

LANKA

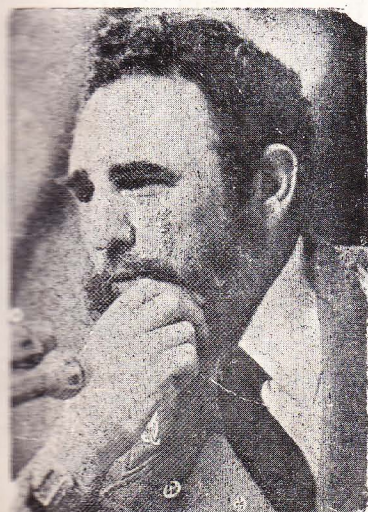
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GUARDIAN



**Castro : stormy
petrel**



**Sadat : the
outcast**



**Tito : the
godfather**

From Colombo to Havana

Jaffna Report

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Israel - Egypt : The peace process

Mervyn de Silva

Religion and nationhood

N. M. M. I. Hussein

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GARADS

Buddha and Marx

Buddhism and Marxism, an aspect of the General theme of the current symposium on religion and politics in this journal is the subject of this year's Martin Wickremasinghe memorial lecture. The lecturer is Professor Trevor Ling, an outstanding British scholar who is now Professor of Comparative Religion, Manchester. He is the author of several books including "Buddha, Marx and God" and "A History of Religion East & West". His forthcoming books include "Buddhism Imperialism & War" and "Buddhist Revival in India". The full title of his lecture is "Philosophy: Buddhist and Marxist, agreements and disagreements".

Doctor Ling sees the Buddhist dhamma as an entire way of life rather than a means of fulfilment, for the specifically religious aspect of Buddhist Culture is but a small part of Gotama's world-embracing vision".

Race prejudice

*With all responsible Sir Lankans increasingly perturbed over communal trends it is interesting to find **Bhakti Prabodhanaya**, a monthly magazine and probably the only joint Catholic-Protestant publication in Sinhala, devoting serious attention to the problem of racial prejudice and discrimination.*

The most recent issue has an article by Dr. Antony Fernando on this subject. The writer is the head of the Department of Cultural Studies at the Kelaniya University. Pointing out a parallel between this effort and our own, its Editor Rev. Claude J. Perera stresses the need for all journals and journalists to educate the public, particularly the Sinhala reader, on these urgent and provocative questions.

Question of Identity

Jayantha Somasunderam in the Guardian of May 1 asks "but how come the Tamil-speaking people discovered their unique identity in 1972? Is it not because it was only then that they came alive to the acute nature of the economic crisis, the inability to provide jobs and decent standards of living".

Is Mr. S. aware that the previous regime started "standardisation" long before 1972. Many felt that this was happening before May 1970 as well. Mr. S. should also know that for decades the Sinhalese had been protesting that the Public Services have been overcrowded with Tamils. This cry was there even in 1948.

"MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE". Mr. S. would do well to go back at least fifty years and study a little bit of history. Once a year when our national leaders climb ladders to garland the statues of Sir Ponnampalam Arunachalam and Sir Ponnampalam Ramanathan, the Sri

Lanka National press tries to make out that they are more national-minded than the present day Tamil politicians.

Permit me to quote the following passages from the book "Ramanathan of Ceylon", by M. Vythilingam:

"Ramanathan contended that any scheme of Government the foreigner would formulate should guarantee to the Tamils absolute freedom to work out their destiny as much as it did to the Sinhalese to work out theirs. Any departure from this pattern of constitution making would mean the total utter extermination of Tamils. 'Donoughmore means', he said 'Tamils no more' - see page 730.

In or about 1913 Sir Ponnampalam Arunachalam said, "Various wants we have. A press that may not degenerate into a hireling is a great want for the country. Shall we not aim at a press for the Tamils, if only to combat calumny and vile misrepresentation? For days, weeks, months and years, we have suffered at the hands of an unscrupulous press."

The Tamil problems started long ago.

Jaffna

N. Deva Rajan

Identity (2)

It was with great interest that I read the articles on the Tamil problem in the 'Lanka Guardian' of 1st May. But the article of Mr. Jayantha Somasunderam on "The only identity that matters" seemed too simplistic, not taking into consideration the dimensions of the problem.

(a) Though the economic crisis and problems of social mobility, employment and standardisation play an important role, the rise of Tamil national consciousness in Sri Lanka cannot be entirely understood in terms of the economic. It should be said that one of the main weaknesses of the Left movement in Sri Lanka was that it ignored questions of culture and national identity and looked at them merely as the super-

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Letters . . .

structure of the economic base. It was for this reason that the left parties had no appeal to the mass of Sinhala speaking and Tamil speaking peoples. Though it is also true that the Middle class articulated political aspirations of the people, to say that the whole movement is Middle class is far from the truth. The overwhelming support of the F. P. and the T. U. L. F. in the North in the recent years is proof of a tremendous popular base of Tamil politics.

(b) Ceylon Tamil nationalism has to be understood in the historical context of the Country. Unlike the Sinhala people, the Tamil people of the Country, did not have a powerful organization like Buddhist Sangha to articulate their national identity and destiny. The Tamil people belong more to the oral tradition and their clergy confined themselves only to ritual functions in the temples. But the Tamil people always express their distinctiveness through their language, religion and customs. History testifies that they had their distinctive political identity from the 12th century A. D. till the coming of the Portuguese. The Portuguese and the Dutch recognized the ethnic differences between the Tamil and Sinhala people and had different administrations. During the British period the whole Country was brought under a single administration. It was the aggressive missionary movement and the process of Westernization which challenged the leader of both Communities to resist the British. It is of great significance that Tamil leaders such as Muthukumaraswamy, Ramanathan, Arunachalam and Ananda Coomaraswamy not only inspired Tamil nationalism and identity but also were the pioneers and inspirers of Sinhala nationalism and culture at a time of Western domination. The radicalization of Tamil nationalism took place after the 1950's and the Sinhala Only bill was passed. It was the constitution of 1972 which forced the Tamils to raise the cry of Tamil Eelam. The riots of 1958 and '77 polarized the Tamils

still further. How to strive in one's native land which negates one's identity, language and culture at every turn was the biggest question which faced the Ceylon Tamils.

(c) Mr. Somasunderam says that we are heirs to a communication revolution that is hurtling us towards one language, one culture, one identity.... Is this true? I feel strongly that the communication revolution is helping us to appreciate more fully what is unique in other races, nations and cultures and move towards unity in diversity of cultures and peoples which is a far more enriching experience.

(d) Mr. Somasunderam rightly says that the way out of this impasse is to push forward social revolution. The socialism we have had so far has been opportunistic siding with racial chauvinism for reasons of political expediency or confining themselves to the urban proletariat and Classical Marxist concerns. It is time we free ourselves from this Western oriented dogmatic socialism and social philosophy and build on Eastern traditions which will take our pluralism and identities far more seriously.

Rev D. J. Kanagaratnam
Pilimatalawa.

Shoes of the poor

The printer's devil made me speak incongruously (LG, May 15) of 'the poor in their best shoes' in the opening sequence of Kosintsev's *King Lear*. What I wrote was 'bast shoes'—shoes made of fibre, such as used to be worn by Russian peasants and are often referred to in 19th-century Russian literature.

Colombo 5. Reggie Siriwardena

Code for Catholic clergy

The priest should be wed to his candle and crook,
His rosary, missal and cross,
On life everlasting he must only look,
Not on matters too earthy and dross.

The poor and the hungry may crowd at his door,
The destitute, jobless and sick,
He may sympathise, but he must n't do more,
To have them with him is the trick.

"The poor ye have always with you", it is said,
The reason to tell never try,
Just toss to the beggar a morsel of bread
And say that salvation is nigh.

Preach of the kingdom in heaven above,
Of losing one's soul for the world,
In prayer and in fasting, in penance and love
They must live, or to hellfire be hurled.

To probe the dark secrets of plenty and want,
Of capital, labour and wage,
Of rank exploitation, of housing so scant
Is nothing but plain sacrilege.

Forget the last Christian who died on the Cross,
He seems a forerunner of Marx,
He spoke of things earthy and matters so dross,
To save human souls is your task.

Lest you should stray from the straight, narrow path,
Remember the need of the hour
Is to speed development, forget home and hearth
And pull with the party in power.

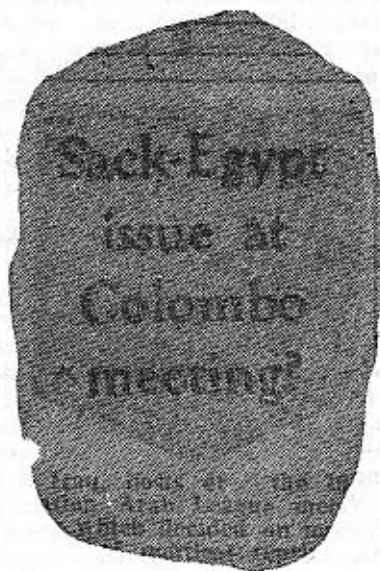
Mervyn Casie Chetty.

Colombo Conference

Unity and continuity — the West's counter - attack

"Sack Egypt issue at Colombo meeting" The front page story in the 'Sun' is a racy reminder how world events sometimes create surprising ironies and paradoxes. When the non-aligned foreign ministers who meet here next week conferred in Belgrade last year, the Egyptian Foreign Minister joined the anti-Cuba combo which produced some discordant noises. While a few members wanted to 'boycott' the Havana summit or change the venue, Egypt argued for a postponement.

His speech drew a cutting rejoinder from the Cuban spokesman. Those who pocketed their pride and went to Jerusalem now have the audacity to say that they cannot come to Havana! The Egyptian Foreign Minister is reported to have bowed his head in shame. Certainly, the Egyptian



Foreign Minister who accompanied his President to Camp David must have retained some residual traces of self-respect because he resigned his post after the agreement was signed.

Today it is Egypt that has been 'boycotted' by fellow Arabs. And for all Sadat's windy outpourings on the verdict of posterity, his Treaty with Israel has resulted in anti-Egyptian feelings extending beyond the Arab League to the whole Islamic world. Even Iran has cut off relations. And recently Egypt discreetly kept away from the Islamic conference in Morocco.

This is not to say that Egypt will be expelled from the non-aligned movement. There is no such procedure, and the practice is unknown to the organisation.

True, Chile did not attend the Colombo Summit and will certainly not dare to make an appearance in Havana. But not because it was formally expelled. The Chilean junta is aware of what the whole

world knows. It is the accomplice and beneficiary of the self-confessed US conspiracy to 'de-stabilise' the government of Salvador Allende. The junta also knows that its merciless repression and butchery are no longer wellkept secrets.

Anti-Cuba

The anti-Cuba campaign was launched by a handful of non-aligned members. (In Colombo, Colonel Gaddafi threatened to 'expose' these 'trojan horses' at a later and more propitious date). But the inspiration did not come from **within** the movement only. No great expertise in international politics is required to grasp that simple fact. Any reader of the world press would realise that the campaign had the active encouragement and patronage of the West and, in the apt phrase of James Schlesinger, America's new "quasi-ally" China.

