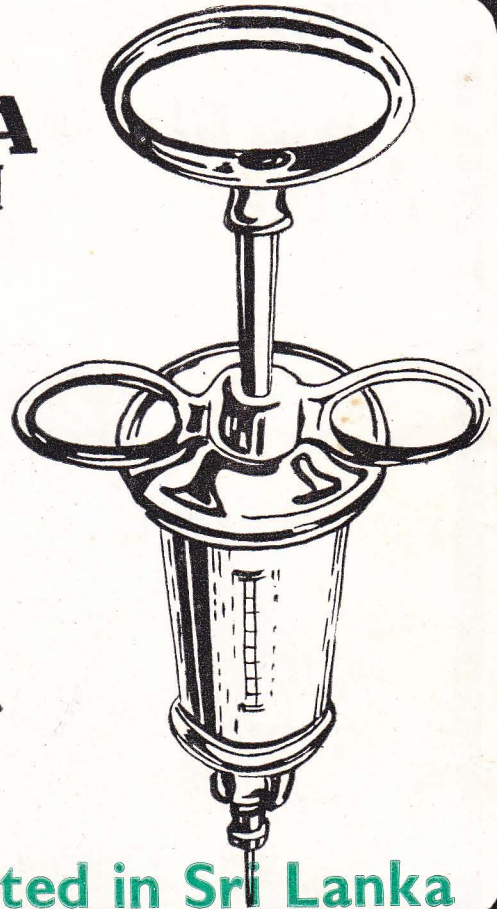


GUARDIAN

DEPO PROVERA The ignorance-based contraceptive



Banned in US - promoted in Sri Lanka

N. M. — 'Leader of the working class'

— Hector Abhayavardhana

NICARAGUA : Paper tigers, straw dogs

The Church and revolution

Latin America : Third World war centre

Proportional representation — G. R. Tressie Leitan

Which way for the Left? : Peradiga Sulanga

● SATIRE

● BOOK REVIEW

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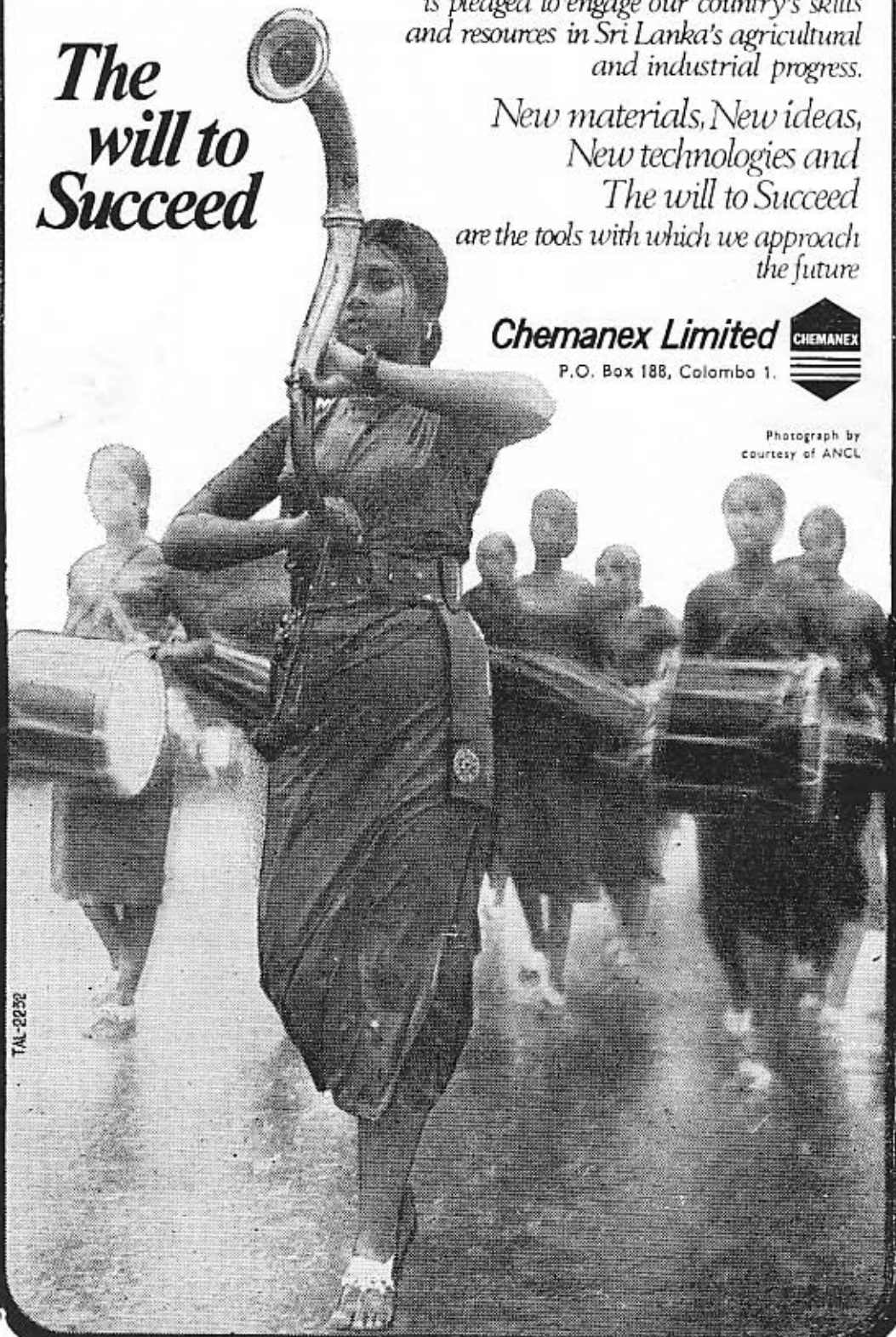
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A gathering storm?

When the **Lanka Guardian** was born on May Day last year, its main cover page headline read: 'White or Black Paper?' The reference was to the White Paper on Employment Relations, which provoked such a storm among trade unions and other working-class organisations (even UNP unions found themselves compelled to get into the act) that the proposals were shelved. The White Paper proposed, in respect of strikes, to make 21 days' notice obligatory in the case of an essential industry, and to legalise strikes in disputes referred to an industrial court or already the subject of an award or settlement. Now there is a draft Essential Services Bill which seeks to go much further, completely banning strikes in essential services.

By its new draft Bill, the Government has unintentionally given a filip to the moves for joint action among five left parties. Although last week's meeting of left party representatives was stymied by the old LSSP's continuing objections to the nomenclature of the 'new LSSP', it is certain that whenever this issue is resolved, the Essential Services Bill will figure largely on any agenda for joint action. Although Mrs. Bandaranaike, hastening to make capital out of the new Bill on behalf of her party, twitted the left with silence on this issue (alleging that this was gratitude for the state honours to N.M.) at a public meeting, it is impossible that either Old Left or New Left could ignore the Bill. Already while Mrs. Bandaranaike was speaking, the city had been plastered for several days with protest posters in customary hand-written JVP style.

Incidentally, at the LAWASIA confabulation, where human rights figured largely on the agenda, most visiting delegates (according to observers present) were left with the impression that Sri Lanka was a paradise of human rights. Hardly any of them knew that there was an Essential Services Bill in the offing or troubled to find out the precise provisions of the Anti-Terrorist Act.

Beating the bookseller

Recently local booksellers upped the price of imported books by raising the conversion rate of the published price to Rs. 40 per pound sterling, thus making still more prohibitive foreign books — whose prices had already soared out of the reach of the common reader as a result of devaluation here and inflation abroad. The excuse of the Booksellers' Association (the ring that controls the book trade) was that the upward fluctuation of the pound made this adjustment necessary. But at the time of writing the pound's exchange rate stands at just over Rs. 35.

It has long been a grouse among book-buyers that book prices are converted at a level much above the prevailing exchange rate, although book importers get a discount of at least 33 1/3% on the published price. At the time when the FEEC system was in force but did not apply to books, and book imports were subject to quotas, the booksellers used to convert the pound and the dollar at a figure above the non-FEEC rate, arguing that since imports were limited, they had to meet the same overheads with a reduced volume of imports. Now that that argument no longer applies, the flotation of the rupee is being trotted out instead.

Students and other selective book-buyers who do their purchasing on special orders have, however, one way of beating the booksellers' ring. One benefit of the liberalisation of imports of which not sufficient advantage is taken is that it is now possible for anybody to obtain books for personal use direct from foreign booksellers or publishers (up to a ceiling of Rs. 5000!). The procedure is simple: provided one has an invoice from the supplier, one gets the exchange permit virtually across the counter at a bank, and when the parcel arrives it is delivered at one's door (if it is marked BOOKS, as is usual). Even paying for (sea mail) postage, it still works out cheaper than ordering through a bookseller here — and

(Continued on Page 2)

Pharmaceuticals

Mr. U. Karunathileka's articles on the Pharmaceutical Industry, published in your "Lanka Guardian" contains certain glaring inaccuracies which must be pointed out for the benefit of your readers.

That there has been a fantastic increase in the prices of imported drugs is an accepted fact. In trying to explain this, Mr. Karunathileka trots out the old theory that free market forces instead of leading to a reduction of prices had actually contributed to its phenomenal increase. The real reason why prices of imported drugs have increased is to be found closer home.

The 100% devaluation of the Sri Lanka Rupee in November '77

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Letters . . .

preceded "liberalisation" and the removal of the SPC's monopoly. Just prior to liberalisation the Pharmaceutical Corporation's, retail price of imported finished drugs was 180 if CIF is taken as 100. In May 1978, the PC began retailing drugs at a price which was 108 when CIF was taken as 100. More recently, it has adopted a two-tier system—120 for "essential" and 140 for non essential drugs. The private sector presumably retails at about 140/145 when CIF is 100. (all figures here are close approximations).

It is thus clear that this phenomenon of very large price increases have actually taken place at a time when the margin between CIF and the retail price has dwindled.

The impact of devaluation and the continuing depreciation of the Sri Lanka rupee in terms of foreign currencies is seen to be the cause of high drug prices when one realises that immediately before devaluation, the £ sterling was valued at about Rs. 15/- and rose to Rs. 29/- in consequence of devaluation. Today the £ sterling costs about Rs. 35/-. Understandably, the government owned press is also silent about the adverse impact of devaluation.

Colombo 4

M. M. S. Fuard

The Foreign Service

I was interested in reading the Sociological Survey of the Foreign Services outlined in Dr. Wiswa Warnapala's piece on Vaithianathan and Dias era (June 15, 1979). The best that can be said of this survey is that it is not entirely spurious; only a simpleton could find it wholly convincing. Most of the top segment of the Foreign Service do not belong to the elite upper crust but were grafted into it by matrimonial alliance. In the first batch of recruits, you will find one DPL fledgling marrying a Central Bank governor's daughter, another opting for the hand of a Permanent Secy's daughter, yet another

marrying a teenage daughter of an Inland Revenue chief. Some improved their coat of arms but many of them were carrying kingsize chips on their shoulders. It is good to remember that there is a balance of rivalry at the top among knight-errants and some of them do bear grudges.

You cannot stop a central school product in the Civil Service ending up as President of the Eighty Club — nor can you prevent a Foreign Service officer with a rural background ordering a custom made suit from Austin Reed's or Airey and Wheeler. To start with, foreign service was never attractive in the initial stages as there was no ban on the import of consumer items and exchange control restrictions were not operative in respect of undergraduate education in Oxbridge. Moreover strawberry jam, cheese and Chivas Regal were freely available in Sri Lanka. There was no scramble to join the foreign service. Some of the selectees declined the offer of appointments. Roland Sri Pathmanathan (First class honours — Western Classics), J. B. Kelegama, James Lanerolle and Kanesathasan to mention a few. Sri Pathmanathan topped the list in the first batch of recruits but he opted to be a University teacher. His vacancy was doubled and brought a bonanza for the son of a Knight and the son-in-law of a Knight. Seven graduates were recruited as probationers to the foreign service on the results of a competitive exam held in 1949.

