

*Kumari Jayawardena on racism and the plantation workers*

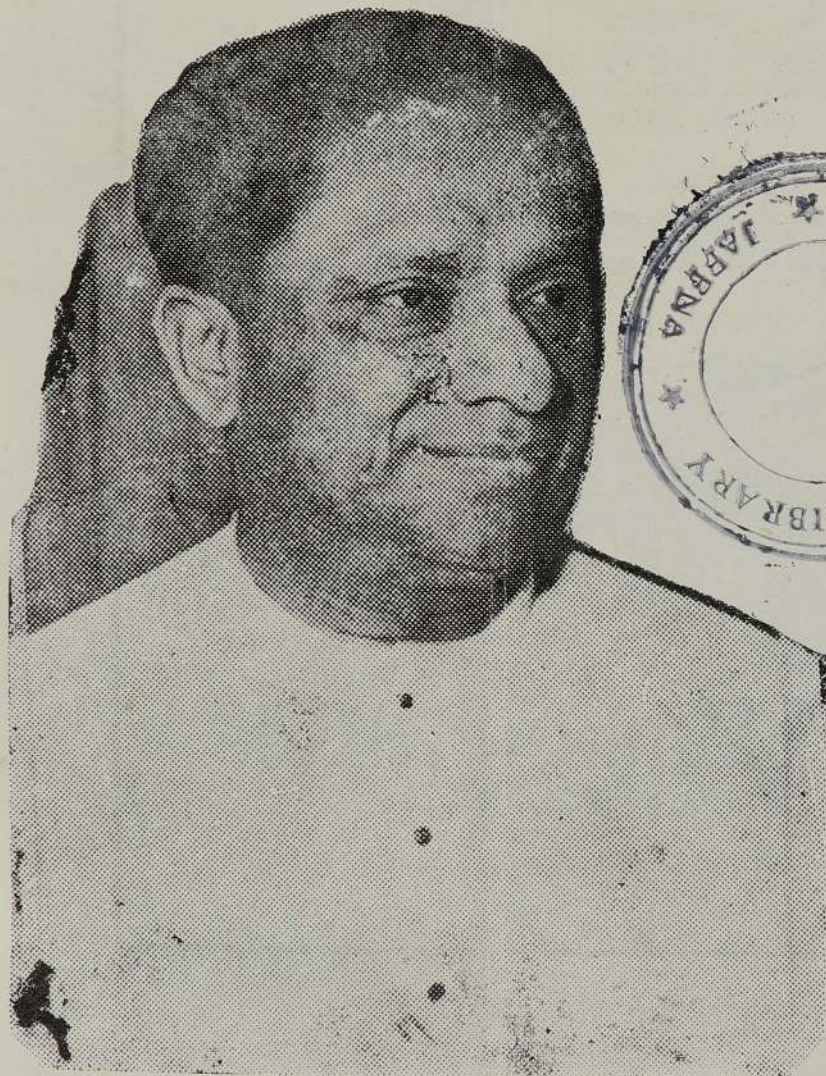


LANKA

# GUARDIAN

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PM's challenge  
to  
India, Indira



- \* Sri Lanka's 'confrontation modes' — Mervyn de Silva
- \* The Allen drama
- \* The New Opposition
- \* JVP's 'MasalaVadai' line

## PLANTATIONS : SLEEPING GIANT WAKES

— Laksiri Fernando

EXCLUSIVE

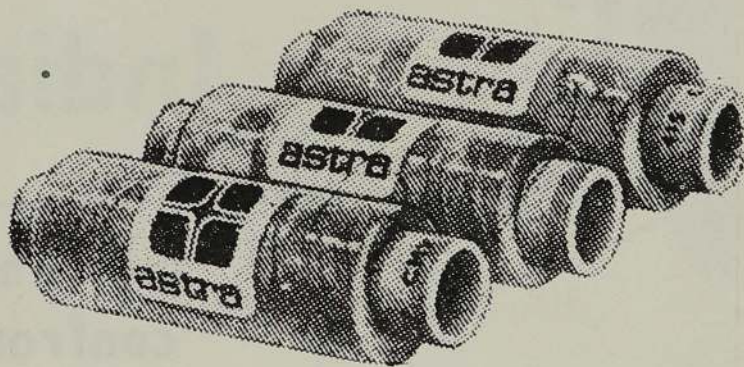
Wallerstein on Social Science

\* \*

Tara Coomaraswamy on Lenin and Luxemburg



**With compliments.**



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## BAN ON PARTIES

THE DEMAND for the removal of the post-July ban on the JVP and NSSP is not only growing but has emerged as a central issue in a burgeoning oppositional movement that the LG suggested may mature into a Sri Lankan version of Pakistan's and BD's Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD). The other issues are lifting the emergency (certainly in the South) and the announcement of general election.

The SLFP was not present at the very well attended and enthusiastic NEW TOWN HALL meeting on the 24th but Opposition leader Anura Bandaranaike has spoken on the matter of the JVP and NSSP ban many times in Parliament. But the rest were all there with two well known monks on the platform. The meeting was chaired by Prof. Carlo Fonseka and addressed by Vijaya Kumaratunge, Athauda Seneviratne, Prins Gunasekera, N. Shanmugathan et al. Interestingly, there were also representatives from pro-JVP and pro-NSSP trade unions.

## BASELESS SUSPICION

IN CHINA, President JR has taken the opportunity to contradict once again the rumour that Sri Lanka is offering bases to the U.S. Although he did not mention the US, it is no secret that for many years now the

Trinco Tank Farm deal has been widely interpreted as a move in the direction of extending special facilities to the US navy.

President JR added: "We do not seek military aid... We are in the non-aligned movement and intend to follow its principles strictly..."

## TROUBLED TEA

INDIA is back in the world tea market sooner than we thought. India's concern for the domestic tea-drinker (half a dozen cups a day) was widely read as a pre-election move by a consumer-conscious Gandhi government. So not many Sri Lankan brokers expected such a quick return. Anyway boom times are over.

And that is a troubling thought. In her hard-hitting statement on the UNP's decision to reverse our policy on Israel, Mrs. Bandaranaike mentioned the Arab world as our biggest tea buyer. She might have described it as the Islamic world too for the heavy tea-buying area in fact stretches from Pakistan to Morocco. Pakistan is not Arab but the Zia regime which is pursuing a strong policy of Islamization is fiercely anti-Israel. One reason for this is that the Gulf region is a lucrative source of income in many ways for Pakistani businessmen, technicians and workers.

## Feminist Militancy

I salute the women's groups that defied the police and successfully held a militant demo and a rally on International Women's Day in Colombo. Dayan's report of the events (LG March 15, 1984) conveys the militant mood of our feminists which shines like a ray of hope on an otherwise dreary political horizon with the working class movement in the doldrums. I salute the women again for their brave show of solidarity with Nirmala. In today's political context Nirmala means many things to progressive Sri Lankans whether they are Tamils, Muslims or Sinhalese.

It is my fervent hope that the feminists will sustain the initiative and move towards a broader campaign for Nirmaia's freedom — a campaign which will signify the unity of all forces opposed to all forms of oppression.

**N. Shanmugaratnam**

Institute of Developing Economies (Aija Keizai Kenkyusho), Tokyo, Japan.

## Best Magazine

I have been a reader of your magazine since 1982. Now I am in Ampara. So there is no place to buy a copy of it. I think there may be several readers who face this inconvenience. So I would like to convey this news to you in order to take necessary steps.

To my mind this is the best magazine I have ever found in Sri Lanka, discussing current issues in correct perspective.

**Rev. B. Wimalawansa**

Koknahara Maha Vidyalyaya, Koknahara, Ampara.

## The Wheel

An engaging trait of Touchstone is his extraordinary penchant for dotting every i and crossing every t. Thus: I... can't swear to the

(Continued on page 24)

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## CONTENTS

News Background	3
May Day in the Plantations	9
Lessons of the Estate Strike	10
100 years of Ethnic Conflict - (5)	12
Terror in 1984	15
Restructuring Social Science	17
Responsibility in the Caribbean	19
Shantikumar	21
Marxist Theories of Imperialism	22

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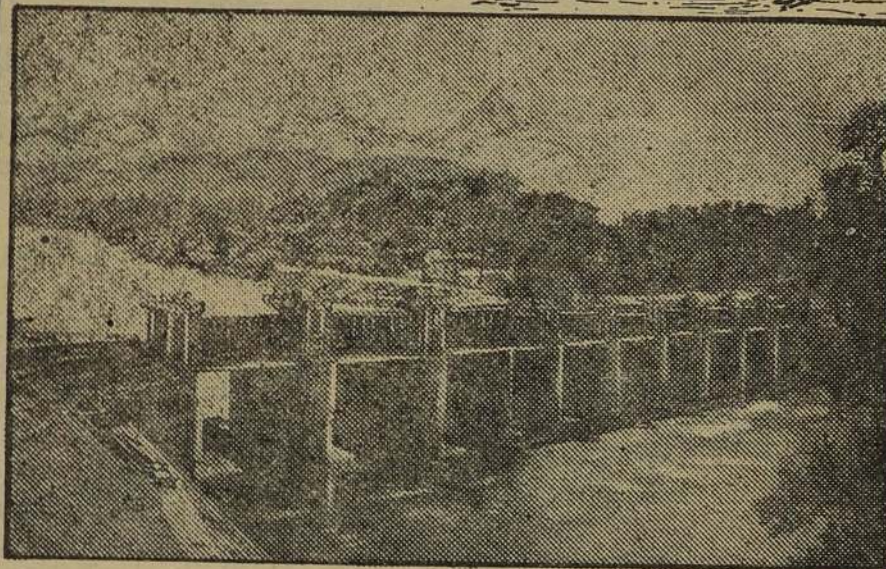
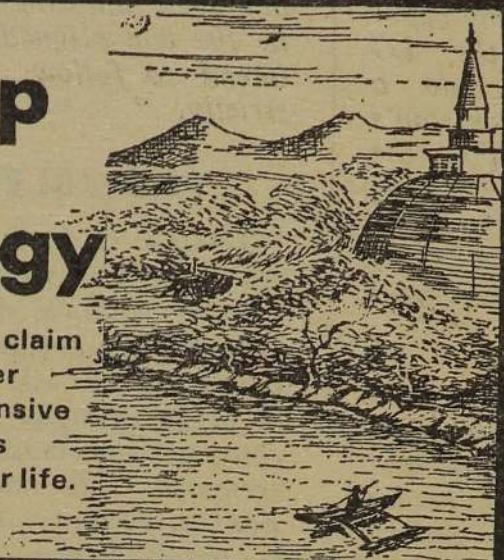
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COVER PICTURE: Member of Desha Vimukthi Plantation Workers' Union addressing estate workers who were subject to threats by 'junta squads' during the April strike.

# to link up with technology

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# The unresolved ethnic issue and "confrontation modes"

Mervyn de Silva

The most sleepy and dull Parliament and the most ineffectual Opposition in the island's history suddenly burst into life on two consecutive days last week. Such is the magical, energising effect of the Sri Lankan crisis.

In July 1977, the unpopularity of an exhausted administration and the quirk of the British first-past-the-post electoral system helped the UNP to win a commanding four-fifths majority. The representation in parliament was also a gross distortion of the balance of forces in the country. The secessionist TULF became the main opposition party and its leader, Mr. Amirthalingam rather than former Premier Sirimavo Bandaranaike, SLFP leader, was elevated to the post of Leader of the Opposition.

But it was not merely numbers that reduced the house to a dreary assembly whose unexciting routine business was received with a tired yawn by the voiceless electorate outside. All the ablest and experienced politicians had been swept away at the polls. The cock-a-hoop UNP dominated the House, drowning any Opposition voice that dared to criticise or challenge it. While the UNP was soon infected with the disease diagnosed by Senator Fulbright as 'the arrogance of power', the enfeebled Opposition, except perhaps for the TULF when it was championing its own cherished, if sectarian, cause slowly sank into a minor functional role that was necessary for the ceremony of a Parliament already "devalued" in 1978 by a Gaullist constitution which centralised power in an executive Presidency.

Came another July, 1983. And the aftermath of 'black July' has been so all-pervasive, so life-giving

in a paradoxical way, that Sri Lanka's gravest crisis has invaded parliament.

By October however, the TULF (15 MP's) had withdrawn from the House refusing to take an oath renouncing separatism. So an opposition of 10 faces a government of over 140.

Yet it was just a handful of this once frightened and beleaguered battalion that kept parliament, debating the ritual monthly emergency extension, open till the early hours of May 25th. It took on the government again the next day, provoking frontbenchers into bursts of indignation and unparalleled and strange histrionics while the once mighty regiment of backbenchers listened timidly.

## Israel

The first issue was Israel. It was Mrs. B. who seized the issue with the understandable glee of an Opposition politician who spots a government's exposed flank. The issue also fitted the personality perfectly.

In this country and abroad Mrs. B. is totally identified with non-alignment. That is history and neither the UNP nor its re-write men in the agit-prop department can do anything about it. It was Mrs. B. who closed the Israel mission. It was she who made the 'opening' to the Arab world by her unflagging support for the Palestinian cause. And it was this support which made Sri Lanka one of the most highly favoured non-Islamic countries in the eyes of the Arab-Islamic world.

