

LANKA

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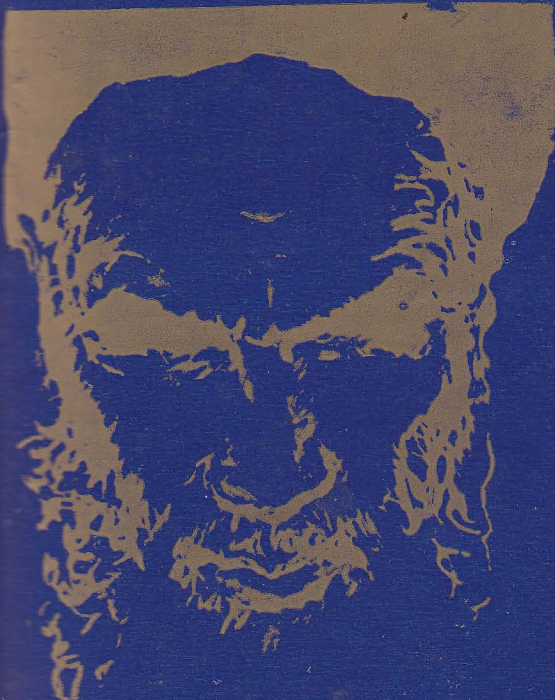
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IN



THE SEVENTIES

*(Lankan perspectives)*



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- Maj. Gen. Anton Muttukumaru
- Bertie Gajameragedera
- N. Sanmugathanan
- Upali Cooray
- Mervyn de Silva
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## Indira's long shadow

Right through last week, the major embassies in Colombo as well as representatives of the international media had one question uppermost in mind—how will Indira Gandhi's victory influence political trends in Sri Lanka?

Since pre-independence times Indian politics has had a direct bearing on developments here but few observers will care to deny the close parallelism which emerged in the Indira-Sirima years. Indira Gandhi ("Save India, Call Indira") made the cover on our December 1st issue which also had as its main local story "Waiting for Mrs. G.", with a picture of Mrs. B. In a pathetically painful effort to deny this long-established connection "Sunday Observer" columnist made some incoherent noises about Kachachativu blithely ignorant of (or indifferent to) the simple fact that it was the UNP's election propaganda which made Indira-Sirima, Sanjay-Anura identification complete.

Now from Washington to Peking, Cairo to Tokyo, Sri Lanka watchers want to know whether Indira's victory will affect Sirima's political fortunes.

## Not-so okay Silva

When the court ruled in favour of Dahan's election petition, Mr. Albert Silva's problems started. Nomination or no nomination? The answer was 'No'. But then his luck was in. There was a vacancy at Kamburupitiya. Thanks to our highly advanced constitution he could be an MP once more, without all the inconvenience of a by-election.

Then the troubles start again. The police have to step in when Kamburupitiya's citizens (UNP supporters, presumably) welcome their new MP!

## Lake House exodus

While tycoon Upali Wijewardena's newspaper has yet to see the light of day, Cousin Ranjit, the ex-ANCL boss, will launch a three-pronged attack on the big combines with Sinhala weeklies—for women, children and a family audience.

The secret of D.R.'s success, the biographers have it, was circulation. An exodus of Ranjit loyalists from Lake House brought bad news to the Lake House management. All of them were top executives—a "Dinamina" editor, the Circulation chief etc.

Meanwhile there's trouble brewing in the non-native quarter too. A comment by Saddler, top CDN columnist, on Tony Blunt, the Cambridge don who is a self-confessed Russian spy, had several references to Sri Lankan communists who studied at Cambridge. The names mentioned included Keuneman, Kandiah and Vaidyalingam, all top CP members.

'Saddler' was quoted by the 'South China Morning Post', Hong Kong, in an AFP despatch from Colombo. But another Hong Kong journal ASIaweek pooh-poohed the Saddler comment. Both the AFP's Colombo correspondent and Asiaweek's man are Lake House journalists.

In other internal developments, the 145 year old 'Observer' has gone tabloid and the 'Janata' is being taken over by the Editor of the Silumina.

## Prof. Wilson on Tamil Consciousness

It is not often that one finds a Professor of Political Science making a committed contribution on a contemporary political question of controversial nature. As Anthony H. Birch, another Canadian Professor of Political Science, says, "It is not necessary for scholars, as distinct from policy makers, to commit themselves to a normative position about ethnic loyalties and the resurgence of minority nationalist movements." But on the question of the problem of the Tamil national minorities of the country, Prof. Wilson is not just another political scientist, but the son-in-law of the "father of Tamil Nationalism and the progenitor of Tamil Nationhood", to quote Wilson's own words. Wilson's remarks carry even greater significance, in view of the leading role—the Tamil intelligentsia was so made

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to believe—that he supposedly played in the functions of the Presidential Commission formulating possible solutions to the National question.

Naturally, a ray of hope or a sign of sanguinity would have been expected to emanate from the son-in-law of S. J. V. Chelvanayakam, in the Jaffna Central College Hall. Nothing came out, that could make anybody hopeful or sanguine about an imminent settlement through some form of decentralisation on lines recommended by the Presidential Commission. In his prize-day address, Wilson has stated what should have been conditions precedent to the whole exercise, as necessary conditions for the success or survival of the outcome of the same as exercise. No *carte-blanche*, either, from him, to those Northern MPs in obvious hurry to bury the Eelam hatchet and qualify for Dharmista bliss. But only a grim warning: the present parliamentary leadership would be "swept away in a storm and replaced by an extreme leadership which means business", if the former concedes to anything that would not be "tangible and substantial in exchange" for the Eelam demand. What one is tempted, to add here is that already concessions have been made in the form of sheer inaction by the Tamil political leadership to what has been experienced by the Tamils, particularly, in Jaffna, in the latter half of 1979. One is also inclined to say that in deliberately avoiding the task of making any positive recommendations, Wilson has dispelled 'the illusion', that he had helped to create in the minds, at least of the Tamil people, about the possible outcome of a solution from the findings of the Presidential Commission.

Finally, notwithstanding Wilson's manifest standpoint, slant, the inward looking approach, the gloomy-predictive tone and the not too savoury federal flavour, one cannot but agree with Wilson, however much one might

wish that he is wrong, when he says 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 by 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 Sinhala army of occupation in their midst. Take these all away, and I would still doubt that Tamil nationalism will ever be stilled."

Colombo 6. R. T. Nayagam.

### Tamil Awakening

It is very refreshing to read the reproduction of the speech delivered by Dr. A. J. Wilson at the Jaffna Central College in the December, 15th issue of the L. G. I say it is refreshing after following the abstract polemics of the other writers.

Those were somewhat akin to religious preachings in Pali, Latin and Arabic, I would say, without much concern as to whether it is being understood by the people, or for that matter, by the priest himself!

Professor Wilson says that the Tamils had fallen into a state of deprivation due to the elitist power combination based on Goigama, Karawa and Wellala or Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim. He states that the Sinhalese Goigama mislead the Tamils who were magnanimous and generous. I would say generally all these communities as a whole had been neglected by the elite of those blocs. The Tamils acutely became conscious of it when they started losing the privileges they had in Government white-collar jobs which was the main source of income of the middle class strata of their society. If you look at it from that point of view, I would say, that it was not only Tamils but generally all the communities other than

the members of the urban bourgeoisie who were English educated and had facilities more than their brothers.

I respectfully say that this was due more or less to the lopsided economic framework of this elitist power bloc, whose thoughts were 'power wise' and not 'country wise'. It was money and business and productivity. They fed the limbs forgot the other parts. The consequences are felt now in our society.

I also disagree with the learned Doctor on his opinion that the Muslims have a greater affinity to Tamil culture and the Tamil language than to Sinhala culture and language. I would say apart from present day politics, culturally, historically and ethnologically it would be totally incorrect.

Finally I wish to express my appreciation of Dr. Wilson's speech over the other aspects of the Tamil problem. Especially his genuine effort in trying to understand the problem as a true scholar dedicated to finding a solution, instead of making a flashy, attractive political speech to please his brethren as most do now a days.

Sudarma Dhanapala.  
Kandy.

### Bad habits

Patrick Jayasuriya should, consult Aruni Proops of the Sunday Observer who will assure him that masturbation is good for him and not a bad habit at all. What is a bad habit is that he should write fibs about people. I have availed myself of the courtesy of your columns for "intellectual" (if P J will so have it) exchanges but not with my "buddies"; nor can the exchanges fairly be called literary or even "pseudo-literary" either in content or in style.

Kollupitiya. Costain de Vos

The letter "Too Scholastic" appearing in L. G. Vol. 2 No. 17 was written by Mr. R. S. Perinbanayagam.



## Scholars explore and explode myths

Discussion of ethnic or nationality problems in Sri Lanka—particularly the relationships between the Sinhala and Tamil communities—has been often charged with great emotional fervour, but seldom have these issues been looked at in the context of a correct interpretation and analysis of the country's historical background. The seminar organised by the Social Scientists Association on "Nationality problems in Sri Lanka" held recently was therefore path-breaking and of enormous significance. It was the first time that a group of scholars had gathered together to discuss and analyse the background to the country's ethnic conflicts.

The papers presented at the seminar fell into two groups: those dealing with the growth of Sinhala and Tamil identity consciousness during the pre-colonial period and those concerned with the impact of developments during the colonial period.

Dealing with the peopling of Sri Lanka, Dr. Senake Bandaranayake showed how the island had been peopled by various groups of migrants at various times and the resulting amalgam had coalesced into a homogeneous society and that this process had been associated with the growth of a centralised state. Challenging the Vijayan and Aryan myths, he pointed out that priority in chronological time could not be construed as conferring any claims to priority by any particular group.

Dr. Susantha Goonatilake, basing his paper on recent archaeological findings and on a reinterpretation of chronicle material demonstrated that Sri Lanka and South India had shared, in the prehistoric period, a common economic structure and technological base, with settled agriculture dependent on irrigation; however at a certain stage, this society had adopted a language and religion derived from North India. To him, this was one of the central contradictions of early Sri Lankan history. He also emphasised the crucial

role that Buddhism had played in legitimising the systems of rule.

Professor Leslie Gunawardena traced the growth of a 'Sinhala' consciousness. He showed that during the early stages, the word 'Sinhala' had been applied only to the king and the king group; this identity had even been held from all the other retainers and followers. Later the scope of those embraced in the concept 'Sinhala' had been widened, mainly in order to cement their adherence and loyalty to the royal family. The whole process was associated with the growth of feudal kingdoms and principalities in Sri Lanka. He also demonstrated that the numerous wars fought between rulers of principalities and kingdoms in the island between themselves or with the kings and rulers of neighbouring South Indian kingdoms could not be regarded as arising from ethnic or religious conflicts. They were struggles for power between feudal kingdoms, such kingdoms often embracing people of various ethnic groups and religions. The wars between Dutugemunu and Elara have necessarily to be seen in this light: Dutugemunu had to overcome 32 other kings before he found himself sufficiently strong to challenge Elara, whose armies contained many Sinhala people and one of whose chief generals was indeed a Sinhalese. This paper also analysed the Aryan myth, its origin and the way it was used in various periods, up to the present.

The Dutugemunu-Elara conflicts was elaborated by Dr. W. I. Siriweera who dealt with the historiography of this particular episode. The Dipavamsa, our earliest chronicle, had not even referred to Elara as a Tamil or a Chola and had spoken in the highest terms of his sense of justice. It described Elara as calling on Buddhist monks for advice and repairing inadvertent damage to Buddhist monuments. The Mahavamsa, written about 400 A. D. had different emphasis: even though mentioning Elara's claims as a just king, the episode is now magnified to epic

proportions—as war fought to establish Sinhala Buddhist dominance over a Tamil Hindu usurper. The Pujavaliya, written in the twelfth century distorts the picture further: Elara is here a cruel ruler, oppressing the Sinhalese and indulging in anti Buddhist activities who was justly killed by a ruler striving to reestablish the Buddha sasana in all its glory. Dr. Siriweera made the point that historians of each epoch tend to project their own feelings and situations on their interpretation of past events and said that many contemporary historians and particular text books base their interpretations on the Mahavamsa — Pujavaliya tradition.

There was general agreement that the present chauvinism among the Sinhalese and Tamils could not derive from our historical background; a correct understanding of our history would deny any legitimacy to claims of superiority or chronological priority of any particular groups to control or ownership of this island. Concepts such as the Aryan descent of the Sinhala people through Vijaya had no historical basis and in fact myths elaborated at subsequent periods of history to legitimise the claims of particular groups. It was evident that the causes of present conflicts must be sought in correct circumstances and that the Sinhala or Tamil historic consciousness which is invoked to fuel this conflict has been distorted.

The second session dealt with the colonial period. Dr. K. Sivathamby examined the social formation of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. He discussed the widely-disparate economic structures of the Tamils in Jaffna, in Batticaloa and in Mannar and the Vavuniya areas and the consequent differences in their social organisation and legal forms. Despite these differences, he traced the manner in which these different groups had been

drawn together and had indeed developed an identifiable Tamilian consciousness as a response to Sinhala chauvinism.

The development of such a Tamilian consciousness during the 19th and 20th centuries was the special subject of a paper presented by Dr. K. Kailasapathy. He analysed the various factors that had gone into its fashioning, including the development of the Dravida movement in South India and its impact on Tamil-speaking people in Sri Lanka. He also described the various manifestations of this consciousness in cultural and art forms.

The development of a Tamil consciousness was strong enough to draw into its fold, even for a short-time, the plantation Tamil community. However, the tremendous economic differences had earlier kept them apart and are doing so now. The special problems that face the plantation Tamils and the development among them of a consciousness of an identity separate from other Tamil-speaking peoples in Sri Lanka was the subject of a paper by Dr. P. Devaraj. A consideration of the contents of this paper appeared to cast strong doubts on the success of present attempts to integrate the plantation and village communities.

A paper by Dr. Kumari Jayawardena traced the growth of capitalism in Sri Lanka and showed how the absence of a strong national bourgeoisie with anti-imperialist contradictions distorted the nationalist movement which remained incipient and did not develop into a fully fledged nationalist struggle that would have united all ethnic groups. The paper also demonstrated that the Sinhala petty-bourgeoisie, lacking broad opportunities for economic advancement through trade because of the dominance of British and Indian merchant capital in these areas, were quick to divert their antagonism towards Indian and other local ethnic groups. This attitude was backed by a certain degree of religious and cultural revivalism (financed by the Sinhala

## TV and 'The dangerous woman'

"This is not a case of pillar to post but SLBC pillar to post office" said a former Permanent Secretary as he walked out of a queue at the SLBC minus the TV licence he had come there to obtain. The radio keeps making threatening announcements of the dire penalties which TV owners will suffer if they do not obtain their licences. But where do you get them? After many fruitless hours in queues at two post offices, several hundred owners of TV sets joined a queue at the SLBC.

With the lunch break, the counter was closed and the queue vanished. A new queue formed itself in the hot afternoon sun. By about 4 p. m. the counter clerk announced the sad news that he had run out of forms! When would new forms be available? The SLBC

would send for them next day—if transport was available!

But lavish self-praise marked the speech of the Minister of State (Information) when he spoke about the mass media in the budget debate. Sri Lanka TV will NOT follow the BBC, the Indian or any other network but produce its own programmes, he said. Another senior minister expressed contrary thoughts. His grandchild was so glued to the TV that she wanted to be a "Bionic Woman" he complained.

