

**MIGHTIER THAN THE PEN-NAME**

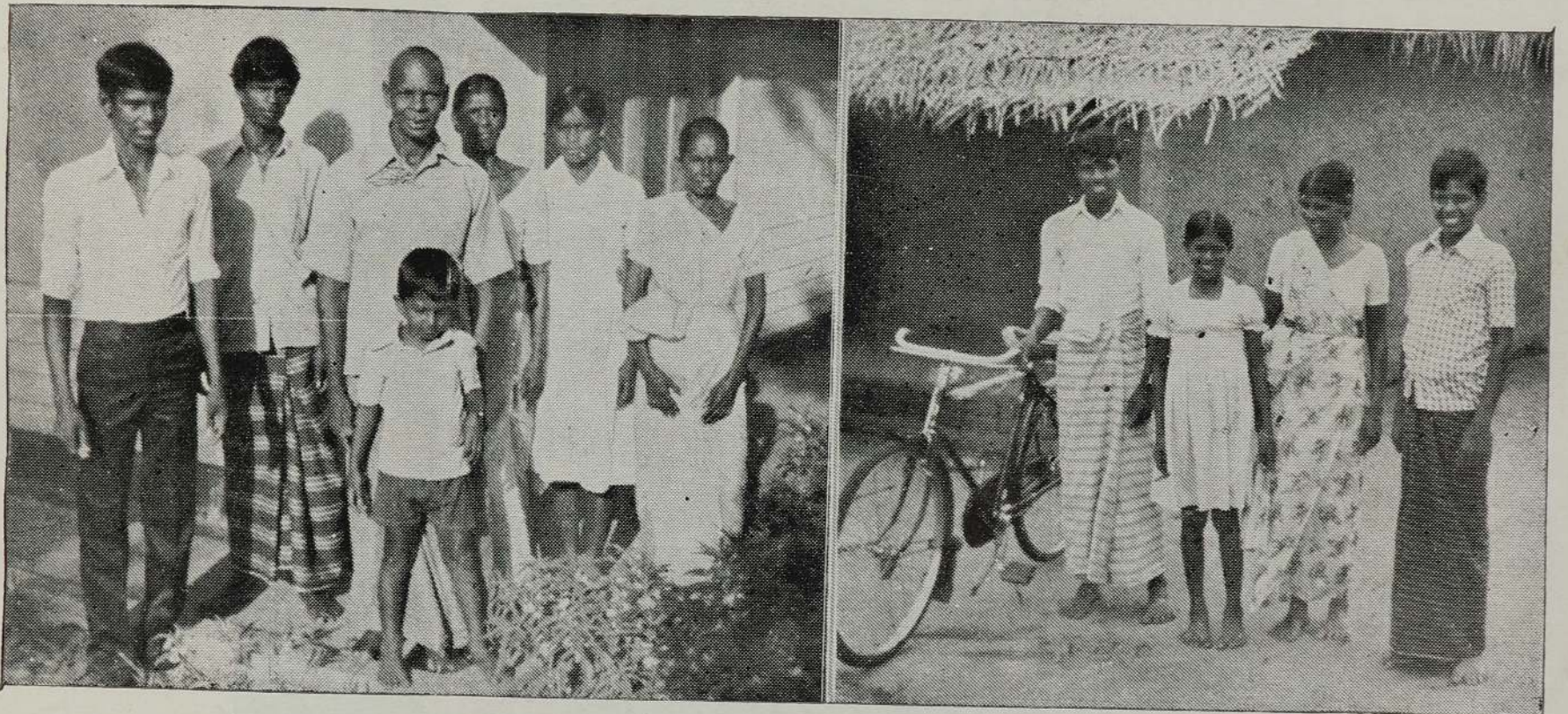
— *Mervyn de Silva*

**LANKA**

# **GUARDIAN**

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The Tamil issue

## **WHAT DO THE SINHALESE REALLY THINK?**

— Opinion researcher Jehan Perera's findings

- \* A century of communal conflict  
Indian bogey and Red peril — Kumari Jayawardena
- \* National security, the Army and  
Third World politics — Altaf Gauhar
- \* Role of intellectual in Third World — Nguigi wa Thiango

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## ANURA'S TURN

"Never" wrote the lobbyist of the 'Daily News' cheerfully "had so many encomiums been showered on National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali by Opposition Leader Anura Bandaranaike as yesterday." When he first hailed the President's nominee for the new portfolio, Mr. Bandaranaike's praise had a tinge of sarcasm. He is the UNP's "new Messiah" said the Opposition leader.

Last week however the Messiah's virtues were more closely defined — "sensible, practical, and intelligent".

But Mr. Bandaranaike obviously had other purposes than issuing testimonials. Mr. Athulathmudali he said never engaged in 'kaivaru' (that is, idle boasting). Now 'kaivaru' is a word that the National Security Minister himself used at a public meeting when he chastised some (unidentified) critics of his own 'tactics and strategy' on combating terrorism.

Divergent views on the roots of the problem and how to treat Tamilnadu and India had become so evident that Cabinet spokesman, Dr. Anandatissa de Alwis had to describe sharp differences between Prime Minister Premadasa and Mr. Athulathmudali as 'shades of opinion'.

Ever since he entered Parliament in 1977, and more so after 1980 when Mrs. B. was expelled from the House, young Anura Bandaranaike has been the special victim of the Prime Minister's trenchant wit and sarcasm and his clever tactics of splitting the SLFP — Mrs. B. and Anura, Anura and other members of his family, Anura and Maitri and on current form Anura and brother-in-law, Vijaya.

It is now obvious that the young Opposition leader has grasped the use of tactics and strategy himself. It is his chance to turn tables.

## INDIAN POLITICS

Even the most casual observer of the Sri Lankan ethnic issue and political crisis knows that a major aspect of the problem is Tamilnadu politics and electoral trends in India, especially the Centre-periphery relationship. While pre-election developments have to be watched carefully, more important perhaps would be the post-election Indian situation and the compulsions and constraints that will affect decisions at the Centre.

This INDIA TODAY report on by-elections and the national electoral scene, together with the upswing of the DMK is therefore required reading:

THERE was little cheer for the Congress (I) in the 24 assembly by-elections in 14 states last fortnight. While the party won three of the five seats it contested in the south, it won only four of the 10 seats at stake in the northern belt stretching from Gujarat to Bihar, dropping six of the nine seats it held earlier. It retained two of three in Bihar and one each in Rajasthan, Karnataka and Nagaland. All in all, it conceded six seats but wrested four from other parties one each in Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The most significant loss was in Uttar Pradesh where it lost Malihabad to the Rashtriya Sanjay Manch and Jakhania to the Lok Dal. And it retained seats by greatly reduced majorities in Thanagazi in Rajasthan its margin of victory dropped from over 4,000 in 1980 to slightly over 1,500.

"Of the Opposition, the National Democratic Alliance of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Lok Dal fared well, winning four of the nine seats it fought, the BIP taking three, one retained in Maharashtra and two wrested from the Congress (I) in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. BJP morale, in fact has been considerably boosted by these wins, although it lost Pragpur in Himachal Pradesh to the

(Continued on page 3)

## TRENDS + LETTERS

### Correct usage

Reviewing "Recent Politics in Sri Lanka" by Wiswa Warnapala and Dias Hewagama, Shelton Kodikara considers the authors use of the word "personation" merits a (sic). The usage is perfectly correct.

Sidat Yatigamma  
Kiribathgoda

### Omissions

I wish to draw your attention to 2 glaring omissions in two otherwise valuable articles which appeared in your issue of 1st June.

Firstly, I refer to Dayan Jayatileka's contribution entitled 'The New Opposition'. He has in it mentioned the names of a

(Continued on page 23)

LANKA

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## CONTENTS

Editor: Mervyn de Silva

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News Background	3
CRM on proposed Press amendment	6
Foreign News	8
Glimpses of Sinhala perception	11
100 years of ethnic conflict — (6)	17
Marxist theories of imperialism — (4)	20

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COVER PICTURE shows some of those interviewed by Jehan Perera.

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# The absurd and the desperate

Mervyn de Silva

A sword hangs over the peoples' right to free expression and it is mightier than any pen-name, including the legendary "pro bono publico". What is at stake in the proposed law to ban pseudonyms from the mass media is not the privilege of a few hundred journalists. That is a misconception which the authors of this insidious move wish to circulate in order to confuse and deceive the vast mass of newspaper readers. The law is nothing less than a blatant attempt to protect the wielders of power and their coteries from criticism and exposure. For all its apparent innocence, the law is a deadly blow aimed at a fundamental right of the people as the Civil Rights Movement has ably and forcefully argued.

"Pro Bono Publico" of the provincial town X is heartily sick of the gross inefficiency, corruption, waste of public funds, glaring abuse of power, and the high-handed conduct of political panjandrums and bureaucratic big-wigs. He is irritated, disgusted, angry. Whether it is this private emotion or his social conscience or bit of both that finally impels him to act, 'Pro Bono Publico' sends a letter to the Editor of a national newspaper, giving his name and address but only for the information of the editor, who can, if necessary, check the letter's authenticity.

If the letter once published offends the laws of the land — the wellknown and well tested laws of libel or the Press Council Act — the editor, publisher and printer risks legal action and the penalties that the courts or the Council are empowered to impose. "Hang the Editor but not the Free Press" was the challenging invitation issued by the SUN.

"The end result of this law will be the augmenting of the already considerable army of

courtiers, court jesters, singers of hossannas and hurrah boys who flatter the puny egos of those ensconced in power with their sycophantic panegyrics" wrote the ISLAND. True, but only part of the truth.

The pseudonym is the writer's protection from retaliation and reprisal. The purpose of the law is to unmask and unarm the critic so that he can be identified and exposed to those ugly and vicious methods of retaliation and reprisal, which have been institutionalised in recent years. The student, the trade unionist, the leaders of opposing parties, academics and intellectuals, members of the clergy and the judiciary, the activists of opposition parties and organisers of constituencies, businessmen and professionals — in their time, all these groups have been victims of harrassment and abuse, intimidation and assault, while a few, pre-selected or accidental, have been deprived of their civic rights, means of livelihood or of life itself.

Dr. Anandatissa de Alwis, a former journalist himself and now the Minister of Information, weeps over these proposed changes, and ridicules the absurdities that the press will be forced to parade on its front pages if the letter of the law is to be respected. A weather report, for instance, will have a by-line!

A government with a four-fifths majority faces the feeblest opposition in our post-independence history. The 'Referendum' of December 1982 allows this administration to govern this island till 1989. It has armed itself with Emergency regulations and the PTA. And yet this mighty elephant makes a mockery of the law and its own natural nobility, turns its back on its past performance as champions of the free press and its own pious election manifesto, and suddenly goes on a wild rampage, apparently incensed by the sting of a bee. It is not

as if the government had no other problems to occupy its mind! Yet, it is the intriguing absurdity and the ironies which reveal the truth.

For the mass of the people, the burdensome business of ordinary living is becoming almost unbearable, and the economic situation will get worse, not better. As the government argues, its main task is to win the "war in the north" but economics and material hardship makes no ethnic distinctions. The stench of corruption has spread across the land. The government is besieged by other problems, by other aggrieved groups. The absurd is often the natural expression of the embattled, the desperate, the frightened philistines ●

## Trends...

(Continued from page 1)

*Congress (I). In Andhra Pradesh, the Telugu Desam proved its continuing supremacy by retaining one seat and reducing the victory margin in the other by 18,500 votes. Profiles of the keenly fought contests."*

**"Tamil Nadu:** K. Karunanidhi and his Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) cannot but be elated by the results of the four by-elections last fortnight. The DMK took Maviladuthurai from ruling All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) and retained Annanagar — Karunanidhi's old seat which he had resigned in protest against the Central and state Governments' inaction on the Tamil problem — improving its margin by about 9,000 votes. The Annanagar result is a slap in the face for Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran for in his election meetings he had taken pains to point out that 'this by-election is not a fight between the AIADMK and the DMK but between me and Karunanidhi.'"

