

● 1983-1987: How the L.G. monitored the crisis ●

**LANKA**

# **GUARDIAN**

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## **ACCORD IN THE NORTH...**



## **DISCORD IN THE SOUTH**

**RAJIV: A triumph at last**

**J.R: 6, 7, 8, 9 and he's up !**

**U.N.P: Learning protracted war and  
foreign policy the hard way**

*— Mervyn de Silva*

**LORCA IN SINHALA — Jayadeva Uyangoda**

**SINHALA DRAMA — a translator's trials — Ranjini Obeyesekera**

● **CARLO ON SLFP**

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# TRENDS

## CARROT AND STICK

Speak softly and carry a big stick and PDR, Finance Minister de Mel does not always carry his Galle Face Green walking stick with him but he does so these days when he is addressing his fellow ministers, M.P.'s and public service organisations and unions. On such occasions, he also dangles the carrot.

The Annual general meeting of the Inland Revenue Staff officers Union (July 17) was the ideal occasion. After all these are the men who collect the taxes and account for almost half of government revenue. In 1985, the Dept. collected 15.4 billion; in 1986 it was 17.2 and provisional estimate for 1987 nearly reaches 19 billion. In the first six months, (1987 taxes) the collection has exceeded 8 million. A creditable performance, it was, and the Minister served out compliments and congratulations to his loyal and efficient staff.

Then the carrot, dangled long and demonstratively enough, to catch the media cameras. A reasonable salary increase for the public service would amount to about 3 billion. Taking cue from his Finance Minister, President J. R. has publicly promised

to consider an across-the-board wage salary hike after a peace settlement. Mr. de Mel persists in concluding his speeches that hold out promises of better pay by loudly lamenting the rising defence costs. If only... the argument always ends, especially when he is on the topic of the de-centralised budget, the funds that help District Ministers and M.P.'s to keep their voters happy.

If Economics is the most powerful argument of the "doves" President J.R. waves an even bigger stick than his Finance Minister. "If no settlement is reached, he may hold a general election."

## MUSLIMS DIVIDED

How do the Muslims, who are a key factor in the Eastern province and therefore in the N-E merger formula, feel? Transport Minister M.H. Mohamed told the Sunday Island that the E.P. Muslims will feel cheated. His opposition to the merger plus was unequivocal. But he hasn't spoken since

Foreign Minister Hanumantha is for the peace accord but he demands special safeguards for the E.P. Muslims.

Former SLFP Education Minister, Dr. Bodhidatta Mahipala, who is no longer in SLFP, demands a separate Provincial Council for the E.P. Muslims.

"But can these people and their respective organisations claim to represent E.P. opinion?" is the pertinent question posed by a longstanding Eastern province Muslim politician with a 20 year record of successful politics. He supports the position of the UNP Muslim M.P.'s of the E.P. which is hastily supportive of the Accord.

Mr. Ashraff, leading a new Congress, is busy politicking in the East, and his views are not yet public. Another group led by Dr. Abdulahaddeen, a former UNP MP, is the only person who seems to see the possibility of shared political interests between the E.P. Tamils and the Tamil speaking Muslims.

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**MINISTRY OF LANDS & LAND DEVELOPMENT**



# Rajiv in the captain's seat

Mervyn de Silva

*"There has never been a protracted war from which a country has benefited"* (SUNTZU, quoted by B. H. Liddell Hart)

Mr. Velupillai Prabhakaran, the LTTE leader left Delhi for Madras on Sunday. (2/8) On the same evening, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, M.G.R. addressed a joint AIDMK-Congress (I) rally. Quite obviously, the object of the exercise was to give the Sri Lanka-India peace accord Tamil Nadu's stamp of approval publicly. By this act, the Indian Prime minister demonstrated the key role that Tamil Nadu had lately played in the Sri Lankan conflict and the state's importance to Delhi and the Congress party at a time when the Centre and Mr. Gandhi personally have suffered many political reverses. In that sense, Tamil Nadu appeared, after 1983, to be the all-important, irreplaceable point of inter-section in India-Sri Lanka relations.

The Tamil leaders, from TULF to LTTE, realised this soon enough to enhance their bargaining strength with Colombo and their leverage on Delhi through Tamil Nadu support. Given the basic factors in the equation as well as the domestic political trends in India which continuously increased rather than decreased Tamil Nadu's importance for Congress and Gandhi, the Tamil cause acquired a dimension of power and influence and therefore bargaining strength which was not theirs before and even in the first years of Rajiv. To put it the other way, Sri Lanka could have made a better deal with the strong, highly popular Rajiv of 1985 than the beleaguered Gandhi of 1987. Sri Lanka didn't see it that way. Or if it did, Colombo did not wish to negotiate a deal because its most desired goal was a military victory. The negotiating process was a time-buying exercise.

With a frankness that certainly impressed both Mr. Gandhi and the foreign press, President JR took full responsibility for this grievous miscalculation and tragically idle hope. The guilt is not entirely his. The militarists in the UNP and the UNP's inner influence-wielding circle were convinced that a military victory was possible.

Even those who didn't share that honest delusion, encouraged the militarists since they had a vested interest in continuing the war. The engine of war drew their new gravy train. What the L.G. has described and, with our limited resources, patiently monitored, as 'the militarisation process' produced a clique entirely new to the Sri Lankan scene: big businessmen becoming arms dealers or middle-men, enjoying intimate contact with decision-makers and the power elite. A mutually supportive group was the foreign 'advisers' and the counter insurgency experts, with special status if not diplomatic cover, and the agents of the big-time international arms bazaar. All of them had a common interest in the war. And therefore in sabotaging any peace effort.

President JR used his own weapons of self-critical candour, a light hearted humour and disarming flippancy at his uproariously

successful (from his point of view) encounter with the international, Indian and Sri Lankan media. Wisdom dawned he said with a correct 'combination of stars and planets'.

## NEW DIPLOMACY

There was a more earthly conjuncture too. Having made its several messages clear (See L.G. 15/6/87) or seeing that these "registered" on Colombo, in Mr. Gandhi's own words, the policy-makers in Delhi decided to make India's Sri Lanka policy a direct two-sided business, while in no way underestimating the Tamil Nadu and Tamil factor. But that became a diplomatic dialogue; in fact, a three-sided affair — Delhi-MGR the Tamils, but effectively Delhi-MGR-LTTE. In choosing this new approach, Delhi achieved the following:

(a) It reversed the earlier relationship i.e. the Tamils and the LTTE using MGR to put pressure on Delhi. Now it was MGR and AIDMK that put the pressure on the LTTE. This was possible because the Tamil refugee presence and its consequences had become a social irritant in Tamil Nadu, with the people of Tamil Nadu getting a bit tired of this 'alien' presence and the accompanying problems. Irritation and exhaustion must not however be confused with a Tamil Nadu insensitivity to the plight of the Tamils in the north. In fact, the fundamental emotional connection remained firm, breaking out openly whenever the Tamil plight became in their eyes, intolerable, such as the period that began with 'the blockade' and climaxed with 'Operation Liberation', originally called, somewhat too hopefully and revealingly, 'Operation Thunderbolt'.

(b) While Delhi was on this track, Sri Lanka was kept informed

## De-Stabilisation

The name of the game (and the game-plan) is of course "destabilisation" a much-used term in Mrs. Gandhi's political vocabulary. Last month, Rajiv Gandhi found that events had forced him to return to his mother's idiom. (L.G. 1/5/87)

NEWS  
BACKGROUND



but there was never any formal or direct Sri Lanka-Tamil encounter. The whole negotiating process was made tighter and more secretive. As a direct outcome, the negotiators or participants were reduced in number. Mr. Mani Dixit was made the sole negotiator on the spot — no Bhandaris, Dinesh Singha, Chidambarams etc. and quick 'visit' diplomacy was completely cut out of the communications system. At the other end was Foreign Secretary K.P.S. Menon, an old Sri Lanka hand, and from him direct to Mr. Gandhi or, if urgency required it, Dixit to Gandhi directly. This was possible for yet another reason. Mr. Gandhi was finally coming to grips with the problem and its complexity. And once that was so, Mr. Gandhi, in spite of many serious, time-consuming challenges in Delhi, gave his mind and time to the settlement of the Sri Lanka issue.

(c) Mr. Gandhi's breakthrough (and singular achievement) was to convince MGR and AIDMK leadership that Sri Lanka was no longer a Tamil problem but a national problem for India, even a national security problem for India with regional implications. The de-stabilisation of Sri Lanka was part of an effort to de-stabilise India. Now de-stabilisation is an over-worked term with high propagandist voltage. Easier to establish an argument was the thesis that an unresolved Tamil problem would weaken India, damage its image and interests, and undermine its status as the paramount power in the region, while devaluing the aspirants' claims to world power standing along with China, in the 21st century.

Once MGR and his party leadership (Food Minister Ramachandran in particular) were convinced, the LTTE's capacity to negotiate directly with Delhi on its own tall terms were considerably reduced.

On July 31st, Mr. Gandhi told the Congress that "outside forces" were inciting violence in Sri Lanka against the accord. The next day he said so in Uttar Pradesh. The Tamil issue, he told a massive cheering crowd in Madras

on his day of triumph (Aug 2) was being used by "outside forces" to de-stabilise Sri Lanka and weaken India, the record was a major contribution to "regional stability" (See Foreign Policy).

#### GAMING'S ROLE

The negotiating process produced new actors in Colombo too, principally Mr. Gamini Dissanayake, the Lands Minister, who has established independent contacts in Delhi and in Madras. Mr. Dissanayake's appearance on TV to answer questions covering a wide range of questions from Ampara to Trinco, merger and foreign policy and Indian politics, is of course a reflection of these changes within the government. The interview was broadcast in both languages by SLBC.

Don't you understand, we have lost the war?" Finance Minister Roonie de Mel told a UNP group meeting. Understandably, Mr. de Mel has been the voice of (economic) reason. Each time he goes to Paris, he convinces the donors that 'peace' is on the way. With less and less conviction, Mr. de Mel has played the same tune "One more time". He returned after the June 26 meeting in Paris, and told his bosses they may have to find another man for the job.

On the local scene, within and outside the Cabinet, he has been locked in a furious and unseemly squabble with National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali. In this Great Debate "Development or Defence", the Finance Minister won the final round because Ministers, Deputy Ministers, District Ministers and MPs

want money for their "projects" especially at the tail end of the regime. Before they defend race, religion and nation, they must defend their electorate from an increasingly hostile voter. (How hostile the last days of this "black July" showed, and how!).

The message from Paris and the World Bank-IMF who have been demanding 'structural adjustment' in return for balance of payments support and aid coincided with the message from Delhi (the aid) and the report from the battlefield. President JR read these messages correctly. "Operation Liberation" did NOT bring the military gains that would have allowed the UNP to regain the large electoral ground it had yielded to Mrs. B. and the SLFP, now at the head of newly formed five-party front. What is more, President JR realised that this war was in fact unwinnable. Besides, he could not fight two-and-half wars — one in the north, one against Mrs. B., widely supported on her 'General Elections' demand by other Opposition parties, the 22 unions and the students, and half a war with a resurgent JVP which had already reached a stage when its cadres were raiding military establishments near Colombo. The northern front had to be closed, to defend the main base of any Sri Lankan regime, the Sinhala south. Economics in mind but politics in command, to adapt Mao Tse-tung, a devoted student of Sun Tzu. The convergence of the many messages was the combination of stars and planets. I

## DELHI DIALOGUE

- |                         |                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LTTE frontliner</b>  | "I am ready to die with my comrades rather than sacrifice our cause. . ."                                       |
| <b>Senior Official:</b> | "But are you prepared to fight the Indian army?"                                                                |
| <b>LTTE frontliner</b>  | "I would not like to do so because of my respect for India and Mr. Gandhi but if I have no choice, I will. . ." |
| <b>Senior Official:</b> | "Do you know the strength of the Indian army?"                                                                  |
| <b>LTTE frontliner</b>  | "About three hundred . . . three hundred and fifty thousand. . ."                                               |
| <b>Senior Official:</b> | "You must add one more nought. . ."                                                                             |



# Foreign Policy, Indian Security and the 'Annexures'

The new 'Peace Accord' is an improvement on Annexure 'C' Mr. Gandhi told a cheering Congress (I) committee members 48 hours after his arrival in Delhi. A seminal contribution to the literature of a negotiated settlement and to Indo-Sri Lankan dialogue on this issue, Mr. G. Parthasarathy's thoughtfully crafted document is now a part of history, best left to the historians.

Far more significant — some would say portentous — is the Annexure of July 29.

A neat diplomatic device, the Exchange of Letters, would be described by some students of Indo-Sri Lankan relations as a foreign policy *quid pro quo*.

Long before July 1983 and the Indian involvement in our ethnic conflict through the mechanism of "good offices" this journal had focused on the steady shift in Sri Lankan foreign policy from its traditional, non-aligned middle course, closely paralleled, in Indian eyes, with Delhi's own approach to international and regional issues.

## DENIAL DOCTRINE

From that basic change (that is, in substance rather than in Foreign Minister Hummed's formal rhetoric in international fora) specific issues arose which increasingly became major irritants in the small neighbour-big power relationship. The first was our attitude to the IOPZ, which Sri Lanka herself had sponsored, albeit under the Bandaranaike government in the UN, with the warmest blessings from India's Indira Gandhi. It is in that context, an avowedly commercial transaction over Trinco attained the status of a security consideration for India. From Sardar Pannikar in the 1940's who argued that stable relations with Ceylon

(and Burma) had to be a prerequisite of a realistic "defence policy" for India to Admiral Ravi Kaul who wrote that Sri Lanka was as important strategically to India as Hire is to the U. K. and Taiwan to China, Trincomalee has been a major strategic concern. Not in order to grab it, as some callow Sri Lankan commentators and contributors to the national press, cry from time to time, in exaggerated alarm, but in order to ensure that it does not come under the sway of an external power-hostile or potentially hostile. India policy on Trinco has been a simple application of the 'doctrine of denial' — denying Trinco to outside powers, particularly of course the superpowers.

