

MGR vs AMIR — The Tamil sub-plot

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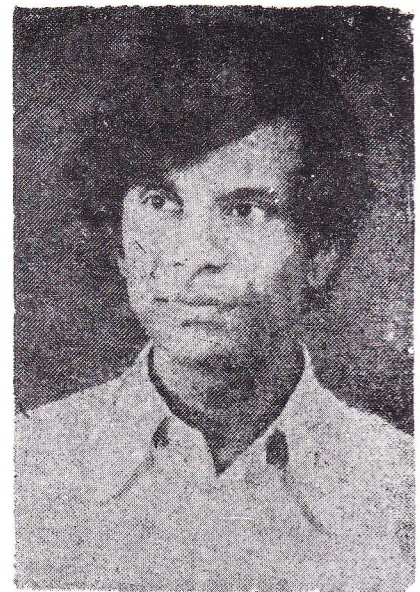
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JVP — EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

— *Lionel Bopage*



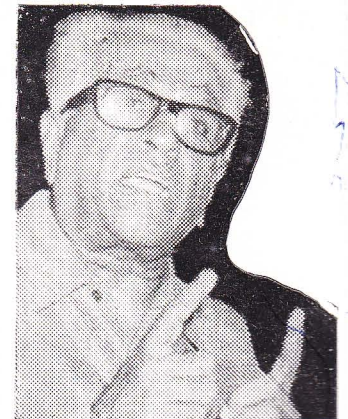
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HOW EXPERT?

An expert is one who comes to find out and leaves before he is found out. The **SUN**'s excellent investigative report on the ever swelling nomadic community of foreign experts concentrated more on the rising cost of "expertise" than on the competence of these advisors and consultants. And yet we keep lamenting on our own brain drain. It is possible that a good number of our own highly qualified specialists could be persuaded to live and work here for a tenth of that total sum. To complete the circle of irony all we now need is to invite a foreign expert to give us an expert report on the cost-benefit ratio of expertise.

SEEING RED

The fiasco at the Grindlays Bank where some gallant gentlemen of the Fire Brigade behaved like the Keystone Cops at their zany and helpless best provoked the question of what happened to the Brigade's veteran fire-fighters. Had they lost their jobs with the July strike?

The same question takes on a more sombre note with the series of CTB and CGR accidents in recent months. Have old men well over the hill and raw recruits been entrusted with sensitive jobs which demand both experience and skill? In India, the Railway Minister vacated his post after one major crash. Sri Lankan standards of accountability seem to be extraordinarily lax. In that regard the Minister ("I can't wave a red flag to prevent every mishap") appears to be as off the rails as his locomotives.

JVP MOVES

Proud of its internationalism, the JVP takes great pains to be

fastidiously correct in all its foreign policy stances. And it does take a position on every major issue and critical event. Thus, anti-JVP'ers, especially LSSP'ers, were agreeably amused when the JVP found itself for the first time in its history in the same position as its bete noire, the SLFP, in extending "100% support for the Arab Baath Socialist party of Iraq" in the current war.

Now the JVP has come out with a strong statement on El Salvador where it congratulates the Cubans for their solidarity with the revolutionary movement. Another statement on the most talked-of topic of local politics closely followed the press release on El Salvador. The JVP recognised the elected MP for Kalawana, Sarath Muttetuwagama, as the only representative of the people.

Was the JVP warming up to the CP, another party out of the 5 party bloc? "The JVP kept its mouth shut on Afghanistan" snapped a CP CC member. "Yes, there's still quite a gap, or should I say, gulf between the JVP and the CP" remarked a young Maoist cheekily.

Neo - Nazis

Has it not occurred to the author of "The Past Has Not Ended" how ridiculous it is to label a heaven of neo-Nazis a state of which Willy Brandt is a leading politician and in fact the chairman of the ruling Social Democratic Party of Germany? Do I have to remind the author that Willy Brandt has received the Peace Nobel Prize and is the chairman of the Independent Commission on North-South Relations? Does the author not know that Mr. Brandt was a refugee from Nazi persecution and had to spend the Nazi years as an emigrant abroad? Perhaps the author has to be reminded that Mr. Brandt resigned as German Chancellor in 1974 not because neo-Nazis forced him to but because the GDR had planted a spy in the immediate entourage of the Nobel Peace Prize winner?

Equally important to my mind as tracing the last remaining Nazis is to rout the vestige of Stalinism wherever it raises its head. Still in the centre of Europe people are being shot

(Continued on page 21)

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MGR and Tamil sub-plot

And now MGR has got into the act. Earlier it was Mrs. Indira Gandhi whose several sympathetic comments on Mrs. B. provoked an undeclared war of words across the Palk Straits between the UNP, the Indian Premier and the press on both sides. That "war" slowly ground to a halt.

