

● How Prabhakaran's guerrilla tactics confound the IPKF ●

— D. S. Sardeshnande

LANKA

GUARDIAN

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At UNP Ex-Co meeting

**I'll forego immunity but
answer my questions**

President challenges Anura Kumaratunga

**JR tells Anura:
Take me to court**

**President defends Chief
Justice's appointment**

Prepared to go to Courts if Anura answers his questions

The 100 million rupee question

J.R. vs Anura: Will the Hultsdorf heavies fight their battle?

SRI LANKA

the 'democracy' that never was — S. Sathananthan
why things fall apart — Steven Weisman

Youth revolt, T.V. and the comic strip hero — Ajith Samaranayake

UNP's two-pronged offensive — Mervyn de Silva

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MP's CHIT

There's near-unanimity on one issue at least. Youth unemployment which fuelled Tamil protest and made the northern, once nominally separatist movement, increasingly militant, is certainly the major cause of unrest and violence in the South. A connected cause of youth anger was the institution known euphemistically as a 'Job Bank'. In the past two decades, in fact, employment in State and semi-state organisations has been politicized. In the age of the Long Parliament (1977 — ?) it has been said "it is the safest bank in town if you had a Green (party) Card". Or a politician's letter of recommendation. Also called a 'Chit M.P.'s chit".

Since party affiliations or even political sympathies of the wrong sort was a definite disqualification and merit no high priority, the Job Bank was a hate-symbol and a top target of righteous youth indignation.

The Job Bank, it is reported, has ceased operations since January 1st. For two reasons. No treasury allocations. The functions of the Bank will be transferred to the Provincial Councils.

In short, the Job Bank, like the Bank of Ceylon and Peoples' Bank, will be proudly branching out into the remotest districts, Devolution. Good, in principle. But if the same system prevails, then "jobs for the

boys" will become an operation even more transparently politicized at the local level. Discrimination and injustice will be even more obvious and therefore more provocative.

SECURITY AND
INSECURITY

While 'job security' is a perennial concern for the jobseeker and the employee, security jobs have now become an urgent anxiety for the government. Chiefly because the same principle of selection applied by the Job Bank was more or less extended to the selection procedures of the Armed Services. Despite resistance from the Service Chiefs, young men with the standard 'chit' were thrust into the Armed Forces, especially after 1983. With rapid mobilisation the lower ranks of the four services (Army, Navy, Air Force and Police) doubled and trebled.

And now with so much talk of deserters as subversive hit-squads and 'infiltration' of the Armed forces, a flushing out of 'undesirable elements' has started.

In their strength (the regular army's) is their weakness. Mao told his guerrillas. Quantity affects quality. 'Security' has now become a cause of insecurity for the regime. While the S. I. F. is conducting flushing-out operations in the Southern jungles, the intelligence agencies are trying to flush out subversives in the armed forces. The dialectic works,

Vijaya

Mr. Hector Abhayawardena finds (L. G. 01, 02, 88) that Vijaya was the first to lead a SLFP breakaway to the left. But, a faction led by Messrs. T. B. Subasinghe and Nanda Ellawala was also a SLFP breakaway to the left. They formed the PDP with which the LSSP and the CP entered into a no-contest pact in 1977.

E. M. G. Edirisinghe
Wellpenna.

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MINISTRY OF LANDS & LAND DEVELOPMENT

UNP'S DOUBLE-BARRELED SHOT

Mervyn de Silva

Active Democracies, concerned deeply with the preservation of fundamental rights, find it more difficult to combat terrorism than authoritarian regimes. As a general proposition, true.

There is a more complex question though in many a Third World country where spiralling political violence and terrorist activities is an increasingly dominant feature of social and political life. Must terrorism, the deadliest menace to democracy, be wiped out mercilessly in order to save Democracy or must Democracy be restored to its fullest health and vigour if it is the denial or restriction of Democracy that has produced the violence in the first instance? Professor Morris-Jones (See BBC report) seems to support the second view while President JR remains a convinced advocate of "First terrorism, Then Democracy" line of thinking.

In the past fortnight, thus, the SLFP-JVP "connection" (if any) has become the major topic of the domestic political debate. Is the JVP the guerrilla fish swimming freely in a blue S.L.F.P. sea? Or, is an opportunistic S.L.F.P. exploiting the J.V.P. to de-stabilise the U.N.P. regime in a manner that the SLFP itself, as an 'Establishment' party, cannot do? These are the questions that UNP agit-prop delights in posing. In the parliamentary context, the SLFP is the UNP's traditional foe. And a formidable one, after 11 years of UNP rule, the Indo Sri Lanka Peace Accord which a majority of Sinhalese oppose, and worsening economic conditions.

Sri Lanka has no Gallup Polls. But any random sample of most

freelance opinion-pollsters would endorse the general belief that (a) Mrs. Bandaranaike cannot be defeated by any UNP frontbencher and (b) the SLFP will win more seats by the PR system, its manipulative devices or plain jerryandering. Already many a major embassy is not only making quiet contacts with the SLFP but activating old connections and inquiring about the personnel likely to manage a future SLFP government's economic policies, foreign relations, defence and media.

If elections are to be held this year and before mid-1989, then the SLFP is NOT the main enemy. The JVP is — especially if "terrorism" is going to be the reason for a postponement. But then how? How can the Presidential election be postponed after December? What constitutional legal means? While these options are being solemnly and agonisingly studied, both parties the SLFP and the JVP remain Sri Kosha's principal targets. Thus, the party's supreme strategist, its leader, uses a double-barrel gun. The JR-Anura exchange strikes me as a part of that general strategy. The speech at Kurunegala on International Women's Day was a clearer, extended exposition of the JR 'line' on 'terrorism and the SLFP-JVP connection'. An excerpt:

NO FORGIVENESS

"In the future how should women look at this question. Terrorism exists in the world wherever you go. In Sri Lanka it started first in 1971. At that time the terrorists tried to arrest Mrs. Bandaranaike — I did not know whether it was to detain her or kill her but one night

the terrorists were preparing to arrest her. Fortunately a UNP — he is today a high police officer — he worked with them for some time but at the last moment he complained to the police and they were able to apprehend the suspects. They had gathered at a cinema in Borella and had planned the operation for midnight. But the army chief was able to warn Mrs. Bandaranaike and move her from Rosmead Place to Temple Trees. The culprits were put in jail for a number of years. That was how the UNP leader acted. The JVP had also planned to arrest me too as leader of the opposition but did not succeed. But after 1983, it is, similar campaign but it is more dangerous, with bombs, weapons, machine guns which can kill many in a time. So the terrorist campaign today is more dangerous than that of 1971."

"He recalled the bomb explosion in parliament and reiterated that he was not injured. There had been three attempts on his life — twice earlier, at Peliyagoda during the march to Kandy and at Wall-mada when he attended a meeting of Ms. Percy Samaraweera. But nothing happened. So I think I am one who cannot be killed (applause). When the time comes I will die but the terrorists cannot kill me. Remember that I challenge them to kill me if they can. That is how we should be."

"Whether terrorists, come whoever comes, even if the SLFP supports them, terrorists should not be allowed to win any day. We will not be able to have those women's organisations, bring up our children, marry and have receptions, hold democratic elec-

tions. Mrs. Bandaranaike won't be able to stay for 24 hours if she supports the terrorists and comes to power. They are like animals. It is not what Buddha, the Mahanayakas or Christ or Prophet Mohamed says that they accept. They should be sent to the mental asylum. That is what one will do to those who get caught. I will not give any forgiveness to such people. Till the UNP lasts, we will not pardon the terrorists until they give up violence, lay down their arms, bombs and weapons, accept non-violence and the democratic way of life. In one voice as one people, the UNP will work to destroy terrorism.

Go and tell Mrs. Bandaranaike and Mr. Anura Bandaranaike they were doing a foolish thing."

Homagama and the propaganda fall-out from the peremptory postponement of this parliamentary by-election for a seat that fell vacant when the Agriculture Minister Gamini Jayasuriya resigned on the 'Peace Accord' issue, offered a more striking illustration of UNP strategy in an extremely volatile political situation. The DAILY NEWS is the daily news. Its readers surely must have been amazed to find the State's authoritative spokesman publishing on March 8 the report of the first meeting held by the SLFP in its Homagama campaign a week after the Homagama by-election had been postponed.

The story quoted the SLFP candidate saying that 'the JVP was with the SLFP.' The candidate, former speaker Stanley Tillakaratne corrected the paper at once. The correction read:

"Mr. Stanley Tillakaratne, the SLFP candidate for Homagama, told the 'Daily News' that he had not said that JVPers were with the SLFP as reported yesterday.

Mr. Tillakaratne said that he had called on all sections of the voters to support the SLFP. He would appeal to those UNPors who accepted the position taken by Mr. Gamini Jayasuriya on the Indo-Lankan Accord to vote for the SLFP. Similarly he would

appeal to all others, including the JVP and the left, opposed to the accord, to vote for him.

Mr. Tillakaratne said that he also called on the authorities not to blame everything that happened in the country on the JVP but to investigate these incidents and make a proper determination.

He also stated that he had said that the murder of an ex-gramodaya mandalaya official had nothing to do with the by-election.

It was Mr. Stanley Tillakaratne again who highlighted the significance of the Homagama by-election in the wider context of the basic issue we raised at the outset — 'violence' and the democratic system, its recent past and its current trials. While the UNP candidate Mr. Susil Moonesinghe, who was so confident of victory that he challenged Mrs. Bandaranaike to contest him, attributed the postponement to the assassination of a former gramodaya mandalaya chairman and the attempted murder of a grama sevaka, Mr.

Tillakaratne pointed out that the murder was in Kesbewa.

"Until the security situation improves, and I can give protection to my organisers, I cannot carry out a normal campaign".

To Mr. Tillakaratne the postponement was a disappointment, not just to him but to "those who wanted the by-election as a step towards putting parliamentary democracy back on the rails... this was an opportunity for two democratic parties to contest and give life to the democratic process".

Meanwhile three organisations have submitted nominations for the Provincial polls to be held in four of Sri Lanka's nine provinces — North Central, North Western, Uva and Sabaragamuwa. They are the UNP, U.S.A. and the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress. Since the U.S.A. is a four-party alliance, the contestants represent 6 out of the 18 parties recognised by the Elections Commissioner. The UNP list may include nominees of the C.W.C., the plantations union of Mr. Thondaman, a recognised party. The UNP and U.S.A. have 169 candidates each, the SLMC 78.

CITY MOAT

*Where the lane by the choked canal comes on the road
Sunburnt, in the jungle green they man the bridge
Stopping the emptying city's impatient horde
Bored, dressed and delicate in their limousines.
Cherry blossom pastels and high octane growl
Brakes reluctant to the barrel of the gun
Silently resenting the sour
Sweat stained dull kakhi and glum
Unsmiling faces that just last week
Miles away from the city in the salt sun
Dispensing sprayed death, distinction did not seek
Between the helpless meek and the fierce insurgent prowl
They killed to order. Now lean the gun
Against the sleek windscreen where fat eyes glower
And pretty faces late for the cocktail round
Forget they made bright school boy faces dour
To keep their world safe, stolen hour by hour.
To keep their world safe, those guns will surely turn
From the cars to the choked canal where lean eyes burn ?*

— U. Karunatilake

Prabhakaran—the final battle?

