

LANKA

**GUARDIAN**

Vol. 2 No. 16 December 15, 1979

**“A” LEVEL****Current Affairs**

(Mark your own script)

- \* Do you predict a re-shuffle after Galle ? (10 marks)
- \* What are the chances of an election in 1980 ? (15)
- \* What is the significance of the UNP-SLFP coalition move ? (15)
- \* Why did Anura praise Prema ? (3)
- \* Is it Wriggin's Dilemma or Howard's End ? (2)
- \* Will the TULF join a National Government (10)
- \* What do you think the LSSP is up to ? (5)
- \* Is Anil GBS but not KGB ? (2)
- \* Is the LSSP-CP front defunct ? (10)
- \* Has the 5 party bloc become Rohana Vs the Rest ? (5)
- \* Is politics getting dharmysterious ? (20)

(Marks can be adjusted at Malay St. for a modest fee)

**ALSO A. J. Wilson : Tamil awakening****Wiswa Warnapala : Local govt.****Gail Omvedt : Indian scene**



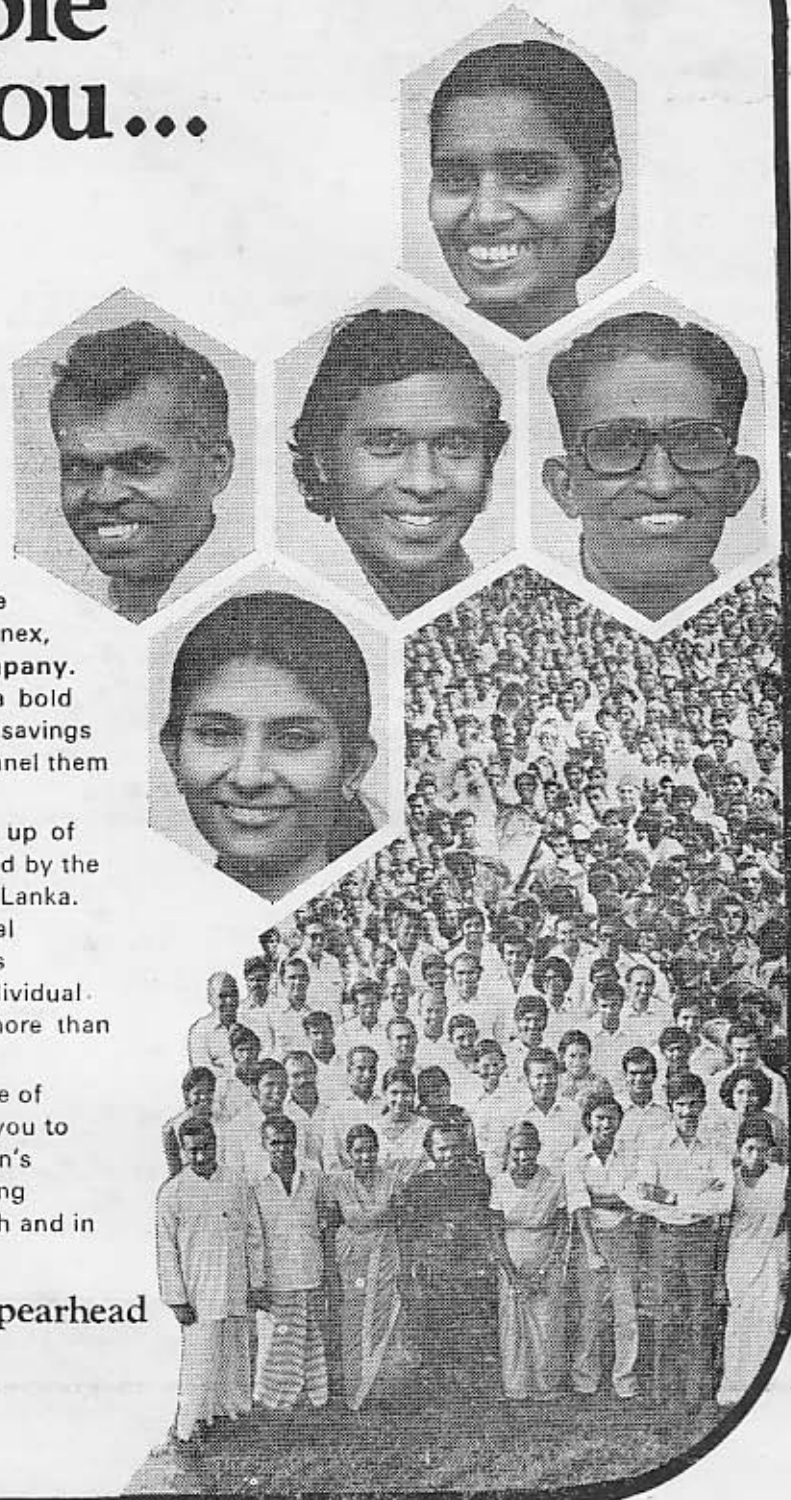
# People like you...

People like you are the shareholders of Chemanex, the first **People's Company**. Chemanex represents a bold attempt to mobilise the savings of the people and channel them into productive effort.

Our company is made up of small shareholdings held by the ordinary people of Sri Lanka. It is the small individual contribution that makes Chemanex, with no individual or family controlling more than 5% of our shares.

We represent the desire of millions of people like you to contribute to the Nation's progress by participating in business, in research and in development.

**Chemanex the spearhead  
for development**



### Mathew Magic

"Some of my best friends are Jews" (Or Negroes) is the standard answer of a WASP accused of anti-Semitism or colour prejudice. Industries Minister Cyril Mathew charged with anti-Tamil sentiment went one better. His top adviser on running his Corporation Empire, he said, was a Tamil, adding that he was not anti-Tamil, only anti-Eelam and anti-Tiger. But he did receive a surprising cheer from the ranks of TULF Tuscany when Opposition leader, Amirthalingam no less, congratulated him for the way he ran the corporations. The budget debate saw many such compliments from unexpected quarters. Anura praised Premier Premadasa and so did the TULF's Navaratnam.

### Asia Foundation

When is the 'new look' Peace Corps, as the CDN called it, returning to these shores! Although the Peace Corps is an institution sponsored by the US government, some highly placed US diplomats in this part of the world frown on this organisation regarding it as a globe-trotters' club for post-juvenile do-gooders. On the other hand, Asia Foundation, a non-government agency which was also expelled by the Bandaranaike regime, may return with full blessings from Washington. When Asia Foundation boss Hayden Williams was here his visit which included meetings with many Sri Lankan VVIP's was warmly patronised.

### Galle Pickle

With the all-powerful UNP fielding a non-UNP'er, the SLFP divided and undecided to the end, and the LSSP putting forward a non-LSSP'er and ex-JVP'er against a JVP which was its erstwhile "ally" in the short-lived 5 party bloc, what a pickle Galle turned out to be.

Though the UNP obviously recognised this battle as a critical test of the government's prestige, the only questions which appear to attract the anxious preoccupation of the four competing parties are: (a) how big will be the gap between the UNP and SLFP vote and (b) who will come 3rd, the LSSP or JVP?

### Politics And TUs

President Jayewardene's stern warning to the UNP unions is a dramatic reminder that the interests of a union often clash with the interests of the party to which it is affiliated. The same lesson was underscored by the CWC's General Secretary Mr. Sellasamy. Though his boss, Mr. Thondaman, is a Cabinet Minister, the CWC addressed a strongly worded letter to President Jayewardene requesting an immediate inquiry into thuggery and strong-arm tactics against plantation workers in state-controlled estates. Mr. Sellasamy talks about the ways some managers are trying to force trade unionists into submission through organised assaults. A bold front page story headlined in blood red in the current issue of CONGRESS NEWS says that gun-toting thugs masquerading as security guards are running amok. This confirms the L.G. report "Noteworthy Funeral" in our Dec. 1st issue.

### Double VV

Old soldiers never die—so our own irrepressible and unpredictable General De Galle rides again!

The British said of Churchill during World War 2, "Winston spells with a double VV. A double sign of Victory." Is it ditto for "W" of Galle?

H. E. R. Abayasekera

### Not of CMU

I refer to the article that appeared in "Lanka Guardian" issue No: 14 of 15th November 1979, under the caption "Socialists and the Tamil issue", wherein you have referred to me as "CMU Assistant Secretary Upali Cooray".

This is incorrect. I am the Assistant Secretary of the

(Continued on Page 2)

## LANKA GUARDIAN

Vol. 2 No. 16 December 15, 1979 Price 2/50

Published fortnightly by Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd., First Floor, 88, N. H. M. Abdul Cader Road, (Reclamation Road) Colombo 11.

Editor: Mervyn de Silva

Telephone: 21009.

### CONTENTS

News background	3
Foreign news	9
Tamil consciousness	16
Tower Hall	20
Book review	22
April Insurgency	25
As I like it	27

Printed by Ananda Press  
82/5, Wolfendhal Street,  
Colombo 13.

Telephone: 35975

Revolutionary Marxist Party and not of the CMU. I shall thank you to publish a correction accordingly.

**Upali Cooray**

### **Galle by-election**

The much-talked of and much-expected "5 party united front", has, for all intents and purposes, fallen apart soon after its formation—a bit too soon I must say. The simpletons, Utopians and non-partisan "leftists" of the middleclass (i.e. the petit-bourgeoisie) had pinned a lot of hope on this seemingly favourable unity of the left.

And what was the cause of the bust-up? A by-election! This only shows how utterly parliament orientated the "Marxists" of these parties are. Instead of organising the masses, rousing them and leading them in country-wide agitations for their immediate demands, they form united fronts for the sole purpose of contesting elections! The entire thinking processes of these parties are expended in planning for and contesting elections, (including formation of fronts!). This sole preoccupation with parlia-

mentary politics, however, does not prevent them from haranguing about revolution. Excuses are given, justifications made and theoretical arguments advanced to defend the parliamentary line. But a mere by-election is enough to make enemies of the one-time united front members.

The only hope for the left lies in its ability to lift itself from the quagmire of parliamentary politics. Parliament, is indeed, the opium of Ceylon's left.

Hatton **Dr.M.S.Thambirajah**

# **Union — a standard to measure precision by.**

Union Platform Weighing Machines,  
Counter Scales and Spring Balances  
are manufactured to the highest  
international standards — your  
guarantee of absolute quality.

Manufactured by



**SAMUEL SONS & COMPANY LIMITED**

371, Old Moor Street, Colombo 12. Tel: 32341 - 4.



# Grand alliance, grander design

by Mervyn de Silva

The story of a major Cabinet re-shuffle is still in the air although the state controlled media maintains a discreetly studied silence. But the more enterprising columnists of the "Sun" group ("Cabinet re-shuffle — Columnists collide", LG Nov. 1st) have pressed on with their interesting behind-the-scenes reports and speculative commentaries. The party newspapers have carried the story much further. The LSSP's "JANADINA" and the CP's "ATHTHA" have had front page items on top-level UNP-SLFP discussions aimed at a new coalition of the country's two major parties.

The SLFP's "NATION" gave the story a bolder (and more hopeful) twist and headlined its account "GENERAL ELECTION NEXT YEAR? UNP CIRCLES PREDICT MARCH POLLS".

The "Nation" builds the story on the resignation of a senior Minister (MDH), the "first signs of dissension within the Cabinet," and the conviction of the UNP's advisers that the government has become so "unpopular" that it "will not have any chance of winning, if elections are held, as scheduled in 1983".

Into the thick of this political gossip (sometimes, highly inspired, one suspects), wild conjecture and serious speculation has been thrown another confusing item — UNP leaders have been having secret talks with the top LSSP trio! "Absolute nonsense" snapped

a LSSP politburo member when asked for his comments.

## Anura's asides

IN A WRAP-UP survey of the month's developments, the WEEK-END's political commentator MIGARA made a pointed reference to Anura Bandaranaike's contribution to the budget debate. The young SLFP'er made news (and raised some parliamentary eyebrows) by commending the hard-working Prime Minister. The long-standing and often bitter feud between them is public knowledge. Anura himself alluded to their fights in the NSA and courtroom, and outside.

The Leftwing press which has no love for Anura has always hinted that the young Bandaranaike would get a bigger battering from Mr. Premadasa, easily the most merciless of parliamentary wits, if 2nd MP for Nuwara Eliya did not have a sympathetic "guardian" higher-up. Anura has had to stand up in the past to some wild heckling from UNP backbenchers. So he seemed happily surprised that he was no longer their special target and the House itself was much quieter. Instructions from the top? Anura's suggestive inquiry only drew a snappy retort from Mr. Speaker: "I take instructions from the House and nobody else."

The relevance of Anura's remarks to this discussion is that he has had a personal dialogue going with the UNP ever since the Kalawewa brouhaha when he sought (unsuccessfully) party nomination on the ground that the UNP High Command had promised not to field a UNP man against him. While young UNP'ers say jokingly that he is the "best UNP'er in the SLFP", Anura has never been averse to SLFP-UNP cooperation.

Another piece of the jigsaw was Premier Premadasa's own exchange with the TULF. While Mr. V. N. Navaratnam showered praise on the PM Mr. Premadasa himself addressed a cryptic remark to the TULF leader about getting together soon.

## Grand alliance

AT A PRESS conference held on the eve of the 1977 polls, a foreign correspondent asked the UNP leader: "It is said that depending on the results you may form a grand alliance... what exactly do you mean by a grand alliance?" Turning on the sweetly inscrutable smile he reserves for such occasions, JR replied: "A grand ..... alliance....."!

Schooled for so long in parliamentary politics and fully conscious of the 'pendulum effect' which has characterised Sri Lanka's own electoral experience, JR a master himself in oppositional tactics, has always revealed a special fascination for the idea of a grand alliance or a 'national government'. Deep down, it is nourished by the maturity of a politician who has grasped the essential difference between the party interest and the interests of the system (Marxists would call it 'class') and knows that the demands of the latter must transcend the claims of the former whenever the stability (a key word in the JR lexicon) of the system was in peril.

In 1965, UNP did form a self-styled national government but its credibility was never high because the major opposition party (SLFP) and the traditional Left were not constituent members.

In 1970 and more so after the 1971 insurrection, JR vigorously canvassed the same idea though this time the move would have to be in reverse, The UNP would



Anura Bandaranaike

have to enter the U. F. This was the beginning of the acrimonious JR-Dudley debate, which nearly led to some dubious stratagems to have him expelled from a party he had served with a more unwavering loyalty than some others who shared in good times the fruits of JR's labours in adversity. What is often forgotten is that there was no basic dispute between the UNP duo. What was the problem?

