

# Forward

THE VIEW FROM THE LEFT

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### We Say.....

#### Referendum

It is now clear what President Jayawardene had in mind when he said that he wants to roll up the Opposition's electoral map for a decade.

For the very man who vowed from many public platforms that he would not postpone elections even by a single day now wants the people to forgo for six years their INALIENABLE right to elect a Parliament of their choice.

Instead, he wants to perpetuate until mid-1989 a mock Parliament, where five-sixths of the MPs will be his appointed nominees, and where the Opposition will be frozen to the same meagre number it obtained under the most adverse circumstances in 1977.

What President Jayawardene and his government want to do is a cynical abuse of what is democratic in a referendum. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the UNP's anti-democratic 1978 Constitution, a referendum is fundamentally a democratic device through which the people can be directly consulted on a major issue. It cannot, and should not, be a means to deprive them of basic and inalienable rights.

A referendum cannot, and should not, take away or suspend the rights of voters who polled a minority. It should not deprive voters of their right to choose between contending parties, including non-governing ones. It should not prevent contemporary political trends among the voters from being reflected in Parliament by freezing them at what existed several years ago.

If 52 per cent of the voters can deprive the remaining 48 per cent from exercising an inalienable right, it is not democracy but a naked tyranny of numbers! What makes things even worse is that, under Jayawardene's referendum rules, this can also be done by a mere one-third of those who vote.

One can understand short postponements of elections if the free exercise of the vote or unimpeded access to polling stations is made impossible or very difficult as a result of war, widespread civil disturbances, or extensive natural disasters. But none of these circumstances exist to-day. Indeed, President Jayawardene's farcical act of asking all UNP Ministers and MPs to submit undated resignations to him indicates that one of his compelling reasons for putting off elections is his desire to put his house in order without risking his existing five-sixth majority.

By setting up a Parliament of "chit MPs" for the next six years, President Jayawardene hopes to provide the "stability" that the foreign capitalist investors demand and which he cannot ensure through the free choice of the people. He also feels that this is the only way in which he can keep his promise to the World Bank to impose harsh economic cutbacks in the people's welfare and to President Reagan to provide facilities for the US Navy at Trincomalee.

J. R.'s referendum is, therefore, a further step in his steady march to absolute dictatorship. It must be resolutely and unitedly resisted by all who value democracy and the hard-won and cherished right to choose those who rule in their name. Otherwise, the Presidential election of 1982 will become the last election of this decade.

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#### Preposterous

How preposterous can one get?

Apparently, there are no limits, if one is to judge from the President's spine-chilling inventions about plots, if Mr. Kobbekaduwa won, by "Naxalites" who have seized control of the SLFP to kill not only himself and his Ministers but also (doubtless with an eye to future moves towards a "National Government") the Bandaranaiques, mother and son.

Equally lurid was the Prime Minister's imaginative account to Parliament of sinister schemes to set up a government, with the Communist Party as its core, which would unleash anarchy and terror.

These tall tales seek to camouflage the government's obvious reluctance to stop post-polls violence by its supporters and to offset the substantiated reports by the Police, and even its own mass media, of Deputy and District Ministers, as well as government MPs, leading attacks on political opponents.

As far as J. R. is concerned, his remedy for post-election violence is to do away with elections!

## Stop J. R.'s Move to Put Off Polls

The Communist Party's call (see page 2) for united action by all non-governmental parties, mass organisations, and democratically-minded people to condemn and oppose the UNP government's attempt to put off general elections to Parliament until mid-1989 has been widely welcomed in Left and democratic circles.

These circles say that the anti-UNP forces have an opportunity to rectify the mistake made in the Presidential election, (when the failure to rally round a common candidate helped J. R. Jayawardene's victory,) as well as a second opportunity to mount a mass campaign against the government's moves towards dictatorship.

Apart from the CPSL, most parties have also condemned the government's proposal.

A statement by SLFP General Secretary, RATNASIRI WICKREMANAYAKE, condemns the government's proposal as "a move to deny the democratic rights of the people" and "to perpetuate UNP administration administratively".

Leader of the Opposition and TULF chief, Mr. A. AMIRTHALINGAM, has also opposed the proposal. So has TC leader, Mr. Kumar Ponnambalam.

LSSP General Secretary, BERNARD SOYSA, in a statement, denounces the proposal as "an anti-democratic act" that "can only strengthen the tendency towards dictatorship."

Several leaders of smaller anti-UNP parties have also done the same. All parties call for general elections to a new Parliament to be held on time.

Several public bodies, like the Civil Rights Movement, have also opposed the proposal and asked that it should be abandoned. So have many trade unions.

Many people who voted for President Jayawardene have also said that they cannot agree to the postponement of the elections.

### U.N.P. Starts a Witch-Hunt

Is the CID interrogation of Hector Kobbekaduwa, Vijaya Kumaranatunge and even Mrs. Bandaranaike the start of a massive witch-hunt against leading political opponents, intended to supplement the physical terrorism unleashed at mass level against several persons who opposed President Jayawardene's re-election in different localities?

Political observers, who ask this question, point to President Jayawardene's statement, in his speech to his MPs that legal action will be taken against many people who worked and spoke against him during the Presidential elections.

Premier Premadasa's wild allegations in Parliament against named personalities in the political, administrative, mass media and cultural fields is further evidence of the beginning of a witch-hunt in the public service.

WEEKEND (31/10), reporting that the government will

launch a "dragnet" to flush out "moles in the public service" in a programme to "clean up the public sector" of "saboteurs" and "fifth columnists", quotes Minister FESTUS PERERA, as saying that "all bureaucrats who worked against the government during the Presidential polls would face inquiry and subsequent expulsion".

Following the elections, the government has also sealed the printing press of the SUTHANTIRAN in Jaffna and another in Maradana owned by a SLFP supporter. Administrative action against ATHTHA and DINAKARA is also spoken about in government circles.

Opposition parties believe that this witch-hunt is aimed at intimidating people from taking part in the referendum, thus lowering the total vote and allowing the UNP to have its postponement of elections ratified by a mere one-third vote.

### U. N. P. CANARD DENIED

The charge made by the President, the Prime Minister, and other UNP spokesmen of a "plot", if Mr. Kobbekaduwa won the Presidential election, to set up a "pro-communist government" by force and to unleash a reign of murder and terror against UNP leaders and supporters (including the President, the P. M. and Cabinet Ministers,) as well as Mrs. Bandaranaike and Mr. Anura Bandaranaike of the SLFP, were branded as a slanderous canard, whose main object was to conceal and excuse the real terror that many UNP Ministers and MP had unleashed against defeated political opponents.

SLFP MPs and Sarath Muttetuwegama of the CPSL categorically denied these charges on behalf of their parties, when made by the PM and other Ministers in Parliament.

Well known composer PREMASIRI KHEMADASA, whom the PM accused in Parliament of getting drunk at a Chinese Embassy reception and blurring out advance information about an opposition plan of post-election violence, told FORWARD: "This is totally false. No such thing happened. The PM has obviously been given a dead rope by some interested party

or else has no regard for truth. Parliament and the country have been misled".

Communist leader, H. G. S. RATNAWEERA, whom the PM said was to be made Chairman of Lake House, told FORWARD: "Premadasa is talking through his hat. I was not offered, nor did I ask for or accept, this or any other post. Our party made it clear before and during the election that, although we supported Mr. Kobbekaduwa, we would not accept Cabinet or any other office under a SLFP government, even if an offer was made to us".

A well-known cultural, personality, who was among those mentioned by the PM, told FORWARD: "The Prime Minister has joined up with some of the actors and other artists who supported J. R. to further professional vendettas in the cultural world. They are trying to intimidate producers into not giving us any work, and to put people who will dance to their tunes in commanding positions in Rupavahini and the SLBC".

Asked for his comments on Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's charge that "all this was planned by the Communist Party", CPSL Politburo member, D. E. W. Gunasekera, said: "From the time that Hitler staged the infamous Reichstag fire trial, anti-communism has been used by the most reactionary sections of the capitalist class to justify its attacks on democracy. What is happening now is no exception."



## Say "No" to J. R.

The following statement, on behalf of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, was issued by its General Secretary, K. P. SILVA, on 28th October, 1982.

"The outrageous proposal to put off Parliamentary elections for six years is the latest step in President Jayawardene's determined and planned progress towards an absolute dictatorship.