D. S. Sardeshmunde

Generalissimo Prabhakaran's blunt reply to his Eastern province commander "It is not your business to assess the situation" and his equally curt order "prepare for post-Vadamarachi" operations, mean that he is going to launch "suicide missions" of the Nelliadi-type. If anything like the kill-ratio he desires (one-to-fifty) is realized, the IPKF will face a new, even deadlier type of warfare than the land-mine explosions which claimed so many Indian lives (nearly 400, according to Defence Minister Pant) and left so many soldiers wounded (1200).

Meanwhile movement on the political crack is not all that impressive. Prof. Selvakumar's shuttle diplomacy (Colombo-Madras-Delhi) has produced some new formula but still don't resolve the central issue — the surrender of arms by the LTTE and acceptance of the Accord. Mr. Selvakumar, a pupil of Prof. Marshall Singer of Pittsburg Univ., an active back-stage negotiator in the Tamil issue, representing the semi-official 'U. S. Connection' in the diplomatic game, is a leading figure in the American Eelam lobby. His activities and the visit to Delhi of High Commissioner Dixit were the latest efforts to put the Indian 'net' together in time for North-East merger and Provincial polls, and of course the key Tamil Nadu parliamentary elections.

The IPKF's problems, if this final diplomatic initiative fails, are examined by an Indian defence analyst, D. S. Sardeshmunde:

ENEMY'S BLUNDERS

Out of sheer cunning, Prabhakaran made a symbolic show of surrendering arms to the IPKF in September-October last year. But, true to the cause, he made no compromise on his original

political aims, or even the means to attain them. A guerilla movement relies for its success largely on the blunders of its enemy. The high toll borne by the IPKF — 365 killed and over 1,000 troops wounded — was due to its under-ascimation of the LTTE's fighting capability, cached military hardware, and arrogance towards the LTTE, which is considered a mere band of lungi-clad youths brandishing small arms. The IPKF's initial lethargy in assimilating information, faulty planning, hurried deployment of troops and inadequate logistics in the initial phase also cost a senior army commander his assignment.

Fighting the LTTE requires a deeper appreciation of its leadership acumen and cadre motivation. But the attitude that the IPKF might had no match in the battered guerilla force looks ill-considered. Though the Indian army had ample lessons to learn from other theatres of guerilla combat (China, Vietnam, Cyprus, Malaya), it was the tolling effect of the LTTE mines and sniper fire that got the message across. Nearer home, the army has had over a decade's experience in quelling insurgency in Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur. Unconventional warfare is no longer a new phenomenon to our armed forces.

The task of restoring peace is a two-pronged, long-term strategy. On the military front, a new phase of intensive counter-insurgency operations has begun. On the civil front, the IPKF faces the daunting challenge of winning over the Tamil population's support. One need not add that its success will largely depend on the will and assistance of the Governments of India and Sri Lanka. The immediate threat, however, is still from the LTTE guerillas who are capable of nullifying whatever progress has been made on the Indo-Sri Lankan accord.

Additional troops have been inducted into the IPKF to ensure safe conduct of the proposed provincial council polls. The IPKF has also discontinued conventional warfare tactics. Since the threat is not from a continuous military "front," conventional formations have been split into smaller counter-insurgency units. Often, the tactics used by the rebels prove to be, when adopted by the army most effective in curbing their operations. Wearing out the LTTE's resources is the most important step in rendering it impotent.

The guerillas' chances of success have to be minimised by relentless pursuit to the point where surrender is imminent. However, the "search and seize" operations have to be brief and intensive, since tensions, hatred and grievances of the locals tend to be aggravated in the long run. Another aspect of countering the LTTE is denying them their bases and local superiority. The first line of defence is thus the villages, on which the LTTE depends for its food supplies, intelligence, fresh recruits and safety.

It is here that an effective intelligence system yields results. The villagers' loyalty to the LTTE can be eroded by winning over key elements in the population protecting them from possible LTTE retaliation. Propaganda is a vital auxiliary tool since public opinion forms the "centre of gravity" of the movement. This must go hand in hand with economic reconstruction at the village level.

Depriving the LTTE of its leadership will naturally be uppermost in the minds of most IPKF commanders. Prabhakaran and his loyal lieutenants have to be captured, or isolated from their cadres, to throw the whole movement into at least temporary

confusion. An effective disinformation campaign is equally essential to throw the LTTE off balance.

On the civil front, a concerted "civilisation" plan — resettlement of refugees, restoring normalcy, aiding restoration work, setting up health facilities, economic concessions and financial aid and protection from LTTE retaliation — have already begun in the war-hit areas. The action aims at making its practitioners (Indians) more popular with the hostile Tamils, demonstrating the former's genuine concern for the latter's welfare and isolating the LTTE from its sympathisers. Such a course has its political and economic costs, but, given a vigorously supportive Government and a sympathetic population, the IPKF is sure to succeed in its mandate.

POLITICAL ANGLE

Since the LTTE movement is essentially a political one, it must obviously be dealt with by the Governments of India and Sri Lanka. The formulation of a judicious political programme to rally the support of the Tamils is essential. Of paramount importance is the need for a sincere, united leadership that can hold the Tamils together in their struggle for peace and progress, and against the violent methods of the LTTE. Key Tamil citizens have to be coaxed into involvement in the peace process, for military means are seldom successful on their own.

A word about the political dissent at home against the IPKF. If despairing politicians lose heart and succumb to their war weariness — or worse, seek to make political capital out of the situation — they will not only let down the Indian army and the Sri Lankan Tamils, but also present victory to the LTTE on a platter. It must be remembered that guerrillas seldom win wars, but their adversaries very often lose them.

J.R. TAKES THE OFFENSIVE

— challenges Anura, confronts critics

Of course it made the frontpage of all the Sunday papers, the lead story and banner headlines in at least two.

"I'LL FOREGO IMMUNITY BUT ANSWER MY QUESTIONS
— President challenges Anura"

(State-owned Sunday Observer)

"J. R. TELLS ANURA: TAKE ME TO COURT"

(Independent Sunday Times)

It is not every day that the Elected President of a country offers the Opposition Leader (the son, in this case, of the President's main political rival, the SLEP President Mrs. Bandaranaike) that he would waive the immunity he enjoys under the constitution to allow the Opposition leader to sue him for defamation. For a Sunday press anywhere, the President's speech to the UNP Ex-Co was glorious gift. It has now become the most exciting political development of 1988, with the possibility not merely of proving a sensational legal battle but a major political development.

It all started with the National Management Conference on Feb. 18. There, President J.R. referred to events in July last year when he and Indian Prime Minister Gandhi signed the peace accord at President's House in the Fort. Mr. Jayewardene said that a violent mob converged on this venue, and that Opposition Leader Anura Bandaranaike was in the mob.

Mr. Bandaranaike was not amused. In a letter to the

President he said that only Article 35 of the Constitution which granted the President Immunity from suit, prevented him from suing Mr. Jayewardene for defamation.

But the President was prepared to accommodate him. On March 5 at the UNP's Executive Committee meeting Mr. Jayewardene said that he was prepared to waive his immunity if Opposition Leader Bandaranaike was willing to get into the witness box and answer some questions. He listed the questions, among which was one about Mr. Bandaranaike telling Mr. Jayewardene some years ago that a former brother-in-law (Mr. Kumar Rupasinghe) was attempting to topple his mother's government.

The Opposition Leader has accepted the President's challenge. According to a report in *The Island*, Mr. Bandaranaike's lawyers are preparing the papers to sue President Jayewardene for a hundred million rupees.

Mr. Bandaranaike, the report said, was hoping that Mr. Jayewardene too would get into the witness box.

NCMC: a SLFP formula

A Sri Lanka Freedom Party committee which looked for solutions to the North Colombo Medical College dispute has made the following suggestions, among others:

- Make merit the criterion for admission, as in other medical faculties;
- Attach the NCMC to the Kelaniya University and make it non-fee levying.

The SLFP committee was headed by Opposition Leader Anura Bandaranaike and included former SLFP Health Minister Siva Obeyesekere.

The dispute has dragged on for eight months, and more than a hundred medical students who have qualified from the state medical faculties (Colombo, Peradeniya, Ruhunu and Jaffna) have been kept away from internal appointments pending a solution.

The NCMC has been asking for MBBS degrees from Colombo's state Medical Faculty, which has opposed by faculty students, teachers and government doctors, in the teeth of the Government's attempts to grant the NCMC demand.

The SLFP committee has called the Government's attitude "a stubborn refusal to accept reality".

Prof. Maurice Jones on the ethnic conflict

"But that is by no means the only problem. Leaving aside serious economic difficulties, it has to be said that Sri Lanka is no longer a thriving democracy. The political process virtually came to an end a decade ago with the concentration of power under the new constitution in an executive presidency at the expense of parliament, judiciary and elective participation. If violence now stalks the land, is it not in part because the channels of open, free democratic politics have been for so long blocked?" asked Professor Wyeth Maurice Jones, an international authority on ethnic relations.

"But even if Sinhalese/Tamil relations were the only problem, it cannot be spoken of as something the island has always endured. The two peoples lived side-by-side for several centuries, not by ignoring each other but actually by interacting amicably. Communal tension came as a by-product of social change in a previously very stable society. Ceylon entered independence as a cosy, almost cocooned little world led by a westernized, well-educated elite of high social status for whom English was almost their mother tongue. Both Tamils and Sinhalese belonged to this elite; and probably saw less distance between each other than between them and ordinary folk, who accepted the gulf. It was a placid society; and independence had come not as the result of a loud nationalist move-

ment stirring the people to rise against the British, but rather through gentlemanly negotiations at the top.

So nationalism came to Ceylon; not before but after independence, and it came as Sinhalese nationalism. The easiest way of challenging the westernized alliance of elite Tamils and elite Sinhalese was to appeal in the name of defence of buddhism and advancement of the Sinhala language. The appeal was heard by the now awakened Sinhala educated middle-class which saw their rise impeded by a non-communal elite. Thus social aspirations were converted into communal hostility.

From then on each single Sinhalese Party, when in power has cried cautiously to reach deals with the Tamil leadership; and each, when out of power, has stoked up anti-Tamil sentiment to prevent any durable agreement. The Tamils in response moved at each stage further away from moderation towards more vigorous defence of Tamil interests.

If part of the trouble has been that rising social expectations have been too easily exploited in communal terms, the very high levels of mutual distrust and hatred probably owe much to Sri Lanka's smallness especially alongside India's giant size. This has created a deep sense of vulnerability, even on the part of the majority community. But not every Sinhalese, not every Tamil, in Sri Lanka has lost

objectivity, even in the terrible times through which the island has been passing. It is around such pockets of sanity, but by re-examining the past forty years, that it may still be possible to find ways out of violence and despair."

— B. B. C.