The Trinco transaction, which finally proved fruitless, agitated Mrs. Gandhi from the start, largely because she felt certain that no matter which company or consortium constructed and managed the Oil Tank Farm, the Pentagon and the US Navy would enjoy special advantages. This suspicion deepened when Sri Lanka sponsor of the IPOZ resolution, began to soft pedal the Diego Garcia issue and in November 1983 fought a fierce and successful rear-guard action to get 'Diego Garcia' deleted from the NAM resolution.

Trinco is named in the 'Exchange of Letters'. Twice. It figures in 2 and 3 of the four point 'letter' as an issue on which the two countries will "reach an early understanding". The first concerns the use of Trinco or any other ports for military purpose prejudicial to Indian interest; the second refers to the construction of a Oil Tank Farm as a joint Indo Sri Lankan venture.

The other two items don't name names — just the employment of

foreign military and intelligence personnel (decoded, it means Pakistanis, Israelis, and JMS ('Dogs of War') personnel of assorted nationalities from South African, former Rhodesian and Fijian. Agreements with "Foreign broadcasting organisations" will be reviewed to make sure that such facilities are only used for 'public broadcasting' and not for military and intelligence purposes. There are such agreements — Deutsche Weile and V. O. A.

## V. O. A., PAKISTAN

The establishment of a 'Voice of Germany' transmitting station north of Trinco brought no protests from India. Nor from anybody else.

On the other hand the V.O.A. has been a top target of Delhi, and more recently of the Soviet Union, too.

Pakistan not only became our main source of military training for service personnel and paramilitary groups but Pakistan officers were soon acquiring a high visibility in Sri Lankan military circles after the visit of a top-level military mission in 1986. Our reliance on Pakistan marked such a qualitative change in the past year or so, that the Madras press, and then Delhi itself could point an accusing finger, rightly or not, at a Pakistani Brigadier, a counter insurgency expert, as the brains behind "Operation Liberation".

This change in the sensitive area of military cooperation — essentially a dependent relationship — was seen in Delhi as a 'threat' which had regional implications. It was after all, Mrs. Gandhi, who established a new Southern Command, one of her last public acts. This was her concerned response to what Dr. Dieter Braun, the West German Indian



ocean specialist called India's "exposed southern flank". Sri Lanka was no threat *per se*. The growing Pakistani presence was, especially when another close ally of the U.S., Israel, was beginning to advise Colombo on all intelligence matters. 'Strange bedfellows', Mr. Gandhi once remarked.

The excerpts which follow are taken from L. G. commentaries, reports and editorial notes on the

crisis as it unravelled. The longest extract is from our issue of Sept. 1, 1984 a few months before Mrs. Gandhi was assassinated. The cover showed Mrs. Gandhi and President J.R., both studies in deep reflection, and characteristic poses. The article was titled "Restore foreign policy status quo — Delhi's message".

We begin with this particular extract for several reasons. First, because that is precisely what we

have now done as our present note on the 'Annexures' shows. Secondly, because it underlines the continuity of Indian policy linking Mrs. Gandhi and her son. Though mother and son, their thinking appeared so different at the start, together with their styles of government. Ultimately the perception of Indian 'national interest' became similar and now almost identical. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi has taken up the same maternal themes (the unity of India, de-

## Restore foreign policy

The naive calculations of the Colombo theorists are largely founded on the belief that a much weakened post-election 'Centre' in India is certain to prove immensely advantageous to Sri Lanka, whereas a Centre revitalised by an easy polls victory, will be more quickly tempted to use that newly acquired strength if only for demonstration effect.

Evidently, 'system-analysis' has made little impression on our foreign policy or strategic affairs analysts, a group modest in number and intellectual equipment at the best of times. Not only do states, like other systems seek to reduce domestic disequilibria and shape foreign policy accordingly, but often take refuge, wrote Prof. Frankel, in directing public attention to external dangers, real or imaginary, stemming from the international environment.

Colombo's elite should reflect more seriously on a connected issue. If in fact the 'Centre' has alienated too many region-based oppositional forces, then its sensitivity to Tamilnadu will be greater. Secondly, a 'Centre' which emerges from the polls more visibly weakened will respond to the stronger need for an external demonstration of power to ensure internal unif-

cation. It was Raymond Aron who spoke of the objective of "glory" as an important, if not too easily definable, dimension of national power and power projection. Bangladesh was a post-election exercise.

In my view, the Sri Lankan crisis lies at the inter-face of India's domestic politics and her national strategic considerations.

What Colombo analysts also tend to ignore is that neither the vicissitudes of domestic politics (governmental change for example) nor the changing fortunes of individual personalities, however powerful, determine ultimately critical foreign policy choices which are taken in accordance with the 'national interest'. And it is this 'national interest' which sustains a tradition in foreign policy thinking, a continuity.

To ask what in fact is India's "national interest" is also to pose the question, where does one locate that concept. In whose mind? Whatever term one may prefer — Indian bourgeoisie or governing group or power elite — the study of the actual conduct of foreign policy in a reasonably large time-frame, permits a generally acceptable definition.

"Under Nehru" wrote Dieter Braun in his recent work on the Indian ocean, "India pursued a globally oriented foreign policy with an eye on the power blocs and usually at a careful distance from them. But under Indira Gandhi, priorities changed. By the time of the emergence of Bangladesh, if not earlier, the consolidation and protection of its dominating position in the sub-region, along with the elimination of Pakistan's longstanding claim to the greatest possible parity with India in particular, had become the primary goal". While western states, the same writer says, had largely followed the precept of Indo-Pak parity, the USSR from 1955 had persistently taken account of India's "natural pre-eminence".

When Vice President George Bush visited India earlier this year, the phrase "pivotal power" was attributed to him. This could be an American version of "natural pre-eminence" and an American attempt to extend to India, the kind of recognition which Moscow has extended for 30 years. It could therefore be a US effort to loosen the Indo-Soviet linkage. Last year, the US beat the USSR to first place as India's trading partner. It is in this light that Mr. Douglas Liyanage's statement



stabilisation and external forces hostile to India) with the new P.M., if at all, using those arguments even more assertively.

Thirdly, it shows how over brief span of four years, an internal ethnic conflict in a little neighbouring island became an inter-mestic factor in Delhi's policy planning. Next how this issue even began to acquire a super-power interest, activating the Indo-Soviet connection, drama-

tised by Gorbachev-Gandhi talks on the region in June, with Sri Lanka one of the issues.

All in all, the current situation is a reflection on the sheer lack of foresight (President JR was honest enough to admit it) on the part of our political leadership and elite, and a damning indictment on the Sri Lankan intelligentsia, captives of their own insularity and ignorance. Lastly, these excerpts record the L.G.'s

own reading of the evolving crisis — a reading, weighted as it was towards, foreign policy, earned this little journal the sneers of UNP frontbenchers the Sri Kotha think-tank, assorted diplomats, F.O. wallahs, professional pundits, local and expatriate 'experts' and sundry dabblers in these matters, across the ideological spectrum, from S. L. A. A. S. luminaries to radical and Leftist illuminati.

— Editor

## status quo — Delhi's message

to the JERUSALEM POST should be read. U. S. assistance to Sri Lanka to fight Tamil terrorists, he said, cannot mean direct involvement because the U. S. does not want to clash with India.

Before Bangladesh, India's strategic perspective, Dr. Braun observes was fixed on land borders — the main theatres of conflict, with Pakistan and with China. The Bangladesh war awakened India to the existence of another theatre, the sea, and the importance of another flank, the southern, and to sea power.

Describing the Indian army as an "institutionalised holy cow — perhaps the last remaining" Richard Nations speaks of the deep "historical anxiety of Hindu society which has never exercised the imperial power necessary to unite a continental-sized civilisation subjugated by the Moghul and British empires." It is no Indira supporter but a leading member of the rival Janata party, Mr. Inder Gujral, who told the same correspondent "Security comes first and is unquestioned... we have suffered in the past because we have been weak."

The southern front, the Indian ocean, with all its deepening tension and big power rivalries, has long been regarded as "an exposed flank." The establishment of a Southern Command at Trivandrum recently was a reflection of India's own threat-perception. For Sri Lankans it is 'the threat from the North'; for the Indian policy-making elite, it is a threat from the South.

Is it the threat of Tamil refugees? Is it primarily the anxiety of spill-over effects of our ethnic conflict and the escalating violence in the North? I think not.

A careful reading of Mrs. Gandhi's statements — and these in turn have been most carefully crafted — reveals the true source of Indian misgivings and apprehensions. The preoccupation is not with Sri Lanka or its unmanageable problems. It is the intrusion of 'external' forces or what Mrs. Gandhi likes to call the "induction" of Israeli interests i.e. the Israeli Interests section in the U. S. Embassy. Does Delhi agree with Mr. Liyanage that the U.S. does not favour 'direct' involvement with all its attendant risks, but is not all that certain that "Indirect" involve-

ment can be ruled out? It is surely significant that even when Mrs. Gandhi speaks of Tamil refugees, she can refer to 'spies.' We have surely entered the third circle of insecurity.

The tangible attributes of power, says Richard Nations, symbolise the self-image of India today. And Mrs. Gandhi herself personifies India's new self-esteem.

Mrs. Gandhi's *realpolitik* commands, notes the writer "the unabashed admiration of the very intellectuals who criticise her methods as high-handed, ruthless and unprincipled." In the projection of India's role as a major power Mrs. Gandhi reflects the generation of post-independent India" commented an Opposition party leader. "The Indian elite is totally behind her."

Sri Lankans should not personalise the issue. Prof. Pran Chopra of the Delhi Centre for Policy Studies said in a recent article that Mrs. Gandhi only symbolises and reflects what will remain dominant Indian thinking long after she ceases to be what the ECO-NOMIST once called 'the Empress of India.'

(L. G. 1/9/84)



## Sirima condemns Israel move

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

Mrs. Bandaranaike states, "When Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, SLFP Member of Parliament for Attanagalla asked a question about Israel recently, the Minis-

ter of National Security gave an answer that was vague and evasive. Now an official of the US Embassy has confirmed that an "Israeli Interests" section will be established soon in Colombo under what he described as "the protecting power" of the US.

"As leader of the SLFP and head of the Government which ordered the closure of the Israeli Mission I denounce this

decision which may only lead to bringing the Arab-Israeli conflict and all its violence to our homeland at a time when this island itself is threatened with so much violence.

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

(L. G. 1/6/84)

## VOA — another kind of base

When Sri Lanka was battling its out with the non-aligned Chairman, India, on the latter's own ground, Delhi about the inclusion of Diego Garcia in the resolution on the IOPZ in the final summit document, a vociferous Indian editor told a group of journalists covering the 7th summit "India is really more worried about what Sri Lanka plans to do with Trinco and the VOA". While Mrs. Gandhi and top government spokesmen had frequently voiced displeasure and dismay about both, the coupling puzzled some. The same editor explained: "We consider both bases — though the other is only ideological and propagandist".

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's reaction to a book written recently by a not too well-known American academic exposes Delhi's hypersensitiveness on issues of this kind. (See Rajiv and the Texan study). If the material in that book would have been provocative in normal circumstances, it became explosive after Mrs. Gandhi's assassination. India is a multi-ethnic nation which has at least half a dozen regional languages. The VOA station in Chilaw — the lease agreement for 20 years was signed recently — will use powerful transmitters (one 500 Kw, and three 250 Kw) to broadcast in regional languages. The station's range will cover the whole sub-continent, the Arab world, parts of China, Soviet Central Asia, Afghanistan, Iran and East Africa.

Much of the turmoil on the subcontinent are rooted in the

politics of nationalities and sub-nationalisms. In all this language and culture is the key. The BBC which has the largest audience in the world (100 million listeners) counts this as its largest listenership. The 'target group' exceeds 35 million. But the BBC's audibility is already worrying the managers of what is universally regarded as the best broadcasting organisation in the world. It relies on 250 k. w. transmitters and, on account of financial constraints, is already lagging behind its rivals. However it makes up for this weakness by the credibility it has acquired throughout the world.

The VOA has received 1 billion dollars for a worldwide modernisation program for the next 5 years. The BBC has been given 10 million pounds (less than 15 million dollars) for 1985 and 100 million pounds for the next five years. The VOA station in Sri Lanka will be the most powerful outside the U.S.

What has caused concern in India and other neighbouring countries and beyond is not the power of the VOA signal alone. The anxiety is founded on two factors.

Firstly, the nature of the message.

In a parliamentary debate in late 1981, Mr. Anura Bandaranaike quoted a report written in the "Washington Post" by one of its leading journalists, Murray Marder. The W. P. had scooped what was known as the "Nicolaidis Memorandum". Mr. Nicolaidis held the post of Deputy

Director and was chief coordinator for overseas broadcasting commentary and news analysis. The memo was submitted to Mr. John Cookling who was the VOA official that visited Colombo to negotiate the main agreement. What was recently signed was the 'lease agreement' for 1,000 acres of land in the Chilaw-Nattandiya area.

Mr. Nicolaidis argued that the VOA must abandon the notion that it was "a journalistic enterprise of some sort". He wrote "We are — as all the world understands — a propaganda agency" (L.G. Vol. 4 No. 15). The memo said: "We must promote disaffection between peoples and rulers, underscoring the denials of rights, inefficient management, corruption, indifference to the real needs of the people, suppression of cultural diversity, religious persecution". The W. P. criticised this attempt to "politicise" the VOA and said it was part of an ideological Reaganism. What effect will this doctrine in practice have on India, Pakistan, BD, Nepal, Iran, Afghanistan? VOA and Radio Moscow, the propaganda agencies of the superpowers can battle it out on their own. What of the smaller countries?

