

Forward

THE VIEW FROM THE LEFT

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PRICE ONE RUPEE

We Say.....

LEONID BREZHNEV

All citizens of this country will endorse the decision to make the day of LEONID ILYCH BREZHNEV's funeral a Day of National Mourning in Sri Lanka.

It is a symbolic token of the high prestige and respect that the late leader of the USSR enjoys among all sections of our people.

It shows that our people regard the loss that the Soviet people and the world have sustained as though it were one of our own.

Our state and party leaders have paid eloquent tribute to him. The spontaneous expressions of grief, appreciation and affection from the common people and their organisations have been no less eloquent.

FORWARD adds its modest tribute to the memory of this great man.

A central theme of the tributes to the late leader, both here and throughout the world, has been his appreciation of his indefatigable and outstanding role as a fighter for detente, disarmament and a lasting peace. In a world that lives under the constant threat of destruction in a nuclear catastrophe, Brezhnev's sanity and cool nerves, his unfailing ability to make new initiatives to defuse tensions, and his eminently practical proposals to end the arms race and to replace confrontation with co-operation between nations, made peoples the world over look on him as a champion and leader of the fight to abolish war from the life of human society.

Indeed, it can be said that the fact that there has been no world war for over 35 years since the last one ended - the longest period in this century - is in no small measure due to men like LEONID BREZHNEV being at the helm of affairs in the mighty, socialist Soviet Union, reflecting the deep and unshakable commitment to peace of the party, people and state that he led with such distinction for nearly two decades.

The heartfelt tributes to LEONID BREZHNEV'S dedication to the cause of peace, which have poured in from all corners of the globe since his death, show how little credibility is enjoyed by those who try to frighten the world and justify an escalated arms race by shouting about an imaginary "Soviet threat".

LEONID BREZHNEV was actively associated with all stages and all the vital tasks of transforming backward Russia into an advanced socialist state, and of laying firm foundations for the communist society that is to come. Fighting in the ranks of the glorious Red Army from the first month of Hitler's attack on his country until victory was won, he rose to the rank of a General and, battling all the way from the Dneiper river to Prague, he was among those who helped to liberate Europe and mankind from the fascist yoke and thus open the door to all the great advances in human liberation and social progress that the post-war era has seen.

After the war, LEONID BREZHNEV discharged with honour the tasks set him by his party - those of rebuilding the war-shattered economy of several Soviet Republics and of steadily advancing the standards and quality of the lives of the Soviet people. His name has been associated with the epic sagas of opening up the virgin lands of Kazakhstan, developing the vast untapped resources of Siberia, and the exploration of outer space. As General Secretary of the CPSU since 1964, his name has become synonymous with the massive contributions that Lenin's party and the world's first socialist state have made in the domestic and international fields.

Living in a country of the developing world, Sri Lankans highly appreciated LEONID BREZHNEV'S implacable opposition to imperialism, new and old colonialism, and racism; his staunch championship of all peoples fighting for national liberation; his friendship and assistance to all who seek to consolidate and build on the political independence from colonialism that they have won. The all-round strengthening of bilateral relations between the USSR and Sri Lanka during the period when LEONID BREZHNEV headed the Soviet state is an expression of this.

LEONID BREZHNEV is no more. But the causes with which he was associated and to which he devoted all his energies and talents, are imperishable. While saluting his memory, we wish his worthy successor as CPSU General Secretary, YURI ANDROPOV, and the great party of Lenin, whose noble son BREZHNEV was, new successes in carrying out these worthy causes.

Referendum - With Opposition Gagged

Heedless of the demand of 10 Opposition parties that he should not proclaim a referendum until the state of emergency is lifted, President Jayawardene has, by order in the Gazette, proclaimed December 22 as the date on which the referendum will be held.

Unless he allows the present declaration of the emergency to lapse and does not renew it when it expires next week, this will mean that the UNP government intends to hold Sri Lanka's first referendum - with the Opposition parties and all who want to campaign for a "NO" vote effectively gagged!

The issue at stake at the referendum is one that is vital for the future of democracy in Sri Lanka.

It is whether or not the Parliament elected in 1977 is to be extended, without a general election, until almost the end of this decade.

It is whether or not there is to be a "chit" Parliament, most of whose members are appointees of President Jayawardene, or a Parliament whose members are elected by the sovereign people.

Although the government claims that holding a referendum is a concession to democracy, the opposite is the case.

GAGGED

Maintaining the state of emergency during the period of the referendum will gag Opposition parties in the following ways:

- **ATHTHA**, the main Opposition newspaper, is banned. Its printing establishment, where other Opposition newspapers are also printed, has been sealed and is under Police guard.

- **SUTHANTIRAN**, a widely-circulating periodical critical of the government and published in Tamil, is also prohibited.

- Parties and organisations who wish to organise a "NO" campaign at the referendum are prevented from doing this effectively because many printing establishments owned by or available to them have been sealed under emergency regulations.

Most other printing establishments either refuse or are afraid to undertake Opposition printing, even on payment.

- A wide range of restrictions and pre-conditions have been imposed on public meetings under emergency regulations.

These restrictions are, however, not applied in the case of meetings organised by the government, but only in relation to those organised by Opposition parties.

- Radio and TV give special and FREE time to Ministers, in particular the Premier and Minister Athulathmudali, to argue the case for a

"YES" vote, without spokesmen from Opposition parties being given similar FREE time to answer them, and explain the case for a "NO" vote.

- The General Secretary of the SLFP, the largest Opposition party, has been detained under the emergency without charges preferred or reasons given.

He is kept incommunicado at ROCK HOUSE, Mutwal.

As no one - not even his lawyer or family members - is allowed to see him, he cannot sign in time the necessary papers which he is obliged to do under the referendum laws, such as appointing various agents.

This in turn will make it difficult or impossible for this party to appoint in time its polling agents to check impersonations at polling stations.

- A large number of the main campaign speakers from the SLFP have been either detained or prevented from campaigning because the CID wants them to report for questioning practically daily. Most questioning is in relation to the ration book affair.

- Businessmen and others suspected of having contributed funds or vehicles to Mr. Kobbekaduwa's campaign in the Presidential election are locked up or else threatened with reprisals if they do the same at the referendum.

- A calculated campaign of physical terrorism and intimidation, mainly by the JSS, continues against many leading workers for Mr Kobbekaduwa's campaign, with no attempt by the authorities to stop this. Where the Police have taken government supporters into custody for such intimidation, they have usually been released on orders from District, Deputy Cabinet Ministers.

INSIST

Opposition parties, public organisations and civic rights groups have, therefore, stepped up their campaign to insist that the state of emergency, and particularly the restrictive regulations made thereunder, should be withdrawn during the period of the referendum.

Some have asked why the government BANS newspapers and seals their printing establishments when, during past emergencies proclaimed to deal with real and more serious situations like widespread communal rioting, it considered pre-censorship sufficient precaution to prevent incitement or the publication of inflammable material.

Others want to know why, if the government thinks it needs a state of emergency to conduct its probe into the alleged "plot" to assassinate state leaders, it cannot put off the referendum until the need for an emergency is over.

They point out that there is no hurry to hold the referendum this year, as it can be held any time before the present Parliament's term of office expires in August, 1983 - nearly 10 months from now.

What is now a stake is not merely the right to choose one's M.Ps by election, but also to express opinions at a referendum where everyone who wishes has the free, fair, and unfettered right to make his point of view known to the mass of voters.

All who value these rights must demand that President Jayawardene, now that he has proclaimed the referendum for December 22, should immediately withdraw the state of emergency.

Tributes to Brezhnev

Members of the Political Bureau of the CC of the CPSL called at the Soviet Embassy, Colombo on November 12 to lay a wreath and expresses condolences and tributes on the occasion of Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev's death.

Those who took part were K. P. Silva, Pieter Keuneman, M. G. Mendis, H.G.S. Ratnaweera, L. W. Panditha, D. W. Subasinghe, D. E. W. Gunasekera, Peter Jayasekera, A.G. Jayasena, and Prof. Leslie Gunawardena.

Representatives of many other political parties, trade unions, youth leagues, & women's associations also called at the Soviet Embassy to pay their respects, condolences and tributes.

TRIBUTE TO L. I. BREZHNEV

(The following statement on the death of LEONID ILYICH BREZHNEV was issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka.)