# ISRAEL ISSUE

Addressing the UNP Executive Committee on June 9, President Jayewardene said that his government will not change its decision on the opening of an Israeli interests section in the US Embassy. Each country that had been asked to help Sri Lanka fight terrorism had refused to do so. Then the Israelis had offered to help. He had accepted that offer because he

did not wish to be the Head of State in which the future of the Sinhalese was in peril.

He warned certain newspapers not to act irresponsibly by stirring up communal feelings. He also told Muslim MP's that if they did not support the government decision they could leave. If they spoke against the decision, they would be forced to leave the party.

## Tough new press censorship

GOVERNMENT re-imposed press censorship with the evoking of regulation 14 (1) of the emergency regulations.

State Ministry Secretary Douglas Liyanage announcing the decision at a news conference said government was obliged with reluctance to restore the censorship which was lifted in October last year.

He disclosed that the scope of the regulation had been expanded to cover letters to the editor, cartoons and advertisements. The censorship would also cover foreign news, Mr. Liyanage said.

Under regulation 14 the Competent Authority is empowered to take any measures or give directions that are considered necessary to prevent or restrict publications which may be prejudicial to the interest of national security, the preservation of public order, the maintenance of supplies and services essential to the life of the community, or which may incite or encourage persons to mutiny, riot or cause civil commotion or might prejudice steps taken in connection with training of persons engaged in the suppression of terrorist activities and matters connected therewith.

— SUN

## Protests: Situation in hand

Some anti-Israel demonstrations were staged near mosques in a few places in the Batticaloa and Ampara districts on Friday, states a press release issued by the Ministry of State.

The full text :

Some anti-Israel demonstrations were staged by some persons near mosques in a few places in the Batticaloa and Ampara districts on Friday.

Small groups of unruly demonstrators stoned a few police vehicles, set up road blocks and set fire to a CTB bus. 29 passengers including some persons of the area were injured when another CTB bus was stoned by a mob.

Several policemen received injuries when the demonstrators threw stones at the police on duty.

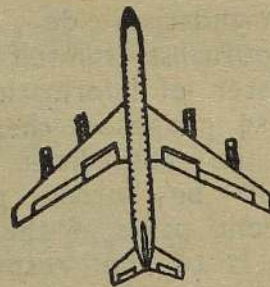
Police fired tear gas shells and were compelled to open fire to disperse the crowds.

12 demonstrators received minor injuries.

The situation is well under control and no incidents have been reported since.

— SUNDAY OBSERVER

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# DEADLIER THAN TERRORISM

**"Inflation is a greater threat than terrorism"** warned Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel and proceeded to explain the mounting economic difficulties which confront Sri Lanka. The Aid Sri Lanka Consortium, sponsored by the World Bank, meets in Paris next week. This time Sri Lanka goes to this annual encounter minus the usual clean bill of health from the I.M.F. with which it failed to reach agreement on a second tranche of 50 million SDR's as standby support.

Mr. de Mel calls it the 'toughest' test he will have to face since 1978. Then the UNP, flush with an unprecedented parliamentary victory and armed with a new economic strategy ideally suited to the 'free market' doctrines of western countries and the international agencies, could face prospective donors with the utmost self-confidence. This confidence has now been badly shaken by many factors, domestic and international, political and economic.

Late last year, a boom in tea prices created an illusion of a buoyant economy and a bright future. But as the *L. G.* cautioned (*Trends*: Vol 6, No 22, March, 15 1984) the cause was both external and artificial, and the bonanza was likely to be short lived. For its domestic reasons, India had placed a ban on tea exports. Now Mr. de Mel observes correctly that the "bonanza" had the effect of 'artificially masking' the island's deep-rooted economic problems.

The bubble has burst. From the peak-months of November-January, tea prices have slumped by 20% at the London auctions and there has been a similar decline at other centres.

**Another important reason for the darkening clouds over the economic horizon is Sri Lanka's external debt and debt-servicing burdens.**

When the IMF and World Bank missions were here, Finance Minister de Mel issued public warnings against high-spending ministries and "protected" corporations which were raising loans from banks, local and foreign, which the government had to under-write for "political reasons". All these corporations were part of the "little ministerial empires" that have become a prominent feature of the post-1977 period.

## Debt Burden

In its own guarded and bland idiom, the Central Bank reported last month:

**"Bank borrowings and commercial credit which had formed a negligible proportion of total External Debt in 1979 had by end 1983 climbed to 33%. Between these two years long term concessional debt increased by SDR 1,052 while short maturity high-cost credit from commercial sources increased by SDR 577. In consequence there was a significant deterioration of the debt profile. Another, and more worrying feature, was that the debt service to exports ratio had by 1983 increased to nearly 22%".**

**Sri Lanka's new problems are therefore an essential part of the common predicament of a debt-ridden Third World; a predicament which is the direct outcome of US policies, its hefty budget deficits and the high interest rates now prevailing. This charge is not levelled by the Third World alone but the principal allies of the U. S.**

At the recent seven-nation summit in London, speaker after speaker accused the United States of being "the major threat to world economic recovery, the stability of the international financial system" and to all reasonable efforts to

"ease the Third World debt crisis". Writing in the *NYK Times* Paul Lewis said:

"The Europeans will argue that it is unfair for the US to ask heavily indebted Third World countries to adopt stringent austerity policies under the IMF's supervision when the US is increasing their financial problems by forcing up the cost of servicing the debt".

The same report correctly predicted that Mr. Reagan will resist the demands of the other six and the Third World in view of the Presidential election! All the promises of Williamsburg said Fred C. Bergsten, Mr. Carter's top Treasury adviser, "were meaningless".

**They recommend free trade to the poor, and practice protectionism; they promise lower interest rates, and keep raising them; they urge realistic exchange rates and over-value the dollar.**

Thus, the conservative but highly knowledgeable *Financial Times* could speak editorially of "an imported American virus" and state that "US policies...are importing savings and exporting inflation to the outside world".

## Political Stability

And inflation, says Mr. de Mel, is a bigger menace than "terrorism". He is the one member of the Cabinet that can appreciate the connection because in an interview published in the state-run *SUNDAY OBSERVER*, we are told that the Finance Minister will "have to face a barrage of questions on aspects connected with political stability." The political situation "after the July disturbances" will also "figure largely" since the donors are "understood to have expressed doubts about Sri Lanka's capacity to absorb foreign aid in the present unsettled conditions."

# CRM on proposed Press amendment

The following is the full text of a statement issued by Charles Abeysekera on behalf of the Civil Rights Movement on the proposed amendment to the Press Council Law.

According to the newspapers the Minister of Justice Mr. Nissanka Wijeyeratne is proposing to the Government an amendment to the Press Council Law under which any proprietor, printer, publisher or editor of any newspaper publishing anonymous or pseudonymous articles or reports shall be guilty of an offence, liable to be punished with a term of imprisonment not exceeding one year or a fine not exceeding two thousand rupees or both.

Such an amendment violates the fundamental right of freedom of speech, expression and publication enshrined in Article 14 (1) (a) to our Constitution and under its provisions cannot become law unless passed by 2/3rd of the members of Parliament and subsequently approved by the people at a referendum.

Under the Newspaper Ordinance no person shall print or publish any newspaper in this country without making a written declaration to the Registrar of Newspapers in a prescribed form specifying the title of the newspaper, where it is to be printed and also the true name and place or abode of all persons intended to be the printer, the publisher and the proprietor. Any changes are also required to be registered. This provision has been made to enable criminal or civil proceedings to be instituted by any party aggrieved against the printer or publisher of a newspaper which also includes the Editor in respect of any violation of the rights of others or any infringement of the law. What then is the necessity for the proposed amendments?

## Cornerstone of democracy

Freedom of speech of the press is the foundation of all democratic

societies for without free political discussion no public education, so essential for the proper functioning of the process of popular government is possible. As has been said in a well known American case, *Thornhill vs The State of Alabama* (1940) 310v 388 84 law 1098: "The safeguarding of freedom of speech and the press to the ends that men may speak as they think on matters vital to them and that falsehoods may be exposed through the process of education and discussion is essential to free government."

A free and untrammelled press is an essential instrument for free speech and expression. In this connection we can do no better than quote from the submissions made under the signatures of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and a distinguished team of lawyers headed by Mr. H. W. Jayewardene Q. C. to the Constitutional Court objecting to the enactment of the Press Council Bill by the previous government, a Bill which was also opposed by the CRM —

"1. 1 The freedom of the Press is the essence of liberty and this is the source of all other liberties. If this freedom is suppressed, restrained or controlled, then the foundation for autocracy is laid. Freedom of expression and freedom of speech is the opinion. This is of fundamental importance.

"1. 2. It is submitted that there are two priorities involved in the concept of freedom of speech, namely —

(a) the source from which communication issues, and

(b) perhaps the more important one, the recipient of the communication.

The freedom to express one's thoughts is confined to a few compared to the wider circle to which the freedom of expression is extended in so far as the recipient is concerned, namely the community.

1.3. It is in the freedom of the recipient that public opinion has its birth, the Press provides the data by which such opinions find their fullest expression. Therefore it is man's right as the recipient of information to look to as many sources of information as he likes: and it is equally the duty of the Press which provides the information to seek it from as many sources as possible. It however, the sources of information become concentrated in one, or restricted to a few bodies, then the formation of ideas is limited. It is in such circumstances only proper that the sources of information available to the public should be enlarged rather than restricted: therefore there can be no justification for interference with the freedom of the Press".

If, having the above principles in mind, we examine the proposed amendment, we find that it imposes unwarranted restrictions on the freedom of the Press. We shall examine this matter further under three heads: news reports, letters to the Press by citizens and articles.

## Inhibiting effect

News reports have their source in reporters who go out gather news and then prepare reports for publication. Let us take the instance of a reporter gathering news which is of public importance but is discreditable to important Minister of government, or to powerful official, or to the management of a Public corporation which has influential connections or to someone in the Police, Army or Customs or immigration or Emigration Department. He could be inhibited from reporting the true facts if his name is to be published in the newspaper as the person who collected the news, because he could have a reasonable fear of reprisal. His freedom to report the true news would thereby be affected by the proposed amendment.

The editor of the newspaper if he is a man of principle, may authorise the inclusion of this news item in the newspaper without exposing the reporter to any risk of reprisal and



thus decide to impart to the public important information which it is in their interest to know. But if he is a timid person, he may himself fear that the consequences of publication may be personally bad for him and he may not publish the news at all.

This situation can become all the more important in the case of investigative journalism such as is found in the articles by INSIGHT teams in the Observer (UK) or in the Sun (Sri Lanka). Such investigations are often directed towards the exposure of various alleged misdeeds and rackets — crime, such as drug-peddling or extortion, financial and business rackets, corruption and inefficiency in government departments or state corporations etc. To require that the names of the journalists entrusted by the editor with such investigations be given in the reports and analysis that are finally published expose those individuals to retaliation from the powerful pressure groups who have been exposed or embarrassed by thugs of the criminal underworld or by the goons of politicians or various persuasions. This may result in attacks even on the homes and families of such journalists or in forms of more subtle victimisation by the government. If the expose is of the police, journalists and their families may feel under threat from the police in the localities where they live, the present proposal will thus inhibit investigative journalism.