But the relationship was not just warmly symbolic. It had substance as Arab aid, concessionary arrangements on oil, remittances from

migrant workers and Arab banks demonstrate. So it is a Moslem issue (the local Moslem community, traditional pro-UNP) but much more than a Moslem issue. It is an economic issue — a question of tangible economic advantages, and therefore a national issue. Mrs. B. and other opposition speakers were quick to focus attention on the fact that a large majority of the migrants were Sinhalese. For the first time in our history, a segment of the Sinhalese community, from the lower-middle social strata, was allowed access to employment abroad. No wonder the UNP was nervous and tetchy as this point was driven home. (SEE SIRIMA ON ISRAEL)

It is also an international issue underscoring once more that 'Black July' internationalised Sri Lanka's sectarian strife.

The LSSP leader Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, with characteristic skill, exposed these international and foreign policy ramifications in his statement. Israel, the most highly subsidised state in the world, means a projection of US power into the Indian ocean and Sri Lanka. (See COLVIN ON ISRAEL)

The government is obsessed with a threat it identifies as "international terrorism". The Arab-Israeli conflict has also been a product of what is internationally described, particularly by the Reagan administration, as "global terrorism" and "state-sponsored terrorism". Again, it was Mrs. B. who warned the country that the establishment of an 'Israeli interests section' in the US embassy will only attract all the violence generated by the Arab-Israeli conflict to an island already witnessing the dangerous spread of

(Continued on page 4)

# P. M. ON INDIA, INDIRA

SRI LANKA has not provoked India in any way but India on the other hand had provoked Sri Lanka by releasing the 25 members of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front who had claimed responsibility for kidnapping the Allens and failing to hand them over to Sri Lanka. Prime Minister R. Premadasa said in Parliament yesterday. The Prime Minister who was reiterating the remarks he had made early yesterday morning when he wound up the debate on the extension of the emergency was responding to the speech made by the Leader of Opposition Anura Bandaranaike during the debate on the leasing out of the Trincomalee oil tank farm which followed.

Mr. Premadasa said that he stood by every word that he had said. He would not only challenge the Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi to invade Sri Lanka if she wished but would ask the Opposition Leader to convey his challenge to India. He charged the SLFP with being subservient to India.

## The unresolved . . .

(Continued from page 3)

violence, of all types, in its own society in the past few years.

The L.G. would be the last to encourage HAIGSPEAK, even in the Orwellian year '84. But the former US Secretary of State, General Alexander Haig did manufacture the term "confrontation mode" in striving to explain superpower rivalries. The debate on Israel and the furious follow-up exchange in parliament on India, (SEE PM on INDIA) indicates that the unresolved ethnic issue (and the talks at the Roundtable Conference stand on wobbly feet) is pushing Sri Lanka, step-by-step into various confrontation modes:

(a) Government versus armed Tamil militants who enjoyed Tamilnadu patronage.

Mr. Bandaranaike in his speech had said earlier in the day that he did not know what the implications of the Prime Minister's "unofficial declaration of war" on India was. Mr. Bandaranaike said that he agreed on some points with the Prime Minister. On certain issues India had taken up position which had hurt Sri Lanka. The Prime Minister had appeared to speak with a great deal of emotion and some degree of sincerity. But yet he wished, the Opposition Leader said, that the Prime Minister would not be taken seriously because he dreaded to think what the consequences would be. Mr. Premadasa had said that 15 million people were ready to die but he did not think any Sri Lankan wished to die in a war instigated against India.

Mr. Premadasa replying said Mr. Bandaranaike had spoken in his absence and he wished to reply to him. It had been in 1965 that the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation had taken over the oil tank farm from British interests, but

(b) Sri Lanka and India, which supported a 'political settlement' via invited mediation but sees the chances of a negotiated settlement receding fast.

(c) Arab vs. Israel — the diplomatic, political struggle and the 'secret war'.

(d) India vs. the US, if US diplomacy which officially supports a 'political settlement' is actually pursuing two-track tactics, and one track is perceived by Delhi as seriously detrimental to basic Indian regional interests.

Obviously, Mrs. Gandhi's conversations with Vice-President Bush was aimed at mobilising US support for a 'political settlement' (track 1) and a US effort at friendly persuasion of President J R when he visits Washington next month.

the SLFP had not allowed the UNP to lease it out saying that if it were given to anybody else India would get upset. But why should India worry. The SLFP had today become India's mouthpiece. They should be ashamed of themselves. He would repeat every word he had spoken in the previous debate, the Prime Minister said.

At this stage there was a heated cross talk between the Prime Minister and Industries Minister Cyril Mathew on one side and Mr. Bandaranaike and Attanagalla MP Laksman Jayakody on the other.

**Mr. Bandaranaike:** I can't help it if you were not here when I spoke. Please don't twist my words. You have been misinformed.

**Mr. Jayakody:** You will bring this country to the brink of war. You will ruin this country.

**Mr. Mathew: (to the SLFP)** You are stooges of India.

Continuing the Prime Minister said that the Opposition Leader had earlier said that India's southern naval command had been shifted to Trivandrum and within 10 to 15 minutes they would invade Sri Lanka. He would challenge India to do so without using northern terrorists to destabilise the country.

The Prime Minister accused Madras of double standards. There was substantial US investment in Tamilnadu but when the Trincomalee oil tank farm had been given out **The Hindu** had written that the lease had been made to a firm with US links. It was only when Sri Lanka did a thing of this nature that it was bad. Mr. Premadasa also said that the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty made no provision for military aid but considerable military aid was pouring in from the Soviet Union. The Soviet Defence Minister Marshal Ustinov had recently pledged Soviet support to India in case India had any trouble. Similarly Sri Lanka too should have the right to ask for aid from any quarter without being exposed to humiliating remarks from India, he said.

— (ISLAND)

# Eelam's long arm and 'stunt' politics

Sri Lanka is so full of instant experts that it is now importing Israeli expertise. Actually, a phenomenon like "EELAM" movement and its by-product "terrorism" (or, as President JR termed it "the guerrilla war in the north" in his 'India Today' interview) can be grasped by any thoughtful student of the international press and the political processes in the Third World, and the world at large.

Commenting on Mr. Vaikunthavasan's sneak entry into the U. N.

building and finally his one-minute speech to the General Assembly, the L. G. of March 15, 1979, headlined a brief article "Internationalising the Tamil Issue".

"It was a stunt, but what a stunt! Grabbing a platform is an old weapon in the propagandist's armoury... Mr. Vaikunthavasan did it. The wire services did the rest....." we wrote then, adding:

"London is the centre. But the long arm of 'Eelam' is now reaching

out to the US, Canada, Africa, Australia, India.....in fact to wherever there is a Tamil community".

Having described the fund-raising and propagandist activities of the "Eelam" movement, the L. G. said: "The well-organised 'stunt' is the other technique. Publicity is the chief objective. . .Will the time come when Eelam's long arm reaches out to an airplane on an international flight....?"

## THE ALLEN AFFAIR

In an instinctive bow to current fashions in movie titles, the tense seven-day drama of the kidnapped American couple is plainly styled "The Allen Affair". As the drama ended however the Sri Lankan public has been left in a state of wild, exhilarating confusion and the government, though much relieved, intrigued and worried.

The trouble is that nobody seems sure whether it was planned as a straight political thriller or as a complex tale of international intrigue, involving Washington, Delhi, Madras and what Cabinet spokesman Mr. Anandatissa de Alwis likes to call with Reaganite abandon, "International terrorism and Marxist subversion".

Whoever wrote the script and whatever his intentions. His plot got maddeningly skewed, in the process of production. As a result there was a stunning transformation in the type-cast roles of the main players. To the Sinhalese Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, whatever his own star image at home, is the archetypal villain safe in his remote Tamilnadu castle masterminding all the terrorist activities of the "Eelam" separatist rebels to whom he affords patronage and sanctuary. Half-way through the Allen affair, M G R was hailed as a hero by a contrite Sri Lankan audience.

The "Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Liberation Front" committed an incredible blunder in its First Ransom note by asking the government to hand over fifty million rupees in gold to the Tamilnadu Chief Minister and to guarantee safe conduct to twenty of their imprisoned comrades to Madras. The E P R L F could hardly have expected MGR'S response to be so completely off cue. Just when the Sri Lankan audience was sitting back to relish this blunt, public confirmation of its long-settled suspicions and the "exposure" of the master-criminal by his own "gang" M G R issued a stern warning to the kidnapers. Their action would hurt the interests of Tamils all over the world, said M G R, and alienate "Five crores of Tamils in India".

When the burst of applause from the audience died down, an appreciative government recognised the Tamilnadu Chief Minister as a responsible leader who was obviously prepared to assist Colombo in dealing with the hostage crisis.

By kidnapping two American citizens the "Eelam" Rebels had revealed themselves as "Terrorists" and thus wittingly or unwittingly qualified for inclusion in Mr. Reagan's current campaign against "International Terrorism", American public opinion would swing in Colombo's favour and

even more predictable against those highly educated and quite affluent Tamil expatriate groups who have gradually converted themselves into activist lobbies in America.

In Canada, Britain, France, West Germany, Scandinavia and Australia (all major aid-givers) these lobbies have become the bane of Sri Lankan Embassies. These groups would now face the backlash of public opinion incensed by the kidnapping and the threat to kill Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Allen. **In this manner did Colombo's cheerful logic proceed.**

Besides the timing could not have been more propitious. President Jayewardene meets Mr. Reagan on June.

The hostage crisis and the rapidly alternative Sri Lankan attitudes illustrated the dilemma best. On the one hand, the E P R L F statement exposed Tamilnadu "involvement" to the world (a plus point to Colombo) but at the same time it brought Mrs. Gandhi into the drama and it was the Indian Premier who cracked down on the rebel group whose Madras-based leaders were arrested. At the same time, the international media (and this was also a battle of wits for publicity) gave her the credit for the release of

(Continued on page 21)

# Sirima condemns Israel move

SLFP PRESIDENT Sirima Bandaranaike has described the move to open an "Israeli Interests" section in Colombo at the US Embassy as a slap in the face of the Arab and Islamic community.

## Colvin on Israel

THE LEADER of the LSSP Dr. Colvin R de Silva, in a statement said yesterday "the government's secretive attempt to get on the road to re-establishing diplomatic relations with Israel does not surprise the L.S.S.P. The move accords with the trend of U.N.P. politics.

"The move towards Israel is in fact a part of the Government's larger move away from Non-Alignment, towards alignment with American imperialism, especially in Asia. It is not irrelevant that the Israeli "Centre" is to be located within the U.S.A. Embassy, the USA being Israel's "protecting power" in this matter. It is surely also significant that this move comes on the eve of President J. R. Jayewardene's official state visit to the U.S.A.

"Militarily, Israeli power is also a projection of U.S.A. power in the Middle East. The major anti-imperialist force in the Middle East is the Arab mass, which is also in conflict with Zionism. The L.S.S.P.'s firm participation in the decision of the United Front Government in 1970 to sever diplomatic relations with Israel stemmed principally from that consideration. No reason has arisen in the meantime to change that decision. On the contrary, the behaviour of both U.S.A. imperialism and Israel in the Middle East during this period has amply borne out the correctness of that decision. The alleged needs of the UNP Government's offensive against the Eelamists in the North and East of Sri Lanka do not suffice to displace that decision in any manner.

"The L.S.S.P. condemns this act of the Government and calls upon all progressive forces in Sri Lanka to resist it."

Mrs. Bandaranaike atates, "When Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, SLFP Member of Parliament for Attanagalla asked a question about Israel recently, the Minister of National Security gave an answer that was vague and evasive. Now an official of the US Embassy has confirmed that an "Israeli Interests" section will be established soon in Colombo under what he described as "the protecting power" of the US.

"Whatever the explanations and whichever the quarter they come from, it is clear that the UNP Government has given a slap in the face of the Arab and Islamic community, and the Non-Aligned world.

"Only a very small number of non-aligned member states have diplomatic relations with Israel — a country which has time and time again violated decisions of the

## Lot of gas

The boss of the Singapore-based company which won the Trinco Oil Tank farm contract, Mr. Douglas Miller, has warned that his firm has plans to take legal action against an Indian and a Sri Lankan newspaper. His suit for defamation made headline news in the *DAILY NEWS* which said that he intends to claim the staggering sum of 30 million US dollars, one third the total annual aid receipts from the United States government. Reuter also filed the same story from Singapore.

While Industries Minister Cyril Mathew has stoutly defended the choice of Mr. Miller's firm (he was earlier Managing Director of US Coastal Corporation, an unsuccessful tenderer in the first round) Opposition leader Mr. Anura Bandaranaike said that the Singapore-based firm has three directors "Mr. Miller, Mrs. Miller and a peon". Mr. Sarath Muttetuwegama MP said that the capital is "hardly enough to run a bicycle shop in Singapore".

Another opposition MP commenting on the affair said "it could be a lot of gas ..."

Security Council of the United Nations and has shown scant respect for world opinion or humanitarian considerations. In any event, what the people of Sri Lanka must fully understand is that this step is an open repudiation of a policy adopted by the United Front Government in 1970 and followed for more than 13 years.