"Soon the government will put on its own show, genuinely Sri Lankan of course... it will be called BAYANAKE GENI... Dangerous Woman" wisecracked an SLFP journalist, adding "of course naturally, it won't be exported to India For domestic consumption, only!"

## Emergency ends

The Civil Rights Movement has welcomed the end of emergency rule in Jaffna district and the Katunayake area. The CRM says that it is gratifying to note that the Public Security Ordinance is no longer in operation in any part of the island. This state of affairs, it hopes, will continue not merely throughout the new year but the whole decade.

Emphasising once more that the emergency in force was "far more drastic than any needs of security could justify" the CRM notes that it provided for the

merchants) harking back to past glories, the Aryan myth and to the 'Sinhala-dipa' and 'dhammadipa' concepts.

The constitutional manipulations of the British rulers exploited these divisive tendencies and this aspect formed the subject matter of Susil Siriwardena's paper. He traced the various stages of constitutional development during British rule which tended to strengthen ethnic differences and he stressed the underdeveloped

death penalty for even trivial offences, reproducing the same regulation introduced by the previous government just after the 1971 insurrection.

The CRM also observed that despite the end of the emergency two laws which contain many features of Emergency rule are operative throughout the country—the **Prevention of Terrorism Act** (valid for 3 years) and the **Proscription of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and other similar organisations Law** extended in mid-1979 for a further year.

state of nationalist ideology in colonial Sri Lanka. Neil Kuruppu in his paper on Communalism and the labour movement referred to the absence of a proletarian ideology and a strong class-consciousness in the early years of the movement and the tendency of the workers to lapse into communalism during periods of economic crisis. He also referred to the failure of the Left parties to overcome the chauvinistic tendencies of the Sinhala bourgeois and petty-bourgeois classes.



# Indira's dramatic return

by Hector Abhayavardhana

The Congress (Indra) has almost won a two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha. What few people expected and many feared has taken place. Overwhelming power has once more been concentrated in the hands of a single political party at the centre without the possibility of any constitutional check on its use and abuse. The Janatha Party and its allies did not have a two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha and were in a minority in the Rajya Sabha, the upper House. Under Mrs. Gandhi's father, Jawaharlal Nehru, the Congress Party had won a two-thirds majority in both Houses in the parliamentary elections of 1952 and 1957. The Indira wave of 1971 had won her 350 seats, a little short of the coveted two-thirds majority. There are certain to be desertions from Janatha, Congress (U) and even the Lok Dal, that will enable her to make it eventually.

The overwhelming nature of the Congress (I) victory has already been hailed as a solution to the political crisis that has been so particularly obvious in India ever since 1975. But the violence of the swing that has taken place is itself a demonstrative indication of the grave instability that persists. The 1977 swing to the Janatha Party was only somewhat less violent. It was a reaction to the dictatorship that Indira Gandhi and her coterie in the Congress Party clamped on the country, even behind the back of her own Cabinet. Now the reaction against that swing to Janatha has placed even greater dictatorial authority in the Congress (I), without any need to resort to a proclamation of "emergency". What makes it more serious is that unlike the Congress organisation that was the riddled with dissensions in 1975, the Congress (I) is a new formation, consolidated on the simple principle of total loyalty to its sole leader, Indira

Gandhi. Any challenge to her authority can only emanate from the scarcely political direction of her controversial son.

There is only one path along which Mrs. Gandhi can seek to provide a solution to the political crisis in India. In our commentary in this journal of January 1st, 1980, we mentioned that it was a new Indira Gandhi, emancipated of her previously convenient



Mrs. Indira Gandhi

Leftist disguise, that now occupies the political stage. The iron lady has already announced that one of her highest priorities will be the imposition of "law and order". It is unnecessary to blame her for this. Janata unleashed so much caste-ist and communal terror in the villages of the North that the poor and the oppressed longed for some reliable paternalistic authority. Indian newspaper reports depose that the Janatha Party's Rajput leader, Satyanarain Sinha, arrived at election meetings in Bihar escorted by elements of his Rajput mafia carrying Bren and Sten guns since he did not trust the police, who were also invariably present. The Congress (I) Government that takes office will make this kind of bravado no longer necessary.

The election results make it clear that the Rajputs and Bhumiars and Thakurs of Northern India let the Janata Party down badly. Janata depended a lot on the Rajput chieftains it paraded in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, Chandrashekar (its President), Dinesh Singh (Indira's former Deputy

Foreign Minister), Satyanarain Sinha and others. The indications are that the Jats stood solidly by Charan Singh and his Lok Dal in Haryana, and U.P., though the other "backward classes" the Kurmis, Ahirs, and Koeris appear to have been overcome by their rivalries with the Jats. No reliable figures are as yet available about the intensity and break-up of the polling. Newspaper reports state that polling averaged about 50% in the country. As a whole; that there was less interest in voting among women than in 1977; that polling was higher in the Southern States than in the North, with the exception of about 65% in West Bengal; and that in U.P. it was as low as 40% and in Bihar 35-40%. It would not be wrong to infer from this that large sections of the poor and oppressed did not come to the polls in the North. Not only Brahmins and Baniyas, but Rajputs and Thakurs and Bhumiars rallied to the standard of Mrs. Gandhi. The Harijanas did not have confidence in Jagjivan Ram's ability to do anything for them through the Janata Party.

It is noteworthy that the Southern States, with the exception of Kerala, have remained as solidly with Mrs. Gandhi as in 1977. It is plain that they saw no need to revise the suspicion that they had about Janata as a party of the rural rich in the Hindi areas—except to confirm it. The Janata Cabinet had only one Minister, P. Ramchandran of Tamil Nadu, from the South in the entire Cabinet; and even he was reduced to doodling on the Cabinet papers before him, while his colleagues dragged out their discussions in a language that he did not understand. With her sophistication and cosmopolitanism, Mrs. Gandhi commands the confidence of Southerners in a way which no other living North Indian leader can approximate. But this

only emphasises the sharpness of the antagonism between North and South in India. Mrs. Gandhi serves as a mediator between the Hindi and non-Hindi linguistic regions without transcending the antagonism itself. The problem is not merely linguistic, but one of relations between constituent States and between these States and the Centre. This is one of those basic problems that cannot be solved by resort to authoritarian rule.

In Kerala, Mrs. Gandhi's Rightward turn and break with the Communist Party (CPI) has lost her the dominant position she enjoyed in 1977. The CPM-CPI led Left Democratic Front has won a clear majority of the Lok Sabha seats. This is likely to be clarified further at the State Assembly elections to be held on 21st January. But where she has met her Waterloo is in West Bengal. The CPM-led United Left Front has, it would seem, made a clean sweep of the Lok Sabha representation at these elections, leaving a mere 3 or 4 seats out of 41 to the Congress (I). The importance of this is not merely that the Marxist bloc is likely to be the biggest opposition group in the Lok Sabha, with its implication of the polarisation of forces in the period ahead between Left and Right in the country as a whole. No less significant is that the Communist Party of India (Marxist), which has dominated politics in West Bengal and administered the State Government since 1977, has retained the confidence of the people and, indeed, enhanced it during the last two years and more. The United Left Front Government of West Bengal has a remarkable record which no Government in New Delhi can underestimate.

The United Left Front of West Bengal has campaigned on an outspoken programme of the redistribution of powers between the Centre and the States. Among its demands are restriction of the power to promulgate an "Emergency" to the occasion of foreign aggression alone; prevention of misuse of the power to impose President's Rule on the States; amendment of the Constituion to

expand the powers of the States and guarantee their autonomy; genuine land reforms in the interest of poor peasants and agricultural labourers. The DMK, which fought the elections in Tamil Nadu in alliance with the Congress (I), cannot be indifferent to such a programme, nor will the Congress (I) parties in the other Southern States — or Kashmir or the States on the Eastern border.

Mrs. Gandhi has promised immediate attention to the grave problems of the economy. These are not new problems and her record in regard to them is far from re-assuring. What is significant is that her Election Manifesto refrained from outlining any approaches to solution of these problems, beyond "controlling conspicuous consumption" and "boosting production". The jubilant reaction of the Bombay stock-market to her election victory and her own re-assurance to capitalowners do not reflect any comprehension that the crisis of economy in India dates from the mid-sixties rather than from the brief episode of Janata rule.

In the realm of foreign affairs, however, India has begun to speak in more self-confident tones already — even before the new Government's formal assumption of office. Indira Gandhi's brief press comments on the situation in and around Afghanistan constitute a voice of Asian non-alignment that could never be heard previously, even if one strained one's ears in the direction of the Janata Government. She has no kind of ideological sympathy with the Soviet Union, as she has made clear. But she understands more clearly than any other representative of the Indian capitalist class that the assistance of the Soviet Union is essential to the protection of Indian interests against the desperate design of American Imperialism. The pretence of Non-Alignment put up by Sri Lanka will be increasingly exposed by juxtaposition with the new Indian Government's diplomacy. Even the SLFP's intrigues with China will be attended with greater reticence and limited to a stealthily contrived demonstration outside the Soviet embassy in Colombo.

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## Afghanistan

# Power Game

The western media, including the BBC, have given great prominence in recent weeks to the "headquarters" of the Afghan rebels near Peshawar, in Pakistan's North-West frontier. In the past year and more, the western and Pakistani press persisted in calling them 'refugees'. Detailed and vivid accounts of what's actually going on at Peshawar and other "rebel" centres on Pakistani territory, close to the Afghan border, now make it abundantly clear that the hard core of these "refugees" are in fact well-nourished able-bodied men (there are of course thousands of women and children too) who have been given modern weapons training by "foreign" tutors. A British correspondent Nick Downey, who spent four months with the rebels inside Afghanistan reported that they had large sums of money and also enjoyed "foreign-backing".

In an article published in LG Oct 1 (reproduced from the British journal "Race and class") Fred Halliday wrote: "The US ally Pakistan is giving covert support to exiled Afghan groups acting under the banner of Islamic counter-revolution, a foolish policy since it can only be a matter of time before Afghan restraint vis-a-vis the Pathan and Baluch issues in Pakistan wears thin". The main reason for which the distinguished

Pakistani journalist Salamat Ali was sent to jail for one year's rigorous imprisonment by a one-man military tribunal (a major who was both judge and prosecutor) was his report on Baluchi resentment over the policies of 'the Punjabi clique' (Gen Zia).

It is these covert but now open activities the victorious Mrs. Gandhi, while criticising the Soviet intervention, described as "meddling by foreign powers over a long period in this region". Other Indian leaders have been dismayed by the speed and enthusiasm with which the US pledged 100 million dollars arms aid to Pakistan. Indian opinion, across the whole political spectrum, stresses one question. Will Pakistan return to its traditional role of US bastion and, forgetting its lately acquired non-alignment, re-activate the arms race on the sub continent?

But if the well-planned external pressures on the new Kabul regime achieved success it was also on account of the senseless and often barbarous excesses of the Amin administration.

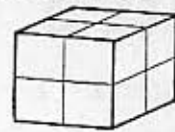
Several thousand political prisoners have been released, among them the widow of Noor Tarakki, and three wellknown officers, all hailed at one time as the 'heroes' of April 1978 revolution.

Cracking down on the rival (Karmal's) faction of the ruling party Amin jailed, tortured and executed hundreds of Tarakki loyalists and to install a personal dictatorship made his son deputy prime minister and his nephew the commander of the northern sector.

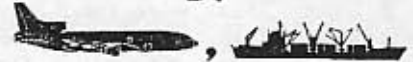
Frightened by the Iranian revolution and the loss of its main regional base, and worried over the Iranian revolution's spill-over effects on the vital Gulf region, the US has tried to use the Islamic slogan as a propaganda cover for its attempts to subvert the new pro-Soviet revolutionary regime in Kabul, and Afghanistan always a strategic buffer state has now been dragged once more into a power game.



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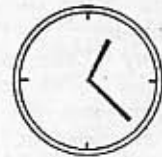
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# United Fronts in Latin America

by A Special Correspondent

**T**he party, the army, the united front. These were the 3 key elements which were identified by Mao as being responsible for the victory of the Chinese revolution. The Vietnamese Marxists have also stressed the importance of these three interacting factors. Of the three, the party is the determinant. Next in importance to the communist party, is the Peoples' Army - "the party commands the gun". The combination of these two form the necessary conditions of existence for the third factor - the united front. It is only the armed party that will facilitate proletarian hegemony within the front, eventually, if not at the outset.

But what happens in a country where the communist party has undergone the process of 'embourgeoisment', becoming bureaucratized and co-opted into the establishment? What happens in a country where, even if this process has not fully taken place, the CP has lost its revolutionary élan, becoming structurally and temperamentally incapable of sustaining clandestine activity and armed struggle? What is to be done in a country where, even when the CP does resort to armed struggle it is on the limited basis of 'armed self-defence' and for the purpose of increasing its bargaining power in electoral agreements with various factions of the bourgeoisie? These after all, are situations typical of most 'third world' countries where the fragmentation of the world communist movement since 1956 has had its starkest reflection.

The point being made here is that theories of the united front were conceived in the Marxist movement, in terms of what was basically a 'binary model' - one in which the various permutations and combinations involved 2 main components, i. e. the Communist parties (belonging to the Third

International) and the Social Democratic parties (of the Second International). In its colonial application the binary model remained, with bourgeois nationalism (or revolutionary democracy) taking the place of social democracy. It is this schema that emerges from the 2nd Congress of the Comintern in 1920, where the theory of the 'anti-imperialist united front' was born, as well as the proceedings of the 3rd and 4th Comintern Congresses in 1921 and 1922 which set forth the theory of the 'United Front of the Working Class'. (Thus we see that contrary to the persistent assertion of our local 'New Bolsheviks', united frontism has had an immaculate Leninist conception).

Theories of the united front set out by Lenin and developed by Stalin and Mao, though they provide a valid point of departure, must necessarily undergo modification in the vastly changed context of the contemporary 'Third World' where, instead of undivided Communist parties we find, at best, 'parallel CP's and more frequently a multiplicity of revolutionary groups all contending for the mantle of authentic vanguard of the proletariat. In the absence of a genuine revolutionary Communist party, the question of a united front gains enhanced significance. This is all the more so since in most peripheral societies the struggle must be waged against imperialism (neo-colonialism) and most importantly against various forms of dictatorial rule. In underdeveloped countries the creation of the united front cannot and must not be deferred artificially until the task of building the 'Bolshevik-type revolutionary party of the proletariat' is complete. 'Party' and 'front' are not two mutually exclusive and contradictory categories. The task of party building must not be counterposed to united front work;



rather, the former should take place within the latter process. **Reaction does not hold still until the new Bolshevik party is unveiled in its finished form and pristine beauty!** Years of bitter, bloody experience have taught the Latin American revolutionaries that 'partido o frente', is a false dilemma. Régis Debray was a thousand times right when he wrote in his subtly wrought collection of essays 'Prison Writings':

"It is clear that in the present political situation, and indeed generally in the situation of any semi-colonial country fighting to achieve genuine liberation, all thinking and action must be in the context of a united front rather than of isolated class determined parties - still less splinter groups".

The unity of anti-imperialist forces has been a slogan very dear to Fidel and Che' throughout their conscious revolutionary lives, and they have made consistent, powerful pleas that this imperative be recognised by Latin American militants. From 1961, Fidel urged the continents revolutionaries to unite on the basis of a minimum anti-imperialist programme. Broad alliances should be attempted, but conditions may reveal only selective ones possible. In some countries it will be possible to integrate the old leadership into the struggle, but in many, only critical support to these leaderships will be possible, while in others, this segment will have to be bypassed at least at the outset. "Division in the face of the enemy



was never an intelligent strategy" either nationally or internationally.

