

EXCLUSIVE

SAMIR AMIN on Problems of Nation Building



LANKA

GUARDIAN

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PEACE CONSTITUENCY

IS the growing Anti-war constituency a reflection of a genuine change in the mass mood? Earlier the call for a cease-fire, for negotiations with all groups including the young militants, was confined more or less to small groups of broadly progressive Sri Lankans inter-acting in various ways. The converted speaking to the converted?

That was not its only weakness. It had no voice at the national political level. But the statement made by 20 major trade unions, representing the SLFP, C.P., NSSP, JVP, CMU, and other organisations was perhaps the breakthrough. Another contribution came from the seven Teachers Unions which protested about the use of school buildings by the forces. (The Unions received a stern warning from the Government)

And now, three major parties, (see NEWS) have succeeded in both broadening the "peace constituency" as well as giving the idea national expression.

PRICE OF SECURITY

THE insurgency in the north and the lower-level violence in the eastern province apart, the rapid increase in crime and all forms of violence is a phenomenon that few observers of the Sri Lankan scene have neglected to identify and emphasize.

The Peoples' Bank has closed down several branches in the north but that is not the problem which most preoccupies its chairman, Dr. S. T. G. Fernando. In a press interview, Dr. Fernando rightly underlined the rising cost of security in the day-to-day operations of the Bank. Each branch of the Bank, he said, has

at least four security guards regardless of the profitability of the branch.

The emergence of private "Security Agencies", some of them allowed small arms, is a post-1977 phenomenon. The rising cost of security is the clearest sign of the prevailing insecurity, of rich man and poor man.

NO RETURN

While the Government holds hard to its position that it will not re-open talks with the TULF, unless it first renounces separatism publicly, Mr. Amirthalingam, the TULF leader has told the *Washington Post* that the 'Tamils have reached the point of no return'. The TULF leader made specific reference to the government's plan to settle Sinhalese in the north. "It will only lead to the division of the country". Another Madras-based Tamil spokesman has described the plan as "an Israeli West Bank type settlements plan".

But the plan has run into a new snag. Water, security and money are the basic problems. But now the areas where the government intends to settle these new colonists have been affected by an epidemic of dysentery caused by the Sinhalese and Tamil refugees already living in camps in the Mullaitivu region.

CONFUSED STATE

The SUN described it as a 'ding-dong' battle in Washington. The report was from the paper's US correspondent. According to Aziz Haniffa, Ambassador Corea "reacted angrily" and threatened to submit a protest note when a State Dept. official told IPS that the National Security Minister, Mr. Athulathmudali had asked for increased arms aid. The State Dept. official Mr. Brecht had in fact mentioned patrol boats.

TRENDS
+
LETTERS

OPINION

Blood and Soil

IN ANCIENT TIMES, especially in the Middle East, when people were conquered, they were taken as slaves, either to the lands of their conquerors, or to some other territory, and some other people were settled in their land, thus destroying the link between "blood and soil". The Bible is full of such instances. One of the earliest examples was the capture of Samaria (721 B.C.) and the transportation of their people. It happened again when Babylon captured Judea, and finally, when the Roman general Titus captured Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and forbade any Jew to possess a

(Continued on page 8)

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PHOENIX

No "no-go" in foreign policy

Mervyn de Silva

THE permissive politics of a country may afford any regime the luxuries of ill-tempered outbursts and temperamental fits, open exhibitions of confusion and indecision, and tough, aggressive displays of uncompromising attitude or total intransigence. If the people are sovereign and can freely exercise their sovereignty, the regime is only (and finally) answerable to that constituency in the short-term or long run. But that which is an acceptable luxury or a tolerable risk in domestic politics can be a costly adventure in the field of foreign policy. In the sphere of interstate relations, a nation deals with another sovereign country whose reactions and responses to one's own behaviour can determine the future of the relationship in a manner that may make the character of the relationship unalterable. The possibilities of total control which national sovereignty offers, stop at one's own border.

One can establish a "no-go" or "prohibited zone" within one's territory, and withdraw or change its territorial limits or operational rules at any time. A "no-go" zone in foreign relations can impose restrictions on one's own freedom of movement in a way that is self-defeating because its rules cannot be altered at one's will and pleasure.

Accusing a huge and powerful neighbour of having mounted 'a **de facto invasion**' could be a perfectly reasonable course of action — as long as the accuser is not only fully convinced that the charge can be sustained but has also calculated the likely consequences, and is prepared to face them.

Curiouser and Curiouser

But for the highest policy-making body of the ruling party to scream "**de facto invasion**" on

Monday and then have the **de jure** spokesman of the government to lower his voice meekly and announce a retreat in a pathetic confusion, on Thursday is curious enough for a charitable public smiles in suppressed embarrassment. **But to see the government's most important minister undertake an official visit to the de facto invader's capital a few days later is to make things so curiouser and curiouser that the country itself and its people run the risk of becoming the laughing-stock of the world.** And in the last scene of all, Colombo welcomes the "cordial" and "constructive" talks which may help restore "the traditional ties of friendship".

The National Security Minister, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, who understands better than most of the Sri Kotha wiseacres the complexities of foreign policy and South Asia, politics, and the necessary sensitivities of diplomacy in a high-pressure situation, is not to blame. Sri Kotha's trigger-happy foreign policy pundits must take the rap.

It is surely time that the U. N. P. or at least some of the more level-headed members in the party heirarchy, sat down quietly and mapped out for the serious consideration of its top policy-makers a diplomatic strategy and a contingency plan. Such an exercise can start with a few basic assumptions.

Basic Points

(i) Whatever the rights and wrongs — and we may be 100% right and the **de facto** invader 100% wrong — the asymmetries of power place us in a very weak situation. In the world of international politics, power, not morality, alas is the ultimate measure.

Final decisions at state-level are founded on factors of power and the relative demands of self-interests and not on moral considerations.

(ii) If Sri Lanka could take the high ground morally (that is, if we had a very good case, the case of small, helpless country, fully deserving of international sympathy) then **world opinion**, though not formally institutionalised, could be a useful countervailing factor to the massive disadvantage of the imbalance in power. International opinion, if intangible, is a non-formal non-state factor of considerable influence. The world media, in turn, colours and conditions that opinion more strongly than any other agency.

Despite all the cheerful self-serving reports we publish (or inspire) to convince ourselves that there has been an opinion turn-around and lift up our drooping spirits, the truth is — and facing up to the truth is a large part of the problem and a huge handicap to the policy-planner — that the current is strongly unfavourable.

The collapse of the APC not only led to great disappointment abroad, and dismay in the vital donor (western) community but turned attention to the other front. And there "excesses" is the softest word. In New York and London (dissemination centres of the English-speaking world so important to "our image") terms like "My Lai" "massacre" "brutal" "barbarism" etc have been frequently used.

(iii) In the institutionalised, state-level communities Sri Lanka's "impeccable nonaligned credentials" (1976 Colombo conference) had gained us respect and credit, if not given us great clout. Have we retained these assets? Have we

frittered them to acquire even bigger assets? What matters at this level is policy. That's the first point to remember. Second that votes or pro/con decisions generally conform to a group or bloc pattern — West, socialist, Arab OAU, Latin Americans etc. Have our policy positions on Falklands won over the Latins who matter both in the Assembly and in U.N. committees and in the Security Council? Or have we alienated them? Has the Israeli decision helped us with the Arabs? How do we stand on the US policy of "constructive engagement" on South Africa.

In balance, it is easy to note the weakness rather than strength of our diplomatic position. To argue that 'nonalignment has failed us' is to confuse cause and effect.

It is the nonalignment that we practised that has failed us.

(iv) The only nation and group which has sufficient weight to offset this imbalance is the US and the West. The US insists on a "political reconciliation" with the Tamil community (meaning its representative, the TULF) before it can consider aid, including arms assistance, to help us fight "residual terrorism" — not the other way about. The US Congress has voted 180,000 dollars for military training — cadjunuts.

The West joins the US and some of these countries are even more assertively demanding, in urging a "political settlement".

(v) So let us suppose Mr. Gandhi responds favourably to all our

requests. Surely such help will be accompanied by an equally strong, probably stronger, plea. For a 'political settlement'? With the fate of 'Annexure C' in mind the help will certainly not be open-ended. The political settlement will be the condition attached to a positive response, if not a condition precedent.

So, we can go round in circles but come to the same point—political settlement. And since our relative position is manifestly weak, we have to summon all resources, especially our intelligence, to prepare a carefully conceived, neatly ordered, step-by-step plan of action.

Today it is all *ad hoc*, day-to-day and re-active. That simply won't do. Bravado can be suicidal.

The Thondaman factor

"WE cannot remain spectators while people are being harassed and killed" said the CWC leader, Mr. S. Thondaman in an interview with the SUN. His hard-hitting remarks were followed a few days later by a blistering attack by the CWC on the government's evident rejection of "Political dialogue" for what the powerful plantation labour union called "a harsh military operation".

The CWC also condemned the government's attempt to move Sinhalese settlers into Tamil areas as a "violation of human rights" and a "violation of the understanding which had existed between the communities" since independence.

Though in striking contract to President Jayewardene's Feb. 4 message to the nation, the two statements, taken together, offer an insight into the nature of today's crisis and to the new factors which deepen that crisis each passing week.

"We shall overcome" said a brave President Jayewardene, while promising to eradicate the 'terrorist menace' in order that "all commu-

nities could live in peace, equality and harmony".

That is the essence of the pre-independence ideal — the ideal of a united, democratic, secular, stable nation. The crisis is a direct threat to that concept.

If it is that the same "atmosphere" which has led to the steady alienation of the Tamil Community in the north, then the question is whether the plantation youth, and consequently the plantation families will come under pressure too. If that happens, what the two Tamil communities, so far apart physically and psychologically, have failed to achieve — the unity which proved so ephemeral in the original TULF — could be forged, ironically, on the anvil of official policy. Thus, what every Colombo regime feared can come to pass.

This explains last week's nervous questioning: "Is Thonda tying up with the TULF or trying to do the TULF's job?". "Has India opened a second front?". "Is the new battle going to be on the economic front."

