

Special Report

S. M. Querishi

PAKISTAN PLAYING WITH FIRE

**LANKA**

# **GUARDIAN**

Vol. 2 No. 22

March 15, 1980

Price Rs. 2/50

**Devolution & TULF**

**JVP's foreign policy**

— Chintaka

**Chauvinist or radical?**

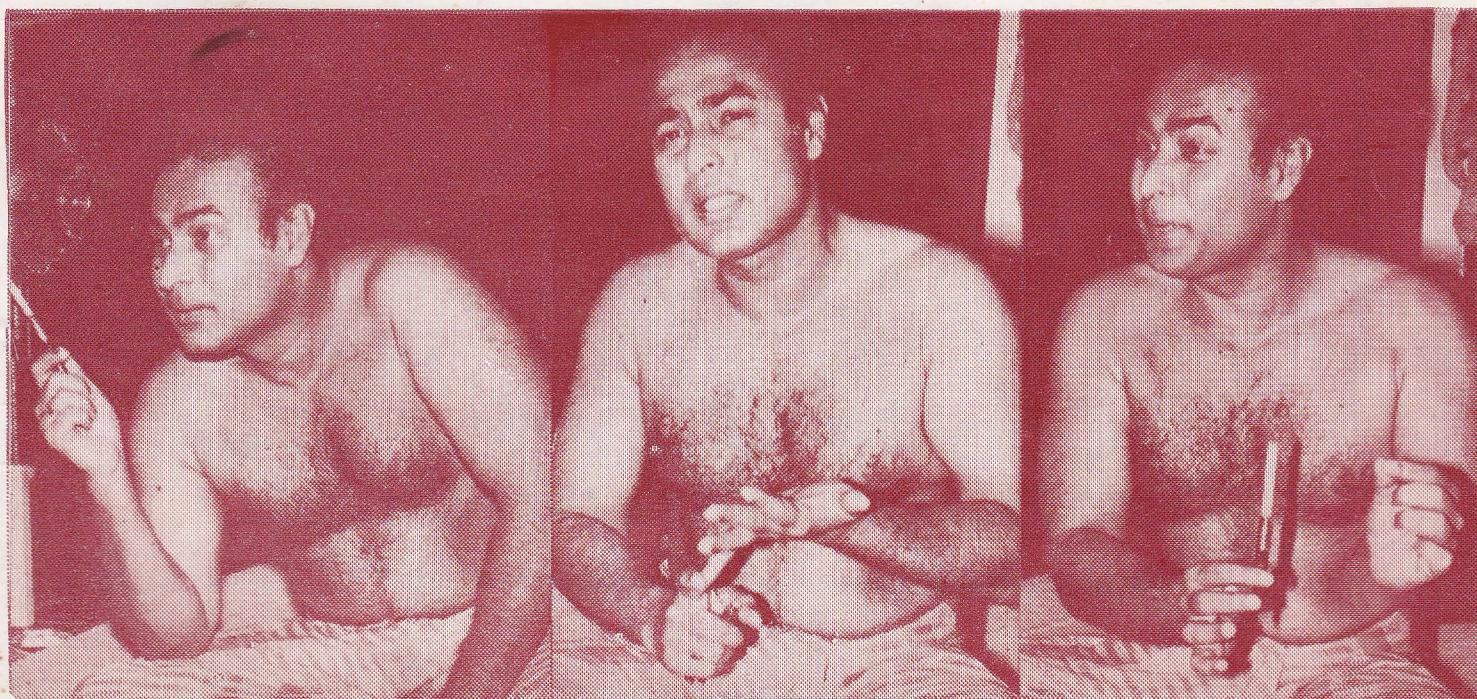
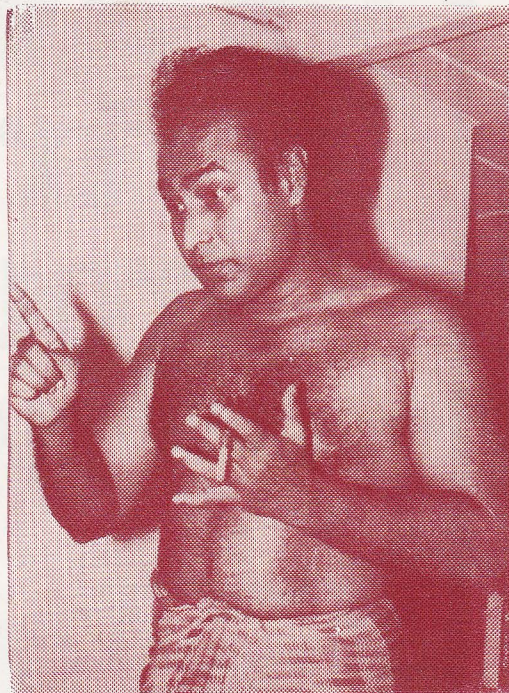
— Yohan Devananda

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— Lakshmi de Silva

**China and Mao**

— N. Sanmugathasan



**TRIALS OF MOVIE MAKERS**



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## Mrs. B's counter-attack?

Contracts have always been the 'tender spot' of many an administration. Earlier this month, the 'SUN' scooped the US Senate report which refers to gifts to some top Sri Lankans from the US multi-national TEXTRON, the parent company that manufactures the Bell helicopter. Four of them were given to Sri Lanka by the US (via the U. K. in order to circumvent Congressional constraints) as arms aid in April 1971. The sum involved was about half a million rupees.

Now the highly controversial Hydro-Cracker Tender is back in the news. "The sparks are still flying" said an opposition politician commenting on the fact that Mrs. Bandaranaike had teamed up with the TULF leader in giving notice of a motion calling for the appointment of a Select Committee to investigate the affair. "This could be Mrs. B's counter-attack" said a top UNP'er.

## The Wijetilleke Letters

Opposition members who know the inside story of the move say that the material on which the resolution is based is the Wijetilleke correspondence.

Dr. L. Wijetilleke, a Sri Lankan expatriate living in the US, came back home with his family to accept the important post of Managing Director, Ceylon Petroleum Corporation. He has now left the island.

The opposition move is centred on the circumstances of his resignation, on the evaluation of the Hydro-Cracker Tender, and on the purchase of a coastal tanker by the CPC.

## SLFP-Alone

The Left parties, notably the LSSP, which had hopes of a joint May Day rally with the SLFP will receive a firm 'No'. As the L. G. reported in its last issue, Mrs. B. simply refuses to take the same platform as the JVP. And if the LSSP-CP had any hopes that a group in the SLFP Politburo will adopt a different line, their plans have to be abandoned after the unanimous SLFP PB decision taken recently.

## Mass Protest

Over 3500 delegates from unions affiliated to the major parties (the UNP and JVP were the notable exceptions) decided at a two-day National Convention to organise a Day of Mass Protest. The Convention was sponsored by the JCTUAC. Among the 60 speakers were Alavi Moulana from the SLFP's SLITUF, L. W. Panditha of the CFTU (the convenor), Bala Tampoe of the CMU, Batty Weerakoon of CFL, Vasudeva Nanayakkara (United Workers Union), J. A. K. Perera of PSTUF, A. Aziz of the DWC, N. Sanmugathan of the CTFU and Sambanda Moorthi of the Tamil Trade Union Federation.

Demonstrating a rare degree of unity, the federations decided to mobilise mass support for the 23 demands put forward by the JCTUAC. The main demands are (a) a minimum 300/- wage increase (b) restoration of subsidies and rations (c) repeal of essential public services act (d) repeal of ban on demonstrations (e) right to picket (f) monthly wage for plantation workers.

Besides these demands, the convention highlighted the citizenship rights of plantation

(Continued on page 19)

## Terms of German capital aid

With reference to the article "Aid—an efficient instrument of the new Colonialism" by U. Karunatilake in the "Lanka Guardian" of March 1st, please permit me to state that in the case of the Federal Republic of Germany, capital aid to Sri Lanka is given as an untied credit at 0.75 per cent interest per annum over a 50 year period (with a grace period of 10 years) and the recipient country is free to buy its project equipment anywhere in the world market, as it pleases.

**Heribert Woeckel**

*Ambassador of the  
Federal Republic of Germany*

## LANKA GUARDIAN

Vol. 2 No. 22 March 15, 1980 Price 2/50

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

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

Telephone: 35975

## CHINA AND MAO

I have read with interest the comments of "Touchstone" (L. G. Feb. 1) on my article on China and the intelligent questions he has posed. Permit a brief reply.

The first question is how the death of a single person can alter a country's policy so radically. There is an answer. It is not quite correct that it was just Mao's death that unleashed the counter-revolutionary flood. The process had started earlier. There was a fierce struggle between the revolutionaries and the revisionists during Mao's life. The Cultural Revolution was precisely concerned with this. This ideological struggle was not a "bureaucratic struggle in which the masses were mere spectators". Anyone who, like me, had seen millions of Chinese march past Tien-an Square where Mao reviewed them; or seen the millions upon millions of big character posters that occupied almost all available open spaces in all the principal cities will vouchsafe that the masses fully participated in it.

During the second half of the Cultural Revolution, the revisionists had jockeyed themselves into key positions in the State apparatus. But the immense personal prestige of Mao and his appeal to the masses prevented them from acting. They could do nothing so long as Mao was alive. Once this road block was removed, they acted swiftly. But it must not be imagined

that there was no opposition. The very fact that men had to be sent from Peking to Shanghai to paste the first posters denouncing the "four" shows that it was not all easy going. Nor is it even now.

But the real question is how it is possible for capitalism to be restored in countries like the Soviet Union and China after such revolutionary upheavals. This question has not yet been studied in depth. But I can venture a few suggestions. The Imperialists and reactionaries do not accept defeat merely because they are defeated in a revolution. In fact, Lenin once said that the defeated bourgeoisie was more powerful than the victorious proletariat. He gave three reasons for it. Besides, the Imperialists are willing to be patient. They never give up easily. They waited till Lenin and Stalin died before subverting the Soviet Union. Similarly, they waited till Mao died before doing the same thing in China. The forces that work for capitalist restoration come not only from the former capitalist and landlord classes but also from inside the privileged classes that grow up inside the Party and the State. Imperialism and reaction consciously corrupt these forces. Yao Wen-yuan—one of the disgraced "four"—has analysed this problem in an article entitled, "The social basis of Lin Biao's anti-Party clique."

This development back to capitalism can only be prevented

by the success of world revolution (not to be confused with Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution). The slogan of socialism in one country was only a tactical slogan for a particular period. But, as both Stalin and Mao have pointed out, the final guarantee of the success of socialism—be it in the Soviet Union or in China—depends on the overthrow of world imperialism and the success of world revolution. As Mao put it, "Only over the grave of world imperialism can we build a new society without exploitation." Therefore, we should not be content with celebrating anniversaries of revolutions in the Soviet Union or China but work hard to make revolution successful all over the world. If a gap is allowed to develop, then imperialism will use that opportunity to corrupt the existing socialist states. Let us not forget that socialist states are surrounded by Imperialist states and that the latter can and do corrupt the former by all forms of ingenious ways. It is a law of dialectical materialism.

As for the second question, I had to write within the space allotted to me. But, in the document "In Defence of Mao Tsetung Thought", adopted by our Party, we accept that there were errors in foreign policy from 1971-1972. Most of these were carried out under the influence of Chou En-lai, who, it turns out, was not a genuine follower of Mao. Over some

*(Continued on page 8)*



# Will devolution satisfy the TULF?

NEWS  
BACKGROUND

by Our Political Correspondent

The words "Sinhala" and "Tamil" do not appear, I learn, in the report submitted by Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam, a member of the Presidential Commission on Devolution, Decentralisation and District Development Councils. Dr. Tiruchelvam submitted a separate report all on his own while some other members recorded reservations. The reservations came from the two Moslem members of the Commission chaired by the former Chief Justice, Mr. Victor Tennekoon.

While Dr. Tiruchelvam's scrupulous exclusion of all racial references is undoubtedly laudable, there is little use in pretending that this exercise has nothing to do with the problems of a pluralist society, generally, and the vexed issue of the Tamils in particular. The very composition of the Commission revealed an attempt, undeclared, of course, to represent the diverse interests of a multi-racial country. In that sense, it is fair to speak of the Moslem members of the Commission and its Tamil members although Dr. Tiruchelvam, the Harvard-educated lawyer, and Dr. A. Jeyaratnam Wilson, an expatriate Professor of Political Science, would probably dislike such communal labels.

It would be absurdly disingenuous however to approach the Commission and its work as an academic exercise or an inquiry totally detached from politics, and sectarian politics at that. This could be true of the Sinhala members too. The psychologies which were brought to bear on these highly sensitive issues could be, for example, distinctively "Kandyan" or "Low country".

After all, here is a problem of power — of the power-relationship

between the Centre and the periphery. How much power would the Centre be prepared to relieve itself of and vest in the District Councils? Naturally, the 'power' so vested must not be just formal but effective — a decision-making authority which includes the power to spend money.

Call it what you will — Regional Councils, District Councils, District Development Councils or any other, but from the days of the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact (public) and the UNP-FP pact (secret), this idea has appealed to both Sinhala and Tamil leaders as a way of granting a measure of autonomy that would satisfy aggrieved Tamil opinion.

Thus, the TULF, now standing for an Independent Eelam (as against the FP's 'federalism') was invited to nominate a representative. The SLFP declined to do so.

Dr. Tiruchelvam and Dr. Wilson (who hasn't signed the report because of some mix-up in the delivery of the report) are both personally and politically associated with the FP-TULF. Dr. Tiruchelvam, the only FP Minister in the UNP-FP coalition, an appointment which was part of the Senanayake-Chelvanayakam deal. Significantly, Mr. Tiruchelvam held the portfolio of Local Government.

Dr. Wilson is the son-in-law of the FP's founding father, Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam. What is not so well known is that Dr. Wilson, in his dual capacity as son-in-law and Peradeniya lecturer in political science, played a very important if back-stage role from 1956 onwards. He took up this role again when he returned to the island last year on vacation. He was assisted by a

small in-group of professors, both native and foreign. One of his former colleagues in fact said "Willie is both Peradeniya's and the peninsula's answer to Henry Kissinger....."!

If the main (majority) report has not satisfied either of these Tamil academics (one of whom, Wilson, publicly expressed confidence in devolution as 'the best solution') then it is unlikely that even the most cooperative "moderates" in the TULF will accept the Commission's recommendations.

The Commission is known to have studied other essays in devolution — notably the experience of Scotland and Wales.