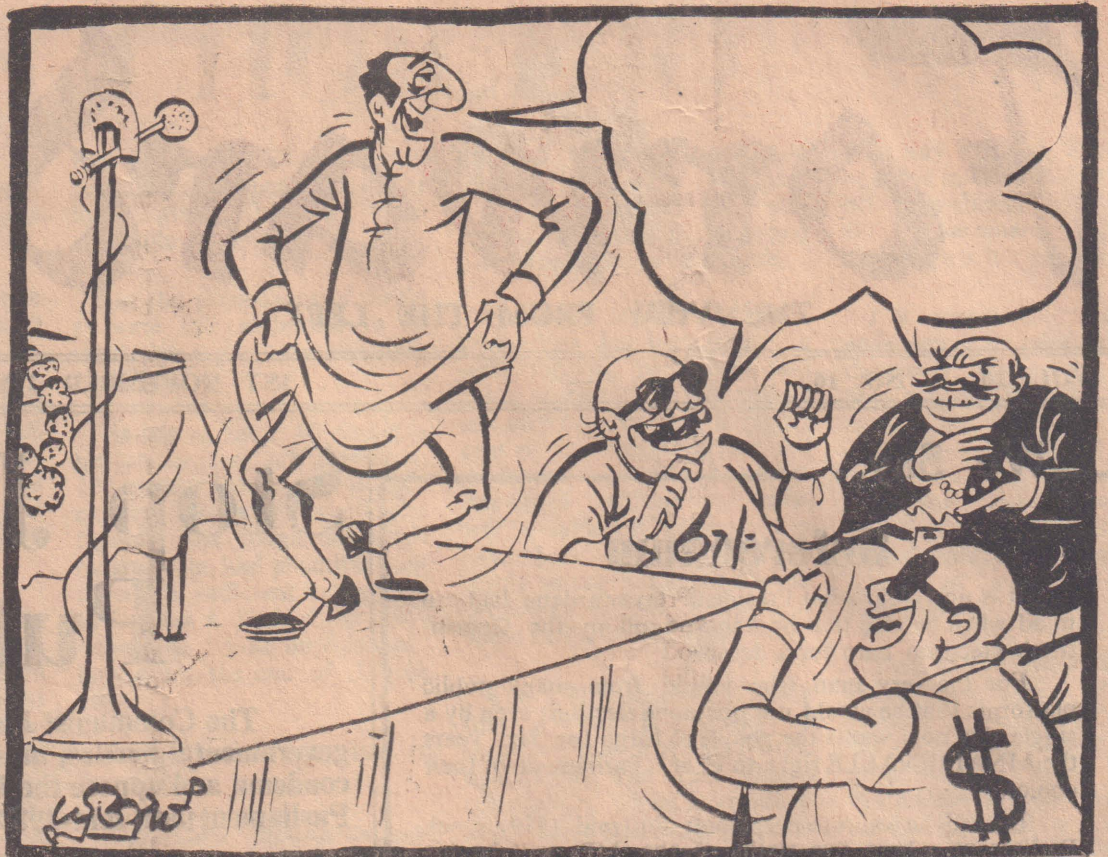
"What makes this proposal even more reprehensible is that it has been made by the very man who has been telling us repeatedly, on election and other platforms, that he will not postpone elections even by a single day. The Communist Party of Sri Lanka strongly condemns this anti-democratic proposal.

"It is precisely because the election result has made it plain that he cannot hope for a stable government and a workable Parliamentary majority, that he has resorted to the present shabby manoeuvre to extend the life of the 1977 Parliament, with its five sixth majority, so as to push through the harsh economic measures that he has promised the World Bank,

"This latest step of President Jayawardene and his government also shows how correct was the warning of the Communist Party that the recent Parliamentary election could be the last election for a long time, that further moves towards a dictatorship would follow if President Jayawardene is re-elected, and that joint action in support of a common anti-UNP candidate was urgently needed to prevent this.

"The leaders of the LSSP, NSSP and JVP, who spurned this and preferred to follow a sectarian and divisive path, bear a heavy responsibility for what is happening now. However, we hope that least now they will unite to oppose the proposal of President Jayawardene to put off parliamentary elections.

"Our party appeals to all other non-government parties, and to all mass organisations and democratically minded people, to condemn unequivocally and oppose the anti-democratic proposal to put off Parliamentary elections.



"HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN."

## 2.5 Million March for Peace in India

Marches for peace, which have drawn in many millions in Europe and North America, have now started up in Asia.

The 2.5 million who marched for peace in New Delhi, India, on October 4 made this march the biggest march for peace that has taken place anywhere in the capitalist world so far.

It was also the biggest demonstration that India's capital has ever seen.

Nearly 80,000 more persons, who had set out from various parts of India to join the peace march, were unable to do so as India's transport system could not cope with the problem of carrying them to New Delhi in time.

Many thousands were stranded at railway stations and bus terminals en route.

### SIX SPONSORS

The National Peace March was jointly sponsored by six non-governmental parties.

They are: Communist Party of India, CPI (M), RSP, Forward Bloc, DSP and PWP.

Trade unions, students and women's organisations, and hundreds of different mass organisations also took part.

The Indian peace movement was also strongly represented. President of the World Peace Council, ROMESH CHANDRA, who came specially to join the marchers.

The main slogan of the peace march was "Against Nuclear War and the Threat to National Security and for Support to Palestinian Struggle".

Demonstrators came to Delhi from every regional state and district of the country.

### ALL WALKS

Describing the march, the Indian journal NEW AGE wrote (10/10):

"The marchers, though overwhelmingly consisting of the poorest of the poor, came from all walks of life. There were college and university teachers, students, agricultural workers, peasants, office employees, industrial workers,

intellectuals and cultural personalities. Among the marchers were physically handicapped ones too".

Saying that the march showed that the Indian people's struggle for peace had entered a new stage, the journal commented editorially that: "The characteristic feature of this new stage is that the struggle for peace has now been taken up by the broad masses of our people".

## Short Takes

While the UNP government is, quite rightly, tough about enforcing the Gleneagles Agreement banning sporting links with South Africa, it doesn't care much for the UN resolutions urging trade and economic sanctions against this monstrous apartheid regime.

In 1981, for instance, Sri Lanka imported Rs. 663.8 million worth of goods from South Africa, 36 per cent of this sum being spent on chocolates, biscuits and soft drinks. South Africa bought only Rs. 352 million worth of goods from us (mostly tea), leaving us with a trade deficit of Rs. 311 million.

Thus the UNP government not only trades with South Africa, but subsidises its racist regime as well.

\* \* \*

Pre-tax profits of the state banks are falling. Between 1980 and 1981, the profits of the Bank of Ceylon fell from Rs. 331 to Rs. 239 million and of the People's Bank from Rs. 190 to Rs. 150 million.

The main reason for this Rs. 132 million drop in profits is competition from the 15 foreign commercial banks that the UNP government has invited to operate in Sri Lanka. These banks are not hamstrung by restrictions imposed by the government on the state banks.

## J. R.'S HIT LIST

Nearly 30 UNP MPs and 6 Cabinet Ministers are likely to have the forced and undated "resignations" President Jayawardene extracted from them accepted.

The MPs include all who represent former constituencies where Hector Kobbekaduwa got a majority in the October 20th polls, as well as such notorious "expendables" as Sunil Ranjan Jayakoddy, G.V. Punchinilame and Yatiyan-tota's Vincent Perera.

Their removal will be done in batches so as not to "rock the boat" before the referendum.

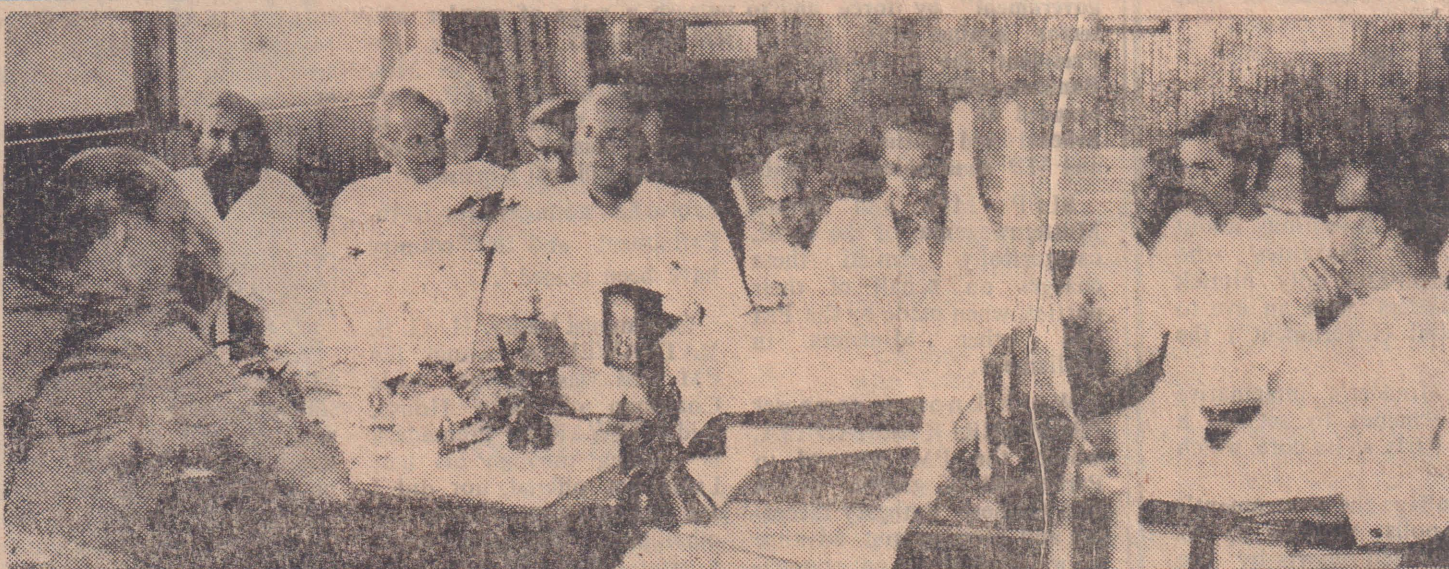
Most MPs however hope that the whole "resignation" exercise will be a cosmetic one, to soothe the public before the referendum, rather than

to make any serious changes.

