

LANKA

GUARDIAN



SUMMIT

SPECIAL REPORT

HAVANA DIARY

Mervyn de Silva

'HANSA VILAK'

Reggie Siriwardena

EELAM + MARXISM

Chintaka replies

LEFT UNITY : PROSPECTS, PROBLEMS



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GARADS

That Chilly Feeling

Two prestigious journals, the 'Hindu' and 'Newsweek' have done the UNP's new economic policies proud. Commenting editorially on President Jayewardene's recent visit to Japan, the **Hindu** notes the aid and investment that Sri Lanka is now attracting from a variety of sources. It is a testament, says the **Hindu**, to the island's newly achieved stability.

Sri Lanka figures in a three-part **Newsweek** survey which seeks to make a political point from the options open to different countries and the choices actually made. One choice is Big government, socialism or social welfarism, with state-controls, nationalisation, subsidies etc and the other is defined as capitalism, with free market forces, tax cuts etc.

Of the statistics reported by the correspondent, James Pringle, one was picked up by Mr. N Sanmughathasan when he addressed the recent protest rally against the Essential Public Services Bill. The average skilled worker here earns half the statutory minimum in India and one-fifth of the wage paid to a skilled worker in Singapore. The survey which has a general title 'TILT TO THE RIGHT' places Sri Lanka in the company of Thatcher's Britain and Pinochet's Chile. Regular readers of the international press will note the re-appearance of what the **CDN** once called 'The Chilean parallel'. When Allende's coalition (which took office the same year as Mrs. Bandaranaike's U.F.) was toppled in 1973, the **ECONOMIST** published a commentary on Sri Lanka entitled 'That Chilly Feeling'.

Image Abroad

Though the UNP Government's performance is being showered with so much favourable foreign publicity, the authorities are increasingly concerned, it was reported last week, over the sustained anti-government campaign conducted abroad by expatriate groups. This propaganda draws attention to two questions,

the Tamil situation and the tough new legislation.

The campaign has now spread from the UK and US to Western Europe. Some of these exercises may be dismissed as 'stunts'. But there have been many publicity coups too. Western journalists who covered the Havana conference, for instance, revealed the fact that they were on the mailing list of an organisation in London called 'the Tamil co-ordinating committee'. In their mail recently was a photocopy of a reply by Mrs. Indira Gandhi to the TCC. In her letter, Mrs. Gandhi says she was "horri-fied" to read the contents of the documents sent to her by the TCC. Mrs. Gandhi has also criticised the Janata Party's attitude to the "sufferings of the Tamils."

Christian Protest

Besides the major trade unions affiliated to the SLFP the ULF and other Left parties, several Christian organisations have condemned the essential Public Services Bill in the strongest terms.

Prominently displayed on the front page of the 'Catholic Messenger' is a story headlined "EPS Bill would be a 'negation of democracy'."

(Continued on Page 2)

'Bhikkhus in revolt'

Dr. Kumari Jayawardene's four-part article entitled "Bhikkhus in revolt" which appeared in your journal has sought to analyse the historical development of the Bhikkhu-oriented political movement in Sri Lanka. Her record of this development comes right up to the late fifties, but not beyond. Though studded with a galaxy of well known names, many leading lights in the movement had by that time gone their own way and in that process had their radical views blunted to the extent that some of them have sought refuge in rank communalism in the post-1956 era.

But that tradition did not die with such defections. It could be said that it culminated in the 1971 insurrection and no less than 300 Bhikkhus were apprehended by the authorities while Bhikkhus like Pitakatuwana Vajiragana, Telwatte Rahula and Bhathie had to suffer incarceration.

Although their efforts proved abortive, they yet deserve mention in any historical record of that movement, which was an attempt to translate into action its aspirations.

Kelaniya

P. Wanigabadu.

(Continued on Page 2)

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Editor: Mervyn de Silva

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Trends . . .

"The Messenger report is based on a statement issued by the Centre for Society and Religion. The effect of the Bill, it says, is to divide the trade union movement, to bring it as far as possible under government control, to victimize trade unionists, to curtail the freedom of speech, and to create conditions of 'stability' for foreign investors.

The Christian Workers Movement has also attacked the Bill because it 'undermines democratic freedom', deprives workers of trade union rights, benefits local and foreign capitalists, and seeks to destroy trade unionism.

Waiting for Gandhi?

A veteran politician with strong, settled views, JR has rarely concealed the crucial importance he attaches to Sri Lanka's relations with India.

The Mrs. G. Mrs. B. connection was so firmly established in the public mind here that the Janata party's 'cow-and-calf' election campaign was an obvious inspiration for the UNP's anti-Sirima, Anura pre-July 1977 propaganda blitzkrieg.

A series of CDN articles by a 'special correspondent' on the "JR Jawaharlal connection" has become a conversational topic in DPL circles. While the archivist does throw some new light on JR's political career and the evolution of "JR Thought", the articles are seen by at least 2 Asian diplomats as particularly interesting in the light of electoral trends in India.

Bi-Partisan?

Those who read with care the Foreign Minister's many guarded and non-committal statements on Kampuchea may have concluded that the government was 'neutral' or 'undecided' on this question and that Mrs. Bandaranaike was the only distinguished non-aligned supporter of Pol Pot in this country. Wrong.

The SLBC proudly announced that 71 countries, including Sri Lanka, voted for Pol Pot. It added that the 'ASEAN group joined Sri Lanka' in doing so. India voted for Heng Samrin.

It may be said for Mr. Hameed

Letters . . .

Caste in Jaffna

I am afraid that I cannot let pass unanswered Mr. Gamini Dissanaike's reply to my letter on the above subject. I do not know why Mr. Dissanaike has got himself hotted up to the extent of attacking me politically. All that I did was to point out some mis-statements in his article— which, incidentally, he has not denied.

He thinks that I am grossly over-playing the caste factor. Since he is not at the receiving end of caste repression, it is easy for Mr. Dissanaike to pontificate. There can be no such thing as over-playing the caste issue and, in particular, untouchability as practised in Jaffna. I think that caste oppression is man's greatest inhumanity to man. There can be no question of soft pedalling this issue.

Mr. Dissanaike compares my attitude to Mr. Cyril Mathew's— surely, an absurd parallel! Mr. Mathew uses the existence of caste among the Tamils to deny them their just demands. My support to the just demands of the Tamils is beyond doubt. I urge the resolution of the problem of caste in order to build greater unity behind the just demands of the Tamils. Two different things, altogether! I could also reply that Mr. Dissanaike's attitude is the same as that of the die-hard caste reactionaries of the North who use the very arguments he does to justify continuation of caste oppression.

From where does Mr. Dissanaike get the idea that I am hostile towards the Tamil youth, from among whom we have a considerable following? If Mr. Dissanaike had been present in Jaffna for this year's May Day

that he had to be mindful of the fact that Sri Lanka was the NAM's chairman. Anyway our position on this issue at least is bi-partisan and the SLFP pot can hardly call the UNP kettle black. What if Idi Amin had claimed he was still the head of government in Kampala?

NEXT ISSUE

- "Encounters" with Daniel Ortega, a founder of the FSLN (Sandinista) and a member of the ruling Nicaraguan Junta, and with Information Minister Malek of the POLISARIO.
- The final part of Chakravarti Raghavan's article on the New Information Order.

celebrations, he could have seen that the greater part of the united trade union demonstration consisted of our following and that this demonstration was bigger than that of the TULF—even as admitted by the 'Virakesari'. Anyway, who gave Mr. Dissanaike the idea that the youth of Jaffna are sympathetic to the USSR, Cuba and Vietnam? One or two visits to Jaffna do not justify such sweeping generalisations.

I am not going to argue in this letter as to what is the main contradiction in the North. But, let me tell Mr. Dissanaike that the struggle to end caste oppression is part of anti-feudal revolution. It is, therefore, part of the new democratic (or national democratic—call it what you will) stage of the revolution. Therefore, I am not skipping any stage of the revolution.

Colombo 5. N. Shanmugathasan

Kum is or Kumar?

"I marvel at thee Octopus" sang Ogden Nash, "If I were thee I'd call me Us". Is Kumar David one person or are Kumar David two persons? It is reasonable to suppose the latter since Kumar David refer to themselves in the plural. Kumar David tells us that in their considered view NM "is the biggest and most important of the political leaders and personages during the first three quarters of this century." As for "important", it all depends, as Ioad used to say, on what you mean by important. But Kumar David are wrong about "biggest". I'd personally say CAS Marikar was much bigger. Kumar David are particular to specify the first three

(Continued on Page 28)

Left unity : problems and prospects

by A staff writer

The ongoing discussions between the country's leading left parties have caused apprehension in the ranks of the Government, and dismay in the SLFP leadership, while simultaneously creating an upswell of enthusiasm among the rank-and-file of the working class organisations. The current mood is similar to that of the months preceding the formation of the United Left Front in 1963. But there are still signs that a united left movement may turn out to be a mirage once again, and that the present dialogue will only result in a realignment of forces within the Left, rather than a broad ingathering of the badly divided Marxist movement.

JVP

The current discussions were, surprisingly though, mooted by the JVP, which, until April/May this year had concentrated its polemical fire on the 'old' Left and its other 'new' Left rivals. This tactic enabled the JVP to build up its own strength by projecting an image of ideological purity, while eroding, or at least putting pressure on, the support bases of the ULF. This was the JVP line up to this year's commemoration, meeting of the April Insurrection. One month later, on May Day, the JVP switched tactics and directed its onslaught on the SLFP leadership and the Bandaranaike family in particular. Its highly impressive May Day demonstration and rally, followed by its relative success (vis-a-vis the ULF) at the Local Govt. Polls brought home to the 'old' left the message that a *modus vivendi* was imperative. That ULF newspapers began to accord the JVP the coverage it definitely merited, was a sign of this belated recognition of political realities.

The JVP now proceeded to open negotiations with the ULF, from

a position of 'essential equivalence'. It had a psychological advantage since nobody expected the JVP to initiate the discussions. The news that Wijeweera, Lionel Bopage and Upatissa Gamanayake had actually sat face to face with Colvin, Bernard et al, caused surprise and hope to spread through the ranks of the Left.

There were other factors that led the JVP to temporarily modify, if not abandon, its sectarian hostility to the ULF. The government's legislative onslaught compelled with the rising economic hardships, brought home to those JVP leaders heading the party's burgeoning trade union wing, the strongly felt working class need for united action with other Left parties. Furthermore the JVP, began to recognize that the party's decision never to repeat the international isolationism of 1979, and the consequent need for legitimacy and recognition from the socialist camp, should logically reflect itself in the formation of new, broader alliance patterns on the domestic political scene. Opposition to the JVP's new realistic orientation is said to have come from the party's petty bourgeois base, notably its youth and student sections headed by Wass Tillekeratne, the most vociferous critic of the ULF next to Wijeweera, and a firm adherent-advocate of the JVP's post-1971 neo Trotskyite theoretical line. Though Tillekeratne is himself a loyal acolyte of Wijeweera, the prevailing power balance within the party leadership seems to be tilted against him.

Though the JVP took the important step of initiating discussions its assessment of the degree and form of left unity required at the present juncture, imposed on the discussions a restrictive character from the very outset. The JVP sees a need for 'united

actions", to "march separately while striking together. The CPSL however stands for the creation of higher forms of unity i. e. of a broad-based United Left Front which will embrace within a political alliance, the JVP, the LSSP (New Leadership), Dinesh Gunawardena's MEP and of course the 'old' LSSP. The MEP's extremely ambiguous stand on the 'anti-Terrorist' Bill effectively precluded its inclusion in the current discussions. The CPSL hopes that 'united action' will be a prelude to the creation of a united left movement, incorporating the organisations named above.

The CPSL and JVP agree on one issue. Namely that "Maoism is counter revolutionary" and that therefore no unity is possible with any of the Maoist groups. In any case, they say, the Maoists are numerically so small as to be insignificant. Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakkara's LSSP (N. L.) disagrees, and argues strongly for the creation of a United Left Front comprising all Left groups without alternative political formation. The LSSP (N. L.) has been perhaps the most consistent single advocate of Left unity within the Marxist movement of this country and has been, for almost two years, the leading contingent of a 'New' Left conglomeration. Mr. Nanayakkara is striving hard to have at least Mr. N. Sanmugathan's CCP-as representative of the Maoists-included in the current series of discussions.

Rank-and-file leftwingers strongly support Mr. Nanayakkara's bid, and resent the perceived attempt by the JVP and CPSL to perpetuate the split in the local Left along the lines of the Sino-Soviet schism. The sharp personal antagonism that Mr. Wijeweera shares towards the JVP breakaway group

'Janatha Sangamaya' and Mr. G. I. D. Dharmasekera, strengthen his anti Maoist ideological convictions, thereby.

LSSP - NL

Mr. Nanayakkara is hampered in his efforts at broadening the ambit of the present discussion, by differences within his own party. He and to a much lesser extent, Dr. Wickremabahu Karunaratne, the party's General Secretary, are under criticism from a group within the party leadership. In the context of the Vietnam-Kampuchea dispute, Vasu (and Bahu) adopted a position which diverged from orthodox Trotskyism. Significantly, in doing so, they were at variance with the position that their parent body in Britain led by Ted Grant and the 'Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International'. The Vasu-Bahu duo had long been accused of being tainted with 'Stalinist-Maoist' deviations by rival Trotskyist groups, on account of their incessant championing of a broad Left Front.

The new maturity and realism demonstrated by these two notably Vasudeva in the field of international policy, however, caused these some criticisms to be voiced for the first time within the party leadership. This group of critics exacerbated a rift between the LSSP (NL) and its radical left partners in the 'United Committee of the Left' on the twin issues of May Day celebrations and local polls strategy. Seeking to demarcate itself sharply from both the pro-Moscow as well as Maoist 'lines', these critics who are sympathetic towards Ernest Mandels USEC and Britain's IMG, seek closer alliance with Mr. Tampoe's RMP and Mr. Prins Rajasooriya's 'Marxist Group'. These three organisation will jointly celebrate Trotsky's birth centenary on November 7th.