### Citizens' letters

The situation in the case of letters written by members of the public to the press is similar. A person may send a letter to the press criticising something related to social, cultural, educational or political aspects of life in this country. But he may not desire to expose himself to any reprisals as a result of his name being made known to the person, groups or movement he is criticising. Therefore, he may want the letter published under a pseudonym and it is so published. There may be contradictions of this or observations from other citizens also published in the press. The citizens then have an opportunity to come to a conclusion in their judgment as to the truth of

the matter. These matters are all important not only for them to exercise their votes properly at various elections but also for them to exercise influence over the persons elected by them.

### Articles

The same arguments apply to articles published in the newspaper, individual articles or regular columns. A writer of an article in the newspapers may not want his name published for the foregoing reasons though his article contains matter which the public should know. Apart from this writers have down the centuries written articles, stories, reviews to the newspapers under pseudonyms or pen names so that persons reading the articles may concentrate on what the article says and arrive at their conclusions without being prejudiced one way or other by looking at the name of the author. What is important to the public is what is said not who said it.

It is also the practice of all newspapers to use depersonalised titles such as "Political correspondent" "lobby correspondent" "business correspondent" "special correspondent" "sports commentator" etc... Even though different journalists may write such columns from week to week, yet continuity is maintained by this method. What conceivable harm can there be in this practice?

Sri Lankan journalism has been considerably enriched by columnists such as Sooty Banda, Flybynight, Atticus, Alice, Tatler, Jay Quill, Janus, Candida etc; in the national language press by Ukussa etc. The reading public also had the benefit of other professionals who wrote learnedly on subjects within their competence, but did so under a pseudonym Lex, Ficus, Agricola, Adonis, Dinar.

We wonder how many of these journalists and other professional commentators would have chosen to write their trenchant sarcastic pieces or informed and incisive essays if they had to sign their names to every column.

### Letters of Junius

Pseudonymous political and social comment has indeed a long history. A significant case in point is the letters of Junius published in the

"Public Advertiser" in London between January 1769 and January 1772. The principal aim of these letters was to discredit the government in power at that time and to draw attention to what was considered the undesirable political influence of George III. Junius was extremely careful to preserve his anonymity.

He once wrote to his publisher. "I must be more cautious than ever. I am sure I should not survive a discovery three days." His success is attested to by the fact that the authorship of these letters is still a matter of dispute.

11. That the fears we have expressed regarding the inhibiting effects of the proposed new laws on free expression of opinion in the press are not idle is also borne out by the submission of Mr. R. J. Jayewardene to the Constitutional Court to which we have referred earlier. To quote;

"1.4 Freedom of speech requires courage. If a person who gives information is timid or is reluctant to give facts then the formation of public opinion is restricted.

The placing of any restrictions on the communication of data and opinion as hitherto communicated to the public is a matter which merits the closest attention of any tribunal."

In this context it is unarguable that the proposals referred to are an infringement of the right to free expressions.

12. We have not speculated on the motives behind these proposals. However, we consider it apposite to quote once again from Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's submissions to the Constitutional Court:

"1.5 It is submitted that in a system of government based on universal suffrage both the issuer and recipient of information express themselves through the ballot. In such a system there is always a tendency on the part of those in power who wish to maintain their position of power, to control the publication of data and opinion, because it might ultimately affect their tenure. Therefore it is not uncommon to see those in power

(Continued on page 23)

# The culture of silence and fear

Ngugi wa Thiongo

The most dangerous cancer in most Third World countries today is the culture of silence and fear. The microbes of this cancer are grown in the heavily guarded laboratories of neo-colonial regimes. The carriers are writers, journalists, intellectuals, the educated elite in schools and universities, the group who trade in written words—ideas, opinions et al—to explain the world. The victims are the masses—ordinary men and women deprived of food, clothing and houses. But the profiteers from this cancer live in the Wall Streets of the western world. They invest in the stability created by the cancerous culture of silence and fear.

Take the example of Kenya. In March 1982, three truckloads of armed police went to Kamarithu Community Education and Cultural Centre in Limuru and razed to the ground an open-air theatre built and used by peasants and workers of the area. What would have happened if the villagers had shown physical resistance?

In August and September of the same year, more than 2,000 people are believed to have been killed when the armed forces of the regime lashed out in response to an attempted coup, which, according to the government's own sources, had been crushed within hours.

The following months saw more than 1,000 political prisoners, mostly air force personnel, given jail terms of up to 25 years.

In February, under the pretext of stopping inter-clan squabbles in northern Kenya, the regime rounded up 5,000 pastoralists, stripped them naked and made them lie on the ground for three days without food or water. The councillor for the area has charged that later more than 300 were shot dead as they tried to flee.



Ngugi: writer and rebel

In November 1983, in a secret agreement, Tanzania deported at least 18 Kenyan political refugees. At the time of writing, only two have been brought to open court. The others are still in the regime's police cells. There were no headlines about this, no condemnatory editorials.

Why are there such muted voices from within Kenya, particularly from its intellectuals, and from the world intellectual community, particularly the western press?

Kenya regained its 'independence' in 1963 after more than 60 years of British colonial rule. The British settler regime seized land, introduced forced labour in the huge plantations and slave wages in the new industries, and imposed a taxation system on Kenyans to finance the settlers.

This economic exploitation could only be imposed by political repression and police terror. But the British, like any other colonial power, knew that economic and political control could never be effective without cultural domination.

So they suppressed Kenyan people's culture, while through the English language and educational institutions, they tried to impose the values of subservience to imperialist plunder. They created a cooperative elite imbued with a colonial mentality, while suppressing the seeds of resistance contained in people's culture

Kenyan people fought back: the peak of all the anti-colonial resistance movements in the different nationalities at different times was the Kenya Land and freedom army (Mau Mau) which, from 1952, waged a 10-year armed struggle of Kenyan workers, finally forced the British to concede to some sort of independence.

But the new 'independent' government was manned and run by a cooperating, servile elite born out of the colonial past, which saw its future as a willing messenger of imperialism. The new government, under Jomo Kenyatta, did not even make a token attempt to break with imperialism, the colonial, economic structures and social institutions remained. The masses sank deeper in to poverty even as this tiny elite joined the ranks of Euro-American multinational boardrooms to facilitate the smooth operations of US, British, West German and Japanese economic interests. The Moi regime sealed this dependence by giving the US military facilities.

Because there were no meaningful economic changes, the regime became more and more politically alienated from the people. People could not be trusted with democracy. To maintain itself, it resorted to the same colonial tactics it had learnt: political repression and rule through police terror. Both Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi (his Vice-President

and successor) guided by Charles Njonjo (attorney-general and then minister) destroyed centres of democratic expression. Today in Kenya, a gathering of more than five people constitutes a public assembly and requires a police licence. Whenever it has suited the regime, the police have arrested them under this law and hauled them to the courts and prisons. Today in Kenya, to discuss the possibility of the death of the President, through illness, old age or any other cause, is a treasonable offence and carries a mandatory death sentence.

But in the colonial past from which the Kenyan regime draws its vision of the future, political control was accompanied by cultural repression. Thus in 1982, the Moi government embarked on a campaign of cultural repression, with the banning of plays deemed critical of Kenya's social ills; the destruction of the people's open-air theatre at Ramarithu; arrest and detention without trial of university lecturers and students; police raids on libraries; and the 14-month closure of the only university. Police even stopped an art exhibition at Kongemi village, Nairobi. Lecturers and students are still being held in inhuman conditions in various prisons as hostages to silence those who would speak. What we are seeing in Kenya, as in many imperialist-dominated Third World countries, is a desperate regime's attempt to impose a culture of silence and fear on its people.

In my book, *Detained: a writer's prison Diary*, I have tried to describe the roots of this culture in colonialism and to warn Kenyans (and other Third World people under imperialism) about its cancerous consequences. Self-censorship becomes a norm. The people, particularly the intellectuals, become their own policeman — policing themselves on behalf of the regime. A traveller in such a country reports normality. The investor is satisfied about the obvious 'stability': people are not complaining, or are they? When, later, people erupt, the ready-made explanations are pulled out of the journalist's drawer:

high birth rate; tribalism, arid conditions or hostile nature.

The international press, particularly in those nations that gain most from Kenya, has for a long time colluded with the regime's fiction: Kenya is not as bad as other countries.

As long as western interests are 'safe', the Kenya regime can get on with the massacre of innocents.

Its culture of silence and fear is financed by a ready and willing multitude of aid agencies from Tokyo, Bonn, London, Washington, even Copenhagen.

But in another brand of analysis, Kenyan intellectuals and outstanding men of letters are to blame for the continuation of the culture of silence and fear. Since independence, Kenya has produced many brilliant sons and daughters. We have internationally famous historians, political analysts, geographers, zoologists, medics, scientists and engineers, religious thinkers: where were these voices when their colleagues were jailed and their families tortured? Where were their voices when Kenyans were massacred in the north? The bourgeois ethos that *I am not my brother's keeper* is plaguing many intellectuals of the Third World, who in the privacy of their own studies are disturbed by the prevailing repression of democracy. They rationalise that as long as they, individually, are safe, the victims of terror are somehow to blame. Governments don't fail people for nothing, do they?

The cancer of silence and fear is paving the way for more, not less, authoritarianism. Hopefully, democratic-minded intellectuals, religious thinkers, patriots of all our nationalities will raise their voices and join the masses to say: Enough is enough.

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# NATIONAL SECURITY, THE ARMY IN THE THIRD WORLD

Altaf Gauhar (Editor-in-Chief, "Third World Quarterly")

'Demilitarisation' is in the air though not on the ground. Last December one would have cited the proud example of Nigeria as a great experiment in democracy but the December 1983 *coup d'état* changed all that. Still there is a great deal of evidence to support the belief that military rule is gradually yielding place to more popular forms of government. The Kissinger Commission's report on Central America devotes a whole section to this mid-political passage. It mentions several instances: Brazil is turping to popular elections of a civilian chief executive after two decades of military rule, Argentina elected its first civilian president for many years, Ecuador ended military rule and elected its civilian president in 1979, Peru did the same in 1980, the Dominican Republic has free elections regularly and Venezuela's democracy was strengthened by its elections in December 1983.

The same could be said of Asia where Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines is under growing pressure to end his particular brand of military rule and the Chief Martial Law Administrators in Pakistan and Bangladesh are pledging themselves to hold elections in 1984 and 1985.

Years of military rule in different parts of the world have shown that the military can act neither as agents of change nor as instruments of modernisation as social scientists argued a few years ago. In the end the military cannot even maintain law and order let alone enhance a nation's sense of security. All the myths about 'the man on horseback' have crumbled. Unfortunately, not enough work has yet

been done to study what happens to a community under prolonged military rule. One continues to believe that once the army returns to the barracks, political life will bounce back unimpaired across the bleak terrain of repression and exploitation. Is that true? Do democratic institutions survive long periods of authoritarian rule? How soon can people recover their sense of liberty after prolonged enslavement?

The working of the military mind removed from its normal habitat, namely the barracks, also needs greater study. Alain Rouquie has recently attempted to answer two central questions:

(1) How are the military politically conditioned?

(2) Since armies are not primarily organisations specialised in aggregating and articulating interests, how do they function politically?

There are also the questions of the long-term aims of the military.

Does the military ruler set out to create a new political order or is he primarily concerned with the suppression of the political? **Does he use the plea of national security to create a new type of permanent military government?**

It is important to study the working of the military mind in a political environment. How does it respond to a crisis different from a specific military threat? What kind of defences does it rely upon under stress? The tendency, so far, has been to assume that a military ruler deals with political problems in much the same way as a politician does. To

an extent this is true; day-to-day matters are disposed of by the military dictator on the advice of the bureaucrats. He brings his own associates with him but they are rarely in a position to improve on the advice given by the bureaucrats. In a sense, the work of the government goes on uninterrupted under military rule although the top structure undergoes pronounced change — much of the change, however, is superficial and largely a matter of style.

