

Elections Commissioner Speaks out



SPECIAL COMMENT : C. V. Gooneratne MMC

Quarterly of the Christian Workers Fellowship

CHRISTIAN WORKER

**MURDER
MOST FOUL!**

— C. A. Chandraprema

* **Privatisation : Milk
and Insurance**

— D. E. W. Gunasekara

* **What the Budget
Portends**

— Bernard Soysa

* **Snags to a settlement**



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*Reagan's Arms Scandal *Dissent in China



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FOURTH QUARTER 1986

Annual Sub : Rs. 30 (Local)
Asian : U. S. \$ 5.00
Others : U. S. \$ 10.00

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

Quarterly of the Christian Workers Fellowship

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From our readers

CHURCHES & SERVICES

Mr. Editor,

You carried an article in the recent issue of your magazine which posed the question, "What are Cathedrals for?" a subsidiary question raised in that article was, "What are churches for?" The article went on to decry the non-use of these edifices for events of cultural, social value and meaning.

It was therefore a pleasant surprise and experience for me to be present at a service in Polwatte last month and to witness how a church could be more than just a ghetto for holy huddlers. Also, how Tamil culture could be movingly and meaningfully made use of within the

ethos of the "Anglican" heritage of the Church of Ceylon an exercise that is woefully neglected by the two cultural and linguistic streams of the Church in the island. (I am quite sure that Sinhala customs and culture could quite easily be adapted as were the Tamil customs on Thai Pongal day.)

What was most helpful for the appreciation of the service was the explanation-discussion that was held the evening before. This aided my complete absorption in the service.

It would take up too much space to go into a detailed description of the service but I will touch upon just a few aspects of what took place that morning.

The preparation of pongal (the farmers thanksgiving), accompanied by the ringing of bells and the

chanting of the officiating clergy just before the procession into the church set the tone for all that was to follow. The congregation and clergy moved into the church to the sound of the "nadeswaram" and "thavil".

Inside, the building was tastefully decorated with a beautiful "kolam" at the entrance and the usual (Tamil) custom of leaves hanging between the pillars.

No organ blared, no piano thumped, no guitars were strummed a la Western style. Instead "veenas" were used and the music was carnatic. A most delightful change.

The presiding clergyman and his aide were clad in the verti and sat on the ground for the first part of the service. The sermon spoke of the lack of pongal in some parts

of the country solely because the farmer is unable to engage in his time honoured and traditional occupation of being a tiller of God's earth and sustainer of his fellow-beings.

Seeing articles of labour being offered up is nothing unusual to you, Mr. Editor, for your own C. W. F. services on May Day stress this. However, I think you have something to learn from what happened at this special service. There was a marked and symbolic difference between what happens at your services and what took place this day. Each offering, and every offeror, was blessed with specific reference being made to the work they symbolised together, all pointing to what would come last in the procession - the pongal, the nourisher of people of all walks and faiths of life. It was a poignant moment when the pongal the result of the labour of the farmer, the sustainer of all - was placed on the table. The idol of "open - economy - progressive society - accelerated development," is too much with us with the result that the backbone of all economy, development and life is all too easily forgotten. Here we were led and helped to re-evaluate our priorities.

Before the prayer of consecration and thanksgiving the presiding priest removed the shawl he had been wearing and tied it around his waist and together with the other clergy proceeded with the service. The pongal was taken around and shared with all present, irrespective of religion (for there were Hindus present) How effective. How enlightening. How sharing.

Would that more of our services now mere reflections of what the missionaries brought us - be more imaginatively and creatively enacted as was this service. Would that, in fact, all our services incorporated and Christianized more of our culture. I am convinced that, were this to be done, we would all feel a greater affinity to our island fellow-beings and also be better Sri Lankan Christians.

S. Noah
Polwatte - Colombo 3.
18. 01. 87.

The Falkland Islands

Dear Mr. Editor,

Again on the question of the Falklands Islands (Malvinas) Since England is regarded by many as the model democracy and has been known to be the State which conducts its diplomatic relations and foreign policy with maturity and capability, for compromise, one is rudely shocked by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's present attitude on the Falklands.

While Argentine is prepared to agree to give fishing rights in the waters surrounding the Malvinas (Falkland Islands) to other countries, the, 'democratic' Margaret Thatcher remains committed to excluding Argentina from all negotiations about the future status of the Islands. This attitude reminds us of Regan-ism. Is Thatcher trying to out Regan, Regan? One notices a callow belligerence in Thatcher's present attitude which is completely alien to the spirit of traditional British diplomacy.

N. K.
Colombo 8.
31. 01. 87

Illegal? Betting Centres

Sir,

When we hear news like "Inspector General of Police orders raids on illegal betting centres" (yes! believe it or not these betting centres are illegal, but carry on regardless) that love of Law and Order which is deep down in most of us, begins to stir with hope, again, is the government, which assures us that all they do is for the people, actually going to do something at last?

Our hopes lasted less than 24 hours. We are back to square one of "Dharmista" law and order. The raids were mysteriously stopped and we are assured that the Betting Centres will pay B. T. T.!

We recall with alarm the words of Edmund Burke, the 19th century British parliamentarian: "All that is necessary for evil to prevail is for enough good men to do nothing". How long more for this kind of 'democracy'? The better word is 'demokery'. Where are these 'good men' and what are they doing?

R. P.
Colombo.
27. 01. 87

A Tribute to S. Nadesan

Mr. S. Nadesan Q C a dedicated champion of human rights and a founder member of the Civil Rights Movement passed to his rest on 21 December in his 83rd year.

In his long career of 55 years as a lawyer, S. Nadesan was associated with a number of important cases involving human rights such as the Abdul Aziz trade union trespass case, the challenge to the Prccs Council Bill of 1972, the Fundamental Rights Applications against the banning of the *Aththa* and *Saturday Review* newspapers, and the challenging of the contention that the Supreme Court Judges were deemed to have vacated office in 1983. Among his more recent successful cases were the 'Pavidi Handa' fundamental rights case, the Kalawana constitutional issue and the defence of the Kalmunai Citizens Committee President Paul Nallanayagam as recently as 1986. He excelled in every field of the legal profession.

Christian Worker mourns the passing of S. Nadesan, whose loss will truly be felt in these troubled times.

Snags to a Settlement

Despite failure to reach a settlement on the "Ethnic" issue at the Gandhi-Jayewardena talks in Bangalore last November, considerable progress was made with India's assistance to work out terms which would at least partly meet with the aspirations of the Tamil militant groups and bring them also into the negotiating process. These attempts have centered around the Tamil demand for the merger or link-up of the Northern and Eastern provinces. Unfortunately snags have been encountered at every turn mainly as a result of apparent shifts in our Government's thinking accompanied by certain actions that have caused misgivings and also a lack of flexibility and even intransigence on the part of the Tamil militants.

December 19 Proposals

On December 19 after the Indian Ministers P. Chidambaram and Natwar Singh had discussions with our President, the position of the Sri Lankan Govern-

ment on the demand for a Tamil Linguistic Unit was seen as a willingness to excise the Sinhala-speaking Ampara district from the Eastern Province and attach it to the Uva Province. With a consequent enhanced Tamil and Muslim presence in the East, it was felt that the Indian Ministers could then discuss the question of the Tamil groups accepting two provincial councils instead of the North-East linkage demanded at present. A six-point formula providing for structural inter-provincial co-ordination between the Northern and Eastern provinces on specific functional areas was also agreed upon. These as reported by *The Hindu* included a boundaries commission to re-demarcate provinces, a common university with affiliated institutions for both North and East, a common planning commission for both provinces, an inter-ministerial council to co-ordinate functions between both provinces, a national land commission in which State land would be vested and a system for settling farmers in the Mahaveli irrigation project areas.

DECEMBER 19 PEACE PROPOSALS

The Indian Ministers, Mr. P. Chidambaram and Mr. K. Natwar Singh, left Sri Lanka this evening after a three-day stay here, taking with them a proposal that emerged after three rounds of talks with the Sri Lanka President, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene and discussions with various political party representatives and groups, lawyers and Government officials.

The new proposal envisages carving out a Tamil linguistic entity out of the existing Eastern Province, enhancing the Tamils' political strength. This is to be done by excising Amparai electorate from the existing boundaries of the Eastern Province. Since half the Sinhala population of the east is concentrated in the Amparai electorate, which, in itself, has 95 percent Sinhalese, the Tamil and Muslim components of the east will increase.

According to the proposal, the demographic pattern of the east will change from the figure of 42 per cent Tamils, 33 percent Muslims and 25 percent Sinhalese to Tamils 48 per cent, Muslims 37 percent, and Sinhalese 14 percent.

The advantages of the new proposal, according to sources, are as follows:

Contiguity: The re-demarcated Eastern Province would remain a contiguous politically and economically viable entity with the minimum dislocation of the population.

The Tamils of the Eastern Province would have an enhanced sense of political security, as they would be close to an absolute majority in the Eastern Province, and, in a system of proportionate representation, have every likelihood of controlling the provincial council.

Sinhala apprehensions of being submerged in a single Tamil entity would be partly assuaged. The Sinhalese in Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts would remain undisturbed although there would be an effective dilution of the Sinhala presence in the east, when the Amparai electorate is excised.

Tamil concerns met: The Tamil concerns for a single homeland could be addressed through arrangements for inter-provincial coordination rather than a territorial linkage between the north and the east.

The new proposal, while taking into concern the Tamil grievances about being progressively reduced to 42 per cent by colonisation, also notes the fears of their strength being further reduced. It also takes into account the Tamil fears about alliances between the Sinhala and the Muslim people in the east working to the detriment of the Tamils.

The Indian Ministers in their discussion with the Tamil and Muslim representatives impressed upon them the need to form a common understanding between themselves. Both sides had expressed a desire to explore ways to share power in the east through systems like rotation of chief ministership and further devolution of powers to a cultural council, encompassing the Muslim majority areas.

To consult TULF and militants: The Ministers will, after consultations in Delhi, take the proposal to Madras and consult the TULF and the Tamil militants. The objective is to assuage the Tamil fears over political survival and security of the Tamils of the east. If the Tamils have a greater say in the east, it may be possible to persuade them to refrain from pressing for a structural linkage between the north and east.

The Government, while remaining opposed to a north-east link, had also opposed the removal of the Seruwila electorate from the east.

On the substance of the devolution issue, the Indian delegation has reportedly agreed to allocate functions to the list of concurrent powers as in the Indian Constitution.

— *The Hindu* 20. 12. 86

Exchange and Dialogue

On the same day that the discussions were had in Colombo with the Indian Ministers, there was an exchange of prisoners between the Sri Lankan Army and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Jaffna, an event made possible after the second visit of Vijaya Kumaratunge to the North and discussed elsewhere in this issue. Minister of National Security, Lalith Athulathmudali was present with the Joint Operations Command General when the two LTTE men were handed over to the LTTE's Jaffna Commander 'Kittu' outside the Palaly Camp, while Yatiyantota's Government Party P Vincent Perera was present when the two captive soldiers were handed over by the LTTE to Captain Kotalawela and the military at the Jaffna Fort. Encouraged no doubt by this thaw in relations, a Government delegation led by the Yatiyantota MP had discussions on Christmas Eve with the Tigers led by 'Kittu' and 'Rahim' Captain Kotalawela too being present. Official sources stated that these talks were of an 'exploratory nature'.

However, *The Hindu* of December 27 reported that the Sri Lankan High Commissioner had met the Indian Foreign Secretary to convey the Sri Lankan government's reservations on the December 19 peace proposals which, though not a formal withdrawal of the offer, indicated some second thoughts on it followed by an attempt to slide back.

According to reports published in India, this was said to be due to internal dissension within the Cabinet with National Security Minister, Lalith Athulathmudali opposing the December 19 proposal on the grounds that the Muslims were against it and that it would be possible to split the LTTE on the issue by opening up direct talks with 'Kittu', the Jaffna area commander.

Then came the announcement made in early January by the LTTE that it had "effectively taken over the civil administration in the North" and was collecting taxes, which prompted the Government once more to turn to its military option by constant shelling, helicopter strafing and moving the army out of its camps. The decision of the Government to stop all fuel and aluminium supplies to Jaffna in this situation caused great hardship, crippling motor transport and creating a chain reaction of decrease in essential supplies of food and other necessary items. These measures though calculated to put public pressure on the LTTE only served to alienate people further and make them even more antagonistic to the Government. The Indian Government too felt compelled to voice its concern and protest over these measures. Meanwhile the LTTE using its superior fire-power had followed up its decimation of TELO (Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization) and paralysing of PLOT (People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam) by driving the EPRLF (Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front) underground and thus establishing itself as the one Tamil organization exercising effective military control in the North, from which the TULF (Tamil United Liberation Front) had been expelled long ago. Tension increased too with

the return of LTTE leader Prabhakaran to the North from Madras where he had been resident for some years apparently to take personal control of the LTTE forces.

Meanwhile the Government, while enforcing the fuel ban and showing a military presence in Jaffna, also explored the possibility of negotiating directly with the LTTE. *The Hindu* of January 16 reported that overtures made to the LTTE by the Yatiyantota MP on a second goodwill visit to the North by sections of the Government was rejected. Kittu said: "We could not even think of considering such good will visits when the Government has declared war against us by enforcing a fuel ban. They cannot intimidate us". As for direct talks, Kittu said: "We have not budged from our position that they should be with India's approval. Also our conditions should be met" (release of innocent Tamils in preventive detention under the Prevention of Terrorism Act). First he stressed, the fuel ban must go. (*The Hindu* of January 22 has reported that Tamil traders had claimed to have penetrated the Sri Lanka Government's fuel blockade by paying bribes of Rs. 1000/- to troops for every barrel smuggled into Jaffna). As a "defensive measure", the LTTE set fire to the four storey Veerasingham Hall and General Post Office in Jaffna town in order to prevent the Army using them as camps.

Misgivings.

Strong resentment was generated also in Delhi by the Sri Lanka Government's denunciation of Indian Foreign Secretary A. P. Venkateswaran's statement in New York about the presence of foreign mercenaries in Sri Lanka. (See separate item on this inside) The names of some of these mercenaries had already been disclosed by the late Communist M. P. Sarath Muttetuwegama in parliament. Besides, the presence of Israeli and Pakistani advisors, the visit of the Israeli President to see President Jayewardena last November, not to mention the willingness of our Government to allow the U.S.A. to establish a political and military presence here, had already caused India enough uneasiness. Furthermore, President Jayewardena's calling on the Indian Prime Minister in his interview with U.S. Magazine *Nawsweek* to impose "a blockade by India of weapons and terrorists coming to Sri Lanka from the Southern Indian State of Tamilnadu" while the President was pursuing his own military offensive and economic blockade in the North was anything but helpful in this situation.

On January 20, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at a news conference indicated that there was very little India could do to bring about a settlement so long as the Sri Lanka Government kept on vacillating and going back on its commitments. Mr. Gandhi said "I am as foxed as you are" replying to a question whether any progress was being made by India in its mediatory efforts. He added: "We cannot do anything until we know that there is a package on which the Sri Lankan Government will stand by. We can't do anything with a vacillating Government." *The Hindu* of January 21 reported: "The Prime Minister disclosed that the agreed package that emerged at the final meeting on December 19 the two Indian Ministers of State had with the Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R.

Jayewardene, was typed in his office. But after a few days, the Government of India was told that Sri Lanka could not adhere to it because of some difficulties that had arisen. And the latest position was that Sri Lanka had said that they stood by the December 19 proposal and wanted India to ascertain the reactions of the Tamil leaders to them."

Clarifications

Land Development Minister Gamini Dissanayake who on January 14 met Minister Natwar Singh in Delhi for detailed discussions had indicated that the December 19 proposition was a "negotiating position for further talks with the militants in arriving at a mutually acceptable agreement on the contentious demand for a Tamil Linguistic region as part of an overall political settlement". (*The Hindu* of January 15) When questioned about Premier Gandhi's remark that Sri Lanka kept on vacillating and going back on its commitments, Mr. Dissanayake told (*The Hindu* January 22) that the Government was "firmly committed" to the December 19 peace proposal and that all the clarifications sought had been given by him in Delhi. He said that both Union Ministers Chidambaram and Natwar Singh involved in the negotiations "could not have been able to brief the Indian Prime Minister fully on our from position before the press conference". Mr. Dissanayake said something definite would be known only after the Indian Ministers meet the Tamil militant groups in Madras. (This will also mean establishing contact with the LTTE leaders now in Jaffna to get their co-operation in moving forward to the next stage of negotiations.)

When Indian External Affairs Minister Thawari met our Foreign Minister Hameed later in Kathmandu at the SAARC Secretariat opening, he urged the Sri Lankan Government to lift the oil embargo, release political prisoners and create conditions for resuming dialogue with the Tamil leaders. After consulting President Jayewardene, Minister Hameed stated that these demands would be considered if the LTTE especially was prepared to negotiate on the basis of the latest devolution package (*The Hindu* January 22).

Credibility

On the question of honouring agreements and the Government's credibility, we may note that the Three Party Alliance has already complained that the Government had unilaterally gone back on certain positions solemnly agreed on at the Political Parties Conference. The President publicly assured everyone that this would not happen and that the only changes that the Government would accept were those which improved on, rather than diminished from the positions that were reached. As *Forward* of December 15 commented on that question: "It is no excuse for some sections of the government to plead that it is compelled to go back on what is agreed to owing to the insistence of Prime Minister Premadasa on having his own way. If the Government cannot control its individual Ministers, however powerful, it does not deserve to govern. It must also take the responsibility for the consequences."

While holding the Government to the agreed positions both at the Political Parties Conference (P.P.C.) and elsewhere, it becomes the duty of all who stand for a negotiated political settlement to do all they can to ensure that a proper climate is created for genuine dialogue and understanding. There must necessarily be a willingness on both sides to reach a workable settlement which even if it may not fully satisfy the aspirations of all concerned will at least enable our people both Sinhala and Tamil (influenced as they presently are by racist ideology) to get together to solve their common problems which really stem from the capitalist and neo-colonialist exploitation of our land.

Constraints

In this situation, it is important that the Tamil community come to appreciate the measures for the devolution of power that have already been conceded by the Government under pressure of the progressive forces both within the PPC and outside it. On the question of the demanded merger or link of the Northern and Eastern Provinces as a "Tamil homeland", it therefore becomes necessary for the militant groups in particular to recognise the constraints in the present situation and accept a suitable compromise which will enable the Tamil community to live in peace and security and with a preservation of their cultural identity as a community. Such a position could well be worked out in the context of the right of two or more provinces to act in concert on matters of common interest which we have advocated strongly in these columns and which has already been conceded by the government.

It becomes necessary in this context to recognise the mixed reaction to a North-East merger among the people of the Eastern province. For here in contrast to the North, we have sizeable sections of communities other than the Tamils (with differences even among the latter.) For instance the Muslim community would obviously be opposed to such a merger for it would reduce the percentage of this community from the present 32 in the Eastern province to 18 percent in a combined Northern and Eastern province. It has also been found that certain disturbing trends in the Jaffna peninsula like the elimination of all rival militant groups by the LTTE have prompted many Tamils to reconsider their earlier support for the merger of the two provinces, more so since about 80 percent of the cadres of the ERLF - the latest target of the LTTE - came from the Eastern Province. Of course the activity of the armed forces operating in the eastern province in recent times has only served to exacerbate the feeling of insecurity within the Tamil community there. In any case, the wishes of the people in the East too need to be considered on this question in fairness, all the more so because in any devolution of power from the Centre, people of any region whatever be their race would naturally prefer to have a council of their own which they could directly control or influence regionally. The demand for a separate Tamil "homeland" could also be inimical to the Tamil community as an interspersed minority. It has of course to be acknowledged that the Tamils

have a genuine need for security of life and property which has given rise to this demand for the demarcation of a separate homeland. However, such a separation would tend to accentuate and perpetuate passions on both sides of the boundary. In this connection we would specially draw the attention of our readers to a very thoughtful and constructive contribution on the subject of the merger of North and East, which we have taken from *Tamil Times* and reproduced elsewhere in this issue.

Desire for Peace

It would be true to say that in the present situation people of all communities yearn for peace and an end to the fratricidal and bloody strife which has already taken the lives of so many of our young people, both Sinhala and Tamil, who were combatants, not counting innocent civilian casualties. Furthermore, we have reached a stage when the prospect of a settlement is closer than never before, it is incumbent therefore for all who stand for a negotiated political settlement to do all they can now to ensure that this becomes a reality. Professions of standing for a negotiated settlement but pursuing a military option at the same time simply will not do: it can only bring into question further *bona fides* of the Government and deepen the existing distrust that the Tamil groups and now even Sinhala groups have of it. And it is precisely this deep distrust and lack of credibility on the part of our Government that has necessitated Indian interven-

tion and also underwriting of any agreement reached if it is to be accepted. President Jayewardene will have to act resolutely in this situation therefore to carry through such a settlement which he can well do enjoying as he does the undoubted support of his United National Party and his Government. Popular pressure too will have to be brought on the Tamil militants for them to enter the negotiation process in a conciliatory spirit, bearing in mind too the practical difficulties despite their natural desire to strike a hard bargain in any negotiations. For any settlement must necessarily be found acceptable to the mass of our people if it is to be in fact workable.

Only in this way too would we be able to build up a truly united Sri Lankan nation, regarding our country in its entirety as a common "homeland" for all our different racial and religious communities, due regard being also given of course to the distinct identities of such communities residing in different parts of the Island. The devolution of power through Provincial Councils properly constituted can provide the basis of such a living together of our different communities in mutual respect and in the meaningful development of their areas. Provincial Councils too can well provide a timely check to the unhealthy authoritarian trends that have become so painfully evident in our country in more recent times, operating as they will in all parts of the Island through the elected representatives of the people. □

The Merger of North and East

—S. Jeevaraj

THIS issue of the merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka has become central to the dispute. With Tamil opinion increasingly polarized in favour of the merger and Sinhalese opinion virtually unanimously opposed to it. Proposals have even been made to dismember the Eastern province to resolve the dispute. It does not appear that the long term consequences of the different opinions have been fully examined.

It is assumed that any possible solution must grant to the self-governing units adequate powers to control colonisation and maintain internal security. Anything less will be suicidal for the minorities. Given this assumption, there seems to be no significant advantages in merging the Northern and Eastern provinces. In the absence of coercion from outside, those already in the Eastern province will have a common interest in limiting colonisation from outside and in avoiding disturbing the ethnic proportions of the province. In particular, the Tamils and Muslims will be equally interested in ensuring that their population share of the province is not

further reduced by unrestricted Sinhalese colonisation. If there is to be any colonisation from outside, that must be negotiated by the centre with the provincial government which must first be given the necessary authority to control colonisation and the numbers to be brought in from outside and their ethnic composition must be approved by the provincial government. Such an arrangement will in fact give both the centre and the provinces incentives to cooperate and avoid discriminatory policies.

