTTE including its Commander Kittu and his deputy Rahim. They discussed also a proposed exchange of prisoners between the Security Forces and the LTTE (the Colonel insisting on a so-called "non-political" intermediary for this purpose), but for the second time this did not materialise.

7 December, 1986

# Contents

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## 1 FROM OUR READERS

### COMMENT

- 4 Settlement in Sight ?
- 8 What I saw in Jaffna
- 13 The Role of India
- 18 A Call to the Tamil Community
- 19 Cropp Protest
- 20 Talking of "Privatisation"
- 23 Some Thoughts on Privatisation
- 25 Vietnam Delegation's Visit
- 26 What are Cathedrals For ?
- 28 Sri Lanka's Contribution to Liturgy

### WORKERS' STRUGGLES

### WORLD AFFAIRS

- 30 The Star Wars & Arms Control

- 31 Philippines

- 32 Nicaragua

### ECOLOGY

- 33 On Kotmale
- 34 Cracks in Aid Strategy
- 35 A Tale of Two Dams

### HUMAN RIGHTS

- 36 World Military & Social Expenditures
- 36 Govt & AI on Disappearances

### RELIGION & POLITICS

- 37 Fidel Castro on Christianity
- 39 Religion & Violence
- 40 Towards Moral Theology of Violence

### FELLOWSHIP IN ACTION

## From our readers

### The Nuclear Debate.

Sir,

Having had the opportunity (and the pleasure) of reading your quarterly journal regularly, please permit me to thank you for the quality of the news and views published. This is not the fare one can pick up in the normal media. Having said this, may I also say that you are nevertheless in the same "river" although you may be swimming in the other direction—against the current, so to speak. This is an extremely good exercise. Yet, why do you not focus attention on the one changeless truth, that all life is in constant change?

Let me try to make myself a little clearer. About 45 years ago most of us thought that the atom was the ultimate Truth about matter, an individual unit, from which in varying configurations, the whole material universe, or that part of it we could see with our physical senses, had developed. Today, after Hiroshima and Nagasaki we know that the unity of the atom can be broken up and energies far beyond anything the mind

of man can release are possible. And there, you and everybody else, stop. This is why I said you are also in the same "river", although you may be swimming in the opposite direction. All life, in whatever form, is subject to continuous change. Nuclear energy has a role to play, but not the type of nuclear energy we are using today through the fission process as Professor Osmund Jayaratne has so convincingly shown in his article appearing in the last quarter's issue of "Christian Worker". Nuclear energy is the primordial energy after it has become matter. It is released through different processes. It can be released through the fission process, which is the first stage in man's break-through into this field of science. The fission process releases plutonium which is highly destructive and dangerous. This is what is used in the atomic bomb. There is also the fusion process, from isotopes of water, a plentiful supply of which is available in the oceans, rivers, lakes, etc. Scientists who are working on this in U. K., U. S. A., U.S.S.R., China tell us that by the fusion process we can have a

perfectly safe use of the inherent energy of the universe, which, as we know, is an electrical universe. There isn't anything else in the whole universe but electricity. If we forget this, we are likely to lose our way in this life. Professor Osmund Jayaratne's article "Sri Lanka and the Nuclear Debate" in your 2nd quarter 1986 issue takes us very close to what I am trying to point out, but not close enough.

When you do not emphasise the "change aspect" of Nature, you are permitting your readers to live in fear. As a magazine devoted to the promotion of a Christian understanding of Life, you must surely recognize the overall fact of the Cosmic Principle (or God, as Christians call IT) that overshadows the affairs of men. All history confirms this, and if we accept this, we need not react to life's experiences pessimistically, we can react to our experiences optimistically.

**M. Seneviratne.**  
Panadura  
15-09-86

Dear Editor,

## Global Terrorism

As a regular reader of your very esteemed and now popular journal, I cannot help but offer some comments on some of the points made by another of your I believe regular readers Mr. Robert Beard of Ratmalana in a letter addressed to you and appearing in the last issue (i. e. the 2nd quarter 1986 August), I am referring to his statement expressing disappointment at the use of the Falkland Campaign as an example of imperialist death throes and that he cannot accept the use of the word "attack" to describe the action of the British Forces in liberating British subjects on British Sovereign territory. At no time in the history of the British Empire which it is obvious is now seeing its decline and fall, has there been an instance of direct armed intervention in a similar context to safeguard its rights. The British to their great credit it must be said were never so lacking in tact and diplomacy. In fact we in Sri Lanka remember how Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranayake in 1957 by the methods of peaceful negotiation took over the bases granted to Britain in Sri Lanka. This was a truly peaceful and civilised way of settling a thorny problem. Here there was no attempt to make any show of armed force. Perhaps the Falklands Episode only brings out clearly the difference between Margaret Thatcher and S. W. R. D. Bandaranayake.

Ironically enough it was Bandaranayake belonging to an old family of the feudal landowning oligarchy who with his Oxford classical education was able to display the true spirit of aristocratic liberalism and democracy in settling a contentious issue in the British tradition of quiet diplomacy while Thatcher the grocer's daughter, a science graduate of the Cambridge University, displayed a quite contrasting style. Strange indeed are the ironies of history! Sri Lankan Bandaranayake, the populist leader of a left leaning political party in a former British Colony displays the very British traditional and time honoured method of quiet but effective diplomacy and the spirit of compromise while Thatcher the British Prime Minister, leader of her country's Conservative Party, the "Iron Lady" prefers to show a mailed fist with a provoking aggressive military stance. As for characterising the Falkland Campaign as an example of Imperialist

death throes, is or is not the Old British Empire dead and/or dying? Perhaps, Mr. Beard sees Thatcher as leading a revival and resurgence of the old British imperial power.

Mr. Beard it would seem remains a true Briton who is still continuing to wave proudly the good old Union Jack to show the world that the old John Bull is still very much alive and kicking vigorously, although circumstances today compel him to follow the footsteps of a faltering old Uncle Sam, who has now taken the leadership in the Sphere of neo-Colonialist Enterprise! If this affords some much-needed consolation to Britons like Mr. Beard, they are quite free to see, even though deludedly, life once again stirring in the dead and/or dying British Imperialism or even having another life after death. In fact, Thatcher's action reminds us of the jingoistic foreign policy adopted by Lord Palmerston in the last century, when Britain was in the hey day of imperial power and glory. But the Falkland Action of recent times makes us also think that Britain's Prime Minister is taking a leaf out of Ronald Reagan's book with the same disastrous consequences for Britain's Conservative Party, as for Reagan's own Republican Party in the U. S. A., the G. O. P. No wonder that the Conservative Party in U. K. has already ominously lost two by-elections as pointed out by Mr. Beard himself. With fraternal greetings

from a Sickbed,

N. K.

Borella.  
10. 10. 86.

### Editorial Note

We too would like to comment briefly on the letter of Mr Robert Beard published under the title 'Global Terrorism' in our last issue. Mr Beard's objection to the use in our editorial comment of the word 'attack' in relation to the British military action in the Falklands is valid and is strictly speaking a terminological error on our part.

It is historically true that the Falklands is a self-governing dominion of the British but one whose sovereignty has been under continuous contest since the 1780's first by Spain and then by Argentina. In 1690 the Dutch navigator called

Seabald Van de Weldt first sighted the Falklands and gave his name to the islands on maps of the 17th and 18th centuries. The French navigator Louis Antoine de Bougainville founded the first settlement on East Falklands in 1764 followed by the first settlement by the British in West Falklands in 1765. Both were driven out by Spanish troops and war between Spain and UK over the Falklands was barely averted by Spain returning the port (and the fort constructed thereon) called Egmont. For economic reasons the British withdrew their naval garrison in 1774, leaving a plaque claiming full sovereignty, whilst Spain maintained the settlement till 1806 when there was a revolt against the Spaniards in Argentina. In 1832 the British government reasserted claims to the Falklands and in 1833, in the noonday of British supremacy, 'peacefully expelled the Argentinians' and raised the British flag again. All this is from the 'Encyclopedia Britannica'.

The islands are largely moorland and hilly mountainside with large outcrops of quartzite boulders. In 1970 the English speaking population was 2000, a figure first exceeded in 1901. Population peaked at 2400 in 1931 and declined thereafter. There are 600,000 sheep on East and West Falklands and the leading commercial industrial firm is the Falkland Island Company owned by the British. We must thank Mr. Beard for helping us to enlighten ourselves on the real position with regard to the seesaw fortunes of these desolate islands on the question of sovereignty; we concede Mr. Beard's argument that since the islands are still technically a self-governing dominion, the term 'attack' was inappropriate and we apologize. Besides, we have no particular reason to prefer the present Argentinian regime to Britain as the ruler of the Falklands. The previous regime of the Falklands committed the murder of hundreds of its own citizens who disappeared overnight.

However, our reference to the Falklands was in the context that only small countries - sovereign or colonial - were characteristically becoming target of 'attention' by great powers. We are also fully in agreement with Mr. Beard that

the incident was a "deplorable episode". so was the attack on 3 million people in Libya for the alleged fault of their leader. Mr. Beard will agree with us that force is obsolete as a means of settling international disputes. Now that Britain claims to have discovered an authentic case of State terrorism, are we to assume that instead of targeting small objects, whose involvement in terrorism is not established, a bigger country like Syria whose involvement in terrorism is claimed to be well established, should be more appropriately the object of attention? Or will the Great Powers only make some noises of disapproval, since Syria is not small enough?

We also agree with Mr. Beard regarding the relatively greater liberalism of the British. We would like to believe that this greater humanism is forced on their rulers by the British people for whom we have a healthy respect. Likewise, our respect for the good people of America has been given a fillip by their recent overturning of Mr. Reagan's Senate majority. Mr. Beard incidentally refers to tourism inter-se between UK and USA plummeting. He may not be aware that the numbers of American tourists in the USSR are increasing by leaps and bounds. Reason—the USSR is being recognized as the only country where Americans are safe from clobbering and bomb explosions; O tempora, O mores!!  
Editorial Board

## Chernobyl

Editor,  
Sir,

The unfortunate accident at Chernobyl in April 1986 opens up many channels for reflection. What I wish to reflect on in this letter is the 'Spiritual' aspect of this, especially as your journal is primarily concerned with "things of the Spirit" and I must say I admire the way you ably relate this aspect (spirit) to the material.

There is prevalent today what may be called a "catastrophic complex". From all sides, prognostications of disaster are being given out. It is necessary to counter this destructive syndrome. There is catastrophe today—millions are dying of starvation, in a world of plenty, millions are dying in wars in a world which is said to be at peace, floods,

earthquakes, epidemics, the whole works. There is violence in our world. Much of the violence today is really the result of man's non-realization of his true nature, of the fact that he is really, fundamentally, a soul in incarnation; that this personality is a vehicle for a great entity, the soul. The violence in the world today is the result of the imbalance between his inner knowledge of himself as a soul, and his inability to manifest this on the outer plane... through conditioning by society, the lack of education to this effect, and by the point in evolution which the majority of humanity has reached. This produces a situation where man is at war with himself and therefore with the society of which he is a part. A great deal of the violence in the world has this as a cause.

What is necessary is a total change in our social structure throughout the world. This involves, in the first place, working through the existing governmental structures in order to change them. The involvement of all sections of society in the construction of the new order will ensure the speedy adoption of the necessary measures, so that in this process, the very nature of government, as we visualise it today, will change. No matter what form of organisation that we use to live out our social life, it must be through some form of government — whether that government sits in a special place we call Westminster or the Kremlin, or wherever; or whether it is through workshops, or through community gatherings. Government is organisation of relationships. There must be some structure or organisation where decisions are taken for certain results to pertain. That is government; whether it is on a community level, a personal level, or an international level, it would still have some formal structure. What emerges from this is that the governmental system will change by the participation of all sections of society in this process of change. What we today call the democratic system, or the communistic system or the fascistic system—are all in process of transition towards something else. They are all in a more less transitory stage, and no one at this moment can foresee exactly the form of government which will pertain in any given country in, say ten years time.

Take our youth for example. What the young today resent very much is authority. They are born into the world with the ideas of freedom, equality, and brotherhood.

This is right, this is what the Hierarchy teaches and this is what the Christ taught and will teach again if He appears again. Hierarchy is a fact in nature. It is perfectly possible to believe in, and demonstrate your belief in equality, brotherhood and liberty, and at the same time to recognise yourself and all others as being at some point on the ladder of evolution. We are all equal under God. But taking part in a long and apparently endless evolutionary journey, we are all of us at some point on that journey. Some are ahead and some have still very far to go. Those whom we call The Masters have completed the journey. They are at the top of the ladder. They stand at the top and They bend down and hold Their hand out to give the next one a hoist up. And he puts his hand down and gives the one below him a hoist up. And so on, down and down the ladder until you get to the least evolved. From the most primitive members of the human race to the Christ, and beyond, is a hierarchy. There are always those who are more evolved, more advanced—they are not better, they are simply more advanced on the evolutionary path. They are demonstrating more of their potential, which is divine. As souls we are all one. On the soul plane there is no such thing really as an individual soul. There is only an individual aspect of one great Oversoul. As that soul incarnates, involves itself in matter, it has started a journey of return to that perfection from which it came.

Our problem as human beings is that we have lost our Divine sense and therefore get embroiled in the "affairs of the world" and mislead ourselves and others. In our material adjustment to life, we become sectarian, take sides and create the sorrows we find around us.

This is why the western press fed us with so much distorted interpretations of the Chernobyl tragedy. And that is why even our press, (though it claims to be 'non-aligned,') went to the extent of trying to mislead us into believing that the jams imported by the C.W.E. were contaminated by the nuclear fallout, when actually these jams were imported into Sri Lanka three months before the Chernobyl accident! This is the sad story of the human situation which the Buddha explained with the word Avijā-ignorance.

G.J.R.S.  
Colombo-8.  
20.10.86

# Settlement in Sight ?

If two rounds of Talks between the Government and the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) consequent on the deliberations of the Political Parties Conference (PPC) followed also by several clarifications with the Indian Government held out genuine hopes of a settlement to our "Ethnic question", certain pronouncements and actions on the part of our Government leaders soon contributed to erode such hopes. Indeed it seems to be only the role of India as a patient and consistent mediator that has helped to keep such hopes alive. And the recent public pronouncement of its Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi that "some sort of solution" to Sri Lanka's ethnic problem would soon be found and peace restored, has certainly done much to once again raise hopes and expectations.

### Discordant Notes

The first discordant note struck soon after a good measure of agreement was reached, had of course to come from Prime Minister R. Premadasa who with his past record as a "India-basher" could not resist delivering an obviously calculated anti-Indian thrust during his speech at the plenary of the Non Aligned Summit in Harare. Not content with this, Mr. Premadasa having secured a personal discussion with the Indian Premier at Harare, handed the latter a memorandum of his own on contentious issues which he also released to the press! This provocative act not unnaturally disturbed Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and made him doubt openly as to whether our Government would stand by the Provincial Councils package it had but recently offered as a solution. President Jayewardene had to re-assure Prime Minister Gandhi on that score but the differences apparent in the Government ranks on the devolution of power, prompted Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) Opposition Leader Anura Bandaranaike in Parliament to support Prime Minister Premadasa's conduct at Harare (despite their past animosities) in the hope, no doubt, of forging new links in the opposition to Provincial Councils.

### Military Offensive

Then came the fighting in the Eastern Province especially in the Trincomalee and Batticaloa dis-

tricts which took on the proportions of a minor war, with reports of even aircraft strafing and bombing especially in Batticaloa. The advance made by Tamil militants in this province apparently prompted the Government to engage in these widespread military operations. The activities of the Special Task Force (STF) in rounding up even children as suspects tended to antagonise the population further against the Government. Earlier (from September 20) there was a five day Hartal in Batticaloa over the alleged indiscriminate shooting of civilians by the Security Forces prompting the Bishop of Trincomalee and Batticaloa Dr. Kingsley Swamipillai to address a letter of protest to the President.

In October there were battles also in Mannar and especially fierce in Adampan where an army unit engaged in combing operations was ambushed by a group of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), resulting in many deaths. (It was here that LTTE Commander Victor was killed and it was from here too that the bodies of dead soldiers were removed to Jaffna where they were handed over to the Army Camp in the Jaffna Fort, while two soldiers taken prisoner here and also removed to Jaffna figured later in an attempted exchange of prisoners through Vijaya Kumaratunga). There were also army operations reported in Vavuniya with casualties. Earlier there had been many suspects rounded up from Vavuniya and confined in the Boosa Camp where many had been held for long periods and on whose behalf there were protest fasts more recently by University students in Jaffna and detenus in the Welikade Remand Prison.

The several military assaults launched in the Eastern Province and the attempts elsewhere to have the forces fight their way out of the fortified camps in areas that were under the control of Tamil militants, are reported to have resulted in high civilian casualties (which again served to turn the people in these areas against the Government) and in great losses of both men and materials without any appreciable strategic gains.

The Government's military strategy appears to be to concentrate its forces in the Eastern Province to gain control there and to re-establish its position in the Mannar and Vavuniya districts while holding on to its encampments in the Jaffna peninsula. But these avowed "search and destroy" operations of militant hide-outs go ill with professions of standing for a negotiated settlement and even tend to make the motives of the Government suspect.

## The Nugegoda Speech

Such suspicions seemed to be confirmed when President Jayewardene made his much publicised speech of October 9 in Nugegoda (on which too the Indian Government sought clarification) where he said "the Provincial Councils proposed will not be presented in Parliament until the terrorists laid down their arms and accepted the concept of a unitary state". The President also said, "the Indian Government and the State of Tamilnadu should pledge their co-operation to end terrorism and all terrorist weapons should be handed over to the Government and terrorist camps in northern and eastern Sri Lanka should be dismantled".

(Sun of October 15)

The Sri Lankan Government has again had to assure India that this statement of President Jayewardene was in no way a shift in Government policy. The President has explained this statement as being no more than "a realistic assessment of the situation" and that his making this position public constituted a part of his campaign to educate the masses as to the need for a solution. Now, the President is no political innocent (as he himself has pointed out before), as not to know the effect of his statements on the militants and that his position was, from their point of view, quite unacceptable and would be considered as yet another move made with the intent of stalling any progress towards a solution. *The Hindu* (India) of October 13 reported a LTTE spokesman as saying that the militants had taken to arms to provide security and peace for the Tamils and that the struggle would continue till "we achieve freedom for the Tamils". The spokesman also said that Mr. Jayewardene who was known to "blow hot and cold" was not sincere in his efforts to find a political solution and was keen on driving a wedge between the Tamil groups and the Indian Government.

The reaction of the Sinhala chauvinist opposition led by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) was apparently one of satisfaction that this was a tactical retreat by the President in the face of the agitation carried on in Sinhalese areas by the "Movement for the Defence of the Motherland" (MDM) led by the Mahanayake of Asgiriya and Mrs. Bandaranaike. The rabid tribalistic agitation conducted by this MDM against the Government's proposed political solution and its attempts to bring pressure on M.Ps to vote against it and the threat that the Buddhist Sangha would "resort to stern action" if the Government went ahead with it, resulted in the Government's decision to enforce Emergency Regulation No. 23 which makes punishable with the death penalty, 20 years rigorous imprisonment and

forfeiture of property any attempts to prevent the President, Prime Minister, Ministers and M. Ps. from exercising their duties or seeking to coerce or influence them by unlawful means. No content with this, the Government also rushed through an amendment to the Special Presidential Commission of Inquiry Law No. 7 of 1987, to enable it to deprive offenders of their civil rights—a virtual outlawing from political life—calculated to give cold feet to many who like Mrs. Bandaranaike are in the forefront of the campaign against the establishment of Provincial Councils. A more recent memorandum sent to the President by the Mahanayakes of the three Nikayas expresses pleasure at his statement at Nugegoda and requests him not to introduce any legislation on the devolution of power in Parliament until the law and order situation returns to normal and the people of all communities displaced by terrorist violence are re-settled (*Daily News* of November 8).

## Tamil Militants

The wish of the TULF as well as of all parties represented at the P. P. C. was that militant groups should come into the negotiations. The attempts of the Tamilnadu Chief Minister and the Indian Central Government however to secure the co-operation of the militants in the peace process has taken considerable time and the reported intransigence of the militants and the reiteration of their position based on the four "Cardinal principles" trotted out by them at Thimpu in place of making direct and concrete counter-proposals to the proposals made by the Sri Lankan Government, has also not been helpful in progressing towards a negotiated political settlement.

The pronouncements and actions of the Government leaders as well as the present position of supremacy enjoyed especially by the LTTE in Jaffna (as is also described elsewhere in this issue in the article by Vijaya Kumaratunga) has no doubt contributed to the 'hard' stance taken by the militants. However, in this context, it is worth bearing in mind the following shrewd observation made by Uma Maheswaran, the leader of the People's Liberation Organization of Tamileelam (PLOT) in an interview with *The Island* more recently; "We can say that they (i. e. LTTE) are controlling Jaffna, but if the Indian government wants at any time they can counter them. Really our situation is that we have been trapped. Most of our people outside the peninsula have been driven away and become refugees. In Jaffna, the army camps are there and so are the militants. The army is unable to come out and the militants are unable to attack the camps. But if Jayewardene tomorrow stopped fuel, electricity and

foodstuffs, the Jaffna people can't stay in refugee camps. They will beg for a solution. So politically who is winning?"

The fact that on November 8, the Madras Police took in the militant leaders including V. Prabhakaran of the LTTE for questioning shows the controls that could be exercised in Tamilnadu. Furthermore, the reaction in Tamilnadu to the excesses of some militant groups resulting also in an editorial comment in *The Hindu* (November 4) that, "The time has come in a strict law and order sense, to ensure that the Sri Lankan militants functioning in India are not allowed to carry or store arms for any reason ('self-defence' etc)..." also constitutes a warning. We understand that anticipating such controls, the LTTE had much earlier shifted its main training camps and munitions manufacture from Tamilnadu to Jaffna, but it must not be forgotten that the question of cutting off supplies too has already been raised for the first time by the SLFP in Parliament, during the last debate to extend the Emergency. So it may be wisest for the LTTE and other militant groups to recognise the constraints and decide to take part in the negotiation process and thus surface as a political rather than as a mainly military force.

The most recent news that the LTTE among the militant groups now stood for a political settlement close to that advanced by the TULF and has put forward counter-proposals to those of the Government aimed at reaching a settlement is at least in this situation encouraging. But as we have pointed out in these columns, to reach an acceptable and workable solution will entail a generous spirit on the part of the Government and a conciliatory approach on the part of the Tamil representatives. We have no illusions however that we could have a 'complete' solution to the problem from this or any other capitalist government, for indeed what has been achieved in the Political Parties Conference itself was in no small way due to the pressures of the Left parties as will be seen from the statement of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) appearing elsewhere in this issue. But a way has undoubtedly to be found which will enable our people both Sinhala and Tamil (influenced as they are by current racist ideology) to get together to solve their common problems which really stem from the capitalist and neo-colonialist exploitation of our land. That there are sinister right-wing forces both international and national that will do their best to prevent such a process and encourage de-stabilisation instead, has also to be recognised and resolutely countered.

