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THE HEART OF DARKNESS

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The PA's darkness at noon

Mervyn de Silva

What attracted more public attention than the trade union action and the opposition U.N.P.'s reaction was the behaviour of the ruling S.L.F.P.'s allies in the eight-party "Peoples Alliance". And the intervention of a maverick caucus calling itself the "Mulberry Group", its membership almost exclusively confined to P.A. members, comrades and friends. Prominent in this group was the island's oldest party, the L.S.S.P., now led by Mr. Bernard Soysa, a Cabinet minister.

But the issue was not narrowly political. It was economic, and its impact immediate and direct, disrupting life in factory, tourist hotel, port and airport and every household which could not afford its own generator. And this of course meant the affluent and the super-rich businessmen, which in turn made the highly charged situation inescapably political, or more accurately anti-P.A. And that explained why the (evidently) well-intentioned

"Mulberry group" invited the wrath of the P.A. leadership, from President Chandrika Kumaratunga to the Minister of Power, Lt. General Anuruddha Ratwatte, the hero of OPERATION RIVIRESA, the conquest of Jaffna, the capital for many years of the secessionist "Eelam" Tigers (L.T.T.E) of Commandante Velupillai Prabhakaran.

With the "Mulberry Group" playing self-appointed mediator and pressing on, despite the rising gorge of the Commander-in-Chief and the Minister of Power, General Ratwatte, anti-government passions reached a new pitch. "Darkness at Noon" became a columnist's cliché. The utter helplessness of the Minister of Power — the hero of Jaffna and the P.A. was the sort of psychological blow that few popularly elected regimes can take.

The instinct to react promptly to a potentially explosive political situation that could threaten her administration,

and even cause serious damage, is one of President Kumaratunga's secret strengths. Unfortunately, she tends to overdo it, unlike her mother. An oratorical rampage, accusing her political opponents of a diabolical plot to overthrow her regime, is usually the form the counter-attack takes. As this mini-crisis proved, such reactions do not help to resolve the problem. On the contrary, it strengthens the hand of the opposition. If every strike is treated as a "capitalist conspiracy" in order to pin the rap on the U.N.P., the basically pro-P.A. unions will soon

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CONTENTS

A Chance for Peace	2
The War of Tamil Independence	5
C R M on "Disappearances"	9
Ethnic Conflict and Devolution (3)	11
Are All Wars Terrorist	15
Education for Peace and unity	16
Bosnia	18

It's a National crisis, let's debate — Ranil

"You can change the clock but you can't change the calendar" says Opposition and U.N.P. leader Ranil Wickremasinghe. The P.A. government had NOT followed tender procedures. He was referring to a coal power project that was NOT in the list read out to the House on May 24 by the Minister. He requested the Minister who was not present in the House to give Parliament the relevant information at the next sitting. The House could

then discuss this matter fully.

"This is a national crisis. The government has totally mishandled the situation. People are out of work, their pockets are affected" said the UNP leader.

"The energy crisis is far more serious than a terrorist attack in the capital. The damage is enormous" observed Mr. Ken Balendra, Chairman John Heells Kolding, the F.T. reported.

be alienated. And at the same time the capitalists, the foreign investors and the donors, are certain to conclude that the P.A.'s recent "conversion" to private enterprise and the IMF-World Bank supported growth strategy is a confidence-trick. That simply won't do.

LEFT PRESSURE

Look at the behaviour of the oldest Marxist party in the island, now better introduced as "Left-inclined", the L.S.S.P. And with the L.S.S.P. of Bernard Soysa the N.S.S.P. of Comrade Vasu and Comrade Bahu. Mr. Soysa is the last of the 'comrades' who were taken into custody by the police in pre-independence times for preaching revolution. Speaking to him the other day, I realised why LSSP — PA (or SLFP) relations are somewhat strained. Apart from their ideological differences, these parties unlike the SLFP have genuine trade

union support. While the Marxists are ready to concede that private enterprise has won the historic battle, the basic problems that attracted popular support for radical parties have not been solved. In an island where the Marxist L.S.S.P. has a longer history than capitalist U.N.P., the L.S.S.P. — C.P. — N.S.S.P. will always have supporters, particularly because "free market economics" do place heavy burdens on the lower-middle class and the poor — certainly in the first phase of implementation. The welfarist "cushion" is removed — a non-negotiable part of the deal, certainly for small countries such as Sri Lanka, that choose the IMF-WB route.

Privatisation is the name of the game. The **Peoples Alliance** finds the exercise more painful than the "capitalist" (private enterprise-oriented)

U.N.P. Backbenchers and Left-inclined M.P.'s are caught in what the Marxists call 'contradictions'. The "Mulberry Group" is the byproduct of this problem. And so "darkness at noon", and the first major setback for the P.A.

OFFICIALS WARNED

Attacking officialdom is often the knee-jerk reaction of the embattled politician, particularly the Left-oriented. Addressing the first annual general meeting of the Association of State Corporations and Statutory Bodies the President told Corporation chairpersons that they should remove officials who show reluctance and block the implementation of Government policies. "Implementing government policies is not participation in a political act.... Some officials mark time until a change of governments". □

A Chance for Peace

Jaffna limps back to life as Tamils who had fled during the army offensive return. But this may again prove a temporary respite unless a political solution is found.

Nirupama Subramanian in Jaffna

At the 150-year-old Vembady Girls High School in Jaffna town, a science class is in progress. Dressed in clean white uniforms, the children are bent studiously over their books. As the school gong strikes, they noisily troop out of the classrooms, pick up their bicycles and vanish chattering into the afternoon. A peaceful scene were it not for the bombed-out roof of the school's hall, the pianos destroyed by shells, the ransacked library, the smell of burning paper still hanging in the air.

The school has been rebuilt twice, once after the 1987 war between the LTTE and Indian troops, and in 1990, after the war between the Tigers and the Sri Lankan forces. When government troops moved into the town once again in December last year, this school again suffered extensive damage. "Each time we rebuild, we are driven into the ashes," says

Vice-Principal Sarojini Tharmalingam.

Like her, for most Tamils of Jaffna peninsula, peace now means only an absence of war, till the next round of battle. There was peace in the five years following 1990 when the LTTE was in total control of the peninsula; despite the shortages of food and other necessities, and even the complete lack of some of them (like electricity and petrol), life went on. On the face of it, there is peace now, even though a lasting solution is still elusive more than six months after the Sri Lankan military launched a successful operation, code-named Riviresa, which pushed the LTTE out of the Jaffna peninsula, putting government forces in complete control of the area for the first time in the history of the ethnic conflict.

It is to savour this peace again that thousands of Tamils who fled their

homes in the Valikamam region of the peninsula — under orders from the LTTE after Riviresa began last October — have now begun returning home from eastern Jaffna. With the Tigers retreating quietly, those who had moved out to Chavakacheri and Point Pedro have begun returning to their homes in a steady stream.

The Sri Lankan Government estimates that more than two lakh of the around four lakh — almost the whole population of the area — displaced people have returned in the last month. Jaffna town, once the most densely populated urban centre in the country which became a ghost town almost overnight as the Sri Lankan troops advanced into it last year, has regained some life. And so have the areas around. "We have come back because our homes are here, and because, once again, there is only one

controlling authority. We can manage with either the Tigers or the army, not both in the same place," says a government employee who returned to Jaffna town from Point Pedro in the last week of April.

For the present, it is the army. Once confined to the Palaly camp in the north of Valikamam, the Sinhala soldiers now swarm the make-believe Tamil Eelam of the LTTE. The administration, including food distribution, is being run by the army. There are checkpoints at several places where soldiers screen those passing through for likely LTTE infiltrators. Walls in market places have been scrawled with names of regiments of the Sri Lankan Army stationed here.

The LTTE insignia — the face of a roaring tiger — has been removed from wherever it had been put up, and their heroes' memorials have been broken to bits. An LTTE auditorium is one of the few standing testimonies to what once was. Now confined to the jungles in Mullaithivu and Mannar on the mainland, their strength has dwindled to around 8,000 from 15,000 in October. And to save its cadre for future guerrilla incursions, the LTTE is even withdrawing from bases like Killinochchi — a key link between the mainland and the peninsula — which are being threatened by the army.

White flags, put up by the people themselves, mark the homes of those who have returned. Still more families are on their way back from the east, their belongings loaded onto any available vehicle. It was the lure of a proper home, coupled with their miserable condition as refugees in Chavakacheri and other areas, that brought them back. "Who can turn down the opportunity to return home?" asks Kamala Devi Arumathurai, who along with her postmaster husband and daughter was one of the hundred families to be air-lifted from Vavuniya to Jaffna last fortnight.

More such displaced families who had managed to reach government-controlled territory in Vavuniya are on their way back. In Colombo too, around 6,000 people have registered to be taken back to Jaffna. Banks in the region re-opened in the first week of May and schools in the second. According to the Jaffna Government Agent (GA), around 7,000 children out of a total of 25,000 are back in classrooms. With some of the academic and non-academic staff of Jaffna University trickling back as well, the Government may re-open it by May end.

At the Jaffna Teaching Hospital — it had shifted to Point Pedro during Riviresa — only a few doctors and other employees have returned, and there is a severe shortage of medicines. But patients are queuing up. The hospital, which has seen heavy fighting since 1987, is carrying out repairs. Also, only a skeleton remains of the GA's office, known as the *kachcheri* which was booby-trapped by the LTTE to prevent soldiers from taking control of the building during Riviresa. It has been completely destroyed.

Shell-pocked by successive battles, Jaffna is a long way from recovery. The Government will need \$ 70 million immediately to put the peninsula back into working order, while the long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction of the region could cost at least \$ 1 billion, an amount that Colombo plans to raise from friendly countries.