The Thondaman factor is the economic factor. Mr. Ronnie de Mel based Sri Lanka's case for

continued aid at old levels on two arguments he presented at the Aid Group meeting. Firstly, a political settlement would be in place in 6 months time i.e. December. Secondly, Sri Lanka would have a modest balance of payments (about 200 million dollars) at the end of the year, thanks entirely to tea prices. The second argument was addressed mainly to the IMF to hold back a demand for devaluation.

Anyway, the first leg of the argument has collapsed. As for the surplus, the expanding military budget (right now, 160 million dollars) and the anticipated loss in tourist income (more than 60 million dollars) have wiped out the 220 million dollars, the actual surplus we registered.

Labour unrest in the plantation sector will bring all development activity to a grinding halt.

No wonder the UNP didn't give Mr. Thondaman 'the Mathew treatment'. In fact, the UNP sheepishly swallowed the pill and party pride to proclaim that it "understood Mr. Thondaman's anxieties". The UNP's anxieties are equally understandable.

Varsity issue : an Opposition in-gathering

WHILE foreign policy has remained the UNP's special area of weakness, its skills in the manipulation of domestic party politics are truly stupendous. The way it managed an SLFP split and kept the Opposition so crazily divided and squabbling, is an object lesson in masterly divisive and diversionary tactics.

It was only the other week that the UNP was warned by an adviser to the President and a working committee member, Mr. Esmond Wickremasinghe, of "insurgency conditions in the South" in the event of further devaluation, new price increases etc. Only the UNP's "popular ethnic policy" he said "masked" the party's many difficulties. A clear sighted analysis and a frank admission.

The new Universities Act (privatisation of university education and the political regimentation of these institutions) is not pure economics. But it does attack the

foundation of Sri Lankan social welfarism, free state education.

The University Teachers have joined the students in their agitation against this move to restore privilege in education. And now ALL the opposition parties, for

the first time in almost a decade, have decided to support their protest campaign.

They have formed a "joint action group" while the students are to launch a house-to-house campaign. The national crisis must be such an oppressive burden on the UNP that its right hand seems to have lost its customary cunning.

Appeal for cease-fire

The Sri Lanka Association of Tamil Speaking People (President Major-General Anton Mutukumara) has issued the following appeal:

We, the members of the Sri Lanka Association of Tamil Speaking people, who met in Colombo on 31st January, 1985, and reviewed the present situation in regard to the ethnic problem,

Noting with deep disappointment apparent abandoning of the process of negotiation to seek a political solution;

Expressing our immense sorrow at the increasing wanton destruction of life both military and civilian;

Fearing the grave consequences to this country if the political stalemate and the carnage were allowed to continue; and

Re-affirming our commitment to a united Sri Lanka in which all communities can live in peace with justice;

Do hereby call upon Government and the leaders of the Tamil militant youth movements to take immediate steps to commence negotiations to bring about the cessation of all acts of violence;

We also urge Government to create the conditions in which all parties can take part in the search for a political solution with dignity and equality;

We call upon all political parties, religious leaders and community elders to express their support for the call for an immediate cease-fire and resumption of talks;

We appeal to the news media in all languages to lend their weight towards mobilising mass support for the above appeal.

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JVP versus Eelam

— the conflict continues

Dayan Jayatilleka

THE JVP from the underground continues its propaganda campaign against Eelam. Almost half a year ago it issued a printed leaflet in which it accused ultra-left agent provocateurs of attempting to stir up trouble against the armed forces and the police. For its part it pledged that it would not attack, in deed or in word, any establishment or individual representative of the armed forces or police at a time when these services were engaged in combating terrorism in the extremely harsh terrain of the sun-scorched North and East.

Last November the politbureau of the JVP issued another printed leaflet from Colombo saying that "The JVP is totally opposed to Eelam. We pledge that no one in the JVP has had discussions with Uma Maheswaran or any other Eelamist. We further pledge that we shall never have such discussions. Eelam is a subject we have nothing to discuss about. It is the UNP's minister Thondaman who has held discussions with Uma Maheswaran and other Eelamists, and it is president J. R. Jayewardene who holds discussions with Eelamists like Amirthalingam. We challenge the government to prove that what we say are untruths".

A printed leaflet issued in Colombo in December harped on the same thing. "We pledge once more that no one in the JVP will support the Eelamists by even a single word, still less join them to fight against the army." The leaflet went on to accuse the UNP of not wanting to really defeat Eelam and in fact conspiring to divide the country.

Most recently a cyclostyled press release was issued in Sinhala together with an English translation. The document dated January 5th 1985 was issued in Colombo. Repeatedly criticising "the violent activities of the Eelamists" the statement reminds the people that "we publicly voiced our opposition to Eelamism and sepaeratism at the maiden meeting held in Jaffna town in 1978, where our President comrade Rohana Wijeweera was injured as a result of attempted disruption by certain disappointed opponents....The JVP based on its policies stand firmly against the division of the country through Eelam, while at the same time oppose autocratic centralization. Therefore it is nothing surprising for the JVP to be at the butt end of the Eelamist anger and on the other hand, Victim of State reprisal. It is therefore the urgent need of both Eelamists and the Capitalist Govt. to bring about the downfall of the JVP. In this respect the Eelamists and the Govt. are in concurrence".

The document accuses the government of "adopting all public media to suppress the very important declarations of policy" whereby "the JVP has publicly announced its anti-Eelam policy." Of the many reasons for the government to repress the activities of the JVP, the document identifies in first place the need to divert "the displeasure of the people and the armed forces as a result of the governments inability to solve the ethnic problems".

The government's tactic of connecting an anti-Eelam JVP with the Eelamists benefits only the

latter says the document, which on this basis asks the rhetorical questions: "Hasn't the government become entrapped by Eelam tactics? Is not the government itself that has become the collaborators and helpers of Eelamists? Hasn't the state mass media become the Eelam tools?" The document ends with a strong call for general elections.

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THREE-PARTY BLOC ANALYSES CEASE-FIRE

The Lanka Samasamaja Party, the Communist Party of Sri Lanka and the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party, in a joint statement, supported what they called the rising demand in all parts of the country for an immediate ceasefire by the government and the armed youth groups.

The statement also said that the good offices of any willing party, domestic or foreign, should readily be availed of to bring about such a ceasefire.

The full text of the statement is as follows:—

“The policies of the UNP government over the past seven years have already produced major crises in our political, economic, cultural and social life. Its state terrorism, repressive laws and vindictive measures against political opponents have encouraged the spread of violence and brutality. In addition to all this, the UNP Government has complicated and aggravated ethnic relations to a point where the unity of Sri Lanka and its peoples has been placed in serious jeopardy.

Seven years of current UNP rule have seen four major outbursts of racist violence, each far worse than the other. Sri Lanka's good name has been besmirched abroad as never before.

“But, despite its public election promises in 1977 and not withstanding its secret eve of-poll agreement with the TULF and CWC leaders, the UNP Government has not shown any serious desire to find a just and democratic settlement of estranged and embittered ethnic relations through political dialogue. Instead, it has followed policies that has made matters much worse and strengthened racist, divisive and separatist tendencies.

“It dragged on the Round Table Conference for nearly a year and terminated it abruptly after the president had presented his own proposals in the form of a draft Parliamentary Bill. In these proposals, both the suggested devolution of powers from the Centre and the twist sought to be given to them by creation of a Second Chamber were designed more to perpetuate the ruling party in power than to find a lasting settlement to the ethnic problem.

“As a result, the situation has deteriorated to an extent that is actually worse than that which existed immediately after the terrible events of mid-

1983. And the most recent pronouncements of the President and important Ministers indicate that the government has no political solution to suggest and does not immediately propose to take any further action to find such a solution.

Censored

“Widespread and senseless killing, arbitrary mass arrests and detentions, and severe deprivations and hardships for uninvolved civilian population has become the order of the day. Civilian authority and democratic institutions and processes have disappeared. Thousands, from all communities, have been deprived of their normal means of livelihood and their freedom of movement, while hundreds more have become refugees. Members of the Security Services and the police, most of whom are youngmen from poor urban and rural families have also been exposed to sudden, violent and futile death and injury.

“Misusing sections of the media for the purpose, the government has also whipped up a war hysteria on a scale never witnessed before. As a result, social restraints and discipline break down good sense, is submerged in tribalistic emotions and attitudes and behaviour are increasingly brutalised. Anyone who dares to speak of the need for a political solution of the problem is portrayed as a traitor or an accomplice of ‘terrorism’.

“To make matters worse, a systematic campaign of confrontation and brinkmanship has been unleashed against India, thereby endangering our own security, disrupting the traditional good neighbour relations that have existed between our two countries, damaging the non-aligned movement, and assisting the US and other imperialist forces who are fighting hard to prevent the Indian Ocean becoming a zone of peace.

“On top of all this, our meagre financial resources are being squandered on buying new arms and building up armed forces at the expense of severe cutbacks in social benefits. As a result, our national economy has broken down in important areas and is being overcome by creeping paralysis.

“A sinister development of this situation is that the UNP Government, in the name of ‘fighting terrorism’, has begun steadily to extend the militarisa-

tion that exists in the north and east to the rest of the country, thereby adding a new dimension to its concerted efforts to replace democratic institutions with greater authoritarianism and dictatorial rule.

“This is seen in the creation of new ministries to extend the ‘security’ measures in the public sector to the private sector as well; the creation of so-called ‘defence committees’ in localities, workplaces and estates where UNPers are to be given military training, supplied with arms, and encouraged to spy on political opponents; and the latest proposals to have UNP M. P.s select 250 supporters from each of their electorates who will be given military training, supplied with arms, and settled in selected areas to form a reserve army of the UNP Government.

“In combination with the special ‘commando’ forces that are now under training (censored) these armed political gangs can well become an even more formidable danger to democratic functioning and political dissent than even the JSS go on-squads in the past. The fact that the government now speaks of terrorism as a ‘southern’ phenomenon as well, showed that these preparations are intended to be used, not merely in the north and east, but against the working class, the trade unions, and all active forms of opposition to UNP misuse.

“Our parties appeal to all progressive and democratic forces not to be misled by these dangerous actions of the UNP Government or to respond to its specious appeal for ‘non-partisan’ support for these actions. Let us never forget that, while making such appeals for non-partisanship, the UNP Government does nothing to alter the policy of revenge against political opponents that it has ruthlessly followed ever after it returned to office in 1977.