Besides this will be done from Sri Lankan territory. And the government nor the SLBC will have any editorial control because of "instant switching" via satellite. That is the second factor. We will have no control over the day-to-day, 24 hours — a day use of the air waves from our soil.

(L. G. 1/2/85)



## Colvin on Israel

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

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

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

"The L.S.S.P. condemns this act of the Government and calls upon all progressive forces in Sri Lanka to resist it."  
L.G. 1/6/85

## Indian doctrine

The disturbances in Sri Lanka have "spawned an Indian doctrine of regional security" observes Dr. Bhabani Sen Gupta, one of India's best known strategic affairs analysts. Sen Gupta, a pupil of Dr. Brzezinski at Columbia is a Director of the Centre for Policy Research in Delhi and the author of "The Fulcrum of Asia".

He states:

The doctrine has received prompt implicit or explicit approval of the regional as well as international communities. It can be explained in the following terms: India has no intention of intervening in internal conflicts of a South Asian country and it strongly opposes intervention by any country in the internal affairs of any other. India will not tolerate external intervention in a conflict situation in any South Asian country if the intervention has any implicit or explicit anti-Indian implication. No South Asian government must therefore ask for external military assistance with an anti-Indian bias from any country.

If a South Asian country genuinely needs external help to deal with a serious internal conflict situation or with an intolerable threat to a government legitimately established, it should ask help from a number of neighbouring countries including India. The exclusion of India from such a contingency will be considered to be an anti-Indian move on the part of the Government concerned.

**Power Confirmed:** This regional security doctrine reflects, on the one hand, the reality of India's preponderant power position in the South Asian

region and, on the other, the South Asian consensus that there should be no interference by any country in the internal affairs of any other. It goes two significant steps further.

First, it asserts India's right to be included in any regional assistance sought by a South Asian country to deal with a serious internal conflict situation. Secondly, it stresses that assistance in such contingencies should be regional rather than by individual countries.

An important aspect of the Indian regional security doctrine is that it emerged from a series of conversations between Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and leaders of the Opposition. It is therefore cushioned on a national consensus.

A flurry of diplomatic activity ensued in the Indian foreign office. The four governments and others were immediately told that while India was inevitably deeply concerned with developments in Sri Lanka, it had absolutely no intention of intervening. At the same time, India would not tolerate intervention by any other country within or outside the region.

It was made clear by implication that intervention by a third power might compel India to intervene.

US Charge d' Affairs Marion Greekmore assured the Indian foreign office that no request for help had been received from Sri Lanka by US Government and that Washington did not wish to get involved in the Sri Lankan conflict. Similar assurances were also forthcoming from Britain. L.G. 1/12/84



## India as guarantor

**"WILL GANDHI GUARANTEE THE PEACE?"** was the question posed on the L.G. cover (15/9/86)

The following are concluding paragraphs in the L.G.'s main commentary:

"Having granted devolution, at some political risk and cost, the UNP would require guarantees about the behavior of the militants. What if they continued with their military operations and disrupted a settlement reached so painfully and at such a high price? If the militants did not enjoy a veto in the negotiating stage, they still had the power of veto over implementation, and would continue to enjoy it until they ran out of their firepower.

In short, the implementation stage has to be preceded or accompanied by a process of de-militarisation. Who has the superior fire-power to guarantee that? Clearly not the Sri Lankan army which has already entered that contest for more than 5 years and find itself, at best, in a military stalemate. Again, the answer is India.

That is why Mr. Gandhi's dramatic move — one newspaper called it a volte-face — is also a brake, a shattering sudden brake, on the negotiations, with a land-mine impact on all the neatly designed, perhaps over-optimistic calculations of many a Sri Lankan. It is also a stark and stunning reminder that he holds almost all the cards firmly in his hand, except perhaps the 'Tiger' card that may slip out, if that hasn't happened to some extent already.

(L.G. commentary 15/9/86)

## Rajiv's assailant a JVP member?

COLOMBO, Aug. 2

The Criminal Investigation Department of the Sri Lanka Police (CID) suspects that the sailor who assaulted Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi during a farewell ceremonial parade in Colombo last Thursday was a member of the proscribed political party, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) or had deep links with it.

Police further told Lankapuvath that detectives were today visiting the home of the sailor who hit the Indian leader with a rifle butt when he was inspecting a Naval guard of honour opposite Jundipathi Mandiraya just before his departure for New Delhi after signing the peace accord to end the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka.

The Assailant was pushed off balance by Naval Commander Rear Admiral H. A. Silva, as he aimed the blow at Mr. Gandhi and later overpowered by Naval and security officials.

Detectives are also investigating as to whether the assault on the Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was part of a larger JVP conspiracy to destabilise the democratically elected government of Sri Lanka through violence.

About 200 members of the JVP have been arrested by the Police during the past three months for engaging in subversive activities against the state.

The JVP staged an abortive insurgency in 1971 against the Sri Lanka Freedom Party government of Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike.

President Jayewardene as Leader of the Opposition at the time gave all support to Mrs. Bandaranaike's government to fight the JVP insurrection successfully.

The party was proscribed after it was found to have been deeply involved in the July 1983 ethnic disturbances in July 1983.

JVP leader Rohana Wijeweera has been in hiding since then.

Police told Lankapuvath that preliminary investigations into last weeks wave of wanton violence showed a deep JVP involvement.

— Island

## Priority for rehabilitation says CCP

Mr. N. Sanmugathan, CC Secretary welcomes the current attempt to solve the national problem on the basis of autonomy to a single Tamil region, composed of the North and Eastern Provinces.

But there are other hurdles which must also be cleared. First, the army and its camps must be withdrawn from the north and east.

Secondly, the Prevention of Terrorism Act must be withdrawn, and, all prisoners (Sinhala and Tamil) arrested under it released, and a general amnesty declared.

Thirdly, firm decisions must be taken about the extent of devolution on matters, like law and order the police and land and land settlement.

Fourthly, the government must give priority to rehabilitation of people and rebuilding of homes and schools and pay compensation for lives and property lost.



# What the spark? Which the prairie?

**W**asn't it Mao who said 'a single spark can start a prairie fire'? The spark is always easy to spot, in most instances, in this case, there was no difficulty at all. President J.R. himself identified it publicly — the Peace Accord. And the intention, he added, was to see that it wasn't signed... and later, it would be to stop its implementation.

But what was the prairie, so well prepared as events proved, for first spark?

If the UNP is wise enough, it would get its 'think tank' on the job, and seek out the answers for what was more than a mob (or scores of mobs) on the rampage or even one mighty riot. What really gave this mass protest the dimensions of an uprising — like the battle of 1952, in some ways, and like so many outbursts of communal violence from 1958 onwards to that 'Black July' in 1983 which changed the face of Sri Lankan politics? It had something of both — anger rising from socio-economic causes, and that most combustible of provocative issues, the ethnic. And yet it was NOT, decidedly, NOT COMMUNAL. Professional looters may have robbed Tamil shops, goondas may have assaulted or injured Tamils or Indians, and some may even have been killed, but this was NON-COMMUNAL. The issue, certainly was the Accord and the righteous indignation it stirred in the hearts and minds of a vast number of Sinhalese. Yet the anger was NOT directed at the Tamils or the Indians. It had a single, clearly conceived target — the State. The most telling evidence of that was the row upon row of CTB buses and State-owned vehicles, all charred bodies, on our TV screens. The Mahanayakes were right when they spoke

of 'Public Property' and admonished the violent, rioting hordes. Yet, it was the General Public that attacked Public Property. For the protesters, it was State property, the symbol of the State, and the most accessible target of opportunity. To strengthen this impression we have another known fact — not just the murder of the Tangalla MP, and the attacks on the private homes of MP's and other UNP politicians.

It was anti-government, non-communal. On this point at least there appears to be a wide consensus which includes the more intelligently observant UNP'ers. Within the UNP, this unfortunately, leads to the temptation to pin the blame entirely on the JVP. "The JVP dunit" is the instant answer of most UNP'ers and even the non-UNP upper middle class. How this answer strokes our own recent past! Every act of violence was the work of "Lekam terrorists". How self-assuredly officialdom offered this explanation, and how enthusiastically our media, without exception, propagated it.

It is ironic for another reason. Believing that every crime, every act of mischief, every protest was JVP-organised, the law-and-order agencies cracked down on Sinhalese youths, particularly undergraduates and high school students (or those who looked like university students) and dragged them to the nearest cop-shop and threw away the key, satisfied that the PTA and the Emergency will take care of "justice" and "human rights". This is not to exculpate the JVP or discount the involvement of JVP sympathisers or activists, but to draw attention to the more important fact that the repressive measures of recent years created, and multiplied

'enemies'. Repressive rule, as situations in so many countries have amply demonstrated (and the L.G. has recently focused on South Korea) sows the seeds of its own destruction. So one conclusion may be drawn. This was a mass uprising restricted to certain areas though, and the identity of these areas is most interesting in which the youth played a major role, and both the militancy and the direction came from lower-middle class youth, in parts, not savings. The youth-student component, the *sangha* included, was extremely large.

(2) The campuses, the scene of continuous disturbance in recent times, were the foot, from Kelaniya, Moratuwa, and Kandy to the Ruhuna, the traditional JVP stronghold. The articulate university and 'A' level student is the natural spokesman of discontented youth. Still the 'prairie' eludes us.

In our issue of 1/4/86, the L.G.'s cover story was "THE MIDDLE GROUPS LEAD THE WAY", with a strap line, 'Doctors, Dons, Dentists, Nurses'.

Discontent was spreading. It had a wider embrace — another generation, another social stratum. In July this year this discontent surfaced in the GMA strike — interestingly NOT on a strictly trade union issue — which drew immediate support from other unions, students etc. It was a matter of policy — 'privatisation' of higher education or, in the perception of the protesters, UNP-supported privilege. 22 unions were meanwhile ready for a token strike and street picketing on POLITICAL demands — release of persons detained for long periods without trial, the PTA, removal of the ban on some parties and unions (JVP, notably) relation of the emergency. What is more ALL



these unions and groups, supported the call for general elections issued by Mrs. Bandaranaike, and backed by all the opposition parties, including the LSSP which had kept out of the new 6-party 'front'.

(3) Democracy had emerged as the main issue, on the national agenda. Not surprisingly, July 23 marked the 10th anniversary of the our "Long Parliament", the longest government since independence. In a once highly politicised country, electoral exhaustion and impatience was all too evident. Few realised that this impatience was reaching bursting point.

(4) There's another largely unsurveyed area, Demography. The under 25's have become a major factor in the Sri Lankan population, and urban youth a very

restive force. Colombo, its outskirts, and down the southern coastline were the most affected areas. Again, the temptation will be to point an accusing finger at the JVP. But JVP 1971 battle-grounds like Kegalle, Kurunegala, Dedigama etc were relatively undisturbed. More important is to examine patterns of demographic change and then relate these to causes of economic disaffection.

(5) The UNP, if one accepts official figures, reduced unemployment from 24% to 12% but now it is 17%! If it reaches above 20%, then both regime and country are in deep trouble.

(6) Besides the overall impact of the "open economy" and the I.G has in the past decade published many thoughtful essays which use approaches and methods

of analysis radically different from World Bank and western growth-oriented methodologies — it is necessary to examine far more closely the effects of inflation, reduced to zero, we were told in 1980, and now at 8%.

(6) Finally, a phenomenon which this journal has described as 'the militarisation process': not just the new familiarity with arms, and their availability, but its impact on the Sri Lankan ethos. Consumerism, violence, high-level crime and patronage, drugs etc were already part of the changing pattern of our society when we raised the curtain on the "National Security State". More than a dozen items in our "TRENDS" column ended with our own melancholy epitaph on the 'New Society'... 'there is no Security'! M.

## SECURITY SPENDING

The Defence vote has not been cut; it has in fact been increased from 8.6 billion to Rs. 10.6 billion. There has also been an increase of 269 million in the votes of the new Ministry of Manpower Mobilisation which supervises a security related operation, and a small rise in the vote of the Ministry of Commercial security. But the more we spend on security, the less secure everybody appears to be — the majority Sinhalese and the minorities, the private citizen and the private sector, the government, the Opposition that is supporting the government on the P.C.'s (bomb attacks on Vijaya's meetings and the bomb in Colvin's home) and the Opposition.

And now the Ministry of Commercial Security has been seized

by a fit of insecurity about Private Security Agencies, a post-77 phenomenon, like most other developments in the sphere of security, which could be said to represent the "privatisation" of security under the aegis of the UNP government.

In the beginning was the Ministry of Defence. Not even a full-fledged ministry in fact, just a part of the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs, with one Minister (the Prime Minister) and one Permanent Secretary. That post-independence set-up was found more than adequate from 1947 to 1977, including just before, during and after the 1971 insurrection.

But the sheer multiplication of "security" ministries and the proliferation of security-related

ministerial responsibilities signalled a major change. We had "defence" "internal security" "national security" "commercial security" and Manpower Mobilisation".

Last week the Ministry of Commercial Security held a conference chaired by Brigadier Dennis Hapugalle, the Ministry's top official. The Ministry has decided to keep a vigilant eye on private security agencies hired to protect government enterprises. Their work will be monitored. Some agencies were scolded "mushroom". They have failed to respond to questionnaires sent out by the Ministry. One official moaned: "Everybody wants to set up a security agency... there's a lot of money in it".

(L. G. 1/11/86)



# J. R.: The great breakout

**T**o turn once more to Mao, the Great Teacher and Great Helmsman, greatly encouraged criticism and self-criticism. President JR practised self-criticism at the Gandhi-J.R. press conference when he answered a difficult question. Couldn't he have signed a similar accord sometime ago, why didn't he?