However, the LTTE is still dreaded — most Jaffna residents are convinced that the Tigers can stage a comeback, and that if the army cannot wipe them out completely, the Government should at least involve them in negotiations, otherwise peace would remain illusory. For the army, which was always viewed as the militant arm of Sinhala chauvinism, gaining civilian acceptability is now crucial. Soldiers

have been on their best behaviour since the beginning of Riviresa. Realising this, the LTTE has been provoking them to retaliate through a series of skirmishes, hoping to catch civilians in the crossfire. But so far, they have been disappointed.

While the Government has taken pride in the return of civilians to Jaffna, it has been dragging its feet on a political solution. Says Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar: "You cannot rule out the war-weary Tamil people saying, enough of all this politics, and even devolution, first and foremost, give us an administration that works." For them, of paramount importance is a civilian administration that works. In January this year, the Government brought out a legal draft of the August 1995 devolution proposal that have been universally acclaimed as far-reaching.

However, the text disappointed many, especially the non-LTTE Tamil parties, who described it as a "dilution" of the earlier proposal. President Chandrika Kumaratunge's defence at the time had been that the proposals were up for discussion in the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC), and that only through discussion would the Government take a decision on tricky issues such as the unit of devolution in the north-east, the status of Buddhism as the foremost religion of the country, and the powers of the Governor.

However, with the Government's military success, interest in deliberating on the political package seems to be flagging at the 21-member PSC. At one meeting earlier this month, only three members were present; a fourth, to achieve the quorum, was found with great difficulty. "The PSC is dying a natural death," says Douglas Devanada, the founder of the Eelam People's Democratic Front (EPDF), which with nine MPs is the strongest Tamil parliamentary party. According to him and leaders of other Tamil political parties in Colombo,

Kumaratunge is taking advantage of the military success to postpone a political solution. A suggestion to form an interim council for the area with representatives of Tamil political parties has been almost shelved.

"There now seems to be a temptation on the part of the Government to project itself as the sole protector of the Tamil people," says Loganathan Ketheeswaran of the Colombo-based Centre for policy Research and Analysis. Indeed, one of the first acts of the Government after the win was to open an office of Suddu Nelum, a social organisation fronting for Kumaratunga's Sri Lanka freedom party in Jaffna town. In contrast, only with much reluctance did the Government agree to bring representatives of Tamil parties to Jaffna, and has not yet permitted them to open offices. According to Ketheeswaran, if the Government believes that it can reach the people over the heads of Tamil politicians, it is only "fooling" itself.

But then, the Tamil parties are themselves in a dilemma. Forced out from the peninsula in 1990 by the Tigers, they have little rapport with the Tamils and are nervous about their reception in Jaffna. More important, the LTTE threat to their lives cannot be countered without weapons from the Government. But Kumaratunge is firm that no Tamil group will be allowed to bring arms to Jaffna. "It would be fatal to allow them into the region with guns," says Kadirgamar.

Confusion among the Tamil parties has made them look once again to Tamil Nadu for support. Though the newly sworn-in chief minister, M. Karunanidhi, has not yet acquiesced to a request for an appointment by five Tamil leaders, the very move has sent panic signals in the Sinhalese leadership. A prominent leader warned Tamil politicians against "running to Big Brother" in the Colombo daily *Observer*, a government organ.

Although Sri Lankan Tamil leaders are convinced that a decent package

can still be hammered out of the devolution proposals if the Government only demonstrated more interest, Kumaratunge has problems of her own — a stagnant economy, a non-cooperative opposition and the rebellion against devolution in her alliance's ranks. Still, the Prime minister

is better placed than any other Sri Lankan leader to win the hearts and minds of the Tamils, by restoring not just normalcy but a lasting peace to Jaffna. Unless Kumaratunge grabs this opportunity, the military successes of the past six months may just dissipate.

Waiting — 24 Nineteen thirty nine

With that quiet announcement of War
The August holidays ended.
From far away, mad voices on the Air
Stilled finally the music of the Fair
Ending many things for many folk
Blinkered to the Ad and rising share.

Not so, for us
What ended for us, then?
With that August, childhood ended.
No more would you teach me plait your hair
Or tousele mine on your pink gowned lap.
You were a big girl now you whispered
On the eve of War's cruel flare.

So back again to each ones school
(Before the schools and we were scattered out of town)
In an Isle that had no choice of side
As gathered dimly from our History books
Already to Imperial treaties tied,
Across the seas, where marching feet
Automated for Death and Glory
For each sides Bankers and their bed time story

We wondered,
Wise on BBC and Berlin Radio
Would Colombo have its own black-out
With searchlights and Air-raid sirens
And window panes criss-crossed with paper strips?

Leaving Matale, that time, for me
It was not just end of holiday sadness
While the white tower at Kadugannawa
Stood sentinel as we zig-zagged the Pass
Balane, reminder of old Wars.
I watched that afternoon light up your hair
At the back of the Baby Austin
Why this strange despair
To see you deep in Wuthering Heights
Already far in thought from me.

So while the World girded for War,
I raged against your big-girl air.

U. Karunatilake

The War of Tamil Independence

Adrian Wijemanne

The near-48-year history of independent Sri Lanka presents an unique, challenging and ominous paradox. Here is a state which secured independence from imperial rule without a shot being fired or single life lost; and yet, its first 35 years of parliamentary government has produced an internal war of independence by the Tamil nation, a war which grows in intensity by the day and already has cost thousands of lives, produced a million refugees and caused massive destruction of property mainly of the Tamil people. The peaceful imperial disengagement seems to hold no lessons for the successor government.

The tragedy shows up in poignant relief the difference between parliamentary government and democracy. They may coincide and produce a cohesive state based upon the consent of the governed. Contrariwise, parliamentary government may exist without democracy and produce oppression and war. This difference is perfectly illustrated by the former imperial ruler (the U.K.) and the successor state of Sri Lanka.

In the U. K. it is the universally accepted principle that if, by a majority vote, any of the constituent nations of the U.K. (English, Irish, Scottish or Welsh) decides to secede from the U.K. and become a totally independent, separate, sovereign state, there would be no let or hindrance to its doing so. Indeed such a separation actually took place in 1922 when 26 counties on the island of Ireland seceded to form the free, independent, sovereign state of Eire (now The Irish Republic).

A former Sri Lanka civil servant, the writer lives in Australia.

The principle of freedom to secede is repeatedly re-iterated at every general election in the U.K. as there are political parties contesting such elections with precisely that stated objective of secession. The sanctity of the vox populi of a nation is the bedrock of democratic life in the U.K.; it is a basic principle of public morality to which British nationals of Sinhala and Tamil origin residing in the U.K. subscribe without reservation. The coincidence of parliamentary government and democratic principle produces a cohesive state based upon the consent of the governed.

In Sri Lanka precisely the opposite is the case. It has been made perfectly clear to the Tamil nation, after it voted overwhelmingly in 1977 for secession, that under no circumstances will they be allowed to secede. The will of the Tamil nation in that respect will be crushed by the military might of the successor state. The majority wish of a nation, expressed in a free vote at a general election, counts for nothing if it is unacceptable to the wish of the larger nation. That is how parliamentary government has operated in independent Sri Lanka. It is parliamentary government at a distant remove from democracy. It is that disjunction that has produced war.

Nor is there the slightest prospect of a remedy in the various constitutional reforms that have been produced from time to time by the government. All of them, without exception, aim to preserve the paramountcy of the single all-island state. That supersedes all considerations of democracy or the majority will of a people to secede.

The utmost care is taken to eliminate the slightest vestige of a right of secession. The paramountcy of the single all island state, to be clamped on unwilling subjects by military force if needs be, is the basic principle of political organisation. The freely-given consent of the governed is seemingly unheard of and unknown.

It is a classic disjuncture of parliamentary government and democracy. It has produced not a cohesive, let alone harmonious, society but one riven by rancorous discord and finally plunged into war.

Relevant moral issues

In every war both parties regard themselves as endowed with moral justification. It cannot be otherwise for war requires the killing of the troops of one's adversary and encourages the sacrifice of the lives of one's own. So the doctrine of the casus belli includes an essential element of moral justification. Much has been, and continues to be, written on the subject. I urge everyone troubled by the deep anguish about the moral righteousness of the positions of our respective nations in this war to read and reread. Michael Walzer's *JUST AND UNJUST WARS* (Basic Books, Harper/Collins USA, 2nd Edition 1992).

For the Sinhala people the moral justification for the war goes something like this. "It is the Tamil people who are trying to split up the single all-island state and usurp, even in part, the sovereignty which that state now possesses. Such an extreme step is not warranted by the grievances they profess to have, all of which could be amicably settled by negotiation and secured further by constitutional

change. It is they who have taken up arms against the state. We have both the right and the duty to protect the state from subversion and final subdivision".

The position of the Tamil nation is best stated by the Tamil people and, indeed, only by them. Nevertheless, as far as I can understand it, their basic position is that they can secure their physical safety and the integrity of their homeland only by establishing a state of their own in the area in which they are domiciled as the majority of the resident population. The only means by which this end can be secured is by armed struggle and war.

The weakness of the Sinhala case lies in its arrogating to itself the right to decide that Tamil grievances can be amicably settled. **That is a matter for the Tamil people, not the Sinhala people, to decide — it is the victim, not the offender, who has the right to decide on the nature and adequacy of the redress.** The end result of the Sinhala position is the totally immoral denial to the right to rule itself in a state of its own.

The conclusion is inescapable that the Sinhala position in respect of the casus belli is devoid of moral justification and is based on a culpable folie de grandeur.