### Leftward lurch?

THE UNP was disturbed by what it saw as the dangerous leftward lurch of the UF's policies. The UF had 90 SLFP'ers while the combined Left could count on only 25 votes. Yet the qualitative balance seemed to support a near-dominance of "leftist ideas". By virtue of their intellectual weight, argumentative skill, organisational muscle, their hold on important levers of government (finance, plantations, transport) and the support they received from left-leaning ministers of the SLFP (Industries, Trade), the Marxists were dragging the SLFP, the government and the country leftward. In order to correct this ominous imbalance, the UNP should go in and prop up the SLFP, especially the "pure" SLFP.

Dudley sensed the danger and agreed with the analysis but would 30 UNP'ers suffice? The UNP would be swamped; it would lose its identity, and there would be no "democratic" alternative to the SLFP at the next polls. There the internal UNP debate ceased and with Dudley's death the tactic too died a natural death.

What is most significant in today's context is that Mrs. Bandaranaike achieved in her own time and in her own fashion what the UNP had perceived as its historic duty of saving democracy from the Marxists. The ease with which she booted out the LSSP in 1975 proves convincingly that far from being a prisoner of Machiavellian Marxists, she had been using them for her own political purposes. When their potential was exhausted and

her own purposes changed, she dumped them unceremoniously. Subsequent evidence from both sides shows that Mrs. B. knew what she was doing from the start—from the very act of distributing portfolios, retaining the strategic Planning and Economic Affairs ministry etc. (The LSSP claims that she even reneged on pre-election promises about portfolios.)

### LSSP exit

THE sacking of the LSSP was SLFP's compulsive response to the pressures of both internal and external factors. First, the seismic shock of 1971. Secondly, the maturation of a nascent bourgeoisie (some SLFP radicals of a pro-Peking persuasion still refer to it as "the progressive national bourgeoisie") which had been nurtured by the SLFP's post-1960 policies of import substitution and had flourished through party/State patronage. Prominent in this class were those SLFP mudalalis, the financial backers of the party, those self-same mudalalis much maligned and murderously threatened by UNP leaders on election platform. This potential class, as Samir Amin describes it had arrived. With its growth as an authentic bourgeoisie, its interests and outlook had changed, its progressive phase ended. It looked forward to the next stage of foreign collaboration and overseas markets for 'new' exports. The stage therefore was being set for the IMF-oriented policies (export platforms etc) which the UNP was historically ordained to pursue.

### External pressure

THE OIL CRISIS and the post-1973 pressures on our payments situation had forced the UF not only to court West Germany and Japan but to search for new sources of aid in the oil-rich Arab countries and Iran. Before N. M.'s last budget, Mrs. B had returned from Bonn to announce to the SLFP "no more nationalisation."

With the LSSP gone, FDB, the new Finance Minister was drafting the Foreign Investment Guarantee Law, an idea reinforced



Mrs. Bandaranaike

and refined by the UNP to adorn Sri Lanka's new constitution. Dr. Seevali Ratwatte, then Director General of Export Promotion, was working on the blueprint of the FTZ. A rearguard action by the "Left" in the SLFP-CP coalition helped by the masterly diatribes on the mudalalis and the multinationals by the SLFP rebel and Opposition 'loner', Mr. Ronnie de Mel (now the UNP's Finance Minister) together with Mrs. Bandaranaike's preoccupation with the upcoming 5th Summit stalled these moves. And after the Summit, it was time to prepare for elections.

### Continuity

A PRE-ELECTION social event produced a remarkable coincidence which illustrates well the fact of continuity rather than discontinuity between the SLFP's last years and the UNP's first phase. The island's only genuine multi-nationalist Mr. Upali Wijewardena (first cousin of the UNP leader) was appointed the FTZ's czar. His deputy was the one-time SLFP Export Promotion boss, Dr. Seevali Ratwatte, brother of Mrs. Bandaranaike and Mr. Wijewardena's father-in-law. In centuries past, marriages of that kind ended wars between nations. (Or started them).

As for all those blood-curdling threats against the SLFP's financial backers, where have all the mudalalis gone? To the FTZ? The ostentatious scions of what the UNP propagandists called the SLFP's "new class" have become ready converts to the new-look, Singapore-style economic policy. Through membership in inter-looking directorates and matrimoni-



al links, they have joined a growing entrepreneurial and trading group that represents the confluence of old and new wealth.

### Objective basis

IN SHORT, there is an objective basis for a grand alliance. And broadly speaking it is in accord with JR's conception of national interest and need, and his vision of his own historical role. His reaction to the polls result was touched by a revealing paradox. No party leader could have dreamt of so spectacular a victory and JR, exulting in his triumph, must have appreciated the benignity of a fate that had crowned his long career with such glory. Yet, he was sufficiently sagacious to admit to a foreign correspondent that he was "worried" by the magnitude of the UNP victory and the catastrophe which had overcome its traditional opponents. The SLFP had been reduced to a humble 8 and the Left had been annihilated. Would the UNP victory, by its own staggering scale, endanger the UNP's future and what is more imperil the stability of the system?

### JR's vision

IT WAS a disturbing element of another kind. It was the one factor which could not be accommodated in JR's grand Gaullist vision of his historical role as the party politician who was destined to place himself above party politics; the statesman-in-the-making; the symbol of the nation, perhaps the State itself. Such missions need a mystique. For de Gaulle it was the restoration of France's vanished glory. Drawing from an Asian heritage, JR spoke of **dharmista**. Between Bonaparte and de Gaulle Asoka and Dharmasoka, "JR Thought" wrestled with the great imponderable of political philosophy and action, the perennial problem of Might and Right, trying to reconcile what is possibly irreconcilable, the exacting and harsh demands of power with the ideals of good governments. As Sri Lanka's own Professor S.J. Thambiah phrased it in a celebrated study, Dharma Raja and Raja Dharma.

But all this in the rarified realms of personal vision. The



*President Jayewardene*

realist, tough-minded politician, unable to reverse an election result to his convenience, proceeded to take some practical, preliminary steps. It is no secret that UNP emissaries made contact with the SLFP leadership to explore SLFP participation in the July 1977 government. It recent reports, the Leftwing press has been full of fresh details of these discussions. There were some SLFP'ers, including certain key member of the Bandaranaike family who were ready to respond to the offer. Others in equally influential positions, rejected the offer. Mrs. B. decided to sit it out and bide her time.

From July 1977 to NM's funeral, JR has also tried to maintain cordial relations with the LSSP. Long association and civilised decencies do not wholly account for this attitude. Shut out from the parliamentary process, the LSSP could be tempted into 'extremist' or 'extra-parliamentary' activity which may be a destabilising factor, especially in a field to which JR has attached great importance, the trade unions.

### New structures

MEANWHILE the architect began to build, brick by brick, the edifice of power. (a) an omnipotent executive presidency (b) a presidency that will outlast the 1983 elections and will therefore allow the president to choose his premier and cabinet (c) no parliamentary defections, no by-elections (d) a formal shuffling off his party position by making Mr. Panditaratne UNP chairman

(e) the PR system which in effect loads the pendulum after its last pro-UNP swing so that the next oscillation will deny any party 2/3rds majority (f) a corpus of new laws which were in part pre-emptive strikes on potential sources of trouble, the unions, universities ect (g) the Tiger law which can be used against any other organisation, (h) the presidential commission which can lead to the political immobilisation of those who abused power under the previous regime.

But this is only a structure, constitutional and legal. It is only the form. The content must come from the realities of politics, the substance of power. The structure can be sustained only by power-relationships, by new alignments and re-groupings of organisations in which political power resides, the collaboration or co-optation of important personalities who also carry political influence.

Mr. Thondaman was won over and with him, one presumes, majority support among plantation labour. Yet, the TULF-CWC link, though now severed, was always a tenuous one. Mr. Rajadural was also given a place in the cabinet to substantiate the government's claim that the E.P. did not support the TULF and Eelam, and to implement the government's strategy of physically isolating 'eelamism' to the north. Then the emergency and the crackdown, and the offer of decentralisation and district development. Stick and carrot.

The TULF leadership, mainly middle-class professionals, contains many conservative elements that would support a rapprochement with the UNP, its partner in the 1965 'National government'. But if a party split is to be avoided the actual terms that the UNP offers the TULF, on the basis say of the Tennekoon Commission report, must be sufficiently substantial and attractive in the eyes of the majority in the north. Only then can the TULF 'sell' the deal to its peninsular constituency which it swept at the polls on the single strident cry of Eelam. The terms

can be then justified as an 'interim settlement' in a step-by-step solution. On the other hand, no TULF leader will leave himself open to the charge of a 'sell-out'. In such an event, the more radical wing, supported by the youth, will gain the upper hand. Though the parallel cannot be pressed too hard, the Camp David Accords only led to Egypt's isolation, and the greater unity and radicalisation of both Arab and Palestinian opinion.

Besides the political and psychological constraints of the Eelam mandate (i.e. the TULF electoral base) the TULF learnt a lesson from the 1965-70 experience of participation. In the face of Opposition pressure (mainly SLFP) and the 'Dudleyge badey, masalavada' propaganda barrage, the UNP never honoured its pledges to the FP.

Many TULF members were not merely disappointed but dismayed by the SLFP refusal to nominate a person to the Tennekoon Commission. Some of them had honestly believed that the SLFP had made such a commitment and ex-Speaker Tillekerane would be the SLFP nominee. For obvious reasons, the TULF does not want to be caught in an intra-Sinhala UNP-SLFP crossfire.

In any equation therefore the SLFP is a key factor.

Meanwhile the leftwing press had introduced a new figure into the ongoing discussion. Though no names were mentioned, the hints in the LSSP's JANADINA were so strong that no reader had any doubt that the accusing finger was pointed at US Ambassador Howard Wriggins. The papers alleged that the US envoy had done his best to persuade top UNP'ers not to initiate any charges against Mrs.B because her elimination from the political scene even for a few years will endanger the democratic system.

The allegations gained wide currency for two reasons.

Firstly, the reports were not denied. Secondly, Ambassador

Wriggins is no ordinary envoy. The author of "Ceylon, Dilemmas of a New Nation" (1960) he counts most of Sri Lanka's leading politicians as his personal friends, and his knowledge of the intricacies of our politics is highly regarded. Besides, he is known as 'Zbig's boy', a nominee of Zbigniew Breezinski, President Carter's national security adviser. As head of Columbia's South Asians studies department, Dr. Wriggins and Breezinski belong to the charmed circle. Wriggins returns to Columbia next month.

Whether Ambassador Wriggins was a mere victim of Leftwing propaganda or not, the same line of argument surfaced in an interesting article written by the well-informed Colombo correspondent of the Far Eastern Economic Review (Sept. 28). He said that a section of the government which is watching the move towards Left unity believes it would be better "to ensure that Mrs.B. continues" as SLFP leader. Within the SLFP, he added, there is a growing tendency not to accept the Bandaranaike word as gospel. Since the UNP may think that her continued presence would be a deterrent to a united Left forging a united front with the SLFP, "the situation could lead to some soft-peddling of charges against her".

A grand alliance, says MIGARA, could "chart a common course in the futherance of democracy". Both the style and the sublime sentiment are such that the sentence may have come from one of JR's prize-day perorations.

But the SLEP, despite some eager aspirants, resort to Dudley's old argument against a grand coalition. What can be done with 8 MP's in a front of 150? The SLFP would lose its identity.

But the SLFP has its own serious problems. (a) The internal problem of party re-organisation and democratisation. Debates on this have led to squabbles at the leadership level which have now seeped down to the rank-and-file. Arguments about the appointment of district organisers, nominations for Galle (the SLFP 'team' from

Colombo was actually gheraoed by blue-shirts) bomb blasts in the trade union office and the long delay in holding a congress are the plainest signs that things have not settled down. Nonetheless it is clear that Mrs.B. is still the commanding personality although a triumvirate of Mrs.B., Maitripala and TBI, controls PB decisions. (b) the damoclean sword hanging over the SLFP leaders. If the Commission makes adverse findings parliament could impose civic disabilities. After Felix who? Would it be Mrs.B. or some other SLFP stalwart?

The commentaries in both the leftwing press and the 'SUN' group gave prominence to this unanswered question.

MIGARA (WEEKEND) took note of the fact that the SLFP daily 'DINAKARA' paid no attention to FDB's statements before the Presidential Commission. After a byzantine in-fight FDB did succeed in having himself nominated Dompe organiser but his future role in the SLFP is in the lap of the gods, and Mrs.B.

Behind all this is the shared view (although not publicly stated by UNP'ers) that the UNP's popularity curve is downward while the SLFP's, by the conventional wisdom of the parliamentary game, is rising.

This situation provides the framework for a battle of wits between Sri Lanka's two most powerful personalities — pressure and counter-pressure, accommodation and confrontation, bluff and blandishment, with both bearing in mind the situation in their own parties (the challenges within) and the situation outside. Both working in 1980, keeping a vigilant eye on 1983-4.

In an effort obviously to put some meat into their story the 'SUN' produced a prominently displayed item on "JR-Sirima talks". Actually, it was no secret meeting but a formal discussion with SLFP members about rural elections. The SLFP sent a 'correction' which was published in the NATION since the SUN itself had chosen not to print the correction.



# Radicals in command?

The CPSL's present tactics and strategy, the result of an exhaustive self-critical assessment of the party's post-war experience and parliamentary performance, have been outlined in 4-Part series of analytical essays published in the weekly edition of the ATHTHA. The author is Jayathilleke Silva, widely regarded now as CPSL's top theoretician.

The main conclusion is that the policy of political, programmatic and governmental alliances with the SLFP was a "Right opportunistic error."

Even at a time this alliance was forged in 1968 the author argues it was becoming evident that the "national" bourgeoisie which the SLFP represented, was linking up with imperialism while heaping burdens on the masses. The world capitalistic crisis of the 1970's accentuated this process and the Sri Lankan 'national' bourgeoisie, (which unlike the Indian bourgeoisie, is economically weak and therefore non-autonomous) became a pro-imperialist bourgeoisie. Thus there is no longer a progressive, section of the local bourgeoisie for the left to ally itself with, and, since the local bourgeoisie is promoting dependant capitalist development, the anti-imperialist tasks at present, intertwined with the anti-capitalistic tasks.

Since the party is agreed that the anti-imperialist tasks are now intertwined with the socialist ones, it proceeds to assert that the only form of state that can accomplish these tasks is one in which the working class plays the leading role. Though Jayathilaka Silva's article states the need for Socialist development and the political report of the CPSL's Youth League Federation's 8th congress (held recently in Galle) calls for a government committed to socialist policies, the CPSL's internal bulletins and other documents still contain a somewhat

ambiguous formulation according to which the present 'stage of the revolution' is a transitional one, from the 'national democratic' to the 'socialist'. As for the form of state which should be fought for, it would include social classes other than the working class (under the latter's leadership) but would not encompass any section of the bourgeoisie. This state has not been categorised either as a 'proletarian dictatorship' or a 'national democratic state' but is understood as a modified form of the latter.

