

● I.P.K.F. — an emerging issue in TAMIL NADU, INDIAN politics ●

**LANKA**

# **GUARDIAN**

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## **Death of a Superstar**



## **Which way for the U.S.A. ?**

**THE LIBERAL-DEMOCRATIC STATE: Does Lanka qualify ?**

— S. Sathananthan

**How an island society disintegrates — Steven Weisman**

## **THE VIJAY PHENOMENON:**

**Reggie Siriwardena Hector Abhayavardhana Jayadeva**

**Tilak Gunawardena Mervyn de Silva**

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# TRENDS

## HUMAN RIGHTS, OPPOSITION UNITES

It was a rare event, and potentially unique. Tamil and Muslim Congressmen, the Senanayakist E.L.F.P. the pro S.L.F.P., upper bracket Liberals at a meeting sponsored by the strongly pro-Sinhala-Buddhist M.E.P., with the S.L.F.P. and the Communists promising to attend the next meeting on Feb. 29. At a time when the Opposition cannot unite on anything, not even on the need to oppose the UNP government, this was a bow-wow that deserved more prominence as 'news'.

What brought them together? Adversity of course. With the striking exception of the late Mr. Sarath Muzetuwegama the CP MP for Kalawana, 'Human Rights' was an issue best left for international agencies, like Amnesty Int. and other foreign busybodies. There was a 'war' and 'terrorism' in the North and East, and there may be some 'excesses' but nothing really to shout about. Why, anyway, were these H.R. groups always championing 'minorities'?

The MEP Leader, Mr. Dinesh Gunawardena, MP took the initiative. He summoned recognised Opposition Parties to a conference to discuss "how they could work together to prevent the increasing suppression and steadily deteriorating human rights".

Better late than never, this extraordinary awakening to the commonplace fact that 'Human Rights' was a human concern that transcended ethnic and other differences.

## NO CONTROLS

Was the 'open economy' an open invitation also for ministries, government departments and state corporations to go on the wildest spending spree in the Island's history? The Attorney-General has listed as many as 8 causes for the 'gap' between government's "plans" and its "performance". The language is necessarily technical. There is not a trace of shock or indignation. Nonetheless the picture presented is of massive mismanagement, total disregard for the simplest rules of financial control and accountability, and a pirate's attitude to the taxpayer's money.

Along the strictures passed by the Auditor-General are "no financial planning and control", "no effective system of central control" "absence of adequate checks and balances" "non-compliance by some corporations of Cabinet directives and treasury directives" "non-settlement of advances"

"misappropriation of cash" and "the improper allocation of funds".

It is difficult not to conclude from the A.G.'s report, despite its sanitised idiom, that they were all in it for the loot.

## NO TAKERS?

The purpose of terrorism is to terrorise. It is in this light perhaps that one should read a front page item in the ISLAND. The report said the post left vacant by the murder of Supt. Terence Perera (posthumously promoted D.I.G.) has not been filled as yet. Mr. Perera who was head of the Counter-Subversive Division (CSD) was gunned down by "southern subversives" according to the Police, who have since accused the same group of killing UNP Chairman Harsha Abeywardena. A D.I.G. is now supervising Mr. Perera's unit.

The report says that an appointment will be made soon.

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# BRUTAL BLOW AT BAPTISM

Mervyn de Silva

The motor-cycle assassin who gunned down Vijaya Kumaratunge, the super-star son-in-law of Mrs. Bandaranaike may have killed more than the heart-throb of the Sri Lankan screen. They may have snuffed out the flickering hopes of Sri Lanka's non-communal Left movement to become a revitalised and credible 'Third Force' in the island's increasingly polarised politics, dominated by the ethnic issue and Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord.

The new injection of vitality come from a single Vijaya — while 'unity' (albeit in adversity) broadened the base of the alliance, bringing together as it did old ideological foes and bitter enemies. But 'Vijay' was the key factor, and not only because of his charismatic personality. What is not so widely known is that he was an energetic, amazingly gifted organiser.

A super star was gone. Was another star born that late evening at Independence Square when half a million mourners gathered to say a final farewell? While UNP supporters were aghast and angry at the way the funeral was converted into a political occasion — that was both natural and in a sense inevitable — middle-class Sinhala opinion was shocked when Chandrika Kumaratunge, without playing the self-effacing grief-stricken and silent widow, made what the 500,000 present and a few million watching the 4 hour 'live' telecast, understood instantly as a defiant gesture of determination, the handclasp over her head a signal of unity and struggle. (See Cover)

The C.P. chief, K. P. Silva, made it clear that Chandrika would be the leader of the Alliance, which can only mean that she will be the Front's candidate at the Presidential polls. It was no secret that

'Vijay' had already been picked as the U.S.A.'s nominee. Both as Alliance 'leader' Presidential candidate, Chandrika would necessarily challenge and confront Mrs. Bandaranaike, SLFP leader and the obvious rival to President JR or his party nominee (the constitutional limitation of 2 elected terms can always be removed) and in a short-add-long term perspective, her brother Anura, the Opposition leader.

Sri Lankans who recognise the central role of family in everyday life and in other spheres of activity, politics not excluded, will appreciate that there is a serious problem here. Just as personality was a vital factor in Vijay's case, so is the personal factor in the case of Chandrika, a 40 year old widow with two kids. Of course, she is educated, and emancipated with a passion for politics. There is absolutely no question of quiet retirement or a steady drift into domesticity. She will remain party leader. How much time and energy however can she give to organisation, the organisation so essential to maintain the separate identity of the S.L.M.P. If she keeps this identity nominally alive while playing the assigned role of the Left's Ideal Presidential candidate — a change which may in fact become an interesting, institutional Sri Lankan adjustment to a Presidential politics entirely new to us — students of the fast-changing Sri Lankan political system will have an absorbing subject for closer attention and study from now on.

## URBAN YOUTH

Taking a somewhat different (generational) view on the 'politics' of the Vijay-Chandrika-Bandaranaike relationship in an article published in this journal. (L.G.

15/5/1984 "A Star Is Born" by Dayan Jayatilaka) the writer argued:

"Never has a party expanded so far so fast as the S.L.M.P. has done in a matter of months. The JVP after Wijeweera's release displayed a similar capacity. Indeed the SLMP demonstrates that the Bandaranaike insignia is not only unnecessary but may even be counter-productive for a new, expanding oppositional movement... the Mahajana Party a U.L.F. phenomenon has the momentum and sweep of the 1956 wave but the rallying cry this time is not cultural or linguistic. Rather it is socio-economic and political in the sense of anti-dictatorial, anti-fascist... and for the restoration of democracy... As the crowd moved past shouting 'Revolt', one recognised that while Vijaya and the leadership could afford to wait till 1989, these people cannot, caught as they are in the continuing and downward spiralling process of under-development and mass pauperization... The urban/semi-urban/coastal located/lumpen/petit-bourgeois youth support base of the Mahajana party may thus prove to be the main force, though not the leading force, of radical social upheaval in Sri Lanka".

This was almost 4 years ago. While the socio-economic crisis has been aggravated by the 'war', and stability through the restoration of democracy remains the core issue in the national crisis, has the 'Peace Accord', an event not anticipated, emerged as the dominant issue with the economic exacerbating the social tensions? Further, will the death of Vijay reduce the militant youth base of the U.S.A.? Will this support shift JVP-wards? At its birth, the new Left Alliance received a deadly blow.



# Democracy and the SLFP boycott

**M**ore than any other system of government, Democracy requires a ruler or ruling party to possess a certain degree of legitimacy. The exact degree, the irreducible minimum, or threshold of popular tolerance varies from country to country.

Thus, One forceful way of opposing a government that denies democracy is to expose its lack of legitimacy. Non-participation is a popular method.

General elections or Bust. That appears to be the thinking behind the S. L. F. P.'s decision to boycott the Provincial Council polls. It also boycotted the opening of Parliament on Thursday (25) and the M. E. P.'s leader, Mr. Dinesh Gunawardene, kept away too. The other party with a sole representative in the House — the CP — broke ranks and was present at the President's annual Address. Except on some specific issues (the government's use of the Emergency and PTA powers or an economic policy) this division in the Opposition is likely to remain a firm feature of the parliamentary scene until the next elections. It shows a UNP, over-represented in the House and almost monopolising it, confronted by an utterly under-represented SLFP, supported by the M. E. P., whereas the only C. P. M. P. opposes it on economic and broadly democratic issues while backing the government on the Peace Accord.

The SLFP will participate in the debate that follows but its boycott decision may be the beginning of a more general boycott, part of a wider strategy of non-participation. Whether the SLFP will be bold enough to

take that option and whether, if it does so, the party can force the UNP to yield are questions that are likely to crop up as 1988 advances.

In the meantime, last week's developments in the House were interesting in as much as they reflected an emerging extra-parliamentary pattern. It is a broadly speaking, a three sided contest for power by parties operating within the system — the UNP, the SLFP and its assorted allies, and the new/Socialist Alliance.

Outside this triangular contest at the Centre, is a major anti-systemic force, the JVP. On two critical questions its thinking and the SLFP's run on parallel lines — the demand for General Elections and anti-Accord. The JVP demands the removal of the ban on the party. The SLFP and its allies support it. But that's about all.

But the SLFP's boycott decision vis-a-vis the PC polls is just what the U. S. A. needed. If polls are held in April May, and they are not totally disrupted, then the U. S. A. will be the major non-UNP force in at least 7 P. C.'s. A future SLFP government will face 9 P. C.'s in which the ruling party has no representation.

A similar problem arises with regard to PC's in the North and East. Will conditions permit the holding of elections? Can the non-LTTE forces put up a credible alternative 'front' that can win the votes and then take administrative control of the north? What of the East?

While implementation of the Accord, stage-by-stage, is right now the focal concern, little thought is given to Tamil representation at the Centre. We seem to be long way off from that.

And as this comment is being written, one of the organiser's of the UNP candidate at the Honigams by-elections has been killed in fairly well-policed Keshwa.

The challenge what Sri Lanka faces is nothing less than the awe inspiring problem of repairing the foundations of representative government, foundations which have been cracking for a some time. The institutional structure, the pillars — from village council to parliament — have been collapsing. Democracy in Sri Lanka is beginning to look like one of our famous "ruined cities".