## The Stumbling Block

The stumbling block in any settlement proposed will no doubt be the demand of the Tamil parties for the merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces or the creation of a separate single linguistic unit in a Provincial Council. The other issues raised in regard to the wider exercise of powers could, it has been felt, be sorted out somehow across the negotiating table, more especially since such differences have now been narrowed down considerably.

The main objection to any proposal for a merger of the North and East is the varied ethnic composition of the Eastern Province in contrast to the Northern, but it seems to us that in all fairness, the wishes of the people in the East too on whether they would want to be merged with the North in preference to having a provincial Council of their own should be ascertained. This is all the more so because in any devolution of power from the Centre, people in any region whatever be their race would naturally prefer to have a council of their own which they could directly control or influence.

The Tamil demand for a linguistic region or unit is however understandable in the context of the feeling of insecurity and of genuine fears that the Government may not ultimately honour any accord reached nor implement it fully and may in fact not be permitted to do so by Sinhala chauvinist forces both within its own ranks and outside it. The deep distrust that the Tamil groups (and even Sinhala groups) have of this Government is a big part of the problem. There is again the fear that any change of government may result in the abrogation of any accord reached, especially when the SLFP is presently engaged in a shameless tribalistic campaign designed to frustrate a political solution by the Government. The blatantly bankrupt and opportunist politics pursued by the SLFP is seen in its refusal to put forward proposals of its own as a solution, contenting itself instead with making a pronouncement that it would place its own "solution" before the people when it came into power, while in the meantime of course, it seeks diabolically to inflame racist passions. The Sinhala racist elements in both the UNP and SLFP especially must in this situation therefore bear the main responsibility for the "Tamil homeland" position so doggedly being maintained by the Tamil groups.

We ourselves are not enamoured about having separate "homelands" - whether for Sinhalese, Tamils or Muslims since we firmly regard Sri Lanka as the "common homeland" of all our different communities. In fact, in our view, this insistence on a separate "Tamil homeland" can be dangerous and even excite,



as well as help perpetuate, racist feelings at the expense of the Tamils, and more especially in the context of the Tamils being an *interspersed* community with a good many of its members residing in other parts of the country *outside* the "homeland" asked for. We have nonetheless to seriously take account of Tamil fears and feelings and make whatever adjustments are possible in the circumstances. The offer by the Government of a boundaries commission to effect necessary changes in provincial units could be seen as a move in this direction.

Any true settlement however demands a climate free of hostility and suspicion and a genuine contact and dialogue between the people of the North and South. The warm reception accorded to Vijaya Kumaratunga by the North recently augurs well for the future and needs to be followed up by visits of the Three Party Alliance of which his party is a member and indeed by all others who stand for the unity of our people and the building up of a truly united Sri Lankan nation. And it is only in this manner too that we could maintain our national integrity as a people and avoid being reduced to playthings of Big Powers which will be inevitable if we are divided.

### The Foreign Connection

In this context we would do well to be wary of the attempts of the United States of America in particular to "fish" in our troubled waters. The UNP Government has been more than willing to allow the U. S. to establish a political and military presence in Sri Lanka in return for loans and other forms of aid. The grant of land for a Voice of America (VOA) station in our country second only to that in the USA is only one example. It was but natural therefore that there should have been concern in India recently over the US offer of aid to Sri Lanka under an "anti-terrorist programme", resulting in the USA having to clarify that such assistance will be limited to aviation security to be used for training civilian officials only. However the admission now that our Government has agreed to allow the US to send its airborne "anti-terrorist" Delta Force at will to the Colombo International Airport to deal with any "terrorist" attempts to damage or hijack US aircraft using the airport or planes carrying American passengers (*Forward*, November, 1) should be a cause for concern. Even the offer said to have been made by an American company to spend up to 250 million US dollars to set up a power plant in Trincomalee to harness the energy of the ocean to produce electricity (*The Island* of November 8) must be viewed with suspicion for while we have the ocean all around us, why pick especially on Trincomalee which as everyone knows is of prime strategic importance to a foreign Big Power?

However it is not only the Government but the Tamil groups too who must be wary of being used, perhaps quite unwittingly, by such sinister forces in the context especially of the efforts now being made to bring about a negotiated political settlement to our vexed "ethnic" question.

And the prospect of such a settlement seems nearer now with the discussions to be held between President Jayewardene and Premier Rajiv Gandhi at the time of the S A A R C Summit at Bangalore in mid-November and the developments that must necessarily follow such a meeting.

(9 November, 1986)

### Postscript:

While this issue was in the press, came the news of the latest proposal on the crucial issue of the unit of devolution especially as regards the Eastern province. According to this proposal, the Eastern province would be reconstituted into three separate provinces - a Batticaloa province where the Tamils would have a clear majority, a Trincomalee province where the Sinhalese would have the numerical and political edge and an Ampara province which would be recognised for practical purposes as a Muslim dominated province. Linked with this is the appointment of a Boundaries Commission which would look into the question of what Tamil areas in the Trincomalee and Ampara Districts might be be-linked and attached to the Tamil majority province of Batticaloa. This division of the East would in fact appear to reflect the sad tensions and fears that exist now in a single province where once people of different races lived together in reasonable harmony.

The latest proposal was made during the three rounds of talks had between Premier Gandhi and President Jayewardene in Bangalore. It is significant too that at a news conference held thereafter, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi is reported to have remarked: "with the package that President Jayewardene has given now, we believe that the Tamils can live in peace and security." For even if this new proposal falls short of the single linguistic unit demanded by the Tamil groups (which itself poses many problems) the right of two or more provinces to act in concert on matters of common interest (advocated strongly in these columns) has already been conceded by the Government.

(18 November, 1986)

### STOP PRESS:

The attempted settlement at Bangalore failed when the LTTE leader brought there for discussions insisted on the need for a single linguistic unit or North-East link - up as a "Tamil homeland".

If the Tamilnadu Police crackdown earlier on the militants including the confiscation of their arms and subsequently of their communications equipment was aimed at pressurising them into a settlement, the post-Bangalore Summit offensive of the Sri Lankan Armed Services would probably have prompted the return of the communications equipment seized, especially when it was said to provide the latest information on daily military actions in Sri Lanka. Obviously our authorities have not yet learnt to act wisely in the context of India's "quiet diplomacy" on this question.

Further discussions on a settlement have however continued both in India and here with the recent visit of Indian Ministers P Chidambaram and K. Natwan Singh who are to come again in December, after more consultations in India.

It was pointed out in Parliament recently that Sri Lanka was spending Rs. 31 million a day and Rs. 30,000 every minute on defence activities.

(30 November 1986.)

# What I saw in Jaffna

— Vijaya Kumaratunga

*(As recorded at a special interview)*  
**Christian Worker**

On October 20th afternoon I left for Jaffna to help secure the the release of two Army men who were taken prisoner by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the course of the fighting in Mannar the previous week.

## How it all happened

I had earlier received a telephone call from 'Rahim' (his real name I learnt later was Kanagaratnam) promising to release the two soldiers to me in Jaffna. He wanted me to come with members of the families of the two captured servicemen and media personnel from the newspapers, radio and T.V. so that the soldiers could be handed over to me in their presence.

I had naturally to get Government permission for such an arrangement and the Government at first agreed only to my making the trip alone. It was with some difficulty that I was able to even obtain permission for Ossie Abeygunasekara and Felix Perera of my Party to accompany me on this mission. For security reasons, I was asked to fly to Jaffna by a Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) aircraft.

## An exchange of prisoners

On our arrival at Palaly airport, we were taken to the Palaly Army Camp where we lodged for the night. At the camp I learnt that there was in fact to be an exchange of prisoners: two of the LTTE captured by the Army were to be released in exchange for the two captured servicemen in LTTE custody. Colonel Wimalaratna, the Commanding Officer in the North, described this as a "historic occasion". The mass media had reported earlier that the two soldiers were to be handed over to the Jaffna G. A., Mr. Panchalingam, but this was apparently not acceptable to the militants.

At the Palaly camp early that evening I was present when there was a telephone conversation between 'Rahim' and Captain Kotalawala about the intended exchange of prisoners and, Colonel Wimalaratna gave eleven names to Captain Kotalawala to be read out over the phone to Rahim. It was agreed that Rahim should, on the next morning, inform Captain Kotalawala of the two prisoners who were to be released out of the list of eleven names. A German TV team who had been in Jaffna a few days earlier with Government permission

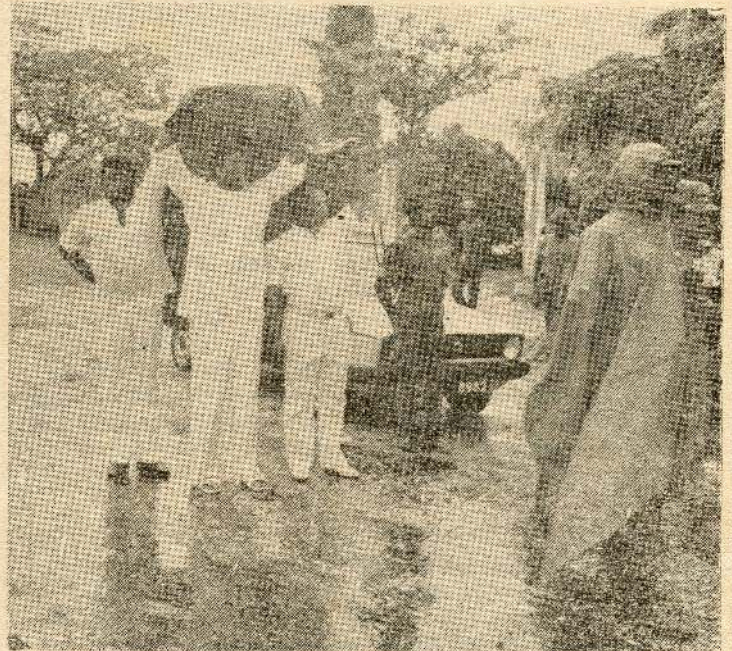
also recorded an interview with Colonel Wimalaratna in my presence at the Camp. In this interview, the Colonel confirmed that this was the first time that prisoners were to be exchanged and said that this was a good turn of events. He was appreciative too of the earlier gesture of the militants in handing over coffins containing the bodies of nine soldiers killed in action in Mannar to the Jaffna Fort Camp. All this is recorded on video and cannot therefore be controverted.

On the 21st morning Colonel Wimalaratna came to my bedroom with a telex message he had received from the Joint Operations Command (JOC) with instructions that no prisoners should be released. I too saw this message.

## Meeting the militants

Despite the countermanding of the arranged transfer of prisoners, I said that I had to meet the militants and we were therefore flown to the Jaffna Fort Camp from Palaly.

We stood at the barrier near the entrance to the camp with an Army raincoat held over our heads since it was raining somewhat. On seeing the militants approach us at a distance, I advanced with my companions to meet them some distance away from the barrier where we had been standing. These were tense moments for us as soldiers and militants, fully armed,



Awaiting the militants

stood facing each other on opposite sides. A false move by someone on either side could well have meant the end of us!

'Rahim'—a smart young man of 20 years—rushed forward and shook hands with me and I introduced him to my companions. He asked where Captain Kotalawala was and called out to him to come out and meet him. The tension was broken when Rahim and I walked back to the barrier where we were joined by Colonel Weerasesekera who was in charge of the Jaffna Fort Camp, Colonel Wimalaratna and Captain Kotalawala. It was the first meeting between Colonel Wimalaratna and Rahim along with the militants. Captain Kotalawala was already known since it was he who had received the bodies of the dead soldiers from the militants earlier. After introductions were made, we left the camp with the militants, accompanied by the German TV team. The Army received permission to send another camera man to accompany us (whom the militants discovered before long to be a Sub-Inspector of the National Intelligence Bureau!). The militants even invited the Colonel and the Captain to join us but this offer they politely declined.

We then walked on into the town where we met 'Kittu', the Northern leader of the LTTE—a stout bespectacled militant about 28 years old who was obviously held in high esteem. Kittu spoke in Tamil and was translated into English by Rahim who was fluent in Sinhala too, having been educated at Trinity College, Kandy. Kittu and Rahim appeared to be very popular figures wherever we went.

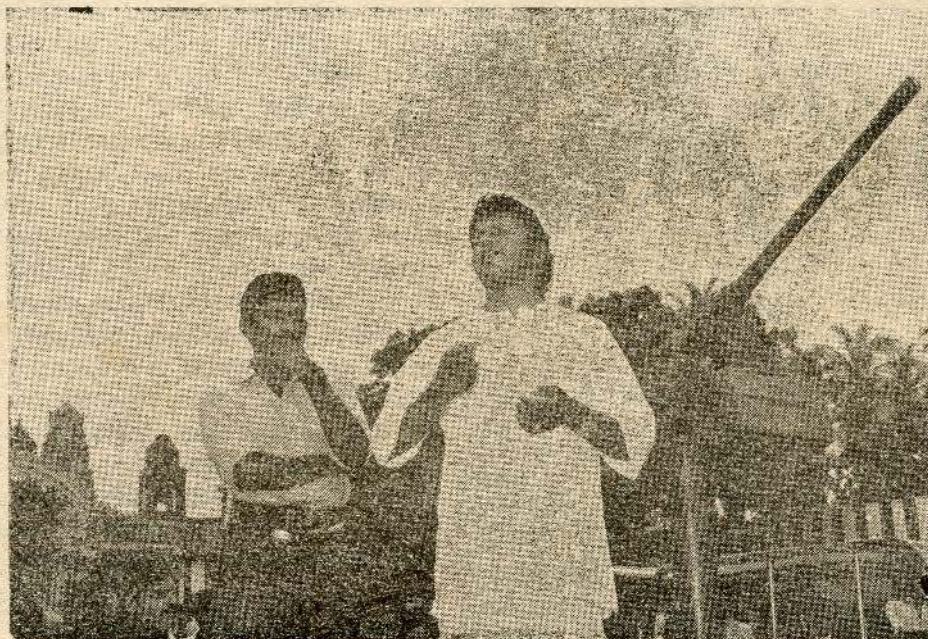
### Visiting the captives

Accompanied by Kittu and Rahim we went first to see the two captured soldiers at a nursing home. Both

of them were being treated for their injuries and looked relaxed and comfortable. They said they were being treated well. Rahim and Kittu explained to the soldiers that the government had violated its undertaking to release two prisoners in Army custody in exchange for them and that it was not possible therefore for them to be released to me as arranged.

We had a long discussion on this matter. I tried my best to secure the release of the soldiers notwithstanding the Government's refusal to exchange prisoners. But the militants were reluctant to do this as they felt they had been cheated. They explained that they wanted to show the world that they had no desire to fight against the Sinhalese or against the ordinary soldiers who were merely fighting for their pay. That was why they had wanted the parents of the captured soldiers, journalists and photographers to be present at their release. Kittu said they had earlier released two policemen unconditionally, also two run-away soldiers who had surrendered to them. They had also sent the bodies of nine soldiers killed in Mannar to the Jaffna Fort Camp, as a gesture, since they too had suffered casualties, and they knew that parents would always want to have the last rites done for their sons killed in action. It was a human feeling. But now, in the present case: it was different since these were prisoners of war taken in battle and an undertaking was violated and they had to show their disapproval.

Kittu and Rahim however, emphasized that they would not release these two soldiers to anyone else but me whenever they decided to do so. They also said that there were four more prisoners taken by the Army whose names should be disclosed to them before they considered a mutual release of prisoners.



Speaking from the armoured car, with Rahim, as interpreter.

### Press conference and Temple pooja

We then proceeded to the LTTE Party Office where a press conference was held. From here we visited the famous Nallur Temple where a pooja was held for peace and communal harmony in the country. Kittu and Rahim who normally do not go to the Temple also removed their shirts and joined us at the pooja. After this I was able to address the people who had gathered outside the Temple and I did so from the top of a LTTE armoured car.

I said I was proud to be there as a Sri Lankan and a Sinhalese who stood for the rights of the oppressed

regardless whether they were Sinhalese, Tamil or Muslim. I explained that we were engaged in a struggle for peace and justice so that the people of the North and South could live together in communal harmony and commitment.

### Hospital visit and public response

We next visited the General Hospital and went round the wards seeing also the parts damaged by the shells and bombs of the Security Forces. The Hospital was well equipped and had 137 doctors. Kittu did not go inside the Hospital with us, since it was outside normal visiting hours: he did not wish to break rules even though he was the undisputed LTTE leader in the North!

On coming outside after our Hospital visit, we had lunch and were then greeted outside by a massive crowd which cheered and mobbed me. I had even to sign autograph albums! Acknowledging the greetings of the crowd I shouted back in Tamil: "Long live the unity of the Sinhala and Tamil people!" Although it was generally an enthusiastic and cheering crowd that milled around us, the LTTE leaders felt they should not let me address the crowd there for reasons of security.

### "Tiger" training camp

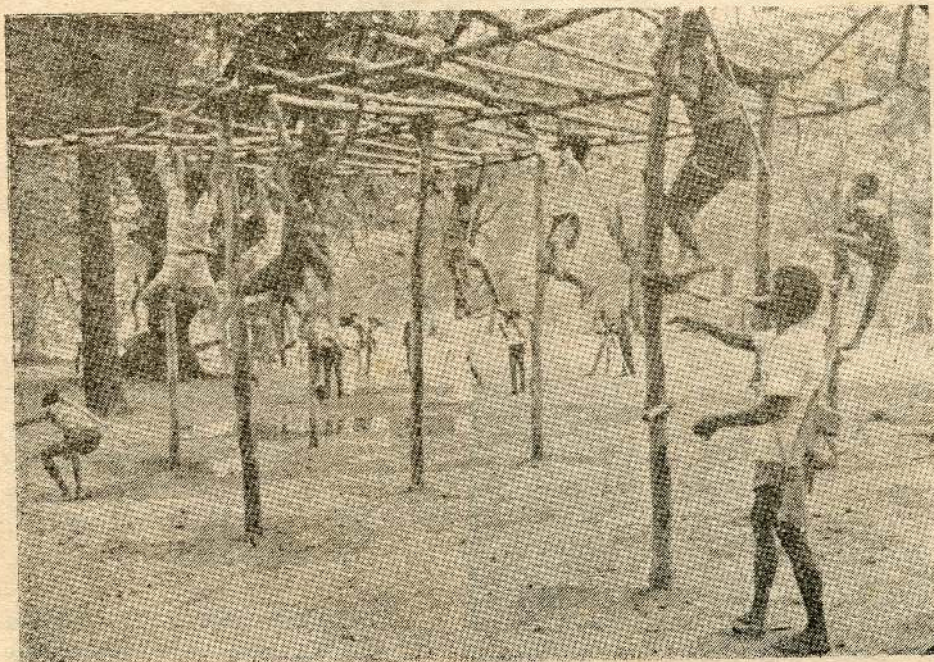
We then left for the LTTE training camp situated in what was once the Residency and its gardens (originally, British Governor's and later Government Agent's residence—Ed.)—some 37 acres of sprawling land in the very heart of the Jaffna town. I was later amused to read a story in the *Daily News* of October 29 headlined

"Tigers pitch camp in GA's Residency" as if it was quite a hot piece of news. This camp has in fact been in existence for quite some time now and is not unknown to the public. Those receiving military training quite openly at this camp are very young people, many of them 12 years in age and over, the oldest being in their early twenties. The training given here is apparently of a general nature to be followed up later with more specialized courses. I saw young boys going through their training and also examined arms and equipment. The grenades were marked as, 'Made in Pakistan'. "Army supplies", I was told. Most of the weapons were from the USA and marked 'Property of the US Army'. They were modern, sophisticated weapons. I tried out two of them myself with a little assistance, not without some degree of success in hitting the targets! (The targets used were not cut-outs of soldiers as maliciously made out in the *Weekend* of November 2) The militants now have anti-aircraft missiles and they produce their own mortars. I was introduced to a 16 year old named Sri Sabaratnam who makes 6 inch mortars which have been named "Kutti Sri".

### My impressions

I went round Jaffna town and the environs and there are many things I could say. I shall however, restrict myself here to making a few general observations. Firstly, the impression I had was of a people now well accustomed to the sound of shells and explosions and who were going about their normal business notwithstanding these. (In fact they may well be surprised if there were no such noises to be heard occasionally!)

Even the children now play 'Army and Tigers' instead of 'Cops and Robbers'. It is said that the most popular children's toy that sold fast at the last Nallur Temple festival was a toy gun! Bus transport is normal and so is also activity in schools and hospitals. Even the State offices function and civil administration goes on as usual, the only difference being that while the government pays the employees, real control of the administration is in the hands of the militants. There are now no normal courts of law in the official sense except 'Eelam Courts'. In place of the normal State police there are 'Eelam policemen'. Bunkers and checkpoints manned by the militants are found all over the peninsula. Taxes too are collected from the residents—farmers



Tiger cubs in training

and fishermen included. Shops too contribute their share of taxes with a heavier tax being imposed on liquor shops. The militants permit liquor shops in preference to the hidden manufacture and sale of 'kasippu', although they themselves do not drink or smoke as part of their discipline. It is in fact a clear situation of **dual power** that I saw in Jaffna where the Government pays the salaries of the State employees while the LTTE in fact runs the administration. There was even a zoological garden recently set up by the LTTE administration which I saw and, three or four new children's parks too, opened by them!

Backing for the militants is evident in Jaffna for they have emerged, as a result of the Government's own mis-handling of the situation, as protectors of the people and of their self-respect as a Tamil community. The Army is for the most part confined to their camps and tolerated by the militants. It is also a fact that even firewood and water has been supplied to the Army Camp in Jaffna Fort free of charge by the militants themselves!

### On our return

When we returned to the Army Camp in the company of the militants, we were met at the entrance by Captain Kotalawala. Rahim introduced some of the militants to the Captain and jokingly asked him to take good care of the NIB-Sub Inspector sent out with us as a camera man. "He didn't say he was an inspector, but we found that out" said Rahim. "The Sri Lanka government surely deserves a better intelligence service!" he remarked. "Just imagine, sending out an inspector like that with a camera!" Everyone, including the inspector laughed good-naturedly. We shook hands and said goodbye.

Later on, after an informal chat with the Colonel and other Army officers and the Police Superintendent at the Jaffna Fort Camp about our experiences, we left for Palaly and then back to Colombo on the 22nd.