If the emphasis is on 'nativisation', the need for post graduate training in international relations is hardly necessary. With the hotline and the jet available to the Minister of

Foreign Affairs, a diplomat is nowadays hardly even a courier. But one or two essential qualifications remain — he must have intestines of steel and the ability to stay up till two in the morning not only at cocktail parties but at international airports awaiting the arrival of VIPP. The main objective of the diplomat is to project the image of Sri Lanka and to give the correct political perspectives.

Finally I must conclude this note with the observations made by the Hon. Minister of Finance on 26 February 1979 when quizzing Mr. Badrapala Wickramatunga, our envoy to Sweden at the select committee hearings.

"Our last Ambassador in Sweden is now in active business in Sweden and Norway. You can draw your own conclusions. This is not the first time it has happened. This is about the third or fourth time. Our Ambassadors are not looking after the interests of the country at all. They are only pushing their own interests. I am sorry the Foreign Office must look into this."

We all know the story of a "representative" we once had in Manila, whose 'business' was certainly not the nation's business. And what of the athletic antics of a "heavyweight" (not mentally) in another ASEAN capital?

R. Mendis.

Trends . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

it is certainly much quicker. A Lanka Guardian writer who has dealt with an American bookshop says he gets a book within two months of sending a bank draft, whereas it used to take him anything from six months to a year to obtain an American book through a local bookshop. (Hint: When ordering, it is always best to specify registered post; otherwise, books are in danger of disappearing in the Parcels Office.)

Is banned drug used here ?

A drug **Depo Provera** is being advertised in the local press—interestingly enough—in the Sinhala press. Although international organisations including UNFPA which recently held a much publicized conference here and the I.P.P.F. have given their blessings for the use of this drug, this injectable contraceptive is **not** approved for use in US, Canada or Britain.

More details about this are available in a magazine called **Poverty & Power** (a War on Want publication) in an article by Jackie Barton.

"Depo Provera" (DP) is an injectable contraceptive which with one shot gives protection from pregnancy for 3-6 months. It is currently used by one million women in 70 countries, almost all of them in the Third World—the biggest users are Thailand, **Sri Lanka**, Uganda, Kenya and Costa Rica. The number of users is increasing yearly, yet the drug is **not** approved for use in the US, Canada or Britain. Why then is it so freely available in the Third World?

"DP is manufactured by the US Company, Upjohn and has been in use since the late sixties. In 1972, tests showed that it led to increased breast nodules in beagles and after that the Oral form was withdrawn. There was also concern that it could cause permanent sterility. Although in 1973, the US Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) stated that it intended to allow the injectable form for special cases, after further suspicions about association with cancer, this time of the cervix, and action by a Congressional sub-committee, FDA approval was finally suspended.

"This however, does not stop the use of DP in other countries. USAID cannot supply it without FDA approval, but the UNFPA, the WHO and especially the IPPF

continue to supply the Third World with all its wants. Between 1970 and 1974, Thailand received 32,000 doses through the IPPF, despite the fact that at that time it was "under clinical trial". As the IPPF said, "you can get people accepting injections more readily than a pill."

Here is the crux of the matter. Almost all the arguments presented for DP are based on the assumed ignorance or worse, irresponsibility of the user. This is why a drug which is not considered safe in the West is passed over to less developed countries. In the Third World apart from shortcomings in literacy, communication and popular understanding of the subtleties of modern medicine, women have neither the social freedom nor the economic conditions which would enable them to make a proper choice. But a birth control method which is actually based on such shortcomings, indeed thrives on them, is highly questionable.

"Look at some of the arguments for the use of DP in the Third World.

(a) **DP is effective:** So effective that it may lead to permanent sterility. One programme in Thailand will only give it to women who have already proved their fertility by having children. This however, is not in the woman's interest but "to protect the programme from giving it to a sterile couple."

(b) **DP requires that the woman sees a doctor only once every few months.** Protection lasts a long time, but so do the side effects—weight gain, menstrual disturbances, dizziness, headaches. There is no way of withdrawing the drug once it has been given.

(c) **DP is convenient.** It is certainly convenient for the doctor who does not need to do even a pelvic examination.

(d) **DP can be given soon after birth,** which may be the woman's only contact with medical services, at a time when she is "highly motivated" to accept contraception.

(e) **DP can actually increase lactation.** Whether it disturbs the balance in milk content, however is not known. Also no one seems to ask how a woman who is already only just sufficiently nourished herself can produce extra milk. From what reserves does it come?

(f) **DP is a method which can be used where the husband is likely to interfere with other methods of contraception.** This is a problem which seems to demand education for men rather than dangerous pharmaceuticals for women.

Another report from Thailand says "...In the minds of common people, a physician without a syringe is not a real physician at all...therefore a contraceptive to be taken by injection has a tremendous advantage over other methods."

Advantage to whom? asks Jackie Barton. "The West has taught the rest of the world to admire technological "needle and syringe" medicine. Illich and others are now beginning to question whether such medicine really improves our standard of living or not. **Before we pass our rejected pharmaceuticals on to the Third World, we should urge them to question also.**"

And when I questioned the FPA about this drug a lady doctor who had been to Thailand replied that there was a lot of politicking at the FDA and that there were no such adverse side effects.

Dr. Siva Chinnathamby told me that she was aware of FDA suspension of DP but that later research with Rhesus monkeys

(Continued on Page 4)

Study leave : dons protest

The major working class TUs are apparently dormant. But the increasing economic pressure and hardship is beginning to affect even the middle class TUs like the GMOA. There was a time when the doctor was considered upper middle-class but now most young doctors who are not lucky to have rich parents have been pushed down to the large mass of middle class employees. Now, it is the turn of the University teacher, once also considered a comparatively privileged person.

The issues may arise from specific complaints or incidents eg, foreign exams for doctors, interdictions etc. But below the surface is economic and social pressures. In the case of the University teacher, a campaign has started on questions of vacations, both study leave and vacation.

The University Teachers Association, Colombo says "the decisions that have been taken by the U. G. C. will adversely affect both the work and the career prospects of our membership. Our association is of the view that most of the decisions already reached are unreasonable and unpractical. Their implementation will seriously affect the teaching and research standards of the Universities."

Some of the points made by the UTA are:-

* Most probationary assistant lecturers are already burdened with heavy examination and teaching duties. It is not possible for them to register and conduct research for a post graduate degree while at the same time being engaged in the normal duties.

Furthermore, the entire long vacation of the University teachers is taken up by the examination work including the

preparation, printing of question papers, supervision and the marking of scripts. Other institutions such as Central Bank, A.R.T.I., C.I.S.I.R. give full pay leave to their employees and arrange for them to study abroad for research degrees.

One of the most important features in the University organisation introduced by Sir Ivor Jennings is the scheme of probationary study leave which has survived nearly 40 years of changing University administrations. All our top academic administrators are products of that system. It is this singular feature which in the past succeeded in attracting people of high academic calibre to the University staff.

* It is hardly necessary for us to point out the total inadequacy of library facilities even for undergraduate studies let alone post graduate work? We do not even have back numbers of indispensable journals of subjects like economics, education and sociology and law.

* For our probationary staff to do the M.A. in Sri Lanka under the supervision of our present senior staff will necessarily lead to the most dangerous type of inbreeding, limiting research interest within a narrow sphere.

* According to the provisions of the document under reference, confirmed lecturers would become eligible for study leave to read for a doctorate not earlier than 10 years after first appointment.

* The modification of the earlier practice was made for very good reasons. With present living costs in countries abroad no university teacher can maintain himself and his family on his rupee salary. It is essential for him either to get a special award, which is rare, or to obtain an assignment abroad. Such assignments are not generally available for periods as short as three terms or one academic year. A change of the present practice is in fact a virtual abandonment of the sabbatical leave provisions, as only an exceedingly fortunate University teacher can hope to finance himself in a foreign country. We request, therefore, that the present provisions be retained.

Reviewing the decade for women

The second Preparatory Committee meeting for the World Conference on the Decade For Women, concluded in New York on September 7th. This Committee of 23 countries had met earlier in Vienna.

The World Conference of the United Nations Decade For Women : Equality, Development and Peace, will be held in July 1980 in Copenhagen. The Secretary General of the Conference is Mrs. Lucilla Mathurin of Jamaica.

Women form half the World's population, yet in an unequal World they remain dependent, discriminated against and disadvantaged. The World Conference will take stock of what has been achieved in the first five years of the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-85,) by reviewing progress made and obstacles encountered in carrying out the World Plan of Action adopted by the 1975 Mexico Conference. The conference will also design a specific action-oriented programme for the next five years, with emphasis on employment, health and education.

— J. S.

Is banned . . .

(Continued from Page 3)

were found to be satisfactory. "WHO, UNFPA and IPPF are not pushing the drug. We asked for it. We have already administered the drug to over 10,000 women in Sri Lanka and have received no complaints and failure rate was nil."

"I must say that DP was used here" said Dr. Chinnathamby, "after a careful conducted trial by me during 1968-1970. And the IPPF's Central Medical Committee has been acting as a watch dog. In the world today, more women die of childbirth than of D.P."

— G. D.

NICARAGUA (3)

Paper tigers and straw dogs

by A Special Correspondent

There have been instances when the guerilla forces, guilty of the error of 'vanguardism' went into action far ahead of the mass consciousness, completely asymmetrical with the development of the mass movement. Conversely, there have also been times when the mass movement surged forward, but was beaten down simply for want of an armed shield and spearhead. Bolivia provides an example once more. When the masses went into motion in the early 1970's, the ELN was on the retreat.

In Nicaragua however, the FSLN offensive coincided with, and was the armed vanguard of, the rising tide of the mass movement. How this movement matured and the nature of the linkages between the FSLN and the oppositional forces are questions we shall take up subsequently.

What then, is the most fundamental single lesson that the FSLN's military victory holds out to the people of the world? Surely it that the popular forces can defeat a professional army, in actual armed combat. This was one of the three main conclusions which Guevara derived from the Cuban experience and presented to us all in the opening pages of his "Guerilla Warfare". That a military victory of the peoples forces is possible over an enemy who is superior technologically and numerically—this has been strikingly confirmed to us by the events of the past half decade, in Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. The revolutionary changes in Ethiopia and Afghanistan have clearly indicated the potential role of sections of the armed forces and consequent necessity

of political work within these structures. The Iranian experience brought home oppressive ruling classes as well as to the oppressed peoples the world over, the lesson that even the most awesome police state can crumble and disintegrate when subject to the unremitting pressure of the arisen masses. This wave of revolutionary triumphs in Indo-China, the African continent, the 'Horn of Africa' and most recently in Iran must have surely given courage and determination to the Nicaraguan people and revolutionaries in their final struggle.

The enemy was superior by all counts. Numerically the National Guard numbered around 15,000—incidentally, roughly equivalent to the Lankan—while the FSLN's hard core until a few years ago, numbered no more than 300-400. During the offensive of September last year, they fielded around 1000 combatants who led non-FSLN youth in the insurrection. After the defeat of the September uprising known as the "war of los muchachos (the youth)", the FSLN ranks were bolstered by these youngsters aged between 12 and 20. The victorious Sandinista army which defeated the Guard numbered between 3000 to 5000. No account so far gives an estimate higher than 5000, which was a 1:3 ratio in favour of the Guard. Furthermore, the Guard was heavily armed with US M-16 and Israeli Galil automatic rifles (one of which was presented to Fidel by FSLN leader Moises Hassan Morales in Havana last week), armoured cars, tanks, helicopter gunships, T-28 turboprop attack aircraft (of Korean war vintage but ideal for counter-guerilla warfare) and C-47 gunships heavily armed with 'Puff-the-magic-

Dragon' multiple barrelled automatic rotary cannon which can place a tracer bullet in every square foot of an area the size of a football field.