American antipathy is wholly understandable. The Cuban revolution, on America's doorstep, was a direct ideological challenge to the world's mightiest and wealthiest nation. America has never forgiven Cuba this act of defiance just as it has not forgiven Vietnam for the humiliation it suffered at the hands of some backward peasants in black pyjamas whom a famed US general wanted to bomb back "into the Stone Age".

It is again no secret that Cuba has been a top target for subversion. The exercise has taken many forms, from armed intervention to assassination attempts. Cuba has not only survived all this but gone from strength to strength. Neither relaxing its ideological militancy nor retreating from its declared principles, Cuba has continued to defy her enemies. What is more, its influence in the community of nations considering its size and population, has grown steadily. Far, from being isolated, it has become an example to other Latin American countries of how a people can take command of their national resources and exploit these resources for genuine economic develop-

Divide and rule

"Two bits of intelligence coming out of Africa suggest the time may be at hand to consider whether we have not made considerable progress this year towards a basic foreign policy goal, that of breaking up the massive bloc of nations, which for so long have been arrayed against us in the international forums and in diplomatic encounters generally. Obviously this was going to be difficult and it is by no means fully accomplished. At most we begin to see signs of success."

— (Prof. Daniel Moynihan, former US Ambassador to India, quoted in N. Y. Times 28.1.76)

ment. All these achievements have only intensified the hostility of those who see Cuba as a dangerous example to other poor nations.

Foreign policy

However, it would be self-defeating if the propaganda campaign against Cuba was grounded in such reasons. The ostensible reason for the attacks on Cuba from outside and from within the non-aligned movement are two-fold. Firstly, Cuba's openly stated and close friendship with the Soviet Union and the socialist states. Cuba argues that anti-imperialism and anti-neocolonialism is the pith and substance of non-alignment and that in this struggle and on this fundamental issue, the socialist states are the 'natural ally' of the non-aligned. Non-alignment it says is neither passive nor 'neutral'.

Of course there are other 'interpretations'. Tito may be a self-elected ideological 'godfather' of non-alignment but the movement is not a Third World Mafia. Yet, Yugoslavia is a dynamic pioneer of the movement and therefore it has the moral right to speak authoritatively on these matters and have her voice heard.

But the anti-Cuba campaign is really fuelled by outsiders. What is the moral right of the United States to deliver pious sermons on the subject when its Secretary of State, at the very birth of the movement, declared non-alignment "immoral"? More recently, another Secretary of State, Dr. Kissinger and his UN Ambassador, were denouncing the conduct of the whole Third World in the U. N. as an essay in "the tyranny of the majority"!

China speaks of 'super-power hegemonism', brands the USSR "the main enemy" and maintains that Cuba is not "non-aligned". Yet only last month, Singapore espoused the cause of "US world leadership". Neither Washington nor Peking nor the western press rose up in righteous indignation to denounce Singapore for this blatant deviation from "genuine non-alignment." Certainly nobody would ask that Singapore

be 'boycotted' or 'expelled'. These studious silences, highly selective judgments and double standards expose the hollowness of those homilies on non-alignment by countries which have no real respect for the movement. It also reveals their true interests, the self-interest behind the apparent solicitude.

The other ostensible reason is Cuba's involvement in Africa ever since the Angolan war where it answered the MPLA's appeal for direct assistance. Cuba responded to that appeal and Cuban troops fought alongside the MPLA. Support for liberation struggles is one of the main principles of the non-aligned movement. But nobody speaks of the direct assistance given by the US and the West to the other "fronts" engaged in the struggle for power in Angola. Anti-Cuba critics in the West, and their supporters within the non-aligned group, prefer to maintain a tactful silence on how the West engineered the military intervention of racist South Africa. If the MPLA had lost, few countries would have bothered about Cuban help. The point is that the "wrong" side won and Angola's substantial resources were now in the hands of Angolan people and not controlled by various western consortia.

Furthermore, African nationalist hostility to South Africa, a western bastion, was enhanced.

Counter-attack

In reality, the anti-Cuba campaign is not an anti-Cuba campaign only. If it had been so it would not be so important an issue for the non-aligned. In any case, if Cuba has proved anything these past 20 years it is that it can look after itself.

The campaign is part of the West's concerted counter-attack on the whole Third World. As a well-conceived strategy it had its beginnings in 1973. A year of great importance, 1973 saw the success of the oil producers in getting together for the first time to dictate what they regarded as fair prices for their product. It saw the Algiers summit and the

Third World's demand for a New International Economic Order. It witnessed Egypt's military blow against Israel. It saw the poor nations using every forum and mobilising their collective strength to demand radical and structural changes in a post-war world system which had been completely dominated by the West and used by the West to safeguard the interests of the rich and powerful. The whole structure was under attack: the economic order, the monetary system, the international institutions, the information system etc.

If UNCTAD is the "economic" forum, the non-aligned conference is the most active "political" forum of the poor nations while the UN and all its agencies are other platforms. Everywhere the West felt the new, growing pressures. As usual, the most dangerous and the least acceptable was the economic demands. It was seen as direct threat to the prosperity of the affluent nations and the living standards of these countries, standards sustained by the exploitation of the Third World's resources, reinforced most of all by an unjust trading system, and sanctioned by a value-system (cultural and ideological domination) which operated mainly through the transnational communications system.

The West saw it, and correctly, as a frontal and fundamental attack. In its counter-offensive (see box) the West has used, quite successfully, many familiar tactics: spreading discord and division, encouraging disagreements, co-optation and collaboration, isolating the more dynamic and demanding, disrupting collective action and any association or working alliance with the West's own "main enemy", the socialist states.

Unity

In a way, the success of the West (the continued failure or slow progress of UNCTAD) was partly founded on the weakness of the newly emerging collective. The very diversity of the movement (so many countries, with various types of regimes and so many specific, national problems) was the West's greatest asset.

By the same logic, unity within such diversity, is therefore the great challenge facing the movement today. Unity of course must express itself in a continuity of action, and the action itself, hopefully, must become more and more effective, more and more radical. This is the thought that haunts the west as the road leads from Colombo to Havana.

Despite diversions and disagreements, there has been continuity in idea and action from Algiers to Colombo. In Belgrade, there were 25 participants; in Colombo 85. Though the movement faced many threats, it is to Sri Lanka's credit, and of course to the Sri Lanka Prime minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike that movement survived many crises and preserved its broad unity. The decisions made in Colombo can only be changed in Havana.

There are attempts, some perhaps well-intentioned, to dilute these decisions or to alter decision-making processes. Some are covert attempts, some are disguised as "procedural" or "organisational" issues. Such efforts, whether they are inspired by Yugoslavia or India or any other country, can only help those who want to disrupt or weaken the movement for their purposes.

Governments have changed since Sri Lanka became Chairman. While the UNP's new economic strategy may change the content of the country's foreign policy, it is to the credit of President Jayewardene and his Foreign Minister, Mr. Hameed, that in performing the functions of chairman they have discharged their responsibilities in a manner worthy of the spirit of a movement that is now a formidable force in world affairs.

PR (within quotes)

'As you were' was the order of the day at last month's local government polls. The UNP in the south and the TULF in the north retained the positions they had won in the general election of 1977. The protest vote expected by some Opposi-

tionists did not materialise, except perhaps on a small scale in Colombo. In the city the JVP, fighting under the disadvantage of being an 'unrecognised' party, was able to beat the ULF into fourth place by taking votes away not only from the Old Left but also from the UNP (some disillusioned Tamil voters and youth).

Other features of the election:

- The first experience of the new electoral system proved that 'proportional representation' was a misnomer for it. In Gampaha the UNP with 2450 votes (55.4 % of votes polled) won 5 seats out of 7, while the SLFP with 1749 (39.5 %) got only 2. Again, in Haputale, the UNP 5 seats out of 7 with 558 votes (54.6 %), where the SLFP had had 2 seats with 463 votes (45.4%).

- With its high cut-off point for parties, the new method of choosing the people's representatives will tend to prolong the 'three-party system' that emerged at the 1977 general election.

Surgical misadventure

A bad carpenter blames his tools after a shoddy job. Surgeons, at least in Sri Lanka, can justifiably blame the operating theatre equipment.

Recently Dr. Sri Lal Gunasekera, Neuro Surgeon, told the City Coroner that the death of a 16 year old youth on the operating table was due to a malfunction in the diathermy machine. The verdict was surgical misadventure.

L. G. investigations have revealed that surgeons working in the country are doing their job using out-dated equipment, machinery prone to sudden breakdown or without certain equipment which stand in the operating theatre awaiting repair.

Two other machines which are absolutely essential in any O. T., is a Boyle's Machine for anaesthesia and an electrical sucker to take out secretions.

Surgeons interviewed by L. G. especially those who have worked in hospitals around the country, revealed that most of the machines and equipment they had to use are not 100 percent reliable. They have never been checked out regularly or serviced. Some that had broken down were awaiting repair for many months.

In the tragic case of Stanley Wijesekera who died in the NSU theatre, the diathermy machine broke down in the middle of the operation. The stand-by machine on to which the patient was switched on did not work at all. There was no Electro-Medical Engineer on the premises of the leading medical institution to call for rush help. He had to be contacted in Maradana.

(The diathermy machine is cutting equipment, using an electric spark which severs and automatically coagulates the blood to prevent excessive bleeding.)

"You know what Dr. Gunasekera should have done", explained a senior surgeon in an outstation hospital. "He should have kicked the bloody thing. It might have worked. It is useless calling the E.M.E. in Maradana. By the time he comes, the patient, in some cases, would be dead. Or he may have gone to repair a machine which went out of order eight months ago".

When equipment is malfunctioning, a report is made in the theatre log-book. That goes to the M.S. of the hospital who will minute that the E.M.E. in Maradana be informed. The Chief Clerk will do this faithfully. As to when a very busy E.M.E. will turn up is anybody's guess.

"I have called the local electric baas to repair a machine about four months ago", an outstation surgeon told the L.G. "But that is highly irregular."

It is inconceivable that a technician is not available at all hospitals with operating theatres

"Most of us say a prayer before we start on the list", was the

(Continued on page 16)

JAFFNA REPORT

Exit Lionel, enter Duraiswamy

The well-kept streets of Jaffna were unusually quiet. Few people waited for buses while some walked about on their business. There were some crowds at the pubs. The few banks that were open for business had armed police guard. An old lady standing outside the gate to her house was telling her friend that a piece of fish about the size of her palm was fetching over Rs. 10 at the market. The Kovils had their usual share of devotees in the evening but the striking feature of the afternoon was the large number of schoolgirls riding their bicycles to their tuition classes.