"The correctness of the decision taken by my Government is manifestly evident in the large benefits that have accrued to the people of this country, especially in recent years. Now this opportunistic and desperate Government is wantonly risking the loss of those benefits and choosing to insult the countries whose friendship and gratitude, earned by our principled support for the Palestinian and Arab cause against Zionism, brought Sri Lanka those benefits.

"Ministers of this Government, particularly those who claim to be champions of the Sinhala Buddhists often complain that the Sinhala Buddhist youth have few opportunities for working abroad. It is precisely because of our pro-Arab, anti-Zionist policy that well over a lakh of Sri Lankans, the vast majority of them Sinhala Buddhists have found employment in these Arab-Islamic countries.

"The Arab world is our main oil supplier and this fact is all the more important at a time when there is a war in the Gulf. Our Arab oil suppliers have often given us concessions. The Arab world is the biggest buyer of our tea. It has been a source of aid.

"As leader of the SLFP and head of the Government which ordered the closure of the Israeli Mission I denounce this decision which may only lead to bringing the Arab-Israeli conflict and all its violence to our homeland at a time when this Island itself is threatened with so much violence.

"I call on all patriotic forces, regardless of race, creed and political affiliations, to oppose this step which is a blatant attack on the national interests of Sri Lanka and its people."



# THE NEW OPPOSITION

In its comments on the SLMP as well as the embryonic 'MRD phenomenon', the L.G. has pointed to a new mood and momentum among the oppositional masses. The New Opposition is a loose bloc of forces which is distinct from and to the Left of the SLFP, and it converges on issues and occasions rather than functioning as an electoral alliance.

The 4-party bloc which took shape on May Day is one manifestation of this while the Janatha Udgoshana Vyaparaya (Peoples' Agitation Movement) is another. See L.G. May 15th '84). A significant component of the New Opposition, and an important new phenomenon on the current political scene, is a progressive — oriented sector of the Buddhist clergy. Most commentators tend to view 'the clergy' as a monolithic entity, forgetting that, it too is the site of much the same contradiction and conflicts that exist in society at large. Hence the Buddhist clergy, like the Church in most Third World countries, is itself fissured. There are those who have prospered under the UNP administration, while there are others who see their traditional roles and position threatened by the rapid growth of dependent capitalist relations. There are those who are hardcore racists, are committed to violence and maintain a shadowy existence. Finally there are the Bhikkhus who are anti-UNP, have conflicts with the hierarchy who they perceive as being co-opted by the regime (the black Benz bonzes), but being more educated and generally sympathetic to progressive causes at home (July '80 strikers) and abroad, are open to rational persuasion on the Tamil National Question. It is not that there is no chauvinism in their thinking. Rather it is that chauvinism is not their exclusive or even predominant ideology. The 'Pavidi Handa' group, the 'Sinhala

Bala Mandalaya' and the newly formed, Bhikkhu Organization for Humanity are their expression, Prof. Sarachchandra's indictment of the 'New Thuppahism' (first published in English in this journal) is an example of their ideology, and Rev. Madoluwawe Sobitha is their most eloquent spokesman. Anti-UNP-ism is so great, and the blows (physical ones too) they have received at the hands of the regime are so painful, and July '83 has been such an experience, that the emergent thinking suggests that they are beginning to perceive their *main enemy* as the UNP, rather than the Tamils. There is also the growing perception that the UNP is not only the *main* but also the *common enemy*, since it has visited repression on both Sinhalese and Tamils. At the recent New Town Hall meeting of the Peoples' Agitation Movement, Rev. Sobitha openly accused the UNP of active responsibility for July '83, which said was the culmination of the use of thuggery against all oppositional sectors, North and South. Some months earlier, Rev. Sobitha had, in a speech sponsored by the Buddhist Association of Vidyalankara University, said that the Tamil youth had the same problems as the Sinhala youth and more, because (unlike the Sinhalese) they had no chance, since 1948 of voting out the incumbents and replacing it with a regime of their own. The same bhikkhu was also upbraided by a UNP politico who shared the platform with him on another occasion, for praising the USSR's solution of the National Question.

The newly formed Bhikkhu Organization for Humanity had its first Colombo seminar at the Public Library on the 25th. A banner above the stage read: 'Black July — Never Again'. A veteran monk, Ven. Wellawatte

Gnanabhiwasa Thero, said that the 'Sinhala Only' policy was a mistake and a farce, and English had been re-enthroned to the disadvantage of both Sinhala and Tamil. A Resolution passed at the meeting called for a struggle to 'restore lost rights in both the North and South' albeit within the framework of a unitary state.

The ideology of the New Opposition is mixed and volatile, with extreme vacillations. The packed New Town Hall crowd cheered N. Shanmugathan who recounted how the Allen affair had made the U. N. P. look foolish and how the Allens had praised their kidnappers. The same crowd also cheered when Vijaya Kumara-tunge claimed with deadly seriousness that it may have been a Reagan-J. R. plot — his entire evidence for this thesis being that the EPRLF had chosen to kidnap the Allens and feed them, rather than feed a starving striker! But a consensus is growing among the New Opposition, that the National Question is a political one, and needs a political solution along the lines of the B-C Pact, and the UNP is criticized for frustrating it at the time.

Listening to Rev. Sobitha quoting the Jataka stories to excoriate the JSS, a young member of the Centre for Communication and Development (CCD) asked a pertinent question: "Is this the emergence of a Buddhist Khomeini-ism or the birth of a Buddhist Liberation Theology?"

— Dayan Jayatilleka.

# J. V. P. takes 'Masala Vadai' line, rejects devolution

First came the 16 page cyclostyled leaflet addressed to "Sri Lanka's progressive people", shortly after the party had been banned last July. It said that "In the past period, the links that America has with the Eelam movement have been revealed. The Massachusetts State Assembly made a statement in support of Eelam, but Anandatissa de Alwis and Athulathmudali, Ministers of the Jayewardene govt. which attacks India, remain silent on this."

Next was the 18 page, internal statement, also cyclostyled, and issued for the 13th Anniversary of the April 1971 uprising. Entitled 'Time and Tide wait for no man', it was addressed to 'all veterans, activists and members'. Referring to "the communalist movement in the North" and "terrorist activities", it went on shockingly to condemn not only the Roundtable Conference (which is understandable given their exclusion) but also **any attempts at devolution**. It said:

"What is the intention of the RTC that is now on? It is nothing other than the creation in Lanka of a Federal system, behind the backs of the people. In a small country like ours, what is most conducive to the process of social advance is a unitary state system with equal rights for all and without discrimination. If, by means of the RTC, District Councils, Provincial Councils or Regional Councils or a Federal system by any other name is created, then, not only will it not abolish the Eelam movement, but it will give it a filip, and it will grow, as is happening in India which has a Federal setup."

And finally, the May Day Message of the JVP, issued publicly in the form of a printed leaflet, accused the Govt. of

"Giving various concessions to the TULF which is agitating and fighting for the division of the country and the setting up of a separate Eelam;

having overt and covert political transactions with the TULF and becoming subject to that party; permitting 6 of the 7 members of its Politbureau and the entire leadership of the TELF to escape to Tamil Nadu; allowing foreign leaders and diplomats to interfere in the internal affairs of the country; . . . having secret talks with foreign diplomats with a view to creating a Federal system under the guise of setting up Provincial Councils and Quota systems; setting up a Federal system by conspiring to foist on the masses the aforementioned agreements by way of the RTC and thereby pushing the country further and further to the brink of division; welcoming the TULF (which agitated for the division of the country and set up a separate armed unit for violent activities towards this goal) lovingly at the RTC and preparing to grant it State Ministerships; permitting foreign organizations like Redd Barna and SEDEC (and local organisations connected to them) which lend active support to separatist movements, to function unhindered at the same time that the JVP, which opposes separatism is proscribed; becoming a prisoner of the strategy of the TULF and thereby bringing the country to the brink of division and also handing over the North and East to the proposed Tamil State in Tamil Nadu (sic) . . ."

Of course the roots of JVP racism go way back to the infamous lecture on 'Indian Expansionism'. A new leaflet issued by JVP dissidents goes so far as to allege that before 1971 Wijeweera had said that "the alien Tamils would be killed after the revolution." (The JVP's pre '71 attitude to the Tamils was discussed in '1971, the JVP and the falsification of history' in L.G. vol. 1 No. 18 Jan 15, 1979.)

The party made something of a self criticism and came out, in the post '77 period with what it claimed was a Leninist stand on the Tamil National Question, but the major flaws and dangers in their position was quickly pointed out by observers (See 'Tamils:

Wijeweera challenged' — by J. Uyangoda L.G. Vol. 1 No. 11 Oct 1, 1978.) Columnists in this journal steadily monitored and made theoretical critiques of the JVP position throughout. (See 'JVP: need for self criticism' in Vol. 4 No. 11 Oct 1, 1981 and 'JVP since '77' in Vol. 4 No. 13 No. 15, 1981.)

By mid 1982, these theoretical errors had given way to a resurgence of fully fledged chauvinism. This was particularly pronounced during the '82 October Presidential Election campaign. For a detailed critique, see 'JVP and the National Question' Vol. 5 No. 22 Oct. 15, 1982.) Though some fellow travellers justified the JVP position even at that time as a 'strategic silence' (not to be confused with a 'deafening silence') and a 'low profile', this years May Day Message is clearly a direct 'descendant' of the '82 position. It is also a function of the deep crisis that Rohana Wijeweera finds himself in today. (This was foreseen by L.G. columnists — see 'In Defence of JVP' Vol. 4 No. 10 Sept. 15, 1981 and 'Rohana's Third Crisis' — L.G. Vol. 5 No. 14 Nov. 15 1982.) Reputed foreign observers like Gail Omvedt also commented critically on the JVP position. (See 'Tamil National Question and Left Mistakes' — Vol. 5 No. 18 Jan. 15, 1983.) The JVP's line soon translated itself into dubious alliances in practical politics 'on the ground'. (See 'Campus Polls — JVP, SLFP, UNP combine'. *ibid.*)

What is most ironic is that those JVPers who wrote to the L.G. defending the party line such as Lionel Bopage and Dr. S. C. Fernando, have since resigned or been removed from the JVP!

— D. J.

# THE SLEEPING GIANT RAISES ITS HEAD

Laksiri Fernando

The unprecedented May Day enthusiasm of the plantation working-class this year has revealed a renewed awakening of this important section of the working-class which was once called 'the epicenter of the Ceylonese revolution' by a leftist, Edmund Samarakody. The enthusiasm was undoubtedly a direct result of the success of the plantation strike in early April.

In the morning hours of May 1st thousands and thousands of plantation workers belonging to the Ceylon Workers Congress flocked to Dunbar esplanade to celebrate the day, while Sinna Dorais of the Estate Staff Union gathered at the Hatton Urban Council Hall to listen to their firebrands from Colombo. The National Union of Workers held its meeting at Sami Malai which is supposed to be one of their union strongholds. A. Aziz, the leader of the Democratic Workers Congress and one time competitor to S. Thondaman delivered its 'sermon on the mountain' at Agrapatana against separatism. There were several other May Day celebrations, here and there, in the hills however with lesser significance. 'What had actually happened to the LJEWU on this important working-class day?', one wondered from the hills. Undoubtedly the banner must have been there at the UNP celebrations at Galle Face. But were plantation workers present at Galle Face?

The CWC May Day was politically important at least for two reasons. First the CWC demonstrated its renewed strength, a clear edge over the LJEWU. Secondly the CWC repeatedly reiterated its

independence from the government, a matter undoubtedly controversial. However, this was the first May Day after 1977 that the CWC celebrated independently of the UNP tamasha at Galle Face.

The CWC meeting at Dunbar was preceded by a cultural pageant. The pageant in no way deflated the May Day spirit. It demonstrated the talents of the young artists and the cultural traditions of the hill country Tamils. It was, nevertheless, working class at heart. At the peak hour of the celebrations there were well over ten thousand people attending. The large women's participation was a noteworthy feature. Miss Saraswathy gave a radical expression to the women's cause in the plantations by making the most militant speech at the meeting with literary eloquence. The contours of the mass gathering was also interesting. The leaders of the CWC, with some foreign delegates, were on the stage, which was erected in front of the huge Dunbar pavillion. Behind the stage, there were over hundred men and women, perhaps the emerging intelligensia of the hill country Tamils, seated in chairs comfortably in the pavilion. Surrounding the stage there was a circle of radical youth, many of them wearing red shirts and caps. Then came the mass of people the ordinary folk. Perhaps there were Sinhalese in the crowd — one never could identify from their look or dress. S. Raju, the first speaker on the stage, in fact, started his speech in clear Sinhalese shifting into Tamil in five minutes. There was no trace of communal rhetoric, all the speakers concentrating on trade union rights and working class conditions.