The challenge to Vasu's leadership is not considered credible, by most political observers. Vasudeva's superb speaking ability and appeal to the radical youth, combined with Wickremabahu's tactical skills at infighting and

sound grasp of Marxist theory, make them a combination that's hard to beat. Together they espouse a relatively sane Trotskyism which takes into account the new realities of the global power-balance. That the infighting within the LSSP-NL has had some adverse effect on the party as a whole is evidenced by the defection of veteran trade unionists H.A. Wilbert Perera (CP-wards) and Reggie Mendis (JVP-wards). In a sop to the opinions of the 'minority faction', Dr. Wikremabahu now stresses the need to see that the present discussions within the Left are not along the lines of 'Popular Frontism'. Political observers are of the view that the only positive feature of the minority faction's 'platform' is its stand on the Tamil issue. Meanwhile, party organizer and trade unionist Siritunga Jayasuriya is said to be gaining immensely in popularity, among the rank- and-file.

Mr. Bala Tampoe, who has long championed the slogan of an 'anti-capitalist united front' is expected to support the LSSP-NL suggestion to bring the Maoist groups into the current discussions. Mr. Tampoe's own position has been somewhat impaired however, by the resignation of his top T.U. organiser H.A. Seneviratne, who also edited the RMP's newspaper. Earlier, Mr. Tampoe lost a few leading cadres to the JVP which in a sudden policy shift, had begun to attack the RMP/CMU, probably for the twin purposes of eroding his T.U. base (a singularly unsuccessful effort) and distancing themselves from 'overt', 'official' Trotskyism. Mr. Tampoe had urged the JVP to abandon their sectarianism in favour of united action with other Left parties. (see L.G. Vol I No. 8, August 15th; No 15, Dec 1st). Now the JVP seems to have come round to this view. A reconciliation of sorts has taken place. "There are limits to which the JVP can attack Tampoe "Remember that he knows all the skeletons in their closet" said an ex-JVP leader.

LSSP

As might well be expected, the attitude of the 'old' LSSP leader-

ship constitutes the biggest single obstacle to the successful progress of the ongoing discussions. As we predicted on several earlier occasions, the changing correlation of world forces as well as the attractiveness of the CPSL's selfcritical 'new look' combined to alter the balance of forces within the ULF against the LSSP and in favour of the CPSL. One of the many important results of the special sessions of its PB (totalling 30 days in 2-3 day spells) was the decision to go ahead **unilaterally**, if needs be, with efforts to build Left unity especially with regard to the LSSP (NL), JVP and MEP. The pressure exerted from within the ULF by the newly militant CPSL and that from without, by the JVP and LSSP-NL, combined to force the LSSP into a more conciliatory position. Even in the course of the discussions however, its filibustering continues with the semantic problem of the Vasu group's choice of nomenclature as its *casus belli*.

The old LSSP's behaviour has to be seen in the context of its problems of leadership and succession, which were anterior to, but were aggravated by Dr. N.M. Perera's death. "Desha Vimukthi", the usually well informed and lively newspaper most representative of the Maoist 'new' left, disclosed that LSSP veterans Chandra Goonesekara and Ananda Premasinghe were leading a group of members who urge close affiliation with the SLFP. These personalities are expected to resign from the LSSP and join the SLFP in the likely event that this 'line' is rejected by the party.

The differences in the LSSP are made visible by the contention between Athauda Seneviratne and Anil Moonesinghe, both presently additional Secretaries of the party. Anil Moonesinghe, who is assiduously disseminating the news of his resignation from an executive post in the Maharaaja organisation, represents, together with JANADINA editor Sarath Navana, a faction which is critical of Soviet foreign policy and urges a return to the Trotskyist/ Titoist 'virtues' of the

past. He is chief organiser of an LSSP sponsored seminar on Trotsky's birth centenary, which will feature several Indian and European Trotskyists as guest speakers. Paradoxically, or perhaps not so paradoxically, Moonesinghe has also advocated the adoption of a Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinist line which would outflank the UNP govt on the Tamil issue and take the party closer to the SLFP, thus escaping the 'Stanlinist-Soviet embrace'. He claims tacit support from Leslie Gunewardena for the 'line'.

Anil's main rival Athauda, leads the party's youth wing together with Vajira Palpita, one of the most original and forceful orators in Sri Lankan politics today. When the LSSP was a member of the UF Govt. this duo, under the leadership of Vasudeva Nanayakkara, acted as a radical inner party caucus which had the youth leagues as its power base. Athauda and Palpita opted to stay within the LSSP when the chips were down, thereby earning the withering scorn of Vasu and Bahu. Today however, Athauda, Vajira Palpita, veteran political journalist Sugathamuni Gnanasiri, party theoretician Hector Abhayavardhana, and the hugely popular Carlo Fonseka, represent an important tendency which has turned its back on Trotskyism, urging instead closer rapport with the CPSL and the socialist bloc. The fact that Athauda has as his electoral base N.M. Perera's old constituency Ruanwella taken together with his fine speaking ability, and Dr. Colvin R. de Silva's tacit support, give him an edge over Anil Moonesinghe who is hampered by his erstwhile Maharaja connections. The LSSP's current stalling in the 'left unity' discussions indicate however, the temporary strengthening of the Moonesinghe faction's anti-Soviet, anti-JVP, pro-SLFP line.

Ironically enough this polarization within the old LSSP parallels, albeit imperfectly, that within its *bete noir* the LSSP-NL, with some sections of the latter party's leadership having personal contact with, and being fairly sympathetic towards, important sections of the

SLFP. This was evidenced last year when, in absence of Vasudeva and Wickremabahu (who were abroad at the time) a top party representative shared a platform with Mrs. Bandaranaike at a Hyde Park rally held to denounce the new constitution. This move generated much criticism both within and without their party ranks. Vasu himself is alleged to keep in touch with SLFP 'progressives' of the 'Dinakara/Nation' group.

MAOIST

The Maoist movement for its part, is split clearly in two. G. I. D. Dharmasekera, Gamini Yapa and the CP (ML) endorse China's foreign policy line and consequently lean towards the SLFP. Dharmasekera is given considerable prominence in the SLFP's widely circulating *Dinakara*, which indicates that he enjoys the kind of special relationship with the SLFP that only Mr. H. L. K. Karawita and his "Working Peoples Party" has had. Dharmasekera and Yapa, who described Mrs. B as "semi-fascist" in the course of the 1977 General Election campaign, still find greater affinity with the 'Dinakara' caucus than with the Bandaranaike family itself.

The other, and stronger wing of the Maoist movement is critical of China's post-Mao course in foreign and domestic policy, under Teng Hsiao Ping's leadership. As we disclosed in our issue of May 1st this year, this tendency comprising Mr. Sanmugathasan's CCP, the Nava Lanka CP, Janatha Sangamaya, Mahinda Wijeyesekera's MVP and the 'Desha Vimukthi' group of the PDP are engaged in discussions with a view to eventual organizational fusion and emergence as a single party. The discussions, at which many theoretical differences have been resolved, are expected to reach fruition within several weeks. Though they rejected Albanian leader Enver Hoxha's recent write-off of 'Mao Tse-tung thought', these groups admit that Mao made mistakes in the foreign policy realm beginning from the early 1970's. Adopting a militant, albeit 'critical' Maoism, roughly on the lines of India's CP (M) and the

South East Asian CPs, this incipient political formation, comprising as it does, a core of experienced and talented cadres, is expected to make some headway, eroding to a modest extent, the JVP's traditional bases among the rural youth. In some areas it may also cut into the SLFP's peasant base.

Political observers agree that the CPSL-JVP strategy is one of isolating the Maoists and pushing them into the arms of the SLFP, thereby discrediting them thoroughly. These observers also consider it shortsighted on the part of the CPSL, not to exploit, as the Cubans and Vietnamese are doing internationally, the contradictions between the 'pro-Teng and 'anti-Teng' tendencies within the Maoist movements. Since the latter seem to agree that as far as the Sri Lankan people are concerned, the USA is the main external enemy, observers think that these groups could be co-opted into any project for broad left unity. Though Rohana Wijeweera's extreme personal antagonism towards these elements, constitute an obstacle, the CPSL and LSSP should include them, since they will counter-balance the JVP. "If not, the ULF runs the risk of having chunks bitten off by the JVP. Podi Athula's book is a shocking revelation of how utterly unreliable Wijeweera can be", said a member of the LSSP's Educational Bureau. However, the old LSSP leadership's inveterate hostility towards all 'New' Left groups ("We all look alike to them" quipped a Stalinist) seems to preclude such a subtle and differentiated approach, even if it is in their self-interest to adopt one.

The old LSSP's intransigence, its quarrel with the LSSP-NL, the existence of 'minorities' within both parties which lean towards the SLFP, are therefore the most immediate obstacles in the current round of discussions. Even if these are satisfactorily and swiftly resolved, the success of these efforts at Left unity will require serious effort to overcome long standing

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No way, Jose

"DIOKNO LASHES OUT" read a dramatic headline in a daily paper. But upto now readers of the mainstream media have been denied the pleasure of reading a speech that received a standing ovation from several hundred Sri Lankan lawyers and a distinguished gathering of jurists and academics from this region at LAWASIA. It is probably the only keynote address given at a international convention held here that has been 'blackened out'.

Professor of Law, ex-Senator and ex-Minister of Justice, Jose Diokno is one of the outstanding intellectuals of the Philippines. Professor Diokno was kind enough to give the L. G. a copy of his address. Regretting the absence of jurists from the socialist countries and expressing the hope that LAWASIA will correct this mistake next time, Dr. Diokno said:

Asia is in turmoil, but it is the turmoil of life; not death; of the movement of people struggling, sometimes successfully and sometimes not, but always with single-minded determination to create a better, more human—and more humane—society for themselves and their children; and if we of the law are to play a meaningful part in this struggle, we must use every resource of knowledge, of experience and of skill that Asian lawyers have to offer.

The record of our region in protecting human rights is not enviable.

Of the 16 countries from which we come, only three have rati-

fied the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; only one, the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and none, the Optional Protocol that would authorize the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations to entertain complaints by individuals against their governments for violating their fundamental freedom. **All our governments avow respect for human rights but none seems willing to submit its performance to the scrutiny of its peers.**

No nation, of course, has a perfect record. But in far too many of our countries, the government is admittedly authoritarian, if not openly dictatorial; the press is managed or controlled; political parties have been emasculated or outlawed; elections are a farce; and dissent is tolerated only to the extent that it is ineffective.

In far too many, little people subjected, with brazen impunity, to arbitrary arrest; to prolonged detention, under dehumanising conditions, without trial; to brutal torture; to debasement; to **unofficial executions, officially sanctioned.**

In far too many, trade unions and associations of farmers, fishermen, urban poor and students are undermined, their leaders hounded or imprisoned; women are exploited for vice; labour is kept cheap as an attraction for multinational investment; academic freedom is seriously curtailed; whole communities are uprooted to facilitate military operations or economic projects; and while millions are spent on the military and on infrastructure for tourism and for commerce, the vast masses of the people have no-where to live but in miserable hovels,

numb with hunger, wracked by disease, condemned to a near-mindless existence.

With some notable exceptions, we of the law have refused to see or concern ourselves with this stark reality other than by providing free legal aid—the lawyer's way of giving alms to the poor. This is no longer enough.

Change there must be. Change there will be both in our nations and in the international order. Yesterday, we lawyers faced the question: do we stand for change or against change? Today the question we face is: what kind of change do we stand for: change that will enable the vast masses of our people to approach closer to their aspirations or change that will convert their dreams into the nightmares? **And always we will face the question: do we stand with or against the people?**

The elimination of neo-colonialism is not only "a pre-requisite for development," it is also a pre-requisite for protecting and enforcing human rights. **The key to neo-colonialism lies in the congruence of interests among the ruling elites of the dominant and of the dominated nations, congruent interests that are pursued, more often than not, at the expense of the rights and wellbeing of the people of the dominated nation.** This congruence thus creates a conflict between the ruling elites who control the instruments of power, on the one hand, and the people of the dominated nation on the other. Eventually, the conflict becomes so deep that the dominated nation either becomes a police state or is overthrown; in either case, human rights are sacrificed. Time and again history has shown that no nation can be dependant on another and still remain a true democracy. So the struggle against neo-colonialism is not only a struggle for development but a struggle for human rights. And it is that same right of self determination of peoples that our predecessors in law established at such heavy cost that gives legal justification to the struggle against neo-colonialism today.

TUs unite

"It looks as if the UNP has achieved the impossible" a Central Bank staffer commented half-way through the Hyde Park protest rally organised by the JCTUAC against the Essential Public Services Bill, the subsidy cuts and the rising cost of living. It was not merely the unusual array of speakers on the stage but the size of the crowd and its militant spirit which occasioned the surprise.

There was Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, plainly enjoying his new role as LSSP union boss. It was in trade unionism that the young Colvin had made his first foray into national politics fifty years ago. With him were Bala Tampoe (Trotskyist), the leading figure in the faction that broke with the LSSP in 1964; and Mr. N. Sanmugathasan, hardline Maoist; and G. Savanadasa, of the GCSU which Vasudeva Nanayakkara's 'new' LSSP wrenched from the LSSP three years ago; and the MEP's Dinesh Gunawardena, son of the redoubtable Philip; and the SLFP's Alavi Moulana, demonstrating that whatever the bitter squabbles between the Left and Mrs. Bandaranaike, working class solidarity was paramount.

The rally came at the end of a week-long picketing-cum-poster campaign in Colombo and the main towns.

Though there was no formal JVP presence at Hyde Park, the JVP's young activists had thrown their full weight behind this campaign. A pro-JVP voice was also heard at Hyde Park in the person of the Ceylon Teachers' Union president, H. N. Fernando.

The CFTU's L. W. Panditha, also on stage, had reason for special satisfaction. This 'ingathering' of forces long hostile to each other was the result of many months of tough and tricky backstage negotiations in which he and his party had played a key role.

If ever increasing hardships which touch an ever-widening segment of society and tough new laws compel a fiercely divided opposition to close ranks, the police may finally seal the pact.

The 'SUN' likes to tell it in pictures. While the CDN was reporting somewhat shyly how the police were pulling down posters and taking persons into custody in Ambalangoda, Galle, Anuradhapura and other places, the SUN showed us pictures of the police in full force. Private sector employees, shoppers, and even tourists may have thought that there was an uprising in the offing. Helmeted policemen, armed with batons, wicker shields and rifles were deployed in such numbers, that patrol cars and walkie-talkies created the impression of a full-scale operation. The Central Bank employees, locked in during the lunch hour, responded with jeers that could be heard in the heart of the Fort. Ordinary citizens were the victims of the brusque manner and heavy hand.