"On behalf of all Communists of Sri Lanka, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka expresses profound sorrow at the death of Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

"We extend our condolences on this great loss to the Central Committee and all members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to the Soviet people, and to the members of Leonid Brezhnev's family.

"Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev was a great son of the Soviet people, a worthy leader of the great party of Lenin. He served his people and his party well in the great patriotic war against fascism, in the settlement of the virgin lands of Kazakhstan, in leading the work of socialist construction in several Soviet Republics, and, for 18 years at the head of the Communist Party and the Soviet state, in building an advanced socialist society and laying firm foundations for a future communist society.

"As an international statesman of high renown, Leonid Brezhnev was tireless in his pursuit of the noble goals of detente, disarmament, and a lasting peace. His innumerable initiatives in these matters won him the respect and admiration of peace-loving mankind.

"As a dedicated Marxist-Leninist and a true internationalist, Leonid Brezhnev firmly opposed imperialism, all manifestations of old and new colonialism, and racism. He supported the national liberation movement unswervingly, and was a firm friend of all newly independent states and peoples, including Sri Lanka.

"The Communist of Sri Lanka highly values Leonid Brezhnev's many contributions towards consolidating the world system of socialism and the unity and cohesion of the international communist and workers movement.

"We shall always cherish, in respect, gratitude and affection, the memory of this staunch comrade and worthy leader".

Central Committee,
Communist Party of Sri Lanka.

BREZHNEV MEMORIAL MEETING

Town Hall, Colombo

Tuesday, 16 November, 4.30 p.m.

Chair: K. P. SILVA

Speakers: PIETER KEUNEMAN

M. G. MENDIS

SARATH MUTTETUWEGAMA

Leader from the Ranks

CPSU General Secretary, LEONID ILYICH BREZHNEV, who died on November 10th, 1982 at the age of 75, was an outstanding leader of the Communist Party and the Soviet state and of the international working class and revolutionary movement as well.

His entire life was devoted to the cause of the October Revolution, to the great party of Lenin, to the interests of the working class, and to the building of socialism and communism.

Leonid Brezhnev was born on 19 December 1906 in the city of Dneprodzerzhinsk. His father was a steel worker and, at the age of 15, the young Brezhnev himself entered a big iron and steel works as a worker. He joined the Komsomol at the age of 17, and became a member of the CPSU in 1931.

After graduating from a technicum, Leonid Brezhnev worked as a land surveyor in the Kursk Province, in Byelorussia and in the Urals. It was here that he learnt about the farmers and the problems of agriculture.

Returning to his native city after this, Leonid

Ilyich Brezhnev entered the Metallurgical Institute. While studying there, he held a number of important party and trade union posts. After graduation, he worked in a factory, later served in the armed forces in the Transbaikalian area and held several governmental and party posts.

Elected Secretary of the Dnepropetrovsk Regional Party Committee, he led the work of the communists and workers of the region in socialist construction.

WAR SERVICE

From the earliest days of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people, Leonid Brezhnev served in the Soviet Red Army, taking part in all the fighting from Novorossik to Prague.

As head of the political section of the 18th Army and of the political department of the 4th Ukrainian front, Brezhnev took part in planning and carrying out a number of major operations of the Soviet Army in the Caucasus, the Black Sea area, Crimea and the Ukraine.

Together with the victorious Red Army, Brezhnev

took an active part in the liberation of the European nations from the fascist invaders.

In recognition of his signal services in the armed forces, Leonid Brezhnev was promoted as a Major-General of the Army, and headed the victory parade in Moscow.

After the war, Brezhnev worked as regional party First Secretary at Zaporozhye and Dnepropetrovsk regions of the Ukraine, and directed the work of restoring the gigantic metallurgical plants and pits destroyed in the war.

From 1950-52, he worked as First Secretary of the Communist Party of Moldavia, then one of the youngest Soviet Republics, where he did much to develop its industry and agriculture.

From 1954, as First Secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, Brezhnev put his heart and soul into the cultivating the vast virgin lands of that republic. Thanks to this selfless work, which he has modestly described in books which he later wrote, the battle of the virgin lands was won, and Kazakhstan became one of the Soviet Union's main grain-growing republics.

At the 19th CPSU Congress, and at all subsequent CPSU Congresses, Brezhnev was elected a member of the CPSU's Central Committee. From 1956, he has been a member of the party's Praesidium (later renamed Political Bureau).

In addition to several other governmental posts, he became the Chairman of the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR from 1960 to 1964, and again from 1977 until his death.

Leonid Brezhnev was elected First Secretary (later renamed General Secretary) of the CC of the CPSU in 1964 and functioned in this post until his death over 18 years later.

Leonid Brezhnev is a leader who rose from the ranks and gained wide experience in party and state work, and in the armed services.

A brave soldier, he was a staunch champion of peace and made this one of his main aims as leader of the CPSU and the USSR.

He remained ever faithful to the science of Marxism-Leninism and the noble cause of proletarian internationalism.

The Central Committee of the CPSU had praised the "priceless contribution" made by Brezhnev to "the restoration, consolidation, and development of Leninist norms, of party's ties with the masses". Brezhnev, it said, set an example of "harmonious collective and leadership". Following Lenin's behests, he worked tirelessly to make the CPSU the political vanguard of the Soviet people, the organiser and inspirer of the creative work of millions, and the guiding force of Soviet society.

NATIONAL MOURNING FOR BREZHNEV

November 15, the day of President L. I. Brezhnev's funeral, has been declared a day of national mourning in Sri Lanka.

Flags have been flown at half-mast since his death on all public buildings, as well as at all Communist Party and trade union offices.

President J. R. Jayawardene, in an official message of condolence, said:

"During his stewardship of the Soviet Union for about two decades, we have followed with admiration his untiring efforts to achieve an international climate devoid of the fear of war.

"His contribution towards the successful conclusion of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Helsinki Accord that resulted has been widely acknowledged as a significant contribution towards better understanding between among nations.

"His far-reaching proposals on disarmament have also made notable contributions to world peace. We have admired the efforts he has made as leader of the Soviet nation to strengthen the nation's economy and improve the welfare of its people.

The relations between Sri Lanka and the Soviet Union have grown and been further strengthened during his period of office.

"The world has lost a great statesman, and the government and people of Sri Lanka join me in extending our sincere sympathies to Mrs. Brezhnev and her family and to the leaders of the Soviet government and the Soviet people on their great loss".

Opposition and TULF leader, A. Amirthalingam, in a message, says:

"President Brezhnev was one of the most outstanding champions of peace in the post-war world.

"He strove hard to establish detente between the big powers under the most trying circumstances.

"He will go down to history as one who contributed to peace, progress and the liberation of the oppressed in the twentieth century."

SLFP leader, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, said:

"The Sri Lanka Freedom Party joins the rest of the population in Sri Lanka in saluting this great hero of the socialist world who, though he is no more, yet will be remembered by generations to come for his very able statesmanship."

"For nearly two decades, he guided the domestic, as well as the foreign, affairs of the Soviet Union with new initiatives and lasting achievements.

"In foreign affairs, his proposals on disarmament were notable contributions to world peace."

"In the domestic field, he made great efforts to strengthen the nation's economy and improve the welfare of the people.

Foreign Minister A. C. S. Hameed will represent the government at the funeral.

The message of the Central Committee of the CPSU is published separately. CPSL leaders, K. P. Silva and Pieter Keuneman, will pay radio tributes on the SLBC today (15/11). A commemoration meeting has been organised at the Colombo Town Hall tomorrow (16/11).

Stop U.N.P.'s Drive to Dictatorship!

(The following statement was unanimously adopted by the Central Committee of the COMMUNIST PARTY OF SRI LANKA at its meeting on 6th November 1982.)

"The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka condemns and opposes the attempt of the UNP government to put off the general election to Parliament, due next year, until mid-1989.

"This anti-democratic proposal is the latest move in President J. R. Jayawardene's step-by-step advance towards an absolute dictatorship, although the retention of some of the external trappings of parliamentary democracy may tend to camouflage this fact.

"Although the UNP misused state power and its official monopoly of the mass media, as well as resorted to a whole range of election malpractices and gimmicks, in order to further President Jayawardene's re-election on October 20th, it was only able to poll 379,214 votes more than the Opposition parties in an election where 1.7 million (of 17 per cent) of the voters did not vote at all.