The resolutions adopted at the meeting also demonstrated the new

awakening of the plantation workers after the April strike. The CWC rally called upon the tripartite committee appointed by the Government to make its report available before 31st May enabling plantation workers to enjoy a living wage an end to discrimination in relation to cost of living and other allowances. The rally urged the Government to take urgent and effective steps to prevent the recurrence of communal violence against persons and property of the Tamil plantation workers. While appreciating the proposal to grant Sri Lanka citizenship to the residue of persons of Indian origin the rally stressed that ending of statelessness alone is not sufficient. The rally demanded equal rights for Tamil plantation workers in all spheres of national life. There were resolutions on housing conditions and educational facilities. The rally insisted the importance of the severance of the link between employment and captive housing. The rally further called upon the management to reprogramme the work schedules of women workers affording them time, on completion of their work, to attend to their tasks as working wives and mothers.

Thondaman's speech at the meeting, though not an apology, was an explanation of his role within the cabinet. He attempted to establish that he entered the cabinet not to compromise the demands of the plantation workers but to champion them, under unusual and trying adverse conditions

The CWC rally lacked only one thing: The absence of self professed 'Marxist revolutionaries' who usually sell their propaganda literature at in others' rallies was obvious. The absence of any kind of leaflets, booklets and newspapers was clear enough to indicate the ideological vacuum within the rank of the plantation working-class.

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# Is another estate strike inevitable?

S. Sundararaj (Desha Vimukti Plantation Workers Union)

The master-stroke of the '84 plantation strike lay in its timing. Firstly, the tea market was in a boom condition due mainly to the export ban enforced by India on certain varieties of its teas. Translated into economic terms the strike meant thus a production — loss of around Rs. 32 million per day. Secondly, there was the unusually wet weather which had contributed to an upsurge in the tea yield in the period preceding the strike, enabling the pluckers to earn improved pay-packets that made it possible for them to sustain a fairly drawn-out strike. In fact the over poundage earnings of the tea pluckers and the overtime earnings of the factory workers in the period immediately following the strike have greatly compensated their earnings — losses during the strike. The total 'strike-loss' incurred by the two state corporations coming directly under President Jayawardene, in reality exceeds the estimated sum of Rs. 840 million (The Rs. 552 m. wage increase plus a production — loss of approximately Rs. 288 million). In my view the 'quality-loss' resulting from the coarse-leaf plucked after the strike and the losses that would be incurred in respect of the tea factory — machinery which are being choked and over-strained today, would raise the real-loss to almost Rs. 1,000 million.

**It is the parliamentary and Colombo-based left that must absorb the main lessons from this strike.** The old — left had virtually abandoned the 'Govindans', the moment D. S. Senanayake forcibly deprived them of their voting rights. Even some of the 'new leftists' had begun to write-off the plantation workers as being 'dormant and non-militant'. Though much has been written about the '1980 General Strike', very little is mentioned of the two successful plantation strikes but were launched in August 1981, and May 1982. It is often forgotten that the 'Joint Committees' of Tus that constantly meet in Colombo and issue press — communiques,

consist mostly of representatives of white — collar 'workers' (mostly clerks, teachers and bank employees) whose effectiveness either in the political or economic sense could never measure up to that of the super-exploited, largely skilled plantation workers. This is not meant in any way to down-grade the importance of the city employees. On the other hand, in formulating of political strategy one must differentiate between the proletariat and various layers of the petty-bourgeoisie. It is this lapse which results in the organisation of so-called May Day rallies (led by the "Left and radical forces") with hardly any representation of the plantation workers! It is the same under-estimation which led even some of the Left plantation trade unions to veto our proposal that a 7 day estate strike be launched on 11th October 1982 (a day after pay day) to coincide with the last phase of the Presidential Election campaign, on the monthly-wage issue. These parliamentarians are advised to add up the votes received by them and those received by J. R. Jayewardene at this election from the plantation areas.

Coming back to the recent strike we must now focus our attention on May. The Rs. 2/- increase was not the only condition of calling off the strike. When the President met representatives of the striking unions (having retreated from his "no discussion till the strike is called-off" stand) the minimum demand raised was a daily wage of Rs. 27.04. When the strike was ultimately called-off (prematurely in the opinion of most left unions) on the initiative of the CWC, the daily wage was fixed at Rs. 23/75 as an interim measure. A committee was to be appointed to grant further relief to the workers. The deadline fixed for its report was 31st May. **In the likely event of its recommendations not meeting the demands of the estate workers, another plantation strike is inevitable.** What are the lessons of the April '84 strike which we

have to absorb for our future struggles?

## Positive Factors

1. The vanguard role of the JPTUC (Joint Plantation Trade Union Committee) has been firmly established. This Joint Committee which grew in the shadows of the '80 July strike, is in my view the only effective workers' centre functioning today. Starting from 8 member unions it today combines 14 unions. Though the collective strength of these unions do not amount to more than 20% of the total plantation work-force, the influence exerted by the 'Puttu Kommitu' is widely acknowledged. By adopting a flexible non-sectarian policy rarely seen in the Colombo base of Joint-Committees (it has 3 joint conveners and the meeting — places are worked out on a rotation — basis), it was able in the post — July '83 period to obtain the participation of CWC leaders at meetings which resulted in the issue of a joint communique condemning the UNP's role in the communal — violence! The contradictions within the government were so skillfully utilised during the strike that at the negotiating-table Minister Thondaman and the JPTUC representatives locked in fierce arguments with Minister Gamini Dissanayake and his henchmen of the JSS 'plantation union'.

2. The role played by the CWC in the April strike is worthy of analysis. During the token-strikes called by the JPTUC in 1981/'82, the leadership of the CWC played a classic pro-government role urging the workers to stay at work. On both occasions large number of their membership did not heed this call. In fact, heated debates went on in the Tamil press between the CWC and the JPTUC on these occasions and these continued till July '83. **The communal outbreak however changed the picture radically.** This was the third occasion that the Tamil plantation workers received a mauling

since S. Thondaman became a Cabinet Minister. The 'Young Turks' within the CWC began to stir and reports began to trickle in of a substantial membership drop in the CWC. A combination of such factors ultimately pushed the CWC to attend a conference called by the JPTUC to condemn the UNP's role, in July 1983. In fact it was a CWC 'Young Turk' who brought up the idea of an estate token strike as far back as September 1983. Though there was a great degree of vacillation since then, especially as Minister Thondaman ballooned into a 'round-table king-maker', the new mood of militancy prevailed. In fact, it was the CWC that first called out their membership in April, though they were also the ones who called off the strike. What we learn from the CWC's current line of action is that real contradictions do exist within the government is also within the CWC. Further as a political party which is solely based on the plantation workers, Thondaman's group cannot shut themselves off from their problems if they wish to retain their base. This makes the CWC very different from the sham (junta) outfit of Gamini Disanayake and Raja Seneviratne which calls itself the LJEWU.

3. One of the most encouraging results of the strike is the total exposure of this 'junta-union'! The leadership of this union which makes in lakhs of rupees monthly from estate workers as union subscriptions, shamelessly carried out a 'black-leg' offensive throughout the strike. But all reports clearly establish that the large majority of their members too joined the strikers. In some of the up-country estates LJEWU leaders who attempted to address their membership had to face cow-dung and stones flung at them. This union is disintegrating at a rapid rate today, and it is a primary task of the other trade unions to quicken the pace.

4. The main weapon utilised by the government in July '80 was to dismiss the workers who struck work. During the April strike too this threat was liberally used by government politicians in many areas. **One of the most positive lessons**

**of the strike is the ineffectiveness of this weapon in the plantations.** Most estate workers fall into skilled and semi-skilled categories who cannot be replaced in a short period. The relative impotency of the government here is worthy of note.

### Negative Factors

One of the negative aspects of the April strike was that it was led by the CWC. Though the seeds of the confrontation had been sown by the JPTUC the strike depended entirely on the CWC's decisions. In fact till 1st April the JPTUC union had not decided on a definite course of action since most of them were unsure of CWC's final decision. Finally, when the CWC did come out the issues were both vague and watery. Throughout the strike Sellasamy kept speaking of "the President's sympathetic attitude towards the plantation workers" etc. Then when the struggle had reached a climatic point the CWC unilaterally decided to get back to work after obtaining a mere Rs. 2/- wage increase. The vacillating nature of the CWC has necessarily to be expected and this is an important factor the JPTUC has to grasp. It has to be led and this can be done by raising the proper issues.

2. The disruptive role of the LSSP plantation union is something which must be exposed. In fact the history of its actions in this sphere has been utterly inglorious. Having pulled out of the August '81 strike in the 23rd hour, it virtually boycotted the May '82 strike. Now as the April strike gathered momentum no less a person than Dr. Colvin R. de Silva became involved in an exercise that amounted to an attempt to create a parallel joint plantation union committee which could have undermined the JPTUC. In fact most of the leaders of this union were concentrating their energies on these manoeuvres, in Colombo, during the entire length of the strike!

A careful analysis of the actions of some of these gentlemen has now to be undertaken. Dr. de Silva himself was given a resounding slap

by the anti-UNP forces at the Presidential action as they considered him to be nothing more than a disruptive agent. A good number of people were then already of the opinion that it was the LSSP unions which disrupted the attempts of the '80 July strike — victims to carry out demonstrations during the Queen's visit. The LSSP unions have also continuously kept away in Colombo from attempts to set up a joint workers' centre, attempting occasionally to set-up its own rival centre. (All these attempts have ended in massive failures, quite naturally). Its disruptive tactics in the sphere of plantation workers' struggles perhaps have deeper roots. It was Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, often then referred to as "the darling of the estate superintendents" who consistently argued against the granting of a monthly wage to plantation workers upto the time he was deprived of his Ministership! Perhaps this gentleman suffers from a deep guilt — complex at a time these workers are continuing their struggle for this basic right.

3. One of the weak points of the strike was its lack of success in the low-country areas. The strike hardly had an impact in the south, while in areas like Kegalle, Ratnapura and Passara it was only partially successful. It must be noted that a fair proportion of the estate workers in these areas consists of Sinhala villagers. In fact a point that is often forgotten is that the total Sinhala work-force on the plantations has now risen to almost 75,000. With repatriation and the exodus of workers to areas like Vavuniya, the composition of the estate work-force has been changing significantly for quite sometime. Where the Sinhala workers were concerned, April was hardly the best month for a strike. Further, living in the villages they were subject to pressurisation by government M.Ps. In fact in areas like the Kelani Valley, Sabaragamuwa and Upper Uva, the M.P.s and their agents used low tactics like threatening "a repetition of July '83" to also intimidate the minority Tamil workers. The progressive plantation trade unions should take note of this achilles heel when embarking on their future struggles.

# Denial of political rights to plantation workers <1928-1948>

Kumari Jayawardena

From the 1930's the present day, the history of the plantation sector in Sri Lanka has been a grim record of the denial of economic and social justice and basic democratic rights to the largest section of the island's working-class, namely the workers of Indian origin, whose labour on tea and rubber plantations provided the country with its main exports and largest foreign exchange earnings. The onslaught was carried out through several means; by stripping the workers of their voting rights in stages — thereby depriving them of representation at local government and parliamentary level; by creating a mass of stateless persons and eventually subjecting a large section of them to what amounted to forced repatriation to India; by refusing them many of the wage, education, health and social benefits available to other sections of the population; by exposing them to the ordeal of famine conditions in the 1970's and finally by subjecting them to death, rape, loot and arson during periods of ethnic violence in 1977, 1981 and in July 1983. This article, however, specifically deals with the political attacks on these workers and the strengthening of racist ideology among the Sinhalese in the twenty years between 1928, the year of the first opposition to Indian workers' franchise — and 1948, when they were finally deprived of citizenship rights.

The strategy of the political exclusion of plantation workers was spearheaded by the Sinhala bourgeoisie in the late 1920's. The Sinhala politicians used the cry of 'swamping' to avert the real threat that a class-conscious plantation proletariat might pose to the system, especially if it joined forces with

other sections of the Sri Lanka working people. However, although racist propaganda against the political rights of Indian workers on plantations was first raised by the Sinhala politicians in the late 1920's, the Sinhala working-class, under the social-democratic leadership of A.E. Goonesinha, was at a peak period of ethnic unity and class solidarity, and opposed discrimination against plantation workers. When in the 1930's and 1940's Goonesinha's policies changed on this issue, the Left gave non-racist leadership and opposed every attempt to restrict the rights of Indian workers in the urban and plantation sectors. Thus on the question of voting and citizenship rights of the plantation workers, the **working-class parties** in the period 1928 to 1948, firmly supported the plantation workers, while the **parties of the bourgeoisie** consistently campaigned for the denial of these rights.

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The earlier articles in this series discussed the formation of the Sinhala-Buddhist consciousness and the resultant conflicts with other non-Sinhala or non-Buddhist elements — the Christians, the Muslims and the Malayalis. In all these instances, ethnic conflict flared up into violence against members of these groups. However, ethnic antagonism could lead, not only to violence against persons and property, but also, as in the case of plantation labour, to violations of the fundamental human and civic rights of a minority group.

It is a very revealing that, although from 1830 to the 1930's, the numbers of Indian migrants on plantations increased significantly, the 'Indian issue' did not become a central concern of Sinhala agitation

during this period. In 1911, the Indian Tamils numbered 530,000 or 12.9% of the population of 4.1 million; the vast majority were plantation workers and their dependants and the others were mainly traders and urban workers. By 1921, the numbers had risen to 602,000 of which 536,000 were plantation workers and dependants. The presence in Sri Lanka of such a large group of recent migrants might have been expected to cause resentment and open expressions of hospitality. But the targets of the Sinhala buddhists, from the 1880's, were other minority groups, even though they were numerically much smaller than the Indian Tamils.