## SEMINAR

A seminar will be held on March 16th at the Centre for Society and Religion, Colombo.

The subjects are:

1. IPKF in Sri Lanka
2. The right of self-determination of the Tamil People

Among the speakers will be:

Vasudeva Nansykkera  
T. W. Rajaratnam  
(formerly of the Supreme Court)  
Patrick Fernando  
Surenendra Rupasingha  
N. Sathumugathasan



## TAMILNADU

## Can the Centre hold?

**A**t the national level, the Delhi's Sri Lanka policy has been included in the Opposition agenda in its current anti-Rajiv campaign but it is still issue of marginal importance. On the other hand, in Tamilnadu itself, where the political game is wide open, the Tamil problem has been thrust on to centre stage. Perhaps the most dramatic development was the fast organised by the DMK, and its leader, Mr. Karunanidhi, the Tamil nationalist firebrand. The fast was a protest against Delhi's "military action" against the Tamils in the north. While Mr. Karunanidhi led the fast in the Tamilnadu capital, other leading DMK figures organised similar protests in other districts. The Hindu reported demonstrations in Erode, Thanjavur, Vellore and Tiruchel.

Interestingly, the party's Secretary N. Veeraswamy, read out a letter from LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran thanking the DMK for its support for the Tamil cause. The fast, said the DMK boss, "was a demonstration of the anguish of the Tamil people". The Hindu reported:

"The DMK President Mr. Karunanidhi said his party would fight to the last for the cause of the Sri Lankan Tamils and charged the Prime Minister, Mr. Gandhi with standing on his 'ego' despite the LTTE leader Mr. Prabhakaran's announcement that he was prepared for talks with the Government of India. From Oct. 10, the Indian army which was sent to Sri Lanka to guard peace, was annihilating the Tamils and the IPKF was doing it at the behest of Rajiv Gandhi who received instructions from Sri Lanka President J. R. Jayewardene."

The new Governor of Tamilnadu, Dr. P. C. Alexander has promised polls in Tamilnadu, now under Presidential rule, as soon as possi-

ble. No sooner was this announcement made, four Opposition parties — Lok Dal (A), Congress (S) and the Jan Morcha and the Janata party met to map out a common strategy for the Tamilnadu elections. Talking to pressmen,

Dr. Subramaniam Swamy said, the present indications were that the DMK would be the leading party among the contestants. "Our main purpose is to reduce the chances of the Congress (I) to the minimum and if that necessitates our joining hands with the DMK we may do that."

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi addressed his own party's MP's on the eve of the annual President's Address to the Indian Parliament. Sri Lanka figured in this speech too:

On Sri Lanka, the Prime Minister noted that the island's President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, had announced elections but there were a couple of promises yet to be fulfilled. He hoped these would be fulfilled before the elections. He pointed out that the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement was very significant for both countries but unfortunately some leaders in our country opposed it for their own personal politics. He congratulated the people of the country, and particularly the people of Tamil Nadu for the support extended to the agreement.

The Prime Minister highlighted the need for a strong Centre and exhorted his party men to strive for this objective.

The Opposition did not walk out when the President began his Address. But the opposition parties, despite sharp ideological and other differences, did discuss how best to attack the Gandhi government on its "its failures on Major Issues". Sri Lanka was among those issues.

More significant perhaps was the Opposition strategists' response to the confused situation in Tamilnadu, and the Sri Lanka issue. A MP from the AIADMK, a staunch Congress ally in the M.G.R. era, was invited for the Opposition's strategy talks. This report from the Hindu's Delhi correspondent throws light on the intricate manoeuvres.

The participants included the leaders of the Telugu Desam, Janata, Jan Morcha, Akali Dal (L), CPI, AGP, BJP, Congress (S), Lok Dal (B), Lok Dal (A), RSP, Forward Bloc and AIADMK (Janaki faction)

## AIADMK (Janaki) invited

It is for the first time that the AIADMK has been invited for the Opposition leaders meeting. The AIADMK, being an ally of the Congress (I) had not been invited earlier. Even now, the invitation was sent to Mr. Aladi Aruna, leader of the AIADMK group in the Rajya Sabha and not to Mr. Kolsandaivelu, leader of the AIADMK Parliamentary Party. The reason is not far to seek. Mr. Aruna belongs to the Janaki faction, while Mr. Kolsandaivelu belongs to the Jayalalitha group. After the recent developments in Tamil Nadu, the Janaki Ramachandran faction has become a strong critic of the Congress (I) whereas the Jayalalitha group has come closer to the Congress (I). It was in the light of this, that Mr. Aruna was invited to the Opposition leaders' meeting today. Mr. Aruna's acceptance of the invitation and his participation at the meeting indicates that his group will sail with the Opposition in both Houses of Parliament. So far, the AIADMK members had never joined the Opposition in any walkout or demonstration, even though on some issues, like language and Sri Lanka, they were critical of the Central Government.



The Congress (I) meanwhile has appointed Mr. G. K. Mooppanar as its President. He told the press:

The new TNCC (I) President, Mr. G. Karuppalai Mooppanar, today promised to unfold a programme on behalf of the Congress (I) which would be a blueprint for building a modern and prosperous Tamil Nadu.

On the Sri Lankan Tamils issue, he said despite all the Opposition propaganda, the people of Tamil Nadu supported India's role in implementing the agreement. "I think even the Opposition has now switched over to demanding the full implementation of the agreement".

Ties between the Jayalalitha faction and the Congress (I) were greatly strengthened after a recent meeting in Delhi between the Indian Prime Minister and Ms. Jayalalitha, the press reported.

The AIADMK led by Ms Jayalalitha and the Congress (I) will work out a mechanism for consolidating their mutual ties.

According to Ms Jayalalitha, this was agreed to at the meeting she had with the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, in Delhi.

"I reaffirmed my party's firm and total commitment to MGR's ideologies and also assured that there would be no change in the political functioning of the AIADMK and its cooperation with the Congress," she said.

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi promised her that the Congress (I) would continue to actively cooperate with the AIADMK in its endeavour to uphold the policies and programmes of M. G. Ramaswamy, she said. The Prime Minister had also told her that consolidating the nation's unity and integrity and defending democracy, secularism and socialism were the first article of faith of the Congress (I) MGR had accepted these ideals and this

had cemented the close understanding between the two parties, Ms. Jayalalitha said.

### Indian left views

During the visit to Colombo for the inauguration of the United Socialist Alliance, the CPI (M) and CPI leaders spoke to the press and to politicians here. In the light of closer ties between the Indian Left and the lately united Sri Lankan movement, these comments of Mr. Surjeet Singh, the Punjab CPI (M) stalwart are interesting. The P.T.I. report from Colombo:-

### IPKF must remain for Tamils' safety: Surjeet

The Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) should remain in Sri Lanka so long as the Tamils in the Northern and Eastern provinces consider it necessary for their safety, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet said here today.

Mr. Surjeet, who is here to attend the funeral of film star turned politician Vijaya Kumaraswamy, said the continued presence or withdrawal of the IPKF from the island should be based on what the Tamils wanted and not on the demands of the extremist sections of the Tamil community.

There was no alternative to continued presence of the IPKF in the island for the time being as their withdrawal could result in the massacre of Tamils, he said. Those in India, who were demanding the withdrawal, should bear this in mind.

Mr. Surjeet however hastened to add that the CPI(M) did not support military intervention anywhere.

It had supported the Indo Sri Lanka accord because but for the accord, the Sinhalese and Tamil chauvinists, encouraged by imperi-

alist and reactionary forces would have come to the forefront in the island. Even now these forces were encouraging the Tamil militants to scuttle the accord, he said.

**Peace, the objective:** The Marxist leader expressed satisfaction with the way the IPKF had conducted the recent search operations in the eastern Batticaloa district, where the loss of lives and property was minimum. The Indian army's job should be to restore peace and normality in these areas and not to suppress the Tamil population, he said.

Mr. Surjeet regretted that even leaders considered rational, like Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, were opposing the accord merely for temporary gains at the polls at the cost of long-term national interests.

**Positive factor:** Mr. Surjeet said the most positive element in the Sri Lanka scenario was the emergence of a United Socialist alliance composed of four left parties, bypassing the traditional leadership. Vijaya Kumaraswamy symbolised the spirit of this alliance. His killing was the direct result of the growing popularity of the forces that desired peace in the island, history showed that when the course of events was sought to be changed by terrorism, the people rose up against it, he said.

Mr. Surjeet said the outlawed Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP) had sent a delegation to India in May last year to meet the CPI(M) leaders.

But the talks did not continue for more than 15 minutes, because we found that they were not on the right path. I told them that their attitude was not correct, it is anti-democratic and that we can't support.

(P. T. I.)



# Vijaya dared to speak out

Reggie Siriwardena

Even When Vijaya Kumaranatunga was a very young and still immature actor, the first impression one had of him on the screen was his extraordinary charm. It was this quality, apart from his outstanding good looks, that gave him his immense popularity from the inception of his screen career. However, when one met him, it was evident that the charm was not just a surface quality but the outward expression of personality and character — of a warm, sensitive and humane personality. People responded to this even when they disagreed with his political ideas because the transparent honesty and idealism of the man could not but command their respect.

I recall that when Vijaya first entered politics, many intellectuals tended to depreciate him because he was not an intellectual himself. However, they were soon compelled to grant him a grudging respect because his forthrightness and courage were unquestionable. At a time when many more senior politicians hesitated to take public positions on the ethnic problem

because of fear of unpopularity, Vijaya dared to speak out. Vijaya came from a predominantly Sinhala-educated context; his formative background was remote from the sophisticated liberal or Marxist theories which Western-educated intellectuals in Sri Lanka have acquired from their education. Vijaya came to socialism rather through experience and intuitive sympathy with the downtrodden than through theory, and this was, I think, part of his strength. He incarnated that humanism, generosity and compassion which are the better part of the Sinhala tradition and which in recent times have tragically been submerged by political chauvinism.

