

LANKA

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UNIONS TO THE FORE



Victoria Project re-examined

L. W. Mediwaka

Who's subsidising whom?

U. Karunatilake

Gamini's new film

Reggie Siriwardena

Free books : An L. G. Reader

The Outsider

ALSO



Pakistan



New Cold War



The Indian Tamils

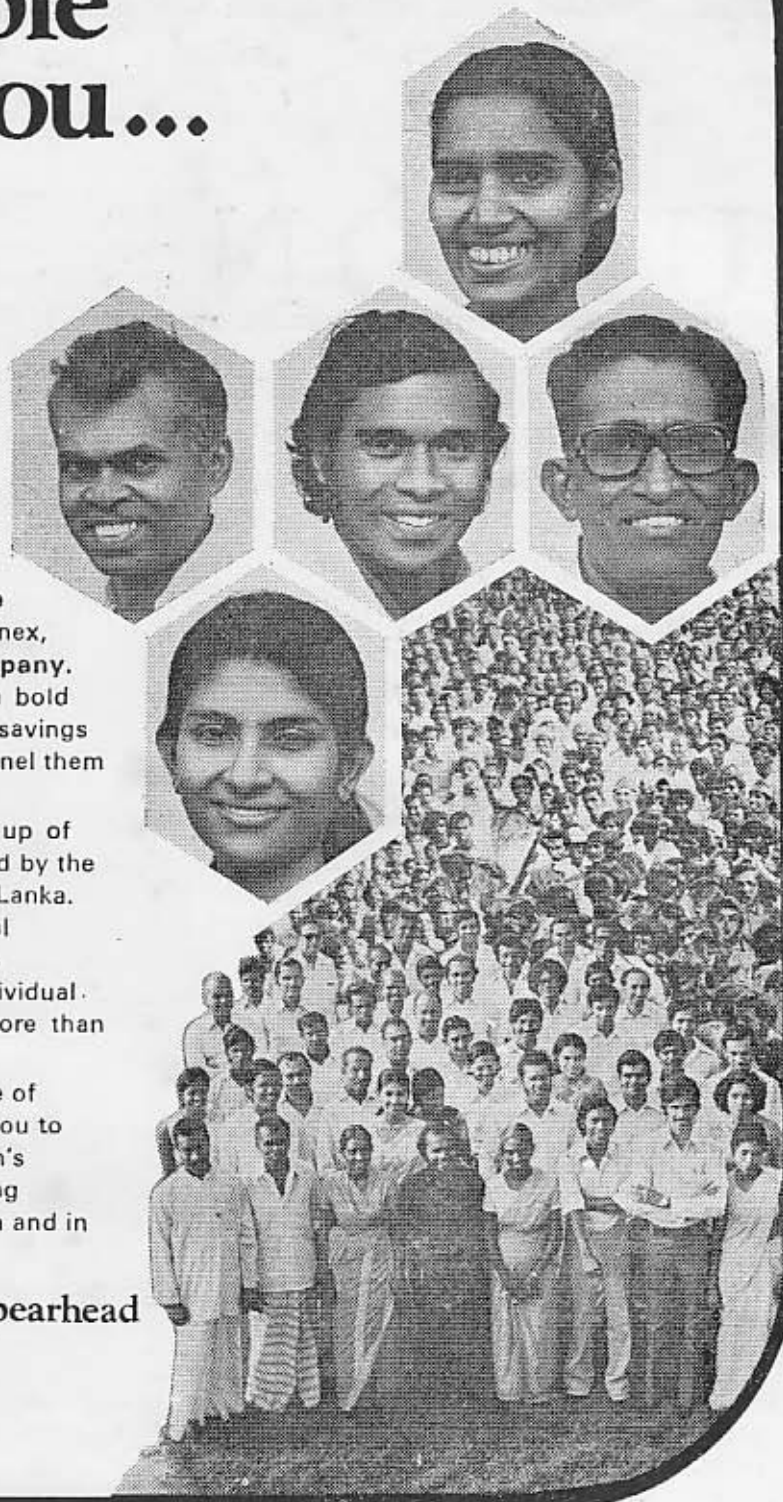
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Friction and Factions?

Political forecast, astrological prediction or just wishful thinking? "SNAP-ELECTION 1980" was the front page headline of the SLFP paper **The Nation** in its 1st February issue. The second headline had a question mark "WILL PREMADASA LEAD THE UNP?"

The story more than suggests serious divisions in the UNP leadership. It speaks of "The growing strength of the Udagama group (now over 100 MP's)". Similar stories appear frequently in the SLFP Sinhala daily **Dinakar**.

Last Will

Laughing off this report UNP'ers say that it is the SLFP which is riven by internal problems. As evidence two UNP front benchers were talking about what was called. "The last will and testament of T. B. Tennakoon." The conversation which was overheard by several parliamentary correspondents took place on the day that the NSA passed the vote of condolence.

Even more than Mr. M. S. Themis the postal department employee, Dambulla Tennakoon symbolized the peoples victory of 1956. UNP'ers claim that they have in their possession a letter circulated by Mr. Tennakoon sometime before his death. The letter castigates the 'radala' (feudal) clique in command of the SLFP.

Was this part of the scurrilous leaflet campaign against Mrs. Bandaranaike and the family? Mr. Tennakoon it is said, was officially asked whether he had in fact written that letter. A popular versifier, Mr. Tennakoon sent a one sentence reply "Yes, I am the author".

Address Unknown

So that OPEC petition which was given the full treatment by the mainstream media was for local consumption only. The Colombo Embassies of OPEC countries made solemn inquiries about the 'state

of the petition' sometime ago. No more. They all take it as a publicity stunt which is now best forgotten.

There was always the question anyway to whom this petition would be submitted and in what manner. The daily press wrote about a delegation of representative Sri Lankans — from all walks of life, from all communities. But which OPEC country would receive them? Now the petition, if it is to leave our shores, will have to be airmailed. But to what address? An Iraqi deputy minister suggested, not very helpfully, that it should be mailed to the US oil companies.

Demarche

Will Sri Lankans require visas to visit France? A French move, according to western diplomats, is imminent. No reason may be given. Nor does Paris need to explain. But many diplomats believe that it has much to do with the propaganda activities of a pro-TULF London-based Co-ordinating Committee which has been organising press conferences and public lectures in Western Europe and in the Scandinavian countries.

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Telephone: 21009.

COVER PICTURE: This picture of two thugs being apprehended by the Police was taken on July 20, 1978. Hundreds of thugs set upon unarmed Bank workers who were on strike. The picture, taken by an ATHTHA photographer, won a President's award. On January 8 this year two Press photographers were assaulted and their cameras smashed when thugs broke up pickets near the Central Bank.

Nationality

Your report on the discussion of ethnic and nationality problems of Sri Lanka under the caption "Scholars Explore and Explode Myths" in your journal of 15th January 1980, although belated is commendable at a time when communalism is exploited by politicians of varying shades. The Social Scientists Association should be congratulated for organising such a discussion which will certainly help to forge better understanding between the two communities without appealing to emotion.

But may I point out that the myth of "Vijayan and Aryan" origin had been "exploded" long before by such eminent Indian social scientists — the great Indologist late Dr. Probod Chandra Bagchi and the well known Bengali linguist late Dr. Sunith Kumar Chatterjee and others over 25 years ago. Had our university dons reflected on these salient

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features very much earlier most of the damage done could have perhaps been avoided.

Yet it is disheartening to note a programme in the S.L. B.C. "A Sinhala Puranaya" which is another "Pujavaliya" version of Valmiki's Ramayana in which it tries to portray Rama and Ravana as Aryans, whereas Sugrewa and Hanuman as Dravidians who conspire to bring about a conflict between Rama and Ravana who were otherwise kith and kin, with a view to Dravidian expansionist moves in Lanka. Perhaps it may be interesting to note here that in early 1950's D.M.K. - oriented dramatists staged their own version of Ramayana under the title "Kamayana" in Madurai in which "Ravana" was glorified as the "great Dravidian king" who withstood the "Aryan Rama". What a strange link between our "Sinhala Language" scholars and D.M.K. - oriented scholars in Madurai? No wonder that in 1956 a group of monks went on a pilgrimage and implored the Dravidian God Kadiragama to make Sinhala the only official language of Lanka!

This discussion could be broad-based to include Indian historians and social scientists too. I hope it may pave the way to widen our common outlook and explode more "myths".

Kandy. **E.A. Vaidyasekara.**

Politics and sport

Muhammed Ali may be the "greatest". Without a doubt he is the greatest boxer ever. He is also the pride of the blacks in America. He was

converted to Islam and it is as a Moslem and a sportsman that he began his campaigns against the holding of the Olympics in Moscow because of Russian troops in Afghanistan.

Now we read that in Africa he learnt what the Africans really think of the American policy, and how the US government opposed a boycott of South Africa which practises the foul and degrading policy of apartheid. It is the same with the Arab campaign against Israel. Don't mix politics with sport. That is what the US and the West have been preaching. Surely we are not that brainless to be fooled by all this? It is not that the US loves sports but it stands by its allies, the racist South African and the racist Jews? It is not that the US loves sport or Islam but that it hates the Soviet Russians. It is all politics. Does Mr. Carter think that black Africans or brown Moslems have no brains to see through this?

Dr. E. S. Ratnasabapathy.
Colombo.

Standardisation

I noticed belatedly in your journal of 15th January, that Dr. Wickramabahu Karunaratne has written "but also the so-called progressive intellectuals like Dr. Colvin Goonaratne have come forward to oppose concessions", meaning concessions to Tamils.

All I ever did was to advocate the reintroduction of subject-wise and media-wise standardisation of raw marks at the G. C. E. "A" level examination if these

marks must be used for ranking of candidates for University admission. I did so in the interests of fairness because the technique is an educationally and statistically valid procedure, and mandatory as the examination is presently constituted.

The charge of being "a so-called progressive intellectual" is impossible to refute. However, I deny the charge that I opposed any "concessions" to a particular ethnic group. Until those who at least by implication call themselves radicals usher in the "age of radical solutions" mentioned in Dr. WK's article, subject and media-wise standardisation is the best method we have of conferring some degree of reliability to raw marks for purposes of ranking.

Dr. Colvin Goonaratna.
Faculty of Medicine
Colombo 8.

LETTER TO MY WIFE

*If I am killed, I want you to
know I have lived
in struggle for life and for man
A world of all for all.*

*If I am killed, a rose
as red as my heart
is the love I leave you*

*If I am killed, it's all the same
I won't see the corn growing
alongside the road
or the show of tenderness for
bare feet,
but I know it will come.*

*If I am killed, it doesn't matter.
Our cause will go on living;
others will continue it.*

The future is brilliant.

Translated by Reggie Siriwardena
(Richardo Morales, teacher, poet and a Sandinista Commander was killed in battle 70 kilometers from Managua, the Nicaraguan capital. He was 43.)

TUs take centre stage

NEWS
BACKGROU

But for the sudden spurt of activity provoked by the Galle by-election national politics seem strangely dormant with few serious confrontations between the main parties. On the Tamil front where events in 1979 were challenging enough to push the government into declaring an emergency, and send the army out with a Churchillian command to wipe out all forms of terrorism before the New Year, things look so quiet that the press did recover a semblance of credibility when it reported the unusually warm welcome extended to Trade Minister Athulathmudali in Jaffna. The Tamil leaders are obviously waiting (some of them with genuine hope and others with some trepidation) for the recommendations of the Presidential Commission on Devolution and District Development Councils.

As for the other major parties, a cynical observer may conclude that there is more of conflict inside each than between them.

A grievously divided Opposition forced to dissipate its energies on internal disputes and leadership problems is in no position therefore to exploit what could, otherwise be an ideal situation — the soaring prices of all essential commodities. Spiralling living costs are rapidly pauperizing the middle class, once the much-vaunted 'bulwark' of a social and political system where the poor were 'cushioned' by social welfare and subsidies.

Opposition immobilised

The government leaders, many of whom have been seasoned in opposition politics, must be thanking their guardian deities each day for the good fortune of an opposition which is so disorganised that it can make no effective use of the mass mood.

Not unnaturally, therefore, the unions have moved onto the centre stage of national politics. The issue after all is economic, and the TU's represent the only



J. R. Jayewardene

organised movement ready for action.

Thuggery in broad daylight on the streets of Colombo, the arrest of several union officials and the brutal assaults on many prominent TU leaders dramatized this new development.

Unions mobilise

Next month, the JCTUAC, which took the lead, will hold a National Convention to which non-members will be invited. Already, organisations that had so far kept aloof of the JCTUAC have expressed a desire to join the fold. One such union is the Estate Staffs Union which claims to have members from over 1000 plantations.

A sign of the times was the strongly worded protest of the CWC (see overleaf). The CWC the largest single union in the country, has a Cabinet Minister as its president.

Responding to a request made publicly at the well-attended Hyde Park rally organised by the JCTUAC, President J. R. Jayewardene summoned a conference of TU representatives. As a result, the immediate issue of working

hours and leave will be studied by a committee headed by the Transport Minister.