President JR replied that he had lacked the intelligence, foresight and the courage to do so. To include 'intelligence' among his faults, is in my own humble view, is to carry humility beyond the bounds of credibility! Foresight and courage are more easily accepted.

And "courage" is the word commonest in all the congratulatory messages which have poured into Colombo from leaders of the stature of President Reagan, Mrs. Thatcher, Prime Minister Joe Clark and of course Prime Minister Gandhi. The Indian leader, addressing a huge rally in Madras, paused for a moment, to mention the Sri Lankan leader's name and then voiced the words loud and clear — 'moral courage'. The other word preferred by the heads of state and government across the world and from our own SAARC region, was 'state-manship'.

Commenting on the agreement, Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam, a former UNLP MP but better known in Colombo's academic and intellectual circles, as the Director of the International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES) offered a characteristically academic observation. The preamble (actually item 1) while expressing a 'desire' to strengthen the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka, recognised the "multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, pluralist" character of our society. This is "breakthrough" on fundamentals, a conceptual breakthrough, he said.

What is the nature of Sri Lankan society? That is the question which on which is centered the great historical debate, in which historians, the politicians, the clergy, the entire intelligentsia and as the issues acquired an immediacy and intensely emotive content, the people have been engaged. The answer given in the Accord may be rejected. Pacts have been signed only to be torn up. But the words have been put down on paper for the first time in an interstate agreement what has now earned international recognition. That is J.R.'s moment of history, whatever the historians may say later, and politics dictate.

What does this mean in the current political context? The weeks of June-July saw the army bogged down in the north (Ronnie de Mel) the economic forecasts gloomy, the Opposition showing signs of unity, the Tamil rebels returning to the fray, the Indian aidstop, a newly active JVP, the monks' vocal and demonstrative Mrs. B. launching a national anti-intercommunal campaign for 'the restoration of democracy,' Indian pressure mounting, the GMOA refusing to surrender, other unions stirring. The points and sites of confrontation between people and regime were multiplying. The regime's capacity to control events was rapidly diminishing; indeed each step it took, exposed more of its weakness. The UNP looked trapped; the regime engaged in two-and-half wars — in the north and east an armed conflict, in the south a democratic challenge to power from Mrs. B and the non-JVP forces, and an emerging half-a-war with the JVP.

What could the Generalissimo, a keen student of military affairs, do? The fortnight July 5th to July 20th (the fortnight in which Mr. Premadasa was abroad) has been called by some

"J.R.'s Blackreig" — UNP group, UNP Executive, ISS and finally the Cabinet with the PM present. He took the Indian option. What cannot be settled internally, must be resolved externally. If the local balance of forces did not allow a breakthrough, power must be tapped and flow from outside. He made his historic decision, come what may, and fully realising the grave risks involved.

For the great debate, there may have been a historic breakthrough; For Generalissimo JR, it was the great break-out.

An opposition paper had a cartoon showing the Emperor Without His Clothes. In fact, J. R. is now dressed in the Blue Silk robes of SLFP nonalignment. He has run away with the SLFP's clothes.

The SLFP is a quintessentially parliamentarist party — even more so than the UNP, after Senanayakism declined, and JR began to take command, first of the J.S.S. and then the whole party, making it in opposition a more militant organisation ready to take to the streets and take the consequences. The SLFP has yet to demonstrate these agitational capabilities — the Cory Aquino question.

Now JR, by this manoeuvre, has split the emerging alliance (the C.P. and now the SLMP) have taken up new positions and LSSP is sure to follow) to leave the SLFP with a painful dilemma. If it moves into agitational politics (and the SLFP is NOT built for that) it will be associated or confused with JVP-type politics. The SLFP, especially under Mrs. B., has not only been a non-violent, democratic party but a 'Law-and-Order' party.

The 'conceptual breakthrough' that the ethnic studies specialists recognise is in fact a step that will lead to a qualitative change in our politics. It can result in a re-structure

(Continued on page 16)



# Colombo's JR takes a bold gamble

Mervyn de Silva

President Junius Richard Jayawardene's right-wing pro-west government, the longest and most powerful since Sri Lanka's independence in 1948, enters its second decade today looking in even more trouble than the strife-torn Island.

Under sustained Indian pressure, Jayawardene has staked his government's future and his own long unassailable authority on a new offer of regional autonomy to the separatist Tamils. Many in his party and cabinet fear that the Sinhalese will see the proposed deal, underwritten by India, as a sell out to the Tamils and a surrender of sovereignty. That is certainly how former Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, the opposition, and the monks will present it.

Though the Tamils, liberal-minded Sinhalese and western diplomats see Jayawardene's bold move as the first flicker of light in a long, winding tunnel, the ruling United National Party (UNP) is distinctly jittery. Local and foreign businessmen are already alarmed by the prospect of a possible confrontation with Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa when he returns to Colombo. The party's most uncompromising critic of the Gandhis, mother and son, Premadasa said in Tokyo on Sunday that he was "unaware" of any new offer.

Recently the President convened a special meeting of the 12 ministers who comprise his inner cabinet. He invited the Indian High Commissioner, Mr. Muni Dixit, to "clarify" Mr. Gandhi's views. This was an unprecedented encounter reflecting the radically changed situation after India's first overt intervention, and prompting the opposition leader Mr. Anura

Bandaranaike to remark, "Mani makes our world go round."

The airdrop of relief supplies in the north by military aircraft marked more than a change in India's role from "honest broker" to semi-partisan negotiator, but was also an attempt to appease Tamil sentiment in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu, one of the few important states still friendly



President Jayawardene:  
Master strategist

to Delhi at a time when regional nationalism, through local parties, is rolling back the once undisputed hegemony of the governing Congress party. Moreover Colombo's most energetic supporter is Pakistan, and in Indian eyes, this open assistance has come too definitely close to direct involvement.

Jayawardene read the Indian intervention correctly. It was a modest demonstration of Delhi's deterrent power. The Mirage jets that escorted the Soviet-made cargo planes flew menacingly over airfields and harbours. The only real military gain was the north-eastern coastal area, a third of the

peninsula. The Tamil Tigers are back with a vengeance, not merely ambushing army patrols but attacking now, fortified camps. The army is bogged down, says Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel.

By the intervention and the distribution of relief supplies, India taught a lesson to the overbearing and intransigent Tigers too. Indian Red Cross officials were mobbed and kissed by Jaffna's beleaguered citizens who now understand that Delhi, not Tamil Nadu or the Tigers, is their ultimate protector.

Of the six dissenting ministers, the most assertive voice was that of the National Security Minister Lalith Athulathudal, one of the premier's rivals, who was also chief negotiator. He was eased out of the second post by Land Minister, Gamini Disanayake, another front-runner in the succession stakes. Another peace advocate is Minister S. Thondaman who also holds the influential position of trade union chief of Indian Tamil plantation labour now said to be infiltrated by Tamil radicals. Finally the Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel returned from the Paris aid group meeting with a near-ultimatum. The donors who account for 30 per cent of the budget want a settlement this year. The World Bank and IMF, worried by rising defence costs and debt-servicing, demand the same.

Jayawardene has realised that he has to fight two-and-a-half wars.

If the Tamils deal goes through, the President can close the northern front and defend his main Sinhalese base,

(Financial Times, London)  
23/7/87



# JR's message — forget the past

"I have to untangle the Gordian knot, and to do that this agreement must be implemented sincerely, fully, in all its aspects," the Sri Lanka President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, told me in an interview at the Presidential Palace on Thursday.

The interview took place towards the end of the State visit by the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi to Sri Lanka.

Mr. Jayewardene added: "I intend to do that. I want India, which is also a signatory, to do it — and to get the separatist groups, violent and non-violent to accept and follow it."

Mr. Jayewardene spoke frankly on the nature of the opposition within the island to the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement and, specifically, to the effort to find a lasting political solution to the ethnic conflict in the interview and then off the record, he sounded a realistic but determined note as if to make the point — as an experienced politician he was not underestimating the forces working against the agreement, but he did not want to overestimate them either.

The central point he made in his responses to the question raised on the morrow of the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement to Establish Peace and Normalcy in Sri Lanka (plus the the Annexure and the exchange of letters relating to Trincomalee and other security-related matters) was this — let the agreement be implemented fully and he would "untangle the Gordian knot" and reverse the "mistakes" he and others had made in the past.

The 82-year-old Sri Lanka President, who seemed relaxed and also in a reminiscing mood on the history of the ethnic conflict, said that while he was happy with what was worked out between the two governments, he

was "very unhappy with the way some of our people have behaved. A set of hooligans and thugs murdering people, causing harm to individuals, property... That's not the way democratic people behave."

He sharply criticised Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the SLFP leader and former Prime Minister making the point that while he and his party, the UNP, did not exploit her big trouble of 1971 but fully co-operated with her in responding to the threat of extremist violence, she was letting "Sinhala terrorists and extremists who believed in violence 'use her again' — referring to the JVP factor in the early seventies and in the current troubles. However in response to a question, Mr. Jayewardene made it clear that he would make a political distinction between Mrs. Bandaranaike and the "Sinhala terrorists" and extremists who were influencing feelings in a context of "ignorance."

Asked for a message for the Sri Lanka Tamils, who have currently their political representatives in India, Mr. Jayewardene said: "The message is forgive, I have forgiven them — if they lay down arms. Join the mainstream of political life and be elected into the positions of power."

The political veteran sounded a self-critical note, admitting "mistakes" made by his party, the UNP along with various others in the Sinhala political spectrum. In the interview, he elaborated on the nature of the major mistake made on the Sinhala Only question (the language question saying he now believed in the soundness of an observation by Colvin R. de Silva in the fifties: "One language, two nations. Two languages, one nation."

At one point, Mr. Jayewardene asserted that had the Tamil side

not taken up arms to assert its political demands, its cause might have achieved much more, if they had adopted the non-violence of Gandhi to achieve, freedom, they may have succeeded. "You can't govern people who don't want to be governed!" He said that "if those whom I call terrorists or separatists disarm, as the accord wishes them to do — genuinely, fully without having to have recourse to arms or laws — the first step to true friendship will begin. That is fundamental, essential." He related this to the process of the army going back to barracks.

Asked about the resistance within his own Government to the agreement, or at least some of its features, Mr. Jayewardene responded:

"There will be no problems if we implement the agreement. If they don't accept my view they must go. There is no question about that." He said if he found his determination to see the solution to the ethnic conflict through was blocked at the legislative level he would "dissolve Parliament." He noted that an advantage in the Sri Lanka Constitution — which "suits the present situation" — was that the President was "insulated from parliamentary pressure" and could pursue what he believed to be the correct course — although he had to go to Parliament for legislative action.

Asked about the current general impression that the situation could go either way, the Sri Lanka President responded: "It will go only one way. I'm sure of that" — provided the agreement was implemented sincerely. He promised to take his "whole Cabinet," including the Prime Minister, Mr. R. Premadasa, to Jaffna if the key step of de-militarisation — to which India's peacekeeping forces are expected

(Continued on page 24)



## Tight security blanket over South

**Suresh Mohamed**

The Southern Province had been placed under a tight security blanket following information that subversive elements were attempting to create further trouble and dissension in the region, Inspector General of Police, Cyril Herath said.

Around 1000 troops had been sent to supplement Police in their endeavour to crush subversive and anti government attempts to perpetuate violence in the sensitive Southern region, military sources said yesterday.

Senior Police officials said that plans by members of the proscribed Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) to incite the people and create another bout of violence and disturbances in the country had come to light.

### Remanded

Wellawatte Police arrested 71 curfew violators during the past three days.

The suspects, Wellawatte OIC Inspector Lalith Lekanga, said were produced before Colombo South Magistrate, Mr. Maxwell Paranagama, and remanded.

Police and troops exercised rigid patrolling in the South and all police stations especially those located in areas identified as JVP strongholds had been placed under a 24-hour alert.

No fresh incidents had been reported after Saturday and Police attributed that to intensified police patrolling and surveillance.

Police and troops had also been ordered to take a serious view of those found violating the curfew and a large number of persons had been arrested

throughout the country during the past four days for breaking the curfew.

Sporadic incidents were reported from a few Southern towns on Saturday and troops and special police squads had been rushed to the areas where there had been fresh violence.

"The flames are certainly being fanned by the JVP", senior Police officials said.

The situation was now under control and security forces were alert to clandestine moves by JVP members to create further trouble.

Meanwhile Intelligence Bureau sleuths and CID officers were still in the process of grilling the sailor who had attempted to assault Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The suspect who hails from the South was being investigated for any JVP links, security officials said.

### Police quell JVP attack on station

A JVP attack on the Kottigala police station, about eight miles from Embilipitiya, was repulsed early yesterday, according to a report reaching police headquarters.

The report said an armed group dressed in blue uniforms launched the attack. No details were available.

Reports reaching police headquarters also said that groups on arms-grabbing missions had commandeered five repeater shotguns and 90 cartridges from some Mahaweli security guards at Nachchiyagama.

## Sirima condemns violence

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party does not condone violence or action aimed at harming government property which belongs to the people but will oppose the Indo-Sri Lanka accord and the setting up of Provincial Councils in Parliament, its leader Ms. Sirimavo Bandaranaike said.

She also expressed regret at the assault on Indian Premier Rajiv Gandhi by a naval rating during his two day state visit to Sri Lanka.

Speaking at a press conference at her Rosmead Place Residence, Ms. Bandaranaike said that she will go before the people to explain the proposed accord and the setting up of Provincial Councils.

### J.R: The great...

*(Continued from page 13)*

uring of the Sri Lankan polity, a fundamental transformation of what the radicals call a 'dependent authoritarian state' and the Tamil intellectuals term a 'dependent, authoritarian, racist state'. Devolution will bring radical structural reform, and democratisation, albeit partial.