As for the political (distinct from the theoretical) aspect of the CPSL's self-criticism, it says the Right opportunist deviation in the party was evident even in the line of the 7th congress in 1964 since it had an incorrect assessment of the role of the ULF. In a context when it should have advocated the leading role for the Left, it instead envisaged only a leading role for the Left. In the debate on the self-criticism, sections of the party's old leadership held the view that the CPSL's error resided in the acceptance of Ministerial portfolios in 1970, by party front-rankers instead of juniors. Still other members of the leadership identified the error as the acceptance of any Ministerial post by the CPSL as a whole. Rejecting these two positions, the more militant line eventually prevailed, namely that the chief error resided in the very formation of a political alliance with the SLFP in the 1960's. The ascendent radicals are now going much further and seem to be gaining tentative acceptance of their view that CPSL's right opportunist view dates back to 1950's, specifically from the 1953 Hartal. Jayathilake Silva's series states at one point that parliamentary opportunism within the left encompasses the post-1948 period. This poses another problem which is whether or not the party has abandoned the positions adopted by the famous 4th con-

gress in Matara 1950 which provided a framework for CPSL strategic policy concerning the 'national' bourgeoisie. It is unclear whether the 1950 theses are considered incorrect or merely outdated and whether they should be abandoned or modified. The party's attitude to the hard anti-capitalist line of the 1948 3rd congress at Atureliya also remains ambiguous.

The critical attitude to the SLFP and the national bourgeoisie originates in the post-1971 period and was part of the thinking so-called hardline in the 1972 split. Obscured for several years, this critical viewpoint re-emerged in the post '77 run-up to the 11th CPSL congress. The anticapitalistic position is very visible in the Political Report adopted by the CPSL Youth League Federation's 8th congress held a few months back in Galle. However, it is Jayathilaka Silva's series in the 'Aththa' which articulates most clearly this anti-SLFP line. The radical reinterpretation and rescruity of the party's history, together with the new anticapitalist position, is expected to relieve the stamp of orthodoxy at the CPSL's 12th congress scheduled tentatively for March 1980.

A problem area in the CPSL's new analysis of the SLFP concerns the subject of the anti-family dissident group within the SLFP. The CPSL seems to identify this group as representing the interests of the 'middle' and petty bourgeoisie who have a contradiction with the proimperialist, antidemocratic big bourgeoisie which is best represented within the SLFP by the present Bandaranaike leadership. Formulations are ambiguous on this question, and attitudes are provisional.

The CPSL's antagonism towards the SLFP leadership has an added dimension - that of foreign

(Continued on Page 8)

## The Anil factor

After Galle, the LSSP-CP United Front will be dead. Only the obituary may take some time.

Since NM's funeral, the LSSP CC has been discussing the present political situation and the party's future tactics. The seriousness of the LSSP's inner party debate can be seen from the fact that it invited non-C.C. members to address the C.C. Already the UF had shown some growing stresses. The CP seemed to be as, (or more?) interested in its relations with the so-called 'New Left', the JVP, NLSSP and RMP, as in its partnership with the LSSP. This angered the LSSP which still regards itself as the major Left party. These emerging tensions helped to surface old ideological and internationalist anti-CP sentiments in a party that was once openly and proudly Trotskyist and anti-Stalinist, anti-Soviet.

When the JVP decided unilaterally to field its candidate for Galle and the LSSP replied in kind, without informing its UF partner, the CP in turn decided to remain neutral in order to place the interests of a broad left front before bilateral relations.

The Trotskyist revival coincided with the Trotsky centenary. The below-the surface anti-Soviet feeling of these lapsed Trotskyists is also identified with the party's parliamentarists or local Euro-Communists. (The L.G. in one of its earlier issues published a very informative interview on Euro-Communism with Leslie Goonewardena, one of the LSSP's top trio).

The debate brought to the forefront Anil Moonesinghe, Minister of Communications in the SLFP-LSSP 1963 coalition. He is not KGB (Kandyana Gogama Buddhist) but he is G.B.S. (Gogama Buddhist Sinhala). Together with this basic asset, he is a young, educated politician of agreeable manners and organisational abili-

ties. As such he has always been considered a future leader. Anil joined N.M. in supporting the LSSP line of coalition in 1963, when the party split. This 'Right' majority carried the day while the 'Centrists' led by Colin, Leslie, Bernard, Doric etc came a poor third in the voting. The 'Left' led by Tampoe and Samarakkody walked out.

Today Anil is joint assistant secretary. The other assistant secretary, ex-MP Athauda Seneviratne stands for Left unity while Anil still argues for an alliance with the SLFP in the name of political realism and parliamentarism.

While Anil's pro-SLFP line does not find full favour with the 'Centrists' he is fiercely opposed by a half a dozen C.C. members whom Anil describes as "Stalinist stooges" and "Moscow liners". One of his critics who was persuaded to withdraw his resignation from the party denounced Anil (in Sinhala) in the most biting terms. "Philip called JR the mahayanake of capitalism...our friend is the maharaja of Titoism and Pekingism." This was a snide reference to the fact that Anil, as an executive of Maharajah Organisation, had visited China. He has already had talks with the SLFP leader and news of a Yugoslav-type "programe" is being widely circulated in LSSP circles, as a possible SLFP-LSSP common program.

### Radicals. . . .

(Continued from Page 7)

policy. The SLFP anti-Soviet, anti-Cuban, anti-Vietnamese, line is seen as a result of the heavy influence on the Bandaranaike leadership, of the USA, China, West Germany, and Yugoslavia. (Mrs. B's open support of Pol Pot is the clearest, most recent example.) This foreign policy orientation is the logical corollary of the hegemony of the proimperialist bourgeoisie within the SLFP, says the CPSL.

WITH

THE

COMPLIMENTS OF

DISTRIBUTORS

OF

CITIZEN

WRIST WATCHES

& CLOCKS



# How 'war' began

by Gail Omvedt

**H**ow could such disparate people and political forces indeed live together in one party? In fact, for quite a while they did and the bickerings that went on after the Janata Party government came into power seemed no worse than what always had gone on among Indian politicians. The factional alignments also seemed quite normal, with the BLP and the Jan Sangh factions dividing political control of the northern states among themselves and forming a kind of "rightist" alliance against the Socialists' "left".

What changed after that was a result of the growing antagonisms in Indian society itself.

First, the working class began to use its newly won "democratic rights" almost immediately after the Emergency was retracted. It used them to attempt to roll back the speed-ups and wage cuts imposed on it during the Emergency and continuously facing it since then. Strikes broke out and quickly rose to the level they had been for most of the pre-emergency years, about 20 million workdays lost a year. Worse, their ferocity increased. Workers were now ready not simply to **gherao** (physically surround) managers but also to occupy the factories, to collect tools and machine parts with which to physically fight the police, and they were ready to go out for months on strike not simply for higher wages but to oppose the firing of activists and the attempts to impose heightened work norms.

This was an increasing challenge to the control of capitalists over the production process itself. The result was both occasional police rampages resulting in numerous deaths by firing and a relentless push by central and state governments under all political parties to bring in greater

state-enforced control of the working class. Pressure on the Janata Party components mounted as unions under Socialist (or Jan Sangh) leadership began to join united Communist-led protests against the Industrial Relations Bill, the Bhoothalingam Commission which sought to impose a wage-salary policy and other new measures. The Socialists, whose claim to a working class base was their main political asset, felt this the most. Leaders like George Fernandes tried to deflect the working class pressure by thunderous tirades against Indian monopolies and by proposing gimmicks like a "workers' parliament." Threats to nationalise big Indian business like the Tata Iron and Steel Company were unlikely to materialize given right wing power within Janata, but Indian businessmen began to condemn what they saw as the main fault of the Janata regime—its inability to take clear stands and to bring order into the industrial scene. A meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) on April 2, 1979 was marked by unusual open hostility to the government. There were calls for "traders" to organize for their rights, and finally the most politically shrewd of India's former nationalist businessmen, G. D. Birla himself, took the lead in attacking the "confused atmosphere" caused by Janata. Businessmen clearly were opposing the Janata party now not because of its politics but because of its inability to bring "discipline" and maintain stability—and just as clearly, they are swinging to Indira Gandhi for the same reason.

Rural conflicts developed with equal intensity. Growing capitalist agriculture not only brought new kulaks to the fore, but also led to efforts of the growing numbers of agricultural labourers

to assert their rights. These often met with ferocious repression: Agricultural labourers were beaten to death in police lockups, raped and assaulted, burned to death by landlord gangs, murdered at night, or deprived of work and provisions from village shops under boycotts imposed by rural bosses. No country has "classes" free from the social identities of its past, and in India these identities are mainly those of caste. Thus the rural conflicts were expressed quite often as caste conflicts. Not only were those attacked mainly from ex-untouchable and similar low castes, but very often caste Hindu poor peasants and labourers either stood aside with indifference while the attacks were going on or actively took part.

This was bound to have its impact on Janata. Specifically, the largest "peasant" caste in northwest India, including kulak farmers as well as poor peasants and workers, are the Jats, spread over the Punjab (where they are Sikhs), Haryana, western U.P. and Rajasthan (where they are mainly Hindus, sometimes Muslims). The largest ex-untouchable caste of the same area are the Chamars, whose traditional duties included both field labour and show making and who were once almost family slaves of the Jat dominant peasants. Charan Singh is a Jat from western U.P., Jagjivan Ram a Chamar from Bihar (In fact he is from Bhojpur, the very district in Bihar where the Naxalites have won a strong base among ex-untouchable labourers by killing the thugs who rape their women). The ability of these two leaders and the political factions behind them to get along in the same party is naturally hampered by the bitter conflict between the class-caste social forces they represented. Once these forces—ex-untouchable labourers and Jat peasants—were together against the British and

landlords; now they are ferocious enemies. It is not surprising, then that Jagjivan Ram would be able to accommodate with the super-Hinduistic RSS before he would go along with Charan Singh, the man who represents the Jat peasantry in an almost naked fashion.

The increased ferocity of these social conflicts gave Indira Gandhi a theme to bely the Janata regime with (about this time she began to talk against "capitalist, casteism and communalism") and increased tension inside the party. But since workers and agricultural labourers were only weakly represented in Janata, this was not the basic thing to tear apart the party. Rather the contradiction which became bitter and finally decisive was that between the kulak farmers and the urban bourgeoisie. It was a conflict that first set Charan Singh against Morarji Desai as a representative of the industrial bourgeoisie, then against the whole Jan Sangh, merchant-based faction.

Peasants, including rich peasants, once fought their main battles against big landlords, moneylenders and merchants who kept them racked by debt and high rents, and against urban high caste intellectuals and bureaucrats. In some regions such conflicts are still strong, for instance Bihar where Charan Singh's allies fought ferocious riots against high castes over issues of job reservations. But increasingly the kulak farmers, now in control of the villages, have found themselves confronting the state itself. The issues have been prices—government-set prices of agricultural inputs such as tractors and fertilizers and prices of crops especially those purchased by government levies—and the policies followed by the banks from whom they now drew most of their credit. But in these demands they found themselves confronting the industrial bourgeoisie itself. For the big capitalist wanted the credit themselves for industry, and preferred, the opposition to the farmers, low prices for the food which fed their workers and the raw materials for their factories.

The kulaks seemed to be riding on the crest of an agricultural boom with good harvests in the last few years, increased production and even new good grain exports. But the underlying crises of Indian agriculture, in part the lack of adequate demand from impoverished small peasants and underpaid labourers, meant a frequent inability to sell increased produce. The two-year price stability following the end of Emergency meant for the farmers a stagnant and at points declining return for their crops. The steadily rising price of gold in 1978, which peaked in October, enriched the merchants but hit them because they were increasingly putting their surplus in gold and then using the gold for credit to get loans from the state banks.

The kulaks newly feeling their political power, thus found themselves in conflict both with merchants and the state itself. By the middle of 1978 this began to be expressed in the form of farmers' riots and battles with the police, in peasant rallies throughout the country and road-blocking demonstrations demanding better prices for their crops, and even in the form of religious riots such as those between orthodox (peasant) and reformed (mainly merchant) Sikhs—the notorious Nihang-Nirahari clashes. And in Delhi, Charan Singh, pushed by his "brother peasants" to get higher prices for their crops, began to increasingly attack Morarji Desai and was forced to resign in June, 1978. He reacted by going forth to organize north Indian peasants culminating in a Kisan Sammelan (peasant rally) held in the capital on December 23 to celebrate his birthday—said to be the biggest ever political meeting held in Delhi.

Morarji was compelled to take Charan Singh back into the cabinet in January 1979 as Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister—for in fact this was the most significant rural base that Janata party had. But Charan Singh continued to go on the aggressive, pushed by the clamorous demands of the farmers. At a

time when credit was tight and declining for both the public sector and private industry, the state began to borrow massive amounts from the reserve bank mainly to finance purchases of grain at prices set 2-3% higher than the previous year. And Charan Singh's budget, announced on February 28, reduced taxes on farm inputs and imposed increased taxes on middle class consumption items of all kinds from soap to kerosene and cooking gas. All of this led to be a massive transfer of resources to the rural areas and to an 8% price rise in the following three months.

This was a period in which stagnation in coal and steel production and transportation bottlenecks were leading to power shortages which resulted in days of blackout in the most industrialized states of West Bengal and Maharashtra. And then, once again as in the pre-Emergency period, the horror of inflation. "What can we do", said the very poor who could hardly afford cooking oil or kerosene lamps. "We have to eat our food in the dark, what food we get." And all of this began to be blamed on Charan Singh and his farmers.

More significantly, the bourgeoisie, both big industrialists and traders, also were not going to stand for capitalist farmer assertion. The same FICCI meeting in April which saw the big spokesman directing their guns against the Janata regime, heard calls for action: "If the kisans could come to Delhi and get Charan Singh reinstated in the Union cabinet, traders too should fight for their rights."

It was then that the big fight broke out in Janata, between the Jan Sangh elements, representing traders and in this case the industrialists, and the rich peasant-based BLD. Throughout the Janata-ruled northern states the party divided, and the Jan Sangh factions withdrew their support from BED chief ministers. State governments began to topple. Unable to win their way inside the Janata party, Charan Singh's men began to withdraw from it



accusing the "Communal" RSS forces of dominating it—and finally in June they formed the Janata (Secular) consisting mainly of the ex-BLD people and some of the Socialists. The rest of the Socialists plus most of Jagjivan Ram's group plus all of Morarji Desai's old Congress (O) faction stayed with the Jan Sangh-RSS group in the Janata party. But it was not enough to hold the government together, and Morarji Desai was forced to resign in July.

This was replaced finally by a government headed by Charan Singh and consisting of the Janata (S) in alliance with the original anti-Indira Congress party headed by Y. B. Chavan. Backing it were all the left parties (the two big Communist parties, the Peasants and Workers Party, the Revolutionary Socialist Party and the Forward Bloc) which described it as the crucial "anti-communal" (meaning anti-RSS) and "anti-authoritarian" (meaning anti-Indira) force.

