

LANKA

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Goodbye to the Indemnity Bill

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SECOND THOUGHTS

The approach of elections concentrates the politician's mind. When polls come close, can second (and sobering) thoughts be far behind? In the past fortnight both the Indemnity Bill and the Bill to amend the Land Reform Act introduced by the United Front government of 1970, have been quickly withdrawn. The government had decided earlier this year to raise the present 50 acres per person limit to 100 acres.

FINE ART

"Impersonation" said Elections Commissioner Chandrananda de Silva is on the increase — a post 1982 trend confirmed by official reports he has received from the Department's personnel in the field. The Commissioner was making his first public speech after he assumed office six and half years ago. The most noteworthy feature, he added, was the strong evidence "training". Impersonation is not 'the innocent act of voting in the name of another person by accident but a deliberate attempt to steal the votes of those persons who are expected not to vote

in the way the impersonator would wish". Impersonations at the recently concluded PC elections, he believed, were "organised" and the impersonators "trained" to carry out the operation.

TASTE OF INSECURITY

Mr Athulathimudali, the Minister of National Security (and Minister of Shipping) was to visit the Pasa Authority premises at the Colombo harbour. And the UWP's trade union, the JSS, was meeting on the spot to discuss arrangements.

Unknown persons flung bombs and also fired at the gathering, injuring four. They came on foot, and fled on a motorcycle after the attack, the police said.

EXODUS

Doctors who have qualified in socialist countries are leaving the island, because the state will not employ them. Five left last week for America and Middle East. They are among those who graduated in the Soviet Union and China.

Recently about fifty such doctors met the Food Minister and asked for food stamps.

Youth — the real asset

May I also associate in the felicitations and tributes paid to you for your remarkable success in scoring the esteemed journal — Lanka Guardian — through the ten long and arduous years intercepted by turbulent periods. The concluding sentence of your article under the caption "LTTE raises the ante" in your esteemed journal of 13. 7. 88 — "The result could be inescapably of a more dramatic kind than we have ever witnessed in these crisis-ridden post-1983 years" — calls for very serious thought by all right-thinking, public spirited and patriotic citizens. None of those men and women who have brought the country to such a pass can escape blame. They are none other than the chauvinist elites who succeeded the British imperialists and continue to manoeuvre and manipulate to sustain themselves in power under various political labels and legal precedences with utter disregard for the rights and existence of the downtrodden and the national minorities. For unless this country is rid of such people there is no peace or salvation for the poor and the oppressed. The real asset of this country — the Sinhala and the Tamil youth — are sacrificed at the altar of neo-colonialism and opportunism adopted by the successive regimes to perpetuate their power.

T. S. Kumaresan

Nervely,
Jaffna.

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December is the decisive month

Mervyn de Silva

Monday 12. Life in Colombo came to a standstill. And so it was in the suburbs and many a provincial town as the island, in response evidently, to a JVP appeal, mourned the death of lawyer Wijedasa Liyanarachchi, who died in police custody. There was at first some confusion, about the duration of the 'hartal' (one day or 5 days of mourning?) but shop-keepers took no chances anyway. The bomb blast in the Pettah hotel which had defied a previous strike call was a warning that was too risky to disregard. Five persons, including the manager, died and 30 were wounded.

The regime looked helpless. It acted fast. It had to. Transport was the key. It usually is. Once again the private bus owners — the beneficiaries of the UNP's first exercise in experimental privatisation — let the UNP down. While some CTB buses, jam-packed, were seen on the road, the private coaches never ventured out. By afternoon the SLBC was warning them bus operators that their route licences would be withdrawn and their buses requisitioned by the CTB if they failed to keep normal schedules on Tuesday. Shopkeepers were also assured of police protection, and persuaded to re-open.

Governments, especially powerful governments with huge parliamentary majorities, cannot afford to look powerless. People get accustomed to the idea, and soon appearance tends to become the reality. With elections in the offing the danger to the incumbent office-holder is all the more real. Besides, recent political developments in the neighbourhood and the Asian region, from Pakistan and Burma to the Philippines and South Korea, can become encouraging examples.

Contributing to the confusion was a coincidence of great poli-

tical importance, and a communications gaffe — the news item on All-India Radio that the North and East had been merged by Presidential Proclamation. The WEEKEND 'scoop' itself made the whole affair bizarre. Sri Lankans learnt of the North-East jolinder and that Tamil had been given this status of a National Language — both in keeping with the provisions of the Accord — two days after the event.

Why keep secret a 'secret' that cannot be kept?



As a result, some observers believed that the hartal was a protest move against these vitally important, and potentially explosive, decisions.

President JR. himself argues that it was the permanent North-and East linkage that provoked him to launch the UNP's 1958 'holy March' to Kandy against the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact, and that the Accord makes the merger only temporary. A referendum in one year's time will allow the voters of the Eastern province to decide to continue or abandon the arrangement.

In the 30 year history of the island's violent communal conflict, this 'merger' idea has been one of the two most provocative issues. Language and merger. Now, Tamil has been made a

national language, while Sinhala remains the sole State language. Has the issue being drained of its incendiary content? Have the Sinhala majority decided that their language has been granted the proper status and that this is irreversible? If so, have they also recognised that the language of the largest minority deserves special recognition just as much as English, the international language popular in Sri Lanka should be granted greater recognition too?

As for the merger, it is possible that the SLFP, the authentic champion of this particular cause, may have decided not to inflame passions right now because this could lead to a violence that may make the holding of peaceful polls difficult. (Or, allow the government to postpone polls.)

The electoral calendars of both President Jayewardene and Prime Minister Gandhi are adding to the mounting pressures. If Presidential polls have to be held here by December, Presidential rule in Tamilnadu must also be removed or re-imposed by the turn of the year. Already there is a growing clamour for the 'restoration of democracy' in Tamilnadu. The opposition DMK of Mr. Karunanidhi, the traditional rival of the charismatic Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran who died last year, is leading the agitational campaign. And this is supported by the newly formed 7 party Oppositional alliance of which the DMK is the latest constituent. Its first national rally will be held in Madras this weekend. On the election issue, even the two Communist parties which are not in the National Front, are working with the DMK.

Last week in Delhi I raised the issue with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The half hour conversation at his private residence was

not a formal interview and was of course off-the-record. But the points he made about the Sri Lanka issue and its Tamilnadu implications were more freely discussed and firmly re-stated by three of his top advisers who were far more expansive. As indeed was Defense Minister K. C. Pant. In my conversation with him at the Defence Ministry.

The National Front has so many internal differences that its present appearance of cohesion will soon prove illusory. In any case, the people of Tamilnadu are satisfied that the Indo Sri Lankan Accord has satisfied Sri Lankan Tamil aspirations on language, regional autonomy and security. "They have understood this, just as the Sri Lankan Tamils, and I hope all Sri Lankans, have appreciated that the idea of 'Eelam' is totally unacceptable to India... unless we want to have 20 'Eelams' in this country... we stand firmly opposed to separatism" said Mr. Gandhi in a tone unexpectedly aggressive in so disarmingly mild-mannered and charming a person.

At least two Indian editors however felt that the wily Karunanidhi, a veteran advocate of Tamil nationalism is biding his time. "It is too early for him to start beating the chauvinist drum... he will wait till elections are announced..." remarked a Delhi-based political analyst who had lived in Madras for 18 years.

By December the Presidential campaign will be in full swing in Sri Lanka. It is now certain that Prime Minister Premadasa will be the UNP's consensus candidate, if President JR does not seek a third term. He is hardly an enthusiastic supporter of the 'Accord'. Less so is the Opposition candidate Mrs. Bandaranaike. India must have North-East polls before December and a political-administrative structure in place by December. Ideally with LTTE participation, direct or indirect.

The Sri Lankan conflict has been heightened and the national crisis aggravated by the pressures of geographic space. New tensions rise under the pressure of time.

DEATH OF A LAWYER

In drawing lessons from convulsive changes in other Asian countries, notably the Philippines and South Korea, the LG has laid special stress on "the Middle groups", preferring the wider term 'group' to 'class'. This phenomenon, peculiar to political change in the Third World, is not unfamiliar to western democracies which went under, such as Greece, Portugal and Spain. The political impact of the death in police custody of lawyer Wijedasa Liyanarachchi, we feel should be read in such terms—the entry into the fray of the professionals, representative of the middle groups—doctors via the GMOA (the GMOA—NCMC issue) nurses and now lawyers, a notoriously passive, pro-Establishment group.

On the 17th, when the new Courts Complex is declared open by President JR, the ceremonies would invite the attention of all serious observers of the fast-changing political scene.

An empty coffin

A university lecturer, a doctor, and now a lawyer. The university lecturer is among those "disappeared"; the doctor is still among the living, after he was dragged off his car on the highway; and, in the case of the lawyer, there were more than one hundred internal injuries, the post-mortem report revealed when he died after a week in police custody.

The middle classes did not stir when it happened to countless nameless youths. But now the professionals are beginning to feel the heat. Hultsdorf closed shop on September 5 and the legal profession marched round the courts bearing an empty coffin; the police had snatched the body when the Bar Association announced that the battered corpse of Attorney-at-Law Wijedasa Liyanarachchi (35) would be kept at their headquarters near the Supreme Court for the public to pay its respects.

But the police had descended on the undertaker at crack of dawn and had taken the body away.

The City was put on 'full alert', and police sources were reported saying: "There are some people who just wait for an opportunity to create trouble".

The dead lawyer had filed more than a hundred habeas corpus applications in courts on behalf of Southern youths. After his arrest and death the Government controlled media splashed a Government communique alleging that he was a top level JVP'er who had ordered the killing of Vijaya Kumaratunga, Harsha Abeywardena and Terrance Perera.

Courts boycott

Lawyers boycott courts for three days following an emergency resolution passed by the Bar Association of Sri Lanka to protest the death of Attorney Liyanarachchi. The decision was conveyed to the Chief Justice, the President of the Appeal Court and other judges.

The Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal and all courts in Hultsdorf adjourned early.

After the resolution was passed lawyers burnt the empty coffin lying at the BASL headquarters in Hultsdorf.

Over a hundred lawyers signed a resolution for consideration by the BASL calling on their colleagues not to defend any police officer appearing in any case, privately or officially, in the superior or lower courts.

