

LANKA

GUARDIAN

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JUNE 1980

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**KEY DATES IN
AN OPPOSITION DIARY**

● **The Energy Crisis**

— W. Karunatilake

● **Encounter in Jaffna**

— Nihal Perera

● **Trash in Sinhala Cinema**

— Laleen Jayamanne

SCIENCE AND DEVELOPMENT

International Development Research Centre

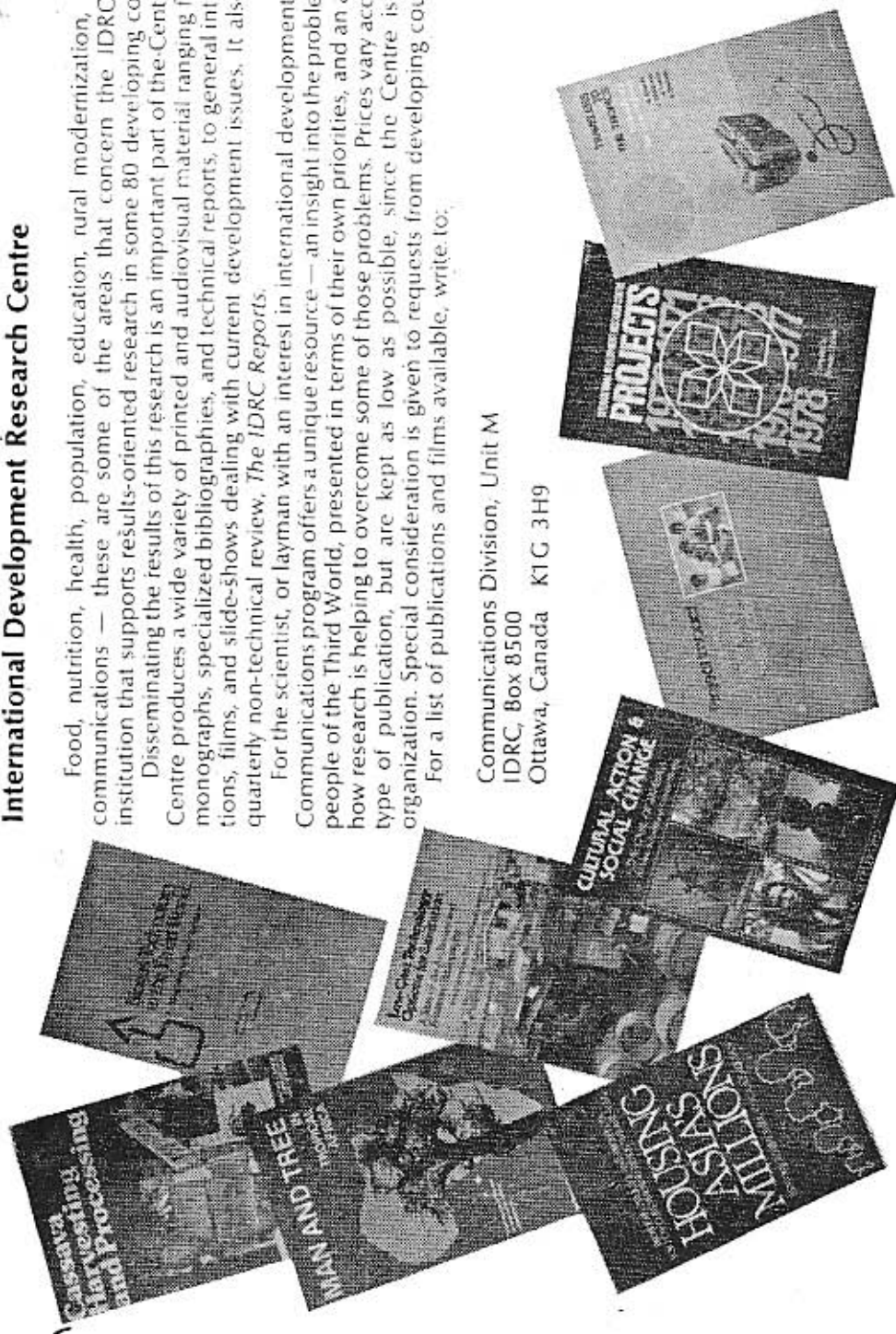
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Press Freedom

Justice, a cynic remarked is open to all..... like the Ritz hotel. Has this same acerbic wisdom infected the Sri Lanka Press Council? At this writing, the Council has not contradicted a news item that said it would like to see the Newspapers Ordinance amended to require all newspapers to provide a bond guaranteed by the Insurance Corporation of Sri Lanka or the new National Insurance Corporation.

Everybody interested in the freedom of the press, guaranteed by the constitution, must sincerely hope that this news report is incorrect.

Rich newspapers can afford not only strong insurance "cover" but a battery of Q. C.'s on retainer. What of the mini-press which the director of the Indian Press Institute described as the liveliest section of the Sri Lanka Press? Since insurance is a State monopoly, the CRM was obviously correct when it pointed out that such a measure would make government control of the media total.

"Subversive" Sramadana?

So Sarvodaya is back in the news, of only through association with an American Professor (Buddhist studies) who was given 48 hours to leave the country, along with her two kids and two American colleagues. The Immigration Department was acting on reports by the army-police intelligence units in the North. While the "Observer", with some understandable enthusiasm, rushed forth to give it a front-page splash the **Daily News**, the next day, tucked the unusual story away on page five. In its front-page item the "Sun" gave the news a sinister

angle which may explain the government's extraordinary stern action. The **Sun** spoke of contacts with "extremist youth" in Jaffna.

A greatly agitated A. T. Ariyaratna, the Magsaysay Prize-winning Sarvodaya leader described the action as a "terrible mistake". Mr. Ariyaratna says that Professor Joanna Macy of the American University in Washington is one of the best known Buddhist scholars in the U. S.

This is not the first time that Mr. Ariyaratna's organization which receives generous foreign assistance has found itself in such a contretemps. During the last regime, a SLFP Minister made sinister allegations about Sarvodaya's activities in the Siyane Korale. Under the protective umbrella of some members of the "inner circle" Sarvodaya succeeded in going straight to 'Temple Trees' and having his organisation's name cleared.

Brain Drain

So now it is the turn of the teachers. They have joined the brain drain, which for many years has been associated primarily with our doctors.

In the fifties and early sixties a fair number of teachers and university lecturers did go to the U.K., U.S., Canada, Australia etc. To the US the passport had the magic words "montessori teacher". Now the main destination is Africa, mainly Nigeria. An enterprising job agency has organised a couple of plane-loads. As a result several leading schools in Colombo, Kandy and Galle are suddenly faced with a shortage of science teachers at the "A Level".

(Continued on page 2)

TRENDS + LETTERS

'Militant'

The author of the biographical note published alongside my article on "OPEC..." in your issue of May 1, 1980, has claimed that the Nava Samasamaja Party... is affiliated to Ted Grant's 'Militant' tendency in Britain... A similar claim though this time using the more ambiguous term "linked" is made in the piece "On the Trotskyist front" published in the same issue. These statements are false.

The 'Militant' is a weekly newspaper published by Marxists who are members of the British Labour Party. As such they are

(Continued on page 2)

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Trends ...

Perhaps more alarming is the news that this academic exodus may be swelled by some of our top professors — economics, language studies, engineering and sciences.

The problem of course is the now familiar one — salaries. The salaried middle and upper-middle class intelligentsia is caught in the crunch of declining real wages. "We are being pauperized" wailed a senior don, the colour of his collar proclaiming his compulsory recruitment to the new brown-collar class. "And this is also true" he added "of our varsity contemporaries who are now at the top of the bureaucratic ladder.....either they must take bribes or live at the edge of poverty".

In his monumental work "the Asian drama", Gunnar Myrdal spoke of the cancer of corruption. Knowing the experience of Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand etc the thoughtful observer of Sri Lankan trends must regard this situation with the most anxious concern. Already the university teachers have given the government time till June 30th for a revision of salaries. Right now they are confining their work to teaching and research. If they do not set papers, exams may have to be postponed.

Devaluation

The strongest currency in the world? Even as a platform slogan, a lost illusion. Commenting on our item "inflation, devaluation", a top economist said, "few countries these days make formal announcements of devaluation. In any case the Sri Lanka rupee has been floating or sinking, slowly". He drew attention to the fact that the value of the Sri Lanka rupee stood at just over 30 to the pound sterling some time ago. Now it is 37. Some months ago a hundred Indian rupees would cost 180 S.L. rupees. Now it is more than 200. So with the dollar, up from 14 to 16.

As for inflation, he contested the widely quoted World Bank figure of 42 percent. He thinks it is 23-25 percent.

Letters ...

not affiliated to any organisation to which the Labour Party itself is not affiliated. However it is true that the NSSP has friendly relations with them and sympathise with their aim of winning over the Labour Party to a Marxist Program.

Colombo. Shanta de Alwis

Population — Sterile concepts

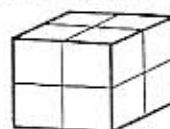
Alex Marshall refers to the importance of visiting villages. But has he visited even one of the 'purana' villages scattered all over the N.C.P. If he does so by first establishing contact with the village 'hub' in the person of the chief incumbent of the Buddhist temple of that village, I am sure he will come across a fund of folk lore and information regarding 2000 years of civilization which has owed its survival to Buddhist economics. Buddhist economics ensured the survival of this civilization based on tank-fed paddy fields, a highly developed form of chena cultivation of an intensely pristine nature and a perfect eco-system established by verdant jungle. Although these villages are going through a period of real hardship owing to the prohibition of chena cultivation by the present government, the absence of poverty there is mainly responsible for the low population ratio which is around six persons per family, inclusive of the two ageing grandparents.

It was my personal experience when I took a roll call at a 'Watugoda', one of those common compounds surrounded by a few houses, 55 occupants stepped out of the 9 houses, that were there. Now, where do you stand with your 'family planning' concepts, Mr. Marshall. The vital factor that governs genuine family planning is contentment and culture, not the brave new world of contraceptives and sterilization.

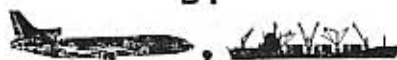
R. Upatissa Perera

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ADSEL

Workers will assert themselves . . .

NEWS
BACKGROUND

by H. A. Seneviratne

With the death of a worker on June 5, the UNP government received a major blow.

The government was rightly worried by the limited show of protest of the organised working class. Under severe economic stress there was a possibility of the working class developing itself into a molten lava in motion with the June 5 movement, despite the lack of a left movement or a credible left leadership.