The practical aspect

In respect of practical possibility too the Sinhala position is in equally egregious error. A modern state, headed willy nilly for the rigours of economic competition in the 21st century, requires to be founded upon the freely-given consent of its citizens. It is impossible to found a modern state upon the continuous application of military force to a section of its citizens to repress their desire to secede. Eric Hobsbawm in his "The Age of Uncer-

tainty" refers to the "democratization of the means of violence" i.e. the ease with which dissident elements in a state can arm themselves with a formidable array of weapons, explosives etc. in support of their objectives. The state's exclusive monopoly of military force is now a dead-letter. Modern states, existing with ever-diminishing controls over the movement of goods and information and people and funds, are more and more vulnerable to urban guerilla warfare (demonized as "terrorism"). Even so hallowed a precinct as Downing Street in the heart of London has had mortar fire rained down upon it from a small passing van firing through its sun-roof!

No state, not even the richest and most powerful, can protect all of its physical assets 24 hours a day 365 days of the year due to the crippling cost of such an effort. For a desperately poor country such as Sri Lanka such an attempt would precipitate financial ruin in the short term.

It is an absolute sine qua non for a modern state that it should be founded upon a minimally cohesive society in which secessionist tendencies are marginal and are contained on the periphery by political means long before they even aspire to armed struggle, leave alone resort to open, organised warfare. It is perfectly plain that in Sri Lanka the situation has long passed that point and now poses the unthinkable and palpably impossible prospect of continuous military suppression. The limits of the practicability of such a course will soon become apparent and could undermine the very existence of civil government.

There is now no viable or rational alternative to bringing the dimensions of the state into line with a society from which it can derive freely-given

consent. Only then can the long march to modernity and progress and self-fulfilment begin.

Conceptual problems concerning the war

For the Sri Lankan government and its armed services as well as for the Sinhala people this is their first experience of modern war. All of them display the naivete of primitive magnitudinism — the belief is universal that since the Sinhala side is larger in every physical element, since it has vastly greater financial and economic resources to back its war effort, it is a foregone conclusion that victory will be theirs however long postponed. No account is taken of the numerous instances in recent world history where precisely the opposite has occurred.

Just at present large sections of the Sinhala people and many of its leaders believe confidently that victory in the battle for Jaffna, now in progress, will mean the end of the war. Their own very recent history is forgotten. **That the IPKF took Jaffna in October '87 but that their war with the LTTE continued for a further 18 months with ever increasing ferocity until the IPKF withdrew in April '89 is forgotten. Wishful thinking has replaced realism.**

Little is known about the true and deadly nature of nationalist guerilla wars of secession; that their duration is to be measured in decades rather in years; that the guerillas are strengthened instead of weakened by the prolonged duration of the conflict; that nationalism thrives on military reverses and cannot be extinguished by military force — all of these repeatedly proven factors of the world's recent experience are unknown.

The new stage of the war could well include the dreaded element of urban guerilla warfare waged in the

populated centres of Sinhala society. Colombo has already had its first taste of it. Other cities and towns in the Sinhala heartland could experience for the first time the devastation that such attacks could cause. **The IPKF could not be attacked in this way for the urban centres of its origin lay in another country and beyond the LTTE's reach. The opposite is the case now. Furthermore, when repressive defensive measures begin to affect the Tamil plantation population on a large scale their present cautious, pragmatic leadership could be undermined. The policies of the Sri Lankan government at this juncture could well produce a Prabhakaran in the hill country exactly as they did in the north.**

The recent enormous increase in refugees is a factor of great military and tactical importance in a guerilla war. Israel has learnt to its cost how the squalid refugee camps of Lebanon and the Gaza strip became a fertile recruiting ground for all the numerous Arab guerilla movements, not just the PLO. It is not too exaggerated to say that as long as there are refugee camps, so long will there be guerilla warfare. The battle for the hearts and minds of the young men and young women who languish in refugee camps can never be won by the forces that put them there; it is those who offer them the challenge of winning their security and dignity by the force of their own arms who have won their allegiance time and again.

The military offensive that commenced in October '95 marks a watershed in the war of Tamil independence in a manner undreamt of by the Sinhala government, its armed forces and the Sinhala nation.

Features of the Sri Lankan government's military effort

Earlier in this paper it was stated

that a war of this type is essentially a war of attrition. In all such wars it has been the government fighting to preserve the status quo (in Sri Lanka the single all-island state) which suffers attrition before the nationalist guerillas. How long such a war will last in Sri Lanka depends upon several factors peculiar to this particular conflict.

Sri Lanka has no armaments industry worth the name. Nearly everything required by its armed forces has to be imported and paid for in scarce foreign exchange. The purchase of new, state of-the-art, equipment is completely beyond the limited funds available so used and/or obsolete items being jettisoned by desperately cash strapped East European countries (e.g. the 2 Antonov transport aircraft which plunged into the sea shortly after being received in Sri Lanka) are purchased. The IPKF, on the other hand, was backed by India's large armaments industry some of whose factories are located in Tamilnadu state, north of Madras.

In addition Sri Lanka suffers from a very precarious foreign exchange balance. It is able to service its foreign loans largely from the annual foreign exchange transfusions from the international aid consortium. The garment export industry, which is the largest foreign exchange earner, requires a great deal of foreign exchange for the import of its raw materials. Tourism too entails foreign exchange outgoings though on a lesser scale. Both these industries are very vulnerable to the hazards of urban guerilla warfare. The needed defensive counter-measures themselves will affect tourism adversely even if there are no guerilla attacks on tourist facilities.

In the U.K., which has a fullblown armaments industry, the government was able to sustain the 26-year anti-guerilla war against the IRA but was

unable to crush the guerillas. Even without any imports of armaments that effort cost the U.K. £ 3.5 billion per year to contain a mere 300 guerillas of the IRA. That enormous drain on its resources has contributed in no small measure to the U.K.'s current lowly standing in the world's prosperity league.

The recent escalation of the war in Sri Lanka, entailing increased imports of military hardware of all types, will swallow up foreign exchange earnings and reserves on a scale that cannot be long sustained. Already the scarcity of foreign exchange is being reflected in the steep decline in the exchange rate of the Sri Lanka rupee and this will add to the inflationary impetus of local-currency military expenditures.

It is extremely unlikely, therefore, that the present high-intensity military operation can be sustained at this level for another 12 months. This could result in a reversion to a low-intensity holding operation which could drag on for decades.

States in the modern world

In a fast shrinking world every state becomes enmeshed willy-nilly in ever-closer, and ever-more competitive, relationships with its trading and investing fellow members of the comity of nations. To build up such relationships on a reasonably equitable basis competitive capability needs to be constantly up graded. This can be done only in conditions of peace. Every state engaged in a long-drawn-out war falls back in relative terms. Sri Lanka is one of the best examples of this. In 1948, when Sri Lanka became independent, it had a g.n.p. per capita per annum of around US\$ 200-, the same as another British colony, The Federated Malay States. Today the figures are Sri Lanka US\$ 580-, Singapore US\$ 18,200 and Malaysia US\$ 3200-. In 1962 The Federated Malay States split up peacefully without a shot being

fired or a single life lost into two independent, sovereign states.

As the world progresses primitiveness acquires a new connotation with every passing decade. Long-continued war will unquestionably relegate Sri Lanka (as it has already done Myanmar now in the 47th year of an exactly similar war) to the lower levels of primitiveness as the new century dawns and progresses.

The Tamil state on the Island

A state is, in the last resort, a state of mind. In that sense the Tamil state already exists in the hearts and minds of the Tamil people. The assumption of the overt forms of a state is delayed by the continuance of the war of independence. That delay is unavoidable for a war of independence must necessarily be a war of attrition, not one in which a military victory can be secured. That is the essence of nationalist guerilla wars of secession. The continuance of such a war day by day is a daily victory which contributes towards the final objective of independence.

The role of a national diaspora

In many wars of independence a national diaspora has played an important part. The classic examples are the Jewish and Irish diaspora, both of which contributed towards the establishment of an independent state for each of their nations and continues to participate in the work of nation-building. Both followed near identical courses. First, financial, logistical and moral support for their emerging states locked in war. Then the clear explication to host nations and the international community of the *raison d'être* of the war of independence. Next the long and patient endeavour to secure their foothold in the host country, obtain citizenship and voting rights and

through them influence public understanding and secure media support for the struggle of their compatriots back home. Finally, when the time is right, the build-up towards securing the sponsorship of the host state for the international recognition of the emergent state. There is no doubt that the Tamil diaspora, which shares so many characteristics of the Jewish, will tread this well worn road until the independence of the Tamil state is achieved and it joins the comity of nations.

Conclusion

Wars of independence, like other wars, come to an end some day. All

wars of independence (save the Biafran struggle which was not a guerilla war but a conventional war fought by regular army units of Biafran extraction) have ended by the securing of independent statehood by the nation fighting for it. **In Sri Lanka the stage is now set for a long-drawn-out guerilla war, the total impoverishment of both nations, the demise of civil government among the Sinhala people and the eventual establishment of the state of Eelam. The best efforts of the Sinhala state can only postpone this sequence of events — they cannot avert the final outcome.**

[Hot Spring]

What Use, Pen

Let Muzzamil speak for the Muslims,
I've got out of my political denims.
I have donned the white cloth of nonchalance
Putting away the ink-stained lance.
After all the epistles still beatings on the head
Leaving so many Palestinians dead.
The economic claw continues to be bloody
And I have only been wordy.
The ear of the UN is deaf to the moral,
Its mouth a clay-piece for the vested vocal.
The infant strivings of UNCTAD.
Are a naked mess for stripe-pant uncle and dad.
The world will work out its raw justice
As the bear, the fox, the jackal and the hare practice.