In the stunned incredulity with which many people received the news of Vijaya's murder, there was a refusal to believe that anybody would want to kill a man like him. However, that very disparity between the character of the victim and the brutality of the act is a measure of the political intolerance and fanaticism in which our country has been plunged. The mass expression of shock and grief which

followed his death was a sign not only of the affection in which the people held him but also of their horror of the act. It is true that unfortunately popular memories are sometimes short. But if, as I hope in this case, the deep revulsion against violence engendered by Vijaya's death is more lasting, if it grows into a reaction not only against the use of terror as a political weapon but also against the climate of ethnic chauvinism and intolerance that has engendered it, then Vijaya will not have died in vain.

## GANDHI'S MESSAGE

The Indian Prime Minister sent this message to Chandrika Kumaranatunga

I was shocked and saddened by the dastardly murder of your husband Mr. Vijaya Kumaranatunga. Besides being a renowned and creative artist, he was a most courageous and dynamic political leader. In the current atmosphere of communal hatreds which threatens the very unity and integrity of your country, Vijaya's enlightened views and unflinching efforts to bridge the divide were rare and valuable qualities.

We remember his courageous journeys to Madras and Jaffna in search of communal peace and his staunch and unflinching support to the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. His recent contribution to the forging of an alliance between progressive Sinhala and Tamil parties was a step in the same direction.

A dynamic career has been cut short by the assassin's bullets. Sonia joins me in conveying to you and your family our most heartfelt condolences.

## Vijaya

*Sorrow is not what you by your violent death evoke,  
It is outrage, that be degrees crept upon us  
And now come to a climax We sit back helplessly  
And trace the long train of life destroyed  
Day after day, till we had blocked ourselves insensitive  
Against further assaults on our hardening conscience.  
If by the gun it had not been already blasted dead  
Extermination in their parlance, and your's has a meaning  
More potent in what it suggests about our part,  
Our immediate shackled past, and our surrendered present,  
Which we hesitated to recognise, and now we drift aimless  
And watch ourselves succumb to a thirst for blood  
Which some like you have risked for our dignity and peace.*

— Tilak. A. Gunawardhana.



# Vijaya led the first SLFP breakaway to the Left

Hector Abhayavardhana

**V**ijaya Kumaranatunga has been for several years the most popular among film actors in the country. But he never belonged to the establishment. He owed his popularity to his personality and the directness and ease with which he identified himself with his audiences. As for the establishment, he was invariably ranged against it.

When he contested a parliamentary constituency for the first time, it was at Katana in 1977 when the odds were heavy against an SLFP victory. It is noteworthy that this was not his first essay in political activity. During his teens he had been motivated to work with LSSP youth in Katana, where the name of the late Dr. Hector Fernando had radical associations.

Vijaya was defeated in the 1977 elections. But that only brought him more wholeheartedly into political action. He soon became

one of the principal figures in the internal politics of the SLFP — first, in defence of Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike against her Right-wing assailants, and then against the compromise she patched up with the latter. At the Presidential election of 1981 Vijaya was the chief organiser of the campaign that, despite many handicaps, took the late Hector Kobbekaduwa very near victory.

This opened a period of travail and harassment, including deten-

tion as a "Naxalite", which might have broken many others. Vijaya Kumaranatunga lived through all of it until, with his wife Chandrika, he led the first breakaway to the Left in the history of the SLFP. All previous SLFP breakaways, if it is significant, had been to the Right, in the direction of the UNP. In fashioning a political formation committed to a Socialist programme, out of the body of the SLFP, Vijaya created history and established his credentials as a genuine Left political leader.

## Dixit bares North-South arms link

**A**rms smuggled via Sri Lanka's west coast have gone into the hands of both the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP).

This startling revelation was made by India's High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, Jyotindra Nath Dixit, in an exclusive interview with WEEKEND.

He said the arms caches have been brought in from Singapore and smuggled in with the assistance of "interested elements in both Sri Lanka and abroad". He declined to identify them but added that the Government of Sri Lanka has been apprised of the developments.

A Sri Lankan intelligence source confirmed they were in receipt of "valuable information" which confirmed their own findings but declined to elaborate. The source said detailed inquiries were still continuing.

Mr. Dixit said findings were made in the wake of the Indian Peace Keeping Forces military offensives in the north and east during October, November and December, last year. "We captured large caches of arms. Some were freshly imported from Singapore and landed in the east coast," he disclosed.

"This is the work of chaps who are interested in mayhem," Mr. Dixit said.

Asked how the JVP came into possession of these weapons Mr. Dixit revealed that they went through "interested channels". But he would not elaborate.

The Indian envoy said the findings led to the Indian Navy introducing additional patrols to guard coastal areas. This supplemented preventive measures taken on the ground by IPKF personnel," he added.

(Sun)

## SEMINAR

*Did you will this world within  
Crackling in time, apart  
All the neat theories  
So logical, and so smart  
The mathematical models do not hold  
They crumble slow to pass  
Into other thesis plausible but contrary  
And heads nod in safe and splendid isolation.  
The world recedes too, hunger grows  
Priests and peasants fall  
The paddies turn to sugar  
Defeating the agronomical arguments of previous Seminars  
And in the sugar fields the fighters go  
Toys trigger toys to unleash untold woe  
Ah, such was that seminars never know  
But behold. While fires billow  
(No ethnic industry this)  
There are those to take the sacrament  
Of torch on village roof.*

— U. Karunatilake



# A profile in courage

Jayadeva (Columnist, ISLAND)

"The people made me a star — no studio, no person, but the people did", Marilyn Monroe once asserted. Vijaya Kumaranatunga could have made the identical claim, perhaps with equal pride, and certainly with greater justification. Unlike the Hollywood's aspirants to stardom, he had no professional "imagemaking" crews to groom him, nobody to prepare him for the shining lights of the marquee. Nor did he always enjoy the kind of media backing required to "build up" an actor and keep him in the limelight in the broader fashion. On the contrary, the media establishment played fast and loose with him, using him, as the occasion demanded, either to shore up sagging circulations or to serve transparent political ends. There were also times when he was blacked out, when he did not even exist as an actor for those very segments of the information media that wept so copiously over his brutally mutilated remains. No, it was the people who made him a star and maintained him at the top of the popularity poll year after year despite the wayward (though not unpredictable) behaviour of newspapers, radio and television.

Now, why did the people so readily accord him this status? He was not, in the estimation of the critical fraternity, a notable performer on screen, though to my knowledge nobody called him a bad actor. But he had something rare and exceptional among actors — a special quality which allowed him to break free of the familiar typology of filmdom's heroes and touch the mass audience as few men had done before in this country. He did not slip smoothly into one conventional character type and stay comfortably within it. He was not, for example, the commonplace romantic lead celebrated in scores of song and dance routines. He

wasn't the "tough guy" either, hiding a golden hiding a golden heart beneath a muscular, rough-hewn exterior. He did not conform to the "saintly" mould of character beloved of female audiences. He possessed the physical attributes associated with these and other categories of hero known to Sinhala Cinema, and had no difficulty in fitting himself into all such conventional character matrices of the screen. But did not completely belong in any, for he had a personality that remained unquenched whatever role he played. And this personality cut across demarcations of character and resonated at a frequency that penetrated the assumed boundaries of fictional narrative. He became palpably real to the mass audience in a warm affectionate, endearing way. His essential kindness communicated itself through the mask of the dramatic persona. Universally, he was "Vijaya Ayya" everybody's kinsman who was always accessible, who could be reached and touched and, ultimately, depended upon. He was not just a celluloid image confined to the posed photograph or the cinematic frame, but an extraordinarily unassuming, buoyant man who effortlessly, unconsciously prevented the erection of walls between him and his public. In sum, he had an aura and a personal magnetism which were not limited to the artfully illuminated world of cinematic make believe. Unlike the average movie star who, minus the props and lights and make up turns out to be a rather colourless person in real life, he was a full man — a vibrant presence — under the naked sun.

## Essence

Such as I saw it was the essence of Vijaya Kumaranatunga, the film idol. He could have remained

the idol enclosing his inner drives and his social conscience within the guarded framework of the cinematic medium. Had he elected to do so he would in all probability have evolved into a symbolic leader. His impact on society in those circumstances would have depended largely, if not solely, upon his popular image as generated and sustained by the Sinhala film. How influential he would have been and how fulfilled, have now become matters which are only of narrow academic interest. But that he had choices before him — and tempting ones too — is a historical fact that the country cannot afford to forget. There was nothing to prevent him from pursuing a safe career in films, and building up his material fortunes in the process. He took another road — the one less travelled. He became a public man an "eventmaking" man in the full socio-political sense of the term. He wanted to enter "the stream of historical causation" and be an active instrument within it.

Players as politicians is a familiar theme in our part of the world. And several variations on it are embedded in the historical experience of our people. Vijaya Kumaranatunga however, made us aware of a new dimension of this largely predesigned encounter between politics and entertainment. He took up an unpopular cause — that is to say a cause which did not seem to have the support of the majority. And in doing so he went against convention. For no actor who values his popular base dares advocate socio-political stances which are not wholly acceptable to the majority. Historically speaking in most instances the policies and platforms that actors take up in the hustings are actually extensions of the ideas and values previously promoted by them through their films.



Tamilnadu eloquently illustrates the intimate (and even organic) connection that may develop between the main currents of politics and the thematic concerns of the stage and the screen. Indeed, there was a time in Tamilnadu when the distinctions between theatre and cinema on the one hand and active political campaigning on the other were altogether blurred. The very same rhetoric was heard in both places. The player on stage or screen thundered on behalf of Tamil identity and inveighed against the Sanskritic, Brahminical domination emanating from the North. He thundered in the same voice in the political arena. From the studio he went to the state legislature he did not have to change on the way.

The complete identity of interest that subsisted between politics and the thematic focus of mass entertainment in South India is foreign to us. On the whole, to our cinema has been less focussed less pointed on political cultural and linguistic issues.

Consequently the journey from studio outdoor platform has not been accomplished with the same facility as in South India. All the our stars do in everyday political terms is to come out at election time, and decorate the meetings with their presence. They function largely as side attractions and "crowd pullers". And for this service they are rewarded when the correct party comes into power. The risks involved in this enterprise are minimal.