As Bala Tampoe said in his speech he had asked an ASP "Yuddetada?" (Going to war?). Near me at the rally two young girls, both Corporation workers, agreed that they might have not joined the picket line but for the needlessly rough manners of the police.

Besides the high spirits there the slightest trace of interest. The speeches were free of even the slightest trace of racialism. In fact the Emergency in the North was strongly denounced. Secondly foreign capital figured prominently, with repeated references to Iran, Singapore and Nicaragua.

NAWAZ DAWOOD

The special number on the Havana summit is dedicated to Nawaz Dawood whose death at the prime of his life shocked and saddened his many friends and colleagues. Nawaz was the first director of the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies. All of us who worked on that project admired his devotion, respected his intelligence and his unwavering concern for academic standards.

He was one of our ablest analysts of international affairs. Though we sometimes found ourselves in serious disagreement over interpretations of non-alignment in the present global context there was never an occasion where his commitment was open to doubt. He was a prolific contributor to the 'Nation'. Our journal which always received his encouragement and critical advice regards it a privilege to have published what proved to be his last signed article.

— ED.

EPSB and professionals

The Civil Rights Movement which urged the Bandaranaike government to withdraw the emergency regulations of 1971 which affected 'general civil liberties' now states that it has once more to "voice grave concern" over the EPSB. In a 9-point analysis of the Bill, the CRM says in a press release that an "extraordinary punishment" contemplated by this bill is exclusively aimed at professionals — doctor, lawyer or accountant. On a conviction for ANY offence, however trivial, under this law the professional will have his name erased from the register of his profession. The offense may have nothing to do with the practice of the profession. He will be fined/and/or imprisoned, forfeit his property and be taken off the professional register.

China at 30

"In the last analysis", wrote Lenin in "the outcome of the struggle determined by the fact that will be Russia, China, India etc, account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And during the past few years it is this majority that has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of socialism is fully and absolutely assured" (1923).

This statement not merely displays remarkable prescience, but marks a definitive rupture with the Eurocentric view of world revolution then dominant within the international Marxist movement.

Earlier in 1918 Stalin had pointed out that "the October Revolution is the first revolution in world history to break the age-long sleep of the labouring and oppressed masses of the East, thereby drawing them into the fight against world imperialism."

"The gunfire of the October Revolution brought us Marxism-Leninism" (Mao Tse-tung).

The world revolutionary process initiated by the birth of Soviet Russia in 1917 advanced decisively to a new stage when the Chinese people led by their Communist Party headed by Mao Tse-tung overthrew the semi-colonial-semi-feudal-comprador bourgeois regime. After the Great October Socialist Revolution, the victory of the Chinese Revolution is the most outstanding event of the 20th century. In 1917 one-sixth of the land surface of the globe, and in 1949, one fifth of the human race, broke away decisively from the world capitalist system.

The victorious Chinese Revolution dealt a heavy blow at world capitalism by breaking its eastern front. It further strengthened

the socialist camp and was one of the great historical events which tilted the correlation of forces on a world scale in favour of national independence and socialism. Thus the Chinese Revolution has fundamental international importance and an immense significance for the peoples of Asia in particular. The liberation of the Chinese people in turn accelerated the process of global liberation, since China, with her geographical immensity, multitude of people and potential power, became a bastion of socialism and world revolution. China's contribution in rolling back the US aggressors from along the 38th parallel in Korea is a shining example of revolutionary internationalism. The subsequent successes of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea against the cruel and destructive US aggression would have been impossible without the direct and indirect, material and spiritual conditions created by the October Revolution of 1917 and Chinese Revolution of 1949. The latter positively affected the military situation in Indo-China.

As the first successful revolution in Asia as well as the most important of all the anti-colonial liberation struggles (until Vietnam) the historic victory of 1949, as well as the great social transformations affected by that victory, gave immense joy to a whole generation of Asians. Furthermore, until the beginning of this decade of the 1970's the Communist Party was a great, sincere supporter of countries fighting for national independence, nations wanting liberation and peoples fighting for revolution. In the decade of the 1960's Mao's China, together with Vietnam and Cuba, was moral and symbolic center of world revolution. The Chinese revolutionary experience was an important factor in the development of the revolutionary consciousness of "Third World" youth (including

the Sri Lankan youth). However, the profoundly opportunistic direction taken by Chinese foreign policy throughout the 1970's has reduced to naught the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party's once credible claim to be a moral leader of radical forces in the "Third World".

Still it must also be recognised that the fact that China was able to beat the imperialist blockade and obtain recognition of the international community including the USA, is a manifestation of strength which that great revolution has developed. Likewise, whatever the deviations and vicissitudes, socialist construction is continuing to make successful headway in China.

It is certain that in the long run, the opportunistic foreign policy of the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party cannot succeed, and objective factors such as China's basically socialist character, will eventually prevail over these distortions. When this takes place, as it inevitably will, China's rapidly growing economic and political power will render her an important factor in strengthening the power of the socialist camp in Asia and the world.

Support welcomed

Calling on the First World to support liberation struggles in the Third World, Jamaica's Michael Manley said in Havana:

"Let the countries of the developed world understand that we will not change our view so as to avoid a coincidence of views with the Socialist world, or any other part of the world. And for those who are concerned about the fact that there are increasing examples of a coincidence of view between the NAM and, say the socialist group, about matters like liberation struggles, the matter can be simply remedied by the developed countries changing their position and joining us in what would then become a truly international consensus!"

Agostinho Neto (1922-1979)

Agostinho Neto was born on September 17th 1922 and grew up with Methodist missionaries in Luanda. He was one of the few blacks to complete the Liceu Salvadore Correia, the secondary school. In 1947, supported by a Methodist Church scholarship, he studied medicine at the University of Lisbon and Coimbra thus becoming one of the handful of blacks to obtain advanced education. As Neto studied and travelled in Europe, he found, like others of his generation, that Marxist philosophy alone offered an alternative to Portuguese oppression. In addition to moral strength, Marxism gave them organisational skills to develop a revolutionary movement. Capitalism was at the root of Portuguese colonialism, while the USA supplied Portugal with arms through NATO. Thus, Agostinho Neto's hostility to the Portuguese matured into anti-imperialism. Dr. Neto's orientation towards Marxism may also be explained by the fact that ideologically, Catholicism supported Portuguese rule while Protestant missionaries taught passive submission.

Neto's poetry, political views and active participation in opposition politics had him in and out of Portuguese jails from 1952-1958. He received his medical doctorate in 1958 and returned to practice medicine in Luanda. On June 8th 1960 he was once again arrested, flogged in the presence of his family and taken off to jail. His intellectual ability, and personal sacrifices ensured his status as the leader of the MPLA.

The anti-imperialist, nationalist MPLA, was politically the best organised of the three guerrilla

movements in Angola, holding high the banner of national independence, democracy, agrarian reform, cultural decolonization and African unity. In 1977, Dr. Neto presided over the transformation of the MPLA into the MPLA-Party of Labour, which proclaimed itself as a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party of the working class.

Western Civilisation

Tin sheets nailed to poles
fixed in the earth
make a house.
Rags complete
the landscape.
The sun penetrating cracks
awakes each occupant.
Afterwards twelve hours of slaving work
break stone
cart stone
break stone
cart stone
in the sun
in the rain
break stone
cart stone!
Old age comes early.
A coarse mat in the dark night
suffices to die
grateful
and hungry.

Realization

Fear in the air!
On each street corner
vigilant sentries light incendiary glances
in each house.
Hasty replacement of the old bolts
of the doors.
In each conscience
seethes the fear of listening to itself.
History is to be told anew!
Fear in the air!
It happens that I
humble man,
still more humble in my black skin
come back to Africa,
to myself
with dry eyes.

DRINK

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AS

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The fight that never was

“When the bell rang Tito didn't come out of his corner fighting”. This snap end-of-day verdict by the Latin American bureau chief of a leading US journal wasn't all that neutral. The pugilistic expression certainly sounded authentically American and the tone professionally distant, with just a touch of the weary cynicism which is supposedly an occupational habit of a tough hard-boiled tribe.

Yet a sense of personal disappointment, of hopeful expectations thwarted, came through strongly too.

Tito vs Castro. The Fight of the Decade. The western media build-up in the months before the summit could have done a World Heavy-weight championship proud. It was as if the media had a stake in the duel and were in fact promoting this thrilling contest between the undefeated champion of non-alignment and his brash young challenger.

It is a temptation to see it all as the stylistic idiosyncrasies of a sensation-hungry press. Readers of this journal may recall that one of our earliest issues (July 15-1978) had a large picture of Tito on its cover, with Castro and Lee Kuan Yew in smaller size. Singapore's Mr. Lee absented himself just as he did three years ago when the Colombo summit was held. However his aggressively articulate spokesman, foreign minister Rajaratnam, was not merely the ASEAN activist at the Havana meeting but one of the participants in the very thick of the anti-Cuba battle.

The year-long media campaign was very much a part of the West's counter-attack on a movement which was not only getting too large and far too vociferous but showed strong signs of taking

a direction even less acceptable to the western camp. And at least in regard to that last possibility China shared western misgivings fully. As a direct consequence, the Chinese press stepped up the attacks on Cuba soon after Deng Xiaoping, returning from his history-making US visit, branded Vietnam as the 'Cuba of Asia'.

By presenting Tito as the leader of the “moderates” and publicly pushing him into battle with the “radical” Castro, the western propaganda campaign was plainly serving what America's UN Ambassador Prof. Moynihan once described as a ‘basic foreign policy goal’ i.e. the tactic of dismemberment of the Non-aligned Movement.

TURNING POINT

Tito's speech was, in that sense, the turning point of the conference which was itself a turning point, in Pham Van Dong's phrase in the movement's 18-year history.

In reply to Castro's sharp, brilliant, impassioned and uncompromising speech, Tito was subdued and discursive. The great fight was non-event. Why? Never short of theories, the press room and the diplomat's lobby offered the observer a fair feast of self-indulgent speculation.

Tito faked it. That was the crudest of explanations. Perhaps the ageing patriarch simply couldn't summon the combative vigour to match the dynamic Castro. Or if he could, he had nonetheless decided that a measured gravity was more suited to the sole surviving founder of this movement. May be he felt that any other stance might leave him open to the charge that he had needlessly provoked a clash which could wreck non-alignment. Its unity after all would be the best monu-

The editor of this journal visited Cuba and covered the 6th summit on the invitation of the CNOSC, the National Committee appointed by Premier Fidel Castro, to organise the Havana conference.

ment to his own pioneer achievements.

The real reason, in my view, was somewhat different. Tito, the old partisan, his reflexes still sound, must have sensed that the line-up, the balance of forces not merely in numbers but morale, the terrain and the prevailing mood would make a frontal assault a near-suicidal operation.

What was the actual balance and what does it signify? Assessing this, the measurement of weight and counter-weight, cannot be a simple, mechanical exercise. In this loose-knit, diverse collective, consensus and not division bells or secret ballots, is the decisive mechanism. An active, articulate member-nation carries more weight than a dozen ‘token’ participants or half a dozen feeble others, disabled by their own uncertainties and vacillations. Quality over quantity.

US PRESENCE.

So far from god and so near the US. This oft-quoted Mexican lament (attributed sometimes to the Canadians) is as good an introduction as any to an understanding of the historical significance of the sixth summit, the political content of its weak-long debates, and its future course.

The summit was held in Havana, the capital of revolutionary Cuba, 90 miles from Miami. The first such convention in Latin America, it took place only a few weeks after the triumph of the

Sandinistas, and the downfall of Somoza in Nicaragua which had proved one of the most durable of US-installed dynastic dictatorships on the continent. The conference was held at a moment in history when the centuries-old struggle of the Latin American people against US domination is showing signs, inspite of successive setbacks, crushing defeats and cruel repression, of renewed vitality. Of the six nations admitted as full members four (Nicaragua, Bolivia, Surinam and Grenada) are from Latin America and two (Iran and Pakistan) from Asia. While Iran's popular uprising has also meant the downfall of a dynasty which had Britain and US as its patrons, Pakistan's entry was made possible by the collapse of CENTO. In the idiom of conventional strategists, Cento, the successor to the Baghdad pact, protected the 'northern tier' of a vitally important West Asia.

Finally, the Havana summit came a few months before the UN will discuss an economic strategy for the 1980's, the third development decade.

The first two decades have been characterised by conspicuous and self-confessed failures and the rising frustrations of the poor nations whose fervent agitation for a re-structuring of an unjust world economic system, a system fashioned, controlled and managed by the US and its allies, has proved depressingly sterile.

The western economy is in trouble and in the opinion of many knowledgeable and orthodox analysts, including the Brookings Institution; the crisis will deepen. While the demands of the poor nations will increase the west's capacity to accommodate such wants

will diminish. The conflict will therefore get keener, and the agitation fiercer.

LATIN AMERICA

With the discovery of substantial oil resources, Mexico has regained sufficient self-confidence to give public expression to old antipathies and fresh grievances. In the heyday of American expansionism, the US annexed larger expanses of Mexican territory. The Mexican president's speech at the state banquet to Mr. Carter earlier this year was a torrid half-hour for the US leader. But Fidel Castro was given a hero's welcome a month later.

Though Latin American history till the late sixties is punctuated by so much US military intervention that the US marine was an ubiquitous symbol, American expansionism never assumed the form of classical colonialism far south of the Rio Grande. It became instead a continent of pillage and systematic exploitation. The wealth of Latin America is drained into the "blood banks" of Wall Street from what Eduardo Galeano calls the "open veins of Latin America". This is neo-colonialism, but it is no abstraction adorning the rhetoric of Third World leaders nor a worn-out term in the patois of of the radical intellectual. It is a way of life, seen and felt everyday by the Latin American people.

For here, in Latin America, the governments are controlled by the oligarchies. Both the bourgeoisie and the landowners are in open and direct alliance with North American capital, the transnationals and the banks. Here, the dictator, even if he has not been placed there by the marines, lives by the grace of Washington.