“Indeed, experience has shown that the UNP Government is the principal cause of the many-sided crisis in which the people of our country are now engulfed and the principal obstacle to any democratic solution or attempted solution of this crisis. The fight for such a solution must therefore be accompanied by no let-up of the struggle to defeat and remove the UNP Government

“As far as the ethnic crisis is concerned, our parties have repeatedly

made it clear that we oppose any division of Sri Lanka into separate and hostile states. We also oppose and regard as counter-productive any efforts to seek a solution to the ethnic crisis through terrorism, either by the state or by individuals or political groups.

"We firmly believe that the Sinhalese and Tamil peoples, who have both lived in this country for over two thousand years and contributed towards its political, social, economic and cultural progress, can continue to do so in equality, friendship and cooperation. We want the people of our two major communities, for whom capitalist rulers see no future other than that of slaughtering each other in a "no win" civil war, to be able to work together, shoulder to shoulder to end all forms of discrimination, inequality and oppression, and to build a bright socialist future for themselves and our common country.

"We are convinced that, by opting for a solution of the ethnic problem by state force and by military means, the government has only strengthened separatist tendencies and increased the danger that Sri Lanka may become another Cyprus and Lebanon.

"In calling for new initiatives by patriotic and progressive forces among all nationalities for an agreed political settlement of the ethnic impasse, we emphasise that, as we approach the end of the 20th Century, experience confirms that no newly free country can stabilise itself on the assumption that minorities cannot expect anything more than what a majority is prepared to concede.

"While re-iterating the need to preserve our national sovereignty and territorial integrity, we believe that any viable political settlement of our ethnic problem should be based on the principles of (a) retaining Sri Lanka as a united country and (b) within this framework, devolving (and not mere decentralising) substantially many now-centralised powers and functions to the people of the different areas of our country, so that they can look after their own area affairs while co-operating to administer those powers and functions that should remain centralised. The experience of many countries, both socialist and otherwise, has shown that such devolution strengthens, rather than disrupts, the essential unity of a country. Such unity can be further secured by a Constitution that guarantees fundamental and human rights to all citizens alike, by an administration set up without ethnic or other discrimination and by scientific national plan for the economic development of all areas of the country concerned.

"But before any new efforts can be made in the search for a political solution, it is essential that the present senseless killing, looting and destruction of property should be brought to an end. Our parties therefore welcome and support the rising demand in all parts of the country for an immediate cease fire by the government and the

armed youth groups. The good offices of any willing party, domestic or foreign, should be readily availed of to bring about such a cease fire and arrange the modalities of direct negotiations between the government of Sri Lanka and all organised representatives of Tamil opinion, including those of the armed youth groups.

"We also demand that the government's policy of brinkmanship towards India should be stopped; that normal good neighbour relations with the country should be restored; and that any problem in these relations should be settled solely through discussion.

"Such actions now can provide the whole country with a respite in which to recover our senses and prepare the basis of a fresh approach to consolidating national unity.

"Our parties appeal to all progressive forces to work towards a united effort in this direction."

The statement has been signed by Messrs: Bernard Soysa, General Secretary, Lanka Sama Samaja Party, K. P. Silva, General Secretary, Communist Party of Sri Lanka, and Vijaya Kumaranatunga, General Secretary, Sri Lanka Mahajana Party.

Letters . . .

(Continued from page 1)

copy of the Torah or to circumcise his children upon pain of death, and the Jews had, in order to practice their religion, to disperse over the rest of the Mediterranean world.

It is a strange thing that we in Sri Lanka should attempt the same kind of technique in solving the present "ethnic" problem on perhaps the advice of those who were the earliest victims of it. In the name of Democracy we are proposing to settle Sinhalese in the areas hitherto occupied by the Tamils, and Tamils are to be settled in Sinhalese areas. How a person in fertile Ruhuna will be persuaded to settle in arid Valvettithurai is beyond our comprehension; but what is more incomprehensible is that these ideas should be propagated by responsible people.

The mind reels at the international possibilities this idea presents. One way for Indira Gandhi to have solved the problem of the Akali Sikhs would have been to forcibly settle them in Travancore and to have transported the people of Andhra Pradesh to the Punjab. One way for the United Nations to

solve the problem of South Africa would be to transport white South Africans back to Holland or Germany and settle the Ethiopians there. Despite the legacy of Cromwell it is a solution that Margaret Thatcher would do well to consider as a solution to the Irish Question.

Democracy, the rule of the majority, was never meant to be a device for the suppression of minorities. A political minority gains its distinctiveness by living in a contiguous area, speaking its own language and practising its own religion and culture. The right to cultural self-determination is a human right, and it is wrong for anyone to attempt to remove it, especially for those who have signed the convention on Human Rights. It is one thing to affirm that everyone has an equal right to settle anywhere in this country. It is quite a different proposal for the State to mix up populations so that all minorities will always be outnumbered by the majority community. Every cultural minority needs to preserve its identity.

Rev Shelton A de Silva.
Methodist Church,
Colombo South Circuit.

THE CONTROVERSIAL DOCUMENT

The following is the text of Annexure C as published in the Indian press :

ANNEXURE C

IN TERMS of paragraph six of the President's statement of December 1st, 1983, the following proposals which have emerged as a result of discussions in Coimbo and New Delhi are appended for consideration by the All Party Conference. These proposals are in the context of the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka and will form a basis for formulating the Agenda of the All Party Conference.

(1) The District Development Councils in a Province be permitted to combine into one or more Regional Councils if they so agree by decisions of the Councils and approved by Referendum in that district.

(2) In the case of the District Councils in the Northern and Eastern Provinces respectively, as they are not functioning due to the resignation of the majority of Members, their union within each province is to be accepted.

(3) Each Region will have a Regional Council if so decided. The convention will be established that the leader of the party which commands a majority in the Regional Council would be formally appointed by the president as the Chief Minister of the Region. The Chief Minister will constitute a Committee of Ministers of the Region.

(4) The President and the Parliament will continue to have overall responsibility over all subjects not transferred to the regions and generally for all other matters relating to the maintenance of the sovereignty, integrity, unity and security and progress and development of the Republic as a whole.

(5) The legislative power of the Region would be vested in the Regional Councils which would be empowered to enact laws and exercise executive powers in relation there to on certain specified listed; subjects including the maintenance of internal Law and Order in the Region, the Administration of Justice, Social and Economic Development, Cultural matters and Land Policy. The list of subjects which will be allocated to the Regions will be worked out in detail.

(6) The Regional Councils will also have the power to levy taxes, cess or fees and to mobilise resources through loans, the proceeds of which will be credited to a Consolidated Fund set up for that particular Region to which also will be credited grants, allocations or subventions made by the Republic. Financial resources will be apportioned to the Regions on the recommendations of a representative Finance Commission appointed from time to time.

(7) Provision will be made for constituting High Courts in each Region. The Supreme Court of Sri Lanka will exercise appellate and constitutional jurisdiction.

(8) Each Region will have a Regional Service consisting of the officers and other public servants of the Region and (b) such other officers and public servants who may be seconded to the Region. Each Region will have a Regional Public Service Commission for recruitment and for exercising disciplinary powers relating to the members of the Regional Service.

(9) The armed forces of Sri Lanka will adequately reflect the

national ethnic position. In the Northern and Eastern Regions, the Police forces for the security will also reflect the ethnic composition of these Regions.

(10) A Port Authority under the Central Government will be set up for administering the Trincomalee Port and Harbour. The area which will come under the administration of the Port Authority as well as the powers to be assigned to it will be further discussed.

(11) A national policy on land settlement and the basis on which the Government will have to be worked out. All settlement schemes should be based on ethnic proportions so as not to alter the demographic balance subject to agreement being reached on major projects.

(12) The Constitution and other laws dealing with the official language Sinhala and the national language, Tamil, be accepted and implemented as well as similar laws dealing with the National Flag and Anthem.

(13) The Conference should appoint a committee to work out constitutional and legal changes that may be necessary to implement these decisions. The Government would provide its Secretariat and necessary legal offices.

(14) The consensus of opinion of the All Party Conference will itself be considered by the United National Party Executive Committee and presumably by the executive bodies of the other parties as well, before being placed before Parliament for legislative action.

REMUNERATION OF SCIENTISTS IN SRI LANKA

A Survey

M. Y. M. Siddeek

Generally, it is said that the public servants are paid very poorly in Sri Lanka. Most of the scientists too fall into this "poorly paid" category. If we compare with other developing countries or under-developed countries, except in very few number of countries, Scientists are paid more and given a prominent place in the society. Due to this poor remuneration system, science experts have been or are leaving for other countries for better pastures and research works. These experts seek countries which give sufficient facilities in the form of financial and non-financial incentives and where they are respected. Due to this, shortage of expert Scientists arises here. To fill the gap, between scientists available and required, the government imports scientists from foreign countries. The foreign scientists working in Sri Lanka are paid very handsome salary. By these

payments, the government loses much needed foreign exchange. We ignore the fact that some of the foreign scientists are less qualified and perhaps less experienced. If the local scientists are paid a little more and respected and given the necessary research facilities, the government can reduce the loss of our qualified, efficient and experienced Scientists.

I did my survey in the Faculty of Science, University of Colombo. Five Departments — Botany, Chemistry, Physics, Zoology, Mathematics, and a centre-Radio Isotope Centre, belong to this Faculty. 92 Scientists are employed in 10 categories of job titles and approximate number of scientists employed in each of those jobs are as in table below.

The functions of these scientists are as follows :—

(1) Teaching Science subjects to Undergraduate and Postgraduate students.

(2) Carrying out Scientific research.

(3) Administrating their units or departments (Some of the senior Scientists only do this administrative function).

(4) Conducting seminars.

(5) Examination and related functions.