Here, two questions are likely to be the critical test in regard to TULF acceptance:

a) Whether the Chairman of the DDC will be elected, and if, so what his relationship will be to the District Minister appointed by the Centre? Or will the Commission recommend that the Chairman of the DDC should be the District Minister? Can there be a compromise by which the District Minister will play President to the DDC Chairman's prime minister in an elected district assembly?

b) What will be the DDC's budget? How will the money be raised? A grant from the Centre plus locally raised funds? In what proportion? Who will select development projects? Will a national experts Committee be given the job?



## SLFP winds of change

**W**inds of change are blowing over the SLFP, often with surprising results.

In Kandy, citadel of the hill country aristocracy, R.P. Wijesiri, a newcomer to the party who publicly proclaims his so-called "low caste", led an anti-aristo move when the party chose its district organiser. Wijesiri was made president, while ex-Minister Kobbekaduwa and kinsman Colonel Anurudda Ratwatte failed to find a place among the office-bearers.

Poor organisation was one of the major causes of the SLFP's 1977 rout, Mrs. B has repeatedly told party rallies recently.

The new constitution was considered an effort to reorganise the party. But it also had the avowed aim of 'democratisation'. At the start, there was sharp criticism against the transitional arrangement on the grounds that it concentrated power in the president. It was argued, however, that this was only a temporary measure—a necessary prelude to a party conference.

The conference has still to be held and the election of district-level office-bearers is a preparation for the selection of delegates to the conference.

In Kandy, Wijesiri has former Gampola M.P. D.M. (Dimo) Jayaratne as secretary.

Another sort of "demo" greeted Mrs. B. when she visited Polon-

naruwa, the constituency of Ratne Deshapriya Senanayake. A sizeable crowd of SLFP supporters shouted slogans against Ratne and made all sorts of allegations.

The Senanayake brothers have not done too well lately. Younger brother Dharmasiri, a coporation chairman under SLFP Minister Kalugalle, challenged him for the key post in the Kegalle district. But veteran SLFP'er 'Kalu' romped home by getting more than double Dharmasiri's votes.

The Rajapakse brothers, on the other hand, did very well by becoming organisers for their respective areas. Ironically, one of the casualties of their victory was the architect of the 'new' constitution, Professor Rohanadeera. Mahinda Rajapakse's victory was all the more surprising because he was "charge-sheeted", as the phrase goes, by the party last month. Mrs. Bandaranaike wanted to take disciplinary action against him for deviating from the party line on Afghanistan. Speaking at a public meeting in Colombo, Rajapakse led a stinging attack on China, calling the Peking leaders "monkeys and mandarins".

You cannot teach an old dog new tricks. Another SLFP veteran V.T.G. Karunaratne, proved the wisdom of this old adage when he spotted a move against him in Ratnapura. Out-smarting some young challengers and their top-level backers, V.T.G. won the day.

Maho station master claims that he was abused by a Government MP. According to a Transport Ministry statement to the press the rumpus took place when the station staff detected several of the MP's constituents travelling in the 2nd class with 3rd class tickets.

### CORRECTION

The last paragraph on J. Uyan-goda's article "UTHUMANENI" which appeared in L. G. March 1 1990 should have read:

"In this context, Gamini Fonseka, by his faithful portrayal of the real conditions of society, dispels some of the dominant conventional illusions concerning them and shatters the optimism of the existing social authority".

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## Assault and abuse

**I**s it the beginning of a long hot summer or are Government MP's simply losing their cool? "ASSAULT RAP on TANGALLE MP" announces the SUN which reported that the Attorney General will soon indict the Tangalle MP for assault. He is alleged to have caused bodily harm to an employee of the M. P.'s hostel 'Sravasti'.

Last week, all train services beyond Kurunegala were paralysed when the Maho station staff went on a lightning strike.

President JR has ordered a full inquiry into an incident where the



# Playing with fire

by S. M. Querishi

FOREIGN  
NEWS

*Q. What are Zia's chances of survival.....?*

A. Before I offer you a direct reply, I feel I should make a basic criticism about the comment on Pakistan which you sent me and I found quite interesting.... In making Zia the focus of your commentary you tend to over-personalize Pakistan's current problems and dilemmas.

If you look at the history of Pakistani foreign policy you would, for instance, be far less inclined to take its proclaimed "nonalignment" as seriously as you seem to do.

In the first few years the new state was preoccupied with all the physical problems that accompanied partition and the political problems of party rule and administration. When it did appear to be sure of its separate identity it began to conceive and formulate a foreign policy. That policy was closely tied to Anglo-American interests. Of course, as British power declined and British interests diminished, Pakistan became an instrument of US policy. This had several aspects. First of all, it earned the intense suspicion of India, particularly over Kashmir and western support for Pakistan on that issue. Secondly, Pakistan, step by step, found itself isolated from the general movement of newly independent Asian and African states; that is, the newly awakened Afro-Asianism which I think you people in Sri Lanka sometimes call the spirit of Bandung. As arms supplies followed defence treaties and other alignments with US and US-sponsored military alliances directed against the two Communist powers, USSR and China, Pakistan was converted into a 'cold war' bastion. You will remember the affair of the U-2 spy plane which took off from a base near Peshawar, which is now very much in the news

again. Finally, while India, Afghanistan, Ceylon etc joined the nonaligned movement Pakistan chose to continue its pro-US policy, helping to serve its declared objective of 'containment'. This was even more apparent as military rule became the established norm.

Bhutto did try to improve relations with India and the Soviet Union but the basic thrust of Pakistan's policy (that is anti-India, anti-Afghanistan, anti-USSR) remained unaltered. In fact, it was in a way strengthened by the US-China rapprochement. Pakistan's rulers, whether Bhutto or Zia, and the upper bureaucracy which is the servile agent of its uniformed master, all regard Pakistan's broker-role as the finest achievement of our diplomacy.

I shall turn to your question about Zia later in this reply because it strikes me that another question you pose fits into the flow of my argument at this point.

*Q. How genuine is Pakistan's nonalignment and can it be sustained in the present context?*

A. Pakistan's nonalignment was not a free or honest choice but a decision forced upon it by a concatenation of circumstances, mainly external. The chief impelling factor internally was of course Zia's initial, irrevocable decision to eliminate Bhutto physically and Bhutto-ism politically, and Zia's need for legitimacy and acceptability abroad.

CENTO died a natural death. The revolution in Iran wrote CENTO's obituary. Pakistan did not opt for nonalignment. The formal disability (membership in a multilateral military alliance) was automatically removed. Far from objecting to joining the movement, the US and China wanted Pakistan to get inside a movement which was taking, from

S. M. Querishi is the pen name of a prominent Pakistani academic who did not wish to disclose his identity "for personal reasons". His letter from Lahore answers some of the questions put to him by the "Lanka Guardian."

their point of view, a basic direction that was hostile. Didn't somebody at the Colombo conference talk about "trojan horses"?

*Q. Why did Zia talk about 'peanuts' when the US offered him 200 million dollars as new aid? Does it show an anti-US tendency in Pakistan today?*

A. Not from Zia, and not from the ruling clique. It is not that Zia is unwilling to play the American game. Oh, he is willing all right. He wants a bigger rake-off. He wants his reward to be something more than peanuts. But there is a slight difference in thinking in the upper echelons in Islamabad. Fundamentally, all hold views that compel Pakistan to play a subordinate, if not servile, role in US-China geo-strategy. But there are those who think that China is the more reliable friend and patron. There is a common ground between these two lines of thinking. Get arms and money from US, while working closely with the Chinese in their regional strategy. Unfortunately, this means Pakistan is pushed into a confrontation with Afghanistan, and therefore with the Soviet Union. This is a very dangerous game with incalculable results. In one sense, it is the culmination of Pakistani foreign policy over the years. In another, it is the immediate result of Zia's own political plight.

*Q. How will the recent events in neighbouring Afghanistan and the policies that Pakistan is now*

(Continued on page 6)



# Disruption and subversion

'Too little, too late' is the all too familiar verdict on the reformer who often defeats his own purpose and prepares his own grave. Too much, too soon could well be the equally self-destructive method of the naive or over-eager revolutionary.

It is now a well-established fact that Pakistan is the base camp of the Afghan rebels, and the command centre of the increasingly coordinated operation mounted to de-stabilise and subvert the revolutionary regime installed in Kabul in April '78. And after the Iranian revolution and the downfall of the Shah, the regional policeman of the US and the publicly hailed hero of Peking, north-west Pakistan became the operational base of Pakistan's principal patrons, the US and China, in their concerted campaign against the Soviet-backed Kabul regime. (See PAKISTAN: PLAYING WITH FIRE).

But if the possibilities for successful subversion increased it was because of the social and political unrest caused by the sweeping reforms introduced by the revolutionary regime. These social and economic reforms threatened to disrupt the feudal structure of one of the world's most backward countries, traditionally bedevilled by fiercely divisive ethnic conflicts.

Noting that the Karmal government has been careful not to announce new economic decrees, LIZ THURGOOD, reporting to the GUARDIAN, London from Kabul reminded her readers that Afghanistan, the size of France, is described as one of the world's least developed countries. With a population slightly bigger than Sri Lanka's the country's literacy rate is less than 20%. Life expectancy is not more than 45 years, and the average income is about Rs. 200/- per month.

Radical reforms (See REFORMS) and steps towards social emancipa-

## REFORMS

1. Legislation of trade unions.
2. Cancellation of all debts owed by peasants (usury)
3. Extensive land reform initiated January 1st 1979 — previously all arable land was owned by 5% of the land owners. Under the land reform a ceiling of 15 acres was imposed. All surplus land was to be taken without compensation and distributed free to landless peasants and nomads. Already 150,000 formerly landless families have received 1 hectare of land each. A total of 680,000 families stand to benefit from the land reform programme.
4. Equal rights have been granted to women who were earlier, bought and sold as commodities. Arranged marriages have been banned and limitations placed on dowries.
5. Pledges have been made to nationalize at least 51% of industry.
6. The national rights of Afghanistan's various peoples have been recognised. Steps to establish newspapers, radio programmes and educational facilities. These measures have a destabilising effect on Pakistan owing to the example it holds out to the Baluchis.
7. The old state apparatus has been purged, and most officers above the rank of major have been dismissed.

tion can have the most disrupting effects in the short-run. That this is not merely an academic lesson drawn from the study of societies in rapid transition is seen in this graphic account by James STERBA of the **New York Times**:

"Land reform attempts undermined their village chiefs. Portraits of Lenin threatened their religious leaders. But it was the Kabul revolutionary government's granting of new rights to women that pushed orthodox Moslem men in the Pushtun villages of eastern Afghanistan into picking up their guns.

"The government said our women had to attend meetings and our children had to go to schools," said Shahab Uddin, a 40-year-old farmer who fought and then fled eight months ago. "This threatens our religion. We had to fight."

"The government imposed various ordinances allowing women freedom to marry anyone they chose without their

parents consent," said a former headmaster, who has adopted the fighting name of Zamari."

"The moment the women were invited to the meeting, the fighting started," Zamari said. "The village men met secretly," he said, "and organized an attack, which began April 12."

## Playing . . .

(Continued from page 5)

pursuing affect, if at all, the situation in the North-West frontier and Baluchistan?

A. I particularly like the point you made when comparing Yahya's legacy and Zia's dangerous course. I also agree generally with your remarks on Baluchistan etc, based I believe, on the excellent analysis of Fred Halliday.

Not all the so-called aid from the US, nor the help from its "most trusted ally", China, nor the money from the Shah or the oil sheiks have rescued Pakistan from its condition of under-development. On the contrary, the economic situation has got worse; the impoverished masses have been condemned to intensified forms of exploitation; the problems of uneven development within the country have been aggravated, sharpening in turn the national question, the rights of the Baluchis, Pushtuns and so on.

Yahya saw Pakistan lose its east wing. What will be Pakistan's fate under Zia? Coming now to his own future. . . . . Another major political upheaval and he can be blown off his perch. Or another group of officers with another general as its leader will oust a man who is universally unpopular. As he goes on playing the US-China game against Afghanistan, Zia may unwittingly trigger a fresh uprising in Baluchistan and he will have to turn those guns which he has been promised against the Baluchis. He signed Bhutto's death warrant gladly. His own death warrant could be the next.

# An incurable fondness for dictators

by Jack Anderson

**T**HE Iranian crisis won't disappear when the fate of the hostages is finally settled. Recriminations will start bubbling to the surface of the American political landscape.

The question to be answered goes deeper than our humiliation in Tehran, serious as that has been. It goes to the heart of U.S. foreign policy: what is to blame for the hatred and ridicule that have been heaped on this country in recent years, and what can be done to reverse the situation? In a way, it's unfortunate that this issue will be discussed in the overblown rhetoric of an election year, because it is one that deserves more dispassionate consideration.

The Iranian crisis is only the latest, and most dramatic, evidence of the enmity the United States has aroused by its support of repressive dictators in the name of anti-communism. In Nicaragua, a Teheran-style backlash was prevented only because the revolutionaries who ousted the U.S. backed Anastasio Somoza were less fanatical than the mullah in Iran. In Cambodia, revenge for our support of the corrupt Lon Nol was avoided because there were no Americans left to terrorize. In South America and Africa, we continue to prop up the regimes of generals who beat their countrymen with one hand and rob them with the other.

As a basically decent man who inherited years of locked-in-concrete alliances, Jimmy Carter has reaped the whirlwind sown by his predecessors. After two years of kowtowing to Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, for example, he was finally persuaded that

the Shah's fate was sealed, and played a crucial role in his final exit.

But it was too little and too late. The revolutionaries who ousted the Shah remembered only the decades of U.S. support for the tyrant, not Carter's pressure on him to moderate his rule. And to our client dictators, who have been trading on their anti-communism for billions in U.S. aid over the years, Carter's abandonment of the Shah was seen as simple treachery to an old ally.

The intelligence community's role in America's current no-win predicament is certainly worth looking into. Did our intelligence-gathering agencies send honest, accurate information to Washington, where it was distorted at the top levels to conform to political policies already established? Or did the experts at the Central Intelligence Agency and the State Department censor their own reports to tell the policymakers what they wanted to hear?

For years I had reported that the Shah was unpopular with the Iranian masses and quite likely to be deposed by popular revolution.

This information was reported by U.S. intelligence, which considered the Shah an unstable megalomaniac. But it was apparently ignored in favour of more optimistic assessments.

Only two months before the Shah's collapse, Carter's national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, telephoned the Iranian dictator and assured him 100 percent. In a matter of weeks, the reality of the Shah's collapsing situation finally sank in, and Carter withdrew his pledge of support, after the Shah had refused to liberalize his rule.