Among Ministers mentioned as due for the "chop" are Nissanka Wijeratne, C. Rajadurai and Mrs. Wimala Kannangara.

However many other Ministers fear that they may be edged out to make room for the Kalugalle deserters, any SLFP or TULF cross-overs to a "National" government, or the "technocrats" J. R. wants to bring into the Cabinet.

Premier Premadasa and his supporters are apprehensive that his position and right to succession may be undermined by a new proposal within the UNP that 3 new posts of Vice-President should be created and the PM "kicked upstairs" to one of them.



Leaders of anti-UNP parties who interviewed the IGP on October 25 (see story on page 5) regarding organised post-polls violence by UNP MPs and supporters. Among those who took part in the Opposition delegation were Hector Kobbekaduwa, T. B. Illangaratne, Ratnasiri Wickremarajane, Pieter Keuneman, Mathripala Senanayake, Dinesh Gunawardena, Anil Moonesinghe, G. I. D. Dharmasekera and Jinadasa Niyathapala.



(PIETER KEUNEMAN answers questions on the outcome of the Presidential elections put to him by FORWARD staffer, STANLEY RANASINGHE)

# What the Polls Results Show

**Q. The UNP and the so-called national press have claimed that President Jayawardene's victory signifies national endorsement of his government and its policies. Any comment?**

**A.** This false claim was fully and factually debunked in the statement of our party's General Secretary, K. P. SILVA, which was published in several newspapers.

First of all, the results show that while the UNP and CWC polled 3,450,811 votes, the candidates contesting the UNP polled 3,071,537 votes. The difference between them was only 379,274 votes.

On top of this, nearly 17 lakhs of registered voters did not vote at all, which is hardly an endorsement of the government's policies. And no one knows how the 80,000 odd voters, whose ballot papers were rejected, expressed their feelings.

**Q. But haven't the UNP and CWC increased their vote as compared with what they got in 1977?**

**A.** Look at it this way: In 1977 the UNP-CWC duo polled 3,241,928 votes. In 1982 these two parties polled 3,450,811 votes. The increase in their vote is, therefore, 208,883. Percentage wise, this increase is from 51.9% to 52.91%, i.e. 1.01 per cent.

Compared with this, the anti-UNP vote increased from 2,227,143 in 1977 to 3,071,537 in 1982, i.e. by 844,394 votes. Percentage wise, this vote went up from 35.7% in 1977 to 47.09% in 1982, i.e. by 11.39 per cent.

The difference between the UNP and anti-UNP vote in 1977 was 1,014,785 or 16.2 per cent. In 1982, it was reduced to 379,274 votes, or 5.82 per cent.

President Jayawardene has boasted that he approaches election "mathematically". He should ponder on these figures before making unsubstantiated claims.

**Q. What do you think were the main reasons for President Jayawardene's victory?**

**A.** President Jayawardene claims that he took advantage of the divisions in the Opposition and caught them on the wrong foot. There is some truth in this claim.

Practically everyone, including the SLFP, has admitted that the divisions and internal problems in that party, which continued throughout the election, affected Mr. Kobbekaduwa's chances adversely. This was not only a matter of the UNP-organised "desertions" of Kalugalle, Wijesiri and Co., but was also manifested in the actions and speeches of people like Mr. Anura Bandaranaike during the campaign, as well as in the

rivalry between different SLFP "organisers" in several electorates.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva has also pointed to the disunity in the Left movement. He is correct there, but he should also have mentioned that, in this election, his LSSP made no small contribution to this disunity.

President Jayawardene's candidature was helped by a good election organisation, unlimited funds, the backing of almost the entire mass media, and the full resources of the state. He successfully frightened many who had got jobs between 1977 and 1982 that they would lose these if Mr. Kobbekaduwa won, although Mr. Kobbekaduwa specifically repudiated this canard on several occasions,

*The UNP also made full use of the help given to it by Dr. de Silva's spurious "law point" and the JVP's sectarian and disruptive campaign, to promote J. R.'s victory.*

Our party is making an in-depth study of the election results and our Central Committee will give its considered views on these matters soon.

I would like, however, to mention one matter that has not been mentioned so far, and that is J.R.'s timing of the election.

He realised that his "open economy" policies were heading for acute crisis and financial bankruptcy which would become extremely visible next year. So he decided to call the election while the consumerist attitudes, illusions and expectations that his government had generated around this policy still had an impact.

This, to my mind, is one of the main political reasons for his victory.

**Q. What do you think of Mr. Kobbekaduwa's campaign? Do you agree with those who say that the SLFP should have selected a stronger candidate?**

**A.** Whom the SLFP selects as its candidate is, of course, a matter for that party, I don't think it proper to interfere in its internal affairs. I don't want to be like J. R. Jayawardene, who used Upali Wijewardene to try to get the SLFP to put forward a candidate suitable to him and who is apparently trying to do so once again in relation to the next round of parliamentary elections.

*Hector Kobbekaduwa was, of course, the candidate of the SLFP. But he was also the candidate commonly endorsed and supported by a number of parties, including our own, and by numerous mass organisations.*

Considering the short time he had, his lack of resources, and the sniping at him from

within the SLFP, and from the LSSP and JVP, I think he did very creditably.

*Anyway, he polled more than the SLFP got in 1977, when there was no question of "strong" or "weak" leaders of its campaign. And he was able to attract support from a wide spectrum of other anti-UNP forces, which the SLFP was not able to do in 1977.*

Let's not forget that Hector Kobbekaduwa always said that the fight was not between him and J. R. but between the people and the UNP. This was really so. If he had the time, resources or organisation to back up the swing in his favour in the last 10 days of the campaign, a fact that is admitted even by the UNP and its political commentators, the outcome of the election may have been different.

**Q. What are the reasons for the defeat of the Left?**

**A.** As our General Secretary, K. P. SILVA, made clear in his statement, the Left was NOT defeated.

What was decisively rejected were certain wrong and sectarian policies of the LSSP, JVP and NSSP that objectively helped the UNP.

Most of the Left followed the correct policy and supported Mr. Kobbekaduwa. This includes four-fifths of the LSSP members and supporters.

Far from suffering defeat, it was the correct position taken by the CPSL and the majority of the Left forces that played a major part in the overall increase in the anti-UNP vote in 1982 over 1977.

**Q. What do you have to say about the role of the CPSL in this campaign?**

**A.** The important role that our party and ATHTHA played in this campaign has been publicly appreciated by Mr. Kobbekaduwa, by the SLFP in its official statement, by other leaders of the SLFP and of parties supporting Mr. Kobbekaduwa, and has even been the subject of comment by newspapers and political columnists supporting J.R. I have nothing to add to that, except to say that ATHTHA did a first class job. Its circulation increased more than three-fold and the demand was such that copies were selling in the blackmarket at Rs. 5 per Re. 1 copy.

**Q. Do you expect that there will be changes within different parties as a result of the recent elections?**

**A.** If the general elections to Parliament do not come almost immediately, this is possible.

President Jayawardene has indicated that he may have to reshuffle his Cabinet and purge his party of some MPs, as well as consider revamping certain aspects of policy. The

re-admittance of Upali Wijewardene to the Presidential fold and the need to compensate Kalugalle and Co for their perfidy may also bring about some changes.

As for the SLFP, the unresolved internal problems will have to be resolved one way or the other before it faces the next round of elections.

The LSSP, too, will have to take stock about where the policy of its leaders has led this party, which had lost four-fifths of even the hard-core support it had in 1977 and fared dismally.

I don't know about the JVP, which is run more on military than on democratic lines, but even in that party there must be those who will want to know why the tall promises of its leaders have not materialised.

Although the TULF did not take part officially in the election, it will also have to draw conclusions from the failure of its "boycott" appeal and the high vote for Kobbekaduwa in Jaffna, the performance of Mr. Ponnambalam, etc.

The CPSL is, perhaps the only party that will not have to undergo any soul-searching in regard to this election, as our entire membership was in full agreement with, and helped actively to implement, the decision of our Central Committee.

**Q. What will J. R. do next? Will he held a general election soon? Or will he try to postpone it by resort to a referendum?**

**A.** I can't say. J. R. himself has said that he doesn't disclose his plans even to his wife. So he is not likely to tell me.

In calling an early Presidential election, J. R. took a gamble, which succeeded—but only just. Now he must take another gamble to bolster his far from stable position.

He can hold an early election. But the 2% overall majority he has obtained will not give him a stable government in the next Parliament. It is also risky for him to go to the electorate without major changes in his team, which may be difficult for him to do.

He may decide to seek a further extension of his rule through a referendum. In this way he can maintain his 5/6 majority for a longer period. Perhaps this is what he had in mind when he spoke about "rolling up" electoral maps for a decade. But, once again, a referendum will be a risky gamble with the 2% overall majority he has. What happens if the TULF enters the fray or the 17 lakhs of voters who did not vote decide to do so? It will reduce the percentage of the total vote that the UNP got.