N. R.

Martial law — I'll defy it. . . — Mrs. B.

Mrs Srimavo Bandaranaike, the SLFP Leader, in the South on the first phase of her Presidential campaign, told a public rally at Deniyaya that she had reliable information of a plan to impose martial law to avoid election.

But, said Mrs Bandaranaike, if the Government did not hold elections on the due date she would be the first to take to street and defy such a diabolical move.

She charged that the Government was making Sri Lanka a "killing field. There was no rule of law. She added that people were disappearing from their homes.

The repression through the security forces and terror gangs armed at State expense was driving more and more people to resort to violence, the SLFP leader said.

The latest example of the Government's callous disregard for law and order was the adoption of a resolution approving the arrest of the lawyer Wijedasa Liyanarachchi.

The Government had alleged he was responsible for the killing of several important people. Dead men tell no tales, Mrs Bandaranaike said. ●

Indemnity Bill Suspended

The Indemnity Bill which was due to be presented in Parliament on September 6 has been suspended by the Government. A communique issued by the Chief Government Whip announced that the decision had been made by the Government Parliamentary Group.

The communique said that the Prime Minister, Mr. Premadasa, had told the Group that the Indemnity Bill would be wrongly interpreted by the people at a time when a lawyer, Mr. Wijedasa Liyanarachchi, had died after being arrested by the police.

Mr. Premadasa had also said that the suspension of the Indemnity Bill was required in the light of criticism that it would be used to pay off certain private grudges

between security personnel and the public.

The communique added that the Bill sought to give the security services personnel protection from legal action.

Lands Minister Gamini Dissanayake had said that he too agreed "that the Indemnity Bill should not be introduced at the present juncture, particularly after Mr. Liyanarachchi's death".

Earlier, all political parties, (except the UNP) legal associations including the Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL), human rights organisations, the Buddhist clergy, the Catholic church had condemned the Bill and had urged Government to withdraw it.

On September 5, eight Buddhist prelates sent a joint telegram of protest to President Jayawardene against the Bill. They are the Ven. Madihe Pannatissa Maha Nayake Thera, Chancellor of the Ruhuna University, the Ven. Dr. Paravehara Pannananda Nayake Thera, President of the Sri Lanka Buddhist Congress the Ven. Mapalagama Vipulasara Thera, the Ven. Davuldane Gnanisara Anunayako Thera, President of the Sri Lanka Bala Mandalaya, the Venerable Maduluwawa Sobhita Thera, Senior lecturer of the Sri Jayewardenepura University, the Ven. Dr. Bellanwila Wimalaratana Thera, the Vice Principal of the Peliyagoda Vidyalankara Pirivena, the Ven. Welamitiyawa Kusaladhamma Nayake Thera, and the Chief Incumbent of the Pannipitiya Vidyalankaraya, the Ven. Luchapana Dhammalankara Thera. — P.S.

CORRESPONDENCE

LOTTO CULTURE

State Lotteries are legion in this poor country with LOTTO as the latest addition. In the years gone by when a person paid a mere fifty cents to buy a Hospital Lottery, winning a fortune was far from his mind.

But today if one sees the scramble for the various lottery tickets in busy towns one could hardly think whether any of the buyers had any other motive other than winning a fortune for himself.

To add insult to injury a leading daily newspaper on 5.8.88 boxed a news item prominently on its front page and gave it the headline "Schoolboy

wins Rs. 5m Saturday Fortune jackpot". Isn't this an attraction for other schoolboys to follow suit?

To make matters worse another daily newspaper on 18.8.88 had the following inserted inside a quarter page advertisement.

"A person bought a Development Lottery ticket from a seller he knows in Pettah. It gave him a prize of Rs. 20.— He bought another. This time the prize was Rs. 10.— He bought yet another. It had 'Three Lions' on it. He bought his fourth ticket, but that failed to produce a prize. "This can't be!" he said to himself jokingly and bought 3 more tickets in a row. The last ticket in the row gave him a prize of Rs. 10.— And

when he scratched the middle ticket he discovered that he was a winner of Rs. 1/2million!"

This sort of bold advertisement naturally prompts many innocent people to part with their hard earned money to buy state lotteries in the hope of getting rich quicker.

The fact remains that a large percentage of the buyers of these lotteries are poor low income group people who can ill afford to put away their hard earned money on lotteries. The question therefore naturally arises whether a poor third world country like ours could afford the luxury of so many state lotteries?

V. K. Wijeratna

Panadura

After Zia, the threat of turmoil

John Elliott

The death of General Zia ul-Haq, ruler of Pakistan for the past 11 years, throws an internationally sensitive buffer state on the borders of the Soviet bloc into political confusion and potential turmoil.

Pakistan has not experienced such uncertainty for more than a decade. Since 1977, President Zia has dominated the country's politics. First as military ruler and then as President, he gradually brought to one of the world's poorest countries a degree of political stability that surprised even his critics and opponents.

His removal from the political scene comes at an extremely sensitive time, both for Pakistan's domestic politics and for the situation in Afghanistan, where Soviet troops are now half-way through withdrawing. He leaves a vacuum which it will be difficult to fill. There is no one in Pakistan of sufficient political stature, experience and guile to follow him as leader of the 100m people of that volatile and under-developed country.

On Afghanistan, the complex balance of power has been dramatically changed. President Zia was among those most opposed to the continued rule in Kabul of the Soviet-backed Najibullah government. He was the most important supporter of the Mujahedin guerrilla forces; his death removes the Mujahedin's leading champion and the US's most reliable ally against Soviet aggression. Pakistan has traditionally provided the arms routes to the Mujahedin. It has come under strong attack from the Soviet Union — most recently in the past few days — for allegedly continuing to do so following the recent Geneva accord on Soviet troop withdrawals.

Others in Pakistan want to withdraw support from the Mujahedin to create a better chance of peace in Afghanistan — and to enable some 3m refugees in Pakistan to return home. Such views will now be more likely to prevail. Gen

Zia's death could well make it more difficult for the Mujahedin to continue to receive the supplies they need. One possible result of this could be to strengthen the Najibullah regime's chances of remaining in power. A weakening of the Mujahedin could also make it easier for Afghanistan to move towards a compromise solution.

As a relatively new Moslem country, created when the Indian sub-continent was freed from British rule in 1947, Pakistan has not yet developed a self-confident national identity nor formed a stable democratic political base. Its army took over early in the young nation's life. President Zia's decision three months ago to oust the elected government of Mr. Mohammed Khan Junejo, the Prime Minister, confirmed that the army had decided to stay in control behind the scenes.

If he had lived, President Zia would have faced a serious challenge this November in elections which he had called to replace the Junejo government. Ms. Benazir Bhutto, daughter of President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, whom President Zia ousted from power and then hanged in the late 1970s, was heading an opposition challenge.

This could have posed problems for president Zia. It would have been impossible for him and Ms. Bhutto to rule together as President and Prime Minister, and so a clash was in prospect if she had won.

The opposition is divided and mistrustful, however; opposition parties have been in disarray for many years. Ms. Bhutto, as the political heir to her assassinated father, has considerable personal charisma and political potential. But she has failed till recently to pull her party into an organised force and she has also failed to unify a clutch of other deeply divided political parties which have had little if any experience of government.

The ousting of Mr. Junejo from the prime ministership had helped

to galvanise the opposition and to enable Ms. Bhutto to recover some of the élan she displayed when she returned to Pakistan in triumph from voluntary exile some two and half years ago.

President Zia's death gives her, as she approaches her mid 30s, what may be her last opportunity for a long time to come to power. After the announcement of President Zia's death, she reacted calmly. "Life and death is in God's hands and we have to accept it", she told reporters.

"We in the PPP and in the opposition are prepared for whatever we can do to ensure that this process remains stable and constitutional as much as possible".

The real question now, however, is what the army top brass will decide to do. During the past few years, when President Zia has been allowing the country to edge towards a form of limited parliamentary democracy, it has been clear that a group of generals has been continuing to finger the reins of power behind the scenes.

If the opposition succeeds in generating enough unrest to convince the generals that the situation is out of control they will surely take over again.

Army people have gained a widening role in the country, partly through land given to retired army officers, partly through expansion of army-based industrial and transport corporations.

The army also believed to be deeply involved in drug running and corruption. The generals would be loth to see any erosion of the army's hold on power.

So it is difficult to envisage a Pakistan in this century free of army control or influence. That means that Ms Bhutto or any other aspirant political leader must decide whether to try to do a deal with the army or whether to run the risk of martyrdom in a possible army coup.

Over the years, President Zia proved himself increasingly to be a master strategist at domestic politics and international diplomacy. He deflected and defeated his opponents, whether they were members of the political opposition, ambitious generals, or even politicians in foreign countries like the U. S.

Economically, little permanent progress was made during President Zia's 11 years in power. The country experienced a growing superficial prosperity based on foreign aid, the earning of Pakistanis working in the Middle East and the illicit profits of a rampant drugs and gun trade, plus widespread and growing corruption.

Social unrest increased, especially in the rebellious southern province of Sind and in Karachi, Sind's provincial capital and the country's main commercial centre.

"Zia's is a benevolent regime. It shows teeth but doesn't use them," one leading industrialist said recently, reflecting the general view that the President was far from harsh after his early years in power.

But the result is a weak corrupt government. On paper the economy is over-regulated, but in practice you get round everything and live at standards well above what the country can afford.

"The government does not have the will or self-discipline to start an austerity drive which is needed. The problem is that Pakistan's governments believe the evil day will never come, that they will be constantly protected and saved by lucky harvests, remittances and foreign aid."

That sums up the legacy of the Zia years — relative politi-

cal stability, but prosperity based on an ephemeral economy. There are harsh problems ahead, especially because the future of generous US aid, amounting to \$4.05 bn (£2.36 bn) over the coming five years, might be put at risk by the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.

It cannot be said that President Zia was a bad leader for his country. But, like most military rulers, he did not know how to design his own exit and pave the way for successors. He would almost certainly have liked to have retired gracefully to play golf on courses in northern Pakistan.

Suddenly that exit was cruelly achieved and a poor country, at the fulcrum of international tensions on the borders of the Middle East and South Asia was pushed back to the brink of a new era of uncertainty and unrest.