If, on the other hand, the Northern and Eastern provinces are united, the predominant fear within the Eastern province will be domination by the Northern province. On this issue, the Sinhalese and the Muslims of the Eastern province will have common cause to resist Tamil domination. Even the Eastern province Tamils may have occasion to join hands with them on certain issues. Thus there will be communal and regional disharmony within the self-governing unit which can be exploited by those who have political interests in fomenting such unrest. In contrast, if the

Eastern province remains as one unit such unrest will be minimised and, in particular, the Tamil and Muslim populations will unite, not against the Sinhalese of the Eastern province, but against excessive colonisation from outside the province.

The most disturbing aspect of the problem is the suggestion to break up the Eastern Province into Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslim sections. In the first instance, the geographical and demographic features of the Eastern province militate against such division. Such a division is not likely to be permanent as none of the units will be feasible self-governing units. Moreover, it will permit unrestricted immigration into at least the Sinhalese unit, quickly and effectively transforming the demographic composition of the province as a whole. When the Eastern province is reunified as it surely will be when the broken up units are found to be too small and disjointed to be effectively governable, the new Eastern province will be very different to the present one in ethnic

composition—perhaps with an absolute Sinhalese majority. The demographic transformation which 40 years of agitation by Tamil and Muslim leaders has effectively slowed down, will be quickly effected in a few years of unrestricted colonisation from other provinces, albeit of certain sections of the province only. For the Tamils and Muslims of the Eastern province, nothing could be more disastrous in the long run. The inevitable heightening of communal friction will rekindle Tamil militancy and harm everyone in the province and cause damage to national unity. Ultimately, we will all be the losers.

Moreover, any tampering of provincial boundaries will inevitably threaten the interests of significant sections of the population transferred from the control of one province to another. It will therefore be wise to leave the provincial boundaries as they are. Under provincial autonomy, the Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims will have vested interests in treating well the minorities in the regions in which they are a majority—for others of their comm-

unity will be vulnerable minorities elsewhere. Any attempt to achieve ethnic segregation will not only be unworkable, but will also have the most undesirable consequences for all.

Granting provincial autonomy need not rule out colonisation from the other provinces completely. For example, the centre should be able to negotiate with the Eastern province government for some small numbers of Sinhalese, Indian Tamils, Ceylon Tamils and Muslims from other regions to be settled there, in such a manner that the development of the province is promoted without damage to communal harmony and without harming the welfare of those already living in the province.

There are both short term and long term reasons for accepting the existing Northern and Eastern provincial boundaries rather than attempting to re-draw them to cover disjointed pockets of land. In the short run, any re-drawing of boundaries on an ethnic basis will inevitably generate intense tensions which

may prevent or sabotage any agreement. In the long run, it is desirable that the "Tamil" provinces (or regions) should not stand out as distinct from the others in such a manner as to draw their antagonism. In India, while state boundaries have been drawn broadly on a linguistic basis, each state is a contiguous region and does not include pockets of villages enclosed within other states. Such pockets, if detached from the surrounding region will not only be administratively difficult to govern, but will invite the resentment and hostility of the surrounding region, enhancing rather than overcoming the problems of the people residing in such pockets. Furthermore, if existing provincial boundaries are retained, the line up in future negotiations on devolution will not be Sinhalese versus Tamil, but the centre versus the 9 provinces. The latter will be more conducive to further devolution from the centre to the provinces.

Courtesy : Tamil Times November 1986 ☐

Foreign mercenaries in Sri Lanka

Isn't it time that our government comes clean about the foreign advisors and trainers, both official and mercenary, working with our security forces in military operations in the north and east of the country?

Our government has taken umbrage and lodged an official protest with India about a reference made to this matter by India's Foreign Secretary, Shri A.P. Venkateswaran, when he conferred with U.S. State Department officials in Washington recently. The Foreign Secretary is reported to have expressed "concern" that U.S. mercenaries are also involved in this exercise.

It will take more than airy denials by Defence Minister Lalith Athulathmudali, whose expertise in splitting hairs and dodging awkward questions is second to none, or the cruder comment of Mr James Spain, U. S. Ambassador in Sri Lanka, that the Indian Foreign Secretary's statement is a lot of "crap" to dispel anxiety on this question here and abroad.

We do not know whether Shri Venkateswaran made a specific reference to the U.S. in his reported remarks or not. The only confirmation we have found is a frontpage headline in the ISLAND of January 12 which is nowhere repeated in the text of the story attached to the headline

We notice, however the text of the official government protest to India only refers to India's Foreign Secretary making a statement "to the effect that foreign mercenaries are assisting the Sri Lanka Security Services" and does not particularise America or any other country.

Indeed, the main theme of the official protest is to suggest that India is trying to interfere in our internal affairs by questioning our government's sovereign right to get military help of whatever kind from wherever it wants,

As it is, our government has officially admitted that it has got down Israelis to train our security forces in intelligence and combat activities. It has also confirmed its recruitment of commandos from Britain's S.A.S. and we have earlier published particulars about their names and work.

The government has not yet confirmed the charge that foreigners are helping to pilot the new helicopter

gunships that the government has purchased or revealed the nationalities of the suspicious characters in Pakistani costume roaming the eastern province, generally stirring up trouble and trying to involve the Muslim populations there in it. As far as we know, none of these characters are citizens of Sri Lanka.

But even if Shri Venkateswaran had particularised America's role in this discreditable business, would he have been so wrong?

It is no secret that the Israelis were got down on the suggestion and with the help of President Reagan's Special Envoy sent to Sri Lanka, General Vernon Walters, and continue their activities under the umbrella of a "Special Interests Section" housed in the U.S. Embassy in Colombo.

We are not so naive as to think that everything said by India's official spokesmen about our ethnic crisis is beyond disbelief. But in the present matter our own experience goes to suggest that Shri Venkateswaran is more right than wrong.

What alarms us even more than the undeniable presence of foreign mercenaries is the patent

attempt to revive tensions and confrontations with India. The recent episode and President Jayawardene's interview with NEWSWEEK last week point in this direction.

We have always stressed that uppermost in India's mind is its concern at the way in which the U. S. and its allies are trying to use our ethnic crisis to endanger India's legitimate security interests. Looking at the way in which U. S. imperialism and its allies are escalating their efforts to encircle India with hostile states and to intensify internal destabilisation, one can hardly blame India for this.

This is why our government should be especially careful about allowing foreign mercenaries to intrude into this situation or the U.S. and its allies to use our ethnic crisis as a reason for extending their political and military presence in Sri Lanka. It would be foolish for our government to imagine that India will always continue its mediatory efforts, come what may, or sit by idly if the situation is allowed to deteriorate in any drastic way.

(The Editorial in **Forward** of 15 January 1987)

Pradeshiya Sabha Law undermines Provincial Councils System

The LSSP-CPSL-SLMP alliance has criticised the new Pradeshiya Sabha law that the government has introduced in Parliament, in a joint statement issued over the signatures of the General Secretaries of the three parties.

The government – and especially the Minister in charge, Prime Minister Premadasa are anxious to rush through this objectionable legislation this year as part of its run up preparation for the next Parliamentary elections, if it decides to hold them.

The full text of the Alliance statement is as follows:

"The LSSP, CP and the SLMP demand that the Government make the Pradeshiya Sabha Bill available for public discussion before it is submitted to Parliament for enactment.

"Up to now there has been no opportunity for the needed public

discussion, despite the fact that the Bill introduces itself as legislation that is meant "to provide greater opportunities for the people to participate effectively in decision making processes relating to administrative and development activities at a local level".

"This is legislation meant to provide local government machinery for areas outside the purview of Municipal and Urban Councils. The administrative units set up for this purpose are known as Pradeshiya Sabhas with elected representatives.

"The main drawback of the Bill is that it is part of this Government's perspective as became evident in the District Development Councils system which it set up in the early years of its rule.

"From the All Parties" Conference to the Political Parties Conference our three parties have always urged very strongly the restoration

of democracy at the grass roots' level in the rural areas by the creation of bodies like the Village Councils that had been abolished. The Government responded by promising to set up Pradeshiya Sabhas.

"It is sufficient to observe here that the Provincial Councils' system' as finalised by the Political Parties Conference and accepted by the Government, recognised as anti-democratic and undesirable the District Development Councils system and set out itself to replace it by Pradeshiya Sabhas.

"The present legislation does not however reflect this perspective. In fact it raises serious doubts about the Government's willingness or ability to implement a democratic system of administration through Provincial Councils and related bodies.

UNWARRANTED

"This legislation reserves for the Minister, right from its commencement, an unwarranted

degree of power over the establishment of these Sabhas and over their functioning.

"Section 217 gives the Minister an unsupervised power to cut, chop, add to, and otherwise modify the law and its application by gazette notification and solely on his own judgment. This is a wide power that can be a great danger to any administrative body that functions subject to it.

"The Minister has also absolute power to dissolve any Pradeshiya Sabha or remove its members or its Chairman. The Bill provides for the Minister's action to be preceded by an inquiry into the working of the Sabha. But the Minister is not bound by the said inquiry or its finding. In fact the outcome of the Inquiry is itself not made public. In this situation the elected Chair-

man of the Sabha can be wholly the instrument of the Minister.

BUDGET

"Such Chairman can act without any reference to the elected representatives. A budget not passed by the Sabha is deemed by law to have been passed if the Chairman wishes it to be so. The Chairman can even vary the budget without reference to the Sabha.

"At the least this Bill should be referred to a Standing Committee of Parliament before the Third Reading to pass the Bill That will enable public representations to be made.

"It is noted that together with the Pradeshiya Sabha Bill there is a

set of amendments to other laws governing local bodies. An attempt is being made to devolve on them powers in regard to ventures for earning revenue and for providing employment. This is desirable if the necessary resources can be used.

"But supervening everything are the undemocratic provisions of the entire package. All local bodies are made the hirelings of the DDCs.

"The extent of powers conferred by the package on the ministerial establishment tends to create a government within the government.

"The whole package of measures contemplated is another grievous blow struck at democratic rights in Sri Lanka." □

Vijaya's Northern Break Through

Christian Worker published a special interview with Vijaya Kumaratunga in its last issue for the 3rd quarter, 1986.

Vijaya Kumaratunga began that interview by saying: "On October 20th afternoon I left for Jaffna to help secure the release of two army men who were taken prisoner by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)"

He finished his interview by saying: "Even though we have not been successful in immediately securing the release of the two servicemen, we have no doubt that we made.....useful contact.....above all, with the people of Jaffna to whom we demonstrated our sincere desire for peace and unity.....".

The Second Visit

If readers care to turn to the back of the front cover of the last issue of the *Christian Worker* they will read the following item of late news:

"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 Vauniya, Paranthan and Chavakachcheri and large crowds lined the roads and cheered the convoy as it entered Jaffna..... The group visited the two prisoners and spent time with them and the monks chanted pirith for them at the LTTE camp. 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..... 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....." (Dated: 7 December 1986)

The Swap

The weekly edition of *The Hindu* of 7 December 1986 said on its front page: "At a meeting in Jaffna, an LTTE commander for the peninsula, "Kittu" said the captives would be released only if the government released some of the LTTE members held in custody. The meeting was attended by a visiting leader of the Mahajana Party, Vijaya Kumaratunga, a group of Buddhist monks and relatives of the two captive soldiers.....

Mr. Kumaratunga on his second mission to Jaffna since October to seek the release of the army men, appealed to the LTTE to release them to lay the foundation for a healthy political dialogue between the North and South".

The lead story in the government controlled *Daily News* of 20 December 1986 announced in a banner headline: 'Soldier hostages set free'. The story went to say: 'The two prisoners were handed to Captain Jayantha Kotelawala At about the same time two men were released by the government to the terrorists. They were a young Sinhalese named Gamini Anasthenis..... and a suspected terrorist named Kunju Kumar'. (It later transpired that "Kunju" was in fact Anura - one of the top five commanders of the LTTE).

Minister Athulathmudali was quoted as saying..... "I wish to thank all those who have been making their own efforts towards the same end."

Concerning the subject *The Hindu* of 20 December 1986 reported: "The long awaited exchange of prisoners between the Sri Lanka government and the LTTE took place in Jaffna. Lt. Chandrasiri and Pvt Bandara of the Sri Lanka Army who were in the custody of the LTTE in Jaffna were handed over to Captain Kotelawala.. Simultaneously the army authorities gave in exchange two LTTE members in custody..."

Vijaya's Efforts

Mr Vijaya Kumaratunga...visited Jaffna twice in a bid to secure their release.. During the first attempt the SLMP leader stipulated that the soldiers should be released only through him. During his second visit he said that the LTTE was free to release them to anybody. Mr Kittu said in Jaffna that it was after Mr Kumaratunga's change of Position that the soldiers were released directly to the government....."

Beyond any manner of doubt Mr Vijaya Kumaratunga has played a key role in securing the release of the two captured army men. Nor is that his most significant achievement in the current context. He has also emerged as Sri Lanka's Man of Peace, as London's *Sunday Times* recently described him. As is well known, for the past several years, Vijaya Kumaratunga has been Sri Lanka's most popular film actor. He has now convincingly demonstrated how an actor's gift can be imaginatively applied to politics. He has effectively used the fame acquired in one field to pursue purposefully long-range and large-scale objectives in another.

His critics - and these include the racist right and the lunatic left - have ganged up to belittle his achievement by ridicule and slander. They have vigorously tried to dismiss him as an unlettered rock star with the brains of a rock star whose Political naivete is matched only by his self-assurance.

To counter the barrage of hostile propaganda against him Vijaya Kumaratunga offers the best argument that a professional film actor could possibly offer; the story of his visits to Jaffna recorded on film. Those wishing no truck with non-racist egalitarian politics will shut their eyes and block their ears and

dismiss the films as a record of the political escapades of an unlettered bumpkin. (For the record Vijaya Kumaratunga is not less academically qualified than D.S. Senanayake, John Kotelawala, Sirima Bandaranaike and R. Premadasa). But to see the story of Vijaya Kumaratunga's visits to the North on film is to sense optimism, enthusiasm and idealism. It is also to see earnest young people engaging in political activity caring little for immediate consequences and seemingly motivated by moral imperatives.

Candour and Flexibility

In these films Vijaya Kumaratunga's personal authenticity is almost palpable. He comes across as a guileless character of disarming candour and flexibility.

During the first visit when official intervention prevented the release of the two soldiers to him, he is seen to contrive - successfully - to commit the militant Tigers to release them to no one else. And the militants were as good as their word. On his second visit when it seems to him that the question of his prestige appears to be the sole factor preventing the release of the soldiers, he is seen requesting the Tigers to ignore his prestige and release the soldiers to any one, the Minister of National Security not excepted.

In the event, the two soldiers were released to Captain Kotelawala (who was on the cover of the preceding issue of *Christian Worker* shaking hands with Tiger 'Rahim', while Vijaya Kumaratunga was looking on)

During the second visit Vijaya Kumaratunga is seen making a major speech in Sinhala in which he emphasises repeatedly that the principal aim of his visit was to help build a bridge of understanding between the two temporarily estranged communities. watching the film, it is also not possible to resist the feeling that in sharp contrast to the racist capitalistic and opportunistic politics pursued in varying degrees by permutations and combinations of the UNP, SLFP and groupings like the MEP and JVP, Vijaya Kumaratunga's position representing as it does the politics of the Three party Left alliance of the LSSP, CP and SLMP, provides the only way out of the present tragic political morass in our bleeding island home. For, in that direction alone lies the only hope for the emergence of a truly united modern Sri Lankan nation.

The Constitution of UNESCO declares; 'Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.' Watching the story of Vijaya Kumaratunga's visits to the North on film it is not possible to remain unimpressed by the defences of peace that he has already constructed in the minds of our estranged Tamil brothers and sisters. □

L.S.S.P. Call to Tamil Militants

The peace-by-negotiations effort, for which a foundation was laid by the Provincial Councils scheme as projected by the Political Parties Conference, has visibly weakened in recent weeks. The LTTE has shown a complete intransigence in their rejection of the proposed solution through the devolution of power to Provincial Councils. They are attempting to strengthen their administration in the area in their control together with the collection of revenues and dues that belong to government. They are in fact seeking the further appropriation of powers to themselves instead of seeking to negotiate a settlement. Government has met these efforts of the LTTE by the stoppage of oil supplies to the Jaffna Peninsula and stepping up their military operations there by land, sea and air. The relevant question is not which side has killed more uninvolved people in the process. The relevant and terrible fact is that both sides appear to have got on the war path with all its attendant death, destruction and national disaster.

The peace process

The military path is not a path along which or at the end of which there lies for the people of Sri Lanka a future of peace, security and dignity in an undivided Sri Lanka. As such, the mass of people in Sri Lanka who thirst for peace cannot permit either a drift to military confrontation or a deliberate resumption of military confrontation to take the place of sustained effort to keep going and bring to fruition the peace-by-negotiation process. It is a task of the peace-seeking forces to struggle to compel such effort by both sides in the confrontation.

The peace-seeking forces must realise the considerable victory won by their pressure on the Government. They have brought the Government to the acceptance of the need to devolve and decentralise the power of the central government to regional and local units. They have brought the Government to the point of putting forward concrete but improvable proposals for a Provincial Council system and, at another level, for Pradeshiya Sabhas. The struggle has of course to continue to make such devolution real, substantial and adequate to the situation in terms of People's self-management at every level. The first phase of such struggle will be for appropriate legislation and the next will be for honest implementation of the legislation,

As at the present juncture, the peace forces have another struggle to conduct and step up. They have to struggle to bring the armed Eelamist organisations into the peace-by-negotiation process.

This struggle is no less vital, from the point of view of peace-seeking forces than the struggle to bring the Government to the peace-making process and to hold the Government to that process.

This fact was clear from the time the Government put forward the provincial Council Proposals. It will be remembered that at that time back in July 1986, the LSSP by a published formal resolution, called on the armed Eelamist organisations to put forward their counter proposals as a necessary step in the peace-by-negotiation process. The only condition laid down was that the counter-proposals should be this side of the demand to carve out of Sri Lanka a separate Tamil state.

Call for response

It will be remembered that a proposal to the same effect made by Dr. Colvin R. de Silva was unanimously adopted by the Political Parties Conference. It was pointed out on that occasion that the putting forward of such counter-proposals would enable the negotiation of a cease-fire on both sides and of other arrangements for some agreed period which would enable serious negotiations based on the rival proposals.

The L. S. S. P. declares it is now more than time for the armed Eelamist organisations to make their counter-proposals and thereby contribute from their side to the peace-by-negotiation process.

The L. S. S. P. calls on the peace-seeking forces to press on the armed Eelamist organisations to that end just as they have pressed and are pressing on the Government in respect of the Provincial Council proposals and the peace-by-negotiation process.

Success in the struggle to bring the armed Eelamist organisations to the making of counter-proposals this side of the division of the country will be success in the effort to get the peace-by-negotiation process to a new stage of actual political negotiations.

We call on the armed Eelamist organisations to play their part in the process. The peace-by-negotiation process can be a victim of failure to play that part. To open the way to such national disaster would surely be a frightful responsibility.

Lanka Sama Samaja Party

Dangerous Trends in the south

— C. A. Chandraprema

The writer was until recently a student of the University of Colombo and an active member of the Independent Students Union. Therefore this article represents the viewpoint of a good section of University students.

Murder most foul

The last two weeks of December 1986 were traumatic ones for many University students and political activists. The body of Daya Pathirana the well known and respected student leader was discovered with his throat slashed near a deserted inn on the outskirts of Colombo. His friend Somasiri was discovered alive but with near fatal injuries.

Speaking at the funeral of the slain student leader, prominent Lanka Sama Samaja party (LSSP) politician Athauda Seneviratne said that never had he heard of anything like it in the half-century history of the left movement in Sri Lanka. The reaction of many when the news first struck their ears was disbelief, shock and incomprehension. The confusion increased as the culprits were exposed. Could a party which was ostensibly on the side of the masses have been responsible for the murder of a well known left-wing student leader?

The First reaction of many of those who had got used to thinking of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) — Peoples Liberation Front) as a part of the left movement, was to dismiss the idea as totally preposterous. Instead true to the JVP tradition suspicion was sought to be cast on the CID, NIB, CIA, MOSSAD, UNP goons and the like. However, as things stand now, the facts appear to point directly to the JVP as the perpetrators of this dastardly crime.

ISU vs JVP

The Independent Students Union (ISU) of which the late Daya Pathirana was the leader for the past three years, had its inception in 1980. That was a time when the JVP had effectively established its bases in the Universities. The ISU was inaugurated by a group of politically conscious students who were disgruntled with the JVP tactic of subordinating the student movement to the parochial interests of the party leadership. It soon emerged as the dominant group in the University of Colombo, with the leadership of the students council devolving on it in 1981. It has maintained its dominant position to this date.

The ISU though independent of all political parties and tendencies, has not been independent of politics per se. From its very inception, it has taken consistent stands on national issues and maintained close

links with all major left-wing political parties, trade unions, peasants organizations, and various other human rights groups etc. The ISU has also served as the rallying point for the student activists of left-wing political parties within the University of Colombo. This was made necessary because the JVP took advantage of every available opportunity to physically intimidate activists belonging to other groups.

Communalism

In addition to fundamental differences of opinion as to aims, objectives, and methods, a bone of contention between the JVP and the ISU in recent times has been the "ethnic issue". The espousal of Sinhala racial chauvinism by the JVP was seen as an unforgivable act of political opportunism by the ISU. The ISU was from its very inception strongly against any form of racism or communalism.

During the communal riots of July 1983, students belonging to the ISU gave protection to Tamil students and lecturers; as well as many unfortunate Tamil citizens who happened to be on the roads during those days of racist terror. The late Daya Pathirana was at that time in the forefront of this rescue campaign as a new recruit to the ISU.

Patriotism

Since of late the JVP had reached its nadir in its standing amongst the students due to its opportunism and manipulatory political tactics. The mishandling of certain issues contributed to this decline. The upshot of this was that the JVP thought it expedient to show a new face to the students; and accordingly attempted to organize a 'patriotic students front' ostensibly for the purpose of opposing the proposed provincial councils; but with the actual intention of bolstering their position within the student movement by sowing the seeds of racial hatred. The students however, saw the wolf within the sheep skin, and the inaugural meeting of the Patriotic Students Front ended in a fiasco with the speakers being jeered at and frog-marched out of the hall.