The government had no alternative but to suppress the June 5 movement. But the government was at the same time faced with the dilemma of suppressing mere picket holders whilst continuing to speak of T.U rights and democracy. This time it could not issue the threat of dismissal of workers either, as in the case of the proposed token strike of 28th September 1978, also called (and later called off) by the Joint committee of Trade Union Action. The trade union arm of the UNP was, therefore utilised to launch a pro-government picketing campaign on June 5 itself. This reminded one of the attacks on anti-government pickets last December.

Rising Mood

But the government's tactic failed because of the brave show of protest on June 5. One anti-government picket, Comrade D. Somapala, fell victim to this desperate tactic of the government. Various other tactics reportedly used to prevent his funeral being conducted under the banner of the working class also failed with the rising mood of protest everywhere. The long-winding funeral march of June 9 turned out to be a powerful show of protest against the government.

The spectre of the dead worker will haunt this government throughout its days. It will not

June 5 to June 24 — an SLFP - led opposition ?

"June 5, and 24.... these will be red letter days... important dates in the opposition diary" remarked a top-ranking LSSP'er. Perhaps he was carried away by the enthusiasm generated by the events which have followed the day of protest launched by the JTUAC. Ever since the elections the morale of the LSSP has been particularly low. With more and more youth joining the JVP or other radical "New" Left groups, the LSSP's future looked so bleak that the characteristically cocky Rohana Wijeweera diagnosed the disease as "senile decay".

But it is the LSSP which seems to draw greatest satisfaction from trends since May Day, when it teamed up with the SLFP, after 5 long years, for a joint rally. The negotiations it initiated also saw the MEP drawn into this emerging formation. But the JVP's fortunes since May Day have seen a markedly downward turn. Its claim to have an attractive appeal to rural youth was blasted at Anamadawa. It was totally isolated on June 5. So acute was the embarrassment of some of its supporters that in a few places (e.g. Maharagama Teacher Trainee Institute) known JVP'ers joined the JTUAC demonstration. The C. P. daily "Aththa" mocked the JVP with a venomous cartoon that showed Mr. Wijeweera crying "Long live the revolution" while pushing a menacing tank, with J. R. atop.

Meanwhile the LSSP move to strengthen opposition unity and broaden

the anti-government front scored a major success when the TULF came to Hyde Park on June 24. Although some Left parties, notably the CPSL and the NSSP still remain outside this widening opposition circle, the Hyde Park rally was a substantial gain for the LSSP.

"It is the SLFP however that will be the real beneficiary... just as it was after the 1953 Hartal" commented a radical political scientist. "It is Mrs Bandaranaike who presided at Hyde Park and she was flanked by the TULF's Sivasithamparam, the LSSP's Colvin R. de Silva etc" he added.

A knowledgeable Asian diplomat observed "as the UNP government approaches the mid-point in its 6 year term, the JSS seems to have achieved the impossible — brought about the unity of opposition parties."

"This is the angriest funeral I have ever attended" a Colombo professor told a staff writer of the Lanka Guardian shortly after the speeches were over at Kanatte on June 9.

The L. G. published its own commentary on the implications of June 5th in its last issue. It has invited comments from others on this event and on-going developments. We publish in this issue an article by Mr. H. A. Seneviratne, a Trade Union activist for many years, a noted writer and a lawyer by profession.

be a question, any more, of protest launched according to the wishes of bureaucratic and/or opportunistic trade union bosses. The working class will gradually take control of the situation.

The joint Committees of Trade Union Action called for a day of national protest by "all political parties, trade unions, all mass organisations of youth, students, peasants, women etc." On June 5, it should be admitted that the

basic reason for this is the distrust the working class has in the capacity and intentions of their existing leaderships. That the government over-estimated the capacity of the leaders of the working class and of the left and under-estimated the capacity of the working class to liberate itself from their leaders was clear.

However, as the protest mood after the death of Comrade Somapala was rising, President Jaya-

wardene himself announced the likelihood of another wage increase.

How long can these tactics last is the crucial question? Will it be unlikely that the working class and the masses will rise as they did under less severe economic conditions in the great Hartal of August 12, 1953?

S.L.F.P tactics

But at the time of the Hartal the working class and the masses saw the possibility of the alternative of a left government although the left-leaders shirked and let it slip. Today, twenty seven years after the Hartal a similar situation has not yet emerged. As things stand today it is hardly possible that the working class will move for a decisive battle except as part of an on-coming general election. **This is why the SLFP's political and trade union leaders are now inclined to support working class action.**

Despite the perspective of a general election, the working class will get rid of their bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and opportunist as well as the bureaucratic leadership elements in the very process of the class struggle. This is precisely what the JVP either fails or does not want to understand. Nothing can stop them from falling into the category of the so called revolutionaries who are utterly exposed in the face of the deepening class struggle.

Whatever may happen in the near future, one thing is certain: the protest cry against the government is bound to gather momentum with the passage of time and develop into a movement that could in the long run seek to settle accounts with the social system itself. Although in the final analysis all class struggles bring the masses led by the working class to this position, in the present conjunctural situation, it will be more prominent and clear-cut now. The Commander-in-chief who can only "Command" class struggles for and within the limits of their own survival will fall in the course of this struggle. The working class will replace them with its real leaders.

CPSL : Three Versions

"The CPSL's much vaunted self-criticism is rather suspect, while the Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP) is very likely to be drawn into the SLFP orbit in the near future." This was the view expressed by the Peradeniya political scientist **Laksiri Fernando** addressing the May Day 'indoor rally' of the (Trotskyist) **Revolutionary Workers Party (RWP)**. Quoting from the leading Sinhala left-wing daily '**Aththa**', the English language weekly '**Forward**' and the CPSL's 11th Congress Political Report, he pointed out that the party had presented not one, but three subtly differentiated versions of the self-criticism, and furthermore each version itself contained ambiguous formulations. The page one lead story in the '**Aththa**', published during the closing stages of the 11th Congress, quoted the new Gen. Secretary K. P. Silva as promising that the CPSL will never enter any front, alliance or bloc with any bourgeois party. The Political Report however states that the decision to enter a United Front with the SLFP in 1968 was incorrect in that given context and under those conditions since the hegemony was that of the bourgeoisie. This interpretation, said Mr. Fernando, was conditional and equivocal and avoided the more fundamental issue of an alliance with the bourgeoisie. The '**Forward**' version was the most watered-down one he added.

The CPSL has yet to explain the theoretical sources of the political error committed from 1968 onwards. In point of fact, the 1968 decisions were the logical product of the theory of a united front with the 'progressive national bourgeoisie'. The CPSL's current 'left turn' has a precedent in that party's policies of the late 1940's under the leadership of Harry Abeygunewardena, who was following the the Zhdanov-Ranodive Line'. This phase was short-lived and culminated with Harry's ouster. Similarly, the CPSL's present left-phase would very probably be transitory,

since the self-criticism contains enough avenues for a renewed 'right turn' should the party feel itself isolated or if Soviet foreign policy needs require it. In any case, concluded speaker Fernando, the CPSL 11th Congress' position on the National (Tamil) Question, where it pays lip service to the recognition of the right of self-determination but follows the petty bourgeois Sinhala-Buddhist prejudices of the JVP in denouncing the so-called 'division of the country', reveals that the CPSL is not prepared to break through the parameters of the bourgeois state.

Incidentally, identical criticisms of the CPSL's new line were contained in a slim booklet on sale at the Demetagoda rally of **Revolutionary Communist League (RCL)** which is the local affiliate of Gerry Healy and Michael Banda's Trotskyist group in London. Though it was publicly articulated by these two Trotskyist sources, this critical appreciation of the CPSL's 11th Congress seems to be shared to a certain extent even by non or anti-Trotskyist sections of the radical left.

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Encounter at Vermbarai

by Nihal Perera

(Desha Vimukthi)

One has necessarily to waste the first day of a visit to the peninsula, meeting its profound theoreticians. And they would take great pains in attempting to enlighten the outsider of the situation prevailing in Jaffna, in the light of course, of their pet theories. The Sinoists while being extremely fidgety about the goings on in Peking and awaiting the balancing factor that would restore equilibrium in the C.C.P. are more at ease when noting gleefully that "the S.L.F.P. is no longer a 'dirty word' in Jaffna." The Chunnakan Trotskyists, living on the threshold of the Socialist Revolution, slips up at an unguarded moment to pontificate that the L.S.S.P. would have made greater headway in the Peninsula had not been dominated by the "Koviyar (Caste) People." The most 'advanced' self-determinists announce profoundly the discovery now of five nationalities in Sri Lanka. The 'revisitonists' are extremely hard to come by these days, their real leader having de-camped, perhaps with the Sen Thamilayar flag—to Lusaka, Zambia. The occasional one you chance to meet could be seen trying to out-do the Vasuists in breast-beating to display his self-determinationist fervour. A humorous if not pitiful, sight.

Only having completed this Jaffna ritual is one 'free' to go interior. And then—the people! Firstly the farmers. In Chunnakan, Atchuvely, Nelliaddy and K.K.S. It is one consistent tale of woe. 'Cannot the soaring costs of inputs ranging from farm implements and insecticides to Kerosene to work the water pumps, be brought down? (The cost of producing one pound of dried chillies is as high as Rs. 10/- while the market would at best yield Rs. 11/-). Why go through the rigours of cultivation when imported onions, chillies and even dhal could be purchased in the local

market? Is the Government not aware that a farmer requiring more than the allotted cwt. of seed-potatoes has to pay Rs. 1,200/- for it which is a full 100% above the fixed price? Why does it strangle the tobacco grower with its exports-ban to Kerala?

The workers' problems were best articulated by my old-friend, 'Thalaivar' Kanapathipillai—the undisputed leader of the Cement workers, who incidentally never gets invited to the Joint Trade Union May Day Rallies in Jaffna. Sitting bare-bodied in his cottage after work, he relates in fluent Sinhala, how in K. K. S. they have tamed the U. N. P. Trade Union junta, having crushed them mercilessly at the recent workers' Council elections. Parent Unions according to 'Thalaivar' are the greatest obstacle to working class unity at factory level. The Eelam cry does not excite the white haired leader who sees it as just one more result of the failure of the old bickering left. It is with the utmost difficulty, he confesses, that he has managed to remain faithful to cause. Thirty working years, he says, is indeed a long time to arrive at zero.