Zia death linked to Afghan policy

Was army involved?

David Housego and Christina Lamb in Islamabad

Pakistan's Government believes the death of President Zia ul-Haq in an air crash was part of a plan to halt the country's widening military intervention in Afghanistan.

However, Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan, Acting President, said Pakistan's Afghan policy would not be changed.

Senior ministers believe that, if sabotage was involved, Pakistani security forces must have supported it. They also believe the Afghan intelligence service must have taken part.

Mr. Nasim Aheer, Interior Minister, said he had no doubt that the explosion which destroyed the military aircraft was due to sabotage organised "internally, but surely not without external influence."

Comments from senior officials suggest a reluctance to blame the army and a lack of urgency in seeking those responsible. Mr. Iqbal Buksh Soomro, Information

Minister, even suggested inquiries might never establish who was responsible.

Mr. Soomro said he believed the saboteurs "must have had some support in Pakistan," but put most blame on foreign agents — a theme likely to be voiced increasingly.

One diplomat commented: "The more they blame foreign hands, the more I am convinced it is internal."

The armed forces had become disgruntled over President Zia's policy of involving the army in operations in Afghanistan. However senior officials, unwilling to pin responsibility for the disaster on members of the armed forces, suggested that Afghan intelligence might have bribed security officials. Mr. Aheer believed a crucial pointer to responsibility for the attack lies in that the main proponents in the armed forces of the president's activist Afghan policy were killed in the crash. They

included General Akhtar Abdul Rehman, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and a close confidant of the president.

Pakistan's army has been providing more and more military advisers to the Afghan guerrillas. President Zia's goal was an Islamic regime established in Kabul.

The Interior Minister said the government was warned three months ago that Afghan agents would switch their attack from planting bombs in public places to attacking VIPs.

Pakistani investigators were joined by US experts. Officials said they believed the crash was caused by an explosion rather than a missile. A box supposed to contain mangoes — a favourite fruit of the president — was put aboard at the last minute.

The army's reluctance to be drawn back into domestic politics became increasingly clear.

Mr. Soomro said the Government might back party-based elections in November, thus reversing the late president's position.

Sri Lanka's complex situation

The situation that Sri Lanka now faces is one of the most complex in its history, both politically and economically. Against this background, the program of economic reforms recently announced by the Government is a bold initiative. On the political front, in spite of the Peace Accord signed between the Governments of Sri Lanka and India in July 1987, establishing a viable peace in the Northern and Eastern regions, and starting up the Reconstruction Program, have taken longer than expected. The recent resurgence of terrorism in the south has created new complications. In addition, Presidential, Provincial and Parliamentary elections are to be held in the next twelve months. In such a political climate, pressures to postpone the program of economic reforms have been strong. A postponement would be dangerous, however. Gains in consumption and employment brought about by delaying economic reforms would be small, short-term in nature and unsustainable over the longer run. In addition, this would leave Sri Lanka's economic problems unresolved.

ii. The country's economic problems are serious. The economy has continued to deteriorate in 1987 with growth at less than 2%, and unemployment at over 18% of the labor force. In addition, the country's level of spending has continued to be well beyond its available resources. The current account deficit in the balance of payments is at 8% of GDP, net official reserves have fallen to their lowest level in a decade and at close to 30% of exports of goods and services, the debt service ratio is at a record high. Chronically high fiscal deficits have pushed interest payments on the Government debt to 5% of GDP.

iii. There are three principal causes for the country's economic problems. The first is related to structural constraints to growth that were created over several decades of controls and extensive government intervention in the economy, prior to liberalization in 1977. While that liberalization had a strong positive effect on efficiency, it failed to (i) reduce the size of the overextended public sector which still employs one-fifth of the country's labor force and accounts for close to half of GDP; (ii) increase the efficiency of public expenditure programs; and (iii) reorient the industrial sector sufficiently towards export markets which have the largest potential for growth.

iv. Second, the structural constraints to growth have been aggravated by a level of spending which, in spite of the large volume of aid made available to Sri Lanka, has been beyond the country's available resources. After liberalization in 1977, with strong donor support, the Government undertook a massive public investment program (concentrating on irrigation, power and housing) that peaked at 15% of GDP in 1980-82 and then declined gradually to 12-13% of GDP in 1983-87. In spite of a relatively high tax-GDP ratio of 20%, the fiscal deficit rose to 18% of GDP in 1980-82, before gradually falling to 11-12% in 1983-87. This expansion in aggregate demand contributed significantly to increased inflation and, because of an insufficiently flexible exchange rate, led in turn to a gradual appreciation of the real exchange rate in the first half of the 1980's. This appreciation has impeded a more vigorous development and diversification of the export sector and, together with

the deterioration in the country's terms of trade, contributed to a current account deficit which averaged 16% of GDP in 1980-82 — with a gradual decline to around 10% of GDP thereafter. This deficit was partially financed through commercial borrowing up until 1984; this has been one of the main reasons for the rapid increase in the debt service ratios. Thus the good growth performance after liberalization can be explained by a once-for-all gain in efficiency that followed the removal of regulations and market distortions prevailing before 1977, complemented by an expansionary fiscal policy. The basis for such fiscal policy was an investment program which grew rapidly because of the need to rehabilitate an infrastructure run down by an extended period of insufficient investment and inadequate maintenance. In addition, there was a need to improve the housing stock that had deteriorated during decades of rent controls and, in the 1970's, by limits on the number of houses an individual could own. Gradually Sri Lanka's housing program became one of the most innovative and efficient of the developing world. It is now well targeted to the poor, it emphasizes low cost indigenous construction methods, and it is based on self help. Such projects were, however, the exception rather than the rule in the Government Public Investment Program and a large share of the country's resources was absorbed in public investment projects with low rates of return; thus, the growth experienced after 1977 could not be sustained.

v. Finally, the third cause for the country's problems has been the outbreak of the ethnic conflict in 1983 and, in the last

two years, severe droughts. The ethnic conflict required fiscal resources which reached 5% of GDP in 1987, and imports of US \$100 million, i.e. 5% of the country's total import bill. In addition to the burden it has put on the budget and on the balance of payments, the ethnic conflict has also weakened the Government's capacity to respond vigorously to a deteriorating economic environment. Throughout the 1980's, the annual budget speeches have reiterated the need to stabilize the economy; a first attempt at stabilization was made in the early 1980's when an Extended Fund Facility was negotiated with the IMF. The out-break of the ethnic conflict in mid-1983, however, has complicated decision making, and the Government has found it increasingly difficult to translate its views into policy actions. In the Sri Lankan political system where power is distributed among 40 Cabinet level ministries held by 28 ministers, and where most important decisions are taken on a consensus basis, the views of the Ministry of Finance do not always have a strong influence on the decisions ultimately taken.

Furthermore, from 1978 to 1985 GDP growth was above 5% per year. Until shortly after the out break of the ethnic conflict, Sri Lanka could borrow on commercial terms in the International market, and, from 1983 to 1985 the price of tea was at a record high. The adjustment could thus be postponed.

vi. By 1986, however, it became evident that the country's spending levels could not be sustained any longer. The tea boom was over and, in spite of the decline in oil prices, the external current account deficit reached 9% of GDP for the second year in a row. The growth rate of GDP slowed to under 4%, unemployment rose to about 17%, and gross official reserves declined to less than 2 months of imports. In November 1986, the Government announced a three year stabilization program consisting, essentially, of a reduction in public expenditures from 33% of GDP in 1986 to

about 29% by 1989, the maintenance of fiscal revenues at 20% of GDP, the adoption of a more realistic exchange rate policy.

vii. Next, during the course of 1987, the Cabinet has approved the reports and recommendations of three high level committees — the **Administrative Reform Committee (ARC)**, the **Presidential Tariff Committee (PTC)**, both appointed by the President in 1986; and the **Industrial Policy Committee (IPC)**, appointed by the Cabinet in 1984. Finally, a **S&F agreement** has been reached with the IMF and a **Policy Framework Paper** outlining an agenda for future policy changes was issued in early 1988. With such decisions, the measures that the Government had announced in late 1986 to stabilize the economy have evolved into a comprehensive adjustment program focusing on long-standing constraints to the country's economic development. The 1987-90 Adjustment Program consists of three important structural reforms, all of which are justified on microeconomic efficiency grounds but which, taken together, would address long standing and serious macroeconomic problems: the unsustainably large deficits in the balance of payments and fiscal accounts, and the politically intolerable high unemployment.

viii. **The Administrative Reform.** The first structural reform is related to the reorganization of the Central Government with a view to rationalizing its administrative structure and reducing overstaffing. Compared to other countries of its size and level of development, Sri Lanka's public administration is exceptionally large. Organizational units with uncoordinated and overlapping functions have proliferated. The three main clusters of Sri Lanka's public sector are: (i) the Central Government, consisting of 40 Cabinet Ministries, 4 non-Cabinet Ministries and 25 District Ministries with 430,000 civil servants; (ii) 86 statutory bodies, i.e. decentralized units of Government which include the country's

eight universities and other agencies with diverse functions, such as the Ceylon Tourist Board and the Mahaweli Development Authority, which employ 155,000 people; and (iii) some 130 public sector enterprises (PEs) financial and non-financial, employing 180,000, including the workers in the publicly owned tea crops plantations and temporary and casual workers. The public sector employs about 1.1 million people, close to one-half of all formal employment in the country, at heavy cost to the budget (6%-7% of GDP in recent years). In spite of the high aggregate wage bill, public sector employees are largely underpaid. Adjustments in wages have, historically, not kept up with inflation, particularly at the senior levels. In real terms, the salary of a civil servant in the higher echelons is now less than half of what it was in the 1950's, and is less than half of private sector salaries. This situation has brought about a growing discontent among civil servants and severe morale problems.

ix. The thrust of the ARC proposals is to address the twin problems of overstaffing and inadequate pay through a strategy aimed at redefining the existing Central Government's administrative structure reducing the number of Ministries to 16 and the number of civil servants by at least 25%. A part of the savings from reducing staff would be used to make the salary scale more competitive with the private sector. The Government has already implemented the first phase of ARC's recommendation on wages, i.e., beginning January, 1988, civil servant's salaries were increased by 50% of the proposed ARC increase. This meant up to a 40% increase, in real terms, for the higher levels, and a 10 to 20% increase for the lower level staff. By the end of 1988, a plan of action to implement the ARC's recommendation related to the reduction in the number of ministries and staff is expected to be completed before the second phase of the wage increase.