This was grasped, sometimes fitfully, by militants of Latin America, and beginning from the mid 1960's, attempts were made to reach this cherished goal. Columbia's Padre Camilo Torres, for instance, maintained the profoundest personal commitment to the project of revolutionary unity. His onetime colleague at the sociology department of Belgium's Catholic University in Louvain, Fr. Francois Houtart tells us that.

"Camilo was convinced deeply of the necessity of uniting all the Leftist groups in pursuit of clearly defined goals, with agreement on common action. Towards the end of 1964 his plan began to take shape and he contacted more and more people to work out a programme." Published in March 1965 as a Platform for a Movement for the Unity of the People, "it elicited an unprecedented response throughout the country and succeeded for a while in serving as a rallying point for all the progressive forces of the country". ('Church and Revolution' - Francois Houtart and Andre Rousseau)

In Camilo's mind, the United Front would be a vehicle for **socialist revolution**, not merely the waging of limited propaganda campaigns to safeguard, bourgeois democratic rights or oppose specific legislative acts. If a degree of united action is necessary for the defence of bourgeois democracy, how much greater unity is required for the harder task of socialist revolution.

Writing in October 1965 to the paper "**Frente Unido**" Camilo said significantly:

"We must explain clearly that this programme is oriented towards the setting up of a socialist state ..... It is a platform for liberating Columbia from US imperialism and creating a socialist state ....."

For Camilo, the socialist revolution was no "wedding" to which only a single guest - the new Bolshevik party of the revolutionary proletariat - would be eligible to attend. His intention was to

summon a "national convention" of all radical organisations to discuss and ratify the draft programme. Opposition from the old bureaucratic leaderships (notably of the local CP) sabotaged this effort. Still, Camilo held to his ideal, and in his "Message from the Mountains" which explained his decision to join the guerrillas, he renewed his call to respect "the peoples desire for unity, without religious or traditional party differences, without the slightest tendency to oppose the revolutionary elements of any other sector, movement or party, without **candillismo**."

This was in January 1966. One month later, on the 16th of February, Padre Camilo Torres was killed in armed combat in the mountains of Columbia. His portrait, together with that of Commandante Guevara, flank the gaunt image of the crucified Christ, on the walls of many a poor home. South of the Rio Grande.

The middle of that year (1966) saw the merger in Venezuela of Fabrico Ojeda's FLN and Douglas Bravo's FALN, in the aftermath of the latter's expulsion by the country's once dynamic CP. Here again, unity came too late and Fabrico Ojeda died some weeks after the merger.

Those philistines who consider any conception of a united front as 'post-Lenin Menshevism', should take careful note of the views of that purest Leninist internationalist of the contemporary period, Commandante Guevara, as expressed in the urgent proclamation of the ELN issued from the Nanchahuazu camp in April 1967:—

"(It calls upon the) Bolivian people to come together, forge a solid united front without distinction as to political shade or colour; it calls upon those patriots who are in a position to do something and feel able to withstand the hard conditions of battle, to enter its ranks."

Earlier, in Peru, the brilliant intellectual and valiant guerrillero, Luis de la Puente Uceda had issued a call for the creation of "a single anti-oligarchic and anti-

imperialist front" in and for the struggle. (July 1965).

Latin America's virtuoso of urban guerrilla combat, Carlos Marighela writing on '**The Organisational Function of Revolutionary Violence**' identified the '**shortcomings of the Brazilian revolutionary movement and prospects for the struggle**' as follows:—

"The overwhelming defect of the Brazilian revolutionary movement is the disunited state of the revolutionary organisations and their disagreement over attitudes and objectives. Within this disagreement there is an intense struggle for leadership going on. Each organisation is tacitly claiming the leadership of the revolution for itself and this makes it difficult to discover a common denominator among those who are prepared to fight against our common enemy."

Marighela's writings on the need for unity assume a special relevance and poignancy for us in 1979 which is the 10th anniversary of his death and the 15th anniversary of the Brazilian golpe.

The down of the 1970's found the Uruguyan Left in a state of unity, with a 'broad front' being formed by the Tupamaros, the Communist Party (led by Rodney Arismendi) and the Socialists. This 'Frente Amplio' succeeded in winning 20% of the popular vote at the country's general elections of 1971. In retrospect, Debary correctly locates this as the high point of the 'Tupas' existence. The subsequent spiral of revolutionary violence and armed repression drove the Left parties apart, with the CP/Socialists taking up their old positions of parliamentarism and the Tupas moving towards sectarianism and militarism. By 1973, the Tupas had been liquidated as an organisation. In 'Revolution on Trial', Debary correctly identified the Tupas main error of judgement:—

"Whereas they thought they were dealing with a representative democracy which, though decrepit and decaying, was still in being, they were in fact confronting a nation militarized and wholly

controlled by the repression, and a bourgeoisie that had thrown, overboard all shame, all legality all republican responsibility, to ensure its own survival. In other words, the Tupamaros had underestimated the fascist character of the civil power."

The emphasis is Debray's own and, for our purposes, would serve as a further riposte to local revolutionary leaders who stubbornly refuse to recognise the process of **fascistization** that has taken place in Latin America and is well underway in other parts of the 'peripheral' world. The rejection of 'united fronts' is of course, logically linked to, and flows from, this non-recognition of the phenomena of fascism.

"Unity with the **Unidad Popular** parties and with sectors of the Christian Democratic Party is one of our fundamental objectives in this period and one of the most powerful tools to overthrow the dictatorship. There were important differences between us and the Communist Party and its policies during the United Popular government and still today we have differences with them but they are our allies in the struggle against the dictatorship, they are comrades on the same path."

Here too is a fragment from the Declaration of Edgardo Enriquez, member of the Political Commission of the MIR on October 8th 1974, in memory of Miguel Enriquez:—"Miguel Enriquez, Secretary of the MIR, has died. fell at his combat post, at the head of his organisation and **in the struggle for the unity of the left forces, for the defeat of the fascist tyranny** and for the ideas of socialism.... The Chilean working class is in mourning, a **standard bearer of unity**, a defender of their class interests has died. This standard is not only that of the MIR, it is the standard of the Chilean left." (My emphasis)

If the danger of fascism and the imperative need for unity of the left is not grasped and acted upon, then Reaction will not find it an insurmountable task to bid "adios, companero,

adios" to the whole Left, democratic and workers movement.

What then of Nicaragua? Of what import was the factor of 'left unity' in the victory of the Nicaraguan revolution? Let there be no mistake or evasion on this score: **unity** was a factor of paramount importance. Listen to Fr. Ernesto Cardenal, one of the most prestigious of Latin American poets and the new Minister of Culture of liberated Nicaragua.

**"The first lesson that stands out is that to achieve victory there must be unity. While in other countries the left has been split and split again, we were uniting more and more. That complete unity spelled the death of the Somoza regime; without unity the struggle would have gone on much longer. I think that is the foremost experience that could be of use to other peoples struggling for their complete and definitive independence."**

(Gramma' Oct 21st 1979)

Thus Fr. Cardenal, discussing the experiences and lessons that can be learned from the victory of the Nicaraguan revolution, while on a recent visit to Havana. Clear and unequivocal, one should think.

Of course the FSLN was not itself a united front, though its choice of nomenclature might lead the uninitiated to think otherwise. Though it applied the mass line with a Maoist perfection, it was not a mass movement, since the masses did not join en bloc, except perhaps at the terminal stages of the crisis. The FSLN's structure and organized cadre rendered it necessarily narrower than the mass movement. It was in this sense, a vanguard organisation rather than a mass party, and functioned as such. The FSLN's experience confirms the need for revolutions to build **vanguard organisations** rather than 'open' or 'mass' parties **coextensive** with the masses or the class. This latter is a social Democratic/Menshevik construct which could not survive under repressive conditions either in existence or coming

into being in most 'Third World' countries. There is however the other danger, that of 'vanguardism' or what Debray calls 'the metaphysics of the vanguard'. Discussed in parts (ii) and (iii) of this current series of articles, vanguardism implies the construction of an organisation insulated from the masses, impervious to the mass mood, insensitive to the rhythms of the mass movement. Of course, the revolutionary organisation should not tail behind the masses nor merely be reactive to mass sentiment, just as its organisational structures should not be coextensive with the mass movement. What is necessary is the construction of a **vanguard** revolutionary organisation which will adopt a **mass line**, a line which is neither behind nor too far ahead of the masses, a line which systematizes the views and experiences of the masses and inserts this back into the mass consciousness, so it is **repossessed** by the masses.

It is precisely this, that was a major achievement of Mao and Ho Chi Minh. Schematic sectarians would raise the objection that this was Mao's great error, "the substitution of the masses in place of the working class, the adoption of a mass line instead of a class line." (certainly Mao made occasional errors in this direction, but in the main, the criticism is invalid during the period upto 1949.) But the 'class line' cannot and must not be counterposed to the 'mass line' in a period where national independence and democracy have been sold to imperialism by the local bourgeoisie (Stalin); where the proletariat has therefore to take possession of the twin banners of national independence and democracy thus becoming the 'nation class' (Engels, Stalin, Cabral); where 'the nation and socialism are one' (Le Duan).

So the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FNSL) was a vanguard organisation which did not succumb to the 'metaphysics of vanguardism'. It was not itself a mass movement or united front, but rather, a vanguard organisation which adopted a mass line.



# International trends — an overview



PATTERNS OF  
CONFLICT

by Mervyn de Silva

As the decade ended President Carter was threatening the naval blockade of Iran, once America's strongest ally in a vitally strategic region and a key factor in that post-war alliance system which the US had constructed for the expansion and protection of her global power.

Henry Luce, founder of TIME, LIFE and FORTUNE, and an authentic emblem of native genius, enterprise and dynamism, had heralded the 20th century as 'America's Century.'

In his celebrated inaugural address, President Kennedy had spoken not only to his own people but to the whole world. "Let every nation know whether it wish us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardships, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and success of liberty."

An admirably soaring rhetoric proper to a memorable occasion but surely a sentiment not untouched by the unmistakable traces of American self-confidence or arrogance which characterised that decade? For America, between Luce's magnificent dream, Kennedy's brash magniloquence and the world of the 1980's falls a profoundly disturbing reality—the reality of Vietnam.

Since the dimensions of power are not confined to 'pure' politics, if there is such a thing, or to the clash of arms, military victory and defeat, many an analyst would hasten to introduce an amendment. Vietnam and the dollar, they would say.

Vietnam, of course, had much to do with the pressures on the US economy and the entire US-dominated world economy which was further unsettled by the 1973 oil price hike. While that economy

is still striving to recover from those shock waves even as new pressures are being released, the overall impact of the crisis was felt in every single institution which had been created after the war to facilitate the smooth management of an international system in which the US enjoyed pre-eminence and the West along with Japan, collective dominance. This is as true of economic institutions like the IMF, IBRD, GATT etc as it is of seemingly ineffectual diplomatic fora like the UN and its specialised agencies.

All these institutions from the UN to UNESCO and WHO are under severe strain from what the Kissingers and Moynihans, goaded into an intemperate impatience, would like to stigmatise as 'the tyranny of the majority'. The unease and the ire spring from the realisation that western control over the very institutions which were established in order to exercise such control, is being challenged by a large host of poor nations using their numerical strength or collective voting power. The challenge ranges over all those areas and issues where such western dominance has been long entrenched—UN, IMF, trade, information and so on. The shift of emphasis to UNCTAD, its fierce acrimonies, protracted debates and negotiations, and its many frustrations, is probably the ideal example. But it would be a grave mistake to see these as **institutional** problems. The stress within is the manifestation of pressures outside and those pressures constitute a major phenomenon of the world of the 70's.

## Vietnam

In the decade that is over the overwhelming importance of Vietnam is inescapable. Besides,

Vietnam exposes if one may extend an expression of Hegel, the cunning of history caught in an improbable mood for neatness. The Vietnamese tanks rolled into Saigon (Ho Chi Minh city) on April 30th 1975—right in the middle of the decade.

A day later, Japan's leading newspaper, the conservative ASAHI SHIMBUN noted editorially: "The war in Vietnam has been in every way, a war of national emancipation". The age in which nationalism could be indefinitely suppressed it added was also over.

A more comprehensive assessment of the long-term and global significance of the victory, was made by Le Duan, First Secretary of the Vietnam Workers' Party, and its leading theoretician. In his victory speech made just two weeks later, Le Duan said: Vietnam became the area of the fiercest, historic confrontation between the most warlike, the most stubborn, aggressive imperialism with the most powerful economic and military potential on one side, and the forces of national independence, democracy and socialism of which the Vietnamese people are the shock force in this region on the other.

The victory of Vietnam, therefore, is not only a victory of national independence and socialism in Vietnam, but has also a great international significance, and an epoch-making character. It has upset the global strategy of US imperialism. It has proved that the three revolutionary torrents of our times are on the offensive, repulsing imperialism step by step and overthrowing it part by part. Today, imperialism, even US imperialism, cannot grab a single square inch of any socialist country; neither can it push back the movement for national independence in the world, nor

hinder the advance towards socialism of various countries.

Vietnam reduced America to a divided nation, in a way that no single issue had done for perhaps a century. The market-economies have been besieged by serious economic troubles. Such basically economic adversities have produced social and political consequences such as racialism and policy changes on immigration in Britain, new attitudes and practices vis-à-vis the once welcome 'guest worker' in prosperous West Germany, industrial unrest in France, strike waves, new forms of political violence and chronic governmental instability in Italy, and new material hardships for an increasing number of Americans, notably the already under-privileged non-whites.

### Stability preserved

In spite of the seriousness of the economic recession however the basic stability of the socio-political system has been preserved. The 'centre' has held. Centuries of pillage under colonialism, the enduring benefits of the industrial revolution, the bountiful rewards of the new global system of exploitation and extraction of the Third World's resources and its systematic transfer to the metropolitan centres have cumulatively enabled these affluent nations to sustain their living standards.

Even within this broad group of nations however the fact of uneven development is undeniable. If one takes "the West" then in a wide sweep, the need for differentiation becomes obvious enough.

The less developed belong to the 'south' — Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece. The 'north-south' conflict in the 'West' finds a particularly telling illustration in Italy, the most developed of these countries. Even the most casual student of Italian affairs is aware that the traditional division between the industrialised north and the agricultural south (broadly analogous to the situation within a smaller compass in Portugal) is a massive socio-economic actuality which expressing itself in different forms continuously influences Italy's politics.

Portugal, Spain, Greece and as you move middle-eastwards, Turkey have been gripped by what Nicos Poulantzas has called the 'crisis of dictatorships'. Here long established dictatorships have been overthrown. In the 70's we watched their strivings and fitful struggles for constitutional legitimacy and democracy. In some places where democracy prevailed, it is proving all too fragile.

While this summing-up reflects the general impact of economic trends on the politics of certain categories of countries or broadly demarcated areas, it should be noted that these states, in conventional strategic terms represent the southern tier of NATO, with the Mediterranean as the focus of frenzied western concern.

If the metropolitan centres, despite internal stresses of varying intensity; have demonstrated a resilience in coping with, the all-important question which is carried over to the 80's hinges on whether this crisis will deepen, and if so, whether the capacity for assimilation will match the new, sharper challenge.