Vijaya Kumaranatunga broke his "showbiz" pattern. He marched unambiguously into the danger zone in support of policies and causes that did not appear to harmonize with the perceptions of his mass audience. He may have been right — or he may have been wrong. I don't have enough political sophistication to pass judgment. But I am convinced that his was a true profile in courage. I therefore salute him.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### Is Sri Lanka Heading Towards a Multi-Party System

Ever since the system of proportional representation (PR) was introduced under the 1978 Republican Constitution political commentators have pointed out that this new system would definitely affect our party system. As the people did not have the chance so far to elect a new parliament under the PR, the impact of PR on the party system could not be assessed properly.

When Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP), a coalition under the leadership of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike swept to power in the 1956 general elections, political observers predicted that Sri Lanka was well on its way to a two party system, ending the one party dominance of the United National Party (UNP). But the development in the Party system later proved it was not so.

The tendency of polarisation of the Left Wing parties with the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and the Right Wing or minor parties with the UNP was quite evident since 1956. Just before the 1956 general elections, the SLFP under the leadership of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike not only formed a coalition comprising the SLFP, the Viplavakari Lanka Sama Samaja Party (VLSSP) of Philip Gunawardana and the Sinhala Basha Peramuna of W. Dahanayake, but also entered into a no-contest pact with the leading Marxist parties at that time the Lanka Sama Samaja party (LSSP) and the Communist party (CP). In 1964, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike formed a coalition government with the help of LSSP and after the 1965 general elections Dudley Senanayake formed a "National Government" with the help of the Federal party (FP), the Tamil congress (TC), the Ceylon workers Congress (CWC), the MEP of Philip Gunawardana Sri Lanka Freedom Socialist Party (SLFSP) of C.P. de Silva and the Jathika Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) of K.M.P. Rajaratne. In 1968 the SLFP, the LSSP and the CP formed a United Front on the basis of common programme which came to power with an overwhelming majority in 1970. Although the UNP gained a landslide victory in the 1977 general elections and

formed a government with 5/6 majority it included CWC as a junior partner and its leader S. Thondaman was made minister. The above tendency of forming coalition governments since 1956 has led to the political analysts to describe the party system in Sri Lanka from 1956 to 1977 as two-coalition party system.

With the announcement of 1988 as an election year by the government and recognition of four more political groups namely, the Liberal Party, Sri Lanka Muslim congress the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front, and the United Socialist Alliance as political parties by the Commissioner of Elections, the number of registered political parties in Sri Lanka has risen to eighteen. There is a possibility of some more groups applying for recognition as political parties.

The PR system introduced under the 1978 Constitution fixed the cut off point at 12.5% or 1/8. The cut off point means that any party or a group of independents which fails to get 12.5% of the total votes polled in an electoral district will be disqualified from the contest and votes received by such parties or groups would be deducted from the total number of votes. Such parties or groups will not get any seats in the Parliament. Many political parties have criticised this high cut-off point. As a result the government is now considering the possibility of reducing the cut off point from 12.5% to 2.5%. If the government decides so and brings an amendment it will help smaller parties to get at least a few seats in the Parliament.

PR has produced unstable or coalition governments in other countries. It generally encourages a multi-party system. Whereas the simple majority system (which prevailed in Sri Lanka upto 1977) encourages two-party system.

When we view the increase in the number of political parties in the context of government reducing the cut-off point, we can confidently say that Sri Lanka will have a multi-party system in the near future.

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(Dept. of Political Science Peradeniya)



## HUMAN RIGHTS

### Seminar on "Legal Services for the Rural Poor and other disadvantaged groups in South Asia"

**B. Sriskanthadas** *Attorney at-Law*

*(Represented "Lawyers For Human Rights and Development" Colombo at the Seminar)*

The tiny town of Rajpipla in the Indian State of Gujarat was a hive of activity recently with the holding of a Seminar on "Legal Services for the rural poor and other disadvantaged groups in South Asia" organised by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) and the Rajpipla Special Services Society.

Delegates from Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and various States of India attended the Seminar while there were observers from Thailand and Philippines.

The participants included judges, practising lawyers, law teachers, law students, sociologists, economists, political scientists in addition to members of grassroots non governmental organisations working for the welfare of the rural poor and other disadvantaged groups.

Mr. Amarsinh Chaudhary, Chief Minister of Gujarat, attended the inaugural session as the special guest. The inaugural session was chaired by former Chief Justice of India, Mr. Justice P. N. Bhagwati, who had been instrumental in making members of various grassroots organisations view legal aid in a different perspective, in contrast to the traditional way of looking at it. Justice Bhagwati in concluding his speech had a message, which was meant to be communicated through the delegates, to the organisations which were inclined to work for the benefit of the rural poor and disadvantaged in this region who are subjected to various forms of oppression, when he said: "The legal Service programme must be bold and radical in its strategy. Our social action groups have therefore to evolve strategies directed towards bringing about change in the social and economic structures which are responsible for the creation and perpetuation of poverty and denial of justice to the large masses of people."

Dr. Clarence J. Dias, President, International Center for Law in Development, New York, who spoke on "Problems faced and challenges before the legal resources groups in the region" pointed out how the last decade witnessed in South Asia a resurgence and maturing of the legal aid movement. He also explained how today the shift towards a service-oriented concept of 'Legal assistance' and self-reliance oriented concept of legal resources has taken shape. According to him the most serious

problem that legal resource groups face are in their relationship to government.

In dealing with the different ranges of governments attitude he referred to:-

- A) Repression, both through the use of draconian laws and through subtle use of detention, torture and extra-judicial executions.
- B) How most governments in South Asia use laws such as the official secrets act to cloak their activities in utter secrecy.
- C) How legal resource groups are confronted with governmental lawlessness.
- D) How social action groups have had to resist being co-opted by the very system they are challenging.

In identifying the cause for poverty in this part of the world he said that "impoverishment of a majority of the peoples of Asia has largely resulted from the feeding of the transnational hungers". Further he emphasised how important it is for the legal activists to work with and through other social action groups already in close contact with the grass-roots level in their endeavour to reach out to disadvantaged groups.

Speech by Dr. Clarence J. Dias and presentation of country studies by delegates from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka formed basis for an animated discussion on various aspect under review. Last three days of this five day seminar saw the delegates grouped into two Committees.

Committee one was entrusted with the task of identification of problems encountered by the rural poor and other disadvantaged groups and by legal resource groups who help the disadvantaged. In addition this committee was requested to map out the strategies to deal with these problems.

Committee two had to deal with Education programmes for the rural poor on their rights; training of para-legals; experience gained and strategies for the future; ways and means to stimulate new legal resource groups and the role of development organisations, lawyers, judges and university faculties of law and social sciences.



At the Plenary Session, chaired by Mr. D. J. Ravindran, Legal officer International Commission of Jurists, reports of committees were adopted with the necessary modifications.

## Certain salient problems identified at the seminar

### Identification of the Disadvantaged:

● In South Asia the disadvantaged include women, children, the aged and political prisoners. It was pointed out through its state processes the state had created additional classes of disadvantaged people, a condition arising out of inequitable allocation of natural resources and adherence to development plans and policies that benefit a few at the expense of the large majority of these disadvantaged groups. Cultural and social changes supported by the state have also led to the creation of disadvantaged groups.

● The disadvantaged groups in South Asia fall into following 4 sectors:-

- (i) The Bonded Sector:- e.g. of this sector the women.
- (ii) The Exploited Sector.
- (iii) The Suicide Sector, consisting of those categories of workmen who are employed in hazardous industries or occupations, that lead to a shortening of their life span, e.g. Employees of Union Carbide at Bhopal.
- (iv) The Genocide Sector: These are human beings which the state processes deem to be expendable, e.g. Tribals in Gujarat who are helping to build the Narmada Dam in India which will wipe out their livelihood and entire means of existence.

### Eight Techniques of State Repression Identified

- (i) The denial of state to build a common Nation from all the ethnic communities of the country and also by the State's violation of cultural rights.
- (ii) Through the State's control over Natural resources.
- (iii) Through exclusion or covertness. This happens where the disadvantaged group is not consulted at the initial stages of decision making.
- (iv) Through State controlled violence.

- (v) Through government lawlessness.
- (vi) Through bribery and co-optation.

### Eight Institutions of State Repression Identified

- (i) Institutions of Law and order which includes the Armed Forces, the Police, and paramilitary forces or vigilantes.
- (ii) The Bureaucracy or administrative system and this includes the political power bases at the local level.
- (iii) The judicial system and the legal system.
- (iv) The custodial system.
- (v) The professions, especially the legal profession.
- (vi) The legislature.
- (vii) The Print and Visual media.
- (viii) Local Elites.

Various recommendations were made with a view to achieve greater benefits to the disadvantaged groups of society. These include following:-

- (i) Creating legal awareness among the people.
- (ii) Training of para-legals.
- (iii) Using traditional Customary law to settle disputes in the rural areas which can be more expeditious and socially effective. In so doing it was pointed out this should not be permitted where one party enjoys definite local advantage over the other or where such traditional laws offend human rights principles.
- (iv) Measures to attract and involve more lawyers into legal service programmes.
- (v) Re-structuring of legal education curriculum.
- (vi) Urgency of the Judges to develop a more people oriented approach keeping in view the social economic realities of life in different countries of south Asia.
- (vii) Use of Public Interest litigation wisely, discreetly and creatively.
- (viii) Need for international and regional co-ordination.



# Nicaragua: The dynamics of change must prevail

FOREIGN  
NEWS

Carlos Fuentes

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Right after he awarded me the literary Order of Ruben Dario a few weeks ago, Daniel Ortega announced that he was inviting me and my friend, the novelist William Styron, along on his trip that night to the Central American presidents' meeting in San Jose, Costa Rica. Why were we going? To show that peace in Central America was concern of citizens, not only of governments. President Ortega would pick us up at 3 A.M.

The flight never took place. Nicaraguan intelligence said a missile attack by the contras on the president's plane was highly probable. So the bus that was to have taken us to the airport rolled south toward Costa Rica.