This itself leaves the system with a built in flaw and the opposition with an agonising dilemma. The opposition wants democracy in the south and no devolution in the north, democracy in the south, with repression in the north. That equation has been changed. If democracy is indivisible, you cannot have devolution in part of the country, nor, ultimately, repression.



## Bail for UNP MMC, two monks and 12 others

**T.** M. Sangatissa, UNP-MMC, Grandpass, Ven. Vidallavita Saddananda Thera, Chief Incumbent, Bodhiraja Temple, Ven. Velandagoda Yassasi Thera and twelve others were yesterday produced before the Chief Magistrate, Colombo. Mr. Sarath Gunatilleke, in connection with the attempted attack by a mob on the residence of the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Sports, Mr. Vilemont Perera, on July 30.

The suspects who are charged on four counts were released on surety bail and directed to appear in court on August 28.

The Magistrate in granting bail noted that the only reason he was granting bail was because the suspects were entitled to be bailed out according to the law.

The suspects he said should bear in mind that the Court does not approve of their actions.

"If you want to protest over anything, you should do it in a democratic manner, violence is certainly not the answer."

The Magistrate also reminded the suspects of a peaceful protest launched by certain persons opposite the residence of Judges of the Supreme Court.

Mr. Daya Perera, Senior Counsel for the suspects, moving for bail submitted that his clients had been produced under Section 13 (1) of the Emergency regulations, for violating the curfew, even though Section 13(1) of the Emergency regulations, has still not been gazetted. Hence the charge of violating the curfew must fail, he said.

The other alleged offences his clients have been charged with namely conspiracy to commit an offence, unlawful assembly and the attempted attack on the Minister's home, are all hailable offences he said. (Island)

## Pravda hails Peace Accord

**A**greements between New Delhi and Colombo aim to frustrate the plans of imperialist powers that try to use the Sri Lankan crisis in their interests, "Pravda" has said in its August 3 issue, a Press release from the Soviet Embassy stated.

The Indo-Sri Lanka Accord, signed by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Juvana Jayewardene in Colombo on July 29, paved the way for ending the bloody ethnic conflict which has been tearing this island republic for many years.

Extremist Tamil groups saw an answer to the crisis in dividing Sri Lanka into Sinhalese and Tamil states, the latter under the name "Tamil Eelam". Brutal operations by security forces in areas populated by Tamils and terroristic actions by separatists only added to the strife. As many as 140,000 Tamils fled to Southern India. Six thousand people fell victim in the clashes.

The problem is that the majority of Tamils (nearly 50 million people) live in Southern India and, naturally, events on the neighbouring island cause a rather stormy reaction among them.

The Tamil Nadu state also sheltered most refugees, many political emigrants and leaders of Sri Lanka Tamils. The Tamil Sinhalese strife was also fomented by nationalist and separatist feelings among Tamils living in India.

Another, even more serious, factor was the increasing interference into the conflict in Sri Lanka on the part of foreign states. Pakistani, British and Israeli military advisors appeared on the island. Taking advantage of the difficulties faced by the Colombo Government, the imperialist powers, the USA in the first place, hoped to take hold of a strategically important naval base in Trincomalee.

The Sri Lankan crisis played a rather important role in the far-reaching plans to destabilise India and encircle it by hostile regimes, the newspaper notes.

Finally, agreements between New Delhi and Colombo to refuse to give the Trincomalee base to a third country, to limit and control the activities of the U. S. Voice of America radio station, to recall

Pakistani and Israeli military advisors aim to frustrate the plans of imperialist powers that try to use the Sri Lankan crisis in their interests, "Pravda" writes.

(Novosti Press Agency)

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## U. S. reply

U. S. Ambassador Mr. James Spain in a press statement stated that the point of view represented in the Pravda article "could be dismissed as hallucinatory". The ambassador also stated that "The record of American relations with Sri Lanka is clear. It covers almost two hundred years of friendship and has never included any effort to establish military facilities at Trincomalee or anywhere else in the island. Last week the United States was the first outside country to commit itself to supporting the Accord signed by President Jayewardene and Prime Minister Gandhi.



# Prabakaran : 'We do this for peace...'

LTTE leader declares he will not stand for election or accept office

William de Alwis in Jaffna

**L**TTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran told a rally at Sudumalai Amman kovil here yesterday, that his group was surrendering its arms "in the interest of peace". The exact modalities of the surrender were not announced, but the Indian peacekeepers were keen to have them settled last night.

The LTTE leader who spoke in Tamil, said his party would contest elections to the proposed provincial councils, but he himself would not. "I will not contest the elections or accept office even though they may offer to appoint me as a chief minister.

"... we respect India and Prime Minister Gandhi and look to them to protect us. Although we do not like this agreement, we trust India and Mr. Gandhi and expect them to safeguard us after we surrender our arms," Prabakaran said.

A large group of media people representing the Sri Lankan and foreign press were present to hear Prabakaran's public announcement. Eyewitnesses estimated that 75,000 to 100,000 people attended the rally. Defence Secretary Sepala Attiygalle and some Colombo-based diplomats were also present.

Diplomats said that the actual surrender of LTTE weapons was expected to be completed by the extended deadline for disarming the militants, scheduled to end at 3.30 p.m. on 6/8/87.

A senior government official in Colombo said that TELO, the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation, many of whose members were massacred by the LTTE last year in a bloody internecine war, had already surrendered their arms.

Meanwhile, additional Indian troops to beef up the peacekeep-

ing effort have landed in Trincomalee where a large consignment of military equipment, including armoured personnel carriers and tracked vehicles, have been unloaded.

Authoritative sources said that two Indian destroyers and a cargo ship docked in Trincomalee on Wednesday and 1,000 troops, supplementing 3,000 men airborne last week, were taking positions in the troubled areas.

Some reports said that the LTTE would prefer to surrender their weapons in bulk rather than surrender them individually. Reuters, in a Colombo-dated story, quoted a military officer as saying: "We have received reports that the LTTE have been collecting their weapons in two or three houses in Jaffna. They might just tell the Indians to get them from these places".

He had added: "They probably would not want to go through the humiliation of giving up their weapons one by one".

The deadline for the surrender of arms ended at 3.30 p.m. on Monday, but was extended a further three days by President Jayewardene at Prime Minister Gandhi's request.

The Indian troops have moved into Sri Lanka's army camp in Jaffna fort located in the town, travellers who reached Vavuniya, just south of the peninsula told Reuters.

They said residents who left their homes were now returning to the town and abandoned shops around the fort had either reopened or were undergoing renovation.

Rebels were also seen removing roadblocks and landmines on roads leading to the fort.

(Daily News)

## THE ALTAR IN THE VALLEY

*We are too poor, we cannot afford poplin  
With polythene we put out this yellow flag  
Sad for the tolling temples in the Valley  
Empty of the little priests who played  
With us after Dhamma School on Sundays  
Not dreaming this sudden spatter of blood.*

*We are poor. On polythene blood will not stay  
In the angry wind this flag will flutter  
But rain, in prayer, will wash the stains away  
May be sometimes we played at troops and terrorists  
We, and these little monks were too poor for hate  
They died for those who had to keep hate burning  
The Poplin Peers who beat the drums of Fate.*

— U. Karunatilake



## Zia : Caught with the goods

FOREIGN  
NEWS

# Pakistan near N-weapons threshold, says US official

WASHINGTON

A senior Reagan administration official told Congress today that Pakistan appears to have reached the threshold of possessing nuclear weapons but said it would be foolhardy to cut U.S. aid to the country.

But members of Congress said Pakistan appeared to have violated U.S. law and warned that American aid may have to be stopped, since aid to Pakistan is contingent on its promise not to build a bomb.

"Despite our best efforts, Pakistan has proceeded to the threshold of nuclear weapons possession", said Richard Murphy, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, in a statement to two subcommittees of the House of Representatives.

Appearing before a joint hearing of the two subcommittees Murphy also said the United States had expressed concern to Pakistani officials over the recent arrest of a Pakistani-born Canadian in Philadelphia.

The suspect, Arshad Pervez, was arrested two weeks ago on charges he tried to bribe a U.S. customs officer.

The United States charges allege that Pervez was trying to smuggle special steel used in making nuclear bombs.

State Department officials, who declined to be identified, said Pakistan had issued a warrant for the arrest of retired Brigadier General Inan Oul-Haq, who allegedly directed Pervez.

State Department spokesman Charles Redman told reporters that U.S. officials see the arrest warrant as "a positive first step", and Murphy said Pakistan had assured Washington that it was not involved in the case. He said Islamabad promised a full investigation in which "heads will roll".

Pakistan has made repeated denials that it is developing nuclear weapons.

Murphy said the Asian country had not yet moved across the nuclear threshold and that maintaining U.S. economic and security aid would encourage it to show nuclear restraint. He said aid also helps Islamabad "stand up to Soviet pressure through Afghanistan".

Some U.S. lawmakers have said it would be unwise to cut aid to Pakistan because Islamabad may refuse to continue its key role of funneling American assistance to Afghan rebels fighting Soviet troops in their homeland.

But others have said that U.S. refusal to cut the aid could send a message to other countries that Washington is not serious about nuclear non-proliferation.

## Pakistan denies violating US laws

ISLAMABAD (AFP)

Pakistan said that neither the government nor any of its agencies had sponsored any violation of U.S. export laws by attempting to buy special steel for use in the production of nuclear weapons.

A foreign office spokesman, commenting on reports from Washington on the arrest of a Pakistan-born Canadian citizen for allegedly attempting to illegally export special steel alloy to Pakistan, described the allegation as "baseless."

Arshad Pervez was jailed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for allegedly attempting to bribe U.S. officials to allow exports of a maraging 350 steel, a high-strength steel alloy used in the enrichment of weapons-grade uranium, according to court documents.

The U.S. State Department summoned Pakistan's ambassador,

Representative Stephen Solarz, a New York Democrat who heads the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, said today it appears that the Philadelphia case is the latest in "a series of incidents suggesting a systematic Pakistani nuclear procurement program".

He said that unless the U.S. and Pakistan draw up a new agreement in which Pakistan gives credible assurance that it is not building a bomb, "we would have no alternative but to insist that the law in all its provisions be faithfully carried out".

Meanwhile senior U.S. officials and Republican legislators warned Congress to weigh carefully the role Pakistan plays in helping Afghan guerillas before cutting off aid to that country in retaliation for an attempted violation of U.S. nuclear export restrictions.

Jamsheed K. A. Marker, to explain his government's role in the apparent violation of U.S. export laws.

Quoted by the official Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), the spokesman said such incidents were "always publicised" whenever the U.S. Congress was about to consider U.S. economic aid and military sales to Pakistan.

The spokesman said that subject to approval by Congress, President Ronald Reagan's administration and Pakistan had agreed to a six-year waiver on the 87-post aid package, APP reported.

The spokesman said the "bizarre" case in which a U.S. official tried to convert a commercial transaction into a crime is still to be tried.

He said that in the past, a number of Pakistan citizens accused of violating trade laws of foreign countries were subsequently acquitted.



## U. S. opinion

## Pakistan keeps it up

## Halt American aid

The arrest of a Pakistani trying to violate U.S. export laws shows once again how tenaciously Pakistan pursues the bomb. It also prompts a familiar chorus of State Department lamentations about the apparent violation, Pakistani protestations of an innocent, peaceful nuclear program and U.S. demands for good Pakistani behavior from now on.

This litany needs a new ending. American demands have to be backed up by action, even to the point of stopping aid to Pakistan. A cutoff might not work any better than scoldings, and it could be costly in other ways, but anything less would undermine U.S. nonproliferation policy.

Evidence mounts that Pakistan's decade-old pursuit of the bomb continues unabated. Yet Pakistan remains crucial to resisting the

Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. All spring, Congress wrestled with these concerns and with an administration request for a \$4 billion, six-year aid program. Would approval send a limp message on proliferation? Would stopping aid destroy American influence?

As it turns out, even as Congress sweated over the usual compromise of renewing aid while expressing concern, a Pakistan businessman was hard at work in Philadelphia. He was trying to buy a steel alloy that could only be useful to Pakistan in producing nuclear weapons, and to bribe Commerce Department officials for an export license.

The boldness of Pakistan's latest perfidy has shaken even those who had hoped to paper over differences with yet another compromise. All manner of reason and arguments have been tried with Pakistani leaders. It is time for stronger steps.

There is indeed no guarantee that an aid cutoff will restrain Pakistan's evident order for the bomb. Nor on the other side is there any certainty that Pakistani opposition to the Soviet presence in Afghanistan will be reduced by a cutoff. Pakistanis have their own reasons to oppose that occupation.

What the aid cutoff offers is another sort of guarantee; that U.S. statements about preventing proliferation are more than oratory. Whatever decisions Pakistan makes, the U.S. interest is clear. It lies in steady opposition to the development of nuclear weapons, in the strife-torn subcontinent and world-wide. Proliferation is a terrifying prospect. It will loom long after the injustice now plaguing Afghanistan is resolved.

— The New York Times

## An ominous pattern

Once again a Pakistani has been arrested in the United States for trying to smuggle out materials that could be used to build nuclear weapons. This time it was steel of a certain highly special type used in the uranium enrichment process. Work is proceeding steadily in Pakistan, and it is pressing the United States toward an unpleasant decision.

American law forbids economic or military aid to countries that are building nuclear bombs. But Pakistan provides the major supply routes and staging areas for the guerrilla resistance to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and for that reason the United States currently gives it very substantial aid. Pakistan is forcing the United States to decide between its interest in sustaining the Afghan resistance and its interest in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. Put in those stark terms, the greater

necessity is to deflect the nuclear rivalry — and, with it, the possibility of nuclear war — in South Asia.