In class terms this was essentially a government of north and south Indian capitalist farmers backed by the working class. Politically it represented what so many people had called for so long—a "third force" different from the Janata and the "Indira Congress", allied with a "united left". In fact the CPI and CPI (M)'s coming together was itself a major step, a thrust towards the achievement of political unity for the first time since the Communist movement split in 1964. But the Janata (S)-Congress, left alliance had no positive program of its own, no credibility among the people, and, more to the point immediately, not enough members of parliament to be stable. When it lost a vote of confidence, the President of India, Sanjiva Reddy, followed Charan Singh's advice to declare parliament prorogued and called for national elections.

And so the whole game has been once again thrown open — and riding high the wave of popular disillusionment with all these "politicians" is once again Indira Gandhi, unrepentant for

Emergency, able to convince people that she represented something different. Never mind that the Janata Party has its solid core of RSS cadres and its scattering of socialists and is projecting a "Harijan", an ex-untouchable as its leader: Jagjivan Ram's dependence on caste-Hindus and capitalists, has never had a widespread mass base among the nation's volatile-untouchable masses, and Indira has always had a stronger claim to the low-caste and minority votes. And never mind that Charan Singh's party, now called the Lok Dal, claims to and does represent peasants and rich farmers and that with this force are the major working class parties of the country—the strongest characteristic of this alliance so far has been its seeming incapacity to unite at all, to produce any positive program symbolizing that unity. As a result Indira may well win also in some of the strongest working class centers such as Bombay.

What does Indira Gandhi have to offer that the other bourgeoisie forces cannot? Something very simple—stability and "discipline". For the capitalists and middle classes she can offer a mass base sufficient to give enough legitimacy to form a stable government—a stable government that is necessary to impose firm restrictions on the turbulent working class and discipline the big farmers. And she holds the mass base, so far, because she has consistently recognized the necessity of appealing to the rural poor, because she has been able to give a few significant welfare-type concessions, and because of the lack of a revolutionary political alternative for people who feel "all are crooks but some government is necessary".

Her own view is clear. She told reporter Arul Louis just before her first big "comeback" electoral victory in Chikmagalur in 1978, "If there were no reforms there would be an upheaval and it would be the rich who would suffer the most. The poor people would say go to hell with everything and there would be a violent revolution. The rich should realize this danger."

The real question is whether Mrs. Gandhi's efforts to hold back revolution necessarily have to be at the cost of Indian democracy—something for which she herself has never shown much attachment. If it is, then in fact the likely completion of her own comeback from political defeat will not lead in the end to renewed stability but only to deepened and even more bitter, even brutal conflict. Young artists and students who joined the campaign against her in Chikmagalur did so by drawing thousands of posters themselves, posters frequently depicting the torture and barbarities that occurred in jails under her rule—and the question still remains whether this is to be the face of the future in India.

## LANKA GUARDIAN

*Subscription rates.  
With effect from 1st January 1980.*

	One year	Six months
Local	Rs. 60/-	Rs. 40/-
Asia	Rs. 300/-	Rs. 150/-
	US \$ 20.	US \$ 10.
	£ 10.	£ 5.
Foreign	Rs. 450/-	Rs. 300/-
	US \$ 30	US \$ 20
	£ 15	£ 10

Cheques and money orders to be made out in favour of  
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd.

The Commercial Manager,  
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd.  
No. 88 N. H. M. Abdul Cader Road  
(Reclamation Road), Colombo 11.

# Trouble in the Eastern hills

by Nalin C Meegama

The tranquility of the wooded wilderness is shattered by the staccato of machine-gun fire that echoes in the surrounding hills, where rebel Naga and Mizo insurgents have constant skirmishes with Indian security forces. This sensitive and volatile region of North-Eastern India, about 600,000 sq.km in area, cradled between Burma, China and Bangla Desh has been witnessing renewed spells of violence during recent months. Compromising five states and union territories, this is India's land of the rising sun.

Two of these five states, Mizoram and Nagaland, are seeking secession from India to form autonomous sovereign states. Mounting an escalating guerilla warfare campaign on Indian government security forces, the rebels claim to have won the support of local people. The inhabitants of these are mainly tribal Christians of semi-mongoloid stock much like their Burmese neighbours.

The Nagas, 26 fiercely independent tribes, took arms in 1955. Under the leadership of the Naga National Convention (NNC) and led by Z.A.Phizo they established the underground government. The Indian army moved in and crushed the insurgent forces within a period of twenty years. The Nagas signed a peace accord with the government of India in 1975. They renounced their claim to independence and deposited their arms with a neutral peace council of prominent social workers, church leaders and politicians. The situation, calm for some time sud-

denly turned violent in January this year when armed Nagas killed over 50 people in a pre-dawn swoop on sleeping villages in the neighbouring Indian state of Assam.

The ageing Naga leader Phizo, self exiled in the country of his citizenship, Britain, is adamant on the subject of negotiations. He has refused to talk to Indian government officials if any sort of conditions are imposed. The Indian Foreign Ministry is equally tough in its attitude and considers him a foreigner, because he holds a British passport. Former Prime Minister Morarji Desai refused to hold talks with him in London and stated—"we don't wish to discuss our internal affairs with foreigners."

Eleven years after the Naga uprising, the rebel Mizo army under the leadership of Mizo National Front (MNF) President Laldenga rapidly liberated almost the entire union territory (then a district in the state of Assam). It was several days before the Indian army pushed back the rebel forces. An Amended Special Powers act, in force from 1972, gives the Indian army the freedom to shoot, kill, arrest individuals without warrants, as well as enter private premises and conduct 'search and destroy' operations.

The insurgents Mizo National Army (MNA), a force of young men trained in guerilla warfare, dressed in fatigues and jungle boots, are armed with SLR automatic rifles, sten guns, bayonets and grenades, most of which are believed to be obtained from China or stolen from Indian security forces.

The recruits are sent across the border in groups to the training centres under the central command, the elite force of the MNA. It is said to shift its location along

with the MNF headquarters (which in turn is believed to move from the Arakan Hills in Burma, to the Chittagong Hills of Bangla Desh, to locations in Mizoram, from time to time according to expediency.)

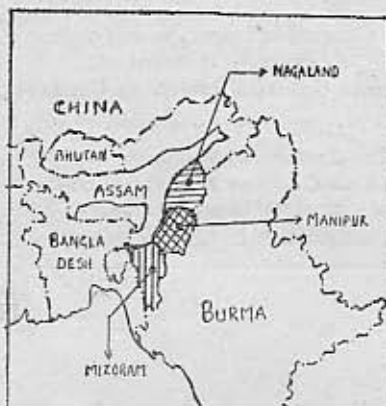
The hilly bamboo jungles of India's North-East have earned the reputation of being a perennial insurgent area. On the Burmese side of the border, insurgents are said to be running private armies and governments in separate "liberated" areas of Burma, especially in areas along the Indian border. Pockets fighting the Bangla Desh government are also said to exist at several points, with the highest concentration in the Chittagong hill tracts of Bangala Desh bordering the Indian states of Tripura Mizoram.

Fresh violence in Mizoram in the form of sporadic fighting, arson and looting, accompanied by a Mizo directive to all non-Mizos to leave the area immediately, have forced the Indian government to impose curfew in what it has declared, "a disturbed area".

Taking full advantage of the topography and terrain, the rebels launched surprise hit-and-run raids on Indian border security outposts and are often believed to decamp with ammunition and weapons. After an attack, impenetrable jungle and proximity to the Burmese frontier enable them to evade capture and flee from pouring Indian security forces.

During recent weeks, signs of fresh violence in Manipur, another state in the same area, is giving rise to speculations that President's rule will be introduced, with the administration of the state taken over by the Central Government in New-Delhi, following their loss in confidence in the state Government's ability to deal with the situation. In the mean time, the

(Continued on Page 15)





Nicaragua (5 b)

# Somoza's isolation

by A Special Correspondent



Somoza

The power-bloc dominating Nicaraguan society underwent a significant reconstitution in this decade. It is important to note this and remember that the so-called national bourgeoisie did not take an anti-Somoza position until the 1970's. Prior to this Somoza was supported by large sectors of the upper and middle classes, but the 1972 earthquake and the Somoza family's gross misappropriation of foreign relief assistance caused a cleavage. (Writing in the L.G. Jan 1st 1979, I spoke of the link between natural disaster and social crisis and made the point that the dialectics of nature lay bare the structures of society). Already an objective contradiction existed since the dominance of the oligarchy (big bourgeoisie and large landowners), the competition of foreign imports, absence of state protection, limitations of the internal market and consequent stagnation of national industry had blocked the areas of development of the small and medium-sized industrial and commercial bourgeoisie. But it became obvious in 1972 that not only was the imperialist backed oligarchy blocking potential areas of development, but it was also extending its economic monopoly and encroaching on the sectors hitherto held by industrialists, shop-keepers, transport owners, and even bankers and landowners belonging to the middle strata of the bourgeoisie.

Thus the power-bloc began to decompose, with layers of social support peeling away. In the 1970's the power-bloc gradually became co-extensive with the oligarchy allied with foreign monopoly capital. The oligarchy itself became coterminous with the economic empire of the Somoza family and its intimate friends. The gargantuan business and agricultural empire was worth over five hundred million US dollars, comprised as it was of almost 400

companies and 70 percent of the country's arable land. The business enterprises included vehicle distribution companies, breweries, construction companies, newspapers, a T.V. station, banks, airlines and an entire port! Clearly, there was the closest congruence between social class and family power—another specificity of the Nicaraguan situation.

So, in the 1970's the Nicaraguan polity saw the emergence of a bourgeois opposition to Somoza comprising those strata of the bourgeoisie, who, in response to the pressure exerted on their class interests by imperialism and the oligarchy began to adopt objectively anti-imperialist and democratic positions. What this means is that we can speak of a national bourgeoisie in this context since such a social group did exist in Nicaraguan society at that given conjuncture. After all, "the concept of national—does not arise from the origin of its ownership, but from the political position to which this ownership, has led a section of the bourgeoisie. It is a political and not a geographical conception." This point is made by veteran Cuban Marxist **Carlos Rafael Rodriguez** in his interesting and important article on "**Lenin and the Colonial Question**" (published in February 1970), which contains an excellent analysis of the related problems of the national bourgeoisie and the stage of the revolution. Marxist militants in each country should undertake a thorough analysis to ascertain whether or not such a 'national' bourgeoisie exists in their society, instead of imposing schemes developed under essentially different conditions.

It is important to understand the paradox inherent in the political positions adopted by the national bourgeoisie or what conventional analysts refer to as the middle class. In his '**Cuba: Exception or Vanguard?**' (1961) Guevara wrote of the "objective conflicts

between the national bourgeoisies struggling to develop, an imperialism which inundates the markets with its products in order to destroy in unequal competition the national industrialist. There are, as well as this, other manifestations of struggle for value and wealth. In spite of these conflicts, the national bourgeoisies are not capable, in general, of sustaining a consequential struggle against imperialism. They fear the popular revolution more than the sufferings under the oppressive and despotic domination of imperialism, which destroys nationality, affronts patriotic sentiments, and colonizes the economy.

The big bourgeoisie, for its part, openly opposes the revolution and does not hesitate in allying itself with imperialism and land owners to fight against the people and cut off their access to revolution."

All non-Trotskyist sections of the Left habitually profess recognition of the contradictory character, the dual nature and consequently the vacillatory role of the national bourgeoisie. This alone is clearly inadequate, for our analysis of the national bourgeoisie must encompass a correct assessment of which aspect of this contradictory character achieves primacy in each phase of the revolutionary process. The FSNL's own assessment of this and the tactics by which it enlisted the bourgeois opposition in a subaltern role within the national-popular bloc, is something that merits special attention when discussing the all-important question of united fronts.

## IRAN

# THE LAST RESORT

Self-interest and real politik, SOPEC membership and the spirited revival of anti-US nationalism after the encouraging discovery of oil, prompted Mexico, once the temporary sanctuary of the Shah, to shut her doors to the fugitive Emperor. Toppled from his Peacock Throne by the mightiest surge of popular emotion seen in recent times, the King of Kings and the Light of the Aryans found a home briefly in the Bahamas, the holiday resort of the world's wealthy.

Will Egypt be his last resort? Sadat is willing. If Egypt does become the final refuge of the runaway Emperor, the choice will make meaningful politics of recent regional developments. The Shah was not merely a tyrannical ruler. Just as the parvenu Pahlevi dynasty was a creation of Britain, the second Shah was the client of the US and its regional gendarme after American power replaced Pax Britannica. The steady US build-up of Iranian military might was not only an exercise in recycling petro-dollars but also a determined drive to equip its regional policeman to do his ordained task. Helping Barzani and his Kurdish secessionist movement in neighbouring Iraq, a radical regime, and assisting Sultan Qabbus to beat back the threat from the Dhofari liberation movement in Oman were duties duly performed by the gendarme.

### TWAIN ON TERROR

THERE WERE two "Reigns of Terror," if we would but remember and consider it; the one wrought murder, in hot passions, the other in heartless cold blood; the one lasted mere months, the other had lasted a thousand years; the one inflicted death upon a thousand persons, the other upon a hundred million; but our shudders are all for the "horrors" of the minor Terror, the momentary Terror, so to speak; whereas, what is the horror of swift death by the

One of the undeclared but manifest aims of Camp David was an alliance between Israel, accredited agent in this strategic area and Egypt, Israeli's most formidable Arab foe; an alliance which was better qualified to contain the increasingly assertive Palestinian resistance and quench the fires of the Arab social revolution. Israel-Egypt-Iran: a strong NATO sub-system which would be an admirable substitute to a moribund CENTO.

When the Shah fled, his first stops were Cairo and Rabat, where he was warmly embraced by Sadat and King Hassan, close allies themselves in North Africa. As Reuter and other agencies

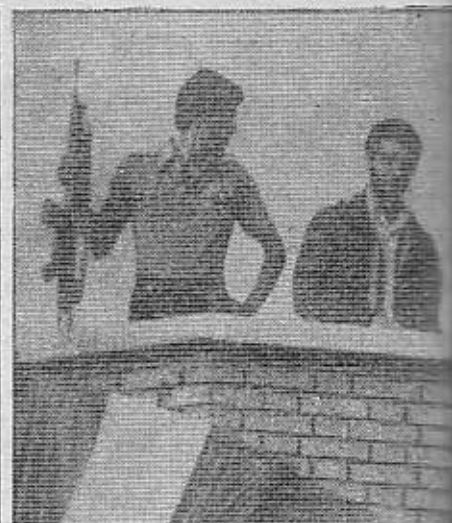


Shah

reported at the time, Sadat openly offered to assume the Shah's role and safeguard western interests. In the euphoria of Camp David, now a fast fading US hope, Sadat's overweening self-confidence appeared to redeem the sheer shamelessness of this highly publicised candidacy. (In a 'fake' advertisement titled MIDDLE

axe compared with lifelong death from hunger, cold, insult, cruelty, and heartbreak?.....A city cemetery could contain the coffins filled by that brief Terror which we have all been so diligently taught to shiver at and mourn over; but all France could hardly contain the coffins filled by that older and real Terror—that unspeakable bitter and awful Terror which none of us has been taught to see in its vastness or pity as it deserves.