In terms of personnel and training too, the Guard was (or seemed) superior. It boasted a crack commando unit trained by the US Green Berets at the John F. Kennedy special Warfare Centre, Fort Bragg, Northern Carolina and at the Panama Canal Zone counter-guerilla school. Named the 'Black Berets' after their American mentors, this unit acted as a special striking force for eliminating 'terrorism'. US and South Vietnamese mercenaries, together with Guatemalan and El Salvadorian officers served advisors to the 'Guard'. Commander-in-chief Somoza was warmly regarded by his soldiers and 'martial tradition' of his family bound him closer to his men.

Truly, the National Guard was a capable fighting force, thoroughly professionalized and possessing fearsome firepower, yet they were defeated in armed combat.

So, the Nicaraguan revolution confirms that when a ruling class renders it impossible to wield the weapon of criticism, then the masses are forced to resort to the critique by weapons, and in the final analysis material force (i.e. the state machine) can be overthrown only by material force. It also proves, that however powerful the class enemy is in the short term, from the point of view of History, all reactionaries prove to be paper tigers and straw dogs.

Why the Catholic Church joined the revolution

by Barbara Koepfel

Managua, Nicaragua

Twenty years ago, the former Archbishop of Nicaragua pinned a medal on his good friend President Anastasio Somoza Debayle. At the time, ties between church and regime could not have been better.

Less than two decades later, most priests and nuns in Nicaragua were actively supporting the struggle to overthrow the President, a few even taking up arms with the Sandinistas. And today, two priests sit on the Cabinet of the new government: Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto Brockman, and Minister of Culture Ernesto Cardenal.

What happened in Nicaragua is not unique. Throughout Latin America, the church, which was a fortress of conservatism and linked to repressive dictatorships, found it could no longer be aloof from the liberation movement that sought to overthrow the regimes responsible for the poverty and suffering of the mass of population.

In Nicaragua, the story begins in the early 1970s. Changing personalities (Miguel Obando Bravo became the new Archbishop of Nicaragua), increasing Sandinista strength and National Guard brutality, and crass attempts by General Somoza to control everything, including the church, all combined to bring about the conversion.

Concerned by the flagrant violation of human and political rights, the eight bishops of Nicaragua published a document in 1971 that urged the people to recognize the political realities in the country and not merely follow General Somoza's rubber-stamp Liberal Party.

According to the Rev. Paul Schmitz, an American priest of the Capuchin order who has been in

Nicaragua for several years, this marked the start of the split between church and state that would widen dramatically over the next few years.

"At first, Somoza reacted by trying to divide the church, offering material support and privileges to some church groups, while ostracizing others," he says.

Then, after the earthquake in 1972, President Somoza tried to manipulate Caritas, a Catholic relief agency, for his own enrichment. "Such action only antagonized the church further," Fr. Schmitz recalls.

In 1976, when the Sandinistas intensified the conflict and moved to the mountains, he claims that the guard began to persecute, torture, and kill peasants wholesale, charging they were feeding and housing the guerrillas. "The guard didn't understand that in the mountains, you give food to whoever needs it. So they overreacted. They even seized our chapels, using them to torture the campesinos (peasants)," he continues. "In one village the guard killed 29 children along with adults, and took to dropping the peasants from helicopters," he alleged.

After this, 27 Capuchin priests published a report with the names of the hundreds of peasants who were said to have been arrested and never found.

"Because the press was censored, we sent one copy to Somoza and passed others to the International press. Somoza hotly denied the charges, said we were Communists, and threw one priest out of the country.

"When the guerrillas moved to the urban areas next, the guard again overreacted. They killed youths en masse indiscriminately," the priest claimed.

At this point church support which had generally been passive, quickened. A few priests, like the Rev. Gaspar Garcia Laviana, who later died in combat, joined the guerrillas.

Priests routinely offered their churches as havens to those hunted by the guard. In Managua, they ran an underground railroad to transport guerrillas from one locale to another, and church halls were used for secret meetings. Reportedly, lay pastors were tortured and eight priests were killed for providing refuge. Two Maryknoll nuns tell of being rifle-butted by guards who stormed their schools, searching for youths suspected of having guerrilla ties.

Most important, the church initially denounced with growing vigor the repression and atrocities committed by the guard. When the press was censored, news reports were read in the churches. And during the September insurrection and later in June and July, when General Somoza's planes bombed whole civilian "barrios," Archbishop Obando strongly condemned the destruction and killing of thousands of Nicaraguans.

To the Rev. Ernesto Cardenal, a poet and priest who earlier had joined a Trappist monastery and latter traveled the world to raise money for the Sandinistas, the course for the clergy was clear. He illustrated their involvement with his own story.

"Originally, I was a pacifist, and formed a religious settlement on an island, Solentiname in Lake Nicaragua. The guard bombed and completely destroyed it. After this, I realized the only way to free the country was through armed struggle, so I joined the Sandinistas.

"I considered it my duty as a poet and a priest. A poet can't
(Continued on Page 7)

Latin America : war centre of Third World

by Frank Barnaby

ONE IN FIVE of the 125 or so wars that have taken place in the Third World since 1945 has been in Latin America. In many respects the one recently concluded in Nicaragua was a text-book example of the way these particular wars have gone.

It is unusual in that such appalling casualties were suffered. By any standards, the estimate of 40,000 deaths in 50 or so days of fighting is disturbing, as is the number of refugees — put at 70,000 — reported to be languishing in 76 camps. Relief officials were saying last week that at least one in three of the entire population had been affected by the war.

The text-book nature of Nicaragua's war can be seen in the

Why the Catholic . . .

(Continued from Page 6)

be apart from the people's struggle for liberation, and much less can a priest. I belong to the Sandinistas out of total fidelity to the gospels, because I want a new and just society.

"No one would think the fight against Hitler was a sin, and Somoza is worse than Hitler," he observed just one week before the ex-President's downfall.

Now that the war seems over, some priests, like Fr. Schmitz, are concerned that the church is too closely identified with the Sandinistas, and that it must remain unaligned, to criticize as well as praise. "We don't want to be so closely attached to one party that we are compromised," he says, adding that some priests suspect they might be "used" by the Sandinistas.

Archbishop Obando, however, sees no problem. "The church will continue to act as before, for the betterment of the people. And I don't see where the new government will pose any obstacles for us."

— *Christian Science Monitor*

fact that the sole purpose of the Sandinista guerrillas was to overthrow the (military) Government. Nearly 90 per cent of all Latin American wars have been aimed at overthrowing the ruling regime. It was also text-book in that the arms suppliers to the Government came from the industrialised First World, in this case mainly NATO countries, while the guerrillas seem to have relied on Panama and Cuba as suppliers from the Warsaw Pact area.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Latin American countries currently spend a total of nearly \$7,000m a year on the military. The world total arms expenditure is about \$410,000m a year. Latin American countries have been involved in some sort of conflict since 1947: Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela.

Latin American wars tend to be short and sharp. Those since 1947 averaged 1.7 years in length compared with a Third World average of about three years.

A peculiarity of Latin American violence has been the relative lack of foreign participation. About half the wars were fought with foreign help, significantly less than the Third World figure of about 62 per cent. Nevertheless, the Latin American experience confirms the general rule that wars fought with foreign involvement tend to last longer than those fought without it. Of the six wars that have gone on for three years or more, four of them involved foreign countries.

In the 10 years to the end of 1978; Latin American military spending increased 1.7 times, even when measured in constant prices to take inflation into account. This is about the same as the

increase in Asia (excluding China and Japan), but less than that in Africa (3.4 times). Per capita military spending, at about \$20 a year, lies between that in Asia (about \$ 10 a year) and Africa (about \$ 30 a year).

The military expenditure of individual Latin American countries varies enormously. Brazil alone accounts for about one-third of total Latin American expenditure. Argentina (17 per cent) and Mexico (10 per cent) together spend about another one-quarter.

If the strength of armed forces is measured in number per 1,000 of the population, the top six countries are Cuba (13.3 troops per 1,000 people), Chile (10.6), Uruguay (9.1), Peru (6.3), Paraguay (6.3), and Argentina (5.9). For Latin America as a whole the figure is 4.1 soldiers per thousand people. This is considerably larger than the figure for Africa, 2.9 soldiers per thousand, but about the same as for Asia. For comparison, the figure for the developed countries is 10.1 and the world average is 6.3.

Latin-American countries are reported to have bought military equipment worth about \$3,450 millions between 1967 and 1976 (in current prices). The United States accounted for about 30 per cent of these sales, France 16 per cent, the Soviet Union 15 per cent, the United Kingdom 14 per cent, West Germany 8 per cent, and Canada 5 per cent. These six countries supply nearly 90 per cent of military sales to Latin America.

Five Latin-American countries — Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru — have meanwhile established their own defence industries to produce major weapons under licence or their own design. Those of Argentina and Brazil are particularly advanced.

Frank Barnaby is Director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

News and economic liberation

by Chakravarti Raghavan

In Africa and Asia, the decolonisation of information was part of the political decolonisation effort, and a reaction to what the political leaders and the elites thought were the patronising and sneering misrepresentations they were subject to by the former mentors. But, in Latin America, it was part of the continent's efforts to achieve economic freedom and independence from the overpowering northern neighbour and the US transnationals that dominated every aspect of life. This economic dependency on the USA became more visible and overpowering in the information-communication sectors—in many parts of Latin America, US capital owned and ran local telephones, telecommunications and other such systems. The newspapers, radio and TV were owned or controlled and influenced from outside by commercial interests.

American style advertising, and by American enterprises, was another powerful factor. That these outside capital interests saw threats to themselves in local economic and social reform movements, and joined hands with domestic feudal-landlord interests and mercantile-capitalist groups to create and prop up repressive undemocratic regimes, helped sharply to focus in Latin America the interrelationships of information independence and political, economic and cultural independence.

All these contributed to the raising of the issue of independence of information and the balanced flow of information (as opposed to the free flow doctrine of the US). The rights and freedoms of peoples to foster their own cultures and spread understanding of other cultures throughout the world began to be raised and voiced at various non official and inter-governmental gatherings.

The disillusionment with the 1945-70 world development strategies and models was another strand. The growth-oriented development models of the North (whether market-oriented or centrally planned) with their emphasis on production and social structures to distribute production, create savings for capitalisation into further production-distribution—saving—capitalisation cycles had created societies where people were increasingly alienated from the system. Ecological and environmental hazards to life in this mad growth cycle was becoming sharply evident.

The concept of *alternative development*—a need-oriented, ecologically sound endogenous development process—was being voiced from various parts of the world. The philosophy was articulated in the 1975 Dag Hammarskold Report 'What Now, Another Development'.

Its ten-point programme underlined the role of information in an endogenous development process and said, 'Citizens have a right to inform and be informed about the facts of development, its inherent conflicts and the changes it will bring about, locally and internationally. Under present conditions information and education are only too often monopolised by the power structure, which manipulates public opinion to its own ends and tends to perpetuate preconceived ideas, ignorance and alienation. A global effort should be made to give the new international relations their human dimensions and to promote the establishment of genuine cooperation between peoples as the basis of equality and recognition of their cultural, political and social and economic diversity. The image of the Other should reach each of us, stripped of the prevailing ethnocentric prejudices, which are the characteristic feature of most of the messages currently transmitted. Such an effort should be concerned

Sixth Summit

The need for a new liberal information order was once again stressed at the recent Havana Conference.

both with information and with education in the broadest sense of the word; it should be directed towards "conscientisation" of citizens to ensure their full participation in decision-making process.'