But the real test comes under stress. How does a military ruler react to a situation of crisis? Little is known about this because few military rulers survive to tell the story of their failure. Politicians often live to reflect on their performance, but in the case of military rulers 'the truth is oft interred with their bones'.

The process of transition from military rule to democratic rule is in many ways similar to the process of decolonisation. The only real difference is that military rulers are 'sons of the soil' and colonial masters are aliens. It is easier to whip up public frenzy against an alien master than against one's own dictator. Colonial power rested on the argument that the natives needed to be trained in the art of self-government. Native Doctors use the same ploy, and as they entrench themselves they keep reaffirming their pledge to educate and prepare their people to assume democratic responsibilities.

There is a need to examine how native autocratic rule destroys the indigenous political process as surely as colonial rule destroyed the traditional institutions of an enslaved community.

# GLIMPSES OF SINHALA PERCEPTION

Jehan Perera

Summaries of conversations-cum-interviews held at Balalla village in the Kurunegala district 13 March to 16 March 1984

## (1) Conductor on Estate (Age 40)

Bitterly disillusioned with Government, although family has voted U. N. P. for generations

Connects corruption and abuse of power with the grievances of the Tamils. Tamils should be given the rights they seek and should have an equal place in society.

Does not oppose the idea of regional autonomy, although wary of the consequences. Believes the primary step is to cleanse the Government.

## (2) Sinhalese Teacher in School (Age 40)

The demand for separation arose with the failure of U.N.P. Government to keep election promise of restoring to Tamils their rights, which the Tamils interpreted to mean the rights, they enjoyed in the '40s.

Problem can only be solved under Communism whereas Regional autonomy will lead eventually to Indian interference and new problems. In Communism there is no distinction between races; Sinhalese, Tamil and may be English will be made official languages.

## (3) Landless Labourer (20)

JR is too "Dharmishta" to deal with this problem. He is not firm enough and he permits corruption.

Objected to Regional autonomy on grounds that it would lead to an influx of Indians. When the powers to be retained by the Central Government were explained to him he insisted that the powers given to the Regional Government would lead to more demands for more powers. He was aware that in India

Jehan Perera, age 25, is a Knox Fellow at the University of Harvard, Massachusetts

there is a federal system and minor powers are given to the states. Would not mind that system in Sri Lanka if further demands could be prevented.

The armed forces should be given greater powers, but he acknowledged their inability to control the situation due to lack of support from the people of the area. When asked why he still advocated a military solution he said something must be done, as a last resort.

Did not fear an Indian invasion because the non aligned world of which Sri Lanka is a member and the U. S. A. would intervene.

## (4) Public Health Inspector (30)

Advocated a tough line — send the army in (His brother is in the army) JR is weak because he is concerned with international opinion. But India will not intervene because if it does Russia will involve India. Besides North and South India are split.

The fault lies with the Tamil political leaders who promised what they could not give. Now they cannot control their youth.

Categorically against any regional autonomy type solution. There is no solution except for the military one.

## (5) Shopkeeper's Son (20)

All people should be treated alike. Those who rioted in July did so to loot, not out of love for country.

The answers people give depend upon their political view point. Pro-UNPers approve of the government's tough stance, pro-SLFPers say the Tamils should be given most of what they ask for.

## (6) Travelling Vegetable Seller (25)

The northern vegetable traders he deals with are fully for separation. They also do whatever they can to hurt the Sinhalese traders who come up north — they sell underweight buy below the marked price and sell above it, and if they complain stab them. He is convinced that in 50 years or less the Tamils will have everything they want, even a separate state.

JR's "Dharmishta" policies are rubbish. If he had moved harder against the terrorists when they were just raising their heads, all this could have been prevented. They could have been crushed like an insect with a fingernail, but now one needed an axe.

Even regional autonomy would not work because the Tamils are bent on separation. From historical times the Sinhalese and Tamils had fought wars, it was in the nature of things. There is no solution, except JR should have stopped it earlier on.

## (7) Irrigation Engineer (30)

The lasting solution will only come with a communist solution. At the heart of communal conflict is class. The Tamil political leaders camouflage their exploitation of the Tamil proletariat by shifting the blame onto the Sinhalese, and vice versa. Under communism there would be a federal system with subsidiary powers being given to the regions.

## (8) Small Land Owner (20)

This government cannot solve the problem. JR is not to be trusted. He is always looking out for crafty solutions. He will divide the country only after making sure that his house abroad has been built.

Sinhalese-Tamil conflict is very old and is in the blood. The Tamils have equal rights — they have hospitals, roads, schools.

A federal system would only last a week before the Tamils demanded more. If JR leaves a solution might be found, but whatever happens the Tamils will eventually separate. His opinion is that most people think the solution is a military one, although he does not think it will work.

The armed forces should not be used as a solution. However due to historical enmities and the fact that the Tamils had their own separate kingdoms, separatism will never die. The final solution is coerced assimilation whereby the law will decree that Sinhalese and Tamils have to intermarry.

#### (9) Large Land Owner (50)

The Tamils are fighting for their equal rights. This should be given to them, but within a unitary framework because otherwise the Tamils will ask for more. Sri Lanka is too small for federalism. The solution does not depend upon institutional framework but upon the quality of leadership.

#### (10) School Principal (50)

The problem should be solved in a humane manner. That is only possible by educating people while still young, and teaching them both Sinhala & Tamil. From this will develop a single Sri Lankan identity.

Giving regional autonomy above will create new problems. The Tamil areas are poor and so will always quarrel with the Central Government trying to get more, and this will provide South India with an opportunity to interfere.

The Sinhalese-Tamil conflict is due to the opportunism of the political leadership. The Tamil leadership promised the Tamils unattainable goals and now they have lost control over the youth they aroused. Likewise in 1956 when questioned at a Committee meeting about the advisability of Sinhala-only in 24 hours, SWRD struck his head and said why not? Say one second instead of 24 hours. But at that same meeting he admitted that not in 25 years or even a 100 would Sinhalese replace English.

#### (11) Large Land Owner (40)

The opinion of most people is that the basic problem is economic. Under the SLFP Government the Jaffna farmers benefited from the closed economy. Now under the open economy they have been hit. Mrs. Bandaranaike can solve the problem because she will change the economic system.

The armed forces should not be a solution. Sinhalese and Tamils have to intermarry.

#### (12) Government Clerk (50)

The armed forces should not be used to solve what is essentially a political question. But the politicians have been playing football with the problem.

Regional autonomy is a possible solution, but the trouble is that Sri Lanka is a small country and the Tamils will ask for more. But it might be the only solution.

#### (13) Landless Labourer (25)

The Tamils are too much. They must be treated with greater harshness. If they continue to create problems the army must be sent to wipe them out. However, such a step should not really be taken.

#### (14) Vegetable Mudalali (50)

The whole problem is that Sri Lanka obtained independence too early. Our leadership was incapable of dealing with the problem of a country. Good leadership is the pre-requisite to solve the communal problem.

Regional autonomy is not good. The Tamils have no right to ask for a part of the country for their own rule when they came here later than the Sinhalese. Where will their demands end? Besides, compared to other Third World countries, do the Tamils suffer so many disabilities? South India is like the mud, yet the Sri Lankan Tamils must complain about the little difficulties they have which even the Sinhalese have.

#### Conclusions

(a) The people of Balalle recognise the gravity of the communal problem, it is not something they feel can be ignored and will go away.

(b) They think of the Tamils as distant kinsmen, not as total out-

siders with no rights to the country, who are disturbed and agitated. For instance, no one said let them leave the country if they don't like it; most said solve their problems equitably, and a few said kill them if they remain intransigent.

(c) The government in general and JR in particular came in for harsh criticism with respect to the corruption and inefficiency which are seem to have a direct bearing on communal conflict. "Dharmishta" policies are only referred to in sarcasm. No one had a bad word for Mrs. Bandaranaike.

(d) There is an openness to Regional autonomy if it can be shown to be a viable solution which will not slide towards separation. There is no vehement opposition to any solution, including regional autonomy; they only want some solution from people they can trust will not deceive the country. Some have a defeatist mentality and there is little evidence of militant nationalism which is the preserve of the rootless urban intellectual, those who compete directly with the Tamils, and those who struggle to make ends meet and need someone as scapegoat.

(e) The weakest link in their analysis is foreign affairs, they have strange ideas of what international obligations are.

(f) "Let not their leaders mistrust them for theirs is an amazingly responsive nature". These words of Gandhi epitomize the Balalla people. They have open minds, they can be lead either way. The role of Buddhism and the Buddhist sangha did not figure even once in their conversations, they only spoke of the political leaders. The people are looking for leadership, and may be here lies the danger of exploitation.

#### BANDARAWELA TOWN AND VICINITY

April 9-11

#### Boutique Keeper (age 30)

If the Tamils have no equal rights and are discriminated against that is bad.

This problem can be solved politically. But simultaneously the power of the army must be increased so that they can deal with the terrorists. Not sure what regional autonomy is about so cannot support it.

The Buddhist priests have more influence than the politicians. Many people go to the temple to get advice and listen to what should be done. It was the priests who led the people during the July riots.

It is evident that JR must go for this problem, and other problems, to be solved.

#### **Mechanic (age 60)**

No equal rights because of lack of language rights. When NM fought for parity of languages the LSSP's popularity crashed. He was accused by SWRD of having one foot in India and one foot in Sri Lanka, to which he had replied that he was indeed afraid of bringing both legs together in the vicinity of SWRD.

The problem cannot be solved militarily or politically. There must be a big clash between the two communities and out of that disaster a new order will be born.

Not against Regional autonomy, but most Sinhalese will oppose it at a referendum. Disputes over borders and powers etc., will lead to further problems. After the big clash however things will be turned upside down and a solution might come, like lightning comes when the cold air clears the clouds.

Even 40 years ago the Panch Maha Balavegaya was strong. But today it is like the earth and sky. The Sangha has no power. They are not given attention.

JR cannot solve this problem. Mrs. B. is more resolute, she is also very friendly with Mrs. Gandhi who even visited her house.

The whole problem is that the Sinhalese are divided, for instance into the UNP & SLFP, and do not help one another, whilst the Tamils are united and dedicated. Even if it takes 500 years they will finally get the separate state they want.

#### **Waiter (30)**

How can Tamils say they haven't a place in this country when if you look at any hospital, govt. office etc., they are there in numbers. They want Eelam because it will be half the country.

The solution is to give the army power and send it in. The Tamil terrorists are killing innocent Sinhalese people. This cannot be solved by talking.

The people will not want regional autonomy given to the Tamils. They feel very strongly against them. The Sinhalese now say that they will fight even the Tamil terrorist army that is being prepared in India. In the villages the people are even more adamant about this than in the town.

The Sangha is powerful in this matter. In fact during the July riots it was a Buddhist priest who led the attack against the only 2 Tamil people living in the area. Although the people disapprove of priests engaging in violence, because this matter concerns the Sinhalese community an exception was made. About a 1000 people joined in the attack and they were terribly worked up.

JR cannot solve this problem. He is not tough enough. His gov't is corrupt. People are against the MP's even more than against JR. They are against the gov't not because of the economic crisis but because of the Tamil problem that is not being solved. However although the people are anti-government they do not have a clear alternative.

#### **Waiter (30)**

Political negotiations will get nowhere. Besides the people will not accept the verdict of politicians, both Sinhalese and Tamils, whom they do not trust. The army should solve the problem and can solve it if they are given the necessary powers. Now they are hamstrung.