Also significant is the formation of a new National Mercantile Union in the private sector by the UNP's JSS. The JSS boss, Industries Minister Cyril Mathew, said on this occasion that the cooperation of the unions was essential for stability.

We publish below President Jayewardene's address to the TU leaders, statements by the Bank Employees Union and the CWC, and an interview with the Secretary of the (New) LSSP.

J. R. on T. U's

President Jayewardene said:

"I am now addressing you as the first trade union leader to be elected to power by the people of Sri Lanka. As such, I have a great sympathy and concern in my heart for trade unions. We have to work in unity. I regret that trade unions had not been consulted on the holidays issue.

"With the introduction of new working hours for public servants—viz: 8 am to 3.30 pm the working day has been reduced by half an hour. As such the government did not think of consulting trade unions. Also the new holiday scheme applies only to government servants. It would not apply to corporation and bank employees.

"I am not a dictator. I shall place your views for consideration by the Cabinet which approved the new holidays scheme. The new 8 a.m to 3.30 p.m working day was introduced to enable everyone to go back home early.

"Travelling is very difficult now. Price of flour too has increased. It has become essential for everyone to get back home early after buying their food and other provisions. The government was still incurring losses. In spite of all these difficulties the government has provided the freedom for everyone including trade union members to air their grievances.

"Some referred to picketing as peaceful picketing while others called it compassionate picketing. I would not allow any form of picketing aimed at overthrowing a democratically elected government. I was completely against picketing. Although workers started picketing in a peaceful manner without any talk it can later lead to a demonstration and an anti-government movement aimed at overthrowing the government.

"A government should be changed only through an election. No one will be allowed to overthrow the government by force. I will not allow a bank union or a political movement to overthrow the government."

Thugs in the Fort

In a letter to the President, the Ceylon Bank Employees Union gave an account of what happened.

"Our Union was scheduled to picket the Bank of Ceylon Head Office at York Street at 12.30 p. m. on the 9th January 1980. Unlike the previous day, where

scores of policemen were present on the street, not a single police officer was to be seen at York Street on the 9th. At about 11.50 a.m. for reasons best known to them, the York Street was closed to traffic by the police. Thereafter nearly six hundred persons gathered unlawfully at York Street and brutally beat anyone whom they suspected to be a picketer. At this time, none of our members were on the street to picket. The President of our Union who was on the doorstep of the Bank of Ceylon was dragged to the pavement and manhandled by thugs in the presence of at least 5 security officers attached to the Bank of Ceylon. About 15 thugs beat up our unarmed President with bicycle chains, and knuckle dusters. He would have certainly been beaten to death had it not been for the intervention of a solitary

CWC on Constitutional and TU rights

In a letter to the President Mt. M. S. Sellasamy C. W. C. General Secretary states:

"We were shocked and sorrowed to know of how a group of Trade Union Picketeers in Fort was set upon by a mob of thugs and brutally assaulted. Among these who have suffered at the hands of these ruffians is Mr. Alavi Moulana, General Secretary of Sri Lanka Independent Trade Union Federation.

constable (Traffic duty) who had apparently strayed there by accident. Immediately afterwards, shocked citizens witnessed the thug beating up this constable mercilessly.

"An employee of the Insurance Corporation was similarly beaten and battered under the mistaken belief that he was an office bearer of our Union. Two prominent trade unionists — Mr. Sarath Navana, Mr. Alavi Moulana and two press photographers were some of the others who were at the receiving end of this brutal assault by the hired thugs. The police arrived a full half an hour later. All this happened just a hundred yards away from the Fort police station and a 'whistles distance' from the Police Headquarters."

"We are writing this letter not with a view to lending support to the campaign of the picketeers but to lodge our strongest protest at Trade Unionist being allowed to be mercilessly attacked by thugs and rowdies.

"We may not necessarily agree with philosophies or campaigns of certain trade unions. But we would certainly fight to defend their right to espouse any cause they cherish.

(Continued on Page 7)

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JR is the true Bonapartist

by Jayantha Somasunderam

Since his interdiction for hoisting black flags on Feb 4 1978. Dr. Vickramabahu Karunaratne, a lecturer in engineering mathematics at the University of Peradeniya, has been the focal personality among the radical Sama Samajists. Expelled from the LSSP in 1972 he launched a newspaper called **Vama Samasamaja** built a faction within the Party and finally became founder-General Secretary of the Nava Sama Samaja Party. The NSSP controls the GCSU whose office bearers were held in custody last month. Karunaratne discussed the Left's response to the current situation.

● Why did the Government react as it did, banning pickets?

They have no alternative. It is vital for them to present to foreign investors the image of a completely docile working class. You're not going to get them investing here otherwise.

But that is not all. The government wants to force the opposition to work within its own constitutional framework. This means that there can be no room for mass agitation. No room for picketing or hartals. In fact some day even ordinary public meetings may be banned.

● How conscious is the working class of this situation?

We are still in the shadow of the coalition politics of the sixties and seventies. The popular fronts have only bred cynicism among the workers. The UNP victory of July 1977 was the high point in this trend. But this situation is now breaking down. Yet the masses are moving into opposition, but not specifically to the Left.

● What then is the immediate task of the revolutionary working class party?

Given the situation it would be fatal to pose an immediate political alternative. This would only alienate the mass movement.

● Aren't you forgetting the UNP unions?

No. They are also being subjected to a kind of radicalism. We see this in the Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya. We see it in the strike of the trishaw drivers. We saw it after the attack on the pickets, the same mob went and almost took over the CTB depots. In their own way they are reacting to the economic situation and fighting the management. In itself the JSS is not necessarily a fascist force. Rather it can be a radical force which we can mobilise on the basis of common demands like the cut in holidays, the rise in prices, etc.

● What of the minorities?

With Amirthalingam coming out openly and supporting the Govern-

... but there are two tendencies in the UNP and divisions will emerge ...

ment when it raised prices we can envisage a further widening of the gap between the leadership of the TULF and its youth wing, the Elangar Peravai. The Left will thus have an opportunity to work more closely with the radicalised element among the Tamil youth and mobilise them towards the realisation of the Tamil nation.

The Muslims are also polarising. See what happened at Slave Island last week. We see the gaping split developing between the establishment types and the poorer Muslims who like everybody except the rich, are being pauperised. These people who rose up against the Police, also testify to this growing radicalism.

● Will the Indian situation have any bearing on what is happening here?

There is a tremendous danger in drawing a parallel between

the Indian political situation and the local. This arises out of people putting too much faith in Parliament. The SLFP is not the only one guilty of this. The LSSP old leadership and the CP are also anxious to promote some kind of coalition to duplicate the Indian experience. But it is not going to be that easy. JR's government will not disintegrate like the Janatha. JR is a much shrewder Bonapartist. Only a struggle of the working class can break the backbone of this government. The SLFP is only looking as far forward as 1983.

● Did not the UNP play into your hands by breaking up a picket which did not involve a mass issue?

Yes they did. It is correct that the cut in holidays mostly

affected the 'office mahataya'. But the UNP is in this sense with its back to the wall. They cannot tolerate any kind of protest for fear of driving away foreign investors. Even the Slave Island incidents are examples of this. But JR is the Bonapartist par excellence. He reacted by making concessions to the bank and corporation employees.

Going back we can cite the attacks on the Vidyalankara students and the CBEU strikes as part of this trend. But at that time people could not clearly perceive the political significance. Today it is different.

● What will be the outcome of a successful opposition campaign?

It will accentuate and bring out the different approaches contained within the government.

(Continued on Page 7)

NEW COLD WAR

“One of the most salient features of the later seventies has been a widespread recrudescence of cold war politics in the West. The relative novelty of this second round of orchestrated international reaction has been its overwhelming concentration on the USSR as a target—China being largely exempt for its diplomatic complaisance towards the USA.”

This is the view expressed, editorially, by the 'New Left Review' in a recent issue (No. 117). The British based NLR is together with the U.S. based 'Monthly Review', one of the best known and most respected journals dealing with Marxist themes, albeit from an independent international perspective. The NLR's editorial committee comprises distinguished Marxist scholars and journalists, many of whom rose to prominence with the upsurge of the student movement in Britain and the west in the sixties. They include Perry Anderson (Editor), Robin Blackburn, Fred Halliday, Anthony Barnett, Alexander Cockburn (all of whom write for the 'New Statesman'), John Merrington, Nicholas Krasso, Quintin Hoare, Tom Nairn, Lucien Rey, Norman Geras, Jon Halliday, Branka Magas, Juliet Mitchell, Francis Mulhern, Roger Murray, Bob Rowthorn and Gareth Stedman Jones. Just as the 'Monthly Review' caused something of an intellectual revolution within the radical intelligentsia throughout the world by translating and disseminating the ideas of Latin American 'Third World' Marxists, writings on 'dependency and underdevelopment', so too did the New Left Review make its contribution by making available to the English reading public the finest product of European Marxist thinking (notably the writings of Louis Althusser and Régis Debray).

Commenting further on the resurgence of cold war politics the NLR editorial quoted earlier goes, on to state:

“The main proximate cause of the new climate is not hard to seek: It dates from the unwelcome shocks suffered by the

world Imperialist system from the triumph of the Vietnamese Revolution, to the consolidation of Angolan independence, the sustenance of the Ethiopian Republic, the survival of South Yemen, and the overturn in Afghanistan—all facilitated or safeguarded by

Soviet arms or assistance. At the same time, however, contemporary Russophobia is not confined to the Right. For different reasons it has become an increasing vogue among sections of the Left as well, which in their frustration at the impasse of the labour movement in the West have taken to discharging their aggression upon the USSR. Social-democratic periodicals which condoned the Moscow trials, Maoist zealots freshly awakened to the values of the Free World, Eurocommunist functionaries once supine before Stalin, can all be found today ventilating the most vulgar and ignorant anti-Soviet themes.”

In another article in the same issue of the journal is featured a discussion of contemporary Russian society and a review of the Brezhnev era as it moves to a close. Here the NLR editors state:

“In the past decade, the strategic role and weight of the Soviet Union in world affairs has risen sharply. The areas of continuing repression and failure in its foreign policy are obvious, and major: above all in the zones of tension along its borders, in Eastern Europe and China. At the same time, however, the USSR has also intervened successfully in recent years to sustain popular upheavals across a wide range of more distant international theatres. In Latin America, the Cuban Revolution owes its flourishing economic survival in large part to Soviet aid. In Africa, timely Russian air-lifts have saved the Angolan and Ethiopian Revolutions from foreign invasions. In Asia, Soviet equipment clinched the

final victory of the Vietnamese Revolution.”

These views tally with those expressed by Fred Halliday in an article on 'The arc of revolutions: Iran, Afghanistan, South Yemen, Ethiopia' published in No. 4 Vol 20 of 'Race and Class'—a journal for black and 'Third World' liberation, edited by Sri Lankan A. Sivanandan for the Institute of Race Relations (Britain and the Transnational Institute.) While the entire article was reproduced in the pages of the Lanka Guardian some months ago, one of Halliday's conclusions bears repetition, given the current climate of opinion among this country's intelligentsia following the recent events in Afghanistan. Halliday wrote:

“The major military initiatives of the Soviet Union in the third world have been positive ones, designed to assist revolutionary movements that have already achieved state power or are well advanced towards doing so. The regimes in Ethiopia, Afghanistan, South Yemen and earlier, Cuba, fall into the former category, that in Angola and Vietnam the latter. Even in these two latter cases state power had already been formally, if not practically, achieved. These initiatives are the main instances of what Russia's critics call its 'expansionism', but in every case the revolutionary movement has gone a long way before substantial Soviet aid appeared and the military aid has been used by the countries in question to achieve legitimate national rights. In fact, the caution not the 'expansionism', of Soviet military aid has been criticized by revolutionaries elsewhere. The Russians can be rebuked for their failure to assist other movements that needed their help, not for what they have done..... Those on the left who are embarrassed by, or who denounce as 'imperialist' this limited Soviet assistance to regimes in Cuba, Vietnam, South Yemen, Ethiopia and Angola, must reflect that

without it these regimes would almost certainly have been overthrown by the counter-revolutionary forces, armed and to a considerable extent organised by the USA. The roles of these two countries—misleadingly equated as 'superpowers'—are therefore quite contrary."

Halliday winds up with the assertion that;

"The revolutionary and democratic forces emerging in the 'Third World' have to deal with the Soviet Union. Few can exist on their own, They have to develop a working relationship with the USSR, in which they derive what advantages they can without accepting the priority of all Soviet demands." — U. K

JR is . . .

(Continued from Page 5)

On the one hand there are the Premadasa group who want rural upliftment and not massive capital-intensive energy-consuming projects like the FTZ and the Mahaweli. Then there will be one group that will press for concessions to the masses in response to the opposition, while the other group will lean more and more on the police.

CWC on Constitutional . . .

(Continued from Page 4)

"Breaking up picket lines by strong arm methods smacks strongly of authoritarianism and anti-working class manouvers. This also nullifies the constitutional guarantee of such fundamental rights as freedom of association and expression.