Patrick Jayasuriya

CRM on “Disappearances”

“Disappearances” in Sri Lanka have been a matter of grave concern to the Civil Rights Movement (CRM) ever since this heinous practice surfaced in our country. CRM has made numerous representations to successive governments on this subject, has studied the phenomenon in its international context, and has also co-operated with the two visits to Sri Lanka of the UN Working Group.

CRM accordingly welcomed the appointment of the three Commissions which are currently investigating disappearances in different areas of the country (albeit with some reservations as to their cut off date of January 1988), has followed their work attentively, and has submitted memoranda and documentation to them. Several other non-governmental human rights organisations have likewise taken a keen interest in the work of these Commissions, and have actively assisted them in various ways.

At a recent meeting the Working Committee of CRM viewed with alarm and deep concern indications that the work of these three Commissions is to be wound up shortly. If this is indeed the case, we feel that such a decision should be reviewed by the President as a matter of urgency. The Commission relating to events in the Northern and Eastern Provinces has had particular problems, its work being hampered by the continuing conflict in that area. Recent developments in the conflict mean however that this Commission should now for the first time be able to have access to the Jaffna peninsula. Even with regard to inquiries into disappearances in other parts of the country coming within the geographical scope

of this Commission, it is our understanding that there is further work that needs to and could be done.

As regards the other two commissions, one dealing with the Western, Southern and Sabaragamuwa Provinces, and the other covering the Central, North Western, North Central and Uva Provinces, they too have received many thousands of complaints. From our observations, they have been working diligently ever since they started to function, travelling frequently to various parts of the country, where they have held lengthy hearings. They have, in some instances, found it necessary to return several times to the same area. These Commissions commenced work at the beginning of 1995¹ and it is clear to informed persons who have followed their activities that it would be hardly possible for them within a period of eighteen months to do justice to the enormous task entrusted to them. This task furthermore multiplied after they commenced work with more and more persons coming forward with complaints. It may be relevant in this context to note that the Special Presidential Commissions of Inquiry into two deaths, those of Denzil Kobbekaduwa and Lalith Athulathmudali, which commenced work about the same time, still remain to be completed².

It would be invidious if a situation were to arise where some cases of “disappearances” have been inquired into, and some not. To every complainant, his or her petition about the disappearance of a family member is as important as that of any other; likewise it is as important as the assassination of a public figure. Whether the truth in a particular case

emerges or not, what is important is that every person should have the satisfaction and the solace of knowing that his or her case received the same attention as the others. This is the minimum expectation that was raised when the Commissions were originally appointed.

From the wider point of view, it is essential that the Commissions be enabled to complete their task to the best of their ability, and have time to sit back and review the whole after dealing with the details. The outcome we expect from such Commissions is not merely investigation of specific cases, but also findings as to the underlying causes and responsibility for the disappearances, and informed and thoughtful recommendations to prevent such occurrences in future.

In the circumstances, the Working Committee of CRM decided to urge the President to review the work that has been done so far, assess the stage the commissions have reached, ascertain from them what further extensions and other facilities are needed for them to complete their task satisfactorily within a realistic time-frame, and take a decision accordingly.

Suriya Wickermasinghe
Secretary
CRM

Notes:

¹ The Commissions bear the date 30 November 1994 but were gazetted on 25 January 1995.

² These are two separate Commissions. But as the persons appointed are identical in both cases, they may be considered as one Commission for the purpose of comparing the time taken. This does not detract from the point CRM makes.

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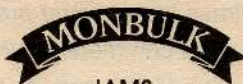
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Race, Nation, Ethnicity, Nationalism

Kamalika Pieris

In Sinhala the word for nation, race and people are practically synonymous and a multi-ethnic or multi-communal nation or state is incomprehensible to the popular mind. ("Managing ethnic tensions" p 163) one reason for this may be, as Heinz Bechert has pointed out, that 'a complete system of political thinking is provided in the early chronicles and the basic ideology was that of unity of nation and religion.' (Wiswa Warnapala "Ethnic strife and politics in Sri Lanka". p 23) In addition to this, in our popular culture Tamils were viewed as invaders and plunderers, due largely to a hazy recollection of the Chola invasions of the 11th century. The fact that there were significant migrations from the North and South of India well before that is generally forgotten. The Tamils were viewed as the 'traditional enemy of the Sinhalese' (Tambiah, "Buddhism betrayed" p 138).

It is not possible to make out a parallel case for Tamil ethnonationalism, using data from pre-colonial Sri Lankan history. There is definite evidence of Hindu influence in our Buddhist temples, and Tamil influence in Sinhala language and literature, but this is insufficient to establish equivalence of the two ethnic groups. There are no records of Tamil victories over Sinhala kings, or of the creation of a substantial independent civilization. It lacks a weighty history, matching that of the Sinhala Buddhist group. The kingdom of Jaffna was under the Kingdom of Kotte for some time and the Vanni resisted absorption to either Kingdom. Tamil ethnonationalism wishes to have both a separate Eelam and also right of access to the rest of the country.

In order to facilitate this the 'revisionist' historians have attempted to present a fresh history where the Tamil contribution is presented as both distinct and also intertwined with Sinhala Buddhist history.

This diffuses the impact.

However in recent times there have been two useful monographs which help to see things from a Tamil perspective. Manogaran and Pfaffenberger's 'The Sri Lankan Tamil: ethnicity and identity' published in 1994 is presented as the 'first sustained attempt to comprehend the ethnic identity of the indigenous Tamil people of Sri Lanka'. (p 1) This book is definitely intended for readers outside Sri Lanka and it is likely that readers inside Sri Lanka will not agree with all of its contents. But this book contains certain chapters which are ethnographically significant and which will help develop some understanding of the Tamil ethnic group.

S. Arasaratham, one of Sri Lanka's most respected historians, provides a valuable historical review of the Tamils from pre-colonial to colonial rule. Inter alia, he discusses caste division, and the various forms of economic activity. He discusses the interface between Tamil Christians and Tamil Hindus and points out that they did not have the gulf that existed between the Sinhala counterparts. A.J. Wilson on the 'Colombo Man, the Jaffna Man and the Batticaloa Man; regional identities and the rise of the Federal party'. He gives an account of the three identities and the reasons that produced the differences specially during 1920-1930. Hellman Rajanayagam examines the various Tamil histories from the early Yalppana Vaipana Malai with special reference to histories written in the 19th century. She concludes that the 'modern' histories were intended for political ends. (p 55) Hellman Rajanayagam also provides a quick overview of the militant Tamil youth groups with special emphasis on the LTTE. There is a great deal of useful detail. Lastly Pfaffenberger examines the 1968 incident of a satyagraha of the

traditionally untouchable castes at the Maviddapuram shrine. This has been included in view of the fact that Jaffna was considered to be the most caste conscious and conservative region in the island. (p 143)

A Theva Rajan's book 'Tamil as an official language' gives us considerable information on the topic. He provides a list of references for the existence of Tamil in the pre-colonial period, the use of Tamil during the colonial period, and the history of the Tamil language as an official language thereafter. He indicates with concrete examples that the main fault has been poor implementation of policy. He has done a ten year study of the functioning of the Ministry of Tamil language implementation from 1978-1988 to show 'the inaction of the Ministry' (p 124) One of the weaknesses he illustrates is the lack of Tamil stenographers and typists.

The demands made by Tamil political parties clearly indicate that for several decades, the single aim of the Tamil nationalists was the creation of a Tamil ethnic state. The Bandaranaike-Chelvanayagam pact of 1957, refers to the right of Regional Councils to amalgamate 'even beyond provincial limits' and for Regional Councils to divide themselves. The Senanayake-Chelvanayagam pact of 1965 stressed that land in the North and East should be alienated on the three tier principle. Land was to be alienated firstly to the landless persons of the area, then to Tamil speaking persons of the North and East. Lastly to citizens of Ceylon, preference to be given to Tamil citizens in the rest of Ceylon. Apart from this, the demand of Tamil political parties has consistently been for the creation of a Tamil autonomous state. This has been an open policy and no charge of secrecy could be made.

All modern independent states are composed of varied ethnic groups. Over time these states were expected to evolve into supra-ethnic polities, were the main political concept was to be the notion of 'equal citizens'. This idea of 'citizenship' was intended to bind together persons of different social levels, ethnic groups and various regional principalities into a single polity. In this respect, modern democracy, which took a considerable time evolving, was considered superior to the older fissiparous parochial divisions of race and region. The concept of universal franchise or 'one man, one vote' meant the rise of 'majoritarian democracy'. This in turn led to the possible engulfing of dissident or numerically under represented groups. Mechanisms were devised long ago to compensate for this, and ensure adequate representation and safeguards. Sri Lankans are familiar with two such mechanisms-proportional representation and special representation through multi member electorates. There is also a third mechanism, known as 'affirmative action' giving special consideration to selected groups. A possibility for Sri Lanka would be ethnic quotas for education and employment the two flashpoints for ethnic unrest.

It is significant that the Tamil separatist group have not suggested, even as a first step, some sort of affirmative action or special representation in Parliament. Instead they advocate a return to the primordial and divisive concept of 'ethnicity' over the more advanced concept of 'citizenship'. The existing political structure of Sri Lanka is the standard political set up available in any country. However this has been described as 'ethnically blind' (which is precisely what it was intended to be) and in place of this they advocate 'ethnically shared sovereignty', 'distribution of political power among the different ethnic groups' and the idea of a 'modern democratic polity with pluralistic ethnic foundations'. I have taken these phrases from Jayadeva Uyangoda's excellent presentation of this issue. ("Devolution and development in Sri Lanka" p 83-118).