In Cambodia, knee-jerk anti-communism saddled the United States with another corrupt, unpopular dictator, Lon Nol. When this pathetic bumbler was thrown out by the savage Pol Pot regime, which was in turn overthrown by Vietnamese-backed communists, the United States had no place to go. The result was the shameful U.S. vote in the United Nations to recognize the government of Pol Pot, although he had butchered half the population of Cambodia.

In Nicaragua, only when it became obvious that Anastasio Somoza — whose corrupt 40 years of family rule was made possible by U.S. backing — was losing out to a popular revolt, did the United States give up — after an attempt to rob the rebels of victory by back-door manoeuvring.

Our apparently incurable fondness for dictators — who need only to spout a convincing anti-communist line and assure us of their stability — may get us in more trouble before too long. In Argentina

AFTER SEEING TORTURE CHAMBERS & VICTIMS

**Commission shaken by  
unimaginable atrocities**

*The author is one of America's leading columnists.*



and Chile, we continue to back repressive military regimes to protect U.S. business interests. And in Zaire, another who enjoys American support, President Mobutu Sese Seko, is reportedly heading toward a Somoza-style debacle. He has enriched himself while his people starved and imprisoned any who dared criticize his dictatorship. But he jovially wines and dines U.S. officials and businessmen.

Robert Remole former head of the U.S. embassy's political section in Kinshasa, told me Mobutu's days may be numbered. Remole's summary of the situation puts the U. S. predicament in a nutshell.

"Mobutu's an s. o. b.," he explained, "but the powers—that be say, as always, that he's our s. o. b. I'm sure he's not going to be around much longer... the people of Zaire will blame the United States for supporting him."

Those who will not learn from history are doomed to relive it. It's time U. S. policymakers read a little of our recent history so we won't be doomed to repeat it endlessly.

## Letters . . .

(Continued from page 2)

of these Mao had no control. I know from unimpeachable sources that Mao told a delegation of Chilean Marxist-Leninists, who had remonstrated with him against China's attitude to the Chilean fascist junta, that he agreed that China's policy was wrong and revisionist. He told them not to be idealist or metaphysical and that there were two lines within the Chinese party and that he could not always ensure that the correct line was followed. He advised the Chilean comrades to stick to their correct ideas.

There were, ofcourse, other matters on which Mao seems to have erred. We, ourselves, had occasion in 1973 to write to the Chinese party and point out that its attitude to the government of Sri Lanka—particularly their providing arms—was indefensible. But we consider that Mao Tsetung Thought

is fundamentally correct despite certain aberrations in foreign policy matters after 1971. But we do not subscribe to the theory of anyone's infallibility. But Mao never advocated an alliance with US imperialism to isolate Soviet social-imperialism.

**N. Sanmugathasan**

Colombo 3

## Daylight Thuggery

We wish to thank you for the publicity given by the 'Lanka Guardian' to incidents of thuggery which occurred outside Bank of Ceylon, Central Office.

We are confident that your valuable journal will continue to expose acts of wrong-doing of this nature and serve as the watchdog of the rights of all sections of the people.

**A. Valentine Merinnege**

*Secretary, Bank of Ceylon Branch of CBEU*

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# WHY PROFESSIONALS EMIGRATE

by Mervyn de Silva

**W**hat makes a man migrate? To uproot oneself from one's own environment and to sever personal and family ties is surely a painful wrench. Yet a great number among the most skilled people in developing countries continue to take the plunge.

Drawing on studies undertaken by four independent experts, a recent report the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development identifies the lure of higher income and living standards as the principal cause. Important also is 'social environment and working conditions'. A closer inquiry into skilled migration, its magnitudes, composition and direction, reveals other impelling factors too. These include the internationalization of skilled manpower, the comparative advantages gained by some developing countries in producing and exporting skills, and immigration and emigration policies of the rich and the poor countries.

On both sides of this relationship there are what is commonly designated as "push" and "pull" factors. An examination of their actual operation points to the crucial fact of dependence, itself a manifestation of the fundamental character of a world economy in which "unequal development" is a central feature.

## Efforts at control

In moving towards action to deal with the situation, there has been a recognition of the different interests of different developing countries. As a result a broader framework for practical measures is emerging. "Intensive", "regulatory" and "de-linking" policies constitute the three main areas of action.

While it is almost impossible to reduce the salary differentials between the rich and poor nations

in a manner that would substantially affect emigration flows, incentives such as enhanced salaries remain a standard response. But such a step, especially when applied on a selective basis, often creates new problems by distorting local wage structures.

Far more hopeful is a planned effort aimed at the improvement of the institutional features of professional life. This could even attract back expatriate skills. Temporary research jobs and the use of expatriate professionals in particular projects may also offer a short term answer.

## Restrictions self-defeating

Regulatory and restrictive measures in the sphere of emigration, another stock-response, have not only invited moral criticism and protest but proved cumbersome and self-defeating in practice. This line of attack, often abandoned in the face of protest, has angered and demoralised the professional community, sometimes tempting it into ingenious and dubious modes of escape.

The argument that the problem is rooted in the "over-expansion" of educational facilities does not stand up too well under serious scrutiny. Rather than a reduction of these facilities what might be more useful is the "indigenization" of professional training systems. This would not only make the training more relevant to local conditions, but reduce the international mobility of the country's professionals. This would not, of course prevent poor nations from helping each other. To ensure this exchange of skills, bilateral and subregional, there could be a more efficient division of labour within developing regions. That is, in the production of and trade in skills.

To deal effectively with the flow of human resources among nations, several attempts have been made

*Part 2 of a feature specially written for and circulated by the U.N Office of Information N.Y.*

to come up with acceptable accounting procedures. One of the UNCTAD experts, Jagdish Bhagwati of MIT has suggested that three elements be distinguished in international accounting:

- (a) official flows;
- (b) the nominal private flows; and
- (c) the imputed capital flows implicit in the movement of skilled manpower.

Since two approaches have been proposed with regard to the mode of computation—'Historic cost' (HC) and 'Present Discounted Value' (PDV). The Exporters' Group has recommended that the question of fair and feasible methods of measuring human resource flows be further examined.

## Compensation for the drain

With other studies in both developing and developed countries, and an increasing body of expertise, the international discussion on the 'brain drain' has now reached a stage where two questions figure prominently. First, the issue of compensation for the countries that have helplessly borne this drain for so long. Secondly, the problem of how best the gains that have accrued to the rich can be shared.

Several interesting proposals are now assuming clearer shape. If a 'direct assessment' on the host developed country were levied, its proceeds could be used for development projects in the poor countries. This could be done directly by the developing country or through a Special Fund. Many variables would determine each country's contribution to the Fund and each poor country's share of



the proceeds but this exercise would not be too difficult.

The U.S. tax system and tax-exemption practices have also inspired ideas that could be profitably adapted. A global tax system could, for example, include a moderate supplementary tax on skilled migrants to be used for developmental projects in the poor countries.

Since migrants' remittances have come to play a not inconsiderable part in the balance of payments of many poor countries, it has been proposed that the IMF's Compensatory Financing Facility be extended to cover fluctuations in earnings from such remittance thus cushioning the poor from another adverse effect of recessionary trends in the developed world.

As the North-South debate continues, we are sure to hear more about these and other proposals to turn the 'brain drain' into an irrigation canal.

## THE GREY-EYED KING

by Anna Akhmatova

*Glory to you, pain unending!  
Yesterday died the grey-eyed king.*

*The autumn evening was stifling and red.*

*At the door my husband quietly said:*

*'You know, he went hunting with  
his hound;  
His body by the old oak they found.*

*'So young!...It's sad for the queen,  
they say:  
In one night her golden hair turned  
grey.'*

*His pipe from the mantelpiece he  
took,  
And in he went to work on his book.*

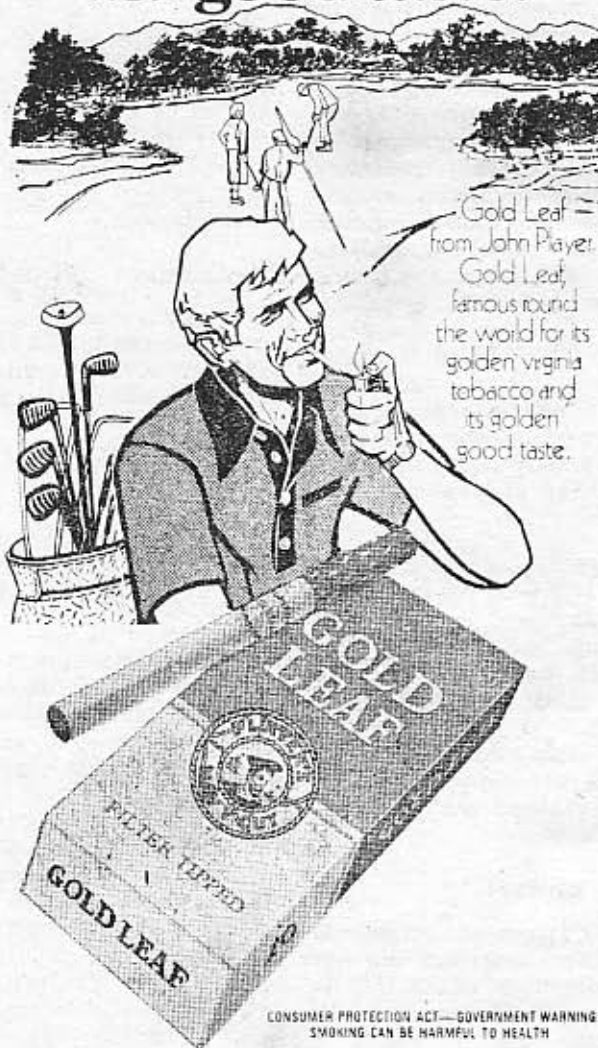
*My daughter in bed now I'll wake:  
In her grey eyes one look I'll take.*

*But beyond the window the poplars  
sing:*

*'On earth no more is your king,  
your king.'*

Translated by  
Reggie Siriwardena

## Player's Gold Leaf for good taste.



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

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

# Tradition and progress — No conflict

by Godfrey Gunatilleke

The questions relating to traditional value systems, the place of religion, the role of the family and kinship ties did figure as an important element in the vision of a desirable future life. But here it is difficult to draw any significant conclusions. In most cases the responses indicated that the future society which is the outcome of development should retain these elements and that they were valued by the households who were participating in the dialogue. There were of course the minority which questioned the importance to be assigned to these values in a process of development. But even in these cases many were objecting to the institutional form which religion has taken and the vested interests which had organised themselves around it. The substance of religion and its importance for the lives of individuals was seldom unequivocally dismissed. But the dialogues do not help us to understand how the participants themselves saw the conflict between what they valued in the traditional value systems on the one hand and the new life styles, values, consumption patterns on the other, which would inevitably grow out of the changes and the developments that were taking place. While recognising the importance of religious values and cultural identity, the responses seldom went on to consider how these had to be protected and preserved in the process of development.

First, the dialogues do not seem to have perceived any sharp conflict or confrontation between tradition and modernity, between religious values and the modern scientific materialistic attitudes. Second, while there was a vague awareness of the threat to the preferred systems as a result of the entry of urban life styles and ways of living, this threat itself was not clearly articulated nor was there a sufficient understanding of its significance. On the basis of the

material available, it is not possible to derive any conclusions as to how these rural communities maintain their equilibrium within this somewhat confused ideological frame. One expected a greater awareness of the inherent conflicts. On the other hand, it is also likely that the rural communities did not perceive a sharp conflict between the religious system and the modern development process leading to material wellbeing. It would seem that the moderateness of expectations has some connection to the ideology in the village and to the way in which the pursuit of material improvement and the value systems which emphasise non-material needs somehow are held together and co-exist at present. It would be useful to examine these themes in greater detail. What is necessary is to inquire whether in fact at the less-than-conscious level, these communities seek to evolve their own synthesis of tradition and modernity and provide for the co-existence of different value systems without engendering sharp conflicts between them. These comments however are of a speculative nature and would need to be substantiated by much more detailed work at the village level.

In the same context most participants both at the local and national levels argued for a separation of religion from politics. This was essentially a reaction against the mobilisation of religious support for political ends and was derived from a concern to prevent the religious dimension from being profaned by the political processes and to protect the integrity of religion in society. The majority of respondents did not distinguish the politicisation of religion from the constructive role that religion might play in development and social change. Surprisingly enough, they did not emphasise the moral and ethical force of religion for society and the processes of

This is the final part of the main conclusions reached by the Marga research project, National Dialogue on Development.

Government as a whole. The notion of 'dharmista' or 'righteous' Government, the avowed objective of the ruling party was not commented upon explicitly in this context. This could have been the result of the way in which the dialogue was structured and the issues were raised. What might have been of great value would have been the exploration of the popular perception of 'righteous' Government.

The dialogues attempted to distinguish the perceptions and aspirations of the younger generation from those of the older households. But in the discussions themselves, while differences are recognisable and there is generally a higher level of expectation among the youth there is no evidence of a sharp or irreconcilable conflict of attitudes suggesting a deep discontinuity with the past or breakaway from the older generation. Neither does the difference in levels of expectation stand out in sharp contrast to the pattern of differences among households as a whole. More analysis is however needed before any definite conclusions are drawn.

A large majority of the dialogue participants did not wish to see any major departure from the existing political and economic system. Most of them wished to preserve the present political system which enabled citizens to exercise their power through the vote and choose between competing parties. They wanted to achieve the desirable future and improvements to the social system through the processes of parliamentary democracy. In the urban dialogues, however, there was repeated reference to the evils of the party system, but the discussion itself did not separate the abuses



arising from the exercise of power by individual parties on the one hand, and inherent weaknesses of a multiparty system on the other. The consensus however appears to point in the direction of an endorsement of a system which preserves values of freedoms based on free elections and the institutionalisation of political opposition and dissent by citizens. The preference of the majority is clearly for an open society.

On the questions of social and economic organisation, there is again the majority view that there should be a mixed economy. The approach to this question by those who favour a mixed economy was not based on identical grounds. In most cases there was a distrust of large bureaucracies. The state enterprises appear to have left a popular impression of mismanagement and inefficiency. In this context the private sector is seen as a sector which must play a significant role in development and economic activity. At the same time many participants seem to argue for an important welfare component administered by the state. The dialogues themselves have not probed very far to examine the views of participants regarding subsidies and free public services. Some opinions expressed seem to support a general strategy which reduced the element of subsidy provided the pace of development was accelerated and incomes rapidly increased. At the same time many participants appeared to regard the mixed economy as one in which the state played an important role through its welfare services.