There was an interesting development on our return for we found out from the pictures we had brought back that one of the two captured servicemen reported to have been Private Kithsiri Fernando was in fact Second Lieutenant Ajit Chandrasiri of the Gajaba Regiment believed to have been killed in the Mannar fighting and supposedly buried at Moratuwa in a sealed coffin! The other soldier, however, answered to the name we had been given—Private K. V. Bandara of Yatiyantota.

What then, of the mission we had gone on? Even though we had not been successful in immediately securing the release of the two servicemen, we have no doubt that we made an useful contact with the militants and, above all, with the people of Jaffna to whom we had demonstrated our sincere desire for peace and unity. We were also able through this visit to learn for ourselves a lot more about the actual conditions that exist in Jaffna which the Government until now has, I think, foolishly tried to conceal from the vast majority in our country. The visit to Jaffna certainly strengthened our resolve to bring about a negotiated political settlement which alone could put an end to the present senseless slaughter and wanton destruction in our land.

And this is precisely what our party, the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party (SLMP) and the Three-Party Alliance of the LSSP-CPSL-SLMP are struggling to do constructively in this situation in sharp contrast to the bankrupt, opportunist and racist politics peddled by certain other elements for their own selfish ends. □



With the captives — Bandara and Ajit Chandrasiri.

## Tigers at the Fort

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)—in an unprecedented, dramatic gesture—handed over at the Jaffna Fort Army Camp nine bodies of soldiers they had killed on 12th October in a fierce, direct confrontation at Adampan in the Mannar District.

Eye-witnesses told SATURDAY REVIEW that on Tuesday night, 14th October, a covered truck along with some other vehicles carrying armed militants came up near the Fort Camp on Main Street, Jaffna.

Then Kittu, the Area Commander of Jaffna LTTE had talked with the Jaffna Fort Army Camp over the walkie talkie. As communications were not clear, he had moved his vehicle up to the bus halt near the Jaffna Municipality which is very close to the Jaffna Fort Army Camp

Meanwhile, the SATURDAY REVIEW understands that LTTE militants had already taken up positions in the Subramaniam Park close to Jaffna Fort and buildings nearby. They were prepared for the worst.

Kittu had again talked to Captain Kotaiawela, who is understood to be in charge of the Jaffna Fort Army Camp and had expressed his willingness to hand over the corpses of the security personnel.

## Comment on LTTE

There is little point in speculating whether the Police crackdown on militants in Madras is a routine security exercise in view of the S.ARC summit or an attempt to cut the militants, especially the L.T.T.E., down to size. Whatever the reason, the crackdown has created a new situation from which all sides can learn useful lessons:

Indian authorities have woken up to the implicit danger of allowing armed groups, who flaunt their weapons, to move around at will and seek to appropriate to themselves rights that Indian citizens themselves do not enjoy. Sri Lankans who doubted India's seriousness and sincerity in mediating for an ethnic settlement have had to change their minds. But the biggest lesson has to be learnt by the militants, especially the L.T.T.E.

In recent times, the L.T.T.E. or leading circles in it seem to have grossly over-estimated their own power and influence. In various ways, they have tried to lay foundations for an U.D.I. In preparation for this, L.T.T.E. leader V. Prabhakaran has publicly declared that Eelam will be a one-party state and that the L.T.T.E. will be that party.

The L.T.T.E. itself has taken a number of unilateral steps to establish its hegemony in the north by force, including liquidating a vast number of TELO cadres, forcing

Captain Kotelawela is reported to have assured him that there would be no reprisals.

Meanwhile a white flare had been fired from the Army Camp and in return the militants had fired a red flare.

Once agreement had been reached between Kittu and Captain Kotelawela, Kittu returned to the point near the Main Street junction where the truck carrying the dead bodies had been parked in a reversed position.

When Kittu gave the order for the bodies to be handed over, the truck which was loaded with the bodies of the dead security personnel, went in a reversed position towards the Jaffna Police Station barrier—which is the point of no entry for un-authorised persons into the Army Camp.

At the barrier Captain Kotelawela and 3 or 4 security personnel were there to meet them.

The vehicle carrying the bodies was manned by only 2 persons—the driver and another person. They got off the vehicle and attempted to off-load the coffins.

Then Captain Kotelawela ordered his men to carry the coffins and take them inside the camp.

Captain Kotelawela hugged and shook hands with the two persons who had brought the bodies to the camp.

Everything ended peacefully.  
Thank God.

Saturday Review 18th October

PLOTE to pull out of the fight, and now threatening the EPRLF with forcible extermination. Nor is its drive for hegemony confined to other militant groups. It has so alarmed TULF leader Mr. A. Amirthalingam that he has spoken bitterly about would-be "Pol Pots". Of late, some LTTE cadres have even tried to threaten and tangle with the Communist Party and the trade unions, the only all-island mass organisations still functioning in the north.

**More sober elements in the LTTE, if such exist, must ask themselves where these hegemonist ambitions will eventually land them. Have they failed to notice that mass opposition to their crude methods of diktat are already leading to open protest in several areas of Jaffna? Have they failed to notice that not a single important newspaper or political force in India, including Tamilnad, has criticised the crackdown against them, while several have openly queried how they have been allowed to function as they did for so long? Will justice for Tamils be best secured by threatening violent extermination against others fighting for the same cause, albeit by different methods and in different ways? And do they want to add forces of progress and socialism in south Sri Lanka and abroad to the already not inconsiderable list of their active opponents?**

It would be infinitely wiser for the LTTE to shed vainglorious hegemonist illusions and add its influence and authority to the search for a negotiated and honourable settlement of the Tamil problem.

From the Editorial in **Forward** (Communist Party of Sri Lanka) November 15

## Not a provisional Govt: LTTE

MADRAS, Oct. 30.

The LTTE's steps to "Organise and consolidate the civil administration" in the Jaffna peninsula from January 1, 1987, were not tantamount to declaring a provisional Government, a spokesman of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam clarified in Madras - today.

The spokesman said these developments "had nothing to do with the proposals" of the Sri Lankan Government to devolve power to the Tamils. He charged the Sri Lankan Government with trying to distort the LTTE's setting up of a civil administration as declaring an independent State with a view to making the Government of India feel "annoyed" with the LTTE.

He pointed out that the LTTE was already running the civil administration in the Jaffna peninsula "But now we want to have an organised set-up to run it from January 1, it is not a new phenomenon. The civil administration is already there. We are slowly consolidating it. We are trying to bring the civil administration in a formalised set-up. It has nothing to do with the proposals." He said this in reply to a question whether the move to run the civil administration was a pressure tactic to force the Sri Lankan Government to concede more than what it offered in the proposals.

"We said we will set up the civil administration, not declare a provisional Government. We will be issuing licences. We are already trying to recruit traffic policemen," the spokesman explained.

Asked what the LTTE meant when it said it would set up the "Tamil Eelam Secretariat" from January 1, 1987, the spokesman said the Eelam Secretariat meant the local administrative body. "It will consist of people who will collect taxes, issue licences, give permits, etc.... All highways are in disrepair. We have to repair them. There is no municipal administration there. We have to set up the administration." The Eelam Secretariat, in effect, meant the Collector's office, he added.

Asked whether the LTTE would issue its own currency, he said the organisation had plans to do so, but it was a "very complicated task."

- The Hindu Oct 31 (Excerpt)

# The Role of India

- Nirmalan Dhas

*This article specially written for Christian Worker by a Sri Lankan presently in Madras, sets out the reactions of the people of Tamilnadu to events in our country, besides seeking to analyse the role of India in our "Ethnic issue".*

*Although we tend instinctively to shy away from any proposal to create a linguistic state in our devolution of power to the provinces as one that could exacerbate racism and even go counter to our real need today to build up a truly united Sri Lanka nation, the situation described in this article needs to be taken note of seriously. It could also provide a much needed corrective to the insular attitudes and ways of thinking that is so characteristic of many of our Sri Lankan people.*

The recent past has seen various elements active within the Sri Lankan political context voice anti-Indian sentiments and attempt to turn the island's people against the people of their neighbouring country. While various factions have come up with arguments supporting this anti-Indian stance, it is clear to us from our exile here in India, that these arguments are being put forward by persons who have little if any experience of the Indian people and their political aspirations or a clear understanding of India's approach to the role of Mediator that she has been called upon to play.

## A realisation slow in coming

It has only gradually become clear to the people here that the Tamils in Sri Lanka have over the centuries come to occupy certain well defined geographical locations within the island. In the central hill country regions they are concentrated at elevations above 200 feet and on the plains they inhabit a well defined contiguous region that extends from the Northwest to the East along the island's coast. The people and government of India are now well aware of this situation of the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

It is now also accepted that the Tamils in Sri Lanka have been subjected to a consistent policy of political and economical marginalisation which has led to their progressive alienation from the life of the nation. Moreover, the periodic violence let loose against the Tamils is now seen as a gradually increasing spiral of violent oppression that is now rapidly approaching what can legitimately be described as a

situation that threatens this community with genocide. India has recognised this fact and clearly articulated it at international level.

India's semi-federal state structure has been reasonably successful in providing its several linguistic groups with a measure of autonomy and a fairly wide scope within which their right to self-determination can be exercised. Hence it appears to the people of India that the Tamil people of Sri Lanka have every right to a linguistic state of their own, along the lines on which the Indian states have been constituted. The reluctance of the Sri Lankan government to constitute such a linguistic state and thus create the structures through which the political and economical aspirations of the Tamils can find expression, is therefore viewed with suspicion and is beginning to be seen as an indication of the government's lack of sincerity in its claims of being desirous of a negotiated solution.

## The first major change

**It can be seen in retrospect, that it was the anti-Tamil violence of July 1983 that brought a major qualitative change to the armed struggle that had been opted for by a then miniscule minority amongst the Tamils.** This violence convinced most of the Tamils that a people capable of opting for such a sweeping and brutal response towards their attempts to realise their political and economical aspirations, would hardly be led to accept the legitimacy of these aspirations through negotiations. Hence the support for an armed struggle grew, and thousands of young Tamils volunteered to join the Liberation Organisations.

**This violence of July 1983 also had serious repercussions amongst the people of Tamilnadu,** who had hitherto been under the impression that the Tamil youth fleeing persecution and seeking refuge in their land were some sort of political criminals. Even the publicity given to their cause when two of their leaders were arrested following a gun battle between their rival groups in the heart of one of the biggest shopping centres in Madras had not been able to convince the people of Tamilnadu of the legitimacy of the grievances of the Tamils of Sri Lanka, much less that of an armed uprising against the state.

The violence of 1983 changed this perception overnight and the Liberation Organisations found themselves welcomed as patriots and heroes by the Indian people who now readily went out of their way to assist them in their struggle.

Furthermore, the smashing of the economic base of the Tamils in the course of this violence, led to a spontaneous expression of outrage amongst the Tamils of South India for many of those affected Tamils who had been engaged in commercial activities in the cities and towns of southern and central Sri Lanka had close links with Tamilnadu being Tamils of recent Indian origin themselves. This spontaneous expression of outrage was seen by certain political parties in Tamilnadu as an emotion that could conveniently be manipulated to achieve their own political advancement. Therefore these parties, swiftly jumped to the fore of these protests and assumed the posture of champions of the Tamils. They even found it convenient to project themselves as the local patrons of the Tamil Liberation Organisations, and their involvement gave rise to chauvinist expressions and jingoism of the most opportunistic sort.

The sudden surge of popular support for the armed Liberation Organisations lifted their operations from the level of anarchic individual actions to those of a more co-ordinated guerilla war. The state armed forces who had failed to anticipate such a qualitative change or consider such a change as being a serious possibility, and the government which had maintained that the armed element within the Tamil people's struggle was an anarchistic outgrowth that was limited to a few adventurous youth and which could therefore be crushed with ease, were therefore caught off guard. In fact it is now generally accepted that several elements with the government and armed services connived with those who planned and executed the anti-Tamil pogrom of July 1983 in the naive belief that this violent suppression would lead to the extinguishing of the Tamil people's struggle once and for all. Faced with this unexpected development the armed forces and the government reacted with an unprofessional and unprincipled brutality that shocked the world and abruptly rendered the democratic political process within the island irrelevant.

Consequently the TULF found that whatever its intentions, it was ultimately unable to influence the actions of the government in any way and it therefore had to rely on the Liberation Organisations to bring to bear upon the government whatever pressures were possible. This factor was also recognised by the Indian government once it realised that none of the island's political parties appeared to be willing to take on the task of checking the government's genocidal militarist strategies and come to the assistance of the Tamil people in their struggle. This recognition has enabled the militant Liberation Organisations to consolidate themselves and grow until

they have now reached the stage where they have been able to wrest control of significant sections of the Tamil areas away from the government and even bring the civil administration of these areas under their control.

### **A clearer perception emerges**

As the geo-political implications of the spill over of the island's crisis into neighbouring Tamilnadu began to be more evident, it also became clear that the island's government had allied itself with foreign powers that are antagonistic towards India. This led the Indian government to attach greater importance to the developments within the island and to exercise greater care in its role as mediator between the government of Sri Lanka and the Tamil organisations. There is now a general agreement amongst observers here that the present crisis in Sri Lanka forms another link in the nexus of destabilising forces that have been kindled along the peripheral regions of the Indian sub-continent. The identification of trends that further this destabilisation and their effective isolation is therefore seen by all progressives here as being an urgent and vitally necessary task.

It is generally accepted that the basic aspirations of the Tamil people for a contiguous region where they can feel secure and manage their own affairs, as well as the demand of those who though native to the island have been denied recognition of their citizenship, for the granting of the same, are indeed legitimate and must be accommodated. Elements who oppose the acceptance and accommodation of these legitimate aspirations are therefore clearly identifiable as those that invite destabilisation and create the pressures necessary for the stirring up of divisive racist forces which in turn lead to the strengthening of separatist tendencies. From the point of view of India, these elements represent trends that are antagonistic towards its own interests and security. It is this perception of a subtle threat to its own interests combined with a sincere commitment to the realisation of the legitimate political aspirations of the Tamil people that forms the base of India's approach to its role of mediator between the various factions that are involved in the Sri Lankan crisis.

The belief, apparently widely held, that the Indian government is presumably blind to the international implications of the Sri Lankan crisis and insensitive to the legitimacy of the political aspirations of the Tamils and that it is merely the internal pressures from Tamilnadu which can be seen to emanate from certain definable quarters, that has led to its intervention, is a mistaken perception that arises from a



sad lack of communication and links between the Sinhalese people and the people of India and the limitations of the vision and analytical abilities of the island's intelligentsia.

### **The response of the people of Tamilnadu**

The brutal military strategies of the state armed forces, led to a general feeling of outrage and to a twisted perception of the Sinhalese people in general. Amongst the ordinary people of Tamilnadu for instance, there grew up a popular notion that the Sinhalese people in general were akin to a sub-human species devoid of human sentiment and committed to the massacre of the Tamil minorities. This perception was exploited by several political parties in order to further their own political goal and hence persisted for a long period. In fact this perception of the Sinhalese has only just begun to change following the visit to Tamilnadu made by Vijaya Kumaratunga, and the widely projected welcome given him by the Chief Minister, Dr. M. G. Ramachandran. Today a growing section of the Indian people, recognise that there is a significant, though small, section of the Sinhalese people who recognise the legitimacy of the Tamil people's political aspiration and their struggle to realise the same.

Amongst those with a more analytical outlook, the fact that it is only certain identifiable factions who oppose the acceptance of the political aspirations of the Tamil people has become clear and a general interest in identifying these factions can be discerned. There is also, amongst those with this outlook, an interest in the actions and stand of those factions who recognise the legitimacy of the Tamil people's political aspirations. This arising awareness has largely isolated the chauvinistic and jingoist voices that emerged from certain political parties within Tamilnadu following the anti-Tamil violence of July 1983.

### **The present situation**

Despite the fact that the present negotiations hold out the promise of a possible solution and a chance to rebuild the democratic process, there are serious shortcomings that make optimism seem out of place. Chief amongst these is that despite the ongoing talks, the government of Sri Lanka has stepped up its military activities. This increase in military actions especially in the Eastern region, has been linked with attempts to get India to agree to bring pressure to bear upon the Liberation Organisations to agree to whatever the government may hold out to them. This gives the appearance that the govern-

ment of Sri Lanka has gone along with India's attempts to forge a solution only in order to secure the co-operation of India in bringing pressure upon the Liberation Organisations and that now, seeing that India has no intention of pressuring the Tamils but that it rather seeks to realise their aspirations which are seen as legitimate and to bring the island's political process back within a democratic framework, it has fallen back on its military strategies that threaten the Tamil people with genocide.

India has patiently watched the Sri Lankan back-tracking on its professed commitment to a negotiated solution, for the second time this year. This time it has not even bothered to protest and has chosen to let the government reap the rewards of its ill-conceived strategies and learn the hard way from its own experience. The last time the government of Sri Lanka attempted such a military approach, it must be remembered that the fighting that resulted saw it lose control of the Northern region up to Kilinochchi and Vavuniya. If the government of Sri Lanka chooses to ignore the present opportunity to gracefully accept and accommodate the Tamil people's aspirations for a separate area of their own comprising one contiguous region encompassing the present Northern and Eastern provinces, it is likely to have to face a military defeat in the East as in the North. If this does occur it will soon be faced with the existence of such a separate state even if it fails to recognise the same. The moral strength of the Liberation Organisations that arises out of the undeniable legitimacy of their aspirations is gradually winning them greater and greater support amongst the Tamil people, and if the government chooses to persist in adopting its militarist approach such an outcome now appears inevitable.

### **Liberation Organisations to the fore**

Recognising the government's reluctance, which is now taking on the appearance of insincerity to engage wholeheartedly in any attempt to forge a solution through negotiations, the Indian government has been forced to accept the reality of the increasingly important role the Liberation Organisations will be called to take upon themselves. As if in anticipation of this impending change in the existing status quo, **The Hindu**, perhaps India's most widely read English daily, carried a two-page interview with Mr. Velupillai Prabhakaran, who leads the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, spread out conspicuously next to its editorial columns over two consecutive days: thus bringing Prabhakaran into the limelight, and giving him an opportunity to accustom himself to the responsibilities that history may call upon him

to shoulder and the restraints he may have to subject himself to in the wider interests of the Tamil people.

### The overall context

Forces antagonistic to Indian interests have also stepped up their activities to keep pace with the progress made by India in neutralising the various destabilising factors along its border. Rumbblings of dissatisfaction have been heard recently from Assam where unhappiness at the delay in implementing the provisions of the Assam accord have been expressed, and threats to resume agitations have been heard from this quarter. Pakistan appears to have stepped up its encouragement of separatist elements and has pressed ahead with its nuclear programme complicating its likely effects by linking it with China. The National Socialist Council of Nagaland has stepped up its armed attacks in recent times and the Ghurka National Front has taken to violent agitations. A new force has emerged amidst the Jharkhand Liberation Organisations and China has brazenly occupied border areas in the Himachel Pradesh. And now as though to crown all these disturbances, the Hindi lobby in New Delhi has succeeded in having strong moves made in order to impose the limited use of Hindi in Tamilnadu just when it seemed that the Tamil Nationalist Parties in the region had been carefully disengaged from their exploitative usage of the Sri Lankan crisis. A resurgence of Tamil Nationalist sentiments in Tamilnadu at this moment can have serious consequences for Sri Lanka as well as India.

The growing strength and influence of the Non-Aligned Movement clearly felt through the stand taken by the Non-Aligned countries within the commonwealth on the South African issue; the unity of the Non-Aligned countries in condemning the unprecedented instance of a major power using its armed forces to attack the residence of the head of another state, manifest in the US armed forces attack upon the home of the Libyan leader, Col. Quaddafi; and the Non-Aligned Movement's firm stand and concerted strategies aimed at assisting the people of South Africa in their struggle against racism, cannot but have caused consternation amongst those countries that have traditionally looked upon the developing nations as a convenient source of cheap raw materials and labour. As the strongest nation within the Non-Aligned Movement, India's role within this movement will undoubtedly carry a great deal of weight in influencing the decisions it makes and strategies it adopts. The recent visit to the sub-continent by Oliver Tambo of the African National Congress, the visit of the Nicaraguan foreign minister who even staged a fast, in protest against the threat to his

country created by the US, in order to impress upon the Indian people the volatile situation that his country and people were faced with; and more recently the visit of the Nicaraguan President, Mr. Daniel Ortega himself, show clearly the importance that is attached by Non-Aligned Nations facing situations that demand special attention, to their relations with India.

### The historical perspective

It takes no special effort to see that, amongst the Third World countries, it was the people of India who offered the first co-ordinated opposition to imperialism in the form of their struggle for National Liberation, and hence it should come as no surprise that the momentum of its victory should carry it into the heart of the present struggle against imperialism being taken up by several nations within the Non-Aligned Movement. We have seen how, faced with the threat of armed aggression by a racist regime the people of South Africa have turned to India for solidarity and assistance. We have seen how the African nations bordering South Africa, when faced with threats of aggression by that country for their role of assisting the South African people in their legitimate struggle, have turned to India for assistance. We have seen how the people of Nicaragua have looked to India for help in consolidating their freedom which they have only recently won after a protracted and bitter struggle with imperialist forces.

In the face of this concrete reality our people must be taught to accept the fact, that whatever the nature of its internal political and economical arrangements, India has consistently maintained a foreign policy stand that supports the struggles and aspirations of peoples against imperialist domination and racism and their aspirations for peace. We must teach our people to see her as our ally in our efforts to create political structures that permit the realisation of the political aspirations of our island's people, including those of its several minorities, and towards the formulation and implementation of a progressive policy of economic development and growth that is in the first instance self-reliant and in the second in close co-ordination and co-operation with the several non-aligned countries that have successfully freed themselves from ties of economic and political dependency and subservience to imperialist powers. If we fail to do this we will be making a mistake that will soon leave us with no alternative other than to link hands with the various nations and political tendencies perched precariously along India's borders from where they can be seen to be engaged in sowing seeds of discord amongst the people of India. Isolated from all progressive people and trends,

we will be forced to join these pariahs of the Third World Who have chosen to become the pawns of the Imperialist vultures whose beaks of subversion thrust again and again into the vitals of those Third World nations who stand for the goal of political and economical freedom and global peace, which many

of us still cherish, causing confusion amongst their people, making their struggle more difficult and the price of victory higher day by day. It is time we began to think seriously about whether it is in our interests to choose our leaders from amongst those who wish to lead us into this corrupt company. □

## HOME TRUTHS

by President J. R. Jayewardene

### What is meant by 'your race' ?

Excerpts from a Question and Answer session at the Kelaniya Sri Lanka Tyre Corporation in July -

Q. When these new proposals are implemented will there be threats to our race through more hidden methods than one?

A. What is meant by your race ?

The questioner is asked to explain at this stage and he says what he meant was the Sinhala race.