The clear linkage between the NIEO and information came in the Third World Journalists Seminar, held in New York at the time of the 7th Special Session of the UN General Assembly in 1975. The seminar underlined the view that the present world information and communication structures based on the centre-periphery relationships and hierarchy could not continue. 'True political liberation is endangered and efforts for economic liberation will continue to be strongly handicapped unless steps are taken to break the hold that news agencies, reflecting interests which are not those of the third world, have on the information sent to or originating in third world countries. For the New International Economic Order to emerge, peoples of both industrialised and third world countries must be given the opportunity of understanding that they share a common interest in creating international conditions that will permit another development of societies in all parts of the world.

* * *

Changes in the present unjust international structures must be seen as a precondition for peace and security tomorrow. This common interest cannot be adequately perceived unless communication patterns are also liberated from the market-oriented sensationalism approach to news. Such reporting will never permit public opinion in

the industrialized world to have full information about the third world, its true reality and its urgent needs. The third world nations must protect themselves from the distortion of their cultures and ways of life implicit in present communications dependence. Information is a non-material commodity that is bought and sold in a highly oligopolistic market. This must be changed. An end to such a system and thus a widening of the capacity to inform is a fundamental component of the New International Economic Order, permitting a valid interplay of different cultures and national realities.'

The seminar, presenting a modest programme of action at national, regional and international levels, to ensure the rights of people to inform and be informed, to communicate, in order to bring about a new structure of world relations said: 'The New International Economic Order requires a new framework of world information and communications.'

* * *

The idea of a new framework of world information and communication was further conceptualised at the Mexico Seminar in May 1975 organised by Instituto Latinoamericano de Estudios Transnacionales (ILET) in the call for a New International Information Order. Though the use of the term 'International' tended to suggest only changes in the international flow of information the Mexico Seminar clearly saw the linkages in national and international actions and the need for democratisation of both to alter the centre-periphery relationships among nations and within nations. The further terminology 'New World Information Order', used in a paper presented by Tunisia to the MacBride Commission, though the result of its being first drawn up in French and its linguistic requirements, helps to restore semantically the national and international linkages.

The intellectual and socio-economic-cultural inputs into the NWIO movement is thus entirely a democratic approach, but democracy is understood in a larger sense, and principally as contrary to the anti-democratic centre-periphery approaches, whether nationally or globally.

Third world governments in invoking an NWIO may not be fully aware of the broad democratic philosophy behind it and its imperatives of changes in the national scenes. They may be motivated by the desire to have a better image of their countries abroad. But this is not necessarily an authoritarian trend.

Governments and countries are interested in projecting a better image of themselves abroad, and in furthering their trade and commerce. Almost all the international bodies seeking to promote greater economic cooperation among developing countries have underlined the need for better flow of information amongst themselves and building on existing national structures, creating new structures where none exist, and linking up such structures regionally and inter-regionally.

Involvement of governments and inter-governmental organisations in the whole spectrum of information/communication sectors is thus unavoidable and inevitable.

The dissatisfaction of countries and governments in the third world over the existing information channels and their failures insofar as the third world countries' rights to inform and be informed are concerned, led to the formation of the nonaligned news pool and other moves for exchange of information. The pool was set up with several relay points, with no centralised editorial control or supervision. As an infrastructure it had its drawbacks but also some advantages. The regional centres were such that there were no 'gatekeepers'.

* * *

As soon as the pool idea was promoted and even before it was launched, the TN enterprises saw a threat to their global oligopoly and launched a bitter campaign directly through their home governments, and through their organs like the International Press Institute. This battle was joined at the Nairobi UNESCO meeting, where the issue of the socialist move for a declaration on the duties of mass media was also on the agenda. The issues got mixed up, and after a very bitter fight, it was sought to be defused: the Director-General was asked to undertake further consultations and submit a revised draft text of the

declaration for the consideration of the General Conference. A commission of eminent persons was also appointed to go into the whole field of international communications.

But before long, the TN news agencies saw that the nonaligned pool was no threat to them, so long as it functioned as it was doing. US studies showed that there was very little of anti-American bias in the content of the pool, despite the participation of news agencies like the Cuban Prensa Latina. Though still suspicious of the venture, because of its potentiality, a less hostile and even patronising attitude was adopted officially. Unofficially, organs like IPI continued their attack. But officially the tactic was changed. Instead of confronting the third world in its information demands of allowing it to coalesce with the socialist worlds (with its different objectives), there was a change of tactic to involve the third world in a dialogue, offer aid and assistance and in the process increase its technological dependency, and ultimately absorb the new structures by cooption or otherwise into the transnational structures.

'What governments say to each other or to their own people, or how they view developments at home and abroad, constitute an important ingredient of news. The pool does provide some of this, and is a positive step in the effort to increase the international flow of information (that is neglected by the TNs for their own reasons) but these efforts have no great impact 'simply because they are not finding their way into the world's major news streams'.

But neither this 'news' nor what is called 'positive' or 'developmental' news (news about the achievements of peoples and governments in development and not merely their failures) constitute 'alternative information' that would help alternative development — need oriented, ecologically sound, endogenous development. Alternative information must hence enable the voices of the poor and oppressed, the voices of the unheard in whose name the development processes are undertaken to be heard, nationally and globally. There was little of it in the pool.

(To be continued)

● An assessment

Proportional representation

by G. R. Tressie Leitan

The Party List System of Proportional Representation has been accepted by law for elections to the National State Assembly and the Local Government Authorities. With the Local Government elections in May this new system will come into effect for the first time in Sri Lanka. In this paper Dr. Tressie Leitan, a lecturer in political science and public administration of the University's Colombo Campus, discusses the broad features of this system.

There is general agreement today that the expression of the wishes of the people through the ballot box, is a necessary and preliminary step to genuine democratic government. Yet the method and machinery by which elections are conducted vary from country to country; and the arguments of some writers are that confusions and abuses which are apparent in the political scene today are to be attributed to outmoded electoral system.

The method of election adopted in Britain and the U.S.A. as well as in a number of Commonwealth countries (and which has prevailed in Sri Lanka upto the present) is the relative majority on the "first past the post" system. Most Western European countries on the other hand adhere to some form of Proportional Representation.

The Relative Majority System

According to the relative majority system, the candidate who secures the highest total of votes in each constituency (which returns only one member) is declared elected even though he fails to obtain an absolute majority (more than half the votes cast). Thus in a particular constituency, the winning candidate although he has polled the highest number of votes, may in point of fact have obtained

only a minority of votes in that constituency i.e. if more than two candidates contest the elections the combined votes of the rejected candidates may well outnumber the votes obtained by the victor.

This often leads to a situation where a party wins a clear majority of seats in the national legislature when it has polled less than half the votes cast in the country as a whole. The system can be criticised therefore on the grounds that it frequently gives the governing power in the parliamentary cabinet from of government to a party which has not won the support of a majority of voters. This means in effect that the number of seats won by each party does not reflect correctly its electoral support judged on a nation-wide basis.

In Britain, for instance, between 1922 and 1966 only two governments (1931 and 1935 Coalitions) obtained more than half the total number of votes cast in a general election, and in fact in 1929, 1951 and 1974 (February) the government party polled less votes than the largest single party which was in the opposition.

It also follows therefore that the governing party can secure the passage of legislation which is fundamentally opposed by the other parties. In this connection, the nationalization programme of the British Labour Government can be quoted as a case in point. The Labour Party which had obtained a majority of 146 seats in the British House of Commons at the election of 1945 was also (despite opposition from the other parties) able to carry out its nationalization programme. Yet the Labour Party had gained only 47.8 of the votes cast.

The constitution will be amended once more to introduce further changes in the electoral system (P. R.), according to Mr. Gamini Dissanayake, the Minister of Lands and Land Development. He was speaking at a UNP Youth Conference.

We continue to publish excerpts from the Dossier on P. R. prepared by the Centre for Society and Religion.

Advocates of this system however argue that it is neither necessary nor desirable to have mathematical exactitude in the representation of groups within the electorate. It is sufficient, they aver, if the composition of the legislature reflects broadly, the main trends of political opinion.

However, the system often results in startling discrepancies between the votes obtained by each party and its strength in the legislature. The following facts relating to the British elections of 1970 and 1974, gives an idea of this discrepancy. For instance, in February 1974, the Labour Party won the elections with a total of 301 seats as against 295 obtained by the Conservatives yet its percentage of votes (37.2%) was in fact lower than that obtained by the Conservatives (38.1%). In October 1974 the Labour Party which obtained 50.2 percent of the seats, polled only 39.3 percent of the total votes; the Liberal Party on the other hand which polled 18.3 percent of the votes obtained only 13 (or 2.04%) of the seats.

This discrepancy between votes and seats obtained by each party is quite evident in the election results in Sri Lanka also. Tables 2

and 3, depicting the election results of 1960-1977, illustrate quite clearly the differences between these two factors.

For instance, in the election of March 1960 although the United National Party won a total of 50 seats (or one-third of the total seats in the House of Representatives) it polled only 29.62 percent of the votes. In July 1960, its percentage of votes in fact increased to 37.57 per cent. Yet it gained only 30 seats (19.9%) while the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, while winning 75 seats (or 49.7%) polled only 33.59 percent of the votes

Similarly in 1970 although the UNP polled 37.92 percent votes it won only 17 (or 11.3%) of seats whereas the SLFP obtained 90 (or 60%) of the seats while it polled a lower percentage than the votes obtained by the UNP.

Again at the last general election of 1977 the UNP was swept into power with a total of 140 (or 83.33%) of the seats in the legislature (the National State Assembly) while obtaining 50.92 percent of the votes cast; the SLFP although it won only 8 seats actually polled 29.72 percent of the votes.

Yet another effect of this system is that smaller parties tend to get underrepresented. The number of seats won by Britain's Liberal Party for instance has consistently been very much less than in proportion to the votes it has polled. For instance, in 1964 the Liberals received 11.2 percent of the votes cast, yet won only 9 seats although proportionately it would have been entitled to 70 seats; and in October 1974 while it only obtained 13 seats it should have obtained 116 seats in proportion to the votes polled.

In Sri Lanka at the last General Election (1977) while the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Communist Party polled 3.61 per cent and 1.98 per cent respectively of the votes, neither party obtained a single seat.

In fact, the verdict of Enid Lakeman on the relative majority system of election is that:

"It cannot be relied upon either to give a parliament reflecting all the main trends of opinion, or to place in power a government backed by a majority of the electorate or even by the largest single body of voters..... It cannot be relied upon either to give one party power to govern unhindered according to its own ideas, or on the other hand, to produce government by consent."

Proportional Representation

These deficiencies of the relative majority method of election have cast doubts about the democratic nature of the system and have led critics to recommend the adoption of some form of proportional representation.

While a number of variations of the system of proportional representation exist, the most

widely used seem to be the Party List System and the Single Transferable Vote.

The Party List System is accepted in one form or another in the Scandinavian countries, in Belgium, Holland, Italy and Switzerland; it was also adopted by France under the Fourth Republic. In accordance with the constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (1978) (Section 99) and the Local Authorities (Special Provisions) Law No. 24 of 1977, the party-list system of proportional representation has been accepted for elections to the National State Assembly and to Local Authorities, respectively.