(A Connecticut Yankee)



Pastar proclaims: "the revolution makes its own laws"

-EAST VACANCIES, the L. G., mocked his obsequious application.

Sadat had been already doing the dirty work in less pretentious ways. Not only by selling out the Palestinian cause but helping Hassan fight Polisario, the liberation movement of Saharoul people whose right of self-determination has been recognised by the UN, the non-aligned and the OAU. Hassan has also been promised stepped-up US arms aid and money. He has also French and Israeli arms.

Meanwhile, Iran's uninterrupted revolution has taken another exciting, if puzzling, turn. As the L. G.'s comprehensive commentaries on Iran observed, the revolution unleashed a host of social forces, with conflicting interests, expectations and ideals. Even the major force, Islamic nationalism, had several strands, progressive and backward-looking, liberalising and puritanic, anti-imperialist and anti-leftist.

Which force will become dominant finally? Which tendency in each group will prove the stronger, and which groups will align themselves at any given time on which issue? Unless these questions are resolved as the active, often violent political process advances, the basic issue of a dominant political will (and therefore "order") will remain unsettled.



The Shah's stay in the US re-introduced into the Iranian situation the single potent combination of mass emotions which made the revolution work—hatred of the venal dispotism of the Shah, and his acknowledged patron, the US.

Certainly, the seizure of embassies violates the accepted canons of diplomacy and renders normal diplomatic life impossible. For this reason, almost every government will refuse to condone such conduct. But on the moral issue of 'terrorism', Mark Twain's wise thoughts (see 'Twain on Terror') are a happily enlightening corrective to the smarmy outpourings on morality and civilidation in the Establishment press here and abroad.

The Shah oppressed his people and plundered their wealth. And he tortured his opponents and critics. His instrument was the savage SAVAK. The documented evidence does not come from Iranians alone.

In the 'Washington Post' an American businessman recounted his nightmarish days in the Shah's prisons. Earlier this year Seymour Hersh of the NYK Times asked a senior US diplomat who had served in Iran and had been a link-man with SAVAK, whether it was true that US diplomats actually watched the torturers at work in SAVAK's chamber of Horrors. Yes, it was true. And why didn't they protest, object...? "But SAVAK was our side."

The Shah made his own rules. That is why outside the Islamic Revolutionary Court a 16 year old boy tortured by SAVAK, can

### Trouble in . . .

(Continued from Page 12)

Indian Government has banned four Marxist Organizations - the Revolutionary People's Front, the People's Liberation Army, the People's Revolutionary Party and the Red Army - which are believed to be openly resorting to violence with the declared object of securing independence for this state too.

Militants of the Meitei tribe, who inhabit the valleys of Cen-

### Palestine Day

## Camp David: UN's "No"

A large advertisement, minus the advertiser's name, appeared in Sri Lanka's leading newspapers on Palestine Day. The expensive add publicised Egypt's outstanding contribution to the Palestine cause. Part of this great contribution it was claimed was the Camp David accords.

On the same day President J.R. Jayewardena issued an exceptionally well written message in which he extended Sri Lanka's steadfast and unreserved support for Palestinian self-determination and the right of all Palestinians to return to their homeland.

A day later the UN General Assembly declared that Camp David accords between Egypt and Israel had no validity in determining the future of the Palestine people. This was the first time the UN had rejected the accords in a vote. The vote was 75 to 33. It rejected all provisions of the accords which "ignore, infringe upon, violate or deny inalienable rights of the Palestine people".

So much of Egypt's claims as a champion of the Palestine people. Immediately after Camp David, the L.G. described the agreements as "Sadat's Sell-out".

say "The revolution makes its own laws..." (see picture)

Senator Edward Kennedy has now castigated the Shah as an oppressor and a thief.

tral Manipur are believed to be at the back of this insurgency, which is directed much against the Naga, Mizo and other tribes, as the security forces in the region.

The disturbed conditions in India's North-East, including the fact that an attempt is being made to boycott the forthcoming elections, apparently indicate that peace is not imminent, and it could be quite some time before calm descends on the troubled hills.

INVITE US TO  
CATER FOR  
YOUR PARTY

6  
to  
60  
or  
more

## PAGODA

Catering is our speciality.

We cater for any  
function large or small:  
weddings engagements,  
cocktails luncheons,  
dinners.

## PAGODA RESTAURANT too

is available for your party.

Phone: 23086, 29236.



## PAGODA

105, Chatham Street,  
Colombo 1.

Cyril Rodrigo Restaurant  
Ltd.

# The Tamil consciousness

by Dr. A. J. Wilson

A great Tamil leader once spoke on a more powerful and related theme but with a shorter heading. It was on "Our Political Needs" and his speech became the manifesto of the nationalist movement of all Sri Lankans that he headed at that time. It was 1919 when the Ceylon National Congress was about to be inaugurated. The man was Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam. He lived to die a disappointed man. His equally famous brother, Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, thought likewise. **Both believed in cooperation with the Sinhalese political elites.** By elites I mean the power-holders in a given society or to be a little more loose in my definition, the influential middle and upper class seeking positions of influence in such a given society. Ramanathan championed the cause of the Sinhalese Buddhists and in the process antagonized the Ceylonese Muslims and their political leadership.

My view is that both men looked on the Ceylon Tamils as one of the two founding races of this island of ours, major partners as Ponnambalam Arunachalam referred to the two races, hoping presumably that they would cooperate in a joint endeavour. I think both brothers, the one, that is, Arunachalam, with more depth and profundity in wisdom and liberalism, the other Ramanathan, more a politician than a statesman were simple men who believed in the simplicity of the Sinhala race. They, in their innocence, probably thought that they, that is these two great brothers, would, in preference to their Sinhalese counterparts, be chosen Prime Ministers of an

This was a talk delivered by the Chief Guest Dr. A. J. Wilson, Professor of Political Science, University of New Brunswick, Canada at the Annual Prize Giving of Jaffna Central College held on Thursday the 18th of October 1979.

independent Sri Lanka, or chief ministers in a semi-swaraj British colonial-type self-governing situation. They probably believed that if a Scotsman like the Earl of Bute could be a Prime Minister of George III or a Welshman such as Lloyd George could become war time Prime Minister in the second half of the first world war over Englishmen who constitute the majority in British society, then why not they. In effect both Arunachalam and Ramanathan had committed the sin of not being farseeing. But both lived to realize the folly of their calculations. Yet another great Tamil followed a similar but bolder path. G.G.Ponnambalam felt that with "fifty fifty" or balanced representation as he called it, and with British Imperial backing, he could form a government as against the shrewdest Sinhalese adversary of all time, Don Stephen Senanayake, only to be disillusioned again like his famous predecessors.

In effect what I am trying to convey to you is a simple truth. **Our leaders were only reflecting the aims, the aspirations and the desires of the elitist Tamils whose views they gave expression to. The first two hoped to win their way through cooperation with the Sinhalese majority, the third expected that by constitutional jugglery, the same objective could be realized.** He made a valiant effort and he failed. But unlike his two famous predecessors, he achieved an important goal, though not deliberately. He raised Tamil consciousness. And that consciousness could not thereafter be contained. It spilled over, as it were, only to take the form of regionalism under a federal set up and now sovereign statehood in the nation of Eelam.

Costly blunders were made by the first two leaders—partly arising from their conviction of the possi-

bility of a partnership of the two major races. I am personally sure that they even thought in terms of a Sinhala **goigama**-Tamil **vellala** partnership. Ramanathan fought and defeated the sophisticated and urbane Sinhala **karawa** medical doctor, Sri Marcus Fernando for the Educated Ceylonese Seat. The Sinhalese **goigamas** were reputed to have supported him because of their dislike of the **karawa**. Arunachalam nearly outsmarted another equally famous Sinhalese **karawa** in Sri James Pieris over the Colombo Town seat. But on this occasion the Sinhalese took Arunachalam's 'no' for an answer while Arunachalam in the oriental tradition had hoped that his 'no' would not be taken for an outright refusal and that the Sinhalese of the Ceylon National Congress would fuss over him as an elder statesman and persuade him as being the only man of the hour. But the **karawas** were rapidly learning their lessons—the dangers of Sinhalese **goigama**-Tamil **vellala** cooperation. To cap it all, as it were in 1942 another well known Ceylon Tamil, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam's son Sir Arunachalam Mahadeva, defeated another equally reputable **karawa** leader in H.W.Amarasuriya for the post of Minister of Home Affairs vacated by Sir Don Baron Jayatilaka under the Donoughmore constitution of 1931-1947. You will understand now why the Sinhalese **karawas** were in the forefront of the leadership of the anti-Tamil Sinhala only, Sinhala Buddhist nationalist movement—the F.R.Jayasuriyas, P de S Kularatnes and L.H.Mettanandas. It was not for nothing. In the process we lost the goodwill of the **karawas** and were used by the **goigamas**.

In like manner Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan by his stance during the Sinhala Buddhist-Muslim riots of 1915 permanently alienated the support of the Tamil-speaking Muslims for the Tamil cause. **The irony is that the Muslims have a**



greater affinity to Tamil culture and the Tamil-language than to Sinhala culture or language. And in no way different from Ramanathan, G.G.Ponnambalam and the major section of his All-Ceylon Tamil Congress deserted the cause of the Indian Tamils when the question of their citizenship and voting rights came up for decision in Sri Lanka's post-independent Parliament during 1948-49. The sum result is that the Ceylon Tamils themselves, or rather their political leadership and elites contributed towards their own isolation, towards the formation of a united front of Sinhalese against them and towards a convergence of Tamil-speaking Muslim and Indian Tamil feelings of despair and indignation against them because of what was obviously a major let down of their interests.

**The Sinhalese leadership must bear a greater share of the blame.** In 1948 G.G.Ponnambalam's Tamil Congress made the effort at "responsive cooperation" only to be let down by the "Sinhala Only" decision of the Kotelawala Government and the United National Party in 1956. In 1957, Prime Minister Solomon Bandaranaike concluded a solemn pact with the Federal Party leader, S.J.V.Chelvanayakam, only to abandon it under Sinhala Buddhist pressure in 1958. In March-April 1960 there was an unwritten Sirima Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam pact similar to the one signed by her husband in 1957, to be honoured only in the breach. In 1965 there was the Dudley Senanayake-Chelvanayakam Pact which collapsed under Sinhala Buddhist pressure in 1968.

The Left Wing in Sinhala politics has been no better. In 1948-49, they were the vehement defenders of Indian Tamil rights. In 1964-65 and 1970-77, their leaders were overly anxious in their defence of the Sirima-Shastri Pact providing for the repatriation of more than half the Indian Tamil population from Sri Lanka. In 1956, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party was firm like the rock of Gibraltar on parity of status for the Sinhala and Tamil languages. In 1964 that position shifted when they entered into a coalition with the Sri

Lanka Freedom Party Government of Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike. In 1970 the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Communist Party of Sri Lanka abandoned their position on parity of status for the two languages when they formulated a Common Programme with the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. In coalition with the Sri Lanka Freedom Party from 1970-75 neither the LSSP and from 1970-77 nor the CP, did a tittle to remedy the hopelessness of the Tamil problem. **In fact the intransigence of the left and their unwillingness to accommodate the Tamil demand, their condoning of the Sinhalese military occupation of the Ceylon Tamil provinces were the principal catalysts that produced the demand for the sovereign state of Tamil Eelam.** The forces of Tamil separatism and Tamil nationalism were unleashed never to be restrained. It can never be the same again.

What is the position today? The Ceylon Tamils find themselves in complete isolation. There is a burgeoning nationalism among them that may never perhaps be contained. The fault lies mainly with the Sinhala political leadership. My father-in-law, S.J.V. Chelvanayakam, the father of Tamil nationalism and the progenitor of Tamil nationhood told me in 1958 in the aftermath of the bloody Sinhalese-Tamil riots of May 1958 that his firm conclusion was that the Sinhalese were not big enough to rule us Tamils. That could not be more true, judging from the events since. We have today a situation where two nations are warring within the bosom of one. In effect we are back to the days of the pre-western conquerors, the times before the arrival of the Portuguse in 1505. Up to 1618, there flourished in the north a Tamil kingdom. That kingdom posed no threat to the Sinhala Buddhist that flourished in the neighbouring kingdom of Kandy. The Tamil kingdom could have everrun the kingdom of Kandy with the support of the so-called Dravidian hordes from South India. But that did not happen even after the arrival of the Westerners in 1505. Sinhalese Buddhism, the

Sinhalese language and Sinhala culture were not only preserved and maintained in their pristine purity but were the mainstays of the kingdom as a Sinhalese sociologist H.L. Seneviratne has remarked in his book. **The Rituals of the Kandyan state.** In short what I am trying to tell you is that nothing changes though there was change between say 1505 and 1948 when the island was under western occupation. In the brief period, the latter half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, we experienced the golden years of Sinhala-Tamil cooperation. That can never happen again. We are back to the period of the pre-1505 years. **What was entrenched for centuries cannot be undone by a few years of Sinhalese-Tamil elitist cooperation. Really it was not Sinhala-Tamil cooperation but the cooperation of a homegenous class of English-speaking native Ceylonese.**

All this brings us to the principal question I have been endeavouring to answer. How best can our political aspirations be satisfied? As I said earlier we have to take into account the fact that Sinhala and Tamil nationalism have come to stay. It is unlikely that the two nations can ever come together. Economic palliatives may ease the tensions but wounds created, the riots of 1956, 1958, 1961 and 1977 cannot be easily healed. Nor can the blatant discrimination practised against the Tamil people in the post-Sinhala Only years since 1956. **Nor can the Tamil people turn a blind eye to the Sinhalese army of occupation in their midst. Take these all away, and I would still doubt that Tamil nationalism will ever be stilled.** There might be solutions like the present one that is being attempted by the President but these can succeed only if they satisfy three conditions. **Firstly** the Tamil political leadership must get something really tangible and substantial in exchange for their demand for a sovereign state of **Eelam.** **Secondly** that solution must prove acceptable to the Tamil people who invested the Tamil leadership with the mandate for **Eelam.** If it fails

to satisfy, the present parliamentary leadership will be swept away in a storm and be replaced by an extreme leadership which means business. And this could mean writing off all the Tamils in the seven Sinhala provinces. **Thirdly** the Sinhala political leadership must show a desire and willingness to work out the arrangements in a meaningful manner should these be acceptable to a majority of the Tamils. The Tamil districts should be encouraged to develop on their own and be provided with the necessary financial and economic supports. That way Tamil economic needs might be satisfied, the unemployed Tamils may find employment, Tamil culture might be preserved and above all Tamil nationalism might possibly be contained within the confines of a single state. A wrong move here or there can throw the whole exercise out of gear. And there are three component factors that could stoke the fires of Tamil nationalism and Tamil aspirations for sovereign statehood. **Firstly** there is what I would call the demonstration effect—the examples of Bangladesh, Cyprus and possibly Quebec among others. We live in a world of mini states. **Eelam** will be no exception. **Secondly** there is the expatriate Tamil component of the Tamil nationalist movement. I would go so far as to refer to this element as ultra-nationalists. They have the burning desire to see their country a separate sovereign state come what may. In my travels I have not come across a more single minded set of compatriots determined to achieve the goal of liberation. **Thirdly** there is no gainsaying that the big powers or to be more precise, major foreign powers are interested in what is happening in the Ceylon Tamil areas. None but those who refuse to see will not realise that the United States, the Soviet Union, the Peoples Republic of China, India and the United Kingdom are anxious witnesses to the turn of events. I would leave it to you to draw your inference from all this great power interest.

