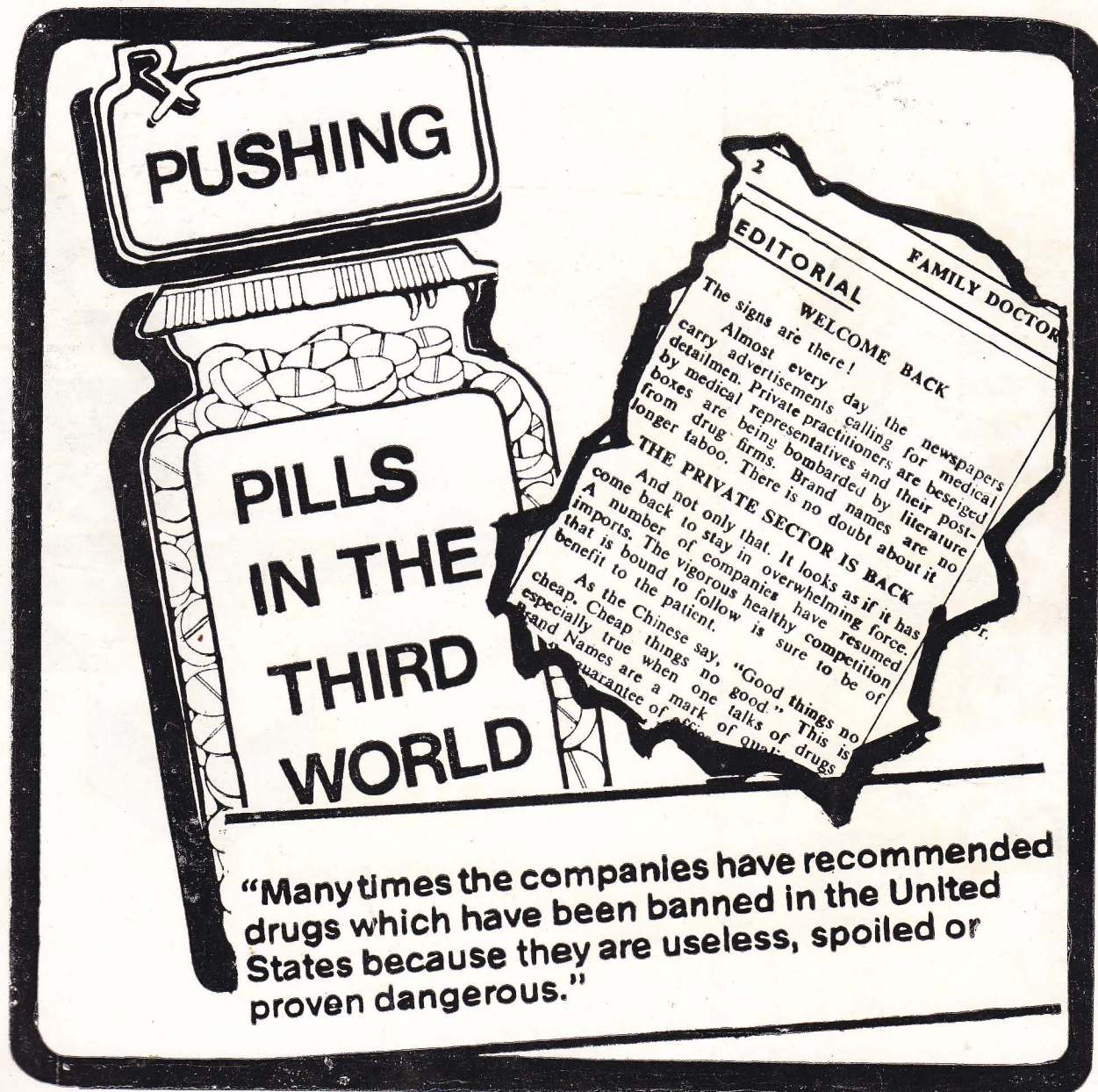


GUARDIAN



HAPPY DAYS FOR DRUGS BUSINESS

Felix versus Sirima

Indian crisis — Hector Abhayawardana

Tamil poetry in Sinhala — J. Uyangoda

Rosemary and soft porn

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GARADS

Reconsidering P.R.

Trade Minister Athulathmudali, one of the moving spirits behind P.R., welcomes the current debate on how best to amend its procedures. "It is clear", he told the LG "the superiority of P.R. over the old electoral system has been recognised by almost everyone. But no system is perfect and modifications may be necessary in the system which had its first trial in May. We must keep refining it to make it even more democratic".

Incidentally, Mr. Athulathmudali sees the absence of rowdy incidents after the MC/UC polls as a sign of the many benefits of P.R. Nobody shouted 'kauda raja?' or jeered at a losing candidate because it was all on party lists, he observed.

The enterprising Centre for Society and Religion sponsored two lively and well-represented "exchanges" on the subject last month. The critical discussion on mechanisms and modalities focused attention on (a) the high cut-off point (12½%) and its ill-effects (b) the injustice of 'bonus seats' given to the party with the highest number of votes (c) the need to permit voters to indicate preferences for individual candidates and (d) the importance of holding by-elections.

Boston Connection

With the Tamil issue in the forefront of national politics, the names of two Tamil academics keep cropping up in high level conversations.

The first is that of Dr. A. Jeyaratnam Wilson, better known to his Royal College and University colleagues, his students and fellow dons, as A. J. Wilson. A Jennings-trained constitutionalist, Dr. Wilson became a full-fledged political scientist, studying and teaching the subject in the US, Canada and UK. He is the son-in-law of the F.P.'s founding father, Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam.

The extraordinary outburst in Boston, Mass., makes the other's connection perhaps more interesting. Dr. Neelam Tiruchelvam, the son of Mr. M. Tiruchelvam, the F.P. Minister (1965-68) in the Senanayake Cabinet, studied law at Harvard. Both are

contributors to a new book on 'nationalism' in Sri Lanka, edited by Dr. Michael Roberts, an expatriate academic. The book is published by the Marga Institute.

How nice

While the UNP government's second anniversary was celebrated with the usual fanfare of supplements, including a 'report to the Nation' by the President himself, the **WEEKEND** caught the eye with a full-page advert, inserted by "the SLFP'ers who crossed over and formed the UNP Balamandalaya in the Beruwela electorate under the presidency of the 2nd MP, Mr. R. G. Samaranyake."

Below two pictures of the President and the PM is the heart-warming headline "IT'S NICE TO BE WITH THE U.N.P.". Below that is a group

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The second-person pronoun in Christian usage

Mr. Reggie Siriwardena's observations in the "Lanka Gaardian" of June 15 on the use of the second-person pronoun was indeed illuminating. I was particularly interested in exploring further the observation that "Britain which led the rest of Europe in the development of capitalism and bourgeois democracy should also have gone fastest and furthest in the accompanying process of nominal change....."

Though this revolution took place in language the British were the most conservative in their social and religious life. The changes in language and the use of the pronoun obliterating distinctions between polite and non-polite form are also seen in the English liturgies composed in the 16th and 17th centuries, but where Church order and social life were concerned, they were closer to the elitist, competitive, hierarchical and self-achieving individualistic thinking of man like Thomas Hobbes and later Adam Smith and Edmund Burke. In Richard Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity", one looks in vain for any definition of the Christian ministry as service such as Martin Luther so finely rediscovered. All the emphasis in Hooker is on hierarchical distinctions and on the ruling function of ministry like Calvin.

When the English missionaries came to Sri Lanka in the 19th century and attempted to translate the Book of Common Prayer into Sinhala they retained the forms of the second-person pronoun in Sinhala usage at the time to bring out the hierarchical social distinctions. In the first Sinhala translation of the Book of Common Prayer by English scholars of Sinhala such as the Rev. Andrew Armour and William Tolfrey in 1820, God is referred to as, "Unvahanse" the clergyman as "Unnanse" and the people as "tho" and "thopi". These forms are retained in the later translations of the 19th

century such as the one by Rev. Canon Dias in 1855. Even in the 20th century till the 50's these forms were retained along with "obavahanse" for God and "Umba" and "Umbla" used individually and collectively when people are referred to. Some translations even have "thope hith osavapalla" (lift up your hearts) and "kapalla" and "beepalla" (eat and drink). I remember when I started working in my first parish, my vicar explained these usages and their distinctions:- God-"obavanse" priest-"Unnanse" and congregation "Umbala".

The social revolution in the 50's had some influence on Sinhala Christian language. In the translations of the Ceylon Liturgy we have "Oba" for God and "oba" for people. The verbal forms end as follows:- kanna (eat) bonna (drink) ganna (take).

It is interesting to observe that in the Tamil translations of the Prayer Book from the 19th century the polite forms of the

second-person pronoun and the verbal endings are used consistently for God, clergy and people.

Another important fact which should be remembered, is that though the social and political changes in the 50's affected the Sinhala language to some extent the hierarchical, status and achievement oriented structures in religious and social life continue unaffected in Sri Lanka awaiting radical social change.

Rev. Dr. D. J. Kanagaratnam

The Theological College of Lanka, Pilimatalawa.

Our missions abroad

It is somewhat tragic when one recalls the number of poor representatives Sri Lanka has sent to the missions abroad, a country which is well known in the world for her brain power, a country which could proudly boast of able men managing many international institutions, a country which has produced many able international administrators has appointed men who are not merely mediocrities but who have done damage to the good name of the country.

Well-known are stories of how a certain Sri Lanka Ambassador was more horizontal than vertical. Also known are other sordid stories which perhaps need not be recalled even to make a point. Suffice to state that these men had no commitment whatsoever, no sense of responsibility, no answerability and were enjoying the rewards available perhaps to those who had supported the Government at that time in power. To most of them the good name of the country was only a matter for momentary reflection. They have no conception whatsoever of the job, and absolutely nothing to lose, for it was never a career, but a five-year holiday and they enjoyed it with a vengeance.

This is why it is perhaps a crying shame to see the Government of Sri Lanka once again nominate mediocrities to represent Sri Lanka abroad. Why ever should we take third class material when we have first class material available. Except

for a few of the appointments, the others are all political hand-outs which are being made at the expense of the country and the people.

Perhaps this situation has been brought about by the quality of our foreign service itself. There are many "foreigners" in the service who not only by their ineptitude but also by their mental make-up are totally unsuited for representational duties.

Let us use the able men we have for what is undoubtedly our most important task at hand - the realisation of the development goals we have set for ourselves through the efficient implementation of our foreign policy.

Let me draw attention to two factors :-

1. That the Government should realise the need to have men of ability and men who have proved themselves in public service to represent us, and

2. That we draw attention to the need to do away with the system of political pay-offs at the expense of the country.

How soon the UNP has forgotten that contemptuous act of the last administration, when as a care-taker Government it chose to appoint two party cronies as Ambassadors, wasting thousands in foreign exchange? It was thought that the UNP would change. It is still hoped that what was once said of the French Bourbons would not be said of the UNP once again, that they learned nothing and forgot nothing!!

Ratnasiri Wijesinghe.

No forum

We have no place to air our grievances against the rising cost of mass circulating newspapers in our country.

Panadura.

V. K. Wijeratna

Trends . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

photo with the man-in-the-news Samaranayake flanked by several monks and other ex-SLFP supporters.