According to the Party List System, in every constituency, (which has to be a multi-member constituency) each political party puts forward a list of its candidates

TABLE 2
GENERAL ELECTIONS IN SRI LANKA — PERCENTAGE OF SEATS WON
IN RELATION TO VOTES. (1960 AND 1970)

General Election	Party	Seats Won	Percentage of Seats	Percentage of Votes
March 1960	United National Party	50	33.1	29.62
	Sri Lanka Freedom Party	46	30.5	21.12
	Lanka Sama Samaja Party	10	6.6	10.50
	Communist Party	03	2.0	4.62
	Mahajana Eksath Peramuna	10	6.6	10.62
	Tamil Congress	01	0.7	1.25
	Federal Party	15	9.9	5.75
	Jathika Vimukthi Peramuna	02	1.3	0.36
	L.P.P.	04	2.6	4.08
	S.M.P.	01	0.7	0.79
	S.I.J.P.	01	0.7	0.36
	B.B.P.	01	0.7	0.32
	Independents	07	4.6	8.83
	Others	0	0.0	1.78
July 1960	United National Party	30	19.9	37.57
	Sri Lanka Freedom Party	75	49.7	33.59
	Lanka Sama Samaja Party	12	7.9	7.36
	Communist Party	04	2.6	2.96
	Mahajana Eksath Peramuna	03	2.0	3.38
	Tamil Congress	01	0.7	1.54
	Federal Party	16	10.6	7.19
	J.V.P.	02	1.3	0.46
	L.P.P.	02	1.3	0.96
	Independents	06	4.0	4.62
	Others	00		0.37
	1970	United National Party	17	11.3
Sri Lanka Freedom Party		90	60.0	36.63
Lanka Sama Samaja Party		19	12.7	8.75
Communist Party		06	4.0	3.42
Mahajana Eksath Peramuna		00	0.0	0.94
Communist Party		00	0.0	0.07
Tamil Congress		03	2.0	2.33
Federal Party		13	8.7	4.96
S.M.P.		00	0.0	0.41
Independents		02	1.3	4.56

Source: *Economic Review*, May 1977.

for the constituency, the number of candidates nominated generally corresponding to the number of seats to be filled. The order in which the names appear on each list is decided by the political party, so that this system gives the party machine a larger degree of power and limits the freedom of choice of the individual voter.

Under what is called the "blocked list" system the voter is required to vote *en bloc* for the entire party list of his choice. This is the method which is to be adopted in Sri Lanka, but with variations. He is not permitted to divide his vote between candidates of rival parties.

Parties	Total Votes
A	93,000
B	58,000
C	49,000

Under variations of this system cross-voting between party lists is allowed so that a greater amount of discretion is allowed to the voter either to vote for the candidates of a single party or to split his vote among different parties.

As already pointed out, all constituencies are multi-member constituencies. Within each constituency therefore, following the voting, seats are allocated to the contesting parties on the basis of an electoral quota, which is determined by dividing the number of votes cast by the number of seats. For instance, in a constituency with 200,000 valid votes containing 5 seats, the quota would be 40,000. The votes obtained by each party list is then counted, a list obtaining 40,000 seats being entitled to one seat, another securing 80,000 to two seats and so on. A party which is entitled to two seats gets the candidates whose names appear first and second on its list elected.

In practice, since party lists rarely obtain exact multiples of the quota, the votes obtained by each party over and above the quota (or its multiples) can be weighted in different ways. The two most commonly used are the "largest remainder" and the "highest average" methods. Under the "largest remainder" system the

TABLE 3
GENERAL ELECTIONS (SRI LANKA) 1977

Political Party	Seats	% Seats	% Votes
United National Party	140	83.33	50.97
Sri Lanka Freedom Party	08	4.76	29.72
Lanka Sama Samaja Party	—	—	3.61
Communist Party	—	—	1.98
Mahajana Eksath Peramuna	—	—	0.36
Tamil United Liberation Front	18	10.71	6.75
Ceylon Workers Congress	01	0.06	1.00
Independents	01	0.06	5.65

party which has the highest number of votes left over after the seats are allocated on the basis of the quota gets an additional seat. For instance i.e. in a five-member constituency, where the quota is 40,000 the results are as follows:

Parties	Total Votes	Seats allocated on basis of quota	Remainder of Votes
A	93,000	2	13,000
B	58,000	1	18,000
C	49,000	1	9,000

According to the largest remainder method the 5th seat would go to party B. Under the "highest average" system, the total votes obtained by each party is divided by the number of seats it has obtained plus one. Thus in the foregoing example the resulting averages would be:

A — 93000	
—————	= 31,000
3	
B — 58000	= 29,000
—————	
2	
and	
C — 49000	= 24500
—————	
2	

A thus secures the fifth seat. The former system favours smaller parties at the expense of the larger, while the latter is advantageous to larger parties at the expense of the smaller.

The Single Transferable Vote (STV)

The Single Transferable Vote System of proportional representation was first advocated by Thomas Hare and was upheld by John Stuart Mill in his book "Representative Government" (1861).

This is a system of preferential voting based on multi-member

constituencies generally containing 3 to 7 seats. It is adopted in the Republic of Ireland, in Northern Ireland since 1973, Malta since 1921, in elections to the Australian Senate since 1949 and in two states in Canada.

Each voter is entitled to only one ballot paper which contains the names of all the candidates for the constituency (generally arranged in alphabetical order). The voter therefore does not vote for an entire party list but is required to mark his preferences among the candidates. Thus he has to mark 1 against the name of the candidate he favours most, 2 against the next candidate in order of his preference, and so on. This system, it is obvious, gives more freedom of choice to the individual voter than under the Party List system. Here he is able to cross-vote between parties; even within the same party, it is the voter who indicates his order of preference and not the party.

The first stage in the counting is the establishment of the quota necessary for winning a seat. This is done by dividing the number of votes cast (in the constituency) by the number of seats to be filled.

This is referred to as the "Hare Quota".
The "Droop Quota"
i.e. $\frac{\text{total votes } \boxplus 1}{\text{total seats } \boxplus 1}$ is also used

At the first counting, only the voters first preferences are taken into consideration; thus only those ballot papers where 1 appears against A's name are counted as his votes, those on which 1 has been marked for B are assigned to him and so on.

The candidate/candidates who obtain the requisite quota at the

(Continued on Page 24)

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Which way for the Left?

(II) Gamini Yapa — Peradiga Sulanga (East Wind) Group

Wimal Gamini Yapa, known to some by the nom de guerre Wimal Ranasinghe was a science graduate of Colombo campus and was subsequently a science teacher for a brief period. Joining Mr. Sanmugathasan's Ceylon Communist Party, he soon rose to the post of CC member and Editor of the then widely circulating party organ Kamkaruwa. He was also District Secretary of the Party's Colombo branch. In 1969, Yapa led a group out of the CCP and formed the Peradiga Sulanga (East Wind) organisation. After a few years of clandestine activism Yapa and his colleagues were incarcerated under the Emergency, as a security threat. Released with the lapse of the Emergency, in early '77 he re-entered left politics. He has recently published 2 volumes on 'A Socialist Analysis of the Agrarian Question.'

Q: 'What were the issues that led you to break away from Mr. Sanmugathasan's Ceylon Communist Party? Were the differences theoretical ones or merely practical and organisational ones? Would it be correct to say that your main intention was to apply the Naxalite line of armed struggle to Sri Lanka?

A: The issues which led us to break away from Ceylon Communist Party, were mainly organisational and practical. Since 1965 we also had criticized and opposed various incorrect tendencies and attitudes amongst the leadership, but in vain. The leadership was bent on suppressing the members and youth leagues who were critical of the organisational politics and procedures of the leading bodies of the party.

The leadership was not able to produce a revolutionary programme to meet the demand of the members and the working masses. Though they spoke highly about grasping revolutionary armed struggle they did not have any intention to take at least the first step towards their goal. The powers of leadership were abused to the extent of suppressing all initiative on the part of members, and the internal party criticism was curbed. The immediate cause for our withdrawal from the party was the wholesale expulsion of members whose only crime was criticising the methods and working styles of the party leadership.

What you call the Naxalite line is not new to the world Marxist-Leninist Movement. It is in essence a mass armed struggle by the peasantry against the oppressors and landlords. That was what happened at Naxalbari in West Bengal in 1967.

But we had our own assessments and judgements of the extremist actions by the Naxalite movement. We reject their line of struggle for two reasons. One, that they did not accept the need of a centralized party to lead the armed struggle, and secondly even in the case of armed action they openly advocated liberationism. (as shown by the magazine "Liberation") by relying on the spontaneous initiative of the peasant masses.

Q: In brief, what are the main political lessons you have drawn from the experience gained in the years spent underground by your group?

A: In my opinion there are two most important lessons. Firstly, for any form of secret or underground political work, a mass basis has to be developed. Secondly whatever their political capabilities are, by organizing selected groups of politicized individuals alone, can lead the movement nowhere. To be effective they must be integrated with the people and mass organisations should be set up lead the day-to-day class struggles of the working people.

Q: You are perhaps the foremost champion of Mao Tse Tung's strategy of protracted People's War, within the local Left, and counterposed it to the strategy of a one-day armed insurrection once propounded by the JVP. However, isn't it mechanistic and dogmatic to reject other modes of struggle and impose the Chinese model to a country like Sri Lanka which is vastly different in almost every vital respect?

A: Protracted people's war is a strategy which enables us to bring out the initiative and creative activities by the masses in full, for the benefit of the struggle. It is a dialectical process in which you build up your own forces and develop a new form of a superstructure, a new democratic social organisation with the participation of the people. In contrast, one-day armed struggle or the spontaneous mass struggle will be mechanical, unrealistic and dogmatic in practice. The form of the struggle is not determined by imposing models or mechanistic approaches. This will depend on factors like, the class nature of the revolutionary struggle its aims and objectives, distribution of state power, and the possibility of imperialist intervention etc. We hold that the protracted armed struggle can solve problems created by such conditions and mobilise the people for revolutionary action.

Q. Though you have been promising a self-criticism for sometime now, it does not yet seem to be forthcoming unlike the Janatha Sangamaya and even the JVP. Will it be made public soon and could you tell us some of the main points it will contain?

A: More than one whole year has elapsed since we made a self-criticism for those concerned with our movement and to the

friendly organisations. I think that anybody will agree that we need not publicize such a document as our movement had not affected the major political patterns among the people. In case of the JVP and Janatha Sangamaya of course that should be given to the whole population since their insurrection affected the whole country.

In our self-criticism the Ultra-left deviation, and pertinent political actions and organisational lines were discussed. The major mistake was our drifting away from the people and underestimation of the significance of the people in our struggle. Our left sectarianism made us isolated from the general trend of the revolutionary progressive movements of Sri Lanka.

Q: While in prison you engaged Rohana Wijeweera and the present JVP leadership in a major polemic. What were the main issues involved and what would you say were the results of this debate?

A: It is not accurate to say that we engaged Rohana Wijeweera and the present JVP leadership in a major polemic. But there was an ideological struggle which amounted to the same. At the time all the new interpretations, theories and arguments of Wijeweera on various issues especially on the tactics of the revolutionist class forces, and on international issues, were based on Trotskyite theory. But he dared not declare that he was professing Trotskyism. I also took an active part in opposing these and propagating the viewpoints of Marxism Leninism and the thoughts of Mao-tse-tung. The outcome of this struggle was the break-away and consolidation of certain active groups struggling inside the JVP at that time. They have later joined together to form the Janatha Sangamaya.

Q: After your return from jail you entered into a debate with Kalyananda Tiranagama, on the question of the 'national bourgeoisie and the United Front'. In general how do you assess the potential of the SLFP?

A: The debate you are mentioning is the publication of an article written by me while in the Magazine Prison criticizing the viewpoint of an article by Comrade Kalyananda Tiranagama on the national bourgeoisie. There I have pointed out that there still exists a national bourgeoisie and it will be represented even by the SLFP.

Considering the SLFP it can be seen clearly that it is opposed vehemently by the feudal and reactionary forces inside the country and by the imperialists in international politics. All these forces consider the UNP as their representative. Thus in internal and external policies the SLFP has a definite progressive role, whatever its shortcomings are. The general membership and the sympathisers of the SLFP exhibit an anti-imperialist and progressive stand. Furthermore, in opposing both superpowers, viz. United States and Soviet Union, the SLFP is playing a more patriotic and more progressive role. On local politics the SLFP has its own contribution to the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggle.