In either case, the anti-UNP forces should maintain, and,

if possible, extend and intensify the unity of action that they achieved during the Presidential polls.

If J. R. holds a snap general election, they should seek no-contest arrangements that will permit the new Parliament to become a forum of confrontation with, and struggle against, President Jayawardene, a platform for popularising and seeking to assert the people's demands and for mobilising the people's struggle outside.

If he goes for a referendum, they should unitedly campaign against any extension of the present Parliament. After all, it was J.R. himself who stomped the country saying that he would not postpone elections "even by a single day".

In either case, J. R. will, as he himself indicated, now try to push ahead with the "National" government he has been advocating for many years.

He first advocated this united front of the capitalist parties in the 1970s, when the world and domestic crisis of capitalism became acute.

At that time, he tried to join Mrs. Bandaranaike's government and even offered not to nominate a UNP candidate at the Kalawewa by-election provided Anura Bandaranaike was the SLFP candidate.

Even after his 1977 victory, he offered Mrs. Bandaranaike and some other SLFP leaders portfolios, which they rejected.

Now, when the crisis of neo-colonialist and capitalist development in Sri Lanka has reached explosion point, he will try again. During the Presidential election, he indicated that he would invite Opposition leaders to join him after the election.

Anti-UNP forces should therefore be vigilant regarding any attempts by J. R. to use the inner problems of the of the SLFP and the TULF to advance his plan for a "National" government.

(Interview on 27.10.82.)

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# U. S. - Backed "Coup" in West Germany

*An American hand is seen by many political commentators behind the toppling of the Helmut Schmidt Social Democratic Government in West-Germany.*

This reveals a pattern of destabilisation promoted elsewhere by the USA.

It may be a prelude to new moves at the destabilisation of other Western European governments that Reagan has reservations about—particularly, Bruno Kreisky's government in Austria, Olaf Palme's government in Sweden, and Francois Mitterand's government in France.

Although Helmut Schmidt's SPD government basically toed the US line in many essential matters, such as support for NATO and the stationing of new US offensive nuclear missiles in Western Europe, it was compelled by many domestic circumstances to differ from the US in several particulars.

Among these compelling domestic circumstances were (1) the crisis of West German economy, where industrial production's increase is down to a mere 1.5 per cent, inflation runs at 11 per cent, 2 million are jobless, and even big companies (AEG-Telefunken being the latest) are going bust; (2) the sharp rise in the movement against nuclear missiles and for peace, as shown by the massive peace marches and the impressive showing of the anti-nuclear "green" party of ecologists at recent election; and (3) the rising militancy of the trade unions, which are determined that the workers should not suffer from cutbacks to support increased war preparations.

## RESPONSE

In response to these domestic pressures, even the right-wing leaders of the SDP were compelled to adopt different policies from what Washington wanted—particularly, in regard to Ostpolitik, detente, and commercial and border agreements with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

The front-rank role that the Schmidt government took recently in defying the US order to scrap the pipeline carrying natural gas from the USSR to Western Europe also displeased the Reagan administration greatly.

Although Schmidt was a strong supporter of stationing US Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Western Europe (and in West Germany) targeted on the USSR, the US could not be sure that he would be able to guarantee the US aim to have these missiles positioned and targeted by early 1983.

So, Schmidt had to go.

## SIMPLE

The destabilisation operation was relatively simple.

The Free Democratic Party (FDP), led by Foreign Minister Genscher, was induced to pull out of the coalition government with the SPD, thus depriving it of its majority in Parliament.

By a majority vote, the FDP Parliamentary party decided to link up with the extreme rightist Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and to use a constitutional device to instal a short-term CDU-FDP coalition government, rather than face a new election.

This "coup" by the Genscher leadership of the FDP was bitterly opposed in that party itself. The Parliamentary party had only approved it by 34 votes to 18, while the FDP's General Secretary GUENTHER VERHEUGEN, who has held the post since 1978, resigned in disgust.

West Germany's voters had even stronger feelings about what Genscher and Co. had done.

At the election to the assembly of Hesse Province, which followed shortly afterwards, the FDP was eliminated altogether, polling only 3.1 per cent of the vote while a minimum of 5 per cent is needed to get any representation at all. A similar fate befell the FDP in the Bavarian elections thereafter.

*The new government, headed by Helmut Kohl and consisting of a CDU-FDP bloc, knows that it will be defeated if it goes to the polls. But it is determined to stay in office, at least until the stationing of the US missiles can be made a fait accompli.*

## COMPOSITION

The composition of the Kohl government makes its reactionary character clear.

Its Finance Minister is Gerhard Stoltenberg, a man from the house of Krupps, the arms manufacturing TNC.

Home Minister Friedrich Zimmermann is notorious both for his extreme rightist views and his shady deals, being involved in a scandal involving gambling dens some time ago and somehow saved from prison by his patron, CDU boss Franz Josef Strauss.

The new Defence Minister, Lt. Col. Werner of CDU, is a militarist who is strongly in favour of stationing the US missiles in the FRG.

And Genscher, who all along tried to hinder any "opening to the East" in the SPD's foreign policy, remains Foreign Minister, and has been rewarded for the dirty job he did by being made Deputy Chancellor in addition.

The new KOHL government remains weak and unstable. It announced policy to control demonstrations and to

impose heavy burdens on the workers and common people has been resisted by the trade unions.

*The unions have threatened industrial action if KOHL tries to force such measures through and, in any case, are poised for a fight by February 1983, when new wage agreements have to be negotiated.*

So the US inspired "coup" may turn out to be a pyrrhic victory. Kohl has been compelled to promise elections before March 1983, but whether he will keep his promise or not still remains an open question.

## PIPELINE FIASCO-END OF ERA

The open defiance by Reagan's major NATO partners of his arrogant order that they should discontinue contractual obligations entered into with the Soviet Union over the international gas pipeline, and the failure of the intimidatory embargo he has slapped on firms in these countries, symbolises the close of an era—the era of uncontested, unilateral domination of the world's capitalist economy by US imperialism.

Having pursued its own imperialist aims during the course of World War II, the US emerged victorious over the empires of its principal imperialist rivals, Germany and Japan.

Europe, including America's allies, and Japan lay devastated, ripe for penetration and domination by US finance capital.

Through the Marshall Plan in Europe and the salvaging of the Zaibatsu in Japan, and under cover of the Soviet "menace". American imperialism imposed its control upon the world capitalist economy and world trade. But it did not go unchallenged for long.

In addition to the growing challenge of the socialist sector and colonial liberation movements, the US also faced a reconstructed European Community in the late 1950s, led by the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG); the emergence of Japan as a major world producer and exporter in the 1960; the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in the 1970s; and the entrance into the world market of the Advanced Developing Countries (ADCs) such as Algeria, Brazil, S. Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan and Mexico.

## IMPACT

These developments had a serious impact on the weight of the US in the global economic system.

Its share of total exports of manufactured goods fell from its post-war high of 29 per-

cent in 1953 to only 13 per cent by 1971 (Dollars and Cents, July-August 1982.)

The steady erosion of its share of the world export market brought three major depreciations of the dollar in the 1970s.

Thus, while as late as 1950, the US accounted for 50 per cent of the gross world product, in 1982 that ratio has been cut in half.

Now, the level of US trade is only about 12 per cent of the world total, one-third that of the European Community. US exports of manufactured goods are less than those of the FRG alone.

The precarious position of the US flows from, among other factors, its increasingly heavy dependence on the world economy.

Over 20 per cent of US industrial output is now exported; one of every six manufacturing jobs and two of every five acres of farmland produce for export; and almost one-third of the profits of US corporations derive from their exports and foreign investments.

This explains the desperate efforts of American imperialism via the Reagan Administration—as in the case of the pipeline embargo extension—to undermine and subordinate the economies of its chief imperialist rivals.

So again, the myth of the Soviet "menace" is trotted out, but this time with a new twist.

Having tried to build up world tension over an alleged "superiority" of the Soviet military, now the Reagan Administration asserts that Soviet Union is in deep financial trouble and must be deprived of foreign exchange sources to weaken its position at home and in world trade.

## AFFECTED

Admittedly, because of the global division of labor and interconnections of world trade, no country is unaffected by the deepening world capital-

## POST POLLS QUOTES

"We have been able to survive only because of the aid the World Bank is giving us. I really don't know what to do about the economy. Nobody does".—President J. R. Jayawardene, in an interview with David Selbourne of the "Illustrated Weekly of India", quoted in "Lanka Guardian".

"The mandate given to President Jayawardene will now mean that foreign investments in Sri Lanka will increase four fold".—Mr Paul Perera, Chairman, GCEC.

"The climate for foreign investment is now very good.... There has been a lull in economic activity during the last three months with prospective investors fearing a change of government. However, now there will be a resurgence of economic and business activity".—Mr P. A. Silva, Chairman, Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.

"We are very glad at the re-election of President Jayawardene. It will mean that the present policy of the open economy will continue, encouraging industry and trade".—Mr D. E. de S. Wijeratne, National Chamber of Commerce.