The opposite page sports another large advertisement in which a single individual (a Mr. A. M. M. Mowjood) chooses to convey his personal "anniversary greetings to the government", with a few well-chosen words, by way of self-introduction. Mr. Mowjood advertises the fact that he is a foreign exchange earning gem dealer who has "contributed his might" to the government's effort to develop the economy and "feed the hungry masses". He has participated in the Mahaveli project and, in keeping with official policy, even given jobs to ex-insurgents.

UNP's 2nd year

Policies and political processes

'Back to the land' was a discarded slogan of the old UNP.... giving back the land to the old owners seem to be the policy of the new UNP", a high-ranking LSSP'er told the L.G. He was commenting on the news of the week, the free land distribution exercise to mark the second anniversary of the government.

Mrs. Bandaranaike made much this same point at the SLFP's very well-attended Kurunegala rally. In her own electorate about 300 acres had been returned to the former owners, she said.

"This free land distribution is the kind of propaganda at which the UNP excels," the LSSP spokesman added. "But there were other events to mark the occasion too", he remarked. He pointed to the Food stamps scheme which he described as another step in the UNP policy of completely abandoning the food subsidy system."

"A consistent and basic demand of the World Bank and the IMF will thus be fulfilled, and that itself is a part, an important part, of the government's economic strategy which was made up of devaluation, import liberalisation, invitation to foreign capital, massive foreign loans, crippling the state ventures encouraging private enterprise and so on".

Another 'event' he observed was the "draconian law" passed the same week. "On the one hand we have headlines on one page about the undemocratic and barbarous laws and regulations of the previous regime...on the other hand, we see another report in the same newspaper which tells us that these self-same laws have been re-introduced The ghost

of Satan Felix seems to be haunting the UNP!" he said.

Q. "Are you suggesting that all these are pieces of a pattern? And if so, are you not indulging in sweeping rationalisations?"

A. "It is a question of economic policy and the integral connection it has with constitutional changes, legal changes, new political structures and processes. At the end of the second year, the outlines of the pattern are clearer—from the change to the presidential system, the centralisation of authority in the executive, the extension of the term of the presidency until 1984 so that the chief executive will be in office when the elections are held in 1983, the P.R. system with a high cut-off point consolidating the two-party system but guaranteeing that no party will get a 2/3 majority, the constitutional amendments, the labour laws, the university act, and now the old emergency laws made normal law for a three year period... all this is part of the process...."

Q. "It means a definite break with the political past?"

A. "Of course the UNP talks about its democratic socialism.. but that's just for mass consumption.....no thinking UNP'er, would deny, at least in private, that this is full-blooded free enterprise, meaning capitalismand given their ideological position and their general beliefs, that is the correct approach socialism, they tell themselves, has failed.....so let's try to please the people with the other system capitalism that is why their policies seem much more consistent and thorough than the policies of the SLFP or even the old UNP.

"Of course, what we have to understand is that in an underdeveloped country like ours, a party such as the UNP, with its own ideological outlook, has no other option".

Q. "Do you see a model.....?"

A. "When a leading editor almost loses his job for publishing an article written by some foreign journalist slightly sarcastic about Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, then the model looks obvious....."

Q. "What of future trends?"

A. "We have locked ourselves firmly into the international economic system, that is international capitalThe way things move in that system ..recession, depression etc...will influence our economic life and therefore our politics....."

Drugs business

Are dangerous drugs banned in the US and UK being sold in this country? With import liberalisation all sorts of drugs in vast quantities are re-entering the market. It is a well-documented fact that the big pharmaceutical corporations are dumping useless drugs on the Third World. This is simply a money-grabbing exercise of the MNC's. What is criminal however is that drugs found to be dangerous in the countries of manufacture are sold to the poorest of the poor.

By high-pressure sales promotion (advertising, and detailmen) and by co-opting conscienceless private medical practitioners in the countries of the Third World, the MNC's are not only plundering the poor but causing incalculable harm.

A sign of the times is the 'editorial' from a journal called "The Sri Lanka Family Doctor"

(Continued on Page 11)

FDB : No more SLFP rights?

Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, ex-Minister of Justice and the author of a multitude of laws, both famous and infamous, has consulted three SLFP lawyers to ascertain whether his political rights as a member of the SLFP have been abridged, suspended or robbed by the party's new Constitution!

'The Felix Papers', which reached the **Lanka Guardian** last week, reveals an extraordinary turn of events in the continuing crisis of the SLFP.

Has the party leader, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike MP, lost confidence in her former Minister of Justice, Public Administration, Home Affairs and Local Government, Finance, de facto Foreign Minister, multiple-purpose Man and Mr. Fixit? FDB himself thinks so although he is still the only SLFP'er who can address the Leader "My dear Sirima" (one of the letters in the Felix Papers).

The question is: Can Felix register himself a member of the party in the Gampaha District and thus come on the party's list at a future election? Even if the answer is "yes", FDB says he does not want to change his residence from Colombo 5, just as much as he did not change his religion. The actual words he uses in explanation are: "I don't want to fake residence just as I didn't fake my religious beliefs".

According to FDB, Mrs. Bandaranaike told the Weke (Dompe) Bala Mandalaya members that "my interpretation of the new party constitution was wrong. It is incorrect that I am disqualified by non-residence".

But "the Felix Papers" include a photocopy of a front page of the SLFP paper "**DINAKARA**" which reports Mrs. Bandaranaike as saying "SLFP offices should be filled with people from



Dompe sans Satan?

Village Branches — no place for parachutists".

FDB objects strongly to the pejorative term "parachutist". He thinks that Mrs. B. can "drop the pilot" but should not imply that he (FDB) was a parachutist because it was Mrs. B. who in 1960 dropped him with a parachute on the Dompe electorate where he made such a perfect pinpoint landing that he not only bagged the seat but the portfolio of Finance at the age of 29. "I am no parachutist", says Felix, deeply wounded by the slight. Nor is he ready to accept the appellation of "long jumper" because his only lapse into elongation was from Dias to Dias Bandaranaike.

A far more serious question arises from FDB's legal queries. Though he addressed his inquiry to three SLFP lawyers (two played a key role in drafting the new party constitution) only Mr. Nihal Jayawickrama (his ex-Secretary) has submitted a written reply. In answer to FDB's first question (out of 6), Mr. Jayawickrama states:

"In my opinion the new Constitution does **not** contemplate the continuance of his membership by virtue of his registration at party headquarters under the previous constitution".

If this interpretation is correct, have **all** SLFP members lost their membership rights? If so, FDB can well ask, is there an SLFP under the law.

Mr. Jayawickrama also says that the new constitution cannot be amended until the institutions contemplated by it have been established. The 'transitional arrangements' gave all power to the party president. That arrangement was for 9 months— i.e. August.

FDB's circular to the Dompe organizers states:

"After a discussion at which several Weke Bala Mandalaya Members took part, Mrs. Bandaranaike, replying, made the following points:-

"1. My interpretation of the new Party Constitution was wrong. It is incorrect that I am disqualified by non-residence.

"2. Under the new system of proportional representation, there was no assurance that a candidate from any electorate, (Dompe or anywhere else,) would be included in the Gampaha District List of Candidates.

"3. If the new Party Constitution needed amendment, that would be done, but only after the new institutions were set up, in terms of it.

"4. The party re-organisation had to be completed by August 1979, and if there was no-one to undertake the task, she would send a team from Colombo to complete the re-organisation in 24 hours, (as was done at Panadura).

"5. She valued my services to the Party highly, and had not lost confidence in me. Although my feelings had been hurt, she hoped I would at the request of the people undertake the re-organisation."

Rosemary, Porn and the New Culture

A Sri Lankan success story in the true American tradition ("Is Bestselling Burgher Beauty Sri Lanka's Answer to Jacqueline Susann—the new Panadura Debate") Ms. Rogers has returned to the native heart for a short sojourn. The dailies dutifully hailed our only Dollar millionairess. Their Sunday sisters swarmed about her with starry-eyed awe. The FTZ bosses waited with bated breath for a project proposal. No catty comments, no Girl Guide giggles were heard. The CDN had a page 1 picture of her. The 'Queen of Porn', as she was called, was received in the highest circles and showered with compliments everywhere.

The average middle-class male still not wholly dharmistitized by the Public Philosophy of the New Puritanism, (while being mesmerized at the same time by a mass media already adapting itself to the New Consumerism), has always had access to what the trade calls soft and hard pornography. A sexy magazine smuggled to him by some friend abroad or furtive purchases in a back-street bookshop keep secret fantasies aflame. And

those who cannot afford "Sweet Savage Love" (37.50) or "The Crowd Pleasers" (45/-) can get their daily dose in newspapers, some of them founded by our great Buddhist revivalists.

A minor debate has been going on in the **SUN** about the AXA comic strip. A Batticaloa padre protested about AXA on the grounds of her scandalous nudity. (See below). He thought that AXA was a "girl who believed in women's Lib and goes about fully unclothed." "Back came angry protests from women activists, one of whom wrote that Women's Lib was a serious movement for "the political, social and economic advancement of women.... that protests against sexist comics where women are depicted as sex objects.....at the beck and call of predatory males."

As man's power to dominate the female declines, male fantasies according to sociologists, shift to pre-historic or futuristic periods where nude women are chased, captured and tamed by gorilla-like males. It is back to the hunt, and AXA obliges with a daily dose of poses. The poses

cater mainly to three types of fetish — legs, breasts and buttocks.

The escapist craze for men from outer space or cave men has an obvious explanation. How else can naked women be openly hunted like animals without the police stepping in?

The Amazonian AXA however is a 'typical female' — terrified of rats as the July 5 strips shows! When AXA volunteers to kill the rat, the hero shouts: "Run Woman, your job is breeding, not fighting."

Is this the shape of things to come? Is TV with its third rate, racist sexist program (some of them banned in the US) the gateway to a new Culture?

A mason meets a carpenter

I made the walls
And you made the roof
True, he paid us both
But there is a board
"Beware of dogs"
And, for us the doors are closed

A. P. G. Saratchandra
Habaraduwa.

AXA



By AVENELL and ROMERO

Congress and the new crisis

by Hector Abhayawardana

Eight days have passed while this is being written, since the resignation of Prime Minister Morarji Desai's Government in India and there is as yet no indication of when and how a new Government of India is to be formed. The Janata Party has been reduced to some 203 members in a House of 543, following the desertion of former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Charan Singh and his supporters to form a Janata (Secular) Party. The Congress lies divided between the official Congress led by Y. B. Chavan with 75 members and the Congress (Indira) led by Indira Gandhi with 71 members. Neither Janata (Secular) which has some 76 members, nor the official Congress nor Congress (I) can form a Government of its own. It is also virtually impossible for two or more of them to combine without generating further individual splits.

Whether it be Janata (Secular), Congress (I), the bulk of those who decide or are of importance in all these organisations are veteran Congressmen. Janata alone contains an important, perhaps even predominant, non-Congress component viz. the Jan Sangh which today constitutes almost 50 per cent of the Janata Parliamentary Party and at all times has played a decisive role within Janata by reason of its unified (Hindu) communal outlook and its monolithic discipline. Janata also contains an important contingent of Socialists, many of whom have a Congress past, even if an oppositional or dissentient character. But all the rest have an extensive record of activity as members of the Congress party and have figured prominently in State level politics during the post-Independence period. Mutual rivalries, deriving from personal ambitions, conflicting interests etc., have

brought about irreconcilable incompatibilities and necessitated organisational separation. Individuals may detach themselves from one organisation and attach themselves to another from time to time in the pursuit of career or other advantage. But that these organisations can be compounded is unthinkable.