I have touched on the fringes of our political and economic

needs saying a great deal without articulating it all in concrete terms. Nkrumah once remarked, "Seek ye first the political kingdom and the rest shall be added unto you". You cannot expect a nationalist movement to draw up economic plans and blue prints for the kingdom that is to come. They are too involved in the political struggle to have the time to spare. There is also the experience of the Indian National Congress to draw from. That Congress early in its existence felt that it would be unwise and impolitic to divide an otherwise united people on economic issues. The question of economic development is no doubt fundamental but as I stated earlier, it is inextricably intertwined with constitutional and political reform.

There are nearly a million Tamil-speaking persons in the Northern and Eastern provinces. The Tamils of the Jaffna peninsula constitute a middle-class oriented society. Education for white collar employment or for professional jobs continues to be the Mecca of all Tamils aspiring towards upward mobility. Part of the reason for this craze is the missionary-type education that we received, partly because nature was unkind to us and while our counterparts among the Sinhalese had smiling lands of plentiful abundance, the Tamils had to look for state employment. Lastly since the arid plains failed to yield easily except after strenuous effort, the Tamil man learned to become industrious and thrifty in comparison with his Sinhalese counterpart. All this is now a thing of the past in the sense that the Sinhala Only policies of Sinhala governments since 1956 has pushed out Tamils from the public services and denied them admissions to the universities and the professions in the way they were able to do in the golden age that has slipped by. Just as Scottish nationalism was contained by permitting Scotsmen to obtain prize positions in the colonial empire before World War II terminated British imperialism, Tamil nationalism which was always there remained dormant until 1956 because the educated Tamil was still allowed

a certain undisturbed entry into the island's public services and the professions.

We are now obliged by the turn of events to re-orient our outlook. Whatever rights we might obtain to own territories will therefore have to be exploited for the purpose of absorbing our employable population. That can be achieved by a skilled and dedicated leadership. Not only has this employable population to be found outlets but we may have to take steps to transfer a fair percentage of the population of the Jaffna peninsula to other parts of the Northern and Eastern provinces. The water resource experts have repeatedly cautioned us that the water deposits of the Jaffna peninsula are being ruthlessly exploited, that the peninsula in about quarter to half a century could become an ecological disaster, in one effect semi-desert conditions could result. The peninsula will not be even able to supply drinking water to its own population. If that were to happen there will have to be a shift of population. It will only be some state apparatus located in the Tamil areas that will be in a position to interest itself in such a problem. Government and administration today are far too Colombo-centered and we are all in the grip of the octopus-state.

I now come to the last of my questions and this has to do with the future of our society. In the past, we used to think in terms of Jaffna Tamils, Mannar Tamils, Trincomalee Tamils and Batticaloa Tamils. Sinhalese nationalism has helped to eliminate these differences. Tamil nationalism has closed the gaps and we all now refer to ourselves as the Tamil nation or as a single collectivity of Tamil-speaking persons. Again in the past we looked on the Indian Tamils as a separate entity of recent arrival. That difference too is being gradually reduced. Our political vocabulary now uses the term "hill-country Tamil" to describe the Indian and Indians are being welcomed to populate the Tamil-speaking territories. We have however

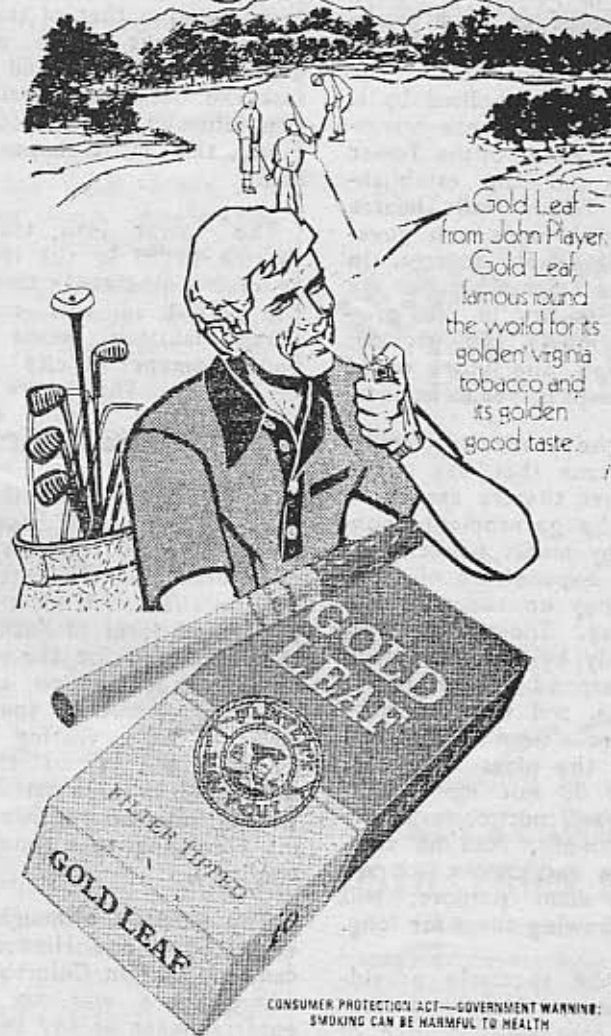


yet to give up our village loyalties and cease inquiring from each other as to which local parish we were born in, who our parents are and what they are doing etc. etc.

But apart from all this there is one question that begs a solution and that is the problem of the so-called depressed castes. It is true that political leaders have taken steps to combat discrimination against these unfortunate people. It is also correct that the Constitution bans the imposition of social disabilities. But these alone are not adequate. A state of mind or a mental condition cannot be legislated away or changed by token measures. Something more tangible has to be done if political and social unity are not to founder in the morass of casteism. I would suggest protective discrimination written into any constitution. This will ensure the so-called depressed castes quotas in respect of admissions to the public services and the universities. The members of these groups must also be assured proper representation in the various legislative bodies, not by nomination but through the democratic electoral process. It is only then that a nation can become a nation, when it closes its own ranks and does not permit the growth of deep dissatisfaction in its own heartland.

I am not quite sure whether I have been indulging in the gloomy lamentations of the prophet Jeremiah. But I think I have from the angle of my own discipline and my own sampling of opinion in this island of ours indicated to you the problems that beset us. It is in that context that I sought to outline what I feel are our immediate political, economic and social problems. But let me end in an optimistic note. I believe we have the capabilities, the skills, the dedication and a honest leadership at various levels to solve these issues. When that happens, and I am deliberately avoiding saying, if it happens, we would have begun our entry into the millenarian society, the Promised Land.

## Player's Gold Leaf for good taste.



Gold Leaf  
from John Player.  
Gold Leaf,  
famous round  
the world for its  
golden virginia  
tobacco and  
its golden  
good taste.

CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT—GOVERNMENT WARNING:  
SMOKING CAN BE HARMFUL TO HEALTH

# TOWER HALL : Is it a genuine tradition of Sinhala Theatre ?

by Ediriwira Sarachchandra

In the last twenty five years or so there have been, in my memory, two or three attempts made, with the blessings of the government in power, to revive what is believed to be a tradition of Sinhala theatre, if not the tradition, centred at the Tower Hall and symbolised by it. The most recent of these attempts is the renovation of the Tower Hall theatre and the establishment of the Tower Hall Theatre Foundation with funds from governmental and private sources. In spite of governmental patronage and wide publicity in the pro-government media, the previous attempts failed. The future of the present attempt is yet to be seen.

Why did the previous attempts fail? The lesson that has to be learned is that theatre cannot be kept going by government sponsorship or by media publicity or even by the expenditure of large sums of money on costumes and lavish display. Theatre can be sustained only by audiences who enjoy and respond to what is put on the stage, and who are moved by the revelation of plot and character in the plays they see. If the plays do not move audiences, they will not come to the theatre any more, and no amount of songs and dances, extraneous to the main purpose, will succeed in drawing them for long.

Nor can the spectacle provided by sumptuous decor and costumes be a continuous source of attraction. Some of the best theatre traditions in the world, like those of Japanese Noh and Peking Opera dispense with stage decor entirely. And in periods of the highest creative activity, the theatre was poor and was patronised by the common man. As was the Elizabethan stage and the

theatre of Shakespeare which depended on the drama enacted before the eyes of the audience and had no use for decor. Another example that comes readily to mind is that of the theatre of the Greeks which used few external trappings, and in contrast the decadent Roman theatre that followed where spectacle became the most important element.

The Tower Hall tradition of theatre began in the last decades of the nineteenth century with the arrival in this country of Parsee musicals meant for the entertainment of city audiences of Bombay. They were performed by Parsee touring companies who had learned western stage craft and were introducing it for the first time on the Indian stage. The musicals became popular because of the stage tricks they used, for the catchy melodies in them, and for the dances, a debased form of Kathak, which they threw in for the purpose of holding the attention of audiences. Parsee musicals toured other cities of India, visiting Sri Lanka as well, but at no time were they held in high esteem by critics in India or regarded as drama belonging to a genuine Indian tradition.

The musicals, although performed in Urdu and Hindustani, became popular in Colombo as well, where there was no theatrical entertainment of any sort for the Sinhalese-speaking classes and soon the songs were on peoples' lips. Plays of the Nadagam variety were being performed in certain parts of the city, but these were fast going out of fashion because of their inordinate length, because of the sameness of the melodies, and because

there were few plays with any originality in them. Some producers of Nadagams like C. Don Bastian, took up the new form, using the Indian melodies and stringing them together with stories culled from Sinhalese myth and legend. This is how the form now known as the Nurtiya, to distinguish it from the Nadagam, came into being.

Although in the hands of C. Don Bastian the Nurtiya was little more than popular entertainment, men like John de Silva tried to use the form for more serious purposes. John de Silva was a prominent figure in the Sinhalese Buddhist revival led by the Anagarika Dharmapala, and he set about employing the theatre as a vehicle for arousing in the people a sense of national identity. By basing his plays on historical themes and Buddhist legends he hoped to bring the heritage of the Sinhalese people closer to the audiences of his time. He was the counterpart in the theatre field of Piyadasa Sirisena who used the novel and poetry for the same purpose. Charles Dias who followed him (the Tower Hall was originally built for Charles Dias and it was later that the plays of John de Silva were performed in it) continued in the same strain.

But John de Silva was no more a playwright than Piyadasa Sirisena was a novelist. Both of them were sincere nationalists, but that is a different matter. Unfortunately for the Nurtiya, none of those who wrote in this style had the slightest idea of how to treat their themes dramatically. All they did was to string together their stories by means of borrowed Hindustani songs. There was neither any



organisation of plot or any delineation of character. And anyone who reads the texts of these plays will see that the dialogue is so lame that it does not provide the actor with any scope for character delineation.

The Nurtiya was a form of urban entertainment that was confined to the lower middle classes in the city of Colombo. Its writer-directors ignored or looked down upon the genuine folk tradition of Sinhala theatre that was embodied in forms like the Nadagam, Kolam and Sokari, and took as their model the vulgarised theatrical form that was brought to Sri Lanka by the Parsee Companies. And since the plays themselves do not have any dramatic content, no amount of padding or embroidering can make audiences of today, who have been treated to better fare, want to see them.

The only service the Nurtiya performed was to bestow upon the Sinhalese a musical tradition based on the North Indian system of Raga music. It is a form of light but good music, and to expose people to it would be one of the ways of initiating them to the more serious classical music of India and of enabling them to cultivate their taste for something better than the "pop" songs of today.

The genuine traditions of Sinhala theatre are embodied in the work of the younger playwrights and theatre men that has been going on for almost a quarter century without any patronage from governments or the rich. These theatre men have their roots in the village and were inspired into creative activity by the style of the folk theatre.

They have among them playwrights of genius as well as actors of more than ordinary talent. They have gathered round them young men interested in the ancillary theatre arts like make-up, decor, costumes and theatre music, who are making a noteworthy contribution in these fields. The fact that they write, produce and put on plays amidst all the hardships they encounter today is in itself evidence of their devotion to theatre and to their spirit of self-sacrifice. They are able to carry on because middle class audiences, in spite of the fact that they face dire economic straits, still support them and flock to see the plays, paying even twenty-five rupees for a ticket (a sizable part of their meagre incomes) because they enjoy the plays and gain from them an experience they value.

This is the theatre of today, poor, but abounding in vitality, and undoubtedly it will be the theatre of the future. It is independent and thought-provoking, and it does not seek the patronage of Mudalalis. And perhaps it is not entirely a fortuitous coincidence that successive governments have ignored it and have sought to resuscitate the Tower Hall "tradition." The Tower Hall theatre is a safe art form. It turns its eyes away from present social evils and it bolsters up the social order. It is, in other words, a theatre of the establishment par excellence, and politicians, little sensitive to artistic matters, would like to embrace it for its goody-goody content. The theatre of the young, on the other hand, shakes people out of their complacency. It makes people think. But perhaps it is better if they are not given too many opportunities to do so.

SELECTED  
BY  
CONNOISSEURS

**Hanappier**  
THREE STAR  
BRANDY

*Blended &  
bottled by*

**ROCKLAND  
DISTILLERIES LTD.,**

Under licence to  
Hanappier Peyrelongue & Co.