Professors or Senior Lecturers, administrating the departments and Faculty are called Heads of the Departments and Dean of the Faculty respectively. For example, Prof. R. S. Ramakrishna (Chemistry), Prof. R. N. de Fonseka (Botany), Prof. P. W. Epasinghe (Mathematics), Dr. Wignarajan (Zoology),

JOB TITLES	DEPARTMENTS/CENTRE						TOTAL
	BOTANY	CHEMISTRY	ZOO.	MATH.	RADIO.	PHYSICS	
1. Professor	02	02	01	03	—	02	10
2. Asst. Professor	—	01	—	—	—	—	01
3. Senior Lecturer	03	04	02	02	—	02	13
4. Lecturer	07	06	04	03	02	06	28
5. Assistant Lecturer	03	01	07	03	02	06	22
6. Research Assistants	—	—	—	—	—	02	02
7. Demonstrators	—	—	—	—	—	10	10
8. Micro Chemist	—	—	—	—	—	01	01
9. Computer prog.	—	—	—	02	—	—	02
10. Programmer/Sys. Anal.	—	—	—	03	—	—	03

Prof. M. L. T. Kannagara (physics) and Dr. (Mrs) R. Hewamanne (Radio Isotope Center) are doing administrative works as Heads of Departments and Dr. K. G. Dharmawardana is doing administrative works as Dean of Science Faculty in addition to their teaching and research works. The heads are in middle level of management; and the Dean is in higher level.

Academic and Professional qualifications of these people are very high. They vary from B. Sc Honours Degree level to Post-Doctoral level. They were trained in well recognized foreign Universities. Some of them are eminent scholars. Their research work experience is also high. Some of them have more than 25 years work experience as scientists.

Salary

Salary scale of the Scientists of this organization vary from Rs. 1,700/- to Rs. 4,525/-. Salary scale of Assistant Lecturers at entry point is Rs. 1,700/-. Salary scale of Professors at maximum is Rs. 4,525/-. Annual increments are as follows :—

Assistant Lecturers	Rs. 50/-
Lecturers	Rs. 75/-
Senior Lecturers	Rs. 75/-
Professors	Rs. 100/-

In addition to their salary scale, they are paid a Cost of Living Allowance. This allowance varies according to the Cost of Living Index. This also varies Rs. 297/- to Rs. 348/- according to marital status and employment position of husband or wife. Unmarried persons and the person who has working wife were paid Rs. 267/- and the person who has unemployed wife was paid Rs. 348/- last month.

In addition to this Cost of Living Allowance, Heads of the Departments and the Dean of the Faculty get Head Allowance and Dean Allowance respectively. This varies from Rs. 75/- to Rs. 200/-. Sub-department head is

paid Rs. 75/-; Department heads are paid Rs. 100/-.

So, an Assistant Lecturer at entry point earns as gross salary only Rs. 1,997/-; a Professor, also serving as a head of a department earns only Rs. 4,622/- at entry point.

Incentives

University of Colombo has no payment policy which applies to scientists' consultancy work or other revenue earning work. But some of the scientists from the University earn some money by consultancy work and delivering additional lectures or participating in seminars or attending meetings. The amount of such income is very poor. Before the last salary revision was made, the scientists of the University were paid Professional Allowances according to their higher degree qualifications, in addition to their salary. Example, Rs. 225/- for Masters Degree and Rs. 300/- for Ph. D. Degree. This Professional allowance was the only one instrument existed in the University payment system to encourage the scientist or academicians to get their higher degree qualifications as early as possible. This Professional Allowance system was stopped and consolidated by the last salary revision, which has been operating since 1982.

An Assistant Lecturer should get this Postgraduate qualification within his probationary period of six years. Otherwise his post will be terminated. This University follows this condition strictly. But it does not sponsor or support to get this Postgraduate qualification by research. It is very difficult to get scholarships or assistantship through the University or governmental channel. The UGC also does not give preference to the Probationary Assistant Lecturers, even if the Postgraduate qualification is the main requirement for the confirmation in the post. But these scientists engaged in research and academic works are eligible to receive education and training through the University, because, — to develop research

experience and increase the knowledge are very important for them. The University and UGC must make arrangements to further their education and improve research and analytical and experimental telenus. But the University pays to the Senior Scientists and academicians only the up and down passage to visit for their professional works. Every seventh year after the post of Lecturer, this is available with one year "full pay leave". No other incentives are attached to their jobs.

Welfare

Welfare facilities are probably nil to the scientists in the University of Colombo. Reimbursement of medical expenses, free or lowcost transport, housing, etc; are not provided to the scientists of this organization, even though scientists in other organizations enjoy these benefits. But only the one main benefit enjoyed by the scientists in this organization is full pay study leave for their higher studies up to three years and ten months.

Evaluation

My survey revealed that the value of remuneration received today does not adequately compensates the performance expected from scientists in their jobs. It is inadequate. Scientists are valuable resources, specially in developing countries like Sri Lanka and should be compensated well. Their remuneration should be increased up to 100% from the present salary level.

Income from consultancy works and other revenue earning works is very low. In the case of scientists in this organization additional income is nil. For, example a lecturer in Chemistry with Post-doctoral qualification has no other additional income. He gets only Rs. 2,872/- as his gross salary.

If we compared the status of scientists employed in other organizations, the following factors can be seen :—

In the banks and private sector organizations, employees are paid more with less qualifications. But the scientists in the University of Colombo are paid less with more and more qualifications. For example, a staff officer with basic degree earns double that an Assistant Lecturer earns with Ph. D. in the University of Colombo. In addition to a high remuneration, bankers enjoy following fringe benefits:—

- a) Annual bonus—two months gross salary.
- b) Very low-interest vehicle loan.
- c) Reimbursement of medical expenses.
- d) Housing.
- e) Other financial benefits and over-time etc;

If we compare with private firms, some of the scientists enjoy the following benefits:—

- a) Free car with company paid driver.
- b) Free telephone facilities.
- c) Free transport facilities for attending in the seminars abroad.

In some organizations an Engineer with a basic degree enjoys all these benefits. But a Professor in the Faculty of Engineering in Sri Lankan Universities cannot enjoy all these benefits.

Another example, an Accountant with I. C. M. A. and five years post qualification experience earns upto Rs 200,000/- a year. But a Professor with Post-doctoral qualification and 25 years research experience as a Scientist earns only upto Rs. 50,000/- a year. This is unfair.

If we compare the scientists with non-professional administrative staff within the institution the remuneration is very unfair. The following examples will reveal this more.

1) An Assistant Lecturer in Chemistry with First Class Honours Degree and M. Sc or Ph. D. with four years experience earns only Rs. 2,197/-. An Assistant Registrar only with a Second Class Honours Degree and four years experience also earns Rs. 2,147/-. Here professionally well qualified scientists and administrators with basic degrees are paid nearly equal amount. This is unfair.

2) This is another example:—

A Scientist (Lecturer in Zoology) with the following qualifications: B. Sc (First Class Honours), M. Sc., Ph. D.

Post-Doctorate, and six years research experience earns only Rs. 3,622/- at starting point as his gross salary per month. A Senior Assistant Registrar with basic degree and five or six years administrative experience also gets the same salary.

We can compare in the same way a Professor and a Registrar. A Professor with Post-doctoral qualification and more than 20 years teaching, research and administrative experience is poorly paid. A Registrar with SLAS or basic degree qualification and experience is paid the same as a professor, some times more.

One Professor of Zoology at the University of Colombo expresses this unfairness as follows:

The salary structure is equated to that of purely administrative staff in the University system, though work load and responsibilities of academicians and scientists are very different".

Actually, scientists' experiments, research, investigations and new thoughts make use of resources in proper way, (investigate alternative and economical ways of use of resources), identify unused valuable resources, and make the country developed. But they are not motivated in the ways of financial and non-financial. If they

are not paid well, the country will lose its development trend in the long run.

A Professor in the Faculty of Science in this organization serves as a:—

- 1) Teacher;
- 2) Researcher;
- 3) Scientist; and
- 4) Administrator.

So, when compared with purely administrative staff, work loads and responsibilities are high. They do above mentioned four categories of jobs for one salary. So, the remuneration of scientists should be much higher in relation to non-professional administrative persons.

Many Management researches have revealed that:—

"Motivation is firm job satisfaction"; but the remuneration attached to the scientists in the University of Colombo does not motivate them to be innovate and perform better than normally expected from them in the job. But only some dedicated persons work well.

Purpose of Remuneration

The remuneration system has failed to attract and keep scientists in the organization. For this reason, some of the scientists who have many family problems in the way of inadequacy of remuneration go to private firms; some of them do part time jobs; it is entirely different to that of their scientific career. These persons cannot dedicate themselves to their scientific career. Most of the scientists are expecting better paid jobs in foreign countries.

Purpose of remuneration is not well established. The remuneration system should be revised. It should give at least the minimum support to retain the Scientists in the organization.

THE ETHNIC CONFLICT IN

SRI LANKA

An overview

Urmila Phadnis

DURING our meetings of Sri Lanka Group in late 1983, it was suggested that I should prepare a study on the Ethnic Politics of Sri Lanka, with a view to explore various possibilities / alternatives for conflict management between the Sinhalese and the Tamil Communities in the island state.

In view of the rather inchoate and at times erroneous information regarding the issue in the media, I myself had felt that need for such a study at this juncture. As such, I readily agreed to write the monograph. However, I suggested that before doing so I should visit Madras and Sri Lanka to have first hand information and a 'feel' of the situation. The suggestion was endorsed by the Group.

Accordingly, I started making arrangements for my fieldwork in January 1984. However, due to certain academic reasons, it was not possible for me to combine the visits to Madras and Sri Lanka at this stage. Consequently, I split my field-work and went to Madras in early January 1984 for a week.

Some of the Sri Lankan Tamil leaders based in Madras then, had already met me when they came to Delhi. As such, meetings with various militant Tamil groups were arranged by them. Apart from their publications, interviews with some of their leaders and cadre helped facilitate a much clearer picture of the evaluation and growth of various groups, their social base, policies and programmes.

As for my visit to Sri Lanka, it had to be scheduled during my summer vacation commencing in the middle of May. Thus I arrived in Sri Lanka on May 26 for about four weeks. On my way to and from Colombo, halted in Madras for a day each to meet people and update my information.

During these visits, I had a hectic schedule. I met more than hundred people some times in groups but in most cases individually. These included leaders of the ruling regime as well as of several opposition-parties and groups, bureaucrats, academics, lawyers, businessmen and industrialists, journalists, dignitaries of the Buddhist and Christian clergy and officials of a number of non-governmental organisations, e.g. Marga Instt., Centre for Society and Religion, Centre for Communication and Development, Committee for Rational Development, International Centre for Ethnic Studies

COVERING an area of 25,232 sq. miles and a population of about 15 million, the Sri Lankan society presents the enmeshing of diversity in caste, racial, religious, regional and linguistic terms. Spanning over several centuries, the evolution and growth of the island states ethno-cultural configurations have been determined to a considerable extent by its geo-political setting of proximity to India and distance from any other land-mass.