Commentary on Independence
Day Feb. 4

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FRANCHISE AND POLLS: Sweeping changes

The report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on "Franchise and Elections" was tabled last week in the House by its Chairman, Prime Minister Premadasa. After the Cabinet and UNP parliamentary group approves it, the draft law will be referred to the Courts for a determination of its constitutionality. The government does not expect any difficulties.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka's districts which have more than 10 parliamentary seats, will be demarcated into zones. A zonal system will be introduced in seven of the Island's 25 districts. These would include Colombo,


Kandy and Jaffna. In a large district like Colombo, there will be three zones — urban, suburban and rural. The responsibility for zonal demarcation will lie with a Delimitation Commission that will be given 8 weeks to finish the job. All this will take several months. The Bill is likely to be debated by Parliament in August. The new House will have 196 (as against 168 today) with 29 seats decided on a national basis. Each party's national aggregate will determine its share of the 29. President JR, responding to appeals especially by the Socialist Alliance and the new parties, did away

with the present 12½ percent cut-off point. At the next general elections, the cut-off point will be 12½ percent but the natural cut-off could be higher. The 29 seats on the national aggregate will permit small parties who cannot obtain anything like 12 percent to get a few seats. 6 to 7 percent may allow a small party to have 2 M.P's. Much depends on whether the smaller parties can form 'fronts' or 'alliances' that operate under a single symbol. Then the 3 or 4 seats obtained from the 29 'bonus' seats can be shared by the constituent Parties.

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TAMIL NADU

Two leading ladies and a scriptwriter

When the debate on the President's Address opened in the Rajya Sabha in the first days of March, Mr. G. Swaminathan (AIDMK) demanded early polls in Tamilnadu, which was placed under Presidential rule in the aftermath of the violence and political confusion that marked the death of Chief Minister MGR. Mr. Swaminathan did not conceal his alignments in the current factional feud. Where MGR's widow and Jayalalitha, his leading lady and mistress, are battling for his political legacy. "The people of the State appreciated the stand taken by the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, and would stand by him and my leader Jayalalitha".

The same week, Mr. Gandhi discussed with senior Congress (I) leaders the political situation in Tamilnadu. The Congress (I) boss in the state, Mr. Meppanar briefed the party leadership on "the respective backing of parties in the State", reported the Hindu which added "The Congress (I) went to the polls last time in alliance with the AIDMK but now has to decide its electoral allies afresh in view of the split in the party".

How are the new groups and the main personalities preparing for the big battle? The Congress (I) is "the joker in the pack" noted senior editor Prabhu Chawla reporting from Madras for India Today. He pursues the movie image—a fight for the stellar role by MGR's two leading 'ladies' actresses Jayalalitha and Janaki, and a former scriptwriter, Karunanidhi of the DMK.

A former AIDMK Minister observed "Our party is leader-oriented rather than ideology-oriented. Earlier they voted for MGR and nobody else and

now they are following Jayalalitha".

Mr. S. Thirunavukarasu, also a former Tamilnadu minister, agrees. "No one after the late Chief Minister has been able to rally the Party as she has been able to do within a very short time" But the magazine's Tamilnadu correspondent notes "However MGR's widow Janaki also managed to draw large crowds". Jayalalitha's performance on the other hand has been so impressive that four MP's of the Janaki faction and six MLA's recently visited her home after her first mass rallies. What's more a MP of Karunanidhi's DMK did the same.

The problems of the Congress are summed up by India Today:

The Congress (I), meanwhile, is trying to bring some order into its divided state unit. It has sent its general secretaries Oscar Fernandez and K. N. Singh along with former Kerala chief minister K. Karunakaran to the state in an attempt to revamp the party. Fernandez, during his visits, called the office-bearers of all the frontal organisations in Madurai and Madras and directed them to sink their differences and work unitedly. Said Jayamohan, Tamil Nadu Youth Congress (I) president, confidently: "We are now in a position to face any of our adversaries in an election."

But the exit of matinee idol Sivaji Ganesan and former PCC (I) chief M.P. Subramaniam from the party has caused problems. Ganesan, who left the party after a 30-year association, floated his own organisation—Tamilzaga Munnetra Munnani (Tamil Nadu Progressive Front)—and walked away with five former MLAs

and a sizeable chunk of workers. Said Ganesan: "The Congress (I) leadership can no longer take the Tamils for granted. I will see to it that the Congress (I) suffers maximum damage in the elections".

While the Congress (I) may be 'the joker in the pack', it is Mr. Karunanidhi's DMK that is the nigger in the woodpile. It is he, the firebrand of authentic Dravidian nationalism, and with MGR's "charisma" out of the way, it is surely a heaven-sent opportunity for the man who claims that he is the true heir to the mantle of Annadurai. Editor Chawla who spoke to him, reported:

In the DMK camp, the wily Karunanidhi said he had not begun any "competitive campaigning" so far. While charging that Jayalalitha was being "supported with black money", Karunanidhi is waiting for the building up of Tamil resentment against Congress (I) domination over regional parties in the state. Meanwhile, he has been scurrying his cadres by calling general council meetings and finalising his fund collection and tour programmes.

Karunanidhi, who has the solid support of over 25 per cent of the electorate, is now preoccupied with ensuring a 7 per cent swing in his favour, which could help him ride back to power. With an immediate issue at hand, his plan, apparently, is to exploit the growing disapproval of the presence of the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka and to organise public meetings on this score. For the voters therefore, the choice will be between a script-writer, Karunanidhi, two former film actresses, Jayalalitha and Janaki, with the Congress (I) being the joker in the pack.

Tibetan uprising and ethnic challenge

Islam did not keep Pakistan together. Bengali nationalism primarily linguistic, proved far stronger. Nonetheless, General Ershad who has won a runaway victory in a patently phoney election seems determined to make Islam the State religion of Bangladesh. He probably hopes that Islam will give his unpopular military regime the legitimacy that has been questioned even by the United States, next to China, the country's biggest supporter.

Meanwhile ethnic unrest has suddenly posed a major challenge to the socialist states. Besides the chronic unrest in Kosovo, Yugoslavia, which has led to tensions with its neighbour Albania, there are mounting tensions between two Warsaw Pact allies, Hungary and Romania, over the fate of 1.7 million Hungarians in neighbouring Rumania. And now just three months after the Tibetan uprising, violent disturbances in this Chinese province has claimed many lives, including the lives of Buddhist monks.

Trouble in Tibet

HONG KONG

witnesses said

At least eight people died on Saturday in a day of bloody anti-Chinese rioting in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa.

Witnesses in Lhasa said that at least one Buddhist monk, three policemen and four civilians were killed in the day long rioting which came on the last day of "the great prayer festival," the most important annual religious celebration in Tibet.

A policeman was thrown to his death from a building and two others were stoned and killed to death by an angry crowd while the monk and civilians were shot to death by plain clothes police, the

It was not clear whether more people died later in the day. What sounded like explosions and gunshots could be heard in downtown Lhasa.

The official New China News Agency reported late on Sunday that order was returning to the city. The agency confirmed the death of one policeman Yuan Shisheng. It said that Yuan and another policeman Yang Yuchen were stabbed and thrown out of a second story window of a building. Yang was hospitalized with serious injuries according to the report which made no mention of other casualties.

BANGLADESH

Ershad's "wins" violence-marred polls

Bangladesh's ruling Jatiya Party won an overwhelming majority by taking 236 of the 297 declared parliamentary seats in violence-marred elections.

At least 18 of the successful Jatiya candidates, including five ministers were earlier declared elected unopposed.

Of the remaining declared seats, Abdur Rah's pro-government Combined Opposition Party (COP) won 15. Freedom Party of retired Colonel Faruk Rahman and the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal led by Shahjahan Siraj had two seats each.

Meanwhile the Bangladesh opposition has welcomed official US comments backing its claim of a low turnout in last week's violence-marred parliamentary elections.

"We welcome the realistic statement from the US government regarding the so-called election", Thursday, which was boycotted by the opposition, said Arshadk-Uz Zaman, advisor to opposition leader Sheikh Hasina Wajed.

"According to our estimates, voter turnout was no more than one percent," he told Agence France-Presse.

Secretary-General of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Obaidur Rahman said: "We welcome this position, which proves the United States has realised the real situation in Bangladesh."

Islam may be State religion in Bangladesh

Haroon Habib

DHAKA

A fundamental decision relating to declaring Islam, the religion of a vast majority of the people of Bangladesh, a State religion, is likely to be taken up by the Government of Mr. H. M. Ershad, whose ruling Jatiya Party scored an overwhelming victory in controversial parliamentary elections boycotted by the major Opposition forces.

The announcement in this respect may come within a few days, the independent weekly, "Holiday", reported in its current issue. However, the report said the announcement would not mean that Bangladesh would be an Islamic

republic, an idea which is being consistently put forth by the country's Islamic organisations and strongly opposed by the secular political forces, mainly in the mainstream Opposition.

The issue of declaring Islam the State religion was raised by the President, Mr. Ershad, himself. In some of his recent pre-election public meetings he told his audiences that Islam would some day become the State religion as he wanted to establish the spirit of Islam and its values in all spheres.

Quoting sources, the weekly reported that the decision was likely to be incorporated in the Constitution of the country during

the very first session of the new fourth Parliament.

No official confirmation was, however, available on the question of State religion, though the two women Opposition leaders, Sheikh Hasina of the Awami League-dominated eight party alliance and Begum Khaleda Zia of the BNP dominated seven-party combine, had earlier this week issued a joint statement condemning the move to bring about "fundamental changes" in the Constitution. The idea which was yet to take a final shape, has already been hailed by many Islamic organisations, but strongly protested by many others who vouch for a secular philosophy.

South Asia Arms spending — up and up

South Asia had the largest regional growth rate in military spending in the first half of the 1980's, according to the latest edition of the American handbook, "World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers."

The 1986 edition of the handbook, published by the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, says the annual growth rate of world military expenditure from 1980-84 was three percent while the figure for South Asia was 7.4 percent.

Of the 144 countries listed in the study, India ranks 17th with an annual military expenditure of 7.1 billion dollars, while Pakistan ranks 39th, spending close to two billion dollars a year on arms.

The United States and the Soviet Union accounted for 63 percent of the 980 billion-dollar world military spending for 1985.

However, the traditional South Asian adversaries are both in the top ten in terms of men under arms — India has nearly 1.4 million, while Pakistan has 646,000.

The two countries, which have fought three wars since independence from Britain 40 years ago, substantially increased their armies between 1982 and 1984 — India by 260,000, and Pakistan by 60,000.

In 1984 India imported 800 million dollars worth of arms, which placed it among the top ten arms purchasers in the world. Pakistan bought 550 million dollars worth of arms in the same year.

However, Pakistan's 300 million dollars worth of arms exports far exceeded India's figure of 10 million dollars in 1984.

The World Military Expenditures Handbook offers two reasons for the disparity, given the clear edge India has in numbers and military strength.

"Although India possesses the largest arms industry in the Third World, the volume of its arms exports is small, owing to the large demands of its own armed forces, its dependence on restrictive licensed production and its desire to maintain political standing in non-aligned fora," the handbook says.

In add: "Pakistan's edge is primarily due to support costs for Pakistani manpower, which is prominent in many Middle East military establishments, particularly Saudi Arabia."

Pakistan's arms exports rose from 8 million dollars worth in 1977 to a high of 300 million in 1983, a figure linked the despatch that year of Pakistan's military contingent to Saudi Arabia.