There is considerable emphasis at present on the fact that Sri Lanka is

a multi-ethnic and pluralistic state. This is repeated like a mantram. Pluralistic means, in this context, 'a form of society in which members of minority groups maintain independent traditions' (Concise Oxford Dictionary 7 ed) It is difficult to see this as a paramount issue in contemporary Sri Lanka, where there has been a clear interpenetration of cultural styles. Women of all ethnic groups wear similar sarees. We all like vadai, buriyani, watalappan, hoppers and stringhoppers irrespective of ethnic group. The aspirations, orientations and general behaviour of all communities at middle class level is similar. There is some degree of amicable social interaction between all ethnic groups. They are fussy when it comes to marriage, that is all.

All modern states, with the possible exception of a few islands in Oceania, are multi ethnic and have been so for generations. What is significant however, is the manner in which they have looked at the issue of multi ethnicity. America is the world's largest multi ethnic, pluralistic state. But it recognises immigrants solely as **citizens** of the larger sovereign state, America. Aspiring citizens have to undergo a sort of mini-initiation including a quiz on American History, and American Constitution. America has no 'ethnic states' nor 'ethnically shared sovereignty' as is mooted for Sri Lanka.

There is some degree of skill and care in the manner in which Tamil ethnonationalism has been presented to the rest of the world. Let us take, first of all, the claim that they are a nation. This makes little sense from the Sri Lankan point of view. There was no evidence that during colonial times, the Tamils were accorded treatment as a distinct nation. They were, like everybody else, colonial subjects. Historical claims to a Tamil homeland have been rejected. Further, readers have started writing to the newspapers asking how a single ethnic group, could have two homelands, one in Tamilnadu and the other in Sri Lanka.

However, the Tamil claim to be a 'nation' is effective in terms of western perspectives, which contain plenty of free

interpretations of what a 'nation' is. Tamil ethnonationalism could be presented as a sort of 'Risorgimento nationalism' which is ideally 'liberation from political and social oppressions' (Alter, 'Nationalism' p 29) Karl Deutsch sees a nation as a 'people in possession of a state'. Alter suggests that a nation is a 'politically mobilised people' and Walker Connor views a nation as a self defined rather than an other defined unit. Alter also refers to the 'yearning for a nation state' (Alter, p 10,11,92).

Tamil ethnonationalists have tried to use the various human rights declarations to support their cause. However an examination of the relevant covenants and clauses indicate that they have little or no relevance to ethnic politics in Sri Lanka. The Tamil separatists cause can find no refuge in human rights claims.

The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, which precedes all other human rights covenants, was first enunciated in 1948, and was influenced by certain specific and, now relatively obsolete, events such as the Second World War, and South Africa's apartheid. This Declaration is a significant event in the development of human rights consciousness in the world, but it has certain drawbacks. The declaration carries a high moral tone, but the clauses lack qualifiers, descriptions or definitions. They emphasise individual rights at the expense of community harmony.

The Tamil separatists have tried to justify their claim to a separate state in terms of Article 1 of the two covenants dealing with civil, political, economic and social rights. This article states that all peoples have the right of self determination, and to determine their political status. But the UN has made it clear that this is confined to peoples who are still under colonial domination. It cannot therefore apply to any ethnic group in Sri Lanka.

'Minority Rights' are influenced by the 1992 UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities'. This declaration is primarily for 'indigenous peoples'. Article 1 of this Declaration

makes it clear that it is not intended to ethnic groups integrated into modern communities, for it refers to the protection and preservation of minorities 'within their distinct territories'. In Sri Lanka this can apply only to the Veddahs.

The rights enunciated in the Declaration are at present too diffused and too ill-defined to merit serious examination. The Sub Commission appointed under this Declaration, has admitted that there are problems of bias and selectivity in implementation. The Subcommission is anyway engaged in creating problems of its own. It is now examining the tightening of immigration laws of developed countries as a violation of minority rights. (see 46th report of this Subcommission in International Court of Justice Review No 53, 1994).

Lastly there is the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, known as CERD. This Convention is primarily concerned with three things — apartheid, slavery, and genocide, none of which have any relevance to the ethnic tensions in Sri Lanka.

The Tamil separatists are not forthcoming when asked to indicate what their grievances are. Phrases like 'the unfulfilled aspirations of the Tamil people' and the 'intractable problems of the Tamil ethnic group' are repeated over and over again. Unless these statements are supported with some facts and figures, the story of Tamil grievances will soon begin to resemble the story of the Emperor's New Clothes.

The UN Declarations could be used to clarify matters. Article 5 of CERD provides a near complete checklist of civil, political and economic rights regarding which there should be no racial discrimination. These rights include: equality before the law, right to protection by the state, political rights, particularly the right to vote. Then there are civil rights, such as the right to inherit, the freedom of association, freedom of opinion etc. Economic rights include, in particular, right to education, access to health services, access to public places and equal treatment at work. The 1960

UN Declaration on Education affirms the right of all persons to access to education of all types at all levels. The 1981 UN Declaration on Religion asserts that every one is entitled to have and to practise a religion. Various elements of practice are listed, such as religious holidays, religious teaching and the right to assemble in worship. To conclude, Harry J Steiner, finds much support in the various UN Declarations and covenants, and the laws governing the polyethnic states of America, to confirm that it is illegal for any state to prohibit or obstruct the free movement of its citizens in any part of its territory. (Thatched patio Vol 6(6) 1993).

One aspect of the modus operandi of Tamil separatism is to weaken the position of the majority community. This is not a new operation. It seems to have started long ago. The Tamils have objected to the Buddhist Temporalities Ordinance of 1931 and to the Anuradhapura Ordinance of 1942 as 'discrimination in favour of Buddhism'. There was even a reference to Ulster in the debates of the 1930's (K.M. de Silva p 428, 446. Wiswa Warnapala p 44). The principle of 'fifty-fifty' which came later meant, it appears fifty per cent for the minorities and fifty percent for the whole community including the minorities.

Sinhala Buddhist ethnonationalism is very probably somewhat exclusive in its perspective, but the modus operandi directed towards presenting it as non-democratic and antagonistic to the minorities, calls for comment. The consistent use of the word 'chauvinistic' for the supporters of Sinhala Buddhist values, could be considered a method of denigrating this particular ethnonationalism. 'Chauvinist' means any 'bellicose patriot' or 'fervent supporter of a cause'. It could therefore apply equally for those espousing Tamil separatism.

There is also a concerted emphasis on the relationship between Sinhala-Buddhist activity and violence. There are two groups of studies relating to this. Buddhism-and-violence, and also Sinhalese-and-violence. Four studies relating to the former have come under critical scrutiny. They are: S.J. Tambiah's

"Buddhism Betrayed", David Little's "Sri Lanka the invention of enmity", Donald Swearer's "Fundamentalist movements in Theravada Buddhism" and James Manor's "Organisation weaknesses and the rise of Sinhala Buddhist extremism". The titles themselves are rather provocative. K.M. de Silva and G.H. Peiris, have separately, commented on these four publications. (ICES Ethnic Studies Reports, July 1994) de Silva is of the view that these four publications are 'either constructed on the assumption that religious sentiments drive the current conflict in Sri Lanka or they attempt to identify Buddhism as the key to understanding the current Sri Lankan crisis and its ramifications'. (p 226).

(To be Continued)

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Are All Wars Terrorist

Peretz Kidron

The most common aim of terrorism, says the writer, is to achieve political objectives by subjecting a hostile leadership to internal pressure generated by violence against its civilian non-combatants. Since this tactic is used by all sides in all armed conflicts and wars, they can be labelled 'terrorist'.

Hizbullah fighters are not terrorists. The Lebanese Islamist militia won that unequivocal public testimonial from no less a personage than Raphael Eytan — no mean terrorist himself.

The leader of the hard-line Tzomet party in Israel (who recently joined a tripartite coalition of right-wing parties to support Benjamin Netanyahu's campaign for prime minister) is a former Israeli Defence Forces chief-of-staff recalled mainly for his share in engineering the 1982 invasion of Lebanon. His failure to halt the subsequent Falangist massacre at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps brought Eytan close to being the only IDF chief ever dismissed from office. Given his record and his unrelenting views, neither exhibiting much regard for human life, nor, indeed, much humanity of any kind, it is somewhat startling to hear Eytan grant Hizbullah a clean bill of health when every cub journalist routinely refers to its fighters as 'terrorists'.

But closer scrutiny finds that Eytan's sole criterion for 'terrorism' is on the technical plane of soldierly proficiency. In his book, a 'terrorist' is an untrained irregular, whereas the redoubtable skills and prowess of Hizbullah's formations convince him that its fighters should be elevated from the military inferiority of mere 'terrorists' (and to draw strategic conclusions unrelated to the topic of this article).

Eytan is of course free to use words as he finds fit, but his idiosyncratic appropriation of the term 'terrorist' flies in the face of accepted usage. Historians of World War II are unanimous in defining Germany's systematic bombing of civilian targets — an integral part of its *blitzkrieg* — as calculated terrorism, even if no one considers the *Luftwaffe* pilots who flattened residential neighbourhoods and strafed refugees as less than superb technicians.

With all due respect to Eytan's categories, mere mastery of the soldier's craft is inadequate as a distinction between terrorist and non-terrorist. Indeed, as that World War II example illustrates, terrorism must be defined as: systematic application of force against non-combatants, usually to a broader political end. (That definition incidentally endorses Eytan's 'non-terrorist' view of Hizbullah, for that organisation — certainly when compared with other military formations active in the theatre, not least the IDF — directs relatively little of its violence against civilians.)