If it is the disintegration of the Congress Party and the mutual rivalries and intrigues of individual Congressmen that make it impossible, or at any rate difficult, to form a stable Government in India, the question arises why some other political party does not make use of the disarray or paralysis of the Congress to set up its Government. The answer to this question is that, though India is a parliamentary democracy permitting a multi-party system, political power in India has been very much a monopoly of the Congress Party until it was disrupted by a combination of circumstances at the General Election of 1977. There were other parties besides the Congress Party throughout this period. Indeed, there were other parties besides the Indian National Congress even during the struggle for freedom from British rule. But the Congress was the party that was fashioned by Mahatma Gandhi for containing the limited non-violent struggle that he led and directed against British imperialism. The Congress was also the party that Pandit Nehru and lesser national leaders carefully fashioned to take charge of the Indian state when the British transferred it to Indian hands. It was a parliamentary party, led by representatives of the business and professional classes and schooled by long experience in the art of political mobilisation and manipulation. But it was a party that brooked

Mr. Charan Singh was appointed Prime Minister by the President last week and took his oaths on July 28 — a few days after this article was written.

no challenge to its complete control of the Indian state.

This is not to say that there were constitutional or legal restrictions on Indian parliamentary democracy that made it impossible to set up political Parties to fight the Congress at elections. When Jayaprakash Narayan led the Socialists out to the Congress in 1947 and instituted the Socialist Party of India his intention was to challenge the Congress party's monopoly of power from the Left. Shyamprasad Mukherjee, prompted by the RSS hierarchy, cast off the openly communal cloak of the Hindu Maha Sabha for the disguise of Jan Sangh in order to challenge the Congress from the Right. Somewhat later, exasperated by the Socialist demagoguery of Nehru and the expanding role of state in the economy through the five-year plans, M. R. Masani launched the Swatantra Party from a Platform of free and unrestricted private enterprise as a secular challenge to the Congress from the Right. There was also the challenge proffered by the Communist Party. These challengers were able to make headway here or there in the States. But on the scale of the Union of India, while the Congress party contrived to retain its basic organisational integrity, there was no real threat to its monopoly of power.

This position contrasts with the relationship of general confrontation between the Congress and

Left and Right wing opposition parties in the States of India. For some time the Governments in all States were constituted by the Congress Party. But in the year 1975 a Communist Party Government was set up in Kerala, followed by a United Front Government in West Bengal. Other non-Congress parties, some of them regional in character like the Ganatantra Parishad of Orissa or the DMK of Tamil Nad or the Akali Dal of Punjab, succeeded in setting up State Governments from time to time. At the General Elections of 1976 the Congress was defeated by a coalition of both Right and Left Opposition parties and non-Congress Governments were set up in several States. But at the centre the Congress still enjoyed a safe majority of 40 until Morarji Desai led a revolt of Congress State bosses against the Indira Gandhi leadership in New Delhi and crossed over to the Opposition in Parliament with 55 members. The Congress Party was reduced to a minority in Parliament but contrived to survive with the support of smaller parties, put through radical measures like Bank Nationalisation and abolition of privy purses of the Princes and returned to power with a greatly enhanced majority at the election of early 1977.

Indira Gandhi was able to restore the monopoly of the Congress Party by appealing directly to the radical urges of the masses of People. It was, however, a mere tactical device as far as she was concerned. She generated hopes of liberation from poverty ("Garibi Hatao" was her election slogan) and set out subsequently to stifle those hopes by a declaration of "Emergency" in early 1975. The radical urges of the masses were not some form of Political perversity. They sprang from their increasing misery, despite four Five-year Plans, and the obvious signs of a general crisis of the Indian economy. This economy had begun to stagnate from the early nineteen-sixties. The index of annual growth of industrial production averaged a mere 7 percent between 1951 and 1965, slumped to

3.5 per cent in 1969 and 1970 and hovered at less than 4 percent between 1970-1975. Agricultural productivity had increased greatly in the large holdings, resulting in the emergence of a powerful rural bourgeoisie. But over 44 per cent of village households had less than 1 acre of land and more than 50 per cent of village people lived below the poverty line.

The powerful new rural bourgeoisie not only blocked the road to the deliverance from hunger and oppression of the majority in the villages, but through its accumulation of land and control over credit and marketing constituted a brake on the development of agriculture itself. As the bastion of the whole system of class and caste oppression in India it was also the foundation of the vast structure of the Congress Party. But the industrial bourgeoisie, which dominated the cities and constituted the unifying element in the economy of the country as a whole, urgently needed the expansion of the market through extension of agricultural productivity in the rural areas. Their hold over the Congress Party at the Centre effected a cleavage between the Government in New Delhi and the State Government which were in the service of "kulak" interests. Since New Delhi was unable to release the rural economy from the stranglehold of "kulak" interests, it was essential to restrict the power of these interests by some curtailment of democracy if a way out of the crisis of the economy was to be found.

Indira Gandhi, as Congress Prime Minister, made clever use of this need of industrial monopoly capital to institute her own monopoly of power. But her Emergency Rule did not, and indeed could not seek to break the stranglehold of the "kulak" over the rural economy and made little impact on the economic crisis itself. The Emergency only drove the people of India into bitter hostility to her, her party and her Government and created a vacuum in the structure of power in the country. The Janata Party

was a pathetic attempt to scramble together a political party out of several divergent and even mutually antagonistic political forces to step into this vacuum. It was hoped that the winning of state power at the elections would iron out conflicts and disagreements and eventually produce a viable political party. But Jayaprakash Narayan and a curious assortment of do-gooders, dreamers and careerists were merely being naive in promoting this experiment. They paid no heed at all to the deep crisis of the economy that underlay the crisis of the political process and the burden of class and caste oppression that was making life in the villages difficult to endure for the overwhelming majority of their people.

If the Congress Government of Indira Gandhi clamped the dictatorship of industrial monopoly capital over the state, reducing the rural bourgeoisie to a position of junior partner in the administration, the Janata Party by freeing the state from dictatorship sought to re-establish a division of spheres of influence between industrial and agrarian capital on the basis of the demarcation of Centre and State Interests. But the attempt to bring this about only led to internal crisis within the Janata Party and has resulted in the break-up of the Party and the collapse of its Government. The real representatives of the "kulak" bourgeoisie, viz. Charan Singh and his lieutenants of the former BLD, have walked out of the Janata Party and pitched their camp on "secular" territory which different Congress leaderships have long made familiar in India. The Janata (S) Party seeks to engage in a demagogic appeal to all forces which have grievances against the tyranny of monopoly capital and the upper castes. But it makes no attempt at all to address itself to the basic crisis of economy and its reflection in the power structure. In that sense, it will re-enact the tragedy of the Janata party from which it split and is certain to do so

(Continued on Page 11)

After Nicaragua, what next?

When the dictatorship starts to totter the dictator is the first to flee to safety. Holding on to power as tenaciously as Van Thieu, Somoza stayed longer than the Shah. But even in his heavily fortified "bunker", the evident symbol of the growing isolation of his regime at home and abroad, Somoza was seized a fortnight ago by a sense of insecurity. In a characteristic gesture he had his National Guard commanders declare their loyalty to him on the Nicaraguan radio. "We are with you Chief", they all said, one by one. Now the Chief is not with them. He is in the U.S.

Somoza is gone. The clique of corrupt men who shared the rewards of a dynastic dictatorship installed and sustained by the US, the bankers and the businessmen, the generals who ordered air-strikes on towns and villages, the policemen who ran the torture chambers, will be summoned soon to pay the price of tyranny, perhaps the summary justice of a people too long plundered and oppressed.

Spearheaded by the Sandinista guerrillas, the combined Opposition struggle to oust the dynastic dictatorship of General Somoza approached its climax in June.

Washington was left with few options. In the 1950's, the US marines would have intervened on a pretext as clumsily contrived as that which justified the invasion of the Dominican Republic. In the 60's the intervention would have been more covert, generally through the US-sponsored OAS. But it is a sign of the decline of US dominance in the area that even the OAS recently refused to back a proposal by Mr. Vance for a peace-keeping force.

Though the US found itself completely outvoted at the OAS meeting and even Brazil cut off relations with Nicaragua, the possibility of US intervention could not be entirely ruled out. The Nicaraguan situation is paralleled in neighbouring El Salvador and Guatemala although

the conflict has not reached the critical intensity of the struggle in Nicaragua.

There is a growing opinion in the US that the Administration must prove that America is not weak or helpless. The revolution in Iran was a devastating blow to the American psyche.

Could the US "teach a lesson" in Nicaragua?

Political background

In a broad analysis of the internal political situation. Hugh O'Shaughnessy, Latin America correspondent of the FT, wrote:

"Since 1932 the power has been concentrated not in the hands of Fourteen Families but in those of only one, the Somozas. General Anastasio Somoza is President as was his brother Luis and his father, also Anastasio, before him. Either directly when they occupied the presidency, or indirectly through nominees when they did not, the Somozas have had Nicaragua in an iron grip for nearly five decades. Anastasio Somoza the elder was installed as head of the National Guard which was established by the U.S. Army at the end of its occupation. He subsequently took control of one of the two long established political parties, the Liberals.

"During its rule the family dynasty has built up a very big business empire based on large land holdings and a share in almost every substantial enterprise in the country including Mamenic, the shipping line and Lanica, the airline."

The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) has been on the strategic offensive since the latter half of last year. Avoiding the frequent and fatal error of many revolutionary movements in Latin America and the 'Third World' the FSLN launched its military offensive to coincide with the mood of the masses. Following the murder early last year of the moderate publisher and newspaper editor Pedro Joaquin Chamorro the Nicaraguan people engaged in spontaneous direct action and mass

struggle, the zenith of which was the nation-wide popular insurrection of September (L. G. September 15th 1978.) The insurrection was sparked off by the FSLN's spectacular occupation of the Nicaraguan National Assembly - a completely successful operation the choreography of which ensures its place as a classic in the annals of guerrilla warfare. The mass upsurge was not completely anticipated by the Sandinista though they did not fail to play the role of armed spearhead which devolved on them. Using superior fire-power, including artillery, tanks and airstrikes against civilian targets Somoza managed to quell the insurrection, killing over 20,000 people. The Amnesty International report of June 1979 estimates that around 30,000 people have died in Nicaragua in the past one year.

At the time Agence France Presse reported that U.S. citizens, Cuban and South Vietnamese exiles resident in USA fought as mercenaries alongside Somoza's National Guard.

In a classic example of the working of the dialectic, Somoza's temporary military victory ensures his political defeat. The ferocity of his repressive action isolated him completely in the local arena with the National Guard his only source of internal support. He was also isolated politically from his neighbours in the region whose perception of their national self interests have led them to sever ties with Somoza. Public Opinion, both within the US and globally precluded any overt American support for their grotesque offspring (L. G. Oct. 15th 1978)

In September, the FSLN combatants made a strategic withdrawal from the smouldering towns into the mountains and jungles, their ranks swollen by youngsters escaping Somoza's genocide. In their 'liberated zones' the FSLN rearmed and trained readying for combat. With Somoza's political isolation at its maximum, his power base at its narrowest, with the liberal bourgeoisie paralysed, and objective/subjective conditions at their most mature, the Sandinistas returned.