"Wednesday's incident becomes all the more serious in the light of the fact that assault had taken place while the police were looking on. Because the picketeers were opposed to the Govt or that their campaign was directed against the Govt is no reason for any one to take the law in to their own hands and resort to violence to dissuade them from doing so.

"We shall be most grateful if the miscreants are apprehended, brought to book and dealt with severely so that it would have a salutary effect on these anti trade union elements who try to break up demonstrations by undemocratic means and thus bringing the Government into disrepute."

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ARMS AND ALMS — Zia's survival game

**FOREIGN
NEWS**

The passing glory of the Islamic summit, the more secure guarantees of US arms and money, and the predictable promise of Chinese support now appear to be General Zia's last hope. His record of false and broken promises, especially about elections, is endless. All his shady deals with political parties, factions and prominent personalities have come unstuck. With each move, his manoeuvres to give his regime some semblance of popular backing have been exposed as being motivated solely by his own desire for survival. With each failure, he has turned the screw harder until repression has become the order of the day. As a result, his regime has alienated every significant section of political opinion in the country.

This process of alienation has left him a narrow power-base, a Punjabi military-bureaucratic clique. (See Selig Harrison). Compounding his political troubles is Pakistan's economic situation. With a critical balance of payments position, Pakistan has lived these past years on foreign loans and 'aid'.

He has only one thing in his favour. His obsession with his

own survival (a matter of life-and-death for Bhutto's executioner) coincides with President Carter's own overwhelming concern for re-election.

Faulted for "weak" "immature" and "shilly-shally" presidency, Mr. Carter has suddenly emerged as a tough-minded sabre-rattling leader whose pugnacious postures push up the points in the popularity polls. It is this pre-election gimmickry which his principal challenger Senator Kennedy has denounced as irresponsible and artificially induced 'war hysteria'. The *Sunday Times* (London) calls it 'the new cold war'.

While no serious observer of the emerging geo-strategic picture of the 1970's needed more evidence of the Washington-Peking-Islamabad axis, the recent visits to Pakistan of Chinese foreign minister Huang Hua, and Mr. Carter's top adviser Dr. Brzezinski has to be placed beside another event which is of immense significance to the whole region. It is the dramatic comeback of Mrs. Gandhi and her reference to India's "abiding friendship" with the USSR.

Since the days of Kissinger's (now notorious) "tilt" towards

(General Zia-ul Huq's term of service in the Pakistani army, his only substantive post when he assumed dictatorial powers, comes to an end in March. The man who named himself President now runs his country as Chief Martial Law Administrator. Will he retire? If not, what will the other generals do?)

Pakistan, US arms aid to that country has provoked the deepest misgivings in Delhi. Every report coming out of the Indian capital focusses attention on two developments: (a) the closer coordination of US, Chinese and Pakistani policies in this area and (b) the military muscle which this relationship will acquire with the re-arming of Pakistan, the proposed expansion of facilities in Diego Garcia, the enlarged US naval force and the possible creation of a new 'strike force' in the Gulf area.

Would this result in a new arms race on the subcontinent? Would it lead to a counter-response in Soviet naval activity and increased big power rivalries? Should this happen, it would not



FRAGILE REGIME

There is an even more delicate problem: can President Carter's government, in the wake of the Iran fiasco, be seen to be bolstering a fragile regime which has flogged politicians and journalists into submission and which probably has the capability of making a nuclear bomb?

Pakistan's last balance-of-payments deficit was \$1,200 million. Last year it relied on \$1,000 million in international aid, two thirds of it from the West. Politically, too, it is unstable. Zia's government is unpopular, and if an election were held he would probably lose. In Lahore last week there were anti-government demonstrations, and from Baluchistan province there are reports of pro-Soviet demonstrations.

ANDREW STEPHEN — (*Sunday Times*) reporting from Islamabad.

only increase tensions in the region but prove a major setback to the Indian Ocean peace zone idea. Next year Colombo will host the first meeting of the littoral states.

The initial US offer of 400 million dollars worth of arms was pooh-poohed by Zia as "peanuts". How much is he after? Dr. Brzezinski has spoken of the 1959 US-Pak defence agreement. It was Pakistan's CENTO membership and its manifestly military alignments which led India to consistently (and successfully) oppose Pakistan's moves to come closer to the nonalignment movement.

Last year, Pakistan, like Iran another CENTO member, joined the NAM. What will be India's reaction if the old military alignments are revived?

SEPARATIST FORCES

The Baluchis, Pushtuns and the Sindhis ancestral homelands cover 72% of Pakistani territory. All three of these groups contend with varying degrees of justice that they are excluded from their fair share of political and economic power by a Punjabi-controlled military and bureaucratic autocracy. Increasingly, influential leaders among all three groups have been exploring the possibilities for winning their independence with foreign help, whether from the Soviet Union, the Arab world, India or the West.....

The Punjabi-dominated Zia ul-Haq regime has so far failed to take even a modicum of the political and economic steps needed to neutralize separatist sentiment in the Baluchi and Pushtun areas and thus to facilitate their effective military defence if this should become necessary.

The Pakistani Air Force used U.S.-supplied Iranian helicopters to raze Baluchi villages indiscriminately, leaving a legacy of hatred that has merely intensified separatist feeling.

Domestically, it would strengthen the already disproportionate power enjoyed by the military in Pakistan. Internationally, it would needlessly arouse Indian fears that Islamabad is seeking to use the Afghan crisis to bolster its power position vis-a-vis New Delhi.

— SELIG HARRISON

Washington Post. A Fellow of the Carnegie Foundation for International Peace. Mr. Harrison was a veteran U. S. correspondent in Asia.

Zia has not made things easier for Indo-Pak understanding. He told Indian editor Kuldeep Nayar "How can we trust her? (Mrs. Gandhi).

And on the opening day of the Islamic summit, Zia referred to the Kashmir issue and "the restoration of the rights" of the Kashmiri people—the oldest and the most abrasive Indo-Pak issue.

In the name of Islam, Zia is holding his hand out for aid from the oil-rich Gulf states. In the name of security, he is appealing for a new armoury of highly advanced weapons.

What is most crucial is that this arms aid will go to a politically and economically besieged regime led by a desperate man fighting for his own survival. Thus the situation is fraught with many dangers.

Zia seized power on the promise of free and fair elections and a rapid return to democracy. His pledges became such a sour joke that the CMLA (Chief Martial Law Administrator) was called 'Cancel My Last Announcement'! After 27 months of dubious stratagems and plain deceit, Zia allowed local elections—and then debarred Bhutto's PPP. But the PPP fought under another party banner "Awam Dost" (Friends of the People) and won 70% of the seats. That is why he could not dare hold the Nov. 17 national election. So much so that even Ashgar Khan who imagined he could be the next prime minister declared that the people of Pakistan may have to follow the example of Iran and Afghanistan. Besides the perennial problem of Baluchi and Pushtun separatism, there is now strong resistance to the Zia regime in the Sind and even in the Punjab, where the man whom Zia hanged is regarded as a martyr.

It was said of another Pakistani general, Yahya Khan, that he presided over the division of Pakistan into two. This old soldier, up for retirement, may beat the war drum in the hope of holding on to his post, but it may well be his destiny to preside over the disintegration of the (west) Pakistan that we now know.

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The dynamics of popular unity

by A. Special Correspondent

The Nicaraguan revolutionary experience not only teaches us the need for unity (which is the main lesson that Fr. Cardenal bids us learn), but also that the achievement of unity is a **process** — a process that is **organic** and dynamic in character.

A curious yet significant feature of the Lankan Left is that its history is characterized by a total absence of debate on questions of Marxist philosophy. This poverty of philosophy reflects itself in the weakness of methodology. Most theoretical debates within the Lankan Left are characterized by the inability of the protagonists to grasp the dialectical method, or, to express it more correctly, the inability of the protagonists to uncover the dialectical manner of the inner workings of all phenomena in the universe. Thus, problems of revolutionary strategy (such as the stage of the revolution, the question of the national bourgeoisie, the United Front, the question of peaceful and armed forms of struggle) are debated in a manner which reveals a static, schematic, mechanistic and therefore profoundly undialectical conception of political phenomena and the underlying social reality. The discussion on the stage of the revolution for instance, proceeds in a fashion which discloses that few of the protagonists are aware that the revolution is both an **uninterrupted process** as well as one involving various stages of development. Rarely is the revolution conceived of in this dynamic and dialectical manner. Rarely is it understood that one stage of the revolution 'grows over' into the other, with the second stage fulfilling as a by-product of its own development, the remaining tasks of the first. Seldom is it comprehended that the revolution is comprised of stages, each with its own class alignments and tasks, and yet these stages are not

separated by a 'Chinese Wall.' (Lenin).

The failure to understand the revolution dialectically, as an ongoing process, organic in character, is reflected equally clearly in the various positions taken up on the question of united fronts. Maoists who hold that the stage of the revolution is New Democratic, adhere to the 'four class bloc' schema which includes the so-called national bourgeoisie. Trotskyists, covert neo-Trotskyists and sectarian pseudo-Stalinists argue that the socialist revolution must take place under the sole leadership of the revolutionary party of the proletariat. Trotskyists and ossified 'Stalinists' who glimpsed the danger of fascism articulate the model of the 'united working class front' put forward by the Comintern. Little effort is made to understand the specificity of the contemporary phenomenon which Theotonio Dos Santos terms '**dependent fascism**'. If the nature of peripheral social formations which have as their hegemonic mode of production a dominated/dependent capitalism, is understood, so too could the specificity of dependent fascism be comprehended. This in turn would result in a more creative, flexible, and less 'classicist' conceptualization of united fronts. Nicaragua teaches us that there is no single model of the united front which is valid throughout the entire length of a revolutionary stage. **Popular unity is a living organism, growing and metamorphosing as the revolutionary process unfolds through its various stages, phases, and sub-stages of development.** Furthermore, while the united front is not a static entity, neither is it one-dimensional. Nicaragua shows us that popular unity is a many-layered and multidimensional complex comprising a whole network of blocs, alliances and fronts, the distinctions between which have

been ably drawn here is that unity should not be conceived of in terms of rigorously demarcated classical models of united fronts which are mechanistically counterposed to each other. Unity must be understood as a living, growing and complex organism. In fact Lenin's presentations in the Comintern, Antonio Gramsci's prison writings, Trotsky's essays on Germany 1929-32, Togliatti's Lectures on fascism, and above all Dmitrov's address to the seventh Comintern congress in 1935, must be appreciated for the masterpieces they are, not so much for the 'models' of the united front which are derived from them, but rather for the manner in which the degree and form of unity concretized in the slogans presented is related to a correct analysis of the concrete conjuncture and the interests of the working class in that specific conjuncture.

In his interview given to Granma which we have referred to earlier in this series, Humberto Ortega tells us that 1977/78 was decisive in that the FLSN's various tendencies were able to consolidate their unity around a single politico-military programme, adopt a more flexible line which resulted in the forging of broader alliances, and embark on a strategic offensive. As we shall see these three factors were interrelated and mutually supportive. The divergences within the FSLN occurred not only on questions of military strategy, but also on the question of the role of various classes and strata in that given period of the revolution. In other words, the issue of social and political alliances was of fundamental significance in the internal debate which led to the split in 1975. Furthermore, the questions of military strategy were intimately, though not obviously, linked to the questions of socio-political alliances and the role of various class forces. Tomas Borges'

Prolonged Peoples War' tendency held to a more or less classical model of rural guerilla warfare which necessarily placed emphasis on the need for political work among the peasantry. Jaime Wheelock, returned from the heady atmosphere to Santiago University in the early seventies to lead the 'Proletarian tendency' which emphasized the need to mobilize the working class and marginalized social sectors in the urban areas. The third tendency known as the 'Terceristas' ('the third ones') were also referred to as the "Insurreccionistas" and is the most interesting, since they combined a moderate political programme with a military strategy that placed heavy emphasis upon the most advanced or 'radical' form of struggle—namely, that of armed insurrection. While the 'Prolonged Peoples War' and 'Proletarian' tendencies are perhaps closest to each other in terms of ideology, it is the 'Proletarian' tendency and the 'Insurreccionistas' that drew closest together in the course of the 'strategic synthesis' that took place. The Insurreccionistas leadership, in which the Ortega brothers Daniel and Humberto figure prominently correctly discerned the decomposition of the power-bloc that had taken place since 1972, recognised the existence of a real cleavage between the middle classes and the oligarchy. They understood the need to win over the intermediate strata and the anti-Somoza bourgeois sectors. To this end the 'Terceristas' formulated a 'moderate' social-democratic type minimum programme, while establishing organisational links with the middle class and bourgeois opposition groups. The question of hegemony the 'Terceristas' resolved by adopting and putting into practice the most radical i.e. insurrectionist, form of armed struggle. How this dialectic operated in actual fact we shall examine in a while. The emphasis the 'Terceristas' placed on the strategy of insurrection in the urban areas inevitably led to the appreciation of the positions of the 'Proletarian' tendency which emphasized the role of the urban under privileged (who as it turned out actually bore the brunt of the armed uprisings). The three Sandinista

tendencies finally converged upon a single political programme and military strategy, in which 'Tercerista' thinking was the dominant element.