A. That is an important question. A few days ago Mr. Anura Bandaranaike was told in Parliament by a Minister that his generation started with a Tamil called Neelaperumal. My mother and father also had their origin in India. Keppetipola too was of Tamil origin. Our last four kings belonged to the Nayakkar dynasty in Andhra Pradesh. So it is difficult to say who has unmixed Sinhala blood. I regard all citizens of this country alike. Therefore if there is harm caused to the Sinhala race, other races, would be harmed; if there is any harm caused to the Tamil race, there'll be harm to the other races; if there is harm to the Muslims, there'll be harm to the others; if one individual is harmed, it would be harmful to the whole country. Our aim is to obtain the rights of every citizen without thinking in terms of his race, caste or religion.

Q. You have said you will not have talks with anyone who is against this small country. Then why are you having talks with Amirthalingam and others?

A. I want to change their ideas. The dhamma was preached to those who did not know it so that they could know and understand it. Mr. Amirthalingam and others like the terrorists were going on the wrong path and acting against the tenets of Buddhism. So while telling them what is right I am also propagating the dhamma.

Q. Whose brainchild was the Provincial Councils ?

A. It was Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's. He first proposed Provincial Councils in 1926 as the way to solve the problems of the minorities. He was the first leader to have advocated it. I am following in his footsteps although Mrs. Bandaranaike is not.

(Reproduced from **Saturday Review** of August 2)

### The Two Mudaliyars

President J. R. Jayewardene who opened a two storeyed dharmasalawa at the Soysaramaya at Mudukatuwa Marawila in the Nattandiya electorate said he was proud that Buddhists and Christians in the country had lived together in peace and harmony for several years.

Ven. Madihe Pannaseeha Nayake Thero presided.

The President said Ven. Baddegama Wimalawansa Nayake Thera had referred to the past. He too would like to do so.

His great, great grandfather, Don Adrian Wijesinge Jayewardene was gifted 1,000

acres at Mudukatuwa by the British government after the Sinhalese king was captured in 1815. He was the first Mudaliyar of Chilaw.

Similarly, in Siyane Korale, a similar acreage including the Horagolla lands was gifted to Don Solomon Dias. The Bandaranaike name was not used then. Now it was used as Dias Bandaranaike. He was appointed Mudaliyar of the Siyane Korale.

It was these two who had showed the way to Kandy to the British Army.

D'Oily, the first British Government Agent in the Kandy country had recorded it in his diary - "Mr. Bandaranaike's ancestor was called spy mudaliyar and my ancestor was called guide mudaliyar" he said.

The President said that when the last king of Kandy, Sri Wickrema Rajasinha and his queens went into hiding at Medamahanuwara, these two leaders showed the British the way to arrest them. These two were present during the arrest.

The adigars and ratemahattmayas surrounded the king and tied his hands. The earrings were wrested off the ears of the queens and there was blood on their jackets.

It was left to Don Adrian Wijesinghe Jayewardene to untie the rope that tied the king's hands. Having done so, he chided the adigars and ratemahattayas asking them "Why are you insulting him? Although he is under arrest he is still a king". He then handed the captives to the British government.

The king who was happy gifted Don Andrian Jayewardene with a gold watch as a mark of gratitude. The watch had been given to the king by the Dutch.

(Excerpt from a report in the **Daily News** of August 4)

## A Call to the Tamil Community

The Lanka Sama Samaja Party has at all times eschewed communalism - be it that of the Sinhalese or of the Tamils.

Sinhala communalism branded the LSSP as anti-national conveniently substituting a Sinhala identity for national identity. And although Tamils as a minority whose rights have been affected have seen the LSSP as a political party that has stood for their rights, Tamil communalism itself has seen no reason to be friendly to the LSSP. This is not for communalist reasons alone. Tamil communalism like Sinhala communalism is essentially a petit-bourgeois movement and its class reaction to the LSSP has been no less hostile than that of its Sinhala counterpart. That these attitudes and the false propaganda from which they arise should colour the thinking of even those who within the Eelamist movement call themselves Marxist or socialist is not without explanation. These persons and groupings have not severed their petit-bourgeois class links. They too gain their sustenance from the communalism of this petit-bourgeoisie.

The LSSP took the opportunity of the All Parties' Conference convened by the Government in 1984 to canvas the Conference for its proposal for the setting up, on a national scale, of elected District Councils which are meant to exercise a large measure of powers and functions that would devolve on them from the centre. The system projected was one in which two or more District Councils could coalesce within a province. The Provincial Council as the unit of devolution was thus there in these proposals in its embryonic form. What had to be further discussed and defined were the powers that were to vest in the unit of devolution.

The LSSP at all times distinguished itself from the wholly communal approach from which resulted the demands or the suggested solutions such as the creation of a Tamil Homeland and its alternative, the single linguistic unit. The self-management principle applied on a national scale gave the system which sprang from this distinctive approach of the LSSP.

The District Councils proposed by the LSSP were based on the principle of self-management of the Districts by the people of these Districts through their elected representatives. They differed totally from the UNP's District Development Council within which set up the M. P. for Dambadeniya in the UNP

could be made Chairman of the Jaffna District Development Council and the nominated M. P. for Kaduwela in the Colombo District could be made Chairman of the Polonnaruwa District Development Council. They differed in the extent of powers too. The powers proposed by the LSSP to its District Council were considerable and could be further enhanced. This is proved by the extent to which these powers were expanded and increased, together with the size of the unit of devolution, in the discussions and negotiations which went both before and after the Political Parties Conference. In the Political Parties Conference the LSSP with its partners in the 3-Party Alliance pressed for and reached as Conference decisions the following positions:

1. The Provincial Councils will be set up through election in all 9 provinces.
2. The executive powers vested in these Councils will be exercised by the elected Chief Minister of each Province.
3. The President's power of dissolving a Provincial Council and taking over the administration of a Province will be exercisable only in a situation of a break-down in law and order in that Province, and the exercise of that power will be subject to approval of Parliament within a period of months.
4. Members of Parliament will not have any function in a Provincial Council after the first council ends.

Constitutions are made and Constitutional changes are affected not necessarily on the basis of the political principles or the good will of any political party but in accordance with the balance of class forces at the time relevant. The Parliamentary defeat of the Left forces in 1977 did affect this balance of class forces to the grave disadvantage of the working class and its political parties. The escalation of communalism since about 1983 has resulted in the balance of class forces being tipped further against the working class and the progressive forces throughout the country. In this situation what has been achieved in the Political Parties Conference is noteworthy. The further step will be to get the UNP Government to enact legislation in keeping with the decisions of the Political Parties Conference. The still further step will be to have the legislation properly implemented.

It is the LSSP's view that a nation-wide struggle that cuts across communal barriers can be conducted in order to compel the UNP Government to take

both these steps. The LSSP which has so far campaigned for these proposals against Sinhala chauvinism as well as against other groups of chauvinists has now the further task of winning all sections of progressive Tamil opinion too to a commitment to this struggle to have the necessary legislation enacted and speedily implemented.

The LSSP is confident that properly constituted Provincial Councils will give to all Provinces a high degree of self-management through elected representatives in regard to all aspects of the life of the people in the Provinces. The further extension of the principle of self-management and the areas of self-management will naturally be a continuing process and it will be in the interests of all Provinces to work for this extension. There is thus the avenue open for a united struggle for the extension of the powers of the Provincial Councils to manage their own affairs and for their protection. It will be in effect a struggle for the further extension of democracy and this, in a multi-racial society does accrue to the benefit of the minorities.

The LSSP is not unmindful of the fact that the armed Tamil militant groups have so far publicly said that the proposed Provincial Councils' system is of no relevance to the present situation. But what in fact is the present situation? Tamil militants find themselves today locked in a war of attrition with no prospect of even a partial victory. The much anticipated Indian military intervention direct or by proxy was at no time a likelihood and in any case today there is no such prospect. In this situation declaration of heroics like "we shall fight to the last cadre" (Prabhakaran: *Saturday Review* - 13th September '86) sounds brave but is in fact fraught with meaningless tragedy. The militants themselves now need a solution that is an alternative to a military solution, and which can be looked at from a national point of view as opposed to the two rival communalist points of view. It is here that the proposed Provincial Council system has its pointed relevance. The system provides a satisfactory approach to minority rights as regards language, employment, higher education and land distribution. And unlike in the case of a wholly communal solution this system allows the minorities equal access to the life of the country.

The LSSP can well understand the Tamil people's deep distrust of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and his UNP Government. But what is immediately in question is not the matter of trusting Mr. Jayewardene or even negotiating with him. What is immediately necessary is the unity of all progressive forces on a feasible solution to the prevailing ethnic crisis. That unity will bring forth the joint struggle against all the disastrous policies of the UNP Government. That will be the struggle for

the establishment of what the LSSP and other progressives have projected - democratically elected and democratically functioning Provincial Councils throughout the country. This essentially is the replacement of the communal struggle with the class struggle.

Let all communities enjoy the right to the declaration and the preservation of their identity and the preservation and development of their culture and their traditions. Let all communities be enabled to live together in peace and well-being in a united socialist Sri Lanka.

**LANKA SAMA SAMAJA PARTY**  
20th October, 1986.

## CROPP PROTEST OVER NEW ARRESTS

The process of arrest and detention of citizens by the army and police is continuing unabated in both the north and south. According to reports in the press, the police has taken into custody number of persons last Saturday. Among them was Ms Pulsara Liyanage an activist of CROPP. An assistant lecturer in Western Classics at the University of Kelaniya, she is also very active in various mass organisations.

Ms Liyanage was taken into custody by the CID on the morning of Saturday 01st November 1986. The CID Officers who arrested her did not produce a detention order or any kind of authorisation. She was initially taken to the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB) office at Longden Place Colombo, and then to the anti-terrorist unit of the CID headquarters, the "fourth floor". Since then she has been transferred to the Slave Island police station.

On the first night at the fourth floor, she had to sleep on the ground and was bitten by a rat and had to be medically treated. At the Slave Island police station she had to sleep on a stone slab. This police station does not even have proper toilet facilities.

CROPP would like to draw your attention to Ms Liyanage's state of health. She underwent a major womb operation this March and has still not recovered from it fully. Furthermore, she suffers from low blood pressure. CROPP insists that when people with known ailments are taken into custody, they should be properly looked after. Such has not happened in this case. We wonder whether the police are here using a subtle but insidious form of torture.

CROPP suspects that the sudden arrest of Ms Liyanage does signify the government's intention to crack down on democratic and human rights organisations like ours. While on the one hand, it points to the existence of organisations like CROPP as an example of democracy in the country, the arrest of an activist in our organisation can only mean that their intentions are quite the contrary.

We protest against the arrest of Pulsara Liyanage and demand the government that she should be released immediately.

**7th Nov. 1986 Campaign for the Release of  
Political Prisoners (CROPP)**

# Talking of "Privatisation"

— Hector Abhayavardhana

"Privatisation" was one of the remedies announced in 1978 by the present Government of Sri Lanka as part of a policy package aimed at the shortcomings and failures of state-owned industrial and commercial undertakings. The package outlined four steps that had to be taken: (1) setting up minimum standards of financial stability; (2) requiring state business undertakings to compete on equal and non-discriminatory terms with the private sector; (3) professionalising top management of state undertakings; (4) privatising or closing down uneconomic and inefficient state businesses. "Privatisation" was thus not an all-inclusive device or an end in itself, but part of a policy of applying private sector principles and methods to the reorganisation of the public sector.

## Policy & Practice

What is interesting to observe is that when it came to implementing the announced policies there was a marked lack of energy and enthusiasm on the part of the politicians and bureaucrats concerned. In two areas alone, viz. the textile industry and the production of milk products, has privatisation and rationalisation of management been pursued with some set intent; and in both areas drive as well as expertise have derived from trans-national capital. In 1983 private sector participation was announced in the business of several industrial corporations. Among them were Ceramics, Leather, Mining and Mineral Development, Petroleum, Hardware and Mineral Sands. But little or nothing has been done in this direction until today. Meantime the Finance Minister keeps lamenting from day to day that the State corporations and Government business undertakings constitute a millstone round his neck. He referred recently to the unique kind of "privatisation" that has taken place in some Ministries, resulting in further worsening, in place of relieving, his budgetary burdens.

The failure to rationalise, privatise or close down State industrial and commercial undertakings has not, of course, been due to any improvement in their management. Some of them, like Steel, Hardware, Ceramics, Leather, Tyre and Paper have been grievously affected by competition from unrestricted imports, with little prospect of immediate change in their situations. But in almost all corporations, corruption, waste, inefficiency and outright pillage, resulting from over-staffing, jobbery, rewarding of political supporters, witch-hunting

of opponents, and intimidation of management by hoodlums in the role of trade union bosses, has made it impossible to make plans for their rehabilitation. Lest it be thought that we exaggerate the peril confronting State industrial and commercial undertakings today, reference may be made to the Seventh Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Public Enterprises of 24 January, 1985. The Report reveals that "none of the enterprises have rendered satisfactory accounts"; and states that the control exercised over them by their managements is "far from satisfactory". It lists some of their other shortcomings as "uneconomic activities, fruitless expenditure, under-utilisation of installed capacities, redundant or surplus assets, unsatisfactory price structures, non-remission of draft annual reports to the Auditor-General, poor liquidity, inadequate rates of return on investments, poor financial performance and inefficient and ineffective use of resources and waste of resources."

## The case of bus transport

A particularly disastrous result of privatisation where it was actually attempted is provided by the Sri Lanka Transport Board (former CTB). Prior to July 1977 the CTB was by any standards one of the biggest and most successful road transport enterprises in the under-developed countries. Its balance sheet did not perhaps testify to large profits, but the administration of public services like the CTB cannot be adequately motivated by the making of profits alone. The fact is that it ran an efficient service, linking up almost all parts of the country for the first time and providing access to the remotest villages on patently uneconomic routes. Appreciable economies were effected by the setting up of well-equipped workshops and body-building units. And even if travelling was not comfortable route services ran to time. By 1979 the door was opened to privately-owned buses in the name of supplementing the CTB's services. By 1984 the number of privately-owned buses and coaches at 17,999 exceeded the number of those in the CTB which stood at 16,425. All the most lucrative routes were opened to the private owners and on the shorter intra-city routes in Colombo the number of State buses was curtailed to permit maximisation of profits by the private owners. Cock and bull stories were put out by the Transport Ministry to explain away the CTB's annual losses which soared from Rs. 56,000,000 in 1978 to Rs. 518,000,000 in 1982 and not much less subsequently. Even so, side by

side with astronomical losses, the service deterioration, road accidents took on frightful proportions and, as in the worst days of the bus mudalalis, law and authority disappeared from the roads. What is worse, politicians, high officials and even bank managers developed a vested interest in bus transport. According to one estimate, as many as 30 per cent of private coaches belong to senior police officers. In other words, the ruin of the CTB arrived simultaneously with the ruin of standards of integrity in other places including the arms of the State.

## Growth of the Public Sector

It would seem, therefore, that whatever terms were chosen by the Government to phrase their objectives, neither privatisation nor any of the other items of the policy package proclaimed in 1978 were important enough to fashion implementation of their policies. In practical terms, this was not surprising. The Government has itself estimated that at least 60 per cent of the economy is in the hands of the State. If the estimate is correct, it is unthinkable that such a vast capital holding of the State in poverty-stricken economy can be privatised in a matter of a few years. It is not without relevance that the state-owned public utilities in Sri Lanka were instituted by the British. They would not have done so had it been a feasible proposition for private capital to have set them up and run them. In like manner, a few state industries were set up by Governments of the same political party that administers the country today, the UNP. In fact, the founding fathers of the UNP looked round the country for private entrepreneurs before they made up their minds that none were available for the handful of basic industries they thought were immediately needed. The experience of the war years of 1939-45 had taught them, for instance, that a plywood factory was locally needed to provide tea chests for the tea industry. The Government prepared the project report and offered it to private enterprise. There were no takers, even after the Government offered to underwrite the entire share issue. "Private enterprise was, however, not responsive," said the **Report on Industrial Development and Policy** of the Executive Committee of the State Council for Labour, Industry and Commerce. The Executive Committee then decided that the State should establish the factory on its own account.

The tea industry at that time was entirely in private hands. Since the tea industry was to be the main consumer of plywood chests, there was a guaranteed market that should have encouraged entrepreneurs within the industry, if not outside. The World Bank report of 1952 explained the reluctance of the private sector tea industry to engage in the production of tea chests by pointing out that most of the sterling companies in the tea industry were themselves major shareholders in the companies importing tea chests and other requirements of the tea industry. In other words, the private sector in the tea industry had a vested interest in importing their requirements rather than in producing them locally. Rationalising this experience, the Government decided to proceed with some few industries it had planned, as State owned industries. It issued a declaration of policy in 1946 according

to which certain industries were regarded as basic and had to be in the hands of the State, while the rest would be for the private sector. A few years later this restraint on the private sector was lifted on the recommendation of the World Bank Mission that visited the country. But there was no flow of private capital into industry until the 1960s, when the deterioration of the Government's external balances compelled the enforcement of severe controls on imports and even nationalisation of the trade in certain items of imports. Restriction of the scope for investment in trade combined with the scarcity of imported consumer goods to provide a ready market for a wide variety of locally produced consumer goods. For the first time there was a perceptible spurt in industrial production.

## Effects of open economy

Now it is precisely these industries which sprang up under the policy of restricting imports and promoting local production that are being worn down or destroyed by the policy of liberalisation, the free market and export-oriented industrialisation. The tragic impact of these was pathetically described by the Chairman of the Ceylon National Chamber of Industries, Mr. A. R. P. Wijesekara, in his address to the chamber's annual general meeting in 1981. "...export industries can only be built up on the strong base of servicing the domestic market," he said. "We appeal to the government not to attempt to turn us into exporters while leaving the domestic market open for dumping of imported consumer products from countries with heavily subsidised exports. We appeal to the government to give us a chance of competing for the local market with countries which price their exports at reasonable prices... But please do not search the world for foreign capital to come in and make in Sri Lanka goods which we have made successfully over the last twenty years. Do not allow robber barons to come in to this country to drive the local industrialists out of a market which is legitimately theirs... If the government were to continue on the present road, then local industrialists may fall by the wayside and may be replaced by trans-nationals who have access to tied markets elsewhere in the world."

The Chairman of the Ceylon National Chamber of Industries put his finger on the spot. The Government's Policies of open economy, liberalisation of imports and dependence on external loans and investment would not be able to bring about a new industrialisation directed towards international markets. What would result from such a policy would be the collapse of existing industry serving the local market and the complete capture of Sri Lankan consumers by the products of trans-national companies. In that sense the privatisation of public sector industry and commerce would be nothing more than a fig leaf seeking to obscure the naked domination of the national economy by transnational capitalism. The Government's proclaimed objectives had little real relevance for economic practice. They constituted the jargon on the basis of which the national market was delivered to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for full integration in the new capitalist world market in exchange for liberal annual doses of loans, grants and other forms of "aid".

The Government's transactions with the World Bank and IMF, however, could not be confined to a manual of hymns for ceremonial occasions. The directing centre of world capitalism was dishing out rules for the regulation of national economic orders affiliated to it so that the chaos of conflicting national interests could be replaced by uniformity of practice and effective enforcement of authority. In that sense the deal with the World Bank was the certificate of official adoption of the authorised ideology of world capitalism on the part of the Government of Sri Lanka. It was a recognition by the world institution that it had found in the new Government of Sri Lanka a dependable and loyal acolyte who would be worthy of "the highest per capita volume of aid so far granted to any country. "Until this event relations between this country and the World Bank and IMF had been slender and tentative. The search for development had placed greater emphasis on national effort and resources than on foreign donors. Sri Lankan economic effort was greatly involved, perhaps, with international capitalism. But international capitalism was still riven with nationalist pulls in diverse directions. It had not yet been brought to heel by the trans-national companies.

### The market & the State

The central concept of trans-national capitalist economic doctrine is that of the essentiality and inviolability of the free international market. Both the World Bank and the IMF were instituted to serve this objective. Members of both institutions, as also of GATT, were always to be persuaded to interfere as little as possible with the freedom of this market. But in the period of the long boom that ensued after the second world war, the complexity and contradictions of the international market were not always the most disturbing factor in world transactions. National and trans-national approaches to the market were not always in collision. The recession of the world economy that began towards the end of the sixties and accentuated with the upsurge of oil prices brought about the change. Keynesianism, the principles of which informed the national management of economy in most countries, came into discredit. Allied with it was Social Democracy, which dominated Governments in Britain and many European countries for long periods. Both were now accused of the unpardonable crime of violating the sanctity of the market. The result was alleged to be the distortions and breakdowns of the market, both on the national scale and internationally. Indeed the national market included its world extensions. That was the reality of trans-national capitalism whose internationalisation of production had made the world

market as essential as its home market, and sometimes even more essential. The market, therefore, is no more divisible into national and international categories. It is now alleged to be a Social Market. It is this doctrine of the Social Market, purveyed by Right-wing sections of the ruling classes of Europe and the monetarists of the Reaganite entourage, to which our UNP Government has also become slave.

In contrast to the fantasies of Social Market economy, the central concept of post-war Keynesian and Social Democratic economy has been the managerial role of the State. Policy appeared to the latter to be guided by four signposts: full employment, economic growth, stable prices and a surplus in the balance of payments. The state could not limit its concerns to the money supply and public expenditure, but had to intervene in directions that touched the community's welfare. It is this central role of the State in the economy that has been thrown out by the present Government of Sri Lanka in the name of privatisation. But it would be foolish to conclude from this that the State has been downgraded in all its functions by the Government. In fact, the doctrine of the Social Market is not incompatible with parallel belief in the strong State. The strong State is needed, not for intervention in the market or the economy generally, but to guarantee the inviolability of the market and deal exemplarily with those who threaten that inviolability. In our country, liberalisation of the economy has proceeded hand in hand with growing authoritarianism of the State. At least in that sense, there appears to be a connection between the two.

It is the failure or refusal to appreciate this connection that is at the bottom of our problems. Far from being the product of political abstentionism, the market is the creation of State activity. In under-developed countries like Sri Lanka, even the market has to be brought into being. Subsistence cultivators, underpaid wage-slaves and idle unemployed cannot constitute a reckonable market, even if they make up a majority of the population. State action to reorganise agriculture, to improve wages and provide employment figure among a minimum of obligations that have to be discharged. Privatisation cannot be of much consequence where only fledgling industry as yet exists. Industrialisation demands state investment, tariff protection, export subsidies, assisted research and development and many things else besides, which only the State can provide. □



# Some Thoughts on Privatisation

Dr- Mervyn D. De. Silva

To discuss, objectively, "Privatisation" when the government has yet to define and state clearly what exactly it means by privatisation, spell out its policy, describe the mechanics, and reveal the criteria on which it proposes to select or "condemn" State Corporations for privatisation, is a difficult task. Judging from all available or accessible information, apparently there is no difference made even between privatisation and multi-nationalisation. Very broadly speaking therefore, it may be possible to identify two sources from which the demand for privatisation originates. One is internal, and the other is external.