"This result made it clear that the UNP could not hope to establish, through a parliamentary general election, a government strong or stable enough to (1) carry out the savage attacks on the people's living standards demanded by the World Bank as a pre-condition for further loans; (2) grant US imperialism the naval and other facilities it wants in Sri Lanka; and (3) cope with the immense problems of the crisis produced by its "open economy" policies and its overall strategy of development on capitalist and neo-colonialist lines.

"These realities made it necessary for the UNP to put off the general elections for an initial period equal to the life-span of the next Parliament and the remainder of President Jayawardene's term of office.

Warning

"During the recent Presidential elections, the Communist Party and other democratic forces repeatedly warned that, if the UNP won, this election could be the last one for a long time. President Jayawardene himself made no secret of his intention to "roll up the election map for a decade". All this has been proved to be only too true.

"As a result of the UNP's victory on October 20th, not only the democratic rights that our people have won in decades of struggle but also parliamentary democracy itself have been placed in jeopardy. There is nothing to prevent the UNP using this postponement of general elections as a precedent for further and indefinite postponements even after 1989.

"Everyone can now see how correct the Communist Party was when it emphasised the threat to national sovereignty

and democratic rights that could follow an UNP victory, and when it proposed a common anti-UNP candidate to stop this. The LSSP, the JVP and the NSSP, which spurned this proposal and followed sectarian and disruptive policies instead, as well as some sections within the SLFP which sought to obstruct the campaign against the UNP for political and subjective reasons, bear a heavy responsibility for what is happening now.

"Our party is proud of the positive role it played in the Presidential election struggle. This role has been highly appreciated by the anti-UNP movement in general. It has even been grudgingly admitted

by the UNP and the reactionary forces that supported it. We thank all who responded to our appeal and who campaigned, amidst considerable difficulties, to register an impressive and much increased vote against the UNP.

"By putting off general elections to Parliament for another six years, the UNP seeks to retain during this period the five-sixth majority in Parliament that it obtained under special circumstances in 1977 and which, as the Presidential election results show, has no basis in reality today. It also seeks to deny to Opposition parties the greatly increased representation to which they would, on current voting patterns, be entitled in the next Parliament.

Abuse

"The fact that the UNP government now seeks to have its decision to postpone Parliamentary elections confirmed at a referendum does not make this proposal any more democratic. Indeed, it is a gross abuse of what is democratic in a referendum. For through a referendum, whose outcome it can manipulate more easily than at a general election, the UNP hopes to use the 3,450,811 votes it polled on October 20th to deny both the 3,071,537 who voted against it and the 1.7 million who did not vote on that occasion, their inalienable right to choose who should represent them.

"By putting off Parliamentary elections for six more years, the UNP seeks to extend a Parliament elected in 1977 on an electoral basis that the UNP itself condemned and abolished when it introduced the so-called proportional representation scheme.

"It gives permanence to a Parliament that its own Constitution describes as "transitional".

"It freezes until mid-1989, and maybe even longer, the relations of political forces that existed in 1977.

"Young people who reached voting age in 1976 will be

denied an opportunity of voting or being elected for 13 years.

"Political parties that are not represented in the present Parliament will continue to be denied an opportunity to win such representation.

"Tamil voters, 62 per cent of whom voted against the UNP in the four Tamil majority districts, will have to endure for six more years the "carrot and stick" policies of the UNP in relation to the redress of their just grievances.

Intimidation

"In a frantic bid to win the referendum at any cost, the UNP seeks to reduce the total votes cast to a point sufficient to have its proposal approved by an affirmative vote of a mere one-third of the voters. This is why it has launched a large-scale campaign of physical and political intimidation of those who oppose it, especially those who supported the candidature of Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa.

"Hooligan gangs, often led by Deputy Ministers, District Ministers and MPs of the UNP, have resorted to physical violence and arson to terrorise opponents, with no attempt by the UNP High Command to stop these excesses. In the state corporations and, to some extent, in the public administration, the UNP's JSS storm-troopers have used force and threats to prevent persons suspected of voting against President Jayawardene from attending work in order to secure their dismissal for absence. Political opponents have also been subjected to various forms of revengeful punishment, harassment, discrimination and humiliation.

"Emergency powers have also been misused to prohibit the publication of ATHTHA, which spearheaded the anti-UNP campaign in the Presidential elections and which was leading the fight to stop the UNP from putting off Parliamentary general elections and establishing a dictatorship. New restrictions have also been imposed on public meetings and other forms through which public opinion can be expressed.

Hitler's Footsteps

"Following in the footsteps of Hitler and many other reactionaries after him, who have used anti-communism as a smokescreen to hide their own designs to destroy democracy and establish a dictatorship, the UNP government has concocted the BIG LIE of a so-called "plot", masterminded by the Communist Party and executed by "Naxalites" who have seized leadership in the SLFP, to stage an orgy of murder and violence if Mr. Kobbekaduwa won the Presidential election,

"This anti-communist canard is being trumpeted by the UNP leaders and their mass media to achieve distinct and discreditable aims. They seek to win the referendum by dividing, demoralising and disabling the forces ranged against the UNP. They want to intimidate the mass of anti-UNP voters into staying away from the polls. They hope to get foreign imperialism to give them speedy financial and other assistance. And they make no secret of their attempt, through anti-communism, to encourage forces within the SLFP, who sympathise with the UNP's call for a "National" government, to gain supremacy in that party.

"The Central Committee of Communist Party of Sri Lanka categorically rejects as totally false the charge made by the President, the Prime Minister and other Ministers about a communist-inspired plot to assassinate them, or anyone else.

"It demands the immediate withdrawal of the state of emergency and the repressive orders made thereunder to prohibit Opposition newspapers, close printing establishments, and detain and harass political opponents.

"It further demands that the government should put a stop to post-election violence by its members and supporters, as well as the attempts of its JSS to intimidate and harass public employees suspected of voting against the UNP so as to deny them employment.

"National" Government

"The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka also warns the anti-UNP forces to be vigilant about the current attempts of the UNP to win over pro-capitalist, opportunist and unstable elements in their ranks to join the UNP in a so-called "National" government.

"This attempt to set up a "National" government is an essential ingredient in the UNP's basic strategy of attempting to unite the capitalist class of Sri Lanka so that more broad-based political support can be obtained for the harsh, anti-people measures it has in mind, as well as to continue the path of neo-colonialist development, come what may.

"The Central Committee of the CPSL appeals to all non-government parties, to all mass organisations and public bodies, and to all democratically minded people whatever their race, religious belief or political allegiance may be, to unite in a common campaign to mobilise a victorious "NO" vote in the referendum.

In this connection, it welcomes the step already taken by several non-government parties to set up a "National Committee to Oppose the Postponement of Parliamentary

Elections", and to invite others who share this aim to join this campaign. It hopes that the non-UNP parties which did not support Mr. Kobbekaduwa in the Presidential election will also join this common effort, and welcomes the fact that some of them have already decided to do so.

"At the same time, the Central Committee of the CPSL warns the broad mass of democratic forces to be vigilant against, and to reject, the proposals made in certain quarters for spurious "boycott" or "satyagraha" campaigns as a substitute for a united campaign to win a decisive "NO" vote at the referendum. The objective result of such proposals can only be to reduce the total vote and thus to help the UNP's plan to win the referendum through a mere one-third affirmative vote.

Opportunity

"The referendum, however, provides the democratic forces with an opportunity to correct mistakes and shortcomings made during the Presidential election and to obtain a mass popular reversal of the verdict of that election.

"Defeat of the UNP's anti-democratic proposal at the referendum will make it easier to defeat it at the general election that must follow in such an event.

"Taking into account the line up of forces on October 29th, the defeat of the UNP's proposals at the referendum is by no means an impossible task. Statements by UNP leaders also show that they realise that they have embarked on a risky gamble whose outcome is unsure. The Communist Party is convinced that, if the forces for democracy and against dictatorship are united enough and do not allow the UNP to demoralise, intimidate or confuse them, the UNP's proposals to put off Parliamentary general elections can be defeated.

"The issues at stake in the referendum supercede party affiliations and political allegiances. It is whether one should retain or surrender the basic right to choose one's representatives from among contending parties through the exercise of the right to vote. It is whether the next Parliament will be a rump Parliament five-sixths of whose members are mainly appointed by the President, or a Parliament whose members are chosen by the sovereign people.