As the election campaign was coming closer to its end, a couple of Sinhala Ministers of the Cabinet were seen riding bicycles from the King's House to the city and to the Nallur Temple the following day in a hackery. The intention could have been an attempt at image-improving (or image-building?) but the onlookers did not seem to be impressed at all. Many frowned when they saw that the duo was followed by a security car.

The new Jaffna SP Leo Perera was still demanding more powers to the police while the outgoing GA Lionel Fernando continued to sleep the nights at his sprawling residency with doors and windows open in his room and without a single policeman guarding the 27 acre block that belonged to the residency.

A Wesak card sent to Lionel by a veteran journalist was still lying on his table with the words "PS: I'll see you in Colombo soon!!! scribbled on the back. Smart fellow that journalist was, but a local reporter told me that he predicted that the GA would not last long as early as the day when the Nallur bank was robbed. When the GA heard that the police were on a rampage that day he rushed there and warned the cops to behave, and averted an otherwise inevitable crisis. On

Gamini Dissanaike of the 'Lanka Guardian' toured Jaffna on the eve of the local polls and filed this report.

the same evening when the cops started assaulting the people around the Jaffna bus stand for no reason the GA was there again on the spot. And even at 4 a. m. the following day he was seen "Patrolling" the streets with Khalid his driver. "Why did he do it?" a shop keeper opposite the bus stand asked me. "That was not his job. Why? Because there was great man who dedicated himself disinterestedly in serving us. One of the greatest that ever came to Jaffna." The Tamil businessman was not the only one who openly wept over the sudden transfer of GA Fernando. "Nearly a million people here are now heart-broken" said Mr. S. A. T. Vadivelu-Secretary of the Manufacturers Association of Jaffna and a well-known philanthropist. "I cannot think of any other person who stole our hearts in such a short span of time as in a year as our present GA" continued Mr Vadivelu, "And I can assure you that the local elections are going smoothly only because of Mr Fernando." Mr Vadivelu was not certainly exaggerating for wherever I went-Nainativu, KKS, or VVT everyone seemed to be very sad over Lionel's impending exit. "If Sri Lanka had 20 GAS like him" said one senior public servant at Point Pedro, "the politicians could jolly well go to hell." Naturally, Mr Fernando's transfer was made an issue at the opposition campaign not only in Jaffna but as far down as Vavuniya.

Whatever may be the reasons behind the GA's transfer how complicated would be its aftermath? "End of Jaffna" was how a former SP Jaffna responded to a local reporter when the latter first broke the news of the GA's transfer.

(Continued on Page 19)

WITH
THE
COMPLIMENTS OF
DISTRIBUTORS
OF
CITIZEN
WRIST WATCHES
& CLOCKS

After the Treaty (3)

The peace process

by Mervyn de Silva

Sadat's present situation is placed with another irony, a less merciful one than even the so-called 'linkage'.

Mr. Sadat argued that the 'peace process' that he started (and it does not really matter whether he started it or the Americans or whether it was a parallel effort) has an internal logic and that once the process gathers momentum its dynamics will soon draw in the Jordanians, the Syrians and ideally, the PLO, but at least a sizable segment of the Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza. Given his original and central assumption, it was a valid argument, and he pinned his full faith in it. The US shares this view, of course. But their's seem to be more a hopeful calculation than an unshakable conviction. In any case, the Americans are much better placed. If their hopes are fulfilled—and they will certainly do their damndest to see to it—excellent; if not the regrettable loss will be more than compensated for by the nett gain of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty. Briefly, the risks of incomplete success or partial failure are acceptable risks for the Americans. Not so for Mr. Sadat. He has committed himself to the hilt: prosperity at home, a comprehensive peace in the area.

Therein lies the irony. Substantive negotiations started from 1977 to Camp David last year and the Treaty in March. During that period he moved from what he thought was a position of comparative strength to what became a position of greater and greater weakness. As a result, he yielded more than he extracted from a stubborn Mr. Begin

He received much less than he expected, and what he actually received was also less than the irreducible minimum acceptable to even the most 'moderate' or 'accommodating' fellow Arab—say King Hussein.

Involved in a peace-process in which he had thought of himself as the or a directing agent, Mr. Sadat got badly ensnared in it and as he became its captive, his chances of extricating himself gradually diminished. He could not retrace his steps without disastrous consequences. But once caught in the dynamics of a situation in which he was trapped, he could achieve less and less; and less and less from the Israelis meant less and less chance of satisfying his prospective Arab supporters. Far from getting themselves involved in the process, each distanced himself from it, until finally we see them all go to Baghdad where the Treaty receives collective and complete condemnation.

So instead of drawing some of the Arabs (let's say the 'moderates') into the process and isolating the hardliners, Mr. Sadat finds that he has achieved only his own 'ostracism'. And not all the President's men (Brown, Vance, Brezinski et al) could get king, or Sheikh to support the treaty publicly and retrieve Mr. Sadat or redeem his honour. Poor Gulliver lies stretched on the ground, bound hand and foot by his fellow Arabs, those self-same dwarfs on whom he poured such imperious scorn.

How did it happen? Eric Rouleau, who has served in the Middle East for nearly 20 years, is in my opinion one of the best-informed of western correspon-

dents. Late last year, after the Camp David Summit, Rouleau who is now middle east editor of "le Monde" was on a lecture tour sponsored by Princeton University's Foreign Relations Council. Mr. Rouleau who is preparing a book on the Palestinian problem was invited by the Middle East Magazine to analyse the 'politics' of the Camp David summit and the agreements signed there. In a long interview with Mark Bruzon-sky, editor of the journal, he said:

"He's taking a big gamble. But probably felt he had no choice. His two guests, Begin and Sadat, were of unequal strength. Begin came to Camp David saying that it wasn't the last chance, and that it was still possible to wait, even though Israel wished to reach an agreement. It wasn't just propaganda, because he was negotiating from a position of strength. Begin wasn't threatened if Camp David failed. On the contrary, he could go back and say to the Israelis that they were trying to force him into settlement jeopardizing the security of the State of Israel. And few Israelis would have then turned against Begin.

"The person who was really threatened by the collapse of Camp David was Sadat. He had promised his people that if his initiative failed he would resign. Failure would have put him in a very difficult position. And if he did not want to resign he could have put up a show by saying he was now going to try other means—in other words go back to the Arab fold, to Syria and the PLO and especially the allies of those people, the Soviet Union, for which Sadat has an allergy.

"As a matter of fact, I think one of the reasons which took Sadat to Jerusalem in November was that he wanted to break up the possibly approaching Geneva conference where the Soviets would be present.

(Continued on page 9)

Indonesian genocide

by John Taylor

IT IS NOW just over three years since the Indonesian military regime began its armed invasion of the former Portuguese colony of East Timor. In this period Indonesia has, by accepted international definition, committed genocide. Some 80,000 people, over 10 percent of the entire population, have been killed. The Indonesian government has purchased new western weapons to further its military aims.

East Timor, twice the size of Cyprus, forms the eastern half of the island of Timor (the western part is already in the Indonesian Republic). After a series of incursions into the territory, the Indonesian army launched a full-scale invasion on December 7th, 1975, to prevent the mass-based Fretilin (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) movement consolidating the control it had effectively held since the withdrawal three months earlier of Portuguese, after 450 years of colonial rule.

The results of the invasion have been devastating: in Indonesian held areas, the population

has been herded into camps where malnutrition is widespread and medical supplies scant. Entire villages have been eliminated, their contents looted and their crops destroyed. In Dili, the capital, for example, prisoners are held in the food store of a former hotel; the store has neither windows nor a ventilation system.

According to reports from various sources in East Timor—the Catholic Church, Indonesian officials, refugee accounts and Fretilin radio broadcasts—torture has been widely practised in areas under Indonesian control. The worst effects of the attempted annexation, however, have been experienced in Fretilin-held mountain interior now comprising some 33-40, per cent of the country. Unable to penetrate this area, and unsuccessful in its armed engagements with Fretilin troops, the Indonesian military has increasingly shifted its strategic emphasis to aerial and naval saturation bombing in an attempt to starve the population into surrender through destroying crops and villages.

This policy was increasingly successful throughout 1978: an estimated 30-40,000 people have died as a result of the use of crop defoliants. Many more, perhaps 200,000 have entered Indonesian areas in the last two years in the hope of finding food and medical supplies. In most cases these hopes have not been fulfilled; an ambassador on a delegation visiting 'relief centres' in two villages in early September last year, commented that the people in the camps were 'in a desperate situation... they are starving in many cases; they are desperately ill; they need help in terms of immediate relief—food, clothing, basic medical care'.

A Timorese official, according to an Australian ABC report, commented that the ambassadors had not seen the worst camps: 'At Suai things are much worse'

and there are more people'. Despite these conditions, the Indonesian government has still not permitted the entry of the International Red Cross either into its own or Fretilin held areas.

Indonesian Foreign Minister, Adam Malik then estimated the number of dead as '50,000 people or perhaps 80,000'. And went on to tell the *Canberra Times*: 'what does all this mean compared with 600,000 people who want to join Indonesia? Then what is the big fuss? It is possible that they may have been killed by Australians and not us, who knows? It was war'.

Heavy fighting has continued since the beginning of 1977, with Indonesian aerial and naval bombardment of Fretilin areas, notably the north-central region south Dili, where Fretilin forces have suffered defeats. In an attempt to re-enter this area in late December to re-organise the Fretilin administration, a group led by Lobato was ambushed, and Lobato himself killed.

Given the nature of the terrain and the strength of the resistance, Indonesia's naval and aerial capacity is crucial. Until recently, this was seriously inadequate; aircraft were archaic and pilots badly trained. Since the invasion, however, a number of western governments have stepped up military supplies. The USA has supplied Bronco OV-10 fighter planes, highly suitable for counter-insurgency; the Netherlands has agreed to provide high speed corvette frigates, important for reinforcing the naval blockade of East Timor. Most important, however, is the British government's approval for the sale of eight BAC Hawk ground attack aircraft. These planes are particularly suitable for use in East Timor. They fly low and are designed to saturate large areas using cluster bombs, which according to the *British Defence Equipment Catalogue*, have 'a high kill probability against a range of hard and soft targets'. The Hawk can also drop napalm canisters and defoliants. The British

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government has, of course denied that the planes will be used in East Timor. The Foreign Office view is that the war is a provincial skirmish, like Northern Ireland.

THE OFFICIAL BRITISH ATTITUDE to the war is echoed—perhaps less absurdly—by other industrial governments. The Australian, American, French, German, Japanese and Dutch have all turned a blind eye to Indonesia's actions. Through Australian and US intelligence services they knew that Indonesia intended to invade at least three months before it did so, but made no attempts to prevent it. Kissinger commented on the day of the invasion 'that the US understands Indonesian's position on the question (of East Timor).' The US State Department legal representative, George Aldrich later testified to the June-July 1977 hearings of a subcommittee of the Congressional Committee on International Relations that a policy (opposing the incorporation of East Timor) would not serve our best interests in the light of the importance of our relations with Indonesia'.