The deleterious effects of the '75/'76 split were overcome and the Sandinistas new initiatives bore fruit when an entity known as the Group of Twelve (or simply The Twelve) was formed, and called openly for Nicaraguans to join the armed struggle. The twelve comprised respected clergymen, intellectuals and liberal businessmen. Many of these were representatives of political organisations.

At this point US imperialism attempted to intervene politically and diplomatically, with a view to co-opting the bourgeois sectors of the anti-Somoza opposition, bolstering them as a 'third force' counterposed both to the decrepit Somoza dynasty (which had not merely outlined its usefulness but had become a liability) as well as to the Sandinistas. These efforts were in keeping with a strand of thinking within U.S. foreign policy in the post-war period which sought to replace the oligarchies with the national bourgeoisies as its chief neocolonial ally, push through capitalist 'modernization' in place of quasi-feudal relations of production, build up bourgeois democracy and effect reforms to expand the social basis of capitalist regimes and thereby defuse crises. These efforts and reformist programmes must not be seen as rigidly separate from or totally contrary to the other aspect of post-war U.S. global policy i.e. open counter-revolutionary intervention. After all as Lenin said in article on 'The Differences in the European Labour Movement' (1910):—

"... In every country the bourgeoisie inevitably devised two systems of rule, to methods of fighting for its interests and maintaining its domination, and these methods at times succeed each other and at times are interwoven in various combinations. The first of these is the method of force the method which rejects all concessions to the labour movement, the method of supporting all the old and absolute institutions, the method of irreconcilably rejecting reforms. Such is the nature of the conservative policy which in Western

Europe is becoming less and less a policy of the landowning classes and more and more one of the varieties of bourgeois policy in general. The second method is the method of 'Liberalism', of steps towards the development of political rights, towards reforms, concessions, and so forth. The bourgeoisie passes from one method to the other, not because of the malicious intent of individuals, and not accidentally, but owing to the fundamentally contradictory nature of its own position... In consequence vacillations in the tactics of the bourgeoisie, transitions to the system of apparent concessions have been characteristic of the history of all European countries during the last half century, the various countries developing primarily the application of the one, method or the other at definite periods."

This holds very true of US imperialism's hegemonistic world policy in the post 1945 period.

Lenin made the further point that no crisis is absolutely insurmountable for the bourgeoisie and that in the event of the proletariat proving incapable of decisive intervention, the ruling classes would utilize a judicious mixture of reform and repression to overcome the crisis and attain a stabilization, however temporary, of the system. Lenin's analyses and implicit categorizations of various types of crisis situations is totally alien to the simplistic dichotomies and apocalyptic denouements which characterize the fantasy world of Trotskyism. (Nicholas Krasso was correct when he described Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution as a vision of a "metaphysical carnival of insurrections" resulting from the capitalist crisis. Krasso also criticizes Trotsky for ignoring the massive structural 'blockages' in the course of history and reducing instead the 'crisis of humanity' to a 'crisis of leadership').

Why then was U.S. imperialism unsuccessful in imposing a bourgeois solution to the Nicaraguan crisis? Why didn't the bourgeois alternative appear as the more viable option to the Nicaraguan masses? How did the FSLN succeed in resolving the crisis in a revolutionary fashion? These questions in themselves reveal the total incapacity of Trotskyism to understand the revolutions in the periphery. In their analyses of what they continue to misleadingly term the 'colonial revolutions',

Trotskyists either ignore the role of bourgeois fractions or assume **a priori** that the very presence of such social sectors would inevitably result in bourgeois hegemony. Even a journal like 'Inprecorr Intercontinental Press' published by Mandel's USec and George Novak's SWP, and usually given to moderately sensible commentaries on international events, featured 'analysis' on Nicaragua by the Latin American Trotskyist leader Fansto Amador which drew a grotesque portrait of bourgeois influence within and upon Sandinista thinking. Amador's 'critique' of Sandinista military strategy and political programme was contained in four articles published in 'Intercontinental Press' issues of Nov 21st 1977, June 19th 1978, October 16th 1978 and June 11th 1979. Symptomatic of his line of argumentation is the following sentiment excerpted from the October '78 issue of Intercontinental Press/Inprecorr: "Will the revolutionary process end in a decisive defeat for the mass movement because of errors by the leadership? That is certainly a danger, and the lack of a revolutionary leadership assumes 'still more tragic dimensions in view of this possibility..The Sandinistas' programme, alliances and governmental slogans represent serious, perhaps even mortal, dangers to the revolution. The counter-revolution will raise its head and will have to be fought within the Sandinista camp."

The Nicaraguan people and their revolutionary vanguard, the FSLN has passed its verdict on Trotskyists and Trotskyism—one of the victorious FSLN's first acts was to forcibly deport hundred Trotskyists and jail a further two hundred....

We for our part can state conclusively that the FSLN's slogan

calling for the formation of a national government centering around the 'group of twelve' was a correct one, since it was a concrete governmental slogan which did not greatly outpace, but rather, gave expression to the strivings of the mass movement. This slogan was an integral part of the FSLN's effort to broaden its support base and popular appeal so as to encompass all democratic and patriotic social classes, strata and political formations. The FSLN's stand on this score was not merely correct but also necessary and its moves led to a decisive change in the correlation of political forces on a national as well as continental scale, against the oligarchy. 'Forge and strengthen the unity of the working masses win over or neutralize the vacillatory inter-mediate strata, identify and isolate the main enemy.' It is this operational principle that was set forth by Lenin in his 'Two Tactics' and reiterated in 'The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky', practised on a grand scale by Stalin in World War 2 and summed up with characteristic brilliance by Mao in his slogan: 'Unite the many, defeat the few.'

While uniting all the forces that could be united, the FSLN succeeded in achieving hegemony within this broad popular bloc that was rapidly crystallizing, by coupling the important requirement of winning over or neutralizing the anti-imperialist, anti dictatorial sectors of the bourgeoisie, with the task of armed struggle to forcibly smash the repressive state apparatus of the bourgeoisie. In the dialectic of these two tasks, it is the latter that was (correctly) held to be the 'primary aspect'. Practising the critique by arms, seizing the initiative at decisive moments through bold armed actions and maintaining this initiative, proved the key to Sandinista hegemony.

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RATMALANA.

Foreign policy and US ideology

by Mervyn de Silva

The Rhodesian problem was a trifle anyway when compared to the Palestinian question and its ever-widening ripple-effect on the oil-rich Middle East.

The UN recognises the PLO. Austria's (Jewish) Chancellor Kreisky embraces Arafat who is also treated like a visiting premier by many European countries. While official recognition by several European states is a strong possibility in 1980, a controversy over a confidential chit-chat with the PLO's Terzi provoked Ambassador Andy Young to quit Carter's team. And US blacks and many churches have become open supporters of the Palestinian cause. All this may make even knowledgeable students forget that just over a decade ago, the Palestinian issue was regarded as a question of "refugees". Today it is a question of nationhood.

More, it is not only the western world but the most conservative of Arab states which have had, in their own interest, to accommodate the PLO. At the beginning of the decade, King Hussein, the West's stoutest Arab ally among the 'confrontation' states, massacred the fedayeen in the infamous Black September. The same Hussein joined the other Arab leaders in denouncing Sadat's treachery over Camp David and endorsed Egypt's expulsion from the Arab League. The armed Palestinian presence radicalised the under-privileged Moslems in Lebanon until their fight with the rightwing Israel-supported Christians tore asunder the fragile structure of that 'confessional state'.

The Palestinian cause is no longer confined to statehood. The Palestinians have become the vanguard of the Arab social revolution, frightening not just Israel and the West but the kings and the sheiks. Spread

across the Middle-East, Palestinian brains and guns have become a major political factor in the area. It was the PLO flag that was unfurled over the Israeli embassy immediately after the Iranian revolution.

Limits of power

Vietnam dramatised the limits of US power. A cliché. Analysing its consequences for US policy, Naom Chomsky sounded a salutary warning on how easily this could be misunderstood. In 1955, a prestigious US study group, Chomsky reminds, us identified the primary threat of 'communism' as the economic transformation of the socialist countries "in ways which reduce their willingness and ability to complement the industrial economies of the West".

This, Chomsky concludes, remains as astute summing-up of the essential aims of US policy, although the statement needs to be reworded. Of course, terms like "American foreign policy" "American power" "national aims" "national interest" and so on can be misleading abstractions. Nations do not behave from an independent will of their own. The exercise of power which results in national decisions is an extension of the effective authority of rulers and dominant groups, and their corporate interests. Policy can never be separated therefore from social and economic components, from the actual structure of power and the control over institutions in American society.

True, Nixon's inaugural address was significantly different in content and tone from Kennedy's. US power cannot be freely deployed in any manner, anywhere, at any time. Yet, notes Chomsky, the official or governing ideology supports 'the will to exercise dominion' and this translated into

policy means that US policy "must prevent any region from extricating itself from the US-dominated global system and thereby releasing its resources, human and material, for development guided by internal needs".

Sub-system

Recognising the limits of power, assessing basic its implications, especially the constraints it imposed on policy and decision-making in crises of varying importance, Kissinger and others prepared for the '70s new designs and new structures to support American globalism. Certain conceptual changes, new approaches, shifts in emphasis, and innovative instrument could be broadly identified: a) A general shift from land to sea-based strategies. b) Avoidance as far as possible of permanent bases with the presence of US troops particularly in countries where politics and public opinion may become an embarrassment. c) The military and economic build-up of selected medium-size powers which could act as regional gendarmes — Iran, Indonesia, Zaire, Brazil ect. In short, a sub-system. d) Special attention to specific problems of high-intensity, and the concentrated effort to find 'political-diplomatic' solutions e. g. Middle-East. Contingency plans for unforeseen 'threats to security' and 'force-projection' problems e. g. creation of new fleets (5th Fleet), special 'strike' or 'task' forces (Caribbean, Gulf etc) fire-engine theories.

Carter inherited these ideas and worked on them, though 'trilateralism' and 'human rights' were cosmetic touches that might have given US policy a 'new face'. Camp David was the logical outcome of Kissinger's step-by-step diplomacy. Though everybody paid lip service to the Palestinian issue as the 'crux of the Middle East problem', it was given

secondary importance. Of primary concern was the fact that the US addressed its mind to the problem as an inter-state question, with occupied lands, and Israeli security as the 'chips'. In the first instance, a settlement between Israel and Egypt, the major Arab power, and then Jordan and hopefully Syria. 'Autonomy' 'self-governing unit' etc. on the West Bank was an attempt to 'Bantustanise' the Palestinian issue. With the anti-US uprising in Iran, the Israeli-Egyptian tie-up has become of paramount importance, with Sadat openly offering bases and showing a willingness to play local policeman.

To conclude, a personal reminiscence, if I may. In mid-1975, I was a member of foreign participants at a four day colloquium on "US AFTER VIETNAM — foreign perspectives" at Wingspread, a famed conference centre. The symposium was sponsored by Washington's internationally reputed Georgetown Centre for Strategic Studies which Dr. Kissinger served for a brief period immediately after the last elections.

I posed a question about the viability of the sub-system and the presumed stability of its props? Wasn't this stability illusory? Wealth, growth, military strength, the apparent lack of opposition.....did these really imply social and political stability? Challenged to cite a specific case, I said "Iran". I could see that almost everybody (except the chairman, Dr. Ken Myers, a fine scholar) took it to be a deliberately provocative reply, with a touch of bravura doubtless.

On the flight back to Washington I was seated next to one of the leading participants at the

seminar, a very interesting person whose name keeps cropping up as often in TIME and NEWSWEEK as in academic journals. Ray Kline was at one time Deputy Director of the C. I. A.

Mr. Kline pursued the question with utmost seriousness, intellectual detachment and vigour. The CIA's unsavoury reputation has been earned largely by the activities of its Dirty Tricks Department, or covert operations. It has an equally important function, Intelligence gathering and analysis.

Up to almost the week before the Shah was forced into exile, Mr. Carter was publicly defending and singing his virtues. When Iran was "lost", as they say, many influential Americans blamed the CIA, but the CIA, for its part, claimed that its work of intelligence-gathering was seriously hampered by restrictions placed on it by the White House and State Department. The CIA was not allowed to keep contact with the Shah's critics and opponents — on the express command of the Shah, agreed to by the US.

Carter whose apparent contribution to US foreign policy was "morality" (human rights) had been the enthusiastic supporter of what Senator Kennedy recently described as one of the most corrupt and brutal regimes in contemporary history. This does not mean that Carter is not a good Christian or that his intentions were dishonest. It only means that US-Iran relations had other, firmer, more substantial foundations — the interests of those who control American institutions, and exercise corporate power. Can those interests be reconciled with the real interests of Third World peoples or will clashes of interest influence the nature, scale and intensity of conflict in the 1980's?