## Pressures for Privatisation

The external demand or pressure to privatise could be the self-interested concern of aid donors for Sri Lanka channelled as pre-conditions by The World Bank for receipt of continued aid. And, at this point it is significant to also note that in recent years The World Bank has been consistently trying to wean away Third World Countries from concessionary loans and encouraging them to obtain the idling private capital in the industrialised countries. They must attract such capital and entice them to invest in their countries, by offering the usual packages of incentives which invariably gives The First World the best of both Worlds—high technology coupled with exploited labour, deprived, degraded and oppressed.

The internal demand for privatisation perhaps comes from politically and financially powerful individuals who have turned business men, and The Instant Companies that have reaped and accumulated large sums of easy money since the 1977 aid boom. The internal demand for privatisation could also come from some of the concerned members of the government like The Minister of Finance who sees State Corporations becoming an increasing burden on the economy because of annual losses resulting from mismanagement, incompetence, inefficiency, waste, indiscipline, and above all uncontrollable corruption brought about by unprecedented political patronage.

Whatever the sources from which the demand for privatisation is launched, the very fact that there are many competing and interested takers for the black listed Corporations now recording losses, indicates that in the eyes of the business and industrial worlds in the private sector, these State Corporations are basically viable and could be made profitable with Competent Management. It would also mean that 'prospective

foreign and local buyers of State Corporations have also identified the reasons for the financial losses (It is actually common knowledge), and are confident of their ability and capacity to convert such losses into lucrative profits. If this is so, we have to admit that profitability of an enterprise is totally dependant on the quality of management and control.

Corporations were liberated from the Financial Regulations and Treasury circulars in the hope that this would give them the flexibility in decision making, so very important for proper management, that they could run as profit earning enterprises. This hope was never realised. What then are the real problems confronting the actual management of State Corporations? What part has political interference and patronage played in bringing them to their present state? Before reflecting on these basic questions, let us recount the history of State Corporations in the first place.

## State Participation

Long before Sri Lanka gained independence, State participation in the management of Industries and Services existed with virtual monopoly in some activities such as Railways, Electrical, Posts and Telegraph, Telephones and salt, and in as early as 1930 a separate Ministry of Industries and Commerce was established to administer State Industrial projects. Then, when war broke out in 1939 the Government was compelled to establish several industries partly because of shortages in a wide range of essential consumer goods. Under this programme the State managed enterprises during the war years included the manufacture of plywood, quinine and drugs, tanned leather, coir yarn, paper, ceramics, acetic acid, glass and steel. However, although the management of these industries was believed to be unsatisfactory and the products manufactured of a poor quality, there was a ready market and right up to about 1947 they ran at a profit.

This situation, as expected, changed after the war with the return to normalcy, and with increasing imports following the war and the Korean boom in commodity prices, these industries suffered a set-back, and so did the efforts to expand and improve public sector industries. Nevertheless, one of the first experiments made in Sri Lanka in the field of large scale industry was in 1950 when the Cement Factory was established by Kankesan Cement Corporation which closely followed by the setting up of the Chemical Works at Paranthan.

Upto the early 1950's Sri Lanka's public enterprises functioned under the Advance System and, being controlled through the Financial Regulations and Treasury circulars, these commercial ventures did not have a measure of freedom in decision making which was essential for proper management and which is a pre-condition for the efficient and successful running of any organisation. For these reasons, government quite rightly decided to give public enterprises the advantages of private enterprises, but with public responsibility. It was believed that by freeing the State Corporations from commonly quoted bureaucratic obstacles, they would be able to operate on the principles of flexibility. In keeping with this line of thinking the UNP government of 1955 introduced the government sponsored Corporation Act No. 19 of 1955. However this Act gave government Corporations powers mainly to incorporate existing industrial undertakings.

### New Industries & Corporations

In order to pave the way for government to open up new industries in areas hitherto untouched, the SLFP government of 1956 introduced the State Industrial Corporation's Act No. 49 enabling Government to set up new industries, carry on an industrial undertaking, or take over any industrial undertaking carried on by any Corporation which were established under the government's sponsored Corporation Act of 1955.

By this time Government also indicated that certain Industries would be confined to the Public Sector and several industries emerged after 1958. When the United Left Front government led by Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike came into power in 1970 there was a further extension of State control and management of public enterprises, a policy followed for the purely **economic** and **social** reasons given below.

- (1) The private sector was often not willing, or did not have the resources to invest in large scale projects.
- (2) There was a catalogue of malpractices due to evasion of controls and free-flow out of the country of foreign exchange.
- (3) The State wanted to appropriate profits which could be used for economic development.
- (4) The government wanted to make goods and services available to the people at fair prices.

Today the private sector has the financial resources to invest in large-scale projects but there is sufficient evidence to show that reasons (2) and (4) seem to be valid in so far as Industries under private sector management go, prompting the Minister of Finance to tell the private sector to remember its social responsibility. This of course, is not to forget the fact that with the exception of a few corporations the reasons referred to above were not justified by their actual performances. But is privatisation the only solution?

### Privatisation: for whose benefit?

In the light of these observations, isn't there justification to question the wisdom of across the Board privatisation **WITHOUT** and **BEFORE** making a clinical examination of the causes and reasons for their failure which could not be beyond the capability of of any government to eliminate if it has the will to do so. If the required drastic changes are incorporated in an overall plan that would remove known obstacles (give more autonomy, competence, freedom from political patronage, professionalism etc.) and restore the healthy features of private enterprises, they could continue to be owned by the State and geared to serve the people.

"Privatisation" of State owned Corporations cannot be one, across the Board decision. Each corporation is distinctly different from the other with problems and difficulties peculiar to each of them, and therefore, in deciding whether or not to privatise a corporation its case has to be studied in a comprehensive manner not blatantly disregarding the social objectives for which it was set up.

With the information made available to the people on the fundamental changes that are being made in regard to the ownership of public enterprises, privatisation seems to be regarded as multinationalisation. These new structural changes are also leading to the penetration of trans-national capital flows which follow a model which gives priority to profit maximisation within the international system. And this process of "rationalisation" manipulates all parts around the profit motive and never deals with national economies in a holistic way unleashing several disruptive processes.

The question that then arises is- privatisation for whose benefit?

## Vietnam Delegation Visits Sri Lanka

A three member delegation from the Vietnamese Committee for Friendship with other Peoples visited Sri Lanka in late September. It comprised Presidium member Tran Van An (also Vice - President and General Secretary of Vietnam AAPSO) and delegates Nguyen Van Huong (Secretary) and Dang The Truyen.

### Solidarity Links

In the course of visiting fraternal organizations, the delegates had dinner with representatives of the Christian Workers Fellowship and visited the CWF Centres at Ratmalana (Workers School) and Galaha (Rural Training). They expressed interest in CWF activity and took back with them a coconut scraper with its drawing produced by the Workshop unit as a useful piece of technology.

The Vietnamese delegation came to Sri Lanka on the invitation of the Sri Lanka Vietnam Solidarity Association which was formed in 1964. The CWF was a founding member of this Association and was represented on the Association's Committee for several years. Efforts are now being made to revitalise this Association. It was the CWF too that held a Mass of Thanksgiving for the liberation of Vietnam in 1975 in the Anglican Cathedral in Colombo at which the Charge d' Affaires of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was present and addressed the gathering.

### Press Conference

At a press conference held in Colombo, the delegation leader Tran Van An expressed Vietnam's gratitude for Sri Lankan support given in its struggle against U. S. imperialism. He recalled that the Sri Lankan Government was one of the first to recognise Vietnam. Although they desired peace and wished to rebuild their country ravaged by 30 years of continuous war, the Vietnamese people faced unexpected problems in having to counter the forces of Pol Pot in Kampuchea and China in the North.

### The Kampuchean War

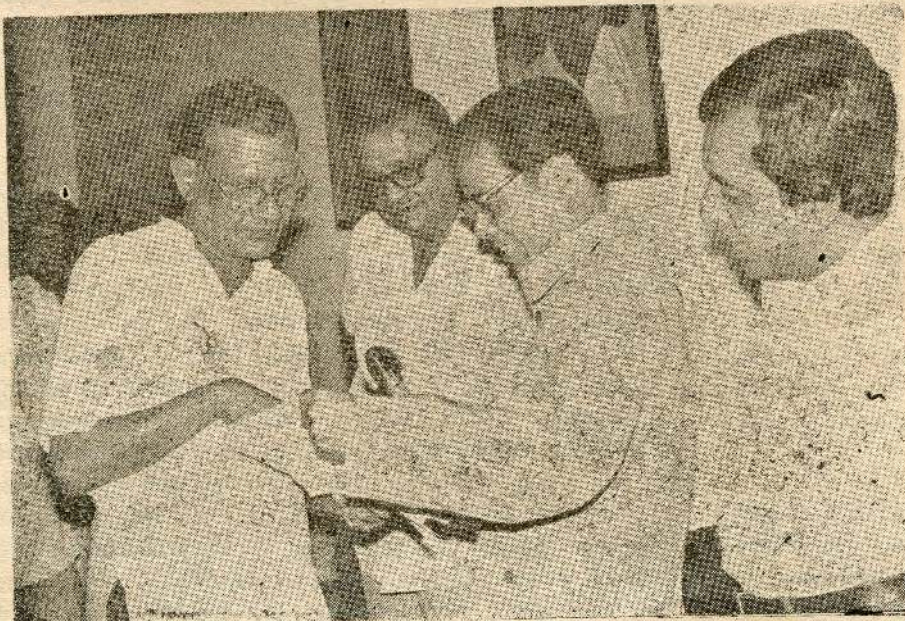
He stressed that Vietnam having fought together with Kampuchea against both the French and U. S. imperialists, felt obliged to intervene in the interests of the Kampuchean people who had suffered through the genocidal policies of Pol Pot and where 3 million out of 8 million people had been brutally killed and their social and economic life destroyed. Then China invaded Vietnam at its northern border in 1979, and every day the Vietnamese people were subject to shelling by the Chinese troops "to teach them a lesson". "We are a very patient people who have sought repeatedly to solve disputes and end the fighting but without success", said the Vietnamese spokesman. "We have appealed both to the UN and the Non-Aligned

Movement but without positive results." (The UN still regards Sihanouk's coalition as the legal government.)

"Our proposal: Let the Kampuchean people themselves decide their form of Government and let Pol Pot stop using Thailand as a sanctuary for attacks on Kampuchea." Vietnam has even now partially withdrawn its volunteers and set a deadline in 1990 for the total withdrawal of all Vietnamese volunteer troops. China has proposed a Vietnamese withdrawal and another coalition government under Sihanouk to be set up but this in effect would again amount to a Pol Pot domination since he would virtually control this alliance. Vietnam had no need to "colonise" Kampuchea as was sometimes alleged. Vietnam needs people for its own economic rebuilding and has only with difficulty spared its own volunteers to help Kampuchea whose intellectuals had been totally decimated by Pol Pot. "We also want to restore friendship with the Chinese people. We are truly grateful to them for the assistance given to us in the past", said the Vietnamese spokesman. He stressed that for stability in Indo-China and even S. E. Asia, Chinese co-operation was vital but there was no encouraging sign in that direction so far.

### Vietnam's Economy

Dealing with the internal conditions of Vietnam, Comrade Than Van An, who is also an economist, pointed out that Vietnam was an agricultural country and a minimum level of self-sufficiency in foodstuffs was reached last year. But because of a natural calamity, Vietnam was forced to import food this year. Since liberalisation and re-unification, 300 industrial units have been set up and large-scale electrification is planned for 1990. Oil too has recently been discovered. The lack of technology and technical 'know-how' however was a great drawback. As a result of having to engage continuously in fighting, Vietnam has not had any real experience in economic reconstruction. "As a backward country we have many things to learn. We cannot do everything by ourselves especially with the lack of 'know-how'. It is a step-by-step progress that we have to make", remarked Comrade Trah Van An. □



Delegation leader with CWF members.

# What are Cathedrals for ?

— N. R.

Most, if not all, bishops and people are saddled with cathedrals dating back many centuries—beautiful, and much admired, though difficult to maintain in their pristine glory. Some bishops and people are saddled with cathedrals of more recent origin but still with the same problem. For, cathedrals are not parish churches and therefore cannot depend on regular subscriptions from those who worship within them. As those who struggle to maintain and refurbish cathedrals built years ago, so will future generations struggle to find the necessary funds to maintain those of not so long ago.

## Ideals and Expressions

A not so recent article in the magazine 'Newsweek', (June 16, 1986), carried an article on the Cathedral of S. John the Divine in New York. It alluded to the mind of the Episcopalians who planned this edifice in these words, "..... they did not think small. In mind was a structure twice as big as the city's nearly completed Roman Catholic Cathedral of S. Patrick: it would be two football fields in length. Little did those Victorian churchmen imagine that in 1986 the Cathedral of S. John the Divine - a church second in size only to S. Peter's in Rome - would still be unfinished". (Going one better than the Jones's is not confined to the Victorian churchman of yester-year. In this day and age a suggestion was made that the Cathedral Church of the Anglican Diocese of Colombo should 'sport' a cross big enough in order that it may seem to dwarf its neighbouring building, the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall ! How petty naive !!).

Planners of Cathedrals, big or small, are motivated by many reasons, many ideals and many forces. In the period of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and even after, cathedrals were meant to express human gratitude to God for all his blessings and goodness. They took on the form of edifices seeking to show forth God's glory, majesty and power. But they were also meant to serve as the nerve centres of culture and civic responsibility: they served as centres of music, drama and art, of discussion and the appreciation of the things that belonged to the 'world'. They were centres where the Liturgy was really live and therefore gave meaning and purpose to life.

In our present age cathedrals tend to be less pretentious and awesome, perhaps with the intent that those who worship there might feel more 'at home', and thereby think of the chief church of the diocese as some sort of a refuge. And, so we find cultural and historical

forms of architecture and decor brought into the construction of cathedrals and churches. In the East, after many years of following the conqueror's pattern of architecture, complete with spires, turrets, belfries, rood screens and what-have-you, we see that there are dents appearing. The Cathedral of the Anglican Diocese of Kurunegala, in our own land, is just one example. Here the architecture of the Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa eras are blended together to form a composite whole and are easily discernible. The chapel at Kilinochchi has adopted the architectural style of a Hindu 'kovil'. The chapel at Chunnakam has done the same but in a slightly more modified manner.

But what do these attempts really mean? What is a cathedral for? What is a church or chapel for?

In *A History of the Diocese of Colombo* one reads that when plans for a new cathedral for the diocese were being discussed a certain Sir Joseph Hutchinson said, ".....the Church of England, in the premier Crown Colony of the Empire, should have a worthy Cathedral in Colombo, as a visible embodiment of the principles of Christianity upon which the British Empire is founded, and as a centre for the spiritual activities of the Church of Ceylon". (The marriage of the "principles" of the British Empire and the spiritual activities of the Church of Ceylon is significant even if they appear to be strange bed-fellows! Also, it seems as if the principles of the British Empire take precedence over the Church of God in Ceylon). Years later a bishop of Colombo said, when further discussions were in progress about this cathedral, that it should be a place, ".....where conventions can be held, where great services of pilgrimage, of thanksgiving, of offerings and intercessions may be worthily rendered, where courses of instruction may be offered in the name of the whole Church to the inquirer and the interested....."

".....of offerings and intercessions worthily rendered.....". What were these offerings and intercessions of which this bishop spoke? In his own mind, and out of his own culture, he may have been thinking merely of cultic practices. But there is more in these words than just meets the eye. These were and are prophetic words. Perhaps this bishop was telling the people of the church in this land that it was about time they sought their roots and worshipped their God in a manner befitting their own culture and ethos. Do any of the cathedrals that dot this land, from the North to the South, the East to the West, do this? Are any of these cathedrals centres of culture and civic importance and responsibility? Or are they jaundiced imitations of an era long past?

## What are Cathedrals for ?

While architectural style may seek to revive a certain amount of pride in that which was, to rely solely on this and bask in the glory of the past is not the function of any cathedral. A cathedral, as indeed every church ought to be, is a symbol of the Incarnation where the homeless and the destitute can find their rest, where thoughts 'worldly' meet in understanding and communion with thoughts 'holy', where the aspirations of all mankind can be expressed in dance, music, drama, art, liturgy, prayer, conversation, teaching and learning and be offered to the God of all, to the source of all life. They ought to be centres where the aspirations of man visibly and audibly expressed, co-mingle with God's aspirations for man. But what have we made of our cathedrals, especially in this land ?

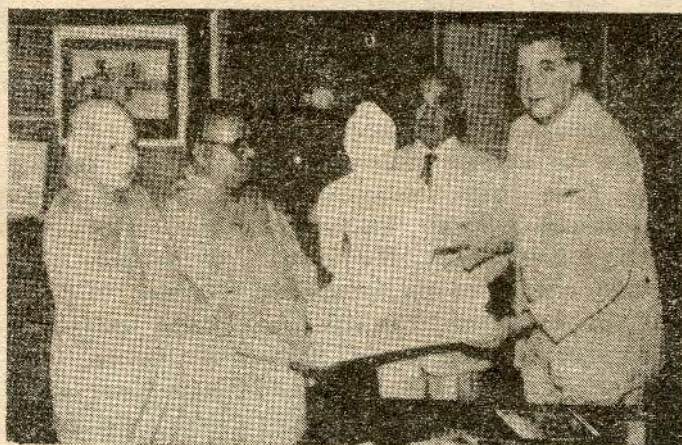
In the early 1970s a banned play, *Malavun Nagiti*, written by a Buddhist who was greatly impressed by the story of the Valley of the Dry Bones as found in the Book of Ezekiel, was performed in the Anglican Cathedral in Colombo. It was a very moving and profound play: a play with a message to the Church and the whole country. The use of the cathedral for the staging of this play — also certain other activities which were not particularly church oriented — was vociferously objected to by many defenders of the faith on the grounds that 'holy' edifices must not be used for secular or worldly exercises ! A similar opposition was voiced when the Christian Workers Fellowship held a Workers' Mass of Thanksgiving there for the liberation of Vietnam at which the Vietnamese ambassador spoke. (Conveniently forgotten of course were Church services held in thanksgiving for victory in imperialist wars in the days when God was linked with Empire). The opposition failed to realise that they were espousing the heretical dichotomy that separates the 'spiritual' from the 'material': that their stance was, and is, akin to the old heresy of splitting Christ in two: that what they were doing was a blatant denial of all that the Incarnation means and also of all orthodox Christology. But, they won the day and this cathedral has reverted to being a veritable grave of God and mausoleum for bishops. That it has so degenerated is a sign of unimaginative thinking and funk.....funk of what the world would think of its guardians.

In contrast to this introvert attitude we read of cathedrals in the West, like New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine, which are open to the winds of change, where people of all faiths and no faiths meet as brothers and learn of each other, where "rabbis, imams, Buddhist monks, secular politicians and atheist scientists share the same pulpit with preacher politicians.", where

"the Christa, a huge crucifix of the female Christ is displayed", where statues of the Buddha are placed, and also of various other attempts to make the mother church of the diocese in question a living centre for all beings. These and other attempts to make cathedrals relevant to the world may seem to be sacreligious. But those who cry so are, basically, disaffected Christians who see in these attempts a watering down of the faith and a denial of the centrality of Christ. But if Christ is not the Christ of all, he is not the Christ at all. And, this is what his 'defenders' are saying, albeit in their fervour on his behalf.

Cathedrals anywhere in the world are meant to serve the communities in which they are sited — they are nerve centres for the community and of the community "providing a conjunction of spiritual and civic values". This is just what they did five centuries ago and this is just what is expected of them to-day. Indeed this is their only role and their "spirituality" cannot be confined to the use of any particular "kind".

But, our sacerdotal immunisation reserves this function to the use of the "faithful" alone, and, in so doing, has converted them into ghettos where the "faithful" huddle together and console each other. Their God is limited, their God is confined, he is imprisoned in an Institution. But it is salutary to reflect that the Living God refuses to be confined, he refuses to be limited and he also refuses to be Institutionalised. He is the God of History whose liberating activity will continue to disturb people but nonetheless to inspire them if they are open enough



*Sri Lankan bhikkhus hand over a Samadhi Buddha statue handcrafted here to the Very Revd. James P. Morton, Dean of New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine to be installed in the Cathedral.*

(Courtesy: Daily News)

## Sri Lanka's Contribution to Liturgy

A *New Dictionary of Liturgy & Worship* edited by J. G. Davies (SCM Press, England) 1986, makes reference to Sri Lanka and to the Christian Workers' Fellowship very specially under the heading of 'Indigenization', reproducing also a photograph taken at a celebration of the Workers' Mass. The following is an extract from the book:

"The experience of Sri Lanka since the 1950s shows more fully the sources and development of contextualized worship. The sequence begins in the recognition both of Sinhalese culture and of the life-situation of urban and rural masses, leading to the growth of many experimental Christian communities and movements. From this a body of indigenous liturgy has emerged, shaped by Sri Lankan society and culture. The seminal work was done in the Anglican diocese of Kurunegala, where in the mid-1950s Bishop Lakdasa De Mel introduced Sinhalese prose-chants, dance and folk-music, in addition to the indigenous architecture, arts and seating - mats already used at Christaseva.

"From 1957, Yohan Devananda's small ashram (Devasarana Aramaya) began to evolve contemporary indigenous offices which included free prayer, silence, readings from the *Dhammapada* and contemporary sources, and the offering of flowers and lights. From long studies of the eucharist and growing involvement in village development, the central emphasis came to be on the worship of the cosmic Christ. This was later embodied in the *New World Liturgy* which draws also on Buddhist and Marxist sources to express strong social and indigenizing concern. The work of Devasarana and other parachurch groups was encouraged by Bishop Lakshman Wickremasinghe, who developed De Mel's measures and added regular readings from the classics of Sri Lanka's principal re-

ligions. He also gave particular support to the Christian Workers' Fellowship, whose common life has been characterized since 1960 by the weekly Workers' Mass. The fellowship is committed to being a part of Sri Lanka's working-class movement and to foster contemporary understanding of the gospel in the context of the country's predominantly Buddhist cultural heritage and of proletarian socialist ideology. Drawing on Orthodox and contemporary liturgies and experience at Devasarana, the mass utilizes indigenous dress, symbols and vessels along with dance, prostration and music, including conch and drum (see Plate 39). Many indigenous prayers, chants and lyrics, batik vestments, liturgies and local ceremonial have been devised for the mass, but most noteworthy are the motifs and themes shaping the liturgy. These are strongly emancipatory, focussing on biblical visions of a just society. The liturgy is sometimes preceded by a procession, in which the Workers' Litany is sung to a Buddhist pilgrim chant. The mass is usually held in a secular building, in the open air, or in workers' homes - all settings where the regular attendance of many non-Christians, including Buddhist clergy, is natural. Sometimes church buildings are also used.