Yugoslavia's special practice

by Mervyn de Silva

The non-aligned conference is the politicised voice of the Third World. The West realises that the greater cohesion of this group and its consolidation, the graver the threat to Western interests. The West is also conscious of another fact. NATO has no chieftain but we all know who it is. The Warsaw Pact has no Bosses but there's no doubt about the identity either. In that sense, the non-aligned have no "leader" for chairmanship has gone from country to country to country every three years or so. Yet, every movement has active and dynamic members, and many who are not very energetic; members who carry influence and weight within the movement, and those who don't. Paradoxically, a loose organisation which is not too institutionalized, without too many rigid rules, allows the more active and articulate to assert themselves. The position of chairman obviously offers such possibilities.

It is in this light of such awareness that the West's post-73 general manoeuvres vis-a-vis the Third World, and its particular concerns in the pre-Havana period should be understood. To obscure issues, to divert and dissipate Third World energies, to demoralise the group and sow discord through propaganda and to divide its ranks were all elements in the West's broad strategy. To make Cuba its special target was its main preoccupation at the moment.

Yugoslavia's considerable and steady influence within the group was based not only on its pioneering role. If Nehru fathered the inspirational idea, Yugoslavia became the ideological guru of the movement, and the durable Tito, its father-figure.

Using the Marxist methodology and idiom so familiar to its leadership and its intellectuals, Yugoslavia quietly built up (and

this is a singular achievement for which great credit is due) what may be called a "a theory" of non-alignment, a set of basic principles, and their "correct" interpretation and application in given situations. Yugoslavia was not merely a founder member but the acknowledged theorist.

What was not so apparent in the 1960's but became evident under the pressure of events today is the distinction between these theoretical formulations and the actual content of Yugoslavia's own foreign policy.

Yugoslavia's own policy was influenced by an axiomatic factor (geography) and its historic confrontation with Stalin. Since 1948, the Yugoslav leadership has seen the latter as the major premise of national policy.

So some non-aligned spokesmen could interpret non-alignment as "equidistance" from the power blocs but Yugoslavia, in the practical pursuit of its own perceived interests, could not in fact share even this narrow interpretation because its concern, its obsessive concern was to "distance" itself from Moscow. Some analysts describe this as an inbuilt anti-Sovietism in Yugoslavia's foreign policy but this may be too strong a term. It is interesting to note however the way in which China's openly virulent anti-Sovietism has gradually led to a confluence, an objective link-up, of interests with a leading non-aligned nation which China branded as the first Marxist renegade and revisionist. And in practice, China's "world view" and Yugoslavia's own non-alignment have moved towards convergence especially after China's chosen role today as the "quasi-ally" of the US and the West.

"After Tito, what?" is no exercise in journalistic glibness. The unity and cohesion of the republic, its economic future (unlike the other

socialist economies, Yugoslavia has not stood up too well to the external pressures generated by the post-73 crisis of the market-economies), the complexion of post-Tito leadership and its effect on foreign policy and regional relations are all serious questions. These are the anxieties which account for the nervous urgency in Yugoslavia's backstage diplomatic activity today.

Two issues exposed the difference or gap between precept and practice, thus revealing the hidden essence of Yugoslav foreign policy:

(a) Yugoslavia will not support the recognition of the Hem Samrin government because Vietnamese forces are still present in Kampuchea. The principles involved are "non-interference" and "territorial integrity." Though some observers raised the old issue of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, which may be long 'forgotten' history, it is argued that here two non-aligned nations are involved. But there was the immediately close parallel of Tanzania and Uganda, a parallel made closer still because both cases involved a genocidal and universally hated dictator, Pol Pot and Idi Amin. Where was the concern for principles there? Was it not that Yugoslavia saw in the Asian situation a chance to attack what it saw as a Soviet interest which was absent in the African instance?

(b) Yugoslavia has always regarded the Palestinian issue as the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Now the Arab League has expelled Egypt for betraying the Palestinians, the PLO and the other Arabs by signing a treaty with Israel under the aegis of a superpower, in essence a multilateral arrangement with military implications. Just before the Colombo meeting Tito made a special trip to West Asia as part of his effort to dissuade the Arabs from demanding the 'suspension' of Egypt. Again, the

(Continued on Page 11)

Non-alignment (3)

Havana : real challenge from outside

by A. W. Singham

The US has found itself in a major conflict with a very small nation in world politics, namely, Cuba. The United States finds Cuba's policy in Africa and the non-aligned movement antithetical to its own interests. It is not accidental that the United States, West Germany, and China have all called for Cuba's expulsion from the non-aligned movement. The grounds for their calling for Cuba's expulsion was based on a new criterion of membership that the non-aligned movement itself has never accepted. In other words, the West is now arguing that since Cuba is a Marxist-Leninist state and is ideologically close to the Soviet Union it does not deserve to be a member of the non-aligned movement. This indeed is a very erroneous reading of the nature of the non-aligned movement. It should also be remembered that if the United States pursues this argument to its logical conclusion then those non-aligned states that are the most pro-American, like Saudi Arabia, Zaire, and Somalia, would also face the possibility of expulsion. This would indeed mean the destruction of the movement as a whole.

There is another factor that is often overlooked about Cuba's role in the non-aligned movement. Cuba, it must be remembered, is in the final analysis, a Caribbean nation. The Caribbean was the first modern society established in the New World. It was created with fragments from Europe, Asia and most importantly Africa. In a sociological sense, it would be argued that the Caribbean was the first international society in the New World. This sociological characteristic gives nations like Cuba and Jamaica a distinct advantage in world politics. It is therefore no accident that in many international gatherings, Caribbean countries often assume leadership positions primarily because they seem to be comfortable with the

whole range of the world's cultures which they are quite accustomed to in their own societies. As countries like Cuba, Jamaica, and Guyana, continue to participate in world politics one must begin to understand them not merely as satellites of the existing world system but as individual nations trying to work out their destinies in the labyrinth of world politics.

Indeed, it is this very aspect of world political development that seems to have constantly confused U.S. foreign policy makers, namely, their incapacity to understand that nations and peoples do develop autonomous views of the world and that even those who are a subject people are capable of being independent. U.S. foreign policy, it would seem, is based on some erroneous assumptions. One of the more important of these is the assumption that the late entrance of the nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, into the political world means that they do not have the experience to deal with the complexities of world politics. Such an assumption fails to recognise the fact that many of the peoples of the Third World have had a long and prolonged dealing with the nations of Europe and the world system generally. As a result of the struggle against colonialism, many of these peoples have developed a very sophisticated understanding of world politics. They thus view the United States' attempt to lecture them on world politics as an act of arrogance: such an arrogance they deem illgrounded for they conceive of the United States itself as being a very new nation in the realm of world politics. They also resent the fact that the Western nations have often assumed that just because a nation is poor it is incapable of being accepted into the family of nations as an equal unit. Many of these countries have objected that just because they are "economically backward" does not

make them sociologically, racially, or intellectually inferior.

For the non-aligned peoples, the attitude of the West, and particularly of the United States, towards them appears to be blatantly racist. It is precisely for these reasons that a normally moderate leader like Julius Nyerere should become outraged at the suggestion of Eastern nations as to how Africans should handle the issue of foreign domination. As he stated: "We all know the facts of power in the World. But we cannot all be expected to accept without question this new insult to Africa and to Africans. We may be weak, but we are human. We do know when we are being deliberately provoked and insulted."

It is of course tragic that a major power of the stature of the United States should adopt such a hostile attitude towards the non-aligned movement which, in the final analysis, represents nothing but the "poor and wretched of the earth." It is becoming increasingly popular in these days of crude power politics to make the victims (the poor) responsible for the current world crisis. On another historical occasion, a similar group of people were chosen by a powerful nation to be blamed for the crisis of the world. For it was the poor and oppressed Jewish people in the ghettos of Europe who were blamed by the fascists for the crisis of Western Civilisation who then proceeded to engage in one of the most dastardly acts of modern history, namely that of attempting to eliminate the Jews. There is a tendency, especially in times of acute social crisis, to look for scapegoats in history, and what better candidate is there in the twentieth century than the "poor and oppressed of the world"? The non-aligned movement, in the final analysis, is a mere collection of small, poor, Third World nations

who are seeking to find an answer to the twin issues of the twentieth century, namely that of war and of poverty. They call for disarmament and the creation of a new international economic order.

The world order seems to be gradually changing from the post World War II period. Most of the assumptions of the cold war period seem no longer relevant. The world is seeing the emergence of new centres of economic power, especially West Germany and Japan who are seriously challenging the United States for Third World markets. China appears to have disassociated itself from the socialist camp and is identifying itself with the West. France which has been dormant appears to be exerting its influence as a world power. In addition Britain and Canada have elected conservative governments who appear to be junior partners in the growing world capitalist camp. Thus the NA movement faces a growing challenge from these "new powers" who have strong links with the old enemies of non-alignment, Israel and South Africa. Thus in Havana the real challenge to the unity of the movement will come from without the movement and not from within as others have predicted. ●

Congress . . .

(Continued from Page 7)

much more swiftly than its predecessor. There is little that Charan Singh can give India in the form of a stable government.

With both the Congress (Swaran Singh) and the Congress (I) incapacitated by their split, Morarji Desai cannot be blamed for the obstinacy with which he holds to the leadership of the Janata Parliamentary Party and that he be summoned to form the Government on the ground that his party is numerically the biggest in the Lok Sabha. The question, however, is not whether Morarji Desai can or cannot form another Government. It is far more important whether such a Government can make any

difference to the basic crisis of the Indian economy and its reflection in the political process. Without such an impact, how long will another Morarji Desai Government last?

Yugoslavia's . . .

(Continued from Page 9)

non-aligned bureau cannot expel or suspend members, a valid principle. However Yugoslavia's support for Sadat in the face of PLO, Arab and Bureau agreement that the Camp David Accords violates UN resolutions, not to mention non-aligned resolutions, raises the question of the true content of Yugoslav policy.

As the L.G. (June 15) noted Castro will not need any special tuition in non-alignment theories, ideology of international politics. The 7th summit will be held in Baghdad where the Arab League met to expel Egypt. Realising that the influence it wielded these years from its pre-eminent position within the group may slip away, Yugoslavia favours all kinds of "procedures" and "reforms" which in effect will dilute the powers of the chairman and the bureau.

But non-aligned members who have carefully studied Cuba conduct itself (and these include the Sri Lanka delegation) have been impressed by the sense of responsibility and rectitude that Cuba has shown.

Drugs . . .

(Continued from Page 3)

(see cover) which announces with shameless glee that good times are here again with the private sector permitted to import drugs, regardless of prices, and sell them under brand names.

Dr. Senaka Bibile's pioneering battle against this world-wide racket earned him the regard and respect of the U. N. and several other Third World countries. Is his work to be quietly interred in the interests of the new economic policy and the private sector? (See U. Karunatilake's article on Page 12).