But as a bourgeois party, and also as a party with the potential of forming a government, the SLFP also has an anti-proletarian and anti-revolutionary stand. This aspect prevents us from forming a longterm, permanent united front with them. A united front as in the case of SLFP-LSSP-CP coalition will promote the interests of the national bourgeoisie and will strive for the bourgeois development of our Society. Therefore as proletarian revolutionaries we can only support and unite with the SLFP only in its anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic activities. Also our attitude towards in the SLFP at such times will depend on the way the SLFP itself is dealing with the revolutionary forces. But we definitely hold that the SLFP cannot lead the new democratic revolution, which is the first stage of the socialist revolution.

(To be continued)

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N M - 'Principal leader of the working class'

by Hector Abhayavardhana

A few days before his worsening illness took him to hospital for the last time, N. M. Perera was visited by a delegation from the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka—a gesture of their fraternal concern for him in his condition. NM was already too ill to engage in any real conversation with his visitors. They were themselves too embarrassed to indulge in any kind of banter. Turning to Dr. S. A. Wickremesinghe, who led the delegation, NM enquired after the Doctor's own health. Dr. Wickremesinghe, who has been battling courageously against a serious heart ailment for some time, replied that he too found it necessary not to do too much. "Yes, Wicky," NM observed, "we have played our part. It is now for the younger generation to go on from there."

It was not given to NM to see the establishment of a Socialist Government in his country, the goal on which he had set his heart. Through the Suriya Mal movement at first and then as a disciplined member of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, he spent about 47 years patiently building up mass consciousness and the strength of organisation necessary to set up a Socialist Government in Sri Lanka. That this should elude him must have caused him many a twing of regret. But it would be grossly untrue that he experienced any feeling of failure or frustration on that account. On the contrary, he gave expression many times to a sober appreciation of what had been achieved by the long years of strenuous exertion and militant struggle in which he and his party had engaged. Most of all, he had

the supreme human satisfaction of having, in every situation, given of his best to the movement to which he belonged to the very end of his life.

The period immediately following the General Election of July 1977, which decimated his party's representation in Parliament, lost him his own seat for the first time and forced hundreds of his supporters to find refuge from the continuing terror that the UNP had unleashed, in outlying jungles or in NM's own house in Colombo, must have been some of the darkest days in his life. But NM knew how to appraise them. In the course of a message on the occasion of the 42nd anniversary of the LSSP in December 1977, he declared:

"For the second time in our history the voice of the Party has been muted in Parliament. In 1940, for the first time, when the LSSP leaders were incarcerated and the Party proscribed as illegal during the Second World War, the Parliament was the poorer for the absence of a representative to voice the feelings and the needs of the masses in this country. This ended with the Election of 1947. And now for the second time our voice is not heard in Parliament. The mighty wave of antipathy that swept the SLFP Government aside threw us also out of Parliament."

Without mincing his words, NM explained the implications of this:

"There is now a vacuum in the arena of politics, the more so because the SLFP membership in Parliament has demonstrated with exceptional distinction its bankruptcy of ideas and even of argument. The TULF, true to its narrow politics, is soused in its commun-

alism. The very effectiveness of the Opposition has highlighted the glowing record of the LSSP performance in previous Parliaments. It is a tragedy for this country that when the presence of the LSSP is most urgently needed, silence has been imposed upon it by the unfortunate decision of the masses themselves."

Two years earlier and a few months after the LSSP had been thrown out of the United Front Government by Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, NM explained in frank terms the achievements of which the LSSP could be proud:

"The LSSP is justly proud of its achievements over the 40 years of its existence. We are proud that we have lasted for 40 years, which is itself an achievement in a country like Sri Lanka, where parties come up and die off like mushrooms. We are proud of our record of struggle against imperialism and capitalism in this period..."

"Today the word 'Samasamaja' is a household word throughout the length and breadth of this country. It is not an idle word. It is a term replete with meaning. It is pregnant with the endless possibilities of a new life..."

"40 years of struggle have borne substantial fruit. We are not content to remain here. We have parted company with the SLFP.... The LSSP will now march on towards the goal which we set for ourselves on December 17th, 1935."

It is not always remembered that the purpose of forming the LSSP was not that of grabbing power for a conspiratorial gang within the shortest possible time or by the quickest route. The very idea would have been absurd in this little island colony of the

mightiest imperialism in the world. It is true that 5 years previously, in 1931, the Labour Government of Britain had introduced the Universal Franchise in Ceylon — for the first time in a British colony. But this did not mean that the era of mass politics had already begun. There could be no mass politics before the LSSP was founded because there were no political parties. Votes were cast not only for individual candidates, but out of considerations of caste, religion, family, wealth etc. The task that the LSSP had to perform was to bring the masses into the political arena, which meant, first of all conducting political activity in the languages of the masses. Only through the building of a mass movement could the fullest use be made of newly conceded universal vote.

The goals of the mass movement were boldly proclaimed by the LSSP's programme: national independence, nationalisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange, and abolition of inequalities of race, caste, creed and sex. Neither NM nor any other of the LSSP leaders expected that these goals could be achieved through the State Council that had been set up by the Donoughmore Constitution. They were convinced that all available means would have to be used for the purpose. Their escape from prison and their migration to India indicated their belief that the liberation of Ceylon from British rule necessitated close coordination of the revolutionary struggle in this country with the Indian revolutionary struggle. What could not be foreseen was that British imperialism greatly weakened by the war, would voluntarily withdraw from India in the face of mounting mass unrest and, thereafter, transfer power to an elected Parliament in Ceylon.

Since the formation of a revolutionary LSSP coincided with the commencement of mass politics in the country, it was to be expected that Parliament would be literally invaded by organised mass pressures from outside. The general backwardness made it unlikely that

elections would return the LSSP in a majority to the legislature. But even a small number of LSSP MP's, functioning with determination and skill and with the backing of mass agitation, could move mountains in an age when bulldozers were unknown. NM and Philip Gunawardena were the only LSSP MP's in the pre-war years, but even as a team of two they dominated the State Council with their parliamentary stagecraft, their tactical skill and their matchless devotion to duty. It almost seemed that NM had prepared himself for this role by the pains he had taken to acquire academic knowledge of constitutions and parliaments in his years abroad.

Even in conditions of colonial subjection, the LSSP was able to use parliament to much greater purpose than is signified by the preference of European Marxists to regard parliament as a platform. NM and Philip demonstrated, in the context of prevalent social relationships, that it was possible to use parliament as a sharp-edged weapon to wrest not merely concessions but positive rights for the masses from imperialism and its local collaborators. The arrest and detention of the LSSP leaders and the illegalisation of the Party during the war virtually took away the positive value that the State Council had for the common people, as NM has pointed out. When NM and Philip returned to the new parliament after the war with a larger team to back their efforts, parliament was made to reverberate to the sound of fresh battles, despite a serious split that ran right down the middle of their party.

NM was largely responsible for the combination of agitation, struggle and pressure through parliament that has characterised the politics of the LSSP, and of the Communist Party as well, from the earliest years. This does not take away any appreciation from the performance of his colleagues. NM would always have been the first to admit that he was part of a team: his prowess as a cricketer had imbued him even as a school student with the virtue

of team-spirit. Nor was the LSSP team to which NM belonged an ordinary team. NM, Philip, Colvin, Leslie, Doric, Bernard, Anthony Pillai—to mention just a few of them—were not mere mediocrities. The flowering of NM's genius owed much to the experience of working in such a team within the collectivity of the party.

Even before his arrest in 1940, NM had begun to emerge as a trade union leader. He was at the head of the strike-struggles in the up-country plantations that developed in a spreading wave in the early days of the world war. The militancy of those struggles struck terror in the hearts of planterdom. The plantation workers found in him a leader in whose courage and determination they could repose the fullest confidence. With his release from prison in 1945, NM plunged into the work of organising the urban working class. He was at the head of two General Strikes of Government workers in 1946 and 1947. There were hard-fought battles in the private sector, especially in the Bus Companies where the owners made ruthless thuggery the main device of personnel management. By the time of the General Election of 1947 NM had become the principal leader of the working class.

(To be continued)

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Some basic elements in a negotiating strategy

The discussion in the preceding sections has etched the agenda for negotiations in the Eighties as it is currently evolving, and the broad conceptual framework within which Third World countries appear to approach this agenda.

However, a constructive process of international economic negotiations in the period ahead demands several important preconditions. The objectives of the developing countries in seeking changes in their relationships with developed countries and the motivations which guide them have emerged with some degree of clarity in the recent period. The responses of the developed countries to the thrust for a new world economic order are not equally clear. In entering into negotiation, Third World countries need to gain a clearer insight and fuller understanding of how developed countries approach the whole range of issues which are the subject of negotiations. The positions that have been taken in the negotiations conducted in the recent past indicate that there is no single unified approach to these issues among the developed countries themselves. It is obvious that there are varying degrees of "hardness" and "softness" among the developed market economy countries to the Third World demands. There is no evidence that developed countries recognise the need for restructuring the world economic system in the same fundamental sense in which the developing countries perceive it. Therefore there does not seem to be agreement on the fundamental premises on which the negotiations are based. UNCTAD V provides a timely opportunity to examine these fundamental premises, as it directly broaches the question of structural change in the international economic system. It is perhaps the first opportunity after the Declaration of the N. I. E. O, which developing

countries would have to seek an explicit commitment to the primary objectives to which the negotiations are directed, and to define the character of the structural changes that are being sought.

The approaches of developed countries to the world economic crisis have been of a mixed and varied character. The policy responses themselves have been defensive and inward looking, giving first place to the need for the economic recovery of the developed countries. In these responses, the recovery of developed countries is seen as a precondition for the smooth functioning of the world economy and the development of the Third World. For the Third World, the most convincing evidence of the need for structural change is the world economic crisis itself, its persistence and its failure to respond to the conventional counter-cyclical strategies. In the Third World's view, "economic recovery" cannot come without restructuring, and defensive responses aimed at only "recovery" and return to the path of growth prior to 1947 can only serve to reinforce the structural elements of the crisis. The Third World needs to establish the negotiating Agenda firmly on this premise. Negotiations on the fundamental issues are of course not likely to be conclusive. Nevertheless, it is important that the Third World maintains its pressure for the definition of the basic objectives, even if it were only to serve the limited purpose of making explicit the underlying conflicts of approach. It would provide the signposts for the directions which the Third World needs to take in its negotiations.

What will eventually determine the outcome of the negotiating process will be the structure of international economic power within which the negotiations take place. Third World countries

cannot assume that the far reaching changes in the world economic order could come from a change of heart on the part of developed countries, or that the changes can be engineered through an appeal to goodwill and reason. It might be granted that the historical process includes the evolution of international norms and moral standards which exert their pressure on international relations, and that the international negotiations themselves can draw on this base. But in the final analysis it is to be expected that the elites of the developed societies will resist a process which dislodges them from their present positions of power and control over the world economy. They will attempt to steer that process in a direction which will eventually preserve those positions without any serious diminution of power. In such a context it might seem naive to expect international economic negotiations in which developed and developing countries could more assiduously get together to cooperate in creating a world economic system in which power is shared more equitably. Therefore as the international economic issues become more sharply defined in the Eighties, the short-term conflicts of interest between developing and developed countries are likely to become accentuated.

Interdependence

However, an alternative scenario in which the elites themselves recognise the need for a more rational and equitable management and resolution of the global conflicts is not an impractical or impossible prospect. In fact international economic negotiations can find a convincing rationale only if the negotiating efforts are directed at such an objective, and assume that the possibility of realising such an objective exists. But if a scenario of this kind is to be a reality, two

crucial elements have to be present. First, there should be some areas of genuine interdependence and mutuality of interests between developed and developing countries and second, the Third World must be capable of exercising effective countervailing power. It is these elements that will provide the motive force for a constructive negotiating process in which the prospect of gains and the fear of losses could complement each other.