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WHO'S SUBSIDISING WHOM?

by U. Karunatilake

One track mindedness is the main feature today of the political scene. The cliches like consumer protection, free market, free society, and even free arrest and detention have led up only one track—maximum private profit to a minority at maximum cost to you and me.

Take safety matches for instance. The so-called outcry was that the box of local matches sold at 5 cts. was of poor quality. So the consumer protection champs got busy and imported matches at four times the cost. Though the match boxes that came in were not loaded with high quality matches, the invoices certainly were, much to the satisfaction of certain people.

Nobody important has talked of quality since then though you and me (and Appuhamy) finds that his imported match breaks in two when struck or flares out within seconds or drops its red hot head in shame on the imported fifty rupee sarong. Worse still, when Appuhamy, sadder but wiser, decides to go back to his old local brand of matches he finds that the price is no longer 5 cts. It is as expensive as the imported variety.

Who has benefitted?

When the bulb of Appuhamy's rurally electrified shack gets fused of an evening while the family is settling down to its home work, he remembers that it is the bulb Andoris sold him a few days ago at the kade saying that it was an imported 'Pilix' and though costing five rupees would last for five years. So until consumer protected Appuhamy gets his salary advance from the rubber estate, his family has only day light for home work. Kerosene and candles of course have suddenly become such luxuries that only the big homes in Colombo hatha can afford them.

When he gets his salary advance and goes for his local

bulb, he gets a shock. The local bulb is also now five rupees.

So much for consumer protection and free import. Between the gallant importers on one hand and the cheerful local manufacturers on the other, Appuhamy will soon be left to end for a family of school dropouts, who even if they could afford an imported five rupee bulb every now and then, would perhaps be unable to afford the imported box of instruments, imported paint box and brushes, imported crayons, imported dissecting set, and imported box of weights. What dissecting instruments and box of weights for yokels like Appuhamy anyway. May be, but what about the five rupee monitor's books, mentioned clearly in the neat book list. (Don't come to school without those, now that the text books are free).

The bad old days, three years ago, when Appuhamy cursed in the queue while waiting for the eighteen cent exercise books seems like a life-time ago. There was the man who told him that everything was high quality now, plenty of gloss on the outside. Inside, like the exercise books, everything was very much the same.

The switches of the sleek imported electric torches did not function after three months. The paint flaked off the smart, imported bicycle, and the imported electrical fittings used recently for wiring his rurally electrified shack were all malfunctioning as though unused to a hot climate.

All these things, part of the simple technology of the simple life he led, had shot up into the luxury price bracket since 'free import' became the gospel, in spite of the fact that they had all been made locally to accepted standards and had cost only a few rupees a short while ago.

The bicycle had shot up from Rs. 350/- to Rs. 750/-. The electric torch from Rs. 10/- to Rs.

30/-, the lamp bulb from Rs. 2.00 to Rs. 5.00, the light switch from Rs. 1/- to Rs. 15/- and a main switch from Rs. 30/- to Rs. 100/-.

Appuhamy does not of course know anything about loading of invoices but the authorities do. For the first time however the authorities have to contend with price loading by countries that have provided consumer aid. They may have to turn a blind eye to this but are they as powerless against the flood of substandard imports that are pouring in?

Let us take electrical switch gear and cables. When there was import substitution some of these items were manufactured in Sri Lanka to standard specifications that were internationally acceptable, so much so, that Lankan manufacturers were able to export these items to countries, where unlike Sri Lanka, these specifications were strictly enforced.

Today under the slogan of liberalization even such items are imported into Lanka. The performance of the imported items however makes it quite apparent that they are the quality control rejects of foreign factories being dumped here.

Where are the safeguards? What is there to prevent our multimillion rupee loans being used on the import of factory rubbish from the West and Japan in the guise of 'hard' consumables and capital goods. There are absolutely no regulations and no administrative safeguards to prevent either the consumer or the State being swindled in this massive influx of sub standard goods on 'liberalized' private, import and on Government tender. Perhaps there are still a few constraints on tender procedure, hence the cry for 'liberalization' of tender procedure.

As far as the foreign institutions are concerned, they have rigged up the system and deployed subservient officials of under developed countries for efficient resiphoning of the credit they provide.

So you buy your electrical transformers from England at £5000 and not from India at £1000, your tractors from Canada at £ 3000 instead of Yugoslavia at £ 1000, even though the transformers in India, and the tractors in Yugoslavia are being produced under licence from the same multinationals as in England and in Canada. This is 'liberalization' of trade. So what happens when credit obtained so dearly under the most disadvantageous conditions like devaluation on one hand and lifting of the tariffs that protect local manufacture on the other, is used to purchase the quality control rejects from the production lines of the West and Japan?

Development becomes a myth.

The thousand million rupee budgets so fondly presented to the people have claimed to be 80% investment, 18% basic consumption and 2% luxury. It is time the 80% investment was analysed in terms of intrinsic value. Who determines the real value of investment in an unreal aura of deliberately boosted inflation?

Inflation artificially sustained by corruption, forced devaluation, and loaded invoicing of channeled capital goods from favoured sources. Also insistence by loaning agencies on the systematic destruction of all local incentives for import substitution either in the way of equipment, spares, or consumer goods?

A tragic example of the unbearable 'development' burden being loaded on the masses is the urea fertilizer project, which was first sanctioned on tender at Rs. 200/- million and then, in violation of all tender procedure quickly loaded up to Rs. 2,000/- million. At the completion of the project we are informed that the cost of production of urea will be higher than

the imported cost of urea, that there will be a nett foreign exchange loss if the Naptha from our refinery is diverted as raw material for production of urea, and that the plant and process installed is, in any case, obsolete!

If this is the pattern of capital investment on 'industrialization' it will be interesting to have a look at the traditional sectors of production—the rice fields and the plantations. The cost of fertilizers and agrochemicals is so conveniently covered by a smoke screen of subsidies that nobody stops to question why these chemical imports are, in fact, so costly and if they are so costly, what, without subsidies, is the actual cost of the crops. The smoke screen is not merely one of subsidies, it extends into a hazy region of Aid-Aid for purchase of obsolete and dangerous agrochemicals from the chemical giants in the West. Aid for the purchase of fertilizer from the collapsing fertilizer giants, Aid designed to pull Nitrogen fixation on one hand, Phosphate and Potassium mining and processing on the other out of the sure recession it is plunging into as a result of the energy crisis.

When we see our peasants and our plantation workers, half starved and half clothed, struggling to use expensive agroequipment and chemicals in a background of poverty and debt, we think of these subsidies and inevitably ask ourselves, who is subsidising whom?

Aren't our poor peasants in their villages and the slaves on the plantations subsidising with their drudgery and poorly rewarded toil, with lives sacrificed to malnutrition on one hand and toxic chemicals on the other, the recession hit industrial giants of the west and their brown fifth column in our country.

The people have been talked out of all their real subsidies—the only subsidies that assured them of a certain minimum measure of welfare, via food, sanitation, education and housing—in order that their labour can sustain an uninterrupted inflow of goods and

services from a depression ridden west. The subsidies have now shifted to these goods and services in the name of development. Have the subsidies on these imports stimulated growth? They may have stimulated flagging outputs in the West, but do not appear to have had any impact so far on our outputs of rice, tea, coconut, or rubber. Worse still in the villages some of our more credulous peasants, who have been talked into buying small agro hardware like pumps, two wheel tractors and sprayers, on credit, have them hung up in the barns or parked under the jak tree in the garden, because they have become unserviceable even before the loan was paid up.

With inflation, spares and repairs cost more than they paid for the item itself. They say that in some villages the people are waiting with crowbars and rocks for the glib Japanese and the sleek well fed local salemen, who gave the 'demonstrations'. In the bazaar towns the mudalalis who actually sold the hardware have their answer ready. They have an oil petition to OPEC on the counter for any protesting villager to sign. When the cost of a two wheel tractor front axel goes up from Rs. 50/- to Rs. 500/- they have the oil petition ready. This they say is all the fault of the Arabs, just put your signature there and let us see what Hameed Sahib will be able to do on his next trip.

In the plantations—the State Plantation Corporation scheme for replacing labour lines with cottages has slowed down to a standstill. Was this a subsidy or was it paid for by sweat and toil? The mortality and school drop out figures on the plantations have suddenly shot up giving a frank indication of the 'quality of life' we can soon expect in Sri Lanka. Real wages on the plantations have declined by 50% in spite of the much publicised cost of living and devaluation wage hikes. On top of this has come the shattering blow—the removal of subsidies.

(To be concluded)

VICTORIA PROJECT – Development without destruction

by L. W. Mediwake

The Victoria Project planned by the Government under the Mahaweli Development Program is essentially a power project. The proposed high dam would store water in a massive reservoir for the purpose of generating hydro-electricity. Water discharged from tunnels, sluice gates and the spill would not irrigate any new land. Only after this water enters the Randenigala reservoir would it be used for irrigation purposes. While Hydro Power is useful in many ways the price at which this power is to be generated is something that the whole nation should know about. **Few people in this country realize the magnitude of the damage this particular project would do to existing agricultural, industrial and human activity in the Dumbara Valley** by raising the bund to the height of 1,437 feet M.S.L. with the flood level at 1,440 feet. The Victoria Dam is to be constructed in the Eastern end of the Dumbara Valley. This Valley is a broad rolling plain and is earmarked to store all this water and in the context of this high dam every extra foot would mean the inundation of thousands of acres of the most valuable agricultural land found in Sri Lanka.

The Planners and the executors of this project seem to think that the Mahaweliganga in this part of the country is a river flowing through a mighty jungle like the Amazon basin with some jungle dwelling inhabitants and scattered trading posts here and there. A problem that could be easily solved with some compensation and resettlement elsewhere. For those who do not know the Geography of

The author was a lecturer in Sri Lanka and in several Universities abroad. A D.Sc from Bonn University, he was one of the architects of the Institute of Rural Technology.

this area it is worthwhile mentioning that Dumbara has a unique climate without extremes of temperature or rainfall throughout the year. The soils are mostly fertile sandy loam and non-waterlogging. All these factors have helped to make it one of the most productive and as a result, one of the most densely populated areas in Sri Lanka. The Mahaweliganga while flowing through the valley begins to drop midway from Haragama through a series of cataracts to Victoria Falls which incidentally is also a cataract. The actual dam site is located just below the point where the Huluganga enters the Mahaweli. **With the construction of this high dam not only would a major part of the low lying land in Dumbara Valley be inundated but every stream and rivulet flowing into these two rivers would inundate further thousands of acres.**

Long before the European planters entered the Dumbara Valley and its environments Dumbara was famous for its agricultural crops, crafts and a rich cultural heritage. The European Planters realizing the agricultural potential, acquired land and introduced new crops to enhance its agricultural value. Those who advocate the Victoria High Dam may say after all thousands of new acres are to be developed in the new colonization areas to compensate for this loss. Only those connected with agriculture and farming know that any crop cannot be successfully grown anywhere and what grows in the moderate climate of Dumbara cannot be grown in the hot dry zone with a different type of climate and soil structure. Furthermore the agricultural practices found in the Dumbara Valley is not subsistence farming, as in the Dry Zone but

advanced agricultural cropping patterns and practices as seen in the estates, homesteads and market gardens. Most of the market gardens are equivalent to or even better than in the Jaffna Peninsula. While two acres of land is hardly enough for a family to eke out an existence in the dry zone half an acre of land in the Dumbara Valley is enough for a family to live comfortably because of high value crops and cultivation practices. What grows in the Dumbara Valley is cocoa, coffee, coconut, rubber, Pepper, Kapok, Cloves, Sugar cane, tobacco, vegetables and soft timber varieties. While some of the produce is consumed in Sri Lanka the rest is exported to earn valuable foreign exchange.

From the market gardens of the Teldeniya region alone approximately six million rupees of vegetables are dispatched annually to the Colombo market in addition to what is consumed locally. From the Haragama and Gurundeniya area over two million rupees of vegetables are produced annually primarily gourds, Pathola, Watakolu, Karawilla, ninety per cent of which is sent to Colombo. Without these vegetables one can only imagine the plight of the ordinary consumer in Colombo. The extent of prime agricultural land that would be destroyed by this scheme is over seven thousand acres. Of this extent approximately three thousand acres is cultivated with paddy, tobacco, vegetables and other food crops. Approximately two thousand acres with mixed horticultural crops such as fruit, cocoa, coconut, pepper, cloves, coffee, tubers and soft wood in village gardens and homesteads and an approximately two thousand acres in big and small estates with cocoa, coffee, pepper, rubber, coconut, sugar cane and soft wood. The approximate net annual income from all forms of agriculture in

this area would well exceed forty million rupees. Furthermore animal husbandry units, crop processing and curing establishments and some of the largest plant nurseries in the country would be wiped out. In addition to the cultivation of food and commercial crops, this same area supplies nearly ten thousand pints of milk a day to the National Milk Board and other consumers.