Press coverage has reflected the lack of government concern. Noam Chomsky pointed out to the UN last year that: 'In 1975, when the fate of the Portuguese colonies was a matter of much concern in the West, Timor received 6 full columns in the *New York Times*. In 1976, when the Indonesian army was beginning the "annihilation of the people", coverage dropped to half a column. In 1977, when this massacre was reaching truly awesome proportions, coverage dropped to five lines.'

In the case of East Timor, an attempt is still being made to deny a nation its political independence. Indonesia is trying to remove a government which has an effective popular base, as a result of its literacy campaigns, health schemes, and agricultural co-operativisation before the invasion. Unlike Cambodia, it is possible to influence the Indonesian regime, since it heavily depends on the

industrial nations for loans, aid and military assistance. Yet, although there have been human rights violations on a greater relative scale and these have been more fully substantiated, the minimal press coverage and government reaction has been at best quiet and at worst supportive, even to the extent of supplying repressive military equipment.

Nevertheless, the eventual outcome of the war remains open. And the continuation of the suffering and brutal treatment of the East Timorese people is still dependent on the sanctioning of military aid from the west.

The peace . . .

(Continued from page 7)

"So Sadat was in a far weaker position than Begin. He had to get something out of Camp David. Sadat was coming without the support of the Arab world and taking an independent path. This reduced his strength. Egypt's strength lies not only in its geography and demography but Egypt has traditionally been the leader of the Arab world and has had the support of at least parts of the Arab world in which the Western world has interests. Egypt coming to Camp David without the Arab world supporting it explicitly, had been reduced to a minor power—important, but still minor.

"Now, to come back to your question. Carter had these two people facing each other and one of them was giving in to the other. He could not be more inflexible than Sadat. He himself was also in an awkward position because on one side he had the pressures of the domestic groups—who are unconditionally for the policies of Israel—and on the other he had Arabs who did not exercise enough pressure on him. Of course, the Americans perceived a potential threat from the Arabs. But that threat was not there, it wasn't real at the time.

"These were the essential components of the balance of power which led to the Camp David accords."

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Diplomats and patronage

by W. A. Wiswa Warnapala

Sri Lanka, unlike some newly independent states, experienced no dearth of trained personnel for the management of affairs at independence. Though this was the position in relation to the Civil Service personnel, there was no trained cadre to manage foreign affairs. The original cadre of the Sri Lanka Overseas Service, therefore, was drawn from the Ceylon Civil Service.

It was in this background that the Overseas Service Minute which contained the rules and regulations governing the formation and functioning of the service, came to be prepared. The draft Minute was prepared by Sir K. Vaithianathan, the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs and there was a series of discussions between the latter and the Chairman of the Public Service Commission. These discussions were related to certain aspects of recruitment to the Overseas Service. According to the Overseas Minute of 1948, the service was to be composed of three classes: (A) Administrative and Higher Officers, (B) Clerical and Executive Officers and (C) Minor employees. The Class A, with which we are concerned in this essay, consisted of five grades, Grade I, II, and III being Heads of Major Missions and Heads of Minor Missions respectively. In relation to these appointments the Public Service Commission negotiated with the Secretary of the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs, who took the view that in the case of appointments to Grade I to Grade III of Class A the views of the Prime Minister, conveyed by the Secretary, should generally be accepted by the Public Service Commission. The Chairman of the Public Service Commission, seemingly willing to accommodate this point of view, stated that the requirements of

the diplomatic service are different from the essentials for the Civil Service and more attention needs to be paid to 'a good presence and ability to mix'.

The arrangements were made in the budgetary estimates of 1948-49 for the creation of posts in Diplomatic Missions Overseas and these posts were to be filled by 1st October, 1948. Sir K. Vaithianathan, in asking the approval of the Treasury for the scheme, emphasised that the Overseas Service will be formed on lines similar to the career diplomatic services of other countries. The Overseas Service, initially was to follow three modes of appointment: (1) by secondment of personnel already in the Public Service including the Ceylon Civil Service; (2) by recruitment from among the public, and (3) by personal selection in the case of Heads of Missions. D. S. Senanayake, the Prime Minister was in support of these initial measures which were necessary to constitute the Overseas Service. In 1948, he wanted four officers appointed as Probationers before the recruitment is finalised to recruit a number of officers each year to form a nucleus of a service.

Patronage

The Heads of Missions, D. S. Senanayake maintained, need to be appointed on the basis of personal selection and this was adopted in the form of patronage. There was a constitutional argument in support of this form of patronage. Hema Basnayake, the Attorney General advised the Prime Minister that the appointment of Heads of Missions abroad is not a function which in law falls within the purview of the Public Service Commission and that these appointments should be made by Her Majesty the Queen. According to Section 45 of the Constitution of 1947,

it was a prerogative right, which, in the context of a Cabinet form of Government, could be exercised by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. The removal of the posts of Heads of Missions from the purview of the P. S. C. afforded more opportunities for the Prime Minister to use these posts as a source of political patronage. The loyalty to the party in power and some association with the Prime Minister became the criteria in the selection of Heads of Missions in the initial period, and this form of selection came to be described as compensation for loss of political career. Tissa Wijeratne, commenting on this, stated that 'even the most superficial study will reveal that the Embassies were set up by the United National Party often enough to send out politicians who were considered to be alternatives to the then High Command of the UNP'.

The appointment of Sir D. B. Jayatilake as the first High Commissioner to India was made in order to pave the way for D. S. Senanayake. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, justified this form of selection, by stating that it was difficult to find suitable people for diplomatic assignments. The appointment of four persons within a period of six years—Sir D. B. Jayatilake, Sir T. B. Panabokke, M. W. H. de Silva and Sir A. Mahadeva as High Commissioners to India—was quoted as an example of the failure to select proper persons. The charge was made that certain political appointees acted independent of the Government, and the case of R. S. S. Gunawardene, the United Nations Representative and the Ambassador to the United States came to be quoted as an example. Such developments took place due to certain deficiencies in the

organisation of the Ministry and the initial difficulties in preparing briefs and instructions to the Heads of Missions.

The mistakes committed by the early political appointees did not discourage the retention of political appointees as Heads of Missions, and the political party competition in electoral politics made it a valuable source of political patronage. All political parties now accept the need for political appointments, specially in the category of Heads of Missions. Yet another character of this category was that a large proportion of these appointments came from the class of retired Civil Servants and Judges of the Supreme Court.

Career officers

The initial method of recruitment to the regular cadre of the Overseas Service was to make use of the Civil Service Examination. The candidates, who sat this examination, were asked to state whether they were willing to take up an appointment in the Overseas Service. In 1948, 14 candidates who were chosen in order of merit for the Ceylon Civil Service and those who indicated the preference to join the Overseas Service were given a second interview. Since most of the successful candidates preferred to join the prestigious Civil Service, only four were chosen as Probationers in the Overseas Service. Any candidate who proved unsuitable during the probationary period was given the option to join the Civil Service and the recruitment procedure was so flexible that a recruit to the Civil Service could be exchanged in place of the candidates who opted to get back to the Civil Service. This form of mobility was applicable only at the point of recruitment, and this, in other words, meant that reversion at a later stage to the Civil Service was not allowed. In 1949, 7 graduates were recruited as Probationers to the Overseas Service on the results of a competitive examination. The examination was a short qualifying one with such subjects as (1) Essay and Precise, (2) General knowledge (3) World Affairs, and each of

these subjects carried 150 marks. The proportion of marks allowed for the Viva Voce was one third of the total marks of the examination. The preliminary interview was conducted by the Public Service Commission whose duty was to 'furnish the Final Selection Board with a comprehensive report on each candidate, together with a recommendation for acceptance or rejection and a rating to indicate the candidate's placing in relation to other competition. This Board had before it the candidate's reports from his Head Master, Professor, Referees Reports and the marked papers. The interview board consisted of the Chairman of the Public Service Commission, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Sri Lanka and the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs. Forty eight candidates—graduates with University degree—sat the examination and the first six candidates, in order of merit, were appointed as Probationers in the Overseas Service. This method of recruitment through a short qualifying examination was abandoned in 1950 and reverted to the medium of the Ceylon Civil Service Examination. Though the examination was called 'the Civil and Overseas Service Examination, in 1950, the conditions of eligibility and the syllabus underwent no change.

Post-1956

The political change of 1956, as in the sphere of foreign policy, brought about changes in the middle of recruitment to the Overseas Service. The criticism was that the Foreign Office was inadequately equipped and such developments as membership of the United Nations and the establishment of diplomatic relations with a new set of countries demanded an expansion in the cadre of officers. The recruitment on the basis of a Combined Examination came to be criticised on the ground that both Civil Service and the Overseas Service were two different services requiring different qualities, and the demand was made that a separate examination needs to be held to recruit for the Overseas Service.

There was an immediate shortage of 10 officers, and the Prime Minister, therefore, wanted the normal method of recruitment by competitive examination to be temporarily suspended in order to recruit a few officers by open advertisement. They were to be selected from among the persons of over 30 years of age. The Selection Board, which interviewed the candidates from whom 8 were selected, considered general intelligence, personal qualities, experience abroad knowledge of International Affairs, International law and languages. In 1957 the conditions of eligibility were drastically changed so as to prevent Advocates and Barristers from applying to sit for the examination. The Public Service Commission took the position that candidates with professional qualifications should not be made eligible to apply, and it further stated that a University degree like in the United Kingdom and India, should be accepted as the basic educational requirement to sit for the examination. The recognition of 'experience abroad', it was pointed out, gave a special place for candidates with private means and it, therefore, was abandoned.

Recruitment on the basis of a competitive examination was again adopted in 1960 and the Government Gazette of May 27, 1960 published the scheme of the examination which included five subjects carrying different marks. The pattern was as follows: Essay (100) Precise (50) General Knowledge (150) Viva Voce (250) and Special English, Sinhalese and Tamil (100), and the total was 650 marks. Gunasena de Zoysa, in his capacity as Secretary, Ministry of Defence and External Affairs, took the position that he does not 'consider it necessary to implement the recommendations of the Official Language Commission in the use of the staff officers of the Overseas Service, as they do not come in 'direct contact with the Public' of Ceylon. Though this was the attitude in 1954, the changes introduced in 1956 in regard to the implementation of the Official Languages Act demanded the

(Continued on page 19)

Nationhood (2)

Myths and realities

by Chintaka

Myth 11. The demand for a separate state is a demand of the Tamil bourgeoisie. Therefore it is reactionary and has to be opposed.

Leninism draws a fundamental distinction between the bourgeois nationalism of an oppressor nation and the bourgeois nationalism of an oppressed nation. The former is reactionary, while the latter is, in the main, progressive. "In-so far as the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation fights the oppressor, we are always, in every case and more strongly than anyone else in favour, for we are the staunchest and most consistent enemies of oppression..... The bourgeois nationalism of any oppressed nation has a general democratic content that we unconditionally support...."