The announcement here that several thousand Pakistani soldiers had completed their assignments in Saudi Arabia and were being sent home has raised the possibility that Pakistan's military earnings could see a drop in 1987-88.

However, the refusal by both countries to reveal the number of troops involved makes an accurate assessment difficult, military analysts say.

The Military expenditure handbook says India's more sophisticated arms industry compensates for Pakistan's advantage in terms of arms exports.

India is believed to produce Vijayanta and Arjun tanks, Gnat class fighters, MiG fighters of the 21, 23 and 27 series, 5-315 Chetak helicopter, 130 MM self-propelled Vijayanta guns and zork air to air missiles in its ordnance factories.

Pakistan makes Mushak trainer aircraft, 120 MM mortars, and various infantry weapons including the RPG 7 anti tank rocket launcher and a 106 MM recoilless rifle.


According to the study, the two countries defence production systems are "low to medium technology based on licensed production or copies of older weapons".

Pakistan and India are both largely dependent on their superpower patrons for the supply of arms.

Seventy percent of India's arms imports between 1981 and 1985 came from the Soviet Union, while 65 percent of Pakistan's arms imports over the same period were from the United States.

The Soviet Union continues to be the principal arms exporter to third world countries, providing them with 35 percent of their weapons in 1985. The United States tally was 25 percent.

(IPS)



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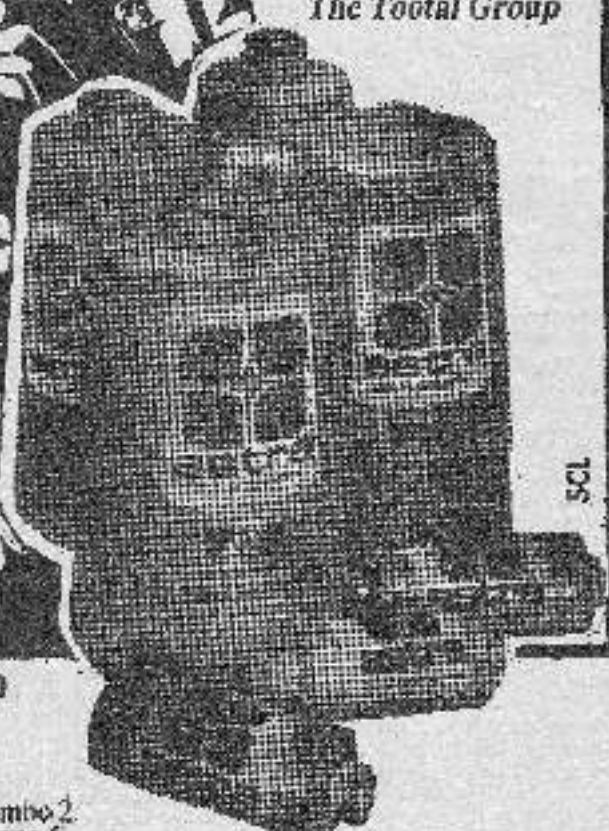
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Drugs: Blind eye on Noriega and Afghan rebels

FOREIGN
NEWS

On the campaign trail, Vice President George Bush is hardly a 'wimp'. He is now suggesting that the Panamanian strongman General Noriega should be 'seized' to face US drug trafficking charges. He has been indicted before two U.S. courts. General Noriega has so far ignored the Panamanian assembly, forced the President to flee, and survived opposition protests and strikes. He has also shrugged off U.S. demands for his resignation.

On second thoughts, Bush thought that all legal and peaceful means should be used to 'get Noriega'. But he did cite a precedent — the capture of two suspected Arab 'terrorists' by U.S. agents.

Why is Noriega playing tough? One strong reason was offered by staff writer Jim Hoagland of the Washington Post, in an article titled "Saying Yes was Always Much Easier". He wrote:

"Unfortunately for Ronald Reagan, it seems that the tough guys he brought to the White House to run foreign policy could not just say no to General Manuel Antonio Noriega. Evidence accumulates that Washington initially turned a blind eye to the Panamanian military leader's deep involvement in drug trafficking in return for promises of help against the Nicaraguan Sandinistas.

Mr. Reagan's war on drugs turns out to have been less serious than his war on Central America. It is now clear that if

the true extent of the U.S. drug problem and the drastic remedies needed were ever sketched for the president, his attention drifted.

Doomed to Fail

Coming from Ronald and Nancy Reagan, they "just say no" anti-drug campaign was doomed to fail. The president has shown himself to be superb at selling a positive message, persuading Americans that they can have it all — a military buildup, tax cuts and, in the final act, even peace with the Soviet Union.

He has been unconvincing on those rare occasions when he has instead asked for sacrifice, including from drug users. Self-denial is not part of the optimism he generates and by which his policies are guided.

Opium Trade

If Washington's spasmodic concern for "Law and Morality" makes little impression on Third World despots, venal and corrupt 'strongmen' and other allies, it is because these men have often been deeply involved in the most scandalous, flagrantly criminal, transactions promoted by Washington's own covert operations. This is certainly the case with the Afghan rebel leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar of the Hezbe Islami which last year got the largest share of the 600 million dollar aid approved for the anti-Kabul, anti-Soviet mujahidin. But most of the Afghan resistance groups are up to their neck in an opium trade which the U.S. State Dept. says is the world's second biggest. The excerpt is from a report by the

BBC correspondent George Arney who has covered the Afghan war from Pakistan in the last 3 years.

Hekmatyar's most hated rival is Ahmed Shah Massoud, a talented guerrilla commander affiliated to Jamiat-i Islami. For the past two years, Massoud has been expanding his own control, both military and administrative, in the north-east of Afghanistan. Like all empires, Massoud's needs money. Last year, nearly 3,000 pack-animals loaded with lapis lazuli made the journey through Massoud's territories to Pakistan. Each one was taxed on route.

Hezbe is not the only villain. Last autumn, hundreds of people were killed in southern Afghanistan in clashes between Hezbe and guerrillas belonging to a party called Harakat, which is supported by Afghanistan's mujahids. The fighting was so fierce that when Soviet tanks rumbled in, they were garlanded by thankful villagers.

The local Harakat commander, who eventually vanquished his Hezbe rival, is reputed to be one of Afghanistan's opium barons. The US State Department's 1987 year-end report on Afghanistan admits guerrilla controlled Afghanistan is the world's second biggest opium Tariffs imposed by Jamiat on trucks coming down the Salang highway, Kabul's military and commercial lifeline with the Soviet Union, are estimated to amount to more than five million Afghani a week. "That's what Hezbe are producer. Much of it ends up as heroin on the streets of London and New York. The war has made a minority of Mujaheddin immensely wealthy.

Sri Lanka's Disintegration — the pull of the past

Steven R. Weisman

At its heart, the story of national disintegration is the story of two peoples, two ethnic groups, each feeling increasingly threatened by the other, each driven to take action that can only reinforce the other's fears.

Many say that race is the main source of the conflict. The Sinhalese, most of whom are Buddhist, trace their origins to lighter-skinned Indo-Aryans of Central Asia who migrated to Sri Lanka 2,500 years ago; the Tamils, most of whom are Hindu, are descended from the darker-skinned Dravidians of southern India, who are believed to have arrived slightly later.

In fact, today many Sinhalese are dark and many Tamils light; scholars believe the concept of two separate races is largely myth, that no single race can claim to have possessed the island first. Yet, when I asked a leading Buddhist monk to describe the source of the island's separate identities, he told me it was race. Were the Sinhalese a superior race? "All races feel superior to each other," he answered. "We are proud of our own race, but we don't look down on others."

Yet the Sinhalese, instead of viewing the Tamils as a minority on the island, tend to consider them a dominating majority — backed as they are by the 50 million Tamils living 18 miles a way in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

The Sinhalese religious mythology contributes to their sense of siege. The earliest Sinhalese records tell how, 2,500 years ago, Buddha sent emissaries to the island to establish a place for his purest teachings. The most sacred place on Sri Lanka is a

temple in the old mountain capital of Kandy, where Buddha's tooth is enshrined.

"In this little country, history has given the Sinhalese race the position of being a majority with the characteristic of a minority," explained Colvin De Silva, a Marxist political leader in Sri Lanka. "The Sinhalese nurse this sense of peril, a belief that, like the Jews, history has vested them with a role of maintaining their traditions."

The island's history is the story of Sinhalese and Tamil kingdoms rising and falling clashing with one another, and together suffering a succession of invasion from the Indian giant to the north. Modern times brought new invaders: the Portuguese, the Dutch, and finally the British, who in 1815 imposed unity on the island for first time in a thousand years.

Independence came in 1948; in the first flush of hope a new nation eager to take its place in the postcolonial world the Sinhalese and Tamil communities managed for a time to submerge their historic antagonisms.

But the potential for conflict was still present; indeed, it had been increased by an important legacy of the departing colonialists. British missionaries, who worried about angering the island's Buddhist majority found it easier to proselytize among the Hindus in Tamil areas. Many missionary schools were established in Tamil regions, and by independence the Tamils had parlayed this educational advantage, and their passion for hard work, into a dominant position in Sri Lanka's universities and civil service.

But Sri Lanka's modern political leaders were always upper-class Sinhalese patricians, many from landowning families of the old plantation economy of tea, rubber and coconuts set up by the British. Often more comfortable with the ways of their English colonizers than with their own culture, the ruling families enjoyed privileges because the Crown considered them "natives imbued with the right spirit" as Yasmine Gooneratne, a Sri Lankan literary scholar, puts it. In her evocative memoir of one of the most powerful ruling families, the Bandaranaises.

Mrs. Gooneratne recalls how the families of these would-be rulers traveled to London on ocean liners, wore Western clothes and took pride in their light-colored skin and plummy British accents. Many believed that British rule had essentially alienated them from the culture and people of their own country.

But a change in attitude came with a vengeance in 1956, when Solomon West Ridgeway Dias Bandaranaike was elected Prime Minister. Bandaranaike set out to restore dominance to Sinhalese culture, and his program showed the potential for a tyranny of the majority.

First, Bandaranaike made Sinhalese the sole official language of the nation, an act that was at the root of rifts between the Sinhalese and Tamils in 1956 and 1958. Next, his Government imposed quotas on Tamils in the civil service in the universities and elsewhere in the educational system.

The Government also embarked on a program to develop areas in the north and east of the island, resettling thousands of

Sinhalese families in areas the Tamils considered their homelands. Demonstrations, riots and attacks continued; each effort to accommodate Tamil grievances failed. Each side accused the other of killing innocents.

Sri Lanka's difficulties deepened during the 1970's as its economy sagged. Years of Government flirtation with socialism and increasing economic regulation had stifled investment and growth. It became increasingly difficult for Tamil and Sinhalese youths, even those with an education, to find jobs.

Compounding their disaffection were lingering resentments over caste discrimination, and the fact that leadership positions both the Sinhalese and Tamil communities still tended to be held by upper-class, landowning families.

Radicalism among the Sinhalese flowered in 1971, when a Sinhalese revolutionary organization called the Janatha Vimukthi peramuna (or People's Liberation Front) rioted in an attempt to overthrow the Government. More than a thousand Sri Lankans died before order was restored. Resentment grew among Sinhalese youth, and also among the Tamils.