It would of course be wrong to say that the presence of several hundred thousand migrant workers caused no resentment among the Sinhalese. Anagarika Dharmapala often made passing disparaging remarks about Indian workers, complaining in 1902, for example, that 'under the English administration, the out-castes of Southern India are allowed to immigrate into the island'. Similarly, contemptuous references to plantation workers were made by Sinhalese leaders and the word 'coolie' was used derogatorily in common parlance.

## Captive Labour

The structure of the plantation system was geared to this 'new form of slavery'. The migrant workers were subject to a military style, hierarchical domination by British management, to the patriarchal control of the **kangani** or labour recruiter and to the ultimate violence of the colonial state apparatus with its police regressive laws and prisons. The workers were kept in 'line' rooms on plantations

were prevented from leaving by both the estate security services and the laws of the land; their health and education levels were deplorable and wages remained, for over a century up to 1927, at a bare subsistence daily rate of 33 cents for men and 25 for women.

However, what was crucial in terms of ethnic relations was that the Sinhalese were not competing for the same jobs as the plantation workers. One of the generally accepted myths is that Sinhalese did not work on plantations because they were not willing to be degraded to the level of 'coolies', being proud of their race, religion and status. Recent studies have shown that Sinhala peasants refused to work as wage labour on plantations because, even after the advent of plantation capitalism, they continued to have access to some land; in short the system had not pauperised the Sinhalese to the extent that they had no options but to join the plantation proletariat.

Hence, in the 19th and early 20th centuries the estate Tamils were not targets of ethnic violence; nor was there agitation for their repatriation. **As long as they remained a captive labour force, isolated geographically in the hills with no trade unions or other types of organisation, possessing neither economic nor political rights, and posing no threat or competition in terms of employment, they could be tolerated in spite of their numbers.**

### Universal Franchise and the Indian Vote

The first concerted attack on the rights of plantation workers by the Sinhala bourgeoisie occurred when the question of universal suffrage was raised in the late 1920's, during the discussions on constitutional reform. Plantation workers were vital to the economy but not to the political process, their near-slave status was accepted but the prospect of their gaining voting rights and influencing the outcome of elections resulted in a chauvinist campaign led by elections of the Sinhala bourgeoisie who stirred up

fears among the Sinhalese that they would become a minority in certain electoral districts.

Before the Donoughmore reforms, 4% of the population was entitled to vote at elections to the legislative Council, the franchise being based on income, property and literacy qualifications. Under this system, the Indian workers were not entitled to the vote but 'Indian interests' were represented by two nominated members. The Donoughmore Commission, which had come to Sri Lanka in 1927, abolished ethnic representation and recommended that the franchise be open to all over 21, stating, however, that 'the privilege of voting should be confined to those who have an abiding interest in the country or who may be regarded as permanently settled in the island'.

### The Debate in the Legislative Council

The issue of universal suffrage and especially the enfranchisement of women and Indian workers aroused much public controversy in 1928. In the Legislative Council, all but one of the Sinhala representatives, openly voiced fears that the Sinhalese would be politically swamped by the Indian vote. **D. S. Senanayake** stated that the recommendation of the Commission which had caused the greatest alarm, was the proposal to extend the franchise to Indians. He voiced the view that the Sinhalese were not only a minority in respect to India, but were also the 'victims' of injustice.

The Sinhalese are...an unfortunate community...the Sinhalese have been misunderstood and even their generosity forgotten...I do not think there is any other community like the Sinhalese who have consented to penalise themselves in order to give privileges to others...the Indians...have a big country. We have only this small bit of land for ourselves...we want this country for ourselves. (Hansard 8 Nov. 1928; emphasis added).

Other Sinhalese politicians in the Legislature expressed similar views; **Francis Molamure** claimed that his warnings on the 'Indian menace' were timely:

It is a question of foresight; it is a question of self-preservation...we are voicing the sentiments of a good majority of the population penetration...In the past...people referred to

Ceylon as Liptons Tea Garden; perhaps in the future people will refer to Ceylon as the Indian Banyan Tree.

Molamure clearly saw the political potential of racism as a slogan in future elections based on universal suffrage. Replying to his critics he predicted electoral defeat for candidates advocating non-discriminatory policies.

I throw out this challenge. Let them go to the country and make this their platform cry 'Send me in and I shall not make any discrimination between Ceylonese and non-Ceylonese'; let his opponent say 'My policy is to save Ceylon for the Ceylonese'. (Hansard 15 Nov. 1928).

In this debate, **C.W.W. Kannan-gara** also referred to the menace of Indian labour which would swamp 'the permanent population' and hinted that those who did not oppose Indian enfranchisement would be considered to be traitors. (Hansard 8 Nov. 1928). Another class angle on this question was given by **V. de S. Wickramanayake**, a member of the legislature.

What I fear most is the Indian cooly on the estate...rather than the Indian living in Colombo...The Indian labourer...goes to work at 6 in the morning and returns to his cooly lines at...6 at night; what does he know of events in the Island?...therefore I say he is not fit or competent to give a vote on matters political. (Hansard 2 Nov. 1928).

### The Labour Party and the Indian Question

The one exception among the Sinhala legislative councillors was **C. H. Z. Fernando**, a member of the Labour Party, who for a decade had been active in support of the urban labour movement. He refuted the alarmist views on 'swamping' calling them 'unfounded in fact' and derided the 'mythical dangers of Indian domination'. However he did not underestimate the harmful possibilities of racist electioneering; quoting **Dr. W. A. de Silva**, he said:

The Congress President...stated that if it is pointed out to the masses that we want to hand over the destinies of the country to Indians who have no permanent interests here, the masses would rise up to express themselves very strongly on the subject. I quite agree...that if anyone were to go among the masses with that cry, which I submit is not an honest cry — it would be very easy indeed to move the masses to some precipitate action (Hansard 2 Nov. 1928).

Several minority Legislators — who were at the time supporters of the Labour Party — also warned of the dangers of racism. These included **Natesa Aiyar** and **A. Mahadeva**, who stated 'The Labour Party says...we want the Indians and we want them on equal terms with the Ceylonese' (Hansard 8 Nov. 1928).

Although not in the Labour Party himself, **T. B. Jayah** (a Malay) supported Indian franchise rights and claimed 'The Labour Party is strongly in favour of the grant of the franchise to the Indian community. Their accredited leader says that the **Sinhalese labourer will not stand in the way of the grant of the franchise to his Indian brother**' (Hansard 8 Nov. 1928, emphasis added).

The 'accredited leader', A.E. Goonesinha, who was at the height of his power as Colombo's trade union leader, supported the franchise rights of Indian workers, since his policies were based on class solidarity and ethnic unity. While sections of the Sinhala press were stirring up racist propaganda, A. E. Goonesinha, in 1928, chaired a meeting of the Gandhi Sangham in Price Park and came out in favour of Indian workers' rights; the *Ceylon Daily News* (10 September 1928) reported Goonesinha's attack on the Sinhala leaders.

A few plutocrats spoke of the Indians as being a menace to the Sinhalese workmen. What had these conscientious patriotic plutocrats done...for their workmen in their times of trouble and hardships? Instead of helping their poor fellow countrymen, the plutocrats had expended their energies in driving out the poor villager from his plot of land. Now these men had developed a sense of patriotism. What was the reason for this solicitude? It was the result of the poor man being given the vote. It was the same plutocrats who went before the Special Commission and opposed...the grant of universal suffrage. Having failed in their scheme they now talk of depriving Indians in Ceylon of the right to vote.

The courageous stand that A. E. Goonesinha took in these years, risking criticism and unpopularity by championing the rights of the plantation workers, was in stark contrast to his volte face on minority rights in the thirties (See L.G. 1 May 1984).

## The Elections

When the amended reforms were finally implemented, the franchise, was given to those with a Ceylon domicile of origin or choice based on 5 years residence, literacy, property and income qualifications or the possession of a certificate of permanent settlement, given to those with 5 years continuous residence and intention to settle in the country. Under this law, a section of plantation workers were able, for the first time, to exercise franchise rights.

During the first general elections in Ceylon in 1931, there was considerable political campaigning in the plantation areas. Two candidates of Indian origin were elected **S. P. Vytilingam** (Talawakelle) and **Peri Sunderam** (Hatton), who became the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce in the new State Council. There was renewed political agitation in plantation areas in 1936, when the number of Indian voters had risen to 145,000. At the general election in 1936, two Indians were returned, **S. P. Vytilingam** (Talawakelle) and the trade union leader, **K. Natesa Aiyar** (Hatton). As general elections were to be held every five years, there was active preparation for the anticipated 1941 elections, (which were postponed because of the World War). By this date the Indian electorate had risen to 225,000 and the election enthusiasm which had spread to plantation sector, also led to a political awakening which facilitated the spread of trade unionism after 1939.

## Denial of Village Franchise

The grant of the franchise, even with certain limitations, to plantation workers and their keenness to register and vote, led to feelings of apprehension among the Sinhala political leaders. Having failed to disfranchise this group at the parliamentary level, an effort was thereafter launched to deny them the franchise at the local government level.

Under the Village Committees Ordinance of 1889, participation in these committees was denied to Europeans, Burghers and Indians, on the ground that they did not form an organic part of village life.

In 1937, law was amended to impose a tax on estates within the village areas, and to give village franchise to Burghers and Europeans, but not to Indians, thereby excluded these workers from a share in local government.

There were loud protests over this legislation; many Indian associations in Sri Lanka accused the State Council of trying to deprive Indians of their political rights and the government of India alleged that the Bill was based on racial discrimination. Dr. N. M. Perera, the LSSP member in the State Council, made an attack on the policies of the Board of Ministers:

They have no objection to enfranchising European planters...Those... who have property who exploit the people in the true sense of the word are enfranchised. But when it comes to the poor labourer who has not the fortune to possess land, he is not enfranchised....**This bogey of swamping is entirely imaginary** and has been created by a handful of people the interests of the Indian labourers and the vast mass of peasants and workers in this country are the same. The fight is against the capitalist class, whether they are Indians or Ceylonese. (Hansard 1937, p 4150)

As a result of the protests there was another amendment, depriving all plantation labour, irrespective of race, of the village franchise. However, since there were only a few Sinhala residents on estates, the effect of the legislation was to discriminate against Indian workers.

## The Ban on Migration

The uncertainties faced by the Indian minorities in Sri Lanka (Malayali and Tamil) were aggravated in the late 1930's, when measures were passed enforcing retirement and repatriation on urban workers of Indian origin. The continuing unemployment also led to a discussion on the issue of migration (from India) for work on plantations, which was vital for the functioning of the key sector of the economy. Ironically, the Sinhala bourgeoisie which had campaigned for the repatriation of urban labour, who were said to be in competition with Sinhala workers, were against the banning of immigration from India for work on estates, since it went against the interests of the plantation economy. However, the

(Continued on page 24)



# TERRORISM IN 1984

## Who is a terrorist ?

**D**OES the United States really need new legislation to combat terrorism? The answer is no, but that does not stop the administration. President Reagan, reacting to violent events in other countries, has sent legislation to Congress that is broad in scope, vague in definition and threatening to political expression. It creates a new crime (aiding terrorism) without telling us two important things about that crime: who terrorists are or what specific acts in support of terrorism would be criminal.

Of course America wants to protect itself against violent acts committed for political or any other purposes. That is why there are already laws against murder, kidnapping, airplane hijacking, bombing, arson, unauthorized arms traffic, conspiracy and a host of other crimes that make up the generality now known as terrorism. In some cases, individuals can be prosecuted for crimes committed abroad. What is the need for an additional catchall statute to prohibit aid to terrorists?

And who can be characterized as a terrorist? The proposed bill would give the secretary of state the sole power to name any foreign government, faction or international group, and his designation could not be challenged by any defendant or reviewed in any court. He might name the Libyan government, the IRA and the PLO, for a start. He could just as easily designate SWAPO, the Mafia, one faction or another in El Salvador or Nicaragua and a few cliques of Bulgarians and Armenians. Should one man be given the right — not even subject to challenge — to compile such a list and make it a crime to aid these groups? Is there any room here for acknowledging that one man's "terrorist" is another's "freedom fighter"?

And what kind of support would be punishable by a \$100,000 fine or 10 years in person? Helping to build bombs, plot a kidnapping or ship arms is already a crime,

remember, so the proposed legislation must be directed at something else. Specific acts are mentioned — training or participating in military activities with "terrorists" — and there is an exemption for providing medical aid. But what else might be covered by the broad prohibition against "providing support services"? Shipping food? Selling computers? Supplying books? Are we to prohibit humanitarian assistance in Central America, for example, because it might go to the families of guerrillas — or the families of the army — depending on which side the secretary of state tells us is right?

Terrorist acts in the United States can be fought with the laws already in place. Statutes governing arms sales, exports and conspiracies are in place dealing with activity in support of violent groups abroad. To pass another law delegating broad powers to a single individual and vaguely defining criminal conduct is to fight terrorism with hysteria.