Pakistan has pursued nuclear weapons with obsessive energy ever since India exploded one in 1974. Legal sources of the necessary equipment have been foreclosed by a worldwide embargo, so it has resorted to systematic theft and smuggling to get the technology. There have been many cases in which police and customs in the United States and in Europe have intercepted illicit shipments; it is clear that there have also been many shipments that reached Pakistan.

The recent pattern is ominous. Two years ago a German company evaded the embargo and sold Pakistan a ton of the special steel used in enrichment equipment. The Pakistanis arrested this week in Philadelphia was trying to obtain 25 tons of the same steel. In April, West German authorities

raided the headquarters of a Cologne firm that makes components for Urenco, a consortium that entitles uranium for several countries' power reactors. It appears that the Cologne firm had been supplying blueprints and equipment to Pakistan. Since Pakistan was already capable of producing enough enriched uranium to build perhaps one bomb a year, the latest cases suggest that it is trying to expand production.

In the 1970s the United States cut off aid to Pakistan because of its reckless pursuit of nuclear weapons. But in 1979, when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, the United States immediately reinstated the aid. Now the Pakistanis seem to believe that because of Afghanistan the United States will never enforce its nuclear control law and will draw aid again. Are they right?

— The Washington Post



# MAHAWELI : WHAT NEXT

A Kumar David, BSc Eng. PhD.

## IV. DEBT SERVICING AND INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT

Some further information on the national economy is relevant to some aspects of this conundrum. The debt-service ratio measures amortisation and interest payment on external debts as a percentage either of gross export earnings of goods and services only, or alternatively of goods, services and transfers; the former is the more significant figure. In 1986 the debt service ratio stood at about 30% or 25% respectively on the two basis; its quantum about Rs. 11 billion. Mahaweli projects, of course, account only for a part of these charges on the external earnings but their importance will increase in the 1990s when the grace period on some of the large loans ends.

The Rs. 11 billion debt service in 1986 may, for order of magnitude purposes, be compared with the total cumulative private foreign investment actually contracted between 1978 and 1985, Rs. 12.5 billion, inclusive of GCEC and FIAC zones. The figures are not strictly comparable because they need to be deflated to the same base year, but the order of magnitude comparison is telling. This may also be compared with the shortfall in respect of merchandise imports and exports in the balance of payments (the trade deficit) which since 1982 has been in the region of Rs. 20 billion per annum, except for 1984 when it fell to Rs. 10 billion thanks to unusual export prices.

Improvement in export earning capacity and curtailment of further large capital intensive investment programmes will help to reduce the debt-service ratio, which other-

wise looks dangerously poised to take off into the 35 to 50% range in the coming years. However, if commitments to the completion of Mahaweli headworks, downstream development and other large infrastructure projects such as highways, communications and water supply, are sustained the state will easily paint itself into the corner where its ideological antipathy to involvement in industrial expansion becomes a self-fulfilling necessity because of its inability to admit new industrial investment options without further eroding the debt-situation. The paradox, however, is that only export oriented industrialisation and upgrading of the traditional export sectors (tea, rubber etc.) can turn around the dismal balance of payments scene in the short-run.

The first set of difficult decisions regarding the way to proceed from the given situation now emerge.

- (a) Abandonment of the simplistic and sanguine hope that a partnership of local and foreign private capitalists will achieve the requisite degree of national industrialisation and abandonment of the ideologically motivated policies of non-intervention in industrial enterprises with commercial orientation.
- (b) A shift of policy towards balanced large scale state investment in industry, infrastructure, the traditional sector and large projects with a view to redressing the debt crisis, improving export performance, meeting domestic needs and acquiring technology — essentially the ques-

tion of planning and broad basing the economic functions of the state.

- (c) Specifically, in consequence of those changes, a more labour incentive, less foreign assistance dependent and decentralised — democratised approach to downstream irrigation, land development and settlement in the remainder of the Mahaweli programme.

## V. LAND DEVELOPMENT AND ELECTRIC POWER

Any shift in downstream development towards a more labour intensive, less foreign currency dependent technology raises most dramatically not the issue of technology per-se nor that of more problematic management, rather that of popular participation. Mobilisation of a popular mass base for tasks such as land clearing, irrigation extension at the small-end, irrigation development and final settlement is a technologically flexible modus. Organisation can be flexibly matched to a range of technology levels which in turn will be determined by what technology can be procured with the permissible level of foreign resource use. Experience elsewhere has shown that unrealistic extremes of the notion of self-reliance are retrogressive but the notion of a degree of self-reliance is essential to such mobilisation.

However, this calls for fundamental national organisational reformulations and the engendering of the necessary ideological motivation. For example the creation of collective labour units which can clear and develop a land section, raise infrastructure and subsequently settle on the land requires, a new approach to labour



organisation. The distribution and management of Mahaweli water, within the scheme of things envisaged here, requires the co-operation of centralised and local (or possibly three levels) of activity and a corresponding devolution of power and democratisation of procedures. It should be mentioned in passing that what is envisaged here has little to do with simple village self-help schemes or the restoration of traditional customs.

It is doubtful if these ideas can be translated into practical form without a major break with the prevailing get-rich quick free market ideology. Without a major revision of mass ideology and without the active involvement and participation of the national political leadership in these ideological mutations the mass enthusiasm necessary to carry through this programme cannot be evoked. On the contrary, serious social conflicts between interest groups, including on the one side contractors looking for additional construction projects and their patrons and grass roots peoples organisations on the other, are likely.

This change of strategy may to some degree slow down the progress rate in some of the phases of down stream development and settlement, but in a context where official estimates now speak of a mere 22,000 acres of new land coming under the plough each year and of a decade long implementation period nothing is really lost and a great deal is gained. Already expensive structures are in place and though their power generation capacity can be tapped, their agricultural potential remains underutilised. Capital intensive expenditure on the large canals and waterways merely augment this idle capacity until the decade long land settlement process reaches fruition. The removal of this dysynchrony by the organisational and technological shifts suggested above will release critical funds for industrialisation without adversely

affecting the actual, modest cultivation expansion targets.

That the Planning Ministry is turning a deaf ear to new project proposals for reason of debt-service and counterpart funding difficulties, needs repetition at this point. Whether funding pressure released in this way will be used for state supported industrialisation is a larger question to which attention has already been drawn.

Returning to the question of dysynchrony between AMP component projects, the deferment in garnering returns to investment and the previous analysis that a particular version of Mahaweli development flowed from a combination of economic and strategic-political reasons, raises the question of whether a different sequencing of headworks and downstream developments would have been more desirable. In the light of the discussion up to this point it would be difficult to refute the view that instead of taking three major headworks in hand simultaneously and following up on the heels of this with the fourth, a more staggered ordering of headworks and land settlement (the total number of families settled outside system H so far is only about 16,000) would have resulted in greater benefits.

To sustain this view, however, the urgency of the demand for hydrogenerated electric energy would also have to be taken into account. This turns the discussion to the thorny issue of Kotmale which certainly was the most suitable candidate for rephasing.

The hydro energy capability of the CRB system without including any of the AMP projects, which came on line in 1984-86 is about 1500 GWH — actual hydro generation in 1983, a lean year, was 1220 GWH. In the same year thermal energy to the tune of 900 GWH was generated at opportunity costs in excess of a billion rupees. The previous

four years was a similar period of chronic shortage and the total thermal generation 1980-84 inclusive has been just over 2000 GWH at a cost in excess of Rs. 3 billion. The appearance in quick succession in late 1984 — early 1985 of AMP hydro generation sources made possible the curtailment of gas turbine and other thermal energy and the release of suppressed demand. However this temporary surge of excess capacity — no large scale system augmentation will now be needed before 1989 — could have been profitably traded for an alternative which is more reliable and the first units of which could have come on line about two years earlier.

Kotmale was always known to have been a problem site due to adverse geological features. After long delays in contract award, investigation by expert panels, last minute design modifications to relocate the dam position, scaling down of the headworks by 30 meters after construction commenced and cost escalation from a June 1979 estimate of Rs. 5.6 billion to a current Rs. 8.8 and still climbing, the power plant was commissioned in 1985 only to be taken out of service again. The several problems that have been experienced at this site cannot be treated as unforeseeable bad luck that could occur on any major construction project however well planned. A reasonable charge of excessive haste can be laid.

A considerable amount of preparatory work had been done on the Samunulaweewa project long before work commenced on Kotmale designs. There is every reason to believe that Samunulaweewa generation could have been on the bus-hats two or more years before Kotmale finally made it, thus saving about Rs. 2 billion in thermal generation costs in the early 1980s. It is very difficult to understand why this mix of Mahaweli and non-Mahaweli projects was not pursued.



## VI ETHNIC CONSIDERATIONS

A discussion of the future of Mahaweli cannot be complete without some comments on its bearings on the ethnic conflict. That without a settlement the colonisation programme will be disrupted is a truism that needs little repetition. While similar remarks may be true of all economic sectors the factor of geographic coordinates invests the Mahaweli programme with a special urgency in this respect.

Two further extensions of this matter have to be given careful consideration. The first matter pertains to the question of devolution and decentralisation which has already been raised. Structures of management and agricultural rationalisation have to be worked into the political and constitutional settlements which will invest the Tamil people with administrative autonomy in their traditional homelands as a part of any foreseeable settlement. Decentralisation of power to the grass roots level is a broader democratic necessity in any case and the ethnic conflict merely underlines its urgency. However, in a complex modern society decentralisation has to go hand in hand with hierarchical mechanisms of coordination. That is to say questions of what crops are grown, when they are grown, technology, support and water management, require some up-down rationalisation at local, regional and national levels. Grass roots, regional and central organs of agricultural management and decision making have to be formed and their powers worked out. The geographical overlap of Mahaweli, especially the wider expanse covered by the UNDP Master Plan to which attention may turn again in later decades, increases the importance of these considerations.

The second matter pertains to the "sharing of waters" — that is the concept of sharing of benefits. The lessons of the conflict between Punjab and her neighbours regarding the usage

of the waters of the Sutlej and Beas rivers should not be lost to us. Given that the only realistic basis for the settlement of the ethnic conflict is the establishment of an autonomous Tamil region, whatever its name, and given that most of the headworks stand outside this region while a large part of the land to be developed is in or borders the Eastern province, while ultimate extension as indicated by the Master Plan includes the Northern Province, the sober discussion of the apportionment of irrigation and power benefits between the two constituents units of Sri Lanka is by no means premature. Agreement now reduces irritation and conflict later.

These remarks, like indeed the whole body of this paper, is based on the assumption that the secession of the Tamil people can be avoided. What do to about Mahaweli, or for that matter anything else, in the alternative eventuality, is something far outside the scope of this discussion.

## CONCLUSIONS

The paper has reviewed the present status of the Mahaweli Project within the total context of the nations economic and political situation. The correct perspectives for the next phase of activity can be reached only through such an approach.

This approach has prompted the following conclusions.

- (a) The State must broaden its economic role and abandon the policy of exclusive faith in private industry as the instrument for expanding the industrial base of the economy.
- (b) The debt-service ratio and the serious balance of payments situation, to which Mahaweli investments have contributed considerably, cannot be turned round except by a broadbased strategy.
- (c) Capital intensive, heavily foreign investment oriented,

contractor-lucrative technologies must be curtailed to the greatest extent possible in downstream development and a concerted effort made to utilise labour intensive alternatives to enthrone popular participation.

- (d) The reasons for the incorrect decisions made in respect of hydropower expansion must be fully investigated so that such misplanning can be avoided.
- (e) In recognition of the achievement of near self-sufficiency in paddy, urgent consideration must be given to the possibility of agricultural diversification in new land development.
- (f) The management of water, rationalisation of cropping and sharing of power and other benefits must be settled within the solution package of granting autonomy to the Tamil people as part of a lasting solution to the ethnic conflict.

The paper has used statistical material and other inputs from several sources, mainly those listed below. At times there has been uncertainty regarding some specific figures but it is believed none so serious as to vitiate the fundamental arguments developed here. In any case data has always been rounded to two or three significant figures so as not to detract from basic concepts.

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## Correspondence

### Sirima and Cory

Mervyn de Silva has perfected the art of tentatious, objective journalism. This skill is palpably manifest in his cleverly crafted piece on the 'Sri Lanka Crisis' (L.G. 15 July). With customary lucidity he provides perceptive insights into our present crisis, while subliminally plugging a political line in the hope — but perhaps not with the expectation — that it will work. He is, after all, a stern pragmatist.

Mervyn evidently attaches great significance to the emergence of what he (hopefully) calls the "SLFP led 6 party Front." At Campbell Park on 2 July the Front (without the DWC) held a rally. The rally was conducted by a presidium of leaders of five parties and it was addressed by Vickramabahu Karunaratne, K.P.

Silva, Dinesh Gunawardane, Vijaya Komaratunga and Sirima Bandaranaike. In the wake of the impressive rally, Mervyn has felt impelled to ask a question to which he keeps returning: "Can Sirima do an Aquino?"

Having attended the rally, I cannot resist the feeling that of the leaders who harangued the massive crowd, it is certainly not Sirima who can generate the motor force required for an Aquino-type movement. It's simply not her style of political leadership. Whether Sirima has the cunning to reap the fruits of such a movement, should it materialize, is, of course, another matter.

Mervyn de Silva has also informed us that:

- (1) SLFP chauvinism has softened markedly (hurrah!)
- (2) the SLFP has moved leftward (tactically!)
- (3) the UNP engineered the break up of the SLFP AND the Bandaranaike family (If so, frailty thy name is SLFP/Bandaranaike!)
- (4) the 6 party Front has paved the way for a family reunion ("Not bloody likely" in Eliza Dolittle's immortal words, judging from a picture depicting mother-in-law's response to prodigal son in law's conciliatory greeting, published on the front page of the Sunday Times of 5 July!).