"The more popular figure was young Anura Bandaranaike who came late into the campaign and whose every speech was more favourable to the UNP than to the party he represented".—Migara, WEEKEND, (24/10).

alist crisis, including the Soviet Union. But the facts about the Soviet Union reveal a far different picture than that painted by the professional Sovietologists.

Today the Soviet Union produces 20 per cent of the world's industrial output—more than the world's total output 30 years ago.

As compared with 1980, Soviet foreign trade rose by 16 per cent and Soviet exports by 15 per cent in 1981.

Of the shares of Soviet foreign trade, Socialist countries accounted for 52.8 per cent (47.6 were Council for Mutual Economic Assistance countries); industrialized capitalist countries, 32.2 per cent; and developing countries, 15 per cent.

In 1981, 80 per cent of the USSR's trade with the industrialized capitalist countries was accounted for by West European countries; this amounted to 25 per cent of all Soviet foreign trade. Soviet major commercial partners are the FRG, Finland, France, Italy and Japan, in that order.

Pressed by internal political and economic problems, Western Europe and Japan are not about to abandon their growing trade with the potentially vast Soviet market in subordination to US finance capital.

Using the language of diplomacy they have charged that the extension of the pipeline embargo implies "an extraterritorial extension of American jurisdiction which is contrary to the principles of international law, this being unacceptable to Community countries." (Resolution of the European Parliament on ECUS Trade)

The rejection of the embargo extension has struck a major blow for peace and orderly world trade; it signifies a developing change in the relationship of forces within the capitalist world, and in its relation to the socialist world. The era of unchallenged US imperialist world supremacy is coming to a close.

(Courtesy: DAILY WORLD)



# U. N. P. M. P.s and post-polls violence

Several MPs of the UNP have been named as instigators or participants in post-election incidents, including violent revenge against political opponents.

Some of them are the same persons against whom charges were made in the earlier UNP-inspired attacks on pickets during the 1980 general strike that led to the killing of Somapala; in the assaults on plantation workers in 1981; and in the orgy of violence at the time of the DDC elections at Jaffna last year. No action was, however, taken against them on those occasions.

The incidents in which these MPs are alleged to have been involved are among the three cases of homicide, 10 cases of arson, 50 assaults and nearly 100 complaints of intimidation and threats made to the Police

in the first three days after the result of the Presidential polls was announced on October 21.

The vast majority of incidents are those in which UNP members and supporters have taken the offensive.

## WORST

The worst case so far involves the MP for Polgahawela, Sunil Ranjan Jayakoddy.

Describing one incident in which this MP is named, the ISLAND (24/10) reports: "...the politico is alleged to have come in a jeep in the evening to a house owned by an opposition party supporter and had assaulted the occupants. He had then dashed an infant on the ground. The Polgahawela Police said that the child was admitted to the Kurunegala Hospital and was kept under intensive care".

The DAILY NEWS (25/12) also reports that this MP and "fifteen other persons described by police as Mr. Jayakoddy's supporters" were arrested after the army had intercepted them in "a convoy of vehicles allegedly intent on a political vendetta".

"A loaded revolver, an iron rod, a bicycle chain, some empty bottles, pieces of folded paper and some match boxes were found on a jeep in this convoy police sources said.

"There was post-election violence at Polgahawela on Thursday when about five persons, including two women, were injured".

Ratnapura MP Mr. G. V. Punchi Nilame, Bibile MP Mr. Dharmadasa Banda, and Yatiyantota MP Mr. Vincent Perera are also mentioned in incidents under Police inquiry.

Another UNP 'chit MP' has been identified among those travelling in a jeep and other vehicles, from which stones were thrown at the residence of Vijaya Kumaranatunge, Asst. Secretary of the SLFP and a leading campaigner for Mr. Kobbekaduwa.

Another UNP MP was discovered in an armed convoy at Maho, which was out to attack opponents.

## AFFECTED

Among the areas affected by post-polls violence this time are Colombo, Biyagama, Divulapitiya, Badulla, Ratnapura, Polgahawela, Bibile, Kekirawa, Ingiriya, Maho and Medawachchiya.

56 persons, mainly UNP supporters, had been taken into custody in the first two days after the polls result was announced.

At the Ceramic Corporation factory at Piliyandala, the Tyre Corporation at Kelaniya and other industrial corporation under Minister Cyril Mathew, JSS goons have assaulted suspected SLFP supporters and ordered them not to report for work.

Political observers have commented on the fact that, while leaders of anti-UNP parties had appealed for peace and order on the eve of the poll, the UNP leaders had failed to do so. All that President Jayawardene had told his supporters after the election was to "go home".

These observers say that, although a state of emergency has been declared on October 20, it is not being enforced against post-polls violence. The Police, they say, are however doing their best to curb such violence, despite heavy political pressure on them from UNP sources.

A high level Opposition delegation that interviewed the IGP on October 25 alleged that post-election violence was now turning from sporadic fights between individuals to organised political violence by UNP personalities.

## THE WAY THE VOTES WENT

The detailed figures of voting in the former electorates, which were also issued by the Commissioner of Elections, show that Hector Kobbekaduwa polled more than J. R. Jayawardene in 17 of these constituencies.

They are: Kesbewa, Attanagalla, Gampaha, Baddegama, Habaraduwa, Hakmana, Kamburupitiya, Mulkirigala, Vaddukoddai, Kankasanturai, Manipay, Kopay, Udupiddy, Pt. Pedro, Chavakachcheri, and Mullativu.

In 37 other constituencies, J. R. beat Hector only because the latter's vote was split by other candidates.

These constituencies are: Kaduwela, Maharagama, Divulapitiya, Mahara, Panadura, Bandaragama, Bulathsinhala, Matugama, Kalutara, Teldeniya, Ambalangoḍa, Bentara-Elpitiya, Ratgama, Akmeemana, Akuressa, Matara, Weligama, Beliatta, Tangalla, Tissamaharama, Vavuniya, Batticaloa, Paddiruppu, Pottuvil, Seruwila, Mutur, Medawachchiya, Horowpatane, Anuradhapura East, Kalawewa, Mihintale, Moneragala, Wellawaya, Ratnapura, Nivitigala, Kalawana and Kollone.

Mr. Kobbekaduwa increased his vote over the 1977 figure in 16 districts, while his vote dropped in 6 districts. The UNP, however, increased its vote in only 9 districts, while it polled less than in 1977 in 13 districts.

UNP gains were restricted to Nuwara Eliya, Wanni, Puttalam, Batticaloa, Digamadulla, Kandy and Kegalle districts.

Its vote fell in Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara, Matale, Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Kurunegala, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Badulla, Moneragala and Ratnapura districts.

Its vote dropped by between nearly 6 and 10 per cent in Moneragala, Matara and Hambantota; by between 3 to 4 per cent in Ratnapura, Kalutara, Matale, Galle and Anuradhapura; and by between 1 to 3 per cent in Kegalle, Badulla, Polonnaruwa, Gampaha and Colombo.

Hector Kobbekaduwa's vote increased in Colombo (6.13%), Kalutara (19.77%), Jaffna (33.94%), Wanni (32.18%), and Ratnapura (10.07%). It also increased in Kandy (3.65%), Trincomalee (9.78%), Digamadulla (7.20%), Anuradhapura (3.38%), Kurunegala (5.70%), and Matara (1.04%). Marginal increases of less than 1 per cent were also obtained in Badulla and Gampaha.

His vote dropped by 6.53 per cent in Polonnaruwa and 1.39 per cent in Puttalam. In Moneragala, Hambantota and Nuwara Eliya the drop was under 1 per cent.

## J. V. P. VOTES GET LESS & LESS

The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna seems to get LESS votes every time it contests an election.

Take the case of the Colombo Municipal Council area, for instance.

In 1979, the JVP concentrated all its forces on a contest in this Municipality. It polled about 14,090 votes but did not win a single seat.

It contested Colombo Municipality once again in the DDC elections of 1981. This time it was more fortunate as the mainstream anti-UNP parties (SLFP, CPSL, LSSP etc) boycotted this fake election. So the JVP was able to poll 24,251 votes.

But the great hopes it had of increasing its votes in Colombo Municipality during the 1982 Presidential elections were dashed. For the JVP vote fell from 24,251 to 6,752.

## COMPARISON

A comparison of the JVP's performance in the DDC elections of 1981 (where it contested only 8 districts) and in the Presidential elections of 1982 (where it contested all the 22 districts of the country) shows a similar picture.

For its poll in 8 districts in 1981 (327,149 votes) was more than the poll it obtained in all 22 districts in 1982 (273,428 votes).

The JVP vote also dropped in all the 8 districts it contested in 1981, with the solitary exception of Hambantota where there was a marginal increase.

This is shown by the following table:

DISTRICT	1981 DDC POLL	1982 PRESIDENTIAL POLL
Colombo	78,012	28,580
Gampaha	77,104	23,701
Kalutara	56,986	14,499
Matale	11,870	7,169
Galle	44,142	20,962
Hambantota	21,275	28,835
Badulla	30,538	7,713
Anuradhapura	33,625	13,911

The 4 per cent of the votes that the JVP polled in the 1982 Presidential elections represents 4 per cent of the valid votes cast and NOT 4 per cent of the total registered voters as some commentators have tried to make out. The JVP leader, Rohana Wijeweera, who contested an election for the first time, also lost his deposit.