In the melee the leader of the JVP faction in the University fled with a pistol he had concealed in a travelling bag. The students were alerted to the presence of firearms by the shouts of a Buddhist monk who had seen the JVP student leader trying to take the pistol out of the bag. Another JVP activist, a final year science student, fled across the University premises in full view of the students and the staff brandishing a kris-knife with which he had earlier attempted to stab an ISU activist. The student has not been seen in campus since. Moreover, a "knuckle duster" brought in by a hard-core JVP'er was confiscated by members of the ISU.

The JVP had concentrated all its power on this meeting with hard-core members being brought in

from the Universities of Sri Jayawardanapura, Moratuwa, and Kelaniya. The failure at Colombo unbalanced the JVP leadership. In a confirmation of Leon Trotsky's observation that terrorism lurks just below the skin of the petit-bourgeois, a student belonging to the ISU was abducted in revenge that very night and physically tortured for several hours in a room at the Sri Jayawardanapura University hostel. Subsequently, Daya Pathirana's life was openly threatened on several occasions.

The ultimate betrayal

On the 13th of December 1986, two individuals claiming to be students of the University of Sri Jayawardanapura had come to meet Pathirana for discussions on the "ethnic issue". The discussion had lasted three hours. This was followed by another long discussion the next day. On the third day ie; December 15th, the two visitors had suggested that Pathirana accompany them to a certain boarding house for a night-long discussion.

Not being accustomed to intrigue and conspiratorial politics, Pathirana had unsuspectingly agreed. On the way to the bus halt they were said to have been followed and picked up by a heavily armed gang in a van claiming to be Criminal Investigation Department personnel. The two students from the University of Sri Jayawardanapura, who were later found to be hard-core JVP activists were let off on the outskirts of the city. Subsequently, the gang which is suspected to be a special team of JVP hit-men, took Pathirana and his companion Somasiri to a deserted inn by the side of the Bolgoda lake and slashed them with razors. Pathirana died almost immediately but Somasiri lived to tell the tale. The two students who lured Pathirana to his death have since gone underground.

Hitlerism

Wijeweera's cultivated image within the party as the great omnipotent leader or "superman" from Ruhuna, destined to lead the country towards prosperity and glory, necessitated only the open and blatant espousal of Sinhala racial chauvinism to convert the JVP into a diabolical third world variant of Hitlerism. Its all there in almost classical purity: the concept of the infallible leader with Wijeweera as the "Führer", Sinhala racial chauvinism in the place of Germanomania, anti-Tamil paranoia in the place of anti-Semitism.

Significantly, Hitler had to pay lip service to socialist goals in order to successfully hoodwink and manipulate the petit-bourgeoisie which was the main mass base of the National Socialist German Workers Party. The "socialist" rhetoric of Wijeweera can be explained in similar vein.

The emergence of this local variant of "national socialism" began to be felt some time ago with allegedly JVP organized hooliganism being unleashed at left-wing trade union meetings, bombs being found in the residential premises of prominent left leaders, the bombing of a left-wing rally at Mount Lavinia, the attempted murder of Vaas Tilekeratne, a former leader of the JVP, on two separate occasions, the

assassination of an anti-JVP school principal down south and finally, the brutal killing of Daya Pathirana.

Parallels

It is interesting to note the parallels in the northern part of Sri Lanka. A few weeks before the southern undergrads charged the JVP with the murder of Daya Pathirana, their counterparts in the north were protesting against the disappearance of Arunagirinathan Vijitharan of the Jaffna University. It was the contention of the Jaffna undergrads that Vijitharan could not have simply "disappeared" with the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) being so firmly in control of the peninsula.

The petit-bourgeois nature of the militant groups in the north makes the elimination of political opponents and the liquidation of dissidents within their own ranks an everyday occurrence. The brutal massacre of TELO (Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization), the "disappearance" of Vijitharan, the "surrender" of PLOT (People's Liberation Organization of Tamil-eelam,) the on going battle between the LTTE and the EPRLF (Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front,) and the alleged massacre of dissidents within PLOT are but illustrations of the petit-bourgeois politics of the north. Since the cadres of the northern militant groups and the JVP come from the same rural petit-bourgeois social strata, it is only to be expected that there would be many similarities in their modus operandi.

Such aberrational political formations are perhaps inevitable in a country like Sri Lanka, with its underdeveloped agrarian economy and overwhelmingly petit-bourgeois population. The creatures that issue from the womb of national, economic, or social oppression in such circumstances often tend to be deformed monstrosities.

The unique position of the petit-bourgeoisie which inhabits the no-mans land between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat guarantees vacillation, inconsistency, opportunism, and blind destructive violence. A petit-bourgeois uprising against any kind of oppression very often takes the form of a blind and elemental venting of frustration in violence and destruction.

There is no guarantee that these elemental outbursts will result in progress. Quite the contrary rather! The absence of ideological consistency, and class consciousness within the petit-bourgeoisie very often makes it subservient to the ideologically, economically and socially stronger bourgeoisie. Hence, petit-bourgeois politics tends to go round in circles benefiting ultimately, only the forces of reaction and counter-revolution. The history of the JVP and its current behaviour has amply borne out this rather unfortunate fact.

The murder of Daya Pathirana marks a new phase in local politics. The writing is on the wall as anyone who would take the trouble to scrutinize JVP graffiti would perceive. Today we confront a rabidly racist and appallingly opportunistic movement of petit-bourgeois youth led by a blood-thirsty megalomaniac. While condemning the brutal murder of a truly humanitarian student leader, all right thinking people should join hands with the progressive movement to eradicate this new phenomenon of quasi-fascist barbarity from our political life. □

What the Budget Portends

— Bernard Soysa

This article written for Christian Worker by LSSP General Secretary and former Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee who as a M P has made valuable contributions in parliamentary debates prior to 1977, examines the 10th Budget of the UNP Government presented last November.

A few months have passed since the Hon. Minister of Finance presented his budget for 1987. It is however useful to recall some aspects of that budget and think of what it could mean in the economic life of the country.

The Hon. Minister justly referred with pride to the fact that he was introducing his tenth budget—the tenth. He has been compared to a mother fondly proud of her large brood, and that was on the occasion of this last accouchement in November. He is entitled to the compliment. Nevertheless there is another comparison perhaps more fitting. It is the comparison to a famous goose—the goose that laid the golden eggs. From one budget to the other every budget on being opened has revealed a golden egg for the rich and the affluent in Sri Lankan society and for most outsiders who have economic and financial links with Sri Lanka. And they are standardised eggs. They do not diminish in size or in importance.

But when he moved the second reading of the Appropriation Bill for 1987 the Minister began with a wail over the unfavourable circumstances that he had had to face in the immediate past and he went on to say that these hostile circumstances persisted. He mentioned two major calamitous features. The first was the continuing conflict and fighting over the unsettled problem of intercommunal relations and the increased expenditure over military activities. This was given as one of the causes of the increasing difficulty he has in bridging budget gaps. The other is the drop in earnings principally the earnings from the export of agricultural produce. It is useful to examine both these given causes.

The Ethnic tragedy

It would be foolish and cynical to deny that the increased defence expenditure caused by the fighting is tragically heavy. The figures emerge in two ways. He says that it is 5% of the country's gross domestic product. Then the revised estimates for 1986, taking into account the added expenditure on Airport Construction, show the extra provision in 1986 to have been 3.5 billion. This is a huge burden particu-

larly for a small and poor country like Sri Lanka. He has to be a callous and cynical person who does not agree with the Minister when he says: "Without peace this country faces complete ruin. Those who obstruct peace will go down in history as traitors to our country, to our people and to our vision of a united prosperous and independent Sri Lanka. Let us all bear that in mind and take this to heart. Those who stand in the way of a settlement now will surely be those who may eventually cause the division of the country."

True. Nevertheless, without denying that this enhanced expenditure is both large and unprofitable in regard to development, this fact can also be noted. The added spending in 1986 was Rs. 3.5 billion. This amount in a total budget of Rs. 73 billions represents less than 5%. This increase in the provision by one twentieth cannot exactly be related to this statement: "The rapid increase in defence expenditure has also increased the budget deficit and necessitated unsustainable levels of Bank borrowing...etc..." Air Lanka had a loss of one billion rupees for 1986. General waste and corruption account for more.

The second calamitous feature mentioned is the drop in earnings, principally the earnings from agricultural exports. It is true that the big companies that deal in primary agricultural produce from the third world conspire to pay the countries less and less. Though a sudden conjuncture of circumstances can send prices up for a short time, generally the international market is unfavourable to primary agricultural products. Prices tend to be depressed. However if the entire picture of our tea export business is looked at with care it can be seen that much of the blame for the crashing prices rests with the Government that is to say with the policy makers and those who implement policies.

Tea without sympathy

In regard to tea, fashions are fast changing. The craze for "instant products" keeps spreading. The backwash has come to India and Sri Lanka with Instant Thosai, Instant Rasam, Instant hoppers and Instant String-hoppers. We tried to produce an "Instant Tea" but without success. In this situation "Mr. T. Pot" and his injunctions ("Boil the water, warm the pot, one teaspoon of tea for each cup and one for the pot") are fast receding. "Tea bags" have come to the fore. The position occupied by the various blends we try to sell with the quality teas of Uva and the uplands holding pride of place are now being taken over inexorably by tea bags. And what goes into the tea bags is not the traditional tea but what is called CTC.

According to the International Tea Committee production of the in Sri Lanka up to and including 1984 has been entirely orthodox. No CTC.

In 1000 metric tons

1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
206	191	210	188	179	208

Up to September 1986 it has been 159.7 million kgs while for the corresponding period in 1985 it was 162.4 million kgs, a drop of 5.5 million kgs.

The manufacture of CTC in India was as follows:

(In 100 metric tons)

1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
370	389	395	400	435	458

The total Asian production of CTC has been (with nothing contributed by Sri Lanka.)

(In 1000 metric tons)

1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
390	414	422	429	486	487

No meaningful steps have been taken to increase the production here of CTC teas which are coming into greater demand. Even in regard to all African teas CTC teas moved up:

(In 1000 metric tons)

1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
183	170	176	190	211	223

Sri Lanka has not kept abreast of changes in world demand. Government is to be blamed for the drop in earnings from tea. This is also a loss in foreign exchange. Even if we commence now to produce CTC on a larger and significant scale it will take at least three years before benefits can accrue.

From 1985 to 1986 there was a drop in sales of every kind of tea produced in Sri Lanka by about one-third the quantities of 1985. We have lost on the Pakistani market. Pakistan was some years ago our No. 1 buyer: but with CTC gaining ground there, our sales are dropping. Inefficient management of the plantations has also contributed to our loss.

Even in regard to coffee, cocoa and pepper we have failed to take advantage of rising world commodity prices, and that in spite of the high quality of our cocoa and pepper. There has been a reduction in areas of cultivation partly because of the land taken in by the Mahaweli Project. There is no planning in relation to agricultural development. (In fact at the beginning the Government said in regard to all economic enterprise's plans must not be allowed to interfere with private enterprise. Then the minister began to talk of "priorities". Now he says he has every year a "rolling plan" which he calls "A PUBLIC INVESTMENT PROGRAM")

It is these poor export earnings and the bleak future that compels Government not merely to borrow largely but face a situation in which debt servicing increases from year to year and has become an insupportable load.

So much for the Hon. Minister's opening oration. What is the major content of this budget? What are its principal measures?

Employment, wages and prices

Opportunities of employment abroad, particularly in the Middle East did grow over the years with the rise in oil prices. Now these opportunities are shrinking. In the same way with the inward flows of aid funds and the expansion of commercial enterprise there was an increasing casualisation of labour but there were more jobs. All kinds of contractors took in numbers whom they hired and fired as they liked. job opportunities in the Greater Colombo Economic Zone absorbed some workers though far from the projected numbers. Now all this is on the reverse order. And so the Central Bank is silent on the question: they say that they cannot say. As always the new job opportunities did not match the increase in the "work force" every year. Unemployment is on the increase.

In regard to wages and salaries and other earnings the budget speech says nothing even in the section in which the Minister talks of the need to reduce the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots". The incomes of the middle and poorer strata of town and country are not to be improved according to the Minister's speech. In spite of this, or rather on account of this, some groups of professional employees and white collar workers have agitated for better pay. Some increases have been indicated. In the meanwhile workers, "pickets" for an increase in pay are met with repression.

Price increases have again come upon the relatively poorer sections of the people. It is not only that beer and arrack have gone up in price. The 15% tax band in regard to BTT has been removed and those items will now be taxed at 20%. Fruit juices, cordials, sheet glass and glassware have suffered a price increase. Smokers are now paying more as the result of a revision of duties. Pension funds, provident funds and savings funds outside the EPF will now be taxed on their investment income. The new tax on LCs (Letters of credit) is being passed on to the consumer. Apart from all this the inflationary impact of the Government's fiscal measures will undoubtedly keep prices high; and with the absence of price control and rationing the price burden lies heavily on the poor.

Inflation

It is of no use to seek to assess the extent of inflation by consulting Government's figures. These figures cannot be trusted. On the other hand even the controlled index on living costs shows a dismal picture. For the month of January in each of these years the index gave the following figures:

In 1985 the Index rose to 575.3 in December and in 1986 in January the figure was 586.5 reaching 613.9 in October.

A few pre-budget household income and expenditure figures revealed: A family of five residing in the Anderson Flats, with only the husband earning, needed a monthly expenditure of Rs. 2903.00 and that without taking in medical expenses, Laundry charges, cost of a newspaper and social requirements. The net income per month was Rs. 1930/- per month.

A working-class family of five living in Timbirig-asyaya needed a monthly income of Rs. 1963.45 and that too without taking in medical expenses, clothes and children's school books. His net income was Rs. 573.20.

Since these people and others at the same level do not earn what is required the result is that many items from the minimal budget are dropped. This in turn means malnutrition, ill-health and misery.

It is on these peoples lives that the full inflationary impact of the present budget proposals will fall, with its promised Treasure Bill financing.

Tax reliefs and other concessions to the rich

The principal concession given for 1987 is the reduction in regard to the payment of a capital gains tax. The rates of tax applicable to sales at various segments of the period between acquisition of the asset and twenty-five years have been reduced, the base year has been brought up from 1957 to 1977. After twenty-five years of holding the asset there will be no capital gains tax. This is a very large new year's gift to the wealthy.

The exemption granted to share transactions has been withdrawn and shares sales will be subject to tax like any other asset. This immediately stopped speculation and the rapid movement of shares and also depressed share values. Capitalists are themselves divided on the benefit or otherwise of this last measure.

Depreciation allowances have been generously enhanced. The period for writing off an asset has been variously reduced while the rate of depreciation and therefore the allowance has been increased in regard to several assets. The tax holiday for exports has been varied to the advantage of both exporter and producer. Foreign exchange earnings in a non-resident foreign currency account attracts no tax to either interest or capital.

All these are big concessions. It is the Minister's lament that he finds himself unable to give more.

The Theory

The Government is following the same pattern of budgeting that began with Government's negotiations abroad for financial aid. The IMF's package usually given to developing countries that go for aid has been

repeated here: Devaluation of the currency, an open economy and privatisation. Together with these measures go the grant of huge tax reliefs in the belief that the savings would be utilised for investment. What has been stimulated? Commercial activity, money lending, and the black activities of drug trafficking, smuggling etc. The black economy has expanded. The Inland Revenue Department says there should be money in the country but they do not know where it is. Some of it is in foreign banks.

The vaunted increase in growth rates is largely in the services sector. Commercial activity goes into the calculation in a large way. But the basis of this is the continued flow of "aid" and enhanced credits. No investments have been made by the "stimulated" private sector to enable the country to earn enough to reduce in any worthwhile way our huge debt commitments. On the other hand no mention is made of the outward flow of our resources through purchases abroad, dividends, fees, and remittances of various kinds. There is no development even to balance this bleeding.

At the end of ten years

In regard to budgeting we see that though there is a sliding down in regard to deficits from the peak of 1982-83, the deficits remain too high to permit a proper reduction of inflationary trends. The amount of debt both external and domestic has grown enormously till debt servicing has reached 30%. The balance of payments deficit continues unabated (he thinks he can abolish it in 1990 if his yearly "rolling plans" fructify in the next three years.) In the meanwhile in our society poverty and crime is on the increase.

"Privatisation" is the new nostrum for development. There are a few rich persons and organisations waiting to gobble up some public assets. If the whole economy is studied and Government's own admission taken into account, 60% of the economy is in the Public Sector. There is no capital in private hands to match this 60% on any basis of valuation. Solutions to this problem are proposed in two ways (a) the value of the assets privatised to be treated as some sort of loan from Govt. (b) foreign participation to be sought. The other aspect of the problem is that Government is in fact proposing through privatisation to sell off public assets and obtain funds which whatever their intentions, will enable the Government to give further tax concessions to the rich and go to finance in large measure the growing waste and corruption.

The lowest one-tenth of the population in terms of income, according to available figures, receives 1.21% of GDP while the highest one-tenth receives 41.7%. This relative distribution of poverty is further emphasised by the fact that 7½ lakhs of our people need food stamps to live. Here are the fruits of ten years of uninterrupted direction.

The dependence on foreign capital and multinationals is in this way to be further increased. We end the 10 years with this dependence made greater than before with all the attendant economic and political consequences. □

Privatisation of Milk and Insurance

— D. E. W. Gunasekara

This article was specially written for **Christian Worker** by Communist M. P. Dew Gunasekara who is today the sole Champion of the left in Parliament.

The UNP Government, when it bull-dozed through Parliament new laws to privatise public sector enterprises, tried to pretend that it was forced to do so because those enterprises were running at a loss, thus involving the Government in subsidies that it could not afford.

But now both the President and Minister of Finance have come out quite openly that privatization is an international trend and that they would extend their policy of de-nationalization and privatization unreservedly to all the sectors of the economy.

Panacea ?

It is true that the Keynesian formula applied following World War II proved to be inadequate in coping with the complex situations brought about by economic crises in the 1970 s. When the state policies for the regulation of the cyclical processes in developed market economies failed, the modern monetarists initiated this concept of privatization, as a panacea.

We are aware, how these formulas of privatization so much in fashion in capitalist circles have already led to the most spectacular economic disasters of modern times even in developed countries. What is worse is that these developed countries are attempting to impose these regressive concepts on the Third World Countries like ours. There is already a chaotic situation in the monetary - financial system imposed by them on the world and we of the Third World are the first victims of these concepts.

What does the so called trend of privatization represent ? It is the trend of accumulation and exploitation of capital by the monopolist and transnational corporations. There has been an alarming increase in the influence of the transnational corporations on world economic relations. They generate the biggest share of international capital flow which they control by means of a vast international financial network. Privatization is one of the means through which these transnationals try to accumulate, concentrate, control and exploit capital.

Though some people are convinced by this concept of the modern monetarists, they will realize the

social and political effects of these trends sooner or later.

Let us examine how this trend operates in our economy. The Milk Industry and Insurance Business were two victims of the privatization process.

Milk

In the case of the Milk Board, privatization was implemented under the pretext of restructuring and modernizing. The monster that benefited from this move was Nestle, one of the most rapacious transnational corporations, operating in the Third World.

In 1984, two World Bank specialists Wesley Hardison and Michael Halse who reported on the working of the Milk Board produced an *aide memoire*, bluntly demanding the transfer of the milk industry from public to private hands, as a pre-condition to a loan provided by the World Bank.

The first step in the privatization process was to appoint the multi-national Nestle as "consultants" at a fee of Rs. 3.5 million. It should be noted that this was the time when the Nestle had been on the look out for new countries for their operations as it had then been condemned and boycotted by a large number of countries for violating WHO and UNICEF codes.

Nestle then took the next step of getting the Milk Board to agree to funnel its 'extra' liquid milk to the Nestle Factory at Pannala.

In the meantime, it got the condensary at Polonnaruwa handed over to it and also obtained sole rights of operation in the so-called coconut triangle. Subsequently, the Milk Board was wound up and its activities entrusted to a private company called Milco. It is interesting to find that this company Milco has been set up on the direction given by the World Bank consultants. The *aide-memoire* submitted by them had clearly stated that it approved the articles of association of Milco and stipulated that the appointment of Milco's Chairman and Board of Directors should proceed as rapidly as possible as pre-project activity before the World Bank loan became effective. This shows the extent to which the World Bank had interfered in the privatization process of the Milk Industry.

The Government offered as an excuse for privatization, mismanagement of the affairs of the Milk Board. But it is most revealing that the mismanagement had, in actual fact, taken place under the present Government.

Butter production which had reached 628,000 lbs just before the UNP Government took office declined to 200,000 lbs in 1981. The 2,214,000 cups of Yoghurt produced in 1977 dropped to only 54,000 cups in 1981. Cheese production dropped from 14939 lbs to 3000 lbs in the same period. Full-cream milk powder produced at the Ambawela factory dropped from 11 million lbs in 1977 to a mere 1.9 million lbs in 1981. This was so in the case of production of liquid milk.

Another reason why the Milk Board could not make progress was the competition, from imported milk under the open economic policy. Rs. 500 million worth of milk products are imported annually.

Hon. Minister S. Thondaman argued that he had no option but to close down the Milk Board as the government could no longer afford a subsidy of Rs. 45 million. However, he failed to answer when the question was raised in Parliament, how he found foreign exchange to the extent of Rs. 500 million for the import of milk products.

So, the real reasons for the privatization of the milk industry lay elsewhere. It took place directly in response to the demand of the World Bank. These behind-the-scenes goings on are referred to (euphemistically) by the Minister of Finance as "winds of change" or "world trends"!

Insurance

The usual excuse of running at a loss or mismanagement cannot be offered in the case of nationalised insurance. Since the commencement of peoples' insurance 25 years ago, it has been not only efficient but a money-spinner and a source of big taxes and loans that helped successive governments to reduce their budget deficits. The Insurance Corporation of Sri Lanka alone was able to contribute Rs. 392 million in taxes to the Treasury between 1980 and 1985. The same was the case with the National Insurance Corporation started in 1979.

In 1979, when introducing the Bill to set up the National Insurance Corporation the then Minister of Trade Mr. Lalith Athulathmudli told Parliament:

"There have been some people who have been making the suggestion that we should have private insurance companies. I must say that I have looked into their arguments very carefully and I remain totally unconvinced, because if you look at the history of private

insurance companies, they with a few exceptions must have been mushroom companies which have failed to honour their obligations" (Hansard 6th March, 1979 Volume 4 Column 1012.)

Nevertheless, there is now evidence to show that the Government had from 1983 been preparing to de-nationalize the National Insurance Corporation. The private insurance companies who were hovering like vultures in anticipation of the spoils that could be gobbled up when nationalised insurance died, continued to bring pressure on the government that it should stop dragging its feet on this matter. The Consortium of Insurance tycoons headed by N.U. Jayawardena threatened the government that unless it passed the new Bill to allow private insurance companies before the 1987 Budget they would refuse to make any investments in Sri Lanka themselves.