### Far-reaching crisis

In the terminology of the 'dependencia' school, the deeper, the more far-reaching crisis is located in the 'periphery' i.e. the Third World or Asia, Africa, and Latin America. When they were the impassioned champions of 'Third World' peoples liberation and not the supporters of the Shah and Sadat and the admirers of Franz Josef Strauss, 'Scoop' Jackson and Margeret-Thatcher, the Chinese, in their own attractive idiom, used to call these continents the world's 'storm centres'

As with the affluent countries, the law of uneven development influences the form which this general crisis assumes within each nation or area.

The crisis in the poor World is intensest because it is a compound of multiple conflicts, internal and external and all interconnected.

In a four-fold classification of the fundamental conflicts which

characterise the modern world (imperialism vs socialism, proletariat vs bourgeoisie, oppressed nations vs imperialism and intra-capitalist clashes of interest) Kostas Mavrakis offers us the standard Marxist perspective noting the 'connected character' of these conflicts, and how they converge in the three continents. At present, he adds, the third conflict is the most explosive. As the decade passed its mid-way mark, we may say that the stormiest part of this explosive area lay somewhere between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, with the Persian Gulf, for the plainest of strategic reasons, as the eye of the storm. The area would embrace what we call the Arab-Israeli issue, the conflicts in the Horn of Africa, the oil-rich belt, the revolution in Iran, the continued unrest in Pakistan, and the upheaval in Afghanistan which has now seen its third government in less than two years with Soviet troops in action against armed anti-government groups.

The ever-sharpening severity of conflict in the Third World and its increasing comparative importance as a factor in world affairs saw a strikingly novel demonstration in Portugal. The costly, exhausting and brutal wars fought by the Portugues army against national liberation movements in its African colonies seemed senseless to the young officers. If the Vietnam war de-humanized the American soldier (new films like 'The Deer Slayer' are facile attempts at an escape from this odium as well as an easy expiation of lingering guilt) the war in Africa radicalises the Portuguese officer, the main actor in the revolution' which ended four decades of dictatorship in Lisbon. Here, the conflict in the periphery had a direct impact on and produced a major change in the centre.

In the two previous decades, Britain and France, the two leading colonial powers, by and large succeeded (there were a few notable exceptions of course) in effecting in their colonies a peaceful transition to political independence: Such freedom did



not mean, as we all recognise now, emancipation or a rupture in the basic relationship between former colonial possession and mother-country. On the contrary, the external linkages were strengthened as the ex-colony was enmeshed in a new network of economic relationships which were in turn an integral part of the US-dominated global system. Neo-colonialism did not enhance freedom, autonomy or self-reliance. It only altered the formal character of the relationship. Though less 'political' and less 'visible', it increased the dependence of the one, and fortified the dominance of the other.

### Paradoxical

This process of locking the under-developed countries into a tighter global system produced in the 70's what strikes one as an interestingly paradoxical effect of internal disturbance, not stability. Both in the economic and political spheres, developments at the periphery could dislocate things at the centre, while major changes in one peripheral part could inspire and influence change in some other remote part.

Export platforms and free trade zones could mean the closure of factories in western Europe, unemployment and new protectionism. In politics, the very success achieved by the developed market-economies to ensnare the poor nations in a system largely dominated and managed by the West, together with the far-ranging and variegated consequences of the 'communications revolution' in a 'shrinking universe' have accelerated the flow of ideas, across oceans, heightened the inspirational influence of example and multiplied the demonstration-effect of events. Consider Iran and Nicaragua, two dramatic events in the final phase of the decade, the downfall of the parvenu Pahlavi dynasty installed by the British and the US, and the overthrow of another fake dynasty, the Somozas, an American manufacture.

"General Sandino, our national hero, was our shining symbol.. that is, of our movement" a Sandinista commander told me in

Havana last September.... "and the Cuban revolution may have been the example at the back of our minds, But" he went on "for the people, for hundreds of thousands who were not activists the fall of the Shah gave them hope, strengthened their resolve because if the mighty Shah can be thrown out, why not this petty puppet dictator, Somoza..?"

It the same year that Vietnam's heroic struggle reached its triumphant climax, three African nations gained independence, all of them through armed struggle. "De-Colonisation" had moved from Asia to Africa and the 1960's was Africa's decade. After a long, brutal war, de Gaulle could have the strength to shuffle off the Algerian burden inspite of the 'colons' (the French settlers), France's large economic stake there, and the OAS. The OAS could disturb the stability which de Gaulle gave France.

Portugal, a decrepit colonial power, held on to its 'African empire' with a tenacious stupidity, totally incapable of negotiating the transition to neo-colonialism which the major imperial powers had achieved. Anti-colonial nationalism had no option left but armed struggle.

In Angola the struggle had a new dimension—direct involvement from outside, with a confrontation between two "blocs". On the side of the MPLA were the USSR and the socialist camp, and finally Cuban soldiers. On the side of the MPLA's two rivals were the US, Zaire's Mobutu, South Africa and the Chinese.

### Chou on Africa

How Chinese generals, military advisory teams, arms and money came to fight on the same side as the US and South Africa, introduces a major theme into any assessment of the world in the 70's. The rapid, critically important changes in Chinese policy have been examined in a separate article in this special number. Therefore I need only invite the reader's attention to Chou-En-lai's visit to Africa in the early sixties, a diplomatic

tour de force. "A continent ripe for revolution" was his verdict, and it was clear that at the time that Peking was the inspirational centre for all radical movements in the Third World. Its strategy seems to be one of outflanking Moscow from the left.

But China's perceptions of the world had gone through many critical shifts. From an ally, the USSR had become an ideological deviationist; then an enemy as hostile as US imperialism; next the main enemy. And this had been paralleled by a Sino-US reconciliation which advanced to the point where Defence Secretary James Schlesinger could call China a 'quasi-ally' of the US.

In his book, 'In Search of Enemies', John Stockwell, the head of the US Angola Task Force, gives us a detailed account of this joint operation. Germane to this discussion is his explanation of why the US exercise had to be 'covert' operation, in which even the US Congress was deceived. After Vietnam, the US Congress would NOT pass funds for external intervention. Stockwell clearly demonstrates the Soviet-Cuban involvement was re-active, a response to the US 'covert' operation.

Chou's pithy verdict on Africa was echoed by Fidel Castro more than fifteen years later. In an interview granted to the journal 'ASIE-AFRIQUE', he called Africa 'imperialism's weakest link.' In non-ideological terms, in the language of orthodox schools of strategic studies, this is the crisis-area constantly generating crisis-situations. The area demarcated in this essay has somewhat wider contours.

Israel, Rhodesia, (Zimbabwe) Namibia and South Africa (Azania) are the obvious signposts. Here is a region where there is a concentration of multiple conflicts making each 'issue' not only intensely explosive but involving by its very nature neighbouring states (making the issue a regional conflict) and also the major powers, making the issue instantly or potentially a global one.

(Continued on Page 32)



# Towards a new international military order

MILITARY SITUATION

by Maj. Gen. Anton Mutukumaru

The expectation was that the 1970's would constitute the 'Disarmament Decade,' on the basis that the armaments race world-wide, was posing an unacceptable threat to international peace and security. The strategy was to speed up the lamentably leisurely pace of the disarmament process, reduce tension and set the pace for a relatively quick and viable peace situation. Subsequent events have shown that progress has been negligible, except in the organisational sphere, in which one notes increases in the membership of the negotiating body and a change towards a rotational tenure of chairmanship.

Pending these developments, the world military situation continued to show signs of turbulence. Space being limited, one can only sketch the outline of the military situation, concentrating on continental and intercontinental aspects. This of course simplifies the task but one can only hope that, in the process, there will be no unacceptable oversimplification.

Predictably, one's immediate thoughts centre round the activities of the Super-powers, the USA and the USSR. Their military capability has moved with rapidity, from the deployment of conventional armaments in the wake of World War II to the use of much more spectacular thermo-nuclear armament which their respective scientific and technological backing, developed largely in the 70's, currently enables them to operate beyond the conventional elements of land, sea and air to outer space. This has given them the awesome ability to deny mankind the capacity to survive an ability

which they apparently share with the Almighty?

It is not altogether surprising that they have devised methods of coexistence inter se, ranging from 'deterrence' to 'detente' which however, being the antithesis of entente, leaves them distant from the state of peace which a war-weary world so earnestly desires. The seventies also saw the progress made in the signing of treaties towards Strategic Arms Limitation. The fact that there has been some agreement is undeniably a sign of progress, but there remains the unmistakable conclusion that what is achieved is the **limitation and elimination** of strategic arms. Perhaps mutual security is central to this conclusion, but one suspects that there is a concurrent ingredient. One senses the desire to appear the more powerful and therefore the more desirable partner, in the struggle for existence by the poorer and weaker segments of the world community.

It is desirable to take note of certain events which had an impact on the postures adopted by the USA in the 70's. In the domestic sphere, Watergate brought about a crisis in American leadership without which, it is axiomatic, national effort lacks viability. In the military field, there was the withdrawal from Vietnam and, with the strengthening of links with China, the corresponding loosening of links with Taiwan. Both had an impact on American credibility and there was even speculation whether the USA would hark back to the isolationism characteristic of pre-World War I American policy. In the economic field, there was the energy crisis in the early 70's and the weakening of the American dollar. The combination of these factors tended to weaken the domestic and international stance of the USA. Indeed,

at one time, the emergence of the image of a less purposeful entity lacking leadership and the will to maintain her predominant position was threatened and even appeared likely to provide the setting for her European military partners in seeking an independent role in military affairs, with West Germany spearheading the move on the basis of a renewed policy of German reunification. **The Soviet Union has been quick to exploit this situation.** Where hitherto she might have followed a policy of reacting to situations, she has had in the 70's a policy designed one suspects to challenge the USA and strengthen her own international position. This is evident in her actions in Africa, Asia and America itself apart from the speed with which she has developed a naval capability, without which Soviet planners have concluded that super power status is distant.

It is against the foregoing background that one undertakes a world survey from West to East. The focus initially is on Latin America, where, true to tradition, there has been turbulence, but 'manageable' turbulence, the scope of which has been the making and unmaking of dictatorship. There have however been two exceptions. The first was the rather bitter controversy over the control of the Panama Canal from the end of the century which gave rise to some fears of American hegemony till the matter was amicably settled. The second was the confrontation between the USA, the USSR and Cuba over the American claim that a Soviet combat brigade was stationed in Cuba, against that of the Soviets that their troops had only training responsibilities. Whilst agreeing to disagree, the USA has announced her decisions not to recognise Cuba so long as the

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troops remain in Cuba and to station a task force in Cuban waters—a perceptible example of how the Monroe Doctrine works

The military affairs of North America—i. e. of the USA and Canada are bound up with those of NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries, who collectively form the bulk of the nuclear world and who have been adjusted to warfare from century to century. **The 70's have disclosed an East European superiority in manpower and tactical nuclear weapons in Europe,** and the West has been making strenuous efforts to redress this by attempting to deploy the neutron bomb and now by the introduction of some 500 medium range nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union is demonstrably opposed to these moves and indeed has offered to reduce its numbers stationed in West Germany. The position is fluid. It also remains potentially dangerous not only because of the effect of what is already involved but also of possible escalation into a full scale nuclear war.

Turbulence in Africa, to which one now turns, is characteristic in that, it takes the form largely of guerilla warfare. Objectives—whether to topple dictators or to settle interstate quarrels—remain constant, as in Latin America. Where turbulence involves more than one state (as in N. E. Africa between Ethiopia and Somalia or in N. W. Africa involving Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania), there is a new element, namely, the desire of the OAU to try to settle differences, on the basis of 'Africa for the Africans'.

The peace in Rhodesia that appears to be in sight will one fears, be the curtain raiser to the final stage in the bitter conflict which is raging to ensure black majority rule in Africa, and which will be fought against the last bastion of white minority rule—South Africa.

One passes next to Asia, where many military complexities arise. In West Asia, the peace which has descended over the Western

front of Israel is offset by the potentially hostile action which may be taken by countries on her Eastern front—notably, Syria, Jordan and Iraq, working in conjunction with the PLO. In the Gulf region, oil, which today has a commodity value and which later on may have a scarcity value, may cause the region to be a cockpit of warring elements. This explains the billions of dollars which the oil rich countries are currently investing in military hardware. The Indian subcontinent is, today, in a tranquil state. What is disquieting however are the reports that Pakistan is developing a nuclear capability, which, if one is to believe certain assessments, is not necessarily for peaceful purposes. The situation in South East Asia is most disquieting. **Vietnam has a powerful military machine both in terms of equipment (which was left over after the US-Vietnam war) and in terms of trained manpower which has stood up to the might of Japan, France and even the USA.**

North East Asia presents the most difficult and most dangerous of the complexities of Asia. Two events which took place in the 70's are at the centre of the problems. One is the normalisation of relations between the USA and China and the other is the Friendship Treaty between Japan and China. The combination of these factors may present an ominous picture to the Soviet Union, if the overt innocence of these developments conceals a covert anti-Soviet intention. Whilst economic relations between Japan and the USSR are satisfactory, relations have been strained over the retention of the Kurile Islands, which Japan claims for herself, and in one of which the Soviet Union is building a military complex which can be used against Japan. This may conceivably lead to a remilitarisation of Japan. The perceptions of the Soviet Union and China of threats to each of them are, mutatis mutandis, the same because each feels hemmed in. The Soviet Union feels hemmed in between NATO

and the possible triangular entente between the USA, China and Japan. China for her part feels hemmed in by the fact that a massive military buildup with nuclear backing, has developed along her border with the Soviet Union; that in naval terms, the powerful Soviet Navy patrols her seaboard and, in diplomatic terms, the Soviet Union has Friendship Treaties with India, Vietnam and Afghanistan. The USSR must view China's modernisation plans with some anxiety because the accent on industry and agriculture will strengthen her economy and the accent on science and technology will strengthen her defence capability.

Australia, the last of the world's continents, is in a tranquil backwater. She however has membership of ANZUS and has afforded facilities in a base in Australia to the USA, designed for control of nuclear units operating in the Pacific and Indian Oceans and is therefore in the firing line in the event of world-wide hostilities.

There is one final point which is worth making—namely, the marked imbalance in the military capability of nations. It is interesting to note that, in the political sphere, there is no such imbalance for the purposes of the General Assembly of the UN where all countries are equal. There is a demonstrable imbalance in the economic sphere which has led to the clamour for a New International Economic order. There is a less demonstrable imbalance in the military sphere because of the need for secrecy in disclosing defence spending. But published figures are however eloquent testimony of a gross imbalance. If all defence expenditure is based on security needs, there would be no need for comment. But there is much evidence to conclude that the motives underlying 'defence' expenditure lie, in varying degree, in the spheres of political influence, ideological rivalry, economic pressure, commercial gain and sheer power-domination. Herein lies the essence of the matter which, if pursued logically, must lead to the demand for a New International Military Order.

# Moving away from Mao

by N. Sanmugathan

In 1812, Napoleon is reported to have said, with reference to China, "Let the sleeping giant sleep. For, when it wakes, the world will tremble." The man who gave this sleeping giant the kiss of life and awakened it was Mao-Tsetung and the Communist Party of China which he led. Debates may continue unabated about the role of Mao in the history of both China and of the world, but nobody can gainsay one fact and that is that he was the creator and founder of Modern China. He and the party, that he headed, led the Chinese people, who constitute one fourth of the world's population, to success by means of the world's longest and most protracted revolution.