Thus, intermittant migrational waves from India have not only

accounted for the bulk of its population but have also provided the majority-major minority component of its social structure — with the Sinhalese comprising 74 per cent of the population claiming Aryan descent and the Tamils claiming Dravidian descent, accounting for 18 per cent of its total population.

Apart from claims of racial distinctiveness, the Sinhalese-Tamil identities have been strengthened further in religious and linguistic terms. Thus, while the bulk of the Sinhalese are Buddhists and

etc. A select list of my respondents is enclosed (Appendix-1) which does not include names of about twenty persons who for various reasons wished to remain anonymous.

Apart from Colombo and its suburbs, I also visited Jaffna, on June 13 for 2 days. I had proposed to go to Trincomalee from Jaffna but the visit to Trincomalee had to be cancelled as I was granted an interview with the Prime Minister on the 16th and I had to rush back to Colombo. The interview with the Minister of National Security as well as the leader of the opposition followed soon after leaving me with hardly any time to reschedule my visit to the eastern province as I had finalised my date of departure (i. e. June 21, 1984) for, I had decided to be in Delhi on the eve of the arrival of the Sri Lankan delegation on June 28, be followed by Gandhi-Jayewardene parleys on June 30 — July 2, 1984.

The situation in Sri Lanka is grim and gloomy. A sense of desolation, despondence and a feeling of uncertainty hangs in the air. The reason is not merely the north-south tension but a congeries of stresses and strains — political, social and economic — which are acute in

their intensity and encompass the country as a whole. Added to its own vulnerabilities as a small state are the pressures and pulls of regional and global environment which heighten the challenges of nation and state-building, of participation and distribution. It is in the context of the overall quest of these challenges and dilemmas of the leadership that the issue of a durable peace between various ethnic groups needs to be examined.

However, as I have already written two papers, covering the wider gamut of the socio-political dynamics of the civic society of Sri Lanka (enclosed as appendix 2 and 3), I will make very general and brief observations on the overall situation in Sri Lanka and concentrate on the causes and implications of ethnic conflict in its socio-political processes.

As such, the rest of this report is divided into four parts: (a) the backdrop to the ethnic conflagration of July 1983; (b) the July explosion and its aftermath; (c) the 'India' factor in the ethnic politics of Sri Lanka; and (d) imperatives and imponderables in ethnic conflict management, followed by a few suggestions which our group may wish to consider.

Sinhalese speaking, the Tamils are Hindus with Tamil as their mother tongue. As for the second largest minority of the Muslims (7 per cent) claiming Moorish identity, it is the bond of religion which provides the major thrust of their ethnic distinctiveness, for interspersed as they are all over the country, they speak the language of the dominant community of the area.

Added to the racial-religious-linguistic congruence of the two communities is the territorial factor. Island-wise, the Tamils are in a minority but in eight out of twenty-four districts the Sinhalese are a minority in numerical terms. Out of these eight districts, the Ceylon Tamils are in absolute majority in five and the largest numerical strength in one. With the Indian Tamils and the Moors having similar position in one each. What is more, barring the district of Nuwara Eliya where the Indian Tamils predominate, the other seven districts are contiguous encompassing the northern and part of eastern provinces and are viewed by the Tamils as their 'traditional home land' which till the advent of the western colonial powers in the 16th century was a separate state — one of the three kingdoms — which comprise the present state of Sri Lanka.

It is not without significance that during the colonial period the Sinhalese-Tamil relationship moved from a cooperative to a competitive phase. If at all, the elite of both the communities had shared power in politico-economic spheres. However, in the post-independence period, such a balance got gradually eroded and conflictual trends increasingly set in.

Such trends found their overt manifestation in an increasing polarisation between the Ceylon Tamil component of the Tamil community and the Sinhalese. As for the Indian Tamils who had migrated to the island in the 19th century from South India to work on the plantations in the heart-

land of Ceylon, such a stridency could hardly be envisaged for, even during the colonial period, in socio-economic terms, they were virtually at the bottom of the power-hierarchy. They became even more vulnerable in the post-independence period when the citizenship laws of the new state disenfranchised a large majority of them making them politically subjugated if not totally ineffective. It was thus, the Ceylon Tamils — particularly Jaffna Tamils — who, having earlier enjoyed power and patronage along with the Sinhalese elite perceived the Sinhalese dominated Centre becoming increasingly partisan and discriminatory vis-a-vis the Tamils and there-by relegating them to a position in the power structure.

Subjective as well as objective factors have accounted for the Sinhalese-Tamils chasm. To illustrate, the culture-bound attitudes and images of both the communities have provided the subjective dimension to the issue. The historic memories of the sporadic Tamil invasions followed by the conquest of the island by the Cholas and the Pandya kings from South India in the medieval period have lingered on. Coupled with this has been the socio-cultural interaction between the Tamils of Sri Lanka and those across the Palk Straits leading to the complex situation of the majority community of the Sinhalese developing a minority psyche, in the shadow of India.

In such a context, the concept of nation-state, particularly since the Sinhalese Buddhist resurgence in 1956 entailed a specific connotations in the average Sinhalese perception: "Ceylonese nationalism could be equated with Sinhalese nationalism, the part unconsciously or consciously sublimated to the whole". Following from it, argued a Sri Lankan historian, the community consciousness of the Sinhalese was perceived as 'national' and that of the Tamils as 'communal'.

Thus, if the historical myths and symbols in which the heroes of one community tended to be-

come the vanquished of other with their victories and defeats overlapping provided the psychological make-up of the ethnic distinctiveness, so did the ideological thrust of the Eurocentric concept of the nation-state.

Moreover, the relatively better economic status of the Ceylon Tamils led this encemic Tamil-Sinhalese conflict express itself in the contemporary era with the Sinhalese leaders like SWRD Bandaranaike raising the demand of the Sinhalese only as the official language. This in turn sharpened the community consciousness of the Tamils.

Empirically, in the fifties, the Ceylon Tamils did have a share in trade, government jobs and prestigious professions, e.g. medicine and engineering which was much higher than their numerical proportion in the total population of the island. What mattered in this respect was that in their efforts to mobilise support on communal lines the leadership exaggerated it.

As for the Tamils, revolving around the issues of language and employment, regional autonomy, land settlement or colonisation, their feeling of relative deprivation has not been in terms of self-prestige and status alone. It has sharp economic edges too.

Thus, in 1956 when Prime Minister Solomon WRD Bandaranaike made Sinhalese the sole official language, this was considered a breach of trust by the Tamil leaders, for till 1954 both the SLFP as also the UNP were committed to preserving Sinhala-Tamil parity. The Tamils leaders feared that the change would restrict the economic accessibility of the Tamil educated youth in the employment market, particularly in the public sector and certain professional fields. Empirical evidence over the decades did give credence to such an apprehension.

Added to this was also the issue of Land Settlement in the context of which the Tamil leaders had

charged the present government as well as its predecessors that the Sinhalese dominated centre had been turning majority Tamil areas into Tamil minority ones. Consequently, the economic opportunities for the 'sons of the sori' were shrinking further. And the government was vitiating the ethnic-character of the Tamil homeland.

As for the issue of regional autonomy, even when the institutional structure was evolved to impart a considerable degree of autonomy at the district level, the long drawn tradition of a unitary political framework adduced several constraints to its functioning.

Moreover, till the end of the sixties, with the two dominantly Sinhalese parties — the SLFP and the UNP — alternately winning by simple majorities, the political leeway and the bargaining capabilities of the Tamil parties were relatively greater. Subsequently, there was a gradual erosion of this with the SLFP/UNP tending to acquire road-roller majorities. In the election of 1970, the SLFP won with more than two-thirds majority as did the UNP in 1977 when the SLFP barely managed to scrap through with eight seats.

The Tamil response to this "majoritarian" mood of self-assertion which resulted from this pattern of electoral results articulated itself soon after the SLFP converted the parliament into a constituent assembly and adopted the constitution of 1972. In protest against what they considered to be a total lack of concern for the Tamil minority susceptibilities, particularly in the spheres of regional autonomy, language, religion and fundamental rights, the Tamil MPs walked out of the Parliament and formed the Tamil United Front (TUF) comprising virtually all the Tamil parties and groups.

Soon thereafter, the ruling regime implemented several measures in respect of education which were perceived by the Tamils as an onslaught on them. In particular

was their strong resentment of the provisions for 'standardisation' of marks obtained by Sinhalese and Tamil students, under which merit and performance in the examination were neutralised by communal-language stipulations. There was also a district quota system which brought down the number of Tamil students at the university level.

One direct consequence of this was the rechristening of the TUF to Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) in 1975 which stepped up its demand of regional autonomy within a federal framework to that of a separate State — Eelam.

With the medium of instruction in Tamil areas having been through Tamil at the school level since 1945 and defacto at the university level since 1956 (except for a few non-humanities faculties) the ranks of frustrated Tamil youths swelled progressively. This was accentuated further not only by the disabilities they suffered in finding employment but the political ethos in which they were bred, alienated them from the rest of the youth in the country.

Ironical though it may seem, during the Jayewardene regime, a number of measures to assuage the Tamil sense of grievance were opted e.g. status of Tamil as an associate national language, greater autonomy in district administration and deletion of certain provisions in admission to the Universities which were perceived by the minority community as discriminatory.

If such measures had been adopted in the fifties and even in the sixties, they might have obviated the present impasse. Coming as they did in late 70s they were perceived as being "too little and too late" and in any case were not adequately implemented. As such, they did not go very far in assuaging the sense of frustration and alienation of the Tamil youth. Some of them took to arms which brought with it the

phase of insurgency and counter-insurgency.

The Sinhalese-Tamil hiatus has thus been exacerbated, over the years, by the enmeshing of three types of violence: (a) violence perpetrated by the Tamil terrorists, popularly known as Liberation Tigers; (b) counter-violence wrought by the coercive apparatus of the State — the police and the military; and (c) communal violence.

Notwithstanding certain broad similarities in the pattern and networks of violence since the mid-sixties, certain features distinguish the communal outburst (which erupted almost immediately after the electoral victory of the United National Party headed by President J. R. Jayawardene) as well as the ones in 1981 and 1983.