* * * *

And then—you meet the young rebels, the dare-devils, the headline makers. It must be mentioned at this stage that my recent trip to the peninsula was in fact planned and arranged by a 'young Tiger' (whom I shall refer to as Comrade T.), now standing trial in respect of a bank break-up, who some months ago wrote for our journal a historical survey of the so called Tiger Movement.* In fact the main purpose of my visit was to meet some of his colleagues, though this event got pushed to the last day or two on account of numerous discussions etc., Two rounds of discussions had already been postponed when came the suggestion—why not meet in the 'field' and then talk? 'Good' I said,

and our work-meeting' was fixed for a Saturday morning at a village of Puttur.

Here again I was late—having spent a good hour or so with the lanky T.U.L.F. Youth Leader Mavai Senathirajah at his house discussing his somewhat sensational resignation. Anyway a full half hour behind schedule I arrived with T. at the pre-arranged place to find that our contact, Comrade N. (another accused in the same bank case) having waited for us left for the 'work site' promising to come back in an hour. This he did sharp on time and we proceeded along the Chunnakam—Puttur road to our 'work site'—the village of Vermbarai.

Vermbarai is a somewhat sparsely populated village situated less than two miles from Puttur. Within a half hour of driving, having passed several clusters of houses, we arrived at the agricultural belt proper. Here on either side of the road were farmsteads, which were fairly large by Jaffna standards, whose barbed wire-fences clearly indicated commercial farming. N directed the driver to proceed along this belt till we came to a stretch which was in sharp contrast to the surrounding area. Here there were no visible signs of cultivation and the unprepared ground was strewn with rocks which jutted rather ungrainly. In the distance, a good quarter mile from the main road, we could see clusters of huts shaded by a few palmyrah trees, towards which our vehicle now proceeded. As we approached the village we could see a brand new jeep (31Sri)—an unmistakable sign of the presence of an M.P.—and over 50 people around it. As we came closer we could see the rising sun flag of the T.U.L.F. adorning the jeep standing along side was none other than the affable party theoretician Mr. S. Kathiravelupillai, M.P. for Kopay.

(Continued on the page 14)

Inherent risks of closer military ties

by Dr. Harry Harding

So, if China is already relatively secure against a Soviet attack, and if China already ties down a substantial portion of Soviet forces, it is difficult to see what additional benefits would flow to the United States from closer military ties with China. What are easier to identify are the risks that would be inherent in such a relationship.

First, there remain a number of regional conflicts where American and Chinese interests do not completely coincide. Taiwan is the most obvious case. But there are other examples as well. Recent signs of progress in the negotiations between Seoul and Pyongyang notwithstanding, China and the United States remain tied to different sides on the Korean peninsula. China and India have border disputes in which the United States might not wish to choose sides. And, Chinese attitudes toward Vietnam are probably more hostile and less flexible than those of the United States.

These differences in national interest and outlook would be less disturbing were it not for clear signs that the Chinese are willing to act on them forcefully. The Chinese invasion of Vietnam in early 1979 showed not only that Beijing was willing to send military forces across its borders to pursue its foreign policy objectives, but also that the Chinese were willing to do so despite openly expressed American reservations. What is more, Beijing made it appear, by launching the attack right after Deng Xiaoping's visit to the United States, that its actions had tacit American support.

Thus, military assistance to China runs the risk that it may

enable Beijing to use force in ways that are inimicable to American interests, but that may imply American approval. It is for this reason, that none of America's Asian allies appear, at the moment at least, enthusiastic about a military relationship between Washington and Beijing.

Second, and more important, is the risk that such a relationship might have a counterproductive effect on American relations with the Soviet Union. It may be that in its first years, Sino-American rapprochement did have a positive effect on Soviet-American relations, perhaps facilitating the conclusion of the SALT ONE pact and the 1973 agreement on reducing the danger of nuclear war. But by 1975 the Soviet Union had already discounted further improvements in Sino-American relations, and it became increasingly difficult to find evidence that Washington was enjoying the leverage over Moscow that its "Beijing connection" had once provided.

By 1979, moreover, one could begin to argue that the early signs of a military relationship between the United States and China had begun to produce a hostile, rather than a compliant, response from the Soviet Union. While it is too early to fully assess the calculations that led Moscow to invade Afghanistan, it seems obvious that the Soviet Union was not the least deterred by the announcement that Defense Secretary Brown would visit China in January.

Finally, a closer military relationship with Beijing even carries risk for Sino-American relations. If, as some people have suggested, the United States links the sale of military technology to China

with the international behaviour of the Soviet Union, so that military sales to China are used to punish Moscow for foreign policy transgressions, it runs the risk that China will see the United States as manipulative and self-serving. And by providing military technology to China, the United States assumes an implicit commitment to China's security interests that, in particular circumstances, it might find itself unwilling or unable to meet. The United States might, for example, find itself associated with hostile Chinese policies it does not fully endorse. Even worse, the Soviet Union might attempt to aggravate Sino-American relations by launching a limited military probe against China, assuming that Washington would be unlikely to respond.

None of these arguments is intended to rule out closer military cooperation between China and the United States once and for all, particularly if Sino-American relations continue to improve, and Soviet-American relations continue to deteriorate. But they do suggest that such a relationship be entered extremely cautiously, with full realization that each step is risky, and that a strategic alignment with China may be difficult to reverse. Above all they suggest that sales of military technology to China, even non-lethal technology, should not be undertaken as a "quick fix" for America's international weakness, as a short-term tactical response to Soviet behaviour, or as a way of mollifying the Chinese in times of strain in Sino-American relations. They must, instead, be an integral part certainly of a broader American foreign policy for the 1980's. Such a policy would assign higher priority to improving American military preparedness,

strengthening the American economy, working to improve relations with our allies, and attempting to stabilize the Persian Gulf than to establishing a security relationship with China.

Put in a somewhat different way, closer military ties between Washington and Beijing, particularly the provision of military technology to China, should develop only after certain preconditions have been met. First, they should await further consolidation and development of civilian relations between Washington and Beijing. Second, they should be conditioned on signs that the Chinese are, as a result of the growing bilateral consultations between the two countries, actively seeking to reduce their differences with the United States over regional and global issues. Third, a military relationship with China requires the support and understanding of America's traditional allies in Asia. And, most important, it must await a thoughtful, sober, long-term assessment of the prospects for Soviet-American relations.

Meantime, there should be no objections to carefully limited forms of military relations between Beijing and Washington. These might include the exchange of military delegations, discussion of the global and regional strategic balance, sharing of intelligence, and exchanges of views on the capabilities and intentions of the Soviet Union. All of these would be in keeping with a consultative relationship with China—nor should sales of dual-purpose technology to China be excluded, as long as the Chinese are willing to give reasonable assurances that the equipment will be used for civilian purposes.

A strategy for U.S.-China relations in the 1980's, then would be to emphasize consultations with China on regional and global issues, and cooperation with Beijing in China's economic development. A strategic alignment with China, while not to be ruled out indefinitely, should be undertaken only with the greatest caution, for now,

the emphasis should be on consolidating and developing civilian relations—relations that, in a formal sense, are less than two years old—and broadening our promising new dialogue with China on issues of common concern.

This is a feasible relationship to forge with the Chinese. Beijing does not, in my view, wish to be either a formal American ally, or an American proxy. To be too closely tied with the United States, particularly in the realm of national security, would produce serious objections at home, threaten China's standing as a member of the Third World, and, perhaps most important, pose serious risks for China's relations with the Soviet Union. Conversely, however, most Chinese leaders also wish move beyond a cool and manipulative relationship with the United States. While some may still see the opening toward Washington simply as a tactical device strengthening China's security toward the Soviet Union, a greater number are coming to see the longer term benefits of a consultative and cooperative relationship with the United States.

Such a relationship will require that Sino-American ties be sensitively managed. Consultation will require identifying specific regional and global issues on which Sino-American dialogue might make progress. Economic cooperation will require resolving remaining issues in Sino-American economic relations, particularly the three to one trade imbalance between the two countries and the deadlock in the negotiations over textile quotas. It will also require that the U.S. government monitor the growing network of private relations with the China to ensure that, on balance, they are mutual benefits to both sides. None of these specific tasks will be easy. But with a broad and thoughtful conception of the kind of relationship the United States seeks with China, there will be a firmer base on which to build.

Yugoslav trials

In the large crop of questions which the ongoing discussion about Yugoslavia's future after Tito, the most challenging internal issue concerns the fragile fabric of this modern republic, a strange mosaic of nationalities and cultures.

In the autonomous region of Kosovo, for instance the vast majority is Albanian. Since Albania is a neighbour of Yugoslavia, Albanian irredentism has always troubled observers of the Yugoslav political scene. While Stalin was responsible for the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform, Albania's formidable leader Enver Hoxha remains proudly pro-Stalinist to this day, aloof both from Moscow and Peking. However, Yugoslav-Albanian relations have shown an improvement just as Soviet-Yugoslav understanding seems to be a policy priority of Moscow and Belgrade.

A series of trials last month has nonetheless attracted the concerned attention of analysts of central European affairs.

Eight members of the Albanian ethnic group in the province of Kosovo have been sentenced to prison terms ranging from 3 to 8 years reports Aleksandar Lebl from Belgrade to the *Financial Times*. Their crime was "activities" directed against Yugoslavia's socialist self-management system.

There have been, says the same correspondent, rumours about arrests in Kosovo of Albanians favouring a merger of Kosovo and neighbouring Albania.

In Zagreb, a group of Croats were put on trial accused of "conspiracy" against the existing Yugoslav order.

A Serbian worker, one of more than a million Yugoslav migrant workers, was also sentenced for eight years. He too was accused of crimes against the Yugoslav order.

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GARADS

INDONESIA

The domino principle

After the Shah, Somoza went. Into enforced exile. President Park was killed by his own KCTA chief. Liberia's Tolbert was murdered too. All perfectly durable dictators. Is there a new 'domino theory'? Who is next? General Zia who exhausted the patience of the Pakistani people with his seasonal promise of free elections or General Sadat who organises them with generous frequency only to win with suspicious ease? Or Ferdinand Marcos, another Martial Law-Giver, with an agreeable devotion to the referendum and the rigged election?

High in the line-up of disposable dictators is Indonesia's Suharto who seized power after one of the biggest blood-baths in modern history. He is keen to win himself a third term in 1982.

When repression is accompanied by colossal corruption at the highest levels, the domino starts to tremble. The Somoza family owned 40% arable land in Nicaragua. The Shah's Pahlavi Foundation, endowed with monies secretly funneled by the National Iranian Oil Company, owned banks, holiday resorts and an off-shore island.

Money, say the French, has no smell. It has.