"The Communist Party vows to do its duty to the full in order to defeat the proposal to postpone Parliamentary elections. It calls on all others who value democracy and the right to vote, irrespective of how they voted at the Presidential election and the political party and social system they prefer, to do the same".

No Referendum Under Emergency

"We demand that the state of emergency should be withdrawn forthwith, and that the referendum should not be held under a state of emergency", said PIETER KEUNEMAN, speaking at meeting at Colombo's Town Hall called by the Communist Party on November 9.

CPSL General Secretary, K. P. SILVA, presided.

An overflow audience attended this first meeting to oppose the postponement of the Parliamentary elections, despite the restrictions placed on public meetings under the state of emergency, the banning of ATHTHA, and the refusal of the LAKE HOUSE and SUN newspaper groups even to publish paid advertisements about the meeting.

Continuing Pieter Keuneman said: "We all remember what happened in Jaffna last year, when the DCC elections were held under an emergency. We don't want to see similar events repeated throughout the country next month, when the referendum is held."

Postponement of elections to Parliament until the end of the decade, he said, was the latest step in Mr J. R. Jayawardene's relentless drive towards an absolute dictatorship.

As he would retain his five-sixths majority in the present Parliament by

arbitrary and contrived means if he won the referendum, there was nothing to prevent President J. R. Jayawardene from extending the life-span of the 1977 Parliament even beyond 1989.

Putting off the elections due next year would perpetuate a Parliament which even Mr Jayawardene's 1978 Constitution describes as "transitional", and which was elected on an electoral system which has not existed since 1978, when the UNP dubbed it as unsatisfactory, atolished it, and brought in its so-called "proportional representation" system instead.

The relation of political forces would be frozen at what they were five years ago. Opposition parties would be denied the increased representation to which they would be entitled according to the voting patterns of October 20. Parties unrepresented in Parliament will lose the opportunity to gain representation, the voters will lose the opportunity to choose among contending political parties who should represent them, and young people who were 18 in 1975 will not be able to vote or stand for election until they are 32.

CHALLENGE

Challenging the government's claim that resort to a referendum made the postponement of Parliamentary elections

democratic, Pieter Keuneman said that referendum procedures were not intended to solve issues like this.

The right to vote was a fundamental and inalienable right, which the workers and people had won in hard struggles in the 1920s and which they had upheld for 50 years since then.

Mr. Keuneman said that UNP supporters could, if they were foolish enough, surrender their basic rights to President Jayawardene, just like the UNP Ministers and MPs had meekly surrendered to him the positions given to them by the people, when they handed him undated letters of "resignation" on demand. But they could not force the anti-UNP and non-UNP voters to hand over their basic rights by the mere exercise of a majority vote, or even by a one-third affirmative vote, as provided in the UNP's law.

What the UNP, hopes to do, said PIETER KEUNEMAN, is to misuse the 34 lakhs of votes that President Jayawardene got on October 20 to take away the rights of the 30 lakhs who voted against him and the 17 lakhs who abstained.

Calling for united action by all who value democracy and the right to vote, Pieter Keuneman said that the issue at stake at the referendum transcended party divisions and how and for whom one voted on October 20.

"What we will have to decide", he said, "is whether we want a Parliament of representatives we choose or one where President Jayawardene nominate five-sixths of the members! We have to decide whether we want to retain or surrender our fundamental right to vote. That is why the Communist Party says: 'Vote to keep your vote! Vote "No" in the referendum!'"

"ATHTHA" BAN

Speaking from the Chair, K. P. SILVA called for an end to the post-election violence carried out by the UNP against political opponents. The object of this violence was to intimidate opponents into keeping away from the referendum so that the UNP could win on a low poll. Those who advocated a 'boycott', instead of a "No" vote, were objectively helping the UNP to achieve what it wanted.

Demanding the lifting of the of the ban imposed on ATHTHA and SUTHANTIRAN, as well as the sealing of printing establishments associated with UNP opponents, he said the government hoped to close even the small breach that opposition forces had made in its monopoly of the mass media, and to win the referendum by gagging its opponents.

On behalf of the Communist Party, K. P. SILVA repudiated the charge made by

the President, Prime Minister and other Ministers of a "communist-inspired coup" on the "Afghan-model" to use "Naxalites" in the SLFP to launch a regime of murder and terror if Mr. Kobbekaduwa won the election.

"The whole thing stinks of a frame-up on the familiar CIA model", he declared. "It follows in the footsteps of Hitler who, in the Reichstag trial half a century ago, used anti-communism to conceal his own plans to destroy democracy and instal a fascist dictatorship."

Referring to the banning of ATHTHA and the sealing of its printing establishment, K. P. SILVA said that the closure order made no reference to anything ATHTHA had written before it. It said that it anticipated that ATHTHA may publish something prejudicial to public security. If that was the government's genuine fear, it had to explain why, on this occasion, it did not resort to its usual emergency measure of pre-censorship of the newspapers.

The real reason for closing ATHTHA, he continued, was the government's anti-democratic desire to silence what had become the main anti-UNP daily newspaper for the period of the referendum.

WELCOMED

On behalf of the CPSL, he welcomed the establishment of a broad-based National Committee to oppose the postponement of the Parliamentary elections. He called on all democratic organisations and persons, including those who may have voted for President Jayawardene on October 20, to support and associate themselves with the work of this Committee and to vote "NO" when the referendum poll was held.

President Jayawardene's drive towards dictatorship could not be hidden by merely decorating it with a few trapping of Parliamentary democracy from which all substance had been removed. Nor could it be cancelled by the current effort to set up a so-

called "National" government with some pro-capitalist and opportunist elements in certain Opposition parties.

"The form may retain some features of Parliamentary democracy in order not to offend world opinion. But the substance and the reality of President Jayawardene's drive is towards dictatorship", he said.

STEP BY STEP

In his concluding speech, SARATH MUTTETUWAGAMA, MP, traced the step-by-step campaign of President Jayawardene to devalue Parliament, deprive the people of their democratic rights, and concentrate power more in his own hands.

Each of the four amendments to the constitution of 1978, which had taken away many powers from Parliament and concentrated them in the hands of a so-called "Executive President", had eroded the sovereignty of the people and the value and effectiveness of their votes.

Before introducing his fourth amendment to Parliament, President Jayawardene had summoned a meeting of Opposition leaders in Parliament and told them that he intended to introduce a series of far-reaching measures. The aim of these measures was to restrict even further the effectiveness of the vote.

One of these measures was the provision that votes cast for a party would not be counted or taken into consideration if a petition was filed merely alleging that a disqualified person had supported that party. So far, only one of the measures that President Jayawardene had indicated then had been enacted. The others will undoubtedly follow if he won the referendum.

"On October 20 we were called upon to vote for a President", he said. "On December 22, we will be called upon to vote for a dictator. Let us all vote "NO"."

WATERGATE IN SRI LANKA ?

Is Watergate being repeated in Sri Lanka?

This question was posed by Communist MP Sarath Muttetuwegama, when he spoke at the Town Hall, Colombo, on November 9.

He said that Premier Premadasa, in contradicting Mr. Anura Bandaranaike about what his mother, Mrs. Srimavo Bandaranaike, had said at a meeting of the SLFP's main policy-making committee, had revealed that he had tapes in his possession which confirmed what he said.

"Is this government bugging the internal deliberations of opposing political parties, like Nixon and his supporters tried to do at Watergate?", the CPSL M.P. asked.

Because he was caught doing this, Nixon had to resign in order to avoid being impeached. This happened in the leading country of the so-called "free" world.

The UNP claims it is out to establish not only a "free" but also a "dharma" society. But its leaders made use of practices that even the USA does not tolerate.

Having admitted to bugging the confidential deliberations of opposing political parties, UNP leaders should be treated in the same way as Nixon was. President Jayawardene should resign or be impeached.

Sarath Muttetuwegama added that Prime Minister Premadasa, who confessed to possessing tapes with such bugged conversations, should also go.

Apparently bugging opponents is not prohibited in the UNP's Code of Conduct for its Ministers and MPs, the CPSL M.P. said.

C. I. A. HAS CAUSED MILLIONS OF DEATHS

The CIA was accused of causing millions of deaths in covert operations by a group of former CIA agents in a public discussion that took place in Washington, together with the screening of the documentary film "On Company Business", which is highly critical of the CIA.

John Stockwell, who worked for the CIA in Vietnam and Africa, told the audience that "direct victims of CIA covert action equal one million or so dead".