The theme of participation in decision-making received more attention in the national dialogues than at the village level. At the national level the need for a more participative system was strongly urged in several seminars. Participants argued that the parliamentary electoral system in which voters made their choice of Government once in several years did not adequately provide mechanisms for continued involvement of the people. The current efforts at decentralisation was endorsed as a movement in the right direction. Forms of 'self-management' in enterprises

were strongly advocated at the Trade Union seminars. It could be said that the desirable system that was projected at the discussions was one which avoided the processes of bureaucratisation and the expansion of centralised state machinery and which promoted instead decentralisation, self-management and the participation of the people. At the local level however the theme of participation did not evoke much comment. The discussion of rural institutions and the capacity for self-management at the local level seldom produced well-considered thoughtful responses. The need for strengthening local government generally seemed to find support. There was still evidence of strong dependence on initiatives and administrative action flowing from the government system. In order to elicit a more active response on the issue of participation, future dialogues would have to focus more specifically on it.

What would be revealing would be a more detailed analysis of the subtle variations in the patterns of expectation and the definition of development goals in the entire range of village and national dialogues. In the general patterns there are exceptions which stand out. For example, the village of Medakumbura is more outward looking than most villages with a marked preference for government employment and for more remunerative jobs outside the village. This is influenced by the occupational structure of the village workforce which includes several government employees.

There is less value placed on extended family ties and more emphasis on the nuclear unit. There is greater receptivity to new values and in all respects a higher level of expectation than most other villages. The various images of the better life at the households, village, and national levels which emerge from the dialogues would therefore need to be examined in greater depth in relation to income levels, extent of exposure to external and urban influences and socio-economic structures. This would be undertaken as part of the continuing work on this project.

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# Energy needs of rural sector in Sri Lanka

by D. S. R. Seneviratne

(Electrical Engineer, Energy Unit,  
Ceylon Electricity Board.)

**E**nergy has always been and shall continue to be an absolute requirement for the existence of mankind. The demand for energy increases with economic development. Use of imported fossil fuel like coal & oil will soon be beyond our reach.

We have not yet been lucky in locating oil, coal or natural gas in Sri Lanka. Power through Hydro Electricity generation will be limited and expensive. Dependency on imported fuel to meet our day to day energy needs will continue to drain our foreign exchange rapidly. The ever escalating world oil prices will undoubtedly be a major threat towards the implementation of the National Development Programme.

## ● Use of electricity and subsidies on kerosene.

A major portion of the population (75% to 80%) live in villages and not more than 10% of them enjoy the facility of using electricity for lighting. The present practice of using kerosene for lighting and cooking by a large number of urban and suburban dwellers will invariably lead to recurrent financial losses to the State by way of annual grants and subsidies. With the increase in the price of kerosene, many more users of kerosene will change over to the use of electricity and firewood.

Cost of materials for transmission lines are increasing rapidly shooting up costs of rural electrification. The domestic consumers find it extremely difficult to meet the initial costs of electrification due to the rising costs of wiring material.

The energy crises that we are faced with, will increase the demand, for the development of alternate sources of energy.

## ● Use of firewood & deforestation.

Rising cost of kerosene will increase the rate of deforestation. With the dwindling forest reserves the country will finally end up with vast extents of barren open land; rendered unfertile due to dried up streams and rivers.

Seasonal rains on these open lands will promote soil erosion, causing silting of waterways resulting in frequent floods, destroying food crops, houses, etc. annually.

## ● The basic needs of energy of the rural sector.

The basic domestic needs of energy in the rural sector are limited to—

- (a) Lighting of 2 lamps per house for 2 to 3 hours a day.
- (b) Fuel for cooking 2 to 3 meals a day.

## ● An approach to waste utilisation as an alternate source of energy.

Bio-gas obtained from anaerobic fermentation of waste matter, such as agricultural waste, droppings from domesticated animals, dried up straw, water weeds etc. can be usefully used as an alternate fuel for meeting most of the energy needs of the rural homes.

## ● Other connected benefits obtained through anaerobic fermentation of waste matter.

1. Utilisation of digested waste material for farm yard application as a soil conditioner.

2. Improvement of general sanitary conditions through the process of digesting the waste matter such as animal & human faeces. The anaerobic fermentation destroys many parasitic ova and pathogenic organisms which causes many diseases such as Round Worm, Hook Worm Tapeworm, Typhoid, dysentery Hepatitis etc.

3. Control of environmental pollution.

## Fuel saving & other aspects—adaptability to local conditions.

If properly developed bio-gas can be used to run internal combustion engines for use in farms and in small industries.

## Rural electrification.

(a) Bio-gas can save fuel used for engines used for the generation of electricity in isolated rural areas.

## Mechanisation of farms.

For running farm-house and agricultural machinery such as, paddy hullers, threshers, water pumps etc.

## Indirect benefits.

In addition to the above the following can be quantified as some of the benefits that will eventually accrue as a result of using waste matter for the production of Bio-gas for use as an alternate source of energy.

1. Benefits to the state, through reduction of oil imports and savings from providing kerosene at subsidised rates.

2. Saving of valuable land for cultivation and development works.

3. Conservation of valuable electrical energy for more productive and economic utilisation.

4. Saving of valuable construction materials used for transmission lines needed for providing electricity;

5. Greater agricultural productivity from plantations, saved from clearing of way leaves, for erecting High Voltage transmission lines.

6. Increased productive working hours; made available through saving of time, spent in collecting firewood.

When considered as a section of cost benefit analysis, the above factors will be of some significance from a national point of view.



# JVP's foreign policy

by Chintaka

In an interview with the "Lanka Guardian" early last year, Mr. N. Sanmugathasan asserted that "today, apart from the pro-Moscow revisionist clique, his (Wijeweera's) is almost the lone voice that supports Soviet Social Imperialism and its Cuban satellite." I quote this statement of Shan's solely since it is symptomatic of the misleading propaganda spread by Sri Lankan Maoists to the effect that the J.V.P. is pro-Soviet, pro-Cuban and pro-Vietnamese. Ironically enough, this is a virtual mirror image of the myth that Wijeweera tries to assiduously disseminate, not least among his impressionable young followers. But, just as a person cannot be judged by what he says about himself, or by what his enemies say about him, neither should we stick a pro-Soviet/pro-Cuban label on the J.V.P. with the readiness that local Maoists demand and Wijeweera wishes. In point of fact, the ideological - theoretical line of the post-'71 J.V.P. is basically neo-Trotskyite and therefore far from a genuinely pro-Soviet/Cuban/Vietnamese posture<sup>1</sup>. The contradiction between the J.V.P.'s ideology and its obvious search for international recognition and legitimacy from the Soviet bloc in general and Cuba in particular, is a dichotomy that Wijeweera is trying to disguise and suppress. The propaganda by the local Maoists in fact is of considerable assistance to Wijeweera in this intellectually dishonest effort and and negates the possible positive effects of their continuous polemical debate with the J.V.P. In order to change a phenomenon it is first necessary to understand that phenomenon correctly and grasp its essential characteristics, rather than attribute to it non-existent features arising from one's subjective prejudices - which is what Maoists continue to do in respect of the J.V.P.

As for the contradiction between the theoretical lines of the Cuban revolutionary leadership and the

J.V.P., even Wijeweera has been compelled to admit it, albeit very reluctantly, in public. I think that our Maoists as well as Lanka Guardian readers in general would find the following text of interest in this respect. It is a previously unpublished rough translation of a series of questions asked from Rohana Wijeweera, and the answers given by him, at the end of the well attended public rally held by the J.V.P. at Colombo's New Town Hall on the 3rd of January last year. (1979) (The topic of Wijeweera's speech was "The historical significance of the Cuban revolution" and the questions were raised by a member of the audience.)

Q: Comrade, the J.V.P. states that Leninist Internationalism disappeared from the world communist movement with Stalin's assumption of power. You also state that Stalin was an opportunist who betrayed the world revolution and adopted a policy of post-Lenin Menshevism. However, Fidel Castro, Che Guevara and the Cuban Party have spoken of Stalin's positive historical contributions and consider him a great Marxist-Leninist revolutionary leader. Isn't it correct to say therefore that the J.V.P.'s views on Stalin and the history of the world communist movement are different and in fact contrary to the views of the Cuban comrades whom you yourself acknowledge as internationalist revolutionaries?

A: Comrade, the JVP is not the local wing of the Cuban Communist Party. Our theoretical views are independent. You have correctly presented our views on Stalin. The comrades' views may be different. We too have read views of Fidel and Che that you mentioned.

Q: So comrade Wijeweera, do you accept that in fact, the JVP's views on this question aren't merely different but also contradictory to those held by the Cuban revolutionary leadership?

A: There is nothing to accept, comrade, it is quite obvious.

Q: Thank you, comrade. My next question concerns the JVP's categorization of the USSR, and other socialist countries as "degenerated or deformed workers states." Isn't it correct that the Cuban comrades reject this concept and characterise the USSR etc. as socialist states? Aren't your respective views contradictory on this question too? By the way, the JVP's new General Secretary, in his introductory speech this evening referred to the USSR as a "socialist workers state." Does this imply a change of views on your part?

A: We have not changed our views in the least. We still say that there are certain political degenerations in the USSR. Our General Secretary mentioned to me just now that he used the term "socialist" on its popular sense only. It is true that the Cuban comrades hold a different opinion. They are completely free to hold a different opinion. They are completely free to hold their views, just as we are free to hold ours.

Q: More specifically, do you comrades still assert that the Soviet Union is ruled by a bureaucratic stratum which has to be overthrown by means of a political revolution?

A: Yes, we still assert that view clearly.

Q: Concerning the problem of the stage of the revolution, the Cuban comrades accept the historical correctness of the theory of the so-called "two-stage revolution," while also accepting that the present stage of the revolution in many countries is socialist. But the JVP rejects the concept of "People's national-democratic revolution" and denies even the historical validity of the "two-stage revolution." Isn't this thesis of yours contradictory to the Cuban position? To clarify my own standpoint, I agree that the present stage of the Sri Lanka revolution is socialist....

A: As a matter of fact comrade, this view that we expressed was our view too, upto 1971. That

is the Cuban view too. However, we have progressed since then. Perhaps the Cuban Party will also advance and one day agree with our position. Our position is independent and Marxist-Leninist. We arrived at it through independent study, not by learning from Cuba, the USSR or any other country's Communist Party.

**Q:** Comrade, various united fronts such as the Citizens Revolutionary Front, played a significant role on the Cuban revolution. In fact Fidel Castro drafted a programme for this united front and fought for its creation. Even upto today the Cuban leadership strongly urges the unity of popular forces against imperialism and local reaction. Isn't your view on "united front's" diametrically opposed to the Cuban position?

**A:** For our part we shall never enter into any united front with traitors and opportunists. We cannot adopt the method of the Cuban revolution, in the same manner in our country. Simply because the struggle there began from the Sierra Maestra mountains, we cannot try to commence a struggle from the Sinharaja forests!

**Q:** Comrade, the Cuban revolution proved once again the correctness of the strategy of armed struggle as the road to socialism. What is your view on the question of the armed road and the peaceful road?

**A:** On this question, our standpoint is very similar to that of comrade Castro's, as enunciated in his speech following the unsuccessful assault on Moncada. Our view is the same as that of Engels. In fact I clarified our position in my speech to the C.J.C.. As Engels says in his "Principles of Communism", it is we revolutionaries who wish most fervently for a peaceful transition to socialism. The decision is however made by the ruling bourgeoisie, and not by us.

**Q:** But surely comrade, all the lessons of history so far (including that of Chile, for instance), goes to prove that the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism is highly remote. Wouldn't you agree?

**A:** That is not a logical argument comrade. Simply because some

thing didn't happen in the past, in history doesn't mean that it cannot or will not occur in the future....

That was the end of that particular exchange.

What this goes to prove is that on almost every key issue of the theoretical lines of the JVP and Cuba respectively there is divergence and disjuncture rather than the congruency and complementarity that Maoists and JVPers alike would prefer to imply.

Both in his "Prison Writings" as well as in his brilliant two volume survey of the Latin American revolution entitled "A Critique of Arms," Regis Debray comments on the attitude of Trotskyists of the Paris based Unified Secretariat towards the Cuban and Vietnamese revolutions. These elements would extend their support in terms of journalistic propaganda but would prefer to ignore the concrete slogans, programmes, tactical alliances, external linkages and post-revolutionary policies adopted. Thereby they would try to overlook the theoretical underpinnings of these revolutions which are contrary to their own sectarian strategies and tactics.

When pressed to look closely at these factors they would say that they had certain reservations to make on these questions and that their attitude is one of critical support!

Debray's description fits the JVP almost perfectly. The JVP support for Cuba and Vietnam, though vociferous, is superficial, and in the last analysis opportunistic. Its foreign policy postures and slogans are not grounded in firm theoretical conviction. Its positions on Cuba are in no way different from those of Ernest Mandel's Unified Secretariat, the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP), Alain Krivine's JCR, the Latin American Secretariat of the Mandelite USec led by Livio Maitan and Peter Camejo. All these are Trotskyist groupings and Wijeweera's analysis is derived largely from these sources, just as his account of the history of world communism after Lenin is derived from Trotsky's works such as

## "Revolution Betrayed" and "Third International after Lenin."

Rohana Wijeweera is determined never to repeat his international isolation of 1971, and has therefore abandoned his earlier Maoist position of "self-reliance." Fine. He has also taken cognizance of the new militancy of Soviet foreign policy roughly since 1973, and should be congratulated on his perceptiveness. He must however be forced to confront the contradiction between this external orientation and the theoretical orientation of the JVP post-1971. This orientation is made explicit in his magnum opus "Proletarian Internationalism or Opportunism" - which owes much to the Fourth International's regular publications such as International Socialist Review (ISR), INPRECORR and "Militant." The JVP's new set of 5 lectures includes one on the "history of the Menshevization (sic) of the world communist movement," which contains an identifiably Trotskyist line of argumentation passed off to the JVP cadres as "Comrade Wijeweera's contribution to Marxism-Leninism and the struggle to rebuild a new Leninist International."

Wijeweera is seeking to be a beneficiary of the policy of "dual recognition" that Cuba accords both to official C.P.'s as well as to revolutionary guerrilla movements in Latin America. The Vietnamese also follow this policy. For instance in India they have official links with both the CPI and the C.M.P.

One stumbling block to that kind of recognition however is the JVP's refusal to make a genuine self criticism of the 1971 events. Another obstacle turns out to be the JVP's refusal to enter a united front with the CPSL on the local scene. But these questions do not concern us here. The third obstacle does. It is the contradiction between the JVP's current foreign policy posture and their ideological foundation.