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Here, immense private riches and vast latifundias, a big bourgeoisie which affects the finest graces of European cosmopolitanism, the private airlines, the mansions and the casinos exists side by side with abject mass poverty, illiteracy, slums, and malnutrition.

Here, where the struggle against power, and privilege and injustice is sharpest, protest automatically earns the name of subversion and justifies the existence of the 'torture state', a phenomenon which American academics prefer to call the "State of National Security". Here, in the sanctuary of fugitive Nazis, the torture techniques of the Gestapo have been perfected by a more sophisticated technology. Here, the policemen who run the 'death squads' are educated gentlemen trained in the International Police Academics in Washington. Here, the officer-elite who man the repressive, infernal machines of the torture state, all the local 'Savaks', have their expert instructors in Fors Bragg, North Carolina or the training school in the US Panama Canal Zone, while the supporting intelligentsia of the oligarchic or neo-fascist regimes, the bureaucrats and the professors, draw their inspiration from Michigan University or the East-West Centre.

The nature of society and state determines the character of the popular struggle. What is at issue is not this or that party, parliament or 'democracy' but human dignity, and decency. And this struggle, despite reverses and increasingly merciless repression, continues and as the circle of protest and suppression gets more vicious, the popular movement draws into its own ranks every patriotic and public-spirited organisation, from human rights group to national-minded businessmen, from social conscious intellectuals to pastors. God may be far away but even the servants of the Church, once a firm ally of the Establishment, join the advance guard of the people's struggle. ("Why the church joined the revolution" L. G. Sept. 15).

Tito's 'key' reply to Castro awaited

By Claude Rapp of Reuters

President Tito, the last surviving dissident ruler, on the second day of the summit.

From the 'Ceylon Daily News'

Regardless of regime and national frontier this surging continental movement finds non-alignment meaningful only in terms of its fundamental anti-imperialist, anti-neocolonialist, anti-fascist character. Nice distinctions like "non-bloc" or polite phrases like "genuine non-alignment" or "strict equi-distance" sound fanciful and remote. The people know their enemy; they have seen its face.

Declarations can be read and studied, changes in the draft noted, the cosmetic touches, the ambiguities and the periphrastic compromises observed, but such an evaluation of 'Havana' will miss much. The spirit that pervaded this summit, the psychological climate in the conference hall, the political tenor of the speeches, the self-assurance of those spokesmen who felt at home in Havana, the discomfort of those who did not find the environment congenial, the timid hesitations and the silences, are equally important because "Havana", its true significance, cannot be grasped if it is removed from its authentic Latin American ambience.

OTHER SUMMITS

Comparisons help. The ceremonies of formal inauguration, the manifesto and the mandate in 1961, in a period of strong cold-war tensions, accord Belgrade its proper place in history. In Algiers 1973, the collective voice necessarily had an Arab accent. OPEC's price hike, the first successful trade union action by producers on a global scale, had reduced the West to a state of panic and produced tremors in an international economic and monetary system, a shattering experience from which it is still struggling to recover. Military preparations were already complete, as we now know, for the Egyptian cross-canal attack, the first defeat for once invincible Israel. The New International Economic Order gave notice to the developed capitalist nations, and the first stirrings of the current battle over information made Algiers memorable. By comparison, Colombo was an orderly tea-party. Latin America

stamped its distinctive personality on the 6th summit.

CUBA, US, USSR.

The non-aligned met in Havana, Cuba, in the Caribbean. Let a Caribbean voice introduce us to what it means. "No area" said Jamaica's Prime Minister Michael Manley "has had a more extended exposure to experience of, or proximity to imperialism than Latin America and the Caribbean".

Cuba was always a "special interest" of the US. With the pleasing candour of another age, John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State to the author of the Monroe Doctrine wrote: "Cuba, almost in sight of our shores, from a multitude of considerations, has become an object of transcendent importance to the commercial and political interests of our Union. ... it is scarcely possible to resist the conviction that an annexation of Cuba will be indispensable to the continuance and integrity of the Union itself."

Intervention (the US-Spanish-Cuban war), the Treaty of Paris which made (the island a 'special territory', US military occupation, a constitutional process and imposed 'treaty' obligations, naval and other 'concessions' (as in Panama) to the US, a permanent US base (Guantanamo) decided Cuba's fate as part of America's "manifest destiny". Economy investment (sugar) trade and commerce (monopolized by twenty giant US firms) and flourishing business exploiting the natural beauty and charms of this island (crime, vice, hotels, casinos run by US syndicates) transformed Cuba into a neo-colony. When sundry civilians could not do the contractual job efficiently enough, there was always Sergeant Batista, who pulled three coups, and remained Cuba's Somoza-type dictator until the revolution 20 years ago.

It was of this period that Bonifacio Byrne was to write:

"Back home, with heavy heart
I see
the flag that is my pride
Unfurled, but still not free,
another hoisted by its side"

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When attempts at economic strangulation (sugar purchase), blockade, diplomatic isolation and all other pressures failed, the US launched the Bay of Pigs invasion. When that too failed, it was cloak and dagger, a series of assassination attempts aimed at the Cuban leadership, principally Fidel himself.

But the Cuban people refused to submit. Instead Cuba spat defiance at the imperialist colossus next door. For a nation of its size and economic strength, it did the impossible. It not only rejected all compromises on national sovereignty but began to build a society on a political philosophy that is anathema to its giant enemy. How was this possible?

When Kenneth Kaunda, who presided, over the 4th summit, was invited by Sri Lanka's Jayewardene to propose a vote of thanks to Castro, he referred to the inaugural address as "an extraordinary speech in an extraordinary place by an extraordinary man." In 1961, Nehru, as Minister Mishra reminded us, called him simply a 'brave man'. Yet personality alone, however exceptional, cannot account for Cuba's remarkable achievement.

Addressing what was, among other things, a convention of front-rank politicians, Kaunda said that they all knew (and probably envied) the secret of Cuba's success:— The Cuban leadership knew the art of mobilising the masses. While this fact of internal strength founded on popular participation and commitment is certainly important, the impact of Cuba outside its own borders and its influence in the international community, as symbolized by this summit, draws sustenance from other historical and political considerations.

Using the double image of "rock and catalyst", Premier Manley said that the balance of forces in the world shifted irrevocably because there was such a rock and catalyst, the October Revolution and Lenin. Admitting the vast difference in scale, he said that "in our hemisphere" the forces committed to the struggle grow stronger and the balance keeps shifting because there was Cuba and Castro.

Three years ago Cuba's influence spread dramatically to another continent — Africa. The Cuban intervention (see Havana Diary) turned the tide of war and won the day for the MPLA against the combined forces of FNLA-UNITA, aided by Zaire, the US, South Africa and China.

Cuba explained its action in three ways. (a) support for a genuine national liberation movement which had been fighting Portuguese colonialism for over a decade (b) commitment to the principle of inter nationalist solidarity, the resplendent banner of the Cuban revolution. Che had died fighting in Bolivia, and young Cuban soldiers were ready to fight and die in a just cause, said Castro. (c) it was a natural expression of the Afro-Latin heritage of a country which is a fine example in racial equality.

The triumphant defence of the MPLA when anti-MPLA forces were 20 miles from Luanda and the unexpected defeat of the powerful South African armoured columns put the Cubans strongly on the global map. To her implacable foes, Cuba's defiance seemed limitless. It was after the African intervention that the anti-Cuba propaganda drive outside the NAM gathered momentum.

Though Cuba had received large-scale Soviet support from 1960 onwards, had been a member of the NAM from its inception and had been elected to play host to the summit by the heads of state who met here in Colombo in 1976, the campaign sought to cast doubts on Cuba's credentials as a non-aligned country because (a) it was said to be a Soviet satrap and (b) had 'interfered' in African affairs.

Never flinching in the face of a direct challenge, Castro said: "We

are very grateful to the Soviet people because their generous co-operation helped us to survive and overcome some very difficult periods in our people's life, when we were even in danger of being wiped out. No people has the right to be ungrateful."

Does gratitude imply servility or subordination? To Castro, the very idea is unthinkable because the revolution, the ultimate source of inspiration and power, was totally indigenous and independent. To those who think otherwise he had firm, if sarcastically oblique, replies. "There are some who have made an art of opportunism...." (read China or Yugoslavia or both).... "we Cubans will never renege on what we said yesterday, not will we say one thing today and do something else tomorrow."

"No one told us when or how to make the revolution in our country, nor could anyone have done so". (Read Moscow and the Cuban CP before the revolution)... "Throughout our revolutionary life, no one has tried to tell us what to do."

The Havana summit was held. Soon Castro will address the U.N. General Assembly as the spokesman of nearly a 100 countries, two-thirds of the world's population. No wonder so much hate and hostility have been heaped upon this small island and its leaders. Castro understands this only too well:— "The true measure of a revolutionary people...the unblemished conduct of a country that cannot be bribed, bought or intimidated...is given by the imperialists' hatred".

AFRICA, ASIA.

Europe has only 3 members (Yugoslavia, Cyprus and Malta) in the NAM. Observer/guest status has been given to Rumania, Portugal and Spain but even if they ever become full members European

● Havana Special Report

representation in the movement will remain negligible.

The authenticity of the tricontinental character of the NAM is beyond debate although the Yugoslavs would be the first to contest this view for reasons which have been fully examined in previous issues of this journal.

A critical historical experience (the confrontation with Stalin), geo-strategic consideration (between NATO and Warsaw pact, in Central Europe) internal politics, and anxieties about a future sans Tito have introduced an anti-Sovietism into Yugoslav thinking. What Yugoslavia tried to do (and failed at Havana) was to rationalise Yugoslavia's own foreign policy interests and have it accepted by the NAM is the **only** correct interpretation of non-alignment.

In short, the theoretical exercise was an attempt to externalise Yugoslav 'national interests' and to impose this as the larger community of adherents as non-aligned orthodoxy. The Vatican is a tiny state but its influence is enormous. This could well be Tito's last summit. Yugoslavia was seeking to multiply its international influence by making Belgrade the doctrinal centre of non-alignment, interpreting the gospel according to St. Tito.

With the Havana Summit, the Latin Americans have not merely injected their spirit more forcefully into the NAM but reinforced the movement's tricontinental personality.

Acting in concert, a sizeable group of countries, even of little importance individually, can make an impression on the discussions in committee, and thus influence the content and tone of the final outcome. They can therefore become the 'leading force', assuming a vanguard role in this global united front.

These general impressions of the African group may offer some profitable lines of inquiry:

Moderates disappointed by Tito

BY ANTHONY ROBINSON IN HAVANA

MODERATE MEMBERS of

non-aligned movement,

are disappointed

by a radical speech yesterday

that seemed to have

been a diplomatic move

that the tendency of

thought at this point

was to

From the 'Financial Times', London

1. There are some fundamental political issues involving crisis-areas which tend to influence African responses as a whole in a way different from the politics of Asia. These questions unify the African group resulting in a common view at least as a public posture.

The issues are the unresolved, problems of de-colonisation and racism. To make the whole question both complex and explosive, these issues are clearly intertwined. Settler-colonies and racist enclaves rather than straightforward old-style colonies or 'modern' neocolonial dependence, they have created problems which the African people see in black-and-white terms, in a very obvious way.

Even those African governments which have open or secret links, mainly economic, with (Rhodesia) or South Africa feel compelled to make common cause with the black liberation movements. Colour and pan-Africanism become the irresistible rallying point.

Even 'conservative' and 'moderate' states which entertain misgivings about these movements on ideological grounds support them publicly because the continued failure of 'peaceful' negotiations will only intensify the armed struggle and radicalise the movement further. Countries like Kenya note what happened in Angola, the radicalisation of the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front and how the 'internal settlement', even with British support is becoming untenable. A 'moderate' like Zambia is pulled into the imbroglio, willy-nilly, and forced by geography and Rhodesian retaliation into a militant stance.

2. Settler-colonialism and racism establishes a natural link between a major African cause and the main Arab cause, between the African liberation struggles and the PLO.

The other side of the coin (a countervailing factor vis-à-vis African militancy) is Israeli diplomatic influence in the black African countries and Israeli-Jewish economic links with these countries, and the strong Israeli

-South African connection, with South Africa and Israel as the two economic-military bastions of the West at the two geographic extremes of the African continent.

3. All the liberation movements which have won NAM recognition (PLO, Polisario, SWAPO, ZIMBABWE Patriotic Front, ANC) are in the African-Arab group. In their own right and as a source of psychological pressure on member-states, this presence represents a radical and radicalizing element within the movement.

4. As a counter-weight which balances off this radicalism in Africa is a strong, pervasive Western influence, notably French. The Francophone group and other countries which are highly dependent on the West (e. g. Zaïre) along with a handful of Moslem states on the African continent (e. g. Egypt, Somalia, Sudan, Morocco) constitute, in practice, a fairly solid rightwing counterbloc.

5. The energy issue brought to the surface certain latent anti-Arab sentiments in black Africa.

Since what is under examination is the collective behaviour pattern of the single biggest unit in the NAM, a more detailed and searching analysis is necessary. However the accuracy of these broad impressions appear to be confirmed by two 'test' cases. While group and the whole conference re-affirmed unequivocal support for ALL the liberation struggles, OAU backing for Polisario had one substantial practical result. Mauritania opted out of the joint opposition to Polisario's fight for independence in the Western Sahara, renounced its territorial claims and left Morocco in the cold. Like Egypt's Sadat, King Hassan did not come to Havana. He did not attend the OAU July summit in Monrovia either. But Sadat did. And it was this loose alliance of African conservatives, this counter-bloc, which fought a hard rear-guard action against the Arab League's move to 'suspend' Egypt. Sadat seems to have measured correctly that he had majority backing within the OAU but he must have known (and his fears

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were justified) that Egypt would be battered in the conference itself. The support of a majority of the largest single grouping guaranteed the eventual outcome a blistering attack on the Egyptian-Israeli treaty and Sadat's treachery but no expulsion or suspension. A clear-cut decision was made impossible by the delicate balance of forces on that issue.

OIL

The post-73 'energy problem' seemed ideally suited to the West's general plan of splitting the "emerging block of Third World countries". The Trilateral Commission recommended the use of the new term 'fourth world' to make a distinction between oil producers and non-oil producers in the larger community of developing nations.