It is very often forgotten what a vast population inhabits China. It is more than Europe and Russia put together. Even to imagine one single Government and administration for this vast population is mind-boggling. In fact, no such thing had ever existed before. It is only after the communists came to power, that a regular direct train ran from Canton to Peking. China was the play-thing of the foreign imperialists and feudal war-lords who carved up their own spheres of influence. It was one of the most backward countries in the world, with millions dying every year due to hunger, starvation, floods and disease.

Mao and the communists soon changed all this. Within a matter of years, the Chinese people, as Mao put it, had stood up. No one died of hunger or starvation or preventable disease. Huge irrigation projects eliminated floods. Unemployment became a thing of the past. Of course, China still remained a poor country with a low standard of living. But compared to India, Burma or Sri Lanka, which had reputedly gained their independence a year earlier than China, China was becoming a model.

This success was achieved not merely through land reform and nationalisation of industries but also by galvanising human labour power, which was plentiful, by putting politics in command. This success was also due to the policy of self reliance to which the Chinese were forced after Khrushchev, in 1960, withdrew all Soviet economic assistance. This policy also became necessary because of the policy of economic boycott and diplomatic non-recognition by the capitalist world. This was particularly so in the first two decades of Chinese people's power.

Mao also realised early that, with the Socialist revolution, classes and class struggles do not end but continue during the long historical epoch of transition from Socialism to communism. The cultural revolution, which started

during the second half of the sixties and lasted till the first half of the seventies, was an example of how to conduct the class struggle under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was also an attempt to safeguard and strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat, to prevent China from changing colour and going on the same capitalist road as had the Soviet Union, and to preserve China as a base for world revolution. It was also an attempt to create a new Socialist man, one who would be without greed, and selfishness, who would be free from lust for power and personal glory.

These are all noble aims which philosophers down the ages had tried to inculcate in men but failed. But, for the first time, under changed economic conditions, when private ownership in the means of production had been totally abolished, an attempt was being made to transform these age-old aims into reality. But, obviously, it was not an easy task. And, as Mao said, one cultural revolution would not be enough.

During the life time of Mao, he had sufficient personal influence and authority (Because of his immense contribution to the leadership and success of the Chinese revolution) to push through his revolutionary ideas. Those who openly opposed them were struck down during the cultural revolution. Others preferred to remain silent. Most of his opponents had expected Mao to die before Chou En-lai, who was then expected to lead the counter revolution—the task now being performed by Teng Hsiao-ping and which Chou would have performed with greater finesse and subtlety. But the reverse happened. Chou died earlier and counter revolution first showed its hand in the April 5th events of 1975. Mao had to get up from his sick bed



Mao greets Shao



to denounce Teng who was stripped of all his posts for the second time.

But Mao's power and influence was on the wane and he died in September 1976. His death was the signal for counter revolution to re-raise its head. Without the sanction either of the central committee or the political bureau or the standing committee of the political bureau, the four close associates of Mao, including his widow, were jailed by Hua-Kuo-Feng who claimed the doubtful legitimacy of being nominated by Mao. The party and the nation were faced with a fait accompli. From this, to the restoration of Teng Hsiao-ping to power, was a matter of time.

Teng's restoration was the signal for the complete reversal of all the revolutionary policies associated with Mao and his four associates. Almost the entire period of Mao's leadership from 1949 was written off as a bad dream. All the correct verdicts of the cultural revolution were repudiated. Monetary incentives, which were condemned as revisionist when introduced by the Soviet Union, were now encouraged. Mao's slogans of "Don't forget class struggle" and "Put politics in command" were replaced by Teng's slogan "What does it matter, if the cat is black or white, so long as it catches mice". All the revolutionary reforms in education, which had earned the admiration of the progressive world, were reversed. The policy of settling students, after their university life, in the out-lying areas, both for the sake of defence and for bridging the gulf between the peasants and the intellectuals, was abandoned. The policy of self reliance in building economy was replaced by reliance on foreign investments and foreign technology.

Worst of all, under the pretext of uniting with all forces opposed to Soviet Social imperialism whom the present Chinese revisionist leadership described as its main enemy (In contrast to Mao's description of both U. S.

imperialism and Soviet Social imperialism as the two main enemies of China and the world), China now started identifying its interests with those of U. S. imperialism and other reactionary forces, such as Japan, Western Europe and even the Shah of Iran.

It must be noted here that the beginning of the nineteen seventies saw, under Mao, the widening of China's influence and diplomatic ties with the rest of the world, including, finally, its triumphant entry into the United Nations. But there was no sacrifice of principles. China agreed to diplomatic relations only with those countries that accepted the People's Republic of China and refused to recognise Taiwan. Even after Nixon's famous visit to Peking (which, incidentally, was at Nixon's request and represented a repudiation of all earlier American attempts to contain and isolate China), the Shanghai agreement remained a virtual dead letter for seven years till Teng Hsiao-ping agreed to go back on earlier Chinese stands on Taiwan and thus brought about diplomatic relations between the two countries.

On the basis of the so-called four modernisations and the aim of leaping into the 21st century as a modern country, the Chinese revisionist leadership invited all sorts and forms of foreign investments. China is one of the biggest markets of the world and foreign industrialists and businessmen were quick to respond although their enthusiasm seems to have waned slightly after the Chinese had revised their original programme. But the invasion of foreign capitalists and tourists and the construction of new hotel complexes have already begun to have their influence on Chinese life. All that is worst in western culture is now being introduced into China. Not only has ball-room dancing become a craze, but even tipping and prostitution have re-appeared.

Price control has been lifted from a large number of articles and this has sent the cost of living rising. According to a recent letter from a long standing resident in Peking, mutton ribs which used to be sold for Rs. 8.00, has gone up to Rs. 18.00. One jin of eggs which used to cost Rs. 9.00 today costs Rs. 13.00. A pound of fish has gone up from Rs. 8.00 to Rs. 13.00.

The nineteen seventies have, therefore, seen a dramatic change in the direction in which China was heading, under Mao, as a model for all revolutionaries to follow. It is the current decade that saw the death of the founder and leader of modern China, Mao Tse-tung. It is this death that enabled counter revolution, under Teng Hsiao-ping, to raise its head and change the direction of China's path, back to the capitalist road. This has led to the reversal of all the revolutionary policies of Mao and the introduction of internal strife and tension and an aggressive foreign policy which caused the impermissible war against Vietnam despite the latter's culpability of its own aggression against Kampuchea earlier.

Just as by its aggression against Czechoslovakia, the Soviet modern revisionists signalled their development as social-imperialists, so did the Chinese revisionists with their aggression against Vietnam. Mao once said that the only socialist country, other than the Soviet Union, which had the economic base to become a social-imperialist power, was China. His worst fears seem to have been realised now. The second half of the nineteen seventies will go down, in the history of China, as the period of the great leap Backward — to use an apt phrase of Professor Charles Bettelheim.

# Britain and Northern Ireland

by Rajan Philipupillai

The 'Mountbatten murders' and the killing of 18 Soldiers of the British army, for all of which the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) has claimed triumphant responsibility, have brought a sense of urgency, if urgency was still required, to the problem of Northern Ireland, perhaps the gravest problem now confronting the British Government.

Barely three weeks before the blasting of Mountbatten's boat, had appeared Novelist Bill Granger's thriller "The November Man", hinged almost on an identical IRA plot to blow up the yacht of a British Lord and Cousin of the Queen while he is sailing in the Irish Sea. The Novelist, a one time journalist, was understandably disturbed by the eerie parallel, but nevertheless confessed that the plot emanated from his understanding and knowledge of the IRA; it was the next logical thing to follow in the IRA's campaign of armed struggle. For some time the IRA, like its progeny the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), had been talking of its activities escalating into "spectaculars": murder of important Britons, no matter where they are, and attacking important targets (Oil Terminals, Power Stations etc.) in Britain, as a means of forcing the British people to demand their own government to leave Northern Ireland severely alone. Its communique claiming responsibility for the recent murders gave clearest expression to its resolve to "tear out their sentimental imperialist heart" for the British government's continued oppression of the Irish people and its torture of the IRA comrades in the "H-Block" of the Maze prison.

Amidst the near universal condemnation of the assassination of Lord Mountbatten and others, the chief actors in the tragic Ulster drama have taken up resolute and intransigent positions. If the IRA



Mountbatten

is determined to go on 'tearing the sentimental imperialist heart', Lt. General Timothy Creasy, General Officer Commanding (GOC) the British Army in Northern Ireland, is equally determined "to defeat the thugs and murderers of the Provisional IRA, and of the INLA". He has expressed confidence, based on his experiences in 'another war', that considered and co-ordinated efforts could defeat terrorism". The anger and determination are no less severe among the Protestant Unionist Forces: The official Unionist Party, Rev. Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party and their 'Rightwing murder gangs'-the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). The question is whether the British government will yield to pressures from the Unionist forces and its own army and subject Northern Ireland to the GOC's "considered and co-ordinated efforts".

We might hazard what the "considered and co-ordinated efforts" may turn out to be. Lt. General Timothy Creasy is not unaccustomed to 'combatting terrorism', having sprung into notoriety in Oman, in the early and mid

## BEHIND MOUNTBATTEN MURDERS

seventies', as chief of Sultan's Armed Forces to terrorize and annihilate 'the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman'. Fred Halliday in his 'Arabia without Sultans' recounts the British soldiers' modus operandi in Oman: "poisoning and blowing up wells, burning villages, setting crops and food stores on fire, killing herds and cutting off food supplies" etc. As Mary Holland of the "New Statesman" put it, if the GOC is to be given the green light by the Thatcher government to go ahead with such measures in Northern Ireland, "the entire population of Northern Ireland is in for an interesting time". It would be interesting indeed to see whether a western government would go so far as to inflict such measures on "its own" people as it did without compunction on, say, the people of West Asia or Vietnam.

While this is to be seen in the future, the past records would belie any contention that British rulers would render favoured treatment to their Irish subjects. The pages of history, whether ancient or modern, whether before or after partition, of British involvement in Ireland, are stained with strong measures, harsh bloody and inhuman atrocities perpetrated by the British rulers on the Irish people. History seems to be taking its own sweet revenge on the British ruling classes for all their past sins-the early conquer and occupation of Ireland, the plantation of Ulster province with English colonists, the sustained and unreasonable opposition to Home Rule, the cunning setting up of the Ulster Unionist forces, the financing and fostering of illegal paramilitary bodies in Northern Ireland, the partition and the creation of the undemocratic Northern Ireland Statelet, and the post partition acts of repression. During the last ten years, from 1969 until the Mountbatten murders, 570 soldiers have been killed and 3429 injured, 127 policemen (of the Royal Ulster



Constabulary) have been killed and 3360 injured, 1407 civilians have been killed and 15,394 injured. What is equally alarming is the impact, tangible and intangible, of the Northern Ireland situation not only on the 900,000 Protestants and the 500,000 Catholics of Northern Ireland, but also on the Southern state of the Republic of Ireland and on Britain itself. One might say that Socialist leader James Connolly's prediction of "a carnival of reaction" if partition was implemented, had indeed come true.

In 1922, at the time of the partition, of Ireland when the Southern Catholic Ireland broke away, few would have had any foreboding of a further territorial disintegration of Britain. **But today, the nationalist movements of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales present the most powerful challenge to the unitary (capitalist) state in Britain.** And the very measures taken by the British governments to clamp down rebellion in Ulster, have poisoned the British polity, besides being counterproductive in Ulster itself. **The trend towards a 'strong state' in Britain cannot be gainsaid. Nor can the glaring departures from the norms of the 'Rule of Law' be obscured.** The 'Prevention of Terrorism Act', which was stamped through the British Parliament in November, 1974, empowers the Home Secretary to deport people without having to provide reason or evidence. It has also introduced detention without trial and harassment of even non-Irish political activists. Suspects are subjected to beatings and third degree methods, while the torture of prisoners is commonplace. What is even more ominous is the manifest impact on the British Army, which, today, in Northern Ireland, is learning the art of intervening in domestic political crises, improvising, developing and mastering new techniques of crowd control, interrogation and torture, as means of containing a hostile and aroused people "indulging in subversive (and terrorist activities) against the state" (sic). It seems that the British Army has learnt a great deal, and has acquired immense power and politi-

cal autonomy. The people of Northern Ireland, particularly Catholics, are the guinea-pigs of the experiments of the British Army to-day, but the question is who the ultimate victims will be. Another aspect of the army's role is that most ex-servicemen from Ulster, throw themselves into the hands of the National Front after retirement. The other disquieting development concerns the role of the mass media—the so called free press and the state owned broadcasting institutions, in that their coverages of the events in the Northern Ireland are both censored and present a distorted picture that contributes to the creation of a climate of mutual rancour and hysterical chauvinism.

If it is still a trend towards 'strong state' in Britain, there is already one in Southern Ireland—the Republic of Ireland. Dublin can boast of a longer history of repressive legislation, and the harshest antiterrorist law in Europe, and claims to be spending more per member of its population in organising 'security' against the outlawed IRA, than Britain itself. There exist courts without juries to convict and imprison people without open evidence being heard. Besides, the notorious Special Provisions Act of 1922, and the Emergency Powers Act of 1973 give the authorities the scope to detain and imprison people without due trial. After the Mountbatten killing the British government has been demanding even greater 'security concessions' from Dublin, such as the right of hot pursuit of terrorists across the border and the right for RUC personnel to question suspects in the South, both of which are unlikely to be conceded by the government in Dublin. Apart from the physical limitations (for instance the Irish Army has only 13,500 men, said to be the same as the British Force in Ulster, and with its other pre-occupations, can hardly be expected to seal off effectively the 310 mile long border) on the Dublin government, there are also political limitations.

Dublin's compromise with the British government is of recent origin, manifestly since 1972, or

to a greater extent since 1975. The compromise itself is, though belated, a consequence flowing from the partition. For the partition had cut off the most industrial part of Ireland, the province of Ulster, and the remaining three provinces of Munster, Leinster and Connacht, which were backward, peasant based, and Catholic dominated, came to constitute at first the "Irish Free State" and later the Republic of Ireland ("Eire"). Displaying the classic features of underdevelopment, and overwhelmingly inhibited against staging any kind of revolutionary breakthrough, Southern Ireland took the path of dependence on foreign capital, both British and MNC's, with the concomitant evolution of an appropriate political system. During the last twenty years or so, foreign investment has increased enormously, and the Irish Republic has become a full member of the EEC.

Even though Jack Lynch's government co-operated to a surprising degree—he even sacked two of his ministers in 1972, for alleged IRA involvement—with London, no Irish government can go the whole hog in the campaign against IRA. While partition of Ireland has led to the subservience of the South to British and foreign capital, the historical opposition to partition cannot be easily rooted out from the Irish political soil. Former Premier Mr. Lynch's own party Fianna Fail is the political heir to Eamon de Valera and his Republican movement, who opposed the 1921 Treaty (of partition) and later, in 1937, enacted the Republican Constitution for the whole of Ireland. "Reunification of Ireland is the very fabric of the Fianna Fail party". Political pressure can still build up in the South, and Lynch may be forced to suggest reunification as the only remedy, if Mrs. Thatcher continues exacting for greater "security concessions".