The Sinhalese are tired of the demands. If there is any trouble again things will go badly for the Tamils here. The people are aware that even the Indian Tamils are in league with the terrorists, they give the terrorists contributions. Indian Tamils and Jaffna Tamils are united and therefore they are all Tamils.

Sangha is only powerful in a religious sense, but not in a political sense.

JR cannot solve this problem. "Dharmishta" policies cannot work against terrorism. Force must be met by force just as Mrs. B. in 1971 gave

the army powers to kill anyone and solve the problem. But people do not have a conception of who the next leader should be.

#### **Retired Post Master (age 60, Muslim)**

There is no discrimination against Tamils, and if there is it is necessary since they had a powerful hold over the govt. service. Tamils pull for one another because they think in terms of the group whereas the Sinhalese think in individual terms, and therefore the community loses out.

This problem cannot be solved politically because the Tamils are too ambitious and therefore must be solved by the army. The Tamils must be put in their place and treated like vassals. The reason that Indian Tamils were attacked here is that they too tried to become too big for their boots. Those who helped did so out of love for community.

If regional autonomy is given the Tamils will unite and work harder than ever and will finally become too powerful to handle. They must be kept in place and force answered with force.

The Sangha has little influence nowadays. They are mainly interested in their own material welfare and have lost the respect of the people.

The ills of this govt. have afflicted other govt's as all, so it cannot be said that JR is no good. Cyril Mathew would be better but he is a hothead. Lalith is a first class choice.

#### **Municipal Councillor (50)**

There does not seem to be a political solution to this problem. The use of the army has become a last resort.

If regional autonomy is to be given at all then it must be given to all parts of the country. But the Sinhalese people will oppose such a solution. They feel that the Tamils already have been given too much. In fact the villager is arming himself in preparation against a Tamil terrorist attack.

The Sangha has influence in some cases, not always, and not all priests are influential. Influence in a village is wielded by the Grama Seveka who is appointed by the MP.

JR is too old and does not act decisively. One day India will take over the country. Thondaman is more powerful than the President and he has links with India. The July riots will not recur because that was spearheaded by the UNP and now the govt. cannot afford it. It was common criminals who attacked and looted not the villagers.

### Odd-Job Man (30)

Not an educated person so not sure about the validity of Tamil grievances or about the possibility of a negotiated settlement.

But whatever is done the Sinhalese should not be hurt. The govt. must see to it that Sinhalese interests are protected.

### Timber Mudalali (age 50)

Have equal rights. For instance, look at the Indian Tamils. They have their leader in Cabinet and in addition go on strike. The Tamils demand for Eelam reflects the state of the world. One day the up-country people might ask for their own state.

There must be no military solution. The army is indisciplined and cannot handle their powers with responsibility. They behave arrogantly and alienate everyone. This is what they did during the 1971 insurgency.

If regional autonomy can lead to harmony it is an acceptable solution. But most Sinhalese will be against such a solution which they are not familiar with and with which the Tamils might not be satisfied.

It is nonsense to say that the Buddhist priests are powerful anymore, although they were many centuries ago. But now they are not sincere and are used by the politicians. Walpola Rahula should be an American citizen since he has spent so much of his life there, and gets paid from there. The Buddhist priests are worse than the priests of any other religion.

If India invades we will have no chance whatsoever. It is madness to talk of defense pacts with countries

10,000 miles away when India is only 22 miles away, and has the second largest population and the 7th most powerful army in the world. We should have a friendly treaty with India and not with any other countries.

JR wants to die as President, that is all. He cannot solve the commercial problem just as he cannot solve the economic and other problems. He is also not interested in solving these so long as he has the Presidency. This UNP govt. has been a bitter pill to swallow especially since so much was expected of it. But Mrs. B. is no good either. There is a leadership vacuum in the country.

### Car Baas (age 60)

Have equal rights. What right have they to complain when the Jaffna train is so comfortably equipped, when they have good schools, shops spread throughout the country etc. They want Eelam so that they can get 3/5 of the country and confine the Sinhalese to the remainder.

The solution is preferably a negotiated one. But if that fails, then the military must be sent in. If in the time of Dutugemunu the Sinhalese could clean up the country of Tamils, it can be done again. Mrs. B. unleashed the army on the insurgents in 1971 and succeeded and it can be done again.

The Tamils must not be given regional autonomy or a federal govt. That will be like separation. They will print their own postage stamps and form relationships with S. India. Further, because of birth control that is being practiced by the Sinhalese with government encouragement, the population in the Sinhalese area will drop and the population of the Tamil region will overtake that of the Sinhalese. The Tamils are a very mean people. They do not even give a glass of water to a Sinhalese. This happened personally 20 years ago. But they are hardworking and so they prosper. They should be given their language. Because this is a Buddhist country the Sangha has moral power. This is a more power-

ful power than political power. If Buddhism is true, then this country is forever protected. Buddhism is true and therefore this country has survived although it has passed through many tribulations.

India will not invade because of the complications. We could get help from abroad, besides like in the days of Dutugemunu the lion race will fight like lions.

JR cannot solve this problem and the sooner he goes the better for the country. He is only concerned with preserving his position. Because he and the top members of his government are insulated from the cost of living and other problems that afflict the common people he thinks that all is well. This govt. is terribly corrupt and the communal problem is partly due to this. Cyril Mathew would be preferable to JR and Mrs. B, too would be preferable.

### Tyre Seller (age 20)

Because of language disadvantages the Tamils might not enjoy equal rights, but it is hard to agree that with respect to employment that they are discriminated against. Tamils hold too many good posts. They ask for Eelam to link up with India. They are asking for almost the whole of the coastal areas, so as to surround the Sinhalese, and then call the Indians in.

This problem can be solved politically without recourse to the army. The army will only antagonize the Tamils further by their way of behaving. Regional autonomy is a possible solution as long as it does not lead to separation is perhaps a good solution. But many Sinhalese would be angry with such a solution and consider it a betrayal of race, religion and country.

India must not be provided a reason to invade because if it does we will have no protection.

This problem is more complex than the 1971 insurgency it is not a small problem that can be solved by killing or arresting a few terrorists. Therefore it is unfair to blame JR for not resolving the problem sooner.



## Conclusion

1. The undercurrent of anti-Tamil feeling was strong. This feeling contrasts very much with the feeling in the rice farming village of Balalla. Whereas Balalla is situated in an almost 100% Sinhalese area, Bandarawela has an almost 50% Tamil population, though largely of plantation origin. The Sinhalese in Bandarawela face competition from these Tamils in employment and business they also, unlike the Balalla villagers, feel insecure against possible large scale terrorist attacks which might win over the plantation Tamils. During the July riots, having attacked the Tamils on plantations and in the town, the Sinhalese fled to the tea bushes when they heard rumours of the terrorist attack in Colombo and Badulla.

2. The respondents were united in asserting that Tamils had no cause for complaint as far as jobs and rights were concerned. On the contrary they thought the govt. had given too much to them.

3. The opinion was divided as regards the military versus political options. But those who favoured the political as against the military solution warned that their opinion was that of a minority. Those who favoured a military solution were confident that such a course of action would protect the interests of the Sinhalese, while those who favoured a political solution on the lines of regional autonomy were less sure.

4. A majority were of the opinion that the Buddhist Sangha were not politically powerful although they retained a certain moral power in individual instances. But when there is a vacuum which political leadership is not filling, then moral leadership can come to the fore.

5. Anti-govt. and anti-JR feeling is pronounced. It is not that JR is seen as an evil or corrupt person, but rather as someone who has outlived his span of leadership and is now primarily concerned with remaining as President for as long as possible and being remembered favourably by posterity as a Dharmishta person. Because of this people distrust JR and feel that he will take the easy way out, of doing nothing or acting weakly,

even though it might compromise the country and the Sinhalese. But there is no one else who springs readily to their minds as an alternative leader, Lalith is viewed favourably. No one had a bad word for him. But he is still seen in JR's shadow and not as an independent leader in his own right.

6. India is seen in terms of the role of S.India in providing terrorists and a refuge for terrorists. There is no alarm about possible Indian govt. intervention.

7. I think the reason for the different 'views' I got in Balalla and Bandarawela is that in laid-back, rural Balalla the people think there is room in this country for all of us, both Sinhalese and Tamil, which in Urban Competitive Bandarawela with its large Tamil population it is either "them" or "us".

### Interview at Waraweve village (20 miles from Anuradhapura 4 - 7 May 1984

#### Ayurvedic Physician (age 60)

Should be solved politically. But regional autonomy may not be liked by many Sinhalese.

The problem is that the Tamils do not have a proper religion which lays down rules of conduct. The best solution would be for all Sri Lankans to become Buddhist. Buddhism is the best religion and non violence is its creed.

Colombo people think in terms of a military solution because they are generally vicious, unlike villagers. Also a military solution, apart from its inhuman aspect would involve India.

#### Gramma Sevaka (age 50)

The problem is a great shame because we are all humans. The division into Sinhalese and Tamils is artificial.

There is no truth in the Tamil complaint of discrimination because they have high posts like I.G.P. etc, governments have given them everything the Sinhalese have such as the vote, factories in their areas, hospitals and schools. In fact they have more than their fair share of things. The Sinhalese are not against Tamils who worked for the good of the country and even voted for them — eg. the

Ponnambalam brothers. But today's Tamil leadership spreads false stories abroad.

There was no reason for Tamils to resort to terrorism, They should have stated clearly what was the problem and negotiated instead. It seems that there is a plot with South India, to join up the two parties into one entity. Thus, it is dangerous to give them any form of autonomy to Tamils finally not under the control of the President of the Country. But if regional autonomy could be supervised by the Central govt. then no objections.

The President and government are doing what they can to solve the problem. But of course, it should have been solved much earlier, not just by this govt., but by previous govt's as well. Lalith seems to be doing a good job, now that that he has been put in charge. He makes clever speeches and is equal in intelligence to anyone.

The tragedy that has befallen this country is in large measure the fruit of the politicians who look out for their own and their party's good before the country's. The people have no choice but to vote for lesser of the two evils. For as long as Buddhism survives in this country the people will never vote for destructionist parties of the left.

#### Two Farmers (ages 20)

Tamils have equal rights, for example they hold many high govt. posts. They ask for separation in order to get half the country. Regional autonomy would be acceptable to most. But it must not lead to separation, whether one support or does not support regional autonomy is an individual matter varying individual to individual.

The army cannot solve this problem merely by shooting people. The Tamils will only get angrier. Also, Tamils too are citizens.

The Sangha is certainly influential, but not when compared to the top rung of politicians.

Most people say that if JR or Lalith cannot solve this problem no one can. JR has given over to Lalith because he is too old now. Hardly anyone here is against

JR because this is an UNP village. JR does have his faults. He lacks a firm will, but JR is too dharma-mista and is like a puppet in the hands of others. He must complete the work he took up with a firm determination.

#### **Another Farmer (age 20)**

Agreed with all above except on regional autonomy. This is a Sinhalese country. There is no need to concede rule over any part of the country because a minority wants it. Besides regional autonomy will lead to other demands. So the army must solve. JR is too lenient. Mrs. B. would have been much tougher.

#### **Tractor Operator (age 20)**

Should be solved politically because terrorism is supported by the S. Indians and cannot as a result be controlled militarily. We cannot fight the Indians, and if we do they will try to destroy us with a single bomb.

#### **Boutique Owner (age 30)**

Tamils have equal rights. Look at the way they prosper in business.

The only solution is to wipe out all terrorists militarily. A political solution is impracticable. The govt. must be tough. Sangha is more influential than politicians. The govt. is handling the situation well.