(Lenin - The Right of Nations to Self Determination) This was starkly counterposed to the views held by Rosa Luxemburg (and later Bukharin and Preobrazhensky) that support for self-determination implies "support for bourgeois nationalism" which Marxists should desist from, since each class in a nation has conflicting interests. (Rosa Luxemburg - The National Question and Autonomy).

For Lenin however, the fact that the national movements of Turkey, India, Persia, China, Ireland, Korea etched bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leaderships, in no way implied that Marxists should not support those struggles. Likewise the petty bourgeois nature of the leaderships of SWAPO, the patriotic Front, the ANC, the PLO., Frente Polisario (Spanish Sahara), Fretilin (East Timor), the Moro Liberation Front, IRA etc etc. does not prevent progressives in this country from supporting their struggles. However these same leftists, some of whom consider

even the SLFP as progressive (!), are unremittingly hostile towards the TULF, on the grounds that it is un-Marxist and non-proletarian! 'Tis strange, 'tis wondrous strange..

12. The struggle for Eelam is essentially a contention between the Sinhala and Tamil bourgeoisie and therefore the Left should stay clear of this infra class competition.

True, the competition between these two bourgeoisies does play a certain role in this issue, but this competition is not the essence of the national question. Unlike in the classical European context the national struggle is not simply a struggle waged primarily by a rising capitalist class. The essence of the national movement in the North lies in the struggle waged by all the oppressed classes, with the educated middle class youth as the main force, against the bourgeoisie of the dominant (Sinhala) nation. In any case, the urban based Tamil 'haute' bourgeoisie is opposed to separatism and seeks negotiated solutions with the U. N. P. middle bourgeoisie in the Tamil areas whose upward mobility has been blocked. Hence its vacillatory politics of contention /collusion with Sinhala bourgeois govts.

13. The Tamils view problem in communal terms rather than in class terms, therefore their demands should be opposed.

True, the feeling 'Tamil-ness' precedes class consciousness within the national movement in the North. But this is quite natural since objectively the main contradiction of the Tamil people is with the bourgeoisie of the dominant (Sinhala) nation and its state apparatus. It is a fact that for most Tamils the distinction between the Sinhala state

and the Sinhala people is blurred. But it is the duty of Sinhala leftists to comprehend the total experience of the Tamil people and work from the nationalist reality towards the class reality. Class solidarity becomes credible only if the right of national self determination is taken as the point of departure. It is impossible for Sinhala and indeed Tamil Marxists to 'skip-over' the nationalist feelings of the Tamil people. Class consciousness can arise though their national consciousness, as the struggle goes on, but it cannot be imposed artificially or arrived at in a linear fashion.

Furthermore it is not surprising that sections of the Tamil masses have a communally tinged consciousness and often resort to fantastic anachronistic arguments. Lenin pointed out that such a "disparate, discordant, and heterogenous mass, containing the petty bourgeoisie and backward workers" will inevitably contain the "preconceptions, reactionary fantasies, weaknesses and errors" of these sections. Leftists must not stand against or apart from these forces but must lead them along the correct path. The strong religious flavour of the Irish struggle in no way prevented (Marx and Lenin from being its staunchest supporters.

See Lenin - The 1916 uprising in Ireland - The Discussion of Self-Determination summed up)

Rosa Luxemburg however, saw only the anachronistic, petty bourgeois, reactionary aspects of national movements and not their complex, dual nature and revolutionary potential as allies for the proletariat.

14. The militant Tamil nationalists are opposed to the Left movement and therefore are reactionaries who should be combatted.

The militant Tamils are not opposed to socialism. They have been heavily influenced by the Marxist-Leninist position on the national question and acknowledge that it is only this approach that provides a coherent conceptual

framework for the understanding of this vexed issue. Their charge is that almost the entire Left movement has taken positions counter to the Marxist one. Thus, it is not that the militant Tamils are hostile to Marxism, but rather that our Marxists have abandoned the fundamental Marxist principal of proletarian internationalism! However Tamil militants do point to certain important instances in which various sections of the Left took up internationalist positions—For instance, the C. P. recognised the Tamils right of self-determination in 1947 and proposed regional autonomy which was a relatively correct position at the time. The LSSP's opposition to 'Sinhala only' in 1956 and the active defence of Tamils in 1958 by the Sinhala working class; the involvement of the Ceylon Communist party (Peking Wing) in the caste struggles of the 1960's, the position taken against standardization by various radical Left groups and the Ceylon Teachers Union in the recent past—all these are seen and spoken of as instances of solidarity extended by the Left movement to the Tamil people.

The policies and practices of the LSSP-CP after 1964—the adoption of the 'Masala vadai line'; the Jan 8th 1966 Incident; Dr. Colvin R. de Silva's constitution of 1972, the LSSP-CP's complicity in the Keenikelle shooting of 1971; their role during the incarceration, torture and shooting of Tamil youth from 1972 onwards; the Left parties silence during the thuggery and police shooting on the estates in '76-77—all those are seen by the Tamil militants as stark betrayals of internationalism by the Left movement.

They realize that the chauvinistic deviations on the part of the Left movement correspond to and parallel the parliamentarist deviation of the old Left. Even the new Left however, is not immune from criticism. Rohana Wijeweera's racist attitude towards the plantation workers has still not been forgotten or forgiven, while the persistent refusal of even the radical Left to solidarize fully with the Tamil cause and actively combat social-chauvinism

is the cause of much disappointment.

It is the socialist orientation of the militant Tamil youth that has forced the TULF leadership to champion the cause of an independent sovereign, secular and **socialist** Tamil Ealam, however superficial its degree of commitment to this goal may prove to be. The TULF has also had to proclaim that its ideology is that of 'scientific socialism,' and adopt anti-capitalist positions in the parliamentary debates of the UNP gov't's economic policies. The TULF leaders also praise the internationalism of Cuba and Vietnam, while speaking warmly of the USSR's solution of the national question. All this is a far cry from the conservative Anglophile outlook of the traditional FP and TC leaders! The TULF's progressive positions in the field of foreign policy and ideology are a manifestation of the influence of the scientific socialist orientations of the militant youth. As the student and youth organisations play an increasingly important role in the national movement of the North, and as the path of parliamentary compromise proves sterile, thus impelling this movement to adopt forms of extraparlimentary direct action, this process of politico-ideological radicalization will doubtless intensify. (See "TULF Dilemma: After the Boycott"—Lanka Guardian March 1st and "Jaffna: The steets are quiet"—L. G. April 1st Page7).

15. The North is feudal and backward, its society is stratified on the basis of Caste (and therefore, politics are reactionary and conservative).

It is not feudal, but rather, capitalist relations of production that predominate in the socio economic formations of the North. Given the geographic differences between the North and South, there was no complex irrigation system in the former areas in the precolonial Ceylon. Owing to this reason and the consequent differences in the forces and means of production, the social relations of production in the two parts of the island also differed. While an Asiatic mode of produ-

ction based on the massive irrigation complexes predominated in the Sinhala areas, the Tamil areas were dominated by a feudal system with a rigid caste structure. The 'Asiatic' social relations in the Sinhala area possessed a more collective character than those in the North. The North displayed a marked tendency towards capital accumulation while the Sinhala areas displayed a propensity towards consumption and the Tamil areas showed signs of a private property system even prior to the colonial period. Those tendencies were accentuated by the relationship established with Arab merchant capital. The early phase of colonization which was of mercantilist character accelerated this trend while the later phase of colonialism, capitalism, has resulted in capitalist private property relations establishing their hegemony over feudal and semifeudal relations. The high degree of monetization of the Northern economy, the high degree of utilization of credit per capita, the remarkable responsiveness of the Northern farmer to capitalist incentives and his intensive usage of agrochemical inputs demonstrates the fallacy of the thesis that the North suffers from feudal backwardness. The caste system exists in the realm of consciousness and ideology (ie. in the superstructure), but not in the substructure except in residual form. The existence of caste prejudices is hardly surprising since pre-capitalist ideas persist in the superstructural realm in almost all capitalist societies including the most advanced i. e., loyalty to the monarchy in Britain.

Just as many African peoples transcended tribalist loyalties and prejudices in the process of a protracted liberation struggle, the barriers of male chauvinism were overcome in Algeria and Vietnam in this very same process. (See Fanon and Cabral) Likewise, casteism and male chauvinism can be eradicated from the consciousness of the Tamil people only in the course of a struggle against national oppression. The fact that of the Tamil youth militants many are from the so-called 'lower' castes indicate

(Continued on Page 16)

Islamic fundamentalism (2)

Religion and nationalism

by N. M. M. I. Hussein

The problem about making a just appraisal of fundamentalism is that it has, as noted earlier, an ambivalent character it wishes to build for the future by going back into the past. The common-sense view about this should be that it is simply not realistic to go back to the golden age in which religion was practised in its pristine purity. This might have been possible for the Wahabis in an isolated part of the world in the eighteenth century, but it is scarcely conceivable in the modern world of Islam. The fundamentalist has inevitably to cope with the present and the future. Anthony D. Smith in his 'Theories of Nationalism' argues that the need to cope with the present problems leads to a gradual, often unperceived and unintended, secularization of fundamentalism.

The question arises whether the idea of going back to the past has nevertheless a revolutionary significance as argued by Mircea Eliade in his theories about 'the return to the source' for renewal. In his 'Aspects of Myth', he cites revolutionary and nationalist movements which cultivated the myth about a 'return to the source.' He says, for instance, that the leaders of the French Revolution sought inspiration from ancient Rome and Sparta and regarded themselves as restoring the virtues exalted by Livy and Plutarch. He also analyses the idea of a return to source in the millenarian movements of Europe. It could be that what seems to many of us the most retrograde aspect of fundamentalism, the reversion to the past, really arises out of a revolutionary impulse, however idealistic and unrealistic it may be.

It should be useful at this point to make some observations on the significance of the attempt to

revive Shariat law as it could throw some light on the ambivalent character of fundamentalism. The elaboration of Shariat law by jurists and theologians in the second century after the Prophet has been regarded by Western scholars - Gibb for instance - as being, "from the point of view of logical perfection, one of the most brilliant essays of human reasoning." "It would seem, therefore that behind the attempt to return to Shariat law is a desire to revive ancient glories. But it seems quite unrealistic to expect that the legal requirements of Islamic societies in the last quarter of the twentieth century can be met by the revival of Shariat law, or even by its adaptation. There also seems to be a desire for a puritanical society behind the idea of reviving Shariat law, but this again seems unrealistic for most Islamic societies of the present day. It should be salutary to recall one of the irreverent remarks of Gibbon, "The wines of Shiraz have always triumphed over the laws of Mohammed."