The terrorist's immediate tactical objectives may vary. German air raids were designed to stampede the population on to the highways, thus hampering the actions of Germany's enemies while leaving the way free for the Panzers' advance. More recently, a similar end was pursued in the Bosnian civil war, where the massive application of terrorism, from methodical massacre to equally systematic mass rape, sought to engineer a forced exodus of 'alien' elements in the interests of 'ethnic cleansing'.

Terrorism is a logical offshoot of the 'total warfare' of our times. The polite myth that wars are waged by formations (armies) specially designated for that role (combat) — while the rest of society (non-combatants) sits on the sidelines to applaud its champions — survives only in the sports stadium (and even there it is often a mere pretext for a general free-for-all). In totalwar, one may seek to defeat the adversary (ie. force his political leadership to capitulate) by destroying his army. But that army being equipped and trained to defend itself (or, at worst, endure a pounding without falling apart), as wifery path to victory is systematic intimidation of the 'enemy' population, in the hope that the tormented civilians will force the political leadership into capitulation, or any other accommodation that will put an end to their sufferings.

In a nutshell, the most common aim of terrorism is to achieve (political) objectives by subjecting a hostile leadership to internal pressure generated by violence against its civilian non-combatants. Set in such terms, it is almost impossible to recall an armed conflict in which the sides refrained from terrorism. As further illustrations from World War II, Anglo-American 'strategic bombing' of German cities (culminating in the Dresden inferno) sought to turn the German population against its Nazi rulers, while the nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were a cost-efficient way of outflanking Japan's defiant generals and convincing the political leadership to capitulate.

Such terrorism is no 20th century innovation. Ever since antiquity, siege tactics have included the systematic subjection of the beleaguered population to hunger and thirst, in the hope that it would induce the defiant garrison to surrender. Equally venerable is 'regime terrorism' applied by the ruler. All empires — the British learned from the Romans, the Romans from their predecessors — terrorised their captive populations to keep them submissive and isolate potential rebels.

Other types of terrorist strategy are less obviously violent, but sometimes equally lethal. US economic sanctions directed, respectively, at Cuba and Iraq, seek to subject their populations to a degree liable to induce the citizens to turn upon their leaders. American politicians never tire of denying any quarrel with the Cuban or Iraqi peoples, but that is who they starve of medicines and other necessities — the attendant results include increased infant mortality — in the pursuit of US 'strategic' objectives.

Thus do civilian non-combatants — on both sides — become hostages or playthings to be manipulated by rival power elites. Jewish tradition has its own wry portrayal of mutual terrorism in the joke about the drunken Cossack squaring up against a rival with the threat: 'If you beat my Jew, I'll beat yours!'

Terrorism in the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Terrorism has been a salient feature of the Arab-Israeli conflict from the outset. Commencing with bloody clashes between Jews and Arabs in pre-1948 Palestine, and continuing since Israeli independence with every form of cross-border incursion — from knife-bearing marauder to supersonic jet loaded with bombs — both sides have pursued their strategic objectives by terrorist means. In that pursuit, unarmed civilians — men, women and children, Jew and Arab — have been the targets of random violence. The victims are not selected for any private sin or crime; they are picked out as civilian members of a community which the perpetrators seek to 'activate' for their own political ends.

That remains true of terrorism 1996-style, whether employing suicide bomber or collective punishment of the population from which the bomber emerged. The latest fashion in random violence does not differ in principle from earlier manifestations. As ever, suffering is inflicted on the 'hostile' community; the victims bear no individual guilt, serving merely as a means of turning the civilian population against its leadership.

The Hamas bomber does not poll Israeli bus passengers on their views regarding Palestinian rights before detonating himself. It makes no difference to him whether his victims are children or elderly. His aim — or, more precisely, the aim of his despatchers — is to provoke Israeli citizens against their government in the hope of derailing the Oslo peace process.

The writer wrote the above article for *Middle East International*, with whose permission it is reprinted.

Similarly, a Palestinian labourer halted at the Israeli checkpoint at Erez is not grilled on his political views. Regardless of whether he supports Islamic Jihad or the people's party, is a 'terrorist sympathiser' or abhors violence, he is turned back and denied access to his job in Israel. 'The purpose of the exercise', as envisaged by the incisive minds behind the closure, is to subject that labourer — and his family — to suffering that can be commuted into internal pressure on the Palestinian leadership to smash the Islamists and other dissidents. If children suffer from

acute malnutrition, or die from denial of medical care, that is a necessary corollary of using the civilian population as helpless 'messengers'.

Terrorism in its various forms having been standard practice for decades, there seems to be little point in appealing to the better nature of either party, particularly given that each side piously denies that its own actions are 'terrorist'. Also, however tempting the resort to the swift brutality of 'counter-insurgency' tactics, they offer no solution, merely

training a new generation of avengers. There is no armed conflict that does not entail terrorism, it is accordingly vain to seek a remedy in the instruments of conflict.

Ultimately, one is left with the stale truth that there are no short cuts to ending terrorism. In every form — including the terrorism practised by enemies of peace — terrorism has no remedy other than a resolution of the basic conflict. — *Third World Network Features/Middle East International*.

Education for peace and unity

Ananda Welihena

Education for Peace is a felt-need in our country. It is a requisite for the successful realization of the first peace (devolution) proposal that the Peoples Alliance (PA) government presented in August 1995.

Gill Fell, (see, 1988, 'Peace'. In David Hicks, ed., *Education for Peace*, London: Routledge) a British peace educator has underlined the significance of skills that can be employed during peace negotiations and dialogue. She identifies **Active Listening** as a single most important skill that can be cultivated and applied to promote peace. As she writes:

"Much of education concerns itself with teaching the arts of written and spoken communication, but in peace education the emphasis is on listening, and communication is an active two-way process". (Fell, G., 1988, 78)¹

There are passive and active types of listenings. The passive listening allows the listener to play the role of a spectator. Often referred to by educationist as the Jug and the mug exercise or what Paulo Freire calls the banking concept of education where the person observes and listens to the speaker and takes into the mind as if some liquid is poured into a receptacle. This type of listening does not possess the capacity for constructive, critical or creative thinking.

Active listening leads to creativity and originality. It is a skill that can be practised and applied. One can cultivate this skill constantly in day to day life to gain success. A person who has acquired the power of mindfulness and awareness can secure this skill without much difficulty. It is important to note Gill Fell's two characteristic features of active listening.

She indicates the capacity to remain listening carefully and mindfully to a person or disputant without interrupting for some time. As she writes:

"...to pay full attention to what the other person is saying, without asking questions, passing comments or giving advice" (ibid., 79).

Interruptions or interventions do not occur haphazardly, but only when the speaker has finished and if and only if it is really necessary. This type of listening is difficult, and it is an art that deserves constant practise. Its principal task is to construct a mental space into which the disputants can send in ideas and thoughts. The listener welcomes them eagerly into this space without hesitation.

The second aspect of active listening is more significant. It is the capacity to reflect on what has been received and understood. It is as Gill Fell says:

"The essence of what the speaker has said, both the gist of the content and the feeling that lies beneath it" (ibid.).

What is important is to acquire the ability to comprehend the emotive dimension concealed beneath the verbal symbols of the speaker or the disputant. It leads to the empathic understanding of the person's inner feelings. It is different from extending sympathy to the other.

These two cardinal principles of active listening must be practised in order to interiorise them, especially by applying them to day-to-day-activities. It helps to overcome or resolve conflicts that arise at diverse levels. This practice enables the person to resolve conflicts that occur between two disputing parties. But to gain this competence one must practise. It can be done at three fundamental levels. The result is that one can learn to resolve conflicts and promote peace and unity among people. The three levels that one can practise the two principles of active listening are:

- 1) At the level of the person,
- 2) Society, and
- 3) environment or the ecology.

1) At Personal Level

Conflict is the reality, and it exists in each and everyone. It is clearly evident at the level of a) thoughts, b) sensations and c) breath.

a) Thoughts

Thoughts can be of two varieties. They can be either pleasant or painful. The capacity to name and identify them is not easy. Much training and practice is required for which patience, diligence and persistence are indispensable. How should one try and approach a painful thought? The following measures would be fruitful:

First, one must gain the skill and capacity to receive a pleasant or painful thought. It is important to be positive or to have an **open mind**. It is to create a mental space in order to allow the thoughts to gain free entry. There should be hardly any pleasant or painful **reactions towards these thoughts**. One must observe these in-coming thoughts with awareness and mindfulness.

Secondly, the art and skills must be acquired to comprehend not only the nature but also the functions of these thoughts. It is important to identify their antecedents or causes of the arising. The understanding of the nature of thoughts would reveal their inconstancy or impermanency (similar to that of a water bubble): they arise in order to pass away.

b) Sensations

The approach to sensations is similar to thoughts: sensations are predominantly bodily feeling of pain or hatred and pleasantness or craving. Mental space has to be provided for them so that they may gain entry. Resistance or reactions towards them should not be allowed. When sensations are distasteful or painful, one is inclined to hate them. When they are pleasant one begins to cling to them tenaciously. If one wants to encounter these sensations and their impacts with aware-

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ness and mindfulness. The result is that one learns to be cordial and friendly with unpleasant feelings and careful or mindful with the pleasant feelings. The person can conclude that both types of sensations are really impermanent or passing phenomena.

c) Breath

One can learn to observe one's mechanical or habitual breathing habit pattern with awareness and mindfulness. The two above perspectives must be kept in mind: he/she must be able to create a mental space for the breath to take place at its own sweet will and then to reflect on their nature and functions with awareness: how it enters and touches the nostrils and causing sensations of diverse types. All this must be mentally noted. The person then will feel peaceful, calm and still. With mental space provided for the entry breath and the departure breath, it is possible to be aware of the nature and function of the breathing: whether it is soft or hard, slow or fast, constant or ceasing. A restless mind enables fast breathing and a calm mind produces soft, slow breathing. Awareness of the nature and function of breath becomes useful to slow down the speedy breathing process. It can help overcome hasty decision-making leading to conflicts, despair and disappointment in life because when breathing is slow the intensity of emotions are less.