To begin with, while the earlier communal violence affected the Ceylon-Tamil dominated areas as well as Colombo, the violent outbursts during the UNP regime also encompassed the central and southern areas where there is a strong concentration of Indian Tamils. Secondly, alongside the scale, the communal turmoil has been far more intense than before reflecting in the process a siege mentality on the part of both the communities. While the Tamils feel increasingly marginalised, the Sinhalese perceive the Tamil secessionist demand a threat to their identity as the 'chosen' people of the Sinhala Dwipa, exacerbated by the induction of the Liberation Tigers who have introduced the violent edge to the Tamil politics. Finally, the behaviour of the Sinhalese dominated security forces, pitted against the Tamil terrorists in the north has assumed at times, distinct communal overtones which has further compounded the ethnic tangle.

(To be continued)

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Peasant struggle at Moneragala

Gamini Yapa

Now it has become a fight to protest and preserve a piece of forest land. The peasant struggle of Moneragala against the multinational sugar companies has now reached a stage where ordinary the peasant has become a better practical preservist, a better environmentalist than most of the intellectuals who are more concerned with the ideological aspects of such issues

The Meta International, the Indian-African multinational sugar giant which reached the back yards of the poor peasants to grab their land to an amount of 12,000 acres, was pushed back by the strength of peasant resistance. The sugar cane saplings now four-five months old on their nursery farm of 100 acres to be planted in that land taken away from peasants is now sold to the other multinational giant at Pelwatte, the Booke Agricultural International.

Then came the step towards the famous Haddawa Mookalana which according to the peasants was standing there for several millennia, then possibly for millions of years, without been cleared by man for settlement or cultivation. Even the forest department admits that it is the oldest jungle in the area. It is situated close to the eastern boundary of Moneragala district, but in the area marked to be given over to the Sugar Company. The extent of Haddawa was about 2500 acres several decades back but now due to the extension of villages surrounding, it today only about 1500 acres can be considered as the old virgin forest.

The pressure of population on land in Moneragala district is a fact we cannot ignore when we consider any land problem there. There are three wild life sanctua-

ries Yala, Udawalawe, and Lahugala in it, which claim a big portion of land there and also the forest reserve by the Galoya reservoir. All of them together limits the possible area of expansion of the population. Now the remaining area is also to be deprived to the peasants partitioned amongst the multinational sugar companies!

water to Heda Oya, the stream running through it. Heda Oya which enters the forest as a very low stream becomes a torrent true to its name as it passes through it. Hence the peasants contend that the clearing if Haddawa will make Heda Oya to go dry thus affecting the whole area.

... Peasants contend that the clearing of Haddawa will make Heder Oya go dry, thus affecting the whole area... So the fight to protect Haddawa is also a struggle for survival.

This population pressure has exerted itself on Haddawa during recent times, but the peasants were able to protect it and they refrained from clearing it on a large scale for settlement or cultivation. And it remained and also now remains as a vast resource for the peasant life in the surrounding area especially for the villagers closest to it such as Kodayanna, Walahagala, Kivuleyaya, Dematobedda, Kapuyaya, Medabedda etc. The AGA's of Siyambalanduwa and Madulla control parts of Haddawa, and they issue permits to the peasants in the two division, when the peasants need timber for their construction purposes. Being close to the herbal medicine gardens of our ancient physician king Buddhadasa which are said to be still thriving at Nilgala area, Haddawa also yields medicinal herbs abundantly for the ayurvedic physicians and the people of the area.

Moreover the most important fact is that the forest acts as a receptacle of moisture in the area and feeds numerous fountains supplying

As shown by the project plans, revealed to the peasants by the company officials 600 acres of the central forest is to be cleared to erect the giant factory of the sugar company milling 2200 tons of sugar cane per day and its office complex. And water for the factory has to come from Heda Oya. The Peasants argue that when Heda Oya dries up, after Haddawa is cleared the factory will have to pump water from Muthukandiya reservoir about 10 miles away thus depriving the peasants of that project of that scarce resource.

So the fight to protect Haddawa has a reason and argument behind it. It affects all the peasantry in the region. And it is also a struggle for survival. All Lanka Peasant Congress has accepted and promoted this struggle and the Moneragala peasants have so far tread a long path of resistance for the sake of Haddawa.

In September 1984 the issue was first raised with the environmentalists and ecologists at Colombo.

The Colombo Committee for solidarity with Moneragala peasants had arranged a meeting for the representative of Moneragala with the forest protectionists at Colombo. On 25th September 1984 Mr. Ananda Weerakoon J. P. a prominent leader of the ALPC in the district committee, a life long activist in the peasant struggles, for a long time the village committee chairman of the area met with a university don who represented all the protectionist societies of Sri Lanka. But it was reported that the professor was pessimistic about Haddawa. In his opinion Haddawa could not be saved in spite of all knowledge of imminent dangers to the area. He thought likewise, since they themselves had agitated for Sinharaja forest in Ratnapura and Matara districts, had gone there to protest and handed over a memorandum to the government but could not stop its destruction. The only extra element here as he said was the protest of the people in the area and he wished them success. They promised to visit Haddawa but that promise was not fulfilled.

But the peasants got set for the struggle. The ALPC branch unions formed vigilance committees exhibiting their grave concern over the fate of Haddawa. In October the news went round that 600 acres of Haddawa was divided into ten plots and ten contractors were allowed to fell and remove the precious timber from the area. Several of them started work and when the peasants went there to inquire they were told that the Meta International had contracted them for the job.

The peasants of Moneragala did not take to violence but they resorted to peaceful methods and finally went to the office of the Government Agent of Monera-

gala on 7th November 1984 to lodge a collective complaint and discuss the matter with the GA. This representation with about 250 peasants in the area included several Buddhist monks and was headed by the leaders of the Solidarity Committee at Moneragala district committee of ALPC and the organizing secretary and the general secretary of the ALPC. At the request of the GA at first ten representatives had a long discussion with him and then he held a meeting with all the crowd listening to their grievances and concern regarding Haddawa.

There it was revealed that the GA was not aware of the situation and he assured them that no permits were issued to anybody to clear Haddawa. So he promised that he would take prompt action to stop such destruction and keeping his word as soon as he finished the meeting even before the peasants reached their homes 10-15 miles away he went there and ordered all the lumberjacks out of the area.

But after a few days the State Timber Corporation entered Haddawa with the government licence and when queried told the peasants it is only the normal procedure of thinning out a forest by felling the trees of circumference more than five feet. But the peasants were vigilant and suspicious of this move which could be the preliminary step of removing valuable timber before bulldozers enter for destruction. The sentiment of the people was revealed when it was reported that once a peasant wife had made a vehement intrusion into a local committee meeting of the ALPC saying that it is useless talking things till Haddawa is finished when some direct action is demanded.

Meanwhile the peasant leaders of Moneragala had sent a memorandum to the Ombudsman of the parliament and they received a letter which stated amongst other

things that Haddawa is not included in the project of the sugar company. And the Commissioner of Parliament requested them to come to the Parliament office on 15th Jan 1985 to discuss the whole truth of multi-national sugar companies.

So, on 15th Jan. 1985 a delegation of Moneragala peasants including Mr. Ananda Weerakoon, and organizing Secretary of ALPC Mr. Patrick Fernando met with the Commissioner who had the Moneragala GA and a top government official in charge of affairs with the Sugar companies, for his assistance. There was long discussion where the GA revealed that the attempt to clear Haddawa was made without his knowledge. He had stated then and there, that he actually chased the illicit fellers out and got the Timber Corporation remove the timber. Also he informed that he had declared 350 acres of Haddawa as a forest reserve, but admitted that it was true the valuable timber had been shifted off before this order was promulgated. But nobody knows who sent these lumbermen to the very same area in which it was earlier revealed that the central office and factory of the Meta International was to be erected.

As we came to know the confrontation at the parliament office enlightened all those concerned about the actual situation. The State officials declared that the views of the delegation runs counter to the State policies hence they cannot make a decision on them. But the sugar project of Meta International is delayed for one year due to this peasant resistance movement. And they also had to admit implicitly that the question whether Meta International will commence its operation or not will definitely hang on this single fact i.e. the resistance movement of Vellassa peasants!

But the peasants of Vellassa consider that the central issue still remains to be fought out. So they have inscribed a slogan on their banner a slogan demanding life and longevity for that forest — LONG LIVE HADDAWA.

NATION – BUILDING OR TRANSNATIONALIZATION ?

Samir Amin

This programme, as its title suggests, concerns the **State in Africa in its internal constitution and external relations**. It has become clear that the whole question of development hinges upon the State and States in Africa which grew out of decolonization, are young and often fragile; they are now confronted with the tragic dilemma of a **conflict between nation-building, the very precondition for any development, and the powerful trends in the modern world towards transnationalization of the economy, of ideology, cultural life and politics**.

Is it a way out of this dilemma for a State to withdraw from the external world and to strive for autarky? should it, on the contrary, totally submit to the requirements of this on going process of transnationalization? or should it try to reconcile these contradictory requirements and, if so, how? To these basic questions the regional UNU research programme for Africa will attempt to outline the responses, either implicit or explicit, of African intellectuals. It is our hope that such a confrontation between different views may lead to real progress in the conceptualization of the problems.

To raise the issue in this way will contribute to strengthening the UNU's main option, i. e. the transition from a world which was dominated by a small number of powers (and in which colonized

Africa had no voice) to a polycentric world. How to ensure that this transition, the major issue of our time, does not, through exacerbated conflicts and loss of control, veer towards the collective self-destruction of the human race? The questions in themselves suggest a link between the specific concerns of the regional African Future Studies programme and those of the UNU as a whole, namely that priority must be given to the problems of war and peace and that human and social development must be visualized globally and not only in strictly "economic" terms.

This programme, therefore, deliberately sets out to be ambitious because it has been designed with a view to enlisting the active participation of the entire academic African community in the activities of the UNU.

Consequently, this initial option implies:

a "research network" approach encompassing a high number of research scholars (perhaps about one hundred), organized on the one hand in "sub-networks" according to precise research topics (while of course guarding against these sub-networks developing independently) and, on the other hand, in "concentric circles", revolving around a nucleus (the coordination unit), of groups devoting a diminishing share of their working time to the project (the first group would spend 25% to 50% of their time, the second 10% to 25% and the third would be made up of research scholars invited to contribute as consultants and advisers to various activities within the programme). In the present state of affairs, this now well-established "network" formula is the only one,

despite its known limitations, to offer any real possibilities of collaboration by a research population that is both large in number and widely dispersed (geographically, ideologically and with regard to their own areas of interest).