— (WASHINGTON POST)  
Editorial

*"There were two "Reigns of Terror" if we would but remember it and consider it; the one wrought murder in hot passion, the other in heartless cold blood; the one lasted mere months, the other lasted a thousand years; the one inflicted death upon a thousand persons, the other upon a hundred millions; but our shudders are all for the "horrors" of the minor terror, the momentary terror, so to speak; whereas, what is the horror of swift death by the axe compared with lifelong death from hunger, cold insult, cruelty and heartbreak?... A city cemetery could contain the coffins filled by the brief Terror which we have all been so diligently taught to shiver and mourn over; but all France could hardly contain the coffins filled by the older and real Terror..."*

— Mark Twain

(Commenting on the French Revolution)

## When they shout 'terrorist' they mean you...

**T**he six-o'clock news does not televise the real terrorism. When armed with high-powered rifles a SWAT team burned alive a worker in Atlanta for failing to pay his electricity bill, it was not splashed across the front page of the nation's newspapers or flashed on every TV screen. The White House propaganda machine did not classify his murder as an act of terrorism.

The victim of lifelong hunger, cruelty and heartbreak, too down and out to pay his bills, he was

murdered by government officials. The rulers of this country label such people as terrorists. By their definition the world is overflowing with potential "terrorists." And you are one of them. If you are hungry, you are terrorist material.

Just consider it. At least 50 million people starve to death yearly, and another 700 million are officially "hungry." You would never know how dangerous these people are by looking at them: their bellies are bloated with the body fluids that fill the stomach during starvation,

their arms and legs are shriveled into twisted sticks. They can barely stand, let alone terrorize.

Every year 100,000 malnourished children go blind due to a deficiency of vitamin A — an ingredient in common foods such as carrots, milk and eggs. In the neo-colonial countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America one-third of all children die before they reach five years of age. The capitalist ruling class has stripped their homelands of resources and wealth. It has reorganized their economies and made them dependent on the United States for food. Now the United States government is holding out on these drought and famine-ridden countries, cutting off aid and using food for blackmail.

The world produces 2.5 times the grain needed to feed everybody, yet because food production is organized around profit rather than need, starvation is actually increasing. What could be more terroristic than starving entire continents to death?

That is real terrorism. The terrorist rulers pointing their bloody fingers at the workers and accusing them of terror are themselves guardians of the bloodiest system of rule in history — capitalism.

Their accumulation of enormous wealth was accompanied by the coldblooded genocide of a half million Indians. At the bottom of their pot of gold lies the blood of untold millions of slaves — for every two million enslaved, one million died in transport. At the foundation of their privileged life lies centuries of rape, torture, pillage and aggression. These rulers harangue and denounce the freedom fighters of the world for bombing oppressors that have tortured their working populations for centuries when they themselves threaten to vaporize every man, woman and child on earth with a nuclear arsenal that could destroy the world 35 times over. If anybody has the right to charge terrorism, it is the workers of the world.

The bourgeois terrorists — our rulers — are caught in a corner. It is closed off by economic crisis. Around them stand workers without jobs or even the hope of a job. They do not stand by passively. Hunger is making them fighting mad. Life in this country is leading to the unavoidable conclusion that "our" rulers are not ruling very well. Their system cannot create work and there is so much that needs to be done.

Workers are concerned that they cannot pay for groceries, medical care, even a roof over their heads. This alone is proof enough that the system has broken down. If something does not work and is beyond repair, you scrap it. This social system does not work for the vast majority of the population. It should be scrapped because it cannot support society. That is what the real terrorists are so worked up about.

All the hysteria around international terrorism has but one purpose: to convince you that revolt against a decaying, useless and unworkable system is terrorism. And that revolt — even the idea of revolt — deserves to be swiftly and violently crushed. Like the SWAT team did in Atlanta, except instead of murdering one worker they are aiming at millions.

That is why Secretary of State George Shultz is talking about "pre-emptive strikes" against terrorists. He's not really concerned about a British policewoman being shot, or attacks on American officials in helicopters. It is not Libya or Brinks armored car robbers that the rulers of this country will stage a "pre-emptive strike" against. They are preparing to strike down the hungry, cold and heartbroken "terrorists", before these 'terrorists' get rid of this worn-out system.

There is a war going on here. It started as a war of words. The word is being spread that you are the terrorist enemy of your rulers. But they can be scrapped — like all waste — once enough of us are convinced that it is these rulers who are the real terrorists.

— (Peoples Tribune, Chicago)

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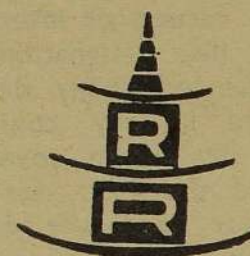
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# Restructuring Social Science

Immanuel Wallerstein

THIS CONTRADICTIONARY LINK was reflected in the ideology of social science. On the one hand, there was a renewed triumph of scientism, of a pervasive and often specious quantification of research, in terms of which the newly-discovered research arenas of the peripheral countries were simply one more source of data. On the other hand, the complexities of the study of these areas pushed toward the building of area studies on an "interdisciplinary" basis — a timid questioning of sectorialization, so timid the very name reinforced the legitimacy of the historic distinctions. The reconciliation of these two thrusts was in the invention of a new vocabulary to restate nineteenth-century verities: the vocabulary of "development" — economic, social, political — subsequently subsumed under the heading of modernization theory.

## OFFICIAL MARXISM

At the level of ideology, the world of official Marxism posed on real opposition to modernization theory. The official Marxists simply insisted upon some minor alterations of wording. For society, substitute social formation. For Rostow's stages, substitute Stalin's. For Britain/U.S. as the model, substitute the U.S.S.R. But the analysis was the same: the states were entities that "developed" and "development" meant the further mechanization, commodification, and contractualization of social activities. Stalinist bureaucrats and Western experts competed as to who could be the most efficacious Saint-Simonian.

As we know, the frenetic certainties of the 1950's began to come apart in the 1960's. The U. S. and its allies began to find their power undermined by the growing militance and success of the movements of the Third World, without and within. The problems of the real world became the problems, both social and intellectual, of its ideological centers, the universities. The explosions of 1968 (and thereabouts) were the result.

It is fashionable these days to downplay the importance of these rebellions of the late 1960's on the grounds that the student rebels of that period have since largely become either reintegrated into or expelled from the social fabric and that the successor student generations are quiescent. What good, it is asked, did the New Left really serve? The answer is really very simple. The meteoric flames of rebellion burnt away the tissue that maintained Establishment liberalism as the unquestioned ideology of U.S. universities in particular and Western universities in general. It is not the Establishment was destroyed. But since then it has been unable to exclude as illegitimate competing views, and this has permitted the 1970's to be a time of much intellectual fertility.

The explosions in Western universities were matched by the destruction of the sclerotic world of official Marxism. The death of Stalin, Khrushchev's report, the Sino-Soviet split, the triumphs and then the failures of the Cultural Revolution have all resulted in what Henri Lefebvre has called "Marxism exploded."<sup>7</sup> Here too we should not be misled. The fact they there are today a thousand Marxisms amidst a situation in which more and more people claim to be marxist does not mean that orthodox Marxism (whatever that be) has disappeared as a major ideological force. But it no longer has a monopoly in its corner.

## SHIFTS AND CHALLENGES

The disappearance of both **consensuses** — the liberal and the Marxist is not independent of the changing geopolitics of the world. With the demise not of American power but of American hegemony, which I would date as of 1967, there has been a steady movement towards a restructuring of the alliances in the interstate system. I have argued elsewhere that the **de facto** Washington-Peking-Tokyo axis which developed in the 1970's will be matched in the 1980's by a **de facto**

Paris-Bonn-Moscow axis.<sup>8</sup> Whatever the reasons for this regrouping (which in my opinion are largely economic), it is clear that it makes no ideological sense at all, certainly not in terms of the ideological lines of the 1950's.

This geopolitical shift, itself linked to the ideological-cum-political explosions in both the Western and the socialist countries, has begun to open up, for the first time since the 1850's, both the epistemological and the historiographical premises of social science.

In terms of epistemology, we are seeing a serious challenge to both universalization and sectorialization and an attempt to explore the methodology of holistic research,<sup>9</sup> the implementation of that **via media** that had been excluded by the nomothetic-idiographic pseudo-debate of the nineteenth century. For the first time, the imagery of the route of scientific advance is being inverted. Instead of the assumption that knowledge proceeds from the particular towards ever more abstract truths, there are some who wish to argue that it proceeds from the simple abstractions towards ever more complex interpretations of empirical, that is historical, reality.

This epistemological challenge has been made before as we have already noted, but it is being made more systematically and solidly today. What is really new, however, is the historiographical challenge. Once our unit of analysis shifts from the society-state to that of economic worlds, the entire reification of states, of nations, of classes, of ethnic groups, even of households falls away.<sup>10</sup> They cease being primordial entities, Platonic ideas, whose real nature we must somehow intuit or deduce. They become constantly evolving structures resulting from the continuing development of long-term large-scale historical systems.

In such a context, the British "Industrial Revolution" of 1760-1830 or the French Revolution do not disappear. But they may be seen in better perspective. There will be

an end to the incredible formulation of intellectual problems in the form: "Why did not Germany have a bourgeois revolution?"; "Can the Kenya bourgeoisie develop an autonomous capitalist state"; "Is there a peasantry in Brazil (or Peru or.....)?"

## OUR INTELLECTUAL TASKS

We are living in the maelstrom of a gigantic intellectual sea-change, one that mirrors the world transition from capitalism to something else most probably socialism). This social transition may take another 100-150 years to complete. The accompanying ideological shift will take less time, however, probably only another 20 years or so. This ideological shift is itself both one of the outcomes and one of the tools of this process of global transition.

It follows that the intellectual tasks before us are important ones, that our intellectual responsibilities are moral responsibilities. First of all, we must (all of us) rewrite modern history — not merely the history that scholars read but the history that is infused into us in our elementary education and which structures the very categories of our thinking.

We must learn how to think both holistically and dialectically. I underline the words "learn how." For much of what has claimed in the past to be holistic and dialectical was merely all-encompassing, sloppy, and unduly motivated by the needs of propaganda. In fact, a holistic, dialectical methodology is infinitely more complex than the probabilistic quasi-experimental one that is so widespread today. We have scarcely begun to explore how it can be done seriously. Most of us are more frightened by its difficulties than by those of linear algebra.

We must then use this methodology to invent (I deliberately use the strong word, invent) new data bases. The ones we use now (or 98% of them) are the results of collecting for 150 — 500 years data about states. The very word "statistics" is derived, and not fortuitously, from the word "state". We do not have serious data about the capitalist world-economy (not to speak of other and prior world systems). No doubt there are manifold intrinsic and extrinsic problems in the manufacture of such data. But the methodological ingenuities of the last 30

years, which have opened up to quantitative research fields, such as medieval history, once thought entirely recalcitrant to the application of hard data, give reason to hope that enough energy applied with enough intelligence might bring us to the point 30 years from now where we have at least as much hard data on the functioning of the modern world-system as a system as we have today on the functioning of the various states.

We must use this new data to theorize a new, but hesitantly. Too much damage has been done in the past by premature jumping into the saddle and creating reified constructs which block further work. It is better for the time being to have fudgy concepts which are too malleable than to have clearly-defined ones that turn out to be poorly-chosen ones and thereby serve as new Procrustean beds.

**Finally, I am convinced that neither using a new methodology nor theorizing will be possible except in conjunction with praxis. On the one hand, it is the function of intellectuals to reflect in ways that those who are at the heart of politics cannot for want of time and distance. But on the other hand, it is through action that unexpected social truths (not only about the present and future, but about the past as well) are revealed, and these truths are not visible (or at least not at first) except to those whose very activities are the source of the discoveries. The intellectual who cuts him or herself from political life cuts him or herself off from the possibility of truly perceptive social analysis, indeed cuts him or herself off from truth.**

The epistemological links between social science and the social movement were there from the inception of both. There is no way this link can be cut without destroying both. No doubt there are dangers to both in this close tie but those dangers pale by comparison with the dangers of surgical separation. This is what was tried in the late nineteenth century, and it would not be too strong to assert that the many horrors of the twentieth were, if not caused by, then abetted by, this putative separation.

Let us therefore renew and reinvigorate the alliance. Let us restructure social science while we restructure the world. Let us restructure social science as part of restructuring the world. Let us participate in restructuring the world so that we may be capable of restructuring social science.

## NOTES:

1 "Of all metaphors in Western thought on mankind and culture, the oldest, most powerful and encompassing is the metaphor of growth." Robert A. Nisbet, *Social Change and History: Aspects of the Western Theory of Development* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1969), 7. To be sure, the point of Nisbet's book is summed up in the title of the last section, "the irrelevance of metaphor," but Nisbet's insistence on the "priority of fixity" does not undo his observation on intellectual history. Indeed, his book is a *cri de coeur* of someone who feels very much in a minority.

2 It is true that the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, published in 1937, is opened by an essay entitled "What are the Social Sciences?" But it is a very weak essay, of a chronologically discriptive, discursive nature.