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Pharmaceuticals (2)

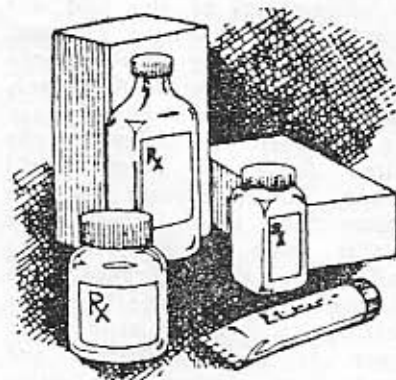
The 34 Drug Program

by U. Karunatileke

It was in 1973, that the change really began with the implementation of the Bibile-S.A. Wickremasinghe recommendations on drugs. As far as local manufacture was concerned, the newly founded State Pharmaceuticals Corporation took over responsibility for the manufacture and distribution of 34 of the most essential and widely used drugs. This was called the 34 Drug Programme. It had an immediate impact on the local drug industry because their hitherto idle production capacity was fully commissioned, sometimes to the extent of working additional shifts in producing the essential drugs needed by the large mass of our people. In line with WHO

recommendation these drugs were produced and distributed under their generic names. Overnight the market was shorn of hundreds of fancy names, which had confused doctors and patients alike for decades. Overnight the expensive promotional premia on these names did not exist anymore and people were for the first time able to afford to be ill without facing starvation as well.

All private manufacturers did not enter this operation with the same degree of willingness. In fact, as I mentioned earlier the first conference brought to the surface different degrees of reluctance. The skies were darkened by flying Vice-Presidents of



multinational companies trying to bring all the promotional skills of their trade to bear on the local administrators and politicians to enlist them against the proposed changes. The most raucous voices were raised against the proposals to emphasize generic names. The same pseudoscientific jargon used in drug promotion was now used to twist such concepts as bioavailability to support the use of brand names. They also sought to strengthen other superstitions held by the public and the medical profession alike about the research investment of the big names in the drug business. When the commotion had died down, and the visiting vice presidents had departed, it was found that most of the private sector manufacturers were regardless of the fuss manufacturing the large volumes of drugs offered by the Government on the 34 drug programme. Of course in the true traditions of the private sector, very few admitted that they were in the programme. Privately they got down to producing so much drugs on the programme that the National Drug Quality Control laboratory which was also set up on the Bibile-Wickremasinghe recommendations, found it difficult to cope up with the volume of local production.

The Sri Lankan Case

What happens when a Third World nation dares to stand up to the giant transnational drug companies? In Sri Lanka there were once 23 different kinds of tetracycline and 12 sorts of chloramphenicol on the local market. But from 1962-70 the government cut the total number of drugs from 4,000 to 630 (WHO says that 80-85% of sick people in hospitals in industrial societies can be treated with 500-800 drug products, and that basic health needs can be met with 299 "essential drugs" and 30 "complementary" products)

Then the State Pharmaceutical Corporation began to worry.

But in 1964, when there was a cholera outbreak and the government asked the local subsidiary of an American firm to convert bulk tetracycline into capsules for the epidemic victims, the company stalled with questions about patents, contracts, and technical control. The Sri Lankans finally had to airlift tetracycline capsules from abroad at inflated prices. When drug officials asked to have the company nationalized, the American Ambassador personally intervened with the prime minister and headed off nationalization.

Next, the drug transnationals threatened to boycott the State Pharmaceutical Corporation. Finally, after the Bandaranaike administration lost the mid-1977 elections, private labs were again allowed to import drugs, which was equivalent to undermining the whole structure.

(Adapted from the 'Manchester Guardian', 1/2/79)

From 1973, onwards (Table I) the local pharmaceutical industry showed a steep growth rate. From a 26 million rupee turnover in 1973 it reached 40.4 million in 1976, remarkable growth of 55%. There are hardly any elements of inflation in this growth because there was rigid price control. There was also no devaluation during this period. Hence the increase represents a true volume growth in local drug output. The growth between 1976 and 1978 however has to be discounted for inflation (removal of price control and devaluation of the rupee). This does not of course apply to the Govt. figures when you consider that most Government tenders are won at competitive prices. They are not affected much by removal of price control except in column 2 where there is a massive c.i.f. increase quite out of proportion to devaluation showing that abolition of price control has resulted in a foreign exchange drain. This is confirmed in the last column where again the increase between 1976 and 1978 is out of proportion to devaluation.

On the basis of this growth the pharmaceutical industry has been able to double its employment potential; in the technical grades the intake has been even higher the call being for Special Chemistry Graduates and graduates in Pharmacy. It must be pointed out however that these represent routine production and quality control and not research in the real sense apart from tropicalization studies. There is still so much to be done by the local pharmaceutical

"In 1960, revenues from foreign sales of prescription drugs accounted for about 23% of the total revenue of American-based pharmaceutical firms. In 1980, this figure is expected to be about 50%. Most of this increase is through sales to LDC's since markets in western industrialized societies are relatively saturated".

"Some drug firms have joined together to become one company; others have diversified into such areas as hospital equipment, food, sporting goods, and entertainment; still others have been purchased by large conglomerates. Since 1963, for example, Coca-Cola, Standard Oil, Liggett and Meyers, United Fruit, Foremost Dairies, and Hershey Chocolates have all entered into the production and sales of drugs"

"One disadvantage is the creation of an inappropriate or even harmful view of drugs and health. Pharmaceutical companies "push" drugs at an excessive rate in countries where other responses

—such as broad social and environmental changes—are called for. For example, the ratio of detailmen (drug salesmen) to dispensers (physicians and pharmacists) is higher in the LDC's than in advanced economies, and they are often paid more than physicians. Other forms of advertising and promotion are also intense"

"Finally the profits are more likely to be used to subsidize expensive research on "rich man's diseases" such as cancer, heart disease, and psychological disease, which are acute only in affluent societies. Research in widespread tropical diseases is neglected".

"A second factor is the ability of the TNP to use its connections in the home country to influence the host government depending on the political and economic influence of the company and the need of the host country for military or economic assistance".

— Richard Pratt
University of Hawaii

companies in production of routine drug needs that research is still a far away prospect. After all, the significant fruits of research have already entered the Formulary. If the local companies can continue to bring the products of the Formulary to the sick beds of the country's poor, to the rural clinics, and the village schools, 90% of their responsibility has been discharged, because after

all the very poor constitute 90% of our population.

It is relevant to examine some of the constraints in the local scene. Pharmaceutical plant costs comparatively little. With very small investments in equipment a company can simply double and treble its productive capacity. However in preceding years, the

(Continued on Page 15)

TABLE I

	Govt. Hospitals & Clinics	Govt. Imports for pvt. sector distri- bution	Private Sector Imports	Govt. raw material imports	Private Sector raw mate- rial imports	Local Production for pvt. sector	Local Production for Govt.	Total Drug Bill
1973 (establishment of S.P.C.)**	20 m	15 m	8 m	—	6 m	25 m	1 m	69 m
1975 (climax, controls)	32 m	30 m	Nil	6 m	9 m	38 m	2.3 m	102.3 m
1978 (decontrol)	54 m	80 m	15 m	12 m	17 m	75 m	7 m	231 m

**State Pharmaceuticals Corporation

'Hansa Vilak' - an opportunity lost

by H. A. Seneviratne

The Sinhala film has begun to display remarkable **potentiality** as an art. 'Hansa Vilak' (A Swan Lake), the preview of which was held recently shows such remarkable ability as far as the craft of our films is concerned, that its director, Dharmasiri Bandaranaike, will surely emerge as a film director who has mastered one's craft in his very first film.

Craft by itself, however, cannot be the strong point in any work of art. As Tolstoy says, in order to express himself so that all may understand it, the artist "must have such mastery of his craft that when walking thinks of the laws of motion."

The film 'Hansa Vilak' combining both fantasy and reality, utilizes the diverse techniques of photography, editing and sound mixing in all their complexities so much so that there appears to be much outward novelty in it. But the "receptive, spectator, the one who can", in the words of Oscar Wilde, "suppress his own silly views, his own foolish prejudices, his own absurd ideas of what art should be or should not be", is sure to ask himself whether all these intricacies were necessary to deal with the subject matter of the film. He might even leave the auditorium at the end of the film not with the impact of the subject matter of the film but under the stress of the complexity of the techniques used. The form of 'Hansa Vilak' is overdone to the point of repeating several sequences **in toto**, with dialogues, for a second time, in an attempt to follow a lazy impressionistic style, as it were.

Not only the form, but also the subject matter of the film

appears to be new and complex to the Sinhala film goer. It deals with the emotional problems of two married couples whose matrimonial bond had been suddenly disrupted.

The extra-marital sexual relationship between Miranda, the wife of Douglas, and Nissanka, the husband of Samantha is suddenly disclosed with the police raiding the hotel in which the 'illicit' couple had found temporary lodging. This results in Nissanka leaving his wife and two children, a son and a daughter. This also results in Miranda leaving husband and her daughter. Nissanka and Miranda are united in marriage, but, apparently, their past emotional attachments continue to harass them. Douglas and Miranda start meeting each other on the pretext of helping their daughter to overcome the shock of separation of her parents. Nissanka does not like Miranda meeting her former husband. He does not visit his former wife, Samantha, his children; but he goes to her ultimately in sheer desperation, only to be thrown out by Samantha's elder brother. Nissanka falls into such a state of despair and mental imbalance by the real and imaginary meetings of Douglas and Miranda and also by the fact of him being thrown out of Samantha's house that he, as far as I understand, in his imagination, kills Miranda (reminiscent of the popular Sinhala film "Duhui Malak") and an old lady in his escape from imaginary arrest. The film ends with a sequence suggestive of his re-union with Samantha who had come to talk matters over with Miranda.

'Hansa Vilak' is the first Sinhala film to attempt to deal substantially with the psychology of a character in the language of the film. But

the subject matter of the film is not mere fantasy or hallucinations of a man overridden by emotional stress and mental agony. It traverses both fantasy and reality.

On his trips to these realms the director—although he has emerged as an **auteur** in our contemporary film and not just a craftsman—film maker—appears to have lost his way. So will the spectators be, since the separation between fantasy and reality in the film is not very distinct. It would have been acceptable to the spectator if the film was dealing with mere fantasy or with the subject of the thinness of the separation of fantasy and reality itself or with the subject of fantasy being the basis of reality or **vice versa**. But it is not so, as the story will indicate. Therefore, it will definitely be difficult for the spectator to achieve much aesthetic pleasure from the complexity of the film. It will only retard him from achieving it.

The raw-material utilized for the subject matter of the film also shows some novelty. There are the children rendered helpless by the actions and emotions of the elders, there are also the children playing about quite unconcerned and ignorant of the world of the elders that is cracking up, there is the believer in God who tries to convince that the only salvation lies in the belief in Him alone, there is also the police who preach morality. But these elements do not combine in the film to project any coherent or new view of the world. Ultimately one is left to conclude simply that happiness lies in the repression of one's sex and even love in order to protect the disintegration of the family as it exists in a **bourgeois** society. But then these things are not as simple as all that.

An artist is free, however, to give even a decadent view in a work of art. But it must be convincing; otherwise it fails as a work of art.