If Insurance had been in private hands, during the 1983 July ethnic violence, the companies would surely have seized on legal loopholes to avoid responsibility for compensation. The fact that state-backed corporations existed however ensured that these claims were met. Undoubtedly, the State Insurance suffered under these exceptional circumstances. After all, it is precisely for this reason that Insurance is required.

Lame Excuses

The government's sole argument to justify its move for privatization of insurance was that the two state insurance corporations had not paid enough attention to promote life insurance. Although, the government claimed that only around 5% of the people of Sri Lanka were covered by life insurance the official figures showed that the actual figure 46% taking group insurance into account. There was no evidence to show that the private sector was interested in life insurance. In all the years of The National Insurance Corporation, the accredited private agents had only brought in a mere 7% of the premia as life insurance as compared with 36% as fire insurance, 27% as motor insurance, 18% as marine insurance, and 12% as general insurance.

In the case of the Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation, life insurance was 41% while fire insurance was only 15%, motor insurance was 23% ect.

What the private companies were specially interested in was to get their hands on general insurance (other than life insurance) and on re-insurance, which was not only most profitable but also provided opportunities for foreign exchange rackets.

The big eight agents who brought in business to the National Insurance Corporation became more rapacious when they netted Rs. 109 million as commission which whetted their appetite for earning more. This is how these business tycoons prepared themselves for an assault to undermine and take over the whole of the nationalised insurance sector. □

Election Commissioner's Report on the 1982 Referendum

C. V. Gunaratne J. P. MMC

The writer of this article figured in a furor which received publicity in the news recently when he was refused permission by the Mayor to introduce a Resolution at a Municipal Council meeting in connection with the Referendum Report of the Elections Commissioner dated 25th July 1986 but released in the latter part of 1986 only in cyclostyled-form, (Date of publication unknown)

C. V. Goonaratne is a Management Consultant by profession and functions as the Leader of the Opposition in the Dehiwala-Mt. Lavinia Municipal Council of which he is a member. He is also the President of the Sri Lanka Independent Harbour Workers Union and Vice President of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party Workers Union besides being a Central Committee member of the SLFP.

Sri Lanka is the only country in the world that has used the device of referendum to extend the life of the legislature. The recently released report of the Commissioner of Elections on the referendum of December 1982, which has been compiled and submitted to Parliament as a statutory requirement brings out disclosures which put democracy in grave peril and strike at its very roots.

Deliberate Violations

It will be seen that the malpractices and irregularities revealed by the Commissioner of Elections vitiate the results of the referendum and are not merely procedural lapses. They have been intentionally committed and by no means are they accidental occurrences, such as (a) **"The continuous display of marked ballot papers** by voters in violation of the secrecy of the ballot". The Commissioner adds: "The display of the marked ballot paper in this manner surprised and shocked everyone because in the elections held in the post 1947 period, no one had witnessed such a scandalous situation" (Para 54.5). (b) **"The public display of symbols** in violation of the election law and the inaction of the police in the face of it" (Para 145 and 150). The Commissioner also reports at para 151 that "The law-abiding citizens are baffled by the fact that after nearly 22 years of compliance within the framework of the law, how it came to be violated with such crude consistency". The Commissioner adds that "the law abiding citizen may see it as a calculated disregard for the law." But does he also see it as "a calculated disregard" to observe the law on the part of wrong-doers convinced that the authorities would not take action? In para 153 the Commissioner further states: "The proposal to extend the life of Parliament was made by the government." "Does he see it as an instance where the authorities who knew the stand

of the government on this issue entertained any fear that they would be misunderstood as individual officers and therefore refrained from taking action to remove the symbols"?

The intimidation of polling observers

To quote from the Commissioner's report (para 5 4.4) "Representations were received on the previous day that polling observers appointed for some polling stations were being instructed to keep away from the polling stations on the day of the poll for fear or safety". In the light of what took place subsequently on the day of the poll it was evident that the right of some polling observers to be present and observe the conduct of the poll "had been disturbed". Allegations were also made about disturbances at the close of the poll notes the Commissioner, including instances where through violent means the close of the poll had been held up. "In the context of a 38 year period of experience in the conduct of regular elections which have been by and large peaceful, the alleged disregard for the law and breakdown in co-operation expected from the people are much regretted" states the Report.

In this connection it brings back sordid memories of the humiliation certain Supreme Court judges were subjected to, not so long ago, and the brazenness with which the culprits claimed, that they had perpetrated the act, to law-enforcement authorities who were paralysed with inaction.

Our Past Record Besmirched

Clean electoral practices have been enshrined by the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary, to the extent that the slightest deviation from laid-down procedure either for nomination of candidates, or, polling, results in the rejection of the nomination papers of the candidate by the Returning Officer and the unseating of the candidate by subsequent Court action.

Sri Lanka was one of the first countries to enjoy universal franchise - which she received in 1931. In this respect, even Britain outstripped us only by a mere four years (1927). In 1981, the government celebrated 50 years of universal adult franchise by, among, other things, having Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and H. R. H. Prince Phillip mark the occasion by a visit to Sri Lanka.

In Asia, Sri Lanka ranks as the oldest democracy that enjoyed universal franchise. Sri Lanka has a hallowed and vibrant tradition in democracy, which has to be safeguarded at all times and against all forces. The slightest smear would pull us down from the high pedestal we occupy in an Asian democracy.

The report of the Commissioner of Elections brings to light ugly blots that are enough to besmirch our fair name for ever, unless there is a vigorous condemnation of the many acts of commission and deliberate omission. For this reason my resolution submitted to the Dehiwela-Mt. Lavinia Municipal Council, called for the resignation of the government as one must do in an act of expiation aimed at the restoration of the high esteem in which democracy has been held.

We will stand condemned in world opinion, before whom we are already on trial for other reasons, unless we ensure a free and fair election to wash away the guilt as revealed by the Commissioner of Elections and disown such practices in the future. The people in the North have always questioned the legitimacy of elected representatives after the experience of the Jaffna District Development Council elections, where six ballot boxes disappeared!

It is noteworthy that the referendum is not subject to judicial scrutiny in the manner of other elections. To quote from para 215 of the Commissioner's report "As mentioned earlier one of the best assurances for the maintenance of propriety at elections can be provided through the mechanism of an effective petition procedure. In the absence of any satisfactory procedure for challenging the result, this referendum therefore became an election without the safeguard normally available in an election law."

At the same time it should be realised that the referendum represents the final step in Constitutional and appellate action beyond which there are no further reviews. The need should be stressed therefore, to ensure that the referendum gives a verdict which is not manipulated or tampered with. Manipulations of referenda are in this light, fatal for a democracy.

Shutting out Discussion

It would be interesting to examine the attitude of the UNP government and its coalition partner, the Ceylon Workers Congress, led by Mr. Thondaman, towards the recent report of the Commissioner of Elections on the Referendum. Before this report could figure in a debate and discussion in Parliament, the Prime Minister obtained majority approval to refer it to a Parliamentary Select Committee despite Opposition protests that they saw in this move a subtle attempt to stifle the expression of public opinion and indignation at the revelations. The Prime Minister in defending his actions stated in Parliament as quoted in Columns 1917, 1921, 1923 of Hansard of 12. 12. 86. that *the report being referred to a Select Committee of Parlia-*

ment would not in any way preclude anybody from having discussions or moving resolutions pertaining to the report. As mentioned earlier I did submit to the Mayor (UNP) of the Dehiwela-Mt. Lavinia Municipal Council a resolution to be included in the Agenda of the Council's meeting to be held on 19. 12. 86, drawing the attention of the government to the irregularities highlighted in the Election Commissioner's Report on the referendum, in view of which the government has no true and democratic mandate to extend the life of Parliament beyond 1983 and should therefore resign forthwith and..... The Mayor in reply informs me that my resolution would not be included in the Agenda as requested, *for the reason that a Select Committee of Parliament has been appointed in that regard!* At the Council meeting despite my quoting the relevant portions of of the Prime Minister's speech from Hansard, the Mayor was insistent in his refusal, but was unable to meet my arguments, and made a 'grave and sudden' exit from the Chamber. Thereafter the M. P. for Matugama, Mr. Anil Moonesinghe, addressed a question to the Prime Minister during adjournment time in Parliament on January 9th this year pertaining to the actions of the Mayor already referred to. The Prime Minister was not present in the House at the time and the question was answered by the Deputy Minister of Local Government, who claimed ignorance of the actions of the Mayor. This on a matter, which had gained so much publicity in the press!

The people would be the best judges of the *bona-fides* of the government and its much vaunted five-star democracy in such circumstances. The Commissioner's report brings in to question the moral right of the present government to continue to stay in office. In this situation, democracy could be safeguarded only through the holding of a free and fair general election without delay.



A Quotable Quote

...When we say that this Parliament is illegitimate, I say that after reading this (the report of the Commissioner of Elections on the Referendum of 22 December 1982 - ed) it is proved twice. This Parliament - I will not say it is illegal, I say it is illegitimate...

Lakshman Jayakody M. P. (SLFP)
Hansard: 24/11/86.

What the Commissioner of elections says.....

The Referendum held in Sri Lanka on 22.12.1982, was not merely the first experience of a Referendum for Sri Lanka, but as far as the records are available (subject to correction) it became the first ever Referendum for the amendment of a Constitution to extend the life span of an elected Legislature, virtually serving as an alternative to a Parliamentary - General - Election. The only other occasion of a similar attempt to extend the life of a Parliament was in Britain in 1945, when Churchill proposed that the war time coalition be extended until Japan surrendered and if the Labour Party would agree, to hold a Referendum for the purpose. Atlee rejected this suggestion as a "notion alien to the British tradition".

However, Referenda had been used for the extension of Office of Presidents in office. In 1964 in Haiti and in 1974 in Tunisia, Duvalier's and Bourguiba's terms of office were extended to life presidencies. Gauthamala in 1935, South Korea in 1969 and Egypt in 1976 extended the period of office of Presidents by Referenda.

Apart from these novelties, being the first ever Referendum to be held in Sri Lanka and the world over being the first Referendum to be used for the purpose of extending the life-span of an existing Legislature an important aspect to which our attention has to be drawn in this instrument as a constitutional device, specially in view of the provisions in Articles 83 (a), 83 (b) is that, it should provide for all the safeguards of an election law, including provision for a realistic Commission of Inquiry or Petition procedure, if the Propriety in the utilisation of this device, is to be maintained as a valid constitutional procedure.

Disturbing Whispers

Criticism is made that the necessary peaceful atmosphere for the conduct of a proper Poll was not available in some of the Polling Stations at the Referendum. From the time of the conclusion of the Poll upto date, in both political and non-political parleys, admonitions continue to be made on the Elections Staff and the Police that the Poll was disturbed. Whispers went around among the Public Servants as to how peaceful would be the Elections

after the experience that some of them had had to face. Equally or more relevant and disturbing is the lack of evidence or complaints of incidents, which continue to remain in the realm of gossip and discussion only.

Allegations & Complaints

Poll closed at 4.00 p. m. Allegations were made about the disturbances at the close of Poll, including instances where, through violent means, the close of Poll had been held up. The total number of impersonations reported is only 51, as against 64 reported at the Presidential Election.

In view of the disturbed atmosphere which had prevailed in some places and as evident from the above facts, a figure of 51 impersonations may not convince anyone as conclusive, specially for those who claim to have experienced certain situations for themselves. It is regrettable to note that the traditional co-operation between the Public and the Staff including the Police who manned the Polling Stations, was not available or effective in some of the places. In the context of a 32 year - period of experience in the conduct of regular Elections which have been by and large peaceful, the alleged dis-regard for the law and breakdown in the co-operation expected from the public are much regretted.

Display of Symbols

Liberal display of Symbols in violation of section 50 of the Referendum Act, became a very unpleasant feature at the Referendum held on 22nd December, 1982. The Proclamation of His Excellency the President under Article 85 of the Constitution read with section 2 of the Referendum Act was published in Gazette Extraordinary No. 219/2 of 14.11.82. According to section 50 (1), display of Referendum Symbols for the promotion of a Referendum is prohibited during the period commencing on the date on which the Proclamation under section 2 is published and ending on the day following the day of Poll at such Referendum. The display of Referendum Symbols commenced prior to the Proclamation. Such display did not violate section 50 (1). It was probably an attempt to

circumvent the law. But to permit them to continue was an affront to the law. It is well – known in the country that the process that commenced prior to the Proclamation, continued over the whole period of the Referendum.

These Symbols were displayed more commonly in the following places:

- 1: Telephone and electricity posts situated on the side of public roads
- 2: Banners across public roads.
- 3: Special structures put up for the purpose on the side of public roads.
- 4: Buildings and other structures, which belonged to public bodies like Local Authorities and some other Public Corporations.
- 5: Over-head pedestrian crossings (some of them yet under construction).
- 6: Roadside walls as drawings.
- 7: Buses belonging to Boards entrusted with Public Transport.

Most of these Symbols had the following common features:

- 1: Some of them appeared to have been produced on a large scale.
- 2: They were made of costly materials like glazed paper.
- 3: They had a common wording.
- 4: They were put up in a uniform manner e. g. on lamp posts of a given area.
- 5: Some of them were well illuminated, with electricity connections either illicitly tapped from main supplies or obtained from independent sources.

Apprehension of persons responsible for the displaying the Symbols, were few. Why were detections difficult? The display of the Symbols was illegal.

Leave aside the views of politically committed or personally prejudiced, and consider the opinion of an average person. The proposal to extend the life of the Parliament was made by the Government. Does he see it as an instance, where the law enforcement authorities, who knew the stand of the Government on this issue entertained any fear that

they would be misunderstood as individual officers and therefore refrained from taking action to remove the Symbols?

Display of Ballot Papers

Complaints were received by some of the Returning Officers in the early hours of the Poll, that in some of the Polling Stations, Voters were displaying the marked Ballot Papers in a continuous manner.

The Display of the marked Ballot Paper in this manner surprised and shocked everyone because in the Elections held in the post-1947 period, no one had witnessed such a scandalous situation. The motivation behind the display of the marked Ballot Paper can be debated for many moons to come, but to the extent that it had been so displayed, claimed to be voluntary though, the secrecy of the vote had been sacrificed. When the secrecy of the vote has been so sacrificed, serious doubts will continue to remain whether the voter exercised the degree of freedom of voting as stipulated in the law.

The display of the marked Ballot Paper of this nature had no precedence. At times an over enthusiastic voter may have attempted to exhibit in a cheap way his allegiance to a Candidate by the display of a marked Ballot Paper but such instances have been so few and far apart, that no one's attention would have been drawn to it. Literate or illiterate, urban or rural, young or old, one could notice in any Polling Station, how carefully the average voter observes this principle. Even accidentally, if a voter is likely to expose the marking when he folds the Ballot Paper, the staff in a Polling Station is always at hand and welcome as they are, to guide such Voters to insert the Ballot Papers in the Ballot Box without exposing the mark.

By and large through experience, all Voters have come to observe this stipulation, as a jealously guarded precious right, guaranteed to them by the law. Except an occasional display which is very rare, Voters have never volunteered to show their marked Ballot Papers. In the process of voting at nine General Elections in the last thirty-eight-year period, amongst several other District and Local Elections, this principle of secrecy of the vote, had been clearly accepted by all. In this context, the continuous and mass display of the marked Ballot Papers in some of the Polling Stations could not have happened by accident. Any ignorance regarding the value of the secrecy of the vote, certainly could not have been the reason for such display. Neither is it realistic to presume that there

was a conspiracy amongst the multitude of voters of these areas, to deliberately expose the marked Ballot Papers.

Then how did the Voters of some areas come to perform this unusual display at the Referendum? If it could not be ignorance or conspiracy to display them, one other possible reason would have been the subjugation to some one's command, for want of which adverse repercussions were likely to have visited on them! It is likely that a promise to vote on conviction, had not been convincing to the canvasser. In order to ensure that in fact such people voted in the way the canvasser wanted, they had demanded that they display the marked Ballot Papers! Unless a demand has been placed on them in such manner, it is not likely that large numbers of Voters would have "voluntarily" displayed their marked Ballot Papers in this manner.

Intimidation

In the interest of a proper conduct of Elections, the Elections Machinery welcomes Polling Observers.

The question at issue is whether any Polling Observers could not be present at the Polling Station, or exercise their due rights for any reasons beyond their control.

It is in such circumstance's that people attempt to decipher a meaningful explanation in the trend of events. If the trend of events indicated any sense of insecurity or fear or apprehension of fear, then the allegation is made even retrospectively, that the Polling Observers would have kept away from Polling Stations due to such fear or insecurity amongst any other reasons. The following instances, which are often claimed to reflect the justification for such a conclusion, are themselves open to various interpretations.

- 1: Failure on the part of certain people to observe the traditional norms of behaviour during Elections.
- 2: Lower level of order at the Referendum so readily evident when compared with the standard maintained at the Presidential Election, held only two months prior to the Referendum.
- 3: Widespread display of Symbols in violation of section 50 (1) against which hardly any effective action was taken.
- 4: Expression of fear prior to the Poll as evident from the representations referred to above.

- 5: Fact that some campaigners including the Secretary of a Recognized Political Party were held in remand.
- 6: Sacrifice by voters at some of the Polling Stations, of the very core and essence of a free Poll – secrecy of the vote – in the display of the marked Ballot Paper with such impunity, and obviously done under some pressure.
- 7: Allegation that unauthorized persons attempted to obtain entry into some of the Polling Stations.
- 8: State of Emergency under the Public Security Act, within whose framework some of the individual liberties could have been subjected to executive control at varying levels of authority.
- 9: The time specific nature in the nine – hour Poll during which, hardly any relief beneficial to the Poll could have been obtained either through Judicial or Administrative procedure against the denial of at least some of the rights arising from either ignorance or abuse of authority.

However divergent the interpretations could be, yet it becomes rather difficult in these circumstances, to deny the allegation that the failure to maintain the expected levels of law and order in general and more specifically on the day of the Poll, partly at least would have been the reason for the failure of some Polling Observers to assert their rights and be present at the Polling Stations. To that extent, the conduct of the Poll had been deprived of one of its essential components and consequent allegations of improprieties or misconduct will remain unanswered. Satisfaction of legal requirements at a Poll in itself cannot claim to ensure a free Poll, because beneath its seeming appearance of freedom, many things can weigh heavily on the free choice of a voter, about which the staff may have neither the knowledge nor the capacity to apprehend and control in the absence of Polling Observers.

The Emergency

The Referendum held on 22. 12. 1982 became the first National Poll to be held under a State of Emergency. The State of Emergency declared in October 1982 continued right through the period of the Referendum and beyond. Questions were raised as to whether an Election can be held under a State of Emergency. The answer was clear and in the affirmative

because these are two distinct and disconnected events under the Constitution.

It is necessary to examine the issue of an Election falling within a prevailing State of Emergency, in the light of some representations received, during this period, and the questions raised by the Press and the Public.

During the period of an Election, maintenance of Law and Order becomes a more strenuous task. Any additional powers vested in the Law-Enforcement Authorities, should therefore enhance their capacity in meeting this objective. To that extent, the order during an Election period and the conduct of the Election itself could be better ensured, through such additional powers.

The representations made on this matter drew attention to another aspect in the exercise of the powers during a State of Emergency. They argue that the time of an Election is also the precise period during which equality before the law of all Citizens, Contestants and their Agents at such Election, and their right of free movement should be guaranteed if an Election is to ensure the choice, which such Election claims to offer. Furthermore it is pointed out that in a State of Emergency, stringent Law and Order can be guaranteed but at times it may be achieved at the cost of freedom, which is vitally necessary at an Election. They contend that the serious apprehensions which prevailed during this period, cannot be denied. Such apprehensions are claimed to be based on the fact that a wide array of regulations are exercisable by a large number of officials throughout the country, and with the best of intentions though, the different and varying levels of understanding and appreciation of the tenets of an Election amongst such officers, can leave at peril, the required level of freedom.

Current problems in the maintenance of Law and Order, consequent to a multiplicity of factors, are too obvious to call for details. Additional powers to meet new challenges, is not what is at issue. It is simply the guarantee of conditions required to ensure the choice before the elector, which an Election seeks to offer and which is alleged to be at stake during such an exercise, that the representation sought to emphasize.

To state that additional powers under a State of Emergency could better guarantee the Law and Order during an Election, is too simplistic an explanation. To argue that such a State of Emergency is inevitable and should therefore be accepted without question regarding its impact during an Election, could equally well be misleading and lead to betrayal of confidence in an Election.

Validity of the above statements are evident from two main facts. Firstly, it is accepted very widely, that the Law and Order situation during the Presidential Election held in October 1982 was of a higher standard than at the Referendum held in December 1982, although the latter was held under a State of Emergency. Secondly, on representations made by interested parties, certain regulations under the State of Emergency, were withdrawn in respect of some areas, where subsequent By-Elections came to be held.

The ideal is that during the period when Elections are held, a State of Emergency should not be in operation. Unfortunately however the factors on which

these two situations depend, are different in nature. They are time specific too, and at times can overlap. Hence two events - Emergency and Elections - may not become so mutually exclusive. If they are to overlap, then the next best remedy has to be sought by ensuring through clear and unequivocal guidelines, that the operation of such Emergency Regulations would not create undue apprehension during an Election. To be more positive, it should be everyone's concern and more so the responsibility of the implementation agencies, to act in a manner, that would generate confidence and guarantee free participation in the election process, in spite of such Laws and Regulations.

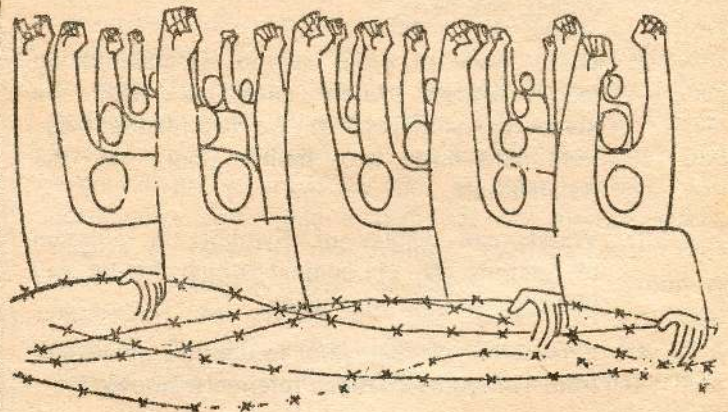
No Remedy

Article 80 (3), (of the constitution) stipulates that "where a Bill becomes law upon the certificate of the President or the Speaker, as the case may be, being endorsed thereon, no court or tribunal shall inquire into, pronounce upon or in any manner call in question, the validity of such Act on any ground whatsoever."