Carlo Fonseka

### No Ivory towers or backroom frontiers

May I be permitted to make a small correction in the opening sentence of your otherwise discerning and prophetic analysis of our current crisis in L.G. of 15 July (13). It was the Duke of Edinburgh (and not the Duke of Gloucester) who declared the Peradeniya Campus "more open than usual" in May 1954. When he visited Ceylon with Queen Elizabeth. The faculties of Arts and Oriental Studies were firmly by then having been preceded by the Departments of Agriculture, Veterinary Science and law which had moved up earlier to inaugurate Sri Lanka's first residential university.

You are also absolutely right in pointing out that student involvement in politics began in the late nineteen-thirties and burgeoned during the dying years of British rule. Student activism and political consciousness have all along been part and parcel of undergraduate life, rising and falling in direct relation to the repressive and anti-democratic

nature of the national political process. Students agitate when they feel that their economic and social interests are threatened by elitist regimes. They are comparatively quiescent when governments favourable to their aspirations and political goals are in power. Since Independence the latter syndrome has rarely been in evidence — hence the past and present convulsions in our campuses. When there was one university intra-campus activism was a significant phenomenon, and was a barometer of extra-campus public politics. With seven universities the problems have escalated in quantitative measure, and the contemporary political contexts do not encourage the view that any de-escalation is possible or is likely to take place. It does not appear to the student that political stability is the revolt of representative government and democratic due process. The universities no longer represent ivory towers or backroom frontiers — they are an inalienable factor in

our national life, for better or for worse, and the sooner this fact is understood and appreciated the better for all concerned now and in the future.

H. A. I. Gounetilleke

#### JR's message . . .

(Continued from page 15)

to make all the difference — was taken successfully.

Mr. Jayewardene said his attitude to India had remained unwavering and unchanged over the years. "I am a lover of India, a friend of its people and a follower of its greatest son".

But basically both the interview and the off-the-record observations did seem to reflect a combination of realism, watchfulness and optimism — all of which hinged vitally on the imperative of implementing the Indo Sri Lanka agreement fully and without delay.

Courtesy The Hindu



## High Standards of Integrity . . . alas, not achieved!

On examination of information available to us we have come across an instance where Mr. G. V. P. Samarasinghe had used his eminence to subvert the Director of Civil Aviation. On being informed that Mr. K. Poobathy, Manager, Engineering, of Air Lanka had been appointed an Inspector of Aircraft in the Department of Civil Aviation, Mr. D. H. S. Athulathumudali, the then Acting Director of Civil Aviation, wrote to the Ministry of Defence pointing out that "it might be contrary in law in conflict with our international obligations, for Mr. Poobathy to issue Certificates of Airworthiness, and Acceptance Checks of aircraft operated by Air Lanka as long as he continued to be an employee of the airline". Accordingly he suggested to the Ministry to obtain a clarification on this matter from the Attorney-General. The response to this letter from Mr. G. V. P. Samarasinghe, as Acting Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, was: "Before I take this matter up with the Attorney-General as suggested by you, I shall be grateful if you will let me know within the next 48 hours whether you have in the Department of Civil Aviation any person qualified to issue a Certificate of Airworthiness for Boeing 707 and Boeing 737 aircraft." We find this course of action on the part of Mr. Samarasinghe to have had a demoralizing effect on the DCA and his staff, and his action certainly inhibited the DCA, intentionally or otherwise, in carrying out the normal regulatory functions on the airline.

2.2.13 We have commented on how the presence of Dr. Tilakaratna on the Board of Directors of Air Lanka acted as a deterrent to the exercise of controls by the Treasury over the Company's use of Government funds. We have

also come across instances in our examination of documents and in the evidence given before the Commission by Dr. Tilakaratna, which compel us to comment on his own effectiveness as a Director of Air Lanka as well as a responsible Government official. Dr. Tilakaratna was questioned by the Commission about the creditworthiness check carried out at his request on a Company called Aerospace Finance Ltd. by the governments' financial advisors S. G. Warburg & Co. In his evidence before us Dr. Tilakaratna stated that Warburg's advice was not conclusive. This is in direct contrast to the recommendation of S. G. Warburg & Co. in their telex dated 23 November 1984 which was sent to

S. G. Warburg & Co. on Aerospace Finance was tabled, and at which Dr. Tilakaratna was present, that this warning was not clearly recorded in the relevant Board Minute No. 84/23/1 which merely noted that the telex was self explanatory. We note with regret that when the issue of Aerospace Finance involvement with Air Lanka was noted by the Board on 30 January 1985 and furthermore when the contents of that Minute were reconsidered by the Board on 15 March 1985 subjugating the interests of Air Lanka to Aerospace Finance Limited, Dr. Tilakaratna appears to have remained silent. We have gone into the issues which relate to the transaction between Air Lanka and Aerospace Finance

### ● How GVP used his "eminence"

### ● How the advice of govt's financial advice was ignored

### ● D. C. Wijesekera, A. R. U. Jayawardena and 'the conflict of interests'

Dr. Tilakaratna and by him to Capt. S. R. Wikramanayake. We are concerned that when this document was forwarded to Capt. Wikramanayake, Dr. Tilakaratna in his covering letter dated 26 November 1984 did not draw the attention of the Chairman, Air Lanka to the critical view of S. G. Warburg's telex which clearly stated that "we would advise Air Lanka to treat any offer made by Aerospace Finance Limited with the utmost caution, particularly if their offer includes the provision of finance and even if they are offering to act a broker only in the provision of finance from a third party".

2.2.14 We find it a further matter of concern that at the Board Meeting held on 29 November 1984 where the telex from

Ltd. and these transactions are examined in detail in Chapter 5.

2.2.15 In another instance where Air Lanka's Board decided to appoint Mr. Anders Hansen as Assistant to the Chairman, we find that Dr. Tilakaratna's evidence to us and his conduct as a Director of Air Lanka appear to be at variance. Dr. Tilakaratna when he appeared before us on 18 December 1986 said that although he was not present at the Board Meeting which discussed the appointment of Mr. Hansen as Assistant to the Chairman of Air Lanka, he had told Capt. Wikramanayake and other Directors that he objected to this appointment as Mr. Hansen was in his opinion "unfit to hold this post". In fact he categori-

(Continued on page 31)





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## Sexual Politics and Ideology in "Dinanno Saha Paradinno"

Jayadeva Uyangoda

The next phase of sexual politics in DINANNO SAHA PARADINNO begins when Ruby finds—rather Ari helps her to find—employment in a hotel as a room attendant. By this time, Ari has brought in his mother to enable Ruby to go to work. What is really remarkable in the portrayal of Ruby's character is the constant emphasis on her 'insensitivity' to her husband's efforts to build up an economically viable family. This is, indeed, a part of a male-centric critique of women who do not conform with the conventional and therefore stereotypical image of a dutiful and conscientious wife. The film develops this critique to the extent of being grotesque (or rather grotesquely political) when Ruby is made to appear dazzled and blinded by the glitter of luxury which she finds in the hotel. Consider the scene in which Ruby enters the apartment occupied by the Englishman. While cleaning the room, she becomes dazzled by the luxuries available in that apartment, luxuries as yet inaccessible to herself. In the film, the camera moves slowly around the room as if to present Ruby's point of view, focusing on furniture, chandeliers, flowers and glassware etc. The point made in this scene is that Ruby's tastes and desires, or rather her materialistic fantasies, are beyond the means of her student husband. Then, the stage is set for another onslaught on the 'materialist girl'. We learn, now from the mother-in-law's point of view, that Ruby wastes all the money she earns on buying such 'unnecessary' items as new clothes, perfumes and glassware. We also learn that she does not give any financial support to her own family. This 'selfishness' of Ruby is further highlighted by her changed attitude to her own child. The

presence of the mother-in-law whose character, incidentally, placed in the world of traditional Sri Lankan values—a dimension shared by Ari too—is, thus, a rather clever device used by the film maker to sharpen a key argument presented in the film: Once a woman deviates, even temporarily, from the institutional framework of the nuclear family, she will go against 'tradition.' Or to put it in popular terms, once 'freedom' is granted, the woman is sure to 'misuse' it.

This twin concept of 'freedom' and 'misuse' in relation to women is a cardinal, though familiar, argument against the individual and economic assertion of the woman within a patriarchally-defined order of gender relations. The economic manifestation of male-supremacy in such gender relations has produced a set of 'norms' that are considered 'normal' and even 'natural.' The concept of woman's freedom, according to the 'normalization' within sexual politics, is inherently a limited one. Woman may find employment, and earn money, but this freedom to engage in economic activity has to be exercised within the rules laid down by 'tradition.' Once tradition is not adhered to, the authority of the patriarchy is not there to punish her. This logic of the "defiance of authority" and 'punishment' is quite neatly presented in the film by making Ruby commit the 'sin of adultery,' yet only to regret later. This is precisely the point in which the male-centric gender ideology of the film finds its ultimate actualization. And this occurs through subjecting Ruby to a belated realization of her own mistakes. After eloping with her secret lover, Ruby comes back home disillusioned and dejected. But things are no longer

the same. Ari has already left for Sri Lanka with his mother and daughter and the house is empty. What she notices as remaining in the house are some old clothes of her baby and of course, the cheap glassware that she herself had once bought. As a symbolic break with the past, and also as a gesture of self-imposed punishment, Ruby dumps all that glassware into a trashbag, leaves the now deserted home aimless and in her wondering finally stops by a stream. There, in a rather poignantly deserving finale to a saga of a woman who ran away from the norms of her socio-cultural order she sees a group of ducks swimming along the current equally aimless in their wandering.

Now DINANNO SAHA PARADINNO, with this episode of Ruby's misfortune, makes a fundamentally political point with regard to women, family and marriage. This is that a married woman has an independent identity of existence outside the ambience of the man-centered family. Even if she dares to move away from it, she has to ultimately come back even in symbolic terms. It is by making this point that this film succeeds in reproducing the patriarchal norms of gender relations. On this point, one may find a parallel between DINANNO SAHA PARADINNO and the American movie KRAMER VS. KRAMER made a few years ago. The subject matter of the latter is also the chequered fortunes of a family in a situation of the young wife leaving her household. The film became highly popular mainly because of its deeply sentimental appeal. Only a very few people initially questioned the assumption of the male-centric sexual politics of KRAMER VS. KRAMER. Then, the Berkeley-based film magazine JUMP CUT carried an essay in 1982 dissecting the male ideology of this film, pointing out that the entire film gravitates around the thesis that the woman's place is located essentially and primarily within the nuclear family as defined

(Continued on page 29)



# Sinhala drama — the problems of a translator

Bernadage Sipurigeya: *Some Comments on Translation and Adaptation*

Ranjini Obeyesekere

In attempting to 'transfer' a play from one language to another the translator or 'mediator' has to make one of three choices.

- To adapt the original work; i.e. change both the content and context in order to allow the work to slip easily and naturally into the world familiar to the audience.
- To transcreate the original; i.e. to translate the work making certain changes and departures in order to convey better what the translator believes to be the meaning or 'essence' of the original.
- To translate the play as closely as possible to the original text, keeping the foreign context, imagery, and references; to convey both the context and the content of the original work.

None of these approaches is totally satisfactory. Something is always lost in the transference. However since for most of us, our only access to other linguistic worlds and works is through our own language, such transference must necessarily be attempted. Any or all of the three methods can be used. The choice often depends on the nature of the original work but even more on what the intention of the translator is or what aspects of the original he/she is trying to convey.

I first translated Lorca's *The House of Bernarda Alba* in the sixties. At the time there were many successful adaptations of foreign plays on the Sinhala stage. There were also some excellent 'transcreations'. I decided to experiment with a translation — not an adaptation or a transcreation — because I wished to test Sinhala audience responses to a foreign play, translated and performed as a foreign play — as say a Chekhov or an Ibsen is rendered in English. It was an

attempt to convey both the content and the context of the original.

I chose this particular play for several reasons. I felt the central themes as well as the values and mores of Lorca's Andalusian world could translate easily into the Sri Lankan context. The issues and social pressures and tensions were no different. Again, unlike his earlier poetic dramas Lorca's *The House of Bernarda Alba* was entirely a 'dialogue' play in the realistic mode. One of the major problems of the Sinhala theatre as I saw it at the time, revolved around the question of a 'natural' language for the stage; i.e. a language that could be spoken without sounding stilted and literary or too colloquial and banal. My translation therefore was very much in the nature of an experiment directed specifically at this problem.

I have discussed elsewhere<sup>\*</sup> at length some of the problems of finding a language for Sinhala drama — problems that I consider peculiar to the Sinhala language because of its two distinct modes or forms of expression and the cultural conditioning that compartmentalizes their usage. In Sinhala, serious, scholarly, philosophical or literary discourse is traditionally expressed in the literary language which is very much the written form. The interactions of everyday life are in the colloquial mode. To reverse the usage is often to evoke a comic response.

In the case of fiction, both modes of expression can be used and the transitions from one to the other can easily and naturally be made. With modern drama, especially modern realistic plays, which communicate through dialogue — i.e. words

spoken on stage — such transitions are more difficult. The range and complexity of experience covered in modern dramatis is no less extensive than that covered in fiction or poetry. The resources of spoken Sinhala however, are much more limited, since it was traditionally not used to cover that range. Dramatists thus had to fall back on the literary language which, when, spoken on stage sounded affected and unnatural. Muge sundari, man obata, prema karami (Dearest, I love you) is an example of the kind of language used on stage and in films in the early days.

Various methods have been developed to cope with the problem. In traditional ritual performances the two modes of expression were combined through abrupt shifts the interpolation of comic interludes in colloquial speech, into the lyrical narrative with songs chants used for expression of more serious religious emotion or for poetic commentary. Such breaks and shifts, which Eddie Jayawardene also experimented with in his early plays and films though acceptable in the ritual context proved inadequate to serve the needs of more tightly structured modern dramas.