Along the way, Mr. Styron and I compared notes on our week's stay in Nicaragua. We had heard criticism from the right and the left. To the right, the Sandinists were Marxist Leninists; they were installing a totalitarian dictatorship with all the trappings — press censorship, harassment of political parties, religious persecution, vigilance committees. To the left, the Sandinists were tepid bourgeois reformists who respected the private sector and gave dollar incentives to exporters; the people were hungry but the businessmen were making more money than ever.

Mr. Fuentes, the Mexican novelist is Robert F. Kennedy professor of Latin American Studies at Harvard University. He contributed this comment to the Los Angeles Times.

"What have you got to say about Sandinist persecution of Marxism in Nicaragua?" a fiery-eyed young man with a tape recorder asked me after the award ceremony. The Sandinists were staring to see us as centrists in these tense political confrontations.

Were we simply witnessing the birth pangs of opposition politics in Nicaragua, where traditionally the only opposition has come out of the gun? Fourteen parties were breeding while I was there. The Sandinists poll less than the government party in Mexico does, but the opposition had yet to present a program of national action comparable to the government's.

Nicaragua was in the initial, affirmative, even violent stages of revolution. I was reminded of the Obregon and Calles regimes in Mexico between 1920 and 1928: fighting opposition from church and business, foreign capitalists and the United States, while promoting programs in education, land reform and infrastructure.

Mexico now faced greater internal violence. There were no firing squads in Nicaragua; it was far safer than El Salvador, Honduras or Guatemala. Nicaragua was suffering greater external violence than Mexico ever did.

The striking thing about Nicaragua was that it had a social agenda that had gone on in spite of the contra war and the destruction of lives, crops and buildings. We saw the new irrigation districts, the new dairy stations dotting central,

Nicaragua, the new schools. We also saw the mutilated kids in the hospitals, victims of the contras. We heard workers in co-ops and factories criticize government officials to their faces, protest against inflation and propose different models of organization.

Were we witnessing an extremely dynamic social transformation, stalled during a "hundred years of solitude" and now carrying along everyone, beyond everyone's political dogmas and traditional class distinctions?

Nicaragua was not perfect. But it was creating an infrastructure in spite of war; it was betting on the future in spite of the strong external draw toward the past. The Nicaraguan establishment and its U.S. sponsors had 150 years to do in Nicaragua what the Sandinists have achieved in nine years.

There was grumbling in Nicaragua, there was hardship, there were many mistakes being made, there were many authoritarian features derived from the state of emergency as well as from the classical Latin American war between tradition and modernization. But there was a national project as well, not a project for plunder, nor simple inertia, as in the past, and it seemed creative and ample enough to embrace a majority of Nicaraguans, and permit them, once the war was over, to oppose the regime while participating in the social dynamics.

(Continued on page 16)





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# Sri Lanka — A Nation Disintegrates

Steven R. Weisman

**O**n an island in a pristine lake near Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka, gunmen guard the sleek new Parliament building, which a terrorist bomb ripped through last August, wounding the Prime Minister and barely missing the President. Downtown, the scattered vacant lots and burned-out buildings are remnants of the riots of July 1983, when hundreds of Tamils were pulled from their homes and burned alive, or hacked to death with axes in the streets.

At the ancient capital of Anuradhapura, the sacred Bo tree—grown from a cutting of the tree under which Buddha achieved enlightenment—is scarred with bullet holes, left from a 1985 attack by Tamil separatists in which 150 Sinhalese died. Throughout Sri Lanka, one sees the saffron robes of Buddhist monks. Traditionally an emblem of peace and tolerance, they have become symbols of militancy and martyrdom—especially after 29 monks were dragged off a bus last June, gunned down by Tamil terrorists and left to die in the dirt.

Near the southern coast of Sri Lanka are blocks of drab concrete dormitories, a Sri Lankan Army camp in which Tamils—a Hindu minority in the country—are interned and, according to Amnesty International and Tamil spokesmen, regularly beaten, tortured and sexually assaulted. Further up the coast is the burned-out shell of a house owned by a local minister, now occupied by a platoon of Sri Lankan soldiers whose task is to subdue Sinhalese terrorists, members of the island's ethnic majority who oppose any accommodation with the Tamils.

In the north and east of Sri Lanka, Indian troops patrol in

Reproduced from  
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jeeps and trucks—part of a 20,000-man foreign army that has joined the war against the Tamil guerrillas. In the once-bustling trading city of Jaffna, shattered storefronts and hollowed-out houses testify to the bloody days of October, when the Indians laid siege to the city—managing to capture it only after losing more than 200 men.

In Jaffna and other northern towns are enormous posters of fallen guerrilla heroes, their guns pointed into the air. The latest martyrs are 12 Tamils who, after being captured by the Sri Lankan Army in September, swallowed the cyanide capsules that all guerrillas wear around their necks.

When Sri Lanka was still called Ceylon—the change was made in 1972—the name evoked an alluring paradise of misty hillside tea plantations and Buddhist monasteries, of pristine beaches and elephant sanctuaries. The country was led by one of the most civilized establishments in Asia, patrician heirs to a 2,500-year-old culture. As recently as the beginning of this decade, Sri Lanka was hailed as a model of economic progress and stability in the third world.

Now, after four years of bloody civil war, more than 7,000 Sri Lankans are dead, 500,000 have been routed from their homes and herded into refugee camps, and the island's economy is in ruins. Hopes were raised last summer, when India sent in its army to enforce an accord between Sri Lanka and India to end the war. But the Indian "peacekeeping" troops soon became caught up in their own war with the Tamils, the

very people they were meant to protect. Today, Indian troops continue to battle the Tamils in the north and east, while the Sri Lanka Army occupies the south.

In Sri Lanka, there is no such thing as original sin. As with Northern Ireland, the Middle East and other historic areas of conflict, every atrocity is justified as revenge for an earlier outrage. The cycle of revenge has no end because it seems to have had no beginning.

Still, Sri Lanka's disintegration reflects tensions found in many developing countries: the tension between economic development and economic equality, for example, and between a national commitment to democratic principles and an ethnic minority's assertion of its rights. Most lethal of all, perhaps, has been Sri Lanka's inability to balance its assertion of ethnic and religious pride with the ideals of pluralism and secularism.

It is nearly three years since I first visited Sri Lanka. The Tamil separatists who had been pushing for the establishment of an independent state in the Northern and Eastern provinces of the island—"Vamill Ealam," or "Tamil homeland"—were already waging a full-scale insurgency.

Nonetheless, the national authorities in Colombo insisted that on Feb. 4, 1985—the anniversary of independence from Britain—all public buildings raise the Sri Lankan national flag, an order that especially irked people in Tamil areas. In the east coast town of Batticaloa, a place of peaceful lagoons and rice paddies, four gunmen accosted the Government's chief local agent in his office and made off with a stack of Sri Lankan flags.

Steven R. Weisman is chief of The Times's Bureau in New Delhi.



Independence Day came, and the Government agent — a Tamil civil servant named Mariampillai Anthonimuthu — made his way to an empty soccer stadium, surrounded by security forces, and defiantly raised the flag. "We recognize we are potential targets," Anthonimuthu told me nervously at the time. "We get no protection. But still we do the job."

Last October, Anthonimuthu was driving in an Indian Army convoy when a precisely timed explosion demolished his car, killing him instantly.

Anthonimuthu was only the most recent moderate Tamil official to be assassinated by Tamil extremists, who accused him of collaborating with the enemy, Sinhalese extremists, who oppose any accommodation with the Tamils, also specialize in assassinating Sinhalese leaders, as demonstrated most spectacularly in the bomb attack on Parliament last August. Since President Junius Richard Jayewardene signed a peace accord with India in July, no less than 50 politicians in his ruling United National Party have been listed as murdered.

The image on the Sri Lankan flag raised by Anthonimuthu in that empty stadium nearly three years ago symbolizes the nation's problem. The flag is dominated by a roaring golden lion — the emblem of the Sinhalese majority. According to the most recent census, taken in 1981, 74 percent of Sri Lankans are Sinhalese, 18 percent are Tamil and 7 percent Muslim.

(To be continued)

## Nicaragua: The...

(Continued from page 13)

Nicaragua was not perfect, sure but all the Central American countries have imperfections. If they throw rocks, as they started to do at the opening of the San Jose conference, glass roofs are likely to be shattered. The report of the Arias plan's verification commission said as much.

Honduras was being judged by an inter-American tribunal on

civil rights for using death squads, trained under U.S. auspices, to liquidate the opposition. Anyone who tried to be an opposition journalist in El Salvador would soon meet a violent deadline. And in Guatemala, human life was still cheap, especially if you were an Indian. Even the venerated Costa Rica has its flaws. Why did this democracy outlaw parties on the left?

Yet in spite of all, the trial of political intentions against Nicaragua seems endless: It is asked for the moon, and when it gives it, it's not enough; Nicaragua must give us the sun now, or else. No other Central American nation is expected to do so much. The rest shy from their obligations without consequences; only Nicaragua has to pay. It pays in blood.

I don't know if Mr. Ortega's decisions in San Jose are the sun. They certainly met Costa Rican President Oscar Arias's test of what was expected of Managua at the meeting if the peace process was to continue. These were not concessions to contra pressure, but simple part of Nicaragua's agreement with its none-too-perfect neighbors to press on toward peace.

Of course, suspending the state of emergency, declaring amnesty and talking to the contras might stop contra aid in its tracks. But in both Managua and San Jose we felt that such an achievement would be a defeat for no one. It would be a success for politics over war. Both were risky, but the risk of politics never maimed a beautiful girl of 13 lying dazed in a Managua hospital. North Americans have a way of healing that girl. No one like her must suffer again.

The will of the Central American presidents, who preside over imperfect nations, must be respected, for there is a limit to what they can achieve. Even if Honduras, for example, banned the contra camps on its territory, this would not matter as long as the United States continued to supply aid. It is the aid that must end.

It is the dynamics of change in all Central America that must prevail. The interest of the United States is to join that movement, not to blast it in the name of ideological obsession and ghostly fears of communism.

Seen from Central America, the United States is not acting out of a sense of national security. Central America is no longer its back yard but might be its glass roof. And through the panes one sees national insecurity, a pitiful nostalgia for the Central America of Teddy Roosevelt.

Insecurity, hypocrisy... Who ever demanded democratization of Nicaragua when it was occupied by the U.S. Marines or ruled by the Somozas?