This Article seems to preclude an inquiry to annul the Result of a Referendum. Any action, therefore seems to be confined to individual offences.

Imposition of individual penalties and disabilities for any misconduct during the Poll alone is very unlikely to compensate an Electorate, whose right to challenge the Result appears to be denied here. Inability to avoid the Result can leave a grievance in the Electorate specially if the sum total of proven misdemeanours can lead to a serious doubt on the validity of the Result. Apart from the relevance or the acceptability of any allegations, the mere absence of positive provision to check the veracity of the result alone, contributes to a continuing grievance.

Referenda can be held for a multiplicity of purposes extending from questions of pure public interest to mandatory issues of a Legislative and Constitutional nature. In the present instance, when the very purpose of the Referendum was to obtain a mandate from the people to extend the life of the Parliament, the Referendum became in fact, a substitute for a Parliamentary General-Election. As mentioned earlier one of the best assurances for the maintenance of propriety at Elections can be provided through the mechanism of an effective Petition Procedure. In the absence of any satisfactory procedure for challenging the Result, this Referendum therefore became an "Election" without the safeguard normally available in an election Law.



Women in society

The tragic death of Selina Perera – Culcutta Diary

We reproduce for the edification of our readers a note that was published on 5 July, 1986 by the Economic and Political Weekly of Bombay in a column that it carries under the title CALCUTTA DIARY. The note focuses on the tragic circumstances of the death of Selina Perera, one of the persons belonging to the Lanka Sama Samaja Party who crossed over to India while that party was [illegallised during the last world war. At our request Hector Abhayavardhana, who was the last of those among them who came back to Sri Lanka, sheds some light on some points raised in the original note—EDITOR.

PERHAPS not even a dozen people in this callous, huge city knew who she was. On the back page of newspapers, way down in an obscure corner, the information collected by junior reporters assigned on police beat was summed up in exactly four and a half lines. A strong smell was emitting from a central Calcutta flat locked from inside; the police arrived, broke into the apartment, and recovered the body of an old woman, who must have been dead for at least a couple of days. The body had been sent for postmortem. The woman's name was Sheila Perera, who had been the occupant of the flat for the past thirty-five years; most papers got her name garbled in print.

Of the barely a dozen persons who still knew her in Calcutta, one or two remembered that a couple of years ago too it was a near thing. Sheila Perera did not stir out of her flat three days: worried neighbours had then managed to enter and found her, sick and starving, on the verge of death. On that occasion, she could be saved, if that is the expression. This time it was too late. There was no foul play. Sheila Perera died because there was nobody to look after her. She died of loneliness.

This woman, Sheila Perera, was once married to N. M. Perera, leader of Sri Lanka's Sama Samaj Party, which was, till the sixties, the principal opposition group in the island country. The party held aloft the banner of the so-called Fourth International, the last-ditch Trotskyites in this funny wondrous world. For a while in the 1960s, N. M. Perera was in alliance with Sirimavo Bandaranaike, and was Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister in her government, perhaps a rarest instance of a Trotskyite holding public office, pace the non-starter of the permanent revolution. But by then Sheila Perera had long been divorced from him. A bunch of Fourth International activists crossed over from Ceylon as it then was to India during the Second World War. Sheila Perera was amongst them. She chose Calcutta, where some remnants of devout Trotsky fans were left. She stayed here forty years at a stretch, lonely, lonelier, loneliest until her grisly end earlier this month in the nondescript apartment. Her body has been sent for post-mortem.



Selina Perera

Does her death bring back the memory of banquet halls departed? No, grandeur was never part of the appurtenances of the Trotskyites. Once the Spanish civil war whimperingly ended in the tragedy that was almost foreordained, the Fourth International, that curiosum to end all curiosums, was left with just two pockets of refuge, Mexico and Ceylon. Why of all places only Mexico and Ceylon is a puzzle which is somewhat difficult to unravel. But this is how accidents occur in history. A certain Latin broadmindedness had always characterised the government in Mexico. It did permit Leon Trotsky to enter the country and set up residence. And once Trotsky arrived, could his followers be far behind? even though they could not save him from a gory death. Ceylon, Victorian-colonial almost till the day she received her independence, must have seemed a stranger spot for the Fourth International rump to end up in. It is mostly children of the affluent Ceylonese, going up to Europe for graduate studies, who fell for the charm of the Trotskyite doctrine and brought the message back home. Or perhaps much more than the doctrine, it was the loose-limbedness of the Fourth International comings and goings, in contrast to the apparent rigidities featuring the Stalinist *apparitchik* of the conventional communist parties. The tropical island beckoned to the romantics. The ambience of Colombo encouraged easy-going non-conformism. It also encouraged intellection. Does not intellection imply that one must insist on splitting hairs? The Trotskyites, let demon bless their soul, were great ones for splitting hairs. Ceylon, today's Sri Lanka, became their natural abode.

For these would-be revolutionaries would be living, nearly exclusively, in the realm of ideas. In *pucca* colonial Ceylon, with its Maughmish milieu, there was little scope for *praxis*. Everybody knew everybody else, that is, everybody who mattered knew everybody else. This made revolution in the concrete somewhat difficult to practice. the revolutionary ideologues from wealthy families were deprived of their overt profession. They were reduced to logic-chopping: come, be a Trotskyite, and chop logic with us. Coconut water and beer and whisky sour and the Fourth International it was a lovely, lovely cocktail. The British were still around, they could not care less. So you either married a planter's daughter or became a Trotskyite, or often combined the two: as long as everybody knew what everybody else was

up to, nobody needed to lose any sleep. During the day, the Trotskyites came and went, playing at revolution, honing and honing further theories on the revolution, in the evening, as the breeze floated from across the Arab sea, each and all, Trotskyites, non-Trotskyites, anti-Trotskyites, and the rest of the crowd, would congregate in the lawns of the sprawling house on, let us say, Gregory's Road, coconut water and beer and gimlet and whisky sour: they would prove to one another's satisfaction that, given the right sort of rarefied environment, elegance and the revolution need not belong to non-compatible categories.

Even so, or perhaps precisely on account of that, young people felt constricted in Ceylon. At least the young ones in India, in addition to soaking themselves in the artifact of schisms and splits organic to revolutionary formations, could now and then rail against Mahatma Gandhi, or throw bombs at the British. Chafing under Ceylon's tropical sun, many of Colombo's children chose to travel to Bombay or Bangalore or Madras or Calcutta, where the action, they thought, was. This happened with the communist party cadres, this also happened with those who were dead set against the communists. For instance, in the early 1940s, the Ceylon communist party despatched the glamorous Anil D'Silva to Bombay and to the Indian Peoples' Theatre Association. Sheila Perera was the Anil D'Silva of the Trotskyites. Her marriage with N.M. Perera was about to break up. The comrades in India sent her signals; did not Trotsky preach that political boundaries do not mean a thing, the revolution is for ever and for everywhere? Sheila Perera ended up in Calcutta.

True, the Fourth International was already the butt of jokes, some malicious, some harmless. But the very fact that they were under attack and yet their faith remained undimmed made them come closer together, the romantic exiles from the world of praxis. For those like Sheila Perera who hopped across the Palk Strait in search of activism, praxis remained beyond the pale, the scale factor proved impossible to circumvent. The Trotskyites were numerically much too insignificant; it was beyond their capability to launch any sort of mass movement in India, where, unless you can gather a sizeable crowd, you are not taken seriously, not even by the police. For individual action too, you need at least one or two well-defined targets. But whom were the Trotskyites principally against: the khadi-clad Congressmen who were comprador servitors of international capitalism, the socialists who had never grown out of the puerile Kautskyite tenden-

cies of the Second International, the communists who were hand in glove in Jawaharlal Nehru? As the Second World War was ending and India was being sucked into the ugliest civil turmoil coinciding with political independence and the partitioning of the country, the Trotskyites were in a fix; apart from reading Isaac Deutscher, apart from taking out a subscription to *Partisan Review*, what were they supposed to do? Warning the nation against the Stalinist conspiracy war regulation chore, but was praxis reduced to only this symbolism?

There was no way of escape from reality, Trotskyite activity in the Indian cities—Bombay, Bangalore, Madras, Calcutta—was soon rendered into empty gestures. All the great causes, alas, were captured by the Stalinists, and the moment those were taken over by the Stalinists, they by definition ceased to be great causes. In this kind of situation, even ideological purity is susceptible to adjustments. The enemy of your enemy inevitably turns into your friend. Thus it was no surprise when the votaries of the Fourth International grew increasingly close to the admirers of the Second; between a Trotskyite and a Social Democrat the behavioural difference simply disappeared. At the next stage, many of the Trotskyites discovered themselves in the clasp of the Congress for Cultural Freedom: have hate for Stalin, will travel.

The left-over Trotskyites for a while stayed a compact group, but it was a thinning group. Some of them, for a change, tried out the company of the Indian maverick, Rammanohar Lohia. Eccentricity is however no surrogate for praxis. As the fifties ran into the sixties and the sixties faded away into the uncertain next decade, the Trotskyites in India were a vanished species. To their grandchildren, the Fourth International cannot but be a strange old wife's tale.

Sheila Perera could have returned to Ceylon, now re-named Sri Lanka. She chose

not to. Was it pride, or a hurt ego which would not admit the twists and turns of reality? In the 1960s, her former husband, still a Trotskyite after a fashion, was Sri Lanka's Deputy Prime Minister. But she had nothing to do with events in Sri Lanka, her emotional links were long snapped. The comrades in India had dispersed; the Fourth International was a lost cause, why be entangled to pre-history? Sheila Perera stuck it out in Calcutta, in a dingy apartment in the city centre, where she had moved in more than thirty-five years ago. After some time only a handful of friends were left. Few knew how she survived; perhaps her sister sent some occasional remittance from Sri Lanka, perhaps she gave private tuition here and there and scraped some money. It was desolate living. She had no help; for most days, she had, one suspects, no food either. The urchins in the neighbourhood would now and then watch the cantankerous woman in her seventies walk along the pavement, all the while muttering to herself. Two years ago, it was a near thing, she was ill, very ill, for a number of days she lay in her flat uncared for and without food. On that occasion, she could be saved. This month, it was the same story again, but she was dead by the time the flat was entered into by the police.

Newspapers misspelled her name, they did not have an inkling who she was, what dreams brought her to India, what frustrations killed her soul. The post-mortem report says she died because of lack of food and nutrition. How wrong it is. She died because her illusion had died already a quarter of a century ago, and her pride would not make her admit the fact. This past quarter of a century was vacuous, marginal existence for her. Calcutta is still replete with such marginal beings. Sheila Perera is dead; there is now one less of them.

Comment

— by Hector Abhayavardhana

"A.M." is completely mistaken in believing that Sheila Perera (I shall refer to her as Selina Perera, because "Sheila" was the name she adopted for reasons of security in India during the war years) was of kind of glamour girl, like the Anil D'Silva whom the Ceylon Communist Party sent to Bombay in the nineteen forties. Selina Perera was in the thick of mass politics from the days of the Suriya Mal Movement. Even after the arrest of the LSSP leaders in 1940, she had been in the forefront of the

demonstration against the Government and strikes that led to a wave of unionisation among private sector workers. There was an order for her arrest in 1941, to avoid which she was compelled to go into hiding, and she was among those proclaimed in the wake of the escape of the LSSP detainees from the Kandy detention prison. She crossed over to India in 1942, not because she had any particular "dreams", but because it was unsafe for her to remain in the island.

Actually, "A.M." romanticises too much about the ambience of Colombo, about coconut water and beer and whisky sour on the lawns of sprawling houses and intellection that chops logic and splits hairs. The Lanka Sama Samaja Party was not that kind of Bohemian organisation. It was an open mass party until repression began in 1940 and it launched all the agitation against imperialist rule and led all the struggles until it was driven underground. It was the realism of the LSSP that recognised the improbability of overthrowing British rule through a mass struggle that was confined to colonial Ceylon and, therefore, the need to establish links with the revolutionary anti-imperialist struggle in India.

There was an element of romance in the launching of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India, BLPI with the LSSP as its Ceylon unit. That flowed partially from the unreal decision to form the Fourth International in 1938, at a time when Fascism was in full flow and the Trotskyist cadres in the world were not merely meagre but had been decimated by offensive action on the part of Stalin's GPU. The formation of the BLPI was also compelled by open support extended to the British Government of India by the Communist Party of India in the context of Gandhi's and Nehru's plans for open mass revolt against British rule. Furthermore, the Japanese armies had marched across South-East Asia to the very land-frontier of India and the Japanese navy was poised to invade Ceylon. The LSSP was not willing to let the Japanese fascists capture its leaders who were in British jails, knowing well the fate that would await them. That constituted the chief reason for organising their escape. Once they had escaped, it was too risky to keep them hidden within the country for long.

The story of the LSSP being a party of plantation owners and their sons had been well circulated among left circles in India much in advance of the arrival of LSSP personnel in India. The source of this story was a certain South African Trotskyist by the name of M. G. Purdy. For some reason he was determined to form a party of his own in India and was no less determined that it should have nothing

to do with the LSSP, even though the latter was officially a section of the Fourth International. The International Secretariat of the FI, however, kept urging the LSSP to undertake the task of forming a Trotskyist organisation in India as of the highest priority. Unwilling to go along with the FI's wishes, Purdy embarked on a public campaign of calumny against the LSSP. There were no political criticisms he could make of the LSSP's policies and actions. So he hit on the line that the party leadership consisted of plantation owners and similar bourgeois elements. Purdy was later compelled to contrive programmatic differences with the BLPI. He announced the discovery that the Harijans (untouchables) of India were the only genuine proletariat! Purdy, all said and done, was a colourful personality given to sensationalist actions. Arrested by the police in Bombay, he escaped once from custody and on another occasion by breaking out of prison. By such means he sought to stake his claim to revolutionary leadership.

The perspective of building the BLPI could not be sustained by the LSSP in Ceylon. One section, with Philip Gunawardena as leader, had already broken loose at the end of the war. It was impossible for the other section to function as part of an Indian political party with plans being laid for an independent India. From that angle the BLPI would be without its principal base. In India itself it was becoming apparent that the Socialists were on the way out of the Indian National Congress and would constitute a powerful Left critic of the Congress. I would be utopian to seek to build a third mass party of the Left. When Jayaprakash Narayan led the Socialists out of the Congress Party in 1948, a conference of the BLPI in India took the decision to go into the Socialist Party. Three Ceylonese decided to remain in India and join the Socialist Party: Selina Perera, S.C.C. Anthonipillai and myself.

Anthonipillai and I joined the Socialist Party in Madras, while Selina joined it in Calcutta. In both places the Socialist Party was extremely weak and Jayaprakash hoped that the BLPI cadre would be able to build a considerable mass base for his party. In both places the BLPI had a strong trade union

following and in West Bengal, in addition, a personable local leader. But the Socialist Party had a Hindi-centric approach to the problem of national consolidation and proved helpless before middle-class currents of linguistic regionalism led by the DMK in Tamilnad and the Communist Party in West Bengal. The first general election to the Lok Sabha of 1952 proved a catastrophe for the Socialist Party. Not long afterwards Jayaprakash Narayan, the leader, announced his withdrawal from politics and a clash between Left and Right tendencies intensified inside the party he left behind. Soon there was to be another split and an attempt of Rammanohar Lohia to build a militant Socialist Party. But by 1980 it was clear that the Socialist leaders had exhausted their role.

I came back to Sri Lanka in 1961. Anthonipillai had become one of the ablest trade union leaders in India, had been elected to the Madras Legislative Assembly and even to the Lok Sabha in New Delhi. There was no question of his returning to the country in which he was born. Selina Perera had no similar involvements in Calcutta, but she had long decided that she would continue to live in India even without Indian citizenship. It was a personal decision that she had made. She stuck to this decision to the very end.

"A M." in his *Calcutta Diary* refers to the post-mortem finding that Selina died "because of lack of food and nutrition". This is somewhat perplexing. Two leading members of the LSSP had visited her in Calcutta shortly before her death and had enquired about her economic situation. She had emphatically rejected any kind of financial assistance, protesting that she had more money than she was likely to need. "A M." suggest that her sister in Sri Lanka may have sent her an occasional remittance. That may have been in order because there were monies lying to her credit in Sri Lanka, but she would never draw on them. What is more, it was a few months before her tragic death that she gifted some valuable land in a Colombo suburb to the Lanka Sama Samaja Party. □

Could Women be Ordained Priests?

Britain's leading Roman Catholic Journal *The Tablet* in its issue of July 5, 1986 published the exchange of letters between Pope John Paul II and Anglican Communion leader Archbishop Robert Runcie of Canterbury on the question of ordaining women to the priesthood and also correspondence between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal Jan Willebrands President of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity on the same subject.

The Tablet in an editorial comments that the correspondence shows "that what Pope Paul VI saw as an element of great difficulty has become for Pope John Paul II an 'increasingly serious obstacle' to reconciliation between the two communions." The editorial however states that this "need not be taken as a step back from the ordination of women but could even be a very tentative step towards it. For the first time, the Catholic church at the highest level has begun to enter into discussion of the theological objections."

As the editorial points out, two principal arguments emerge from the correspondence. One of course is the weight of the tradition of 2000 years against ordaining women. Yet Cardinal Willebrands in his contribution to the discussion does not write as if that ended the matter but takes up the theological challenge posed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and seeks to meet it. "This is significant" says *The Tablet* "Tradition is almost conclusive, yet the church of Rome is committed also to logical argument. And where women's ordination is concerned, the fact is that those who examine the question logically very often find that they cannot maintain their opposition."

The second argument that emerges from the correspondence between Rome and Canterbury turns on the function of priesthood. Both Cardinal Willebrands and Archbishop Runcie agree that priests represent the whole people of God. "This could imply that women should be ordained as making such representation fuller. Cardinal Willebrands, however, sees the primary function

of priesthood as lying elsewhere. The key for him is that the priest stands in *persona Christi*. There is 'real continuity' between the redemptive work of Christ and the priestly office. Dr. Runcie also accepts this but in his case insists that 'the humanity of Christ our High Priest includes both male and female.'

The Tablet states: "Much now hangs on how important to his saving work the maleness of Christ is taken to be. For Cardinal Willebrands, Christ is the head of the Church, which has traditionally understood itself in terms of feminine imagery - as the Bride of Christ. The question is whether such imagery could ever be all-inclusive, or a satisfactory basis for doctrine. The issue can be summed up in a single question: if women cannot represent Christ, then how is it that Christ can represent women?" (our emphasis).

These matters are now officially on the agenda of the Anglican - Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC). *The Tablet* remarks that "the Archbishop of Canterbury's insight that it is only in such a wider perspective that particular churches can truly discern the mind of the whole Church, registers a notable development in Anglican doctrine and is surely right. But the Archbishop's position is very difficult. He tells Cardinal Willebrands frankly that the tensions within the Anglican Communion are straining it to breaking point. He accepts the need for 'ecumenical restraint', but insists also on the need for 'realism'."

The Tablet editorial concludes: "If Rome wants the Archbishop of Canterbury to square the circle, there is only one way out. The discussion in ARCIC must reflect the urgency and seriousness of the question. It must take as its starting point the fact that within the Catholic Church as well as within the Anglican communion there are an increasing number of people who think that the ordination of women is demanded by truth and justice at the earliest opportunity. This is the perspective which is missing from the Roman side of the exchange of letters. It may not be possible to make the clear cut between theology and society that Cardinal Willebrands attempts. The church is the sign of salvation for the

world: It cannot ignore the objection within its own ranks and outside that in one respect it has become a countersign. The commission must also show itself aware of the feminist critique of the all-male authority structure that is an inescapable part of their problem. Then and only then will it be fair to ask the Church of England to wait for ARCIC rather than taking unilateral action at this stage."

"Men save and women are saved?"

The same issue of *The Tablet* reports a pithy comment made by Fr. Robert Butterworth S.J., head of religious studies at Digby Stuart College, Roehampton, at a press conference held in London by the Movement for the Ordination of Women on July 1st. Said Fr. Butterworth, "I still feel strongly that the Roman view is bedevilled not by a different theology but by a totally different sacerdotal piety. A completely different tradition of spirituality I think is involved in the priesthood and I think this comes out very strongly in the way Cardinal Willebrands tries to refute Dr. Runcie's view. I don't think he's successful because I think it comes from a different planet altogether... I think we're really dealing with two radically different views by ministerial representation of Christ." As a Roman Catholic, Fr. Butterworth said he hoped the Church of England would show the way towards the resolution of this issue. He thought that the Roman insistence on the importance on the actual male *persona* of Christ was very literal and fundamentalistic. "Are we saved by God's assumption of our humanity or are we saved by the personal maleness of Christ?" he asked. "Does the priest embody the saving humanity of Christ or must he embody the personal maleness of Christ?" "If Cardinal Willebrands' argument about imagery was carried through it would finish up at the view that men save and women are saved." Now that's a very odd view and certainly not Christian" commented Fr. Butterworth. □

The Iran - Nicaragua Arms Scandal

The last two months of 1986 saw the unfolding of a bizarre drama. The American dominated international press suddenly began to play up the "clandestine" arms deals that took place between America and Nicaragua on the one hand and Israel and Iran (with American backing) on the other. Informed people had been aware for quite some time, that America was covertly supporting the Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries (CONTRAS) and that Israel was carrying out an American supported arms deal with Iran. But it took the entry of the bourgeois press to turn these "leaks" into well publicised "scandals". Such is the nature of our capitalist dominated international information order!

It so appears that at least 250 tons of military hardware including 2000 "TOW" anti-tank missiles and around 285 "HAWK" surface to air missiles with spare parts for American produced Iranian aircraft was air lifted to Iran between September 1985 and November 1986. The disclosure of these covert dealings shocked the American public which had been persuaded by both Reagan and the "free press" to think of Iran as an implacable enemy - what with all that rhetoric about "uncompromising attitudes" towards promoters of international terrorism etc. Surveys have shown that even the Soviet Union ranks above Iran in American public opinion.

The disclosure of these arms deals coming in the wake of the "punitive" bombing raids on Libya for allegedly promoting global terrorism, has opened the eyes of the American public to Reagan's glib hypocrisy as never before. Newsweek has observed that Libya is small-fry in the global terrorism business when compared with Iran. The reasons put forward by the administration to vindicate the supplying of arms to their sworn enemy was two-fold.

- (1) Securing the release of American hostages in Lebanon.
- (2) The wooing of "moderates" within the Iranian government with special emphasis on Khomeini's potential successors. (It was held that Iran was too big a prize in terms of geo-politics to be simply left to the Soviets.)