Everyone seems to be groping in the dark for a solution. Armchair commentators indulge in tautological bombasts, such as the one George Gale delivered himself of, in a recent issue of the "Spectator": "no immediate alternative to

direct rule and the presence of the army, but these cannot constitute a permanent solution, but only a permanent crisis". The commonest argument against a withdrawal of the British Army from Northern Ireland, is that it will be followed by a blood bath. As if to say that the British Army is essentially a neutral force keeping two warring factions away, which of course is now a well exploded myth. The early British imperialist intentions in occupying the whole or a part of Ireland may no longer be quite so relevant to-day. The economic attraction of Northern Ireland is very little considering the heavy expenditure that goes into military occupation and running the administration in Ulster. As has been stated already, preservation of the status quo in the South is a definite reason for continued intervention in the North. Right-wing Tories and sections of the British Army fear that IRA victory will lead to the creation of "a Cuba in the Irish Sea". But the very machinery that Britain has set up for maintaining its control over Ulster, has grown to enormous proportions during the last fifty years and it will not be a simple matter to dismantle this repressive machinery. The Army and other right-wing forces in Britain will bring pressure on the government to take 'considered and co-ordinated efforts' against the Republicans. The intransigent opposition to any form of British compromise would however, emanate from the Unionist forces in Ulster—the Frankenstein monster that has grown under overt and covert British assistance.

The National Question of Northern Ireland, if one may be permitted to call it so, has strange peculiarities. The Catholics and the Protestants are not different nationalities and hence the absence of the customary 'two nation' feature. There is no minority secessionist demand on the part of the Ulster Catholics. There is a demand for the incorporation of both the majority (Protestants in Ulster) and the minority into a larger state (The Republic of Ireland) of the minority's affinity. The struggle of the Catholic minority is a continuation of the

Irish national liberation struggle which met with partial success, in 1921, involving the partition of Ireland and the creation of the 'Irish Free State' comprising three of the country's four provinces. The present phase of the struggle is for the ending of the direct British rule over Ulster and its reunification with the rest of the country. The Unionists or the Protestant majority have always sided with British imperialism against the Irish freedom struggle, at first in opposition to liberation in toto, and now against reunification. The role of the Unionists is similar to that of the customary colonial elite supporting imperialism against the forces of national liberation. But what is peculiar is the Northern Ireland situation, again, is the mass base of the Unionists, among the petty-bourgeois and working sections of the Ulster Protestants. Such elite-cum-mass based opposition to their absorption into the Irish State, has been caused both by hangers of past conflicts and persistent rivalries in the field of economic competition.

In the past, there had been periodic conflicts between the Protestant descendants of the 17th Century settlers and the Catholic descendants of the native Irish. Besides, sections of the Protestants had developed a supremacist ideology that found institutional expression in the Orange Order. In the field of economic competition, Protestants fear that full independence from Britain would jeopardise their position of entrenched privileges. Such fears are wide spread both among the Protestant-industrial, landlord, merchant-elites, as well as among the petty-bourgeois and working sections and the farming population. For almost a century, in the context of Belfast's industrialisation, the Protestants have been far more favourably placed than the Catholics in regard to securing employment. The Protestants have always found employment in the skilled trades, while the Catholics are relegated to unskilled and other menial jobs. In the ranks of the unemployed in Ulster, the Catholics outnumber the Protestants, even though the former

constitute less than one third of the economically active population. Given their supremacist ideology and the relatively privileged position in a "statelet" sustained and protected by the British government, the Protestant elites and the masses are naturally driven to be averse towards their being incorporated into a free and unified Irish State—which, in their view would be the embodiment of Catholic hegemonism, and in which they fear, they will be discriminated against and their privileged position considerably weakened. Their fears and bigotry, however unfounded, — for 80,000 Ulster Protestants abandoned by the Unionists have experienced easy assimilation into Southern Ireland, are nevertheless a party of reality. The violent campaigns of the IRA and other Republican groups would only aggravate the Protestants' fears and bigotry. The Republicans are, on the one hand, actively ostracised by a government of their affinity in Dublin, while on the other, are pitted against an irrevocably hostile Protestant community which constitutes the majority in Ulster—the Republicans main battle ground.

But the Republicans are undaunted. They have faith in history, which they claim, is on their side. After all, it is the "faith of their fathers (though now, not necessarily or only Catholic, but almost a revolutionary faith in the struggle against imperialism and oppression) burning still, in spite of dungeon, fire and sword"! The post partition struggle for reunification of Ireland has gone through several phases and the struggle is continued on different fronts by different organisations, but with one all consuming objective. From the political wing of the official IRA, the Sinn Féin (Ourselves Alone) was formed as a splinter, the Irish Republican Socialist Party. The INLA is an offshoot of the latter party. It has Marxist leanings and is said to be maintaining close links with West Asian guerrillas and the Basque ETA group. As we remarked earlier, their strategy involves "spectacular" acts of violence against the British State. They were responsible for the liquidation of Mr. Airey Neave,



the Conservative spokesman on Northern Ireland, at Westminster, and are also alleged to be involved in the murder of the British Ambassador to The Hague. They are numerically much smaller than the Provisional IRA, with whom they have links, but act independently.

The Provisional IRA, (Provos) broke off from the official IRA, in the early 1970's, when the parent body became Marxist oriented, and had since then become the largest and the most powerful group. From their beginnings as a badly organised and ineffective street army, and almost driven to the brink of defeat in 1978 - as a result of the very "effective measures" undertaken by Roy Mason, the Labour Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and his GOC Lt. General Timothy Creasy -, the Provos have made a dramatic comeback, emerging stronger than before with almost an impregnable cellular internal structure. Since November 1978, they have been concentrating their attacks on "economic targets", British Soldiers and RUC Policemen, fifty of whom have been killed this year, compared to last year's figure of thirty one. They have been careful, not to harm or cause death to innocent civilians. They have also developed a highly successful publicity machine causing international embarrassment to the British government. Their endeavours to attract the attention of USA, with 30 million Irish exiles and a President committed to human rights, met with phenomenal success, when towards the end of last year, the Washington Post highlighted the story of 350 prisoners (PROVOS) languishing naked (with only a blanket), in cells papered with their own excreta. It was a cunningly executed publicity stunt which caught the British authorities unawares. The "increasingly noisy Irish lobby in US", as any irritated Englishman would put it, has also, begun to make its presence felt. We hear of the US suspending supply of weapons to the Royal Ulster Constabulary, while Governor Hugh Carey of New York has shown interest in the matter as have

also Senator Kennedy and Speaker Tip O'Neill.

The IRA's, or perhaps the Republicans' biggest drawback is their narrow mass base which results in elitist style of operation. The only time a mass movement championing the cause of the Ulster minorities, developed, was during the time of the Civil Rights Movement in the late 1960's. This was a movement mainly by of the Catholic population demanding reform within the Northern Ireland state, that found sympathetic resonance in the South and had the indirect support of the media and big business interests, who put pressure on the government to introduce reforms. The movement itself was Non-sectarian, open to Protestants as well as Catholics; it avoided the issue of reunification and it was committed to non-violence. Two factors directly contributed to the launching and the rapid growth of the movement: The post-war free education, thanks to which, the backward Catholics were able to eschew their customary diffidence; and the liberal atmosphere coming in the wake of a concentrated inward flow of capital in the late 1950's and early 60's, replacing the "traditional industries with new outside owned firms".

The CRM reached its high water mark when the British government suspended the Stormont government in Northern Ireland, thus ending more than fifty years of Unionist rule. The total failure of the Stormont government is best summed up by Norman Furmiss in his "Northern Ireland As Case Study of Decentralization in Unitary States" (World Politics, Vol xxvii, No 3, April 1975): The Stormont government could not initiate any long-range development schemes; it retained restrictions on civil liberties unlike in any other part of Britain; and it fostered a "hothouse" atmosphere in which traditional hatreds flourished. The Stormont government was replaced by the power sharing Executive, which had the support of both London and Dublin governments, business interests, top-rung Catholics and major Unionists in Northern

Ireland. The new arrangement was described as the greatest attempt ever to reform the Northern State and was hailed as one that granted far reaching concessions on the question of Irish Unity. These new developments were viewed to be pregnant with great possibilities, but alas, for the Protestant backlash. The bulk of the Protestant people have always looked askance at any attempt at reforms, which to them, were infringement on their privileged position, and historically every British inspired attempt at reforms has generated its own gravedigger in the form of violent Protestant backlash. On this occasion when Protestant bigotry lashed back violently against the civil rights campaign, not merely all attempts at reforms were shelved, but the unprepared Catholics committed to non-violence became the targets of criminal assaults. The British Army was rushed in, to maintain law and order. The British Army has been there ever since, ostensibly as a neutral force, but actually in support of the Unionists and indulging in acts of counter-terrorism against Republican terrorism. The attack on the defenceless Catholic ghettos and the increasingly partisan role of the British Army provoked the IRA (now the PROVOS) to re-emerge, convinced that their earlier decision (after 1962) to eschew armed politics was a great mistake. The ten years that have followed since 1969, have been a decade of violence, a decade that saw over 2000 killings and over 20,000 persons suffering injuries, but at the end if it no body seems to be anywhere near anykind of a settlement.

Apart from minor left groupings and dissident sections of the media, who have raised the "Pull out Troops" demand, there is unanimity of views among the major British political Parties. The Irish question has never been the opposition's cudgel to castigate the government

The British bungling of the Irish question is without parallel, at least from the point of view of the objective results of British actions, in any other country in the world, grappling with the problem of national minorities, or the "National Question".

# The structure of global power

SUPERPOWERS

by Bertie Gajameragedara

The tripartite relationship between US, USSR and China constitutes one of the major structural aspects of the World balances of forces today. Changes that have been taking place in the World situation in the current decade have been ultimately related to the changing character of the relations between these 3 centres of power. The present character of this relationship, to a considerable degree, has been determined by the new orientation that took place in the global foreign policy strategy of the US still the most dominant single power in the contemporary world.

The basic factor which explains the changing character of the US world policy and thus, its relationship with other major powers particularly the relationships with China and the Soviet Union, is the recognition by the US leadership of the relative decline of US power and influence in the world arena, specifically after Vietnam.

The clue to an understanding of the relations between the US on the one hand and Peking and Moscow on the other, lies in the way the US approached the fundamental problem of a global policy since the late 1960's (about 1968/69).

Henry Kissinger was the leading American who attempted to understand the basic problems of the US global policy from a consistent and articulate point of view, when he served as the Special Assistant to Nelson Rockefeller in 1968.

Kissinger clearly recognized that the US power has been declining relatively, due to 3 main factors:

1. The advance of the Soviet towards the status of a 1st

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ranking nuclear power which by the end of the 1960's threatened to give her a status of parity vis-a-vis America. 2. The emergence of new leading centres of power - namely Europe, Japan and China. 3. The traumatic experience of Vietnam.



Brezhnev

As a result of these new circumstances in the world Kissinger concluded that there was the need to redefine the American leadership role in the world. The US foreign policy strategy, upon which the character of the world balance of forces depended to a marked degree, can be considered as a persistent **attempt on the part of the American leadership to perpetuate the dominant role of America in an altered World context.**

Kissinger as the chief strategist of the new US foreign policy remained within the traditional problematique of US foreign policy. He fundamentally accepted the dual foreign policy object which Truman had declared in March 1947. - Namely, opposing "aggression" (on the part of the Communist powers) and supporting "free peoples". However, in relation to the first part of the

objective, Kissinger rejected what he called "undifferentiated globalism". That is, the almost automatic tendency obtained in the US foreign policy before 1968, to intervene anywhere in the world against what they thought to be "communist aggression". Instead he suggested the need for the application of US power in a restrained manner, in order to achieve well defined policy objectives.

On the other hand, Kissinger suggested a new approach towards the US relations with the 2 leading communist powers. He said that the stability and order in international relations always depended on the ability of the great powers to establish some form of understanding among themselves. According to this theoretical proposition Kissinger came to the conclusion that the US should strive to establish a political understanding or what he called "a conception of international order" with the USSR, particularly in view of the fact that the USSR had an ability to challenge the US anywhere in the world. Kissinger also pointed out very significantly, that the trouble with the American was their inability to think about world politics in a subtle manner, particularly in terms of balance of power. This, in effect amounted to a deliberate attempt on the part of Kissinger to reject the predominant tendency in America (ie. to confront the USSR on the basis of the assumption that there was an irreconcilable conflict between the 2 world power centres), and to replace it by a balance of power policy. This in fact can be considered as the most fundamental strategic guideline that Kissinger introduced to the practice of American foreign policy.

As far as the USSR is considered, this implied that the US should now endeavour to establish a global political understanding on the basis of a wide ranging mutual political accomodation.



When China is concerned, this implied in practice a deliberate attempt on the part of US to exploit the difference between the USSR and China in order to "manage" the US relations with the 2 leading communist power, and definite rejection of the hitherto accepted "monolithic character" of the world communist movement. However, largely because of the US involment in Vietnam, and partly because of the tendency of some U.S. foreign policy analysts to consider the Sino-Soviet conflict as one centering on some tactical problem of the world communist movement, no attempt whatsoever was made to change the American policy towards China and to accomodate the widening conflict between the two Communist powers. **However, the most fundamental strategic meaning of America's relations with China in the current decade is the deliberate attempt made by the American leadership to exploit the Sino-Soviet differences for the management of her relations with the two Communist powers.**

#### USSR.

From about the mid-1950's onwards the USSR stood for accomodation with the West, particularly with the US. The downfall of Khrushchev in 1964 did not result in a noteworthy change in the policy of 'peaceful co-existence' which had been declared in 1956. However, until the end of the 1960's the US did not reciprocate to the USSR initiatives towards the establishment of a general detente relationship between the East and West. In the meantime, the Western powers proceeded jointly with the Soviet Union to eliminate any possible occurrence of a head-on clash between the two sides.

The fact that the US did not endeavour to establish a general detente relationship with the USSR was partly due to the inferiority of the Soviet weapons system, both nuclear and conventional vis-a-vis Western military power. **Therefore, the Soviet leadership, since the mid 1960's (after Khrushchev's downfall) adopted a policy of developing their weapons system**

**to a level which enabled the USSR to achieve a status of parity vis-a-vis the US. Once the USSR demonstrated this ability to achieve a status of parity and even surpass the US in respect of weapons, then the Soviet leadership oriented their world policy to establish a general detente relationship or a broad political accomodation with the US. This was by the end of the 1960's. The Soviet policy had the following objectives:**

(a) Establishment of Soviet superpower status globally and compelling the west to recognise this status. (b) To effect a general settlement on the European problem. This meant the establishment of the legitimacy of the European frontiers resulting from the division of the continent following the second World War. (c) The establishment of some form of regulated bilateral relationship with the US.

Accordingly, the main thrust of Soviet world policy was to evolve a regulated, normalized and broadened relationship with the USA and the West. One of the Chief problems the Soviet leadership confronted since the mid 1960's onwards was that of reorienting their domestic economy, which was based on heavy industry, with a view to fulfilling consumer needs by devoting major attention to the increased production and supply of consumer durables. From the point of view of the formulation of Soviet defence policy, the main significance of this imperative need for economic reorientation, was the Soviet leadership belief that the only possible way to develop Soviet agriculture and light industry was to reduce defence expenditure by bringing an end to the strategic arms race with the US. This then was one of the key motivations of Soviet world policy in the decade of the 1970's.