Dr. Sarachchandra, dissatisfied with this kind of disjunction in yoking the two modes, rejected the colloquial mode altogether (after several initial experiments with it) and in his most successful dramas moved into the poetic mode. For the colloquial elements in his plays he evolved a stylized, rhetorical form of utterance, formal yet different in that it was spoken or chanted, not sung as lyrics. The story teller in *Maname* and *Sinhabahu* are examples of the use of this kind of utterance.

Influenced by Dr. Sarachchandra but unwilling to confine themselves to poetic drama, later dramatists like Henry Jayawarna and Gunasena Galappathy experimented with a

<sup>\*</sup> Paper read at the Sri Lanka Commonwealth Literary Association in March 1987 and to appear in the *Sarachchandra Felicitation Volume* published by UNESCO, Sri Lanka.



combination of the two forms. They used the resources of the literary language through the lyric mode for expressing the more complex and subtler range of emotions and ideas, and the colloquial language for comedy or for everyday activities of daily life. The shifts and transitions between the two modes were by this time much more subtly handled than in the early experiments of Jayamanne, Hunuvataye Kathave (The Chalk Circle) and Mudu Pattu (Sons of the Sea) are good examples of this style.

The problem remains however for translations of modern realistic dramas that communicate entirely in dialogue. One cannot introduce lyrics or interpolations in the literary mode without seriously changing the original. In my translation of Lorca's *The House of Bernada Alba* I decided to meet the challenge by confining myself entirely to the colloquial register of Sinhala speech to see how far it would stretch to cover the range of emotion expressed in the original. I tried to capture the

'poetic' element not by using the literary language but by using the colloquial idioms and turns of peasant speech.

Clearly the reactions of the audience was divided. There were those who felt the experiment was a success; some said that for the first time they had experienced a Lorca play—not as an adaptation or a version but as the work of The Spanish dramatist. They liked the "earthy vitality" of the colloquial language used in the translation which they felt conveyed

the tensions and nuances of the play with an "exhilarating naturalism". Others, like the reviewer in the *Lanka Guardian* felt the language of the translation lacked the poetic power to convey the symbolism and nuances of Lorca's play; that a transcreation done in Marasad or Saaki might have been a better mode of transference. Brecht once remarked that "When a performance divides an audience, then something is right". Perhaps the best I can do with regard to Barnadage Sipirige is to make that Brechtian claim.

Today, 1987, with the enormous developments in the range and use of Sinhala, the gap between the literary and colloquial language is fast closing. Sinhala now has begun to acquire a flexibility and a range, and the resources of a vocabulary evolved by constant usage that now allows it greater subtlety of expression. The compartmentalized usage too is fast disappearing, though it still exists in certain areas. Dramatists too have acquired greater sensitivity to the limitations of the language and where it exists, have learned to make use of subtle, non-verbal modes of theatrical expression. Thus a play like Ranjit Dharmakirithi's *Modera Mola* can be a strictly dialogue play but express a complex range and shades of emotions and ideas through the colloquial language alone. With these developments in the language, soon selections from the repertoire of modern drama from all languages can perhaps be brought to Sinhala audiences not only as adaptations and transcreated of the originals but as successful translations.

## Sexual Politics. . .

(Continued from page 27)

by male standards. The young wife in *KRAMER VS. KRAMER* is, from the point of view of the male ideology, more fortunate than Ruby, because when she had no alternative but to come back home, she had her husband and son to accept her. However, the political argument of the film still remained intact: woman can find solace only within the patriarchal family. *DINANNO SAHA PARADINNO* makes the same argument in a more dramatic manner. When Ruby comes back, the family has already gone back to Sri Lanka. And the family that left united consists of the mother, son and daughter. Aside from the Freudian implications of this unity, what the film says is that despite the partial disintegration, the institute of family, with its patriarchal rules, can and should exist. Or you may go against the standards, but you are sure to regret it later!

My analysis has so far been confined to an explication of

male ideology and sexual politics as represented in the conflict between the husband and the wife in the film.

Now, let me restate the above discussion in theoretical terms. The entire film—its characters, conflict, arguments and statements—is constituted within the framework of patriarchal discourse. The male-centric family is the central signifier in this discourse that, to being with creates a network of meanings, and then provides a logic to that network. The patriarchal discourse, we might note, is anchored in patriarchal power which demarcates distinctly separate and hierarchically-ordained domains for the 'empowered' (man) and the 'disempowered' (woman). Yet, male-female interactions in any given social and cultural situation might tend to generate conflict and tension between the two domains precisely on the question of power. The problem of modes of representation, whether artistic or just academic, is that unless approached from a perspective of critical

interpretation, the work itself may become a means of legitimization, reimposition and further normalization of the existing problematic of power. This, I think, is the case with *DINANNO SAHA PARADINNO* when it fails, or rather disregards, to present that critical hermeneutic element within its aesthetic text.

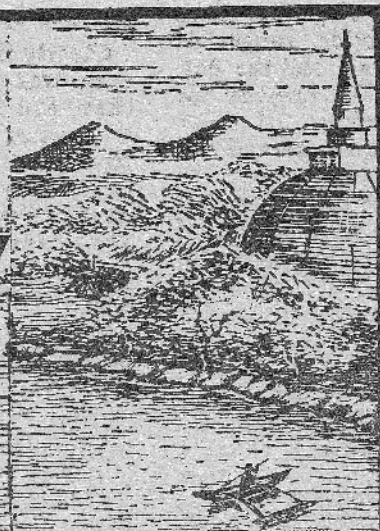
The critical element could have very well been introduced to the film, still within the architecture of the film itself. It could have been deployed to question the assumptions of the seemingly 'normal' or 'authentic' conflict within the household. But the cultural and symbolic codes that govern the logic of events as created and depicted in the film are so orthodox that no critical interpretation of gender and family relations is even indirectly suggested. So rigid and unquestionably accepted are those cultural and symbolic codes that Ruby's character is not allowed to present itself from its own perspective at all.

(Concluded)



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# The Name of the Rose

A Discussion of the Novel & the Film

Radhika Coomaraswamy

## Asian Reality

But, in retrospect, I realize that my enjoyment of the film had less to do with its relation to the text of *The Name of the Rose* and more to do with its resemblance to certain aspects of third world reality which have troubled me for many years. Firstly, I identified with the populist imagery of the film. It evoked within me the debate on populism in our societies; the attempts of many of our political leaders to fight age-old traditions with simplicity, from the Buddha to Mahatma Gandhi. Infact most South Asian novels and films and even our versions of history always

end with a romantic return to the pure state of innocence and goodness — very much like Annaud's film. But, this is as much self-deception as it is aspiration. It is often an escape; a refusal to come to terms with the complex reality of modern states and societies. Recently we have also seen the other side of populism or *pol potism* as it is called, the destructive quality of populism which is anticivilisational; where poverty and fanaticism combine in a self-righteous fury against everything and anything which threatens the ideology. So while Annaud's smiling Madonna, evokes the Gandhian spirit in all of us, I am convinced that this is only

half the picture, the ideal innocent self-image we have of ourselves denying the presence of darker forces. Finally, perhaps as a South Asian I felt completely at home with the reality of the debates on religious orthodoxy and its continuing struggle with heretical in roads. Recent South Asian writers such as Indian's Ashis Nandy, Sri Lanka's Gananath Obeyesekere and Pakistan's Akmal Houssein and Malaysia's Chandra Muzaffer have all pointed to the fact that there are strong heterodox of heretical traditions within Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism which can be mobilised for dissent, not only against the oppressive structures of religious orthodoxy but also to cultivate a sense of modern humanism and spiritual values. In Asia, a western type of secularism is still a difficult and alien goal. Therefore there are many who are beginning to feel that the inherent contradiction present

(Continued on page 32)

## High Standards . . .

(Continued from page 25)

cally stated that he was holding this same view even at the time. Yet we find it surprising that Dr. Tilakaratna had not been able to give effect to his view, even when Mr. Hansen was appointed to a higher post as Chief Marketing Officer of the Company at a later date nor had his dissent on this matter been recorded at any of the Board Meetings.

2.2.16 In other instances such as when the rentals to Mercantile Credit's premises as an office for Air Lanka had been discussed Dr. Tilakaratna had raised certain very valid issues but apparently had not followed them through.

2.2.17 Furthermore, a similar situation is seen where Dr. Tilakaratna has questioned at a Board Meeting the price paid for the second Boeing 747 purchased from Qantas Airline being higher than that paid for the sister aircraft already purchased from Qantas some months previously. However, Dr. Tilakaratna does not appear to have taken any

follow-up action on this at subsequent Board Meeting.

2.2.18 On 10 January 1986 Dr. Tilakaratna as Secretary to the Treasury wrote to captain Wikramanayake on the capital contributions expected by the airline in 1986. He notes, "Up to date the equity contributions made by the Government to Air Lanka Ltd. amount to Rs. 4,035 million inclusive of the interest free loan of Rs. 800 million granted in 1985 which was to be converted to equity." He further notes that "the terms and conditions on which the interest free loan was given to Air Lanka Ltd. have not been approved by the Government are not laid down in any document."

However, the Treasury had informed the General Manager, Finance and Planning on two separate occasions that this interest free loan was to be converted into equity contributions by the Government and provision for this had been made in the 1986 Draft Estimates. He further notes that Captain Wikramanayake was expected to inform the Treasury on the manner in which this

loan was to be repaid, but no action had been taken by the former Chairman on this matter.

2.2.19 As a consequence "the Treasury had no option but to debit the 1986 provision of Rs. 800 million borrowed as equity contribution to Air Lanka." Dr. Tilakaratna further notes that although the Simat Helliesen and Eichner report was submitted to the authorities no decision had been taken by the Government on the implementation of its recommendations, nor had there been a report by Air Lanka on these recommendations. He asked whether Captain Wikramanayake could assure the Treasury that the performance of the airline was in keeping with the projections made by the consultants or it was otherwise. Also, whether Air Lanka's performance was better or worse than the projections. He notes in his final paragraph that "the magnitude of the contributions sought by Air Lanka is so large that it would have serious repercussions on the 1986 Government Budget."

(To be Continued)



# Book Review

Marga Institute, **Transforming Rural Livelihoods**,  
New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Co. Ltd., 1986

This volume is a collection of essays which is an outcome of an Asian regional seminar on rural unemployment, sponsored by the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung and held at the Marga Institute, Colombo in March 1981. At the seminar, eight Asian countries were represented: namely, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Malaysia, Pakistan, Thailand, Philippines and Sri Lanka.

The theme of the seminar was rural poverty and strategies for its alleviation whilst the deliberations focussed on methods of minimising rural unemployment. It was argued that despite the implementation of numerous 'development' programmes over the past three decades, rural unemployment has continued to increase with a concomitant persistence of rural poverty.

Two major reasons were advanced in the essays to explain the general failure of 'development' programmes:

- (a) It had been expected that underdeveloped economies would follow a path of development which would mimic that of developed economies, an expectation which was not fulfilled due to a complex set of limiting factors.
- (b) Peasant settlement programmes had been projected as principal strategies for providing immediate employment as well as for creating growth centres which would evolve into dynamic communities. However, the capacity of peasant settlements to absorb labour was overestimated whilst little attention was paid to long-term employment needs, of the second and third generation of settlers. The assumption that long-term needs of settlements would be met through the development of settlements was frequently shown to be invalid because more often than not the settle-

ments failed to emerge as dynamic growth centres and indeed, in many instances, the settlers abandoned the settlements.

With respect to rural unemployment, the essays have critically evaluated the preference among policy makers to absorb labour predominantly in cultivation and the virtual exclusion of non-farm activities by them as areas of employment generation.

The essays have further examined the avenues and scope for utilising non-farm activities as means of raising labour absorption capacity. In this context, obstacles arising out of insufficient infrastructural facilities and constraints imposed by changing supply conditions of raw materials and energy have been analysed and alternative strategies explored.

S.

## The Name . . .

*(Continued from page 31)*

in the tension between orthodoxy and heresy in Asian religious and social experience is fertile ground to rekindle, or perhaps even recreate, a new and more profound humanism, born of South Asian reality.

### Conclusion

The Name of the Rose as Umberto's novel is I think a modern day Faustus. It contains everything — humour, humanity, terror, ecstasy both physical and metaphysical — (I am quoting at random from reviews). But Annaud's film does not attempt this kind of comprehensivity. It is an angry film, a crusade against human corruption and hypocrisy. And yet both remain partial images

of our realities, our experiences and our discourses. For Annaud there is a comprehensive truth that does exist — a truth that can be found and lived, but it is rooted in rebellion. For Eco, on the other hand there are only temporary truths, temporary Gods and temporary demons. But, this transiency should not prevent one from struggling against hypocrisy and brutality when and wherever one finds it. The older I get the more I agree with Eco and perhaps that is why the novel has such an enormous appeal for me. To end this presentation I will read Eco's last words in the novel as they appear in *The Name of the Rose*. Despite the Christian focus of the book, I think we Hindus and Buddhists will easily identify with the imagery he evokes.

"All I can do now is be silent. Soon I shall be joined with

*The Beginning*, and I no longer believe that it is the God of glory of whom the Abbots of my order spoke, or of joy as the Minorities believed in those days, perhaps not even of piety. I shall soon enter this broad desert perfectly level and boundless where the truly pious heart succumbs in bliss. I shall sink into the divine shadow, in a dumb silence and in ineffectual union, and in this sinking equality, all inequality shall be lost and in that abyss my spirit will lose itself and will not know the equal or the unequal or anything else; and all differences shall be forgotten. I shall fall into the silent uninhabited divinity where there is no word and no image. It is cold in the scriptorium, my thumb aches. I leave this manuscript. I do not know for whom, I no longer know, what it is about.

**(Concluded)**





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