*Distributed by:*

**MAHARAJA ORGANISATION  
(DISTRIBUTORS) LIMITED**

# Decentralisation, administration and politics

BOOK  
REVIEW

by Wiswa Warnapala

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND  
DECENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATION  
IN SRI LANKA By G. R. Tressie  
Leitan—

(Lake House Investments Ltd,  
Colombo 1979, pp. 279)

The tendency on the part of our research scholars, to concentrate on constitutional developments, resulted in the neglect of a vital aspect of political development—the development of administrative institutions. Though an attempt has been made in the recent past, guided largely by the need to generate economic development, to study the administrative institutions, it still remains an unexploited field which is one of the richest in terms of the availability of primary data. Sri Lanka, unlike most of the developing countries, produces all sorts of reports; there is no Department or Statutory body about which there is no published document and the production of reports is a part of a growth industry. Research in Public Administration, though it becomes an interest of the large variety of visiting experts who make a quick study to understand the administrative apparatus, is still inadequate. Neither the Ministry of Public Administration nor the Academy of Administrative Studies has shown any interest in research in this field. **The Academy of Administrative Studies, in particular, has displayed an attachment to techniques and methods which are currently employed in Cybernetics and computer-oriented administrative systems of the highly advanced industrialised societies.** The management and training institutions associated with Government Departments have not exerted efforts to promote research in this field. **Now an Institute of Development Administration has been set up with foreign collaboration to promote re-**

**search, and the bureaucrats, who seem to find enjoyment proliferating institutions, give their blessings to these structures even if they are dysfunctional in the long run.** It is in this background that Dr. Leitan has made an attempt to examine the nature of local government institutions in the context of the decentralized—or over-decentralized—system of administration in Sri Lanka. Her study is not exclusively an examination of the local government institutions; the importance of this study lies in its relationship to the total pattern of decentralized administration and it is this aspect, in my view, which deserves analysis and comment.

District Administration, in the course of its history from the very inception of Collectorates and Agents of Revenue in the early British period, underwent a series of changes, some of which accelerated in the three decades after independence, culminated in **the arrival of a politico-administrative structure.** 'The consciously felt need for rapid economic development' (p. 40) has been the primary factor in the evolution of this district administrative structure, the leadership of which now resides with a politician. The parallel departmentalism and the growth of Department-sponsored quasigovernmental institutions of Rural Development Societies type, interfered with the overall supervisory function of the Government Agent, and the Kachcheris, though it remained the focal point in the District administrative apparatus, experienced an erosion of its functions. The entry of the politician—the Members of Parliament—into the district decision-making process began with their formal participation in the District Coordinating Committee of the early

fifties, and this body, though it gave the parliamentarian the opportunity to decide priorities and solve problems relating to coordination in close association with the respective heads of Departments at the district level, established no effective control over the district bureaucracy. The need to organise and expedite the food production programme and the general emphasis on an accelerated programme of agricultural development brought into existence the District Political Authority (DPA) in September, 1973 and this represented a unique innovation in the district administration of the island. The DPA, with its integral relationship to the decentralized budget and with its direct responsibility to the Prime Minister's Coordinating Secretariat, gave birth to a new form of administrative leadership resulting in minimising the leadership role of the Government Agent. The DPA's direct relationship with the PM's Coordinating Secretariat immediately weakened the role of the Ministry of Home Affairs, which, from the days of the Donoughmore Constitution, maintained a hold over the district administrative apparatus. The changes introduced by the present Government in the area of district administration, including the appointment of District Ministers, have more or less completed the process and the present Ministry of Home Affairs is a misnomer and anachronism.

The innovation of the District Ministry System, with its integral relationship to the Kachcheri system of district administration, has created a situation in which **the district machinery is now directly controlled by the President.** The Prime Minister has been going round activating the District Ministers and having conferences in Kachcheris, and



this again has been done by-passing the Ministry of Home Affairs which traditionally, held the function of supervising the Kachcheri administration. The Ministry of Home Affairs has now been reduced to a single Department—Registrar General's Department, Administration Branch, Accounts Branch and the Record Room of the Kachcheris are the only sections which have some relationship with the Ministry of Home Affairs while the remaining functions are handled by the branches of the respective Departments. The functions of the Kachcheris, except in the cases cited above, are those relating to Ministries other than the Home Ministry. The establishment of the Ministry of Plan Implementation with its respective Planning Units in the Kachcheris reinforces this argument that the Kachcheri is no more a coherent unit. The recent shift in development planning mechanisms from central planning to regional planning and the controlling of regional development programmes has added a new dimension into the area of district administration.

The local government institutions, which played a vital role in the political development of the country in the period after 1931, experienced no significant changes in the last two decades. **The need to control these institutions by a Ministerial fiat led to a variety of anomalies, some of which were represented in the Special Commissioner system which the previous regime inaugurated with a view to politically controlling the local bodies:** Though this aspect has not been carefully treated in this work, Dr. Leitan subjects the evolution of the system to a detailed examination in Chapter II (pp. 46-72). It is this Chapter which assists us to discover some relevant references to the proposed changes in the structure of local government institutions, and the Provincial Councils, the establishment of which was proposed by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike as the Minister of Local Administration, have been discussed. This issue

became a controversial one of such magnitude that no Government was able to implement it. **The SLFP, while believing in the so-called Bandaranaike policies, showed no overt commitment to this though its founder was an ardent advocate of the proposal.** Dr. Leitan rightly refers in the same context to the Draft Regional Council Bill of 1957; this was partly based on the famous Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact. The communal tension and Sinhala chauvinism, which took such forms as 'death fasts' and the abortive march to Kandy by a segment of the UNP led by J. R. Jayewardene, resulted in the abrogation of the Pact in May, 1958. **The main source of opposition to the restructuring of the local government institutions came from the UNP and it was the same political party which introduced another bill to establish District Councils on the basis of a similar pact. Again politics of Sinhala chauvinism interfered with this strategy and the move was abandoned. The present Government has now entrusted this task to a Presidential Commission. Does its composition provide any indication that it would devise a scheme of devolution with a view to solving the problems of the Tamil community?**

Dr. Leitan's work, which consists of seven Chapters with a useful epilogue, has three Chapters (Chapters V, VI and VII) which, in my view, are integral to the problems in a decentralized system of administration which retains the basic character of the agent of economic development. Chapter V (pp 127-164) makes an exhaustive examination of the administrative organisation of the Departments which, with every move towards economic and social development, experienced an expansion. Functions, in many a case, have been duplicated and irrational distribution of functions is yet another feature of this organisation which has given birth to a system of departmentalism (p. 129). It is at this level

of the administrative apparatus that institutions and field organisations have been proliferated to such a degree that lines of demarcations could not be easily determined and the other important defect is that local bodies 'are not really associated in any great degree with the district administration'. (p. 137) It is this feature, in my view, which should partly guide the re-delineation of local government areas of the country. Dr. Leitan, in the course of her discussion on the system of departmentalism, does not fail to examine the Departments-sponsored institutional structures which constitute the plethora of village-level bodies. They are both development and welfare-oriented and it forms yet another aspect of the system of departmentalism. No rational criteria has guided the creation of these institutions and some of them are utterly dysfunctional and useless. The functional and areal considerations relating to these institutions have been neglected and Dr. Leitan exposes their weak linkage with a highly bureaucratized administration. The changing role of the Government Agent has been analysed in Chapter VI (pp. 165-201) and its development role—more than the regulatory administrative role—has been emphasised with the sole purpose of focusing on the changes now taking place in the district apparatus. His leadership role in the area of coordination is presently the basic character of this institution and even this aspect has been minimised as a result of the establishment of structures which are expected to maintain a close liaison with the elected member of Parliament. Chapter VI exposes with some clarity the established tendency within the politico-administrative structures of the district. The member of Parliament, generally within the last two decades, got himself inducted into the formal administrative apparatus and this role, though it creates certain amount of resentment within the bureaucracy, has now been accepted. The politicians do not hesitate to show their 'concern' in the

area of recruitment, transfers and promotions, political interference, about which there was lot of opposition a decade or two ago, is now part of the administrative process. In this kind of context, certain formal measures have been taken to socialise the role of the MP into the formal administrative structure and the Job Bank Scheme is one of the best examples. The MP's infamous 'chit system' has been given a legal status through the instrument of the Job Bank which, in my view, was the worst political invention of this decade. No administrative criteria can explain its existence. Dr. Leitan seeks to explain this aspect—the arrival of the politician into the formal scene of the administration—in terms of constituency politics (pp 204–206) This, in my view, is inadequate a formula because the problems within the entire social fabric strengthens his present role as the accepted trouble shooter. No political party opposes this role and its acceptance has, to a certain extent, weakened the entire foundation of parliament-

**ary government.** It is so rooted in the political system that no Government can alter the procedures without making equally important adjustments in the total system. PR scheme of representation has been partly devised to reduce the impact of this role of the MP, and it is very unlikely that this objective will be realised. These characteristics in the island's administrative system, as explained by Dr. Leitan, have created conflict-relationship between the bureaucracy and the politician and the latter's failure to draw a distinction between administration and politics has resulted in a number of dysfunctional consequences. The role of the politician, in all spheres of activity, cannot be justified on the basis of hollow phrases such as popular participation, participatory management etc. Yet another aspect is that the politician's role as a legislator has heavily deteriorated as a result of the overt manifestation of his role as an active participant of the administration.

Dr Leitan, in her work, has not failed to examine the deve-

lopments in the island's administrative structure from the point of view of the mass of theoretical formulations on the subject of decentralization. She has consulted all the available sources on the subject and certain relevant references to systems in other parts of the world have been made with a view to assessing the efficacy of the Sri Lanka system which is fast moving in the direction of a formal administrative organisation with less local government oriented participation. In other words, the democratic base of the local authorities has disappeared to a great extent, resulting in a system akin to a parallel departmental structure. This study of Dr Leitan, therefore, could have been limited to the process of decentralization and this aspect still remains a vital area which deserves examination. Despite such limitations, Dr. Leitan's study is certain to invite the attention of those 'reformers' who are dabbling with this subject of decentralization and 'devolution' with a view to solving an important political problem.

## **SRI LANKA STATE FLOUR MILLING CORPORATION**

### **WHEAT BRAN**

**Wheat bran which is an ideal ingredient for Poultry/Cattle food is available for sale at Rs. 1000/- per metric ton ex-stores Mutwal. Payment to be made in advance to the Commercial Division at the under mentioned address.**

Asst. Commercial Manager,  
No: 7, Station Road,  
COLOMBO - 3.



# Splittism and puritanism

RESEARCH

by J. Uyangoda

Splits have been a common occurrence within the left movement throughout the world, but Sri Lanka has had more than its share. One reason for this seemingly ridiculous feature is the fact that our local left parties most often ideologically, and, sometimes organisationally, are linked to some other party or political centre abroad. This naturally creates a situation where any change or split in the latter finds its reflection in the former. But splits which occurred within the JVP took an altogether different character. As the JVP never had a parent-child relationship with any party in any other country, its splits had no casual linkage with the disputes or splits occurring in such parties.

The first split in the ranks of the JVP took place somewhere in March 1970, with Dharmasekara's expulsion or breakaway. The Wijeweera-Dharmasekara feud is an important area of study, because it sheds light on some of the peculiar aspects of the Lankan radical left at this particular period of time. Firstly, one can gauge the political issues involved in the dispute. Secondly, such an examination will show the particular psychology under which they acted, and reacted to each other, during this phase.

Were there real political issues in the Wijeweera-Dharmasekara quarrel? Podi Athula's book unfortunately gives very little help in finding an answer to this question. Of course, there was a political issue: Revolution? Yes—then, when and how? It was precisely this question that was under dispute. As Podi Athula correctly describes (though presently a Sinophilic Maoist) Dharmasekara's political thinking at that time was basically influenced and shaped by the revolutionary romanticism of the Cuban experience. Though Dharmasekara joined Wijeweera,

he and his group had always attempted to maintain their identity within the JVP. Therefore, it was not unjustified on the part of Wijeweera to have some apprehensions regarding the activities of this particular cluster of the newly converted. According to Podi Athula, Wijeweera defended the expulsion, or to use the significant JVP terminology, the "cutting off", of Dharmasekara, alleging that the latter had planned and prepared to launch an attack on some police stations, in the days of Sinhala New Year of 1970 and to retreat to the Sinharaja forest. If this were the real issues involved in the climax of differences between Wijeweera and Dharmasekara, it again shows that it was not the social dynamics but the technical problems of the Lankan revolution that played a decisive role in the initial bifurcation of the JVP. **At this point, it is relevant to recall that in Russia, all the major splits occurred in the revolutionary movement on issues which were directly related to the fundamental problems of the revolution, such as basic strategic slogans, class alignments etc.**

Secondly, this was the time of the so-called threat of a "counter revolution". Both Wijeweera and Dharmasekara believed that a counter-revolutionary take over of state-power would be imminent on the eve of the 1970 General Elections. And they anticipated that such a move on the part of the ruling classes would be a prelude to the armed struggle — or to the revolution, as they understood it. Now the tension created in the minds of these people by the "threat" of the counter revolution and the anticipation of a resultant revolution was such that it was natural for Wijeweera and Dharmasekara to have suspicions and, at least, reservations about each other's

credibility and capability. On the one hand, Dharmasekara had lost confidence in Wijeweera because he (Dharmasekara) thought that Wijeweera was not prepared to launch the armed struggle at the earliest possible opportunity. On the other hand, Wijeweera was highly suspicious about Dharmasekara, because he believed that the latter would attack some police stations with the aim of destroying the JVP and himself (Wijeweera). It is interesting to recall that both charged and counter-charged each other as 'false-pretenders' to the revolutionary leadership of this country. However these suspicions and reservations may be justified or not, it reveals the extent to which the tension, excitement and momentum that was developing in the psychology of these two personalities and their followers at that particular period.

The second major split, or more accurately, factional struggle in the JVP, began to develop in the latter half of the year-1970. This time the people involved in this quarrel were Wijeweera's closest lieutenants. It is interesting to note that in this second split, **no political, theoretical or tactical issue at all** was involved. The immediate concern was some minor issue regarding so-called "revolutionary ethics". Though it may seem irrational and childish, this antipathy towards love and sex is not something new and strange. When the leadership, cadre and the membership of the movement come mainly from the geographical areas where indigenous traditional culture and values still prevail, the old puritanism filters through the communistic ethics. This is exactly what happened as far as JVP puritanism is concerned.

Having read Podi Athula's exceptionally long and detailed des-

(Continued on Page 28)

# FREE ISSUE OF SCHOOL TEXT BOOKS

The Government has decided to issue School Textbooks free of charge to all students in Government Schools from Kindergarten to Grade 10.

2. It is proposed to begin the distribution of text books on the 16th of January 1980, which will be the date on which schools will-open for the new year.