The idea of reviving Shariat law could also arise out of a desire to control governmental power. If in the view of fundamentalists the wielders of power show contempt for the rule of law, subvert the Constitution, exercise power on a personal, arbitrary, and absolutist basis, if power is unlimited by principle or ideology, and if people are reduced to the status of being "lesser breeds without the law," then the introduction of Sacred Law, the Law of God, not the law of man, might help constrain power. The fundamentalists may be mistaken about the need for Shariat law, and they may be mistaken in their expectations about the benefits of that law, but their intention could be progressive, if not revolutionary, for no progress is ever possible

anywhere unless power is controlled, if not rough democratic processes and law, through respect for religions or other principles, through Ideology. The idea of reviving Sariat law thus seems to show up the ambivalent character of fundamentalism: nostalgia for a golden age, a retrogressive puritanism, and at the same time a desire to set the pre-condition for progress through law.

The aspect of reversion to the past in fundamentalism could be relevant also for the problem of the recovery of national identity, a problem which could arise out of the excessive westernisation of elite groups. This could lead to a revulsion against the West, a rejection of gross materialism, a quest for cultural and national identity. Some sort of reaction against modernization is evidently involved in fundamentalism.

It seems curious that the reformist movements which sought to adopt religion to the needs of modernizing societies should have virtually become defunct, considering the extraordinary vigour displayed by such movements in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century. The Islamic world produced two extraordinary reformists during the last century in Jamaludin Afghani and Mohamed Abduh, and in this century the Islamic world produced some figures who subjected religion and traditional culture to a rigorous critique. An outstanding example of daring was provided by the case of the Egyptian Taha Hussein who investigated the sources of the language of the Koran in pre-Islamic Arabic poetry. Reformism in the Hindu world of India appears to have followed a similar course of vigour in the last century and decrepitude in the present. Perhaps the reformist movement accomplished its purpose after giving momentum to anti-colonial nationalism, and lost its purpose after that nationalism became vigorous. It could be that one aspect of the significance of fundamentalism is that it tries to cope with some of the problems of post-colonial nationalism.

The importance of trying to understand Islamic fundamentalism is shown by the reports appearing nowadays about the resurgence of the Moslem Brotherhood in parts of the Arab World. This is the most important of the fundamentalist movement, which has shown remarkable staying power for decades against great odds. If the reports about a notable resurgence of this movement are correct, it should mean that there is considerable disillusionment in parts of the Islamic world with the secular ideologies of nationalism and socialism which have been dominant for some time. Most Islamic societies appear to have relegated religion to the background while trying to transform themselves through secular ideologies. Perhaps a disillusionment with what has been achieved could explain the resort to religion as the dynamic to transform society effectively.

It is questionable, of course, whether fundamentalism can more effectively transform societies than the secular ideologies. The limitations implied by the attempt to return to the past, the limitations implied by the analogy suggested earlier with the millenarian movements, are important even if it is recognised that fundamentalism cannot be written off as nothing but reaction of the worst sort.

The positive role that fundamentalism might play is suggested by some observations about religion in Wertheim's *Evolution and Revolution*. After observing that it does not seem that religion can always perform its traditional function of a diversion, stemming the tide of 'red revolution', he says 'On the contrary, it might be swallowed by the revolutionary upsurge and act as a catalyst, in combination with non-religious ideologies.'

The purpose of this article has been descriptive and analytical, not evaluative, and not critical of any societies, governments, or political movements in the Islamic world. The idea has been to promote an understanding of an important religious and political movement in the Islamic world, since it seems to provoke misunderstanding and antipathy.

Priests and politics (3)

Asian theology

by Yohan Devananda

Asia has produced distinguished Christian radical theologians and leaders. Paul Devananda and M. M. Thomas of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society at Bangalore, India, were early pioneers. M. M. Thomas was President of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches at the time the famous grants to combat racism were made. Others who may be mentioned are Professor C. T. Kurein, Samuel Rayen S. J., Sebastian Kappen S. J. (India), Cardinal Kim, Bishop Daniel Tji, Kim Chi Ha (S. Korea), Kosuke Koyama (Japan), Bishop Julio Lebayen, Edico de la Torre (Philippines), Joachim Pillai and Aloysius Pieris S. J. (Sri Lanka). Some of these have served or are serving terms of imprisonment.

An Asian Theological Consultation was held in Sri Lanka in January this year. There were about 90 delegates from almost all Asian countries. It was sponsored by the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians and was backed by both Catholic and Protestant world bodies, representatives of which were present as observers. The Co-Chairman were Bishops Lakshman Wickramasinghe and Leo Nanayakkara of Sri Lanka. The theme of the Consultation was the role of Asian Christians in the struggle for full humanity of Asian peoples.

Sri Lanka

It is in the context of such a world movement that the activities of Christian groups in Sri Lanka should be considered for they may then be viewed in historical perspective. Groups such as the Christian Workers Fellowship, the Student Christian Movement, the Centre for Society and Religion and the Satyodaya Centre have for many years been involved in the attempt to show the relevance of the Christian Gospel to

social and political action in Sri Lanka. The writer of this paper has also been involved for several years in such action-reflection at Devasarana in Ibbagamuwa. Incidentally, Devasarana has also been discovering the roots of Buddhist radicalism in politics—this is a subject of immense importance and will need a separate paper for itself. Incidentally, it must be emphasized that various Christian groups as well as individuals involved in progressive political action have their various standpoints and not all of them, of course, would accept the standpoint of this paper.

The "Daily News" asks:

"If there a section of the Catholic hierarchy actively campaigning against the United National Party and the Government of President J. R. Jayewardene which came into office in July 1977 with an unprecedented mandate sweeping out the Freedom Party and annihilating its one-time leftist allies?"

It must be remembered that the main reason why the UNP got such an unprecedented mandate was because a large part of the people of this country was sick and tired of the previous government and wanted a change at any cost and the UNP was the only practical alternative. Nevertheless, the SLFP got 29% of the votes to the UNP's 51%, which was a fairly considerable minority. The leftist parties got only 5%. This was a serious set-back for them. It was because they were seriously divided and blundered in certain important respects. But this does not mean that the Left has been wiped out. There still remains a fairly considerable uncountable number of people in this country that realise that neither the U. N. P nor the SLFP—both of which are essentially bourgeois parties—hold the key to the solution of this country's

problems. A move to the Left will occur sooner or later. As to when this will be cannot be predicted. Meanwhile, those who are committed to the socialist cause will never cease to hope and work for a radical alternative for Sri Lanka. They have every right to do so. Attempts to wield the big stick whether by newspaper Editors or any others will certainly not deter them.

The people recognize that President J. R. Jayewardena received a clear mandate to rule. He has achieved his life's ambition to wear the President's Crown. The people will be quite prepared to allow him to enjoy the bliss of this state for some time longer, provided the price to pay will not be too high. If the price of the UNP's bliss is constant rising of prices, constant sacking of workers, constant neglect of peasants, constant repression of academic freedom (more university students have been suspended in the last two years than in the whole history of university education in this country), constant repression of democratic and human rights, and constant talk of a spurious development that benefits mainly, if not only the rich, then it will be time to tell the U. N. P. it has forfeited the right to rule and an alternative must be found.

The future

The present ruling elite has failed again and again to solve the people's problems. They are entrenched in positions of power and privilege which cut them off from the realities of the people's struggle for justice. They are insensitive and unresponsive to the real needs of the people. So the people must develop an alternative leadership with an alternative programme. There is no easy way to this, and irresponsible short-cuts must be guarded against. It will need much creative thinking and action as well as a hard struggle. In these difficult tasks, Christian radicals will join with radicals of other religions as well as with secular radicals in the common struggle for a new society.

Surgical . . .

(Continued from page 5)

comment of another. He then mused. "At anytime the Boyle's machine can pack up if it is not checked regularly. Then it is left to the anaesthetist's ingenuity to keep the correct gas flowing in!!

Another commented that the Health Department is talking about local post-graduate training for doctors.

"The only way to justify this is that our young doctors will not be aware that in England, the equipment in the theatre is checked by a technician regularly and during an emergency the surgeon or the anaesthetist does not have to be an electrician. There is a trained man on the premises!!

A Colombo General Hospital surgeon told the L. G. although there is no resident operating theatre technician on the spot, there are half a dozen lift repairers always on duty with two air-conditioning repairmen.

Myths and . . .

(Continued from Page 13)

that this process is already well underway.

One of Lenin's best known essays on the colonial question was captioned "Backward Europe, Advanced Asia", which flew in the face of Marxist orthodoxy that tradition-bound Asia was backward as opposed to capitalist and highly politicized Europe. Lenin pointed out that the awakened Asia, where the broad masses were in anticolonial ferment, was politically more advanced than Europe. Lankan leftists, who have been accustomed to speak patronisingly that the people of conservative North will have to be freed from caste-ism by the victorious Sinhala proletariat after the revolution in the South, must now regard Lenin's essay as mandatory reading.

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Buddhist socialism

The general interest that this booklet of barely 72 pages has evoked among the Sinhala readers is indeed astounding. Even the *Sinhala Bauddaya*, the orthodox Buddhist bi-monthly did not hesitate to give it a favourable review. Yet the content of the book and the general thrust of the discussions contained therein do not seem to tally with the ideological blue print of the "new" society and conventional opinion.

Content

If this symposium of articles were to be translated into English, the title I would suggest for it, is "Buddhist Socialism." This word, I grant, has been restricted by political observers of the past to indicate the **non-marxist** political thinking and praxis of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka, U Nu of Burma and the earlier Sihanouk of Cambodia. It could also stand for the clearly **anti-marxist** socialism which J. R. Jayewardene has recommended to the Buddhists in his well-known article "Buddhism and Marxism." But the socialism advocated in *Budu-dahama ha Janatava* cannot come under either of these categories.

If we may work back from the last article of the symposium we may have a clearer view of what Buddhist Socialism is about. Senarath Wijesundara, the last contributor to the symposium identifies Socialism as the "political vision that accords with what Marx and Engels have described as scientific socialism," in contrast with feudalism and capitalism (pp. 64—65).

Is Buddhism compatible with such a species of socialism? The question is re-formulated: Can a Buddhist progress in the **spiritual** pursuits enunciated in the Buddha-dhamma while living and shaping his **secular** life within a Marxist-Socialist system? The author maintains that it is within an acquisitive, selfish sys-

'Budu-dahama ha Janatava'
Buddhism and the people, is in many ways a unique venture. In these days when we hear so much pious talk on public platforms and read so many articles about national harmony and religious understanding, it is of special significance too. The book is a joint publication of a powerful and highly representative Buddhist organisation, the Sri Lanka Bauddha Maha Sammelanaya and the CWF, the Christian Workers Federation. The reviewer is Aloysius Pieris S.J.

tem that a Buddhist cannot easily adopt the selfless, non-acquisitive **modus vivendi** taught in Buddhism. The author then goes on to explain numerous teachings and practices of Buddhism to demonstrate that Buddhism and Socialism are not only compatible but even **complementary** (p. 71) implying, thereby, that the spiritual praxis of Buddhism and the Socialist praxis of Marxism complete each other.