Suharto's wife "Teen" Suharto was known to Djakarta's smart set as "Fif-teen" Suharto, meaning 15%.

And now 'the General himself is the moving target. Behind the telescopic sights is one of Indonesia's best known soldiers, Lt. General (retd) Mohamed Yasin, once deputy chief of staff. Recently he marched into the National Assembly and presented a 17-page petition accusing the Suharto regime of 'hypocrisy and corruption.' Among the many specific charges was a detailed report on how Suharto became the proud owner of a 720 hectare ranch not far from the capital.

WORLD ECONOMY

Early 1980's – gloomy picture

"This year and next will see the major economies experiencing a substantial downturn which for some countries will be more severe than the depression in 1974 and 1975" says **Economic Models**, an international agency which specialises in forecasting major developments in the world economy. The economies referred to are North America, Western Europe and Japan. These nine countries together constitute 80% of OECD output and trade.

Economic Models in its current report also states "in the early 1980's, along with the downturn in economic growth, there will be a substantial rise in inflation. Although rising oil and commodity

prices are partially responsible, in a number of economies, particularly the U.S., the UK and Italy, domestic factors have also played a leading part."

"Also in line with the falling GNP growth rates is the rising trend in total unemployment. In almost all of the nine countries where forecasts are presented, there are significant increases in the unemployment rate—the major exception being Japan, the country least affected by the oncoming recession."

According to this survey the world economy will show signs of recovery by 1982/83. But there will be a set-back again in 1986.

Human Rights

At a public meeting held in December to mark the Human Rights Day, the Sri Lanka Human Rights Organisation called on the government to sign the two covenants adopted by the U. N. Such a step has also been consistently urged by other organisations, actively engaged in the field of civil rights.

While expressing its satisfaction that the government has now signed these covenants, the HRO observes that this would remain "an empty gesture" unless there was follow-up action. It recommends the following steps:

(1) To amend the Constitution, especially the chapter on Fundamental Rights, so as to bring its provisions into line with the rights laid down in the Covenants. Although the present Constitution

contains a statement of Fundamental rights, this falls seriously short of the stipulations of the Covenants.

(2) To repeal all repressive laws, such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Essential Public Services Act.

(3) To enforce administratively the absolute prohibition of torture in the Constitution, which is continually violated in police stations in respect of persons in custody.

(4) To inquire into all cases of torture and murder committed under cover of emergency powers in the Jaffna District between July and December 1979.

(5) To recognise the rights of the Tamil-speaking people to self-determination, which is accepted by the first article of both Covenants as a right belonging to all peoples.

THE ENERGY CRISIS

by U. Karunatilake

The D. S. R. S. L. (the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka) has a little bit of everything in its make up. Hold it up to the light, and it will display any desired facet of its complex personality—the People's Republic, the Social Democracy, the National Socialist State or what you will.

Underneath the miming however is the rather handicapped clown whose political perspective is that of the Television liberal mouthing phrases about free market forces, supply and demand, free trade, and the Free Society.

The D. S. R. S. L. upholds for instance, the futility of State Planning. State Planning, we are told, is futile if private investors are to make profits. So cut it out. The Ministry of Planning has no co-ordinating role in the Government. The musical comedy officials woke up in 1979 to murmur sternly that Rs. 3,000 million of supplementary expenditure had been incurred without their approval. No one took any notice of them. They have gone to sleep again.

The D. S. R. S. L. opposes all protectionism. In this brave stand the D. S. R. L. is absolutely alone in the world. After all, in countries which are capitalist there is protection for local capitalism. The D. S. R. S. L. however protects foreign capitalism. The Credo? Liberalism a la Trudeau. Local capitalism must compete in the free market with foreign capitalism, capture its consumers, or be wiped out.

The consumers in the D. S. R. S. L. have watched this drama over the past three years. Neither foreign nor local capitalism appear to be getting wiped out. The consumers on the other hand are getting wiped out.

In a country with population problems, perhaps, this solution is unique, but rational.

A Socialist State takes stock of its resources and balances its growth with the conservation and rational use of its resources. The D. S. R. S. L. wants accelerated Socialism. It is an accelerated Socialist State, holding high the banner of accelerated development, accelerated consumption of resources, accelerated deployment of men, materials, machines, cash and energy.

Our Physics tutor used to tell us that acceleration was a dangerous phenomenon unless you knew the algebraic sign of the vector. This would give you an idea of where you were heading. Economists, biologists, and even nuclear physicists shudder at the consequences of accelerated growth in the particular processes they study. Cancer, say the biologists, is also the result of accelerated growth. A biopsy of the accelerated D. S. R. S. L. may hence be urgently necessary. As for resources, in this peculiar atmosphere of accelerated development, they appear to vanish into thin air, like the Bowatenne power project.

Let us take hydropower, now that we have mentioned it. It was once anticipated (before acceleration) that Indian participation in the Kotmale project would enable repayment to be made by diverting surplus power from the project to India. After 3 years of acceleration however, we find that there is no power to operate existing industries leave alone service industrial expansion. The South West Monsoon, moreover, is not exactly the villain of the piece.

What has happened?

The growth in demand, we are told, has increased from a 6% rate to 12%. The earlier blueprints for expansion of power generation were based on the 6% rate of increase, and this was in line with projections for expansion and rural electrification. Where then was the error?

No allowance apparently had been made for the ushering in of the new Consumer Society of the D. S. R. S. L., and the whirring, whining, power hungry consumer gadgets that the new foreign loans let loose on the D. S. R. S. L. like a cloud of locusts.

The Electricity Board will confirm that the 12% rate of increase in load over the past three years has not been really an increase in the industrial demand. There has been no corresponding increase in the output of industrial goods. The increased consumption of electricity reflects a direct increase in the non-industrial consumer load. A direct result, in fact, of the buying spree in which Air Conditioners, Cookers, and other domestic gadgets have come flooding into the country with lifting of Import Control and the seductive hand out of foreign loans, a situation in which our scarce power resources were only serving to pump back the inflow of borrowed cash. To a large extent the 8% increase of G. N. P. recorded in 1979, was a reflection of this wasteful consumption cycle over two energy areas—petroleum and electricity, and two categories of goods, automobiles and electrical gadgets.

Is this the price we are paying in terms of energy to keep playing with all the toys we are getting on import liberalization and borrowed foreign exchange?

The loss is three fold. The drop in real industrial output on account of foreign competition, the consumption of cash resources, and the outright waste of our scarce store of energy.

Convoys of lorries leave the Port of Colombo loaded with cartons of room air conditioners from the big Corporations in Japan. Each room air conditioner consumes about 1 Kilowatt of electricity. A thousand such air conditioners consume one megawatt. And the total power generation in all our hydro-power stations is only 300 megawatts! What about all the electric cookers which consume about 3 Kilowatts each, and the exciting

new domestic gadgets in the full page advertisements in newspapers which shoot off slick editorials against waste of electricity and request that State Industries close down for the duration?

In keeping with the slide back to Colonialism, import liberalization generates constraints on true industrial growth. The increase in non-industrial hydropower load has brought on the power cuts and a slow down in local industry in the same way the increased consumption of foreign exchange on fuel for imported automobiles has meant less foreign exchange for investment in industry.

Even the limited investment thinking that takes place in an atmosphere of trade liberalization is consumption oriented, like the bright idea of diverting the gas from the hydrocracker project for Colombo Seven kitchens rather than as raw material for the Urea fertilizer factory. Actually it has been consumer

thinking along Colombo 7 that has resulted in the current hydropower crisis.

If short power cuts had been introduced in January at the time of the failure of inter monsoonal rains, there would have been no chaos in May with the delay in the monsoon. Enough energy would have been conserved to keep Industry going. But whenever the ruling and mercantile elite in Colombo were faced with the shattering tragedy of no electricity to fry their bacon and eggs for breakfast or cool their secretaries back sides in their airconditioned offices, they barked the Electricity Board unions into submission and over ruled the power cuts. The result was that the power cuts were delayed five months until the hydro power reservoirs were almost empty.

Was it only the B. B.'s in Colombo who were responsible? In the new Colonial set up it is whispered that our big bosses are only little muhandirams to

the very big bosses who really decide our fates in the Board Rooms of the big multinational Banks and Corporations that lend us the money to keep the consumption boom going.

Just following the trend of one little thought, what would have happened to all those millions of Yen worth of Mitsubishi air conditioners we have imported if the power cuts were introduced in January?

Nor should we think that the reluctant South West Monsoon has cowed the V. B. B.'s into silence. As the clouds nuzzle up the mountains, and the levels of Castlereagh and Mousakelle begin to rise, and the April panic is forgotten, the V. B. B.'s and their computers will signal new patterns in the consumer spiral.

And when the inter monsoonal rains fail again, as they will do, because acceleration has removed our remaining forest cover, the same musical comedy farce will commence full cycle.

Serendib is Sri Lanka.

Horace Walpole coined the word "Serendipity", to describe "the faculty of making happy and unexpected discoveries". Since the word derives from one of the ancient names for Sri Lanka, the allusion is inescapable... where better can one find scope for this intriguing faculty than in Sri Lanka itself. Take the monumental fifth-century fortress Sigiriya, for instance... you swing round a bend in the road and it's there, 600 feet above the surrounding countryside, a gigantic rock silhouetted like some crouching prehistoric monster. Your first intriguing discovery will be that it is not just a solid upheaval of the earth's crust but a legendary fortress... the setting for one of the most bizarre stories in history, the story of the God King, who achieved a rather splendid isolation by surrounding himself with all the luxuries of 6th Century Sri Lankan civilization. We manage Hotel Sigiriya, within walking distance of the Rock... and many other hotels with access to other Serendipitous places in Sri Lanka.

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The national question : Marxist perspectives

"Though the LSSP's stand for parity of status for Sinhala and Tamil was a courageous one, the LSSP and CP must be faulted for not supporting the FP's call for a federal solution to the Sinhala-Tamil question". This view was expressed by **Upali Cooray**, London educated economist and lawyer who is presently the Assistant Secretary of Bala Tampoe's **RMP** and a prominent personality of the **Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE)**. Mr. Cooray was delivering the keynote address at a seminar on the National Question sponsored by MIRJE membership drive in the Kandy area and is in keeping with a decision to transform MIRJE into a stable anti-racist movement with grass roots support and a mass character.