One set of responses in the developed countries has begun to emphasise the interdependence of the different parts of the world economic system and the mutuality of interests between developing and developed countries. These perceptions extend from the growing importance of markets in developing countries for the exports of the developed countries, to the role which aid can play in enhancing the import capacity of developing countries stimulating demand in the world economy and speeding the recovery of developed economies. Some of these approaches are reflected for example in the proposal for a new "Marshall Plan" for the Third World. They have also found expression in forceful critiques of current defensive policies followed by developed countries such as the new protectionism, and have led to a growing recognition of a mutuality of interests of developed and developing countries in a programme of international restructuring. The growing emphasis on the mutuality of interests is certainly a new phenomenon in the international scene. It does suggest that developed and developing countries could discover common ground for formulating a programme of international economic cooperation.

In deciding on its own responses and designing its negotiating strategy, the Third World however needs to examine thoroughly all the responses made by the developed countries and consider how it should make selective use of these to secure the best advantage to the Third World. It is necessary to distinguish between approaches which tend to

preserve the prevailing structure of relationships from those which are conducive to bringing about the desired structural changes. Policies that are contained exclusively within a framework of aid and resource transfer could endanger the processes which are aimed at structural change. Proposals for such resource transfers, new models of the Marshall Plan, global Stabex schemes and similar projects are not substitutes for the Integrated Programme for Commodities or the restructuring of production and trade in manufactures. They have to be seen as part of a comprehensive package and as complementing more far reaching measures which are capable of removing the inequalities of present economic relationships and enhancing Third World economic strength and bargaining power. This problem of maintaining the right balance between aid and structural change and the task of ensuring that the aid system itself is reorganised in support of the desired change in the structures and the relationships, concerns the Third World negotiating strategy as a whole. The proposals based on mutuality of interests have only brought these problems into sharper focus.

It is important that developing countries in their strategies of negotiation take due advantage of the concept of interdependence and mutuality of interests. In each of the fields in which initiatives are to be launched in the Eighties, there is considerable potential for demonstrating the short-term and longer-term benefits that would accrue to all parts of the world economic system as a result of the rapid growth and development of the Third World. Analytical studies have already drawn attention to the beneficial effects which price stabilisation of commodities and low cost imports from developing countries will have in the developed economies. Reference has already been made to the new role assumed by aid in the fight against recession. Further work needs to be done within the Third World itself along these lines. The mutuality of interests in different parts of the Agenda has to be perceived together and the cumulative impact more clearly

demonstrated. It is also essential to place the short-term costs of restructuring that might have to be borne by developed countries within the medium and long-term perspective, and show how the transition to a more equitable world economic order could create conditions which are beneficial to the mass of the population in both developed and developing countries. Such an effort would help to give support to the growing awareness in the developed countries of the emerging pattern of interdependence between them and the developing countries, and would help to mobilise the progressive social forces in these countries behind the New International Economic Order.

(Concluded)

Vietnam Day

At a Vietnam National Day meeting held in Kandy last week organised by the Sri Lanka - Vietnam Friendship Association the following resolutions were unanimously passed.

Resolutions

- (a) The people of Sri Lanka, especially those in the Hill country, extend warmest greetings to the heroic people and the socialist state of Vietnam on this occasion of their 34th anniversary of their National Day.
- (b) We salute the great people of Vietnam who, having successfully defeated US imperialism in the course of a Valiant struggle, have also defeated and suppressed the conspiracy by the Pol-Pot Ieng Sary clique and the Peking ruling clique to sabotage the victory of April 30th 1975.
- (c) While firmly denouncing and condemning the act of aggression by the Peking rulers against Vietnam, we resolve to do whatever is in our power to defend Socialist Vietnam.
- (d) We extend our warmest thanks to the Vietnamese people for the inestimable contributions made by them to the world wide liberation movement against imperialism and to the construction of socialism.

The meeting was presided over by Mr. G. B. de Silva and the speakers included M/s. Dew Gunasekera, Athauda Seneviratne, Jayaratne Maliyagoda.

Stop, look and listen

by Jayantha Somasunderam

The plight of the 'Boat People' of Vietnam and the other refugees of Indo China, are a reminder to us, that we live in a world that oft times is brutal in its treatment of people. Three decades after the extermination of six million Jews in the death camps of Buchenwald, Belsen, Dachau, Mauthausen and Auschwitz, the International Council of Christians and Jews, a gathering representing 75 nations, has Neo-Nazism as its topic. Amidst all of its affluence, in the USA, over 18 million adults are illiterate—they cannot read wanted ads, job applications, work orders, road signs, food labels or directions for medication.

When Amnesty International won the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize, David Hawk, its US Executive Director said: We're honoured and very moved at the prize, But we're not celebrating. The time when we are going to celebrate is when there are no more torture and atrocities committed by governments around the world.

When we respond to oppression, to cruelty, to natural disasters, we are reiterating that we are part of a single family. When we try to help, some of the devastation gets repaired, some of the prisoners are set free, some of the hungry are fed and some of the tears wiped away.

Its true we can't do everything, but we can all do something. Yes, each one of us can help to change the world.

"During the past few years, I have had little peace. Twelve times I was jailed, twice they tried to blow up my home, everyday my family and I were threatened, and once I was knifed almost fatally. I have been swayed by the storms of persecution and felt tempted to give up the struggle and withdraw to a more quiet life, but each time I was strengthened in my resolve. Often in the worst moments of crisis and self doubt, an inner voice would say 'see, I am with you.'"

This was Martin Luther King's testimony; he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.

In the last decade, nearly 2,000 people have died in religious violence in Northern Ireland. Then in 1976, Mairead Corrigan a Catholic and Betty Williams, a protestant began a movement for peace. Since then violent deaths in Northern Ireland have dropped by 54 percent. The two of them have also been awarded the Noble Prize for Peace.

All of us are not candidates for the Nobel Peace Prize, but we can stop and listen to the needs of others. Too often we are caught up in our own little world, too busy doing our own little thing, deafened by our own little ideas that we don't get around to listening to others. But then God gave us two ears and only one mouth. So we must have been made to spend twice as much time listening.

A richly dressed youth, Francis, rode his horse one day on the Umbrian plain in Assisi, Italy. As his horse shied he saw the sight he most feared, a leper stood before him. But he fought down his loathing, dismounted and gave the man money. Suddenly Francis was filled with love. He kissed the leper's hand, then embraced him. In that moment a saint was born.

Francis of Assisi was to go on to pen this prayer:

*Lord, make me an instrument of Your
peace.*

*Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And Where there is sadness, joy.*

*O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born
to eternal life.*

(Incidents and quotations taken from The Christopher News Notes)

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Bandaranaike thought

BANDARANAIKE DESAPALANA DARSANAYA (*Bandaranaike's Political Philosophy*)—Monis Gunawardene, *Hondahitha Printers, Kandy, 1978, pp. 15.*

The ignominious defeat of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party at the last general election generated a discussion on the relevance and the currency of the so-called Bandaranaike policies. The intellectuals and politicians of the left who examined the need for reassessment of his place in the political history of Sri Lanka exposed its feeble and rather doubtful relevance to the changing political process of the country and they, above all, attempted to discuss the extent to which 'the Bandaranaike charisma'—which he achieved after assassination—has been utilised to provide legitimacy to the political strategy of the kith and kin of this founder of a popular political machine.

Monis Gunawardene, in a style typical of loyalist cum critic, has produced a fifteen page pamphlet—in garb of a philosophical tract—on the 'political philosophy of Bandaranaike.' Gunawardene's short essay, which consists of four chapters, is essentially an attempt to construct philosophy out of the disjointed and inconsistent political ideas to which Bandaranaike gave expression in the course of his political career. Making a very sketchy analysis of the background—pertaining to his youth—in which Bandaranaike expressed some of his ideas, the author sees (1) Socialism (2) Mass Democracy and (3) Religious Thought as the basic foundation of the political thought of Bandaranaike. The major contention of the author is that the political ideas emerged more in the nature of an attempt to restore the past which disappeared under the yoke of colonial domination. The weakest aspect of this section is that there is no discussion of the impact of colonialism on the emerging national political scene

from which Bandaranaike derived inspiration, and it was this, along with its influence in the whole sub-continent, which nurtured some of his political ideas. The relationship between this factor and the economic and other policies of Bandaranaike has not been properly examined; yet the attempt is being made, more in the form of a propagandist pamphleteer, to say that Bandaranaike was considerably influenced by socialism.

The author seeks the assistance of a quotation from Bandaranaike's work 'The Spinning Wheel and the Paddy Field' which was really an imitation of the Gandhian ideology. The utilisation of the ideas of a 'Spinning Wheel' economy was largely for the purpose of political mobilisation in a backward state, and this, in my view, was partially achieved in Siyane Korale where he successfully established a political base for himself. Such symbols of the primitive economic heritage, unlike symbolic slogans of the national liberation struggles, are of very limited utility, and it perhaps explains as to why the message of the spinning wheel was never an island-wide national awakening movement. This very source, from which Bandaranaike derived inspiration to resuscitate a backward economy under colonial exploitation, demonstrated its inherent weakness as a viable economic programme. The same context has been used to buttress Gunawardene's point of view that the word 'socialism' has been prostituted. However the people and leaders, who were partially, if not totally, responsible for the popularity of 'socialism' in Sri Lanka, have not been mentioned. No efforts need to be invested to unearth the motive for the absence of this aspect!

Gunawardene, in his distinctly weak attempt to construct a political philosophy out of a series of quotations decorated with the phraseology nauseatingly familiar to a political scientist, introduces a number of contradictions; the important question, therefore, could be asked whether these contradictions are representative aspect of the very philosophy. No intellectual or politician would deny the impact of October, 1917 in national liberation struggles of this century; Gunawardene, while agreeing with this contention, was not very sure that the ideas emanated in 1917 had an impact on the thought of Bandaranaike. Lack of certainty in this respect has been justified by indulging in the oft-repeated defensive argument that Bandaranaike was not a 'pothe-gura'—a bookish theoretician. The lack of a theory—or according to the author, the absence of the 'pothe-gura' orientation—is cause and consequence of the poverty of philosophy and it was this aspect, coupled with the fear to show any commitment to a scientific philosophy which gave birth to pragmatic postures in certain political parties. Gunawardene, in page 8 of his tract, indirectly refers to it but no attempt has been made to elaborate this aspect of the politics of Bandaranaike. Gunawardene has successfully if unwittingly exposed this facet of Bandaranaike, who, undoubtedly, was one of the astute politicians of Sri Lanka. Monis Gunawardene, who adds yet another piece into the plethora of incomplete assessments of the place of Bandaranaike in the political annals of the country, must realise that a political philosophy could not be constructed out of the astuteness of a political tactician. Above all, it needs to be realised that theoretical aridity cannot be disguised as philosophy.

The Hydro-Cracker stakes

Cabinet Halts The Hydro Cracker. Unsatisfactory Tender Procedures headlines "SUN", August 16.

Over to Nicodemus at the—Hapugaskande Downs for the running of the Hydro Crackerjack Stakes. The sponsors are International Tender Inc., makers and purveyors of grease and palm oil. "Thank you, Chris and good afternoon, listeners. We are about to witness the running of the richest race ever proposed. Six international runners will vie for Rs. 1600 million in this winner-take-all event.

With such an enormous purse at hand, pre-race preparation has been intense. Owners, trainers and jockeys have spared no money and effort, mostly in unorthodox fashion, to bring their charges to peak condition. Sleepless nights have been spent over cocktails and wild oats, jockeying tenderly for position. Experts on the treacherous nature of the course have been flown to distant capitals for secret review, rest and recuperation. With strategy regarding pace, weight and gate position all-important in this six furlong dash to the wire, millions have been reported spent on any inside information regarding "going" conditions. So great is the frenzy to snatch the multi-million rupee purse, with no holds barred, the Chief Steward has ordered that a special panel of judges be appointed to confirm the placings.