The two preceding articles (we are working backwards from the last article) are a vindication of the same thesis. It is an indirect reply to the anti-Marxist argument that religion is protected in the so-called "free nations" and persecuted in Socialist countries. The Rev. Gnanabhivamsa Thera makes the point that religion nowhere suffers harm as in a capitalist society. It is Capitalism that makes economic well-being the measuring-rod of human growth, thus inculcating opportunism, exploitation and acquisitiveness. It is in the capitalist countries that class hatred and colonialism have coincided with discriminatory religious expansionism. Does this not violate the basics of any religion?

B. Y. Tudawe then takes the other prong of the argument; religious freedom in Socialist countries. Did

Russia really persecute the Christians? If one were to go by statistics of land distribution at the time of the October Revolution, the Church owned a disproportionately large section of the available land compared to what belonged to the peasantry. It is such abusive practices that the Marxists ruthlessly eliminated. Even the separation of the Church and State was possible for the first time in history only with the October Revolution. It is not only "religion" that is allowed to be practised there but also "non-religion", particularly atheism.

These two articles are preceded by two positive and dispassionate expositions of the Buddha's social teaching. The Ven A. Indaratana Thera presents the Buddhist ethics of socialism, substantiating his statements by allusions to, rather than by direct quotations from, the Buddhist scriptures. He resorts to a socialist re-reading of the Buddhist teachings on "Right Livelihood" (*sammajiva*). In a similar strain the Ven Rahula Thera expatiates on the concept of "equality" in Buddhism.

The remaining two articles with which the symposium begins can be regarded as the prelude to the thesis of Buddhist socialism. Rev Mapalagama Vipulasara Thera indicates the main lines along which the Buddha liberated his followers from subservience to superstition and religious authoritarianism and how this new concept of freedom is at the basis of a new concept of man. The implication is that the Buddha's injunction to question tradition should inspire Buddhists of today to free themselves from traditional models and think afresh on contemporary situations. Chandima Wijebandara then takes up the thorny question of Karma which can be misconstrued as implying fatalism. Far from being a doctrine of absolute determinism it is in fact a vindication of man's innate potentiality to produce any desired fruit here on earth. Hence it is far from be-

ing an obstacle to social reconstruction of a just society.

Political convictions

Rev. D. Yassasi Thera, the dynamic Secretary of the Sri Lanka Bauddha Maha Sammelanaya (SLBM) tells us in the introduction to the booklet that this is a beginning of a series of reflections directed towards the worker-population of our country. He also acknowledges that he received the idea from the Christian Workers Fellowship (CWF). This perhaps, is the first time that a Buddhist and a Christian organization have made a joint publication. It is clear that what has brought them together is the common heritage of both Buddhism and Christianity with respect to the liberation of the working-class. The CWF has declared its policy as one of making the Gospel learnt and lived in the double context of the workers' struggles and the Buddhist culture. Hence one could sense here a confluence of Christian Radicalism, Marxist Socialism and the aspirations of the Sinhala Buddhist masses. It is for this reason that one must keep in mind that the SLBMS which is made up mostly of Sinhala-speaking monks, differs in outlook from the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress (ACBC) which could not have subscribed to some of the opinions expressed in this booklet. Analogically, the mainline churches, both Catholic and Protestant, as well as their hierarchical organizations would hardly accept the policies laid down by the CWF.

It is clear to the reviewer at this joint publication has once again proved that even inter-religious dialogue and/or inter-religious conflicts need to be understood in terms of a socio-economic class structure. Let explain.

Both Buddhists and Christians to live at a worker-peasant level may find it easy to communicate on the harsh demand socialism in as much as the Buddhists and Christians who live an economically higher level agree easily on the advancement of a "free society".

Theatre

The Bandaranaike cult

The overwhelming majority of present-day Sinhala plays attempt to convey a political message, much to the ire of the older generation of drama critics. However, a play which consciously focuses upon a current political issue is still a fairly rare occurrence. Ran B. Dissanayake's *Raja Ho Ma Ho* (රජා හෝ මා හෝ) is such a play. It is a thinly disguised effort to grapple with, and indeed, help demolish the personality cult of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike.

The plot is simple enough. A domineering matriarch of a politician (a Mayoress to be exact), together with her sycophantic coterie of officials, erect an enormous statue of a local hero, Santiago Mama at a central spot in

The last century's antinomies were between the national consciousness of Sri Lanka as articulated by Sinhala Buddhism and the colonial exploitation of Sri Lanka by Western powers identified as Christian. Those socio-economic contours have radically changed. The antinomies of today are basically between two classes cutting across Buddhist-Christian boundaries. That is to say, the Buddhists and Christians of the same class standpoints seem to speak of their religious understanding of the social reality within the same wavelength.

One final remark. A connoisseur of Marxist-socialism and Buddhism might find the content and style of these articles too simple, and even naively so. Rev Yassasi Thera in his introduction forestalls this objection. The book is addressed to the unsophisticated reader from the worker-class. It is explicitly intended as a simple introduction to the basic teachings of socialism in the light of Buddhism. We hope that the more profound aspects of Buddhism and Marxism are brought out dialectically in the subsequent numbers of this series.

the town.. The sheer size and location of the statue proves an impediment, not to mention an eyesore, to the community. After much debate, the populace mobilizes itself, and in the teeth of opposition from the powers-that-be, topple the edifice. The playwright thus tries to convey the idea that the Bandaranaike cult has become an obstacle to the forward march of the people, and should be demolished forthwith. But playwright P. G. G. Silva seems to have got himself caught in something of a contradiction, since Santiago Mama as he appears in the play, was an authentic popular hero, an impoverished fisherman who warns his people, of an imminent imperialist invasion and dies by the enemy's bullet. Bandaranaike of course was no such hero, and therefore the parallel doesn't hold, or rather is severely weakened as is the play itself. The audience is confused as to what the playwright's evaluation of Bandaranaike really is. Does he object to the myth itself or merely the magnitude of the myth? Does he criticize only the proportions of the statue or does he question the legitimacy of its very presence in the pantheon of popular heroes? This ambiguity is the central flaw from which the play suffers.

Ran. B. Dissanayake and P. G. G. Silva must be congratulated for attempting a critique, however incomplete and fitful of the myth.

It is heartening to note that the new crop of dramatists like Dissanayake and Silva have begun to realise the urgency of this need to debunk legends. In conclusion it must be mentioned that in this particular dramatic effort, they have been ably assisted by a group of youthful actors and actresses (such as Viyoni be Mel, Hemasiri Ferdinando, Lyn Fernando, Nilendra Deshapriya et al).

Susil George Seneviratne

(Translated from Sinhala)

Exit Lionel . . .

(Continued from Page 6)

The feeling of security plus the profound belief that the GA was a man whom anyone could approach anytime and have their problems solved as quickly as human ingenuity would go would naturally ebb away with his departure.

Mr. S. M. Gopalaratnam, the editor of the prestigious independent provincial daily "EELA-NADU" felt that the GA's sudden transfer could be attributed to the fact that the Government did not really want harmony in Jaffna. "As in the past, anything could happen now" he told me on the 19th morning "Look at the front-page news item of yesterday's incident at PP in the National newspapers. Even this incident may lead to some unforeseen developments in the South."

Asked his opinion on the newly appointed District Secretary—Mr. Yogendra Duraiswamy, Mr. Gopalaratnam told me that though Mr. Duraiswamy was an experienced diplomat now resident in Jaffna the present situation was different. "It would have been better if he had not been in politics earlier. However, if a similar situation occurs like the '77 riots I doubt if he will be able to control it. We must remember that in '77 the Tamil Additional GA in the absence of the GA tried his best to contain the developments that arose at the carin.val but failed and had to contact the Defence Ministry in Colombo."

"The people here feel that the local elections will do more harm than good", continued Mr. Gopalaratnam. "For one thing, the TULF is sure to win at least 17 seats in Jaffna. They will, I think, try to cooperate with Mr. Duraiswamy but how far, I don't know. The District Minister worked extremely well with Mr. Fernando. The other big question mark is whether Mr. Sivagnanam the Special

Commissioner who has done a fine job of work, would be compelled to follow the same path of exit as those of Mr. Egodapitiya and Fernando. And who knows if the police are waiting for a chance to avenge the Nallur incident once Mr. Fernando leaves?"

Whatever developments that are in store in the coming months one thing is clear. Mr. Yogendra Duraiswamy the newly appointed DS by the President (while GAs are to operate as DS in other areas it is only in Jaffna that an outsider is brought in as the DS) will be pushed to the centre stage in Jaffna. Though many people had reservations about his appointment they were prepared, in the absence of any alternative, to give him a chance to prove his worth. Can he cope with an emergency situation like the Nallur incident which the G.A. Fernando handled so skilfully? Will he actively work towards minimising the presence of the Armed Forces (a real irritant among the people) in the North? Will he see that all the Banks in the area are opened without further delay? (over 11 banks were still closed and the people were really suffering with their closure.) Will he really treat all the people equally irrespective of their politics or caste? How far will he cooperate with the TULF—his main contradiction?

Mr. Duraiswamy thought it was too early to answer my questions. "I can only say that I have issued a statement to the effect that I have divorced myself from politics — the Tamil People's Movement of which I was the President — and that I would serve towards development of the area as envisaged by President Jayewardene. As for my views about the Armed

Forces etc; they are already published as evidence given by me before the Sansoni Commission."

Some of the measures suggested by Mr. Duraiswamy on behalf of the Progressive Tamils before the Sansoni Commission were:—(a) A knowledge of Sinhala and Tamil should be made, inter alia, compulsory for recruitment to public, local government and public corporation services. (b) It is essential that all communities should be adequately represented in the Security Services. (c) The police should have good public relations. (d) It is necessary to appoint an ombudsman for each province to inquire into complaints against the misuse or abuse of power by Govt; officials and Security personnel. (e) No political interference should be allowed in the Security Services. (f) Legislation should be brought to punish those who incite communal hatred. (g) News of communal conflicts should not be published unnecessarily. (h) The Armed Forces—Army, Navy and Air Force should be removed from the North and the East.

(To be continued)

Diplomats and . . .

(Continued from page 11)

recognition of Special Sinhala and Tamil for the purposes of the competitive examination.

In 1961 the candidates educated in the Official Languages were allowed to sit for the Civil Service Examination. Yet no candidate entered in the Sinhala medium. The 1960 examination was held on the basis of 'the combined recruitment formula' and 83 candidates sat while 13 of them were interviewed. The first 5 candidates were appointed as recruits for the Ceylon Civil Service and the next four candidates were appointed to the Overseas Service. The abolition of the Ceylon Civil Service and the creation of the Ceylon Administrative Service on 1st May 1963 altered the nature and organisation of the elite cadre of the administrative service of the Island.

Share and share alike

by Nicodemus

It is heartening to read that Sri Lankans now resident in Canada are getting along like a pine forest on fire. Scribe Kirthie Abeysekera, reporting the get-together of these emmigrants on Sinhala and Tamil New Year (CDN) painted a picture of a Rotarian, one-for-all and all-for-one spirit, a rare commodity back home even among Rotarians.