Continuing his address, Upali Cooray remarked that even at the time the Old Left did struggle for the citizenship rights of the Tamil plantation workers, this struggle was confined to parliament. As for the LSSP-CP capitulation to chauvinism, Mr. Cooray said that the maternal roots of this phenomenon lay in the economic upsurging experienced by world capitalism in the first two decades following world war II. This "long boom" weakened the workers' movement while strengthening the bourgeoisie and fuelling bourgeois populism at the political level. This was the international dimension. In this country, the left movements' adoption of the parliamentary road to power meant that it had to adapt itself to the chauvinistic prejudices of the petty-bourgeois masses for the sake of narrow electoral gain. In 1944 the CP took a position more advanced than the LSSP and passed a resolution which recognized the right of secession, while recommending regional autonomy

as a solution. By 1960 however it was obvious that both the LSSP and CP had accepted "Sinhala Only" as irrevocable.

An important feature about left politics in this country was that the official positions which the left parties adopted on the National Question were restricted to the leadership levels alone and unfortunately were not carried down to the base. This would explain why chauvinist residues are present at the base level of the Left and working-class movement, explained Mr. Cooray. If MIRJE went about the task of assiduous proselytization and conscientization at grass roots level, it would then be possible to build internationalist sentiment from the base level up concluded the speaker reminding his audience that it was sheer hypocrisy or confused thinking on the part of some socialist organizations which claim to uphold the right of self-determination while simultaneously stating that they were "opposed to separatism and division of the country".

Newton Gunasinghe, Marxist Sociologist and expert on the 'agrarian question', who returned recently from the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex (IDS), to take over as chief research officer of the Colombo based **Social Scientists Association's** study of the impact of transnationals on the country's agrarian sector, noted the specificity of the national question in Sri Lanka. Marxist theorizing on this problem was conceived either in the context of the multinational states of Europe or in the context of colonialism. Lanka was not an imperialist state and the Sinhalese were not an imperialist nation in the strict sense of the word since there was no expropriation of surplus from the North and East.

The oppression of the Tamils took place not so much at the economic but rather at the political level and the Sinhalese while not an Imperialist nation were nonetheless a dominant, oppressor nation while the Tamils were a dominated oppressed nation. The right of the Tamils to political secession cannot be contested by anyone who calls himself Marxist, and the decision to exercise that right resides solely in the hands of the Tamil people. After the victory of the socialist revolution and the setting up of the proletarian dictatorship there could be discussions between the Sinhala and Tamil Marxists as to whether the two nations could be united or reunited within a single framework. But that was a matter for the future, while the Eelam demand was a constituent element of the current political reality. Furthermore, the most radical demand directed against the capitalist state in the whole political arena today was that of Tamil Eelam precisely because it rejected the very territorial integrity of that capitalist state, said Dr. Gunasinghe.

Sudharshan Seneviratne, a young archeologist-historian who joined Peradeniya's academic staff after pursuing his post-graduate studies under the guidance of one of India's best known Marxist historians, Prof. Romila Thapar, at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University asserted the need to view the National Question from the perspective of the movement of capital and the dialectics of the capitalist state. The new patterns of the movement of capital on a global scale had resulted in transnational monopoly capital penetrating deeply into the country and then fanning out into nook and cranny. This expansionist thrust of monopoly capital meant the ever tighter

Integration of the Island as a single market and economic unit. The political reflection of this was the need for an absolutist authoritarian state which does not and cannot tolerate any centrifugal nationalist movements or for that matter any oppositional movements however democratic in character. In other words the movement of capital at this new stage does not permit any toleration on the part of the bourgeois state centrifugal or countervailing national, democratic or socialist currents. This is the horizontal dynamic. Conversely, the bourgeois state attempts to split the ranks of the working class vertically by recourse to chauvinism. These twin aspects, i. e. horizontal and vertical constitute the dialectics of the bourgeois state in relation to the National Question said speaker Seneviratne.

This dialectic poses a dilemma for the Left movement too and this is seen clearly in India continued Seneviratne basing himself on his extensive Indian experience. Should the Left support the local or regional nationalisms which articulate the interests of the regional new bourgeoisies (new rich)? How to steer a course clear of and opposed to the pan India big bourgeois ruling class as the regional new bourgeoisies? These are the problems confronting the Indian Left. The Communist party of India (CPI) found itself really impaled on the horns of a dilemma during the Sikkim crisis where the pre-capitalist structures of that state were shattered by the repressive state apparatus of the big bourgeoisie which had taken a profoundly anti-democratic turn domestically and an expansionist character externally.

Laksiri Fernando, Peradeniya Political Science don and representative of the **Revolutionary Workers' Party** (R. W. P) led by Edmund Samarakkody pointed out that the bourgeois democratic demand for national self-determination had been posed in the epoch of socialist revolution. This was so because the National Question like the Agrarian Question and the Women Question were

bourgeois democratic tasks which the dependent bourgeoisie was incapable of resolving. These tasks have therefore to be solved by the socialist revolution which was now on the agenda. It is ironic he added, that Maoist comrades who had postponed the socialist revolution indefinitely and still spoke of some form of democratic revolution, chose simultaneously to use the strictest yardsticks of the socialist revolution to raise objections to bourgeois nationalism in the North, which had a democratic aspect.

P. Muttulingam of the **Lanka Social Studies Circle** reminded the audience of Lenin's warning during the Comintern discussions on the National-Colonial Question to the effect that the liberal bourgeois sections who stood at the head of movements for national independence would tend to strike a deal with the ruling bourgeoisie of the oppressor nation. This would take place when the worker-peasant masses assume increasing importance in the national movement thus causing the bourgeois democratic leadership to perceive a threat to their class interests. This is precisely what was taking place in the ranks of the Tamil nationalist movement to-day. The bourgeois leaders who had stood for and even popularized the Eelam slogan for a period, were perturbed by the ideological radicalization of the Tamil youth and the latter's advocacy of militant extra-parliamentary forms of struggle. Thus, some leaders of the TULF were on the verge of a sell-out, while others were vacillating, indecisive and confused. Still others in the leadership were orienting themselves towards the Youth Front. Meanwhile, this Youth Students Front was adopting a Marxist-Leninist ideology and programme as had several other militant youth groups. These Marxist Youth sections were now coming to the fore in order to grasp and carry forward the banner of Tamil Eelam which the bourgeois leadership was in the process of abandoning. Indeed, the radical Youth in the North have raised the slogan of a '**Red Tamil Eelam**' and it was the duty of

all Marxists in the Sinhala areas to support this cause and the struggle to realize it.

Gamini Yapa, leader of the **Peradiga Sulanga** (East Wind) group which is now a constituent member in a Marxist-Leninist Unity Committee together with G. I. D. Dharmasekera's CP (ML), argued that the Eelam slogan should be judged according to whether it strengthens or weakens the imperialist superpowers. In his view, it strengthened these inimical forces and perhaps were even supported by them. Therefore he opposed the Eelam demand though he did accept the right of the Tamils to self-determination. He agreed that Marxist-Leninist thinking was becoming increasingly influential among Tamil Youth who were beginning to study such literature. These youth should be guided along the correct path, away from the separatist slogan, individual terrorist tactics and seclusion from the Sinhala working masses.

J. Uyangoda and **D. Jayatilleka**, Peradeniya campus displayed a close identity of views on the National Question. J. Uyangoda argued that the Eelam slogan must not be evaluated primarily from the point of its intrinsic merits or demerits but rather, from the functional point of view i. e., in relation to its impact on the bourgeois state. The Eelam struggle was a force directed against the bourgeois state. Indeed, the North was today the weakest link in the chain of Lankan capitalism. As for the Tamil bourgeoisie in the North, it had a contradiction with the ruling bourgeoisie because its opportunities for advancement were fettered by the present system and the global economic crisis. D. Jayatilleka said that just as some Marxists had a Eurocentric vision of world revolution, most local Marxist had a 'Colombo-centric' view of the Lankan revolution. However, just as Lenin had executed a radical inversion in Marxist thinking by speaking of 'Backward Europe and Advanced Asia', we would designate the North as 'more advanced' than the South, because there the mass sentiment against the repressive state appa-

ratus was more widespread and of a higher intensity than in the South. The two speakers said that Marxists must criticize the TULF leadership for abandoning the Eelam struggle rather than for advancing the Eelam slogan. It was indeed ironic that Marxists who champion national liberation struggles the world over (e.g. Eritrea) should denounce the Eelam struggle. It was still more ironic that other Marxists, who regarded the SLFP as having a progressive role to play, should regard the TULF and other Tamil political formations as reactionary.

Newton Gunasinghe proposed that the Tamil plantation proletariat should no longer be referred to by the derogatory and inaccurate term Indian Tamils, but rather as Hill-country (Up-country) or Kandyan Tamils—which is how these people referred to themselves as well as how Indian Marxists described them. J. Uyangoda argued that the Tamils in the North and East should no longer be referred to as a 'minority' which was a purely arithmetical and subtly demeaning description. The term oppressed nation should be used instead since it conveyed the idea that the Tamils were a nation like the Sinhalese.

Dr. Kumar David, senior lecturer at the Engineering Faculty of Peradeniya campus and Central Committee member of the **Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP)** stated that while his party accepted and firmly upheld the right of the Tamils to self-determination, they did not advocate separation as a solution at this stage of the struggle. In fact, at this given moment they considered the Eelam slogan unhelpful and incorrect. However at a different stage of the struggle their party may very well support the demand for separation just as they supported the Bangladeshi struggle. Despite these differences between the action programme placed before the Tamil people by the NSSP on the one hand and Left oriented petty-bourgeois organizations like the Illaignar Peravai (Youth Front) on the other, the NSSP strongly advocated united actions with

these nationalist organizations against the common foe, i.e., the UNP government.

Fr. Paul Caspersz, Secretary of the MIRJE, drew the attention of the audience to the fact that the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) had not yet accepted the right of the Tamils to national self determination. Since this was the oldest Marxist party, could it be concluded that the right of self determination had been accepted only by the New Left? If the entire Marxist movement could be persuaded to recognize the right of national self determination of the Tamil people, it would surely pose a challenge to the bourgeoisie. Until then, and in the present context, what should be the minimum programme for MIRJE? Should it shelve 'self determination' for the time being and concentrate instead on a campaign for 'equal rights' for the Tamil people inclusive of the plantation proletariat? Furthermore, how to support the Eelam slogan without playing into the hands of the Tamil bourgeoisie? These were not the views of MIRJE nor even fixed personal views, but rather, provisionally formulated queries he was posing the audience, explained Rev. Caspersz.

Susil George Seneviratne, part-time organizer for MIRJE, set forth the aims and intentions of the movement, prior to calling upon all Left Wing, working-class, progressive and democratic organizations to make frequent inputs into MIRJE activities by means of comments, proposals, support and solidarity. ●

Encounter . . .