In 'Hansa Vilak', there are also certain gaps or omissions in credibility that will raise uneasy questions in the mind of the spectator. The question as to how and why the relationship between Nissanka and Miranda had developed is the most obvious one. This might not have been an important matter if the film were a total fantasy dealing with the psychology of a man, since in that case there will be a greater degree of willing suspension of disbelief on that score, from beginning to end. But this is a realistic film with the elements of a fantasy.

Dharmasiri Bandaranaike's film, 'Hansa Vilak' is bound to raise important issues relating to aesthetics and art, which will give the film a place of importance. However, it cannot become a landmark in the history of the Sinhala cinema, in the sense that 'Rekawa' or 'Gamperaliya' or to some extent 'Palangetiyo' were. It looks as if that period has come to an end with the natural development of the film not only in Sri Lanka but the world over. Only landmarks in the higher sense of the term, that is in the sense that a work of art is something that produces a new experience for the spectator, will remain. 'Hansa Vilak' has lost a glorious opportunity, which had come so close at hand, to give a new experience to be a work of art that becomes a landmark in the higher sense.

Dharmasiri Bandaranaike has nevertheless shown such remarkable potentiality if he not merely sees what is new but also observes and thinks deeply about them, ignoring the trifles, he will be capable of making a remarkable film indeed.

*References of quotations in this article are as follows:-

1. What is Art and Essays on Art, by Tolstoy, translated by Aylmers Aude, Oxford University Press, 1962 Edition, page 60.)

2. The Works of Oscar Wilde, Collins London & Glasgow, 1952 Print page 1035.)

The 34 Drug . . .

(Continued from Page 13)

bureaucracy had effectively stifled capital investment that was originally encouraged by the concessions mentioned. This was by setting up various investment committees to approve even small quanta of foreign exchange for capital items. While some industrialists were allowed to import several lakhs worth of plant for fancy industries, the pharmaceutical companies had to haggle for several years to obtain a few thousand rupees worth of plant, or equipment. This happened even where the Formulary Committee and Pharmaceuticals Corporations had recommended purchase of the items to the corresponding investment committee. It took us nearly five years for instance, to obtain sanction to import a spectrophotometer. At the same time replacement of plant was becoming increasingly difficult and much of the plant in the industry was becoming obsolete. The early official enthusiasm which helped to set up the industry and nurture it with concessions, had given way to bureaucratic apathy and discrimination. There was a time one of the previous Finance Ministers found the foreign exchange situation so precarious that he decreed only raw material indents allowing six months credit be licenced.

We pointed out to the officials concerned that we were obtaining raw materials from the Socialist countries with whom the country had barter agreements. On such barter agreements only rupee letters of credit were necessary and no foreign exchange was involved, so the question of six months credit was only academic. It did not affect the country's foreign exchange situation. The bureaucracy however insisted that we obtained six months credit. So we had to turn to conventional sources who could provide credit. The prices quoted were very much more than from the Socialist countries, and what more, we had to pay in hard currency. In setting out to solve the foreign exchange crisis the bureaucracy was quietly aggravating it. Not

Skylab, the harmless demon.

"It is a demon in the sky,
Pray God to save us all,
No scientist can tell us when
Or where the scourge may fall.

And in the august Lok Sabha,
The aged mystic said,
I cannot tell you what to do,
But we will all be dead.

Ignorant folk sold all they had,
They feasted, sang and danced,
For they would have their final
fling

'Ere death on them advanced.

But we in Lanka had no
qualms,
For we had Arthur Clarke,
"Enjoy, relax", he boldly said
Don't panic in the dark.

No single human will be hurt
By debris that may fall,
I'll give a lakh to anyone
Who's even scratched at all.

And now the monster some
conjured
Has left us all intact,
Let's give the palm to Arthur
Clarke
For fiction and for fact.

Mervyn Casie Chetty.

only aggravating it. They were perpetuating it.

The same thing happened with machinery imports. Companies were requested to obtain quotations from countries which offered lines of credit on foreign aid agreements. Such quotations when they arrived, were invariably higher than the prices normally quoted for such items. There have been instances where we forwarded to the officials concerned corresponding quotations without strings. However letters of credit invariably were approved on the higher price. If the bureaucracy had expended a little more effort at the time in including specific categories of plant in the existing trade agreements signed with several countries, including our neighbouring India, we would not have burned up our credit so rapidly. At the same time we would have had a solid and steadily progressing investment in capital goods. Unfortunately New Delhi or Warsaw were perhaps not such exciting places for signing of trade agreements as say, Paris or Bonn or Tokyo. (To be continued)

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Buddhism and radicalism

by Reggie Siriwardena

I am glad that my article 'Where are the radical Buddhists? (LG, March 15) seems to have prompted Dr. Kumari Jayawardena to write her four-part article 'Monks in revolt' LG, May 15, June 15, July 1 and 15, since it was explicitly my purpose to provoke such discussion in raising tentatively the question whether there has been a radical tradition in Sri Lankan Buddhism. Dr. Jayawardena has brought to bear on her articles an abundance of historical scholarship to which I cannot pretend, but it seems to me that in these articles the erudition is not matched by an equal analytical rigour.

I don't think that clarity of thinking on this subject is helped by using the word 'radical' as a blanket-term to cover everybody from the monks who participated in the nationalist revolts of the 19th century to those who were associated with the LSSP and CP in the '30s and '40s. The compari-

son which Dr. Jayawardena makes in her first article confuses rather than illuminates:

'Just as priests like John Ball and Thomas Munzer were among the leaders of peasant uprising in 14th century England and 16th century Germany respectively, in Sri Lanka the Buddhist monks took a prominent part in the revolts and rebellions that occurred in the 19th century in resistance to British imperialism.

John Ball and Thomas Muntzer not only led peasant uprisings: their pronouncements and writings reflected the egalitarianism and millenarianism, clothed in religious terms, of an insurgent peasantry. Is there any evidence that Ihagama Unnanse or Kudahapola Unnanse expressed the class-outlook and ideology of the peasantry they helped to spur to revolt, or that they were imbued with anything more than a nationalist consciousness? As Dr. Jayawardena recognises, 'the advent of imperialism had been a major blow to the Buddhist religion, which further fell into decay and disarray under British occupation.' That militant Buddhist monks should have resisted imperialism in the interests of their own institutions is, therefore, to be expected.

What has to be asked is whether the 'monks in revolt' whom Dr. Jayawardena writes of in her first article did more than mobilise the peasantry in defence of their own interests and those of the feudal aristocracy whose position had been weakened by imperialism. To say that 'the bhikkhus moved closely with the peasantry' is not enough. Throughout history there have been figures who 'moved closely with' and even placed themselves at the head of masses in revolt, only to serve as the transmitting agency of the ideo-

logy of other and more privileged classes.

Of 1848 we do know that it brought into action broader strata of the peasantry, and (as Dr. Jayawardena says) was 'led in the Kandyan regions by low-country adventurers' of the emerging middle class. But, as far as the question of religious radicalism is concerned, is there any proof that the 1848 rebellion gave expression to any egalitarian or socially radical ideology an ideology of non-feudal and non-bourgeois classes—in the language of religion? If there was such evidence, I presume Dr. Jayawardena would have cited it.

When we come to the nationalist and Buddhist revival of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the question of its class character becomes crucial in deciding whether it can be called 'radical'. If I may return to the European analogy, Dr. Jayawardena will be aware that in the period of the rise of the bourgeoisie in western Europe, the ideology of mercantile capitalism was expressed in religious movements such as Calvinism and Presbyterianism. But at the same time radical Christianity in such movements as those of the Anabaptists, the Hussites, the Diggers and numerous other radical Puritan sects at the time of the English Civil War voiced the world-view and aspirations of the peasantry and smaller artisans and craftsmen in revolt, whose outlook was radically different from that of the big bourgeoisie.

It seems to me that in the Buddhist revival of the late 19th to early 20th century, the parallels with the bourgeois elements of the European Reformation are clear. Anagarika Dharmapala, for instance, was a Calvin-like figure with the puritanism characteristic of a

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period of primitive capitalist accumulation. What the nationalist Sri Lanka bourgeoisie could not beget, however, was a bourgeois Enlightenment — even to the extent of their Indian counterparts (e. g. the Bengali Renaissance) — because the bourgeoisie behind our nationalist movement were a stunted class — and, for the most part, little more than a petty bourgeoisie aspiring to be a bourgeoisie. Hence the backward and reactionary character of their ideology.

But while (with appropriate modifications) one may find the Sri Lankan counterparts of the Calvinists and Presbyterians, I look in vain for a Thoms Muntzer or a Gerrard Winstanley. That some Buddhist groups associated themselves with the early labour movement, and others with the left parties of the '30s and '40s, (as shown in Dr. Jayawardena's third and fourth articles) is true. But in elevating these tendencies into a 'religious radicalism' Dr. Jayawardena seriously misses the point.

One may, of course, use terms in various ways: what is important is not to be mistaken about the character of the social phenomenon that is under discussion. What I would characterise as 'religious radicalism' would be the expression in religious terms of the ideology of an oppressed class, seeking to transform **religious doctrine and practice themselves** so as to make them the vehicle of that ideology. Dr. Jayawardena may say that she does not mean the same thing by the term: but what is really at issue is whether one can find in Sri Lankan Buddhism any manifestation of the social phenomenon that I have described.

If there had been a Buddhist radicalism, in my sense, in Sri Lanka during the period examined by Dr. Jayawardena, I would have expected it to be manifested in a broad and active movement for the re-interpretation and re-statement of Buddhist doctrine and practice — in, let us say, the re-vitalisation of Buddhist pronouncements on caste as a weapon against caste oppression, the use

of the concept of **tanha** as a counteracting force to acquisitive capitalism, or a movement for religious worship and ritual to be conducted in the vernacular rather than in the arcane Pali. Dr. Jayawardena has not been able to discover any developments of this kind. The most she has been able to find is that the political bhikkhus of the '40s defended the participation of monks in politics as being in keeping with the Buddhist concept of **paratha-charya** (altruistic service to society) — a concept which is itself paternalistic rather than radical.

As Dr. Jayawardena admits, the 'political bhikkhus' of that time who flirted with the left movement were swept away by the communalism of the '50s which carried S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike to power in 1956. I see that Dr. Jayawardena's view of this event is very different from mine, since she describes it as one which 'had a progressive content, in that it was a movement of the underprivileged against the English-speaking bourgeoisie. I would say instead that 1956 diverted the discontent of those 'underprivileged' into false channels, and thus helped to preserve the fundamental class structure intact — a development for which we are paying the price today. I suspect that the differences between what Dr. Jayawardena and I see as 'progressive' underlie our variant views on 'Buddhist radicalism' too.

I conclude that in Sri Lankan Buddhism the consolatory aspects of religion have been dominant at the expense of any potentially radical elements, if they could have been found in the Buddhist tradition. That some Buddhist monks may be 'drawn into popular movements for political and social change', as Dr. Jayawardena says in her last sentence, is of course true. But I don't think any socially radical movement in Sri Lanka will have a specifically Buddhist character: the intellectual inspiration will continue to come, as it has done in the last four decades, from the secular, humanist, socialist and Marxist traditions.