All Marxists including those of the CPSL, should focus on this latter point in order to stimulate discussion and debate among the JVP cadres and leadership.

**Note (1)** See "JVP and Trotskyism" L.G. Vol I Nos 12 and 13.



# GAMINI : Trials of movie-makers

*GAMINI FONSEKA, Sri Lanka's best known screen personality, gave an exclusive interview to the "LANKA GUARDIAN" on his current film "UTHUMANENI". The film, a hard-hitting criticism of police methods, the judicial system and the cruel injustices imposed on innocent people by those who wield power, sparked a controversy in the press last month. The second part appears in our next issue.*

**QUESTION 1 - What in your opinion was the reason why your film was not given an air-conditioned cinema at the start?**

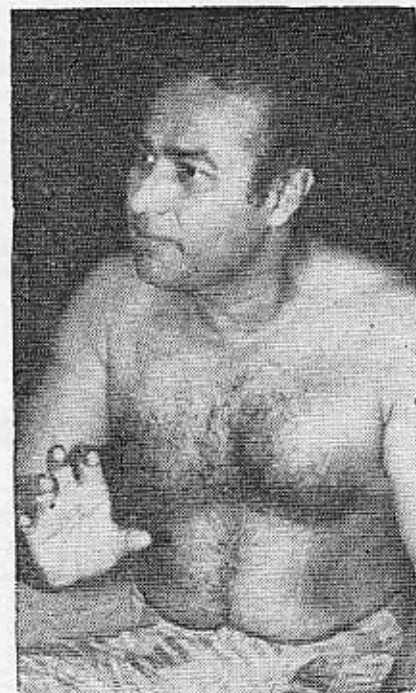
The question forces me to go back a little in time and analyse the various situations the film had to face. I am talking about the time it was first submitted to the State Film Corporation as a script. The script was held by the Corporation for more than 7 months, the reason being that the Corporation officials felt that it was necessary to submit the script to the IGP, the Police, and also the Ministry of Defence before they could sanction the making of such a film. Don't ask me how I did it, but I managed to get a copy of a letter, a printed form with the blanks filled in, attached to the script which was sent for the perusal of the police.

First of all I think it was unnecessary because they were seeking the opinions of the Police but not trying to feed the Police with their opinions. I am talking about the State Film Corporation. The very fact that they attached this printed form with the blanks filled in, making their observations of the script, I thought, could have been interpreted as an attempt to brainwash the police. There was not a single favourable comment on the script. In other words, they had said the script (story) had no social or cultural value. They had categorised the story in one of the columns meant for that question and answer, as an ordinary love story. Now that most of you have seen the film you will know that love has very little to do with this whole film, but somehow the Corporation official or officials who read the script

were able to gather only this much, after 7 months of procrastination. Even the issuing of the raw film licence was unduly delayed and finally the licence was obtained after my unit of technicians and artists had arrived on location. It was under a threat to take it up with the higher authorities that the licence was finally granted.

I must mention at this stage, that in those 7 months I had already contacted certain artistes to play various roles in this film and thanks to the Corporation officials I had to release them from their obligation and re-contract other artistes. Personally I had no intention of playing a role in this film. My idea was to cast Tony Ranasinghe in the role of Siripala. He had given me the necessary dates, but due to the delay on the other side, Tony was compelled to accept other contracts. However, I am thankful to him for agreeing to play a much smaller role. It was, I think on his side, purely a friendly gesture. Tony and I had worked together on many films before and we had worked together with great understanding. He is also one of those who played a very significant role in my earlier directorial venture "Parasathumal" and he was determined to mark his presence, so to say, and as a result he played the small but significant role of the Prosecutor (state counsel). I am merely giving you certain indications of the obstacles this venture had to face from time to time. I will talk about other things in relation to your later questions.

Was there any reason why this film was not given an air-condi-



tioned cinema in Colombo? Actually I cannot offer you a reason. The reasons could only be offered by the State Film Corporation. You know that there was a 5th circuit formed for the purpose of showing films of cultural or artistic value and that was done on the orders of His Excellency the President and one of the conditions that were taken for granted more or less, was that such films should receive at least one air-conditioned cinema in Colombo. So, if there were any reasons for not giving me this cinema, I think the best person to answer that should be the General Manager of the State Film Corporation. Here I must say a word of thanks to the Chairman of the Corporation, the new Chairman of the Corporation, Mr. Anton Wickremasinghe, who made it possible for this film to be shown at all in the 5th circuit. Had he not done so, the film would have actually been shown at least one year later.

**QUESTION 2 - The Corporation says that the quota of running time for Sinhala films**

given to the air-conditioned theatres in Colombo was over. Therefore the release of your film had to be delayed. Is this correct?

That's your question. I must remind the gentlemen of the State Film Corporation that is an arrangement they came to with the sellers of Western Films much later on. At the time my film was censored, or went in for censorship there was no such condition. It was later that they came to such agreements. Well I don't know how much later it was, but up to the time my film was ready for release, all films, one after the other, all Sinhala films that were categorised as good films—(I am not going to sit down here and debate whether some of them were good enough for the 5th circuit or not, but whatever was chosen as good films) were regularly released with no problems at all. The only film that faced this problem was "Uthumaneni".

So in relation to this question, again, if that was the case, then why did the General Manager of the Corporation, offer my producer, Mr. Ariyaratne Perera, a release at the Rio and why did he subsequently inform the producer that the Rio will not be available? If he offered the Rio then there must have been screen time. Subsequently, they offered the Plaza Theatre. The release of the Rio was refused one day before the release of the picture. Then having offered the Plaza, after the producer had sent out the publicity material announcing the release of the film, they refused to give the Plaza for some reason or other. So, I think there is a lot of contradiction in their statement. Then, they say that the quota of running time for Sinhala films was not available. The Rio is an air-conditioned cinema, the Plaza is not. Both theatres were offered and at the last moment, just before the copy was sent in, the release was refused. So I think the question should now be addressed to the General Manager of the State film Corporation.

One thing more—I must say that the Corporation finally agreed

to give the Regal cinema exactly 20 days after the release of the picture. The picture was released without a single theatre in Colombo. The print that was meant for the so-called air-conditioned cinema in Colombo had finally, after a delay of 4 days, to be released in the Casino Theatre, Matale; a far cry from the Majestic, the Liberty or any other theatre that they could have offered us, but this happened after much noise was made by a well-known film critic over the SLBC; after his review had appeared in the Times of Ceylon and after producers were compelled to make a statement to a leftist paper called the "Aththa". Suddenly, we found things happening, suddenly the Regal theatre was available, suddenly, the show time was available and now the Regal Theatre has been given to us for a period of 5 weeks,

**QUESTION 3 - Are you aware of any pressures from the Police, the legal profession or the medical profession, which were brought to bear on the Film Corporation or on theatres in Colombo, so that your film would not get a wide showing?**

The answer to the latter part of the question is a brief "No", because no outsider can exercise any kind of influence or power over the theatres. The only people who can do that, who are capable of doing that, or who have the powers to do that, will be the State Film Corporation. Let us get back to the earlier part of the question. I must say there was pressure from the police representative on the Censor Board to delete or cut certain sequences, to which I am aware that the Chairman of the Censor Board, Mr. D. H. Abeyasinghe, objected. So thanks to him, the slaughter was prevented at that end. It was merely an attempt, to save the much tarnished image of the Police force and you only have to read the daily papers to find out what the Police are up to in this country. I am not saying that all officers fall into the same category, but a few bad ones have done enough to tarnish their collective image and one cannot blame me for talking about it in my film.

The legal profession so far has not objected to the film in any way. Instead I had some very encouraging letters, and telephone calls from leading lawyers, but the medical profession did show some opposition to the film. I was told by the Chairman of the State Film Corporation, Mr. Anton Wickremasinghe, of a letter that was written by the GMOA protesting that the doctors had been cast in a bad light—also asking for 5 passes (5 free tickets in other words) to see the picture and determine whether this complaint was actually true. By this time, the film had been released, and I, on behalf of the producers, refused to grant them any kind of free tickets or a free show for that matter. I told Mr. Wickremasinghe that they were quite free to buy their own tickets and see the film and then find out for themselves the nature of the complaint. I am sure Mr. Wickremasinghe would have conveyed it to them by now. On the other hand, on many occasions there was a great deal of opposition to the film from within the Corporation itself.

I am sure you are aware of the number of odd committees that have been set up, the number of odd advisory committees set up some time ago, who are expected to advise the Corporation, but instead, keep on laying down the law, I am told, even to the present Chairman. There were interested parties, some of them were people involved in the trade, in the film profession, script writers, people who have been directing films mainly, and such types had for obvious reasons thrown many obstacles in the way of the film. I am told by reliable contacts within the Corporation that the film was viewed and then shelved on a number of occasions.

**QUESTION 4 - Were there any sequences in your film which were cut for political or other reasons?**

Well I must say there were many attempts made, especially as I had said earlier, in the absence of Mr. D. H. Abeyasinghe, the Chairman of the Board, who was



very much for the film and who prevented the film from being mutilated by certain interested parties in the Board. But I think your question is pertinent in terms of my earlier work. For instance, I wrote the theme for "Sarungale" a film which was seen some time earlier on the screen (a few months earlier). The story was based on the communal disturbances of 1958 and it was an attempt at pointing out to the Sinhalese and Tamils alike that there was actually not much difference between the two races—their faiths, their beliefs, their customs and traditions, as made out by politicians whose effort it has been always to capitalise on this human weakness—communalism. "Sarungale" faced many objections by the previous Censor Board. When I say previous, I am talking about the Censor Board appointed by the previous government. It lingered on even after this government came into power.

The primary objections were to certain truths that were shown in the film. I could have understood this very much because the incidents shown in this film happened during a different regime whose appointees were the previous Censor Board, but I could not understand at all why the same opinions were upheld by a new Board of Censors appointed by this government—the UNP Government, unless of course they were trying to whitewash politicians on the other side who were in their favour—politicians of the previous regime who were in their favour or, unless some of them had already started making overtures to those who would or could come into power in future. I have noticed such tendencies among officials, that is why I want to mention this. Just a few months or a few years after a government comes into power, you always get the official who stands around waving to those who are to come.

They slaughtered the film very badly. They also cut one very very poignant sequence in the film. This finally brought about a total imbalance in the whole thing. The Sinhalese felt that I had

spoken too heavily for the Tamil people. The reason for cutting the sequence was never explained. I heard a murmur in the background to say that such a sequence may "upset the susceptibilities of the Tamil people in this country". The sequence was to do with Nadarajah, the central character in the story, speaking in opposition to the demand for Eelam—Nadarajah pointing out to the Tamils where they had gone wrong—Nadarajah pointing out to the politically inclined Tamils in this country that it was that kind of dirty politics that made it impossible for the Tamils and the Sinhalese of this country to exist in harmony and peace as they had for several centuries.

Now the authority that finally decided on this was none other than the Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr. Werapitiya. Mr. Werapitiya, backed subsequently by the other "yes" men on the Board and Wickramasinghe, decided to censor the sequences. In other words, by this very action Mr. Werapitiya and others somehow proved to the more sensible people in the film industry that they were in other words, for Eelam.

I have heard or read of what Mr. Cyril Matthew had to say in Parliament about this question. I have heard and read what Mr. R. Premadasa, the Hon. Prime Minister had to say on this questions. I have also read what Mr. Desai of India had to say about this same question over the BBC. If everyone in general would have a right to talk about such questions, then why is it wrong for the film maker to talk about it? Is it because most politicians believe that the finest intellectuals in the country are the so-called representatives of the people? Is it because they believe that they have been chosen to represent the people because they possess the finest brains in the country? Or is it because they sincerely believe that all those who are involved in the field of arts, are not capable of contributing anything towards intelligent thinking?

**QUESTION 5—Were there any changes made by the Film**

**Corporation when your original script was submitted for approval?**

Yes. Changes were demanded, which I did not adhere to. I shot the film exactly the way I wanted to shoot it because I thought the demand from the State Film Corporation was superfluous. The very existence of the script board was in my opinion superfluous, because in any case there was to be a Board of Censors who were ultimately going to decide on the film and they, I thought, (I may be wrong) were capable of thinking right and in any case there was no need for double censorship. There was no need for people at any level, or any calibre to tell the creative artists of this country how they should think. They were putting in shackles the very thinking process of man, of creative artistes and this I think is totally unnecessary. I think the more acceptable thing, like in the so-called developed countries, is self-censorship. Let the artist decide and if someday when the product is exhibited, it is possible for the public to state their opposition to any particular sequence or to a film and halt the exhibition of such a film.

First of all I don't think it is ethical for just a small group of people, small group of misfits, especially those who have been appointed to the Censor Board, because of certain favours they had rendered the ruling party and also because of the fact that they were not fit enough to hold any other kind of post, any responsible post, to sit and decide on what the people of this country should be seeing or what they should be thinking. One cannot easily forgive the audacity of any government that imposes its stooges on the creative thinking of this country.

This so-called Censor Board sometimes consists of individuals, men and women, whose knowledge of film making, leave alone film censorship, is not worth talking about. In my own opinion there are such persons in the present board too. Then you have a situation where persons

who are in the trade themselves are included in the board. For example a script writer who sells his work to a producer could impose himself on a producer with, say, the promise that if the script is written by him or the script work handed to him then the film may not face any obstacles from either the script board or within the Censor Board itself. I simply cannot understand why individuals of this type should be included in a censor board which has serious public responsibilities — both to the film maker and other artists, as well as to the mass audience. I know of a man who once wrote a script for a top politician. Subsequently he obtained employment in a major state corporation. I am raising questions of ethics. How can a person with obvious vested interests in the trade be allowed to sit in judgement over the creative work of others, colleagues or competitors?

Let me tell you of a personal experience. Very recently my last directorial venture 'Sagarayak Meda' was submitted for censorship, among those present were various "catchers" — certainly not members of the Censor Board, may be neighbours or friends, or friends of friends. Then there was one man who was making open and loud remarks throughout screening of this picture, heard by everybody present. However, the board did not take a decision that day, the film had to be submitted to higher authorities. On the 14th of January the film was seen again by the Censor Board. Also present was the Deputy Minister of Defence.

On account of some criticism made by a leftist paper about outsiders attending censor shows a board official had said on that particular day "O. K. no outsiders are to be allowed". But the producer had taken the trouble to place one of his own men at the door to see that no outsiders went in. After the entire board had entered the theatre two stragglers came along. The producer's representative inquired as to who they were. One replied "api nikang aawa".