"In recent years other liturgies have been developed: the fellowship meal, which includes the lighting of the lamp (from Hindu tradition); Vandana (orders for daily worship), which include cleansings, offerings of flowers, light and incense and meditation; special liturgies for Holy Week and Easter (with vigils, the stripping of the altar, veneration of the cross and festivals of light and of water) and for baptism, repentance, marriage and death. A unique liturgical development now comes full circle in the incorporation of many elements from the Workers'

*Mass in the Holy Eucharist - a Liturgy for Sri Lanka* of the Church of Ceylon (1983).

"Compared to this there have been few other attempts in indigenous liturgy, apart from some innovations by Bishop Leo Nanayakkara, in Badulla Diocese, and the low-profile work of such centres as Satyodayo. (Kandy), the Centre for Society and Religion (Colombo) and groups of the SCM."

### A song for all seasons !

*Provoked by an event which took place on 23rd August 1986 in the Colombo Cathedral, Baudhaloka Mawatha, the Bishop officiating at a requiem for the Rev. Canon R. S. de Saram, former Warden of St. Thomas' College, Mt. Lavinia.*

His Lordship is a thorough sport,  
He doesn't think it wrong  
To end a solemn Requiem with  
The jolly Thomian Song.

The bare Cathedral re-echoed  
With lusty, loyal notes,  
As even at his bidding, some  
Strained their lugubrious throats.

The Bishop wields extensive power  
With Mitre, Candle, Crook,  
He may install the College Song,  
A hymn in Holy Book.

Then may the doubting Thomases  
Be reassured with grace,  
And thank the worthy Bishop when  
Good souls depart this place.

*Mervyn Casie Chetty.*

# Workers' Struggles

## Union Agitation Over Wages

Trade Unions stepped up their agitation for enhanced wages in the eve of the Government's budget in November.

Unions belonging to the Ceylon Federation of Labour (CFL) had a picketing of workplaces on October 29th and the group of 21 Unions had their own action on November 11th.

The demands of the Unions centre on a minimum monthly wage of Rs. 1000/- and a 50% increase in existing wage levels. They also demand that the cost of living allowance be raised from Rs. 2/- per point to Rs. 5/- and that the Government re-employ workers who still remain dismissed after the 1980 General strike.

Writing to the Finance Minister before the Government's Budget, Dr. Colvin R. de Silva as President of the CFL pointed out that inflation and the rise in living costs had even taken away the benefits major trade unions had got for their members through the Collective Agreements of 1981. The Government followed these Agreements and announced in 1984 the payment to public servants too of Rs. 2/- per each unit rise in the cost of living index. But the Department of Census and Statistics itself was of the view that each unit in the cost of living index would cost Rs 8/18 today! Dr. de Silva said that publicity had been given to decisions of Wages Boards raising minimum wages during the

course of the year but such decisions had not benefitted the majority of the workers involved since for several years Unions had seen to it that the general level of wages were higher than the Wages Board minimum. "The position of the unionised worker is now being drastically eroded. Hence the demand that the minimum wage be raised to Rs. 1000/- per month" he stated. Dr de Silva also drew the Minister's attention to the general rise in prices of all essentials which called for corrective measures. These remonstrations have apparently not had effect since the Finance Minister's Budget brought no relief whatsoever to the working masses. The Unions are therefore bound to take further steps to mobilise their members to exert greater Pressure in this regard.

Taxmen too showed themselves to be restive when in a surprise action members of the Sri Lanka Inland Resource Service Union comprising Assessors and Tax Officers, stayed away from work a whole morning as a staged protest meeting in late July against what they alleged was a deprivation of the proper incentive awards payable to them under a scheme granted by the minister after Union representations. They entered the Department's building after the meeting shouting slogans. The union has since taken action in court against the Commissioner General. □

## CMU Press employers to negotiate

CMU which is the major union among white collar employees in the private sector has been putting pressure on the Employers Federation in a bid to get them to negotiate a revision of the subsisting Collective Agreement which governs relations between the Companies and their employees. The Agreement was signed in 1981 and was initially for a period of three years. The Employers have been dragging their feet on the matter of discussing the proposals put forward by the CMU. The Union launched a series of token strikes to compel employers to the negotiating table. These token strikes took place on July 10, July 28 and August 21. On August 27 representat-

ives of the Employers Federation met the Union and informed them that the Union should discuss outstanding issues with the EFC. Talks in this regard are to commence shortly.

## Rubber Plantation Workers Strike

Nearly 200 workers of Delthena, Reddagoda Estates and Rambodagalla Rubber Factory in Dodangaslande have been on strike since Sept. 12. The estates belong to a Private individual. The strike was a sequel to the assault of a worker by the management of the Estate. The worker concerned sustained severe injuries and had to be rushed to hospital where he underwent an emergency operation. The owner of the estate

is reputed for circumventing labour laws, non-payment of fair wages and had been resisting mounting pressure from workers to meet their just demands. The striking workers demanded that those responsible for the inhuman assault on Mookiah be brought to book and be removed from the estate. They were also fighting for redress of their long standing grievances such as payment of due salaries, provident fund contributions, gratuity payments and reinstatement of those unjustly dismissed from service. The owner of the estate has denied the workers their weekly rations and in an attempt to brow-beat the workers he had roused racist sentiments. 175 workers are Tamils while 25 belong to the majority Sinhala. Labour Dept. intervention has helped to bring about a satisfactory solution to the dispute. The strike was settled with those responsible for the assault on the worker being sent on compulsory leave pending full inquiry.

## Focus on health hazards of graphite workers

About 25 workers working in the graphite mines are reported to have met their deaths due to a rare lung disease caused by graphite and metallic dust. This disease known as Pneumoconosis was first detected in mine workers by Prof. Urugoda who forwarded his investigative report to the authorities several years ago. The Ceylon Federation of Labour which was concerned for some time about the problem brought the matter to public focus by organising a two-day seminar at the Bogala Mines where the workers were told by Medical experts that this lung disease is caused by dust, graphite silica, temperature and humidity, atmosphere pressure and poor external ventilation. The workers and their families living in the Graphite Village were examined by a medical team after the seminar. The seminar also brought to public light the fact that Pneumoconosis has no cover under the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance. The CFL has now stepped up agitation for the necessary amendment of the relevant Ordinance so as to cover this disease which is now taking toll of the lives of those who are engaged in Graphite Mining.

## Star Wars and Arms Control stumbling block at Summit Talks

At the recent summit meeting at Reykjavik in Iceland between Russian leader Mikhail Gorbachev and U. S. President Ronald Reagan, it was the latter's insistence on continuing the U. S. Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) programme, popularly known as Star Wars, that was the stumbling block to what could have been a breakthrough agreement on missile cuts between the two Powers. It is therefore important for us to understand the meaning and the implications of Reagan's Star War programme and its importance for the US Government.

### Recent SDI Test

The Reagan administration's euphoria over its large-scale SDI test in early September led the Pentagon to declare that Star Wars "is going to be easier than we ever imagined." The \$ 150 million test used a number of sensors, two Delta rockets and a mass of other equipment to investigate missile interception above the earth, the exercise culminating in a high-speed collision of two modified Delta rockets.

Despite White House's denials, the experiment probably violated the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty which among other things prohibits the testing of ABM systems or their components. And as Star War tests become more frequent and more ambitious, the programme threatens to bulldoze anything that stands in the way - including arms control treaties and disarmament efforts.

### Curbs and Dangers

The growing uneasiness felt by the U. S. public with Star Wars is reflected in the U. S. House of Representatives vote on August 12 to cut

funds for the Reagan administration's space weapons programme. But despite this cut, Star Wars will remain the biggest single programme pursued by the U. S. Government. The House also voted for a one year ban on tests in space of the highly advanced kinetic-energy M. H. V. (Miniature Homing Vehicle) anti-satellite missile by the Air Force. The danger however of the administration undermining this ban remains as long as it is committed to increasing its arsenal of MHV weapons. In fact two instrument-carrying target balloons designed to simulate Soviet-satellite targets were launched at great expense in December 1985. So it is likely that that the Pentagon will try to make full use of these with future MHV tests. In contrast, there is an unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing by Russia in force for the past 14 months.

### The SDI Empire

As more countries become involved in Star Wars and their governments and private companies find opportunities for profit in them, the U. S. Defence Department seeks to centralise operational activities through the U. S. Space Command created in 1985 and so control its growing SDI empire. The US demanded and eventually won control over all technology out of West Germany's use of Star War contracts. Britain's SDI agreement with the Pentagon is still secret but is widely believed to contain similar concessions to the U. S. It is estimated that contracts total \$ 30 million for Britain and \$ 20 million for West Germany (*International Herald Tribune* 7 August 1986). Other countries like Canada, Israel, Italy and Japan have also joined or are considering joining Star Wars no doubt on the same

terms with U. S. control. France has kept aloof but has carried out its own technological work basic to the programme such as free-electron lasers. The U. S. may not get all they want from Japan since scientists there fear that the U. S. will milk Japan of its high technology know-how through the exclusive rights that SDI contracts give to the Pentagon.

The picture that is emerging however is that of a U. S. dominated and controlled Star Wars alliance covering allies from NATO, the Middle East and Far East. □

## The Nuclear Test ban History

○ 1945 The first atomic explosion ever detonated, 16 July, was a test. It was used to develop the weapons which killed hundreds of thousands of people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki less than one month later.

○ 1958 US, UK and USSR began negotiations on a test ban and agreed to suspend all tests and review the situation each year.

○ 1959 In December President Eisenhower ended US participation in the test ban process, declaring "We consider ourselves free to resume nuclear weapon testing."

○ 1960 France conducted its first nuclear test, then followed with three more.

○ 1961 USSR resumed testing after the test ban process broke down.

○ 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty concluded by the US, USSR and UK banning tests in the atmosphere, under water and in outer space. The treaty committed the parties to "achieving the discontinuation of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time and to continue negotiations to this end."

○ 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons signed by the US, USSR and UK. Reaffirms the determination of all parties to seek an end to nuclear testing.

○ 1974 Threshold Test Ban Treaty signed by the US, USSR and UK restricting the



yield of explosions, about six Hiroshima bombs. Unratified by the US.

○ 1976 The Peaceful Nuclear Explosions treaty signed by the US, USSR and UK set the same limit for underground tests and arranged for information exchanges and on-site inspections. Unratified by the US.

○ 1977 Talks began between the US, USSR and UK with the aim to conclude a nuclear test ban.

○ 1980 After 12th round of talks in November, and after most points agreed, the newly elected Reagan administration ended US participation in the negotiations.

○ 1982 The US announced officially that it has no interest in resuming the talks, since a comprehensive test ban was only a distant goal.

○ 1985 In August USSR declared a unilateral test ban to 1 January 1986.

○ 1985 USSR extended the unilateral test ban four times, to the end of the year. Reiterated calls on the US to join a test ban process. Made provisions for on-site verification of a ban. The US House of Representatives voted for a suspension of US nuclear tests for one year. Support growing for a comprehensive test ban,

## ● Star wars

"I tape the scientific and technological resolution with caution, whereas my attitude to the programme for the computerization of Star Wars is negative.

Imagine, the slightest error in the computer and hundreds of missiles rush towards one another from both sides of the Atlantic - all due to a minor malfunction in the computer!"

Graham Greene

## Youth Clubs for the Test Ban

Last summer the European Confederation of Youth Club Organizations, which represents some 17,000 clubs with 3.5 million members, adopted a statement calling for a nuclear test ban. The Statement said "Some steps in this direction have been taken, and ECYC supports every step towards a nuclear test stop. If all states in the world take this approach, the world could be free of nuclear arms before the year 2000,"

## Graham Greene on Test Ban

"When we in the West speak about peace, we only look at the Soviet Union, not at the West. I fully support the Soviet moratorium on nuclear tests. Gorbachev's voice rang out as the voice of reason which we had all long expected. It was devoid of any rhetoric. The extension of the moratorium without any guarantees from the United States is a courageous stepn."

Quoted in Moscow News, 5 October 1986.

Courtesy: Peace Courier (World Peace Council Finland, 10/86.

## Philippines

### Cracks within the Government

Sharp differences surfaced within the Aquino Government with Defence Minister Juan Ponce Enrile openly addressing two pro-Marcos anti-Communist rallies, denouncing the Government and demanding a "mailed fist" approach to the rebel Communist New People's Army.

There were also reports of an attempt to topple the Government and eliminate its "left-leaning" elements. This came significantly after the Government and rebel peace negotiations reached agreement on safety and immunity guarantees for representatives of the underground National Democratic Front (NDF) and moved closer towards a possible cease-fire accord. Recently, Cardinal Jaime Sin of Manila came out strongly in support of the peace efforts

and the draft new constitution giving President Aquino an extended term of office till 1990.

### Sabotaging Peace Moves

The peace talks which were at a crucial stage have now apparently been scuttled by the brutal murder of trade unionist and Left-wing leader Rolando Olalia for which Enrile has been blamed.

Earlier, in an obvious attempt to torpedo the peace talks, intelligence operatives of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (APF) on September 29, arrested Communist Party leader Rodolfo Salas who was a consultant to the NDF panel at the negotiations.

After Salas' arrest, Enrile increased pressure on Aquino saying that since she had abolished Marcos' parliament and proclaimed a revolutionary government, a national

election was needed to give her a mandate from the people.

Aquino succumbed to the pressures put on her and though obviously embarrassed by the arrest of Salas, went publicly on record praising the AFP act as a "commendable accomplishment". Observers in the USA described her refusal to release Salas as a message to the US Congress since the US Senate at the time of Salas' arrest was deliberating on the increase of economic and military aid to the Philippines. The USA too had been pressing Aquino to adopt a military solution to the 17 year civil war between the Government and the New People's Army (NPA.)

### Effects of US visit

Although President Aquino's recent visit to the USA was a success in that she got the aid she sought for, the visit also demonstrated that her economic policies did not at all differ from the ruinous economic policies of the Marcos Regime which spelt disaster for the economy. Apart from increasing the country's US \$ 27 billion foreign debt, the loans and arrangement

with the IMF-World Bank are expected to aggravate the trade deficit, open the country more freely to foreign capital penetration and wreak havoc on local enterprises and agriculture.

Significantly, the US Government came out strongly in support of Aquino when Enrile sought to challenge her, obviously with a view to make her lean even more on its goodwill rather than on popular support and 'People Power'.

### Nature of the Aquino Government

What has in fact emerged from the popular February "revolt" is a centrist government with a combination of disparate elements which in seeking to balance between contending interests is often caught in the clash between them. Attempts will no doubt be made now to patch the cracks that have appeared and keep the coalition going, but the government's basic problem is its indefiniteness, in the context of which entrenched vested interests both local and foreign will seek to have their way.

Commenting on Aquino's giving into right-wing militarist pressures, the official NDF publication **Liberation** (Issue of September - October) notes that "the so-called 'democratic space' in the Philippines may not last any longer despite the efforts of revolutionary forces to prolong it". NDF organisations have called on the people to persevere in their struggle to defend their gains and rely on their own organizational strength in the face of the rapidly deteriorating situation.

### Stop Press

Dismissal of Enrile by President Aquino has now made possible a Cease-fire accord between the government and the NDF.

## UN demands halt to US aid to Contras

The General Assembly overwhelmingly called on the United States to stop siding Nicaraguan rebels, or Contras, in compliance with a World Court judgement last June.

The United States vetoed a similar resolution in the Security Council last Tuesday. There is no veto in the 159 member assembly, in which the vote was 94 to three with 47 abstentions.

Joining the United States in voting against the Nicaraguan-sponsored draft were El Salvador and Israel.

Some of the United States' friends and allies abstained, including Britain, France and West Germany, and two of Nicaragua's neighbours, Costa Rica and Honduras.

But others voted for the resolution, including Australia, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Norway.

Several said they did so because of their support for the rule of law and the World Court.

Opening yesterday's debate, the Rev. Miguel D'escoto Brockmann, the Nicaraguan Foreign Minister, said the U. S. veto in the 16-member Security Council was illegal.

He cited article 27 of the U. N. Charter, which, he said, made the veto inapplicable when a country casting it was a party to a controversy in which a means of peaceful settlement was under way or there was a world court judgement.

D'escoto said the United States conducted aggression against his country "in broad daylight" and shamelessly declared that this policy would change only if Nicaragua abandoned its revolution and submitted to imperialist domination.

Terming American policy criminal, he said: "It is obvious that the war to which Nicaragua is being subjected is a U. S. war and that the so-called contras are merely hired hands serving the diabolical objectives of the Reagan administration.

### C.I.A. Strategg Involvement

The Managua trial of U. S. pilot Eugene Hasenfus, shot down over Nicaraguan territory Oct. 5, underlines a little-known aspect of the contra war in Nicaragua.

Hasenfus was the only survivor in a C-123 cargo plane downed by Sandinista special forces some 50 kilometers from the Costa Rican border. The craft was felled by a surfaceto-air missile allegedly on a mission to supply U. S. backed contras operating in Nicaragua.

The pilot's capture underlines the contras' use of aircraft to supply troops and gather intelligence: it also throws new light on CIA strategy in the region.

Hasenfus created a furore in Washington when he declared in a Managua press conference that the crew had been on a mission for the CIA. The 45 year old soldier of fortune said he had flown 10 supply missions into Nicaragua from military bases in neighbouring Honduras and El Salvador. U. S. officials denied the charges.

According to restrictions established by the U. S. Congress in 1984, the CIA is forbidden to supply direct aid to the contras. But growing evidence points to the agency's involvement with the rebels. The CIA has used similar tactics in the past. In Southeast Asia and in Cuba, the agency relied on cargo planes to keep anti-government guerrillas supplied. □

## We are machines programmed for murder

BERLIN, Sept. 22.

A sergeant in the South African army has said that troops in Namibia are "machines programmed for murder".

"My people are machines programmed for murder. We do not know the word mercy. We have been taught not only to kill but to exterminate." George Norval, the sergeant, said.

Norval's men in Namibia don T-shirts with slogans such as "I go out to kill" or "shoot him and he will no longer molest you". And what the slogans say is practised every day in Namibia.

There are about 100,000 South African occupation troops in Namibia, in addition to 10,000 men of paramilitary units.

These special police units, called "Koevoet" (Crowbar), are recruited from former criminals and outlaws and trained in special camps as killers and pillagers. They burn down villages, kill people for being sympathisers or supporters of SWAPO liberation movement. — ADN

From **The Hindu** (India) 23 Sept □

## Kotmale Homes in Peril

Eight villages threatened on both sides of reservoir

Disagreement over details of the evacuation and resettlement of eight villages threatened by earth movements on both sides of the Kotmale reservoir, moved all the way towards compromise after the Ministers of Lands and Mahaweli Development and Rural Industrial Development saw what was happening for themselves, on Tuesday.

What Ministers Gamini Dissanayake and S. Thondaman saw at the ancient village of Niyangandora was a picture of almost total devastation. Gaping cracks in the walls of brick and mortar homes testified to the steady disintegration being caused by earth movements.

Some residents, too terrified to remain, have already deserted the homes in which they lived for generations and moved to safer locations. Others with no choice are still there and they spoke eloquently to the visitors.....

Mr. Dissanayake said the decision will now be easier to take. Mr. Thondaman who said he was against the creation of

pocket colonists in the estate sector, suggested that as far as possible resettlement should be on a more localised basis.

Ramboda was one of the areas suggested by Mr. Thondaman....

Mr. Dissanayake..... said..... "We have to act fast. Most of these people are now living on their capital - that is, money they received from the Mahaweli Authority in compensation for land they lost when the reservoir was impounded."

Geologists studying the phenomenon of the Kotmale earthslide have said that the reservoir is only one of the causes. Kotmale has been beset by landslides for centuries, and what is happening now is not new to the area.

The villages to be evacuated are on both banks and have a population of 800 families. Five hundred of their homes are already close to being uninhabitable. The eight villages are Niyangandora, Wattadara, Pusulpitiya, Kalepitiya, Gamkewala, Pananam-uwa, and Godamaditta. They cover a land area of nearly 1,500 acres.

(Excerpt, Daily News of Oct 23)

## Protest on Govt.s forestry plan

The LSSP expressed concern about government's proposals to implement the master plan on forestry which the party said "appears to be against the long term interest of the nation"

The statement said that while the master plan itself had not been published, the LSSP feared from what it gathered that the plan would hasten the destruction of the country's remaining forests rather than conserve them.

"The main thrust of the plan appears to be the logging of forests, the sawing of timber and the production of pulp for paper factories, mainly for export. The proposed import of over 20 new saw mills gives credence to this view" the LSSP said.

It strongly criticised what it said was a proposal to 'selective' log even the wild life sanctuaries and the wet zone forests, already down to 8 per cent.

The statement alleged that the plan "appears to have a strong Finnish component and the interest of one of the biggest manufacturers of timber extraction machinery in Finland."

The LSSP described the master plan as "diabolical" and asked that it be opened for public discussion before the government makes any firm commitment on its implementation.

(Daily News November 6)

## Comment on Kotmale

Gamini Iriyagolle

The Government-owned newspaper reporting the latest earth movements on slopes on the rim of the Kotmale reservoir admits that "Kotmale has been beset by landslides for centuries and what is happening now." in not new to the area" This affirms the view I have taken (Article entitled "Kotmale-Design for Disaster" in "Christian Worker-4th Quarter 1985) that existing detailed studies should have warned the governments of Sri Lanka and Sweden, the IBRD and Consultants against the very notion of impounding water in this valley. The entire Kotmale valley drained by the Kotmale Oya and other streams in the upper catchment of the Mahaweli River, is geologically unstable.

Those responsible for the construction of a reservoir that is now a threat to life and property do not have even the excuse of social need or economic profitability for their enterprise (public economic profitability, that is), I have explained in

my article how, when the project had to be re-scheduled for completion in 1985 instead of 1983, it lost relevance and became unnecessary for our energy requirements. I have also shown that when cost estimates were doubled in 1980 while benefits were reduced, the project was a dead loss economically. It must be clear to all responsible that the project should have been abandoned at least in that year.

The "Daily News" of 23rd October reports the damage to eight villages in Kotmale valley itself. The greater threat is that to life and property below the dam from a flood caused by overtopping or breach of the new dam. When the hills on the rim of the reservoir collapse into the reservoir, as anticipated, in a very major earth movement, the resultant waves are expected to overlap the dam if they do not cause a breach. In either event the downstream areas would be devastated by floods. The city of Kandy, the town of Gampola and a large number of smaller settlements would be destroyed. The Governments of Sri Lanka and Sweden have, constructed at high cost the "trigger" for such a disaster.