The main research theme selected is fundamental, varied extremely wide in scope and naturally multidisciplinary (in order to involve research scholars with different interests and disciplines). The danger of juxtaposing dispersed subjects is thus very real, but one to be expected in any activity of this kind. One must try systematically to reduce any negative effects.

The central role of the state in the issue of development

Our basic assumption is that all development problems crystalize around the question of the State. Any analysis of the functioning of society must necessarily include an analysis of the State, whether it is from a political angle (elites and hegemonic groups...) or an economic angle (organization of production and utilization of surplus, i. e. the relationship between agricultuer and industry...), whether society is viewed from the inside (national policies) or from the point of view of its integration within the world system (whether sub-ordinate relations and, if so, whether these are accepted or conflictual). The State was chosen because it is the only topic capable of constituting the linch-pin without which the various aspects of the problematic (rural development policies, industrialization strategies, national political life, external relations) would be nothing more than a series of separate programmes incapable of being integrated within a coherent whole.

This is a document of the United Nation University research programme on "African Perspectives". The Programme Co-Ordinator, Samir Amin, outlines the framework of the intended research in this document.

The title "Nation-building or transnationalization"? has been chosen deliberately to provoke discussion and to launch the debate. It suggests that the striking feature of our time is the attempt by Third World State, who have inherited an economy and a type of society moulded into extreme dependency by colonial and semi-colonial domination, to build (or re-build themselves into national State. By that we mean that they are trying to control their own development/modernization by organizing the control of accumulation for a national purpose. This implies that they are trying to: (i) assume control over the labour power (particularly by organizing agricultural development policies designed to ensure the reproduction of the labour power); (ii) control their natural resources (through nationalization and through the technological and financial control necessary for their exploitation); (iii) exercise authority over their financial means; (iv) control the commodity market (by protecting their domestic market and trying to obtain access to foreign markets; (v) control sectoral technologies applied to industrial branches.

In other words, the question could have been framed as follows: Is the surplus extracted from agriculture and the exploitation of natural resources marshalled in order to allow for nationally controlled accumulation, even if within a context of interdependence (and not self-sufficiency, or in the absence of such control, does it contribute merely to transnational accumulation on a world scale? In the first case, nation-building predominates, in the second it is the trends towards transnationalization that predominate, although concrete reality may well lie somewhere between these two extremes.

Thus the programme has to answer the following question: Are the African States about to succeed in completing their nation-building process or are they in a position where it is impossible to do so and therefore obliged to integrate within the process of transnationalization of the world?

2. Explicitly or implicitly there are two contending schools of thought on this subject:

The first argues that the Third World is well on the way to attaining the status of a full partner within the world system, the NIEO and OPEC's victory in 1973-74 marking the qualitative transition. This argument does not imply that there is no recognition of the fact that inequalities in the process do exist and that, consequently, some States may be unable to assert themselves in this manner. These would be obliged to accept and integrate within the process of transnationalization, through a continuing and export-led development based on traditional agricultural and mineral goods or possibly even on new industrial goods for export, relying on the comparative advantage of undervalued manpower and natural resources (export processing zones...). Such a development could not be harnessed, in the sense that it could never become independent from the strategies of the multinationals. In such cases one should speak of transnationalization in so far as the municipal State does not control the five above mentioned processes but operates merely as a local authority with the function of channelling the transfer surplus from the periphery to the centres. Furthermore, this theory does not deny that the general interdependence between national States can exist between unequal partners, but there is nothing new in this for if Brazil is not the United States then France is not Japan, either.

The second school of thought claims that the whole project of setting up national States in the Third World today is bound to fail. Those States who would choose this path would gradually find themselves obliged to change course and to integrate within the system of transnationalization. The shortcomings of the socialist experiences in Africa (Nasser's Egypt, African socialisms in the sixties — Mali, Ghana and the seventies — Congo, Benin, Tanzania, Madagascar) and sometimes their failure as well as the "populist" explosions are supposed to prove the impossibility

of the national States in the Third World.

It will be up to the programme, as it develops, to provide more meaningful answers to these questions or to put new ones, but avoiding the suspicion of being abstract or general as is the case with the current debate.

In order to be more concrete we must look both at the specific aspects of the problematics of development in Africa and, at the same time, make a global analysis of trends in world relations. What we are suggesting below are not answers to these earlier questions, but merely some working hypotheses as a starting point, which in no way exclude any others.

Everyone will agree that Africa is weak. Its position in the world system is a sub-ordinate one. More so than any other continent, which makes it a prey to greed and constant intervention. Africa has emerged from a particularly destructive past (the slave trade, colonization...); it has to grapple with enormous present economic (lagging far behind any other continent), political, social and cultural (linguistic alienation...) problems. The continent is divided into fifty States, many of which are fragile and ethnically and linguistically highly fragmented.

Having stated the obvious, the originality of our project becomes clearer when we emphasize the specific nature of the development of Africa within the world system, on this basis, focus on the particular aspects of the possible direction of this development in the immediate future (i.e. Africa's possible responses to external pressures and to the internal contradictions arising from these external pressures).

(i) The approach must necessarily be multidisciplinary and even deliberately immersed in political and cultural considerations.

(ii) It will, to be sure, be necessary to pursue and deepen some sectoral economic analyses. But beyond, what must be done

is to ensure that these analyses interact into a consistent whole.

(iii) It cannot be a question of analyzing specific aspects of African societies as such (with a culturalist bias), but to show how the general laws governing the functioning of the world system operate in a particular way because of these specific aspects.

(iv) There is no question either of using some general premises about trends in the world system and to fit Africa into them at all costs.

As a starting assumption, three closely intertwined areas could be singled out as Africa's specific weaknesses, i.e.:

(i) The predominant, weak and fragmented nature of the rural economy, typified by:

The preponderance — South of the Sahara — of land tenure systems older than the private appropriation by latifundistas or by modern farmers, hence the specific nature of the problematics in the State/peasant relationship (one of the basic research topics discussed below);

Particularly low agricultural productivity (example: almost total lack of animal-drawn farming).

Rural societies in Africa are profoundly marked by these two main features, which in turn calls for a critique of conventional "Africanist" ethnology. These weaknesses also explain the difficulties and failures of various experimental "modernization" projects in rural areas, the very long list of which include: administrative type "advisory/extension services" operations; attempts to establish "co-operatives" and their relationship with the notables and with merchant capital; modernization projects through private appropriation by agribusiness multinationals; huge irrigation projects, which only serve to throw doubt upon the adequacy of the intensive "Asiatic" irrigation methods and the highly mechanized "American" or "Soviet" type irrigation systems.

(ii) The backwardness of industrialization, even of the Latin

American model of import substitution and/or the type of exports of the newly industrialized countries of East Asia. All analysts agree upon the poor competitiveness of Africa in all industrial fields (with the exception of mining enclaves).

(iii) The markedly high degree of cultural, ideological and political alienation in the continent, to which is undoubtedly linked the fragmentary, weak, small and often non-national nature of the States.

The specific weaknesses listed above are not meant to be studied for their own sake but in order to define Africa's rank in the unequal development on a world scale. Here, too, the methodologies for analyzing the relationship between the specific features of different societies and trends in the global development of the world system differ from one school of thought to another. Some see development as taking place in compulsory and successive stages; others take the view that it is always wrong to consider that the structure of groups of countries higher up in the hierarchy constitute the model towards which those who are lower down on the ladder should strive.

Be that as it may, we can agree on the starting hypothesis that, at the present time and in relation to the evolution of the world structural crisis, the following hierarchy is emerging: (i) the two superpowers; actual or declining hegemony?; (ii) a few industrialized countries (such as Germany and Japan) as efficient economically as the United States (predominance of the quaternary sector and exports of capital goods required for production); (iii) Western Europe, with its conventional industries, perhaps more in the process of disintegration than consolidation. Here a distinction is to be drawn between those countries closer to the previous group and those that are stagnant or even declining; (iv) the "semi-industrialized" countries of Latin America and East Asia which, in co-operation with the multinationals, are trying to build up a conventional industrial system. South Africa, which belongs to this groups, has a unique

position in Africa with all the consequences that this involves for Southern Africa; (v) the "rentiers", i.e. those countries whose surplus is invested abroad (the Gulf States); (vi) the remaining countries in the Third World who are, thus, more or less "marginalized".

In this context, there are three groups of countries in Africa:

(i) The "semi-industrialized" countries of the north (Egypt, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia), whose poor competitiveness in comparison with the semi-industrialized countries of Latin America and East Asia places them in a low position within the international division of labour. Nigeria is striving to move into this category, but is still a long way away.

(ii) The "prosperous economies" based either on agriculture (Ivory Coast, Kenya) or on mineral wealth, but whose prosperity cannot conceal the fact that they do not yet possess a competitive industrial system, not even a conventional one.

(iii) The stagnant economies in the process of disintegration (Sahel type countries), so numerous in Africa.

The target for the research programme will be to relate the specific features of the African situation (such as, for instance, those described above) with the adopted assumptions concerning the evolution of the world system, in order to demonstrate the mechanisms of Africa's responses to the challenge of the modern world. These responses are the product of the contradictions operating within the societies in question, the consequence of the interaction between the local base and external pressures. It has been suggested that in order to give substance to this research, provision should be made for four groups of case studies:

(i) attempts to establish an integrated industrial system; their lack of progress and failures in Africa (e.g. Egypt and Algeria);

(Continued on page 24)

INDIA : NEW MOVEMENTS

Gail Omvedt

Ecology-oriented movements are a major part of anti-capitalist struggles not only in Europe and the U. S., but also in third world countries where the environmental and human devastation caused by capitalist development is reaching new heights in India in particular, sections of peasants and labourers fighting for their livelihood on issues of forests, famine and fishing are not only confronting the state and imperialist penetration but also raising new issues of the nature of economic development itself.

Forests for Profit or People?

With India's forest cover down to only 8% according to aerial surveys, deforestation has become an increasingly visible disaster whose results are seen in floods and famines recurring throughout the country. The most immediate effects, however, fall upon local forest dwellers, who are usually either tribals or low-caste Hindus, and it is among them that some of the most militant struggles have developed.