x. The administrative reform proposed by the ARC deserves strong support. Its implementation should not only increase the Central Government's efficiency and reduce cost of civil administration, but it should also change the philosophy and mentality that has so far shaped the Central Government's *modus-operandi* and interventions in the economy. However, the ARC has mainly focused on the Central Government, and its reports do not question the need for a large number of decentralized units in the public sector most of which are performing essentially Central Government functions. Available information suggests that the decentralized units also suffer from problems of overstaffing and inadequate pay. This report recommends that the ARC also focus on integrating to the extent possible the decentralized units of Government into the main core of the Central Government administration. It may also be appropriate for the ARC to reconsider the current pension benefits which allow civil servants to draw a pension at 85% of the last salary at age 55, after ten or more years of service. This costly benefit may be no longer necessary with more realistic salary levels.

xi. Regarding the third cluster of Government, consisting of over 130 PEs, the Cabinet has already endorsed a program of privatization which is underway. However, full privatization can only be achieved over the long term, if at all, and the ARC has recommended measures to increase PEs efficiency in the meantime. This will encourage PEs to contribute to growth and reduce their cost to the Treasury. The PEs are to be consolidated under a holding company, the Public Investment Corporation (PIC). ARC's approach has considerable merit. It would allow the PEs to be isolated from politically-motivated interventions. However, no system is immune to the quality of its management and in the absence of a firm Government commitment to efficient management for PEs and rigorous selection of strong entrepreneurial managers for the PIC and the

PEs, the creation of a PIC may just create another layer of bureaucratic controls.

xii. **Restructuring Public Expenditures.** Restructuring Public expenditures to eliminate wasteful programs and increasing the efficiency of spending in remaining programs is the second important structural reform of the 1987-90 Adjustment Program. Public expenditures are to be reduced from about 33% of GDP in 1987 to 29% by 1990 (18% of GDP for current expenditures and 11% for capital), a level that can be financed from expected tax revenues (20% of GDP); foreign sources (6-7% of GDP), and other domestic financing sources for the remaining 2-3% of GDP. With the 4-5% growth anticipated during the Program period, the 29% of GDP target can be achieved by maintaining existing expenditures constant in real terms. Thus, from a narrow stabilization point of view, the Government's objective does not call for any drastic austerity measures. From a development point of view, however it is imperative to increase economic returns on public expenditures, improve their cost effectiveness, and phase out all those that generate little or no returns. This is made all the more urgent by a large number of pressing expenditure needs, e.g., the Reconstruction Program and the large backlog of investments in the Transport Sector, that need to be accommodated within the overall fiscal limits. In view of already high tax levels, reducing public expenditures with questionable economic returns is best way to accommodate expenditure programs which are essential to the country's development.

xiii. The recognition that increasing the contribution of public expenditure programs to growth is urgent and that the resolution of this problem is essential for the country's continued development, is perhaps the most important feature of the 1987-90 Adjustment Program. This problem has built up gradually since the early 1950's as a direct consequence of the Government's approach to development which devoted substan-

tial resources to (i) expanding the agricultural frontier to provide employment to the growing numbers of entrants in the labour force and increase food production; (ii) creating an industrial base; and (iii) expanding the Government's entrepreneurial role in all sectors of the economy, all of which generated disappointing returns. As this three-pronged approach to development proved unsuccessful in generating employment, additional pressures were put on the budget to (iv) increase transfers to households to maintain living standards; and (v) expand public sector employment.

xiv. After liberalization, the Government reduced gradually, but substantially, its budgetary support to Public Manufacturing Enterprises (PMEs), as well as transfers to households. The across-the-board consumption subsidy for rice for the whole population was replaced by a National Food Stamp Program later complemented by a National Kerosene Stamp Program limited to the poorest segments of the population. While these public expenditures have declined since liberalization, others have increased. The Accelerated Mahaweli Development Program (AMDP), aimed at expanding the agriculture frontier through large irrigation/settlement projects, has increased public expenditures on irrigation to record levels; at their peak in 1982 they absorbed 7% of GDP. It appears that decentralized units of government have been used to create employment as evidenced by the 7% per year increase in the number of employees in the sector. The exact cost of the Government's entrepreneurial role is difficult to identify in the budget because it is included in an overall expenditure category which contains subsidies as well as the operating budgets of decentralized units of Government. Based on partial information, this cost appears to have been high. In 1986, for example, the Treasury's support to Air Lanka alone amounted to 1.3% of GDP.

(To be continued)

India in Lanka's Internal Affairs

Shelton U. Kodikara

India's role as arbiter in this crisis had the unfortunate consequence (for Sri Lanka) that India got itself involved with questions which were essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of Sri Lanka. India expressed itself openly and unequivocally as being opposed to the Eelamist demand for a separate Tamil State in Sri Lanka. But India at the same time brought pressure to bear on the Sri Lankan government to carry out its own pledges to effect a political solution of the ethnic crisis by implementing the principle of devolution of power from the Centre to the provinces in Sri Lanka.

Devolution of power from the Centre to the provinces involved three basic issues: first, the extent of the powers to be devolved; second, the relations between Centre and Provinces; and third the unit of devolution. India became involved in the discussions pertaining to all these issues since December 1983 and, in fact, the powers to be devolved from Centre to Province and relations between Centre and Provinces were modelled on India's own constitutional experience and incorporated into the 13th Amendment to the constitution in September 1987. The Unit of devolution remained as the problem issue right up to the time of the signing of the July Agreement of 1987.

The July Agreement, in one of its most controversial parts, virtually acknowledged the Tamil 'homeland' demand by providing for a temporary merger of the Northern and Eastern Provinces but at the same time recognised the justifiable reservations of the Muslim and Sinhalese communities in the Eastern Province by providing for breaking up the merger to allow the reversion of this Province to its separate existence if a referendum so de-

termined before a prescribed date. Both India and Sri Lanka put their signatures to this tenuous arrangement. The merger is yet to be effected. The referendum is yet to take place. There can be no doubt, however, that whatever else might happen, this arrangement will continue to bedevil Sri Lanka's politics for many years to come, and it will also give India a handle to interfere in Sri Lanka's politics for many years to come.

And it does not require too remarkable a degree of prescience to foresee that, any continuing Indian pressures would be influenced by pressures emanating from Madras, the nerve centre of contemporary Tamil politics, and that these pressures would necessarily be directed towards assertion of a separate identity for Tamils in the North and East of Sri Lanka, short of separate statehood.

It has become evident that India's intelligence agency, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), has had a leading role to play both in past involvement in arming and training Sri Lankan Tamil militant cadres in India, and in present confabulations with the leadership of these cadres, (still allowed to exist with offices in Madras). In the determination of the discourse and the stakes which are involved in the triangular relations between India, Sri Lanka, and the militants. One justifiable criticism of the July Agreement of 1987 was that it was signed by only two. The same lack of foresight seems to be evident in the negotiations between RAW and the leadership of the main militant groups, the Tigers, for the laying down of arms and acceptance of the Accord by the latter. In this instance it would appear to be the Government of Sri Lanka which is the silent spectator. The point here is that it is RAW which would appear to hold the trump cards in the increasingly intractable situation in Sri Lanka. Given the primacy

of the strategic dimension in the Indian interest in Sri Lanka, it can have its way the Government of India on matters which are disputed in the proposals for resolution of the conflict. It can also maintain the momentum of pressure against the Sri Lanka side if it so desires by reverting to its old role of arming and training Sri Lanka Tamil militants; or it can fund these militants either overtly or covertly. It has been acting hitherto as a third force on the Indian side, a part from the Government of India and the IPKF, as an arbiter of issues of Sri Lanka politics. It would be wrong to suppose that it would give up this role in the Sri Lanka situation in the future.

The Sri Lankan government standpoint was expounded by President Jayewardene in an address to the nation a week after signing the Accord, in the following terms:

But this is purely temporary not for ever. Temporary until the Eastern Province by a referendum which I will have to nominate within one year of the election of the Provincial Council by a referendum and a single majority vote to decide whether they should continue the jainder or they separate. I have no fear of the result of the referendum because we all of us can work against the jainder and I intend to ask all those who are against a jainder to come with me and work in the Eastern Province that the jainder should not be made permanent.

Therefore what are we quarrelling about? Why are we killing each other in the South?

The President's address was intended to reassure opinion in the Sinhalese South especially in the proscribed JVP movement, which had taken up arms to denounce the Accord. The appeal, however, did not reassure Sinhala opinion about the transient nature of the merger especially since LTTE terrorism continued to be directed against Sinhala and Muslim inhabitants of the Eastern Province. On the other hand, it compounded the difficulties with the LTTE

leadership who were driven to continue their armed struggle until they could be sure that the merger was there to stay.

III

In retrospect, what is most relevant about the Agreement is that its key provisions have yet remained unfulfilled. These were incorporated in Art. 2.9, which stipulated that "a cessation of hostilities will come into effect all over the island within 48 hours of the signing of this Agreement. All arms presently held by militant groups will be surrendered in accordance with an agreed procedure to authorities to be designated by the Government of Sri Lanka"; and further that "consequent to the cessation of hostilities and the surrender of arms by militant groups, the Army and other security personnel will be confined to barracks in camps as on 25th May 1987. The process of surrendering of arms and the confining of security personnel moving back to barracks shall be completed within 72 hours of the cessation of hostilities coming into effect". It is arguable that the legality as well as the viability of the entire Agreement and even of the Letters of Exchange which accompanied it rested on the premise that the Government of India was intervening via the Agreement, to bring about an end to the four-year-old Tamil insurgency in Sri Lanka and to effect a surrender of arms by the militant cadres.