# Cracks in aid strategy

## Thomas Bibin on how Sweden's giant hydro-electric project came upon hard times

THE Kotmale hydro-electric plant in Sri Lanka is the biggest aid project ever undertaken by Sweden. It is one of four schemes in the Mahaweli River development plan and it has run into problems. When the project was commissioned almost exactly a year ago, it was known there were cracks in the high pressure tunnels taking water to the turbines. One week later, the single turbine in operation was closed. At that time, the cost of the repairs were estimated at SEK 30 million (almost £3 million).

The bedrock, it has now been found, is not as solid as earlier projected. Millimetre-wide gaps have opened it up as the water rushed through. At first it was thought the only problem was that 130 metres in the lower shaft had to be covered with a steel jacket. Skanska, the Swedish company which built the dam and plant, accepted the contract for the repairs as well.

However, in June it was revealed that the problems at Kotmale were in fact much bigger. While the water was leaking heavily into the cavities around the turbine hall it was discovered that the low pressure tunnels also needed repairing. This meant another SEK 70 million and a much longer stoppage of the plant. Kotmale cannot be opened again until some

time in 1987 at the earliest, some two years after its inauguration.

The Swedish Government has declared it cannot pay for the repairs. According to an earlier decision in Parliament, Sweden has agreed to pay SEK 1.4 billion as a grant and another SEK 234 million as a subsidised credit for the project. Final payments will be made during the fiscal year 1987/88.

The road to Kotmale has been paved with hostile remarks from many critics in Sweden. First, the contract was given to Skanska without formal bidding as laid down in the development aid agreement signed by the two parties. Then attention was drawn to the spiralling costs for the project, starting at a modest SEK 700 million in 1979. Then it was the way in which SIDA, the Swedish aid authority, was virtually ignored while the two governments and Skanska argued over terms.

Critics said Kotmale power would only benefit the affluent users of air-conditioning equipment in Colombo and the foreign free trade zone industries to the north of the city, and not the rural inhabitants.

Now, with the closure of Kotmale, the proud plans for a 210 mW plant have resulted in no power at all. One turbine is in place but cannot operate; a second is installed but cannot even be tested; a third has not even been installed.

Skanska representatives at the site are eager to point out that Skanska is not guilty in the present situation. Skanska delivered the dam and the plant even earlier than planned. There is an air of depression

among those 25 Skanska employees still working at Kotmale. Some of them wonder if Kotmale is needed at all. Other power plants are generating electricity. But there are other reasons for worry. In May, V Prabakaran, the leader of the strongest Tamil guerrilla group, the Tigers, said that the development projects may be a target for future guerrilla attacks.

These threats stirred up SIDA and its security expert has recently visited Kotmale. Security arrangements have been tightened considerably, and the intention is to equip Swedish aid employees with wireless communication systems and elaborate evacuation plans.

The Swedish official attitude towards Kotmale and the aid to Sri Lanka has also hardened considerably. However, publicly there is no harm done to the Kotmale project itself, but war between the Government of President Jayawardene and the Tamil guerrillas has created concern in the Swedish Government. SIDA's assistant director, Mr. Borje Ljunggren, said, "The ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka is very serious and has induced SIDA to reduce the planning of development aid to Sri Lanka after Kotmale; that is, after July 1, 1988".

Kotmale, in other words, has become an unforeseen setback to Swedish aid to Sri Lanka. In practice it means a cut from well over SEK 200 millions a year to about 60 millions, or a cut of about 75 per cent, compared with the Kotmale era, or of about 50 per cent compared with the time before the dam was built. The writing on the wall is clear enough: the screws have been tightened and will remain so until the Government in Colombo finds a peaceful and negotiated settlement with the Tamils.

From **Guardian** (U.K.)  
15, August 1986. □

# A Tale of Two Dams

The recent announcement by the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Anwar Ibrahim, that the government has decided against the building of the Gombak Dam is a wise move.

The proposed \$60 million Gombak Dam at Sungai Gombak, Selangor, was part of the Kuala Lumpur Flood Mitigation Project. The dam was to serve the twin purposes of countering floods, and supplying water to the Klang Valley.

If implemented the project would have flooded 5,000 acres, including two villages in the area, Kampung Gombak Utara and Kampung Sungai Chinchin and displaced more than 8,000 people.

However, the flood mitigation project does not justify the building of the dam as studies have shown that the main causes of flash floods in the Klang Valley are inadequate drainage and blocked drainage systems due to indiscriminate pollution by industries as well as the general public. It is not common to find industries openly dumping their wastes into drains and rivers.

A research team from the University of Malaya estimated that out of the 19,685 acres under cultivation in Kampung Gombak Utara, 2,600 acres were under rubber, 200 acres under orchards, 30 under padi, and 170 under other crops. In Sungai Chinchin, 650 acres are under rubber, 28 under orchards, 60 under padi, and seven under other crops. All of these would have been submerged with the dam.

In a survey that Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) carried out among the residents of the area, the residents gave their reasons for not wanting the dam:

- most of the villagers have lived in the area all of their lives. Uprooting

them would mean destroying their lifestyle and culture.

- the community is an example of the type of society that the government continually encourages. The people are independent and have adapted to modernization without losing their traditional values.

- part of their land was given to an Orang Asli settlement. This settlement would also be flooded for the project.

- Gombak is famous for its Kampung durians. The flooding of the area for the dam would have wiped out the durian trees.

With the Gombak Dam shelved, the focus is now on the proposed \$10 billion Bakun Dam project in Rejang, Sarawak.

SAM says that the proposed dam is a waste of public funds as it is unnecessary. When the Deputy Prime Minister, Datuk Musa Hitam, announced the scrapping of the Tembeling Dam project in 1983, he said that the country has sufficient energy supplies.

The proposed 160 metre-long Bakun Dam would create an artificial lake with a surface area of 73,000 hectares. More than 4,000 people in 16 communities would be displaced. A senior botanist in the Forest Department warned that some plant species could totally disappear if the dam project is implemented.

## Research Results

In an exhaustive research carried out by Edward Goldsmith and Nicholas Hildyard, *The Social and Environmental Effects of Large Dams*, there is clear evidence that building large dams is not an appropriate means of feeding the world's hungry, or providing energy, or reducing flood damage.

**Popular thinking is that big dams are a great economic and**

social benefit as they produce clean power, stop damaging floods and help combat world hunger by providing water for irrigation.

Instead, large dam projects have given rise to massive ecological destruction, social upheavals, and impoverishment for the people whom dams are supposed to benefit.

Among the reasons for opposing the building of large dams are:

- resettlement—when a community is uprooted from an environment in which they have lived for generations it is difficult for them (especially the aged) to come to terms with their new home. For them, the transition period only ends with death.
- for those unable to cope, they begin to drift to towns, creating slum areas.
- lack of compensation and inferior land. In the case of the Batang Ai Dam in Sarawak, the natives claimed that compensation was inadequate.
- ethnic differences ignored.
- inappropriate housing provided.
- loss of wildlife
- deforestation
- loss of land - vast areas of land will be submerged under the reservoirs of the dam.
- dams reduce the flow of rivers with disastrous consequences for fishlife downstream.

It is essential that the government re-thinks its large dam projects, and instead look towards other alternatives. For example, studies by consultants of the Sarawak Electricity Supply have identified 150 mini-hydro sites in the state, each with a potential to generate between 25 to 250 kilowatts of electricity. Such projects, because of their low cost, technical simplicity and minimum impacts on the local people and the ecology, should be emphasised more than the big-expensive ones which ultimately result in massive ecological, social and economical problems.

Courtesy; **Suara Sam** (Sahabat Alam Malaysia/Friends of the Earth) Malaysia, 1986 No. 1. □

# World military and social expenditure

— Rath Leger Sixard

In the 10th Anniversary edition of this new classical reference year-book, nuclear overkill, military repression, wars and the expenditures that make them possible are compared with progress, and the lack of it, in meeting the health, education, and other needs of people. Packed with statistics and information on 142 countries, the report shows how each country ranks in the global spectrum. Among other points:

● The megatonnage in the world's stockpile of nuclear weapons is enough to kill 58 billion people, or to kill every person now living 12 times.

● In the Third world military spending has increased fivefold since 1960 and the number of countries ruled by military governments has grown from 22 to 57.

● Over 1 billion people live in countries controlled by military governments.

● The US and USSR, first in military power, rank 14 and 51 among all nations in their infant mortality rates.

● The budget of the US Air Forces is larger than the total educational budget for 1.2 billion children in Africa, Latin America and Asia, excluding Japan.

● The Soviet Union in one year spends more on military defence than the governments of all the Third World countries spend for education and health care for 3.6 billion people.

● The industrialized countries on average spend 5.4 percent of their GNP for military purposes, 0.3 percent for development cooperation.

● If the price of an automobile had gone up as much since World War

II as the price of sophisticated weapons, the average car today would cost \$300,000.

● Only one citizen in four in the Third World countries has an unrestricted right to vote.

● It costs \$590,000 a day to operate one aircraft carrier and every day in Africa alone 14,000 children die of hunger or hunger-related causes.

**IFDA Dossier 55, September Oct. 1985**

## Govt's request to AI

The Government requested the international human rights organisation Amnesty International to bring allegations it has made in a report on 'disappearances' in Sri Lanka before a court of law here and put its evidence to the test in a manner basic to the principles of International law.

A release from the Media Centre of the Information Department said the Sri Lanka Government had rejected assertions and conclusions drawn in AI's report in toto.

"A statement or sworn affidavit by itself, or accompanied by other statements of affidavits seeming to corroborate one another, is not a legally acceptable, truthful or valid document unless subjected to cross-examination by the party accused of such 'disappearances'."

The Government would welcome even a selected test case filed in the courts of this country. "Then and then only can the truth be known".

"The Government will also guarantee the safety of all persons be they those who file such petitions before the courts of the land or be they the witnesses called in pursuit of such cases".

"The Government of Sri Lanka wishes only the opportunity to test by legal scrutiny and cross-examination the veracity of affidavits and eye witness accounts presented by Amnesty International.

The release said that the theme of AI's report in its general conclusions and recommendations was that it is seeking approval to internationalise an essentially national and domestic matter.

"The domestic remedies available in our legal system and before our courts

have been distorted and have been portrayed as ineffective. This justification is sought, to remove such proceedings from the domestic courts to the arena of international politics".

(Daily News of Sept 30)

## A.I.'s reply

More than 30 Sri Lankans have been reported "missing" since Amnesty International called on the Government last month to set up an inquiry into alleged abductions by the country's security forces.

In a letter to Sri Lanka's Minister of National Security, the human rights organization said it was gravely concerned that the government appeared to have taken no action to clarify the fate of 272 cases already submitted to it by Amnesty International.

The six-page letter, sent to The Hon. Lalith Athulathmudali on 14 October 1986, said the Government should now consider inviting the United Nations Working Group on "Disappearances" to visit Sri Lanka to examine such cases in the country.

Amnesty International said it was reacting to the public Government invitation for it to file legal action on such cases before the Sri Lankan courts, so that witnesses to the arrests of "disappeared" people could be examined.

Although the Government had offered to guarantee the safety of witnesses filing petitions in the Sri Lankan courts Amnesty International said nearly all relatives or other witnesses who had contacted it in such cases had expressed fears of reprisals if their identities were disclosed.

Amnesty International said the Government had an internationally recognized obligation to take effective measures to clarify "disappearances". It said that by inviting the United Nations Working Group on Disappearance to visit Sri Lanka, the Government could "substantially alleviate the sorrow and and anguish of the families who, till now, have searched in vain for their relatives who have 'disappeared'."

The Government's earlier statement criticized Amnesty International for not referring in its report to information on "disappearances" that the Sri Lankan authorities had already submitted to the United Nations. But Amnesty International said it had never been sent the information by the Government and its three most recent urgent requests for this information had received no Government reply.

## Fidel Castro on Christianity

We reproduce below extracts from Fidel Castro's conversations with a Brazilian priest Frei Betto. A book based on these Conversations achieved best-seller status in the original Spanish. It has been followed by an English version entitled "Fidel and Religion" published in Australia by Pathfinder Press which appeared in late July this year

**Frei Betto: What are your views on Jesus Christ, the person?**

**FIDEL CASTRO** Well, I've already told you the story of my education and my contacts with religion, with the Church. Jesus Christ was one of the most familiar names to me, practically ever since I can remember — at home, at school and throughout my childhood and adolescence. Since then, in my revolutionary life — even though, as I told you, I never really acquired religious faith — all my efforts, my attention and my life were devoted to the development of a political faith, which I reached through my own convictions. I couldn't really develop a religious concept on my own, but I did develop political and revolutionary convictions in that way and I never saw any contradiction in the political and revolutionary sphere between the ideas I upheld and the idea of that symbol, that extraordinary figure that had been so familiar to me ever since I could remember. Rather, I concentrated on the revolutionary aspects of Christian doctrine and Christ's thinking. Throughout the years I have had several opportunities to express the coherence that exists between Christian and revolutionary thought. I've cited many examples: sometimes I've used Christ's words: 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye

of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God'.

**Frei Betto: Commander, from the theological point of view, it doesn't mean that Jesus discriminated against the rich; it means that Jesus opted for the poor. That is, in a society characterised by social inequalities, God decided to assume the likeness of Jesus: He could have been born in Rome to a family of emperors: He could have been born to a Jewish landowner's family: He could have been born to the middle strata of parishioners. Instead, He chose to be born among the poor, as the son of a carpenter — one who certainly worked on the construction of the Brasilia of his time, the city of Tiberius, built as a tribute to Emperor Tiberius Caesar, in whose reign Jesus lived.**

**So, what do we say? We say that Jesus unconditionally opted for the poor. He spoke to every-one, both rich and poor, but**



Fidel Castro

from a specific social stand, from the social stand of the interests of the poor. He didn't speak in a neutral, universalist, abstract way: rather, He reflected the interests of the oppressed strata of the times. If a rich man wanted to have a place next to Jesus, he had to opt for the poor. There isn't a single example in all the Gospels of Jesus welcoming a rich man beside Him without first making him commit himself to help the poor.

**FIDEL CASTRO:** I've been listening to you with great interest, because there's a lot of substance in what you've said. However, I could make a mathematical objection: a rich man could never give back four times what he'd stolen, because everything a rich man has must have been stolen. If he didn't steal it himself, it must have been stolen by his parents or grandparents, so it's impossible — if everything he has is stolen — for him to return fourfold what he's stolen, for he'd probably have to steal four times as much again to keep that promise.

**Frei Betto: You're repeating something that St Ambrose said in the early centuries.**

**FIDEL CASTRO:** I'm glad to have coincided with him.

I believe that many of the passages of the preachings of Christ, such as the Sermon on the Mount, cannot be given any interpretation other than what you call the option for the poor. When Christ says, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled', it is obvious

that Christ didn't offer the kingdom of heaven to the rich: He really offered it to the poor, and I don't think the preaching of Christ is also a case of mistaken translation or interpretation. I believe that Karl Marx could have subscribed to the Sermon on the Mount.

**Frei Betto: Commander, I ask you: do you think that religion is the opiate of the people?**

**FIDEL CASTRO:** Yesterday, I talked with you at length about the historic circumstances in which socialism, the socialist movement and the ideology of scientific socialism, of Marxism-Leninism, emerged and how, in that society that was divided in classes, a society of cruel and inhuman exploitation, in which the Church and religion had been used as a tool for domination, exploitation and oppression for centuries tendencies had emerged and severe criticism, justified criticism, had been levelled at the Church and even at religion itself.

Place yourself in the position of a revolutionary who becomes aware of that world and wants to change it. Then imagine the civil institutions, the landowners, the nobles, the bourgeoisie, the rich, the big businessmen and the Church itself, all of them bound and determined to prevent social change. The most logical thing, ever since religion also began to be used as a tool of domination, was for the revolutionaries to have an anticlerical reaction and even an antireligious reaction, and I can fully understand the circumstances in which that statement was made.

I believe, however, that when Marx established the International Workingmen's Association, there were many Christians in that First International: I believe that there were many Christians among those who fought and died in the Paris Commune and nowhere does Marx make any statements excluding those

Christians from the historic mission of advancing the social revolution.

If we go a little further ahead and recall all the discussions that took place after the programme of the Bolshevik Party which Lenin founded, was drawn up, there isn't a single word that excluded Christians from the party: the main prerequisite for joining was acceptance of the Party programme. That is, it is a phrase, a motto, a statement of historic value that was entirely justified at a given moment.

From a strictly political point of view and I think I know something about politics—I believe that it is possible for Christians to be Marxists as well, and to work together with Marxist Communists to transform the world. The important thing is that, in both cases, they be honest revolutionaries who want to end the exploitation of man by man and to struggle for a fair distribution of social wealth, equality, fraternity and the dignity of all human beings—that is, that they be the standard bearers of the most advanced political, economic and social ideas, even though, in the case of the Christians, their starting point is a religious concept.

**Frei Betto: Commander, is love a revolutionary requirement?**

**FIDEL CASTRO:** Of course, in the broadest sense of the term. Socially speaking, what is solidarity? What is the spirit of fraternity?

If we go back to the first great social revolution—not the first socialist revolution, but the first great social revolution in the last few centuries: the French Revolution. It had a three-word slogan: Liberty equality, fraternity. Liberty as I told you was interpreted in a restricted way. It meant liberty for the bourgeoisie, for the whites: it didn't mean liberty for the black slaves. After they'd spread their ideas throughout the world, the French revolutionaries even sent armies to

Haiti to crush the rebellion of the slaves who wanted liberty. After the independence of the United States, which had taken place before that, the slavery of blacks continued, as did the extermination of the Indians and all the other atrocities. Therefore, the French Revolution confined itself to liberty for the bourgeoisie and whites, and there was no equality at all, no matter how much philosophising or talk there was about alleged equality in a society that was divided in classes.

The presumed equality between a multimillionaire and a beggar in New York or in any other place in the United States or between a millionaire and a person who doesn't have a job in the United States could be defined as a metaphysical equality. I can't see it any other way, and I don't think there's any fraternity between the US millionaires and beggars, blacks who are discriminated against, the unemployed and waifs. That is sheer fantasy. I believe that only now, with socialism, can the concept of true liberty, full liberty, equality and fraternity exist. I think that the precept of loving thy neighbour, of which the Church speaks, is very concretely applied and implemented in the human equality, fraternity and solidarity upheld by socialism and in the international spirit.

Socialism doesn't yet uphold full equality—we've already discussed this, in connection with remuneration. It offers many more real possibilities than capitalism does. In Cuba, for instance, the only ones who used to study were the children of the rich: now, every child even in the most isolated parts of the country, the children of farmers and workers, have the opportunity to go to the best schools. Every child has a teacher and the opportunity to go to excellent educational institutions and on to the university to go as far as his talent will take him and this is a real, objective possibility, not a



theoretical or metaphysical one. We have created genuine equal opportunities in our society.

Our system of remuneration for work can't be considered fully equitable, however, for some men are physically stronger than others, some are more talented than others and some are better intellectually endowed than others. In the socialist system, the socialist form of distribution to each according to the amount and quality of his work isn't yet a form of communist distribution: that is why, in his *Critique of the Gotha Program*, Marx said that this form didn't transcend the narrow limits of bourgeois law and that communist society would be even more equitable.

**Frei Betto: Do socialist and communist societies also seek the development of man's spiritual life?**

**FIDEL CASTRO:** Yes, of course: we seek man's broadest material and spiritual development. That is exactly how I've put it when I've spoken about education and culture. You might also add 'and man's spiritual development in the religious sense'. We make it a principle that all individuals are to have freedom and opportunity.

Now, let's take fraternity. I think that our society is really fraternal. When we free men from oppression, exploitation and slavery in specific social conditions, we guarantee them not only their freedom but also their honour, dignity and morale - in short, their human condition.

You can't speak of liberty in a society that is divided in classes, where there are terrible inequalities and where the people aren't guaranteed their human condition. Go ask anybody who lives in a shantytown in Latin America, any black in the United States or any person anywhere in the capitalist societies in the world today.

These are my deepest convictions. As I see it, loving thy neighbour means practising solidarity.

(Courtesy: *National Outlook, Australia* August 1986)

## ON RELIGION AND VIOLENCE

### Two Types of Church Services

#### Bishops shower blessings on fighting soldiers

Security personnel who have lost their lives in the defence of the country were remembered and blessings were showered on those who were fighting the enemy at a colourful ceremony at St. Lawrence's Church, Wellawatte, yesterday morning.

The occasion was a joint Christian service to celebrate the 37th anniversary of the Army.

Christians of all denominations attended the service at which Army Commander Nalin Seneviratne and Mrs. Seneviratne, Joint Operations Chief Cyril Ranatunga, DIG Neil Weerasinghe and several high ranking officials of the services were present.

The Army Commander and other officers representing the armed services lit the oil lamp.

Flag bearers marched up the aisle and in a special blessing, the Archbishop of Colombo, Rt. Rev. Dr. Nicholas Marcus Fernando, blessed the flags. The Sri Lanka flag followed by the regimental flags, the blessing symbolising the blessing of not only the regiments but also their personnel fighting in the front.

Rt. Rev. Swithin Fernando, Bishop of Colombo, in a brief sermon on the main theme of the service, "Achieving perfection in one's duties", said that at this critical moment in the country's history soldiers were trying to achieve perfection by using arms and ammunition in the course of their duties. While it was necessary that they use arms in the defence of the country they should also be disciplined enough as to show compassion to the enemy.

The dead soldiers were remembered with the Army Trumpeteers playing "The Last Post".

(Excerpt *Daily News* October 10)

#### Last Rites for 'Tiger' Area Commander.

The body of Victor, the Area Commander of the LTTE at Mannar, who was killed in a confrontation between the Tigers and security forces on the 11th, was brought to Jaffna on the evening of the 13th.

His body lay in state at St. Mary's Cathedral, Jaffna, where a Requiem Mass was sung. There was a massive crowd present to pay their last respects. Elders and young ones thronged the precincts of the church which was crowded to full capacity. Frequent appeals had to be made through the public address system to ensure order.

The whole atmosphere was charged with emotion and there was weeping and mourning all around, both from the young and the old. Jaffna did not see the likes of it before.

Later, the body was taken to Point-Pedro via Atchuvely, Uduppiddy Valettirurai, Polikandy and Thikkam. All along the route massive crowds pressed their way to have a glimpse of the body.....

Flowers were showered on the coffin while black flags fluttered in the hands of almost everyone. Several wreaths and large garlands of jasmine, rose and temple flowers were placed on the body. Some men and women young and old wept as they paid their homage.....