North of Sri Lanka's central highland forests and tea plantations, the scrub jungles give way to sandy fiat wastelands on which peasant farmers struggle to grow vegetables, chilies and tobacco. Along the coast the Jaffna Peninsula, 20 miles from India, are a string of fishing villages that seem a world apart from the playing fields, law courts and prosperity of the capital of Colombo.

Velupillai Prabhakaran grew up in one of those fishing towns, the son of a Government land officer. Deeply shy as a boy he withdrew to read stories about the bravery of ancient Hindu warriors, Napoleon, and Indian fighters. He also learned from his family about atrocities against Tamils such as the time in 1958 that some Sinhalese broke into a Hindu temple, tied a priest

to his cot, poured gasoline on him and set him on fire.

"This left a very deep imprint on my mind" Prabhakaran once recalled. "If such innocent lives could be destroyed, why could we not strike back?"

Today, Prabhakaran — 33 years old, short, stocky, with a drooping mustache — is the supreme of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam a guerrilla organization of perhaps 2,000 men under arms, and with many thousands of supporters. Tamil leaders say that like the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna among the Sinhalese, the guerrillas have drawn support from young people bitter about lack of job opportunities and resentful of leaders who they feel have been insensitive to their needs.

Known to his men as Thamby or little brother, Prabhakaran has spent most of the last decade underground, and has led his cadres by emphasizing self-sacrifice — symbolized by the cyanide strung around their necks. From his troops, Prabhakaran demands discipline, celibacy, adherence to a puritanical code forbidding drinking and smoking, and ruthlessness in battle.

During the 1970's, the nascent Tiger movement carried out robberies and assassination. But the movement reached a turning point when "the boys," as they are often called began assassinating elected Tamil leaders who, they felt, had betrayed their people. In 1975, Prabhakaran and two other young men ambushed the car of the Mayor of Jaffna and shot him dead.

One midnight late in July 1983 a group of Tigers led by Prabhakaran faced the Sri Lankan Army in a shootout and killed 13 Sinhalese soldiers. Shock spread throughout the island; in Colombo and other towns, Sinhalese mobs rioted, burning and killing hundreds of innocent Tamil men, women and children. The riots, in turn, brought new support and momentum for the Tamil Eelam cause.

The pattern has continued, with each new attack bringing on a new retaliation. Sometimes the guerrillas would storm a police station. Sometimes the Sri Lankan Army would rampage through a Tamil town, shooting people, setting fire to houses, rounding up hundreds of young men.

As Tamil militancy spread, mainstream Tamil politicians grew increasingly impatient with Colombo's slow responses to their appeals for justice. In 1983, the Tamil members of Parliament refused to take their seats charging that President Jayewardene had reneged on promises to grant greater autonomy in Tamil areas.

The Tamil Eelam movement, meanwhile, had split into myriad factions that were soon waging a brutal war against one another. Prabhakaran, who had a shootout with one rival in 1982, has been the most aggressive in launching attacks on other guerrilla groups. During the last two years, the Tigers have killed hundreds of men in two other Tamil Eelam organizations, accusing them of drug-running, shaking down merchants, robbers and other anti-social activities.

The troubles of Sri Lanka seem etched in the face its President, 81-years-old Junius Richard Jayewardene. His is the ravaged countenance of a patriarch whose long career is rooted in a privileged childhood followed by fiery campaigns waged on behalf of Sinhalese nationalism, and finally the agonizing struggle for accommodation of the last few years. Earlier this year, Jayewardene was asked why he had not moved more quickly to meet Tamil demands. The President shrugged: It was, he said, "lack of intelligence, lack of courage, lack of foresight on my part".

"For the last 20 years, there has been some discrimination" Jayewardene acknowledged in a recent conversation at Ward Place a spacious bungalow in a fashionable

ble Colombo neighborhood. The house, surrounded by mango trees and frangipani shrubs, has been his family home for more than 50 years. "We have corrected these defects. Of course there were difficulties of implementation—there always are. But the Tamils were in too great hurry. They were always being pushed from behind by the terrorists, who for no reason began to kill."

The son of an eminent jurist, Jayewardene, who was called Dick as young man, was a scholarly boy who played tennis and cricket, studied history and won many prizes for oratory.

In 1977, Jayewardene ran for Prime Minister, promising to revitalize the economy by restoring free enterprise and investment. His victory marked the first time a single party had achieved an absolute majority of the vote. He took advantage of his margin of victory by changing the Constitution, assuming the new position of President in 1978, and winning re-election by popular vote in 1982.

Jayewardene's critics say he exacerbated the country's divisions by blocking a new parliamentary election and, instead, pushing through a voter referendum that will keep in place the Parliament elected in 1977 until at least 1989. Although he claimed the referendum was essential because leftists were plotting to overthrow the Government, there were widespread charges of vote rigging, and many diplomats say the President simply seized on Sri Lanka's turmoil as an excuse to subvert the country's once-lively democratic processes.

To bring an end to Sri Lanka's conflict, Jayewardene had to recognize the reality of India's involvement. For years, Sri Lanka had complained that India had provided sanctuary for and even training to the soldiers of the major Tamil insurgent organizations at bases in south India. The compla-

int that India had provided sanctuary for and even training to the soldiers of the major Tamil insurgent organizations at bases in south India. The complaints were ignored, partly because the aspirations of Sri Lankan Tamils have long enjoyed great sympathy in the huge southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu and its capital, Madras. According to reports in the Indian press: years ago, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi seeking to shore up her own political support in Tamil Nadu, had authorized Indian intelligence agencies to assist the Tamils directly.

After Mrs. Gandhi was assassinated in 1984, her son and successor realized that the Sri Lankan insurgency might threaten the stability of southern India itself. Rajiv Gandhi had reason to be apprehensive about the possibility of an Indian-supported separatist movement succeeding in Sri Lanka. Among other things, his own attacks on Pakistan for supposedly aiding Sikh separatists in India began to look increasingly hollow as New Delhi uneasily rode the back of the Tigers.

In 1985, Gandhi declared that he was unequivocally opposed to the establishment of Tamil Eelam, and pledged to try to mediate a political compromise. The talks among the Tigers and Sri Lankan and Indian officials sputtered along for two years, gradually narrowing disagreements about how the island should be governed.

Last summer, the sudden success of the Sri Lankan Army forced India's hand. After years of military bumbling, the 30,000-man military had transformed itself—with some training and other assistance from several Western countries, including Israel—into an effective fighting force that for the first time seemed capable of achieving a military solution to the conflict.

During the last year, the Government forces managed to drive the Liberation Tigers out of much of the north and into the Jaffna Peninsula.

Last spring, Sri Lanka decided to try to finish the job, attacking the Tigers with helicopters and planes. In India, defenders of the Tamils cited news reports that hundreds of civilians were being killed, and accused Jayewardene of committing genocide. Gandhi intervened, airlifting 25 tons of food to besieged Tamil areas—in effect signalling Jayewardene that India intended to prevent him from crushing the the Tigers by force.

The Indian action created a major crisis in Jayewardene's Cabinet. Hardliners demanded the Sri Lankan Army continue the assault on Jaffna. Doves warned that might provoke an Indian invasion. The Sri Lankan Army chief of staff feared India might ship shoulder-launched antiaircraft missiles to the guerrillas, letting them shoot down Sri Lankan planes and helicopters. Without air cover, he said, Sri Lanka would have to abandon its effort to oust the Tigers from Jaffna.

Presiding over a fractious Government, Jayewardene seized Gandhi's offer to work out a compromise. "I don't mind giving in to India, I could not give in to Prabakaran," he retailed, referring to the Tamil guerrilla leader.

Under the accord signed by Gandhi and Jayewardene last July 29, Sri Lanka agreed to grant greater political autonomy, including some local control of police and security forces, to Tamil areas in the north and east. In return, India persuaded the guerrillas to begin surrendering their weapons to the Indian Army.

But Sinhalese extremists were furious at what they saw as the de facto creation of Tamil Eelam. As Gandhi reviewed troops on a visit to Colombo in July, a Sinhalese sailor tried to club the Indian Prime Minister with the butt of his rifle. A few weeks later, the bomb exploded in the Sri Lankan Parliament.

Government authorities blame the resurgent People's Liberation Front, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, for the Sinhalese reaction. The front appears to have dropped its old Marxist rhetoric and taken up a nationalistic credo of Sinhalese identity under siege. According to Sri Lankan officials, the front has a wide following among trade union members, students, Buddhist monks, policemen and soldiers.

Despite the threat of Sinhalese reprisals, Jayewardene persuaded Parliament to fulfill the accord with India by granting limited political autonomy to Tamil areas. Whether the president can succeed in calming the Sinhalese majority, and quieting the misgivings in his own Cabinet, now depends on the Indian Army — and whether it can enforce peace in the north and east, then leave the island quickly.

The accord had one fatal shortcoming — it was never signed by the only party in a position to guarantee its success, the Tamil guerrillas. Prabhakaran called it a "stab in the back," even while he pledged to turn over his weapons to the Indian Army. He felt compelled to yield to India's considerable leverage — its ability to cut the rebels' supply lines, as well as Gandhi's promises of protection for the Tigers.

In September, the accord broke down. The Sri Lanka Navy, patrolling north of the island, stopped a suspicious-looking boat and found 17 heavily armed Tigers on board.

The Government charged that because these Tigers had not disarmed, they were not entitled to amnesty and must be conveyed to the prison camps in the south for interrogation. Among the guerrillas was a long-sought prize — the alleged master-mind of the massacre of 127 bus passengers in April. Rather than face what they said would be "certain torture" in the south, all 17 Tigers

swallowed their cyanide capsules. Twelve died. To Prabhakaran, their suicide was dramatic proof of India's failure to protect his men. The Tigers resumed their attacks on civilians, then began attacking Indian soldiers.

Gandhi knew that his army must respond, or else Jayewardene would order the Indian troops from the island. Gandhi authorized his army to disarm the Tigers by force — only to discover the limits of such force in a guerrilla conflict.

Already this fall, more than 250 Indian soldiers have been killed and nearly 1,000 wounded. The guerrillas strike, then melt away. Their losses have been serious, but they remain able to attack throughout the island. "It will take years for the Indian Army to round us up," a guerrilla leader boasted recently.

India, meanwhile, is learning the necessity of winning over hearts and minds, and developing an alternative civilian Tamil leadership willing to stand up to "the boys." Both tasks are proving extremely difficult.

The Tamil public seems to feel resentment toward the Indian Army; toward the Tigers they seem to feel a mixture of intimidation and respect. Tamil politicians say that though the Tigers might not win an election, they are widely admired as heroes whose stubbornness and sacrifices ultimately protected Tamil rights. Moderate Tamil politicians are thus reluctant to freeze them out of the process. And if they tried, they know they might be killed.

"We must face the fact that the Tigers can carry on their guerrilla war for a long time," said Appapillai Amirthalingam, leader of the Tamil moderates. "The only hope is for them to join in a political settlement. Instead, Prabhakaran has overplayed his hand. He has brought this tragic situation on all of us."