2) Social Level

It is possible to overcome conflicts that arise at the level of social relations by applying the above two principles of active listening. The word 'social' refers to the relationship between two or many human beings or groups. When hostile relations caused by anger, hatred or jealousy between two or more persons exist, he or she must be aware of the nature and functions of this negative relation. The options available now are either to become involved in this negativity and make it exacerbate or try and resolve it without becoming victimised by it. If the intention is to resolve the conflict then the first task is to provide a mental space for those emotions that are produced by the conflict to enter freely and secondly reflect on what would really happen thereafter. It is to welcome with an open mind without being afraid or nervous anything that is conflictual or hateful. A person who has inflicted pain on another, out of anger, ill will or hatred encounters conflictual relations which could be resolved by the art of observing the existing pain and hatred with mindfulness and awareness. There is hardly any necessity for any negative reactions to emerge. All that is required is to create a mental space for the arising conflict and welcome the accompanying emotions. It is to be in it but not of it. The next strategy is to gradually reflect back on its nature and

impact: how did the emotion arise? How long it lasted? Was it difficult or easy? These measures would generate an in-depth understanding of the conflict and the person who inflicted. The result of this exercise is that the imagined enemy will be converted to a generous friend or a companion. One will not react mechanically; it means without mindfulness or a second thought to the enemy's thought, word and deed. All this shows that one can listen actively to that which happens at the level of the person's inner self when he or she is impacted by externally induced factors.

3) The ecological level

Every person has to live within an ecological environment constructed by man. He or she encounters problems and difficulties while living in it. Peace and reconciliation are determined by the capacity to deal with them in a harmonious manner. Noise and pollution disturb the healthy, peaceful life of man. The first human reaction against noise is to resist or hate it. The reaction to a pleasant wind or the sound consists in clinging or craving for it. One can come to grips with these realities by establishing a right relationship. These two principles of active listening can be useful for this exercise if they are correctly applied. The habitual pattern of the mind will detest noise. How would it be possible to encounter this menace and overcome its negative impact? How is peace possible in this situation? How can a person remain balanced when he/she experiences the impact of noise. It is the ability to accept and live with it without reacting hastily. It would be much easier to listen to a bird's singing and watch the leaves being tossed by the wind rather than to accept and be with something unpleasant or distasteful. What is to be done is to provide a mental space for this experience and accept it without reaction and resistance. The next step is to reflect deeply on its nature and functions by looking inwards: it is to take a mental note of the impact and to think of the possibility of being free from it. It can be done by being accommodative and friendly.

Peace can be gained by active listening at all these three levels. It provides a person with the capacity to relax and rest with the forces that are inimical to him. To live in peace is to relax with oneself, the fellow beings and ecological context around by practising the two principles of active listening.

Guru-Sishya Relationship

The principles of active listening are practised when the *Guru* and the *sishya* meet each other. The integral development of the *sishya* is caused by the interaction of these two principles of active listening. Oriental education and culture are imparted

through this process of learning. This is how the student acquires a calm mind. The education for peace originates from the relationship established by the oriental *guru-sishya* tradition of learning. Active listening propels the *sishya* to be obedient to his/her *Guru*. The *sishya* practices the principles of active listening by being with his/her *guru* which is **Responsive Listening**. The *guru* reveals his/her love and invites the *sishya* to share in it. The *sishya* responds to the *guru's* love by offering his/her lovingness. The *guru* offers the *sishya* the truth and the *sishya* offers the *guru* in return the understanding of that truth imparted to him/her. Active listening is converted into responsive listening. There exists a profound sharing between the two persons. Alienation disappears and it is replaced by a feeling of fulfilment.

When these two principles have been cultivated at all levels in life it can assist in the resolution of conflicts between two disputing parties. This task can be executed if one is conversant with the three preceding levels of conflict resolution which have been discussed above.

There is another benefit that arises from the practice of these two principles of active listening. In other words, the significant contribution that this practice could offer is the avoidance of two distinct strategies of conflict resolutions. They are:

- 1) the judicial process
- 2) the mediatory process

By avoiding these two strategies one can adopt another strategy of conflict resolution: **direct negotiation** which can be more successful than the previous two strategies to resolve conflicts, because there are two groups talking, negotiating and interacting with the hope of arriving at a concensus.

1) Judicial process

The judicial process involves a distinguished personality who has the knowledge and expertise. He is familiar with the rules and regulations pertaining to the conflict. But he is not involved in the conflict. He is the judge who formulates the verdict after the completion of the judicial process. In this strategy the judge plays the role of 'one man show' for his is the final word. This process is not useful for the resolution of social and political issues for more often they demand creative and participatory actions of the disputants.

(To be Continued)

Note:

¹ Fell Gill, (1988) 'Peace' in Hicks David, *Education for Peace*, London: Routledge.

BOSNIA: Will Dayton Agreement work?

Dilip S. Samarasinghe

The three year long conflict which had been raging in Bosnia was possibly the bloodiest conflict to take place in Europe since the Second World War. In November 1995, the governments of Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia signed an agreement at Dayton, Ohio in which they agreed to cease hostilities and play a role in rebuilding Bosnia. But the most important aspect of the Dayton Agreement was that US government put the full weight of its diplomatic and military might to restore peace in Bosnia. For three years, the World had witnessed some of the worst atrocities committed in any post-war conflict but no action had been taken to stop the bloodshed.

Because of this belated response, there has been a lot of criticism of Dayton being too late, and cynics even attributed its timing to President Clinton's bid for re-election at the coming US Presidential elections.

While most Bosnians are happy to see an end to the fighting they consider the action as long overdue. The Bosnian Minister of Education summed up this view when he deplored that fact that "when someone kills a man, he is put to prison. When he kills 20,000 he is invited to Geneva for Peace Negotiations." It can therefore be said that the distrust generated by three years of war still remains and that American military power, in the form of the 60,000 strong Implementation Force (I-FOR) may not provide a long-term solution.

The Serb gambit

To understand the rationale behind Dayton, one has to look at the unfolding of events in Bosnia prior to the Agree-

ment. Buoyed by a string of victories, the Bosnian Serbs chose to test the UN's resolve by detaining 200 UN troops as hostages. They had earlier on seized 3 artillery pieces and one heavy mortar which had been impounded by the blue helmets. They hoped by this action to nullify an earlier agreement which had forced them to give up heavy weapons used to shell Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital.

In response, the UN Special Representative for Bosnia, Yasushi Akashi allowed NATO to carry out air raids against the Bosnian Serbs. An air strike against ammunition dumps near the Bosnian Serb stronghold of Pale was carried out by 15 NATO jets to convince the Karadzic government of the UN's resolve.

OPINION

Get Moving in Bosnia

Three and a half years of merciless war have left Bosnia's society shattered. Two-thirds of the country's housing lies damaged or destroyed. Half the prewar hospital beds are gone, along with half the doctors and nurses. Roads and bridges are impassable and some 4 million hidden mines await potential victims. Gas, electricity and telephone lines are ruptured, and three out of four adults have lost their livelihoods. So far too little has been done to address these crushing problems. The large reconstruction effort promised as part of the Dayton peace agreement has fallen badly behind schedule.

The delay has potentially severe consequences for sustaining peace. Improvements in the lives of ordinary Bosnians are the most effective way to reinforce the Dayton settlement. If the rebuilding of Bosnia's civil society does not begin in earnest immediately, the peace could start to crumble by the time NATO forces depart at the end of this year, creating pressure for the troops to extend their stay. The nearly \$ 2 billion so far pledged in aid must be put to quick and effective use.

To that end, President Bill Clinton and European leaders should shift their focus from military to civilian aspects of the peace settlement and bring a new sense of urgency to bear on such questions as putting people back to work, assuring free and fair conditions for this summer's elections and making it possible for people to cross ethnic boundaries without fear. They must see to it that the international coordinators of civil reconstruction, chiefly Carl Bildt of Sweden and Robert Frowick of the United States, have the determination and resources they need to get the job done.

The best insurance against renewed warfare in Bosnia would be finding jobs for some 300,000 former soldiers now demobilized.

Tens of thousands of women who lost husbands in the war also must find ways to provide for their families. International reconstruction aid should be channeled as quickly as possible into job-creating projects rebuilding housing, roads and bridges.

Meanwhile, Bosnia is preparing for elections. For these to be conducted fairly, giving moderates a chance to displace the extremists responsible for the war, independent candidates will need access to print and broadcast media now dominated by ethnic parties and governments. Mr. Frowick, who has chief responsibility for supervising the elections, has been trying to expand election coverage and set up new broadcast outlets, but his efforts have not yet produced acceptable results.

The Dayton agreement also assures refugees, a large proportion of Bosnia's population, the right to vote. But some European countries warn that those who exercise this right could forfeit their refugee status. Mr. Frowick and Mr. Bildt must make sure that this threat is withdrawn.

For civilians to move freely throughout the country, they must get past roadblocks manned by armed ethnic militias and survive attack from hostile mobs. Mr. Bildt's civilian monitors should insist that local police secure safe passage for civilians. NATO forces, which have begun accompanying refugee convoys, should prod local military units to respect Dayton's guarantees of free movement.

There is still time to save the civil side of the peace effort if Mr. Bildt and his team move more swiftly in the next eight months than they have in the last four. The unacceptable price of further delay is likely to be new warfare or the long-term commitment of American and European forces.