But the cessation of hostilities which followed upon the signing of the Agreement proved to be very temporary, lasting barely ten weeks. The much publicised surrender of arms in the aftermath of the signing of the Agreement also proved to be very illusory — it was simply a token surrender of some arms held by militant cadres from a very extensive inventory. Both processes — surrender of arms as well as cessation of hostilities — were repudiated by the LTTE leadership on 7th October 1987 when they retaliated against the capture at sea by Sri Lankan security forces of thirteen of their senior cadres who committed suicide on the eve of their transfer to Colombo by unleashing a renewed wave of

violence against Sinhalese civilians and the Sri Lanka army in the Northern and Eastern Province leaving one hundred and sixty dead, and 10,000 Sinhalese civilians fleeing from their homes in Trincomalee and Batticaloa. On October 10th 1987, the Indian Peace Keeping Force, which had been invited to Sri Lanka by President Jayewardene inaugurated their own military campaign against the Tigers, which is still continuing without any immediate prospect either of a cessation of hostilities or a complete surrender of arms by all militant groups.

In the meanwhile, Sri Lanka's security forces had withdrawn to barracks, and President Jayewardene authorised the release of some 4,000 Tamil political prisoners and grant of amnesty to them under the provisions of Art. 2.11, during the temporary cessation of hostilities and the token surrender of arms. Whether the withdrawal of Sri Lanka's security forces to barracks at the time was justified, or whether their continued confinement to barracks after the LTTE had repudiated the Agreement and resumed hostilities was necessary will remain controversial. India had committed itself under the Agreement to underwrite and guarantee the proposals for the resolution of the ethnic crisis in Sri Lanka and it had also committed itself to co-operating directly with the Government of Sri Lanka in their implementation. Withdrawal of Sri Lanka's security forces to barracks necessitated an Indian military presence in Sri Lanka, at first to oversee the token surrender of arms by militant groups, latterly to undertake a full scale military offensive against the LTTE. But the Indian military presence also had other connotations which were relevant for Sri Lanka's domestic politics. The arrival of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) enabled the Sri Lanka government to transfer part of his security forces from the North and East to the South to counter the armed opposition to the Agreement which was being mounted by the JVP. Explaining

the IPKF presence in Sri Lanka, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi told the Indian Parliament on July 21st, 1987:

President Jayewardene explained that because of the deteriorating situation or as a result of disturbances in the South and the increasing demands that this puts on the Sri Lanka security forces, his Government would need assistance to implement the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement for ending the ethnic crisis. For this purpose, the Government of Sri Lanka made a formal request for appropriate Indian military assistance to ensure the cessation of hostilities and surrender of arms in the Jaffna Peninsula, and if required, in the eastern province. He also requested for air transport to move some of the Sri Lanka troops from Jaffna to points in the South.

In response to this formal request from the Government of Sri Lanka, and in terms of our obligations under the just signed Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, units of the Armed Forces of India landed in the Jaffna Peninsula yesterday. Let me repeat that our troops have landed in Sri Lanka in response to a specific and formal request of the Government of Sri Lanka who have invoked our obligations and commitments under the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement.

India's commitment to underwrite and guarantee the implementation of the Agreement had been contained in Art 2.14. Art 1.16 (c) had further stated in general terms that if the Government of Sri Lanka requested military assistance from the Government of India for the implementation of the proposals made therein such assistance would be given by the Government of India when requested. The annexure to the Agreement made the position quite explicit in its para 6:-

The President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India also agree that in terms of paragraph 2.14 and paragraph 2.16 (c) of the Agreement an Indian Peace Keeping Contingent may be invited by the President of Sri Lanka to guarantee and enforce the cessation of hostilities if so required.

The size of the IPKF in Sri Lanka became later a matter of controversy and party political debate in Sri Lanka. The IPKF got bogged down in a guerrilla war against the Tamil Tigers which necessitated a progressive

Increase in its numbers as well as in the number range of its weaponry. It became increasingly clear, however, that the IPKF was in no mood to eradicate completely the Tamil Tiger insurgency from Sri Lanka. While this ambivalence was no doubt due in part to the adverse political repercussions such a move would have had on opinion in Tamilnadu as well as in the Tamil North of Sri Lanka, in large part it was also connected with India's realisation that a military solution of Sri Lanka's ethnic crisis under the aegis of the Indian army and the withdrawal of the IPKF from Sri Lanka would deprive it of its most potent weapon to pressure Sri Lanka into India's own regional security orbit.

In his own evaluation of the Indo Lanka Agreement soon after its signing Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi adopted a two-track approach. In a public meeting at Madras on 2nd August 1987, for example, he declared:

The Agreement secures everything that the Sri Lanka Tamils had demanded, short of breaking Sri Lanka's unity. In fact it goes well beyond the initial demands of the Sri Lanka Tamils. Under the Agreement approximately one third of Sri Lanka's territory will be made into a single province where the Tamils will have a clear majority. They will have regional autonomy comparable to State governments in India.

Explaining the Indian role further the Prime Minister said:-

The Agreement that we have signed ushers back peace and tranquility. It secures justice for the Tamil minority. It provides autonomy, approximately like that of an Indian State, to the Tamils in Sri Lanka. It safeguards the Tamil identity, their language and their culture. Now Tamils in Sri Lanka will continue to live as they have lived in Sri Lanka for hundreds of years as honored and respected citizens enjoying all the political and civic rights on a footing of equality with all other Sri Lankans.

These sentiments did not exactly correspond with President Jayewardene's own evaluation of the Agreement in respect of the North-East merger and it is highly unlikely that he would

have under-set the implied claim that India was delivering the Tamil people of Sri Lanka from discrimination by government of Sri Lanka.

But even more enlightening of the Indian mind-set on the problem of Sri Lanka was the following statement of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at the same public meeting in Madras:-

Forces which do not stand for non-alignment, forces which are not in India's interest were showing their presence in Sri Lanka. The hostilities had opened up opportunities for others to fish in troubled waters and to cause problems in our part of the world. The greatest threat to the security in our region is if the countries in our region drift towards the power bloc. Our security lies in non-alignment. Certain outside presences in Sri Lanka were destabilising this commitment to non-alignment. This Agreement not only brings an end to the conflict, it also brings peace, it gives justice to the minority communities in Sri Lanka and it also removes opportunities for hostile forces to destabilize the region. It strengthens the security of our region, it strengthens non-alignment in our region.

Apart from the Agreement, which looks to the Tamil interests in Sri Lanka we also had exchange of letters between President Jayewardene and myself. It is in the exchange of these letters that we have seen to the security problems in our region. With this exchange of letters, we will see that such hostile forces are not allowed to come into our region. This exchange of letters ensures that forces prejudicial to India's interests will not be present on Sri Lanka's soil. It also ensures that Sri Lanka's ports including Trincomalee, will not be given for military use. If this is prejudicial to India's interests, it also ensures that any broadcasting facilities that are set up in Sri Lanka will not be used for military or intelligence purposes.

In retrospect, the guarantees and undertakings given by Sri Lanka in the Letters of Exchange would appear to have lost much of their force in the context of India's own inability to enforce a ceasefire and bring about a surrender of arms by militant groups. India's military presence in Trincomalee has, no doubt, altered fundamentally independence of action which Sri Lanka previously enjoyed in determining

its use by foreign powers. With the rapid development of the Indian Navy into a blue-ocean fleet, Trincomalee will certainly appear as an increasingly more important factor in the relations between the two countries. But to the extent that the Agreement and the Letters of Exchange formed part of a *quid pro quo* arrangement, India's inability to deliver the goods on its own side carries with it the consequence that Sri Lanka is itself absolved from carrying out its own obligations in respect of the security guarantees and undertakings contained in the Letters of Exchange. To be sure, the leeway which Sri Lanka will have in this respect will always depend on the unequal power equation between India and Sri Lanka. It has not so far been made public whether the prime Minister of India and President Jayewardene have reached an "understanding" as stated in the Letters, "about the relevance and employment of foreign military and intelligence personnel" in Sri Lanka. The services of Israeli experts and British mercenary experts, procured for the purpose of assisting Sri Lanka's security forces in the prosecution of the guerrilla war against the Tamil militants, became redundant with the Indian Army's advent into the fray against these militants. Sri Lanka continues to train its military personnel abroad in the countries of its choice, such as Pakistan. As regards the restoration and operation of the Oil Tank Farm, Sri Lanka can now change its mind in the altered circumstances created by the continued Indian military presence in Trincomalee, and decide not to develop the tank farm at all. In as much as the provision that Sri Lanka's agreements with foreign broadcasting organisations were to be reviewed on the assumption that such organisations were being used "for military and intelligence purposes", no such review was called for if this assumption was not proven and, in any case, the requirement that one country's agreements with another should be reviewed at the behest of a third country not only violated principles of non-intervention, non

-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, but also derogated from the sovereignty of the country, addressed in this manner, to say nothing about its violation of principles of non-alignment. Trincomalee will no doubt continue to be the cynosure of Indian eyes, but that, too, is nothing new. What was new was that Sri Lanka, through the Letters, gave an undertaking that its use, indeed the use of all Sri Lankan ports, will not militarily be prejudicial to India. Sri Lanka may now argue that this undertaking is one-sided, and that it should be changed, such that India also give a similar undertaking to Sri Lanka reciprocally. Such an undertaking, even if given by India, would amount to little in the present context of Indo-Sri Lanka relations.

The reality is that the Indian military presence is likely to continue in Sri Lanka indefinitely in the future. The reality is also that the LTTE have now repudiated all negotiations with Indian emissaries and have dug in for what might turn out to be a

protracted guerilla war with the Indian army. And the unpleasant truth for Sri Lanka is that India's undertaking, given in the Letters of Exchange that it will "deport all Sri Lankan citizens who are found to be engaging in terrorist activities or advocating separatism or secessionism" may prove to be very illusory, considering the continued functioning of LTTE offices and cadres in Madras, and considering also what is now well-known, that the Indian government not only paid large sums of money to the LTTE leader Prabhakaran on the eve of the signing of the July Agreement in 1987, but the also further payments to the LTTE were contemplated and figured in the discussions between the LTTE and Indian emissaries, referred to earlier.¹¹

To sum up, one year after the July Agreement of 1987 was signed, Sri Lanka had fulfilled its part of the obligations by withdrawing its own troops to barracks, as stipulated, even though the stipulation had lost force consequent upon the repudiation of

the ceasefire and the arms surrender by the LTTE. Sri Lanka had released several thousand Tamil political prisoners, and given them amnesty. Sri Lanka had enacted the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, and constituted Provincial Councils in all Provinces barring the Northern and Eastern, elections in the latter two provinces having been held up due to the unsettled conditions in these provinces. On the other hand, implementation of the Agreement was vitiated by India's own failure to bring about a cessation of hostilities and a surrender of arms by militant cadres as envisaged in the Agreement.