Yes despite India's early offer to let the Tigers dominate an interim administration and even to oversee elections, Prabhakaran continues to fight. After years of ruthless combat, years of hiding underground, the solitary guerrilla leader, many people say, has come to distrust politics and fear for his life. He knows that rival guerrilla groups have targeted him for assassination. A journalist close to Prabhakaran called him a "haunted man" trapped by a "paranoid" vision of the world.

"He sees the ghosts of his own men who died for a cause he cannot betray," said the journalist, "and he sees the ghosts of the men he has killed who want revenge."

Today vengeful ghosts are everywhere in Sri Lanka, perhaps the carnage could have been prevented; perhaps, had the moderates compromised earlier, they might not have lost control of events to the extremists, whose killings gave birth to the revenge-tragedy, which continues to feed on itself.

How long can it go on? whether New Delhi can sustain its involvement in Sri Lanka has become a matter of debate throughout South Asia, where India's other small neighbours watch with growing apprehension. Despite the heavy losses in men, Indians appear to support their country's intervention. Even in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, opinion polls show that the people want the Tigers to accept the sovereignty of their island nation.

Still, it is possible to imagine that Sri Lanka will be permanently wounded. Already, people are whispering the unthinkable — that India may be unable to leave for many years, that it could finish by annexing the north and east of the island, following the precedent set by the ancient south Indian kingdoms that invaded the island more than 1,500 years ago.

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MacBride, man of action, man of peace

Terence de Vere White

With the death of Sean MacBride, the final footnote is written to years's lament.

"Romantic Ireland's dead and gone."

It's with O'Leary in the grave."

Born in Paris on January 27, 1904, Sean MacBride was the son of John MacBride, one of the executed leaders of the Easter Rising of 1916, and of Maud Goono, whom Yeats immortalised.

He was christened in Ireland and given the name Seagan, then was whisked back to Paris. According to his mother, "MacBride and English law make it impossible for me to have him in Ireland until he is old enough to defy both." Acrimonious and long drawn-out divorce proceedings were the cause of the trouble.

After her husband's execution — when, for his son's sake, she assumed his name — one of the obstacles to the boy's presence in Ireland was removed.

Sean MacBride, by his own account, was in prison in 1918 — but not for long. His mother was that year in detention, and he spent school holidays with Yeats in Galway.

"A gentle and solitary boy" was Yeats's verdict. Ezra Pound who met him then, detected the worst of Irish monomania.

When de Valera sent a delegation to London in 1921 to negotiate a treaty with the British, MacBride, age 17, travelled with the team as *aide-de-camp* to Michael Collins, but in the Civil War of the following year he was fighting with the treaty's opponents.

At University College, where he studied law and was active in debate, he eluded police attentions. For 20, as an IRA member, he was at war with the British and successive Irish national governments. When Kevin O'Higgins, Minister for Justice, was murdered in June 1927 MacBride was among the arrested suspects.

De Valera then entered the Dail (parliament), severing his links with the IRA. MacBride remained, and when there was an ideological split aligned himself with the commander-in-chief, Maurice Twomey, a traditional republican.

MacBride was called to the Irish Bar in 1937, and in 1943 was admitted to the Inner Bar. In 1947 he founded Clann na Poblachta, the Republican party and won an impressive victory in a Co Dublin by-election. The next year he became Minister for External Affairs.

He was president of the Council of Europe in 1950, vice-president of the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation from 1948-1951, and political adviser to President N'Krumah in Ghana on the formation of the Organisation of African Unity. At the United Nations he became Assistant Secretary General and Commissioner for Namibia (1973-7).

MacBride shared his mother's compassion for political prisoners, and the most lasting monument to his concern is Amnesty International, which he cofounded. He shared the Nobel Peace Prize in 1974. The Lenin International Prize for Peace was but one of the many honours received in his later years, away from Ireland.

There was nothing Irish about the outer man. As a speaker he was plodding, and he had no literary bent. He shared his moth-

er's liking for mystery, but lacked her instinct for theatre. He worked hard, and worked his staff hard. He attained an eminence different from that which he envisaged in his dreaming youth.

Sean MacBride married Catalina Bulfin in 1926. They had a son and a daughter.

Sri Lanka...

(Continued from page 17)

The Tigers, too, are haunted by this history, seeing themselves as fulfilling the destiny of other ancient Tamil rulers in Sri Lanka — just as the Sinhalese look on themselves as heirs to their kingdoms of old.

It is a paradox that what hope there remains in Sri Lanka may spring from a new spirit of national identity that has been spurred on by India's intervention. In private and in public, Tamils and Sinhalese agree on one thing — they don't want to be dominated by India. One even hears a kind of perverse pride voiced by many Sinhalese in the Tamil guerrillas' fierce resistance to the Indian Army.

How could peace be secured in Sri Lanka? Economic development must somehow be shared more equitably, avoiding the overlay of feudalism and caste; a national culture must be nurtured that threatens neither people.

But, finally, the only way Sri Lanka will achieve unity is by revising its view of history, by somehow rescuing the future from the gravitational pull of the past.

(Concluded)

The crisis of Sri Lankan intelligentsia

Ajith Samaranayake

But what these comments reveal is that in spite of the breast beatings and the feelings of guilt the western-educated elite which at this time was beginning to adjust themselves to the new bi-lingual milieu saw themselves as being still capable of playing a meaningful role. They saw themselves as an initially estranged intelligentsia which had to establish more meaningful ties with the people but after having accomplished that a segment which would be capable of bringing new currents of knowledge and thinking to the people, as intellectual leaders of society somewhat akin to Lenin's concept of the dedicated intellectual who would have to bring a proletarian consciousness into the working class stepped in a trade union consciousness.

But how true is such a role today 26 years after? During these over two decades we have witnessed not only a challenge by insurgent Sinhala forces but also a challenge by Tamil insurgent forces to the Establishment of the day. If the western-educated elite saw itself ideally as a secular, rationalist and humanistic intelligentsia which could rally the nation round itself this is no longer the reality today. It has become fragmented and polarised, almost bifurcated into two antagonistic and hostile forces—the remnants of the liberal radical intelligentsia still upholding the old secular values and a new virulently aggressive populist intelligentsia proclaiming the superiority of native values conditioned by a Sinhala Buddhist ethos. But it looks almost as if both segments of this old intelligentsia are becoming irrelevant as far as the insurgent youth movements on both sides of the communal barricades are concerned. Do the old liberal values or for that matter the old Marxist values of proletarian internationalism mean anything to this new generation of Sinhala and Tamil youth? What concept of the society, government and the world do they have when they

proclaim the necessity for a one-party state as the LTTE does or hark back to the golden age of the Sinhalese as the JVP does? These are questions that those who today have made it a fashion to proclaim the necessity for returning to liberal democratic values and advocate holding General Elections as the cure for our multiple ills would do well to ponder. Is this enough by itself or do we not need more fundamental socio-political and economic changes which would mean making drastic inroads into the privileges enjoyed by the so called upper middle class intellectuals or those who exhibit their punditry on rentier incomes?

Even if we take the programme sketched out by Godfrey Gnanatilleke earlier can we say that the western-educated and laconic bi-lingual intelligentsia which has played such a dominant role in the mental life of the nation were able to play a more meaningful role in later years? Did they play a sufficient role in educating the almost exclusively Sinhala-educated generation? Were enough works translated from English into Sinhala, 'a series of popular Swabhasha introductions to modern thought, a selective translation of the classics,' as Mr. Gnanatilleke put it? Or was this intelligentsia only concerned with preserving their privileges and perpetuating them to their own children only, while keeping the larger mono-lingual generation in a sub-culture of darkness? Aren't the spectres which have now risen from that sub-culture and are haunting the sleep of these pundits and mandarins the creations of this intellectual monopoly?

Perhaps this is the best place for a comment on the tragic disruption of the western-educated elite or the nucleus in however unsatisfactory a manner of a Sri Lankan intelligentsia as it was conceived in the 1960's. There is no point in pretending that there was ever a homogeneous Sri Lankan nation. That myth was blasted long before independence. The principle of 'divide and rule' was certainly a pernicious

patrimony which we received from the British but how easily our own elite fell victim to colonialist machination. From the original sin of the Pan-Sinhala Cabinet to the call for 50-50, from the short-lived co-existence of Sinhala and Tamil Cabinet Ministers in the first Government to the scintillating cry for federalism, from the passive Satyagraha campaign of the Tamil people in the 1950's subsequently transformed into a campaign of violence in the face of majority terror—this is the sad and tragic tale of intolerance, alienation between communities and finally the collapse of the old secular intelligentsia.

In that sense the tragedy of the Sinhalese and the Tamils is the same. Just as the Marxist political elite of the Sinhala community continued to repose faith in the system of parliamentary democracy the Tamil leadership too used to cling to the forms and institutions of an open society even in the face of the assaults which their campaign for the Tamil people's rights had received from ostensibly democratic Governments. It was the explosion of these fond hopes quite manifestly at the hands of both the SLFP Government of 1970-77 and the present UNP Government which paved the way for the rise of a militant youth movement rejecting the established leadership and even the best elements of an open society. Just as southern insurgency with its substitution of the gun for civilised discourse is a product of the breakdown of society the LTTE with its adherence to the same is a parallel development in an area of the country where the 'radjan curtain,' the product of journalistic stereotype, has become an intractable reality due to a failure of vision of the contemporary leadership.

I shall not attempt the great exercise in analysis which seeks to find out which came first—the hen or the egg—Sinhala and Tamil nationalism fed on each other although there were qualitative differences between the two as majority and minority nationalisms. I shall only say that the commonality of outlook which

existed between at least the liberal-minded intelligentsias of the two communities was disrupted only recently. In fact there were Sinhala intellectuals who in private admitted to an admiration of the LTTE at a time when its attacks were directed at the state which was perceived as being more and more authoritarian. The tide began turning only after the LTTE's openly chauvinistic stance and its attacks on Sinhala civilian communities.

Now, of course, virulent Tamil chauvinism is met by virulent Sinhala chauvinism. There is the attempt to project a Sinhala-Buddhist ethos, restore the Sangha to a leadership role and give respectability to Sinhala neo-nationalism.

In the face of this rise of nationalism, both liberal as well as Marxist values which have hitherto held society together, are becoming irrelevant. As far as Sinhala nationalism is concerned there is a convergence between the old and the new. Traditionally Sinhala nationalism has been conditioned by patriots like Anagarika Dharmapala and Piyadasa Sirisena who sought to restore both the progressive as well as the regressive values of Buddhism and nationalism. Today too there is a new breed of intellectuals who seek to give respectability to that whole intellectual package. The institution of the Maha Sangha is being projected as the ultimate saviours of the nation quite oblivious to the process of social differentiation within its ranks. The jargon of science and Marxism is being used to justify and invest with respectability the new obscurantism.