From close observation of work connected with this project one can deduce that socio-economic studies and basic data has been haphazardly collected or not done at all, which in fact is a prerequisite for all such undertakings. Even the final figures of the extent of land going under water appeared only a few weeks ago. In the entire history of Sri Lanka's dam construction work, whether medieval, colonial or post colonial, never has a project been undertaken where so much of existing highly developed productive wealth would be destroyed and dislocate so many thousands of families at a time when rebuilding and reconstruction is at its most expensive level. Over three thousand families may be affected and a total population of twenty thousand or more may be rendered homeless.

The value of land, buildings and other installations including infrastructure facilities would well exceed five hundred million rupees and the annual income from all sources exceed one hundred million.

In its geological wealth, clay for the brick industry, river sand for construction work, dolomite, mica, gems and the latest find copper near Teldeniya would be lost for ever. A small developing country like Sri Lanka cannot afford to destroy wealth in any form for the purpose of creating new wealth whether it be electricity or anything else. Five Rajamaha Viharas or historic temples namely Medamahanuwara, Bambaragala, Rumbukwella, Gonawatte and Kundasale would either be inundated or remain as isolated temples without Dayakayas - the supporting laity. Numerous other Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim places of worship and

cultural sites would suffer the same fate.

When the main theme of all International Agencies connected with development matters is "Development without Destruction" it is difficult to imagine that a project with such enormous implications is pursued in such haste purely for the sake of producing more electricity. In the United States of America very recently a billion dollar hydro power dam project was abandoned by Presidential Order for the sake of saving the traditional life style of a tiny variety of fish living only in that part of the river. In California and in many other parts of Western Europe the destruction or the use of agricultural land for any other purpose is prohibited. U.S. aid the world's largest aid giver is supposed to have given up building large dams in other countries due to environmental and other problems connected with such undertakings. For these very reasons Hydro-Power and River Valley Development Schemes in many advanced countries are investigated in depth and executed with great caution.

In fairness to the Mahaweli Development program such an array of problems does not arise with the Randenigala and the Kothmale projects. Randenigala is perhaps an ideal site because it is a valley covered with shrub jungle, chena and a small extent of rain fed paddy land.

The people of Dumbara Valley hope that even in this ninety ninth hour it is not too late for the government to re-think about the pros and cons of constructing the Victoria high dam even though it is to be constructed by an outright grant from the British Government.

The consultants and contractors are only too happy to rush through this program because they are only concerned with making money for themselves and to get away as soon as possible. The ordinary people of Sri Lanka have lived and will continue to live without electricity but not without food they could afford to buy. Those who have unilaterally decided on a course of action seem to think that any-

(Continued on Page 28)

WITH
THE
COMPLIMENTS OF
DISTRIBUTORS
OF
CITIZEN
WRIST WATCHES
& CLOCKS

How the dialogue was conducted

by Godfrey Gunatilleke

At the inception of the project there were extensive discussions in regard to the structure of the dialogue. Some opinions favoured a loosely structured dialogue which raised a few general development issues and thereafter allowed the respondent to range over a broad field according to his specific interests.

Another alternative was to select a few specific problems which were relevant to the village and thereafter unfold the development dialogue to cover the main development issues. In the case of the former, experience of another project had indicated that while the outcome of the dialogue itself may be interesting, there was a tendency to traverse a whole area in an indiscriminate manner and include problems both of an important as well as of a trivial character. The second approach would have required much more preparatory work if it was to produce satisfactory results and could have been organised during the period available. Therefore the Institute decided that the household dialogues should be organised round a carefully designed structure which was to be made available to the researcher in the form of a set of questions and themes with guidelines.

These guidelines directed the dialogue to examine problems at three levels—the level of the household, level of the village and level of the nation. Each household was expected to reflect on their expectations for the future of the household and how they would perceive the better life to which they aspire, what would be their image of the desirable future household in which they would be members. In this section the household was taken through the main elements of a profile of household aspirations. These in-

cluded the basic needs category of food, clothing, housing, health, education. The researcher was expected to record what was available to them in their present conditions and thereafter attempt to elicit how they saw the future increments to which they could realistically aspire. The word "realistically" is important in this connection. The researchers were required to so establish the framework for the dialogue that the respondents are not permitted to indulge in ideal or utopian-type projections of the future life. They were to be brought down firmly to the ground of their present standards from which they were to project the possible increments to their well being. By and large, the approach adopted has been successful in containing the aspirations within a framework which might be regarded as realistic.

After an examination of those components of material well-being which also included prospects of savings, investment, future employment, the researcher was expected to take the household to other areas of well-being of a more qualitative and non-material character. The householder was to be questioned on the conflict between traditional values, religious beliefs and family ties on the one hand, and urban styles of living and materialistic approaches to life based on modern attitudes, on the other. The householder's views regarding education for his children, employment outside the village, the place of the temple, the type of recreation, the styles of living—Western versus traditional—were also to be obtained. This part of the dialogue was to focus on the householder's concept of the desirable quality of life the extent to which he held fast to some of the traditional values such as close family ties, links with the village, the important place assigned to religion and religious

practices, the respect for village customs and so on. To what extent was he looking inwards to and improved life in the village, to what extent outwards, seeking to participate in the world outside in employment, education status and so on?

The second section of the questionnaire took the householder to the issues relating to the village as a whole. He was required to project his own image of the improvement to the village and the desirable village of the future. This again took the householder through the whole spectrum of economic, social, cultural, religious, environmental and institutional issues. The third section of the questionnaire raised issues of a national character. One set of questions raised issues regarding the model of development. Here the researcher was to raise general questions as to the type of society which was preferred the consumerism of the Western society with ever increasing consumption of material goods or a more balanced model in which there is due attention paid to man's non-material needs—religious and spiritual.

It was appreciated right at the outset that this area of inquiry would present numerous difficulties. First, the understanding of what the Western model underlying the development process is would be very vague and fragmentary. Most households would find it difficult to respond to such questions at the village level. But at a more straightforward and simple level the conflicts between materialistic and non-materialistic values, tradition and modernity, would evoke a response from villagers. The national section also dealt next with the political issues—What kind of political system they opt for—The competitive party system with elected representatives or alternative more authoritarian forms of government?

What was their attitude towards democratic freedoms and the preservation of these freedoms? How do they envisage greater participation by the citizen? What forms do they have in mind, e.g. at the village level, at the enterprise level and so on? Another set of themes dealt with the organisation of the economy—What was their attitude towards public ownership. Did they favour a fully state-owning economy or an economy in which private enterprise is dominant, or a mixed economy?

After the household dialogues were completed the main conclusions were to be discussed at a village seminar which included participants in household dialogue as well as other selected discussants from the village.

The national dialogues were organised on a different pattern. It was not possible to structure the discussion in terms of the detailed and concrete inquiry into household expectations which was adopted as the basis for the rural dialogues. Instead, the seminar discussion was focused on two sets of development issues, one being problem-oriented and the other being value-oriented. In the problem-oriented section the seminars were expected to deal with some of the critical problems of development facing the country and to elicit an assessment of the national approaches that have been adopted and constructive views with regard to future directions. The themes included unemployment, poverty, population growth, the development strategies in agriculture and industry, and the dilemmas of mass education.

The second part of the discussion dealt with the qualitative aspects of the desirable future social and economic system for the country. This part ranged over many of the issues which were raised in the third section of the rural dialogues in relation to the political system, the place of parliamentary democracy, the conflict between tradition and modernity, the role of public and private enterprises in the economy, the distribution of income and power in society.

In regard to the rural dialogues, the most productive part of the dialogue was the first section relating to household expectations. Here it was comparatively easy to focus on concrete problems and well-defined aspirations as the discussion moved within a context with which the household was familiar and around which ideas could be clearly formulated and articulated. This does not however imply that the methodology adopted was without any serious problems. What was said earlier regarding the dangers of exploring future expectations has been relevant throughout the study. Even in the household sector the responses had varied in regard to definiteness, clarity and sense of realism. But as the dialogue proceeded to the other two levels, the responses have been less clearly defined. This is to be expected. Most households would not have consciously reflected on the problems of the village as a whole nor would they have formed well-defined opinions and views on the problems. The rural dialogues also suffered from the inevitable consequence of varying quality and capacity among the researchers themselves.

The nature of the information elicited and its coverage to a large extent depends on the initiative of the researcher who conducts the dialogue. As a dialogue of this nature had been undertaken by the researchers for the first time particularly in an area where a high level of speculation, fantasy and wishful thinking can be present, it was possible within the short time available to refine and improve the methodology.

The national seminars however presented a different set of problems. What was attempted in the problem-oriented part was to obtain a general assessment by citizens of the broad directions in which the economy was moving. In the process if participants presented interesting innovative solutions to some of the problems the seminars would have been certainly enriched, but it was clear from the beginning that much

could not be expected in this direction. The discussions at the national level were somewhat disappointing in that a large part of the discussion moved along familiar lines.

This was in part due to the method that had been adopted. More could have been obtained out of these seminars with a longer period of preparation. It might have been possible to so organise the participation as to ensure inputs of better quality by selected participants. This would have required preparation of background papers and more intensive discussions. The second part of a seminar however was less demanding as it attempted to obtain a cross-section of views in regard to the changes in value systems and the desirable features of a future system.

NEXT: Main conclusions

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Free books : An LG Reader

SATIRE

The Outsider

“Here’s a heaven sent opportunity for your esteemed journal to meet the oft-repeated crypto-Trotskyist charge that it blindly endorses the official line without reserving its support only for the government’s progressive policies” said Dr. Wimal Udgothana, Associate Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Buffalo in an exclusive interview with our Education correspondent.

Dr. Udgothana is on a brief re-orientation visit to Sri Lanka during which he will receive a honorary D. Litt from the University of Galbokka and a honorary DSc from the University of Wakkumbure, when it is re-opened, which is doubtful.

Dr. Udgothana is best known for his work “Class and Caste: a study in the micromotivation of 17 ex-insurgents” (in collaboration with Janice Riggins). His recent publication (with Yojana Abeysekera, Univ. of Dallas) “Pregnancy Cravings and Fertility Cults Among Wahumpura Women in the Mahaveli Lower Catchment Area” has been hailed by CERES, the FAO journal, as a “genuinely original contribution to the International Year of the Child.”

“What precisely do you mean, Prof?”

“Look, let’s cut out the crap.. the LG discreetly dodged public support for our petition to OPEC. Why? Well, regular, enlightened readers like myself can follow your policy objectives..you supported the Iran revolution from the start, and put your considerable weight behind Islamic fundamentalism as part of your basic anti-hegemonism line — smash the US eagle’s claws, hit the Big Bear in his soft underbelly in Central Asia..now that’s fine as far as I am concerned but your less informed readers, and I have met many, are convinced that the real reason was your pipeline, if I may use the term, to Sheikh Yamani..”

The Education Ministry Reader for backward boys

1. This shop has shirts
Father is in the shop
He is looking at a shirt
He is buying a shirt
2. Gamini is in the river
He has a bicycle
He is washing the bicycle
Father is looking at Gamini
3. Leela is going into the temple
Rama is going into the kovil
Lal is going into the church
Nizam is going into the mosque
4. This town has a post office
Rama is in the post office
He is looking at a letter
He is near Gamini
Gamini is buying some stamps

“And now..?”

“You have a chance to declare your complete commitment to democratic socialism by backing the free textbook scheme to the hilt..after all, you are in the same line of work..free knowledge for the masses, Make knowledge exciting and education sexy and they’ll all forget about free rice and subsidised sugar when they grow up..in fact as Hameed Shaab, our wittiest politician wisecracked the other day when I asked him about these price increases in bread, flour, rice etc..”

“You have already met Shaul Shaab..? But he left for..”

“I met him at Kingston airport as I was about to enplane for the Seychelles and asked him bluntly whether the free text book scheme was part of the overall development plan which included the withdrawal of the food subsidies..I mean at this rate, I said, the poor man may be back to kos and dhel..Brother Shaul then

cracked back “Man cannot live by breadfruit alone, but all work and no play will make Ja(c)k a fruit-and-nut.”

“What the devil did he mean, prof?”

“Before I could find out he disappeared through the VIP lounge’ to board a fast jet I believe to Kabul..”

“But prof, the ministry has already issued the books..so what can we do..?”

“Demonstrate your total commitment by introducing a superior product that will blaze a trail.. that would be a signal service to the rising generation’s hot pursuit of knowledge..just one sample would do..”

“A few hints, if you’ ll be kind enough..”

“Well, first of all look at their product consider for instance the English Reader for Grade 3..4 (See box above)

“I did glance through it, doc..”

“See how singularly dull and unimaginative those simple, straightforward sentences are..sure, I understand, an elementary application of the situational approach but is this good enough?”

“What do you suggest..?”

“I take the English reader because the government has rightly emphasized the vital importance of English..I mean how on earth are we ever going to be another Singapore or South Korea if we just jabber in Sinhala oniy..? Perhaps it’s too late for the high school yakkos but we can begin with the kids..catch them young, as the Jesuits used to say..”

“Do you have a superior method in mind..?”

“I have no objection to an inquiry..but insults I don’t take..”