#### **Farmer (Age 40)**

Tamils are human so they should not just be killed. Instead their grievances must be looked into.

Regional autonomy is an acceptable solution. A military solution is neither humane nor efficient. The more enlightened people will agree with this.

#### **Maths Teacher**

Tamils have equal rights. The problems said to be afflicting them afflict the Sinhalese to an even greater degree.

Should not give regional autonomy. It does not solve this type of problem. eg. — the Sikhs in Punjab. It will only make them stronger.

People are divided on whether the solution should be solved militarily or politically. The younger set want the former. A political solution is the preferable option, but not sure whether it is feasible.

#### **Farmer (age 60)**

Tamils must all be killed or chased off. From the times of Dutugemunu they have harassed the Sinhalese. Dutugemunu solved the problem by letting loose oceans of blood. The tears pour down one's cheeks when one thinks of those heroic days and glorious Ruhuna.

#### **Farmer (age 50)**

The story is that MGR, who was born in Sri Lanka, swore that one day he would ride round the island that did not welcome him in a chariot drawn by white horses, flanked by two Sinhalese maidens.

The establishment of Tamil settlements in many dry zone areas after the riots of 1958 has made the problem more difficult to solve. Therefore regional autonomy is dangerous. The solution is military.

#### **Boutique Owner (age 40)**

A political solution can be reached, and if regional autonomy would mean a treaty that cannot be broken then it is acceptable. Else, Tamils will use regional autonomy to ask for more and more.

This must be solved politically if we are to maintain the goodwill of the world and get their help in overcoming our economic difficulties. A military solution is not the Buddhist way either.

#### **Boutique Assistant (age 20)**

A political solution is preferable to a military one which would lead to the loss of many lives, but under the circumstances there is little the government can do politically. The main problem is with whom the government is to negotiate with, the terrorists do not want to talk, only to kill and get their Eelam. Therefore the army should be sent in with a free hand.

#### **Carpentry Teacher (age 30)**

Since Tamils are citizens they ought to have equal rights. They may not have them, but not quite sure of this.

A political solution is preferable to a military solution, but since this is a problem with roots in history with the Tamils attacking the Sinhalese and the Sinhalese

relatiating there is not much hope of a final solution.

Regional autonomy is potentially dangerous because the Tamils will use it to bolster up their position. But if it can lead to a peaceful solution well and good.

A minority in any country will be under the majority. So naturally the Tamils fret. Everynow and then they get a blow and an insult, and they are not willing to put up with.

#### **Conclusions**

1) There is a marked difference in the attitudes of Balalla and Waraweve respondents and those of Colombo and Bandarawela. This reflects in part (a) lack of direct competition with Tamils. (b) relative self sufficiency of the peasant economy (c) traditional concepts of tolerance (d) lack of newspapers to constantly focus the mind on the violence in the north.

2) Like Balalla the respondents here were, by a 2/3 majority, in favour of a political as opposed to a military solution. Of those in favour of a political solution most were in favour of or had no objection to regional autonomy provided the autonomous regions under the final authority of the Central Government.

3) Unlike the Balalla respondents, at Waraweve there was less credence given to Tamil complaint that they have no equal rights, and criticism of the govt. was much more muted. Balalla is a SLFP village while Waraweve is UNP. This is probably due to the fact that the SLFP says that UNP corruption and thuggery is responsible for most of the country's problems, including the Tamil, with all people having their rights trampled upon.

4) Lalith is viewed positively as a leader of intelligence and stature who measures up to the Tamil and Indian leaders. No one has thus far said he is unsuited for the job.

5) With positive leadership a referendum on regional autonomy can be won in Balalla and Waraweve.

**(To be continued)**

# The 'Indian menace' and the 'Red peril'

Kumari Jayawardena

In the post-independence phase of Sri Lanka's recent history, the Sinhala bourgeoisie, which in 1947, had formed its own multi-ethnic party — the United National Party — entered into a new phase of its existence, when it began to consolidate its class position. Not only did the Marxist parties have considerable parliamentary success in 1947, (the Trotskyist Dr. N.M. Perera, becoming Leader of the Opposition), but outside parliament the Left also led several militant general strikes in the 1947-48 period. All these factors were instrumental in determining the policies of the new government formed in 1947, with D.S. Senanayake as Prime Minister.

In the colonial period, the presence of the British had kept communal and religious conflicts from flaring up to violent proportions, the last occasion of serious violence being the anti-Muslim riots in 1915. However, in the 1930's, ethnic tension against minorities had built up and by the time of independence in 1948, the Sinhalese of all classes were being prepared for the next round of 'holy wars' — based on ethnicity, language and religion — to be waged against the non-Buddhist sections of the population. The first attack, only six months after independence, was on the political rights of persons of Indian origin resident in Sri Lanka, who numbered 974,000 in 1953, (12% of a total population of 8 million), the majority being plantation workers and their dependents.

This phase of ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka involved the introduction of legislation sponsored by the Sinhala bourgeoisie — with the support of vested interests of other ethnic groups — against the most exploited and oppressed section of the working-class.

The legislation of 1948, denying citizenship and franchise rights to the Indian Tamils of Sri Lanka, was both blatantly racist and anti-working class, achieving simultaneously the long-standing objective of the Sri Lankan bourgeoisie to reduce the political influence of these workers as a class and as a minority, while keeping them in economic subordination.

## Class and ethnic-based legislation against plantation workers

### Citizenship Acts

When the country obtained independence, in February 1948, the constitution which was in force did not define citizenship, a singular and intentional omission which was rectified soon after. In August 1948, **The Ceylon Citizenship Act** provided that citizenship was to be determined either by descent or by stringent conditions of registration, including proof of three generations of paternal ancestry in Sri Lanka, but providing for citizenship to be conferred by the government on persons for distinguished service to the professions, commerce etc. An **Emigrants Act** was also passed in August 1948, the **Indian & Pakistani Residents (Citizenship) Act** was introduced to grant citizenship by registration on certain restrictive conditions, including residence and income.

As Kodikara has observed, the Citizenship Acts 'conferred automatically and without formality the status of citizenship by descent on the indigenous elements of Ceylon's population, i.e. on Sinhalese, Ceylon Tamils, Ceylon Moors and Burghers', but the number of Indians who could claim citizenship under the Act was 'infinitesimal in proportion to the Indian population in the island'. (S.U. Kodikara

**Indo-Ceylon Relations since Independence**, 1965, pp 112-113). These acts were followed by a **Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Act** which amended the electoral laws, confining the vote only to citizens, thus bringing to a conclusion the legal manoeuvres of the Sinhala majority to exclude the plantation workers from citizenship, thereby disenfranchising

the largest section of the working-class.

### The Consciousness of the Sinhala Bourgeoisie in 1948.

In debates on these three Acts the Sinhala leaders were to voice the main fears and suspicions of the Sinhala bourgeoisie about the presence of persons of Indian origin in Sri Lanka. These attitudes can be summarised under two heads, the first symptomatic of their consciousness as ethnic Sinhalese and the second of their consciousness as a bourgeoisie, with class interests that needed to be protected. Among the first set of attitudes, shared by both the bourgeoisie and the large majority of Sinhala people were the following:

1. The fear of being 'swamped' — if the Indians obtained citizenship and therefore the right to vote, they could be a majority in some electorates in the plantation areas and would return Indian members to parliament, as they did in 1947, when they returned 7 members. In addition, was the fear that the Indian vote would be decisive in another 14 electorates. The victims of this 'swamping' would be the Sinhalese in general and the Kandyans in particular and was argued

that Kandyans would not be adequately represented in Parliament as a result. The picture of a helpless, landless Kandyan peasantry was often evoked in these debates, and it was said that these economically dispossessed segment of the population would be politically unrepresented and that their grievances would therefore be not adequately solved.

2. Behind this fear was that of an ever-present 'Indian threat' Sinhalese leaders expressed the fear that India had expansionist designs on Sri Lanka and wished to fill the vacuum created by the withdrawal of the British. Indians in Sri Lanka were, in this view, regarded as a 'fifth column'. These fears were given fresh substance in 1948, when the Indian government took action, including military force, to make Hyderabad and other princely states to join the Indian union.

The class fears of the Sinhala bourgeoisie regarding Indian workers were another component of their consciousness. The parties of the bourgeoisie also visualised the joining of forces between the working-classes of all communities, including the plantation workers, which would pose a threat to their power in the future. These fears were reinforced by the wave of serious strikes that had occurred in both the plantations and the urban areas in the post-war period, when there was genuine concern at the prospect of a revolutionary upheaval. Moreover, the revolutionary movements in China and Vietnam and armed struggles in Malaysia and Burma, together with the 'line of struggle' launched by the Indian Communist Party in 1948, gave credence to fears of possible revolution in Sri Lanka.

The UNP had been surprised by the 1947 election results, obtaining a minority of 42 out of 95 seats; the Left parties obtaining 18 and the Ceylon Indian Congress (CIC) 7 seats. The UNP had to attract several of the 21 independent members to its side to form a government. In parliament, the CIC voted mainly with the opposition. There was thus a belief among the Sinhala ruling politicians that the Left

posed a major threat to the system, and that the Indian vote had gone to Sinhala Left candidates in many constituencies.

This congruence of ethnic and class consciousness was supported by a whole host of prejudices. The Indian workers, both in the plantations and in the urban sectors were portrayed as poor, illiterate, dirty, degraded and immoral and therefore unfit for the vote. In addition, it was suggested that 'Ramasamy' and 'Meenachchi', the contemptuous stereotypes of Indian workers, were basically uninterested in the vote and that the agitation for giving them citizenship and franchise rights was being conducted by designing politicians.

#### The Debates of 1948 — The 'threat' from India

It is in the light of these attitudes to the 'Indian menace' and the 'Red peril' that the Sinhala politicians introduced the Citizenship Acts, which cut away the Indian working-class in Sri Lanka from the political process. Twenty years previously, D. S. Senanayake, the member for Mirigama, had opposed Indian franchise and had clearly expressed his views about the 'Indian menace'. In 1948, in presenting the first Bill on citizenship, D. S. Senanayake, the Prime Minister, faced with an aggressive opposition in parliament, was more reticent and only made a short speech, merely describing its provisions, giving no explanation for its introduction:

It is quite a simple Bill, but a very important Bill. We are not prejudicing the interests of anyone; we are only trying to confer Ceylon citizenship on people in Ceylon who are not citizens of another country... It is necessary that we should have our own citizenship laws. (Hansard, 19 Aug. 1948)

The Minister of Food, A. Ratnayake, who was a Kandyan, was more outspoken — he expressed the grievances of the Kandyan peasantry and openly gave vent to fears of Indian domination. He alleged that the Ceylon Indian Congress leader, S. Thondaman had a 'vision of Ceylon, federated with India, dominated by India, overwhelmed by India' and added:

I am myself inspired by a 'fear complex'... we are afraid and that is why we feel that we have to restrict the composition of our nationals... I fear that the freedom we have won is already in danger — in great danger. It is in danger from within (Hansard, 19, Aug. 1948).

In presenting the Indian & Pakistani Residents Bill, D. S. Senanayake was more forthcoming and spoke on the question of India. He made the usual gestures; 'our attachment to India, our close association with India... makes us feel that it is very necessary for us to be in close friendship with that country', but added, 'we may be a small country, but however small we may be we have a right to our country... We do not expect India to play the role of trying to establish rights where they have no rights, or privileges where they have no privileges or to try to deprive other countries of their rights' (9 Dec. 1948).

S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, who was still a Minister in the UNP government, stressed his friendship and respect for Jawaharlal Nehru and added:

We want to be friendly with the great continent of India. There is so much we have to admire in India and look up to India. We would be friends, but friends on what terms? On terms of betrayal of our own people? Never, never, never can friendship be based on a betrayal of our people (Hansard 20 Aug. 1948).