Former CIA official, Ralph McGhee, said that he had seen an official report that estimated that at least 500,000, and perhaps one million, people had died in Indonesia in the mid-1960s, following a coup supported by the agency.

Paul Sakwa, a former CIA specialist on Vietnam, said that the number of deaths caused by the CIA in Indochina was difficult to estimate exactly, but could total 1.5 million.

NEW TREND AMONG TAMILS

(P. KUMARASAMY, Central Committee member of the C. P. S. L. and Secretary of its Jaffna District Committee, answers questions put to him by FORWARD's STANLEY RANASINGHE.)

Q. Many political commentators have expressed surprise at the high anti-UNP vote in Jaffna. Any comment?

A. The anti-UNP vote was high not only in Jaffna, but also in the other three Tamil-majority districts of Batticaloa, Wanni and Trincomalee.

Nearly 70 per cent of those who voted in these four districts voted against the UNP.

It is also estimated that about 200,000 to 215,000 voters did not go to the poll as a result of the boycott call of the TULF and IELF. If they had voted, these votes too would have gone against the UNP.

Support for the UNP among the Sri Lanka Tamils is largely confined to a narrow upper strata, to businessmen and traders who have done well out of the "open economy", and to opportunists who switch allegiances to suit whoever is in power.

The mass of Tamils did not give the UNP a mandate in 1977 and they did not do so on October 1982, either.

This is not surprising. Apart from the common hardships they endure together into other citizens, the Tamils of the North and East have little reason to love the UNP or President Jayawardene.

When President Jayawardene was Prime Minister in 1977, he told the Tamils "If you want peace, we'll give you peace. But if you want war, we'll give you war". In the five years that he has been both Prime Minister and President, the position of the Tamils has not improved. President Jayawardene has been talking peace, but practicing war against the Tamils.

There were many shortcomings in the policy of the former United Front government towards the Sri Lanka Tamils—especially as far as their national rights are concerned. But, at least, there were no communal riots, and the farmers got good prices and large-scale state support.

The Communist Minister in that government started several housing schemes for the poorer sections and both he and T. B. Subasinghe, then Minister of Industries, helped industrial growth in the area and pushed ahead with the development of the K. K. S. harbour and other projects.

Under the Jayawardene government, this growth has been strangled. In addition, communal riots, on an even bigger scale than before, have taken place. A special feature is that many of the leaders of such riots have been MPs and even Ministers of the UNP government. For the first time, the basic right of Tamil citizens to live and work in safety in any part of the country has been put in jeopardy.

Unable to find jobs, many hundreds of Tamil youth, educated boys and girls, are either emigrating in search of work or eking out frustrated existences. On top of all this, the Jaffna Peninsula has been turned into a species of army-occupied territory where every young man is looked upon as a suspected "terrorist".

None of these basic facts have been changed by the prolonged and fruitless discussions between the TULF leaders and the government. The DDCs, on which the TULF staked such high hopes, have, as the CPSL warned, turned out to be worse than useless. They are an irrelevance that not even the pro-government mass media thinks worthy of notice. To set up these DDCs, the real organs of local government like the Town and Village Councils were abolished. In addition, the Home Guards that the TULF were promised have not been set up in Jaffna, even though they have been set up in Colombo.

Is it any wonder that the Tamils did not support the UNP?

Q. What about the referendum?

A. If the Tamils refused the UNP a mandate in 1977 and again in 1982, they are hardly likely to give the UNP the mandate it seeks through the referendum to let President Jayawardene rule without an elected Parliament until the end of this decade.

If the UNP wins the referendum, none of the grim realities I mentioned earlier will be changed. They will only become worse.

We Tamil Communists are glad that the TULF and the All-Ceylon Tamil Congress have opposed the extension of the life of this Parliament and demanded general elections within the due time. We hope that they will campaign actively to ask their supporters, too, to vote "NO" in the referendum, and not be led into empty gestures like a "boycott" which will only help the UNP.

Q. Do you think that the way the Sri Lanka Tamils voted on 20 October, 1982 indicates any new shifts of opinion among them?

A. Yes, I do. In the last two decades, the dominant trends in Tamil politics were either those of collaboration with the UNP as junior partners in capitalist exploitation, or separatism. A minute section of the youth, acting more from desperate frustration than serious social or political analysis, took the misguided and counter-productive path of terrorism.

The trend in Tamil politics represented by the CPSL and the Left, which was strong in the 1940s and 1950s, and which consisted of unity with progressive and socialist forces among the Sinhalese in the fight for an independent, united and socialist Sri Lanka, in which Tamil national rights would be respected and upheld, was pushed to the background.

The voting patterns on 20 October 1982 suggest that this healthy and essentially, correct trend is once more coming to the fore, and that the other trends, whose bankruptcy has become more and more obvious, are on the decline.

This is a good thing for the future.

In the Presidential elections the Tamil masses got a better understanding of their counterparts in the south and what the latter wanted. They saw that they often wanted the same things.

Mr Kobbekaduwa spent only one day in Jaffna. But in that one day he addressed more meetings than all the other candidates combined did during the entire campaign. The large crowds that attended these meetings showed the new spirit that is abroad in Jaffna.

It was interesting to observe that the visit to Jaffna and the warm welcome received there also helped the SLFP leaders to see how just many of the grievances of Tamils are, and the need to redress them. Mr Kobbekaduwa's acceptance of the need to repeal the notorious and so-called "Anti-Terrorism Act" is a case in point.

I hope most sincerely that these trends will continue to develop and gain ascendancy. Common campaigns to mobilise a "No" vote at the referendum can do a lot in this direction.

A. What contribution did the Tamil Communists make to the success of the anti-UNP campaign in the North during the Presidential election?

Q. Mr Kobbekaduwa has acknowledged the important part we played. So have even the political commentators in the pro-UNP newspapers. So there is no need for me to say more on that subject.



Leaders of 10 political parties meet to demand the lifting of the ban on "Aththa" and no postponement of the Parliament general election.

LIFT "ATHTHA" BAN, SAY 10 PARTIES

Ten political parties have adopted a joint resolution that condemns the sealing of the ATHTHA and SUTHANTIRAN, as well as several printing establishments.

They call for the lifting of these bans forthwith.

They have also opposed, in a separate resolution, the government's decision to put off Parliamentary general elections until 1989, and demand that these elections are held by the due date.

The parties concerned include the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, Communist Party of Sri Lanka, Mahajana Eksath Peramuna, Lanka Sama Samaja Party, All-Ceylon Tamil Congress, Nava Sama Samaja Party, People's Democratic Front, Sri Lanka Sama Samaja Party, Ceylon Communist Party, and Democratic Workers Congress (Political Wing).

21 trade unions, which met on November 8, also condemn-

ed "steps taken by the UNP government to ban meetings and newspapers under the cover of an all-island emergency that has been proclaimed with the Presidential election and calls on the government to withdraw the emergency immediately."

They also call for the defeat of the government's proposal to put off Parliamentary elections.

The Upali group's newspaper ISLAND, whose pro-

prietor openly supported President Jayawardene at the Presidential election, has also come out editorially (10/11), asking that the emergency is withdrawn before the referendum is held.

The Civil Rights Movement, in several statements, has also opposed the putting off of Parliamentary elections and demanded that there should be no referendum held while the state of emergency exists.

THE NEW "KAKUSSI COUP"

Reading President Jayawardene sensational charges of an attempted coup by "Naxalites" in charge of the SLFP, egged on and supported by the CPSL, to assassinate him, the Prime Minister and other Cabinet Ministers, and even the Bandanaises, one is reminded of his earlier charges in what Pieter Keuneman contemptuously called the "kakussi coup".

Then Mr. Jayawardene alleged that certain privates in the Army had been overheard by loyal citizens plotting a forcible seizure of power while urinating in a public lavatory!

Now, we are having the same sort of story again—although somewhat more refined.

If newspaper reports are to be believed, the "Naxalite coup" was discovered by alleged indiscreet remarks of a businessman in his cups during a dinner at the five-star Oberoi Hotel and a similarly drunken composer at an Embassy function!

Whoever thought up these tall tales should be in the business of writing imaginative and melodramatic fiction!

Incidentally, when there was a real coup to overthrow Mrs. B's first government by force, it was none other than President Jayawardene, then an opposition MP, who, in the words of Pieter Keuneman, "made the best and most eloquent speech in defence of these conspirators". He later gave many of them high posts in corporations and other government institutions under his command.