Notes

6. *Foreign Affairs Reports*, (New Delhi), 36: 217, July-October 1987.
7. *China Today* (Beijing), October 8, 1987.
8. *Foreign Affairs Reports*, 36: 208, July-October 1987.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 211.
10. *Ibid.*
11. See *The Island*, April 7, 1988; *Daily News*, May 2, 1988.

(Concluded)

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The Indo-Lanka Accord and Tamil responses

Betram Bastiampillai

The Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 29 July 1987 has taken a leading place in the political scene that had unfolded in Sri Lanka subsequently. As an accord it became clear in a very short time itself that it spelt out a settlement that was not satisfactory and unacceptable to the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam (LTTE) while immediately itself it became quite evident that the accord was unwelcome to several sections of the Sinhalese in the South of Sri Lanka. Clearly the accord spelt out no solution that had been accepted on the basis of a national consensus to see an end to the protracted ethnic strife that had for long revaged Sri Lanka.¹

A fundamental criticism of the accord that came from the Tamil militants, especially the Liberation Tigers, and thereafter from many of the Tamil civilians themselves in the North and East of Sri Lanka was that the accord had been concluded with undue haste, that there had been no consultative democratic process in arriving at the agreement; and this is a criticism that is equally vehemently levelled by a number of Sinhalese too.

Another criticism that is made commonly by the Sinhalese and Tamils, who continue to oppose the accord and its terms is the Indian role in the implementation of the accord. The Tamil militants and civilians have found the Indian role in what is euphemistically described as peace-keeping in the North and East of Sri Lanka the most distasteful single element that had emerged from an attempt at implementation a part of the accord.

Another vital criticism of the accord rivers on the substance of the agreement which it is

complained had affected the national unity and sovereignty of the island. This criticism had arisen in the months that followed most strongly and persistently from sections of the Sinhalese, particularly in the South, while a few of the Tamil militant groups like the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam had also voiced similar criticism. Briefly, looking around over the year and almost over an year later now it is obvious that the accord had not achieved what was expected from it. And what is worse is that it does not even after a year hold out that the anticipated good could still result out of an implementation of the accord.² No promising prognosis of the post accord era is yet possible; and people tend to think sceptically and pessimistically of the prudence with which the agreement was linked.

Any understanding of the response of the Tamil peoples to the accord has to take into account the reaction of the leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Velupillai Prabhakaran. A few days after the agreement was made, on 5 August 1987, Prabhakaran made a public statement wherein he stated at the outset itself, "We are stunned that through our efforts we have created this situation. Will we benefit by this Accord? That, we should consider later".³ Thus not only was a question raised, doubts too were raised. Such doubts have lingered and waxed stronger not only among the Tamil Tigers, but as the days went by among other militant groups and among the Tamil peoples in the North and the East.

Worse and ominous was what followed as Prabhakaran went on, "Suddenly, without consulting our people and our representa-

tives, India and Sri Lanka have signed an Accord, and they are now acting upon it."⁴ Prabhakaran hit the nail on its head with this utterance; the accord did not have the consent of many of the people, be they Sinhalese or Tamil. They were not consulted. This charge that the agreement had no consensus and was made between two leaders alone has been levelled over and over by the Sinhalese in the South and the Tamils in the North. A basic necessity to make a settlement acceptable was absent and this had certainly marred the implementation of the accord throughout the year.

As far as the Tigers were concerned Prabhakaran alleged that till he went over to New Delhi in July 1987 he had no knowledge of an accord. There were many complications in the accord, a lot of questions arose out of it and the leader of the Tigers propheticly added that he had serious doubts of a definite solution arising out of the agreement. To make his position unequivocal, Prabhakaran added that, "we made it clear to the Indian government that this Accord is unacceptable to us".⁵ The most intractable and militarily strongest Tamil militant group could see only discord come out of the accord. Even a year later that discord has prevailed causing so much agony misery to the Tamil people and intransigent problem to the parties to the accord, the Sri Lankan and the Indian governments.

The view expressed by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam is that the accord was designed to strengthen an Indo-Sri Lanka alliance and that it paid no concern to the future of the Tamil peoples or their interest.⁶ A year later such thinking which has led the Tamil peoples even accuse

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India of having sold out the Tamils of Sri Lanka has grown more widespread. The overriding concern in entering into the agreement had been a means to ensure an Indian control of the government of Sri Lanka. This is a view which has circulated among some of Sinhalese too; and today the militant Tamil groups and a good part of the civilian Tamils are inclined to agree that India had been more mindful of her interest than those of the Sri Lankan Tamils both in the accord itself and in its implementation thereafter.

However, Prabhakaran's reason for his opposition to the accord differs from the reason for opposition to it held by other militant Tamil groups and several other Tamil civilians in the North and the East of Sri Lanka.¹ The leader of the Tamil Tigers made it unambiguous that "this Accord does not pave the way for the Tamil Eelamist to achieve his ambitions".² But a number of other Tamils did not subscribe to the idea of creating Eelam. They expected, on the other hand, relief from perceived and experienced discrimination and deprivation which they asserted they had suffered under Sinhala majority governments, especially since 1956 when the Sinhala only Act was passed. Such Tamils saw the Accord in a different light. The objective of the Tamil Tigers was extreme³ and radical while that of the other civilian Tamils was more limited, modest and hence could be more acceptable to the Sinhalese majority in the island.

Yet being pragmatic and knowing very well he was at that time important against "a powerful nation", the leader of the Tigers admitted in exasperation: "However, there is no future in opposing this Accord."⁴ Prabhakaran agreed to hand over the weapons of the Tigers, a requirement in terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement, because the militant group had "now been disarmed within 2 days, without any notice, and without the consent of our militants".⁵ Evidently, from the beginning of the post accord period, the Tigers were unwilling to comply with the requirement to surrender their weapons and it is no wonder that they should have reneged on the

accord within a very short time. Throughout the year after July 1987 following the accord, the disarmament of the Tigers had remained the most formidable obstacle to bringing around a settlement on the basis of the agreement entered into between Sri Lanka and India. In spite of a relentless campaign, even now, an year after the accord, the Indians are engaged in disarming the Tigers and they have failed to fulfil a critical term of the agreement.

The reasons for the failure of the Tigers to accept this important obligation in terms of the accord was their lack of faith in the Sinhala government and also obviously a lack of confidence in the Indian government's ability to ensure the security of the Tamil peoples. Prabhakaran has announced in August, 1987 that India was assuming a great responsibility by taking away the weapons of the Tigers, and a short while later he seemed to have concluded that India had failed to discharge a great responsibility that had been entrusted. This conclusion is unavoidable from his post accord behaviour and from the words of the leader of the Tigers: "The handing over of our arms means the handing over this responsibility for the security of our people from me to the Indian government".⁶

But in the same speech Prabhakaran also made it clear that from the very start the militant Tigers were not accepting the accord. Yet he saw no alternative but to act in agreement with the Indian efforts even though he thought that there would be no definite or permanent solution to the Tamil question. In the thinking of the Tiger leader, "The only certain solution to the Tamil question is the state of Eelam".⁷ Moreover, he had "a great conviction" that the Tigers would, achieve the state of Eelam".⁸ With pessimism and scepticism clouding his view of the intentions and integrity of the Indian and the Sri Lankan governments how could he contribute to an implementation of the accord, Instead he vowed to "continue to fight" for the cause of the Tigers; "the state of Eelam".⁹

Prabhakaran eschewed elections although participating in an election could place the Tigers in a temporary advantageous position of being able to get into the political framework. On the contrary he himself would "never subscribe to or cooperate in such an election" nor would he "accept any position, even that of Chief Minister".¹⁰ To Prabhakaran the accord appeared to be expedient and unavoidable but never welcome.¹¹ No surprise, even an year later, he remains outside the pale of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement of July 1987.

No wonder, from the outset, the accord and its implementation were foredoomed to run into rough weather with Prabhakaran who had to play such a pivotal role in the exercise obstinately, reluctant and even obviously hostile to play his part. The months that followed July 1987 were therefore to constitute naturally a period of violence with the Indian Peace Keeping Force from North and East Sri Lanka. The conflictual conditions of this strife get more complicated when the other militant Tamil groups apparently sure of tacit Indian connivance and favour tried to hit back at the Tigers who were now being kept at bay by the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF). All this armed activity spelt a renewed period of violence ridden and uncertain times to the Tamil civilians in the North and East who are unwillingly and without option left to survive as best as they could in the cross fires of hostilities.¹²

The immediate actions of the civilian Tamils, especially in the North and East of Sri Lanka, who had suffered long and largely when the Sri Lankan State and her security forces, and also when the Tamil militant groups had from time to time fought internecine feuds were relief and happiness at last in the agreement. They had welcomed as an end to the bloody conflict that had been raged so relentlessly and had plagued them for so long, particularly since 1983. The Accord had brought an end apparently, to the pain that

had been suffered by the Tamil civilians in the north and east of Sri Lanka; to many it meant an end to the look out abroad for refuge. After all a number of Tamils had fled overseas if they could or to other relatively safer Sri Lankan areas if possible. But their relief and rejoicing after the accord was soon proved to have been too brief and premature.

Moreover as an agreement this accord had a significant difference in the perceptions of the Tamils. Earlier, agreements between Prime Ministers of the island and the political leaders of the Tamils in Sri Lanka had been abortive. No good had resulted from them. But this accord was entered into between Sri Lanka and India and India had been looked up to as an upholder of the rights of Tamils in the island. So when India guaranteed and underwrote the settlement embodied in the agreement and in the related documents of July 1987 the Sri Lankan Tamils felt confident that at long last they could

look to better days ahead.¹⁹

Furthermore, the accord of July 1987 had recognised that the North and East of Sri Lanka had been inhabited historically by the Tamils and thus implied that they could live with security in the areas. The agreement had thus acceded to a principal demand of the Tamils. Additionally, the accord indeed had recognised that at least initially the North and East should be administered as a single unit, which gave greater reassurance to the Tamils of their safety.