The card is as follows: The Japanese-owned **Chiloda** trained by Wondel, ridden by Deeseela; the German-owned **Binde** trained at Allied Stables, ridden by Gevinthesinghe; the French **Darwin** from the Raja Stables, ridden by Amunson; Britain's **Glomus** trained by Soy Associates, ridden by Ajeesoy; the second Japanese entry **Benibeni**, owned and trained by Benimari Incorporated and ridden by Mahindas and the Italian-owned

Soletti, trained by Frelica and ridden by Aloy Sianco.

It is an impressive line-up. All owners, trainers and jockeys are super-confident of their individual charges. Their stable hangers-on have spent large sums prying into the form of other runners. But professional form readers feel that only three have a chance of cracking the Crackerjack Stakes. Most favoured is the French-owned Darwin backed heavily by a leading financial combine. Further the powerful Raja yard has in the recent past brought off many a coup with their strong line-up of jockeys with novel but effective riding techniques. The line-up includes two women jockeys who have been steering Darwin during work-outs. The Italians are also given a good chance since an industrial and oil consortium have gambled heavily on victory. They are also reputed to be well-stocked with inside information regards course conditions and the form of other runners. The other favoured entry is Benibeni, whose preparation and trial gallops have been done in great secrecy and on a deceptive low-key.

There has been discreet but fairly heavy backing on Glomus. It's trainers have successfully negotiated a weight decrease after the Thatcher lady came into power. Glomus will start on a lower handicap than what was designated at entry time.

The field is now at the gate. They are coming up nicely. No, no. Chiloda is backing. Here they come up again and away they go. Chiloda has planted.

As they settle down it is Binde taking the lead from the bunch followed by Darwin, Glomus, Soletti and Benibeni. It is a mighty rush with Binde in the lead on the rails.

As they come to the two furlong post Binde continues to lead just ahead of Darwin on its outside. Glomus in the middle, Soletti and Benibeni. It is furious bunch of horseflesh with nothing more than two lengths between first and fifth. Benibeni on the outside is now drawing up to Soletti. Glomus half length in front of Soletti and Darwin about a length behind leader Binde.

At the three and into the straight. Binde is faltering. Oh, he's falling back and Amunson has forged ahead of Darwin and got rail position. Glomus has beaten Binde and Benibeni is galloping beside Soletti.

As they take the turn Binde is out of the race. It's Darwin, Glomus with Soletti coming through and Benibeni straightening up for his run on the outside. Soletti is now coming through challenging Glomus who is weakening. Darwin is running sound. Half a length behind now is Soletti and Mahindas has gone for his whip on Benibeni.

At the distance it is still Darwin in front of Soletti and Benibeni is coming like a thunderbolt on the outside. Three whips are flashing as they go for the wire with just half length separating Darwin and Soletti with Benibeni running together like two slices of bread in a sandwich. Benibeni is being whipped on both flanks and is forging ahead like the wind. He has caught Darwin with Soletti maybe half a length behind. Nose to nose, Darwin and Benibeni and at the post I think it is Benibeni by a nose from Darwin with Soletti a half length behind. Glomus is three lengths behind and Binde who flattered at the start a bad last. Chiloda was left behind and there goes the photo-finish signal.

It was a fantastic race. Champagne smiles must be worn by the Japanese and the disappointed

others must be heart-broken counting the money spent in vain.

There goes the photograph to the judge's box. Yes, as I predicted. It is Benibeni. Second is Darwin and third place to Soletti, whose powerful backers must be very disappointed since they openly boasted victory over the much fancied French entry.

While I await the white cone to indicate the 'all clear' I will return you to the studio for an announcement by our sponsors.

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There is consternation here. It is no white cone. The red has been hoisted to indicate an objection by second-placed Darwin and some of the Stewards are joining the judges.

(A musical interlude while the inquiry proceeds. It includes the latest Randy Newman hit "It's money that I love".)

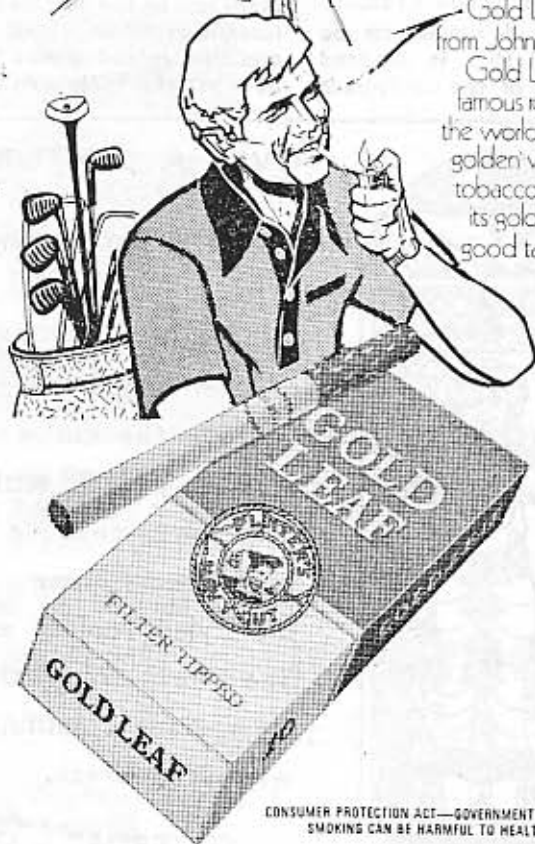
Consternation. My foot! It is chaos and confusion. I have never witnessed anything like this before. The placings have been shuffled like a pack of cards. First the frame went up with Darwin's objection upheld. Darwin first, Soletti second and Benibeni relegated to third. Then down came the frame and the numbers then indicated Soletti the winner, with Darwin second and Benibeni remaining at third place. This is unbelievable. Jockey Amunson and Raja Stable trainers are tottering around in a daze shouting "dope, dope". There is wild joy among the Soletti backers who seem to have pulled a fantastic coup. The Japanese, as usual, have their inscrutable smiles. The white cone is still to go up confirming the placings. And here is an announcement over the public address system.

Good lord! the head judge has resigned and the Chief Steward has called the race null and void. The Crackerjack Stakes has been cancelled.

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Proportional . . .

(Continued from Page 12)

first counting are automatically declared to be elected.

If however, the required number of seats fails to be filled at the first count the method that is generally adopted is the following: the surplus votes of the candidates already elected on the basis of the quota are redistributed among the others in accordance with the voters second preference. These votes are added to the total obtained already by each candidate according to preferences. Thus if the quota is 4,000 and candidate X has received 3,940 as a result of the first count, the re-allocation of the surplus votes of the winning candidates according to second preferences may well give him the additional 60 votes he requires to reach the quota, and thereby qualify to obtain a seat.

If some seats still remain to be filled, the method that is adopted is the elimination of the candidates

at the bottom of the poll one by one and the reallocation of their votes according to second preferences and adding them to the totals already obtained until the required number of seats get filled.

This system thus ensures that the candidates who are finally elected will in fact be selected by the voters, if not as their first preference, then as second (or sometimes later) preferences. It also ensures that votes are not "wasted" but are capable of being transferred according to voters preferences.'

The fully proportional system is that recommended by Thomas Hare according to which the entire country is considered as a single constituency containing that number of seats which is prescribed for the national legislature.

While a fully proportional system may not be the outcome, nevertheless the experience of its use in countries like Ireland shows that results have been fairly close to proportion-

ality. In Britain the revival of interest in electoral reform as a result of the disproportionate relation between seats and votes in the 1974 elections led to the appointment of the Blake Commission of 1975 under the auspices of the Hansard Society; and one of two alternative measures it has recommended is the Single Transferable vote.'

However, the chief drawback of proportional representation, according to its critics is that it encourages minority thinking and therefore multi-party systems and coalition governments. The representation of different interests and the consultation of these interests in the formation of a government may be a sign of political maturity; but a strong and homogenous cabinet able to form a stable government, they argue, is an advantage which should not be lightly sacrificed so as to obtain mathematical accuracy in the representation of various groupings in a society.

(Economic Review Jan/Feb 1979)

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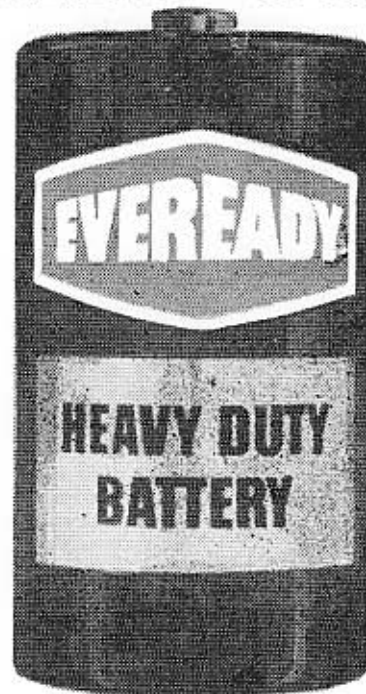
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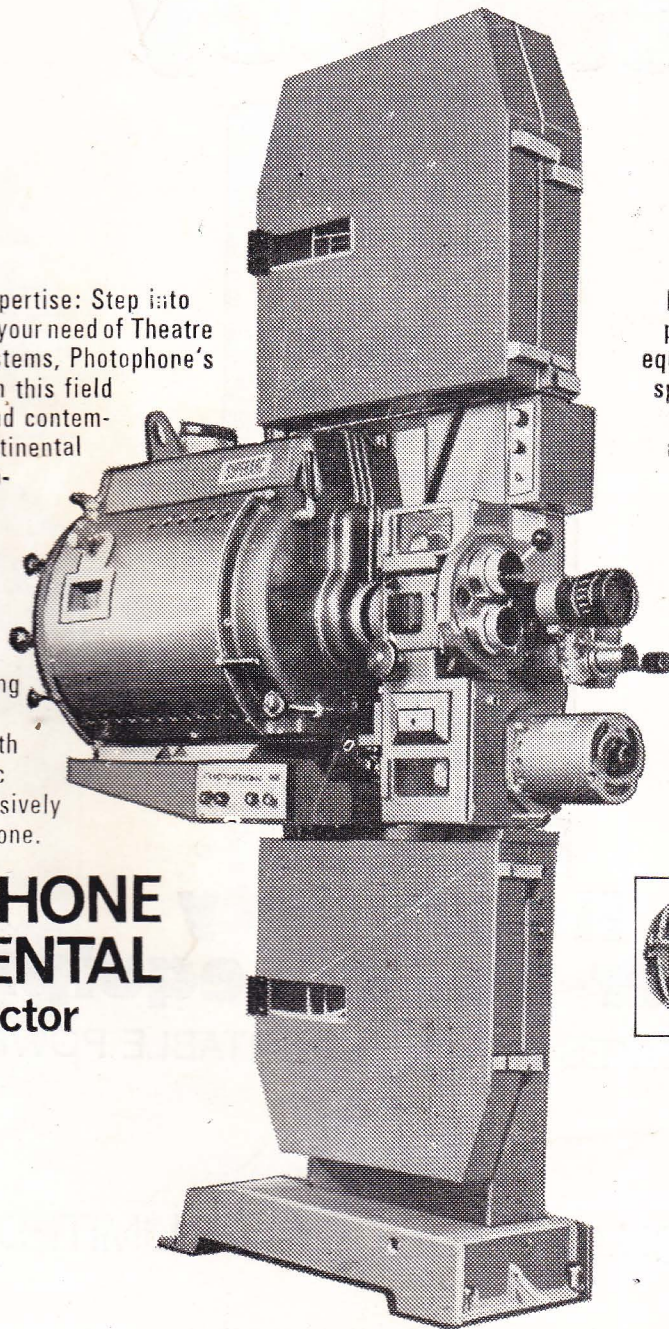
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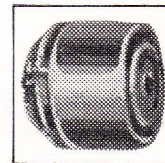
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