The "humanitarian" argument of having the hostages released, cannot be taken seriously, in view of the fact that as three were released in accordance with the arms deal, three more Americans were abducted during the same period. If the "humanitarian" story is to be accepted, Iran would only have to keep on abducting American citizens to ensure an unrestricted and continuous flow of American weapons! The second argument is of course more plausible. The medieval theocracy that overthrew the Shah has one thing in common with its staunchly pro-American predecessor - a profound aversion towards progress. The fact that the "mad mullah's" agreed to deal with "great Satan" and vice-versa, shows how the forces of reaction tend to eventually coalesce to protect their common interests. The argument of America's geopolitical interests is perfectly logical in the circumstances. But the American public does not appear to be greatly charmed by this "logic". In this respect Reagan's much publicised "uncompromising" attitude towards countries like Libya and Iran, has proved to be only too effective. It was a rude shock for the American public to find that Reagan's "uncompromising attitude" was in reality a very compromising one albeit strictly in view of various parochial interests.

Disclosure

In attempting to explain away the sale of arms to Iran, in a damage

control drive, Attorney General Edwin Meese dropped another bombshell on the already dazed American public. He disclosed that the profits raised by selling arms to Iran at enormously inflated prices, was channelled via two Swiss bank accounts to the Nicaraguan Contras. His point was that the whole operation was master-minded and executed by a certain Lt Col North deputy director of political and military affairs of the National Security Council; and that no one else knew anything about it. Accordingly, North was dismissed and his immediate superior, NSC advisor Poindexter resigned in ignominy.

It was of course a shock for the American public to face the fact that their "great democratic and free" country was giving covert aid to the band of ex-Somozaist butchers who are waging a war of attrition against the immensely popular Sandinista government of Nicaragua. The atrocities committed by these reactionary mercenaries have been too well documented for the American public to have any illusions about them.

The CIA man who was shot down in Nicaragua while on a special mission also spilt the beans on TV and confirmed beyond doubt the deep American involvement in the Nicaraguan counter-revolutionary insurgency. Congress had always vetoed all proposals for direct aid to the Nicaraguan rebels until 100 million dollars was passed last year as "humanitarian" aid to the Contras. So it appears that the law of the land was being infringed when money found its way to the Contras prior to that congressional decree.

Guilt

Poindexter, Reagan, CIA director Casey, White House Chief of Staff Donald Reagan, and Vice President Bush amongst many other top officials have claimed total ignorance of these "scandalous" goings on. However, enough has come to light to implicate the entire White House. It is impossible that a relatively junior officer could have conducted an operation of this magnitude leaving

both his superiors and subordinates unaware of it.

The behavior of the administration when the incidents came to light, confirmed their guilt. Everybody was suddenly scrambling for cover. The mumbled excuses were hardly convincing. The CIA director who is supposed to know everything, claimed to have heard only "gossip" about such goings on. Reagan, after muttering about "a full inquiry" into the affair, ducked out of public view probably on the assumption that the less people see of him the sooner they would forget his misdeeds.

It is quite evident that Lt Col North has been made a (willing?) scapegoat for the sins of his superiors. The so called free press seems to be bending over backwards to clear

Reagan of blame. Another Watergate would have devastating implications for American morale. After a succession of failed Presidencies from Johnson to Nixon and Ford to Carter, Reagan seemed to exemplify all that true Americans stood for. The prospect of another failure seems to be too much to accept.

All attempts are being made to sweep the affair under the carpet. Lt Col North, while having destroyed valuable evidence after the incidents came to light, has with his ex-boss Poindexter, sought refuge under the fifth amendment and refused to talk. However the American public remains unconvinced. This scandal has been described as the worst to affect the White House after Watergate. The credibility of the Reagan administration has been irrevocably damaged. □

DISSENT IN CHINA

Early in the month of December, 1986 there arose in Communist China again, the phenomenon of mass dissent on the part of university students. Students have always played a prominent role in Chinese politics ever since the May 4th movement of 1919. The new upsurge is seen by many observers to be the biggest mass movement in China since the Tiananmen square riots of 1976 which brought about the downfall of the "gang of four".

It is all said to have started when around 10,000 students the University of Science and Technology in Hefei marched on the local Communist party Head-Quarters, and demanded fairer elections to the local level People's Congresses. The contention of the students was that since the candidates were always nominated by the party, that there was no real freedom of choice and that the balloting could be rigged.

The mass demonstrations by students soon spread to other cities like Shanghai, Beijing, Nanjing and Canton where crowds ranging from a few thousand to over 20,000 displayed slogans like "long live democracy" "give us back our human rights" and "end bureaucratism".

This mass movement did have some impact of official thinking at least for the time being. Though the 1980 constitution of China has acknowledged the right of assembly and the right to hold rallies, the procedures

for doing so had not been formulated. The recent mass action by university students compelled the local authorities in many cities to promulgate rules to conduct such rallies. Hence many students felt that at least they had won the right to stage demonstrations.

The students also secured the right to have fair media coverage for such demonstrations. Subsequently, it was noted that the official Xinhua news agency reported on such incidents in more detail. Moreover, the procedure for electing representatives to the local level Peoples Congresses has been "democratised" in the sense that any person nominated by more than ten voters could stand for election. Thus the hegemonistic position of the party has been done away with at least at the local level.

Many observers were highly sceptical about the permanence of these "reforms" and the mass movement that brought them about. The demonstrations drew large crowds but were inchoate and disorganized due to the relative immaturity and inexperience of the students. Many in the student leadership itself admitted that the movement would peter out after some time. The "concessions" were also of a dubious character with no guarantee of permanency or workability. For instance, the right to stage demonstrations was subject to the proviso that the organizers had

to obtain prior permission from the authorities - which necessitated the disclosure of names and addresses etc. The fear of intimidation could well turn the right to demonstrate into dead letter. When a similar mass movement of students arose in the mid-fifties in response to Mao Tsetung's "hundred flowers campaign" ("let a hundred flowers bloom and a thousand schools of thought contend!") it was suppressed after some time on the grounds that it was a growth of weeds and not flowers!!

However, the effort made by China's educated youth to introduce discussion, debate and dissent into their political life, can be seen as a highly laudable one. The more so since it was done in spite of the repeated warnings of the government. Students often emphasise broad ideals of human rights and justice rather than narrow economic interests. Therein lies importance of student agitation in situations like that of modern China. It would be appropriate here, to quote an article on socialism and democracy which appeared in the *Christian Worker* of the fourth quarter of 1982:

"Socialism if it does not result in a greater freedom than is enjoyed under capitalism, hardly deserves that name. The right to express dissent is the essence of freedom and that right must perforce exist in any genuine socialist order. Let us make it quite clear that socialism does not mean the dictatorship of a single party or leader, and the absence of all other parties. On the contrary, a multi-party system would better enable a socialist oriented country to function for then there would be alternative policies and programmes available to the people in choosing their elected representatives. So also the right of recall by the people of their representatives would be a right included in the constitution of a socialist oriented state. While there would be no powerful capitalist interests after capitalism is replaced by a socialist order, the right of people to even have a party calling for the restoration of capitalism should be allowed and respected, however remote such a possibility may be. For the superiority of socialism as a system must be shown through its practice and the advance of socialist ideas must lie through persuasion and the conviction of their inherent strength, never through coercion." □

The People before Money

— Stanley Adams

(Stanly Adams is the winner of the United Kingdom VALIANT FOR TRUTH AWARD 1985. This award is given annually to the individual or group working for the media, who has best used modern means of communication 'courageously to convey the truth in the public interest'. The citation for the award reads: 'Stanly Adams for his book Roche versus Adams in which he fearlessly publicised activities by a powerful commercial company which were contrary to the public interest on matters involving international health - and at the cost of great personal suffering.' We here publish excerpts from the speech given by Stanley Adams on the occasion of his receiving the award, on 16 December 1985)

The multinational Companies did not care

I often get asked by ordinary people, 'What made you do it, was there a particular spark which made you act? My answer is always the same. No, there was no one spark. It was an accumulation of things which I had seen happening during a twenty-year career in a great number of countries in the Third World. I had seen poor people suffer because they could not afford the nutrients and medicines which they needed to cure themselves, and sometimes it was a matter of survival. The multinational companies did not care how many poor people got cured and how many died.

Overpriced By 6,478 per cent

These multinationals exist first and foremost to make money. They are not there to serve mankind but to satisfy their shareholders. Their profit margins are not calculated by starting from cost and working up from these. Instead they simply decide in advance how much the market will stand, how much the consumer, the patient can be per-

suaded/forced to pay - and then they dictate the selling price. LIBRIUM, manufactured by Hoffman-La Roche of Switzerland, was over-priced by a staggering 6,478 per cent. The multinationals try to justify their high prices by saying that their research expenditure is so great that it demands extremely high prices for their products. The truth is that they spend quite a lot more money on advertising and promotion than on research.

Open action

I have always believed that if one decides to do something to correct injustice and eliminate corruption, then one must do so openly. When I decided that I could no longer stomach the behaviour of my employers, Hoffman-La Roche of Switzerland, and that my alliance was clearly with the little man and woman, and particularly with the poor, I intimated to my employer that I planned to leave in a matter of months. I was fortunate to learn that the Swiss Government and the European common Market Commission were about to sign a Free Trade Agreement which would come into force on 1 January 1973. This would oblige the Swiss to respect European laws when trading with the Common Market countries.

Twenty — one multinationals in collusion

On 26 February 1973 I wrote a long letter to the EEC Commissioner responsible for the Competition Department (Fair Trading) and exposed the practices not only of my employer, but also of another twenty-one multinationals which were in collusion with Roche, and which were acting contrary to the laws of the European Common Market. These companies were American, British, German, Dutch, Swiss and other nationalities. My

letter contained my full name and address and signature, and informed the EEC Commission that I intended to resign from Roche, and that if the Commission wanted any help from me they had to decide quickly or I would be gone. I did not send one single document with my letter: I left it to the Commission to decide if they wished to proceed.

If I remained in the company earning a salary for a little longer than had been planned, at the same time passing documents to the EEC Commission, it was because the Common Market officials could not build their case against the multinational without my help, and my help could not be given until after the Commission experts had worked out what kind of help they required from me. I had decided that come what may, I would do a thorough and efficient job on behalf of the consumers of the world. I finally left Roche at the end of October 1973.

Profits from death

The immorality which I saw and which we all see continually being exerted by rich countries against the Third World is something which has been going on for hundreds of years. All colonial powers have first taken out all they could from the colonies, and given the people of those lands hardly anything in return; and then when those colonial people (mostly poor) demanded or were given or fought for and took independence, the rich former ruling nations began dumping goods which were not good enough for sale in the country of manufacture, and even positively damaging.

How can it be moral to export useless medicines to the poor of Africa, Latin America and the Far East? How can it be moral to charge the poor people of the Third World exorbitantly high prices for medicines which are generally useless, if not actually harmful? How can we sit comfortably and read at the end of each financial year the balance sheets of multinational companies showing ever-increasing sales and profits,

knowing as we do, that those profits have come about through callous behaviour, and sometimes even through death?

Hypocrisy - South Africa

The Prime Minister of Britain insists that Britain will not introduce sanctions against the Fascist regime in South Africa, because (she says) such sanctions would hurt the black people of South Africa more than they would hurt the white and the South African Government. But would it not be less dishonest of the PM to state facts as they really are:

Britain has around 19 billion of industrial investments in South Africa. If sanctions were introduced, the British-owned industrial companies would be the first to suffer. Likewise, fewer materials would have to be produced in the UK for export to South Africa, and Mrs Thatcher would add perhaps another half-million to her already enormously high queue of unemployed workers in Britain. **This** is the real reason.

There is no political will to control these multinationals. Honesty and morality are not exclusive to any one political party. There is good and bad on both sides of the British political spectrum. I get the impression that **Power defends Power**. The Politicians, while elected by the public (the consumer), appear to be more inclined to look after the powerful, than the down-trodden.

I SAY THAT NON - COOPERATION WITH EVIL IS A DUTY, AND GIANT MULTI NATIONAL PHARMECEUTICAL COMPANIES ARE EVIL.

(Full text in **Third world Liberator** Penang, Malaysia, Issue 1986) ☐

IRRI - DOING RESEARCH FOR TNC'S

The International Rice Research Institute was founded in 1960 by the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. It was the first of several international research centres the two foundations, with their abundant financial resources, jointly established throughout the world in the '60s. These research centres, specializing in different crops - rice, wheat, maize, sweet potato, cowpea, etc. - later became the headquarters of the worldwide Green Revolution. Established to do basic research to improve the quantity of rice, IRRI has played a major role in the Green Revolution.

Legal Immunity - for what ?

In 1959, the Philippine government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ford and Rockefeller foundations, agreeing to the establishment of IRRI and providing for its 50-year term. The Institute was built on land leased from the University of the Philippines College of Agriculture in Los Banos, Laguna, to which it lies adjacent. Its vast experimental fields cover at least 320 hectares around it. It was registered as a philanthropic organization and through Republic Act No. 2007 was made exempt from paying all kinds of taxes in the Philippines.

In 1979, President Marcos through PD 1620 granted legal immunity to the Institute. PD 1620 protects senior officials and staff of the IRRI from any penal, civil or administrative suits arising from the activities of the Institute - a special privilege more ordinarily bestowed upon official diplomatic missions.

Objectives of the Green Revolution

The Green Revolution for which the IRRI is largely credited was launched with two objectives 1) to ease the social tension caused by widespread food shortages in the developing countries and, 2) to open up markets for transnational corporations (TNCs.)

Food, of which rice forms a major part, developed into a political and social issue that threatened the stability of the capitalist system.

The technological breakthrough in rice production was seen as a way of easing the tension. At the same time the food shortage was used as a pretext for TNCs to share in the harvest from farming. By breeding rice varieties dependent on commercial inputs such as fertilizers, insecticides, weedicides and farm machineries, the IRRI opened up lucrative markets for TNCs manufacturing these products.

Interestingly, the breakthrough in new varieties of rice and wheat was made with the advance in fertilizer production. A more efficient way of producing fertilizers was developed at M. W. Kellogg Company in Buffalo, New York. The new process reduced costs by a third, but required large and expensive plants. Naturally, TNCs soon cornered the fertilizer manufacturing business.

TNCs were only too aware of the importance of the work being done by IRRI. **Lester Brown, once president of the Rockefeller Foundation, said TNCs have a vested interest in the Green Revolution.** "Fertilizers," he wrote, "is one item in the package of new inputs which farmers need in order to realize the full potential of the new seeds. Once it becomes profitable to use modern technology, the demand for all kinds of farm inputs increases rapidly, and only agribusiness firms can supply these new inputs efficiently."

He observed that in the US, a major part of agricultural research was undertaken by private corporations - manufacturers of farm implements, producers of fertilizers and other inputs. In the rice-growing areas of the world, IRRI has been providing the research services for TNCs.

Financing of the IRRI

It is well known that transnational companies, foundations and governments of developed countries representing them have generously supported the IRRI. From 1960 to 1983, some 26 private companies contributed various amounts to IRRI totalling \$ 345, 726. These amounts were used to finance researches on

the generic use of their products. The Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd., one of the most generous financiers among TNCs, gave a total of \$ 55,000 to fund studies mostly dealing with weed control.

Bias of IRRI Technology

IRRI's researches which no doubt have greatly influenced rice farming betrays the influence of TNCs. IRRI throughout the years has been developing rice varieties dependent on high technology. Modern varieties are voracious users of chemical fertilizers and performs much better on irrigated farms.

Filipino scientists refer to this technology as the "Cadillac" style of development to emphasize how incongruous it is to the rural environment and to the socio-economic conditions and rice farming practices of Filipino farmers. Farm inputs are mostly imported and costly to small farmers. Moreover, the majority of rice farms in the Philippines and in other developing countries are not irrigated.

Thus, the rice technology developed by IRRI brought dramatic increases in rice production that could not be sustained for long. But more dramatically, it generated and continues to generate sales for manufacturers and dealers of farm inputs.

Is IRRI only serving the interests of foreign agribusiness companies? Why is the intensive use of fertilizers, insecticides and farm machineries being encouraged when this is uneconomical on the part of the farmer?

Scientists from IRRI itself have done studies showing that applying fertilizers and insecticides in quantities more than farmers actually use to achieve the full yield potential of modern varieties reduces more than it increases the farmer's income. As with farm machineries, it has been found that such inputs are unprofitable for farmers to use because they service small farm areas.

The case of azolla is another point. Azolla is a tiny fern plant which acts as a cheap and effective fertilizer. This organic fertilizer spreads easily on the farm and is widely used in other Asian countries. Yet after 12 years of research on this plant, IRRI has not favoured its use.

The Chinese who number about one billion make use of organic fertilizers and produce enough food for themselves. They also use chemical fertilizers, but only in combination with and as a supplement to organic fertilizers.

Green Revolution: Second Phase

Today transnational corporations are not only interested in selling fertilizers, farm chemicals and equipment. They are zeroing in on the breeding, production and marketing of seeds. The stakes are high: whoever dominates the seed industry, dominates the world. (AWSJ, 8 March '85)

Royal Dutch Shell is the world's biggest seed supplier, controlling more than 30 seed companies. Major Japanese companies, too, are improving their capabilities in seed research and cell engineering in the hope of capturing a share of the market. Names such as Nippon Steel Corporation and Mitsubishi Corporation are joining what has been described as a global seed war, (AWSJ, 8 Mar 85). In the Philippines, Cargill Seeds, Inc. of the US has invested \$6.67 million to its local subsidiary. (BT, 12 Mar 85).

The seed industry spells big money – and global power. Estimates for the world seed market in the year 2000 range from \$88 billion to \$192 billion. (AWSJ 8 Mar 85). But more than that, it means corporate power. TNCs, by controlling the supply of seeds, can tell the world what crops should be planted where.

Courtesy: Ibon Facts & Figures (Philippines) 31 May 1985. □

CREATING FALSE WANTS

When John Pemberton first mixed Coca-Cola and Caleb Bradham his Pepsi-Cola almost a hundred years ago, little did they know that their concoctions would be so widely used. Both drinks were then regarded as patent-medicine elixirs. Pepsi was thought to be a cure for dyspepsia (indigestion), hence its name. Today, both Coke and Pepsi, as they are popularly known, are synonymous with soft drinks.

An eight-ounce serving of cola is nothing more than 7.9 ounces of (or 99 percent) water, seven tea-

spoons of sugar, a few drops of edible acids, flavouring, caffeine, coloring and lots of gaseous carbon dioxide. The supposedly fruit-based drinks such as Mirinda Orange, Mello Yello, Fanta Orange and Fanta Grape, contrary to their labels, have **no fruit juice content**. In spite of their non-nutritious make-up, soft drinks are consumed in more than 155 countries all over the world. Their consumption has surpassed that of milk, coffee or fruit juices.

Power of Advertising

The secret behind this marketing success lies in advertising and in the

image-building undertaken by the two cola giants. To the Americans, Coke has become a symbol of America. When Coca-Cola decided to change its 99-year-old formula, many Americans protested vigorously, calling the reformation a "desecration of a symbol." Coke officials had to bring back the original formula and tagged it "Coke Classic," Pepsi, on the other hand, claims to "sell lifestyle." With carefully manipulated advertising, it has captured the "new generation" – the young people – into its fold.

Even Third World people who can ill afford their basic food needs have been patronizing soft drinks. The jump in sugar consumption in many developing countries is largely attributed to higher soft drinks sales. In Brazil, Fanta Orange is

the target seller after Coke. Many Brazilians suffer from vitamin C deficiency: ironically, Brazil is the world's largest exporter of oranges. In Zambia, the government for a time banned Fanta advertisements, when it learned that 54 percent of severely malnourished children in one hospital were fed Fanta by their mothers who were led to believe it was more nutritious than milk.

As with the soft drink sector, the core of alcohol marketing lies in advertising. In 1982 global advertising expenses to promote alcoholic drinks surpassed \$2.2 billion, an estimated 1.6 percent of all advertising expenses worldwide. Advertising is by no means restricted to the industrial countries. It is used quite effectively in the Third World to entice the very people who need it least — rural consumers and new urban migrants who form the bulk of the impoverished popu-

lation. Such massive advertising barrages become the launching pad for new alcoholic categories and brands, thereby generating new tastes and opening up new markets.

Aggressive Marketing Strategies

Part of the reason why liquor and cola businesses feel compelled to adopt an aggressive marketing strategy is that more consumers are shifting to non-alcoholic, non-cola drinks such as juices, powdered mixes and even bottled water. From 1976 to 1984, the share of soft drinks to total beverage consumption fell from 53.2 to 46 percent, and that of beer, wine and spirits, from 37.3 to 32 percent. In contrast the share of non-alcoholic, non-cola drinks rose from 9.5 to 22 percent over the same period. (Newsweek, 6 May 85)

Soft drinks and liquor giants meet this challenge in more ways than by sexier ads and price discounts.

For one, they have diversified their products. Thus light beer and caffeine-free, calorie-free sodas are being sold especially in the advanced and more sophisticated markets. Secondly, these beverage TNCs are branching out into new fields, capturing the market share they lost by themselves producing fruit juices and other natural drinks.

Thirdly, they look to the developing world and previously unexplored areas as a huge market for their drinks. Pepsi is sold in Russia, and Coke in China. A survey conducted last year shows that in South East Asia alone, the consumption of soft drinks in 1984 reached an estimated 3.5 billion liters or over \$1 billion with the Philippines as the biggest market (\$309 million or 30.9 percent of the total for Southeast Asia). (AWSJ, 29 May 85)

(Courtesy: IBON Facts & Figures No. 179/31 January 1986)

Ecology

A Visiting Horticulturist Speaks Out

— John William Wooten

The dangers of Modern Agricultural Chemical Use.

The inordinate, excessive, and careless use of Agricultural Chemicals in Sri Lanka is extensive.

It has taken the Western World many decades to realize that the use of highly toxic Ag. chemicals has consequences reaching far beyond the destruction of insect pests, micro-organisms and noxious herbs.

The truth is that cancer, leukemia, liver disease, kidney ailments and a myriad other ills of modern man are directly linked to the practice of toxic Ag. chemical use.

As the problems caused by the use of these powerful agents become

better understood in the U.S.A. and other developed countries the agronomists and entomologists are developing ecologically wholesome methods to control insect pests and plant disease. However, many of these problems would never have arisen if the ecology would have remained undamaged by chemical farming.