The accord also acknowledged the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious nature of the island's population. It accepted the existence of a plural society in Sri Lanka comprising Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, Burghers and others and that these various ethnic entities had their own linguistic and cultural identities which could be fostered without let or hindrance. Moreover, the agreement recognised the right of every citizen of any of these ethnic identities to

live in equality with other citizens, in safety and harmony fulfilling his own aspirations and not feeling as second class citizens which had been engendered by the Sinhala Only Act of June 1956.

(To be continued)

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(Continued on page 22)

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The village and the tea estate—separate units?

Lal Wijanayaka

The policy statement of the Government of the Central Province which consists of the Kandy, Matale and Nuwara Eliya Districts, which was presented to the Central Provincial Council records that the total land area of the Central Province is 5,619 Kilometers, i.e. about 8.7% of the land area of the whole island. The total population is approximately 2.2 million and 89% of this population live in plantations and in nearly 3,700 Villages. Though the plantation population is not given in the policy statement it is known to be around 7 lakhs. The population consists mainly of plantation workers and small scale cultivators. The total

land area under cultivation is about 209,362 Hectares. This consists of 121,581 Hectares of Tea, 11,905 Hectares of Rubber, 18,443 Hectares Coconuts, 23,093 Hectares of paddy, 15,691 Hectares of minor export crops and 17,839 Hectares of vegetables. In other words the total cultivated land area in Central Province is about 37.26% of the total land area. It is seen that 58.07% of the total land area under cultivation is under Tea. In other words 21.63% of the total land area in Central Province is cultivated with tea. Therefore this shows what an important role the Tea plantation plays and the economic and social set up of the Central Province. This becomes doubly important when one considers the geographical setting of the tea Estates and the 3,700 Villages. The Villages are the borders of these tea estates and mostly hemmed between tea estates. It is unfortunate that the Central Provincial Council under the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, which created the Provincial Councils has no say whatsoever regarding the Tea Plantations. Under the 13th Amendment to the Constitution the first list in the ninth schedule lays down the subjects that fall within the jurisdiction of the Provincial Council and the second list lays down the subjects reserved by Central Government and the third list the subjects regarding which the Central Government and the Provincial Council can act concurrently. A study of this lists shows that the Central Provincial Council has no power to deal with the Tea Plantations. That means the Central Provincial Council will have no say regarding the most important economic activity in the area as shown above. This will completely defeat the purpose for which the Provincial Councils are established, that is, the development of the area. It means that the Central Provincial Council will not have a say about 58.07% of the cultivated land in the area.

During the last hundred odd years the estates and the village has existed as two separate economic units, without any economic or cultural relationship whatsoever. The villagers were not even allowed to cross the border. The villagers were prohibited from using the estate roads. Similarly the Estate Worker who was and to a certain extent even now is a bonded labourer was not allowed free movement. Therefore we see the uneven development of the village and the estates. Even today the village is involved in the most primitive forms of production and the Tea Estates worked on a capitalist form of production. But, what is significant is that the living standards of the Estate Worker and the Villager measured on the basis of accepted social indicators shows that there is hardly any difference between the living condition of the two sectors. The central task of the Central Provincial Council is to develop the 3,700 Villages. These villages cannot be developed without a change in the mode of production. There has to be surplus production for the village to develop. This calls for investment at village level in economically viable projects. It is the flow of capital to village that will stimulate the growth of our economy with a surplus production. This in the context of the Central Province cannot be achieved without the flow of a certain amount of capital from the profits made by the Estate to the adjoining villages. The village has to act as the supplier to the Estate. There are numerous items that can be supplied to the Estate from the village like rice, vegetables, milk equipment, bricks, metal, timber, labour etc, what could be supplied differs from area to area. This can only be achieved by the integration of the Estates and the Villages in the economically viable units.

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GORBACHEV'S

Perestroika

BOOK
REVIEW

Professor Archie Brown

Mikhail Gorbachev's book is the product of a remarkable change in both the style and substance of Soviet politics over the past two-and-a-half years. But its roots go further back than that.

Anyone who has followed the arguments conducted in Soviet journals in the 1970s and 1980s (often highly esoteric in the earlier period, increasingly open in more recent years) will see how time and again Gorbachev has come to adopt the stringent critiques of the condition of the Soviet economy and society offered by the more radical participants in those debates. They will also see how he picked up and developed some of the fresh thinking on foreign policy which was already being undertaken by a minority of intellectuals within the Soviet establishment.

Gorbachev possesses, in ample measure, intelligence, courage and political acumen. But perhaps his most important single attribute—an unusual one, to say the least, in a General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party—is a relatively open mind. He has listened to a far wider range of critical opinion within Soviet society than could ever gain the ear of Brezhnev and he has changed what may be called the balance of influence among policy advisers both within the central party apparatus and the research institutes in favour of those of more enlightened views.

Thus, while this book bears Gorbachev's personal stamp and

is a world away from Brezhnev's entirely ghosted and complacent "memoirs", it gains authority from the fact that he has been a good listener as well as a good talker. Only a few readers of *Perestroika* will be familiar with the Soviet debates which lie behind the judgements Gorbachev has reached. But the fact that he has been playing heed to that minority of social scientists who cried, with limited success, even in Brezhnev's time to push wider the frontiers of permissible criticism and reform, is but one among several reasons why it should be accepted that Gorbachev is in earnest and that the views he presents are the genuine product of a process of re-thinking and re-evaluation which is still going on and is, in fact, the subject of political struggle.

That is far from saying, of course, that all of Gorbachev's positions can be accepted. Thus, for example, though he refreshingly criticises previous Soviet leaders' and theoreticians' habit of seeing themselves as "the sole guardians of truth", especially *vis-à-vis* other Communist countries, he greatly underestimates the contribution to the making of the Cold War of the manner in which the East European states became Communist in the first place. Nor can one take entirely at face value Gorbachev's assertion that "today members of the Politburo and the Central Committee are unanimous as they have never been before". It is not only foreign observers of the Soviet scene but also Soviet reformers themselves who read carefully the speeches of various

Politburo members and detect that while all of them are for *perestroika*, they mean different things by that term.

Gorbachev himself says elsewhere in his book that there have been differences of opinion within the leadership on how to overcome stagnation and that "a conflict of opinions generates thought" but he stresses unanimity on the indispensability of *perestroika*. Probably there is general agreement that any attempt to "muddle through", Brezhnev-style, would not be enough to check the secular decline in the rate of Soviet economic growth or to close the growing technological gap between the USSR and the most successful capitalist countries. But on *perestroika* in the broad sense — with its dimensions of *glasnost* and political reform — it is apparent (and, indeed, natural) that different views exist at all levels of the Soviet Communist Party, though it may well be true to say that there is more support for genuinely radical reform within the apparatus of the Central Committee (largely as a result of the personnel changes instigated by Gorbachev) than at lower levels of the hierarchy.

While it is certainly possible to disagree with particular points in this book, the dominant impression must be one of respect for Gorbachev's ability to go as far and as fast in a reformist direction in so short a time. To a considerable extent Gorbachev's numerous, lengthy and generally

interesting speeches will have prepared at least some readers for what is to be found in the book. But by drawing together in an interconnected narrative some of the major elements in the "new thinking" which he has already espoused, and at times going beyond what he has said hitherto, Gorbachev has produced a work which deserves the wide readership it is going to attract.

It is noteworthy that the book has been published simultaneously in both East and West, for it is perhaps specially bold in an East European context.

For leaders, such as those in Czechoslovakia who owe their present positions, first, to the intervention of the Breznev leadership in their internal affairs and, second to their uncritical subsequent support of that same ruling group, it must be chastening to read that prior to perestrojka, Soviet society was becoming "increasingly unmanageable", that the leadership only thought they were "in the saddle" and that "a certain alienation" emerged which "still has a disturbing effect" in Soviet society.

Gorbachev's book must be welcomed as an authoritative distillation of the "new thinking" which is gaining ground at the highest political level in the Soviet Union and which is greatly superior to the "old thinking" on both domestic and foreign policy. If — as I believe is still likely, though by no means a foregone conclusion — Gorbachev can win his domestic political battles, perestrojka may yet become the name not only of a new book but of a new era in Russian history.

The reviewer is a Fellow of
St Antony's College, Oxford.

'Mein Zerbrochenes Volk'

Erzählungen und Gedichte aus Sri Lanka
von Ortrun Froehling.

Peter Hammer Verlag G. m. b. H.

(Wuppertal, Federal Republic of Germany)

'Mein Zerbrochenes Volk' is an anthology of short stories and poems from Sri Lanka, in German, compiled, translated, and introduced with a long commentary on the present state of the country with the emphasis on its economy, by Fräulein Ortrun Froehling. This is the first time anthology of current creative writing of this country is being placed before the German reading public. The total population of the two Germanys, Switzerland and Austria may be well over seventy five million, and there are large numbers of people in both Eastern and Western Europe, outside these three countries, for whom German is a second language and no less important for them than English or French in academic and cultural matters.

All those who take a genuine interest in the development and promotion of Sri Lankan writing would be delighted by this interest shown by a part of the non-English speaking world in our work. Of course Germans were some of the first people in Europe to translate and interpret Buddhist writing in Pali that had their origin in ancient Sri Lanka. It is also a well known fact that they were the pioneers in the study of Sanskrit, Pali and Sinhala, apart from the other languages of the Indo-Aryan group found in India and Sri Lanka. So this attempt, though limited in scope, should not come as a complete surprise. Current issues of many academic and semi-academic journals published in both Germanys carry a great deal of material pertaining to the sociology, politics and economics of the countries of this region. Many German Universities headed by the one in Berlin were engaged in the study of Theravada Buddhism (whose texts originated largely in Sri Lanka) from the last century.

So I would not be surprised if already some Universities there are making attempts to study and understand current creative writing of the region. One difficulty for the student of Sri Lankan writing, is that it is being done in three languages, Sinhala of course being the central one, and anthologies compiled here and abroad have shown a bias towards writing in English, and the compiler of the present collection Fräulein Ortrun Froehling, has not escaped the tendency to give undue importance to a secondary literature.