(Continued from page 5)

Now the M.P. — having once hosted me and the Cotta Road rebel V. Ponnambalem to dinner at his house — is not exactly unknown to me. Our meeting took place at the time V.P. was under suspension from his party and was preparing the ground for his exit and the launching of Sen Thamilar Movement. I was travelling back from a Communist Party (Marxist) Conference in Calcutta

and broke journey at Palali at V.P.'s requests to discuss his problems and plans. It was on one of these nights that we were invited to sumptuous dinner at Mr. Kathiravelupillai's Jaffna residence. At dinner the wise lawyer was at pains expounding to me the theoretical basis of the T.U.L.F. demands. But what sticks in my memory of that night was the devastating off-the cuff speech dished out by his wife throughout dinner. This sweet lady who had owned a sizeable extent of land in Malaysia was determined not to waste any love on the 'Reds.' 'Communist', she said looking straight at V. P., "are not to be trusted. The amount of trouble they gave us in Malaya! My god! And what hypocrites! You know somebody told me to read that chap Mao-Tse-Tung's books to understand their philosophy. Do you know in one place he speaks of 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat' and just after that of 'New Democracy'. Now see how cunning he is. How can one be for Dictatorship and Democracy at the same time? Hypocrites!" Poor V. P. at whom the darts were aimed, was visibly embarrassed and spoke very little that night.

Anyway so there was Mr. Kathiravelupillai together with his jeep and flag, with some 50 or so people under the cluster of palmyrah trees. The M. P. clad in a spotless white dress, was giving ear to a group of bare bodied men who were forcefully driving home a point. As we alighted from the car three young men emerged from the crowd and met us and they were introduced to us by N. as his colleagues. (These were B, who had just returned from South India and was described as one who had experienced the wrath of the late Bastianpillai; V. who had been detained and dealt with during the recent Emergency and S, another activist). Having paid a visit to the village of Vermbarai, the M. P. now listening to the depressed caste villagers here, who were facing eviction from their houses. In a few moments the landlords, old and new, would arrive.

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Struggle to destroy anti-Marxist trend

by G. B. Keerawella

For the 25th anniversary of the death of Marx, Lenin wrote an article entitled "Marxism and Revisionism" in April 1908. In this article he pointed out that with the victory of Marxism the enemies of Marxism had changed their colours and were attempting to undermine Marxism by pretending to amend or revise Marx. Concurrently a volume of essays by a number of writers who accepted the theories of the Austrian ideologist **Mach**, appeared under the title of "Studies in the Philosophy of Marxisms". This volume was a classic example of the falsification and distortion of Marxism perpetrated in the name of 'defending' Marxism. Reading this book Lenin decided to launch an open struggle to destroy this type of anti-Marxist trend. Therefore he began to assiduously study the works of the Russian **Machists**. As a result, Lenin's great work, "Materialism and Empirio-criticism" appeared in May 1909.

The Machists had tried to refute materialism with the aid of "neo-positivism" and the philosophy of modern 'natural science'. Lenin pointed out clearly that on the pretext of preaching 20th century philosophy of natural science, they were simply resurrecting the subjective idealism of Berkley. In his book Lenin pointed out the three fundamental propositions of the Marxist theory of knowledge.

They are:

- (a) Things exist independently of our consciousness, and independently of our perceptions,
- (b) There is definitely no difference in principle between the thing-in-itself, and there can be no such difference. The only difference is between what is known and what is yet not known.
- (c) In the theory of knowledge, as in any other branch of science, we must think dialectically, that is, we must not regard our knowledge as readymade and unalterable, but must determine how knowledge emerges from ignorance, how incomplete, inexact knowledge becomes more complete and more exact.

This book inflicted utter defeat on philosophical revisionism and at the same time marked a gigantic step forward in the further development of the philosophical principles of Marxism.

On November 9, 1906 the Prime Minister Stolypin promulgated a new agrarian law which represented another aspect of counter-revolutionary strategy. This granted the peasants the right to leave the village community and set up separate homesteads. The **Liquidators** state that this policy wiped out all prospect of another revolution. But Lenin pointed out that the Stolypin policy "was an inherently contradictory, impossible attempt, which will once again bring the autocracy to the verge of collapse and will cause a revival of the glorious epoch and glorious battles of 1905."

At the same time another tendency emerged. They demanded that the Bolshevik deputies in the Duma should be recalled on the plea that their presence there was of no benefit to the revolutionary movement. They were called **otzovats**. But Lenin said 'considering the mechanical strength of the reaction and our feeble connections with the masses, it becomes more and more necessary to utilize the channels of propaganda and agitation created by the old regime.

(Continued on page 17)

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Dynamic pattern of interdependence

While this is the picture which emerges from current trends, there are several elements in South Asia which can project a different scenario of development and cooperation. The South Asian region is much more of a single ecosystem in which both India and small nations participate. The resources and environmental implications of the Himalayan region cut across national boundaries. Recent estimates of both hydroelectric power and water resources available through the harnessing of the Himalayan water system indicate that South Asia could be self-reliant in both energy and food. The exploitation of these resources could create a unique pattern of economic cooperation between small nations and India. The prospects of an abundant source of renewable energy and the transformation of the continent into a food self-reliant or even a food surplus region would dramatically alter the entire development scenario in South Asia. Similarly, the Indian Ocean has to be perceived as the other part of the ecosystem which can contribute a dynamic component in a programme of cooperation in the region. In this situation the small nations in South Asia such as Nepal, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, have a major role to play particularly in the development of the Himalayan resources, while the islands such as Sri Lanka and Maldives enter in a similar manner to a programme of cooperation for the development of Indian Ocean resources. What emerges therefore is a dynamic pattern of interdependence in which India and the surrounding small nations could richly benefit. It alters the over-whelmingly dependent relationships which in the normal course might evolve between the small nations in South Asia and India.

As has been pointed out earlier, the main problem facing small nations in their relations with the big powers in the region is one of creating adequate countervailing power within a framework of regional cooperation. This would first imply the intensification of linkages and strengthening of economic cooperation among the small countries themselves. It would next imply the selective strengthening of relationships outside the region, including both the industrialised small nations in capitalist and socialist blocs as well as the other countries in the developing world. In the first instance, linkages between the small nations of South Asia and South-East Asia would be one element in a structure of countervailing power in the region. Beyond this it would be important for the small nations who are politically and militarily in the category of the relatively powerless countries of the world to increase the linkages among each other and establish forms of cooperation which would enable the small nations to develop the diplomacy of small-nation power at the international level. Such a programme envisages a role for the small nations which could lead to a more equitable distribution of power in the international system. ●

Struggle...

(Continued from page 16)

In December 1908 Lenin went to Paris to make preparations for R. S. D. L. P. conference. Lenin was the principal speaker of this conference. In his speech he severely criticized both the Liquidators and otzonists. The conference adopted Lenin's resolution which contained an analysis of the situation thus prevailing, and condemned liquidatorism and otzovism.

(To be continued)

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MASTERS

Kanchana, or the future of trash

by Laleen Jayamanne

An analysis of some aspects of Sangadasa's *Kanchana* is, I think, warranted as it seems to me at this distance, having read the *Lanka Guardian* and *Mavatha*, that Uttumaneni with its controversial subject matter is overshadowing *Kanchana*, which is also potentially controversial though perhaps in a less spectacular sense. I also had the good fortune to see Sangadasa's short documentary, *Katharak kara* on deforestation along with *Kanchana* in January. It is a pity that more people and especially school-children haven't had a chance to see the former and have discussions around it. It is a non-authoritarian documentary since it has no voice-of-god commentary and therefore leaves the audience the task of working out connections between deforestation, floods and drought. Sounds and images that come to my mind are aerial shots of flood devastated areas accompanied by the sound of trees being felled and sawed.

I think it is necessary to situate Sangadasa's first feature film within the tradition inaugurated by Pathiraja in *Ahasgama*. In the 70's the emergence of what I think is a Sri Lankan attempt to a counter cinema (counter to the dominant mode of film production) is clearly discernible. What makes the Sri Lankan effort especially exciting is that it is happening right within the main stream film industry. Godard's counter-cinema to take but one example, runs the risk of been accessible only to a few whether they be working class cadres, students or art house audiences. This is partly because his post 1968 radical films were made largely in 16 m. m. and get distributed and exhibited in alternative venues. Due to obvious economic problems we do not have a 16 m. m. network and therefore the more committed and intelligent Sri Lankan director has to work within a commercial

industry where the impediments to making an intelligently enjoyable film are many, but the potential rewards in terms of larger audiences are great.

When I asked Sangadasa how he came to make films he mentioned the energising influence of the writings of the late Jayavilal Wilegoda, film critic for *Dinamina* and untiring spokesman for a genuine national cinema. If Wilegoda were alive now he would indeed be very happy to see that his work has contributed to the making of a film culture and a new generation of directors. D. V. Senevirathna and Charles Abeysekara are two other names that come to my mind as people who wrote in the early days, in the Sinhala newspapers, calling for an authentic national cinema and castigating the formula film for the evils it perpetrated. This interaction between critic and film-maker can be a very useful means of creating a wide based film culture in Sri Lanka.

It is quite evident from Sangadasa's documentary and from *Kanchana* that he is a director who has thought and read about the medium and also about the specific conjuncture at which our cinema is stuck. His concerns are political in a wider sense of the word, just as the problems of deforestation are political ones. Thus in his very first feature film he has been able to make a critique of the worst aspects of our film industry, with assurance and humour.

The film is about the making of a formula film, with its mandatory love story of class-crossed lovers. The film opens on a romantic love scene:

Janaka:—Rupa! You don't understand my position. For you it's different. You have enough money, cars and all that.

Rupa:—Your love means more to me than all that, Janaka You.. You..

The actress forgets her lines, and the director of the film within the film interjects:

Victor:—Cut! Cut! How many times have you made this mistake!

We think as the close-up of lovers opens the film that we are going to see yet another love story, but the camera pulls back on the director's words to reveal the set of the film and thus breaks the illusion. Sangadasa shows us how the filmic magic is created by back-projections of beautiful scenery, etc., and constantly works to demystify it.

Also, the illusion of romantic love is undermined by the sexual exploitation rampant behind the cameras. The film focuses on the director, who exploits both his own wife and his leading lady. Indeed, his main purposes in making a film seem to be to make a buck and to seduce naive young girls. Since he calls the shots he is able to manipulate situations to his advantage. His wife seem to embody all the traditional virtues, serving as the husband's doormat with great equanimity.