Increasingly conscious of this strategem, the poor nations resisted the western move. They have not only understood OPEC's actions but commended its first successful essay in getting a fair price for a long under-priced commodity that had been wantonly wasted by the industrialised rich. But they realised that the west had a better capacity to absorb the blow than the non-oil producing Third World nations. In fact, the industrialised countries simply passed on the burden to the poor by including energy costs in the ever-increasing prices of their own exports to the Third World. The result is acute payments problems and imported inflation.

Nonetheless, the poorest of the poor (the least developed and the 'most seriously affected') have refused to break ranks. At Manila, UNCTAD had to waste weeks as the Group of 77 debated whether 'energy' (an item not on the agenda) should be taken up for discussion as proposed by Costa Rica and Columbia a US-inspired move to throw a spanner in the works.

But as the burden becomes more oppressive, the poorer nations watch with dismay OPEC's new wealth return to the west

as investment. Surely those petrodollars can be invested in the developing countries? It makes both economic and political sense, and it could keep the present grand coalition alive. Countries as different as India, Zambia, and Jamaica made the same point and the sentiment was echoed within OPEC by Iraq which has always recommended a special Fund to help the badly affected.

India which has never raised the issue publicly did so at Havana, 50% of India's import bill in 1978 was accounted for by oil, and the estimated additional expenditure for this year is 1.6 billion dollars. The NAM refuses to play the the west's game and attack OPEC but it is trying to persuade OPEC to divert investment and aid, at concessional terms, to the Third World.

Such feelings especially among the smaller African countries, helped Egypt to stand up to the Arab League-led attack better at Havana than in Colombo where Egypt was handicapped by the fact that it is not a bureau member.

ASIA

Though there were passing references to the East Timor, where the Indonesian army presided over a genocidal repression (L.G. June 1) there are no 'recognised' Liberation movements on this continent. The pattern of politics and economic development (or the development of under-development) strikes one as more settled, more formally accepted. Vietnam and Laos (Kampuchea was voiceless) were an exception. India which has always enjoyed a special, autonomous status was less assertive inspite of the continuity of Indian foreign policy as practised by the bureaucratic and diplomatic elite. The political confusion in India and the hiatus in Delhi influenced India's comparatively modest contribution to the 6th summit. ASEAN and the military regime of Bangladesh and Pakistan set the Asian tone.

The performance of North Korea, a communist country, which ordinarily should have gone along with the Indo-China states, turns

our attention to external considerations that help explain Asian behaviour within the NAM. I have in mind North Korea's present relations with China, and more importantly, the massive geo-political fact of China and the new US - China link-up.

Though over-simple and sometimes misleading, terms like 'conservative', 'radical', 'moderate' and 'militant', have been preferred here to equally popular labels like "pro-U.S." and "pro-Soviet." The use of these latter categories by observers outside the NAM is understandable although such a perspective can lead to distortion and self-deception. The dynamics of the movement, its internal character and process should surely be the primary consideration.

This does not mean that pressures from outside or external linkages should be disclaimed or minimised. On the contrary, the steady growth of the NAM and its significance in international relations have drawn greater and greater interest from even those western sources which once reserved a casual contempt for non-alignment. The greater the attention and concern, the keener the temptation and felt need to influence the NAM in all those multifarious ways, open and covert, which often carry the loose, euphemistic designation of diplomacy. Certainly, Washington, Moscow and Peking, not to mention other major powers, have endeavoured to see that the basic thrust of the NAM favours its own global interests or, as a second best option, does not promote the interests of its rivals.

ECONOMICS

It was the outgoing Chairman, J. R. Jayewardene, who pointed out that 80% of the 'least developed countries' and 80% of the "most seriously affected countries" are members of the NAM. Economics is the common denominator. Whatever the nature of the regimes, or the ideological inclinations of leaders and ruling groups, these nations are bound together by a shared colonial past. They find themselves overwhelmed by a host of problems

● Havana Special Report

which have their origins in that past. It is the problem of under-development and its oppressive, many-sided consequences. For the mass of the people, it is the problem of poverty, a poverty that has its foundations in economic structures are still integrally linked to a world system, fashioned, controlled, and managed by the US and its allies.

These legacies produce discontents that have become a terrible burden cast on the frail shoulders of the poor in the poor nations. Their strivings and struggles in turn produce pressures on governments and dominant social groups, who have to respond to such pressures and fight the oppressive system or be co-opted by it and fight their own people.

Now the socialist countries are not part of this past. History therefore will not allow an 'equal' distribution of guilt and responsibility; nor will present realities allow an equally apportioned attack on the West and the socialist community. There are those within the NAM who echo the familiar western argument and say "if we are genuinely non-aligned we must attack both camps equally". Rid of its intellectual embroidery, this is the plain meaning of "non-bloc" "equidistance" etc.

This is not to say that the Third World has no criticisms or complaints against the socialist countries. Grievances about trading practices, the quantum of aid, conversion of currency etc are constantly aired.

But one is a structural problem, the other touches on particular practices and specific transactions in bilateral or multi-lateral economic relations.

This has nothing to do with the US or USSR, Tito or Castro. It has to do with the fundamental features of the international system.

Inspite then of sharp differences on specific issues (political and economic, Kampuchea, Egypt,,

(Continued on Page 17)



SUMMIT

Notes from a Havana Diary

THE CUBAN SPIRIT

by Mervyn de Silva

FOR CUBANS who are only too familiar with Fidel Castro's oratorical track record, his 90 minute speech, part philippic, part trenchant analysis, came as a slight surprise. His favourite 'distance' is three to four hours. "But he is like our Juanterema... he takes everything in his stride" remarks young Carlos Diaz, of the Foreign Ministry's press department and one-time member of the national baseball team, as we take the bus back to the hotel. Juanterema, the Olympic gold medallist, is of course Cuba's best loved athlete.

Of the record thousand-odd accredited pressmen, the Yugoslav contingent alone numbered 130, earning the otherwise friendly Yugoslavs a caustic comment from an African editor. "This is Yugoslav hegemonism in non-aligned journalism" he said to the great amusement of the Cuban hosts.

Among those patiently attending to the many simple but high-pressure professional needs of the invading journalistic task force was Gladstone Oliva. We all took him at first for yet another Information Dept official or pressman co-opted for the job. Dr. Oliva is in fact Director of Cuba's Institute of Geo-physics. Hundreds like him had volunteered to work for the conference in any capacity.

This participatory spirit is surely one of the secrets of Cuba's outstanding achievements, a view enthusiastically endorsed by an ABC (Australian TV team which spent a month in the island making a documentary on 'Cuba after 20 years'.

In the first post-revolutionary mass campaign to eliminate illiteracy (there is 50% illiteracy still in countries like Honduras, EL Salvador, Guatemala) highly edu-

cated Cubans spent months in the mountains and the remote villages teaching old people to read and write. 20 years later, Mr. James Grant, Chairman of Washington's Overseas Development Council and ardent advocate of PQOL, marvelled at the way Cuba, a poor country, has mastered the problems of education and public health. Some Sri Lankan students who came hundreds of miles to Havana to talk to our delegates had nothing but praise for their health services. The hunger for education is such that even one of their professors (an instructor in mechanical engineering) visits the students' hostel daily to practice his English.

MAXIMUM SENTENCE

WHEN it comes to the Comandante, almost every Cuban is a hero-worshipper. A happy discovery though is the affectionate and sometimes delightful intimacy with which the average Cuban speaks of him, quite openly and in the company of strangers. Here is no sacrosanct deity or cold, distant idol or faceless commissar.

Many Cubans found it hugely amusing to see Castro play Chairman and forced to listen to more than a dozen speeches a day for five days, while compelled to accept for himself what must have seemed an eternity of silence.

Cubans who packed Revolution Square to listen to his perorations or sat glued to their TV sets for three to four hours could scarcely conceal their mischievously disloyal thought that the 'jefe maximo' had been given the maximum punishment.

DAUNTLESS DUO

THE PASSIONATE and patent sincerity of the man (I know I

have been "somewhat undiplomatic" not quite in the line of protocol but no one should doubt the complete loyalty with which I spoke") conquered the "neutrals" and overwhelmed even his known critics. After the richly deserved ovation, Sri Lanka's J.R. Jayewardene proposed, in keeping with custom, that the speech be made part of the record. It will surely adorn the NAM's chronicle.

The feeble Pham Van Dong, helped by a young aide as he hopped along, went up to the rostrum to give Castro a warm embrace. This unexpected gesture of fraternal solidarity between two countries that have won worldwide admiration for their amazing fortitude in the defence of their independence was greeted with yet another round of tumultuous applause.

It also drew an interesting observation from a leader of the Puerto Rican Socialist party. Many Sri Lankans will recall the PSP's tactfully low-key role as guests at the Colombo parley. It was a different story in Havana. Dr. Rivera of the PSP's Politburo told me: "No two peoples have in modern times made such impossible sacrifices for their freedom and yet these two nations have been selected specially for a slander campaign.... surely that means something?"

When I reminded him that Deng Xiaoping, on his way back from the US, had called Vietnam 'the Cuba of Asia', he said "I am sure that both took it as the highest compliment".

BEARS AND BASES

"THIS IS the third time this same question has been asked and my answer is the same. I am here to brief you as conference spokesman and not as a Cuban

official. I hope no more time will be wasted...."

The speaker is Lisandro Otero; the place the Casa DI Prensa at the Palace of Conventions on the 2nd day of the summit.

And the oft-repeated question posed almost exclusively by US correspondents? Were there Soviet 'combat troops on Cuban soil?' It was the crudest of propaganda stunts. On the opening day, the US press, radio and TV highlighted the sudden 'discovery' of Soviet troops and Senator Church was urging the Senate not to ratify SALT 2 if the report was true.

Obviously intended to divert attention from the summit, the sensational story found the Cuban government indifferent to provocations of that sort. The *Prensa Latina* however had something to say. Every US President from Eisenhower to Carter, a political editor wrote, has known of the presence of Soviet military advisers training Cubans in sophisticated weaponry. As for 'foreign' troops, the correspondent added, he himself knew only of 2,800 US personnel at the Guantanamo base, an enclave forcibly occupied by the US in spite of protests by a sovereign government for nearly 20 years.

When a squad of tired US scoop-hunters returned to their own temporary bases in Havana's hotel area after a futile chase, they were understandably tight-lipped about their breathless expedition out of the capital. Lazara Penones who teaches journalism at the Havana University offered this delightfully far-fetched theory. "Though this is a sub tropical island I am sure those guys were looking for some polar bears".

The only polar bear visible was the label on a popular Cuban beer.

CHE'S HEIRS

REGIS DEBRAY who followed Che Guevara on his final and fateful journey to Bolivia and spent some time in jail himself, was in Havana to gather material for a new study on the Latin American revolution after Nicaragua.

His two-volume work ('Revolution in the Revolution' and 'A Critique of Arms') is widely accepted as the best on this theme. He tells me that the introduction to the new book will appear soon in "Le Monde Diplomatique".

Meanwhile in the conference rooms and the corridors of the Palace, the young Sandinistas are undoubtedly the stars of the show. In their jungle green fatigues, with the red-and-black Sandinista arm band, the young guerrillas (Nicaragua's new Ambassador to Cuba is 21) look so much like the gallant sons of that knight errant of the contemporary revolutionary movement, Che Guevara.

And so a long forgotten slogan, once a familiar part of the street scene from Paris to Manila, *Che Lives* is alive once more.

COMPANERO SHAUL

THE NON-ALIGNED have steadily resisted the temptation to institutionalize their movement. The majority in this loose knit corporation suspect bureaucratic structures. Yet the idea is not wholly dead. Iraq, the next host, has always lobbied for a secretariat. It may never happen but if it ever does a strong candidate for the post of Secretary-General would be Sri Lanka's Shaul Hameed. At Havana, he was everybody's companero. And it was not mere flattery. They were all impressed by the patience, tact and good humour with which he performed his duties as Chairman during an exceptionally tricky and turbulent two years.

The natives of course remain unimpressed by Hameed's progress in international diplomacy. For them, non-alignment is his private Travellers' Club and diplomatic passport. Hameed takes these endless jokes and barbs in his stride. He told us the latest, a mischievous play on his initials, A. C. S. or All Countries Seen.

Hameed affects an injured innocence. He has NOT yet visited several non-aligned capitals he assures us. I am inclined to believe him. As far as I know he has not toured Cape Verde, for instance.

● Havana Diary

SUMMIT STUDY

AN ANALYTICAL survey of world press coverage of the Colombo summit has been published by the Latin American Institute of Transnational Studies, Mexico. Headed by the brilliant Juan Somavia ILET has been an enlightened activist in the campaign for a New International Information Order. The original work which is in Spanish will be translated into English and French soon. A synopsis in English was made available to those attending the Havana conference.

It was nice to find the authors of "Traps and Neocolonialism", the News Agencies and the Non-aligned quoting quite extensively from a series of articles entitled "the Third World's quarrel with the western press" which the *Sunday Observer* Colombo published just before the 5th summit.

The fight...

(Continued from Page 15)

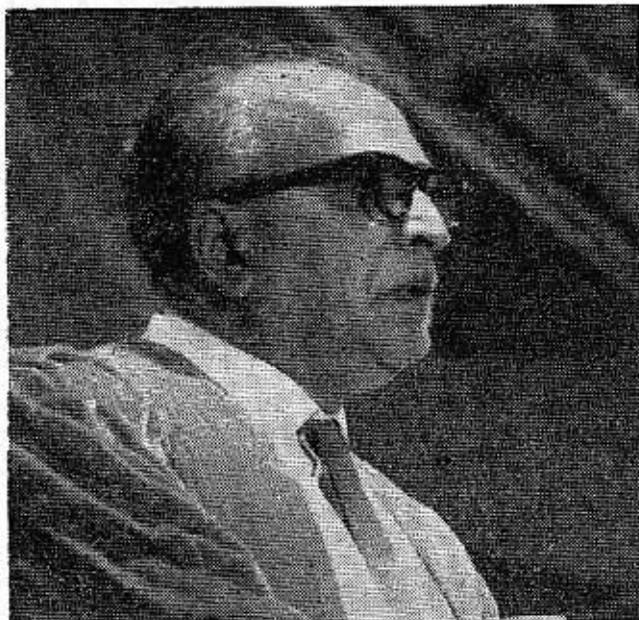
oil etc) there was more a convergence of views than confrontation.