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Homecoming

"Look, the Outsider's back." It was of course Monty Kotipathy the batik tie-noon announcing my arrival to the maitre d' hotel and his minions at the Blue Tiger, oops sorry, Blue Elephant Supper Club. With the same feigned surprise and exultation with which the compere of the B. M. C. sponsored 'Take it or Leave it' Show recognises the tall dark and handsome Chairman of the BMC in the audience, Monty threw out a hearty greeting, a welcome grin stretching from right ear to pearl-studded shirt front.

"Nice to have you back,..... we all missed you Outsider..... been abroad, eh caballero.....?" he asked.

"And I can guess where you've been..... Madrid, eh?" inquired I.

"Well, Madrid..... New York..... Taiwan, Hong Kong Singapore and here and there" he replied a bit cagily.

"Business.....?"

Yes, it's about this rubberised chewing gum factory which I am starting in the FTZ..... local expertise, local labour, local latex..... but I had some problem about equity participation..... you know the collateral thing.... but I am glad to say..... Look Outsider, I don't mind you writing this..... I'd rather have it in your prestigious journal than in the penny press..... besides you know how I appreciate your work and like to do you a favour whenever I can..... I realise you must be absolutely starving for hot news after your long absence..... talking about starving, you will join me, won't you? Nothing special..... just the Lobster Thermidor, with some moselle to wash it down..... good..... well, you see you are looking at the first Sri Lankan businessman to raise a loan from PISOF, the Prudential Insurance Society of Florida, a Rockefeller outfit....."

But I thought you told me last time you got a loan from FISHL, the Fujiyama Industrial something-something, a Mitsubishi conduit.... ..?"

"But that loan was for my Pathola—based Cosmetics and Synthetic Garments factory which has already exported its first consignment to Upper Volta with a net foreign exchange return, value-added, of 2 million D-Marks..... Now that you are taking notes (always the conscientious journalist, eh Outsider?) please note also that Yen loan on the new swing-wing credit line was point six three percentage below the usual inter-bank lending rate in the Euro-dollar market....."

"Monty, the way you keep raising these loans, one would think you are up to your eyeballs in debt.....?"

For God's sake Outsider, kindly lower your voice..... I am ashamed of you..... thought you were the best informed investigative financial reporter in this island..... how could you be so disgustingly callow..... it has nothing to do with my being broke..... it is merely a reflection of the enormous confidence I have earned in the world's money markets....."

"Oh, the old confidence trick....."

"A little more wine..... and shall we order the dessert, now?"

"But Monty,..... these huge loans.....?"

"Outsider, please get this straight..... every single loan I have raised has been under the special Compensatory Financing Facility of UNCTAD's Second Window....." he said, shutting the door firmly on that line of inquiry.

But Monty underestimated my professional pertinacity. The previous day I had bumped into a Lake House editor (he was an editor, when I met him but I am

not sure whether he is still at his desk or merely in transit) who was attending an in-service crash course on journalism. He impressed me a great deal, especially when he spoke with intense feeling about investigative in-depth reporting on events and issues which had nothing to do with the wornout news concept of 'man-bites-dog'.

I had failed to bite Monty for a short-term loan and was, so to say, chewing the cud when I decided, in a rare flash of inspiration, to check his story, indepth-wise, with Dr. Arthika Prasnatilleke, the Central Bank's leaky think-tank and the reporter's dream come true:

"Art", as he was affectionately called on the Colorado U. campus when on a Fulbright grant he did his doctoral thesis "**Kamburupitiya: a micro-study of the paddy economy (1893-1894) and its impact on the animistic beliefs in the southern province, with special reference to the Kataragama Deiyo**", was just getting off his salmon-pink Volvo, a third gift from his second cousin who is working (when he is not guzzling the stuff in a Milwaukee brewery.

"Hey, Art" I said "hang on a minute, will yah.....?"

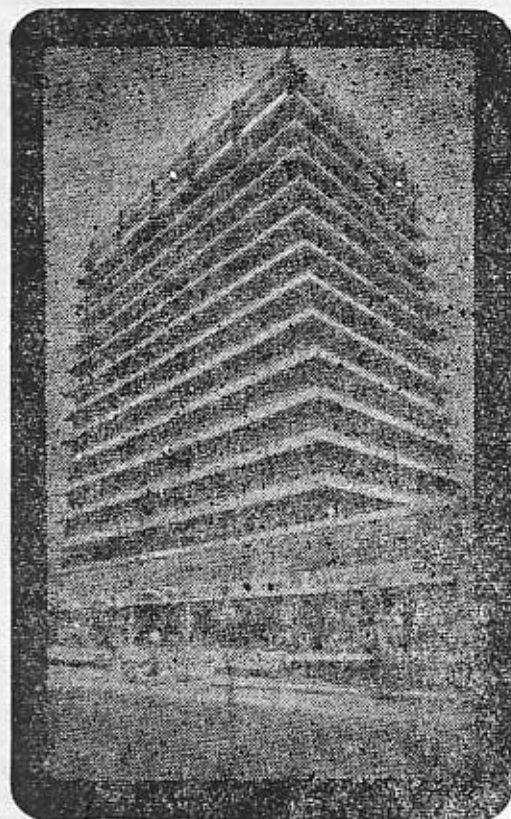
My accent obviously impressed him.

"What's up, man?" asked Art.

"Tell me, doc..... these foreign loans raised by the private sector, specially the FTZ industrialists, will surely increase our debt-servicing burden which according to the latest Central Bank report was exceeding twenty percent of export earnings.....?"

My high school economics prompted a scornful laugh.

"Not" said Arthika P. categorically "if you regard the rising trend in debt amortization in terms of the depreciation of the



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rupee's value vis-a-vis foreign currencies, together with the steady enhancement of the inflow of long-term loans to SDR 680 million in 1978, attributable naturally to the surplus generated in the current account after allowing for the usual repurchases from the Fund, over and above the gross capital inflows in the non-monetary sector which caused the basic change in the maturity structure of debt outstanding...."

Flabbergased, I said meekly: "Doc, you are an economic miracle..... the way you explain these abstruse facts and figures....."

"Come off it Outsider..... out the flattery..... it's just my job you know....."

In the spirit of mutual help which typifies our fraternity, I passed on this hot-hot information to a top in-depth economics staffer in the "DAILY NOOSE"...

In turn, he, an old buddy, gave me an old style H. I. (human interest) story just in case I might pause to ask for the fifty bucks he owed me.

According to the story — a Press Club yarn, probably — Gemunu Perera, a 47 year old postal peon of Buwalikada, Kandy, was knocked down by the CTB when he was riding his brand new bicycle, a post-OPEC price hike purchase. On returning home from hospital a week later he had plans of sending a bag of brinjals to his blood donor, one Wijeyeratne. But then he was torn by the fearful doubt that the donor may have been Wijeyeratnam..... What would his Kandyan aristocratic relatives say if they found out? Could he have a special blood test or something in some famous hospital abroad..... in London or New York..... At this point news of the hapless peon's plight got to the PR man of BANDOS INC., the manufacturers of the brand new, creamy, crunchy, sugar-coated chocolate biscuit (in six colours) and he offered to pay all the hospital expenses. Fortunately, JUNTA, the Chilean charter operators who have just opened an office in Colombo, offered a free return ticket to N. Y. When Perera returns from the Walter Reed hospital, you will see him

in a new program on colour TV, with the returning hero singing the new hit "BANDOS THE FAMILY FRIEND.....BANDOS IS GOOD FOR YOU". Junta will be running a two page colour supplement in the Sunday papers....."It's a truly heart-rending real life story..... the best since Rosemary, the the sweet, savage lovely, returned" said my newspaper friend.

Still trying to take in the local scene after many weeks away, I was glad to be clued in on the political — international front by Prajatantra Bulathvita, the political analyst of a pro-Peking (Lin Piao faction) monthly. The only noteworthy development was S. D. Bandaranayake's suggestion that JR should mediate in the Sino-Soviet dispute.

"But wasn't S. D. a SWRD man?"

"Yes, he was the founder of the Bosat Bandaranaike party but that was after he was called a sawdust doll by SWRD himself and long before he became secretary of the pro-China party"

"But he hasn't had any contact with JR at all....."

"Not since he used People's War tactics and blocked JR's troops with boulders at Imbulgoda on the Kandy road"

"Was he, as the Chinese say, lifting a stone to drop it on his own feet.....?"

"In order to.....?"

"To stop JR's Long March to Kandy in his campaign against the B-C Pact"

It was also nice to find that young Tyrone Fernando was back at his desk as Acting Deputy Foreign Minister for the fifth or fifteenth time, and the younger Ranil as Acting Foreign Minister, faced with the SKYLAB danger, was instructing the natives what to do if a foreign object suddenly fell from the skies.....

Surely we all know what happens when a foreign object suddenly falls from the skies — Ranil goes back to being Deputy Foreign Minister and Tyrone starts planning his next film "The Bridge over the River K" (K for Koralawella) and poor Lester Pieris has problems K — ast — wise.

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Bold initiative

by J. Uyangoda

'Indu Saha Lanka'

"Parakrama Kodituwakku, possibly the best known radical Sinhala poet, has come out this time with something new. It is an anthology of Tamil poems—both South Indian and Lankan—translated into Sinhala by Parakrama himself. The anthology, containing thirty three separate poems is entitled "INDU SAHA LANKA" (India and Lanka) which presumably connotes some sort of brotherhood among Indian and Lankan peoples.

Being in the forefront of contemporary Sinhala poets, Parakrama strongly believes that art has a certain mission to fulfill. In the struggle of the masses against oppression and for emancipation, he holds, art must play its definite role, to use his own words, becoming "a spark in the struggle." By compiling the present anthology, he invites his Sinhala readers to build up a bridge to and conduct a heart-to-heart dialogue with their Tamil and Muslim brethren. If I am correct, this is the first attempt by any Sinhala writer to present contemporary Tamil literature to the Sinhala reader. We must congratulate and encourage Parakrama for his bold initiative.

In this volume we have eleven Indian poets and nine Lankan poets who though they write in Tamil, belong to both Tamil and Muslim communities. It is claimed in the publishers' note that the works of these poets included here, crystalize and represent the realism and "populist progressiveness" (!) of new Tamil poetry—a statement which leaves room for some doubt. It is true that almost all the poems are written in the realistic tradition, but one cannot fail noticing, even at first glance, that the translator-editor has not been sensitive enough in

the selection of poems so as to convey the genuine national sentiments of the oppressed Tamil masses. Amongst the selected Lanka Tamil poems, not a single one can be found which deals thematically with the struggle of the Tamil masses. Instead we got protests against caste oppression, the obnoxious dowry system, religious obscurantism and rural poverty etc, which, though important are not representative of the fundamental and crucial issue as far as the Lankan Tamils are concerned. In this context, it is regrettable to note that Parakrama has failed to communicate the message of Subramaniam Bharathi whom he quotes with so much of faith. It must be recalled in passing, that Bharathi was not only a revolutionary South Indian but a modern Indian poet who had a mission and commitment towards the emancipation of the oppressed Indian masses.

It is a pity that Parakrama does not display his masterly skill in Sinhala poetic idiom which was abundantly evident in his earlier works "Podi Malliye" (Little Brother) and "Akeekaru putrayakuge Lokaya" (World of a disobedient son). One of the remarkable features of his early poetry was that he possessed a rare sensitivity to and a fine grasp of the social reality that he expressed through a strikingly original use of language and metaphor. This rare failure in the use of poetic idiom can perhaps be attributed to the fact that the majority of the poems included in the anthology are not so rich in quality.