The fetishizing of the female image—that is defining women as that which is to be looked at—is a recurrent theme in the film. When *Kanchana* admires the director's cigarette lighter, he tells her to have a look through it, adding that she would see Dambadiva in it—as it turns out, a nude female image inside the lighter. The young girl is speechless, and the director laughs knowingly at her sense of confusion. The grooming of the woman into a pleasurable object of sight is constantly highlighted, and the fetishizing reaches a climax when the director photographs *Kanchana* bathing.

(Continued on page 21)

TRANSLATIONS

by K. S. Sivakumaran

The purpose of this brief note is to put on record for the benefit of local readers in English of the existence of a translation program where writings in Sinhala and English are translated into Tamil. A few Tamil works have also been translated into Sinhala and English. While there is enthusiasm among Tamil translators to bring to the Tamil reader writings of local writers in Sinhala and English, the same cannot be said of Sinhala speaking translators. A mild satisfaction, however, is that readers in English are atleast benefitted by some notices about the local Tamil literary scene either in the press or radio.

To avoid digression, I merely want to present an unorthodox bibliography of local writings in translations, and this is by no means an exhaustive list.

The sources of this list are the following: My own translations from English into Tamil and my little book, **Tamil Writing in Sri Lanka** (1974); a radio talk in Tamil by Thambialayah Thevathas; an article in Tamil by Nagesu Tharmalingam in **Mallikai**; and a paper read by T. Kanagaratnam at a seminar in Jaffna. Thambialayah Thevathas has so far translated three Sinhala novels. T. Kanagaratnam has not only translated Tamil short stories into Sinhala but also Sinhala stories into Tamil. **Mallikai** is a Jaffna monthly which publishes most of the Sinhala writing.

● Sinhala works into Tamil

Selalihini Sandesaya (Pooval Vidu Thoothu) by Rahula Thera translated by Navaliyoor Sovanna Nadarasa. Kumaratunge Munidasa's **Magul Kamae** (Kalyana Chappadu), **Hathpana** (Chettup pilaitha Chin-nasamy), **Heen Saraya** (Meliyar Midukku) — all three translated by Sarogjini Arunasalam. **Setu Bandanam** is a collection of twelve Sinhala short stories translated by T. Kanagaratnam. The stories are by Martin Wickremasinghe, Ediri-

weera Saratchandra, Gunadasa Amarasekera, K. Jayatileke, Madawela Ratnaika, A. V. Suraweera, Gunasena Vithana, Leel Gunasekera, Oswin de Alwis, Jayalath Manoratne, Lakshmi Bombawella and D. D. Nanayakara.

Martin Wickremasinghe's **Gamperaliya** (Cramap Piralvu) has been translated by M. M. Uwise, while his **Madol Duwa** (Madal theevu) was serialised in translation by M. Nithiyanthan.

K. Jayatileke's **Charitha Thunak** has been translated by two people: Thambialayah Thevathas translated as Moontru Pathirankal and T. Kanagaratnam as Mukkuna Chithiram. Karunasena Jayalath's **Golu Hadawatha** (Nenjil Ore Rahasyam) and **Bamba Kettu Hathi** (Iraivan Vahutha Vali) have been translated by Thambialayah Thevathas. **Ambe Aluwa** by T. B. Ilangaratne has been rendered into Tamil by Sarojini Arunasalem. R. Murugaiyan has translated **Valas Punchi** as Karadi Kutty. Dayananda Gunawardane's **Nari Bena** (Nari Mappillai) has been translated into Tamil by Sinniah Sivanesan.

K. N. D. Pieris has compiled a Tamil — Sinhala Dictionary.

Apart from the above works available in book form, more than seventy five short stories and poems from Sinhala have appeared in magazines and newspapers. Anthony Fernando, F. M. S. Faisdeem, M. Kanagarasan, M. A. Nuhman Neelkarai Nambl and I. Santhan are the main translators doing this valuable service.

● Tamil works into Sinhala

The twin epics **Silapadikaram** and **Manimekalai** (Pathini Deiyo and Manimekala Sambu) were translated by Hiselle Dharmaratne Thero. Didactic works in Tamil — **Thirukural**, **Naladiyar**, **Aathi Soodi**, **Kontrai Vendhan** have also been translated in Sinhala. Minihamy Koragoda has been responsible for this and Anthony Fernando has interviewed her in Tamil for the benefit of the Tamil readers.

Indian statesmen late C. Rajagopalachari's short stories (Kula Heenayo) were translated by D. D. Nanayakara. A few short stories by S. Ganeshalingam (Aluth Satan pata) were translated by Ranjit Perera. Some short stories by Tamil writers have also been in book form (Demala Ketti Kathawa) by T. Kanagaratnam. These include short stories by Ilangayarkone, S. Velupillai, Kanaga Senthinathan, 'Dominic Jeeva, Varathar, Neervai Ponnai, S. Ganeshalingam, S. Agasthiyar and V. A. Rasaratnam. Indian writer M. Varatharajan's novel **Kallo Kaviyamo** (Nari Garava) was translated by M. C. M. Sayiru and B. A. Wijedasa. A few poems by Indian and Sri Lankan Tamil poets have been translated by Parakrama Kodithuwakku (Indu saha Lanka).

One or two poems by Sri Lankans were translated into Sinhala via English and broadcast by Karunaratne Amarasinghe in the **Ada Kavi** program over the SLBC. R. Murugaiyan and Sanmugam Sivalin gam rendered their own poems into English while those by Eelavanan, Jeyabalan and Nuhman were translated by K. S. Sivakumaran into English.

A book on the history of Munneswaram has been translated by D. D. Nanayakara and T. Kanagaratnam. The latter had also translated essays and short stories from Tamil and published in Lankadipa, Nuwana and Aththa.

● English writing on Tamil literature translated into Sinhala

Susil Sirivardane has translated K. S. Sivakumaran's article on Tamil novel into Sinhala and published it in Mawatha. In English, **Tamil writing in Sri Lanka** (1974) is the only book available at the moment introducing contemporary Tamil writing. The author of this little book had been persistently introducing the Tamil Cultural scene to the English reading public for more than twenty five years. A. J. Canagatana and S. Sivanayagam have translated a few Tamil short stories into English.

● Local English Writing translated into Tamil

Writings by Alagu Subramaniam, T. Ramanathan, C. V. Velupillai — strangely all of them Tamils — have been translated into Tamil by Raja Sri Kanthan, Kavaloor Rasdurai and P. Krishnasamy.

K. S. Sivakumaran has translated the following from English into Tamil: C. V. Velupillai's article on Hill Country writing; Some views expressed on W. B. Yeats at a seminar held at the Tea Propaganda Board in the middle of 1965. This report was mainly covering those views of Reggie Siriwardane; Arya Abeyesinghe's and Iranganie Abeyintha's article in the **New Ceylon Writing** on contemporary English writing in Sri Lanka; A. J. Gunawardane's article in the **Community** on K. Jayatileke, Siri Gunasinghe and Gunadasa Amarasekera; Gunadasa Amarasekera's article on Sinhala Poetry; Mervyn de Silva - Reggie Siriwardane debate on Ezra Pound in the **Ceylon Daily News**; Wimal Dissanaike's poem entitled Time and Knowledge; Reggie Siriwardane - D. C. R. Gunatileke debate on University English Syllabus; Wimal Dissanaike's article on modern Sinhala poetry; A. J. Gunawardane's broadcast talk on Western Arts in Sri Lanka after 1956.

I understand that some articles from **Lanka Guardian** have appeared in Tamil as well.

One hopes that more and more writings produced in the three languages are made available to all readers so that a better understanding prevails among readers towards the culture of the others.

(Broadcast over the English Service of the SLBC.) ●

Kanchana . . .

(Continued from page 19)

she being unaware of his voyeuristic look. The director can, under the guise of a professional aesthetic interest, visually prey on her body, while his own wife watches him looking at Kanchana, undoubtedly with mixed feelings. Despite the director's advances to Kanchana, she and his wife relate to each other with a fondness that is pleasing. Sangadasa thus avoids the traditional stereotypic bitchiness between two female sexual rivals.

But in both the film within the film (entitled, by the way, "The Pains of Love") and in **Kanchana** itself, we see women play the role of the objects seen and used, while the viewer is the

male. Thus woman is passive, man is active. As John Berger put it in his book **Ways of Seeing** "men act and women appear". As a broad generalization this is the position of women in the visual media. By foregrounding the specific exploitation of women in the film industry within a wider critique of the average formula film, Sangadasa has opened out a new area of experience for us. He exposes the contempt that the average director has for his audience in a scene at the end of the film. The main male actor is dying on the street after being hit by a car. Out of the blue a photograph of his beloved appears on the road and he struggles to reach it. The actor criticises the director for having such an implausible scene in the film, and the director replies that our audiences wouldn't even notice the implausibility. The actor counters by saying that by now our audiences have had quite enough of the kind of trash that they've been given for so long, and are demanding something more substantial. Is he right? The box-office success of **Kanchana** will surely determine the validity of his statement.

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TOWARDS EQUALITY

"As Long as Women are Not Free, The People are Not Free"
"MARCHING TOWARDS EQUALITY" is an exhibition focusing on the place of women in society—a class society, which is unequal, which is unjust, which is oppressive by nature on the weaker sections and which stifles at every step the love of a people for freedom.

In primitive society, women enjoyed a status equal to that of man. They participated fully in the socio-economic life of the time. However, with the emergence of a class society with its accompanying features of family, state, private property and class oppression, history has witnessed the subordination of women. Besides the economic exploitation to which both men and women of the toiling sections are subjected to, there is the social, cultural and sexual oppression of women cutting across class barriers.

Hidden From History

Recalling the ancient civilisations, the Exhibition depicts the barbarism of the 'White Man's Burden'—the slave trade in Africa and Latin America. In was this wealth accumulated through piracy, plunder, slave trade and the inhuman extraction of slave labour in plantations that made the Industrial Revolution possible.

The capitalist system of production intensified the exploitation of women. Capitalism, for women, meant not only the sale of their labour power as a commodity but also the reduction of their bodies as a commodity for sale. But History shows how this oppression was fought at every step. The rise of nation-states and the growth of capitalism brought with them the ideas of 'individual freedom', 'liberty', 'equality'. Working women, along with working men, in the capitalist countries launched struggles for the right to organise, to form unions, for better working conditions and the right to vote. However, only through intense

A mobile exhibition on the theme of women's emancipation will tour India from July onwards. This is a follow-up to the highly successful poster-cum-book exhibition organised recently by the Jawaharlal Nehru University Women's Committee. The committee has invited the participation of women's organisations from Sri Lanka and would welcome books, posters, data etc from this country. All such material should be sent to Indu Agnihotri, C/o Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi 110067, India. The following statement issued by the organisation makes clear the aims of this movement.

struggles were women able to achieve even the right of suffrage.