"Terribly sorry, prof..I really didn't mean.."

"Though some mobile moron masquerading as an educational expert may consider me a pompous pedagogue..I don't need any captive audience, thank you..especially a post-juvenile one, if I may say so.."

"For god's sake, prof..I told you, I am deeply, abjectly sorry.."

"Yes, I do have a superior method..an integrated approach with an inter-disciplinary technique ..let me explain..I'll go along with the situational approach but make it more imaginative and dramatic to capture the child's interest..but it must be environment-oriented if the child is to relate naturally to the reading material..here, the question of credibility crops up, too..and I speak as an educational psychologist ..once the child distrusts you..disbelieves anything you teach him, you have lost him forever.."

"An example would help, I think.."

"Well, take that statement that Gamini has a bicycle..an honest mistake or a deliberate falsehood..? All of us know that it is Lalith who has a bicycle and rides it down Galle Road.."

"I believe I am getting the general drift of your thinking.."

"Next, it's no good introducing him to plain English words..very early we must introduce him to English idioms, proverbs and other expressions so that he can respond truly to the richness of the language and begin to appreciate the multiple meanings of each word or phrase in different situational contexts..also statements alone won't do..throw in some questions too..excite the young

mind..encourage the inquisitive spirit, the quintessence of all knowledge-seeking....introduce a song or two, let him sing them..pose questions based on the situations we have created..teach him the ABC of political science, and international economics..let him get a taste of it, a sense of the world in which he lives, and through that instil in him the

far-reaching, fundamental aims of our economic development effort.."

"Masterly, prof, masterly....if only...."

"I know, I know..you want me to give you a few samples..I have to get to Malay Street in a few minutes but let's see, how it goes, shall we? It's all very tentative, of course" "Of course..of course.."

The Lanka Guardian Reader for advanced infants

1. This shop has shirts

Father is in the shop

He is looking at an imported shirt

He sees the price-tag

Father loses his shirt.

Questions

Why did Father lose his shirt?

Is he always so thoughtless?

Did Mother give it away to the YWCA for its Charity Bazaar?

How come the dhoby's son is wearing Father's shirt?

2. Gamini is near the River

He wants to divert the river

He is looking at the bank

It is called the World Bank

Now the Bank is looking at him.

Questions

Why is the Bank looking at Gamini?

Is it for results?

If Gamini does not divert the River, what will Father do?

Will Father sell him down the River?

3. Nissanka is coming out of the temple

Ranil Baba is in the room

Nissanka is singing him a lullaby

It is called "Sigh, Baba, Sigh"

Soon Nissanka will be singing another tune.

Questions

What tune will Nissanka sing soon?

Will it be an old favourite from 'My Fair Lady'?

4. Nizam is going into the mosque

The politician is shooting a line

It is called the party line.

Nizam shoots his mouth off

The policeman shoots Nizam

Questions

Is the politician a Big Shot?

Is the policeman a bad shot?

How do these stupid questions help Nizam?

5. Rama is in the post office

He is buying some stamps

Gamini is trying to sell some food stamps

Gamini is holding up the queue

Rama is holding up the post master.

Questions

Is Rama a stamp collector?

Or is he an (alleged) tiger?

Can the tiger run faster than the Bull?

Indian Tamil and his ghetto

by K. Sivathamby

In the last few years, there have been many changes. The nationalisation of the estates and consequent retrenchments and displacements have forced the worker to migrate to some of the agricultural areas in Jaffna, Mannar and Vavuniya districts. Working as farmhands under absentee landlords they are as much exploited as they were in the estates, but now live without the fear of communal riots.

The Indian Tamil community has had a closed existence and their very existence in such large numbers in the heart of the Sinhala region had been a source of anxiety to the Sinhala-minded politicians. No sooner the Donoughmore Commissioners recommended universal adult franchise, than the Sri Lankan government of the day had an Order-in-Council passed (1931) which resulted in the disenfranchisement of a majority of the Indian Tamils.

F. P.

It cannot be said that, up to the time of the formation of the Federal Party in 1949, there had been any political movement among the Sri Lankan Tamils which brought within its vortex the Indian Tamils. Even on the issue of the Citizenship Act, the TC, the leader of which (G. G. Ponnambalam) was a Cabinet Minister of the UNP government that brought in the legislation, was not with the Indian Tamils. In 1931, "the claims of the Indian Tamils were not considered important to the Ceylon Tamils..." as one scholar noted.

As for the Indian Tamils, they too did not have any high opinion of the Sri Lanka Tamils. Of the Sri Lanka Tamils, it is only with the Jaffna Tamils that they had contacts and under-

standably enough "the Tamilians living in estates, particularly persons belonging to Vellalan, Kallan and other non-Brahman castes revealed a strong antipathy to the Jaffna Tamil". The estate Tamils have always regarded the Jaffna Tamil as a selfish person and the Jaffna Tamil in his turn, had looked down on the estate Tamils as people of low caste.

But with the spread of the ideology of the DMK, many of the estate Tamil youth turned towards the FP. The FP by persevering with its effort to unite all the Tamils had also endeared itself to some of the estate Tamil youth. It could even be argued that the compelling necessity for the CWC to close ranks with the Sri Lankan Tamils was due partly to such pressure at its grassroots level. It is significant that the recent attempt on the part of the government to bring Vavuniya, traditionally a Sri Lankan Tamil area within a new revenue district that would make the Tamils a minority within that district was criticised by the spokesman of the CWC, even though its leader is in the Cabinet. However it should also be mentioned that in this district there are many Indian Tamils working as farmhands.

The separation of the Indian Tamil community from the Sri Lankan Tamil community could be seen in the fact that Indian Tamils played no active role in the Sri Lankan Tamil struggle over the constitutional status of the Tamil language in 1956 and thereafter. In fact the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Act, which tries to accommodate the use of Tamil within a Sinhala Only position, speaks of special rights for the use of Tamil in the Northern and the Eastern provinces. The current constitution has slightly altered the position and

Dr. K. Sivathamby is Associate Professor at the University of Jaffna. Like the other papers presented at the seminar organised by the Social Scientists Association, Dr. Sivathamby's presentation is a first draft. The final version will appear in a book to be published by the SSA.

this, S. Thondaman thinks, guarantees the right to use Tamil officially even in the estate areas.

A discussion of the causes for the continuing exclusiveness of the Indian Tamils, should, besides referring to the caste characteristics and to the uneven treatment they have received from the governments, which rendered a large majority of them stateless, also refer to the type of Trade Union organization they have had and the leadership it has provided. The historical conditions of the Estate Tamil population had given the Trade Union which had an all Indian Tamil leadership an advantage over the other Trade Unions, especially of those of the left parties. This advantage that the C. W. C. enjoyed could be traced to the fact that the trade unions connected with the Sri Lankan political parties, could not offer a satisfactory solution to the political problem of the constitutional status of those workers. The one exception was the trade union formed by the F. P. but even their trade union has not fared well. The dominant hold the C. W. C. has tends to keep these Indian Tamil workers aloof from the rest of the working-class of this country.

As has been mentioned above, the socio-economic handicaps and the political isolation have not deterred them from falling back on their linguistic identity. Encou-

raged by the wide publicity given to their problems and the social acceptance consented to by, the Tamil parties, the estate Tamils now call themselves the Malaikatt Tamilar (Upcountry Tamils).

The leadership of the Upcountry Tamils, conscious of the geographical distribution of their population, i. e. the fact that they have to live in traditionally Sinhala areas, have openly dissociated themselves from the separatist demand of the TULF. The Indian Tamil leadership also accepts the language policy of the present government—Sinhala and Tamil as the national languages of the country with Sinhala as the only official language.

Thus inspite of ethnic homogeneity, the social formation of the Indian Tamils has kept them away from the Sri Lankan Tamils. It could be said that it was only when the demands of the majority were articulated in extremely chauvinistic, ethno-centric terms, denying even the right of habitation in certain areas, that the Indian Tamils and the Sri Lankan Tamils came together in demanding joint political solutions.

Two areas

An important feature about the Ceylon or Sri Lankan Tamil is that they have been concentrated in two main areas, the Northern and the Eastern Provinces, so much so these two areas, are considered the traditional homeland of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

Today the main traditional homelands of the Sri Lankan Tamils are the North and the East. Here again, even though on common ethnic terms they are taken as Tamils, there is substantial difference between the Tamils of these two areas. The relative geographical separation of these two areas along with the discernible differences in traditional social organization, economic pursuits and, more importantly, varied historical background and the pattern of

population distribution have clearly marked them out as two distinct spheres of interests resulting quite often in the sounding of a double note in the political orchestration of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

Eastern region

The Eastern region has two main units—Trincomalee and Batticaloa and it is the later that deserves closer analysis, for the Trincomalee district in terms of social composition seems to be a half way house between Batticaloa and Jaffna and because of the strategic importance of the natural harbour, has outstripped the other in importance and has significantly enough seen an increase of 40,192 Sinhala residents between 1953 (15,296) and 1971 (55,308).

The significant difference between the Batticaloa and the Jaffna Tamils could be seen in the traditional laws and customs in operation in each of these areas. If law is understood as the 'totality of rules for people's behaviour in society which expresses the will of the dominant group and which are established with the aim of safeguarding, consolidating and developing the social relations and public order advantageous to the dominant group,' then the Tesawalamai laws and Customs of Jaffna and the Mukkuva laws and customs of Batticaloa could be taken as those which have arisen to safeguard the Vellalas and the Mukkuvas in Jaffna and Batticaloa respectively. It is true that these are only traditional laws and customs and that in cases of dispute the common law of the land is held supreme. But the very fact that these are in existence as laws and conventions shows that the traditional social organization in these two areas yet held sway in spite of increasing modernization and social change.

Even a cursory glance at the types of social organization that

exists in Batticaloa and Jaffna would indicate how different one is from the other.

In the Mukkuva law the unit of the family is known as the **Kudi**. Britto defines Kudi as follows: The term Kudi is used by all Tamil speaking classes of Batticaloa to mean every person who is related to one on the mother's side only. Persons of the Kudi however distantly related recognized each other as relations." In contemporary Batticaloa it is not only among the Mukkuvas but also among the Vellalas and the Seerpadas (the other two major caste groups) the Kudi system is in vogue. The Vellalas have 12 Kudis, Mukkuvas 7 and the Seerpada group 13. The lower castes, which work for each of these major caste groups are known as "**Ciraikkudis**" (the bonded Kudis). The artisans and the serfs fall within the bonded Kudis. The Kudis are exogamous clans and rights of property inheritance follow along the Kudi lineage. The Kudi system in Batticaloa is so vital to the socio-economic relationships that even the Muslims have adopted it. It also incidentally indicates the origin of the Muslims of Batticaloa. The Mukkuva law, matrilineal as it is, is integral to the organization of feudalism in Batticaloa. Unfortunately no definitive work has yet been done in this field. The feudal lord known as the Podiyar, unlike the feudal lord in Jaffna, is more often an active farmer.

This type of social organization is so different from the one that obtains in Jaffna, that the average Jaffna man has never comprehended the system and considers the Batticaloa man somewhat alien to his own social system.

The other major factor is that Batticaloa is largely agricultural and therefore the interests of the Batticaloa Tamil has not been the same as that of the Jaffna Tamil. In fact when immediately after the implementation of the Donoughmore Commission report there was a boycott of the elections in Jaffna, organized by the Jaffna Youth Congress inspired by the movement for swaraj in

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	Batticaloa District	Trincomalee District	Amparai District
Sri Lankan Tamils	177,275	65,905	60,519
Sri Lanka Moors	60,889	60,219	126,365

(Census and Statistics figures for 1971)

THE LONE AVENGER

Gamini Fonseka's film, **Uthumaneni**, seems to have impressed some critics and film-goers as a work of directorial skill. Though it goes without saying that **Uthumaneni** is better directed than the common run of Sinhala films, I am less impressed by this aspect of the film than those critics who have sung its praises, because Gamini's falling as a director (also evident in his earlier **Parasathumal**) seems to me to lie in his weakness for flashy and the exhibitionistic. However, my more serious objections to **Uthumaneni** concern its theme and social implications.

Uthumaneni is a film about a hero who, when all attempts to obtain justice for his wronged sister and his family fail, takes the law into his own hands. That this is a theme close to Gamini's heart is brought out by the fact that the figure of the lone avenger appears in several other films of his which don't, however, have the same artistic pretensions as **Uthumaneni**. I notice that city walls have recently been plastered with posters saying: "Uthumaneni — to be banned?" This may be only an advertising gimmick, but it is possible that some censors may have thought **Uthumaneni** a film of dubious morality on the ground that it may encourage private revenge.