In Havana two roads converged: the road from Colombo, the 5th summit, and the road from Manila, UNCTAD V. Since the "Group of 77" was formed in Algiers 12 years ago, these paths have increasingly overlapped.

As the UN prepares to discuss a "development strategy for the 1980's", the peoples of the non-aligned world will have to mobilise their collective will to advance their common cause. The extent to which such mobilisation is effective and the degree to which popular pressure will influence the governments of these countries will determine the spirit and direction of the NAM in the 1980's. History contrived an interesting coincidence. The NAM is only just a bit younger than the Cuban revolution which is 20 years old. As Robert Manning noted shrewdly Castro's speech symbolised a new phase, with Havana marking the beginning of the second generation of the non-aligned.

N M — the worker - rural poor alliance

by Hector Abhayavardhana



It was under NM's leadership that the LSSP taught the working class how to combine trade union and political struggles. The weapon of the strike did not always end in victory for the workers. Defeats were at least as frequent as victories and the consequences of defeat were very exacting. It was essential that trade union struggles should be backed by political pressures on the Government to intervene on the side of the workers, both in parliament and outside. Even more, it was necessary that workers should use their democratic rights to elect those who would align themselves with the working class as Members of Parliament. As mass victimisation of Government and Corporation employees became the familiar outcome of strikes, workers focussed their attention increasingly on the need to return a Government that would be responsive to their

pressures and needings. Political action became an important part of trade unionism in the country.

The criticism has often been made that in devoting so much of his time and effort to the organisation of labour, NM neglected the needs of the people in the rural areas. This, it is contended, was one of the reasons why the way was clear for the SLFP to emerge as the champion of the rural masses in the Sinhala country and constitute itself as the principal challenger of the UNP. NM dealt with this criticism in an article entitled "The LSSP's Fight among the Peasantry" in "The Nation" of 19th December, 1975. He wrote:-

"Although the Party is correctly designated as a working class party and its main base is in the working class, it will be wrong to assume that the peasantry did not receive the concentration and the import-

ance that it deserved. In a country where over 75 per cent of the people live in rural areas it will be both wrong and meaningless for an all-island Party to neglect the specific weight of the cultivator and the rural worker in the economic life of the country. Therefore, from the outset the programme of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party provided a prominent place for the demands of the villager in Sri Lanka."

He mentioned five problems of the rural people which had always received the attention of his Party: Land for the landless; Grazing Land for cattle; Liquidation of Rural Debt; Fair Prices for crops; and Abolition of the Headman System. He himself had crashed his way into the State Council through an election campaign that was an upsurge of the oppressed against the feudal families that preyed on the people through the Headman System. Persistent pressure within the State Council and sustained attacks outside forced a resolution through the Council in 1937 annulling the posts of Rate Mahatmayas, Mudaliyars, Korales and Vidane Aratchies and requiring the gradual abolition of the rest. On the question of Land, NM pointed to the take-over of estates achieved by the Land Reform of the United Front Government as providing the basis for solving the problem of landlessness in the village. The plantations were a high-productivity base for the re-organisation of the entire rural economy. Unfortunately, the SLFP was not interested in planned agriculture of any kind. He summed up what remains to be done very briefly:-

"A radical re-orientation of rural life in Sri Lanka has yet to be achieved. Remnants of feudalism that still linger have to be washed away. The exploitation by middlemen and powerful mudalalis has

not been eliminated. The mental approach to modernism, with all its implications, has yet to be fostered and developed. This is the task of the Party in the coming years..."

In terms of actual day-to-day activity, NM was not merely leader and organiser of the urban working class, but he was also leader and counsellor of small cultivators and wage-labourers in large areas of Kegalle District. Large numbers of village poor from other parts of the country wrote to him every day for advice and assistance in their problems. NM made it a point to read every one of these letters and reply to them. Even in the busiest times he would see that some attempt was made to remedy the grievances of his correspondents. The major village problems, of course, demanded radical political action—which, in turn, only a radical Government could provide.

Reflected in his utterances and his actions throughout NM's political life is this perception of the basic identity of interests between the urban working class and the rural poor. In the rural areas which comprised Kegalle District he could see clearly the organic link that bound workers and cultivating peasants. It was easy to see that the working class and the rural poor throughout the country provided the axis of the revolutionary transformation of the country. If the tasks of revolution in Sri Lanka were looked at concretely, rather than as the mandate of doctrine, it was the duty of revolutionary leadership to consolidate this axis and centre all movement around it. In conditions of the suppression of democracy, it is possible that the developing movement round the axis of the working class and the rural poor will be the monopoly of a single well-organised party. In conditions of a democratic political system, however, this movement of the masses can never be the monopoly of a single party.

NM came to the realisation of this fact out of actual experience. Playing a lone hand he exerted himself to the utmost to make

the LSSP the embodiment of the worker-rural poor axis in the country's politics. The development of a rural bourgeoisie complicated his task. He found it necessary to broaden the alliance to include wider strata in the rural areas in order to deal blows at imperialism and its native-bourgeois collaborators. There was not even a trace of compromise in this. His sights were well and truly aimed. In every Budget that he introduced, whether in 1964 or from 1970 to 1975, there were smashing blows on the capitalist class. In the last Budget that he introduced, the Budget for the year 1975, he provided for the increase of Wealth Tax to 8 per cent on net wealth exceeding Rs. 900,000. This and other proposals of his Budget were never implemented. They provided the provocation for throwing him and his Party out of the Government. It was no surprise to him. In 1964 he had proposed that the highest rate of Wealth Tax should be raised to 5 per cent and the UNP had brought down the Government and reduced the Wealth Tax. It was now the turn of the SLFP to protect wealth by throwing him and his party out of the Government. That itself is adequate testimony to the lack of love lost between him and the capitalist class.

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'Hansa Vilak' — craft and content

by Reggie Siriwardena

In general, I am against the practice of reviewing Sinhala films long before they are released for public viewing, since this means that only a few privileged people who have been able to attend a private viewing are able to make up their minds about the rights and wrongs of the critic's judgments. However, since Mr. H. A. Seneviratne has jumped the gun with his article on Dharmasiri Bandaranayake's first film, *Hansa Vilak* (LG, August 1), I feel prompted to express my own view of the film although I know that in doing so I am committing the same offences of which I have complained. My excuse is that Mr. Seneviratne's article seems to me an unjustified depreciation of a film that is one of the outstanding achievements of the Sinhala cinema. I don't want at this stage to attempt a total assessment of the film (the proper time for that will be when the film is due for general release), but I should like to make a few dissenting points in relation to Mr. Seneviratne's article, at least for the purpose of suggesting to future spectators of the film that an alternative viewpoint on it is possible.

1. Mr. Seneviratne concedes that Dharmasiri Bandaranayake emerges in *Hansa Vilak* 'as a film director who has mastered one's craft in his very first film.' However, the tone in which he goes on to speak of the technical achievement of the film is such as to undervalue that achievement — in fact, to 'damn with faint praise.' My reaction is much more enthusiastic. In my opinion, *Hansa Vilak*, as far as its handling of the cinematic medium is concerned, is the most original and inventive film yet to reach the Sinhala screen. Indeed, its achievement in this respect is almost incredible when one considers the fact that Bandaranayake has never made a film — a dual role which imposes

an immense strain on the capabilities of the director. He is also his own script-writer.

2. Mr. Seneviratne's praise, such as it is, of the craft of the film is virtually cancelled out by his observation that the receptive spectator 'is sure to ask himself whether all these intricacies were necessary to deal with the subject-matter of the film.' This tends to suggest that the complexities of Bandaranayake's cinematic form and structure are a piece of gimmickry imposed on the film with no internal necessity demanded by its content. That is simply not true. The 'receptive spectator' should realise that it is through the form that he comes to share and participate in the bewilderment and anguish of Nissanka, and no 'straight' presentation of the narrative could have achieved a comparable intensity.

3. Mr. Seneviratne argues that the 'separation between fantasy and reality in the film is not very distinct,' and that this will have the effect of confusing the spectator himself. I disagree. I have seen the film only once, nor did I have any prior knowledge of the director's intentions, but the line of division between fantasy and reality in the film was to me always clear, and I think this is because the director himself was never unsure of what he was doing. (Of course, the terms 'fantasy' and 'reality' are ambiguous, since 'fantasy' here refers to an inner psychological experience that is, from the point of view of the film, just as 'real' as the world of material and tangible things and external events.)

I suggest that it is not the director who has 'lost his way' in traversing the realms of fantasy and reality, as Mr. Seneviratne suggests, but the critic. I feel certain that he has misinterpreted the ending of the film. The



Swarna Mallawarachchi and Dharmasiri Bandaranayake in 'Hansa Vilak'

'killing' of Miranda is certainly fantasy, in the sense that she dies only in Nissanka's mind, but the death of the old lady, I believe, is real. Otherwise, one simply cannot make sense of the flashback to the latter sequence at the end, when Nissanka's son invites him to come back home but the father breaks down and sobs, because he remembers that something irrevocable has happened. This gives a different tone to the ending from what Mr. Seneviratne's description suggests: the reference to a 'reunion' and the comparison with *Duhulu Malak* are out of place. The ending, as I take it, is tragic, and not the happy resolution that Mr. Seneviratne imagines it to be.

4. Mr. Seneviratne says that the spectator 'might even leave the auditorium at the end of film not with the impact of the subject matter of the film but under the stress of the complexity of the techniques used.' I suggest that, on the contrary, *Hansa Vilak* has a very serious and substantial theme — the collision between a 'free' love relationship based on personal choice and the norms and demands of social living and family obligations (the intervention of the police, the claims of the children, attitudes of Samanthi's brother and mother — all these help to sustain this theme). I should like to draw attention also to Bandaranayake's brilliantly innova-

tive use of song in the film—neither operatic in the mode of the primitive Sinhala cinema, nor an appropriate emotional background in the manner of more recent films, but in sharp contrast against the visuals—as when he runs a romantic love lyric over the sordidness of the divorce court scenes. Here is an example of the fusion of theme and technique that I have been talking about.

To return to the conflict between personal love and social relations in film, Bandaranayake doesn't, of course, offer a 'solution' to this conflict, but should one go to a work of art for solutions, and is a solution in fact possible for the generality of people in our society? What Bandaranayake has done is to bring home to us, with poignant force what this clash of divergent values and loyalties means to people who are involved in it, and that is for me sufficient to make the film moving, valid and meaningful. But I think Mr. Seneviratne totally misrepresents the film's intention when he suggests that its moral is that 'happiness lies in repression of one's sex and even love in order to protect the disintegration of the family as it exists in bourgeois society.' One must have a very naive view of life to believe that in a situation where people who are involved in the web of family relations find themselves torn between personal love and social obligations, happiness is possible either by denial of one's own desires and needs, or by assertion of them at any cost. Whichever the choice one makes, there is a price to be paid in human pain, to oneself and to others. Perhaps one may hope that in some ideal society of the future, these things will be better ordered, but at present that is a dream, and the artist has to deal with the reality of things as they are. It is all very well to say that the answer is to reject bourgeois morality for oneself, but even among the most 'emancipated' people, under present conditions the break-up of a marriage often involves conflict, suffering and tragic choices, especially where children are involved.

So one has to apply not to Bandaranayake but to Mr. Seneviratne his own words: 'Things are not as simple as all that.'

5. Mr. Seneviratne's final judgement is that in spite of the importance of the film, 'it cannot become a landmark in the history of the Sinhala cinema, in the sense **Rekava** or **Gamperaliya** were.' If it was right to recognise in **Rekava** in 1956 a revolution in the Sinhala cinema because its style and content were so far ahead of the Madras-style film-making on which the audience had been brought up, **Hansa Vilak** is even more revolutionary today in striving to stretch the consciousness and sensibility of its audience beyond its present limits. And where **Rekava** did make concessions to the popular audience (as was understandable in a pioneering film during the formative stage of the Sinhala cinema), **Hansa Vilak** is a film made entirely without compromises, so why deny it the status of a 'landmark'?

Precisely because of its uncompromising character and its original and innovative form, **Hansa Vilak** will be an even more exacting test for the mass audience than **Rekava** was in 1956. I don't want to speculate on the question whether it will succeed in communicating itself to them, but the critic's function is surely to welcome and encourage a film of such artistic daring and integrity. I think therefore, that it is unfortunate that Mr. Seneviratne depreciates the film by describing it as 'an opportunity lost' and claiming that it has failed to give us 'a new experience.'

For my part, I rejoice in the advent of a new and young filmmaker who with his very first film has excelled the achievement of many of his seniors. We are not so abundant in masters of the craft of the cinema that we can afford to be as supercilious about technical achievement as Mr. Seneviratne is and **Hansa Vilak** in my view has much more than sophistication of craftsmanship to offer: it has a genuine fusion of form and content. I

(Continued on Page 28)

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The Arc of Revolutions - (3)

The US role : repression and provocation

The role of the USA in each of the four countries under discussion has already been alluded to. It is now possible to bring together the different forms it takes in these states.

1. In two of the four countries, Iran and Ethiopia, the need for a mass revolution and the depth of hatred unleashed correlates directly with the degree of US support over a quarter of a century for the imperial despots who ruled in these states. US support for Haile Selassie was cynically based on the desire to keep the US communications base at Kagnew, near the Eritrean capital of Asmara, and to preserve an influential pro-western regime in power. Although some suggestions for reform were made by the US Embassy in the 1960s these came to nothing. US military aid, totalling \$279 millions from 1951 to 1976 was almost half of all such aid to black African states. Much of the \$350 million in economic aid was pocketed by Ethiopian officials. One US Ambassador to Addis summed up the official US attitude to military aid as follows: 'It was really Kagnew rent money, and if the Emperor wanted it in "solid gold Cadillac", he could have it that way'. Meanwhile the Ethiopian population lived in conditions of brutal repression and neglect, and when the regional revolts in Eritrea and Bale threatened the regime in the 1960s, US aid, arms and advisers were used in the counter-insurgency efforts.