The Left, however, had a different view of India; many of them, Dr. N. M. Perera, Colvin R. de Silva and others, having spent the war years in India after the banning of the LSSP and their escape from jail in Colombo. They had worked with the Indian Left movement and regarded the Indians in Sri Lanka as allies in the class struggle rather than as a potential danger. Dr. N. M. Perera, in criticising the legislation, said 'The Prime Minister suffers from two diseases; one is Indophobia and the other is Anglomania' (Hansard, 19 Aug. 1948).

#### Racism

When the Citizenship Bills were debated in Parliament in August & December 1948, the leaders of the Left parties exposed the racist and class motivations of the legislation. Dr. N. M. Perera, of the

LSSP (Lanka Sama Samaja Party) alleged that the legislation 'embodied the principles of 'racialism and exclusiveness' and stated:

I thought that racialism of this type ended with Houston Chamberlain and Adolph Hitler ... I did not believe it possible that any person claiming to be a statesman ... would ask us to accede to a Bill of this nature ... we cannot proceed as if we are God's chosen race quite apart from the rest of the world; that we and we alone have the right to be the citizens of this country.

Speaking on the income restrictions regarding citizenship, Perera pointed to the racial bias in the proposed law.

If an unemployed so-called Sinhalese man is fit enough to get citizenship rights, why should an Indian who has no income be deprived of those rights? If that is the criterion, is that not racial prejudice of the worst type? ... Racial prejudice does not come from the bottom. It always comes from the top. (Hansard, 10 Dec. 1948).

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva of the BLP (Bolshenik Leninist Party) spoke on the links between racism and reaction. Describing the bill as one of the blackest deeds of a government which had a 'thoroughly black record' and praising those who had opposed the bill for having taken steps against 'the campaign of race-mongering that has disgraced the political life of this country, he stated:

If you look at the background ... the political motivation and social objectives of this Bill — it will be found that it is a classic piece of sustained reactionism. Racialism is a handy weapon of reaction. This bill is another dig with a racial spade to make a future grave for universal adult franchise.

De Silva predicted that 'the moment the government starts applying an anti-racial principle against a particular group 'this would lead to discrimination against other minorities who are today 'accepted as Ceylonese'. (Hansard Aug 19.1948)

However, several Sinhala politicians took an overtly racial stand on this issue and did not hide their prejudices. A notable example was **T. F. Jayewardena** who, taunting the opposition, said:

If some of the members of the opposition had the same depth of feeling for their own people as they have for their *cochchi sahodarayas* (Malayali comrades) they will agree with me that 40 males living in a house with 4 or 5 Tamil or Sinhalese women are hardly the type of people who are to be encouraged to become citizens of Ceylon (Hansard, 10 Dec.) 1948).

While some were preoccupied with morality, it was left to **A. E. Goonesinha**, the labour leader, who had been appointed Minister without Portfolio in the UNP government, to clearly enunciate the economic basis for his admitted racist stand. Replying to **T. B. Subasinghe** of the LSSP, who had denounced the Bill as racist and also used the occasion to make allegations of racism against him, Goonesinha said:

If for the protection of the interests of the nationals of this country, the interests of hundreds of thousands of workers of this country, I have to be racial then I am indeed racial and I shall continue to be racial.

In this debate Goonesinha made revealing statements on the changes in trade union policy, due directly to the economic depression which began in the late 1920s.

In accordance with labour policy and principles of trade unionism we had practically every Indian worker, except those working on estates, in our unions. But in the year 1929, when the problem of unemployment confronted us, we had to re-examine the whole position. We decided that the interests of the nationals of this country had to be protected that jobs should be found for them before we invited or accepted people from other countries. (Hansard 10 Dec. 1948 Emphasis added).

Commenting on the racist political campaigns in his constituency (Colom-Central) during the elections held under universal suffrage in the 1930s, he candidly remarked:

I gave a handicap of 10,000 votes to my good friend Mr. T. B. Jayah and said that I would not accept any Indian vote because ... I believe that the Indians should be repatriated ... because our own people are without employment (ibid).

(To be continued)

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# Critiques of Luxemburg; theories of crisis

Tara Coomaraswamy

Rosa Luxemburg dismissed the type of argument produced by Tugan-Baranovsky from which revisionists derived much sustenance—i.e., there was an infinite capacity for capital accumulation to take place through internal inducement to invest (competition between capitalists generating pressures towards technological change), *however low consumption might be*, provided only that proportionality between the two departments of the economy i.e. that producing means of production (Dept I) and that producing means of consumption (Dept II), be maintained. She maintained that the final object of capitalist production was the production of goods for human consumption. The notion of capital's unlimited capacity for parthenogenesis' she rejected as 'crude optimism.' She correctly stressed the fundamental antagonism within capitalism production, between the capacity to consume and the capacity to produce, resulting in periodic crises which stimulated capitalists constantly to an extension of the market.

The polemic which was wrapped up within the theoretical elaboration was clearly aimed at SPD colleagues amongst whom "revisionism" had settled and was beginning to gel. If there was an 'inherent tendency towards underconsumption, exporting the problem overseas merely postponed the final hour for capitalism, whose collapse became 'an objective historical necessity.'

Imperialism thus carried with it the seeds of its own destruction, as it were, since capitalism survived only by consuming the environment which had hitherto nurtured it. The destruction of non-capitalist modes of production must follow from capitalism's need to

introduce capitalist production and capitalist utilisation of labour and natural resources in order to maintain the rate of accumulation.

The attribution of a theory of mechanical breakdown of capitalism to Luxemburg is unjustified in that while she asserts the impossibility of continued capital accumulation beyond a certain point, she states that this can be posited only in theory, since socio-political forces would pre-empt the process long before any final cataclysm and would revolutionise capitalist social relations. She has thus ironically been accused both of rigid determinism and spontaneism or "revolutionary romanticism." Unlike Lenin and Marx she makes the connection between revolution and war, rather than revolution and economic crisis. The arms race in her time signalled the advent of such an opportunity to her.

Luxemburg is credited with great foresight in assigning militarism a high potential for surplus absorption. Her analysis, however, treats it as a new source of accumulation derived from the forced savings represented by taxation of workers over and above saving from out of the surplus. Thus it cannot in itself be said to assist surplus absorption, since it merely transfers capital from means of subsistence to armaments. Professor Joan Robinson suggests that

"The analysis which best fits Rosa Luxemburg's own argument and the facts. Is that armaments provide an outlet for the investment of surplus (over and above any contribution there may be from forced saving out of wages), which, unlike other kinds of investment, creates no further problem by increasing productive capacity (not to mention the huge new investment opportunities created by reconstruction after the capitalist nations have turned their weapons against each other)."

The global network developed by capitalism seemed, to Luxemburg, to render futile any thoughts of economic autarchy by individual states. "Socialism is one country" was an impossibility. (It is likely that Trotsky was largely influenced in this respect by her economic arguments; she also foreshadowed his idea of "permanent revolution" in her belief that the proletariat in Poland, her native country should seek a socialist rather than a bourgeois-democratic revolution). She was on the whole deeply suspicious of nationalism as an essentially anti-socialist force. (The nation-state was for her the archetypal form of capitalist political organisation). The socialist revolution had to be international or nothing.

Criticisms of Rosa Luxemburg have been mainly on theoretical and methodological grounds. This is due on the one hand to the fact that hers is the theoretically most developed attempt to explain imperialism; and on the other, to the fact that she devotes much less space than the other writers to delineating the characteristics of imperialism as a distinct epoch.

Luxemburg stresses the continuity between earlier capitalist expansion from the sixteenth century onwards, and that of the nineteenth century so that specific forms of competitive struggle are glossed over, as Bukharin accuses. *There is little analysis of the constitutive features of contemporary imperialism, little theoretical explanation of it as a historically specific capitalist form. The existence of monopoly, so heavily emphasised by all the other Marxists, is hardly registered in Luxemburg's account. Having said this, it is only fair to remember that "The Accumulation of Capital" was meant to be a theoretical work*

to stress continuity would be part of its project: the examination of the general conditions which made capital accumulation possible.

This is in fact what renders her account of continuing importance today, whereas Lenin's more historically specific analysis is already dated in many respects. The crucial aspect of Luxemburg's work is its implications for the impact of imperialism on the less-developed countries.

The chief methodological criticism of Luxemburg is that she attempts the analysis of expanded reproduction (a dynamic situation) while retaining the assumptions of simple reproduction (a static situation). She also builds an entire theoretical framework on one section of "Capital" II, without balancing this by reference to the other two books and "Theories of Surplus Value" where Marx lays more emphasis on the tendency of the rate of profit to fall, as opposed to underconsumption, as the cause of crisis. Moreover, Marx's use of the reproduction schemes was to

demonstrate the exploitation of workers by capitalists, and laid out the minimum necessary conditions for the capitalist mode of production to survive; it is an abstraction from reality hence not meant to be literally applied to it for purposes of description in its crude form.

Capital accumulation involves increments to the wage component of costs, generating more demand by workers; also, capitalists may buy from each other. The assumption that consumption cannot grow overlooks the possibility for rising real wages with the development of capitalism, as well as capitalists' internal inducement to invest, caused by technological progress. It may be argued that a faster rate of growth of Department I (capital goods) and transfer of capital between departments in order to equalise profit rates, means that there is necessity for overproduction of consumption goods in the way that she describes. Competition, which 'determines the whole dynamic, all the laws of development of capitalism' is left out, as

Mandel points out. Barratt-Brown claimed that this led her to overplay the role of the backward areas in capital accumulation, also that she assumed a self-regulating (i.e. competitive market) system, with little or no role for the state, thus failing to foresee the possibility of raising consumption through Keynesian demand-management policies. This is in fact one of the main alleged weaknesses of an underconsumptionist theory, that it lays itself open to Keynesian type "solutions", implying indefinite prolongation of the life of capitalism. (For critique of this, see next chapter.)

Sweezy asserts that Luxemburg's 'third market' only defers the problem, since the surplus merely changes form, and

If there could have been, as a matter of principle, no demand for the "exported" commodities, there can be just as little demand for the "imported" commodities).

Thus what she has proved is 'not the approaching breakdown of capitalism, but the impossibility of

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capitalism.' Tarbuck criticises Sweezy (and Bukharin) on this point for implicitly accepting Say's Law, whereas Marx underscores the fact that selling and buying are not identical, but separate and independent processes in time. Exchanges with non-capitalist markets could be for non-capitalist monetary incomes, not necessarily for commodities. Luxemburg would point out that recapitalisation takes place with at least a part of the surplus, within the non-capitalist environment itself.

Tarbuck asserts that by contrast with Marx, Luxemburg appears to make 'exploitation of the "third market" the driving force of capitalism, not the exploitation of wage labour.' While this too extreme, since without exploitation of wage labour, there would be no "realisation" problem, it does point to an important emphasis in Luxemburg, which is perhaps one of the most interesting features of her analysis rather than a weakness, in that she questions the adequacy of a model based exclusively on the dominance of surplus value production in advanced capitalist societies.

### Falling Rate of Profit or Underconsumption?

Luxemburg's model of capital accumulation theoretically incorporates an explanation of imperialism. Its main weakness is that it oversimplifies and reduces capitalism's economic processes to one fundamental problem — the realisation of surplus value.

Lenin avoids mono-causality but errs at the other extreme, of being theoretically vague. He gives prominence to the export of capital due to the falling rate of profit, but provides no systematic explanation of the inter-connections between this and the need for markets and raw materials, also mentioned by him. He appears to reject underconsumptionism without explicit reasons for doing so. The usual practice has been to interpolate theoretical filling from Marx's writings on capital accumulation, crisis and the need for foreign trade/imperialism.