The producer's man told them that show was only for the Censor Board. A little later however, an official allowed them to go in. Who were they? According to my information one was a "friend" (catcher), the other was a VIP's driver. So again the rule was flouted.

Throughout the screening a busybody stayed next to a VIP and gave a running commentary. Was he brain-washing the VIP?

Although your questions did not demand all these details I have recounted a few instances to give your readers an idea of the way the Censor Board actually works.

#### NEXT: Crime and Punishment

#### Trends . . .

(Continued from page 1)

workers who wanted to live here and an end to all forms of discrimination in employment on grounds of race, religion, and political beliefs.

#### Exit Subsidies

*Are Education and Health included in the omnibus term 'subsidies'. The government-owned press neglected to explain this when it splashed President Jayewardene's public statement on the end of subsidies.*

*World inflation, said JR, has left Sri Lanka no choice.*

*The dismantling of the subsidy system will not only mark the end of an era where Scandinavian-type welfarism characterised our society and dominated our electoral politics but signal the end-phase of the new economic strategy. While the IMF and IBRD will bless this "economic realism", the decision does pose a special problem for the media. For more than 2 years we have been told that money is pouring in as never before and the only problem is the lack of projects. Suddenly it has to break the news — 'no money'.*

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RATMALANA.



# PUSHKIN IN TRANSLATION

by Lakshmi de Silva

LITERATURE

**TWO PLAYS OF ALEKSANDER PUSHKIN** translated by Reggie Siriwardena. (Rs. 10/-)

The translator by the very nature of his work must possess the paradoxical ability to efface and yet to project personality, to free himself from the confines of his identity and merge with the subject of his contemplation, as mystics are said to do. Apart from his enviable technical virtuosity, Reggie Siriwardena appears to possess this elusive power. The contrast of the direct poignancy of his Machado translations with the studied grace with which he renders Gongora's intricate web of both with his crisp, brusque presentation of Yevtushenko's sharply-juxtaposed images in *Beatnik*, made *Many Voices* a revelation of the range of style and feeling within his scope. Translation requires more than an understanding and love of the particular text involved, an intimate knowledge of the author's outlook, the period he lived in, his distinctive style and the technical turns he habitually employs to achieve it. It calls for a full awareness of the contrasting natures of two languages, and ideally, the rare ability to convey the characteristic qualities of one through the use of the other.

The comparison of translations helps a reader ignorant of the original text to gauge something of the essential quality of a writer as well as to assess the value of a translation. Here Pushkin's Tatyana awaits Onegin's response to her letter.

"But her soul aches, and nothing pleases,  
Her eyes betray her with a tear.  
The sudden sound of hoofs! .....  
She freezes.  
Now nearer! Galloping ..... and here  
Is Eugene! By another portal  
Tatyana leaps like nothing mortal  
From porch to court, and shadow  
— light

She flies, she flies, nor in her flight  
Looks backward; lightening-like she rushes  
On past the bright parterre, the lawn,  
The grove, the bridge, the lake,  
and on,  
And fleeing breaks the lilac-bushes,  
And gains the brookside, breathing fast  
Where on a rustic bench at last  
She falls.....

(Deutsch: Penguin Classics)

Meanwhile her heart ached  
ceaselessly;  
Her languid eyes were full of tears.  
A sudden clatter! Her blood froze.  
Nearer! A galloping she hears.  
He's come — Yergeny! 'Ah!' and  
leaping  
Lighter than a shadow, hares  
Tatyana through the entrance hall,  
From porch to yard; look back she dares  
Not; straight into the garden now  
She flies, she flies, across flower-  
beds  
Over little bridges, down the path  
Lakewards, scattering the lilac-heads,  
Towards the brook; till panting fast  
Upon a garden bench at last  
She falls .....

(Siriwardena: *Many Voices*)

The audacious use of the near-slang "hares" is here magnificently justified by the impression of timidity and the glimpse of Tatyana's frightened eyes which it evokes. The breathless speed of that panic flight is conveyed not only by the sense but by the positioning of

"look back she dares Not"

The impetuosity and rapid movement of the verse is far more expressive than the sedately end-stopped lines of the Penguin version. Nor is Babette Deutsch's choice of phrase equally felicitous; there is nothing to rival the telling touch

"across flower-beds,"

While "panting fast" is surely more evocative of haste and

agitation than "breathing fast." The clumsy thud of

"By another portal Tatyana leaps like nothing mortal"

detracts from the unity of effect, just as

"shadow-light She flies"

is awkwardly in conflict with the distressingly robust

"And fleeing breaks the lilac bushes".

Two plays of Aleksandr Pushkin reveal a new dimension of Siriwardena's abilities through the shift from lyric to dramatic verse. His sure control of language and prosodic skill have here enabled him to forge the new medium needed to recreate the distinctive effect of a style that is taut, spare and vigorous. It is no small achievement to have kept free from any overtones of 17th-century blank verse: a less disciplined craftsman might well have unconsciously let the shadow of Volpone fall over the Baron amid his coffers.

"Who knows  
What bitter abstinence, what  
passions bridled,  
Oppressive thoughts, days' cares and  
sleepless nights  
Have been its price? Or else will  
my son say  
My heart was overgrown with moss,  
that I  
Knew no desires."

This is blank verse pruned of rhetoric, moving with a natural life of its own. The rhythm reinforces the intensity of feeling in the Baron's soliloquy, creating the sense of the heat of imagination and working thought as the old man broods on his visions of the power wealth gives, so that the images function and do not become mere static conceits, as happens, for instance, when Racine's evocation of the ferocity of consuming passion.

(Continued on page 32)

# Cultural and linguistic consciousness of the Tamil community

by K. Kailasapathy

In describing the growth of cultural and linguistic consciousness of the Tamil community in Sri Lanka, one cannot treat it in isolation, especially from the political and economic factors that formed the bases for such a consciousness and the inevitable interplay of the two. However, since the political and economic factors have been dealt with elsewhere, I propose to limit the scope of this paper to the cultural and linguistic aspects.

One preliminary observation ought to be made at the outset. The cultural and linguistic consciousness of the Tamil community in Sri Lanka has always been influenced by developments in India in general and South India in particular. This applies to politics as much as to culture; accordingly, the major events in India during the last hundred years or so have had their impact on the Tamil community: the rise of the neo-Hindu Movements—Arya Samaj, Brahman Samaj and the Ramakrishna Mission,—the founding of the Indian National Congress (1885), the partition of Bengal (1905), the Swadeshi Movement (1906–1915), the different regional movements that arose in South India which eventually crystallized in the emergence of the DMK, the movement for the formation of Linguistic states are some of the more significant events that have contributed to the cultural and linguistic consciousness of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

(Although there have been, and there continues to be, certain avowed socio-cultural differences between "Sri Lankan Tamils"—who

have been living in this country for centuries—and the "Tamils of Indian Origin"—those who came here during the heyday of the plantations—both sections have shared the common characteristic of looking up to India for cultural and spiritual sustenance. Language, religion, myth and history have doubtless contributed to the survival of this feature, which is deeply embedded in the consciousness of the average Tamil.) Along with these may be considered the individual influences of personalities like Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902), Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948), both of whom visited Sri Lanka and especially Jaffna where they were accorded rousing welcome; and Ananda K. Coomaraswamy (1877–1947) who also visited Jaffna on more than one occasion.

(Special mention must be made of Coomaraswamy's address at the Jaffna Hindu College in 1906, in which he referred with pride to his Tamil ancestry and having spoken highly of the Tamil language emphasized the need "to preserve and protect the national ideals and Eastern Traditions.") The speeches of Vivekananda and Coomaraswamy were translated into Tamil and published in Jaffna. The evolution of the cultural and linguistic consciousness among the Tamils should be seen in this general background. Having delineated the general scene one has to see the phenomenon more closely.

It is generally accepted by most scholars on the subject that in many Asian countries political nationalism was preceded by religious awakenings that arose in response to Christian missionary activities. The point needs no elaboration. However what should be pointed out is that this religious awakening was, at least on the surface, of a dual nature.

In their response to the proselytizing activities of the Christian churches, the indigenous religions reacted in two different ways: one section appeared to concede the necessity for reform in the traditional religions and thereby obliquely accommodated some of the stances of the Christian churches. This was pronounced among the English educated middle class who were exposed to westernization. The other section was essentially revivalist in character and argued for upholding the traditional beliefs and practices. In the case of Indian history it has become customary to cite the Brahma Samaj and the Arya Samaj respectively for the reformist and revivalist trends.

It is of course arguable, and rightly so, that the two trends were never mutually exclusive and the differences were more apparent than real. Both the reformers and the revivalists came from the Hindu upper castes, but while the former were not only English educated but also used that language for their livelihood and for acquiring social status, the latter were primarily traditional in their education and used their mother tongue for their livelihood and social communication. From this one may postulate another hypothesis: the religious awakening and the activities connected with it took place at two levels or planes. The reformists were, because of their broader vision and greater exposure to non-traditional cultures, and higher social position in their society, prone to take a liberal and compromising position. Besides most of them wrote in English. (One may illustrate this by the writings of Sri Muthu Coomaraswamy, Sir P. Ramanathan and Sir P. Arunach-

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alam all of whom took a keen interest in Hinduism and Indian philosophy and wrote in English. They translated from Tamil into English. In doing so they probably had a particular audience in mind—an audience to whom they wanted to prove the antiquity and greatness of their tradition.)

In contrast, the revivalists were largely, and highly erudite in their mother tongue and wrote in it. Their audience was the local intelligentsia engaged in the professions and the self-employed who were of respectable stock and generally landowners. In other words, the religious awakening and fervour can be seen at the larger national level and the local level each with their adherents and their followers. If one might use the term 'elites' to describe these people, than a distinction can be drawn between the national and local elites. Bearing in mind the fact that such a distinction is never mutually exclusive we may adopt it for our analysis.

The religious revival among the Hindus in Sri Lanka was largely due to the pioneering efforts of Arumuga Navalar (1822-1879) whose death centenary falls this year. This is not the place to narrate in detail the crucial and seminal role played by him in kindling a consciousness among the Tamils in Sri Lanka (and South India) about their spiritual heritage. In many ways Navalar could be compared to Dayananda Saraswathi (1824-1883) who founded the Arya Samaj in North India. What Dayananda did for the Vedic religion in the North, Navalar accomplished for the Saiva-Agamic faith in South India and Sri Lanka. Hailed as the father of modern Tamil prose, originator of public-speaking, the first non-Christian to write and publish Tamil text-books for primary and secondary schools, pioneer textual critic, an innovator in Grammar, and founder of Saiva schools, Navalar strode like a colossus the Hindu-Tamil world of his day. Utilising the profound knowledge he had acquired while helping Rev. Peter Percival with the Tamil translation of the Bible, Navalar counter-attacked the Christian missionaries who were publish-

ing tracts ridiculing the Hindu gods and scriptures. Navalar started publishing pungent pamphlets against the Christians and initiated a movement to win back those who had been converted to Christianity. (Here again one can see a parallel between Navalar and Dayananda Saraswathi whose concept of **Shuddhi** "reclamation or reconversion" helped to fortify the cracks in Hinduism.) As a writer of polemics Navalar had few equals. He was followed in this by almost all his disciples, among whom the notable ones were Siva Sangara Pandithar (1829-1891), Senthinatha Iyer (1848-1924), N. Kathiravel Pillai (1874-1907). The activities of Navalar led to the founding of the Saiva Paripalana Sabhai (Society for the Preservation of Saivism) in 1888, and the Jaffna Hindu High School in 1890 which was later renamed Hindu College. An editorial in the **Hindu Organ** (July, 1899) makes the point clear.

"The idea of a College founded by the Hindus for the Hindus was conceived about thirty years ago by the late lamented Sri La Sri Arumuga Navalar Averbai, whose distinguished labours in the field of Saiva religion and literature mark an epoch in the history of Jaffna. Owing to want of co-operation which, we are sorry to say, is a blot on our national character, the proposal made by Navalar fell through, though he made a beginning and started a High School at Vannarponnai, which owing to the opposition of the Wesleyan Missionaries, the Government refused to register for grant. The idea conceived by Navalar was given practical shape to by the Sabhai, which in the year 1890 founded the Jaffna Hindu College."

The paramount role played by Navalar was not confined to religious and educational fields. No doubt they were unique and far reaching. But Navalar had a social outlook that went beyond that of any other Tamil religious reformer of his times. He had unhesitatingly thrown his weight behind the campaign against the Government Agent of Jaffna W. C. Twynam whose measures were extremely unpopular; He organized relief measures—providing meals for the needy during the severe famine in 1876; He was the force behind the founding of the Jaffna and Batticaloa Commercial and Agricultural Company Limited, whose prime purpose was to

develop agriculture in the Trincomalee District; Just before his death he campaigned for the selection of P. Ramanathan as the Tamil Representative to the Ceylon Legislature in 1879. The vacancy was created by the death of Sir M. Coomaraswamy in May 1879. Convening a meeting of the prominent personalities in Jaffna, among whom were merchants, Public Notaries, Engineers, Vidanes, Udayars and a sub Magistrate. Navalar drew up a memorial to be sent to the Governor (Sir James R. Longden, K. C. M. G.) requesting that Mr. P. Ramanathan be appointed "a member of the Legislative Council to represent the interests of the community". Thus Navalar created the climate for Ramanathan to enter active politics and rise in ladder of public life.

Navalar was thus able to combine his interests in the religious field with practical actions that were vital to the community and mingle both socio-politics and religion. This was a major contribution to the subsequent cultural awakening among the Tamils.

But there was another aspect to this. Navalar It may be remembered spent several years in Madras lecturing and publishing. But many others—C. W. Tamotaram Pillai (1832-1901), V. Kanagasabhai Pillai (1855-1906), T. Chellappah Pillai, T. A. Rajaruthnam Pillai, T. Kanagasundaram Pillai (1863-1922), T. Saravanamuthu Pillai, Sabapathy Navalar (1843-1903), A. Muthutambi Pillai (1858-1917), N. Kathiravel Pillai (1874-1907)—virtually spent their lives in South India holding positions in Government Service and publishing their works with a sense of dedication rarely seen in later times. They did visit Jaffna off and on and founded schools in their villages or helped others to find avenues in Madras. Such close links between Jaffna and Madras was something new. It was true that there were connections between the two regions populated by people speaking a common language and cherishing a common cultural tradition. But the earlier links were sporadic and few and far between. Probably there were more traders,

(Continued on page 28)

# Patterns of political thinking

by K. Sivathamby

**T**he foregoing discussion on the social formation of the Tamils indicates clearly the differences in the stand they take both in relation to each other and in relation to their general status within the national polity. More important, it also reveals the pattern of thinking behind the political actions of the successive governments in dealing with the Tamil problem in general.