In Iran, US military aid dates back to 1942: US advisers helped crush socialist movements in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan in 1946 and in the now famous coup of August 1953, when the Shah deposed the legally elected government of Dr. Mosadeq. CIA advisers played an active role beside the US-trained army. From then on, right through the 1960s and 1970s US advice and support was essential to the Shah's

regime. Not only did this involve the conventional arms of the Iranian army, but it also went right to the heart of SAVAK, the secret police. SAVAK was set up in 1957 with the help of CIA and FBI advisers, and many of its officials were trained at the Marine Corps training centre at Quantico, Virginia. A former chief analyst with the CIA in Iran has now revealed that the CIA trained SAVAK officials in torture techniques, using German army material from the Second World War.

Among the many features of the US association with Iran was the US policy of denying that torture took place in Iran. As late as 1976, when the knowledge of torture had gone beyond reasonable doubt, we find Alfred Atherton, later to become responsible for Arab-Israeli negotiations, telling Congress that torture no longer took place. If one adds to this the enormous supplies of weapons to Iran, making Iran the largest purchaser of US weapons in the world in 1976, it becomes easier to decide who was responsible for creating a situation in which a popular revolution occurred in Iran.

2. Many of the Soviet 'advances' have been made possible by the provocative acts of the USA or of its regional allies whose policy orientations and capacity to act crucially depend on western support. The Nixon Doctrine, propounded in July 1969, has allocated a new militant counter-revolutionary role to key third world states, among them Saudi Arabia and Iran, and the Carter-Brzezinski policy of backing what are called 'regional influentials' follows the same path. In Afghanistan, as we have seen, the key factor that led to Daud's downfall was his growing alliance with Iran. The Shah felt Afghanistan to be a country that Iran could dominate: it was ruled by Iran in the eighteenth century, a third of its population speak Persian, and

it could provide some of the raw materials Iran needed for industrialization. The Shah's plan for an Asian Common Market, deliberately seen as a bloc of Aryan (i.e. non-Arab) countries including Pakistan, Afghanistan and India was really an attempt (a) to dominate western Asia strategically or, as with India, to form a dominant coalition and (b) to acquire the raw materials and labour Iran needed for its economic growth.

The attempt to subjugate Afghanistan led in the end to a revolt that was in the first place political but had strong nationalist and potentially social consequences. Even further back, however, the role of US policy in laying the groundwork for these events can be discerned. For Afghanistan, ruled by a backward monarchy, only turned to the Soviet Union for arms in the mid-1950s after the USA refused to supply it. The reason for this refusal was US support for Pakistan, Afghanistan's regional competitor. It was US obduracy in this regard, including the forced incorporation of Pakistan into the SEATO and CENTO military alliances, which pushed the archaic ruling class of Afghanistan into a reluctant military dependence on the USSR. While the Russian advisers did not use their participation in the army to organize the 1978 coup, the growth of communist sentiment owed a considerable amount to the fact that from the mid-1950s onwards thousands of Afghans, military and civilian, received training in the USSR.

A similar set of developments can be discerned in the Horn of Africa. Most of what is said in the west about Soviet-Cuban policy there is hypocritical and inaccurate, based as it is on the claim that they 'cynically' switched sides from Somalia to Ethiopia in the middle

(Continued on Page 24)

People's Bank

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From modest beginnings the People's Bank has become the largest growing bank in Sri Lanka with over 230 branches islandwide.

Our total assets have recorded an increase of 33% in 1978.

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People's Bank
the Bank the nation
banks on



Arc of revolutions . . .

(Continued from Page 22)

of 1977. The role of the Soviet Union and Cuba is leaving Eritrea aside, a creditable one. Each tried an accommodation between Somalia and Ethiopia in the first months of 1977, when both Soviet President Podgorny and Fidel Castro visited the area. They failed, mainly because western and Arab encouragement led Somalia to believe it could gain the Ogaden territory by force and did not need to negotiate. The Soviet Union only began to give substantial military support to Ethiopia after the Somalis invaded Ethiopia in June 1977, and the real build-up in Soviet and Cuban forces in Ethiopia came after November 1977, the month in which Somalia expelled the Russians and Cubans. Hence the record shows that the Soviet-Cuban policy of supporting the Ethiopians developed by stages, each stage being preceded by a provocation from the Somalis and the west.

The Somalis, on the basis of understandings given them, believed the west would come to their aid and support them in their attempt to hold on to part of Ethiopia. In the end this did not occur. The west, alarmed by the decisiveness of the Soviet-Cuban response after June 1977, a response which they had themselves brought about, retreated and worked to prevent Ethiopia from wiping out the Somali regime in a counter-attack. No doubt the Somalis are now bitter, but it was they who raised the stakes in the first instance. Even now, in early 1979, the same issues apply: the reason why thousands of Cuban troops remain in Ogaden is that the Somalis have refused to abandon their claim to it and continue to back a guerrilla campaign against Ethiopia. Those like *The Economist* who are so upset about 'the Cuban army entrenched in Ethiopia' should also turn their criticisms onto the militant Somalis who persist in trying to redraw the boundaries of Ethiopia by force and the Saudis and Egyptians who support them.

South Yemen is another case of similar western and Saudi provocation. Since independence in 1967

the Saudis have, with western encouragement, consistently harassed the South Yemeni government and have drawn the Aden regime into further conflicts by imposing counter-revolutionary regimes in South Yemen's two smaller neighbours, North Yemen and Oman. The Saudis fought a brief war with South Yemen in 1969 and they armed tribesmen who were sent into the South to carry out sabotage missions. They have imposed an aid blockade on the South Yemenis and even refused to sell oil to South Yemen at below world prices after 1973, despite their normal rhetoric about 'Arab brotherhood.' Faced with such a regional threat, with a denial of western aid and a Saudi refusal to recognise it until years after independence, South Yemen has had to rely increasingly on the Soviet Union for military assistance. The hostile Saudi response to the events of June 1977 has made this even more essential, as has the US decision to cease all diplomatic contacts with Aden after the death of Salem Rodea Ali.

3. The tone of hurt innocence symptomatic of the right-wing position also implies that the US and its allies now have no active policy. It is, we are told, only the Russians who are intervening in these countries. This is of course a lie of such enormity that it may perhaps stun the unwary. The USA has so far not apparently taken up an active policy of harassing the new regime in Afghanistan. But the immediate response of the US and British Embassies in Kabul to the revolution was to spread a mendacious black propaganda campaign through the western press, claiming, unjustifiedly, that thousands had been killed on April 27. Some of the journalists so duped by 'well-informed sources' were later to admit what had happened. The US ally Pakistan is giving covert support to exiled Afghan groups, acting under the banner of Islamic counter-revolution, a foolish policy since it can only be a matter of time before Afghan restraint vis-à-vis the Pathan and Baluch issues in Pakistan wears thin.

In the Horn, the USA has not played any major role on the ground,

but it has used events there as part of a massive propaganda counter-offensive, designed in particular to split the non-aligned movement and isolate Cuba. Congressional sources have revealed that in the latter part of 1977 the CIA organised an international press campaign to discredit Cuba for its role in Eritrea (at that time at least Cuba had no such role) and in the spring of 1978 the Soviet-Cuban aid to Ethiopia in the defence of its own frontiers was portrayed as an aggressive act, threatening detente—in complete disregard of western and Arab responsibility for the Somali invasion.

South Yemen is a continuing case of active US provocation and attempted destabilization. First, the sale of the F-15s to Saudi Arabia, so disputed by Israel, was in the first instance defended by US administration officials on the grounds that there was a 'threat' from South Yemen. If the jets are to be used anywhere it will be in an assault on the revolutionary government in Aden. Secondly, the USA is now busily arming North Yemen, with Saudi finance, in an attempt to build up the vicious and reactionary government there, many of whose leading members are right-wing refugees from the South. Hundreds of army officers and civilians have been executed in the past year in North Yemen as part of a low-level but persistent civil war that has been continuing ever since the 'official' civil war ended in 1970. Finally, the Saudis have announced that they will try and organise an international aid boycott of South Yemen, and will use their new position on the Board of the IMF to try to cut back on World Bank finance for Aden. The consequence of all of this will, of course, be to cement further the ties between a beleaguered South Yemen and the USSR.

Conclusions

Behind the rabid language of 'geopolitical decline' and 'Soviet expansionism' it is therefore possible to discern a very different pattern of events, in which the unity of the right-wing vision is to some extent preserved, but in which the principal actors are assigned

(Continued on Page 28)

From holiness to action

Rich Christians in an age of hunger by Ronal J. Sider. Published by Hodder and Stoughton 220 pp. Rs. 40/-.

For twenty-one years conspicuous life styles had been under attack in this country. The affluent were there all along, but there was a sense of guilt where ostentation was concerned. And simpler life styles came to be encouraged. By reverting to an exclusively market economy, monetary gain once again becomes the sole criteria of economic activity, and affluence, a necessary reward.

Although written with the affluent Christian of the metropolitan countries in mind, and attempting to engage his conscience where the poor nations and people of the periphery are concerned, Dr. Sider's book is just as readily applicable to our contemporary situation. The challenge of social responsibility cuts across religion and nations—a civilised world presupposes that we are each our brothers' keeper.

Much of the data regarding underdeveloped countries that Dr. Sider uses is not original. Nor even is his teaching on Christian social ethics. What is of significance however is that the radical position he takes up is almost unique to people of his religious background. Evangelical Christians, who believe in the inerrancy of scripture and the transforming power of Christ in their personal life, have for long steered clear of thorny social issues. The social Gospel became the refuge of Liberal Christians, whom some allege, threw their faith out of the window. Since the war there has been a worldwide Evangelical revival. It is estimated that the US alone holds 40 million Evangelicals, including President Jimmy Carter. Many come from privileged backgrounds and seemed immune to the political radicalism that shook other Churches like the Roman Catholic.

Dr. Sider's book becomes a historic landmark by its very topic; but the radicalism of the book underscores its importance.

His exposure in the opening pages of the kind of development experienced by Brazil, "a rapid economic growth that has been largely at the expense of the masses," sets the pace for the book. It deals clearly with the link between unfair trade, faulty income distribution, hunger, disease and death. He illustrates the 'North's' contribution to hunger through its heavy consumption of grain-fed livestock. He also details the meagre aid indices which the 'North' has to show.

"God is not neutral. He is on the side of the poor! The Bible clearly and repeatedly teaches that God is at work in history casting down the rich and exalting the poor because frequently the rich are wealthy precisely because they have oppressed the poor....."

"Present economic relationships in the worldwide body of Christ are unbiblical, sinful, a hindrance to evangelism and a desecration of the body and blood of Jesus Christ."

Dr. Sider identifies with the struggle of the Third World for a New International Economic Order, for adjustments in prices, tariffs, aid and debts. He talks about President Allende's attempt to nationalise US copper mines in a situation where 700,000 children were physically and mentally retarded due to inadequate protein. "The CIA subsequently used millions to overthrow his democratically elected government."

"He cites other examples of the skullduggery of US multinationals. In 1954 there was the coup in Guatemala in the face of agrarian reform in that country. In 1974

there was the Banana War between US companies and Central American countries.

In what is today the boldest programme for social action enunciated by Evangelical Christians, Dr. Sider calls for structural changes.

Many developing countries are ruled by despotic oligarchies. "The US has trained large numbers of police who have tortured thousands of people working for social justice in countries like Chile and Brazil.....the US will support dictatorships that use torture and do little for the poorest one-half as long as these regimes are friendly to US investments." Sider insists that US foreign policy and aid programmes must be favourable to countries committed to improving the lot of the poor.

He asks missionaries and the church in developing countries to propound a Gospel that will make the oppressed aware of their predicament.

He calls upon workers in the metropolitan North to accept a just international system of trade even if it hurts them. He cites Norway's food policy as a model. Norway has identified and developed new consumption patterns. These lead to better health, lower trade deficits and less demands on the World's supply of land, water and fertiliser.

Finally Sider asks for encouragement and assistance from the North for development that actually benefits the masses in developing countries.

Sider has his feet planted firmly in both scriptural orthodoxy and economic reality. And from this vantage point he urges a course of action, quoting Dag Hammarskjöld: 'In our era, the road to holiness necessarily passes through the World of action.'

Eelam and Marxism

by Chintaka

In his delightfully dextrous intervention, Dr. Kumar David, formerly a member of the Editorial board of the LSSP-run Nation and presently Polit Bureau member of the LSSP New Leadership, thoughtfully furnishes us with yet another myth concerning the National Question. This concerns, and I quote Dr. David, the contradiction between Lenin's position on self-determination and that of Stalin. The fact that this myth is widespread and assiduously fostered by Trotskyists does not make it any less mythical. Dr. David seeks to buttress his contention by producing, with something of a flourish, the ailing Lenin's indictment of Stalin et al, on their rather brusque handling of the Georgian question. At first glance the indictment is ringing and conclusive, but Marx warns us that if outward appearance were indeed reality then there would be no need for science, while the Marxist method itself urges us to seek truth from facts.

What then are those facts? In the first week of March 1923 the crippled and debilitated Lenin dictated a letter to Trotsky requesting him to take up in the Central Committee, the defense of the Georgian dissidents. Lenin enclosed with his missive, his December memorandum on the Georgian question with its criticism of Stalin. On March 6th Lenin also wrote personally to the Georgian dissidents with copies to Trotsky and Kamenev. On April 16th Lenin's Chief Secretary L. D. Fofyeva wrote to Kamenev, then chairman of the Polit Bureau, providing him with the full documentation. At the 12th Congress of the Bolshevik Party (April 17-23, 1923) the Georgian dissidents raised the issue and referred to Lenin's December memorandum which had

by then been shown to some delegates. The Georgians case was seconded by Rokovky, the chief Commissars in the Ukraine. However it is of fundamental significance that no member of the Bolshevik Polit Bureau or Central Committee made even the faintest criticism of Stalin. Trotsky, who had not fulfilled Lenin's behest either within the Central Committee or Polit Bureau, in fact absented himself from the sessions of the Congress on the National Question on the grounds that he was preparing a speech on economics! The Congress overwhelmingly endorsed Stalin's proposals on the nationality problems.