What did liberalism, secular values, western education and even Marxism—that whole cherished heritage of the post-independence intelligentsia—mean to a young man growing up in Jaffna in the mid-1970's the time when the militant movement was born. I remember once on a visit to Kandy stepping into the Boys Scouts Headquarters there where the Sansoni Commission was then sitting. The witness that day was former Superintendent of Police Chandrasekera who was SP Jaffna during

a turbulent time which included the tragedy with which the Tamil Research Conference culminated. He described vividly his encounters with Sivakumaran, the fore-runner of the Tamil youth who have today taken to arms and to whom a statue was put up after his suicide in the custody of Mr. Chandrasekera's Police, again the fore-runner to the cyanide suicides of the contemporary Tamil youth movement. What did the whole post-independence intellectual baggage mean to Sivakumaran whom SP Chandrasekera described as an intelligent young man. In fact he said that he had tried to draw the young man out and get to the bottom of his feelings. Listening to his evidence one got the feeling that it was like something out of a Kestler novel, perhaps 'Darkness at Noon,' perhaps 'Arrival and Departure.' What did liberalism, democracy and secular values mean to an intelligent young man in Jaffna in the mid-1970's, shut out of the university due to some new-fangled scheme of standardisation?

When the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna first emerged it was almost compulsory for this older intelligentsia to portray them as shallow and witless youth, either bucolic or plebeian, who knew nothing of the great Marxist traditions and were led by their nose by Rohana Wijeweera. But who was responsible for this impoverishment of the intellect and the sensibility? During the spacious and leisurely 1950's it was not difficult for either the Marxist intelligentsia or the Peradeniya centred aesthetic intelligentsia to imbibe the new thinking from western sources. But in the contracting world of the 1960's, the world of the 'asava vidyalaya,' as the older privileged class called the new temple of learning at the Race Course with an appropriate horse laugh, intellectual impoverishment and the enthronement of clichés and slogans became the new ideology. Who was responsible for this? Was it the students or the politicians who desperately sought to expand and thereby dilute university education and their academic collaborators?

It seems to me that there is a definite gulf between this older intelligentsia—whether it is liberal Marxist or nationalist—and the emerging young and those who have sought to express their opposition to the prevailing system through the gun. It appears to me that there is little likelihood of this generation accepting the leadership the older elite. I do not know enough about contemporary Tamil literature but I do not think that there is anything in Sinhala literature except perhaps for a few scattered poems in news papers which is capable of telling us why so many young people today are rejecting the established values and joining radical movements which aim to overthrow the prevailing order by means of violence. What we have as protest poetry are the poems written in the 1970's by those who have now comfortably settled into their own grooves in a kind of sub-establishment, those who in the 1970's themselves were not that young and who were romantically inspired by the abortive revolt of 1971. In fact it will be an interesting sociological study to see how many of these angry young men are now successful academics, administrators and higher-level school teachers.

What relationship has the emerging young to this older elite? I shall illustrate with an example. Some months ago the teenage son of a friend of mine joined the JVP. He had left behind a letter and left home. My friend is a school teacher and a journalist of left inclinations. He says that his son hardly spoke at home. Is there here merely an estrangement between generations or is there something more? What does either the liberal intellectual tradition or the great Marxist tradition mean to that teenager, the muddled product of the new electronic culture? The generation is a product of the television and the cartoon book, the synthetic world of the all-powerful hero who can never be conquered. What does literature or the old literary culture mean to this generation? Has the electronic age already inculcated its own morality in them?

As the discussion at the Community Institute in 1962 demonstrated the western-educated elite although wracked by guilt and their position somewhat undermined by the rising Swabhasha tide yet conceived for themselves a meaningful role in the affairs of this country. It was an elite drawn from both the Sinhala and Tamil communities and animated by values situated within a common intellectual tradition. But that common and unifying tradition does not exist any more. The Tamil segment of the intelligentsia has become radicalised in the direction of nationalism by their own experience of oppression. It is difficult to believe that the scars caused by the last few years beginning with the infamous July 1983 when even some of the Cabinet Ministers who have been hailed as great liberals, intellectuals and custodians of various traditions now, had no word of sympathy for the battered and violated Tamil community, can be healed soon. On top of this cleavage within the intelligentsia we find the young turning away from dialogue and discourse and finding refuge in instruments with which no dialogue is possible. Can we afford to dismiss them as a witless rabble and go back to our esoteric preoccupations?

So far I have attempted to sketch in very briefly several of the more important phases, movements and tendencies which have gone into the formation of the Sri Lankan intelligentsia from the dawn of independence.

I said at the outset that I will try to examine to what extent the intelligentsia have been able to generate ideas conducive to the social good and to what extent these ideas have been able to influence events. In the ultimate analysis any such influence has to be measured by the political and social developments which have been produced and how wholesome they have been from the point of view of the nation. In this respect, of course, the picture is depressing. Obviously the most far-reaching idea which has influenced post-independence politics has been nationalism in both its Sinhala and Tamil manifestations (we are now seeing the emergence of a

militant Islamic nationalism as well) and it is the tragic products of these rival nationalisms which we see today. Not only has the intelligentsia being incapable of checking these developments but it has been by and large thrown into moral confusion by the emergence of these forces.

During these last four decades of independence the intelligentsia has on the whole taken up two attitudes towards politics and the political leaderships to whom the country's destinies have been entrusted. With perhaps the exception of the Marxists they have either recoiled from politics, seeing it as a dirty game not for life-white intellectual souls, or taken up the position that it was the job of the politicians to govern while they (the intellectuals) would keep the administration and the professions going. The first attitude is personified by the rather dim and colourless protagonist of Ediriweera Sarachandra's novel 'Heta Echchara Karuwala Na' (later translated by the author himself as 'Curfew and the Full Moon') who is suddenly thrust into the 1971 insurrection while taking a batch of Peradeniya University archaeological students on a blameless expedition to, if I remember correct, Polonnaruwa. The second attitude was represented by a participant at the 'Community' discussion Chandran Chinnappa who argued that it was not the western-elite which had failed but the political leadership. Dr. Chinnappa (who is a scientist) argued: 'A lot of us, particularly those who are technically qualified, have no power. This kind of work has to be initially started and provision made for development by the people who govern, the ruling elite. The people who govern have been, I think, bad governors. I don't think this was a failure of the western educated elite, rather it is bad government which is responsible for what did not happen after the British withdrew.'

The intelligentsia therefore was largely satisfied with allowing the politicians to run the country and the politicians as we know have been sadly lacking in ideas. They have been greatly enamoured of the cliché and the slogan, the shop-soiled ideology and the thread-

bare philosophy. Again with the exception of the left there has been little thinking among the political parties about a programme of economic development, social re-construction and cultural regeneration. One can think of a few examples like that of the late G. V. S. de Silva who worked in collaboration with Philip Gunawardena to draw up the Paddy Lands Act as instances of fruitful collaboration between intellectual and politician but these are exceptions which are moreover explained by their peculiar circumstances.

Politics in Sri Lanka has been largely devoid of ideology. While the intellectual vacuity of the Right has been notorious the Left has never enjoyed the power to implement their ideas except in collaboration with centrist and populist parties. The dominant political leaderships have been marked by a parochiality of approach, a portliness of intellect and a poverty of vision, soil on which a politics of back-door deals, skulduggery and manoeuvring have flourished.

Therefore when the most profound moral and intellectual crisis of contemporary times burst upon the country the intelligentsia no less than the people were taken by complete surprise and thrown into confusion.

Except for a few civil rights groups, left political parties and concerned individuals there was little resistance to the centralisation of power in an Executive President which is at the root of the present crisis. The intelligentsia watched without a murmur the emasculation of Parliament, the stifling of dissident opinion, the rise of private hit squads and later private armies, the use of political thuggery and intimidation, the witch hunts unleashed against opponents and finally, as the supreme salute to the consolidation of intolerance, highbrow-bashing. Intellectuals were vilified and insulted, it became common to brand critics as subversives, Marxists and trouble-makers. Petty political commissars grown arrogant by the patronage and protection of their masters were unleashed on any

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

S. Sathananthan

The Post-Colonial State and Oligarchic Rule

At the time of legal Independence in the conquered colony of Sri Lanka, the change from colonialism to Independence was a 'non-violent' process, which meant that the colonial State was not smashed. Instead, it was preserved: the State Council was renamed the House of Representatives, which, like its predecessor, remained a graft on top of the authoritarian State inherited from colonialism. If Herring was not taken in by this political jugglery and peered behind the liberal facade, erected with ballot boxes at the time of Independence, he could not have missed the fact that oligarchic rule was the substance of the new 'liberal' State; as Halliday has emphasised: 'Senanayake's regime was run by a family clique whose corrupt nepotism had few parallels anywhere else in the world outside perhaps the monarchies of Saudi Arabia or Ethiopia. Thus, D. S. Senanayake himself was not only Prime Minister, but Minister of Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs; his son Dudley Senanayake was Minister of Agriculture; his nephew John Kotelawala was Minister of Commerce; his cousin J. R. Jayewardene was Minister of Finance; while another nephew, R. G. Senanayake, subsequently became Minister of Trade. The only prominent member of the UNP Cabinet not integrated into the nexus of 'family bandyism' by kinship to Senanayake senior was Mr. S. W. Bandaranaike, who held the important portfolio of Local Administration' (Halliday, 1975: 164). Prime Ministers who succeeded Mr. D. S. Senanayake were Mr. Dudley Senanayake (UNP), Sir John Kotelawala (UNP), Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike (SLFP) and Mrs. Srimaya Bandaranaike (SLFP) in that order; whilst Mr. J. R. Jayewardene (UNP) became Prime Minister in 1977 and is the current President. Thus political power has remained in the hands of a relatively small group (with the

exception of Mr. W. Dahanayake, who was Prime Minister of a Caretaker Government) during the post-colonial period; and the United National Party and Sri Lanka Freedom Party were 'personalistic and dynastic' and 'it is far more accurate to describe Sri Lanka's politics as that of families' (Ponnambalam, 1961: 176). The 'two-party system' served, on the one hand, as a channel of access to political power for the warring factions within the oligarchy and on the other hand, to mask this oligarchic rule.

To ignore these major historical developments is to suffer an extreme form of 'cultural myopia' and to deny the specific character of the post-colonial State in Sri Lanka, and in South Asia as a whole as argued by Alavi (1973 and 1975), as crucially distinct from the liberal States of Western Europe and North America.

Finally, from the standpoint of empirical evaluation, Herring made an extraordinary claim: this fact that liberal States frequently bolt in practice their legitimating ideology (of *laissez faire*), more so in some spheres than others is undeniable but unimportant for this analysis'. Riggs at least attempted to account for the disparity between the formal and the substantive by inventing the Prismatic Model of bureaucracy, although he denied the historical specificity of the post-colonial State on the spurious argument that 'in the long run, the same changes result with or without conquest' (Riggs, 1964: 49).

But for Herring, a State which satisfied the normative features of a liberal democratic State could be defined as such, even if it accepted them and paid lip service to them merely as an ideal. The historical roots in a colonial State and the political reality of oligarchic rule and attendant authoritarianism, must not be allowed to shatter the illusion of liberal-democracy.

The objective reality, however, unfolds driven by its own inexorable logic.