An analysis of the social formation of a group of people within a state and the impact it has on their political behaviour should by definition include a discussion on their class characteristics.

One factor, seen very clearly within the recent history of this question could be stated here. It could safely be asserted that whenever the government in power adopts a left-oriented economic policy, like nationalisation of estates or interventions into the private sector, the tendency for Sinhala-Tamil polarisation and the intensification of communal feelings have been very high. It would not be far too wrong to see a close connection between the decision of S. Thondaman to join the TULF (as one of its Vice-Presidents) and the decision on the part of the then government to nationalise the estates and impose a ceiling on land holdings. So too with the opposition of the professional classes among the Tamils which has always been higher during the ULF or the SLFP periods of rule than the rule of the UNP. Even if the latter were equally hostile, it is seen that a UNP government is able to evoke class unity and thereby minimise their conflicts with activities of the TULF (as exemplified in the activities of the CINTA-Ceylon Institute of National and Tamil Affairs).

But a class analysis of the Tamils of Sri Lanka should not go along

the lines of a rural-urban dichotomy. The position is definitely a complicated one. Any such analysis should first take into account the possibilities and the realities of the caste-class continuum. For if it is true that a "traditional" social organization is able to influence the political behaviour of a group, and it is so as we have already seen, then such a social organization is not only "traditional" but also very "contemporary" in its effectiveness.

Here again there is no specific study done on the character of class formation among the Tamils. The attempt made here is therefore, necessarily exploratory and very tentative.

The Marxist theory of classes as defined by Lenin provides a clue to the understanding of the problem of the caste-class continuum.

"Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in social organization of labour and consequently by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and mode of requiring it." (A Great Beginning).

The social organization of economic production and the ensuing social relationships that are seen in the organization of feudalism in Jaffna (as 'fixed and formulated' in the Tesawalamai system) and in Batticaloa (as seen in the relation ship between the podiyor, the feudal lord, the mullaikkaran, the lessee cultivator who pays fixed rent and the vayalkaran, the agricultural serf and in the constitution of the Ciraikkudis, bonded class), examined in the light of this definition, would unambiguously reveal the class-basis of the caste organization.

A further explication of the method of social control exercised in a feudal society needs to be looked into:

"The main trend of social development (in the feudal society) was for a certain social organization, having an exclusive right of discharging social functions in the sphere of legislation, administration of justice, education, religion and military affairs, to seek to obtain the largest possible share of the social product using the social institutions it had usurped to coerce the labour force" (Martin Siderov-What is Historical Materialism Moscow-1975-. 42)

Understood in terms of the feudal conditions obtaining in Jaffna and Batticaloa, this clearly shows that the depressed castes in the traditional Tamil hierarchy are also the oppressed classes.

Euro-centric studies on the breakdown of feudalism show that the new class of bourgeoisie grew within it and led the struggle of the peasants to revolutionise it. The historical experience of this transition in the Asian countries has been different. Here in most cases defeudalisation took place under the impact of colonialism. We have already seen how in the case of the Indian Tamil labourers working in the plantations, the feudal structure was made to conform to the exploitative demands of colonial capitalism. In the case of the Sri Lankan Tamils too, it is true, a bourgeois class arose within it; but the first groups that arose within it, historically speaking, did not destroy that system; in fact they strengthened it. Colonialism placed the landlord class in an advantageous position in that they were the only class which could benefit by the acts of "modernization" of the colonial rulers and also in that they could, with their new found social power of administrative authority, contain the new benefits within their class. In fact it was the dialectics of the ines-



capable extension of the educational and social benefits given by the rulers on the basis of the concepts of equality before law and rule of law (along with the proselytizing activities of the missionaries all of which brought in a sense of egalitarianism not experienced in the previous social order) that gave the lower castes/classes some taste of higher status and authority.

This is well demonstrated in the history of "modernization" in Jaffna. It has been shown that the "revivalist" movement in Jaffna headed by Arumuga Navalar was really an attempt "to contain the socio-cultural changes flowing from the very character of British administration, within the well-entrenched social framework of the Jaffna Hindu society and that the beneficiaries of these activities, by aim and choice, were the upper caste Hindus" (Social Science Review Vol. I, No. 1)

It is now a well known fact that in spite of the 'liberalism' of the British rulers, education and employment opportunities at the start went hand in hand with the caste system, except in small pockets like Manipay, where the missionary impact was rather high.

Up to the end of the second world war, English education was virtually a monopoly in the hands of the high caste Hindu Tamils (except in the case of the non-fishing Karayars who along with an almost peer status in the traditional hierarchy, had also the benefit of the services of St. Patrick's College, Jaffna but this again was confined largely to the Catholic Karayars) and thereby also employment with the government. Making full use of the educational system which provided for English education within the denominational system, the upper caste Tamils—literally the emerging Tamil bourgeoisie—very often denied the same facility to the depressed classes (when admission was forced, equal seating was not given in class rooms). This was also the time when the 'Drift towards Colombo' started. But within Jaffna, the system was further strengthened by the new employment opportunities found in the Federated Malay States. It

is interesting to note that the new found economic affluence led to an abundance of building activity—building temples and schools which preserved the system effectively. And any Tamil outside Jaffna who wanted to go up the social ladder in his region came to Jaffna to obtain the English education that was a passport to it. Even the Sinhalese from Rajarata came to Jaffna for their English education.

Thus up to the first three decades of this century caste and class went hand in hand.

Social mobility, cutting across caste barriers, comes in only when the cumulative impact of the free-education system and the swabasha-medium education began to assert themselves, and this happened around 1956. But 1956 also marks the awakening of the consciousness of the peasantry and the conscious awakening of the national bourgeoisie on ethnic lines. This led to an interesting amalgamation of forces within among the Tamils, i. e. the depressed castes and higher castes now closed ranks as Tamils. It was at a time when the depressed castes were getting organised on class lines, (not only through employment in government service but also through enterprenurial undertakings) that the ethnic factor was brought into educational and employment matters. And when that tendency grew, the Tamils began voting for the FP or the TULF. It is significant that P. Kandiah was elected in 1956 and since then the Tamil districts have not voted for any leftist.

It would be interesting to note that this had effected the fortunes of the Left Movement in Jaffna for the Left Movement in Jaffna really grew as an anti-caste organization. When there was an inter-caste class collaboration, the strength of the Left Movement declined considerably. The surviving base for the Left Movement now in Jaffna is the intelligentsia.

A major consideration that has determined the character of the Tamil demands on the nationality issue has been the necessity for the middle-class Tamils to stay outside the Tamil areas because

of their employment, trade or profession. The decreasing opportunities for such gainful occupation coupled with the realization of the economic potential of the Tamil areas, especially after the boost the cultivation of subsidiary crops received in the seventies are tending to make even such groups support the demand for a 'separate existence'.

The class position in the other Tamil areas cannot be taken as having come up to any substantial level of consciousness. In Batticaloa the consciousness is rather low, except at urban centres, because neither "westernization" nor "modernization" have affected society sufficiently deeply as yet. Conversely, the pattern of settlements in the newly opened up agricultural areas in the Eastern districts is helping to increase communal consciousness and tension. In Vavuniya, the overflow from the plantations is creating a class of agrarian proletariat.

The presence of a substantial number of Tamils in Colombo, especially within the city, is an important factor to be considered in this discussion. Although the bulk of them are from the working-classes and the lower middle-class, there is an articulate group of industrialists and professionals, whose class associations have determined their attitude from time to time. They have also acted as a pressure on the political advocates of the Tamils demands.

Unfortunately it is not possible to analyse the general trends of the development of class consciousness in this country and how ethnic considerations have manifestly become a motivating factor in socio-economic development, but it could be seen that the pattern of decolonization, or rather the ideal relating to the 'decolonised state' that is in vogue, has not rejected the symbols of power and authority derived through colonialist rule.

It is clear from the above discussion that the Sri Lankan Tamil problem arises from the very economic basis of social composition of the Tamils. Both the uniting forces and the divisive factors arise from

(Continued on page 26)

# Chauvinist or radical?

by Yohan Devananda

RELIGION

**T**he questions raised by Reggie Siriwardena in the Guardian of January 15th 1980 in response to my article in the Guardians of November 15th and December 1st 1979 can hardly be answered in a short communication. However, I will try to be as brief as possible.

I did not say that R. S. was one of the "so-called Marxists" to whom I referred. I was referring to certain opinions that were common among certain leftist leaders in the early years of the left movement in Sri Lanka and that gave rise to certain arrogant predictions about the imminent demise of Buddhism. Today, as a result of deferred hopes such opinions may, no doubt, be less common. It is true that leftists may now realise more clearly what R. S. calls "the immense ideological weight exerted by organised religion as a buttress of the established social order". But it may be asked how many of them realise the depth of genuine sacrificial inspiration in Buddhism that has continued to nourish and from time to time revive the religious and cultural life of the people at a deep level, despite the increasing corruptions of a decaying social order. Without an understanding of this positive side of Buddhism it is not possible to make correct judgements on Buddhist movements of the past and present and the possibilities of such movements in the future.

R. S. has re-iterated his previous characterisation of the Sinhala-Buddhist revival as essentially chauvinist and racist and seems to deny my contention that there are genuine radical elements. He cites the instance of Sinhala chauvinists in recent months putting up posters with the head of Anagarika Dharmapala. But the mis-using by chauvinists today of the example and teachings of Anagarika Dharmapala cannot alter the fact that he did preform an essential historical function in

rousing the national consciousness against the foreigner. And race and language are important parts of the national consciousness. Racial harmony and internationalism cannot be achieved by the suppression of race and nation but through their correct expression and liberation. The cause of the oppression of one race by another is not to be found in the expression of such basic urges and needs but in deeper economic factors. The arousing of national consciousness has everywhere been an essential stage of progress in modern history and has provided motivation for the development of statehood. Martin Luther's translation of the Imperial Latin Bible into German and William Tyndale's translation of it into English were done in the teeth of opposition and were part of a dialectical movement. The movement associated with Calvin is also noteworthy because it emanated in an advanced democratic and republican constitution. Mazzini, Cavour and Garibaldi of modern Italy are other notable examples of national resurgence. Further, such national resurgence is a complex phenomenon and operates at different levels and is influenced by diverse factors both good and bad. Thus in Germany the revivalism of Martin Luther became associated with the rise of the burgher class, while the more radical or anarchist revivalism of Thomas Munzer was associated with the peasants, and the two clashed. Lutheranism won the day at the time but Thomas Munzer was to influence future generations in other lands as well. Rousseau and Voltaire were to echo his prophecies and when corrupted religious concepts and institutions had to be assailed they were assailed in the name of true religions.

Then, with regard to the use of the concept of liberation, R. S. asks "was it the liberation of the oppressed or the liberation from Samsara that Buddhism was

concerned with?" This is a fundamental question which concerns not only Buddhism but all the major religions. It involves interpretation of history and of the birth of religion or dharma. The view that I have put forward is that the great religious founders were actually key historical figures that were involved in struggle on behalf of the oppressed in periods of radical change. Their religion or dharma grew out of this involvement. So the liberation of the oppressed is an inseparable part of the liberation from Samsara. They are not two different things unconnected with each other. But with the subsequent decay of society and the domestication of religious authorities and institutions by the Establishment, religion and religious liberation became something quite other from liberation of the oppressed. So if "religious" people today are to get back to the authentic faith or dharma they must take their stand with the oppressed at the point at which history is being made, that is, at the point of struggle against the oppressors, which was the point at which the great founders of religion stood. Only then can they understand. In fact, this is where "Marxists" too must take their stand today if they are to recover the authentic Marx. Of course, it is not always the same point of struggle. The struggle today has advanced far beyond what it was at the time of the Buddha.

Now to come to R. S.'s resort to Trevor Ling. This recalls the famous occasion in Calcutta when Mahatma Gandhi confessed that he learnt about the Buddha from Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia*. He was suitably taken to task by Anagarika Dharmapala, who asked how it was that a national leader of a country, in which the Buddha was born and preached his message, should go to a book written by a European to learn about him! As for Trevor Ling, he has taken



his stand at the Halls of Academe and from that Olympian refuge has descended on Sri Lanka to pronounce at the Navarangahala that the country which best exemplifies the practice of Buddhist social ethics today is Burma! This is similar to the claim of certain leaders in this country that the whole world looks to Sri Lanka for true Buddhism. No further comment!

R. S. quotes from Trevor Ling what he says is "the key document", the Sigala-vada Sutta. To begin with, it is not Sigala-vada, which means the argument (ඉදිරිපත්) of the fox or "foxism"! but Sigalovade, which means advice (ඔපදාය) given to Sigalaka. Further, to take one isolated quotation and come to a conclusion about such an important and wide subject is, to say the least, surprising. The quotation itself is a small part of a finely constructed discourse on the duties of the various segments of society to one another, which taken in its context (very different from that of today), can by no means be dismissed as merely "paternalistic". It must be remembered that, even according to the Marxist materialist conception of history, the feudal society was an advance on the slave society that preceded it and that the serfs had gained various rights and privileges through struggle.

To understand the true nature of Buddhism and the Buddhist social ethic one has to take the Buddha's life and the Buddhist texts as a whole and go to the central concepts. In my article, I referred to the radical character of the Buddha's life and action (which I admit needs further elaboration). R. S. has nothing to say about this. With regard to the central concepts, the concept of anicca (one of the 6 scientific dhammas in the Vijja bhagiyā Sutta) may be given as an example of truly radical thinking. This is, of course, often interpreted in a negative sense. But it is, fundamentally, a rigorously disciplined search for the truth—going beyond the appearance of reality to the reality itself, and shows a clear understanding of the mechanics of change. In his "Dialectics of Nature" Engels says with regard

to the modern understanding of dialectics: Thus we have once again returned to the mode of outlook of the great founders of Greek philosophy.....Only with the essential difference that what in the case of the Greeks was a brilliant intuition, is in our case the result of strictly scientific research in accordance with experience." (P. 13). Elsewhere in the same work, Engels attributes to the Buddhists also this development in the Greeks: "On the other hand, dialectical thought—precisely because it pre-supposes investigation of the nature of concepts—is only possible for man, and for him only at a comparatively high stage of development (Buddhists and Greeks). (P. 203). Then, again, in "Feuerbach and the end of classical German philosophy" Engels points out: "Great historical turning-points have been accompanied by religious changes only so far as the three world religions which have existed up to the present—Buddhism, Christianity and Islam—are concerned" while the old tribal and national religions passed away in due course, presumably because they did not fulfil the historical imperative of change. (Selected Works. Marx and Engels. P. 343). Thus Engels shows a certain appreciation of the ancients. Of Christianity too he says in his "On the history of early Christianity": "The history of early Christianity has notable points of resemblance with the modern working-class movement. Like the latter, Christianity was originally a movement of oppressed people." (on Religion. Marx and Engels. P. 316).