Prasanna Weerasinghe

Kandy.

Emergency

When the government declared a state of emergency on October 20, it said that this step was purely precautionary, intended to prevent post-election violence, and would be withdrawn very soon.

But emergency powers were not used to curb post-election violence. Instead, UNP MPs and their District and Deputy Ministers, as well as the thugs of the JSS., launched a campaign of physical violence against defeated opponents—without any fear that emergency powers would be used to stop them. Even the few who were taken into custody by the Police were released.

Emergency powers have, however, been used to prohibit the publication and distribution of ATHTHA, the main anti-UNP daily newspaper, to seal its press and also other printing establishments, to harass and lock up political opponents, and even to humiliate the President's main challenger, Mr Hector Kobbekaduwa, by treating him as though he was a common criminal.

If this is not abuse of power, what is? The state of emergency should be withdrawn forthwith!

M. Ansary

Haltsdorf.

Aththa

The government order stopping the publication of ATHTHA and sealing its printing press makes it clear that this step has not been taken because of anything that ATHTHA has said or done, but because the "Competent Authority" feels that it may, IN FUTURE, interfere with the provision of services essential to the life of the community, or else stir up mutiny etc.

How strange that the "Competent Authority" who issued this order to prevent mutiny and the overthrow of lawful government should be the same Mr Douglas Liyanage, who was the first accused in

an earlier "coup case", where all those charged were found guilty by our Supreme Court, which examined the evidence, and were finally discharged on a legal technicality by the Privy Council to whom they appealed!

Tony de Silva

Colombo 5.

More on "Aththa"

When questioned about the reasons for sealing the ATHTHA, Minister Anandattissa de Alwis, under whom the Competent Authority who issued the order functions, merely confined himself to repeating the reasons set out in the order.

He did not even deign to explain why, if the government feared that ATHTHA might in future publish something undesirable, it did not resort to the emergency power which it adopted in the case of communal riots—namely, establishing pre-censorship of what is published.

Prime Minister Premadasa, in Parliament, said that the reason for closing ATHTHA was that "there were a lot of defamatory articles printed by it" (CDN, 5/11). In that case, why did not those who felt defamed file action against ATHTHA, as both the PM and Minister Lalith Athulathmudali have already done?

I agree with Pieter Keuneman (Island, 2/11) who said that the government had sealed ATHTHA because it wants to

deprive the Opposition of its main newspaper during the referendum!

Nihal Godage

Galle.

Boycott

Most people know that the TULF's appeal to the Tamils to boycott the Presidential polls was not a success. But the extent of its failure is not so well known.

I have taken the voting figures for the four Tamil-majority districts—namely, Jaffna, Batticaloa, Wanni and Trincomalee. Allowing for the fact that, if there had been no boycott appeal, the national average of around 80 per cent would have polled, and subtracting from that figure the number who actually polled, I find that only 215,000 could have responded to the call for a boycott which was, incidentally, made by both the TULF

and the TELF. I have not taken into consideration the possibility that some of them did not go to the polls for other reasons.

The "boycott" figures, per electoral district, are:

Jaffna	...	166,351
Batticaloa	...	15,029
Wanni	...	22,088
Trincomalee	...	111,525

This seems to show that the TULF's influence in the North and East in on the decline. In South Sri Lanka, too, the voting figures (especially in the Colombo District and the hill country) indicate that most of the Tamil residents did not heed the TULF-TELF call.

I hope that these two parties will learn a lesson from this result and not indulge in a repeat performance over the referendum, thus helping the UNP once again by keeping the total poll low.

S. Ponnaswamy

Chunnakam.

Maithri's Morals

Maithripala Senanayake told Parliament that he has "no moral right" to oppose the UNP government's attempt to postpone general elections for six years.

But he forgot to tell Parliament whether he felt this "moral" urge BEFORE or AFTER the SLFP decided that he should apply for readmittance as a member and not expect to be given a red carpet welcome back, and even more important—before or after the secret meeting

which he and his group held with President Jayawardene, but which was "blown" by the SUN on November 4.

Anyway, if his "moral" feelings were troubling him so much, he could have assuaged them by refraining from voting. But instead he voted WITH the UNP on this crucial issue.

Lalitha Dissanayake

Colombo 8.

Coming Man

Although Premier Premadasa has quickly used the President's re-election on October 20th to blackmail Rupavahini and Lake House into giving him the maximum publicity which he was earlier denied on Presidential orders, it seems that the Big Boss still prefers Minister Anandattissa de Alwis when it comes to letting Parliament and the public know what he feels.

Twice last week Anandattissa was picked to announce (a) the government's objection to Kuttimani being allowed to take his seat as TULF MP, and (b) that the government had no immediate plans to transform the UNP government into a "National Government".

Is Anandattissa, therefore, the "coming man" in the lineup for the succession? I was present in Parliament when Sarath Muttetuwagama, quoting from the UNP's Constitution, spelled out for the PM's benefit the care that had been taken not to make him the automatic successor. I have rarely seen the PM look so cross and glum.

Incidentally, in objecting to Kuttimani taking his seat on the grounds that he had been convicted for murder (though still on appeal), Anandattissa did not meet the telling point made by Opposition Leader Amirthalingam, who asked how this government, which pardoned and released from jail the JVP leaders who had been found guilty of a conspiracy in which several thousands (including policemen) had been killed, could object to the TULF's nomination as MP of a man who had been sentenced for killing one policeman and who was appealing this sentence.

His speech on the "National Government" also indicates that the President is having big trouble within the UNP on this question. And no wonder! UNP Ministers and MPs must be naturally alarmed and annoyed that, while they have been compelled to hand their undated letters of resignation to the President and while some of them know that their heads are on the block, the Big Boss is blithely considering giving top posts to defectors from Opposition parties and to hand-picked "experts" who could not, in

their wildest dreams, hope to enter Parliament through the hustings.

N. S. Balasooriya

Doḍanduwa.

Houses

In his craze for publicity, Prime Minister Premadasa does not seem to care whether his extravagant promises, which hit the headlines, are fulfilled or not. If they are not, he covers this up with a still more extravagant promises.

Although he promised to build 100,000 houses, the figures which his own Ministry supplied to the World Bank show that he has not built half this number, and that a large number of those which he has built remain unoccupied because they are either too expensive or too badly designed and constructed.

Now, in order to justify the extension of Parliament and this government's term of office for another six years without an election, Mr Premadasa has promised to build ONE MILLION houses by 1989.

He does not care to tell us where he will get the money, materials and skilled personnel to do this.

Already, most of his housing schemes have come to a halt or been scrapped due to lack of funds, and the government's financial prospects, as the Finance Minister has indicated, are far from rosy in the next few years. Even the new HOUSING BANK that the Premier has started in unlikely to raise much capital at home or abroad.

We all remember Premadasa's harebrained scheme of planting kitul trees along the Galle Road. Will the same happen in regard to his much-publicised promise to build a million more houses?

John Guneratne

Dematagoda.

Cotton

Cotton growing in Sri Lanka was forging ahead in a big way. Several thousands of acres were planted in cotton in the Hambantota, Puttalam and other districts. Local cotton, which was of a high quality, was used by local textile manufacturers quite extensively, and cotton growers had a good market.

But everything has been changed under the UNP government and its "open economy". Raw cotton is being imported, and the local growing of cotton has come to a virtual standstill, as it cannot compete.

The same fate that overtook local cotton fabrics (especially handlooms) under the UNP's "open economy", has now spread to cotton growing. If the "open economy" is allowed to go on for another six years, even our big textile manufacturers will be out of business, except where they produce on license for export.

C. Heriadasa

Ratmalana.

Left wins in Spain

Spain's Socialist Workers Party (PSOE), led by Felipe Gonzalez, has been elected to office seven years after Franco's death and for the first time in the country's history.

This electoral victory is another sign of a leftward swing in many countries of Western Europe in recent times. This was seen in the formation of a Socialist-Communist government in France, a socialist victory in Sweden, a big increase in the vote of these opposed to the stationing of US rockets in the Netherlands, and the sweeping gains made by the Socialist movement PASOK and the Communists in recent local government elections in Greece.

The only movement in the opposite direction has been in West Germany, when the Social-Democratic Party of Helmut Schmidt was manoeuvred out of office by US-inspired desertions and replaced by an alliance of right-wing parties without resort to elections.