Authoritarianism Today

An early pointer to the persistence of authoritarian practices, inherited from colonial rule, was the retention of the colonial system of district administration, centralised in each district in the office of the Government Agent (GA) who reported directly to his Minister in Colombo. The underlying authoritarian impulses were brought to the surface by the 1953 Hartal, which led to the resignation of the Prime Minister, Dudley Senanayake. In the wake of this political crisis, most representatives of the oligarchy demanded a 'strong' leader in the country to fight the 'communist menace' and Sir John Kotelawala emerged as the new Prime Minister and crusader for the 'free world' (Hansard, Vol. 16, 1953: 1091).

A further instance of the continuing process of concentration of power was the introduction of Sinhala language as the official language in 1956. Because most mainstream political scientists were engrossed with the 'ethnic' dimension of this change, they failed to grasp the fact that an important reason for declaring Sinhala as the sole official language was to restrict the access to State apparatuses (bureaucracy, judiciary and armed services in particular) and, therefore, to State power for the Tamil-speaking faction of the oligarchy. By this tactic, State power was concentrated more and more in the hands of the Sinhala-speaking faction of the oligarchy. This undermined the capacity of the Tamil oligarchy to negotiate an acceptable political solution to the national question and, consequently, laid the foundation for the demand for a separate State, Eelam, by Tamils.

For a time, the rule by Sinhalese oligarchy through a bureaucratic-authoritarian State was masked by the populist rhetoric of democratic socialism, which was given a Buddhist flavour and presented to the country as the 'middle path' policies of the SLFP. But the organised racial attacks against Tamil populations in 1958 and the assassination of the Prime Minister (Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike) in the same year underlined the fact that liberal-democracy was more an illusion in Sri Lanka.

Challenges to State power by the abortive military coup of 1962 and the Insurrection of 1971 served to justify the steady concentration of power, through the republican constitutions of 1972 and 1978 and led to an absolute increase in the size of the armed forces and to a relative increase in its strength vis-à-vis other State apparatuses. More systematically organised pogroms against Tamils in 1977, 1979, 1981 and particularly in July 1983 together with the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution politically marginalised the Tamil oligarchy and further concentrated power in the hands of the Sinhalese oligarchy. The Prevention of Terrorism Act enhanced the powers of the State and the channels for expressing non-violent dissent were correspondingly emasculated. A predictable consequence was the growing preference for the use of armed resistance and terrorism (both State and individual) as instruments of political participation during the late 1970s and the 1980s.

Confronted with the reality of an authoritarian State, and being incapable of carrying out an analysis historically, mainstream political scientists continued to assume that there existed liberal democracy and explained the current reality as the 'crisis of liberal democracy'; and reached the conclusion that liberal democracy was being undermined. Since the assumption has little basis in fact the conclusion is equally illusory.

Therefore, the recommendation that electoral processes ought to be revitalised in order to strengthen liberal democracy is of little relevance.

What is relevant is the fact that in Sri Lanka, British colonialism revived the pre-capitalist social classes who, in return, collaborated with the British to stabilise the colonial State (Roberts 1973). As a result, pro-capitalist social structures and ideology remained dominant; and society neither gave rise to an independent and dynamic bourgeoisie nor produced a bourgeois democratic revolution. In other words Sri Lanka lacked the social base for liberal-democracy.

It follows that liberal-democracy never did, and still cannot, take root in the Sri Lankan social formation. In the absence of a strong bourgeoisie, the historic task before us is to lay the foundation for a national-democratic transformation.

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The crisis...

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body who dared to be critical of the status quo.

The intelligentsia was helpless to check these developments either because they had been silent and docile for too long or because they had been subtly locked into the status quo. Political leaders and intellectuals who were capable of resistance were silent because of Old School loyalties to those in power or other strange ties. After politicians were silenced by the granting of favours and reduced to court jesters by conferring them with high-sounding but meaningless office. A school of intellectuals and writers, drawn from minor men of letters and other such pseudo-intellectual hangers-on, emerged to felicitate the new ruling class. With the acceleration of the racial conflict and the shattering of the remnants of the old secular intelligentsia the situation was even more aggravated. The polarisation of the

intelligentsia was complete and it only remained for the ambitious and the opportunistic to climb the bandwagon after having repudiated their old loyalties.

The crisis of the intelligentsia therefore is a crisis of conviction and an abysmal failure to influence the political leadership by mobilising themselves as an independent intelligentsia and the bearers of healthy social and moral values. While one section of the intelligentsia was quite satisfied to occupy its ivory tower others were happily grovelling in the political market place. Now both sections have been thrust into the vortex of national crisis and societal collapse.

The intelligentsia has been reduced to pathetic helplessness before the power of the mighty state. It is quite another matter that the state itself, weighed down under the load of its self-defeating authoritarianism, is now convulsed by internal contradictions. The intelligentsia had no hand in bringing these contradictions to a head.

It is a tragic commentary on the present intellectual condition that there should be a sudden nostalgia for the lost values such as liberalism, parliamentary democracy etc. even while the darkness is closing in around us. The true test of the intelligentsia in the coming period will be its ability to resist any further inroads on the people's rights and attempts to seduce them (that is the intelligentsia) into subservience by further blandishments and the use of intellectual middle-men who are today busily trying to salvage the tattered and tarnished images of some politicians.

The politicians can not be faulted for attempting to perpetuate themselves in power because that is their ultimate end. The people are disorganised, confused and helpless. It is only the intelligentsia who can face up to and resist the authoritarian forces, the barbarians at the gates. If they fail in that the present crisis will be compounded by betrayal, the ultimate act of treason against the people.

(Concluded)

Botham for boys

Vic Marks

HIGH WIDE AND HANDSOME.
The story of a very special year.
by Frank Keating (Collins Willow)

The guardian has developed a sound tradition of employing writers sympathetic to the cricketers' lot. John Arlott, as President of the Cricketers' Association, has often demonstrated his concern and compassion at our union as well as in print. And last winter Matthew Engel was less hysterical than most during the Caribbean campaign (though I must voice a reservation here since he once defined the English winter as a time "when, somewhere in the sun-blessed old empire, someone is hitting Vic Marks for six"). Having read *High, Wide and Handsome*, a recollection of Ian Botham's six-hitting jamboree of 1985, I can now, add Frank Keating's name to the list. But it emerges from the book that I'm not the only one who approves of Guardian correspondents, for we learn the startling fact that there are some cricket writers whom Ian admires greatly and his list "always starts with John Arlott."

This is the more surprising since I've rarely spotted Ian marching into the dressing room with a Guardian tucked under his arm. He usually prefers to see what he's written in the Sun. However, I'm certain that the jottings of Messrs Engel, Selvey and Keating would find him nodding agreement rather more vigorously than those on the editorial pages.

Frank Keating travelled with Ian on the traumatic West Indies tour of 1980-1 and witnessed his attempts as captain to overcome the devastation caused by Ken Barrington's death, the Jackson affair, not to mention Marshall, Holding, Garner and Roberts. There he saw Ian stretched to his limits; sometimes they occupied

neighbouring bar stools into the early hours to try to make sense of it all.

Keating recognises that sportsmen are men not machines: they are sensitive, vulnerable, and flawed; that's probably why he likes them. Not that he is anxious to concentrate on Botham's flaws. Plenty of other journalists have done that, though he does acknowledge that he can appear "boorish, aggravating, aggressive, mulishly stubborn, and very short-fused." Many friends have charged him thus. By the same token they have never once hesitated to marvel at his loyalty, generosity, courage, or sportsmanship. All true. Ian has never claimed to be an angel, but his sheer zest for life demands affection.

One of his attractions is that he obviously needs company and friendship whether it be Australian Test captain Alan Border, Elton John or down-to-earth county keeper Trevor Gard — "It wouldn't be the same if Trevor wasn't next to me, cup of tea steaming, his trusty old pipe billowing smoke as he churns over the phrasing of his latest and usually useless words of wisdom."

One of the difficulties of writing a book about Botham is that it's so quickly out of date, but never mind; there will be three more by the end of the year. No such problem with the likes of Dennis Amis; you just add another 1,800 runs to his career aggregate while the printers are at work.

However, Botham's life moves more swiftly. For instance Tim Hudson (an unlikely charmer, way out and not in, a "one-off larky hedonist" and "a family friend as well as an agent and manager") has disappeared from the scene, and instead of hurtling in at Gavaskar these days Ian is probably bowling at his eight-year-old Liant — a world of difference even if these two adversaries are the same height.

Also Ian's assessment of the Ashes winning side — "This lot make up the best English side I've ever played with" — no longer tallies with current Fleet Street opinion. I'm not even sure if P&H is that confident.

Nonetheless *High, Wide and Handsome* has a lasting worth as a celebration of Botham, the Boys' Own hero on the cricket field. It's about time someone concentrated on that aspect of his life. The book is liberally sprinkled with assessments from fellow cricketers from Richard Hadlee to last year's schoolboy debutant Jonathan Atkinson. All are fulsome in their praise of the man and the awesome power of his hitting.

In between, Frank Keating has lovingly and entertainingly filled in the details to produce a record "for any great grandchild to digest." He places Botham as the cricketer colossus of his age, just as Grace and Bradman were in theirs and few of us can argue with that.

In the 21st century when we're grumpily bemoaning England's middle order we'll be able to take refuge in Keating's tribute and the humiliation of the Australians. However, I confess that the Somerset sections of the book left me rather confused, for as Ian strides out at Taunton in 1985 to smash another century against Marshall or Lever I keep expecting Somerset to win, but we never do.

The Liberal...

(Continued from page 23)

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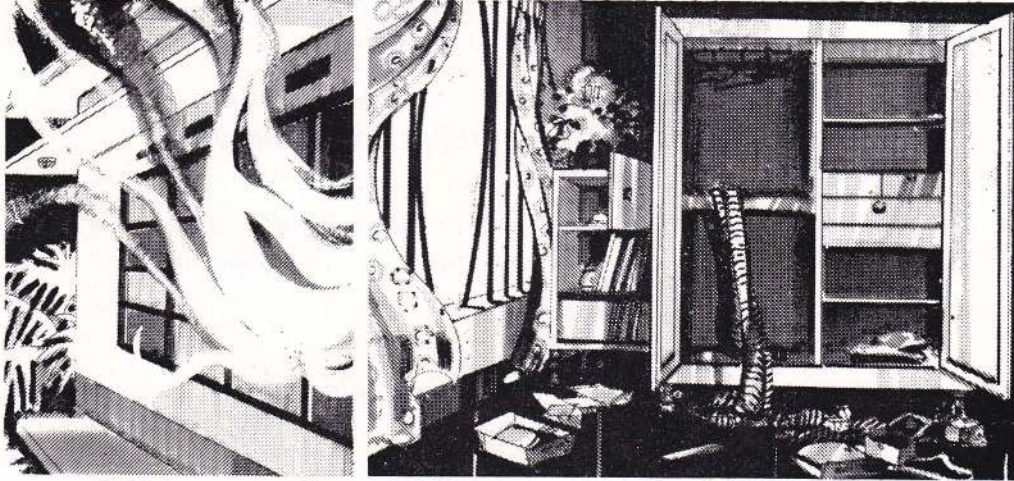
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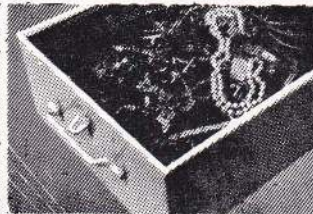
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