The general detente policy of the USSR was in the first place intended to bring an end to the acute confrontation with the US. It seems that the Soviet leadership, like their western counterparts, had been firmly convinced of the need to regulate their bilateral relationships on the basis of the mutual recognition of the status



Carter

quo in the West. One can argue that this objective was ever present in Soviet world policy since the end of World War II. **What differs in the current decade however is that the USSR, unlike in the past, is capable of bringing direct pressure to bear on the Western powers, due largely to her nuclear weapons systems and to the phenemonal augmentation of her conventional forces in the eastern half of Europe.**

There is another objective of this policy, namely the challenges posed by the Chinese to the Soviet Union in the East. That is so say, since the mid 1960's the immediate attention of the Soviet world policy had to be devoted to confront problems emanating from two strategic theatres which were intimately connected with the security of the USSR namely the East and West.

One of the problems which arises in respect of the general Soviet foreign policy strategy in the West is the problem concerning Soviet objectives in Western Europe. There is no doubt that the Soviet Union has endeavoured and continues to endeavour to establish the legitimacy of the Eastern European borders and to increase the Soviet trade and technological contacts with Europe through the establishment of a general detente relationship with the US and the western European

powers, having accepted that the Western European powers themselves had taken actions to broaden this economic relationship with the Soviet Union and her Eastern European allies.

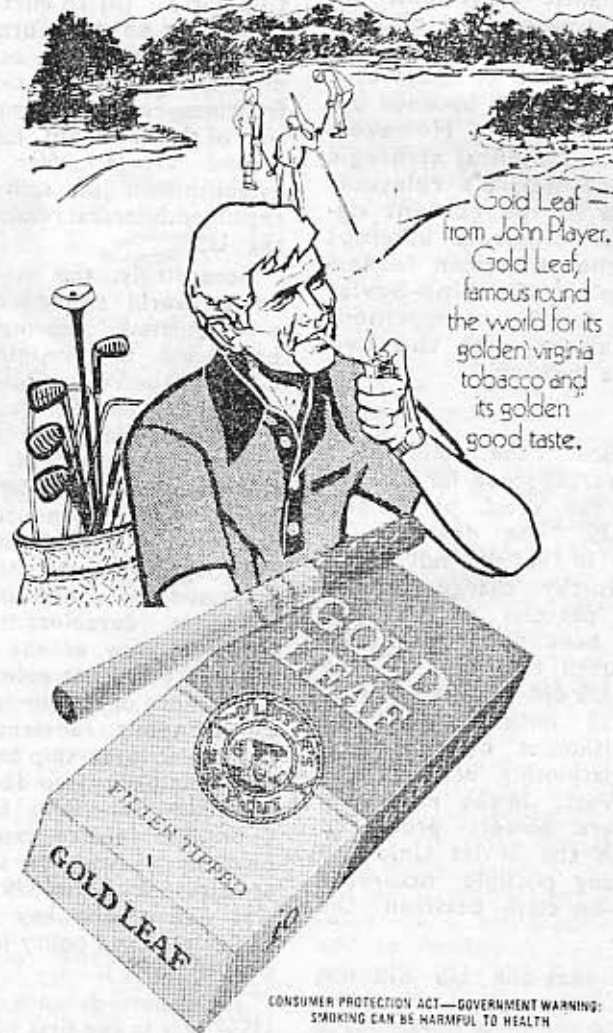
The most noteworthy example of this 'mending' of Western relations with the East was the policy of 'Ostpolitik' followed by Willy Brandt. The Western European leaders have expressed a great deal of anxiety to the effect that the Soviet Union would attempt to cause a breakup in the strategic relations between Europe and America with a view to bring Western Europe, the strategically and otherwise most important region in the world, into the Soviet orbit ('Finlandization' of Europe). This means that the position western Europe is going to occupy in the Soviet world foreign policy strategy remains one of the key problems in the world balance of forces today.

During the 1960's Khrushchev, in order to establish worldwide accomodation with the West, didn't want to confront the West in the periphery. (Example, Vietnam—when in 1962 Khrushchev proposed a negotiated settlement. During this period the USSR did not want to provide military assistance to the DRV/NLF).

After Krushchev however, the new Soviet leadership adopted a policy of providing material support to countries and movements fighting the West while continuing to avoid the risk of a direct conflict with the USA. For instance, the USSR extended support to North Vietnam but only in the form of military supplies and similarly when the war broke out in the Middle East in June '67, and again in October 1973, the Soviet and American leaderships consulted each other with a view to avoiding a direct clash.

This policy of exploiting localized issues without risking a direct clash with the West, has been pursued by the Soviet Union in the current decade. This has led to a Soviet presence in areas of the globe which were traditionally considered to be Western spheres of special interest and has resulted in the increasing influence of the USSR in the world today.

## Player's Gold Leaf for good taste.







# End of the long boom

by Upali Cooray

The spectre of 1929 is once again haunting the capitalist world. As 1979 draws to a close we are witnessing the unfolding of the most serious crisis the international capitalist system has experienced since 1929. The frenzied scramble for metallic currencies in September and October 1979 which pushed the price of gold as high as \$ 437 an ounce indicates not only the deep-going crisis of the international monetary system but also the widespread uncertainties about the scope and extent of the economic recession that is now setting in. This is the third recession world capitalism has experienced within the short space of a decade.

The 70's would undoubtedly go down in history as the decade of monetary crises and recessions; as the decade which marked the end of the long economic boom, the era of full employment and rising living standards; the decade in which the sleeping giant of the imperialist countries, its working class, began to wake up from its long slumber and flex its muscles.

But above all the 7th decade of the 20th Century will be remembered as the decade which shattered the myth that capitalism would no longer experience cyclical crisis, that with a little help from John Maynard Keynes, capitalism has now mastered the art of maintaining a crisis-free economy.

### Synchronisation of economic crises.

During the long wave of expansion which advanced capitalist countries experienced for nearly 25 years after the 2nd world war, there were no long-lasting

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economic crises. Periods of slower economic growth in one country did not threaten to draw other countries into a dangerous downward spiral. For instance the West German recession of 1966-67 occurred at a time when Britain, France, Japan and Italy were experiencing economic growth enabled West Germany to avoid the worst effects of the recession by an export drive directed at these markets. In other words during the long boom, economic crisis of different countries were not synchronized.

Beginning with the 70's however, the tendency has been for economic downturn and recession in all or a significant number of of capitalist countries to occur simultaneously. Thus the first international recession when it occurred in 1970-71 involved all the advanced Capitalist countries except West Germany. And after a short lived "speculative boom" in 1972-73 the economics of the imperialist countries plunged head-long into the first generalized recession since 1929-33. Since then none of these countries have succeeded in pulling themselves out of the vicious circle of excess capacity, falling rates of profits, slowing down of investments, inflation and recession.

Thus the first year of boom after the 74-75 recession was followed by a slow-down in

growth in 1977. Although there was a slight recovery in 1978 the symptoms of yet another and more pronounced recession began to appear in some countries already in 1979.

This deterioration of the international capitalist economy is not caused by "bloody-minded" trade unionists. They are seeking, and not always successfully to ensure that wages do not fall too far behind prices which are continuously rising. Nor is it the result of the monetary crises. The economic crisis preceded the monetary crisis and in part accelerated its outbreak. Nor is it caused by Oil Sheiks who are trying to make sure that their real incomes do not fall due to the inflation in imperialist countries.

The causes of the present economic crisis are more profound. The slacking of technological innovation, excess capacity in key sectors of the economy such as steel, automobiles, petrochemical, synthetic textiles, naval construction and electronics, and the consequent decline in investments, the growing gap between the capacity of production and buying power, compounded by mountains of indebtedness (families as well as companies). In Marxist terminology it is a periodic crisis capitalism inevitably experiences as a result of the growth of

TABLE I  
UNEMPLOYMENT IN IMPERIALIST COUNTRIES (IN MILLIONS)

	USA	ITALY	BRITAIN	JAPAN	FRANCE	WEST GERMANY	OTHER * IMPERIALIST COUNTRIES
1975 MAY	8.2	1.3	0.9	1.3	0.9	1.1	2.4
1978 OCTOBER	5.9	1.7	1.4	1.6	1.2	1.0	4.7

\* includes AUSTRALIA? CANADA, NEW ZEALAND & BENEFIX COUNTRIES.

organic composition of capital and the falling rate of profit.

The synchronization of economic crisis itself is not an accidental feature. It is the result of economic transformations that occurred in the preceding period of capitalist growth and expansion. Primarily it is due to greater and greater internationalization of production accompanied by increased division of labour among all imperialist countries. This internationalism of production has occurred through further international concentration of capital—the rise of multinational firms. These multi-nationals which produce surplus value in a number of countries simultaneously are less amenable to the anti-cyclical measures applied by nation states.

### Rising Unemployment

The re-appearance of unemployment in advanced capitalist countries in the 70's is one important indicator of the deepgoing character of the present crisis of international capitalism. The era of over-full employment or even full employment is a thing of the past. Unemployment in the imperialist countries which stood at 10 million during the recession of 1970-71 rose to 16 million in 1974-75. By the end of 1978 a period which is officially referred to as the "upturn", registered unemployed had risen to 17 million. Since this figure under-represents the real number of unemployed persons, the actual total of unemployed is now probably more than 20 million.

When the coming recession gets underway the number of

persons officially registered as unemployed would exceed 20 million and the actual total would exceed 25 million.

Rising unemployment combined with the austerity measures that are now being applied by the governments of advanced capitalist countries in order to curb inflation, resulting in a reduction of real incomes of the masses, erosion of living standards and reduction in their purchasing power. This in turn has the effect of lengthening the duration of the recession.

### Inflation to slumpflation

After the great depression in the 1930's the imperialist countries sought to avoid deep cyclical downturns by resorting to Keynesian techniques of deficit financing. Since the 70's the creation of such inflationary buying power, which in the first two decades after the World War II helped to modify the effects of economic recessions, has failed to revive economic growth and industrial production. During the 70's the international capitalist economy has passed from permanent inflation stimulating economic upswing to stagflation in 1970-71 and to slumpflation in 1974-75; that is inflation and price increases are now persisting during a period of outright reduction in productive activity and of increases in unemployment.

The staggering rates of inflation that is observable in the imperialist countries is not the result of oil price hikes by OPEC countries, but the product of more than 3 decades of infla-

tionary economic policies by these nations. The massive funds spent on military expenditure—the permanent arms economy) which in 1975 alone accounted for \$250 thousand million is one cause. No imperialist government is prepared to reduce the vast amount of funds squandered on military expenditure. But the main cause of inflation undoubtedly is the massive growth of credit in the private sector—that is bank loans and paper money that financed the economic boom. The imperialist economics "sailed towards expansion on a sea of debts whose cumulative effects necessarily accelerated inflation".

Thus, since the beginning of 1977 the volume of credit in U. S. has risen at annual rate of 14%. In the last quarter of 1978 consumer product rose by 26%, mortgages by 24% and loans by 22%. However production in 1978 increased by 5.5% while the volume of retail sales rose only by 1.5%. Thus an increase in the volume of retail sales by 1.5% required an increase in the volume of credit by 14% to 20%.

If the flow of credit is severely controlled or stopped there would be massive overproduction and a catastrophic rise in unemployment. This in fact is the dilemma of the ruling classes of imperialist countries. If they try to control inflation by checking off credit and pruning government expenditure, they may plunge headlong into a recession, the depth and the extent of which they cannot predict. If they allow the economy to steam ahead or even roll along, inflation will get stronger and it may become even more difficult to control.

### Disintegration of the international monetary system.

The Bretton-Woods agreement in 1944 sought to escape from the dilemma that has confronted the capitalist economy since World War I: that is either maintenance of Gold standard with more and more catastrophic crises of overproduction or abandonment of the Gold standard and a return towards economic nationalism.

TABLE II

### DEBT IN THE UNITED STATES (In thousand million dollars)

Year	Gross National Product	Public Debt	Private Debt
1946	208.5	269.4	153.4
1950	284.5	239.4	276.8
1955	398.0	269.8	392.2
1960	503.0	301.0	566.1
1965	684.9	367.6	870.4
1969	932.1	380.0	1,247.3
1974	1,335.0	666.00	2,000.0



protectionism etc which would be equally disastrous for the international capitalist system. The solution consisted of basing capitalist currencies both on gold and on the dollar, maintaining stable rates of exchange and establishing rules tolerating a degree of inflation, above all when a crisis of over-production was impending. The price of gold was fixed at \$35 an ounce.

So long as inflation was moderate and the dollar lost its purchasing power at a slower rate than the currencies of other important imperialist countries, the system functioned satisfactorily, as far as the imperialist countries were concerned. No one complained about the U. S. balance of payment deficit then, because without such a deficit the Bretton Woods system could not have functioned. The moment the inflation of the dollar became greater than that of other cur-

TABLE III  
SHARE OF MAIN IMPERIALIST COUNTRIES (%) in  
TOTAL WORLD EXPORTS OF MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS

	USA	WEST GERMANY	FRANCE	U.K.	ITALY	JAPAN
1968	20.1	19.4	8.2	11.6	7.3	10.6
1970	18.5	19.8	8.7	10.8	7.2	11.7
1972	16.1	20.2	9.3	10.0	7.6	13.2
1974	17.2	21.7	9.3	8.8	6.7	14.5
1976	17.2	20.5	9.7	8.8	7.1	14.6
1977	15.0	20.7	9.9	9.4	7.6	15.4
1978 3rd Quarter	16.1	20.8	10.1	9.9	7.2	15.8

rencies, when the world's holding of dollars expanded out of all proportion to the rapidly diminishing stock of gold held by U. S. the Bretton Woods system broke down. On August 15, 1971 Nixon officially unhinged the fixed relationship between dollar and gold. The Dollar became inconvertible in terms of Gold. Since

then the price of an ounce of gold has jumped from \$ 35 to \$530.

The international monetary system remains in crisis. On the one hand the capitalist central banks have no reliable substitute for the dollar as a reserve currency. Since Nixon unhinged

(Continued on Page 30)

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



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**NOT the BIGGEST**  
**NOT the TALLEST**  
**But!**

**It's the Best.**  
**Say the Guests**  
AND "THE BEST"  
IS GETTING BETTER

# Conjunctions and communalism

AS I  
LIKE IT

‘Only connect,’ wrote the novelist E. M. Forster, summing up his liberal philosophy of bringing together those separated by prejudices and animosities. And, of course, the grammatical function of a conjunction is to connect. But a grammatical exercise on conjunctions can nevertheless be a vehicle for reinforcing communal prejudices, as is evident from a test paper in English language set to O-Level students in a big Colombo school recently. One question in it asked candidates to pick the correct conjunctions to link the clauses and sentences in a passage. If students made the right choice of conjunctions, this is how the passage would have read:

‘When you go to Jaffna for the first time you feel as though you have gone to a completely different country. Every thing there is so different from ours. So for a moment you feel a stranger in your own country. After some time you get accustomed to it. But unless you know their language you cannot be comfortable there.’

## April days

R. D. Laing, the rebel against the psychiatric establishment, spent several months in Sri Lanka in 1971, studying Buddhist meditation. One experience from his sojourn is preserved in a conversation with his small son Adam recorded in his book *Conversations with Children*. Headed ‘Ceylon-April 1971’ the dialogue opens:

‘Adam (on hearing of fighting, shooting and killing in Kandy, 14 miles away) I want to go to Kandy and kill people and cut them up and eat them for breakfast with a big steel gun and a stiff trigger.’