Rather than learning from the mistakes made over the past decades by the developed nations the Sri Lankan farmer has been led by the nose-ring into the vicious cycle of dependence on toxic Ag. chemicals. The multinational pesticide companies have great powers and resources to encourage the use of their products

Occasionally an aware public or conscientious government control agency will succeed in banning a particularly deadly substance from use on N. American soil. But the production of the said substance will continue and an ignorant and ready market will be found elsewhere (often in the developing countries.)

In California, slowly, one by one farmers are seeking biological and ecological disease and pest control not because of any altruistic sentiment but, because it is being discovered that these natural controls are more effective and less costly in the long run. Unfortunately the vast majority of N. American farmers remain locked in to chemical farming, systems and the poisoning of humanity.

It might be interesting to note that the people in California who are most directly involved with the application of these poisons are usually not the wealthy farmers or even a citizen of the U.S.A. but an illiterate, migrant, farm labourer imported from Mexico. After his tenure has expired he is returned

to his homeland to face the possibility of suffering; sterility, persistent headache, cancer and eventual death as the result of over-exposure to the Agricultural toxins he had been hired to apply.

In the U.S.A., government regulations require persons employed to handle and apply highly toxic Ag. chemicals to wear head to toe, chemical resistant, protective clothing equipped with sophisticated respirators. These laws are, many times, ignored by the employers and not considered necessary by the illiterate, Spanish speaking, Mexican labourers.

The dependence on unnatural toxic compounds to produce food is like a patient with a large silver of glass embedded in his foot being given continuous morphine injections as his only treatment. For sometime the pain will be relieved but the dependence on the morphine will increase as the infection becomes deeper. Eventually the patient will be hopelessly addicted to the narcotic drug and at the same time its effectiveness in relieving pain will diminish.

In such a case an initial dose of pain killer is in order; while a skilled surgeon removes the glass and allows nature to heal the wound.

It is argued (by suppliers, producers and others) that malathion is a relatively harmless substance. Though they have ready arguments and billions of dollars in profits to back them, the truth is that malathion is an extremely dangerous substance that can cause damage and even death to the human organism.

Pregnant women exposed to certain Ag chemicals may suffer miscarriage or, even worse, give birth to hideously deformed and hopelessly derranged children.

I beg your pardon if the truths I am relating are disturbing, but the facts remain - the sickness to yourself, your loved ones, and those around you may be the direct result of exposure to the herbicides, fungicides and/or insecticides that YOU have been using.

The ancient battle between morality and greed is, here, profoundly represented; the immediate short term ability of pesticides to

guarantee a uniform, cosmetically appealing product (and thus higher profits) has been an incentive for users to shrug off the dangers they pose.

"IT WON'T HURT YOU"

"It won't hurt you" they say. Several of my close friends who are farmers have told me that very statement. At a later date I happened to meet them and was sorry to learn that they had barely survived death or contracted cancer as a result of continuous contact with lethal Ag. chemicals.

Natural Farming Practices

There are many natural farming practices which enable the farmer to achieve adequate production of pure, life giving food.

Simple practices such as; crop rotation avoidance of monoculture, interplanting marigold flowers with crops, removal of weeds by hand may alleviate many problems.

In the U.S.A. and other developed countries a biological control for caterpillar infestation is now readily available. It is a microorganism that will only grow in the stomach of the pest. It is non-toxic and harmless to all living creatures except the caterpillar. A government or private facility for the production of this substance in Sri Lanka would be a noble and (human) life saving undertaking.

By spraying a preparation made from hot chillies many insects can be discouraged from attacking plants.

Many of your parents and grandparents were successful farmers at a time before modern farming methods. From them we may discover not only the methods of natural farming but also the state of mind that goes with it.

The problems of natural farming are formidable. The tropical conditions Sri Lanka create difficulties not found in temperate climes. But there is no choice; you can continue to (blindly) follow the Ag. chemical industry or face the problems of farming with the health of your children and future generations in mind.

It is well known that the Ayurvedic medicines so widely used in Sri Lanka have proven their worth over thousands of years. Many Lankans realize the great benefit of using nature's own medicines rather than relying on the complex, man made, chemical compounds that make up modern medicine. It is time this same sensibility is practiced in the field of Agriculture.

I have great confidence that Sri Lankan scientists, herbologists, agronomists and most of all the sensible people of Sri Lanka have the potential to make great contributions in the field of ecological natural farming. ☐

Remembering Bhopal

On the third of December 1986 thousands of people joined protest marches and prayer sessions as the Central Indian city of Bhopal mourned its dead on the second anniversary of the world's worst chemical disaster.

Much of the city closed on Wednesday in memory of the more than 2,000 people who died when a killer gas leaked from a pesticides plant owned by the US multinational Union Carbide.

The shutdown was called by the Communist Party of India (Marxist), which asked its cadres to organise protests against multinational corporations to mark "Bhopal gas tragedy day."

About 2,000 people marched to the Union Carbide factory in the early hours of Wednesday and burned effigies of the "demon of multi-nationals" in the climax to a midnight demonstration organised by local trade unions and pressure groups.

They set fire to effigies of Warren Anderson, former chief executive of Union Carbide Corp, watched by about 200 policemen posted at the factory in the old part of Bhopal.

The demonstrators demanded a government white paper on the gas disaster and a Hiroshima-type memorial for the 2,353 people who are officially said to have died from exposure to the poison gas methylisocyanate.

Another 45,000 people have been affected by the gas according to official figures and some 521,000 have filed compensation claims.

The Madhya Pradesh government, which rules Bhopal, has declared December 3 "Industrial Safety Day", and a public holiday. Chief Minister Motilal Vora joined prayers in temples, mosques and churches and went to cremation grounds in gas-hit areas to pay homage to the dead.

In New Delhi the government said Wednesday that chemical industries should provide sufficient backup facilities based on risk analysis to avoid a repetition of disasters, such as Bhopal. (AFP) ☐

Human Rights

Sri Lanka Human Rights Data Base

We have been informed that the International Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) is engaged in a project on Human Rights in Sri Lanka.

Aims and objectives

The Sri Lanka Human Rights Data Base Project has as its aim to establish a decentralized computer-based documentation system on human rights in Sri Lanka, as part of a global network on human rights information, HURIDOCs (Human Rights Information and Documentation System). A network of collaborators from research institutions, information services and NGO communities will be involved to provide complete, reliable and accessible documentation and also to act as initial recipients for the

dissemination of information to a wider network of potential users.

The system will provide documentation on alleged human rights violations.

The users

The system is an information tool for people and organizations that have an active interest in human rights affairs with special reference to Sri Lanka. The potential users include policy makers, journalists, educators, and the staff of relevant non-governmental organizations.

Output

SLP is currently preparing a select bibliography on ethnic conflict and human rights in Sri Lanka, as well as a directory of national and international organizations concerned with human rights and peace initiatives in Sri Lanka.

Address: PRIO, Radhusgt 4, 0151, Oslo, Norway.

Contra terror

The following testimony is a slightly edited extract from a letter written by Sandra Price, a Notre Dame Namur sister who has worked for five years in Siuna in north-central Nicaragua.

"The blood of the innocent continues to bathe the mountains and the tears of survivors water the earth here. Three days ago, a small cooperative of 150 houses was attacked for the fourth time by the **contras**—300 mortars—five dead, one of them an old man collecting firewood was caught tortured and killed; another a woman looking for bananas.

On March 14 the house of the **Misioneros de Cristo** sisters burst into flames. The sisters were away. Totally destroyed were a dispensary, a sewing workshop, Bibles newly acquired for the peasant communities clothes for families displaced by the war. Some men who had been kidnapped by the **contras** but were able to flee told us the **contras** said they sent someone to burn the sisters' house because the missionaries support the revolution.

On March 25, the same band of **contras** took a Delegate of the Word, Donato Mendoza, from his house Two kilometers from the house they castrated him, gouged out his eyes, pulled out his fingernails cut the flesh from his legs, broke almost every bone in his body and shot him.

Good Friday took on a profound significance for us when Donato's naked and

mutilated body was found. Donato has a chain and cross distinctive of the Delegate of the Word. He had lost the cross a few days before while working. It was this chain without a cross, that identified his dead body.

On Easter Sunday we celebrated Mass with his mother, brothers, sister, wife, nine children and two grandchildren. On the altar was the chain matted with blood and dirt. There was no cross. As Jesus' life did not terminate on the cross but rather in the victory of the resurrection, so too we believe that Donato has won over death and suffering—a simple campesino who read with great difficulty and who could have saved his life if he had collaborated with the **contras**. He never did. He has won over death and suffering and lives by the power of this same God whom he faithfully served during the 40 years of his life."

Latinamerica Press

FP in Japan

On Nov. 5, Korean Kim Sung-il, 35, was arrested by the police of Amagasaki, Hyogo prefecture, for questioning about his refusal to be fingerprinted. Once Kim was in custody, several police grabbed him and forced his arm into a mechanical brace that immobilized his fingers, wrist and elbow and then took all ten fingerprints. Although police

routinely fingerprint suspects, the law authorizes them to do so only when needed for a criminal investigation. The use of a device that resembles a medieval instrument of torture is evidently designed to intimidate other refusers into complying with police summons.

In May, police in Kawasaki, Kanagawa Prefecture, used an instrument resembling a surgical device to forcibly fingerprint Korean refuser Pak Dae Wi, 25. Both Kim and Pak have filed suit against the Japanese government and police for illegally and forcibly taking their fingerprints.

Our Grandmothers

42 years ago, our grandmothers were taken.

"Entertainers" for Japan's Imperial Army.

ill-treated during the day
they were trampled down at night.

Blossom of their youth
sacrificed for the Imperial Army
Our grandmothers
were taken to the front
line in Burma.

They wept countless nights
The sound of bullets ceased
more than 40 years ago
yet the shame and discrimination remains.

Their tears have filled a river
of grief.

They lost so much--
the words of their mother
land

even the name of their
beloved homeland.

Today our grandmothers
dream nightmares 40 years
old.

Night upon night
at the front line
of the Imperial Army,
the virgins of Asia were
trampled upon.

Once again they face the Imperial
boots.

by KIM Myong Shik
(Korea)

Struggle within the church

Sermon preached by Pastor Goddfried Kraatz at the National Conference of the Belydende Kring in February 1986. Cape Town. Paster Kraatz is a Lutheran pastor from the Berlin Mission. He came to South Africa in 1981 and worked in Mitchell's Plain. Where he was engaged in community organisations, He was detained for a number of weeks during the state of emergency prior to the Conference. he was deported at the end of February 1986.

Scripture reading: Exodus 32-1-24 and Matthew 21-12-17.

Grace to you and peace from our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ!

Drawing Parallels

I want to start by referring to a sermon preached by Dietrich Bonhoeffer on the 28th of May 1933. He had given his sermon the theme: Moses' Church and Aaron's Church.

Let me tell you a little bit more about the situation and the sermon. A few days before this sermon, there was a first culmination of the struggle about the Protestant Churches in Germany. There had been a claim to build a National Church and a new office of a National Bishop. This claim came from the German Christians who had identified them broadly with the National Socialist (Fascist) Movement.

The idea was to turn the Protestant Churches into a servant of the Fascist State. During May of 1933 there was a person nominated by the German Christians for the office of a National Bishop to head the National Church. He was a rather insignificant man, but still he was the favourite of Hitler himself. With this nomination, the idea of a political conformed Church was taking shape and the struggle between the worldly and the faithful Church started.

Bonhoeffer was quick to react in his preaching. He was a true prophet with regard to his historical analysis and his warning. He began his sermon with the following words: "The priest contra the prophet; the Church of the world contra the Church of faith: Aaron's Church contra Moses' Church. About this never-ending conflict in the Church of

Christ and about its solution we will hear today".

He then relates his sermon to Exodus 32, with the events around the gold bull. He paints a clear picture of the German people and of their desire for a religious cult rather than for a protesting Church. The German people had this desire for visible gods (idols) rather than for the invisible God. They were impatient and they wanted to enjoy the new ideology of racial self-confidence as it was offered to them by the Fascist Movement after a time of economical, political and emotional depression. They wanted this instead of to suffer all the frustration and hardship of opposition to this ideology.

Bonhoeffer apologises for this desire of the people, but he puts the full blame on Aaron, the nominee for the "National Bishop", and on the Aaronite priests (which he compared to the German Christian Church leaders). They will replace the invisible, living God, and they will put the visible *Führer* of the German Reich in his place.

This sermon stood right at the beginning of the horrible Nazi regime in Germany. Bonhoeffer at that time could not have known how many sacrifices in human rights violations and in millions of human lives the gold bull would demand and the Aaron-Church would have to justify...

So much for the parallel between Church and Israel, which of course bears some significance for the South African situation too. For our theme I want to note down some conclusions:

* The first conclusion has to do with the historical dimension of any Confessing Church. The Confessing Church will have to accept the

specific challenge of her time: it will have to help drive back the specific historical heresies: it will have to reinstall the will and the Word of the living God.

Two Types of Ministry

In Exodus 32 we have inter alia the clash between two types of ministry. In the middle of the story we see the people of Israel. They are tired and frustrated. They have the hardship of marches and desert life behind them and even more of it before them.

Now their leader, Moses, does not come back from mountain where he speaks with his God. The people don't see this God: they want a visible God, a comfortable worship, a joyful religion. They are even prepared to sacrifice with their gold, and they then comfort themselves with the lie they paid so hard for. They point at the gold bull and say: "Israel, this is our god who led us out of Egypt!"

This confession of Israel sounds ridiculous but that is what they say and pretend to believe. I must also admit that I understand this. After five years in Mitchell's Plain, I can understand this — probably like all others who are engaged in the work in the congregations in the township of South Africa. When our people come to Church, or when they find time to turn to religion, they are tired. They have the hardship of the day behind them, and short sleep with night-mares before them. They have been dehumanised now they seek comfort. They seek some joy, something of their own, something to look up at in pride. "This we have given!", they would say. "This is our god!"

Yes, we understand. But we cannot satisfy such desires. We

cannot allow ministers and priests to take advantage of such a situation.

And now, look at Aaron! He, who should know better—he gives the people what they want. He serves them with the lie which seems to make it easier for them to stand their situation. He serves them with the gold bull—in exchange for the true God. A dead, shiny thing would serve to keep them in frustration.

The Kairos Document tells much about this theology of Aaron and of Aaronite priests in our country. It tells much about this "special ministry" with regard to our South African situation. I do not need to elaborate on it. Let us instead see what happens when the crisis comes over the people. When Aaron is called to give account, what does he do? He refuses responsibility. He says he is innocent. He puts all the blame on the people. And while we are stunned over his quick turn, we recognize the tragic fact that Aaron has no love for his people. Worship to the gold bull is worship without love. Religion of the easy comfort operates smoothly, but without love. The ministry of Aaron is not motivated out of love.

In contrast to this, we see Moses. He intercedes for his people at the highest place—before God. He begs for forgiveness—not for himself, but for the people. He prefers to suffer damnation together with his people rather than alienation from them and the promise of the land for himself. His outburst of anger as well as his prayer of intercession are born out of love. The ministry of Moses is one between God who liberates. His people and people who need this liberation so badly.

This is our second conclusion and appeal. We who are in the ministry of this God who liberates: Let us not be ashamed of our love for the tired people! Only love will help to smash the idols of the people and at the same time to identify with the very

people who have fallen for such idols. Only such love help us to go back to God empty-handed (like Moses) after we have smashed both the bull and the tablets with the commands, and to find His will anew. Love will help us to do so. Only with love can we serve both God and His people.

Unending Struggle

* I want to draw one more conclusion concerning the never-ending struggle between the Church of the world and the prophetic Church. For this we have to jump again through history and into another battlefield—Jerusalem, this time. This is now between Jesus on the one side and the Chief Priests on the other. It concerns Jesus' cleansing of the temple and his prayer, which is his healing of the people.

There is much to preach about in this passage. Many of its aspects also concern the situation and ministry in South Africa. I would however want to make only a few points.

Again we see this compassion for the people. We see this not with the Chief Priests, but with Jesus. Again we witness the clash between perverted worship on the one side and true ministry on the other.

This is one of the great historical moments where God reveals Himself. He is the one who cares for the people, and He reveals Himself in this clash. May be we must be thankful for this confrontation!

I want to focus on the consequences which this clash will have for Jesus which has sparked off his later persecution and death. Jesus, even in terms of secular thinking and

speaking, must have known what he did. He must have been aware of the implications of his action. He started the confrontation, and then there was no way back.

For ourselves we must conclude that the struggle between right and wrong ministry demands the highest sacrifice. This is the last of my conclusions, and it is the most demanding. Mount Sinai, Berlin, Jerusalem, South Africa—the struggle is demanding. Moses, Bonhoeffer—we could name innumerable more in the ministry of those servants of God who need His liberation and are willing to bear the consequences of their sacrifices. They all died without having seen the promised land or the Kingdom of God, or the glorious, triumphant Church. But in their lives they have witnessed it. Our God wants to make use of our lives in order to create life.

It is not always as traumatic, we can add. We don't all end up at the cross in the literal sense of the world. But our dedication must be a complete one! Our dedication must be a one of love and commitment to the historical situation we find ourselves in.

I want to close with another quotation of Bonhoeffer's above-mentioned sermon. "To the cross we refer as the Church, because we are Aaron-Church and Moses-Church at the same time. To the cross we refer and say: 'see Israel, this is your God! He has led you out of slavery and He will do so again. Come here, to the cross! Believe, and worship!'"

AMEN

Courtesy: **Dunamis** (S. Africa)
3rd Quarter 1986.

"How can we see the pain, the suffering, the blood, the cruelty of apartheid, and not make a choice for justice, peace and human freedom? If that choice means that we must openly oppose those who try to protect oppression and injustice through the use of gospel words like 'peace', 'reconciliation' and 'unity', then so be it".

—Allan Boesak, in : **Walking on Thorns**

VATICAN DIPLOMACY

Dom Mauro Morelli is the outspoken Bishop of Dughe de Caxias and Sao Jao de Meriti, two huge sprawling urban areas in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The following are short extracts from an interview given to Latinamerica Press.

Q: What has been the impact on the Brazilian church of the Vatican's sanctions against Leonardo Boff?

A: I think it was part of a long process. This century's process of trying to adjust the Brazilian church to Roman terms has been very interesting. At the beginning of the century, we had a romanization of the Brazilian church. In partnership with some Brazilians and others in Rome, church conservatives (I call them "neurotics for orthodoxy") have been trying to correct the Brazilian church's direction—which in my opinion is not so progressive. Many battles have taken place in the process.

For instance, when Pope John Paul came to Brazil, the speech he was supposed to deliver to the bishops in Fortaleza was really terrible. I don't know when or how, but the Pope tore it up...

When he came to Brazil, the Holy Father was amazed to see to see what he saw. I think he understood that something serious was wrong with the speech placed in his hands. Only three people in Brazil read the speech (prepared for the pope). I did myself, I have a copy. The morning the pope started speaking, I was waiting for the last judgement.....

On many other occasions, this conservative group tried to get control, using letters, calumnies, denunciations to Rome. Many of

us have been denounced so many times. Many attempts have been made, like the take-over of the Latin American Bishops Conference (CELAM) by (conservative Cardinal Alfonso) Lopez Trujillo (of Medellin). Boff's punishment was another such manouever, and eventually it was defeated. Politically, it was a very stupid manouever on their part. They touched someone who represents a great deal for many people...

Q: Have relations between Rome and the Brazilian church really entered a new stage?

A: I'm hopeful. At least there's mutual understanding. But the church has some structural problems, and unless these are changed we can expect no real peace in the church. I believe the Vatican state is an obstacle, not just for other churches but for ourselves. It's a world power. For me, the Papal nunciatures are not expressions of the

Gospel; they're the long arm the Vatican uses to control everything.

The church cannot compete with the world; it cannot take two positions. It has to be consistent. The church deals with faith and diplomacy; but the way diplomacy is understood and lived, is incompatible with the Gospel. The Vatican state should disappear to leave the church free (to be faithful) to the Gospel and its mission.

Words will become deeds only if some important measures are adopted. For example, as long as the papal nuncio is the only one in the country who makes decisions about bishops' appointments, we won't have any big change. The structures and the people who make the fundamental decisions in the church have remained the same. In the last 10 years, the process of choosing bishops has been quite visible. They have been chosen from religious congregations and dioceses that are considered 'orthodox' and safe. I'm waiting to see whether there will be any change in the selection process and in its spirit... □

(Latinamerican Press October 16)

SALVADOR: VATICAN NAMES FOREIGN BISHOPS

The recent installation of two foreign bishops in El Salvador breaks with a long tradition of appointing native bishops and fails to take into account the country's religious and social situation, according to the respected journal *Estudios Centro-americanos* (ECA).

ECA is published by the Jesuit run Catholic University in San Salvador. In its latest issue, the editors analyze the Aug. 16 installation of Jose Carmen Di Pietro, an Italian, as bishop of the newly-created diocese of Sonsonate. They also examine last year's appointment of Fernando Saenz, a Spaniard and a member of Opus Dei, as auxiliary bishop of Santa Ana.

The article is especially critical of Bishop Di Pietro's installation ceremony, which it charges was used by the armed forces for political ends.

The Vatican named Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, Nicaragua's conservative archbishop, to ordain the new prelate; according to ECA, high-ranking members of the Salvadoran armed forces were "everywhere" — in the stadium while Obando ordained Di Pietro, at the Mass the new bishop celebrated in the cathedral and at the reception that followed. Throshout the ceremonies, loudspeakers were in the hands of military personnel who led the crowd in cheering the armed forces and shouting, "Cardinal Obando, saviour of Central America and hero against communism!" During the Mass, a Salvadoran air force plane rained anti-communist fliers on the crowd.

ECA says that neither the Vatican nor the Salvadoran bishops' conference protested the armed forces' manipulation of Di Pietro's installation ceremony.

With the new appointments, El Salvador now has eight bishops and six dioceses — up from five each in 1982. According to the Jesuit magazine, the two new bishops do not sympathize with the country's flourishing Christian base communities, which they accuse of having leftist sympathies and of supporting the FMLN guerrillas.

The Vatican has broken with the tradition of appointing Salvadoran priests as bishops because it prefers a hierarchy "that lacks the strong evangelical character that could bring it into conflict with the government or cause tensions with the Vatican or within the bishops' conference," ECA claims. The magazine says that the Vatican sees the pro-U. S. Christian Democratic government as more compatible with the long term objectives of the institutional church. Because of these new appointments, the Vatican has effectively neutralized the bishops' conference; the bishops have been unable to draw up a pastoral program to confront the challenges created by the civil war.

The distancing of the bishops' conference from "just, necessary and beneficial" elements within El Salvador's revolutionary movement is affecting the attitudes of the country's young people, according to ECA. More and more young people are dismayed with the bishops' unwillingness to speak out against oppression.