Meanwhile in the colonies under the yoke of imperialism, the exploitation of toiling people was more brutal and vicious than ever before. In the numerous countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America women actively participated in the fight against imperialism and were in the forefront of national liberation struggles. In India women fought British imperialism with great courage, heroism and commitment. Many gave up their lives for it.

Freedom for Whom

The Constitution of the Indian Republic guaranteed freedom and equality. But does the state ensure it? A declining sex-ratio, a higher infant-mortality rate for females, a higher drop-out rate of female children in schools, lack of full education and literacy for most—reveal the real status of women.

A declining percentage of women workers, unequal and lower than subsistence wages, long hours of work with no rest, no care for children of working mothers and no job-security for those women who are lucky to find any. Debt,

bondage and prostitution befall those thousands of women for whom the state cannot ensure work and wages. Poverty and unemployment drive women to sell their bodies. The Media use women to sell products and a culture that encourages traditional images and attitudes, child-marriages, dowry, eve-teasing and rape.

The active and heroic participation of women during the national movement and in the peasant struggles of Telengana and Tebagma in the 1940's, the food movement in Bengal in 1959, the movements of Bihar and Gujarat in 1874, the anti-price rise agitations of the '70's the working class movements, the Railway strike of 1974 in particular, the resistance against semi-fascist terror, and the more recent protests against dowry, eve-teasing and rape—All these clearly indicate that women's struggles are part and parcel of the general struggles of the toiling masses. And no force on earth can stem the tide of the movement towards freedom and equality.

Women Hold Up Half the Sky

Standing in remarkable contrast to the dismal and gloomy picture of women under capitalism is the increasing real status and participation of women in Socialist Countries in all spheres of activity—economic, social and political. While centuries of social and ideological subjugation of women could not be over-come in a day, the accomplishments of the socialist countries are stupendous. The experience of women under socialism tells us that so long as the people are not liberated from Imperialism, Capitalism and Feudalism, the women cannot be free.

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Problems of translation

Mr. Patrick Jayasuriya (LG, May 15) suggests that in discussing the differences between Russian and English pronominal usage in my article on problems of translation, I have isolated 'one from the complex factors that go to create an effect in literature'. He makes the point that the English translator can make up for the absence of a special deferential or formal second person pronoun by preserving in his translation the formal manner of address in Russian by first name and patronymic. There is some truth in this, though not all English translators preserve this form (Constance Garnett, I agree, does). Even as good a translator as Rosemary Edmonds explains that she substitutes the surname, wherever possible, for the sake of clarity.

However, the numerous shades of relationship (personal and social) that can be conveyed by the two Russian second person pronouns cannot be exhausted by the one possibility that Mr. Jayasuriya is thinking of. What of the tones of intimacy, or alternatively of superiority, that are expressed by the non-formal *ty*, or the effects created by a character switching to *ty* from the formal *vy*, or vice versa? I don't wish to repeat what I have said before, but if Mr. Jayasuriya will look at my article titled **The missing second person pronoun** (LG, June 15, 1979), he will find that I have examined, for instance, the subtle shades of relationship and feeling that Chekhov gets into **The Lady with a Little Dog** out of the two second person pronouns. There is no English translation of the story that conveys these effects, nor can there be.

I was not, however, suggesting that the English translator should use the archaic *thou*. My purpose in the article on problems of indirect translation was to draw the Sinhala (and Tamil) translator's attention to the fact that in translating through the medium of English, he might sometimes miss possibilities that he should

be able to realise in his own language. To take a simple example that I haven't used before, when Trofimov in his tirade against the intelligentsia in Act II of **The Cherry Orchard** says, 'They call themselves an intelligentsia, but they say *ty* to their servants,' the English translator can only render the last phrase as 'they still talk contemptuously to their servants' (Elizaveta Fen: Penguin Classics edition of Chekhov's plays). The Sinhala translator has available to him a more literal, direct and expressive rendering.

Regarding Mr. Jayasuriya's question whether there has been a change in the Russian use of personal pronouns since aristocratic times, I want to say that after the Revolution the Soviet state put its weight behind the effort to universalise the use of the polite *vy* in all social intercourse, except in relations of personal intimacy where the use of *ty* continues uninhibited. In other words, the official endeavour has been to stamp out the use of non-reciprocal *ty* as a form of address to inferiors and subordinates. However, the struggle against this old tradition has been necessarily a prolonged one, and Comrie and Stone in their well-informed and documented study, **The Russian Language since the Revolution**, produce evidence that even in the sixties the use of non-reciprocal *ty* by some managers, militiamen and other persons in positions of authority was being criticised in the Soviet Press.

It is also worth mentioning that in pre-revolutionary Russia asymmetric usage of the pronouns of address between persons also occurred within the family: parents said *ty* to their children and were addressed by them as *vy*, while a similar situation often existed between husbands and wives, particularly among the peasant and merchant classes. These usages in the family have also largely disappeared.

— Reggie Siriwardene

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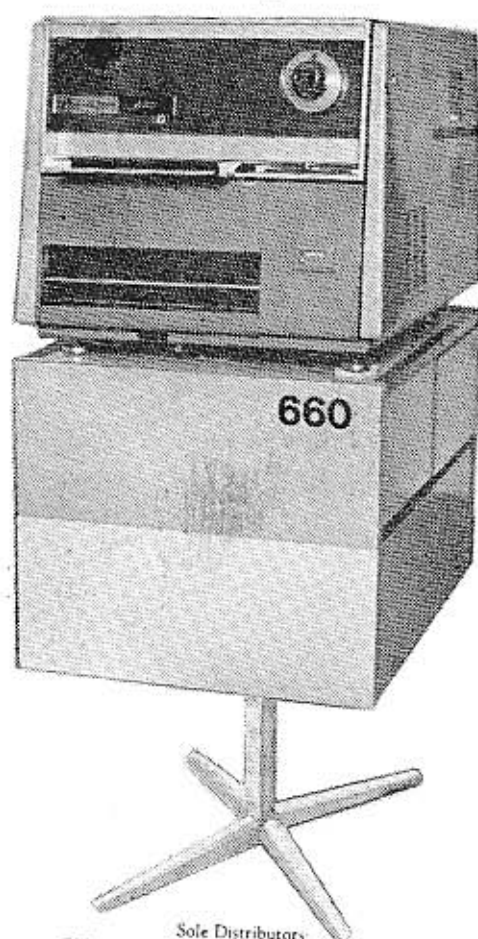
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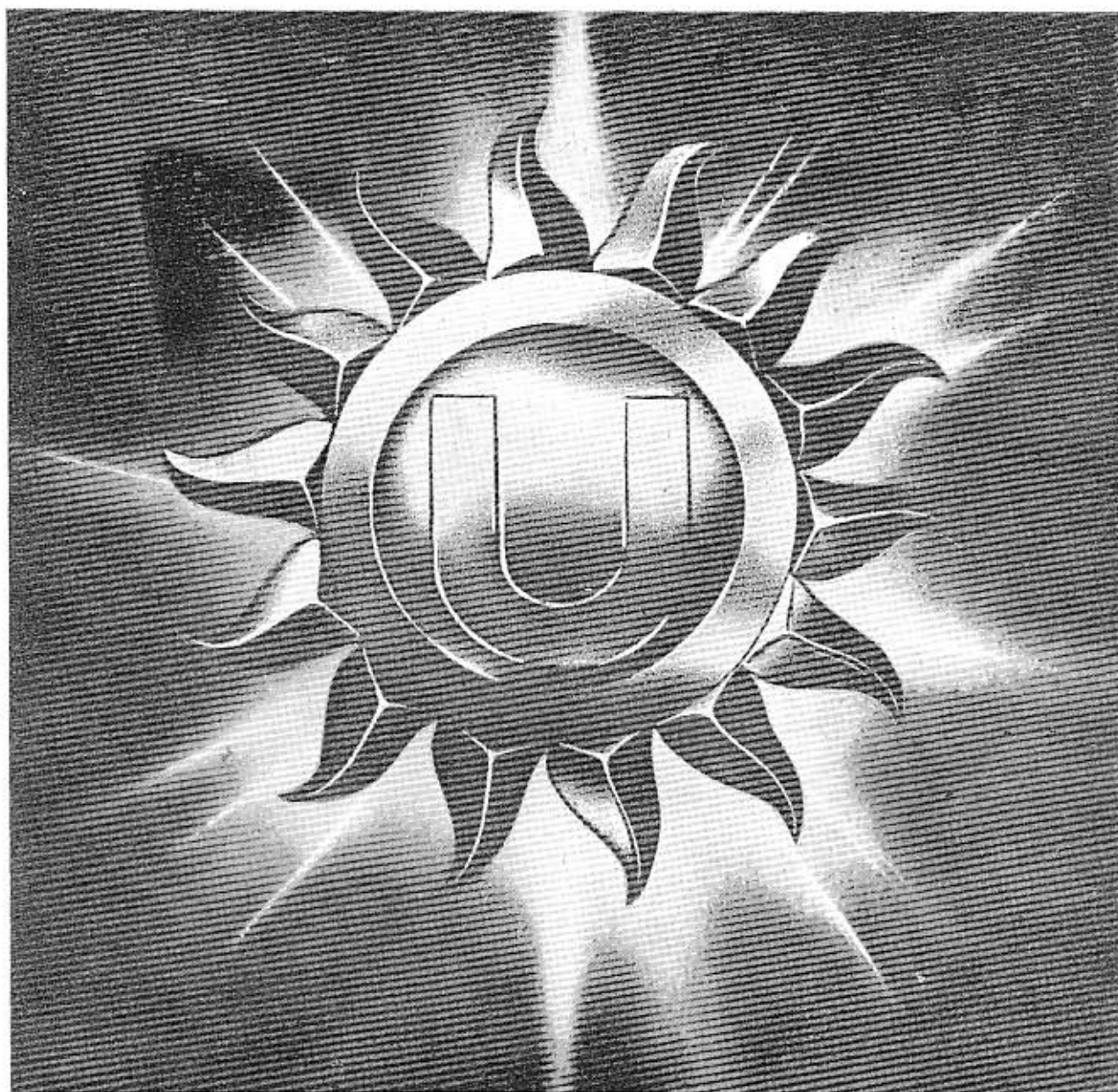
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