Incidentally the best poems out of the whole collection are those of one or two Indian poets, **Sahul Hameed**, described as "the morning star of the Indian revolutionary poetry" is the most

prominent. His poems, though short, display a power common to the best contemporary Latin American and "Third World" poetry. **Aranganathan's** very short poem (only five words!) on Indian Independence has a fine ironic touch.

Nuhuman—a Lankan—has many a thing to say, but lacks coherence and unity. If you take pains to read his long poems (overcoming the clumsiness of the Sinhala translation) you may find traces of some social awareness that others lack or fail to display. It is somewhat difficult to understand why Parakrama has included in this collection a large number of poems which are very poor both in terms of content and form. Surely contemporary Lankan Tamil poetry is not so arid as the selection would make out!

The claims that this selection reflects the realism of new Tamil poetry prompts me to say something about the tradition of "realism". It seems that almost all of our radical writers believe that realism in art is merely a depiction of every kind of injustice of the existing social systems. That is but a vulgarisation. As **George Lukas** states in his study of the European realistic tradition, true realism in art must reflect the fundamental and most essential aspects and forces of a particular historical epoch. Of course, Lukas was talking about great European novels, but, his definition of realism, I believe, applies equally to the other branches of creative art. Therefore, the contemporary Tamil literature to be "realist", in the true sense of the term (different from its present day simplistic definitions), should portray, if I may borrow a phrase from Lenin, the essential aspects of this particular historical situation. As far as the Tamil literature in this country is concerned what is imperative is the portrayal of the national sentiments of the Tamil masses.

(Continued on Page 23)

Political history is high fun

by Jayantha Somasunderam

Sri Lanka: Third World Democracy by James Jupp. Published by K. V. G. de Silva & Sons Colombo. 423pp.

Jupp's book is one of the best documented, most readable accounts of the Senanayake and Bandaranike eras of our history. Focusing mainly on Parliament and the tremendous changes that were wrought through Parliament and in this period, it deals with a period so close to our generation that perhaps we are incapable of analysing it objectively.

Jupp's account of the Sinhala-Buddhist revivalism of the fifties and the emergence of the JVP fifteen years later, are the two best written portions of the book. Calling his book **Third World Democracy**, Jupp seems to restrict this democracy to Parliament.

Bold . . .

(Continued from Page 22)

In this context, the poetry of **Subramaniam Bharathi**, can be cited as exemplary. To quote David Ludden "he (Bharathi) wrote songs that educated the people as to their present condition, their past and their necessary duties for the sake of nationhood; and he wrote songs that could serve as **mantras** as hymns of the people in movement. His lyrics combine these educative and mantric qualities. He prepared the people for participation in mass movement towards nationhood, and also wrote songs they could sing as they moved". (**Imperialism and Revolution in South Asia**—ed. by Kathleen Gough and Harry P. Sharma.)

Anyway, what is important here is Parakrama's sense of commitment and unequivocal willingness to contribute to the cause of the masses through art and literature. Refined in Marxist methodology and world outlook, we hope, he will do a lot in the future.

What he seems to have totally ignored, is the effect of events outside of Parliament and their impact not only on the Parliamentary process, but also on the future of parliamentary institutions.

Take the Hartal of 1953. Its effect was much more than to give a bellyache to Dudley Senanayake, undermine the position of the UNP-moderates and put Sir John in office. It was, to date, the only mass action that seriously threatened the bourgeois state. The JVP uprising in spite of its military sophistication, was not a mass movement acting spontaneously. It was the Hartal that separated the men from the boys as far as the Left movement in Sri Lanka was concerned.

It was the first clear indication that the mainstream left leadership was incapable of leading an uprising or carrying a revolutionary upsurge to its logical conclusion.

Jupp deals with the setback that the JVP suffered in 1971, the discrediting of the LSSP and CP and the general misfortunes of the Left movement that July 77 highlighted. But while this was going on, the radicalisation of the workers and students was also going apace. The explosion on the Peradeniya Campus which ended in the shooting of an undergraduate describes the growing radicalism of the student movement, in spite of the consistent attempts to crush such initiatives.

Railway Strike

The railway strike of December 1976 is much more important. Not only was it taking place in a department with a long tradition of workers' activity, but it was also the traditional stronghold of the established unions of the Left Parties. When the strike broke out, leadership passed on to a group of young men who refused to compromise either with the management or the reformist trade union leaders.

This activism of students and urban workers was taking place

against a background of widespread radicalism within the established Left Parties. The constitution of the LSSP under a new leadership brought it in line with the numerous New Left groups which were establishing themselves under young leadership. The very proliferation of such groups, separated by subtleties of Marxist ideology, was itself witness to the intellectual activity and militancy that was once again being injected in to the Workers' movement.

The ignoring of this trend in the opposition, damages any serious analysis of prospects for Sri Lanka's democracy or her parliamentary institutions.

Jupp's book recounts for us the comedy that an earlier generation had made out of politics. There was Prime Minister W. Dahanayake who in 1959 sacked his cabinet Ministers, dissolved Parliament and quit the SLFP saying "I have resigned from the SLFP because I don't want my throat cut in broad daylight. Then we had N. M. Perera telling a public meeting in 1963, one year before teaming up with the government, that the majority of the government party are blockheads."

Mrs. Konnara Rajaratna's gem was her claim that "the Yugoslav ambassador was the secret agent of the Catholic Church and was also forwarding the interests of American imperialism." Then there was S.D. Bandaranayake who in 1960 formed a party, the **Bosath Bandaranaike Pakshaya** which believed that S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike was a **bodhisatva**.

Of course it was an era of going to extremes to establish your Sinhala-Buddhist **bona fides**. L. H. Mettananda and Philip Gunawardena teamed up but the government refused to permit the MEP election broadcast because "from beginning to end it breathes anti-Catholic venom." But Philip promised to distribute lands of the Catholic Church and the Malwatte monasteries and "expel all foreign fascist Catholics." Mrs. Konnara Rajaratna concluded that "the LSSP was a Tamil political organisation whose leader Dr. N. M. Perera was a traitor." Our political history can be high fun.

Torture and obedience

A few years ago a group of experimenters at Yale University advertised for volunteers to take part in a psychological experiment. Each volunteer was taken into a room where there was a row of thirty switches with labels ranging from 15 to 450 volts, and marked SLIGHT SHOCK, MODERATE SHOCK and so on, up to the last: DANGER—SEVERE SHOCK. In another room, into which the volunteer could look through a glass panel, sat another man strapped to a chair and with an electrode attached to his wrist.

The scientist conducting the experiment told each volunteer that the purpose of the experiment was to test the effects of punishment on learning. The man strapped in the chair had been taught a series of word-pairs. The volunteer was to read out a word, and the man in the other room was to give the matching word. Each time the 'learner' got the answer wrong, the volunteer was to give him an electric shock by pressing a switch—starting with 15 volts, and stepping up the intensity in increments of 15 volts with each wrong answer.

The experiment would begin. Very soon, as the shocks increased in intensity, the 'learner' would show signs of pain, would grunt, then cry out in protest, demand that he be let out, even scream hysterically that he had a heart condition and that he just couldn't go on.

In reality, the 'learner' was an actor, the switches were fake, and the actual purpose of the experiment was to discover how far people would go in carrying out orders when they believed they were inflicting pain or even running the risk of causing death.

The results? The average maximum shock which the

volunteers were willing to give the victim was between 370-400 volts, and over 60 per cent of them went on to the end of the scale.

I have found that telling this story is a useful way of gauging people's social attitudes. Benevolent and innocent listeners usually react incredulously, as if they simply can't conceive the possibility of any human being behaving in this barbarous way. Others, more hard-boiled, shake their heads gloomily or cynically, and remark that it confirms their worst suspicions about the depravity of human nature. Only a few get to the heart of the matter, indicated by the title of the book in which the experiment is described—**Obedience to Authority**.

To make the point clearer, one need only look at some of the conversations which went on between volunteer and supervising scientist during the experiment. Often the volunteer would be unnerved by the victim's protests and screams and want to stop, but would resume when told with an air of authority by the scientist: 'The experiment requires that you go on. I'm responsible for anything that happens'. Interviewed later about their reactions, the volunteers made remarks such as these: 'I wouldn't have done it by myself. I was just doing what I was told.' 'I figured: well, this is an experiment, and Yale knows what's going on, and if they think it's all right, well, it's all right with me.' Even when the man in the other room pretended at first to be dead at the end of the experiment, one volunteer's reaction, as reported by himself, was: 'It didn't bother me. I did a job.'

What the experiment reveals, therefore, is not some truth about the innate evil of human

nature, but how far people can be made to go in a society where they are conditioned to respect authority, carry out orders and shuffle off the sense of personal responsibility with the thought that they are only doing what they are told. Significantly, the figures of average maximum shock and the percentage of people who carried on to the end fell when the experiment was carried out not at Yale but in the small town of Bridgeport in a seedy commercial building under the name 'Research Associates of Bridgeport'. As the educationist John Holt says, commenting on the experiment: 'Authority must be legitimate; not everyone has a right to give orders. **One must have the proper credentials to be able to torture.**'

Of course, the volunteers in the Yale experiment were under no compulsion to obey orders; they were free to walk out at any time; and yet, their respect for the intellectual and scientific authority of Yale University was enough to make them overcome their scruples. But think of men acting under what they believe to be lawful authority to which obedience is obligatory, and a great deal that otherwise seems horrible and incomprehensible begins to make sense.

Confronted with Auschwitz, My Lai, or Kataragama 1971, one may fall too easily into the temptation of supposing that the torturers and murderers were all sadists, that what we have here is some perverted freak of human nature. But that is a comforting evasion of the more disturbing truth. As a British lawyer who had worked on the Nuremberg trials once said, an apparent monster like Eichmann was simply the kind of character who in other circumstances would have retired after thirty years of service in a firm with a gold watch. He was just a man doing a job. The biggest atrocities are made possible by unthinking obedience.

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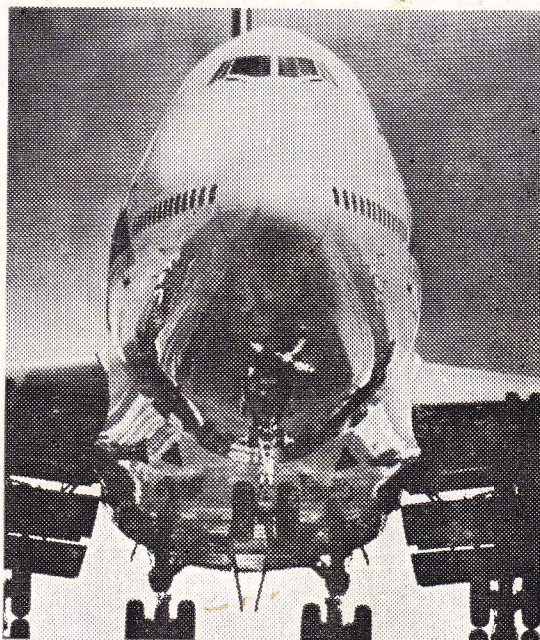
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