Consider: The Bolshevik Polit Bureau which at that time comprised in addition to Lenin, Kamenev, Stalin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Rykov, Tomsy, and alternate members Bukharin, Molotov, Kalinin, and Kulbyshev, refrained from criticising Stalin despite a full awareness of Lenin's indictment. Likewise the Central Committee and the 12th Congress of the Bolshevik party. These leading organs of the Bolshevik party were able to assess objectively the entire situation and avoid the subjectivism of the bedridden Lenin's judgement, based as it was on incorrect, incomplete and second-hand information. It may be noted *en passant* that at the final Bolshevik Congress that Lenin attended i.e., the 11th, he voiced enormous trust in and admiration for Stalin's work as Commissar of Nationalities. Whom else would the Nationalities trust? Whom else could the representatives of any nationality visit and tell in detail his troubles? queried Lenin rhetorically.

So much then for Dr. David's *piece de resistance*. Borrowing a witticism from Marx, let us now leave his argument as it

stands, or rather, limps, and move on to more fundamental issues.

A reply to
Kumar David

There was never a contradiction between Lenin's position on self-determination and that of Stalin, either before or after 1925. In a birth anniversary tribute to Stalin, Mao approvingly quoted Stalin's epigrammatically terse summation of the very essence of Marxism: **"It is right to rebel against reaction"**. This is the basis of Lenin's position on the right of national self-determination. Resistance to national oppression, national rebellion against reaction, always coincides with the interests of the working class in its struggle for socialism. "If we are not to be traitors to socialism we must support each and every revolt against our chief enemy." (Lenin). Stalin's post-1925 practice apart, the support currently extended by the LSSP New-Leadership to the Tamil peoples struggle is somewhat fitful, equivocal and seems to fall well short of the Leninist prescription. But why digress?

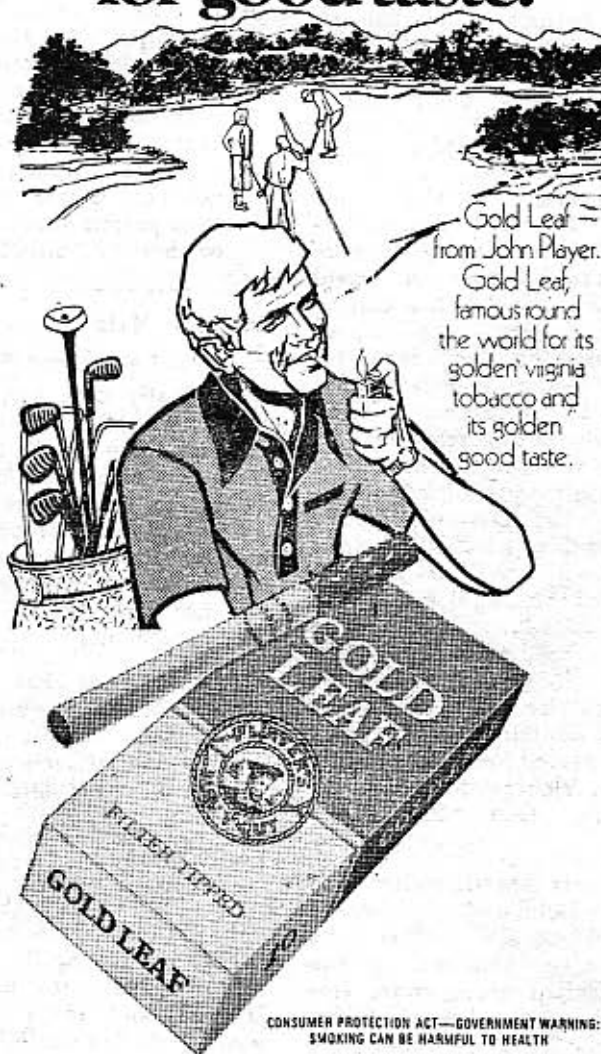
Leninism also holds that the various demands of democracy, including the right of self-determination, have no absolute value. It holds that every democratic demand including self-determination is, for the class conscious workers, subordinated to the higher interests of socialism and that the proletariat evaluates every national demand, every national separation, from the angle of the class struggle. Leninism holds that a democratic demand must be considered not in isolation, but on a world scale, and that in a concrete instance where the interests of the part may conflict with the interests of the whole, it is the former and not the latter that must be repudiated.

It is precisely in this spirit that Lenin, summing up in 1916 the

discussion on self-determination, stated with characteristic prescience: "Suppose that a number of nations were to start a socialist revolution....while other nations serve as the chief bulwarks of bourgeois reaction—then we would have to be in favour of a revolutionary war against the latter, in favour of 'crushing' them, in favour of destroying all their outposts, no matter what small national movements arose there."

It is in this spirit that Stalin, then Commissar of nationalities, expressed in *Pravda* of October 20th 1920, the following sentiment, with which Lenin expressed absolutely no disagreement; "Of course, the border regions of Russia, the nations and tribes which inhabit these regions.... possess the inalienable right to secede from Russia, but the demand for secession....at the present stage of revolution is a profoundly counter-revolutionary one". This was the Leninist-Stalinist position in the post-revolutionary period. Lenin's Civil War directives and E. H. Carr's multi-volume history is recommended reading for those who wish to pursue the topic, Dr. David included. If there was a contradiction between Stalin's pre-and-post revolutionary positions on this question, it was one that flowed consistently from Leninism, for Leninism has as its essential characteristics, a grasp of the actuality of the revolution, of the concrete analysis of a concrete situation and an understanding of how a given slogan or tactic would affect a given balance of forces, nationally, regionally and globally. Jothikumar makes the attempt, (as Dr. David correctly recognises) to consistently extend Stalin's post 1925, i.e. post-revolutionary position to the pre-revolutionary Sri Lanka today. This linear extrapolation is a fundamental error, since, as Stalin pointed out, "everything depends on condition, time and place." The bourgeois nationalism of an oppressed nation is objectively a progressive force when directed against reaction not least because the struggle for self-determination weakens the bourgeois state machine. Marxists should seek to radicalize the nature and course

Player's Gold Leaf for good taste.



of the struggle carrying it beyond the parliamentarist-reformist parameters within which the bourgeois segments of the national movement wish to confine it. This should be clear to those persons and political organisations which have a firm grasp of what Lukacs identifies as an essential characteristic of Leninism, namely: **the actuality of the revolution.**

When directed against the infant, encircled Soviet socialist state, the phenomenon of bourgeois nationalism had objectively a retrogressive content.

If one's outlook is mechanistic (Trotskyist) this line of argumentation seems contradictory and absurd. If on the contrary, one's outlook is dialectical (Marxist-Leninist) it is quite clear, precise, and logical.

The theoretical sophistry, fine phraseology and the characteristically Trotskyist fetishization of the 'programme' that Dr. David displays, particularly in his closing paragraphs, do not quite succeed in obscuring the fact that his position is "opposed to Eelam", that is, opposed to the oppressed Tamil nation's liberation struggle, its struggle to exercise to the fullest its democratic right of self-determination. Dr. David correctly characterizes Luxman Jothikumar's call to "find solutions to the problems of the Tamil within the bourgeois state" as "a manifestation of crass opportunism." By the same yardstick, how then are we to characterize the following sentiments contained in a press statement issued on the 6th July 1979 by Dr. Vickramabahu Bandara Karunaratne, Gen. Sec, LSSP (N.L.) :-

"Racism only breeds racism, and banning the TULF will only alienate the Tamil people further and hasten the development of the Eelam movement **along more violent and intransigent lines.** Although our Party disagrees with the Eelam cry we unreservedly recognise the right of the TULF or any other organization to campaign for this issue by **all democratic methods.** Some sections of Tamil youth have taken to the foolhardy and self destructive path of terrorism. There is no way for

the Tamil people along this road..." (my emphasis)

Thus the irony is evident:— nothing seems to approximate Dr. David's grotesquely a-historical caricature of the Stalinist position on the national question more closely, than the position presently adopted by himself and his party...

Postscript:

- + Characterizing Jothikumar as a 'consistent stalinist' is about as well-founded as characterizing the 'old' LSSP as consistently Trotskyist.
- + Dr. David refers to 'defunct Stalinism.' In this centenary year, with fullscale rehabilitation underway in the USSR, even the Western press knows better than to agree with that adjective. I wonder how many 'workers states' will hold or even permit Trotsky centenary celebrations this November?

Hansa Vilak...

(Continued from Page 21)

wish finally that Mr. Seneviratne had found space in his article for at least a line of tribute to the performance of Swarna Mallawarachchi, an actress who brings to her role a freshness of personality and an enormous power that are virtually unique when contrasted with the familiar celluloid dolls of the Sinhala cinema.

'Hansa Vilak' has been chosen as Sri Lanka's entry for the Mannheim Film Festival, one which gives special importance to the work of young directors.)

Left unity...

(Continued from Page 5)

personal differences, transcend the Sino-Soviet split, avoid an exclusively electoral orientation (a la 1963) and adopt a principled position on Tamil self-determination. Still, the importance of the present discussions can be clearly seen when set against the grim backdrop of increasing economic privation and assault on civil liberties. As the age-old Chinese saying goes: "Even the longest journey begins with a single step".

Arc of revolutions...

(Continued from Page 24)

very different roles. There have certainly been major changes in the four countries under discussion in the course of 1978, but the underlying causes have been: (a) the progressive development of political and social contradictions internal to these countries; and (b) the responses of local popular forces to provocations and oppression imposed by the west and its regional allies. The Soviet Union has in some degree benefited from these changes, but it is erroneous to see it as the instigator of what has occurred. Four different revolutionary processes have developed to a point where western imperialist interests have been threatened. All four countries face daunting political and economic problems which have been worsened by the hostility of counter-revolutionary forces. It is no service to them if the very particular and diverse internal processes are seen in one-dimensional, facile terms as part of some reductionist 'grand strategy'.

Letters...

(Continued from Page 2)

quarters of this century. They no doubt mean that within the first few years of the fourth quarter of this century a bigger and more important "political leader and personage" has emerged. I wonder whom Kumar David have in mind. Dehiwela.

Felicity Gonsal

T.C. & TULF

I read Gamini Dissanaike's reply to me. If I knew that Dissanaike's journalism starts and ends with his swallowing hook, line and sinker all that the TULF says at their meetings or at their social conversations with him, I would not have bothered to use your columns, but would have treated it with the disdain it deserved.

One knows what happens when TULF utterances, on platforms or off them, whether in this Island or outside are questioned;

If one wants to clarify a matter one does not go to an interested party;

G.G. Ponnambalam, (Jr.)
General Secretary,
All-Ceylon Tamil Congress

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Every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday to Karachi and then on to Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Damascus, Dhahran, Doha, Dubai, Jeddah, Kuwait and Muscat.

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TRIBUTES

Britain's HARPERS & QUEEN MAGAZINE

The GFH is the only Sri Lankan Hotel Featured in the magazine's choice of "the best hotels in the world," 1978 Edition, and to quote "The Galle Face is to present a smiling front to the world, rather than continue to wear the Imperial frown the Victorian brown paint has given way to lighter colours symbolic perhaps of the lifting of the White man's burden the capital of this island state will rejoice in a hotel of which is Sri Lanka can be proud."

Singapore's SILVER KRIS

In the March 1978 issue of Silver Kris published by Singapore Airlines, one of the most successful airlines in the world, whose Chairman is Mr Joseph Pillai, with Sri Lanka connection. The Galle Face Hotel and another hotel abroad are featured in the very first article in the series "Grand Hotels of Asia".

AMBASSADORS

The United States Ambassadors in Afghanistan, Nepal, India, Bangladesh and Pakistan meeting in Sri Lanka in Jan. '79 for a conference of Chiefs of Mission, stayed at the Galle Face Hotel. The American Ambassador Mr. Howard Wriggins wrote to the Chairman, Mr. Cyril Gardiner thus:

Dear Cyril,

How very much I want to thank you for the kindness you and your hotel offered to our visiting Ambassadors and Washington officials. They all spoke warmly of your hospitality. Everything seemed to run very smoothly. We didn't have one complaint. The hotel is certainly beautiful now, and the people who have been improving it have done it with great taste and vision.

Again, please express to your associates and the staff my appreciation.

Sgd. W. Howard Wriggins,
American Ambassador.

The GFH had many favourable comments from visitors since the improvements were effected. The UN High commissioner for Refugees, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan commented "Happiness is the Galle Face Hotel". Russian Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin and the American Astronaut Yuri Gagarin and the American Astronaut, wrote to the Chairman thus:



Pushpananda Weerasinghe's 16' teak door installed in 1971.

INTERNATIONAL BUT NATIONAL
OVER A CENTURY OF SERVICE
WITH A SMILE

THE BEST IS GETTING BETTER
YESTERDAY'S CHARM &
TOMORROW'S COMFORT, TODAY

Dear Mr. Cyril Gardiner,

Let us thank you for your part in making our short stay in Colombo a pleasant one. You and your fine staff certainly did everything possible to make us comfortable during our busy schedule.

With our appreciation and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Charles Conrad
Astronaut.

Richard Gordon
Astronaut.

Alan Bean
Astronaut.

115 YEARS YOUNG In 1864 before...

1. The first direct telegraphic message from America was received in Sri Lanka 1866.
2. Marx's DAS KAPITAL published 1867
3. Frankfurter Hof & Oriental

Bangkok	1876
Imperial Tokyo	1890
Tajmahal Bombay	1903
Raffles Singapore	1910
Manila Hotel	1912
Royal Hawaiian	1927
Peninsula Hongkong	1928
4. The opening of the Suez Canal 1869
5. Stanley met Livingstone in Africa 1871
6. The first Australian Cricket Team visited England 1882
7. Conrad Hilton was born 1887

the GALLE FACE HOTEL (GFH) one of the oldest Hotels in the world came into being 115 years ago.

CHARITIES

The Cyril Gardiner and the Aloysiuses' Charitable Fund has one of the largest interest in the GFH. Donations up to 7.7.79 amount to Rs 656 863.

President's Cyclone Relief Fund	125,000
St. Joseph's College	171,993
Ananda College	50,000
Mahila Samithi	58,535
Child & Youth Welfare	55,289
Prithipura Homes	22,915
Mentally Retarded Children	
Human Rights Fund	
S. A. Jiffy Mowlana Trust	
Ramakrishna Mission	
St. Anthony's	
St. Peter's College	
Christ Church	
London Vihare	
Rs. 5,000 each	40,000
All Saints, St. Judes, Fatima	31,890
Other Charities benefiting	
Cancer, Leprosy & Tuberculosis	
Patients, Handicapped & Crippled	
Children and the Blind	101,241

Donations up to 7.7.79 Rs. 656,863.00