Until polling day, Spain was full of stories of coups by fascist elements in the armed forces to forestall a Socialist victory. Some plots were uncovered and a number of officers were arrested or transferred to remote areas. But political observers believe that this is only the tip of the iceberg and that new attempts at a right-wing coup may still be made.

Despite the tense atmosphere and threats from the Right, the PSOE got about 50 per cent of the votes cast and won 201 seats out of 350. It had 121 seats earlier.

Rout

The former ruling party, the UNION OF DEMOCRATIC CENTRE (UCD), was routed,

This party, which ruled Spain on the two previous occasions, had its number of seats reduced from 287 to 13.

One of the main reasons for this debacle was the dissatisfaction of the voters with the UCD's slide to the Right, especially after Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo took command and dragged Spain into NATO.

In addition, the UCD governments had been unwilling to counter the threat from the fascist Right and had also failed to take any serious steps in regard to the mounting economic crisis, which had rendered 16 per cent of the working population unemployed.

The strength of the Communist Party of Spain in Parliament was also reduced from 23 to 5. Observers attribute this decrease in its representation to incorrect policies that the party had followed in external and internal affairs under the leadership of SANTIAGO CARILLO, one of the leading "Euro-communists". After this defeat, Carillo resigned as Secretary-General of the party and was replaced.

However, a disturbing feature of the elections has been the increased representation won by the People's Alliance Party, which frankly supported rightist views. This party polled 25 per cent of all votes cast.

Polarisation

The outcome of the general elections reveals a growing polarisation in Spain's political life.

On the one hand stands the PSOE, whose leaders are in theory and practice close to the Social Democrats of Western

European countries like Britain, the FRG and some Scandinavian countries.

On the other hand is the People's Alliance Party, supported by the pro-Francoites, the wealthy, and a part of the small bourgeoisie.

The Centrists have lost their former role.

In the elections, the PSOE offered policies at variance with the ruling policies pursued earlier by the UCD governments.

In external affairs, it came out for disarmament, detente, development of relations with the socialist countries, widening ties with Latin America, and solidarity with peoples fighting for independence and sovereignty. It wanted postponement of the negotiations over Spain's integration in NATO and a referendum to be held later to seek popular opinion on this move. It also wanted to review the agreement with the USA on bases in Spanish territory.

Internally, the PSOE promised further development of democracy and liquidation of the remnants of fascist rule. It also promised to trim the swollen and cumbersome bureaucracy, to pass new laws to improve the position regarding unemployment, education, health and environmental protection.

Fascists

Spain's defeated fascists and right-wingers have not given up the fight.

Some of them are dreaming of repeating what the Franco fascists did to the elected Popular Front government in Spain nearly half a century ago.

Recently Spain's fascists held a secret conference with counterparts from Portugal, Italy, the FRG, Chile and Uruguay in the Spanish province of Andorra to consider what should be done about the new turn in Spanish affairs.

They decided that everything possible should be done to set up a totalitarian regime within a year and, in the meantime, to work out a "strategy of terror" in which leading political opponents would be systematically assassinated. The supply of arms to pro-fascist groups was also agreed upon.

A "National Solidarity Party" has also been set up, led by Lt. Col. Tejero, who took the government and parliament hostage 18 months ago.

Spain's new socialist government, and the people who elected it to power, will therefore have to face, not only the big socio-economic difficulties inherited from the previous regime, but also the implacable hostility from Rightist terrorism and the pro-fascist elements in the armed forces.

What's the Offence?

The UNP government leaders should disclose what alleged offence they are investigating with such fanfare and publicity over the so-called "bogus" rice ration book affair, said PIETER KEUNEMAN, while speaking on November 9 at the Colombo Town Hall.

He said that the Communist Party knew nothing about the printing of election literature in a format similar to the old rice ration books. If it had been asked, it would have advised against it not because it was illegal, which it is not, but because it was not very effective propaganda, even though it seems to have panicked the UNP.

But what, he asked, is the offence that those who printed or distributed this piece of propaganda are supposed to have committed?

It could not be FORGERY, as there are no legal rice ration book in circulation after 1977. One cannot criminally forge what does not exist, he said.

Nor, apparently, was THEFT alleged, for the only thing that could be said to have been stolen were valueless printing blocks.

Nevertheless, people were being arrested and remanded. Others were questioned repeatedly on the notorious "fourth floor" of the CID. Several well-known printing establishments had been sealed.

Now, PIETER KEUNEMAN said, it had been announced that the government intended to file an election petition against Mr Kobbekaduwa alleging a "corrupt practice" in publishing this RRB-leaflet and seeking his deprivation of civic rights for seven years.

If this was so, he continued, he would like to know how the CID was being used to collect evidence for an election petition. This was a clear ABUSE OF POWER.

There had been election petitions filed earlier against various people, alleging corrupt practices during elections. But in all these cases, the petitioner had to produce his own evidence. The CID, an official body which is supposed to investigate crimes, was never ordered to collect, or manufacture, evidence to support an election petition.

Sri Lanka Greets U.S.S.R. on 65th Anniversary

"Warmest revolutionary greetings and heartiest congratulations" were sent to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, in a message in connection with the 65th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

"We record our highest appreciation", the message says, "of the policy of the Soviet government and the effective role it plays in the international arena for peace, co-operation between peoples and states, national liberation and social progress".

"It is the common opinion of peace-loving people throughout the world that the USSR effectively counters the efforts of aggressive imperialist circles, in the first place in the USA, to impose on the peoples of the world a new round of the arms race, to erode the foundations of detente and mutually beneficial relations between states, and to heighten tensions and confrontation on all continents and oceans", the message continues.

"It is our conviction that the spirit of firm communist ideology, patriotism, internationalism and devotion to their socialist motherland have formed the stable basis for the Soviet people's enormous contribution to the welfare and progress of mankind since the Great October Socialist Revolution".

The message also expresses the high regard of Sri Lankan Communists for the efforts of the CPSU at constantly promoting and consolidating the unity and cohesion on the international communist and worker's movement.

The 65th anniversary of Great October was also celebrated at a largely-attended public meeting at the Public Library Hall, Colombo, called by the Lanka-Soviet Friendship League.

Mr. Peter Jayasekera, General Secretary of the SLSFL, presided and the main speakers were Hon. T. W. Rajaratnam, former Judge of the Supreme Court, and the Soviet Ambassador in Sri Lanka, H. E. Mr. Boris Kirnasovsky.

A concert by the National Youth Council ensemble that recently visited the USSR followed.

A Soviet film festival has also been organised throughout November to mark this historic event.

Mrs. B. Refutes Charges

President of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, Mrs. SRIMAVO BANDARANAIKE, categorically refuted two canards of the UNP leaders and their mass media, in separate statements made last week.

In one statement, Mrs. Bandaranaike branded as false the charge, made by the President and other Ministers, that the SLFP had been involved in any way in a plot to assassinate the President, the Prime Minister, other Ministers or other persons.

The pro-government mass media, which gave big publicity to these charges, did not publish this refutation, with the exception of the ISLAND newspapers.

On November 11, in a statement to DINAKARA and other newspapers, Mrs. Bandaranaike also categorically denied that the SLFP had agreed to consider, after the referendum, the possibility of joining the UNP in a "National government."

She said that the SLFP would not consider such a step.

She also branded those who joined the UNP to form such a government as "traitors".

In saying so, she contradicted the statement made by SLFP MP, Mr. S. D. Bandaranaike, to a press conference that he especially summoned, that the SLFP's Working Committee had decided to take up the question of joining the UNP in a "National" government after the referendum.

Needless to say, this denial was also blacked out in most of the government's mass media.

THEY BEG TO DIFFER

The government, and especially President Jayawardene, has given so many different (and often conflicting) reasons why they decided to try to put off the Parliamentary elections, due in August, 1983, until mid-1989, that anyone who tries to make sense of what has been said will not know whether he is coming or going.

It seems clear that the government decided NOT to proceed with the Parliamentary general election only after the result of the Presidential election was known.

On October 22, the day after the result was announced, the President told a press conference of foreign correspondents that the date of the general election would be decided after studying the detailed results of the Presidential election, but that, in any case, he would have to call it by July 1983 i.e. in a "few months".

So it is obvious that, even though the President has subsequently told us in a press communique on November 3rd that he had received "information" (from whom?) of an attempted assassination plot on October 21st, this "information" had not influenced him on October 22nd to think about putting off the Parliamentary general elections.