## Who Cares for Truth?

In its anxiety to give President Jayawardene's election campaign a shot in the arm, Lake House seems to have no regard for truth.

The "Daily News" of Saturday 18 October 1982, in a move to boost the Free Trade Zone, published a front page story that a study team from Cuba had visited the FTZ to study its work so as to introduce a similar zone back in socialist Cuba.

It was, of course, a threadbare repetition of an old canard, spread originally by President Jayawardene himself, that "Castro is going J. R.'s way".

And like the original, it was FALSE.

On 18th October, 1982, the Information Department of Cuba's Embassy in Colombo, issued a flat denial to Lake House, with copies to other newspapers.

"FTZ draws Cuban study team"

"With reference to your news item which appeared in the Daily News of Saturday 16th October 1982, on the above subject, we wish to inform you that no such delegation came to Sri Lanka upto the present and we will be grateful if you could give publicity to this statement in your esteemed Newspaper for the information of your readers".

But the "DAILY NEWS" did not publish a contradiction until October 25, long after the Presidential election was over. And even then, it was a very evasive one, which sought to shift the blame to FTZ boss, Mr. Paul Perera.



# THE J.V.P. BLUFF IS CALLED

Much of the JVP's bluff has been called by its poor showing at the Presidential elections, where its leader, Rohana Wijeweera, lost his deposit.

In the MAY DAY 1982 issue of NIYAMUWA, the official JVP newspaper, Rohana Wijeweera claimed that his party had 200,000 members.

If this so, his total poll of 273,428 vote (only 4.19 per cent of the total votes cast) does not speak much for the influence his 200,000 members have. Between them, they appear to have influenced only 73,428 other people to vote for their party.

It may be that many members decided (very wisely) not to vote for Mr. Wijeweera!

The JVP leaders also claimed that their party is the only "real alternative" to the UNP. Its youthful followers were assured that it would form the next government, after defeating the UNP, the SLFP, and the traditional Left parties. This was not posed as a distant aim but as an immediate possibility.

Indeed, the JVP billed all its election meetings as rallies "to explain the policies of the next JVP government".

The voting results, however, show a different picture. Only in one electoral district (Hambantota) did the JVP exceed the minimum cut-off point of 12.5 per cent, which it requires to obtain even a single seat in the next Parliament.

The 14.62 per cent that it got at Hambantota is just enough to ensure the JVP a single seat. In all other districts, the JVP vote fluctuated between 2 and 7 per cent of the total valid votes cast.

In Colombo, where the JVP made an initial splash some time back in the Municipal elections, and which it repeated at the DDC elections (in the absence of the boycotting SLFP and Left parties), its vote dropped by 50,000 or more below what it scored at the DDC polls.

One allows for over-optimism and exaggerated claims at election time. But the great difference between the claims of the JVP leaders and the facts shows that they are either living in a fantasy world of their own or, which is more likely, are taking their youthful and inexperienced followers for a ride.

Bandula Tillekeratne

Rajagiriya.

## T.U.L.F.

The TULF has come out of the Presidential election in very poor shape.

The "boycott" call that it issued, together with the TELF, was not followed by the mass of the Tamils. Even in Jaffna nearly half the voters polled, and the proportion was even greater in other districts with a considerable Tamil population.

Mr. Amirthalingam himself has admitted that TULF leaders and members took part in the election, supporting one or other candidate. And Mr. Kumar Ponnambalam has bemoaned the fact that in Jaffna, Trincomalee, Vanni and Batticaloa districts, the "Sinhalese parties", as he called them, received more votes than he did with his call for Tamil Eelam. Mr. Ponnambalam also hinted that the TULF had played a discreditable role in the election which would not be forgotten.

Perhaps the unkindest (albeit the most accurate) cut of all was the comment by the WEEKEND's political correspondent (24/10) that:

"Taking a hard look at the northern results, it appears to have been to the advantage of the UNP now that the TULF did not contest in the north. For if they had, the UNP's final overall majority of 52.9 per cent could have further dropped to dangerous levels".

V. Kandasamy

Tellipillai.

## Janadina

Have the editors of JANADINA, the LSSP daily, become slightly deranged after that party's ignominious showing in the Presidential polls?

In its issue of October 25, Janadina says that the CPSL has learnt a good lesson as a result of supporting Hector Kobbekaduwa—namely, that the UNP was able to top the poll in Kalawana, the seat that the CPSL holds in the present Parliament.

Janadina should know that the UNP's majority at Kalawana was a mere 162 votes, a "victory" to which the LSSP contributed by breaking away 129 votes.

In point of fact, the total anti-UNP vote in Kalawana was 14,489 as against the UNP's 13,806, and the fact that the UNP came first is entirely due to the LSSP, NSSP and JVP splitting the anti-UNP vote.

It will be recalled that, at the by-election, it was the unity of the anti-UNP forces around Sarath Muttetuwagama's candidature that ensured victory.

It would have been more profitable if the editors of Janadina had examined their own track record, particularly why the LSSP, which scored about two and a half lakhs of votes in 1977, under the most adverse circumstances, dropped its vote still further to a mere 57,523 in the 1982 Presidential election.

Could it be that even the hard-core LSSP support of 1977 disintegrated as a result of the LSSP's sectarian and disruptive stand in 1982, and that four out of every five of even these "hard-core" members and supporters preferred to follow the CPSL's advice to support Hector Kobbekaduwa rather than the suicidal

policy of the LSSP leaders? The election results suggest that this is so.

Incidentally, the Janadina, which kept reporting that "thousands" of CPSL members were revolting against its decision to support Kobbekaduwa and leaving the party in disgust, has not been able to mention more than one case up to date to back up its claim.

What have they to say about the proved fact that 4/5ths of the LSSP supporters in 1977 had deserted that party in 1982? Or will it produce a new invention that the 57,523 votes that Colvin polled were all "disgusted" CPSL members and supporters?

G. Hemasiri

Rajagiriya.

## Hector & Jaffna

The UNP, from President Jayawardene downwards, and the mass media that supports it cannot get over the shock of the election results in Jaffna.



Not only did Hector Kobbekaduwa, the common anti-UNP candidate, get nearly double the vote that the UNP got there, but he came a very close second to the Tamil Congress, which fought on an openly racial ticket, asking only for Tamil votes for the Eelam demand.

Trying to explain this away, President Jayawardene told the foreign press that it was due to "onions and chillies", i.e. to the Jaffna farmers, who supported Kobbekaduwa, remembering how he, when Minister of Agriculture, gave them good prices for their produce as compared with the hardships they experience under the UNP's "open economy".

While this is true, it is not the only reason for Mr. Kobbekaduwa's good showing in Jaffna.

Two other reasons are (1) his bold declaration that he would repeal the so-called Anti-Terrorist Bill under which Jaffna has been turned into a veritable army-occupied territory and (2) the strong support given by both the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, which has a sizable base in the North, and by the Minority Tamils Maha Sabha.

This was admitted by columnist MIGARA, who wrote (WEEKEND, 24/10):

"Was it the high price promised to onion and chillie farmers due to a policy of import restriction? Was it

the promise to repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Law? Or was it the excessive influence of the SLFP's election partner, the Moscow affiliated Communist Party, in the north? For were not most of the counting and polling agents for the SLFP candidate CP members of the north?"

However, what Migara failed to note was that Hector Kobbekaduwa topped the poll in the KKS, Udupiddy, Point Pedro, Kopay and Manipay electorates, in all of which the CPSL has considerable influence and where its candidates in earlier general and by-elections have done well, even once winning the parliamentary seat which formerly included both the Udupiddy and Point Pedro constituencies.

As a Tamil, I am very happy that so many of my fellow Tamils in the north rejected both the TULF-TELF "boycott" call and the racial isolation preached by the TC and, instead, supported the candidate backed by the Left and democratic forces in the

expressing themselves through quotations from Shakespeare and other famous bards.

I particularly liked the misprint (or misquote) from "topsy" of 435, Galle Road, Colombo 3. Tel: 85181, who, dear girl, spoke wiser than she knew when her advertisement in ISLAND (25/1) extolled J. R. as "exalted, but clothed in simple grab." (sic)

Prema de Alwis

Colombo 5.

## "Filthy Fourteen"

The "filthy fourteen" Sri Lanka cricketers, who succumbed to the lure of the Krugersrand and slipped off to play in racist South Africa, are a disgrace both to Sri Lanka and to sport.

They have rightly been condemned by all decent people in our country. Their 25-years suspension by the Sri Lanka Cricket Board of Control is only a small token of the wide-spread public disgust.

The bigger issue that arises is: how were these people allowed to leave when the Board, the government and all concerned with cricket knew what was going on?

It was well known that Tony Opatha who, one hears, gets Rs. 3 million for his dirty job, was acting as a recruiting sergeant, offering Rs. 1.5 million per player and Rs. 2.5 million to ex-captain Bandula Warnapura. So much so that Minister Gamini Dissanayake, who is also Chairman of the Board, reported the matter to the Cabinet, and an announcement was made that their passports would be impounded.