The appointments endanger the church's image of "being close to the real problems of the people in solidarity with them and less authoritative," the ECA article concludes

— **Latinamerica Press** 27 November 1986

FUNDAMENTALISM IDEOLOGY AND SOCIAL PRACTICE

Fundamentalism & Politics

Fundamentalist theology develops a potential that is increasingly being exploited for political ends. Reagan's triumph in the US owes a great deal to the born-again Christians. They have become a formidable lobby group lining up behind the Moral Majority and the Clean Up America Crusade. The 'looseness' of this grouping is 'tied together' by what has become known as the 'electronic' Church: a vast radio and television marketing operation reaching out to an estimated 100 million American homes every week. Born-again Christians are 'pro-America, pro-Family, pro-God'.

Like Reagan, and Thatcher, and Quigley, they believe that the welfare state undermines individual initiative and morality: it rewards the slothful and destroys the work ethic. "We've got a bunch of bums out there that wouldn't take a job in a pie-making factory eating holes out of dough nuts!" (Jerry Falwell). Welfare politics has raised a generation of people living on handouts. Thus they favour massive cuts in government spending for supposedly genuine moral reasons.

This rugged individualism coupled with moral probity leads to a natural support of the ethics of capitalism and, in contrast, an almost pathological anti-

communism. When Reagan recently described Russia as the 'focus of evil in the modern world' he was only expressing a view that fundamentalists have held for years. Couple this with the ever present threat of the nuclear age it is easy to see that a born-again Christian in the White House praying each day that Christ might come again soon, presents dangers to mankind which only a non-fundamentalist can appreciate!

Monetarism

The situation in Britain is not so noticeable. Churches are not as strong there as in the US, and do not have the same access to the media. Yet monetarism is given a Christian underpinning, like in the sermon preached by Margaret Thatcher in 1981 when she claimed that her view of politics was the only Christian one. "The welfare state" she said, "takes the blessings out of giving", and so "makes man (sic) a moral cripple".

Conservatism

Whether fundamentalism is growing within New Zealand may be argued. What cannot be argued is the revival of conservatism. This can be seen from the trade unions to the board rooms, from cabinet to the counties, from the universities to the marae. I believe they each feed off the other. This can be seen in many ways. Note how 'official' occasions give a platform for fundamentalism. See the religious directions of radio and television. Note where the leadership for the fight against feminism comes from. See where within the Church resistance to the peace movement lies.

It is said that every civilization has within its birth the seeds of its ultimate destruction. Perhaps we are seeing the end of our time on this planet. The prophets of the Right may be right. Why do we celebrate a religion that so surely and soundly demands our own destruction?

— **Brian Pauling**

(from "Thirty First Report" of Joint Working Committee NCC/RC 21-25 May 1984) New Zealand. Reproduced from **Touch** (New Zealand) 1985.

EXODOUS

"In Latin America, from Mexico to Ceara, we are living through what is perhaps one of the most decisive moments in the continent's history... marked by a journey, what we can call a historical process, in which the continent's poor are discovering that they are not poor by destiny, or because God wishes it, or because of a law of history, something already determined, but for human reasons. They are poor because society is organized in such a way that they become ever poorer so that others can enrich themselves. This new awareness on the part of the continent's poor is becoming a generalized phenomenon..."

In Latin America, the poor are discovering that the God of Jesus Christ is among the people listening to their cry... They intuitively see that as the continent's poor we are on a new exodus to a promised land, a land without evil to be built by the poor themselves. All their strength comes from the living God. With-

out this they could not construct the promised land...

The journey goes through the desert... signifies that the people are not in their land. They do not have a land to live in, to work; their rights are not recognized, their voice is not heard, they have no political influence, they do not participate in culture, in technological decisions, They are left out, marginalized.

The desert is the place where there are no ways already laid out. No one can develop a spirituality for the poor to live out. The way will be discovered on the journey itself. It is the poor, with the presence of the living God, who will themselves discover a Latin American way of being Christians within this process. No one can teach them. The pope is not inspired by the Holy Spirit to tell the Latin American poor how to live their spirituality."

— **Bishop Antonio Batista Fragoso of Crateus in the state of Ceara (northeastern Brazil)** (Latinamerica Press)

GODS OF WAR

The following reflection was offered by Santiago Auxiliary Bishop Jorge Hourton at the funeral of Rodrigo Rojas. Rojas died after troops doused him with gas and set him on fire during a national protest held July 2-3. Rojas, a Chilean by birth, had lived in Washington with his mother, exiled after the 1973 coup. He had recently returned to Chile.

Brothers and sisters;

The God of life is also exiled by the demons that oppress and torment this Country and its people.

The gods of war have taken possession of this land, and have enshrined their idolatrous religion and their law.

The gods of war need human sacrifice to create the illusion that their dominion is invincible and everlasting. So violence is supported by lies, and the end justifies the means. They blame the victims, calling them their own executioners; and while they pretend to be intent upon clarifying events, they in fact only obscure them. So many times now, we have seen the way they act.

Those who thus deny the God of life and worship the gods of war force upon us, pastors of the living God, the humiliation of making them out to be faithful Christians. They oblige us to take up the difficult responsibility of using the only power sometimes left to us — the lash of our word — to denounce the money changers in the Temple and those who profane the living temples where the Spirit of Truth, Justice and Right abides — those who are sons and daughters of the living God.

Brothers and sisters, whatever name we give this force we all live out of faith in the God of life; a God who desires life not death; who animates human life with such a powerful breath that human beings climb to the highest moral, cultural and social levels. A God who will hear the cry of this oppressed people and come down to liberate it from the slavery imposed by inhuman violence. A God who will convert spilled innocent blood into the seeds of new life, love, reconciliation and peace.

— From. Mensaje
October 1986
Santiago, Chile

(Latinamerica Press 6 November 1986)

influence and growth have been declining.

In the past, according to church observers, the aim of the sects was to attract followers and to spread their religious message without attacking the Roman Catholic church; today, however, many have launched a strong offensive against Catholicism, which they identify with the apocalyptic beast and with communism.

Honduran evangelical churches as elsewhere tend to be conservative and doctrinaire, promoting an individualistic and moralistic interpretation of the Bible. Most are closed to dialogue with the Catholic church and frown on political activity that challenges governing powers.

Within the last three years conservative religious aid and education organizations, such as the Summer Institute of Linguistics and World Vision, along with fundamentalist newcomers from the United States, have moved into the Atlantic Coast area, where refugees from Nicaragua are located.

How Fundamentalists win Converts

As in the case most other Latinamerican countries, Latinamerica Press has reported recently that in the Honduras the proliferation of fundamentalist Protestant and evangelical churches in recent years is exerting a growing influence on the social and religious life of this predominantly Roman Catholic country.

In 1979, only five percent of Hondurans were Protestant. Since then, the numbers of adherents have grown to 8 percent of its 4.3 million inhabitants. Any village of 500 residents is likely to have at least two Protestant churches; and it is not unusual, in a town of 8,000 to find as many as 14 evangelical groups.

The growth is explained principally by the arrival of some 50 new Pentecostal groups, working throughout the country; the traditional evangelical churches have grown very little.

Protestant congregations currently number 2,000 pentecostal groups, which often include uncritical allegiance to the state and anti-communist zeal among their tenets, represent 60 percent of all Protestants. Of those the largest are the Assemblies of God, which have 250 congregations, the Church of God and the Principe de Paz (Prince of Peace) church. All have strong ties with parent churches in the United States and in Puerto Rico.

Reasons for growth

The rapid growth of the Pentecostal groups is the result of a massive proselytizing effort in which intense evangelical campaigns play a central role in attracting converts; their work is concentrated among marginal and working-class sectors of the population. The mainline Protestant Churches, on the other hand have ministered to a predominantly middle-class membership and their

Tensions

Tensions between some apolitical evangelical aid organisations and the Catholic church have flared on a number of occasions. In 1980 the Honduran government appointed CEDEN (the Evangelical National Emergency Committee) to coordinate the distribution of aid from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Catholic workers charged that World Vision, which is related to fundamentalist evangelical groups, was threatening refugees and admitting Salvadoran military personnel into the camps CEDEN has also been criticised for the close relationship some of its workers have established with members of the Honduran armed forces.

CEDEN suffered a schism in 1982 when its director and 60 field workers resigned and formed the Comision de Desarrollo y Emergencia (CODE). The dissident group did not share CEDEN's conservative criteria and

questioned the thrust of its work, which involved proselytization among aid recipients.

The work taken up by CODE in the following years involves a clear identification with the needs of the poor and an active willingness to dialogue with Roman Catholics. "Our work with refugees has opened our eyes," said Noemi de Espinoza, president of CODE.

CODE runs a leadership program in 50 communities in four regions of the country; 20 of these are located on the border with El Salvador. They represent 13 denominations and have regular contact with the Roman Catholic Church's Delegates of the Word.

"From them we have learned how to 'see, judge and act', within the base Christian communities," said Espinoza. CODE members do theological and ecumenical work together and read and interpret the Bible in the light of the country's political situation, she said.

At times we feel like a voice crying in the wilderness" said Daniel Medina, head of CODE's theological reflection unit. *The powerful evangelization methods of the sects are overwhelming.* In 1985 they averaged one evangelizing campaign a month, most of which were held in the national stadium in Tegucigalpa, which has a capacity of more than 30,000.

The events are organized through *international publicity campaigns* focused on famous preachers like Yiya Avila, Nikey Cruz, Luis Palau (known for his ties with former Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza), Jimmy Swaggart, Christopher Apper and "Hermano Pablo", among others. During the campaigns, food and clothing are offered, "but only those who accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour receive the goods," said Medina.

Other methods have also been employed. The Asociacion Evangelica Ministerial, a group of evangelical pastors, frequently organizes seminars for youth leaders. These events are run by directors of World Vision and others, and their content is highly critical of the theology of liberation and of everything that smacks of ecumenism. □

I Believe in Justice and Hope

I do not believe in racial or classist segregation (Because there is but one image of God in man.)

I do not believe in slavery of any kind (Because all of us have the right and duty to live in the freedom of sons in which Christ freed us.)

I do not believe in capitalism of any kind. (Because the real capital of man is man.)

I do not believe in the development of minorities or in the "developmentalist" development of the majority. (Because this "development" is not the new name for peace.)

I do not believe in progress at any cost. (Because man has been bought at the cost of Christ's blood.)

I do not believe in the mechanizing technology of those "who pray to the computer: our father art thou." (Because only the living God is our Father.)

I do not believe in the "consumer society." (Because only those are blessed who hunger and thirst after justice)

I do not believe in the so-called order of the status quo. (Because the kingdom of God and men is a new heaven and a new earth.)

I do not believe in the heavenly city at the cost of the earthly city (Because "the earth is the only road which can lead us to heaven")

I do not believe in the earthly city at the cost of the heavenly city. (Because "we have here no lasting city, but seek the city that is to come.")

I do not believe in the old man. (Because I believe in the new man.)

I believe in the new man who is Jesus Christ Risen, the first-born of very new man! Amen, Alleluia!

— Dom Pedro Casaldaliga,
Bishop of San Felix de Araguaia,
Brazil.) □

Beware of these Preachers !

A warning about the danger of the kind of 'mission' and preaching promoted by many fundamentalist sects is to be found in a pamphlet entitled **God, Sex and Luis Palau** by Ian Rathbone and Savi Hensman who work with community groups in London's East End and published by COSPEC (Christian Organisation for Social Political and Economic Change) a federation of more than 30 Christian groupings in the U.K. with a combined total membership exceeding 10,000.

Evangelist Luis Palau has had a "London Mission", more recently followed by a lengthy tour of Europe. Palau was a local Argentinian preacher from a well-off family taken to the USA and groomed: his image was brushed up and he was given training in mass media techniques to put over his message - a gross distortion of the Christian gospel. The kind of Christianity preached by Luis Palau is made of carefully selected bits of the Bible [quoted out

of context and often inaccurately. It has been exported by the U.S.A. making use of "hard sell" advertising techniques and the financial support of American and British big business.

Luis Palau has earlier toured various Latinamerican countries where he specialised in 'Presidential breakfasts' on television, standing approvingly with military dictators. In Guatemala he became great friends with General Rios Montt the country's main dictator whom he embraced before a stadium crowd of 70,000 people in 1982 and called a "genuine born again Christian". The COSPEC booklet exposes the nature of this "mission" and preaching.

Christian Worker has received some copies of this booklet from the publishers which we are willing to share and circulate among interested groups of readers. Those interested should contact the C.W.F. office at the Central YMCA in Colombo Fort. (Phone 27708).

Fellowship in Action

BADULLA

On January 6th, clergy of four major religions participated together in a unique ceremony at which the small building which serves as the CWF centre in Badulla was blessed after fairly extensive repairs had to be effected to it. The little chapel at the centre which itself symbolises inter-religious dialogue was solemnly blessed and dedicated in honour of the Epiphany (manifestation or revelation of God) and named **Mettaloka Devalage** (Literally meaning Light of Love - God's House). This was appropriate since it was on the feast of the Epiphany (January 6) popularly associated with the visit of the Magi representing different races and religions at Christ's birth that the ceremony took place (Epiphany is one of the oldest church Festivals - older than Christmas or Good Friday - and commemorating as it did the incarnation and Baptism of Jesus as named in the 4th century as the day of holy lights.)

The proceedings began with the lighting of the traditional oil lamp by the clergy representing the different religions and by the C.W.F. organizer and two others assisting in the centre's work. The Rt Revd: Roger Herft a Sri Lankan who is now a Bishop in New Zealand and who was in Badulla on holiday, presided over the ceremony. The service began with a invocation in Sinhala chanted by the Bishop and responded to by those present. This was followed by the pirith chanting of the Buddhist monks and prayers by the Hindu priest and Muslim katheeb. The clergy were all seated together on mats (see picture). A reading in Tamil (Matthew 2: 1 - 12) was followed by the singing of a workers hymn and the Gospel. (Luke 4: 16 - 21)

The Bishop thereafter blessed the water and salt and having put on the incense in a traditional incense bowl carried by a young worker went round sprinkling the blessed water with a sprig of a lime tree. He named and dedicated the chapel too. In the course of blessing the building.

The workers mass followed sung by the Bishop and joined in by the people. A full throated rendering of the Sri Lankan version of the Internationale ended the service.

A social followed and the screening of the CWF film on Christians "The first and the last" concluded the programme. The Bishop made a deep impression on the gathering when he addressed them during the social. Referring to his consecration as a Bishop after his short stay in New Zealand he said it was indicative of the openness of the people there that even after the revulsion felt by them over the racist disturbances in our country, they elected a Sri Lankan as a Bishop. Speaking about his own work and experiences in New Zealand the Bishop remarked that the indigenous people there - The Maoris rubbed noses when they greeted each other - expressive of their togetherness since breathing is symbolic of our common life.

Although only a limited crowd was expected at the ceremony which was held at short notice, bus and railway workers in the vicinity crowded in and outside the buildings during the proceedings.

The steady work done by the CWF branch through this Badulla centre is beginning to show results. Apart from educational programmes a pre-school for workers children has been started at the centre. The branch has also helped muni-

cipal workers and plantation workers of recent Indian origin to apply for registration as citizens. The centre serves to co-ordinate CWF work done in the Uva and Vellassa areas.

HATTON

A Farewell to Jeffrey and Annathaie Abayasekera (The Plantations Work Organizer and his wife) was held on Sunday 18th January at 3.30 p.m. at Highlands M. V. Hatton. A representative gathering of CWF members from different areas and town residents was present. A Fellowship Dinner for Working Committee and Plantations Service Committee members and other guests followed. Jeffrey Abayasekera resigned as a full time Organizer in the CWF on 31-12-86 after 21 years of service. He plans to follow a course of Theological studies abroad.

The C. W. F. organizer gave a talk on "Christianity and Development" at the Sarvodaya Development Education Institute Kuda Oya.

English classes at the Hatton Centre for Telephone Operators and staff of Voluntary groups have been re-organized by Ms. Christine Begg a VSO teacher of English from the U. K.

The Hatton organizer and his wife conducted a **Quiet day** at the Theological College of Lanka for staff and students, also attended a "**Solidarity Action in Development**" Seminar at the Jesuit Retreat House in Lewella, Kandy. This represents a first attempt to form an alternative network of development action groups.

The Plantations Service Committee actively supported the **Peace Walk** from Maskeliya to Adam's

Peak held on 15th December. (Poya) The Annual General meeting of the **CWF groups** at Bowhill and Labokellie Estates were held recently. A **Study Camp** for plantation area CWF leaders was held on 20th and 21st December in Hatton.

CWF members at Hatton in association with the Plantation Women's Group visited the **refugees** at the Nanu Oya Estate School, Talawakele and gave gifts so that they could celebrate the Thai Pongal Festival

JAFFNA

The Jaffna CWF group is comprised of four centers in Kuddaveli, Alvai, Toddaikurichy, and Championpattu supported by an urban group in Jaffna town. The members meet every Monday for discussions and prayer. The prohibited coastal zones and the social repercussions arising therefrom are being continuously discussed at these gatherings.

The Kuddaveli group consisting largely of subsistence farmers and refugees has as its ongoing projects a vocational training program, a small scale housing scheme in Jeevanagar Yallhai and regular study classes. In Alvai the CWF group has been mainly concerned with helping the fishermen displaced by the prohibited coastal zones to find alternative means of livelihood such as textile manufacturing, vegetable cultivation and animal husbandry on a small scale. The CWF has been instrumental in starting a program to distribute goats to displaced fishermen.

In November the distribution of food stamps to refugees was stopped. Hence the CWF group has been attempting to launch a project for the distribution of dry rations. Problems have however cropped up

in trying to find the finances for such a program.

A Tamil drama "Unquenchable Thirst" staged by the Kuddaveli group is now being televised for wider distribution.

RATMALANA

The new six-month course in welding commenced in January 1987 with ten youth having enrolled for these classes.

An attractive Christmas exhibition of handicrafts by the children of the pre-school was held in December and drew the appreciation of parents and visitors. It was followed by a concert also by the children at which parents and well wishers were present.

The children of our pre-school who are predominantly Buddhist observed sil on the full moon (Poya) day in December. Regular observance of sil like the monthly worship held on Friday's is a regular part of our programme in the workers school and centre.

The CWF organizer of Ratmalana was invited to lead two seminars at Kandana which were organized by and for the Roman Catholic University students. These seminars were well attended by undergraduates residing in the Jaela and Negombo districts which are mainly Roman Catholic.

Our energetic and youthful Moratuwa group which has links with Ratmalana had a very successful performance of street drama combined with carols during Christmas to collect funds for the Devalawatte housing project in the area that was commenced by a church but could not be completed due to the lack of funds.

KATUNAYAKE

CWF members in the Negombo area played a key role in bringing to the notice of the public and the authorities concerned the plight of the fishing village of **Pitipana** which did not have an adequate supply of water. Action is now being taken to remedy this problem, with the support offered by voluntary bodies.

The Katunayake street theatre group of Kamkaru Sevana Katunayake staged three of their compositions at the Uswatekiyawa Christmas celebrations. Moreover, the play "Abing" (opium) of the same group is touring the Island. They have already performed in places like Polonnaruwa, Galaha and Hatton. The play is to be staged next in Negombo on February 7th.

GALAHA

A Seminar was organized by the CWF at the Sri Jayasumanaramaya in Haloya on the 19th of October to commemorate **World Food Day**. Dr's Weerakody and Samaraweera of the University of Peradeniya spoke on the importance of forest conservation and environmental protection.

A one day seminar was held at the Gami Seva Sevana hall to train members of the Parana Nillabe credit control and thrift society in various aspects of accounting and the organizing of co-operative societies for credit control and thrift.

In November, a **two day seminar on bio-gas and organic farming** was held to promote its use in the area. Representatives from the villages of Haloya, Gurukele, Parana Nillabe and Minipe attended the seminar. It was anticipated that at least 100 bio-gas units would be set up in these villages over the next two years. □

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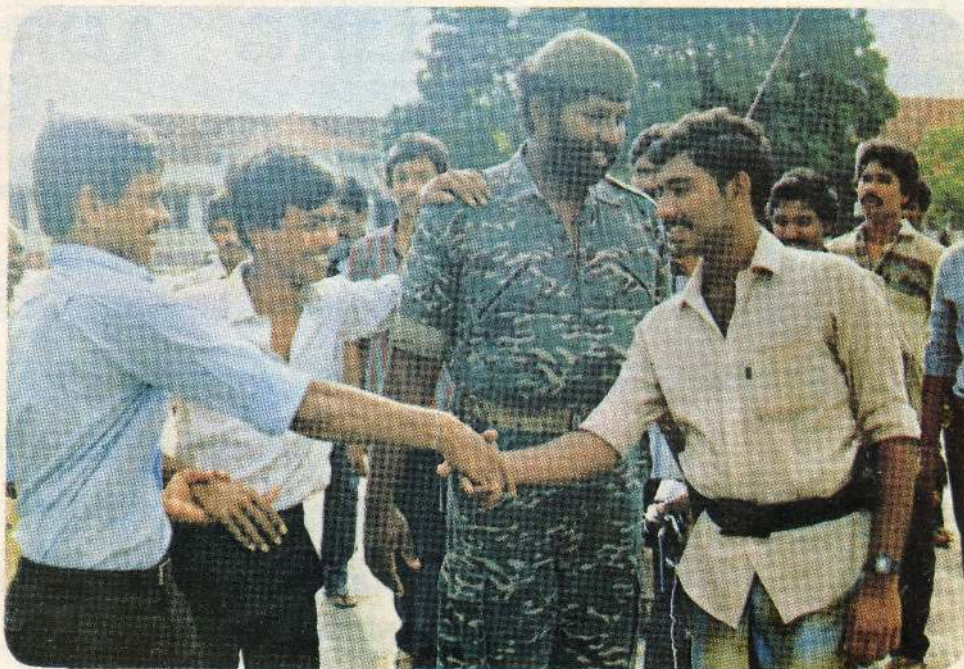
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***Exchange of Prisoners**

Results of

Vijaya's Northern Breakthrough



*** Dialogue between
Govt. and Tigers**

Ajit Chandrasiri and Bandara on their release with Captain Kotalawela of the Sri Lanka Army and 'Rahim' of the LTTE

**What then are the
Snags to a
settlement?**

**See comments
inside**



Govt. MP Vincent Perera hugs LTTE Commander 'Kittu' after garlanding him.

Group photograph of Govt. delegation and Tigers

Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.
noolaham.org | aavanaham.org

Printed at Sarana Press and Publications, 153, Sri Saranankara Road, Dehiwela, Cover Printed at Sri Devi Press, Nedimala, Dehiwela.