Our Man in Canada, Ernest Corea, spoke about his "valiant countrymen who are keeping alive the light of their own culture" and pointed out that the jolly get-together of the Canada-Sri Lanka Association was a manifestation of "shared hopes, shared achievements and shared disappointments." Before sharing these earnest sentiments High Commissioner Corea had kissed the cheek of eight-year old Dilhani Jayamanne who garlanded him. A newcomer to diplomacy Corea did not surreptitiously use his handkerchief on his lips like many others who lie abroad for their country.

This bonhomie among self-exiled countrymen in Canada is certainly not evident south of the border. Last week there were reports that fisticuffs broke loose when a similar group met in New York. Such lack of camaraderie is confirmed by another story sent us by a L. G. subscriber passing through Idaho (to see his ex-wife) on a U. S. I. S. travel grant. He was an invitee to the Aluth Avurudhu reception organised in Pocatello, Idaho.

He writes.....

Twenty three Sri Lankans mustered in the Salvation Army Hall in downtown Pocatello for an evening program of traditional Aluth Avurudhu celebrations. The Chief Guest was Mr. Cornelius "Corpse" Graveman, the leading city undertaker.

The proceedings began with a short address by the Secretary of the Association, Marcus Borunayake, formerly crack drug pedlar for Racket and Pips during the pre-Bibile era and now a Holy Roller with Pocatello Divine Thought Mission.

Marcus Borunayake complained bitterly that he was besieged with anonymous telephone callers the previous day who insulted him in "sudda Sinhala" for taking upon himself the task of organising the celebrations without calling a Committee Meeting. It was hinted that the honour should have gone to a Montessori teacher who was the first Sri Lankan green card holder in the state. One caller, he said, had even called him "you Sinhalese b....r" and he thought he recognised the voice in spite of a nasal twang.

He was roundly hooted by the cosmopolitan crowd of Montessori teachers and their unemployed husbands, male nurses, tennis scholarship holders, cheap curio importers and about a dozen others who mumble incoherently when asked about their employment status in the land of hope and glory.

As he backed away from the stage, a scuffle broke out between two unemployed husbands which was curtailed by their tough wives. The fight was over who should shake hands first with the chief guest while simultaneously whispering in his ear one's eagerness to work at non-union rates in his mortuary.

Mutual goodwill was sadly lacking. This was evident by the lack of conversation as twenty three different groups stood staring at each other from comfortable distances. The cheerless silence was suddenly broken by a shrill voice calling across the hall urging one Beryl not to touch the kiributh.

"Its all pillun", the voice screamed. "You know who made it, no?"

Nicodemus's opening paragraph is now tinged with an unanticipated irony, since shortly after we received this piece, the "Daily News" carried a dispatch from the New York correspondent, reporting the goings-on at a Sri Lankan get-together in Canada in which journalist Kirthi Abeysekera was injured and hospitalised; hardly the "Rotarian" spirit.

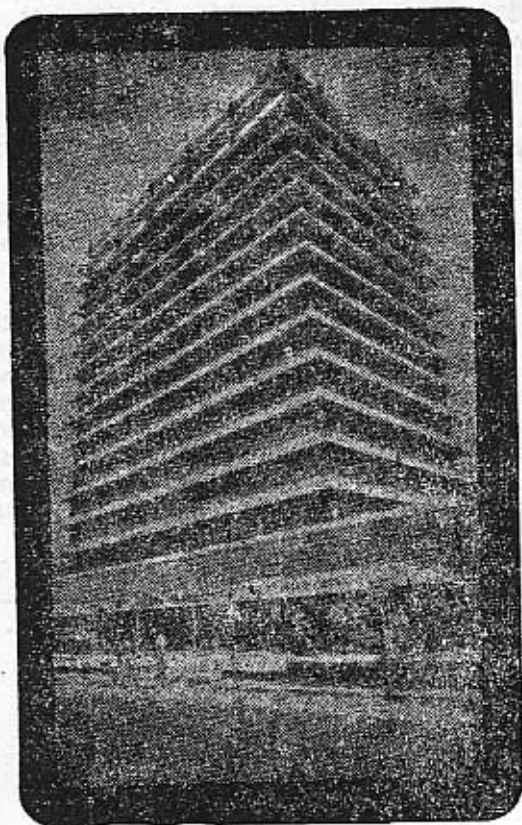
Ed.

The traditional oil lamp was then lit by the chief guest in grim silence which seemed not to upset or effect him. Mr. Graveman softly asked the "folks around to help light a match" with him. In the stampede to the lamp to be the first Sri Lankan at the wick, Mr. Graveman was knocked off his feet and one of the willing hands that reached out to pick him up also picked his pocket.

The kiributh, kavun and kokis was then served by those who had volunteered to prepare the traditional delicacies. All except the family members of the cooks of a particular dish declined to eat. An eight-year old girl, whose hand was struck sharply by her mother when she reached out for a cube of kiributh, was heard to wail; "Aw, mommy, I wanna taste some of that mess. It looks like baked porridge".

While the food was being served four Sri Lankans walked out of the hall in a huff. Their protest was that they were unaware that the Secretary had called for volunteers to prepare the traditional food and that if they knew of this arrangement one of them would have certainly contributed some vadai, soosium and bonda.

The celebrants continued to share their hopes, achievements and disappointments in deathly silence while Secretary Borunayake made desultory small talk with Mr. Graveman. This silence was broken by a calling signal bleeping from a small radio receiver attached



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to Mr. Graveman's belt: He switched it on and a sad voice came over.

"Calling the boss", it said. "There is a stiff to collect from Shady Avenue. Good white area and worth a grand in services if you do the honours personally."

Mr. Graveman thanked the gathering and left in a dignified hurry with a "glad to have been with you folks and remember me in time of need. I like you Indians as much as ours".

Mr. Borunayake, looking as harassed and tired as after selling one of his Divine Thought courses to a dying, rich widow, announced that the happy occasion would be concluded by a Kandyan dance recital by Felicity Kanupala, wife

of Tikiri, third supervisory engineer of Pocatello Sidewalk Maintenance.

There was an immediate rush to the exit by the others. Marcus, Tikiri, his three kids and your correspondent were the only audience yours truly being an invitee of Felicity owing to past native associations.

The spirit in which the Aluth Avurudha was celebrated in this great city was, indeed, encouraging. It was a lesson in how our dear countrymen keep alive the spirit of their own culture, now an emerging force after the fall of the previous regime. There was not a single fatal incident. Further, no alcohol was served.

The married women showed sly signs of gratitude to Marcus

Borunayake for not having to cook dinner since a MacDonald hamburger and a coke on the way home would be a sufficient substitute. The others merely cursed him for having had to miss the weekly idiot-box edition of Pater Falk as Inspector Colombo.

STOP PRESS.... Your correspondent, who flew to San Francisco next day, was told that four San Francisco Bay Area-Sri Lanka Associations met for similar festivities at four different venues in San Francisco, Berkeley, San Bruno and Richmond. They had individually censured the two Sacramento-Sri Lanka Associations, about a two hour drive away, for not inviting them to join in the celebrations in that city.

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Trotsky as Don Juan

Alumni of the Peradeniya campus in the fifties may remember Jean van Heijenoort, who taught mathematics there at that time. Not many people, however, probably knew that this distinguished mathematician had been in his youth Leon Trotsky's secretary, translator and bodyguard, when the outcast revolutionary was in exile, first in Prinkipo (Turkey), and later in France, Norway and Mexico. Van Heijenoort, who was a French citizen in spite of his Dutch name, left the Trotsky household seven months before the assassination. He has now written a memoir, *With Trotsky in Exile* (Harvard University Press), whose main new revelations seem to be some incidents connected with Trotsky's love-life during his last years, which cast an unexpectedly comic light on the drama of his Mexican exile.

Isaac Deutscher's biography had already hinted that Trotsky (who was then nearing sixty) was attracted by Frida Kahlo, the beautiful and gifted wife of Diego Rivera, the famous Mexican painter who arranged for Trotsky's Mexican asylum. It now turns out 'from Van Heijenoort's account that there was a full-scale affair between Trotsky and Frida, which the painter (who was highly jealous by nature) fortunately knew nothing about. Natalya, Trotsky's wife, however did; and to relieve the strain, Trotsky decided to leave his house for a remote *hacienda* where Frida could visit him. Van Heijenoort's chief worry, meanwhile, was whether rumours of the situation would reach the ears of the GPU.

Ultimately the affair was called off, while Trotsky was still at the *hacienda*, but his reaction was to transform his guilt into an unfounded jealousy of Natalya, whom he accused of infidelity with a colleague in Moscow, shortly after the Revolution! He next had a resurgence of desire for

her, and sent her a report on the state of his sexual organ, which he referred to by 'a popular Russian word'.

Soon after these emotional involvements, Trotsky proposed an emergency plan to meet the contingency he always feared of a Stalinist attack on his house (this materialised two years later in the machine-gun assault led by Siqueiros, another well-known Mexican painter). Trotsky's plan was that a ladder should be left against a garden wall, by means of which he could climb over and take shelter in the neighbouring house of a sympathetic young Mexican woman. He even suggested a dress-rehearsal, but Van Heijenoort meanwhile discovered that Trotsky had been trying to make love to the young woman, and persuaded him to call the whole scheme off.

This, incidentally, is the centenary year of Trotsky's birth, as well as that of his implacable antagonist, Stalin.

Poetry corner

Take a look at these lines of (alleged) poetry:

Uh...stupid song...that weather bonnet

Is all gone now. But the apothecary biscuits dwindled.

Where a little spectral

Cliffs, teeming over into irony's

Gotten silently inflicted on the passages

Morning undermines, the daughter is.

Who wrote it? Not, as you may suppose, a computer inadequately programmed in the rules of English syntax and semantics, but John Ashberry, probably the poet most in vogue in the United States at the present time and winner of several poetry prizes in recent years.

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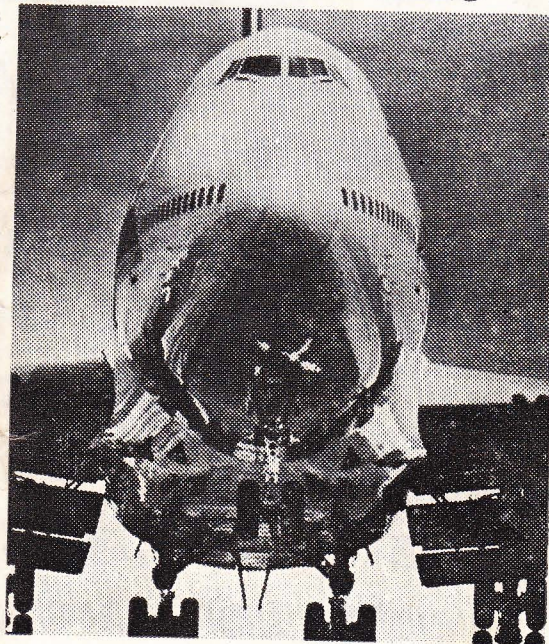
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