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# The Liberal-Democratic State : Myth and Reality in Sri Lanka

S. Sathananthan

## INTRODUCTION

In Sri Lanka, it is widely believed that the country possesses a liberal-democratic State. This belief is expressed by political parties (old and new), activists concerned with human rights issues, writers on the 'ethnic' conflict and an assortment of individuals and groups. They are united by a shared notion that the present politico-economic crisis, often described as the 'decline of democracy', is a result of the increasingly undemocratic manner in which the government dealt with non-violent, legitimate expressions of political dissent in general and, in particular, of the attempts to debate democratic institutions and electoral processes. The near-unanimous conclusion (which in fact is a tautology) reached by them is that a 'return to democracy' is vital and towards this end, they have demanded that presidential and parliamentary elections be held soon.

It is far from clear how a mere holding of elections will reverse the 'decline' because the concentration of political power during the post-colonial period of four decades has proceeded despite regular elections, with the exception that parliamentary elections scheduled for 1963 were not held; and this one exception surely cannot by itself have caused a structural shift from democracy to authoritarianism. Moreover, a

belief in the power of elections to preserve democracy reveals the influence of Anglo-American schools of political science, which invariably equate the functioning of electoral processes to the practice of democracy. But electoral processes relate to the periodic selection of legislators, of representatives drawn from one or another fraction of the propertied classes in general; they could be used to prevent the permanent political hegemony of one fraction over others; and they are methods for securing popular acceptance of, and legitimacy for, the exercise of political power in the eyes of the working classes.

The practice of democracy, on the other hand, relates to wider issues: to the operation of State apparatuses (including the parliament) and to the degree to which they are accountable to the working classes (which is not synonymous with application of the ballot). Here, it is the nature of the State, which crucially determines its role vis à vis the working classes, that needs to be probed. But, denied access to the tools of analysis provided by political economy, the flat-footed approach of mainstream political scientists has been singularly unable to examine the question of the State; instead they invariably have fallen back on the Weberian concept of a 'rational bureaucracy' and constructed a theory of 'Statism' (Scepan, 1978: 26) which conceives the State to be 'representative' of the political unity of the nation-people (Poulantzas, 1978:272) and, therefore, 'above' social classes and capable of acting in the 'common good'. Lenin referred to the same as 'the "State" point of view of the liberal bureaucrat' (Lenin, 1977:8).

By implying the absolute autonomy of the State from the hegemonic propertied classes, mainstream political scientists hold out an utopian possibility that the State could undermine the basic economic interests of these classes to the extent, if necessary, of destroying their political power and introduce fundamental changes in favour of the working classes, the so-called 'people'.

But the fact of relative autonomy of the State (Poulantzas, 1978:272) means that the primary function of the State is to ensure conditions which are necessary for accumulation by, and reproduction of, the propertied classes. In doing so, the State may exercise considerable freedom of action to initiate economic or political processes, many of which frequently could be in conflict with the narrow sectional interests of one or another fraction of the propertied classes; but it necessarily cannot act against the economically hegemonic classes. It is in this context that an analysis of the State is crucial to an understanding of its role.

But, before we discuss the solution, let us look at the assumption.

## The Liberal-Democratic Model

The belief in the existence of a liberal-democratic State in Sri Lanka is supported by the assertion that such an institution was inherited from British colonial rule and that it is characterised by a parliamentary system, separation of powers, etc. (Wilson, 1977).

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This approach tended to emphasise form rather than content and failed to examine how formal structures translate into political reality.

Herring typified this approach. His claim, that Sri Lanka possesses a liberal State, is introduced by way of a footnote (?) and it is based on analytical criteria derived from 'the general ideological and structural form of the States which evolved in Western Europe and North America in accordance with liberal critiques of monarchism and feudalism'. He supported his claim by reference to separation of powers, adversary court proceedings, elaborate case law, procedural and evidential requirements, and 'electoral succession between meaningfully opposed political groupings as an ideal, if not a reality and on the fallacious argument that 'the form and law of such States were transmitted to South Asia under colonial hegemony and remained ensconced' (Herring, 1981: 132).

The euro-centric attitude and the descriptive and ahistorical nature of this approach which ignored underdevelopment needs little elaboration.

More specifically, the colonial State in Sri Lanka began as a military regime and was above all an authoritarian State, euphemistically referred to as a 'law and order government', which introduced regulations through Ordinances. In fact, under the Dutch (1640-1796) and early British colonial rule (1796-1801), many 'administrators' were essentially mercenaries hired by the multinational corporations (Dutch, British East India Company) which controlled the maritime region of the island.

As an alien force, as an extension of the State of the colonising power, the Company administration or colonial State viewed the society as a whole as being hostile consequently, it centralised power

on the one hand and, on the other, created a stratum of collaborating intermedial functionaries (epitomised by the 'Headmen') who were vested with limited powers. These developments have paralleled either in the recent political history of western Europe or in the settler colonies of North America; except perhaps in the military regimes of occupied Europe during the two World Wars.

In the colonial State the executive predated the legislature, while political evolution in Western Europe and North America as a rule followed the reverse order. To claim that opposite political processes could lead to the formation of identical structures (i.e., liberal States), is to display an appalling lack of familiarity with history.

Even where selected elements of the 'form and law' of Western political systems were "transmitted", the resulting political superstructures invariably were hybrid products of the alien and Sri Lankan component (e.g., the legal system). The "transmitted" (an euphemism for imposed) elements may have remained "ensconced" in form but rarely in content. Indeed, to assume that the content remained unaltered is to imply the almost total social, economic and political "sedation" of society under colonialism; but even a superficial study of Sri Lankan history will produce evidence to the contrary.

The liberal institutions in Europe were products of a struggle for power between the feudal aristocracy and the emerging urban bourgeoisie, and the ascendance of liberal institutions, more often in the wake of bloody conflicts rather than through "rational dialogue", represented the dominance of the new bourgeoisie over the pre-capitalist ruling classes; they were the political superstructure of the emerging capitalist mode of production and they expressed the interests of the newly forming social classes. This liberal structure

was introduced into Sri Lanka as the 1933 State Council, a representative type of institution which was grafted on to the authoritarian colonial State. The primary function of this "legislature" was to provide an institutional interface for collaboration between the British colonial State and the Sri Lankan comprador class; and it did not serve as the instrument of political power of the dominant classes in Sri Lanka. Moreover, and despite the creation of the State Council, the centralization of power and the State itself have remained virtually unchanged without a significant "parcelization of sovereignty" to regional and local elected bodies, which is characteristic of pluralism under a liberal State. In other words, the State Council was not the apex of a pyramidal structure, not an institution which, at the national level, encapsulated the representative structure at the local and regional levels; in short, it had no structural base in the country.

Finally, even the assumption that Western Europe possesses a strong and longstanding liberal tradition has little basis in fact. Because as recently as in the 1930s the liberal institutions crumbled under the weight of European fascism, which was finally defeated in 1945. Furthermore, individuals belonging to that generation of Europeans who embraced fascism could be found to occupy positions of power within liberal institutions even today: Dr. Kurt Waldheim is a case in point.

Indeed, the resurgence of Neo-Nazism and the strengthening of repressive State apparatuses to control growing social unrest in the context of the deepening economic crisis during the 1970s and 1980s only serve to underline the need to take a more sober look at the so-called "democratic content of "liberal" institutions in Western Europe (a task which is beyond the scope of the present essay.)

(To be continued)



# The crisis of the Sri Lankan intelligentsia

Ajith Samaranayake

The failure of the Sinhala-educated intelligentsia to transform the changes of 1956 into something worthwhile can be seen by the failure of the Cultural Affairs Ministry and Department established by the MEP Government in that year. It will not be wrong to say that under every dispensation the cultural bureaucracy has been wedded to a narrow and almost obsolete view of culture. By culture they only mean the past as demonstrated by the obsession with the Cultural Triangle, the false piety attendant on such events as the exhibition of the Kapilavastu relics and the fetish that is made of pirith pinkamas and the like. There has been an almost complete official turning away from the fine arts, literature and drama which has been reduced to finding for itself in a market place which, of course, is ruled by the forces of commerce which have driven away the Muse into exile. What this demonstrates is the failure of the predominantly Sinhala-educated intelligentsia to go beyond the narrow bounds of a past conditioned by the remnants of feudal social relations and evolve a humane and forward-looking culture composed of the humanistic and rationalistic elements of traditions compassionate towards the culture, and ways of life of other communities in our midst and responsive to the challenges and pressures of the present. The current harking back to a past golden age, the obsession with atavistic fears and the almost obsessive concern with some backward-looking aspects of tradition are all signs of this failure.

If I have been harsh on the dominantly Sinhala-educated intelligentsia it is not because I wish to under-estimate the historic significance of 1956 but rather because I am conscious of what they could have, but did not achieve. It is almost a case of the 'God that failed'. If we treat

Text of a talk delivered at the International Centre for Ethnic Studies on January 28 1989.

the changes in Sri Lankan society in terms of culture there is no doubt that 1956 was a significant watershed. It was a challenge by the native intelligentsia mounted at the ramparts and fortifications of the anglicised ruling class and its elite. This westernised elite was composed of not only the liberal upper bourgeoisie but also the cosmopolitan Marxist leadership and intelligentsia who emphasising class to the exclusion of culture were also divorced from the native ethos. Tribute has to be paid here to the secular and non-racialist attitude that this Marxist intelligentsia adopted as against the revivalist approach of the native elite but it is at the same time true that the Marxists with their urban roots and cosmopolitan foreign education had no sympathetic relationship to the larger countryside where the people lived. It was hoped that the generation produced by the 1956 upheaval—the offspring of the native elite which spearheaded that campaign—would emerge as a new intelligentsia acting as a synthesis of all that was good in both traditions.