My objection to it is very different, because I don't think it a real danger that people will be provoked by watching the climax of **Uthumaneni** into running amok with a knife (the influences of the cinema on behaviour in real life are never as simple as that). What is more dangerous and illusory about **Uthumaneni** is that it invites the audience to participate emotionally in an orgy of individual revenge as a compensation for the corruptions of justice and the institutions of society which it portrays, and therefore distracts attention from the social changes

AS I
LIKE IT

Touchstone

that are actually necessary. Contrary to what some censors may have feared, **Uthumaneni** is in fact a film which serves the function of the popular cinema of offering those psychological satisfactions which help to preserve the status quo. Although the ending of **Uthumaneni** is superficially "tragic", it works essentially in the same way as the conventional happy ending of popular films — it gives the audience an individual resolution of social conflicts with which to identify themselves emotionally as an escape from those conflicts.

Avant-garde in retreat?

Siri Gunasinghe in the 'fifties was regarded as a leader of the Sinhala avant-garde — a pioneer of free verse and "stream-of-consciousness prose", transmitter of the influences of Eliot, Joyce and Lawrence to Sinhala writing, and maker of the then overrated film, **Sath Samudura**. On a recent holiday from his Canadian exile, Dr. Gunasinghe found little "new and exciting" in the local cultural scene, except the revival of Tower Hall drama — a view that must have startled some of his admirers.

Dr. Gunasinghe (interviewed by the **Sunday Observer**) not only expressed his satisfaction at the revival of these plays as belonging to a "tradition which is now part of our culture", but referred to their characters as "timeless and universal", and even called for new plays to be written in the Tower Hall idiom.

Is it only the sentimental nostalgia of the expatriate that makes Dr. Gunasinghe discover fresh virtues in the Tower Hall drama — just as the Sri Lankan returning home finds a new relish in pol sambol? Or is there something more in this conversion of a one-time experimentalist

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Poetry in performance

by Reggie Siriwardena

BOOK
REVIEW

THE PENGUIN BOOK OF POETRY, edited by Ruth Finnegan (Allen Lane Penguin Books Ltd.)

One reason why poetry has become a minority and elitist art in industrialised and urbanised capitalist cultures is that it has become entirely dependent on the printed page. For in all earlier cultures, wherever poetry was a living and popular art, it was closely bound up with oral communication and performance. When poetry ceases to be recited, chanted or sung to an audience, and is read only by the solitary reader in his study, when performance is entirely superseded by silent reading, the sense of rhythm—which is so vital for poetic communication—ceases to be alive for the common reader, and often for the poet himself. Hence, in Britain, Western Europe and America today, poetry has tended to become an esoteric and specialised art, through which the poet communicates to a small circle of initiates.

That these processes have not taken place to anything like the same extent in the Soviet Union—in spite of urbanisation and industrialisation—I attribute to the fact that communal participation in cultural activity has been kept alive by the new social institutions. Poetry readings are a popular occasion in the Soviet Union in a way that they are not in the West, while the absence of a cleavage between a serious elite culture and a commercialised mass culture means that ordinary Soviet readers are more likely to develop a response to poetry than their counterparts in the West.

To those readers who think of poetry only in terms of the printed page and of individualist expression, *The Penguin Book of Oral Poetry* is a valuable reminder that the greater part of the poetry written during human history the world over has been

different. Moreover, it serves to exemplify the truth that (in the words of the editor of this anthology) 'unwritten poetry can offer much that, at its best, can parallel the written poetic forms so much more familiar to those brought up in a literate culture.'

The anthology offers a selection of oral poetry from thirteen cultures ranging from Gond, Mongol and Malay in Asia, Somali, Yoruba and Zulu in Africa, to Pueblo and Eskimo in America: also included are Irish and English oral poetry. To us in Sri Lanka this anthology should be particularly valuable in offering a rich store of material that can be used in the classroom to introduce young students to poetry. The value of the popular ballad means of acquainting young people with the elements of poetic structure and language in simple and easily recognisable form has long been established. But why should we in Sri Lanka, in the English classroom, confine ourselves to *Lord Randal* or *The Wife of Usher's Well* merely because these are regarded as appropriate material for British students? In our own context, the Scots ballads offer both linguistic and cultural obstacles which sometimes detract from their simplicity of form as a means of introducing poetry.

I think some of the folk poems reprinted in this anthology would be much better suited to the backgrounds of Sri Lankan students beginning to read poetry in English. The striking selection of Gond folk poetry from India placed at the beginning of the

book not only comes from a culture which has a natural and social background not remote from our own but is also very moving and powerful poetry even when read on the printed page. The best of it, in fact, is like the classical Chinese poetry translated by Arthur Waley and others in its simple profundity and clarity. I quote one example:

'The ever-touring Englishmen have built their bungalows

All over our sweet forest

They drive their trains with smoke

O look at them, how they talk on wires to one another

With their wires they have bound the whole world together for themselves.'

As this quotation shows, one useful feature of this anthology is that it does not encourage the common assumption that oral poetry belongs only to 'primitive' or isolated cultures. While the anthology includes much poetry that reflects the reaction of traditional cultures, like the Gond, to the impact of colonialism and Westernisation, it also represents, particularly in its English section, the new folk poetry that has come from workers, prisoners, tramps, soldiers and other such groups in modern urbanised cultures under conditions where communal creation and oral performance were facilitated. This should help to correct the imbalance that comes from school and university study of the ballad exclusively as a product of traditional rural societies. The last section of the book also includes selections from epic and heroic poems—sophisticated poems which have behind them a tradition of popular poetry and were composed for performance. From Homer to Woody Guthrie—the book enables us to see better the relations between individual creativity and popular tradition.

Indian Tamil . . .

(Continued from Page 25)

India, the Batticaloa Tamils did not participate in the boycott and E. R. Tambimuttu was elected to the State Council.

Perhaps the decisive factor in the character of political activities of the Eastern Province has been the preponderant number of Muslims in that region. The table (Page 25) illustrates the position.

This has determined the character of the political demands. In fact it is the presence of a sizeable number of Muslims in Batticaloa that was responsible for the formulation of the concept of the Tamil speaking peoples instead of a direct use of the term Tamils.

The educational backwardness of the district had prevented the inhabitants of Batticaloa from enjoying their due share in the public service and professional occupations. The Jaffna man has been dominating officialdom and the administrative machinery. There has been a sharp reaction to this among the Tamils of Batticaloa and quite often anti-Jaffna politicians of Batticaloa have raised the "Yalpani domination" cry.

In spite of these socio-economic differences, Batticaloa has played a significant role in the cultural revival of the Tamils since 1956; it has also been regarded as the repository of traditional Tamil culture, which has been seriously eroded in Jaffna due to missionary activity and English education. The movement for the revival of the Kuttu tradition prevalent in the Batticaloa district has an important place in the rediscovery of the Sri Lankan Tamil traditions as distinct from South Indian. Swami Vipulananda, the first Tamil scholar ever to hold the Chair of Tamil in the University of Sri

Lanka (he was first appointed Professor of Tamil at the Annamalai University, S. India) symbolises the contribution of the Batticaloa Tamils to the development of Tamil studies in both India and Sri Lanka.

Batticaloa, a seat of the cultural heritage of the Tamils, in spite of the fact that its socio-economic needs were very different from those of Jaffna, was brought into the movement of ethnic solidarity by the colonisation policy of successive governments, especially, in the Amparai district. The militant youth movement that started in Jaffna seems to have encompassed Batticaloa too and the government decision not to hold the elections for the Batticaloa Municipal Council indicates that, in spite of the cross-over of two TULF MP's to the government, the political wind there has not yet changed direction.

NEXT: Northern Province

The Lone . . .

(Continued from Page 26)

and modernist to a backward-looking tradition that is being politically inflated?

Teach yourself French

The Lionel Wendt Film Society this month screened a French film titled **The Cave which Bristles up (?)**, and the programme note read as follows:


"This insignificant and humorous police comedy being merely realised put on scene great actors whom we will certainly like to see again always with pleasure even the spoilt talent is regretted by the lack of dullness of their respective characters."

Translated from the French with the help of a pocket dictionary? (I guess **put on scene** is **mise en scene** in the original.)

Victoria Project . . .

(Continued from Page 18)

one who differs with their line of thinking is (as per the news papers) anti-Mahaweli, anti-government, vested interests, cynics and and those suffering from a negative syndrome. However important electricity would be to a country's progress, agriculture and the production of food would remain to be Sri Lanka's greatest asset especially at a time when the country could ill afford to lose export income and to import food at exorbitant prices. To destroy such a vast agricultural and a food producing area would be at the nation's own peril. If engineers alone could influence government thinking it is a sad day for everyone. Agriculturists, Craftsmen, Religious leaders and many others have a right to be heard. Today many thousands who have toiled to develop the Dumbara Valley to its present state and have not done any harm to the government or anyone else, live in a state of fear and insecurity for no fault of theirs. As farmers they consider it a sacrifice to live the hard life of a rural farmer, producing food for others to live on. Their ancestors are the people who suffered most during periods of colonial conquest to protect the Buddhist religion the sovereignty and the heritage of this country. They therefore, consider it their right to protect and preserve their homes, their livelihood and their heritage just the same way any other group would feel in similar situation in any part of the world. Whether the Victoria High Dam Project would end as a national asset or a national calamity is a matter for each individual to see, think and decide when every aspect is presented in accurate honest facts and figures. Otherwise for generations to come people would say "Here is the most classic example of the famous Sinhalese saying 'Atuwa Kadala Putuwa Haduwa' meaning those who broke a barn to make a chair.



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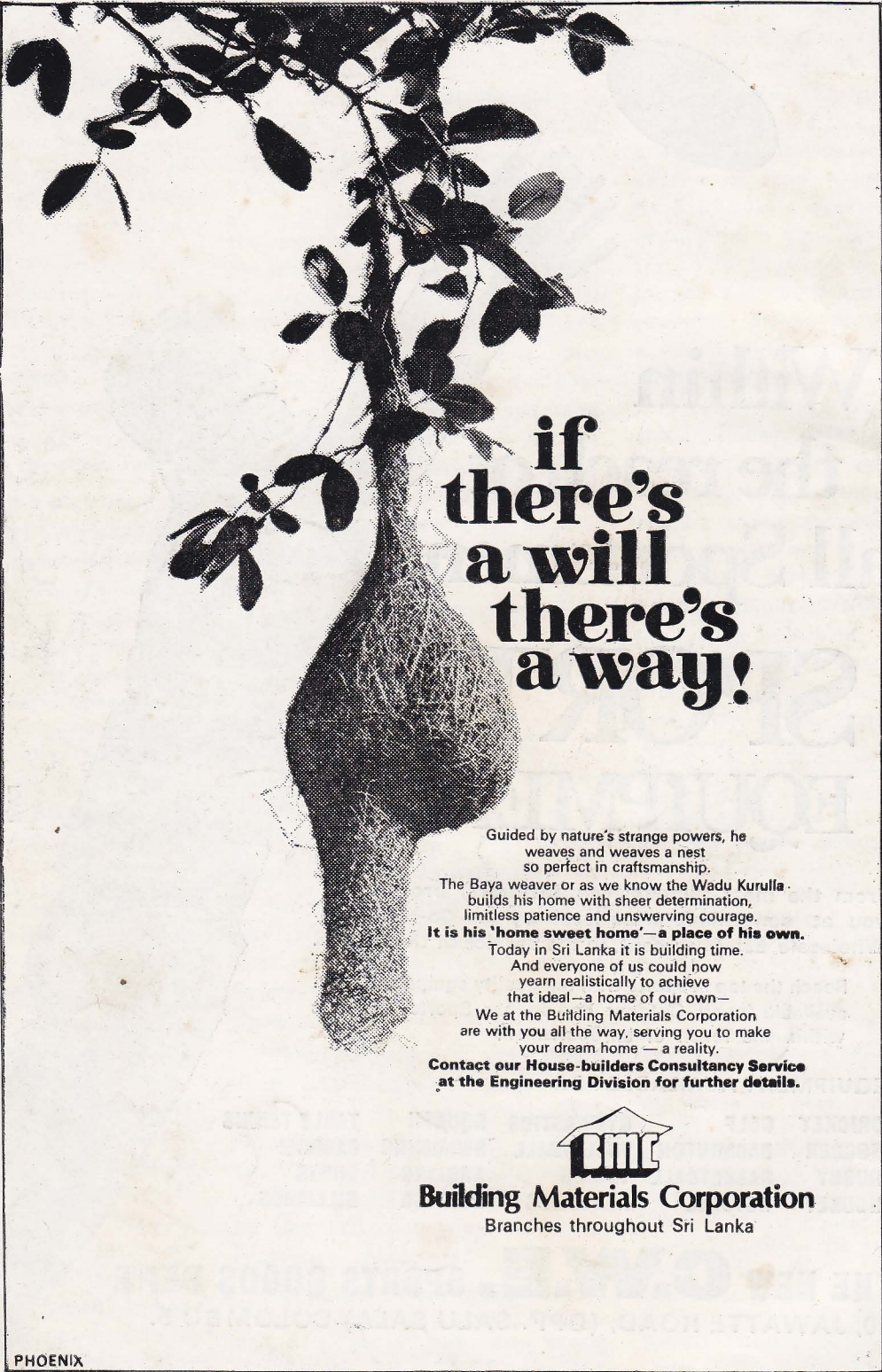
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