The connection between imperialism and crises has been remarked earlier. Marx himself suggests

different ways in which foreign trade serves to postpone crises associated with capitalist reproduction, but does not argue the primacy of any one factor in expansion.

Marx's relevant writings on crisis are scattered throughout "Capital" and "Theories of Surplus Value." A summary of these will be presented here.

The importance of distinguishing the causes of crisis relates to (a) the assessment of the two main explanations for imperialism, (b) the long-term significance of relations between the currently so-called "developed" nations and the "less-developed" nations, and (c) the long-term survival of the capitalist mode of production.

### Types of Crisis

Crisis may arise in the sphere of production or in the sphere of distribution. Usually dealt with in these two categories, under the heads of "over-accumulation" and "realisation problems" respectively, are four types of crisis.

(a) Over-accumulation (production) problems have to do with movements in the rate of surplus value and the composition of capital, while the value system is assumed to remain intact — i.e. goods produced are sold at value. The two types of crisis here are : (i) the tendency of the rate of profit to fall due to the rising organic composition of capital (the "general law of the falling tendency of the rate of profit"); and (ii) the tendency of the rate of profit to fall due to rising real wages, (hereafter referred to as FTRP/OCC and FTRP/RW respectively).

(b) Realisation (distribution) problems have to do with forces creating a general shortage in effective demand for commodities at prices adequate to ensure a satisfactory rate of profit for capitalists; in this case, commodities will sell, or threaten to sell, or at below value. The two types of crisis here are: (i) those arising from disproportionality between branches of production; and (ii) those arising from the underconsumption of the masses.

(Continued on page 23)



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## CRM on...

(Continued from page 7)

hedging themselves in with restrictions on the publication of data which would be the basis for the formation of public opinion."

### Constitutional guarantee

13. The preamble of the Constitution states that the mandate given by the people to their selected representatives at the elections held in 1977 was to draft and operate a Constitution which inter alia will assure to the people **FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS** and the **INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY** as their intangible heritage.

Article 3 of the Constitution declares that sovereignty lies in the People and is inalienable and proceeds to clarify what is meant by Sovereignty includes power of government, fundamental rights and franchise.

Article 4 of the Constitution set out the respective organs of state to which the powers of government namely the legislative power, the executive power and the judicial power have been delegated by the sovereign people. So far as fundamental rights are concerned, the people have reserved these rights to themselves.

Article 4 (d) of the Constitution says that the fundamental rights which are by the Constitution declared and recognised **shall be respected, secured and advanced** by all the organs of the government (i.e.) the legislature, the executive and judiciary) and **shall not be abridged, restricted or denied save in the manner and to the extent provided in the Constitution.**

14. The chapter on fundamental rights enumerates in Articles 10 to 14 (1) (a) to 14 (1) (i) all these fundamental rights.

Article 15 sets out the various restrictions that can be imposed by law.

In respect of the freedom of speech and expression including Publication enshrined in Article 14(1) (a) of the Constitution, the only restrictions that can be imposed by law are set out in subsections (2) and (7) of Article 15. Parliament cannot by its laws impose any other restrictions.

The particular amendment which it is reported the Minister of Justice is sponsoring contains an important restriction on the fundamental right reserved by the people to themselves, which restriction does not come within the ambit of the restrictions set out in Article 15 (1) & (2).

The amendment violates the provisions of Article 3 which must be read with Article (4). Such an amendment has therefore to be referred to the people at a referendum for their approval before it can become law.

Under Article 82 (5) no Bill for the amendment of the Constitution shall become law unless passed by a 2/3rds majority of the members of parliament. But under Article 83 (a) of the Constitution, a Bill which is inconsistent with Article 3 of the Constitution shall become law only if the number of votes cast in favour of the Bill amount to not less than 2/3rd of the members and is also approved by the people at a referendum. It is clear that this amendment to the Press Council law is inconsistent with Article 3 of the Constitution under which the people have reserved to themselves this fundamental right.

## Critiques of...

(Continued from page 22)

**N. B.** It is necessary to distinguish between realisation problems as fundamental cause of crisis, and as the mechanism which sets in motion a crisis due to other reasons. All crises are set in motion by the failure of some capitalists to invest (i. e. therefore those that usually sell to them suffer from realisation problems, leading to a general slump as they cut back production in turn). However, the reasons for the initial disinclination to invest may be any of the four mentioned above.

Similarly, the FTRP may be the **cause** of crisis as in (a) above, or the **symptom** of crisis due to realisation problems getting under way.

(To be continued)

## Letters...

(Continued from page 1)

number of Buddhist monks to exemplify what he perceives as a new phenomenon—the emergence of a progressive oriented sector in the Buddhist clergy. I find it surprising that there is no mention whatsoever here of **Ven. Muruththetuke Ananda Thero** who leads the only Nurses Union with an island-wide membership. It is this monk who led the successful 2 day Nurses' strike in '80 which was later converted to a work-to-rule campaign, during which period his temple was the target of a 'junta bomb-attack'. Unlike some leading Christian and Buddhist clergymen who have been outspoken 'liberationists' during the sparring-session of 1977-82, but who are today somewhat silent after the gong has been sounded for the real bout Ananda Thero continues to battle. Currently he leads the **Anti Water Tax Campaign** and is also the only Buddhist monk who addressed a May Day Rally this year. He spoke at the **Desha Vimukti** May Day Rally held opposite the Wellawatte Mills.

Laksiri Fernando's article on 'May Day in the Plantations' fills a major gap in this year's May Day coverage. He has however not made any mention of what was easily the 2nd largest May Day rally in the Hatton area — that of the **Ceylon Plantation Workers (Red Flag) Union**. This rally which was very well attended was preceded by a procession which set off from Siripura. The meeting was addressed by Rozario Fernando (joint-convenor of the JPTUC), A. Ramiah, Higgoda Dharmasena and a number of other speakers from the plantation areas.

**Nihal Perera**

Colombo 6

# Shan helps form Maoist International

SPOKESMEN for the recently formed Revolutionary Internationalist Movement announced their intention to work for the formation of a new Communist International of a new type based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. This decision was taken, according to N. Sanmugathan age 64, Secretary-General of the Ceylon Communist Party, at the recently concluded Second International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations which united 14 such revolutionary parties. The Conference also took a number of decisions including the election of a Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, to further unify the ranks of Marxist-Leninist.

Excerpts of the **Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement**, released on May 1, 1984 in 22 languages, were read by Sanmugathan at the London press conference. "Armed with the scientific teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tsetung, we are fully conscious of the tasks expected of us in the present situation and are proud to accept and act in accordance with this historic responsibility. The **Declaration** points to the danger of a new third world war as well as the real perspective for revolution in countries throughout the world."

Delal Kamaci, a 29 years old woman representative of the Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist presented the slogans of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement for the First of May 1984. She pointed out that "May 1st 1984 would be the first time in many decades that the proletariat will have common slogans internationally." She called for the intensification of armed revolutionary struggle and the preparations for revolution which she declared was the only way to prevent to third world war.

Carl Dix, age 35, of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA,

presented the resolutions of the Second Conference: a message to Chiang Ching and Chang Chun-Chiao and other revolutionaries in China a resolution calling for solidarity with "all imprisoned fighters for revolution around the world" a resolution of support for the Communist Party of Peru; and a resolution "In support of the revolutionary struggle of the Palestinian people" stating that "the need for a proletarian vanguard armed with Marxism-Leninism remains a vital and pressing task."

"These resolutions," Dix pointed out, "show that our movement now has a much greater ability to develop a common analysis of important events in the world and to act in relation to them."

The following parties and organizations constituted themselves as the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement:

Central Reorganization Committee Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist); Ceylon Communist Party; Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist); Communist Party of Colombia (Marxist-Leninist) Mao Tsetung. Regional Committee; Haitian International Revolutionary Group; Nepal Communist Party (Mashal); New Zealand Red Flag Group; Nottingham/Stockport Communist Groups (Britain); Revolutionary Communist Group of Colombia; Revolutionary Communist Party, India; Revolutionary Communist Party, USA; Revolutionary Communist Union (Dominican Republic); Union of Iranian Communist (Sarbadaran).

The most important member of the RIM is easily the Communist Party of Peru, led by a philosophy professor who uses the nom-de-guerre "Gonzalo". This group is known the world over for the bitter armed struggle it is waging in Peru.

## Excerpts from the Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

"Today the world is on the threshold of momentous events. The crisis of the imperialist system is rapidly bringing about the danger of a new, third world war as well as the real perspective for revolution in countries throughout the world." The scientific accuracy of these words from the Joint Communique of our First International Conference in Autumn 1980 have not only been fully borne out by the recent development in the world but the world situation has been further accentuated and aggravated since that time.

"Thus the Marxist-Leninist movement is confronted with the exceptionally serious responsibility to further unify and prepare its ranks for the tremendous challenges and momentous battles shaping up ahead. The historic mission of the proletariat calls ever more urgently for an all-out preparation for sudden changes and leaps in development particularly at this current conjuncture where national developments are more profoundly affected by developments on a world scale, and where unprecedented prospects for revolution are in the making. We must sharpen our revolutionary vigilance and increase our political ideological, organizational and military readiness in order to wield these opportunities in the best possible manner for the interests of our class and to conquer the most advanced positions possible for the world proletarian revolution.

"Armed with the scientific teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tsetung we are fully conscious of the tasks expected of us in the present situation and are proud to accept and act in accordance with this historic responsibility."

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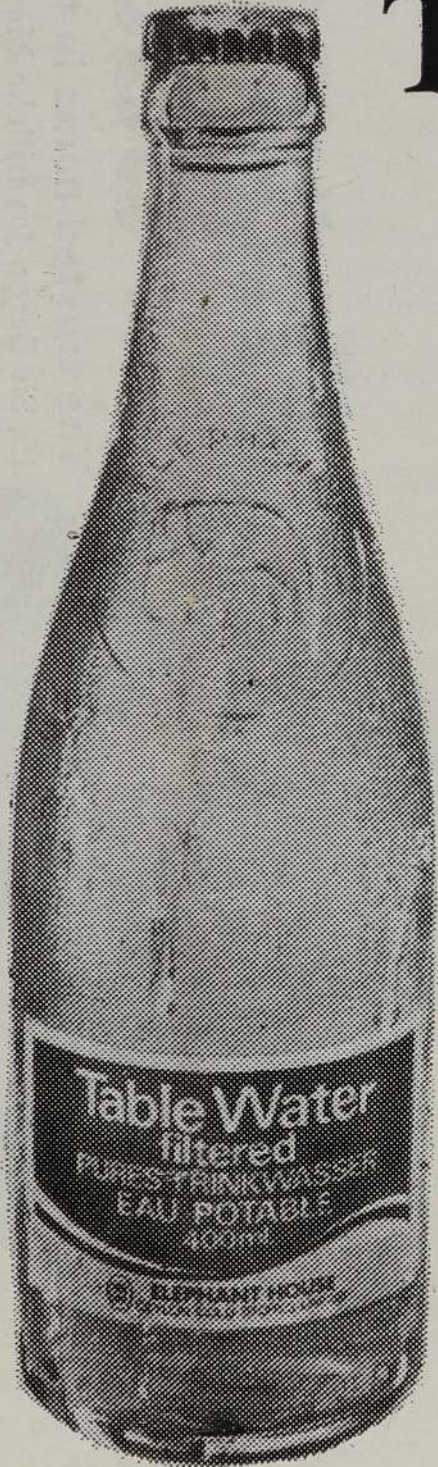
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