The most articulate champion of such an attitude was Gunadasa Amarasekera—the novelist, poet and social critic. The son of an ayurvedic practitioner and a Sinhala school teacher Amarasekera benefitted by both the tradition of classical Sinhala literature as well as modern western writing. Amarasekera's generation looked up to the Bandaranayake triumph almost reverently as a challenge to the brahmin caste. Amarasekera had studied Marxism but was critical of the Marxists' emphasis of the urban working class as the vanguard of the revolution and

their neglect of the cultural factors. In the process of the socialist transformation, in a now celebrated essay in the journal 'Sankruthi' Amarasekera argued that it was the educated class of the village which was destined to give true leadership to our society. Scaped in the life-giving rural ethos but yet open to the best influences from all quarters of the globe, nurtured by tradition but yet modernist in its outlook this class of native son would be the true leaders of any meaningful social transformation, he argued.

But Amarasekera was destined to be disappointed and his disappointment was closely bound up with the failure of this dominantly Sinhala-educated but by now bilingual intelligentsia to which I have referred. Far from given leadership to any meaningful social movement this new elite was quite satisfied to enter the professions and the newly-installed Administrative Service displacing the old CCS Brahmins, forge matrimonial alliances with the national bourgeoisie and move into posh addresses in Colombo which they had got as part of their dowries. Those who could not were condemned to teaching in rural schools—the ultimate purgatory—where their moderate Marxist ideas came into inevitable conflict with conservatism and rural idiosyncrasy.

Some of the most penetrating and satirical of Amarasekera's later short stories such as 'Mithura Balaperothichuwen' and 'Upe Samasari' are the results of this disillusion.

In this first short story appearing in 'Ekama Kathawa,' his first work after his spiritual rebirth in the 1960's Amarasekera offers us a picture of Mahaliyana, an assistant secretary in a Ministry who is waiting impatiently for his old friend Sirtwardena to come. Mahaliyana is the renegade from the native revolution now married comfortably into the mudalali



class and full of contempt for his social-climbing wife, the daughter of a rubber merchant. In Siriwardana he sees all his lost idealism. Siriwardana is his university batch-mate and soul mate who had turned his face away from the 'good life' to still pursue his socialist ideals. Having bumped into Siriwardana accidentally Mahaliyana, who is a victim of the spiritual ennui of the upstart upper class surrounded by the trinkets of urban triviality and a gossipy wife, is impatient to re-enter that timeless world of youthful idealism and heady intellectual discourse which he has forsaken.

But Siriwardana does not come. Instead comes a letter. Beneath all Siriwardana's bravado and the caustic taunts which he had flung at Mahaliyana's betrayal at their last accidental meeting has been a deep sense of misgiving. The death of his elder sister who had brought him up single-handedly after the early death of his parents has plunged Siriwardana into a deep spiritual crisis. His sister, a school teacher of the old school, had remained a spinster to educate and bring up Siriwardana and make him a 'big man'. Siriwardana's maverick ways and in her eyes unfashionable and ungodly politics had been a greater source of distress to her. In these two old university friends, one trapped by a soulless bureaucracy and a soured marriage and the other condemned to a dissatisfied petty bourgeois existence, Amarasekera poignantly sketches the tragedy of the post-1956 generation, the gods that failed.

And when that challenge to Establishment, both liberal bourgeois as well as middle-class radical came, it did not come from any enlightened section of native sons, a modernist intelligentsia steeped in tradition, but from the petty bourgeois sections of both town and countryside which had become frustrated and impatient with the monopoly mounted by both branches of the Establishment. If Amarasekera's generation was drawn from the village middle-class the cadres of the 1971 Janatha Vimukthi peramuna were drawn from the lower

middle-class and peasantry of the villages. Frustrated by the explosion of their ambitions within a contracting economy, stifled by the intellectual asphyxiation of mono-lingual education and driven to anger and social envy by the dominance of the elite the JVP's revolt was destructive and without any meaningful programme of social change. But yet this can not obscure the fact that this futile adventure was the result of the failure of the established elite and the intelligentsia, a failure to lead the society in any meaningful direction towards social change capable of drawing the new layers of the educated into the mainstream of change and social transformation, failure to evolve new social structures, institutions and social relationships a failure of dialogue and a failure to establish sympathetic ties with the emerging generation.

At this point I would like to refer to a major discussion on the intelligentsia which took place in the 1960's. It was titled the 'Role of the Western-educated elite' and took place at the Community Institute in 1962 and is brought together in 'Community' Volume 4 No 1. I would like to quote somewhat extensively from two participants at this discussion, Hector Abhayavardhana and Godfrey Gunatilake.

I think these statements are important because they throw light on how members of the western-educated intelligentsia saw themselves and how they conceived their role in the aftermath of the changes of 1956. While Mr. Abhayavardhana is severely critical of this elite and their limitations Mr. Gunatilake while conceding the limitations tries to envisage a more productive role for this segment within the large nation. Says Mr. Abhayavardhana:

'But if the western educated elite is to recover its place in society, it can not do so on the basis of the exaggerated notions it entertained about itself in the past. Two things, it seems, are especially necessary.

Firstly, it must banish the fanciful idea that it can sweep

back the sea of mass movement in the country with such ridiculous devices as the UNP or a reactionary army-police officers' corps. On the other hand it must accept the fact of the masses and establish contact with them through the use of Sinhala and Tamil for many purposes as possible in everyday life.

Secondly, it must exchange its present snug, largely idle, consuming role in society for one of informed, zealous productive activity. It must accept that the function of an elite is not to rest on the laurels of academic success but to strive to the furthest to place knowledge and skill at the service of one's people.'

Says Gunatilake:

'The fact that this group or this activity did not emerge from the western-educated Ceylonese was of course a symptom of something wrong with that class, some condition which led to the impoverishment of thought and of meaningful social activity. In his introduction Hector Abhayavardhana states that had the western-educated Ceylonese elite been able to develop the country economically it might have rebuilt the Ceylonese nation round itself. This succinctly draws our attention to the tragic consequences of that decade. The economic stagnation of that decade resulted also in the mass distrust, the disparagement if not rejection of the western-educated professional and bureaucratic groups. I would however not agree with Hector Abhayavardhana as to the political implications of his statement, as I do not think the western educated class or its "failure" is co-terminous with the ruling party of that decade or its failure. He refers to the "cosmopolitanism" of the radical elements which led the left. Does not the "failure" then include these elements also: their incapacity during a crucial period of our history to make contact with the growing political consciousness of the rural masses? The failure goes deeper. It derives from the insidious way in which an alien

(Continued on page 24)



## Ivan Peries — an appreciation

The *Island* on February 16th announced the death in England of the distinguished Sri Lankan artist Ivan Peries at the age of sixty six. He had left Ceylon in 1953 to settle in London to pursue a career in art he had begun with his first painting "Cannas" in 1939. He married Veronica who became a devoted wife and the guardian of his necessary solitude and burning desire to paint. He had three sons, Philip, Nicholas, and Joey, and a daughter Francesca. His elder brother Lester James is the well-known film director. A Catholic of the Roman persuasion all his life, an early and lasting influence was El Greco, and his "Homage to El Greco" (1940) reflects this impact in full measure.

He was born on the 31st July 1921, a son of Dr. and Mrs James Peries of Dehiwela, and received his education at St. Peter's College, Bambalapitiya. He displayed a fine frenzy for drawing and painting from an early age. He studied first with David Paynter and later with greater rigour under Harry Pieris, another founder-member and Secretary of the '43 Group. Propelled into formation and towards its early goals by the genius of Lionel Wendt, the '43 Group created energising new directions in the tepid and centative purities of the local art scene. Its inaugural exhibition in November 1943 in the dingy though spacious premises of the Photographic Society at 525, Darley Road, Colombo set up shock waves on the stagnant surface of the city artistic pool in a senate crown colony in the Asian sun. Along with George Keyt, Justin Deraniyagala, Harry Pieris, Geoff Beling, George Claessen, Aubrey Collette, Richard Gabriel and Manjuri Thera, Ivan Peries was in the original twelve

artists, and his eight pictures attracted much interest. I met him for the first time there — he being twenty two and I a few weeks short of that score. I soon fell under the spell of his sombre, subtle, and serene figures in landscapes of an austere and classical charm. His animated life-style came later.

He showed continuously with the Group at its regular exhibitions right up to the final 16th exhibition in 1967, missing out only at the 7th in 1949 and the 9th in March 1955. He was awarded the Government Arts Scholarship in 1946 and spent for years at St. John's Wood Art School in London, returning in 1949.

He had his first one-man exhibition of 125 paintings, drawings, water colours and pastels (1939-1951) in Colombo in September 1951, sponsored by the '43 Group. After he settled in England his work found a place in numerous exhibitions in England, France and Belgium, and he was represented at the Venice Biennales of 1956 and 1958.

He held important one-man shows at St. Catherine's College, Oxford of 80 paintings, water colours, and collages and drawings (1940-1965) in October 1965, and again at the Commonwealth Institute Art Gallery, London, in 1966 where 53 works on display. His last major exhibition of 113 oils, water colours, pastels and drawings was held appropriately in Colombo in October 1983 organised by the Sapumal Foundation. His work has been reproduced and discussed in many local journals, as well as art journals abroad, like, *Marg*, *Studio*, *Art News* and *Review*, and Arts, and he is represented widely in national

and private collections in Sri Lanka and abroad.

The hallmark of all his work was a controlled blend of an assured technique in the handling of form and colour associated with a compelling depth of spiritual feeling. His paintings were permeated by a certain quality of romance; emotion reacting upon his imagination to create an effective vehicle for works of an attractive repose and even deliberate reticence. There were in rather stark contrast to the often volatile and turbulent spirits he was wont to display away from his easel — but the essential and brooding counterpoint, perhaps, of his personality was best expressed through his brush and pen in moods of intermittent calm. Even his 28 delicate line and wash drawings for *Island Story* by J. Vijayatunga published by the Oxford University Press in India in 1947 complemented the sentimental nuances of the text to sensitive perfection. Fourteen of them were exhibited at his 1951 exhibition. He also made congenial illustrations for Bible stories between April and July 1950.

His paintings at their best and most sustained level incorporate a specific Oriental flavour in the traditional modes of linear composition, adroit placement, and an intensity of feeling. We are never not moved or touched by their affinity to a spiritual rhythm or a mystic sense. Both grief and ecstasy are transmuted into pictorial images of a seductive, yet restrained, condormess. To have known him and his work was a rare and enriching experience.

— H. A. I. Goonetilleke.