3 A famous American textbook of the 1950's was Kingsley Davis's *Human Society* (New York: Macmillan, 1948). The message is that each separate society follows a set of rules which is that of "human society" as a generic category.

4 For a brief exposition of what is involved in this *via media*, see my "The Annales School: The War on Two Fronts," *Annals of Scholarship*, I, 3, Summer 1980, 85 — 91.

5 Dudley Dillard, "Capitalism After 1850," in Contemporary Civilization, Staff of Columbia College, eds., *Chapters in Western Civilization*, 3rd ed. (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1962), II, 282.

6 See my brief "Annales as Resistance," *Review*, I, 3/4, Spr./Sum. 1978, 5 — 7.

7 Henri Lefebvre, "Marxism Exploded," *Review*, IV, 1, Summer 1980, 19 — 32.

8 See my "Friends as Foes," *Foreign Policy*, No. 40, Fall 1980, 119 — 131. Also my chapter, "Crisis as Transition," in S. Amin, G. Arrighi, A. G. Frank, and I. Wallerstein. *Crisis, Which Crisis?* (New York: Monthly Review Press, forthcoming 1982).

9 See Robert Bach, "On the Holism of a World-Systems Perspective," with commentaries by Christopher Chase-Dunn, Ramkrishna Mukherjee, and Terence K. Hopkins, in Terence K. Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein, eds., *Process of the World-System* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1980), 589 — 318. See also Terence K. Hopkins, "World-System Analysis: Methodological Issues," in Barbara Hockey Kaplan, ed., *Social Change in the Capitalist World-Economy* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1978), 199 — 217.

10 See my "The States in the Institutional Vortex of the Capitalist World-Economy," *International Social Science Journal*, XXXII, 4, 1980, 743 — 751.

# 'IMF riots' in the Caribbean

THE price riots in the Dominican Republic have been a protest against the conditions that the IMF imposes with its loans. The question arises once again whether the IMF has been too harsh. In the case of the Dominican Republic, a poor country is now subjected to a further drop in its standard of living.

The enormous rise in oil prices five years ago increased costs for oil importing countries, and the subsequent worldwide recession reduced their opportunities to export. A lot of countries, including the Dominican Republic, borrowed to stave off the impact of this drop in income. Eventually, their ability to borrow exhausted, they have come to the IMF as the lender of last resort. The IMF has a responsibility to prevent borrowers from using its loans merely to postpone the day of reckoning further, and that is why it imposes conditions.

The Dominican Republic had spent a lot of borrowed money holding its exchange rate too high and keeping down the prices that Dominicans paid for imported goods. Now, at the insistence of the IMF, the government has let the currency sink toward a level that trade can support. That will help sell Dominican goods abroad, but it makes imports much more expensive. Since some of those imports are foodstuffs, there has been rioting.

Adjustment is unavoidable. If the IMF were not there to help, the adjustment would take the form of a collapse of the currency and an abrupt end to all imports — threatening not merely austerity but actual starvation. But if the IMF is doing a necessary job, it is always important to ask whether the impact on the country's poorest citizens is not disproportionate. The IMF relies on the methods of macro-economics and generally leaves the questions of distribution aside. That is the IMF's dilemma: as a technical financial agency, it cannot get into the internal politics of a country. But neither can it stay out of internal politics.

The greatest burden to political life in the small democracies of the Caribbean is their proximity to the United States. People on those islands often have relatives in the United States. They watch U.S. television. They know something about U.S. standards of living and the social benefits and protections routinely extended in a rich

country. Caribbean governments become trapped between the U.S. example and their own fragile economies. For all these reasons, the United States has larger responsibilities to aid the Dominican Republic than it has acknowledged in this time of economic decline in the Caribbean.

— 'Washington Post' Editorial

## MUSIC

### Marvin Gaye: ahead of his time

There was a new sound on the street in 1971. Elegant but funky, everybody was into it. Blacks, Mexicans, whites. Little kids, low riders, grandmothers. It wasn't just the combination of Southern gospel and sweet urban soul nor the manner in which Marvin Gaye sang it that made the album *What's Going On?* such a big hit.

It was the way it eloquently voiced the agenda of the surging movements against the Vietnam war, police brutality and poverty that made it more than just the latest hot record from Motown. Like John Lennon, Marvin Gaye summed up the hopes and dreams of a generation and so it was especially hard to accept his tragic death on April 1, the day before his 45th birthday.

Marvin Gaye was a giant of modern popular music. Raised in Washington, D. C., he joined Motown Records as a session drummer in 1961 (he often played all the instruments on his later records). In 1962 he helped to put that fledgling label on the map with his first hit record, "Stubborn Kind of Fellow."

His music has always been a vital part of Motown's continuing world-wide impact. (Gaye's rendition of the song "What's Going On?" was a highlight of last year's Motown 25th Anniversary Special, seen by 47 million people). In 1970 he became the first artist at Motown to gain control over the writing and production of his material. The result was *What's Going On?*

However the album almost didn't see the light of day. Motown owner Berry Gordy tried to block its release, claiming that political music wouldn't sell. Gordy couldn't have been more wrong.

The album yielded three top ten songs: the title track, "Mercy Mercy Me" and "Inner City Blues." It was the first concept album released by a black performer and helped to inspire Stevie Wonder and Curtis Mayfield to similar efforts. For nearly a quarter of a century Marvin Gaye made hit records, from "Stubborn Kind of Fellow" to last year's "Sexual Healing." Although the album *What's Going On?* was Gaye's only attempt at social comment, its songs are still staples of modern radio.

It is a bitter irony that Gaye died just as his fans are beginning to see how they can realize the dreams he put into song. In 1971, a vast network of corrupt union leaders, poverty pimps and some preachers stealing in the name of the Lord were able to hand out enough crumbs from the master's table to buy off or confuse the mass movements and prevent their unification. But now there are few crumbs left and leaders who don't help fight for the whole loaf of bread are being pushed aside. Nothing can prevent unity of the have-nots in our struggle for a better life. Those musicians who choose to carry on the legacy of Marvin Gaye will really have something to sing about.

— (Peoples Tribune, Chicago)



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# SHANTIKUMAR

*Was it World War Two, or Warden Saram  
That tossed us together where the air was chill  
With cypress and the scent of foreign pines  
Eucalyptus trees, white flanked, surged up  
the hill*

*From the red farmhouse that became our  
school*

*Where Foster wove his alien themes,  
With skill, into the fabric of our dreams  
And paddy herons turned into mereside  
swans*

*And wild white lilies into daffodils  
You took it in with your shy and clear  
eyed smile*

*Programming these images as codes to recall  
Later, the poet's universal theme, with  
Ludowyck.*

*And while you thus dabbled in the Realms  
of Gold*

*Hayman steered me faltering through the  
fold*

*Of Newton, Faraday, Kelvin and Ohm*

*While the Brothers Janz unravelled Avogadro  
and Dalton*

*And E. L. Perera girded me with many  
a Trig function*

*Ere we were dispatched by train to Maradana  
Junction*

*Seeking exemption from the Matriculation*

*And (after re-orientation by Walatara fresh  
from Thurstan Road)*

*Entrance to those Ivory battlements*

*When Jennings sat completing the Colonial  
Equation.*

*Ways parted the years went winding  
From Thurstan's Stone corridors  
Over the wide world, weaving  
Our paths briefly together, now and then  
At Layards Road, in Ludowycks study  
At Menikdiwela, at Bunyatanya  
Crushing fragrant spice leaves in the garden  
While we puzzled with the Professor  
Over events, we didn't really know  
Would lead in time, to nineteen seventy one.*

*So we went our ways  
I took to the streets, (for lost causes you said)  
As you tried the world for Aid  
For the poor grown suddenly poorer  
And a land grown dark  
As over the warm hills  
Clouds first glide lightly  
Then gather and menace the noon.*

*Now only what we recall, redeems  
The creeping horror of manipulated strife.  
July eighty three, the tense months  
And now the news of your death  
Amidst so many deaths.*

*Perhaps still at Gurutalawa  
Wild, flowering lantana smothers  
The barred Farm gate we scaled as boys  
And the wind in August, high in the  
Eucalyptus branches  
Still talks one language like the sea.*

U. Karunatilake

## The Allens . . .

(Continued from page 5)

the hostages. Mr. Bush, on the spot, and later Mr. Reagan thanked not only Colombo but Delhi and Madras for their cooperation.

The hostages were set free. No prisoners were released and no ransom paid. At that point, Colombo could claim a clear victory. Then the Allens held a largely attended press conference at the American

Center with a senior U S Embassy official presiding.

After two days of grilling, they were able to convince their captors that they were not CIA operatives. After that the kidnappers had spoken to them of their organisation, their cause and ideals. Overtly sympathetic to the kidnappers, the American couple described them as "intelligent", "educated" "kind" and "humane". More emotional than her

husband, Mary Allen refused to call them "terrorists" and seemed sympathetic to their own description of "freedom fighters" who are only demanding "human rights" or "equal rights" and justice. A day after the press conference, the Allens for whom the entire Island had prayed were soon rejected as "poor innocents" and cast in the new role of the "Bad guys" to become the immediate target of Colombo's columnists and cartoonists.

# Lenin and Luxemburg

Tara Coomaraswamy

The timing and direction of investment have been held to contradict Lenin: the major part of new investment was within Europe itself, or went to the white dominions or the older colonies like India; investment often followed conquest and after a considerable time lag. Moreover, rates of interest were often no higher in the new colonies, or actually lower, than at home, and very often higher in the white dominions and Western Europe, as a whole.

However, there would be no mystery if the capitalist system were viewed as characterised by uneven development — within the more developed areas as well as between them and the colonies — as well as by different but simultaneous needs. Consequently there would be capital export both to secure raw material supplies (largely loan capital to backward areas/agricultural regions to develop railways, communications, plantations and mines) as well as to take advantage of manufacturing opportunities in relatively secure environments with higher rates of profit (industrial and loan capital to industrialised regions where economies of agglomeration could be secured; low wage production is not necessarily low cost production). Other uncertainties attended colonial investment the British government in fact played a great part in enhancing the attractiveness of overseas loans to newer colonies, by guaranteeing them. Lenin's criticism of Kautsky makes this clear, in fact.

A further point regarding investment overseas is that the crucial determinant is the **marginal** and not the average rate of return. Thus while average rates of profit at home may be higher, the return on the marginal unit may be greater abroad. This in turn tends to equalise profit rates by depressing those overseas and maintaining those at home, making it possible for some to argue that no significant differences in interest rates existed.

Nurkes and Cairncross propose a "capital-pull" theory as opposed to "capital-push" versions like falling rates of profit. Capital export is maintained to have financed infrastructure to improve exploitation of raw materials, seen as the primary objective. This may fit the British case, but certainly not France and Germany. Lenin himself distinguishes between the latter and Britain, as exporting mainly loan capital ("usury capital") and a combination of loan and industrial capital, respectively. In any case, the "capital-pull" thesis is not inconsistent with Lenin; the export of capital may take place for different reasons, both synchronously and diachronously; returns on capital "pulled" out at one time may be "pushed" out at another.

A point of greater importance is usually taken to be the fact that the net flow of capital has been greater from the colonies to the industrial metropolises. It is not clear why this should be a major hindrance, since logically capital might be expected to show returns greater than the initial investment; this was the motive for capital export in the first place. For Marxist analysis it is no more of a contradiction as Sutcliffe points out, 'than that which is created by the profitability of capital no matter where it may be invested.'

Lenin is criticised for being unduly influenced by Hilferding's book which based its emphasis on monopoly and finance capital on German developments not applicable, for example, to Britain, where monopolies were not significant for the period Lenin described, only gathering momentum after World War I. British capital exports to Africa comprised the funds of small-scale investors. Furthermore, Britain's free trade policy frustrated would-be monopolies by allowing foreign competitors to flood the market. However, Lenin notes that 'in free-trade Britain concentration also leads to monopoly, although some-

what later and perhaps in another form' (i. e. induced by the high capital requirements for new enterprises due to technological advancement). The giant monopolies of today testify to the general accuracy of Lenin's prognosis.

However, the importance of finance capital and the financial oligarchy was overplayed by Lenin and Hilferding, as neither saw the possibilities for internal financing by industrial enterprises which were made possible by huge monopoly profits. Also, Lenin's conception of monopoly was closer to Hilferding's; i.e. he did not, like Bukharin, see the tension between the national political unit and the tendency toward greater internationalisation of capital and its organisation on a world scale.

Lenin was right in predicting continued inter-imperialist conflicts for the first World War was followed by a second. Nevertheless the concept of inter-imperialist rivalry has had to be modified in the postwar era. Forms of cohesive organisation dominated by the strongest groups were evolved at the international level which, while they did not abolish inter-imperialist rivalry, at least limited recourse to armed conflict. Thus what ensued was a period of hierarchical organisation in which the biggest imperial powers were assured a correspondingly greater share of world dominion. The functions of a state at the international level were performed by the USA, as the dominant imperialism, through international agencies under its control.