Why wasn't this done? How were the cricketers able to leave in a bunch for Hongkong, travelling in the same plane, and to proceed to South Africa from there?

The government, and especially Mr. Gamini Dissanayake, must explain how it is that their passports were not impounded or withdrawn.

Did the government believe that this would be a restriction on their "freedom" to give approval to apartheid in sport?

Or did they, who have encouraged Sri Lankans to put money above everything else, feel that these typical products of their "open economy" policies should not be curbed?

Gamini Dissanayake should be sacked from his chairmanship of the Board of Control—or at least suspended for 25 years along with the "filthy fourteen"!

Gladstone Pereira

Dehiwela.

## Reprieve

The foreign and local big business firms, who did so well out of the UNP's "open economy", are now filling the capitalist newspapers with paid advertisements congratulating President Jayawardene on his election victory, and expressing their thanks and relief for the temporary reprieve they have gained.

Yet these same capitalist newspapers, from the DAILY NEWS to the ISLAND, are full of stories about how these firms were, in the last 10 days of the campaign when the swing for Kobbekaduwa was gaining big momentum, panicking to the extent that incriminatory files were being removed and hidden stocks were being sent underground, and some directors were even booking seats on the next planes out!

The present overflowing of thanks and relief from these firms is, therefore, not surprising. Some of them, particularly in Upali's ISLAND, have even gone to the extent of



# Soviet Life: Quality & Levels

This page is devoted to articles celebrating the 65th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the 60th anniversary of the founding of the USSR.

The Soviet Union steadily works to ensure the high level and quality of life for its people.

Many social problems have been settled in this field.

Thus, it is for a long time that the USSR has not had a single citizen without an opportunity to find a job in his chosen sphere.

There are no homeless or hungry people in the USSR either.

Every Soviet citizen is guaranteed, irrespective of his income, state-funded effective medical aid and the possibility to receive education at every level, with secondary education being compulsory.

In the Soviet Union old age and disability pensions are not contributory.

All these boons provide a good foundation for the social optimism of the Soviet people. However, Soviet citizens treat them as something matter of fact.

That is why, assessing changes in their life, say, for the past 15 years, Soviet citizens more frequently concentrate on more concrete things, such as real incomes, wages, prices, housing and the amenities of life in cities and villages.

## DOUBLED

In the past 15 years Soviet real incomes have nearly doubled.

Thus, in 1965 only four per cent of the Soviet population had an income of more than 100 roubles per head a month, whereas the relevant figure was close to 50 per cent in 1980. In 1985 more than 60 per cent of the Soviet population will have such per-capita income.

No capitalist country can boast of such firm and high rates of growth of real incomes of the public.

This growth of incomes is ensured primarily through regular wage increases.

In the past 15 years, factory and office wages have risen by 75 per cent, on the average, and the labour remuneration of collective farmers by 2 to 3 times. This trend remains under the 11th five-year plan (1981-1985): the wages of factory and office workers will go up by 14.5 per cent and the labour remuneration of collective farmers by 20 per cent. The priority growth of labour remuneration in the

countryside is a consequence of the Soviet Government's policy aimed to even out living standards in cities and villages.

## PRICES

However, higher wages do not automatically increase real incomes. For this, it is necessary for the prices of goods and services not to devour wage increases and for shops to back the money incomes of the public with the necessary goods.

According to the latest statistical reports, in the past 15 years the Soviet index of retail prices for all commodities and services has risen by only

concentrated on the fashionable manufactures of the best world standards. Although a great deal of work has been done in this field, it would be premature to say that this problem does not exist any longer.

Thus, in 1965, only eleven of 100 Soviet families had refrigerators, and nowadays the relevant figure stands at 86. At that time people bought any refrigerators that were in shops. Today, although shops are overstocked with refrigerators, buyers express discontent when they do not find the model they prefer.

The same is also true of household electronics. Whereas

Soviet citizens spend their holidays and receive the necessary health treatment at these centres every year. The majority of them pay a third of the actual cost of sanatorium and holiday home vouchers and many do not pay anything at all.

## HOUSING

The quality and level of life in any country are directly connected with the availability of housing, its amenities and rent.

The aim of the Soviet Union is to provide every family with a flat of its own.

For this purpose, the rates of housing construction have been maintained on a high level for several decades—the USSR builds an average of 2-2.2 million flats and family homes a year.

As a result, the provision of the public with well-appointed family flats has nearly doubled in the past 15 years. Nowadays more than 80 per cent of the Soviet urban population lives in unshared flats. In 1990 every Soviet family will have a flat to itself.

As for the amenities of city flats, the Soviet Union has no rivals in this field either: 90 per cent of the flats have running water, central heating and sewerage. 75 per cent have kitchen gas, and 60 per cent have running hot water.

The Soviet state invests in housing more than in any other field. Up to 20,000 million roubles are annually spent from the budget on housing construction, and nearly 7,000 million roubles go as subsidies for the maintenance of housing facilities. The subsidies are a fully social undertaking on the part of the state aimed to preserve the immutable and low level of the rent and utility rates which today take 3 or 5 per cent of the budget of the average Soviet family.

In the past few years the aspect of Soviet cities and villages and their amenities have completely changed. It is pleasant for the Soviet people to learn that cities leading the world in the provision of the favourable conditions of life are situated in their country: Moscow, which belongs to the group of the world's largest cities of this type; Donetsk, which ranks first in the relevant category of industrial centres, and Shevchenko and Norilsk, which are unsurpassed among the cities built in adverse natural and climatic zones. Many other such examples could be cited. Whatever aspect of the life of the Soviet people we take, we shall see fast changes for the better. This process goes on without interruptions, and every year increases the possibilities of the Soviet state to raise the level and quality of life of the public.

(Courtesy: APN)

by Alexander Smirnov

three points. It should be stressed that the prices for necessities, both goods and services, have not changed at all.

With this pattern of prices and the steady growth of the money incomes of the public, the demand for goods and services has increased steeply.

*A nearly threefold increase in trade shows that the consumer goods sector has reacted to these changes.*

However, industry and trade are not always quick enough to take into account, on time, of changes in the demand that is

15 years ago black-and-white TV sets with the tube of any diameter sold like hot pies, today people buy only colour sets incorporating integral circuitry and sensor or distance controls. Shoppers give preference to stereo radios and record players.

Soviet industry manufactures these and many other goods that are in high demand. However, the saturation of shops with these goods lags noticeably behind the growing buying capacity of the public. As a result, the gap between demand and supply exists. The task of the day is to abolish it. This is the aim of the Soviet economy as a whole, its development strategy and the Food Programme which was adopted recently and which provides for raising the level of food consumption to scientifically recommended standards.

## SOCIAL BOONS

The level and quality of life are determined not only by the money income of the public, and their commodity backing. Great importance also attaches to other social boons and their accessibility.

As I have noted above, there is no problem with education, from primary to higher, or with any types of medical aid, which are free in the USSR. The USSR has over a million doctors, more than any other country, engaged in rendering preventive or curative aid to the people.

The problem of children's pre-school upbringing is being tackled quite successfully. Nowadays every second Soviet child goes to crèche or kindergarten. In summer the majority of school-children go to Young Pioneer camps in the countryside. In both cases, parents pay 20 per cent of the state's expenditures for these purposes.

The USSR operates over 13,000 sanatoria (regular and after-work) holiday homes, tourist stations and other health building centres which can accommodate two million people at a time. Some 60 million

## TWO MAJOR SOVIET EVENTS

The Soviet people are now working towards, and preparing to celebrate, two major events in their history.

The first is the 65th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, which falls on November 7.

The second is the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the world's first socialist state, which occurs in December 1982.

As the leader of the Soviet people and their Communist Party, LEONID BREZHNEV put it:

"The twentieth century has brought with it more changes than any previous century. And no country has made such tangible contribution to these changes than the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the homeland of the Great October Revolution, the first country of triumphant socialism. This is the seventh decade that its invincible Leninist banner has been held aloft."

## ACHIEVEMENT

The Soviet people are preparing to celebrate these two events with new achievements of creative labour, in order to consolidate still further the system of real, advanced

socialism they have built, and to lay firm foundations for the world's first communist society.

The plans of communist construction worked out by the 26th CPSU Congress are being fulfilled. The Food Programme, approved by the May 1982 Plenum of CPSU Central Committee, is being implemented. The productive forces of the Ural area, Siberia and the Far East are being developed at a terrific rate, and the building of the Baikal-Amur Railway has become yet another glorious page in the Soviet Union's biography. The natural gas pipeline, linking the Soviet Siberia with Western Europe, is forging ahead at an accelerated pace.

## PEACE

The Soviet people are also steadfastly pursuing the Peace Programme for the 1980s adopted by the 26th CPSU Congress.

The numerous Soviet initiatives for peace and disarmament have earned it high prestige and authority throughout the world.

The slogans of this peace programme to curb the arms race, uphold and deepen detente, ban nuclear and other weapons of mass destru-

ction, rebuff the aggressive designs of imperialism, militarism and revanchism, and eliminate the war danger, are now the common slogans of tens of millions marching for peace in the capitalist world.