On Monday the 13th there was a mass meeting at Point Pedro, organised by the Traders' Association to mourn the death of Victor. Several speakers including Christian, Hindu and Muslim dignitaries spoke. Religious hymns, Christian, Hindu and Muslim were sung by different volunteer group.

A 21 gun salute was given by the LTTE armed group. Point Pedro never witnessed such a massive crowd in its history.....

The motorcade had to move at snail's pace as both sides of the road was flanked by massive crowds enroute to Nelliady. (The people had a view of the body from the roadside. The motorcade left for Mannar the birthplace of Victor despite the curfew.

(Excerpt *Saturday Review*, October 18)

# Toward a moral Theology of Violence

— Fr. Louie Hechanova C. Ss. R.

Fr. Hechanova is from the Philippines and is now Redemptorist General Consultor based in Rome. The following are extracts taken from an essay appearing in a pamphlet by him entitled **The Gospel and Struggle** published this year by the Catholic Institute for International Relations, London.

## I. Desirable or permissible: an important distinction

In any discussion on morality, it is necessary to first distinguish whether we are talking of a *desirable moral value* or a *morally permissible course of action*. The difference between the two is very crucial in a proper understanding and interpretation of various positions taken on the subject.

A *desirable moral value* is something very positive for human life, something we would want to see promoted and fostered, even for its own sake. An example of a desirable moral value would be "a sense of responsibility".

A *morally permissible course of action* is something that is essentially negative in relation to human life, which, existentially speaking, may be seen to be permissible, only for the sake of a higher or better moral value.

Straightaway we have to affirm that in the Christian perspective, violence does not and cannot belong to the first category. It can never be considered as a desirable moral value for human life. It cannot be considered something that one can desire for its own sake.....

Both Christian moral theology and commonly agreed ethics are unanimous

in dismissing violence as a morally desirable value for human beings and society.

## II. Violence as a morally or ethically permissible course of action:

Having dismissed violence as a morally desirable human value, we now come to the controversial question, whether and under what circumstances it can be accepted as a morally or ethically permissible course of action. The dilemma or tension between these two has been well stated by certain Christians. The Protestant theologian Bonhoeffer, who suffered from violence under Nazi rule in Germany, said, 'All that is Christian in me protests against violence, and yet in the present circumstances I can do no other.' The Jesuit Latin American theologian Juan Luis Segundo says, 'I can never love or embrace violence, but there are situations when the option forces itself on me as the only recourse.'

Our own Kalingas in the north whose leader in opposing the Chico dam project, Macli-ing, was murdered, expressed their 'moral theology' this way: 'We are peace-loving people. We do not want violence. But if violence is thrust upon us, we will fight to death.'

Let us now examine the various options of Christians regarding this matter.

### A. The option of non-violence or pacifism

There are two groups which opt for non-violence or pacifism:

(1) Those who cannot accept violence in any form as a permissible

course of action under any circumstances either as their own option or a valid option for others. These are the out-and-out pacifists. In so far as these people would make pacifism as the *only* morally valid option for Christians, their position is untenable and does not square with the history of the church's view of the morality of violence.

(2) The second group are those who, like Helder Camara of Brazil, can see the validity of distinguishing between violence as a morally desirable value and as a permissible course of action in certain circumstances. While they show understanding and sympathy towards those who make an option for violent revolution, and therefore would not condemn them, they make a personal option for non-violence. Our Philippine bishops affirm this stand when they say 'The option of non-violence must be respected as one Christian option, as a Christian pattern of action.'

Perhaps the so-called 'peace people' in Europe who actively promote peace issues fall into these two categories.

### B. The option for violence

Before discussing the option for violence, it is important at this juncture to discuss what exactly we refer to when we use the word 'violence'.

(1) 'Systemic', 'structural' or 'Institutional' violence This is defined and described by Archbishop Romero of El Salvador as the violence that finds expression "in the structure and daily functioning of a socio-economic and political system which accepts it as normal and usual that progress is impossible unless the majority of the people are used as a productive force under the management of a privileged minority. Historically, we come across this sort of violence whenever

the institutional structures of society operate to the benefit of a minority or systematically discriminate against groups or individuals who defend the true common good", (The Church, Political Organization and Violence, CIIR, Church in the World, London, Jan. 1980, p.18).

Normally, the appropriate response to this kind of violence is institutionalised pressure e.g. unions, pickets, strikes, mass demonstrations, protest actions, civil disobedience, etc.

(2) *Violence from established authority.* There are two kinds of violence in question here. The first is the use of physical force on the part of the established authority to defend the rights of its citizens for the sake of the common good. This refers to the right, for example, of a policeman to wound or kill a criminal who has killed or threatened to kill other people, hostages, etc. In so far as this is done for the common good, and in a manner proportionate to the evil being prevented, this kind of violence has always been considered morally justifiable by the church.

The second type of violence from the established authority may be called the *state's repressive violence*. This refers to the violence used by the state's security forces to the extent that the state tries to contain the aspirations of the majority of its people, violently crushing any signs of protest against injustice.

It is well-known that the so-called *ideology of national security* makes national security the supreme norm, thus justifying all sorts of repression and violation of human rights, like arbitrary arrests and detention, tortures, 'salvaging', etc...

(3) *Hateful and terroristic violence* This kind of violence is born out of hate or revenge and involves indiscriminate killings of civilians, private citizens, innocent bystanders, etc. It tends to produce and provoke use-

less and unjustifiable bloodshed, plunges society or a given community to explosive tensions beyond the control of reason.

(4) *Violence as legitimate self-defence, or the 'just war' theory.* This kind of violence seeks to neutralise or at least to bring under effective control, not necessarily to destroy, an imminent, serious and unjust threat.

Traditional moral theology allows violence in legitimate self-defence both on the individual plane and societal plane under certain conditions.

The conditions on the individual plane are the following:

- (a) an imminent serious threat from an unjust aggressor;
- (b) the harm inflicted on the other party is proportionate to the threat, e.g. if it is enough to disable or wound the person to remove the threat, it would be immoral to kill him.

The question of self-defence on the societal plane has been applied in history to justify defensive warfare.

The conditions for moral justification are:

- (a) a just cause, e.g. to counter an invasion;
- (b) peaceful means have been exhausted, i.e. violence is a last resort;
- (c) proportionate means, similar to above;
- (d) reasonable hope of success, in other words that one is not just shedding blood uselessly, (although in most cases, those who fight bravely against all odds even with no hope of success are lauded for bravery), and that the state of things afterwards will not be worse.

Thus, although theologians often invoke the principle that 'the end does not justify the means,' the church has actually praised certain persons who fought in defence of the faith. Fr Buhlmann says: 'In the Missal we read, in connection with St. Ferdinand the King, that "he fought against thy (God's) enemies and defeated the enemies of the faith," and, in connection with Joan of Arc, that "to confound the enemy, she did not shirk from facing the peril of war".'

Nor was it all purely and directly defensive war either. The popes even

got emperors and kings to launch the crusades to protect and recover the Holy Land from the Turks. Fr Salgado, a Dominican, pointed out during his Liguori Lecture how ironical it was that our Philippine bishops chose to issue their *Exhortation Against Violence* on the feast of the Most Holy Rosary, 7 October—a feast actually celebrating the victory of Christian armies at Lepanto over the Moors.

(5) *Revolutionary violence.* otherwise known as armed struggle to topple down an oppressive regime and replace it with a better form of government. It is about this kind of violence that there is discussion going on among Christians in the Philippines today.

Pope Paul VI in his famous encyclical *Populorum Progressio* grudgingly justified it only 'in the case of clear and prolonged tyranny' and



given other conditions, viz. that all peaceful means have been exhausted, that there is reasonable hope of success, and provided that it will not bring on a worse evil.

Although the above four conditions are considered traditional in moral theology and are not expected to change radically one way or the other in the future, they are often glossed over by general and sweeping pronouncements that taken in themselves do not seem to admit qualifications and nuances. Thus, Pope Paul II's words in Puebla are quoted by the Philippine bishops: 'Whatever are the miseries and sufferings of humankind, it will never be through violence, power play, and political systems, but through the truth about human beings that humankind will find its way to a better future.'

There are Christians in our country, including priests and religious, who find such general and sweeping statements 'idealistic' and not based on an objective historical and sociological basis. They point to just one simple historical experience of our own people. We have had a revolution against Spain—an event we all celebrate as a people every year. Even bishops and priests take part in these celebrations by giving invocations. Do we not all acknowledge that revolution did us Filipinos a lot of good by freeing us from colonial bondage even if we merely passed into other colonial hands? In the case of the more peaceful transition to political ('flag') independence from the Americans, would that have come so easily if the Filipinos had not fought the Americans for three years to show their love for independence and reluctance to be further subjugated by another colonial power?

If we accept as absolute truth that 'It will never be through violence that mankind will find its way to a better future,' we should at least be honest enough to condemn as immoral the Philippine revolution against

Spain and the war we fought against the American.

The reason, I surmise, why we are not prepared to do this is because history was on the side of revolution and the present establishment has resulted from it. And we are here touching a fundamental attitude that is increasingly being questioned, namely, the consecration of the establishment with divine aura. Put simply, the question of revolutionaries is this: *Why does Christian moral theology tend so easily to justify the violence that emanates from the established power even if it is unjust, oppressive, and tyrannical, while tending to be so condemnatory of the revolutionary efforts to replace it with a more just society and government.*

Is the explanation to be found in an unholy alliance between the institutional church and the establishment? Is the resistance motivated by a narrow churchy concern for its own institutional interests, at the expense of the people's interests? As Fr Buhlmann observes: 'There is no disguising the fact that, historically, the church has continually sided with the authorities, that she has not been opposed to all attempts to upset the social order, and has been slow to understand the dynamic of history....'

There is, however, a new development that is worth examining—the case of Nicaragua. In the process of toppling down the oppressive US-backed Somoza regime, Christians, including priests religious, considered it not only morally permissible, but a Christian imperative to support the Sandinista uprising. The major religious superiors expressed their joy at the eventual success of the revolution by saying. 'We give thanks for those who have fought with arms in their hands or with the weapon of the Word...' Even the Nicaraguan bishops could say: 'Our people fought heroically to defend their right to live in dignity, in peace and in justice...We believe that the present revolutionary moment is an

opportune time to truly implement the Church's option for the poor.' In a word, they were inviting Christians to find the working of the Holy Spirit in the revolutionary process, and this possibility remains valid even if the Nicaraguan bishops may seem to have changed their minds about the Sandinista-led revolution. Even this overt support for the 'contras' is itself a moral justification for violence.

No doubt it is praxis that has brought about this theological viewpoint in the Nicaraguan church and there is no doubt that it is praxis—or the lack of it—that largely determines the viewpoint of Christians in our country on this question of the morality of violence. Somehow the question appears differently depending on where you are, just as the Pope's words were given different emphasis by different people depending where they stood.

Those in the establishment, or closely allied to it, would be quick to renounce revolutionary violence, while defending the state's repressive violence, especially its epitome—martial law itself and the arbitrary and emergency powers that predominate it.

Those who have been exposed to the struggle of the poor, the deprived, and the oppressed and have made a commitment to their well-being, development and liberation see violence 'as a desperate gesture of defiance by the poor (or by the rich in solidarity with the poor, as in Che Guevara's case) against poverty and injustice' (Buhlmann).

To these people, no less Christian in spirit, there is an option that lies between the extremes of pacifism and brutal, terroristic, irresponsible violence. The option is to undertake a revolution for justice's sake, even in the name of Christian love, in which the risks of giving one's life for others could become the highest expression of Christian love.

There is, therefore, 'responsible violence' which is motivated not by hate but love, which is careful not to implicate the innocent, as far as possible, which is not fanatical or adventuristic, and which is calculated to usher in a new era of justice, truth, freedom, love and peace. □

## Latin American Church & the Pope

"I would like to say that in recent time the Catholic Church, with the exception perhaps of one case, has ever more strongly supported the poor of Latin America in their fight for emancipation. Archbishop Romero, who defended the fighters' rights, was killed during a mass. This was a brutal "distinction" accorded him by the enemies.

I was recently shocked by the Pope who censured those clergymen who are taking part in building the new Nicaragua. This deeply insulted religious Nicaraguans.

True, in a recent encyclical the Pope accepted the need of the force in liberation struggles.

It is very important and urgent to start dialogue between Catholics and Communists".

— **Graham Greene**

(English writer and Roman Catholic in an interview in Moscow. Reproduced from Daily News of October 22)

## Nicaragua: Church - state dialogue cools tensions

The Sept. 27 dialogue between the Sandinista government and the Nicaraguan bishops' conference opens a new chapter in church-state relations here, according to local church observers.

The September talks were divided into two meetings: first, President Daniel Ortega and Cardinal Miguel Obando Bravo met alone for 45 minutes; subsequently, seven of the 10 members of the Nicaraguan bishops' conference; accompanied by newly-appointed Papal Nuncio Bishop Paolo Giglio, joined Obando, Ortega and two cabinet members for a longer session.

After the meeting, Obando told reporters that a "practical plan" had been discussed that could lead to the normalization of church-state relations; Ortega emerged from the meeting speaking of "a global agreement."

"For the past several months, there have been indications of a reappraisal in Vatican strategy toward Nicaragua," said a recent report of the Managua-based Instituto Historico Centroamericano (IHCA) a Jesuit-sponsored study centre. Vatican officials appear to be concerned that Cardinal Obando's and Bishop Vega's support for the opposition has eroded the Nicaraguan hierarchy's image among other Latin American bishops' conferences which have strongly condemned U.S. military intervention in Nicaragua.

Many observers suggest that the Vatican move may be a recognition of the Nicaraguan revolution's political and military stability. The first sign of a church-state thaw came this past June 19, when Pope John Paul and Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Agostino Casaroli held cordial interviews in Rome with Nicaraguan Vice President Sergio Ramirez. Many interpreted the meeting as a reflection of the Vatican's new realism; the U.S. backed contra war appears to have little chance of defeating the Sandinistas militarily or politically.

At the same time, it appears that the Nicaraguan hierarchy is increasingly isolated. The institutional church in Nicaragua has lost influence among ordinary Christians; most poor Nicaraguans continue to celebrate their religious fiestas and devotions with the same fervour, but not jumped on the opposition bandwagon championed by the bishops and some of the clergy.

It remains to be seen whether the new talks will bring about concrete agreements between church and state. But if relations achieve some degree of normality, and new gestures of good will are presented by both sides, the Reagan administration will be unable to cite persecution of the Nicaraguan church to justify its campaign against the Sandinistas. (Excerpt)

— Latinamerica Press 23 October 1986 □

## Fellowship in Action

### HATTON

The C.W.F. Plantations Service Committee visited *Sinhala and Tamil refugees at Punduloya* in the wake of the recent racial violence there and undertook a programme of relief in July in association with the Co-ordinating Secretariat for Plantation Areas. Later on the Organizer for Plantations work was associated in *Peace Walk* in Punduloya when a Shramadana Campaign was launched to rebuild the damaged houses of both Sinhala and Tamil victims of the violence. Along with other groups we have undertaken to help in rebuilding six houses.

Representatives of the Plantations Service Committee attended a Seminar and a Workshop on "Privatization of Estate's organized by the C.S.P.A. in Kandy, for

leadership from estate trade unions and voluntary groups.

A *Sarath Muttetuwegama Memorial Meeting* was organized at Kamkaru Sevana, Hatton, on 24th August. A representative gathering attended this event at which two T.V. Video Films were shown—viz. this year's May Day celebrations at Kotagala at which Sarath Muttetuwegama was the chief speaker; and the Peace Walk to Adam's Peak in March.

An *exposure programme* in the plantation areas was organized for a group of Student Christian Movement senior students, from 21st to 23rd September. The period of reflection and study included a Bible Study led by the Organizer for Plantations work.

The *4th Rural Interaction Workshop* organized by Gami Seva Sevana and the C.W.F. Plantations

Service Committee was held from 28th September to 5th October. 18 C.W.F. volunteers drawn from the village and estate areas participated in this Workshop which involved a Study tour of both village and estate areas. This participatory style of training is proving to be quite popular and the model is being adopted by other voluntary groups.

### GALAHA

A Gami Seva Sevana team participated in a Shramadana (Work Camp) at the Buddhist Service Centre at Matale on 14th September. On 21st September a Gami Seva Sevana team participated in a Work Camp organized by The Parana Nilambe Milk Producers Co-operative Society.

Gami Seva Sevana hosted the 4th Rural Interaction Workshop held

at Galaha from 28th September to 5th October (referred to in the news under Hatton). Fr. Paul Caspersz, Rohana Lakshman Piyadasa, Annathaje Abayasekera and Sirimal Peiris were the main speakers. It was a time of deep sharing and solidarity. The morning meditations were based on Buddhism, Hinduism (a "Saraswathy Pooja" was held) and Christianity.

In connection with World Food Day on 16th October a Conference and Poster Exhibition was held at the Haloya Sri Sumanaramaya Buddhist Temple. Dr. Upali Samarajiva and Dr. D. P. M. Werakkoday of the Peradeniya University led the Conference. A Slide Show on soil conservation was also held. This event proved to be quite popular.

On 14th October a discussion on Credit Councils was held at the H' Area in Timmagama, Anuradhapura at which a Gami Seva Sevana team engaged in a dialogue with the farmers. On 15th October a discussion in Sinhala and Tamil was held at Gami Seva Sevana on poultry breeding and cattle food.

## KANDY

A Bishop Lakshman Wickremesinghe Memorial Meeting was jointly organized by the Kandy Christian Ministers Fraternal and the Christian Workers Fellowship on Thursday 23rd October at 5 p. m. at St. Paul's Church, Kandy. The meeting was chaired by the Rt. Revd. Andrew Kumarage, Bishop of Kurunegala. The Revd. Dr. Rienzie Perera led a Bible Study on "The biblical basis of Bishop Lakshman's Vision" and the Revd. Fr. Joe De Mel spoke on "A Christian response to the crisis of our times." A Tamil lyric was sung by the Mowbray College Choir, the Sinhala version of the Russian Kontakion for the Dead was sung by the choir of the Theological College of Lanka, and the popular Peace Song "Somnasa Sampatha..." was sung by the Gami Seva Sevana choir assisted by musicians of the Peradeniya University. The Bible study and talk were followed by a brief discussion and proceedings ended with a closing prayer and blessing in the three languages by the Rt. Revd. Vianney Fernando, Bishop of Kandy. About 200 people were present and it was a time of renewal and re-dedication.

## KATUNAYAKA

Our Drama Group was kept busy in October with requests for its services. On October 17 we staged three short plays at a *Drama Festival* organized by the Youth group of St. Luke's Church, Marawala on the occasion of the patronal festival celebrations of that church. The plays staged were "Abin", "Asun Gathava" and "Samaye Holman" all based on contemporary social issues.

On October 18, the same three plays were staged at the premises of the Methodist Church, Udammitta.

Members of our group helped in the organization of a "Free Trade-Zone" Exhibition which depicted conditions there and was held in the premises of the church of SS. Peter and Paul, Katunayake from 24th to 26th October. We also staged two short plays here on the 26th as part of our contribution to the Exhibition.

## RATMALANA

### Construction Workers

In September the Ratmalana Construction Workers' Association was formed with 60 persons comprised of carpenters, masons and other daily paid labour engaged in construction work. As reported in the last issue of *Christian Worker*, these people live in shanties along the beach without basic amenities. The new Association has been formed to advance their interests and welfare - social, economic and cultural.

One of the first tasks of this new group was to organize a shramadana to put up a hut for a worker who was disabled by an accident, who has a deaf wife and three small children but no proper shelter of his own.

The Association was able to secure the assistance of government officers in obtaining food stamps for about 100 needy persons and more applicants are being assisted in this regard.

It has been found that many of these "beach" people do not have identity cards, birth certificates and marriage certificates.

### Youth Programmes

The CWF Ratmalana organizer was a speaker at two programmes organized for the Asia Youth Week.

The first was held at the Methodist Church, Korallawela and the other at Anuradhapura where there was a full week-end programme organized by the Church of Ceylon Youth Movement attended by several youth not only from the area but also from places like Chilaw, Kurunegala and Kegalle.

The Ratmalana organizer also addressed the NCC Youth Committee at the Theological College, Pilimalawa during a study programme. The CWF Film "The First and the Last" was also screened there.

### Moratuwa Group

The young Moratuwa CWF group which works in close association with Ratmalana has set about arranging a series of monthly discussions on current issues together with other organizations in the area.

### Environment

A full day seminar on Environment and Consumer Problems was held by the Organization for Safeguarding of Life and Environment (OSLE) of which the Ratmalana organizer is a leading member. A slide show on the Japanese Minamata Disease organized by the CWF followed.

### Study Programme

A three day study seminar organized by the Christian Leadership Movement and sponsored by the CWF was held in Negombo at which the Ratmalana organizer spoke and the film "The First and the Last" was screened.

### Workers' School

The first batch of students going through the new 6 months welding course are now nearing the completion of their course.

Other activities at the Workers' Centre including the pre-school dancing, sewing and English classes continue satisfactorily. Our Centre is also in great demand by other groups - Workers' Unions, drama groups and youth groups and study groups for their own programmes.

### Correction

Mr. Hugh D. Fernando has informed us that he was not a signatory to the letter that appeared in our last issue signed by certain employees of Kamkaru Sevana. The error is regretted.

# FACTS TO REMEMBER

## The High Cost of Defence

*Defence costs when totalled under the Ministries of Defence and National Security and compared with Education and Health in the recent Budget Estimates:*

### DEFENCE

1986 — Rs 5,840,000 000 = 9.6% of Govt's total Budget  
1987 — Rs 10,695,000 000 = 14.9% of Govt's total Budget  
(3% in 1983)

### EDUCATION

1987 — Rs 5,572,000 000 = 7.7% of Govt's total Budget

### HEALTH

1987 — Rs 3,869,000 000 = 5.3% of Govt's total Budget

## Debt Service Tops 30%.

The debt service ratio is higher than the estimated debt service ratio of 32 per cent for 1986, said Mr. H. N. S. Karunatilaka, former Deputy Governor of the Central Bank, speaking to the Rotary Club of Colombo Central (Sun. 1/11).

**“About 50 per cent of the total expenditure of the budget, which is more than Rs 17 billion, will have to be set apart for debt servicing alone this year”, he added.**

Saying that the rupee had been devalued by more than 350 per cent since 1977, Dr Karunatilaka said that “the magnitude of the budgets had gone up because of the sharp and continuing devaluation of the rupee and this resulted in a sharp artificial increase in the entire cost structure in the country”.

Most of the money spent on debt servicing, he continued, was sent out of the country and thus was “a large strain on the economy”.

He added: “Massive construction projects built on foreign borrowing have not resulted in cash flow and some foreign financed projects were a burden on our economy”.

(Courtesy: **Forward**, 15 November)



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