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# Imran's second coming

R. Mohan

66 Imran Khan can't say no to Gen. Zia and Gen. Zia can't say no to God. "This presumably is the reason for Imran's return to the international arena, his retirement plans having been shelved by a spirited call to the good man to come to the aid of the national cricket team.

Nothing invites cynicism more readily than a sportsman's self-declared age (who would dare ask an actress her age?). The protocols about retirements should run a cricketer's age a close second in the credibility stakes. It was the prima donna, Dame Melba, who began the tradition of emotion-whipping last appearances by having a whole 17 or so of them until the public got sick of the whole thing.

For Imran, this is only a second coming. If you can call it that. His comeback was vital not so much because the side needed him. Any side would welcome a cricketer of his calibre. Unless he toured the West Indies, Pakistan would not have been at full strength. If the side did not come at full strength, the sponsor in the West Indies would have backed out. There would have been no series between the West Indies and Pakistan. This is the bottom line.

Imran is not to be blamed for making this strategic comeback. Yet he must leave the public wondering what the term 'retirement' actually means. There are few men in any walk of life who would like to leave it all and walk away on a self-appointed day. The willing 'superannuated man' is yet to be born. In sports, it is even more difficult to give it all up—the adulation, the glamour and the money; in short, the glitz.

It is in the first few months that the heart tugs you most to the sport you have tried to leave behind. The decision to retire will invariably appear to have been premature for the simple reason

that the new player will be struggling to fill the void. It is not uncommon to hear cricketers lamenting years after the event the fact that they have retired.

The game will, inevitably in the mind of the retired observer, seem to have gone into a time warp or it will appear that standards have declined alarmingly. Either observation might be partially true. Still, it doesn't mean champion can even think of going on forever. The bottom of the cycle is lack of motivation in the face of what is, beyond a reasonable point, a vastly repulsive experience.

Timing a retirement must be the trickiest decision to take in a cricketer's life. The best have had to grapple with it. Not even the *creme de la creme* have always come up with the appropriateness of timing, grace and pragmatism which have been the features of the most talked about retirements, e.g. the recent one of Sunil Gavaskar.

Gavaskar had taken a leaf out of Bradman's book by bringing in order and correct timing into his retirement plans too. The cynics had a field day earping at his various pronouncements regarding the Bangalore Test against Pakistan being his last. He stumped them by sticking to his decision to leave the Test arena in Bangalore and the one-day circus in the World Cup.

It is merely by chance that Gavaskar left the Test scene with considerably more dignity—as represented in the miracle of technique which was his innings of 96—than he did the one-day scene, bowled as he was by Philip DeFreitas in the World Cup semi-final. It was perhaps in keeping with his image of perfect organisation that even in one-day cricket he went out on a sombre note, playing a defensive stroke with his head down.

The subcontinent has not been known for gracious retirements. There were more cricketers who had to go out than there were who went out on their own. There were many who were given time to announce their retirements before the team for an ensuing series was made public. Not all of them took it kindly though there were some who might have deserved to go on for longer and others who might not have been given their due when in their prime and hence felt they had to justify their talent by playing on.

There was a fairly successful Indian captain who had the carrot of a benefit dangled before him when his retirement was sought in the wake of one disastrous tour. It was a proposition he could not refuse. This, however, was a better way to go than the unceremonious manner in which some of his predecessors were dumped. The spinners of the golden age also tended to tarry. None of them took a bow from the Test scene with dignity. They were all dropped ultimately.

There are, of course, the comeback men. There is Mohinder, the indefatigable performer who keeps defying age like the imaginary unfading flower which is very close to the family name—Amarnath. Everytime there is talk in the air about the moment having come for him to bid good bye, 'Jimmy' would pop up with renewed vigour. He is the exception rather than the rule in this world of sporting retirements in which the only rules are those that are self-defined. The rule of thumb is 'retire when they ask why and not when they ask why not'.

How many Indians and Pakistanis can say that they have timed the taking of the bow well? If the year '87 became eventful because of the very successful conduct of the World Cup, it also tripped the sentimental chord. Two of Asia's giants were retiring at the end of the subcontinent's greatest ever cricketing tea party. Funnily enough, the number of doubting Thomases was legion when it came to accepting Gavaskar's decision. The talk was there



would be such a public reaction that he would be forced to think of staging a comeback to international cricket.

Imran's words prior to and in the wake of his much publicised retirement had ring of finality to them. They said the divide in Pakistan cricket would disappear now that Miandad would be captain in his own right and there would be no unfair comparisons to Imran's leadership. The team would have to rally around the man from Karachi.

It was Miandad who first found himself suffering from the 'hot seat' syndrome. The pressure of captaincy on players is an inexplicable facet of cricket. Those who have never been thought of as captaincy material can easily ridicule the disease that afflicts those who are chosen to lead. Only the captains know what the ravages of having to care for a whole team can be like. The difference in performance in a player before and during captaincy can be glaring as it is in Kapil Dev's case.

Miandad has chosen not to dapple again with this ambition of leading men day in and day out into the field of international cricket. It is not as if the mantle has been rethrust on Imran. His return, it is to be surmised, is strictly temporary. One of his stated ambitions of recent times—of winning the World Cup—having been dented, Imran perhaps has thought up another. He must imagine beating the West Indies in the West Indies must be the dream of any captain.

Only Clive Lloyd has achieved the task of beating Pakistan in Pakistan in the modern era. No one has beaten the West Indies in the Caribbean in the last 15 years. Not since Ajit Wadekar's Indians made history by winning one Test and the series with it and Ian Chappell's Australians won two Tests in a row in 1972-73 has any team come near being victorious in the islands.

Imran, once the world's premier pace bowler, is no longer the same force at the bowling crease. He can teach many cricks to the carefree youths of the

game but Imran cannot again be the one-man executioner he was during India's tour of Pakistan in 1982-83. His bowling in the series represented the most sustained brilliance in the use of the ball known to cricketers. It is doubtful if any bowler of that pace will attain that level of efficiency over six Tests which Imran did.

It is not cricket alone which has lost Imran Khan the image of the demigod. He has the charisma without which it would be impossible to be a true leader of men in today's world especially in these parts. While Gavaskar's retirement has been accepted quite readily on our side of the border it did not take long for the cries of 'come back Imran' to snowball into a campaign.

The General himself had to get into the act at that point. The Pakistani psyche is such the demigods cannot escape from popular sentiment. Seeing how completely the destiny of Pakistan cricket is tied up with that of Imran the motivator, little wonder then the allrounder has had to remake his own plans of leaving the game.

## The crisis...

(Continued from page 20)

culture built barriers between the large rural community and small urban groupings privileged in "know-how" as well as power, the manner in which it dissolved the bonds of sympathy between these two. I would say therefore that the "failure" we talk about lay not so much in the incapacity to provide the political solutions. It lay rather in the incapacity to undertake that basic thinking, the intellectual study and inquiry necessary for the reconstruction of our society which seems to me to be deeper than, and anterior to political thinking.

Having said this Mr. Gunatilake went on to list a few 'tasks' which the western-educated elite could undertake. He said:

(i) These small groups must devise concrete ways of meeting the Swabhasha masses in their

eagerness to receive the new knowledge. It would be necessary to ensure that the popular understanding of western thought, of modern civilisation, is not debased by the entry of vulgar and commercialised literature. In order to maintain that popular understanding on a serious level, a series of popular Swabhasha introductions to modern thought, a selective translation of the 'classics' of the various branches of modern knowledge could be undertaken by these groups. It is pointless and impracticable trying to reproduce the literature of the west in Swabhasha, with a view to building a self-sufficient and closed intellectual world for the Swabhasha intelligentsia. What is necessary is to provide a mature and serious "digest" of that knowledge, to create a mature intellectual climate which would stimulate the growth of a serious Swabhasha literature and also stimulate persons to establish communication with the international body of knowledge scientific and creative, through English.

(2) These groups must also undertake a serious, intensive study of the problems of our society during this period of economic and cultural change. They should strive to provide that body of knowledge from which programmes of economic action and social planning could draw. There is a danger when all the material for state planning and policy is collected entirely by state agencies or state directives. There should be a healthy intellectual agitation among independent groups of the intelligentsia on which any Government could draw.

(3) These groups are also in a unique position in that they enjoy in certain ways a preview of western industrialised society. As the community speeds towards the industrial civilisation of the west these groups are in a position where they could draw attention to the problems of that civilisation in the west, forestall them and evolve social values and formulate social objectives which would help to create a society in accord with the needs of the Asian community.

(To be continued)



# Tall and proud... Our legacy for tomorrow

Trees... the very core of existence...  
Pulsating life force of nature... so vital for  
our survival.

Destruction of Trees... Ultimate  
inevitable price of progress as technology  
strides ahead of nature, shattering the  
delicate ecological balance.

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scientific reforestation scheme. We have  
already planted 975,000 trees at

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unsuitable for cropping.

Our target - A breathtaking two  
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covering 2,000 acres by 1987.

Our objective - Preserving... Re-  
establishing the life cycle of nature...  
Bridging the gap between progress and  
nature... Planning... Planting... Gently  
nurturing... for tomorrow's world today...  
Giving back to nature what progress  
takes out.



**Ceylon Tobacco Company Limited**

Sharing and caring - for our land and her people.

TAL



# WE ARE A DIFFERENT KIND OF GUARDIAN TO YOU !

*There are a multitude of guardians during your lifetime*

- They who guard the freedom of speech & expression
- They who protect the basic human rights of mankind
- They who guard the democratic freedoms to which each of us are entitled to as citizens

*Each of us is a guardian to others who view us for their  
dependency in day to day life*

**BUT THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR GUARDIANSHIP  
RESTS ON OUR DEEP CONCERN FOR YOUR FUTURE  
WE ARE TRUSTED GUARDIANS OF YOUR HARD-EARNED  
MONEY, GUIDING YOU ON HOW TO SPEND AND HOW TO SAVE  
FOR YOU AND YOUR DEPENDENTS' TOMORROWS**

**SO REACH OUT TODAY  
FOR YOUR LIFE-LONG GUARDIAN**



## PEOPLE'S BANK

***A Different Kind Of Guardian For You***