— The New York Times

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The conflict escalated when the Serbs began shelling the so-called UN "Safe Zones" which resulted in the loss of 76 lives. NATO retaliated by launching a second air strike against Pale.

It was at this stage that the Bosnian Serbs took the radical decision to hold 200 UN peacekeepers as hostages. Television screens around the world showed UN troops chained to various installations to deter NATO air raids. UNPROFOR's weakness was shown by this Serb action.

The international community, which feared further losing face was at this stage seriously considering pulling out of Bosnia. Britain and France, which contributed troops to UNPROFOR stated that they were to pull out of Bosnia. President Clinton even suggested sending 25,000 US troops to cover a withdrawal of the UN forces in Bosnia. But to pull out would indicate that the pressure tactics of the Serbs had succeeded, so the NATO allies examined different options.

The alternate approach was the creation of a Rapid Reaction Force. This was a force of NATO troops who would protect UNPROFOR troops from any attacks. They would go about in vehicles which are not painted in white, like those of the UN, and have offensive equipment. In June 1995 60 French Foreign legionnaires were landed by helicopter near Mount Igman, overlooking Sarajevo. British and Dutch forces joined the Rapid Reaction Force. They had in their arsenal armoured vehicles and artillery, which boosted the UN a firepower but since their mandate was only to respond in case of a provocation, it was little different to that of UNPROFOR and had the same problem of being only able to respond to the cat-and-mouse game played so effectively by the Serbs.

Belgrade's policy change

An important factor which paved the way for the Dayton Peace was the shift in policy of Serbia. At this stage, the Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic offered to use his good offices to bring the Bosnian Serbs to the negotiating table. He promised US officials that within six months he could help bring peace to Bosnia. While the US had long considered Milosevic in a bad light and blamed him for the bloodshed the Serbian leader's behind-the-scenes assi-

stance in the rescue of a USAF pilot shot down in Bosnia helped improve relations with Washington. Furthermore, Milosevic was also annoyed that the reckless policies of Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader and his military commander Gen Ratko Maladic, could draw Serbia into at unwanted confrontation with NATO. Milosevic also believed that the taking of hostages by his Bosnian brethren was casting all Serbs in a negative light. Milosevic wanted Serbia to be integrated in post-Cold War Europe. However, even though Serbia had broken with the pale regime and closed their border for trade, military links between the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) and their Bosnian Serb counterpart remained strong. Many Bosnian Serb officers were seconded from the JNA.

Milosevic therefore had strong leverage on the Bosnian Serbs and could easily deliver their compliance to any peace agreement.

But Milosevic's actions were not totally altruistic but more determined by self preservation. Serbia had suffered severely under UN sanctions but was enjoying at the time a 75 day suspension of the sanctions. Milosevic was keen to see the suspension extended to relieve the debilitating economic conditions in the country. Prior to the signing of the Dayton Agreement, it was estimated that 1 million Serbs were unemployed out of a work force of 2.3 million. The country's GNP per capita had dropped from \$ 2,330 in 1991 to \$ 1,225 in 1993. It was also estimated that 2 million Serbs out of a population of 10 million live below the poverty line. This was the heavy economic price Serbia paid to support its Bosnian Serb brethren.

Milosevic was therefore keen to see Serbia re-integrated into Europe as well as becoming economically stronger. He thus decided to support peace in Bosnia, which offered him a passport to respectability and recognition by the international Community.

The Dayton Agreement

The willingness of Serbia to participate in US-sponsored peace talks on Bosnia was also shared by Croatia's President Franjo Tudjman and Bosnia's President Alijah Izetbegovic. Talks were held at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio.

From the very beginning the US authorities were keen that no external influence should jeopardize the talks, so the parties were isolated and the media was specifically kept out. In order to prevent any controversy, all three Presidents were provided with identical housing on the base. The US wanted to show that they were all to be treated equally.

The parties namely Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia could either communicate directly with each other or could do so through the US Assistant Secretary of Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke. If not they could communicate by using the good offices of Warren Christopher, the US Secretary of State.

The most significant factor was that the most important actors in the Bosnian Tragedy, the Pale Serbs, were kept out. The excuse given was that their leaders Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic were indicted as war criminals by the Hague Tribunal and therefore they would be represented by Serbia. This convenient arrangement encouraged Bosnia to participate without being slighted by the presence of the Karadzic regime.

The discussion aimed to create a new Bosnia. It was decided that the country would be constituted by two entities, the Muslim-Croat Federation and the Republika Srpska (Bosnian Serbs). Each entity would be permitted extensive rights to form links with Serbia or with Croatia.

Critics of Dayton see this as a recipe for partition since the Bosnian Serbs would be automatically drawn to Belgrade and the Bosnian Croats to Zagreb. But others say that under the present circumstances, Bosnia could not realistically expect to have a strong central government. At best it would have to be a loose federation with a weak central government.

The question of demarcation of the borders of the two entities could also be a contentious issue. The Muslim-Croat Federation would be awarded 51% of Bosnia's territory, while the Serbian entity will get 49%. It has been argued that this legitimizes ethnic cleansing since many territories held by the Serbs were acquired by force.

Dayton also provides for a united Sarajevo, while the Bosnian Serbs wanted a divided city like Berlin once was. They fear that Serbs would be

persecuted when the Muslim led government reasserts its control over the city.

As soon as Dayton was signed, a 60 day ceasefire came into effect which was followed by the signature of a Peace Treaty in Paris.

Implementing the Dayton Agreement

The US was keen that the implementation of the Dayton Agreement was not hindered in any way by the "dual key" system, the complicated mechanism where UN and NATO officials had to consult each other before using force against a troublesome party, usually the Serbs. In most cases the response was too late. After Dayton, NATO was freed of the UN veto and could use force without having to consult anyone.

The implementation of the Dayton Agreement was also facilitated by the fact that the balance of power had radically shifted against the Serbian side. The Bosnian Government had been able to inflict some defeats and regain some territory from the overstretched Serbs. More significantly, Croatia was able to defeat and dismantle the Krajina Serb entity which held one third of the country's territory. The fluid military situation therefore encouraged all sides to examine a negotiated solution to the problem.

Since Bosnian Serb held land now amounted to 49% of Bosnia instead of 70% some months earlier, Karadzic was willing instead to consider peace talks.

But in spite of all these points, Dayton is a last chance agreement imposed by force on exhausted but still unwilling parties. It relies heavily on US diplomatic and military pressure for success. It is therefore questionable whether the peace will hold once I-FOR withdraws.

This use of coercion was apparent when the US forced President Tudjman not to raise the question of East Slavonia, since this could create tension with Serbia. So Croatia had to put aside its wish to see that break-away territory returned in order that the Dayton process continued without problems.

Similarly, Izetbegovic was warned not to contact the media because Bosnia could make political capital as a victim of aggression. For Dayton to succeed no party could claim moral superiority over the other, at least while the talks

went on.

Milosevic too was lectured by US officials for not having done anything about the atrocities committed in Bosnia. This was blated, but still mattered.

It was therefore clear that Dayton was not just an American-brokered peace agreement, it was an American-imposed peace backed by the diplomatic influence and military might of the USA.

I-FOR and the creation of a new Bosnia

The lengthy treaty gave details of the institutions which would exist in the new Bosnian State. There would be a Presidency, a Parliament and Judiciary. Thanks to the Croats and Serbs, these institutions would be extremely weak. Both Croats and Serbs want to have privileged links with Serbia and Croatia, which leaves the Muslims in a weak position, all by themselves.

But to make this possible, the 60,000 strong NATO-led Implementation Force (I-FOR) was sent. The largest component is the heavily-armed 20,000 strong US contingent. The role of I-FOR is to keep opposing armies apart. These would anyway be in zones of separation two kilometres apart from each other. Heavy artillery and tanks would be placed in "Heavy weapons exclusion zones".

On November 15 1995 the first of these NATO troops were deployed in Bosnia. They have begun demarcating the land in the two constituent entities, the Muslim Croat Federation with 51% of the land and Republika Srpska with 49%. Each entity will have its own President and legislature.

At the same time I-FOR has to create confidence in the new Bosnia and in this respect has not always been successful. Many Serbs have left Sarajevo after setting fire to their homes, fearing a Muslim backlash in the reunited capital.

Similarly the Muslim side also resent the fact that Karadzic and Mladic, considered war criminals, should go unpunished. Dayton does not endorse the Hague Tribunals indictment of the Bosnian Serb leaders.

The danger of a resumption of fighting in Bosnia cannot be ruled out nor the

danger of a Croatian attempt to recapture East Slavonia. There is also the risk that the Bosnian Serbs may seek to occupy the Posovina Corridor which would link the Serb-held territories. While I-FOR's 60,000 strength may seem huge, the problems and disputes remain considerable, even for a force of that size.

The main concern faced by I-FOR would be to help 3 million displaced persons who in many cases have no place to go. Often their homes have been awarded by Dayton to the other side which confirms that the treaty is an arrangement between governments and has little concern for individuals problems.

Conclusions

The fact that the US, UK, Britain, France, Spain, Italy and Russia have all committed troops to implement the Dayton Agreement shows that at last the Western World is making an attempt to end a conflict which had a demoralizing effect on a continent where relative peace had been enjoyed for half a century.

I-FOR undoubtedly will have to spend a long time in Bosnia but even when it finally leaves, the country is unlikely to be transformed into a happy Balkan version of Switzerland. It remains to see whether once force is removed, the warring factions would stick to the Dayton Agreement or whether they would decide to resume the fighting which for 3 years was screened on the world's television sets and resulted in the worst destruction suffered by Europe since the Second World War.

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