In the Third World, the Soviet Union also enjoys high prestige as a resolute champion of the fight against imperialism, neo-colonialism and racism, a staunch supporter of all struggles for national liberation and of newly-free states and peoples, a friend whose economic, technological and material aid helps these peoples to defend and consolidate their independence.

The spirit of proletarian internationalism, anti-imperialist solidarity, and the profound love of peace that inspires the Soviet people and their leaders is expressed well in the greetings that the Central Committee of the CPSU has issued to all peoples on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the October Revolution and on the eve of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the USSR.

This is why these two events will be celebrated, not only by the Soviet people, but by all peoples the world over as major events of internationalist unity, friendship and fraternity.



# J. R.'S CHOICE OF 3 OPTIONS

Why did President J. R. choose the referendum from among the three options open to him after his re-election?

This question is the centre of discussion in political circles.

Although the President had polled 52 per cent OF THE VOTES CAST on October 20, he was quick to realise that this was the MAXIMUM that the UNP could hope to poll in present circumstances.

Under his P. R. System, although this vote (if maintained) may have been sufficient to win a slight majority in the next Parliament, it was insufficient to guarantee a strong government and a stable and effective majority, both of which he needed to carry through the tough measures that the World Bank wanted, not to speak of the Reagan Administration's demand for naval facilities at Trincomalee.

There was always the possibility that the 17 lakhs of voters who did not vote on October 20, as well as the 80,000 odd whose votes were rejected, would enter the Parliamentary elections in significant numbers.

It was also likely that the TULF, which kept out of the Presidential polls, would not do so in the general elections to Parliament where its M. Ps were directly affected.

All this would tend to increase the total number of votes cast, and thus lower the UNP's percentage to a point where it may only have had a bare majority.

Another reason why an immediate Parliamentary election had to be ruled out was the admitted unpopularity of many Ministers and UNP M. Ps.

So much so that, in the second week of the Presidential campaign, both J.R. and the UNP's propaganda apparatus had to emphasise that UNP voters should forget their animosities towards their MPs, who would be dealt with later, and remember that they were voting for J. R. personally and not for their M.P.

J. R. had to make changes if he did not want to spoil the UNP's "image" (especially with its talk about dharmista principles and "codes of conduct"), but he could not risk rocking the boat and piling up votes against him from the discarded MPs and their supporters when he went to the poll. So that option was out.



## Better Ground

J. R. was on better ground if he chose the second option suggested to him—namely, to scrap his version of proportional representation and to re-introduce the former first-past-the-post system. If

the October 20 showing remained unchanged, this might have given him a more workable majority.

But the procedures of doing so were too elaborate to fit into the tight time schedule J. R. had.

He had to finish all elections before the end of December, 1982, when his current Budget expires, as well as to put through the tough economic measures he had promised and negotiate sufficient foreign aid to fashion a Budget for 1983 before the "Vote on Account" lapsed at the end of March 1983.

So this option, too, had to be rejected.

The third option—namely, the postponement of elections for six years through a fourth amendment to the Constitution and a referendum—was the only way that J. R. could see by which he could keep an obedient government and retain his present five-sixth majority for the remaining six years in which he would be President.

There is evidence (e. g. a speech by a close J. R. confidante, Lalith Athulathmudali) to suggest that J. R.

opposed the postponement of the Parliamentary election, J. R. must expect the votes against him to increase and his percentage to diminish.

However, as Prime Minister Premadasa has been quick to point out, the procedures laid down in the UNP's referendum law also provide that if 50 per cent of the votes cast are not in favour of the proposal, one-third affirmative votes will be sufficient to deem it to have been adopted if two-thirds of the total number of registered voters have not voted in the referendum.

The UNP seems to think that it can find a way out through this provision, quite apart from the fact that a referendum, which is conducted by the government, provides far more opportunities for manipulating the poll than a general election.

After the experience of what their failure to agree on the CPSL's proposal for a common candidate in the Presidential polls has cost them and the country, let us hope that the Opposition Parties will be able even now to find ways and means of joint action to prevent this new move by J. R. towards total dictatorship.



had favoured a postponement even before he knew the outcome of the Presidential election. But the decision to make the postponement one for six years seems to have been taken afterwards, once it became clear how insecure the position was.

This is also probably what J. R. had in mind when he spoke during the election about rolling up the Opposition's electoral map for 10 years.



## Risky

Of course, as both J. R. and the Prime Minister have admitted in their speeches to the government Parliamentary group, they are embarking on a risky gamble in going for a referendum.

On their own side, many who voted for J. R. may not support a postponement of the general elections. As far as opponents are concerned, they will find it easier to get together to campaign for a "NO" vote at the referendum than to conduct a united election campaign. As the TULF, which stayed out of the Presidential poll, has also

## Resignations

J. R.'s insistence that all Ministers and government MPs should submit undated letters of resignation to him (and not to the relevant authorities) is in the true traditions of low comedy.

As a wag put it: "J. R. has given his men the democratic choice of cutting their own throats before he cuts them himself".

Another quipped: "J. R. opposes Mrs. B's matriarchal rule in the SLFP, but wants his own patriarchal rule in the UNP".

It remains to be seen whether, despite the media publicity about a UNP party purge and "getting rid of dead and rotten wood", J. R. will make any changes BEFORE the referendum is held, probably on December 17.

It is not unlikely that the resignation letters will be used as pistols pointed at the UNP MPs' heads to ensure that they work full out at the referendum, while the voters will be told that J. R. has all the cards in his hand and will stage a clean-up after the referendum.

In any case, J. R. seems to be more interested in realising his long-dreamt-of "National" government than in cleaning up his party.

J. R. wants a "National" government more urgently now than ever before. It will not only make the "chit Parliament" he envisages more palatable at home and abroad, but avoid the necessity (at least for some time) of abandoning the FORMS of Parliamentary democracy in favour of a more naked dictatorship.

Even before the Presidential polls were over, JR spoke several times about inviting his opponents to join him in government. Prime Minister Premadasa repeated this invitation in Parliament on October 28. The SUN (28/10) reports him thus: "We are all for national unity and we invite genuinely and with open arms all sections of whatever party to join us..."

Circles close to the President confidently predict that the offer of a Ministerial post to Mrs. B. will be revived, as well as similar offers to Colvin and Amirthalingam.

Whether these offers will succeed is questionable, but Anura Bandaranaike, about whom similar stories are circulating, has raised a hornet's nest with his reply to a question by a "SUN reporter (28/11). "Asked what his reaction would be in the event of his having to join a national government, he said: 'It all depends. I cannot say anything now. Let it come'."

Anura's congratulations to J. R. in Parliament, his certificate that the Presidential polls were free and fair, and his latest tirades against communism and Marxism are also seen as smoke signals to J. R. that "Barkis is willing"!

If everything else fails, JR may produce a "National Government" with Kalugalle and other SLFP deserters, together with a number of "technocrats" and others like Upali Wijewardene, UNP Chairman Panditharatne, etc.

So what may finally emerge is neither a re-shuffle nor a purge but a new accommodation to deserters and to people who could never hope to make it through the hustings, even though J. R. needs their services.



## Talking Points

● Why and where did Rohana Wijeweera disappear when the Presidential election results were coming in? Loyal but credulous JVPers say that he has gone to Indonesia to investigate personally and on the spot whether there was any hocus-pocus about the marking pens imported from that country. Others say that

he went "underground" fearing a Kobbekaduwa victory and hasn't surfaced yet lest UNPers, who are not in the know about how he helped JR's victory, may take violent action against him.

● Was Prime Minister Premadasa's savage attack on Rupavahini in Parliament, in which he named Messrs M. J. Perera and some others, due to his fury that these officials carried out earlier orders from the Big Boss to cut down the exposure and publicity that the Premier and Mrs. Premadasa were getting on TV?

● JR seems to thrive on ideological points provided by Colvin. He made full use of Colvin's notorious "law point" during the election to cast doubts (while not himself endorsing the law point) on the legality of Kobbekaduwa's candidature. Now, he has taken up Colvin's allegation of a "coup" in the top echelons of the SLFP, and given it a new twist in his reference to "Naxalite types" who have seized control of the SLFP. Is this only a case of great minds thinking alike?

● The government says it did not want to announce the 20 cent reduction in the price of a loaf of bread earlier, lest it was denounced as an "election gundu". Apparently, it has not similar objections to denunciation for a 'referendum gundu'. If the government really wants to bring domestic prices in the line with the falling price of many commodities on the world market, why stop at flour? What about sugar, which the government imports at less than Rs. 5 a kilogramme c.i.f. and sells for more than twice that sum? In any case, we have had earlier experience of this government lowering prices before a poll and then raising them afterwards to even higher levels than before.

● Defence Ministry sources deny that any Sri Lankan intelligence service has reported an "Afghanistan-style, Communist-inspired plot" to murder the President and his Ministers, as JR and the PM have publicly alleged. They suggest that such lurid reports have been furnished to the government by a secret CIA group attached (anonymously) to the US Embassy here.

● Anura thinks the Presidential Polls were fair, but Mum thinks differently. She told the FINANCIAL TIMES (26/10) that they were 'rigged'. She is also reported to have said that son Anura (and her 2 daughters) must "go from the party" as "the people cannot be allowed to suffer because of them".