All he was concerned about then was WHEN to call these elections. He intended to do so within a "few months" and anyway before July 1983, after studying the detailed results of the election of October 20.

Study

This study does not seem to have been to the liking of the President or his government. For, as he stated in his official November 3rd communique;

"If I dissolved Parliament and held the general election according to the 20th October voting, my party, the United National Party would have obtained 120 seats out of 196. The SLFP would have obtained 68 seats".

The accuracy of the President's mathematical calculations need not be challenged here. Incidentally, the Prime Minister, speaking on TV on November 11th, calculated that the October 20th poll would have given the UNP 139 seats. As both figures are in the nature of guess-work, one guess is as good or as bad as the other.

But it is clear that the President (and perhaps the PM) had given his mind to whether the number of seats that he (and his CWC partner) could win on the basis of the October 20th voting was sufficient, to quote his own words for "my being allowed to govern our country with a democratic Parliament, ensuring peace and progress THROUGH A STABLE GOVERNMENT... (capitals mine)".

Realisation

The realisation that a stable government may not be possi-

ble apparently prompted the first kites to be flown about whether it was necessary to hold the next general election at all.

It was originally argued that there was no need for a general election as the people, on October 20th, had given the government a "clear mandate" to carry on.

How this could have been asserted when the October 20th results showed that only 33.4 lakhs had voted for the UNP, while 47 lakhs had either voted against or refrained from voting for it, is yet to be explained.

Nor can it be forgotten that practically every pro-government political commentator, and even the UNP High Command itself, has stated that a large part of the vote President Jayawardene received was personal to himself and did not extend either to the UNP or to many of its MPs and Ministers who were "unpopular" in their electorates.

Another argument adduced at this early stage was that one might as well have a referendum as it was the 'same thing' as a general election. Minister Lalith Athulathmudali was the main proponent of this argument.

Once again, it is difficult to follow the Minister's logic.

In his communique, President Jayawardene also made it clear that these terrible things were planned to happen only IF Mr. Kobbekaduwa was elected as the next President on October 20th. As he put it, the conspirators sought "ON THE STRENGTH OF THEIR VICTORY" (my capitals) to "establish a military government..."

President Jayawardene does not explain why Mr. Kobbekaduwa and his fellow-conspirators needed to establish a "military government" once he had been elected President and could exercise all the considerable powers vested in an 'Executive' President who is also, constitutionally, Commander in Chief of the armed services.

It is also noteworthy that President's version differs in significant details from what was said by Premier Premadasa when he made the first public reference to this alleged "plot" in Parliament.

While President Jayawardene only mentions "some Ministers" as being on the intended hit list, Prime Minister Premadasa, who obviously felt that it was a loss of face to have been forgotten, emphasised that HE was the second victim to be.

He also named a number of persons (including public

he intended to hold the general election and that the only matter to be decided was WHEN, there is also a gaping hole in the logic that led him from receipt of the "information" to the remedy of putting off general elections until 1989.

Firstly, as he himself underlined, the present Parliament can constitutionally continue until August, 1983-i.e. for nine months. There was no need, therefore, to rush to the hasty step of deciding HERE AND NOW to put off the polls and hold a referendum before the end of 1982.

Secondly, President Jayawardene must have a very low opinion of the investigating capacities of his C.I.D. if he thinks that it must be given SIX YEARS and NINE MONTHS to probe the "information" received and to prosecute anyone found guilty.

Thirdly, he knew that investigations into earlier conspiracies (and REAL ones, at that) had not prevented general elections from being held. Two general elections had, for instance, been held while proceedings into Mr. Bandaranaike's assassination took place. Nor were elections put off in the 1960s during the times when a attempted coup by top brass of the Police and the armed services was being probed and tried.

After-Thought

Indeed, everything suggests that, far from being the sole reason for deciding to put off elections, the "information" received by the President is only an after-thought to "justify" an anti-democratic, political decision taken for completely different reason.

President Jayawardene's communique suggests as much. For he proceeds to give TWO OTHER REASONS, in addition to the need to probe the "information" he received.

The first reason is that, in the interests of "stable government", he could not "permit a set of political hooligans to enter Parliament in numbers and while wrecking democratic Parliamentary procedures, strengthen themselves to form their Naxalite government at the next elections." i.e. those in 1989.

The SECOND reason given by President Jayawardene for putting off the elections also shows that he is a man who thinks very far ahead!

"I also thought", he continues, "that the democratic members of the SLFP should be given time to assert their authority and gain control of their party".

This is obviously not going to be such a simple process, for it needs nearly seven years to happen!

In the meantime, President Jayawardene's government will try to help things along by having the "undemocratic" members of the SLFP given practical lessons in democracy by being hauled up repeatedly by the CID for interrogation (without legal assistance) on the Fourth Floor, detained without charge and

kept incommunicado, framed up on various charges that are never taken to court, and (in the case of the rank and file) assaulted by JSS thugs led by UNP Deputy Ministers and MPs.

As for the mass of the voters, they will have to be without their basic right to choose who should rule in their name until the SLFP mends its ways and agrees to become the "democratic alternative" that people like Anura Bandaranaike want it to be!

Parallel

The "investigation" that is now in progress also seems to follow closely the lines of the famous "Mock Trial" in "Alice in Wonderland", where the verdict is given first and the trial takes place afterwards!

The President, the Prime Minister and several other Ministers have already publicly declared that there was such a conspiracy, named the main parties and persons involved, and stated what were their aims.

It is only after this verdict has been pronounced that the CID is asked to investigate!

Most of the CID investigations so far seem to be concentrated, not on a plot to assassinate anyone, but on the publication, during the Presidential election, of a political leaflet, in a form resembling the rice ration books which have not been issued since 1978 and bearing both Mr. Kobbekaduwa's photograph and the categorical statement that it is NOT an official rice ration book.

Nearly all the SLFP members, big and small, who have been questioned by the CID so far, say that the questions they were asked related to this document and not to any alleged assassination conspiracy.

On the basis of "evidence" thus elicited by the CID, Mr. Harsha Abeywardene, General Secretary of the UNP, has filed a private plaint (with the permission of the Attorney General) in the nature of an election petition asking that Mr. Kobbekaduwa should be disqualified for seven years for "corrupt practices".

A parallel "trial by smear and innuendo" is being conducted by the pro-government newspapers, who seek to suggest that every questioning by the CID and every detention under emergency regulations is in connection with its probe into the "assassination conspiracy".

Whether these investigations will end up in court is not yet known. But the government has announced its intention (before the referendum is held?) to produce a "White Paper" on this matter where, under the protection of Parliamentary privilege, it can indulge in another round of "character assassination" of political opponents in order to swing the referendum their way and justify their unjustifiable actions before domestic and world opinion.

LAST PAGE

by
Gamini

After all, in a referendum there is only ONE question posed, to which one must answer "Yes" or "No". At a general election, MANY issues are posed and debated, and the voter is asked to choose between them.

Again, there are no parties or candidates at a referendum, while, at a general election, the voter is asked to choose between contending parties, candidates and policies.

Sole Reason

President Jayawardene has since told us (in the official communique issued by the Information Department on November 3rd) that the SOLE REASON why he changed his mind and decided to put off the general election was "information" he received (on October 21, the day after the voting was over and when the result was known) that:

"the group of the SLFP which led the Presidential election campaign and were in a majority in the Executive Committee (Polit Bureau) had decided to assassinate me and a few other Ministers; Mr. Anura Bandaranaike; Armed Services Chiefs; and others; do away with the Constitution; imprison Mrs Bandaranaike".

officers) as participants in, or beneficiaries from, the alleged plot. This, of course, was done under the protection of Parliamentary privilege.

Thirdly, the Prime Minister went even further than the President, who had confined his accusation to a "group in the SLFP", and added that the Communist Party of Sri Lanka had masterminded the whole thing, acting on instructions from "foreign masters". This anti-Communist theme was also taken up immediately by Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe (who seems to be in an early stage of the anti-communist mania that made a former US Minister, James Forrestal, jump to his death out of a window shouting "The Reds are Coming") and Minister M. H. Mohamed.

No Need

To return to President Jayawardene's communique, the time sequence set out in it makes it clear that he was, at first, neither unduly upset nor alarmed about the "information" that some unspecified source gave him on October 21st.

Apart from the fact that, 24 hours later, he was telling foreign correspondents that