In conclusion, I would like to refer to two other texts, one ancient and one modern. The ancient one is the Ummage Jataka. It is a fascinating description of how a small and weak people is transformed under a correct leadership and becomes able to overcome and defeat an invasion by a big and powerful adversary. The modern one is a children's story by Kumaratunga Munidasa-Hin Saraya (හින් සරයා), written for children. It is a beautifully-written story of how a Katussa (garden-lizard) overcomes both an elephant and a tiger. A Swedish

expert on children's education who learnt of this story by questioning a child at a school in Sri Lanka said it was the finest children's story she had come across, and she is now engaged in making a cartoon film out of it. The author, Kumaratunga Munidasa, was yet another creative leader of the modern national revival who showed a genuine radical and revolutionary spirit.

So I re-iterate that while chauvinism and racial intolerance must be exposed, opposed and eradicated relentlessly there are, also, clearly, genuine radical elements in the Buddhist revival that must be diligently searched for, acknowledged, articulated more clearly, encouraged and developed, and organised for the revolutionary tasks ahead of us. These things will mature in due time. "He that hath eyes to see let him see"!

Finally, I must acknowledge that I have written this in association with Kuliypitya Fernando, whom I referred to in my article. I must also mention that I may not have unlimited time to pursue correspondence further on this subject.

## Patterns . . .

(Continued from page 24)

it. A cursory glance at the social formation reveals it as basically a problem of uneven (or irregular) development, sharpened by the mode of decolonization.

Decolonization in a country that has had almost four hundred years of colonial rule should not be based on the ideological assumptions received through the superstructures of colonialism; decolonization should take the form of an intense, inward search for the common social and economic bonds hitherto unrecognized and undiscovered. The process of decolonization will determine the character of the "genuine" Independence that the country seeks and it should therefore be as democratic and morally justifiable as the anti-colonial movement had been, and by democracy is meant, political economic and social democracy.

(Concluded)



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# Porn and feminism

by Patty Rupelt

*(An American scholar who was recently in Sri Lanka)*

**P**ornography and degrading images of women in the media have been steadily increasing in the US with few attempts to curb this cultural trend. When buying at a small neighbourhood store or walking down the street, one is bombarded with magazines, newspapers and movie houses displaying women as sexual objects and victims of torture. One example of this increase in violent images of women was the cover of a popular monthly men's magazine which showed a naked woman being pushed into a meat grinder, being transformed into hamburger.

Until fairly recently most political and social groups have justified the increase of pornography on the basis of freedom of speech and expression. Those who began to question just whose rights were being defended and whose were being violated by such images were labelled puritanical and "up-tight" and ignored.

Today feminists are rejecting these liberal rationalizations for the increasing violence against women in the media. Feminist analysis of pornography and images of woman in the media has progressed beyond our gut-level response of repulsion and anger. We have begun to understand that the objectification of women by the media in advertising and popular culture has paved the path for the new more violent images of women in pornography. Woman has become an object to be marketed, not human, and thus she is treated as a non-human, degraded and tortured, and supposedly she likes it. Violent pornography is also fueled by the rape myth a heterosexual perversion, that is offspring to the stereotype that women are naturally submissive and masochistic.

Last year two national conferences took place in the US to discuss and formulate strategies around the issue of pornography.

Many issues were discussed.... grass roots tactics involving the defacement of pornographic literature, shops and films, public education as well as the complex issue of censorship and legal restrictions on pornography. The obvious danger of censorship laws is that they can be used in the long run against progressive forces, whereas the million-dollar porn industry will easily find loopholes to avoid enforcement of such laws.

WAVPM—Women against Violence in Pornography and the Media—is one of the oldest and largest of the organizations taking up this issue. Their focus is on educating the public as opposed to fighting for legislative reforms. One major ongoing project is a slide show which graphically demonstrates the trend towards violence against woman in popular culture, focusing on album covers displaying pictures of women in bondage and as sexual objects. The main consumers of these albums, and thus the targets for this packaging is adolescent and young men aged 12-20. Album covers are designed to appeal to this audience with no connection between the album's cover and the music inside. WAVPM also organises demonstrations against particularly violent films.

The culmination of both of the conferences were "Take Back the Night" marches held in San Francisco and New York City. Over 20,000 women marched in San Francisco in an area of the city which is world-renowned for its striptease bars and porn shops. Usually walking on this street is itself a frustrating experience, with its placards of nude women with neon-nipples blinking and glimpses of nude dances just inside the darkened nightclubs. On the night of the march women crowded and took over the street, forcing bars and shops to close. Only a small contingent of confused tourists mingled with the procession of angry, yet jubilant women.

Pornography is an issue that affects all women. It is not a phenomenon isolated in the West, but has a worldwide circulation. Although censorship laws are much stricter in Asian countries, imported porn does filter through as well as domestically published and distributed pornography. Although it is not yet the thriving business that it is in the West, it appears that its availability and popularity is increasing. Asian women must wake up to this insidious cultural trend and begin to develop their own analysis and resistance to anti-female culture. This demands a strong stance, going beyond puritanical objections, reclaiming not only our physical identities, but also our mental and emotional identities as women.

## Cultural...

*(Continued from page 22)*

soldiers and adventurers than scholars and poets.

The opportunities under the British rule to travel to India freely not only revived earlier bonds but also established new relationships that were different in quality. By living and working in the midst of Tamils who were themselves experiencing tremendous changes, these scholars from Sri Lanka engaged in a two way traffic of ideas and movements that ushered in a new era. These scholars considered themselves part of the mainstream of Tamil culture and contributed to it as much as they received. In fact during the time of Navalar and about three decades after his death it was the 'Jaffna School' that dominated the literary scene in Madras. The later A. V. Subramaniam Ayyar (1900-1976) has rightly remarked that the most eminent Tamil scholar in the last quarter of 19th Century was perhaps C. W. Tamo-taram Pillai. "He belongs to the band of Jaffna Tamil scholars and is next in importance only to Arumuga Navalar who exercised considerable influence over him and his literary work".

**(To be continued)**

# YOUNG ARTISTS

**A** call is out to redress an injustice that we have tolerated for untold years — a call for a proper national Art Gallery in Colombo, a place where our young painters and sculptors will be able to display their work and sell it, without being fleeced by the unscrupulous entrepreneurs who exploit them mercilessly today. Above all we need a haven for the young artists who do not come from families that can afford to organise exhibitions and stock oils and canvases for years.

This was most forcefully brought home by Jack Kulasinghe, who will exhibit his work at the Lionel Wendt from the 19th to the 24th March, when he held a private preview of his work some days ago.

Jack's paintings are remarkable for their diversity; abstracts in

muted half-tones hanging side by side with the primary colours and style of our ancient temple murals. Leaving the beaten track in his search for old temples, Jack has contributed his mite to preserving this traditional art form by copying murals at Mulkirigala and Pili-kuttuwa temples. In addition, he has done a few originals in the same style, and the originality of his compositions and the wide range of styles he has mastered are a mark of his ability as an artist. A graduate of the Institute of Aesthetic Studies, he seems to be a young artist who should be encouraged and promoted, especially since painting in Sri Lanka today is one field in which young talent is advancing bravely, leaving behind the school of 'Sunday painters' and 'watery' landscapes, which we can well do without, for a new style and form which can present a true portrait of Sri Lanka life.

S. A.



*Jack Kulasinghe at work*

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# A DIRECTOR IS BORN

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**R**elated without much publicity, the new Sinhala film **Kanchana** may run the risk of being mistaken as just another run-of-the-mill production by filmmakers who have not heard of it. That would be a pity. **Kanchana** marks the advent to the screen of a noteworthy new directorial talent. Sanghadasa is a young man who first drew attention with a short film he made several years ago about forests. I haven't seen that documentary, made under the SFC's short film scheme, but I have heard it highly spoken of, and **Kanchana** confirms the fact that here is a new director whose work will repay watching.

**Kanchana** is a film about a group of people who are making a Sinhala movie. A few months ago we happened to see in an international festival Francois Truffaut's film on a similar subject, **Day for Night**. The best compliment I can pay to **Kanchana** is that Sanghadasa (entirely uninfluenced by the French film and working with much less experience and infinitely less technical resources) has produced a work that is not disgraced by the comparison. **Kanchana** has a genuinely local flavour and relevance which to me at any rate make it not less interesting than **Day for Night**. The film within the film in **Kanchana** is an old-style Sinhala movie, and Sanghadasa gets some delightful satire at the expense of this tradition and the film-makers who work in it.

There is a memorably strong performance by Wally Nanayakkara as the Director with a weakness for pretty girls and Sriyani Amarasena is also excellent as his long-suffering wife. **Kanchana** has only two serious weaknesses: the young actress who plays the starlet shows her inexperience, not only on the film-set (where it is appropriate) but off it: and the ending is a conventionally romantic one which doesn't bring to a focus the film's more substantial themes. But in this, his first feature, Sanghadasa

shows a command of and a feeling for the medium which definitely suggest that he is a film-maker with a future.

## Conrad and Marxism

Joseph Conrad is a novelist much studied in university courses in Sri Lanka, but it isn't just for that reason that I should like to draw attention to a new book on him by Jeremy Hawthorn which I picked up the other day in the British Council Library. Hawthorn is one of the younger Marxist critics of literature who have moved out of the strait-jacket of the formulas of 'socialist realism'. Conrad, like Dostoevsky, is a good test of a Marxist critic's intelligence, because he was conservative in his political beliefs, but Hawthorn demonstrates that Conrad's imaginative view of the world—particularly of imperialism—cannot be equated with his consciously held ideology.

What is particularly interesting about Hawthorn's book, which is titled **Joseph Conrad: Language and Fictional Self-Consciousness**, is that Hawthorn effects a fusion between a social and linguistic analysis of Conrad's work. I have never found particularly useful the applications of modern linguistics to literary criticism: most efforts of this kind seem to me only to make simple observations in a needlessly complicated technical fashion. But Hawthorn doesn't follow the fashions of Anglo-American stylistics; he draws instead on the work of Soviet scholars of linguistics like Vygotsky and Luria to bring out the fact that Conrad's interest in the potentialities and pitfalls of language is at the heart of his work, and reflects his awareness of the divisions within his social world.

## Problem corner

The governor of a prison sent for three prisoners—John, James and Peter—and showed them five paper discs. Three of them were white, and two were black.

'Now,' he said, 'I'm going to pin one of these discs on the back of each one of you. Each of you will be able to see the discs on the backs of the other two but not your own, and you won't be allowed to communicate with each other. The first man who tells me correctly the colour of the disc on his back will be released, but make sure you are right before you answer, because the price of a wrong guess is an additional five years' sentence.'

The governor then pinned a disc on the back of each of the three men. After ten minutes Peter, the most intelligent of the prisoners, told the governor, 'My disc is white.' How did he work this out?

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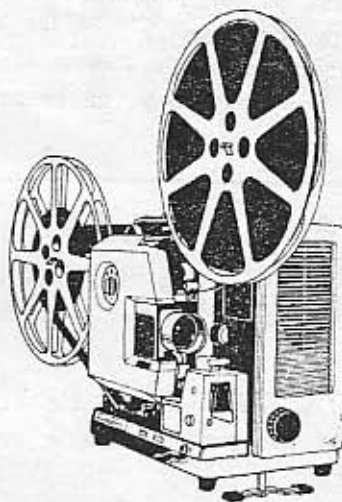
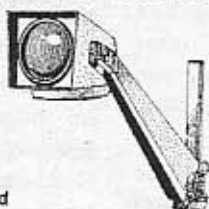
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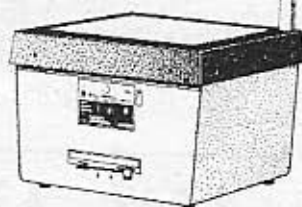
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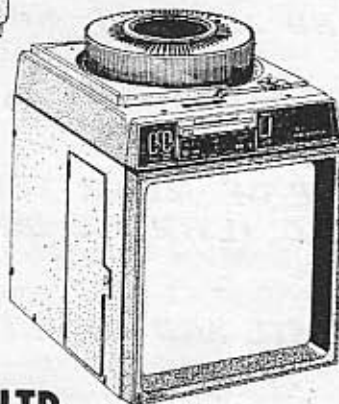
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IMAGE



## Pushkin . . .

(Continued from page 20)

"C'est Venus tout entiere attache  
a sa proie"

becomes Cairncross' flaccid

"All Venus' might has fastened on her prey". The movement of Siriwardena's verse has a rapidity and sinewiness perfectly attuned to characters who are predominantly active, both mentally and physically; it has a swiftness, a quality of cut and thrust, a total freedom that makes it ideal material for an actor; it speaks aloud in the ear, as it were. It is evident that here his experience as a dramatic critic has taught him what effective writing for the stage should be.

There is distinct difference of approach in the two plays selec-

ted. While *The Covetous Knight* is tightly-constructed and works logically through the conjunction of character and circumstance, *The Stone Guest* appears to be a piece of bravura writing on Pushkin's part. In Russian, it must have been a display of verbal virtuosity that compelled admiration, a challenge to a translator — met here with seeming ease, and all the panache one might expect of the original. "Witty, civilised" it is, and the technique is dazzling. There are sections of the play that come off magnificently—the pace of the opening, the mounting force of Don Juan's speech to Donna Anna, "Is it a sign of madness?" followed by her riposte taken so deftly in his stride—a passage which serves to project the impression of Don Juan's swift wit, his ardour and

alacrity of spirit, within ten lines. The individual voices of Laura and Anna, their characters and relationship to Juan are indicated with telling, if unavoidably sketchy strokes. Inevitably, though, the episodic construction prevents the play from gaining momentum and deprives it of the compulsive power that marks *The Covetous Knight*.

A direct down-to-earth diction and a forceful yet flexible rhythm have been exploited with remarkable resourcefulness to mirror the ruling passions of the protagonist and delineate their natures in a way that compels conviction. Siriwardena's fidelity to his model rewards his readers because it brings Pushkin's creations to life for them.

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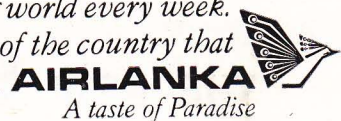


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