## Silkworms and sin

There was another visitor in Sri Lanka in the April days whose

words were recalled to me by the current controversy on whether a *dharmista* society should foster silkworm breeding. This visitor was Rene Dumont, the French agronomist, who arrived in Sri Lanka as an adviser to the Government only a few days before the April insurrection exploded. Dumont was so shocked by the slaughter and tortures that he became one of the initiators of the Ceylon Committee which appealed for the defence of human rights in this country.

In his book *Paysanneries aux Abois* Dumont recalls that on an earlier visit to Sri Lanka he had suggested that the silk industry be developed as a means of diversifying the rural economy, but was told that this was impossible in a Buddhist country since it involved boiling silkworms in their cocoons. At this point Dumont adds a footnote, which (translated) reads:

‘However it was a Buddhist monk who killed Prime Minister Bandaranaike; and we shall soon speak of the bloody repression of 1971. Mrs. Bandaranaike has certainly decided not to take account any more of this prejudice.’

The Sri Lanka section of the book (published in 1972) carries an acknowledgement to Chandrika Bandaranaike for information and assistance.

## Problem corner

You are given ten bags of coins, each containing ten coins. All coins bear the same value, but in one bag (you aren’t told which) all the coins are counterfeit. A genuine coin weighs ten grammes, and a counterfeit coin nine. You are given a pointer scale, which weighs in units of one gramme. How will you find out, in one and only one weighing, which bag contains the counterfeit coins?

WITH

THE

COMPLIMENTS OF

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OF

CITIZEN

WRIST WATCHES

& CLOCKS



# The NSSP and the National Question

by Vickramabahu Karunaratne

**A** Democratic solution to the national question in any satisfactory form cannot be achieved within the capitalist framework. All capitalist leaderships have grown beyond the age of radical solution. None of them are really independent of the neo-colonial forces. Imperialist integration of the capitalist international order has made a real solution within the capitalist system impossible.

Still, the national question is one of the democratic questions for which imperialists themselves have been trying to give half-solutions. In recent times. The creation of Bangla Desh is one good example. Many developments on the African continent can be given as examples. In particular the present imperialist policy is to appraise national minorities, as to counter to revolutionary influences.

In Sri Lanka (Eelam?) the national question in relation to Tamil speaking people has been aggravated to the degree where Tamils have reached the point of demanding separation. However, their bourgeois leadership have been putting forward concrete proposals for a unitary state in the past. Banda-Chelva pact in 1958 and Dudley-Chelva pact in 1966 are the two specific instances where these proposals were considered seriously by the two capitalist parties based on the Sinhala masses.

Though separation is posed seriously by the militants, the TULF leadership, even today, is prepared to discuss a compromise solution and such a solution seems to have a popular appeal. Even after so much of violence and rivalry, this attitude of the Tamil bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie is due to the very complex distribution of the Tamil speaking people.

(The author, a lecturer in Engineering at the Peradeniya University, is general secretary of the N. S. S. P. - Nava Sama Samaja Pakshaya.)

In relation to national consciousness, Tamil speaking people can be grouped into four categories:

(a) Tamils of the north and a section in the east with interest in land, commerce, and small industry, possess a national consciousness. Here the preponderance of this has lately overshadowed caste differences and even class struggle.

(b) Estate workers of upcountry and mid country who are represented by the estate sector Trade Unions. They are, though backward, conscious of the class interest and hence tied to TU's very strongly. Even the most rightwing TU leader Thondaman has more interest in a separate deal with the UNP than continuing with the TULF.

(c) Tamil merchants, professionals and workers distributed in most of the southern cities, predominantly in Colombo. They have roots and connections with either of the above categories, but their main interest is in the area in which they live. These Tamils are mostly urban in outlook and are eager for a unitary solution.

(d) Tamil speaking Muslims (peasants and fishermen) mostly in east and north west. Though lately they were drawn increasingly towards the TULF, they distrust the northern Tamil upperclass leadership.

In this context the democratic solution to this problem in concrete terms, will be.

(a) All discrimination in education, employment and land allocation must end.

(b) A democratic regional administration of the northern and eastern provinces with powers over local administration, colonisation and land usage etc. must be established.

(c) The rights and facilities for the Tamil people to carry out all their transactions with the state in their language must be assured.

(d) A proper share of the national product must be attached for the development of the northern and eastern provinces.

(e) The right of self determination (i.e. right of secession) must be inscribed in the constitution and full citizenship should be given to all those who consider this as their motherland.

Working class and left organisations, while fighting for the above program, are duty bound to defend (with criticism) all reforms and concessions given by the bourgeois governments. In this aspect failure of the left movement in 1958 and 1966 is evident. Though the stand taken by the Samasamaja party in 1958 was heroic, it also did not come out clearly in defence of the concessions included in the Banda-Chelva pact.

Today JR's government, in order to achieve stability and integration of the internal market, is being pressurised by international finance capital to give certain concessions to the Tamil speaking people. The government while proposing cooperation with the TULF leadership, is busy liquidating the militants in the Tamil liberation movement. (Tigers etc). By this the government is seeking to rope in the TULF to work within the limits of constitutional Bonapartism.

Concessions under discussion fall into the following categories: (i) University entrance (standardisation), (ii) Employment, (iii) Land and colonization, (iv) Use of the Tamil language, (v) Citizenship rights and other constitutional guarantees.

Already elimination of mediawise standardization, percentage allocation of jobs and district councils have been proposed.

Intense opposition from Sinhala chauvinists can be expected even for these meagre concessions. Already a powerful lobby is pressing for mediawise standardisation and forced colonization. Not only

"Mathru Bhumi" but also the so called progressive intellectuals such as Dr. Colvin Gunaratne have come forward to oppose concessions. It is clear the government will try to balance between TULF and these forces. In the meantime Tamil middle classes will be waiting anxiously for the outcome.

Any talk on the defence of the right of self determination or even rights of Tamils in general has no meaning whatsoever unless we come out in defense of these meagre concessions (however bankrupt they are!) against Sinhala chauvinists. It is by carrying out the fight against the repression by the bonapartist state in the north and east and by critical defense of the concessions, that the correct orientation on the national question can be brought into the working class and mass movement.

Naturally what is most important is to take these issues into the working class mainly through the JCTUAC. Working class is now moving into action on issues, general in nature. The above demands of the Tamils should be incorporated. In addition, the TU movement should be made aware of the dangers of chauvinism. It is by taking these issues into the TU movement and southern masses in general that it will be possible to win the Tamil radical masses from the blind alley of nationalism and isolated terrorism.

Considering the importance of the national question in the field of higher education and in relation to employment, it is necessary to campaign on these issues in the universities. In these campaigns campaigns several myths should be exploded. (i) Myth of Tamils being a privileged group in education, employment and property ownership (ii) myth of historical animosity between

Tamils and Sinhalese. i. e. Race as given in the popular history (iii) myth of South Indian conspiracies to liquidate Sinhala race (iv) myth of preparation of a communal or race war in Jaffna and ill treatment of Sinhalese in Jaffna.

End of . . .

(Continued from Page 27)

dollar from gold in 1971, it is estimated that the official foreign exchange reserves of dollars had actually risen from the 78% to 81%. An international reserve currency detached from the national economy of any capitalist country remains a utopia. On the other hand the persistent weakness of the dollar, which reflect the declining competitiveness of American imperialism in the world market, massive inflation in U. S. A. and the enormous amount of paper dollars circulating in the banking system outside USA leads to periodic convulsions like that of November 1978 which threatens to throw the entire banking system into insolvency.

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## Race, class and revivalism

YOHAN DEVANANDA must not associate me with positions I don't hold and then describe them as 'naive'. Having summarised some of my arguments regarding Buddhism and radicalism, he goes on to say: 'But, of course some so-called Marxists confidently expect that the hold of Buddhism on Sri Lanka will dissolve into thin air when the capitalist contradictions duly mature. If he intends to attribute these views to me, I must say that I am too conscious of the immense ideological weight exerted by organised religion as a buttress of the established social order to believe that it will so easily 'dissolve into thin air'. Still less do I hold that 'the trade unions (!) will then usher in the new era.'

What is really at issue between us is the characterisation of the Sinhala-Buddhist revival which includes such figures as Anagarika Dharmapala and S. Mahinda Thero. While conceding that 'there are certain spurious and unfortunate features of this movement such as chauvinism and racial intolerance,' Yohan Devananda finds in it 'genuine radical elements,' and believes that the one is separable from the other.

I suggest that, on the contrary, the meaning of the co-existence of 'chauvinist' and 'radical' elements in the ideology of these figures is that they believed themselves to be the spokesmen for the oppressed of one race. I contend that in taking this stand, they helped to preserve the fundamental bases of the class structure by strengthening the consciousness of race against class, and by helping to lay the ideological foundations for the oppression of one race by another. It is no accident, surely, that in the racist campaigns of recent months Sinhala chauvinists have put up posters with the head of Anagarika Dharmapala

and his slogans calling for the preservation of 'Sinhala-ness'.

My second question concerns Yohan Devananda's loose use of the word 'liberation'. He writes: 'Prince Siddharta realised the need for seeking a way of liberation for the oppressed... Then came the wilderness experience and the awakening to the path of liberation.'

Was it the 'liberation of the oppressed' or the liberation from Sansara that Buddhism was concerned with? The claim that Buddhism offered 'a way of liberation for the oppressed' must be tested against the social ethic of Buddhism, for which the **Sigala-vada Sutta** is the key document. Trevor Ling's Pelican, **The Buddha** offers a convenient summary, from which I quote one paragraph:

A good master (i. e. employer) is one who may be relied upon

to show consideration towards his employees by allotting each one work suited to his capacity, by supplying them with good food and pay, by providing care for them when they are sick, by sharing with them any unusual delicacies which he receives, and by granting them regular time off from work. In return, employees or servants should show their affection for their master by being out of bed betimes and not going to bed until he has done so, by being contented with the fair treatment they receive, by doing their work cheerfully and thoroughly, and by speaking well of their master to others.

The social ethic reflected in this teaching is hardly 'radical'; it is paternalistic — one that is designed to soften the contradictions of a class society but not to eliminate them.

— Reggie Siriwardena.

## Marx, Lenin and scripture

Touchstone's 'X' and 'Y' argumentation does not meet the basic point I raised. I wrote on Eelam and Marxism, the right of Tamil self-determination and Marxists, and NOT on Eelam or self-determination per se. To put it in another way, if Marx had not written a word or there had been no individual named Karl Marx, I or anybody else could have written on Eelam and self-determination. But I was challenged by two correspondents who not only claim to be Marxists but argue that my presentation of the Marxist position is wrong. Hence the quotations. Surely this is elementary?

In "State and Revolution", for example, Lenin set out the correct Marxist theory of the state as against those whom he regarded as revisionist falsifiers. In doing so, he quoted extensively from Marx and Engels. Zinoviev

and Kamenev, among others, tell us that when Lenin was hiding in the Gulf of Finland, his constant companion was a blue notebook where he had gathered and carefully noted down under different headings, quotations from Marx and Engels. And this was on the eve of the first proletarian revolution in world history. One presumes that Lenin not only knew "the goals of socialist revolution" (Touchstone) but also how best to achieve them.

Much earlier, Lenin made extensive use of quotations from Engels to combat the arguments of the Machist school of philosophy. (**Materialism and Empirio-criticism**).

In debating therefore the correct Marxist position on most topics, Lenin for one, failed to adopt Touchstone's recommended methodology. In fact, the

innumerable theoretical polemics that Lenin entered into with other Marxists did resemble "the theological battles between rival sects of Christians about which of them represents the True Church."

This same view of the incessant debate within the Marxist movement as tiresome and sterile hairsplitting is shared by liberal bourgeois commentators who did not understand, as Lenin did, the need for absolute clarity on questions of theory. Leninism, Bolshevism, in that sense was a product of such debates, among emigre circles. In a rare display of his own feelings, Lenin wrote to Inessa Armand "Such is my fate. One battle after another against political stupidity, vulgarity, opportunism etc. It has been that way since 1893".

The great debate in the Bolshevik party after Lenin's death on the Leninist nature or otherwise of certain courses of policy were fought on what one might call the terrain of Leninism, with all combatants making frequent use of quotations from Lenin. (Stalin "On Opposition").

Another major debate, the Sino-Soviet polemics of the 1960's involving the leading theoreticians of both sides, was in part a "quotation war".

And speaking of quotations, I confess I know my Lenin much better than my Heine, "Theory is grey my friend; the tree of life is ever green". Touchstone throws at me this quote from Heine as used by Lenin. If only Touchstone keeps in touch with Lenin's writings, for instance Lenin's first 'Letter on Tactics', he would have known from the footnotes that this 'quote' is a line of Mephistopheles in Goethe's 'Faust'.

— CHINTAKA.

## International trends

(Continued from page 13)

We have for instance, in an age where colonialism in its classical form has ceased, the problem of settler-colonists; a white minority of settlers governing a land which they claim is their native land, holding all political and economic power, and denying the vast non-white majority elementary human rights, leave alone political freedom and independence. Race (and religion) form part of the governing ideology which sustains and legitimises the state.

In Israel, this has also led to the forced eviction of nearly three million Palestinians from their homeland. The state of Israel in its present form, is founded on a racist and expansionist doctrine; South Africa, at the other end of the demarcated area, also finds sanction in a doctrine called apartheid. Israel receives more official US aid per capita (this exclude grants from Zionist agencies) than any other country. Militarily it is a US bastion, the most powerful in an area which is the Arab heartland. South Africa which has huge western investment, is also a military bastion (the most powerful in black Africa) with the declared duty of guarding the Southern Atlantic and vital sea-lanes eastward. Israel and South Africa have close financial (mainly Zionist) links.

When Ian Smith, with UDI, cocked a snook at London, Britain did (or could do) little. Frustrated, Zimbabwean nationalism in a continent which was being steadily de-colonized, had to seek other means of expression, of asserting its dignity and the fulfilling the common aspiration for freedom.

In the past decade, this choice has often opened the path to armed struggle. At this point, when the battle lines are being drawn, another line also appears — the line of differentiation between various types of 'nationalist' leaders, between say the Mugabes and

Nkomos on the one hand, and the Bishop Muzorewas and the Revd Sitholes, 'black nationalists' in the eyes of the western world. (Heikal has now reported that the good Bishop received several instalments of 200,000 dollars from the Shah!) In another era, independence struggles saw the nationalist pitted against a single, easily recognisable foe, the colonial power. In the post-colonial age, and in a more complex world where domestic and external interests are closely interwoven, the independence (armed) struggle produces a different pattern of conflicts multiple and diverse.

The OAU, the nonaligned and the UN recognise half a dozen liberation fronts. Who supports them? Who arms their enemies? At the 6th summit, Jamaica's Prime Minister Michael Manley took up what he said was a constant criticism levelled at the non-aligned activists by the West. Why do these nonaligned nations "lean" towards the socialist bloc while unreservedly attacking the West? Shouldn't "genuine nonalignment" mean some sort of neutrality or equi-distance between the blocs? Manley's challenging answer makes a point of wider import. Support for national liberation struggles is a fundamental principle of the nonaligned movement from its genesis. If only the West were to support these liberation movements, he said, it would be a matter of enormous satisfaction to everybody. But do they?

Take Polisario. Who helps King Hassan? France, Israel, the US Jordan (at one time) and now Egypt which in turn receives Chinese arms. Who supports Polisario? Libya, Algeria and the socialist countries, in the main. The line-up not only reflects the broad alignment of forces at the international level but also demonstrates how the character of contemporary politics imposes global involvements on a particular conflict even when it is physically confined to a country or area.

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