As the author states in the introduction "Es erhebt keinen Anspruch auf Vollständigkeit und Systematik. Es ist also keine Anthologie sri-lankaischer Gegenwartsliteratur. Ausgewählt wurden vielmehr Texte, die die gegenwärtige Situation des Landes und einiger seiner wichtigsten Lebensfragen spiegeln, ohne damit andere in ihrer Bedeutung für die Literaturszene des Landes schmälern zu wollen." (It does not claim to be comprehensive or systematic. It is also not an anthology of contemporary Sri Lankan literature. To reflect the most important, current problems (life's) more works (texts) have to be chosen without which the (meaning of) literature of the country would appear to be (rather) restricted (small).

Fräulein Ortrun Froehling has chosen seven poems, one each by Anne Ransinghe, Lakdas Wickramasinghe, Subraminaya Bharati, and two by the present reviewer (taken from 'Trident and other poems') translated from English, and one each by Jinadasa Dansuriya, and Parakrama Kodithuwakku translated first from Sinhala to English by Prof Hema Goonatilake. The one by Bharati (an Indian Tamil) had been originally written in Tamil.

Then there are nine short stories (Frl. Froehling calls them Erzählungen, meaning stories) one each by Puayakanthi Wijanaike, Sita Kulatunge, Si Francis, B. Weerakoon, Swinalee Gunaratne, Karuna Perera, and James Goonewardena and two stories by Indraneel de Silva. Karuna Perera's story had been originally written in Sinhala, and again translated by Prof. Hema Goonetilleke.

Some of these writers are already well known to the reading public here, although they would all be strangers to readers of German. As Frl. Froehling has rightly noted in the Introduction, this is certainly not a comprehensive anthology (in more than one sense). First of all, Sinhala writing is grossly under-represented, so much so that this is largely an anthology of some writing in English. Even in English, it is somewhat narrow. I suppose D. C. R. A. Goonetilleke's anthologies published here, include a greater range of writing, and are therefore more representative, even though he too has left out quite a bit. Anthologies necessarily suffer from the biases of their compilers, and this anthology is no exception. In addition to Frl. Froehling not having been in Sri Lanka long enough, or not having been a student of Sinhala writing especially, one cannot expect a more searching work. She is basically a student of Development Economics, and Law, and this effort of hers therefore must not be looked at as if it had come from a committed student of Sri Lankan writing.

I cannot say very much about the quality of the translation as, at the moment, I have access only to my two poems that are included in the anthology. Judging by them, I feel that Frl. Froehling has given an acceptable rendering.

Poetry, as is well known, is notoriously difficult to translate, and readers do not, most of the time, expect more than the paraphrasable content of a poem to get conveyed. Of course, some poetry offer greater difficulties

than others, especially modern symbolist poetry in French, German and English. Our poetry written in a second language (for a few only a truly native language) do not offer the same resistance to translation. The short stories present no great problems, and I feel that they have been rendered well, judging by their concreteness, the atmosphere they try to create, and their consistency.

The poems which had been written in Sinhala and Tamil may have lost a great deal, having been first translated into English and from that, into German. Future German anthologists, if they are to be really successful, would have to translate direct from those languages. I have no access to Kodithuwakku's poem, here the title of which has been translated as 'Petition zum Bauprojekt im Dschungel des Lowenkönigs'. There is no German word 'petition', and the translator may have taken over the English word, if that is the sense it is 'a petition to the building project in Sinhaya forest'. In the poem Kodithuwakku is concerned about the Canadian led timber extracting project there, and the rage of the primeval forest. I cannot even guess the title he would have given the poem in Sinhala.

The author has given a short glossary of Sinhala terms which appear in the short stories mainly, and most of them seem to have been adequately rendered into German. However for the word 'Puja' in the Buddhist context, she gives the rendering 'buddhistischer Gottesdienst' which is not quite accurate. Also words like 'kattadiya' 'upasammas' have not been rendered well, because of our cultural differences, Germans not being heir to a similar ritualistic or religious culture.

Frl. Ortrun Froehling's anthology is a pioneering attempt and she has produced a very useful book which the German reader will find, I am sure, both interesting and stimulating.

Tilak A. Gunawardhana

The Indo-Lanka...

(Continued from page 17)

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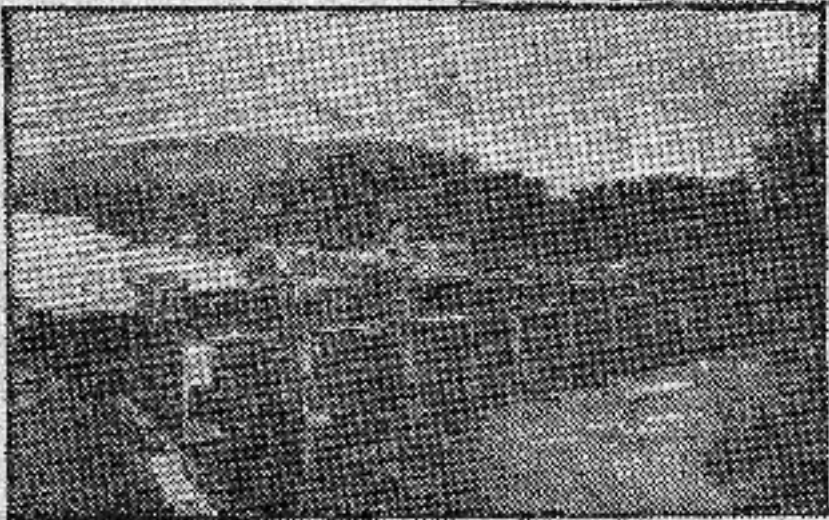
The village...

(Continued from page 19)

This integration of the Estates and the village will have far reaching social benefits by having common markets, cinemas, hospitals, schools etc. This will bring about social integration between the villager and the estate worker. Therefore, it is soon that the Central Provincial Council will not be able to think of a programme for the development of the backward villages without having the Plantation under their control. If the Central Province Council is to be made viable the control of the estates should be given to the Central Provincial Council by amending the 9th Schedule.

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When Colombo basked in Don's radiance

T. Govindarajan

When the streak of dawn lit up Colombo on March 27, forty years ago, it was time to greet the real Don in person. It was the morning after the night before for cricket lovers, young and old. The very thought of seeing the greatest ever batsman out on the ground the next morning made it a restless night.

The Colombo Oval was looking lush green in verdant bloom. The scramble for tickets was chore. And finally, the Don and his men, including many of the then sculliwarts and all-time greats of the game (Morris, Barnes, Miller, Hassett, Harvey, Tallon and Lindwall were there too to make the cup of joy full) — were out on the ground. The Australian team led by the Don himself was on its way to England in the fight for the 'Ashes'... and it was the Don's farewell to cricket.

What an ovation there was when the Don and his men were lined up for the introduction to the island's dignitaries! When it was known that the Aussies were to take first strike, the crowd's jubilation knew no bounds.

Bill Brown and Syd Barnes were seen at the crease. Brown left early, out long before to Sathi Coomaraswamy. This brought the Don to the scene amidst thunderous applause. And that picture of the Don in spotless white, a compact, slightly stocky figure, with the collar upturned and the broad forehead showing out from a skimpy hair-line parted at the right, striding to the crease remains etched in the mind.

Of course it was a friendly match, which did not call for a fierce competitive spirit or hectic bustle. All the same, class showed out. Came Bradman and his charisma. In this instance, the real Bradman fell short of his charisma, but snatches of his undoubted genius flashed now and

again to keep the crowd enthralled. He made his runs mostly in singles and twos, but even these showed his flair for improvisation. He crassed the ball, with a deft flick or a flowing movement, rather than smack it like a Weekes or a Walcott.

Bradman came with the reputation of a master of the pull. He made only a couple of these strokes. Instead, he amazed the crowd with the control over his shots on the off-side. The same type of ball he could steer anywhere between extra-cover to gully. He showed that he could find the gap between the fielders and send the ball through, with a square-drive, or square cut or with his own version of a jab. It was very difficult to see the field for him as he could always find the gaps.

So the innings seemed to go on and even as the crowd was eager to have more of him, there was a sudden termination (when he made just 20). He went for a cover drive as Heyn sent an over pitched off cutter, misjudged the flight and it turned out to be a half-hearted lofted cover-drive and de Kriester saw his chance, got into position and grabbed it. That was the end of Bradman. What a hush there was!

For once a good piece of catching especially by a home fielder went unapplauded. If Bradman had said to the umpire a la W. G. Grace "why there is no question of my being declared out, for the people have come to see me bat and not to see you giving me out," the crowd would have liked it. Of course Bradman would not say that, as much as the crowd would have wanted him to say that and stay on.

More than seeing Bradman, there was the delight of watching another super craftsman Syd Barnes in flowing strokeplay. What a

SPORTS

repertoire of strokes and what great style (he retired at 49)! Blessed is an ore, which could produce two gems like Bradman and Barnes. Of course, Miller's swashbuckling 46 and later his fiery pace generated in such beguiling fashion sustained interest.

It was drawn match, with Bradman's team declaring at 184 for seven and the local lads replying with 46 for two, when rain cut short the proceedings much to the chagrin of the spectators.

Forty years have rolled by since savouring that rare experience. But it was a life-time chance to see the Don in action and can any one forget it! Now after the passage of time, one could echo the immortal lines of Wordsworth on French Revolution "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven". I was 21 then and played some good cricket. What more one could wish for!

What a Godsend, that in those days (1948), the aeroplane was a rarity and all long travels were by ship. And from Australia to England is a long way and Colombo, the Ceylonese (now Sri Lanka) capital was a port of call for ships plying in this route. How lucky it was so then — Bombay was the next port of call — for air travel had not come in to vogue then and luxury liners S. S. Strathairn which took the Aussies in 1948 and Strathairn were the main passenger and cargo carriers. Otherwise where was the chance for people of this region to see in action celebrities like Don Bradman or Sydney Barnes!

Barnes is gone but the Don is happily with us. Actually he is completing 80 today. We wish him a century in line with his other records.

—Hindu

Tall and proud... Our legacy for tomorrow

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

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

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Naula, Bowlana and Walapane on land unsuitable for cropping.

Our target - A breathtaking two million four hundred thousand trees, covering 2,000 acres by 1987.

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



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TAL

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There are a multitude of guardians during your lifetime

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

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

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

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