One of the most well-known of these is the Chipko movement in the Uttarkhand area of the Himalayan foothills, in which aroused peasants have stood to protect trees with their own bodies ("chipko" means "to hug" in Hindi) to prevent contractors from cutting them. The movement is now ten years old. It has not only helped to preserve some of the ravaged Himalayan forests and given inspiration to similar movement elsewhere, but has also articulated principles that are becoming increasingly relevant to wider movements in India —

** that control over forests should rest not with the state but the local community;

** that scientists and experts, who up to now have mainly legitimized the state's decisions as "scientific forestry" while the real ecology issues have been raised by peoples' movements, should learn to serve the people;

** that an alternative form of development must be sought, which unlike the destructive rule of the market is based on technology which allows for ecological harmony and local self-reliance.

While the original Gandhian leadership of the movement tended to be reformist and personalistic in style — sometimes ready to see Indira Gandhi as a kind of "good king" above the "wicked" forest officials — in recent years a more militant youth section has emerged which is moving towards a synthesis of Gandhism and Marxism. This group, the Uttarkhand Sangarsh Vahini ("Struggle Brigade"), has organized campaigns against mining and alcoholism as well as tree cutting, and calls for linking up single issues with the entire process of exploitation which destroys both the environment and the cultural traditions of the people.

"It is the relationship among human beings which determines the relationship between humans and forests", say Vahini activists.

Coming out of a vastly different tradition but organizing on similar themes is the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM or Jharkhand Liberation Front), which was formed in the heavily tribal region of south Bihar in 1973, about the time the Chipko movement was getting going. Tribals in this region, which is one of the most backward in India yet marked by oppressive enclaves of mining and modern steel plants, have been demanding a separate Jharkhand province since the 1930s. Their reasoning is simple: the Jharkhand area provides steel, some heavy industry and valuable minerals for all-India use and for export, yet the factories and mines are controlled by outsiders and resources are sucked out while local lands and people remain impoverished.

The JMM began to take up militant struggle — often with tribals arming themselves with bows and other traditional weapons —

against bureaucrats and moneylenders, and began to oppose dam-building project and other efforts to "exploit" local resources. In 1978-79 they began a tree-cutting campaign, with massive rallies and individual cutting down of teak plantations which had been brought in by a World Bank sponsored program at the expense of the sal tree, centre of their economic and cultural life. Here as well militant clashes with the police occurred, and brutal firings often resulted in dozens of deaths.

What does tree-cutting have to do with tree-hugging? The same issue of local human needs versus commercial needs is there. The "social forestry" carried on by the Indian government and being backed by international agencies emphasizes the planting of commercial trees like teak and eucalyptus, which aside from lumber and profits for rich farmers, gives nothing to local people — who are used to and demand indigenous mixed-forests that provide shade and fodder and whose leaves, roots, bark, fruit and nuts may be as useful as the lumber itself. "Teak is the exploiters', sal is ours" say the Jharkhandis. And their campaign resulted in, for the first time, a World Bank sponsored program being called to a halt.

Irrigation: Dams and Development

Opposition to dams itself raises crucial issues about the form of capitalist development in India. Major irrigation projects, along with high yielding seeds, provision of bank capital and fertilizer have been central to efforts to create capitalist agricultural development. But, while dams have certainly provided electricity and have helped raise India's irrigated area from 18% to 30%, they have often resulted in localized problems of waterlogging and salination, they have failed in significant cases at flood control (south Bengal has been plagued with floods this year in spite of the much heralded Damodar Valley project),

and they have actually intensified uneven development since the majority dry areas remain almost untouched.

A good example is Maharashtra state south of Bombay. Here, in the apparently lush irrigated river valleys, sugar cane and other cash crops have provided a base for a new class of kulak farmers, who have used control over "cooperative" sugar factories to accumulate political power. The factory controlled by state chief minister Vasantdada Patil, for instance, is said to be the largest in Asia with a 7500 ton/day crushing capacity.

But thousands of acres are being lost to waterlogging, while crop productivities are falling even in these central areas — sugarcane yields, for instance, are sinking from 60 to 80 tons per acre to 30 to 40 in ten years. And steadily declining rainfall due partly to the complete deforestation of the coastal mountains has left nearby dry areas even worse off than before.

Poor peasants from these areas have migrated for several decades to Bombay and elsewhere for work, and a new wave of struggle was set off in this kulak-dominated area in 1982-3 when thousands of textile workers returned to the villages during their historic strike. In Khanapur area of Sangli district, these workers helped their rural poor kin, peasants and agricultural labourers, to form a new organization called Mukti Sangarsh (Liberation Struggle") which began a series of demonstrations, conferences, satyagrahas and road-blockings over demands for drought relief.

Peasant struggles have in fact accompanied India's development program from the beginning. But until recently these have mainly been either peasants whose land was to be lost for dam projects demanding good alternative land, or poor peasants and landless demanding government work projects as an immediate relief from famine. Now a new trend can be seen. While forest area tribal peasants are moving towards struggles to oppose big dam construction entirely, the rural poor in areas like Khanapur are demanding that government relief projects should be not simply

"make-work" road-building, but should focus on small irrigation projects that will help agricultural development. Unlike big dams, such small banding and percolation tanks are much more susceptible to local control and planning.

In Khanapur, after only 8 inches of rain during the entire monsoon resulted in failures of several crops, over 6000 peasants and the labourers organized by Mukti Sangarsh brought their bullocks and cows onto the road, demanding that the police either arrest them along with all their animals, or else provide free fodder and a longterm scientific alternative to drought conditions. The free fodder was won, but as it is apparent that the bourgeois state was no real answer to uneven development and drought, Mukti Sangarsh is now going ahead with its own plans for a 10-day 'science fair' in which activists of the Peoples, Science Movement (P S M) will join local peasants and labourers in exhibitions and programs dealing with water, health and superstition — with the purpose of eventually developing an alternative "peoples' plan" for development of the entire district.

The PSM is one of many new popular science and health organizations developing in India. The oldest of these, the Kerala Shastriya Sahitya Parishad, won an important victory last year when it successfully forced the government to stop the building of a small dam which would have flooded Silent Valley, a unique tropical rain forest. Others include the science workers movement in Bengal and the Patritic Peoples' Science and Technology (PPST) group in Madras, which critiques the whole model of "westernized" science and seeks indigenous sources of strength.

These organizations have involved themselves in extensive rural tours using slide shows, exhibits and lectures to spread rational thinking and alternate technologies such as solar cookers and improved biogas plants; in anti-superstition campaigns through songs and street theater; and in poster exhibits on issues such as atomic power and "Hiroshima Day." Now, as they become increasingly involved with popular movements, they

are also learning from the people as well as helping to deepen their struggles.

Fishermen, Christians and Socialism

Just as agricultural production is hitting some new snags, so is another imperialistically promoted food alternative — fishing. In the southwest state of Kerala, long a center of the industry, increased commercialization has resulted in large mechanized boats displacing traditional fishing communities and in less fish consumption by Indians as a whole, since the best fish and shrimp are increasingly going for export.

Even more, while the industry has expanded since the late 1960s is and looked to as an important source of foreign exchange, in Kerala the average catch has actually fallen every year since 1975. Local fishermen blame the trawling technique, in which huge nets are used to scrape up practically everything from the water. And in fact Norway, whose "aid" program was responsible for promoting the trawling technique in India in the 1950s, has banned it from its own sea waters since 1936!

Thus the banning of trawling during the monsoon spawning season was the central demand of a 50-day agitation of the fishing community in May-June, in which thousands of people picketed, held rallies, courted arrests and blocked roads and railways. Along with its challenge to the prevailing pattern of development — once again the argument is that traditional techniques, upgraded and local community control can actually promote better overall growth — a striking feature of the movement has been its leadership: a group of radicalized young nuns and priests defying the church hierarchy to involve themselves in the local fishing union.

Most fishermen in south India, as well as many other sections of the rural poor, are Christians. For some years Christian youth have been involved in their struggles and in the process turning towards some form of socialism. What is new is that for the first time

this is accompanied by open polarization in the church and the emergence of a conscious Christian socialist trend, influenced by Latin American liberation theology.

"The established Church has been catering for the elite and the rich; its politics have always been the politics of the ruling class," argues Sister Alice, a young nun who joined a protest fast in May. Instead she has argued for the politics of the people in struggle, and asserted that "Communists are the genuine humanists."

The fisherman's union, like the Chipko movement, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and the Khanapur peasants organization, all represent struggles growing from the grass-roots and raising fundamental questions about India's entire development process. And, though the leadership is not always sufficiently sensitive to the issue, they are also raising issues of women's liberation, since an increasing role of of peasant and tribal women and even young educated women activists can be seen in the struggles. This is particularly striking in

Kerala, where women have tended to stay away from politics and the fishing community in particular not to mention the Catholic Church has been heavily patriarchal.

Such movements are moving towards Marxism, but a Marxism merged indeed to local traditions, whether these are Gandhian, tribal or even Indian Christian. They are ready to ally with traditional left parties and unions, but show a wary concern for their own autonomy. In fact they tend to be also suspicious of left parties, which they feel have been equally caught in India's degraded politics of elections. Jharkhand leaders argue that low castes and tribals have never gotten a chance for leadership in the left parties while the high castes have kept a monopoly of Marxism, and Kerala Christian radicals argue that "The Communist Parties have been sucked in the vortex of power politics" and have become "mere technicians of mass manipulation."

Whether the new movements will produce an effective new kind of liberation politics still remains

to be seen. It is clear that they are vigorously anticapitalist, conscious of the devastation caused by the market economy imposed by imperialist development. Yet their call for community control, alternative technology, and a new type of development also challenges both the actual practice of existing post-revolutionary societies and (something the activists in India know much better) the bureaucratized local Communist parties. Perhaps it is not accidental that tribal organizations like the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha use green and red flags.

NATION — . . .

(Continued from page 21)

(ii) some of the liberal experiments and an analysis of their current crisis (e.g. farming countries such as the Ivory Coast and Kenya, mineral producers such as Zaire and Zambia);

(iii) some cases of "marginalized" economies (e.g. Sahel countries);

(iv) finally, Southern Africa as a whole, which may be directly affected by events in South Africa.

(To be continued)

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