Bukharin had apparently identified the underlying trend correctly: increasing inter-penetration of national capitals in the form of multinational corporations, and limitation of imperialist rivalry. While this was justified by immediate postwar developments, more recent trends would seem to bear out Lenin's "law of uneven develop-



ment" — for the developed world at least. Avoiding the debate over the relative strengths of the national state and MNCs (e. g. Warren vs. R. Murray,) the position which seems more accurate is one closer to Rowthorn or Mandel.

In other words, there exists as yet no real community of capitalist interests; the relative strengths of capitals (which have remained largely nationally based and owned) have changed — e.g. the dominance of US capital is increasingly challenged by Japanese and German capital (cf. the debate between Mandel and Szymanski on the one hand, and Nicolaus and Petras and Rhodes on the other). The interests of national states appear to remain closely linked to those of national capital; inter-penetration of capital has not prevented growing rivalry of national capitals and attempt to redress the balance by retaliatory measures against more successful economies. On balance, therefore, Bukharin's earlier assessment still seems valid: despite intensifying inter-locking of capital across national boundaries, the dominant tendency is towards reaffirming the national unit of political and economic organisation.

The connection between capitalism and imperialism is questioned by those who point to Sweden and Switzerland; but both economies depended on capital export and the world market developed by imperialism for their current prosperity. Lacking this milieu whether they would have achieved present standards of living is at least questionable.

The "end of empire" thesis of Strachey and Barratt-Brown saw the postwar boom and rising real wages as proof of the irrelevance of colonies (and by this definition, imperialism) to British economic prosperity. Strachey, a latter-day Hobson, stressed the possibilities for internal expansion through redistribution of income; his position is also similar to the turn of the century revisionist arguments regarding mutations in capitalism which allow it to overcome its contradictions and gradually institute reforms through democratic processes.

Kemp and Harrison argue that the rise in living standards is due only minimally to redistribution; the real cause has been increased productivity due to new opportunities for expanded reproduction which opened up after the war. (The role of exports here has to be examined. It is difficult to be conclusive about this period except that income redistribution could not have by itself account for the boom).

H. Alavi challenges Barratt-Brown on the insignificance of overseas income for British economic growth in the immediate postwar period. Gross return from overseas investment constituted between  $3\frac{1}{2}$  and  $4\frac{1}{2}$ % of national income, and 40-55% of domestic net investment. Furthermore profit remittances formed only a part of the value extracted from overseas investment, which included "head office charges", commissions, royalties, etc. and monopoly profits on goods sold under special contractual agreements. Such forms of surplus extraction were an equally effective form of "imperialism, without empire.

Trends in capital export in the '60s were said to contradict Lenin as well; British net foreign investment was much less than it had been pre-1914, for example. Kemp counters this by pointing out that British (and other MDC) foreign investment was still considerable; Britain before 1914 was in any case unique, as he explains. US foreign investment had in fact increased, since World War II. He also maintains that the absolute or relative amount of capital export is no measure of the role which it performs in enabling capital accumulation to take place on an expanded scale, so that despite other surplus "outlets" such as armaments, the profit rate in MDCs is dependent on the existence of external investment outlets.

The labour aristocracy thesis has generally been upheld as a popular explanation for the quietism of Western proletariats, in particular by "Unequal Exchange" theorists (e.g. Emmanuel, Amin) who claim that exploitation is now on a world scale, and that the benefits of foreign trade on unequal terms have undermined the basis for in-

ternational working class solidarity. The Western working classes are even held to benefit more than their corresponding capitalist classes, since, according to Foster — Carter, 'super-wages become normal, while super-profits can only be temporary'. It is obviously impossible to do a cost-benefit analysis of imperialism from the proletariat's point of view, e.g. material benefits vs. physical and economic costs (war, taxation, etc.) of imperialism. In so far as imperialism is agreed to have augmented growth in metropolitan economies, it is not unreasonable to derive at least part of the enhanced living standards of the Western workers vis-a-vis their "less-developed" counterparts, from imperialism.

Lenin's characterisation of the period of "New Imperialism" (i.e. the late nineteenth and early twentieth century) was therefore broadly correct. The question of the main mechanism of imperialism underlying his theory (the falling rate of profit) will be discussed later, after reviewing Rosa Luxemburg's thesis.

### Rosa Luxemburg

Rosa Luxemburg's controversial thesis set out to prove the impossibility of capitalism within a 'closed system' (i.e. consisting only of capitalists and proletariat). For realisation of the surplus produced within a capitalist system, a 'third market' was needed, and this was where imperialism came into the picture. **Hers was the first Marxist analysis of the world capitalist economy as a whole, and the only one to devote any considerable space to the effects of imperialism on the "backward" areas.**

Basing her analysis on Marx's reproduction schemas in Book II of "Capital", Luxemburg discovered an insoluble problem of the realisation and recapitalisation of surplus only a fraction of which could be consumed by capitalists and workers (given capitalist social relations) She concluded that Marx had been in error in asserting the capacity of capitalism to progress on its own internal dynamic, as a self-regenerating system. Intensive development (capital accumulation) could not take place without extensive development (the mopping up of

markets of non-capitalist modes of production). Capitalism needed an external as well as an internal market. ("Internal" used here in the sense of "internal to the capitalist mode of production", i.e. capitalist and proletariat. "External" markets refer not only to foreign ones but also to those within the domestic economy, e.g. the peasant sector).

Marx, she claimed, had treated this relationship between capitalist and non-capitalist (or pre-capitalist) modes as relevant only to primitive accumulation, whereas in fact, capitalism depended for its existence on other modes of production at every stage of its development.

"... As we have seen, capitalism in its full maturity also depends in all respects on non-capitalist strata and social organisations existing side by side with it. It is not merely a question of a market for the additional product....."

The part played by imperialism was thus clear: it represented

".....the political expression of the accumulation of capital in its competitive struggle for what remains still open of the non-capitalist environment."

Protective tariffs were one weapon in this struggle between capitalist nations.

Having realised surplus value, imperialism had a further need for this non-capitalist environment — for recapitalisation of the surplus into labour and constant capital so that capital accumulation could take place afresh. Luxemburg also notes that this is bound up with the desire to maintain high rates of profit. Dealings with non-capitalist modes of production are sought because of cheap labour and elements of constant capital.

"Capital, impelled to appropriate productive forces for purposes of exploitation, ransacks the whole world, it procures its means of production from all corners of the earth, seizing them if necessary by force, from all levels of civilisation and from all forms of society. The problem of the material elements of capitalist accumulation far from being solved by the material form of the surplus value that has been produced, takes on quite a different aspect. It becomes necessary for capital to dispose ever more fully of the whole globe, to acquire an unlimited choice of means

of production, with regard to both quality and quantity, so as to find productive employment for the surplus value it has realised."

Luxemburg thus stressed the fact that capitalism developed a global system from the outset; capitalist production was premised upon a much wider distribution system.

(To be continued)

## The Wheel. . .

(Continued from page 1)

### Letter

Edward or the 25 but the crux of the matter, Longbottom, the early death, the Latin line etc., etc." The joke is itself not a difficult one to make and is one that readily suggests itself. It is the kind of "wheel" that is likely to be repeatedly "invented". Which is why I put it in doggerel form. Touchstone read it in Graves. I did not.

There are many jokes that make themselves. As an example I offer the following (which also appeared in my CDN column).

When god created DNA

And its built-in double-helix  
D' you think He knew it  
could one day

Result in such a sport as  
Felix?

(Following Touchstone I should like to explain that "sport" is used here in the biologists' sense of the word.)

Arden

## Denial of

(Continued from page 14)

Indian government in 1939, in retaliation for the repatriation of urban labour, banned immigration from India.

### Militancy of Plantation Workers

The unionisation and subsequent militant struggles of plantation workers were also factors in increasing Sinhala fears about the potential political influence of these workers. K. Natesa Aiyer had formed the first plantation trade union in 1931, but this never made rapid strides due to adverse economic conditions during the depression. By the

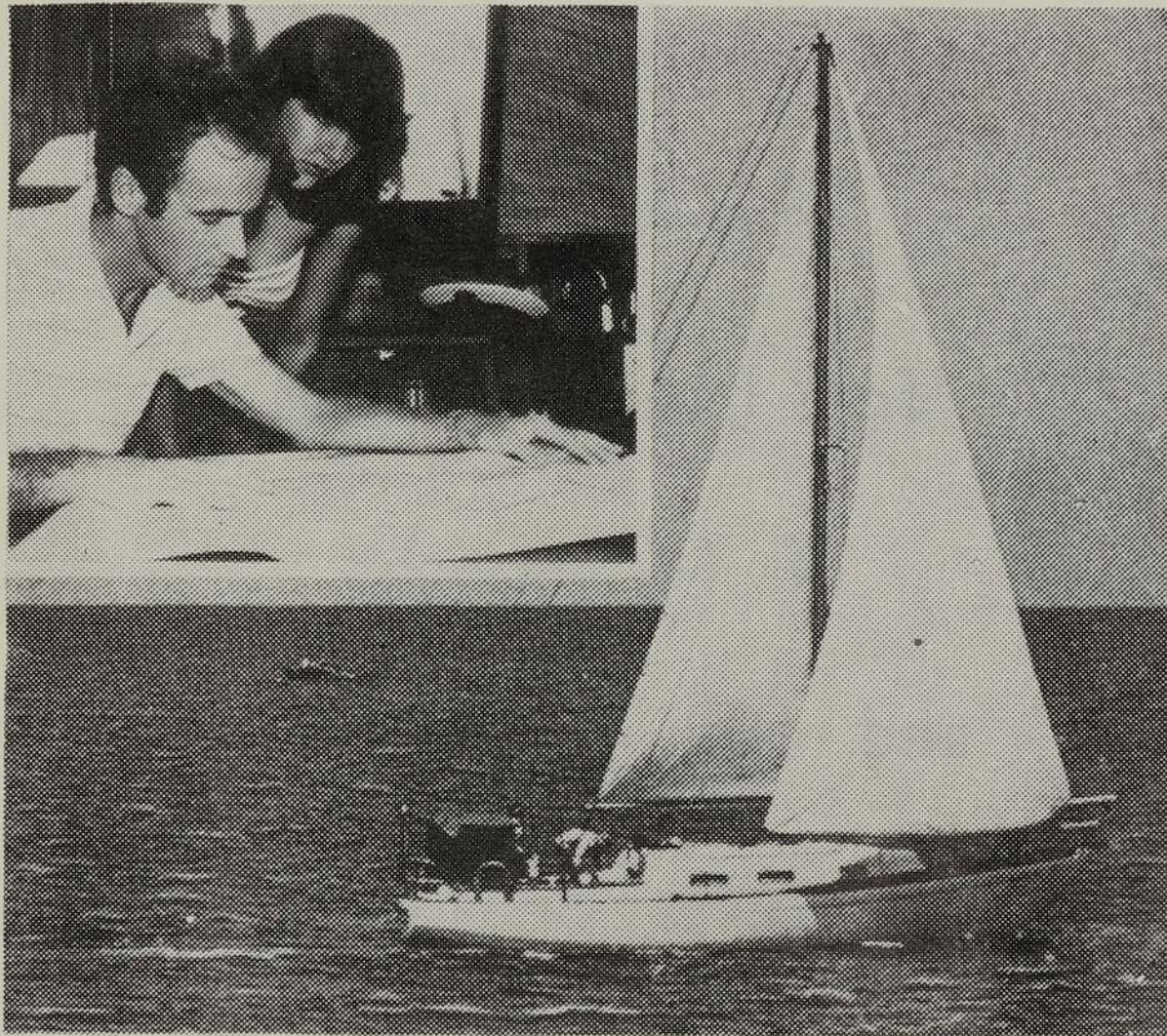
1930's however, the situation had changed; the Lanka Sama Samaja Party started organising the plantation workers and led some very militant strikes in 1939 and 1940, against which the employers retaliated with violence. The Ceylon Indian Congress, inaugurated with Nehru's patronage in 1939, also began trade union activity, organising a wave of strikes, which set the whole of the hill country ablaze in 1940. The planters were caught off their guard, having for generations been used to 'docile coolies'; the colonial officials were also alarmed at the unrest, which occurred after the outbreak of the World War. Recognition was hastily given to the unions and a collective agreement was signed in 1940, between the unions and the Planters' Associations.

The sudden eruption of violence and labour agitation on the plantations also unnerved the Sinhala leaders, who began to see the 'dangers' of an organised plantation proletariat, having links with the Left parties. Alarms about the 'red peril' were further sounded after the end of the World War, when urban labour, led by the Left, erupted in a series of militant strikes in 1945 and 1946, culminating in the general strike of 1947; the spectre of joint revolutionary agitation, involving plantation and urban labour, was to further haunt the bourgeoisie, after the unforeseen successes of the Left parties in the parliamentary elections of 1947, when their representation increased (from 2 at the previous election) to 20.

The election also highlighted the political potential of the plantation sector, the Ceylon Indian Congress had returning 7 members to parliament. In electorates which they did not contest, the plantation workers generally supported candidates of the Left parties, their roles being decisive in around 14 constituencies, which had returned Left candidates. It may also be added that the resentment of the Sinhala bourgeoisie increased after the elections, since the CIC members in parliament sat with the opposition and voted with the Left on all important issues.

(To be continued)

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