3. In order to make use of books which are now with School children and book sellers, this Ministry proposes to re-purchase the following books published by the Educational Publications Department at the rates indicated below:—

TEXT	PRICE Rs. Cts.
<b>SINHALA</b>	
Sinhala 1 New Textbook Series of the Ministry of Education	1.50
Sinhala 2 " " " " " " " "	3.00
Sinhala 3 " " " " " " " "	5.00
Sinnala 4 " " " " " " " "	6.00
Sinhala 5 (Book Five) " " " " " "	5.00
Sinhala 6 New Textbook Series of the Ministry of Education	5.00
Sinhala 7 " " " " " " " "	5.75
Sinhala 8 " " " " " " " "	6.00
Sinhala 9 " " " " " " " "	7.50
Ganitha Puhunuwa — Deveni Sreniya	4.00
Ganitha Puhunuwa — Tunveni Sreniya	4.30
Ganitha Puhunuwa — Hatharaveni Sreniya	4.00
Ganitha Puhunuwa — Pasveni Sreniya	4.50
<b>TAMIL</b>	
Tamil 1 New Textbook Series of the Ministry of Education	2.00
Tamil 2 " " " " " " " "	3.00
Tamil 3 " " " " " " " "	5.75
Tamil 4 " " " " " " " "	6.00
Tamil Malar—5 (Book Five)	8.00
Tamil 6 New Textbook Series of the Ministry of Education	5.75
Tamil 7 " " " " " " " "	6.00
Tamil 8 " " " " " " " "	7.00
Tamil 9 " " " " " " " "	6.25

## TEXT

### TAMIL

	PRICE Rs. Cts.
Kanitha Payitsi 2	4.75
Kanitha Payitsi 3	4.50
Kanitha Payitsi 4	5.00
Kanitha Payitsi 5	7.00

### ENGLISH

	PRICE
English Step One	2.75
English Step Two	3.25
English Step Three	3.75
An English Course for Grade Six	4.50
An English Course for Grade Seven	6.50
An English Course for Grade Eight	5.00
A New English Course for Grade Nine	6.00
An English Course for Grade Ten	5.50

4. In the purchasing of books no distinction will be made between new and second-hand books. However books that have been defaced or books that do not have the full number of printed pages, will not be re-purchased.

5. All Regional Directors, Chief Education Officers, Circuit Education Officers and Principals of Schools have been authorised to re-purchase the above mentioned books at the rates indicated in this Notice.

6. Further details regarding the distribution of books will be announced by this Ministry through the Radio and Press from time to time.

7. Instructions have already been issued to Regional Directors regarding the manner in which books should be distributed in Schools in their Regions. All Circuit Education Officers and School Principals are requested to contact the Regional Director/Chief Education Officer, in case instructions regarding purchase of books have not yet been conveyed to them.

**Sarath Amunugama,**  
Secretary,  
Ministry of Education Services.

26th November, 1979.



# Of scripture and prophets

AS I  
LIKE IT

Touchstone

Chintaka replying (LG, Nov 15) to my comments on argument by quotation, says this is necessary when discussing a question like 'What is the correct Marxist-Leninist position on ...?'

This was precisely the view I was arguing against. For me, advocating X as 'the correct Marxist-Leninist positions' on Y involves demonstrating that X is consistent with or leads to the goal of socialist revolution. For Chintaka, it involves showing that X is in keeping with the teachings of the prophets.

Since some of Chintaka's prophets are anathematised by other Marxists, this approach usually leads to disputes as tiresome and sterile as the theological battles between rival sects of Christians about which of them represents the true Church.

As far as I am concerned, an argument about what is 'the correct Marxist-Leninist position' on some question is not one to be settled by appeal to any authority — not even Lenin's. After all, there have been great Marxists (e.g. Rosa Luxemburg) who have disagreed with Lenin on several matters. It so happens that I think Lenin was right on most of them, but I would still regard this as something to be established by argument, not assumed by an act of faith in Lenin's infallibility.

I regard Marxism as simply the most useful tool of social analysis that has been evolved, and I believe we should be able to apply it in the light of our reason and our understanding of the world and society. We can certainly take lessons from the great Marxists in the methods of using this tool, but to go to them for ready-made answers seems to me inconsistent with the proper critical and creative spirit of Marxism itself.

To treat one or the other Marxist movement as the sole repository of unquestionable truth (as Chintaka and many others of

various Marxist persuasions do) is to turn Marxism into a religion, complete with orthodoxies and heresies, dogmas and anathemas, saints and devils — and this is, of course, one of the depressing features of many Marxist movements the world over.

But another result, which is characteristic especially of Sri Lanka Marxism, is that we have imposed on us Leninist, Trotskyist, Stalinist, Maoist and Guevarist models of theory and practice which weren't derived from an analysis of the particular relations of production and class structure of Sri Lankan society. Chintaka's belief that one can determine what is 'the correct Marxist-Leninist position' on any question by looking up in the sacred books what Lenin said in 1917 or Stalin said in 1924 is symptomatic. It was Lenin himself who on a celebrated occasion quoted Heine, 'Theory is grey, my friend; the tree of life is always green.'

## Black and white

What was said in my last column about the social attitudes promoted by children's fiction has a bearing on *Handaya*, the Sinhala film released for IYC. The bad guys are dark-skinned and look, behave and talk like authentic slum kids; the good guys are fair-skinned and look, behave and talk like well brought-up middle-class children (although they live in a shanty with a drunkard father), and they have a white man and his small son to befriend them.

I think it also rather unfortunate that in a children's film a midget with deformed legs should be cast as a villain because it creates undesirable attitudes towards physical abnormalities in the minds of children. And must we bring to children too that stereotype figure of the Sinhala screen — the Muslim who talks Sinhala with an exaggeratedly comic accent (I have yet to see a Sinhala film with a Muslim character treated otherwise.)?

Those who saw the children's films screened earlier this year by two visitors from the British Children's Film Foundation will remember how carefully these films avoided anything likely to create class or racial prejudices, or combat such prejudices without becoming didactic and without sacrificing anything in story interests, excitement or humour. If we are going to make children's films regularly (and Titus Thotawatte must be commended at least for making a start), we must be watchful about the social images and attitudes they create or reinforce in children's minds.

## Solution

Here is the solution to the palindrome problem in the last column:

In answer to Adam's introduction of himself, 'Madam, I'm Adam,' Eve simply bowed and said, 'Eve.'

## Cannibalism — White & Black

In the article by V. P. Vittachi on the above subject para 2 in column one should have read;

"Now, although neither Idi Amin nor Bokassa can be said to adorn the image of the African race, and no doubt between them killed off thousands of innocent human beings, they certainly did not achieve the levels of flagitiousness of a Hitler and Stalin who counted their victims not in thousands but in millions. But Hitler was white. Despite well-documented evidence no one believes that a white can be cannibal whereas in the case of a black all you have to do is show an unusual degree of wickedness in him for everybody to be ready to believe he is cannibalistic. However hated and reviled Hitler and Stalin were in their day (except by the true-believers) no one ever thought of accusing them of cannibalism."

(— Ed.)

# Lenin - Stalin disagreements

by Chintaka

"I MUST SAY that I write without adherence to any cult—Stalinist, Trotskyist or any other." This statement of Mr. Reggie Siriwardena is most heartening.

My interpretation of Lenin's disagreements with Stalin have an unimpeachably anti-Stalinist source of confirmation:—Georgi Piatakov. Piatakov, as Mr. Siriwardena doubtless is aware, was a Bolshevik leader once closely associated with Bukharin. He was also a leading personality of a 'leftist' faction (headed by Trotsky) which included Radek, Serebriakov, Krestinsky, Ioffe and Rakovsky. This 'Left' faction finally encompassed 75 leading Bolsheviks, who were later expelled from the party. (Piatakov was of course executed in 1937 after having been convicted for treason.) In 1928, Piatakov was appointed Soviet trade representative in Paris. Here he had long conversations with N. Valentinov, who in 1904, was a constant companion of Lenin in Geneva, prior to joining the Mensheviks. (After the Revolution, Valentinov returned to Russia, worked in the early 1920's for the Soviet government, then went abroad and spent the rest of his long life as an emigre). Valentinov published an account of his 1928 discussions with Piatakov in an article which Mr. Siriwardena could profitably peruse in the original Russian. ("Sut' bol'shevizm v izobrazhenii lu. Piatakova"—Novy Zhurnal, No 52, 1951).

Piatakov admitted that he himself and many others of the Bolshevik Politburo, considered

Lenin's last articles 'unfortunate'. They were written, he said, under the influence of Lenin's depressing final sickness. No one who knew him well could take their contents to represent his real views. His authentic outlook had found expression only in one of the last articles: "Our Revolution."

This view of Piatakov, fully corroborates the interpretation I offered. Stalin's body may lie a-mouldering in the grave beneath the Kremlin wall (not quite where

Krushchchev consigned it), but his face is back on the Soviet calendar and screen, his portrait continues to adorn Peking's Tien An Mien Square, his statue remains in Albania and Mongolia, while his name is present in the writings and speeches of Vietnam's leaders. My view that Stalin's errors were far outweighed by his positive historical achievement, is in accordance with the views of all revolutionary leaders from Castro and Che, to Hoxha, Mao, Ho Chi Minh and Le Duan.

## Splittism . . .

(Continued from Page 25)

cription of the incidents of romance and betrayals, the reader might ask himself; How did such a big crisis occur on such a trivial matter? The explanation implied by Podi Athula may be as follows: This ultra-puritanism, though it seems trivial to the outsiders, had a tremendous bearing upon the collective psychology of the JVP, and that, therefore, the violation of 'holy principles' by the leader himself had been an unbearable and unexpected shock to the ordinary members as well as to the second-rank leadership. **Yet, there is another aspect of the problem to which no one seems to have given thought so far.** When we set this second factional struggle, centred on puritanism, against the actual chronological setting of the metamorphosis of the movement, we can see that some kind of crisis within the movement was inevitable and logical at this particular juncture. The movement began in 1967 as an underground movement and till the early part of 1970 it remained so. All the leaders, cadres, and members had been trained and accustomed to work essentially in a clandestine manner. In March 1970, Wijeweera, is taken in to custody, and the movement begins to work openly, at least, to a limited extent. From

July 1970, it officially begins to function 'above ground'. Now the developments in the transitional period between two phases—clandestine and open political activities—and the first few months of the second phase, might have had a crucial effect on the minds of the JVPers. Accustomed to the dark veil of secrecy, now they are exposed to the fresh winds of open politics. The JVP as a movement, and its members as individuals, had to adapt to the new situation. It is not unsafe to assume that some should have been able to adapt and some not. As for Wijeweera, beginning at the Vid-yodaya University in the evening of the 14th July, 1970, the new role as the movement's foremost public speaker was very much an easy going one. But his lieutenants, such as Sanath, Karunathne and Loku Athula, were faced with a new dilemma. According to division of labour decided upon, their activities were still to remain underground, although the movement now goes open. They might not have been able to adjust themselves to this new dual role of the movement. It was precisely this maladjustment that began to be expressed as a dissatisfaction towards Wijeweera. In a situation where the persons involved were not capable of posing their challenge politically or theoretically, it was the question of "revolutionary ethics" that became the vehicle of discontent.



# PIONEERS

...in ALKYD RESINS

**CEYLON RESINOPLASTICS LTD.,**

64, Ananda Coomaraswamy Mawatha,  
COLOMBO - 7.

Phone: 28673.



Cables : TWOSEVENS CBO.  
 Telex : 1160 TWOSEVENS CBO.  
 Phone : 26181  
 Regd. Off : BOX 330  
 323, UNION PLACE,  
 COLOMBO 2,  
 SRI LANKA CEYLON.

**Trustees:**

Cyril Gardiner  
 Mrs. Mavis Gardiner  
 Mrs. Anne Aloysius  
 Mrs. Mangalam St. George  
 Joseph A. Aloysius  
 Dr. Dennis Aloysius  
 Dr. Hubert Aloysius  
 Peter Aloysius  
 Rs. 656,863.00

---

Donations upto 7-7-79.

President's Cyclone Fund 125,000.00

---

St. Joseph's College 171,993.00

---

Ananda College 50,000.00

---

St. Peter's College 5,000.00

---

All Saints' St. Jude's Fatima 8 x 10,630 31,890.00

---

St. Anthony's Christ Church Jiffry Mowlana Trust London Vihare Ramakrishna Mission 5 x 5000 25,000.00

---

Mahila Samithi 58,535.00

---

Child & Youth Welfare 55,290.00

---

Prithipura 22,915.00

---

Leprosy 17,929.00

---

Blind 17,902.00

---

Cancer 17,742.00

---

CNAPT 17,700.00

---

Children's Conval. 15,975.00

---

Crippled Children 10,000.00

---

Retarded Children 5,000.00

---

Human Rights Fund 5000.00

---

Miscellaneous 3,992.00

---

Rs. 656,863.00

---

Rs. 100,000.00 1.1.80

---

Rs. 756,863.00

*Charitable Fund of Rs. 100,000 to help the poorest of the poor.  
 To be inaugurated on the 1st Poya Day in the 80's Tue. 1.1.80.*

**1. FOUR OBJECTIVES**

- A. To assist 100 of the poorest of the poor to help themselves.
- B. To provide employment for 100 persons.
- C. To minimise the evils of Tobacco, Alcohol and gambling, thereby improving mental, physical, spiritual and economic health of 100 young persons.
- D. To perpetuate religious harmony

**2. Rs. 100,000**

Rs. 100,000 will be invested for 100 families chosen from the vicinity of the Galle Face Hotel and the Autodrome.

**3. MAJOR RELIGIONS**

The families will be chosen by the major religions given below in alphabetical order; Buddhism (YMBA Col. 8), Catholicism (Holy Rosary Church Col. 2), Christianity (Christ Church Col. 3), Hinduism (Ramakrishna Mission Col. 6), Islam (Jiffry Mowlana Trust Col. 12), to whom applications should be addressed.

**4. INVESTMENTS**

Rs. 100,000 would be invested in the National Savings Bank or any other institution acceptable to each institution. The annual income from the Fund which should be between Rs. 18,000 and Rs. 24,000 will be used exclusively to assist 100 of the poorest of the poor.

**5. YEARS OF BIRTH**

Applications should be made to these institutions and 20 families will be chosen by each of 5 institutions, making 100 of the poorest of the poor, of which four (making 20) should be born in one of the five years 1967 — 71.

**6. NO ALCOHOL, TOBACCO OR GAMBLING**

The families chosen must not permit alcohol, smoking or gambling in their homes.

**7. EMPLOYMENT**

Preference will be given to these 100 children when choosing employees for the GFH and Autodrome, provided they are total abstainers from alcohol and tobacco and don't gamble and are physically fit, adequately educated and acceptable in regard to character.

Giving does not make you poorer  
 Not giving does not make you richer.

What we gave, we have:  
 What we spent, we had:  
 What we left, we lost:

**SUPPORT CHARITIES ● GROW FOOD ● CONSERVE WATER ● STOP SMOKING  
 ● AVOID ALCOHOLISM ● KEEP FIT ● DON'T GAMBLE.**