Recently pro-TULF youth burnt the effigy of the Tamil Nadu chief, the Sri Lanka-born film star M. G. Ramachandran. But it all started in Madurai, at the recent international conference on Tamil studies. The TULF and pro-TULF Tamil expatriates have sought to "internationalise" the issue. To some extent, they have succeeded — from the UN, where the London-based Mr. Vaikunthavasam upstaged our Foreign Minister, to Boston; the London tea centre to the streets of Frankfurt, and newspapers in Paris and the Scandinavian countries. But of course Tamil Nadu has traditionally been the main operational base of the Sri Lankan Tamils and the Tamil

Conference has never been free of Tamil politics. In 1974 at the last conference several persons were killed in Jaffna when Police fired on demonstrators shouting slogans against the Bandaranaike government and demanding Eelam.

While Tamil politics has always been the sub-plot to the main drama of party rivalries in this island, President Jayewardene's shrewd tactics of "co-optation" have complicated even the sub-plot. The Tamils of Sri Lanka (whether "Ceylon Tamils" or "Indian Tamils") no longer speak with one voice. Mr. S. Thondaman the big chief of plantation labour is a cabinet minister. Mr. C. Rajadurai, the veteran TULF leader from the Eastern province is also a Minister in the UNP government. As a result the old Northern Province — Eastern Province — CWC alliance of "Tamil speaking peoples" has been split in a way which has isolated the northern peninsula. What is more Mr. Thondaman has long-standing ties with both Mrs. Gandhi and the Tamil Nadu chief, MGR. On the other hand the TULF has equally warm relations with Mr. Karunanidhi of the DMK, which spearheaded the Tamil resurgence in South India. To complicate matters further, Mrs. Gandhi's Congress has friendly ties with Karunanidhi, rather than with MGR.

The UNP government has become increasingly sensitive to the anti-UNP campaign mounted abroad by pro-TULF groups. The Boston assembly even declared May 21st Eelam day and called on President Carter to intervene on behalf of "oppressed Tamils" and their human rights. The campaign moved successfully to Europe. As a result the government persuaded the EEC countries to introduce visas for Sri Lankans. Many Ealamites have found political assylum in West Germany and sections of the Western press are extremely sympathetic to Tamil expatriate groups.

No wonder then that Commander in-chief, J. R. chose to include two Tamil "Generals" in the Sri Lanka

delegation, the largest that has ever left our shores. The leader of the delegation was the Speaker, the Tamil-speaking Moslem MP. Mr. Bakeer Markar. Speaking for different communities (the Moslems, the Eastern province Tamils, and the plantational labour) each of these leaders could rebut charges of discrimination which Mr. Amirthalingam the Opposition and TULF leader was bound to level against the UNP. And that's what happened. Mr. Amirthalingam said that the legal and constitutional concessions given by the government did not actually amount to much, mainly because discrimination persisted in practice and at the administrative level. The TULF would never renounce their demand for Eelam. Elsewhere TULF supporters who had travelled from UK and US held an exhibition of posters and pictures. Amnesty International material was displayed to dramatise alleged atrocities of the armed forces, under emergency. (This stall the L. G. is informed, was demolished evidently on the instructions of the Tamil Nadu government). And MGR himself not only accused Mr. Amirthalingam of trying to play politics but of disrupting good neighbourly relations between Sri Lanka and South India. As the war of words hotted up MGR charged the TULF leadership of "oppressing" their own people (caste) and the Jaffna upper-class of ignoring the grievances of the poor tea estate workers. He also spoke of the TULF and the Moslems. Obviously he was well "briefed". The TULF reply was to burn the effigy of Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister and leading actor who, it is now reported, may visit Sri Lanka soon as the chief guest at another conference.

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Lanka's prospects — A banker's view

"Sri Lanka's credit is excellent in Holland, and I am sure it is so in Europe as a whole. In the past 25 years, your country has never failed to meet its debt commitments and meet them on time" said Mr. Robertus Hazelhoff, a Director of ABN which opened an office in Colombo recently. He was answering a question about Sri Lanka's credit rating in view of the suspension of IMF disbursements in July last year. One of the top twenty five in world banking (capital-50 billion dollars) ABN is the first Dutch bank to begin operations here.

It was the Dutch who conceived the idea of 'shares' and ABN is willing to help set up a Stock Exchange here.

How does ABN see Sri Lanka's economic prospects generally? Spelling out the government's main objectives as threefold (repairing the infrastructure, incentives to foreign investment to broaden the manufacturing sector and heavy outlay on long gestation projects), the ABN report notes: "To achieve these three goals simultaneously would be a tall order at the best of times. These are not the best of times".

However, donors, it adds, are ready to back Sri Lanka financially on account of its new economic dynamism and its long established democratic traditions.

Taking a closer look, the report notes:

Despite a wide range of stimuli imparted by the Government the process of industrialization is still in a start-up phase. A substantial portion of the professional population is unemployed: estimates vary but are over 20%. In the capital of Colombo the unemployed workforce is estimated at 40%.

The Government's primary aim will be to reduce unemployment through an export-oriented industrialization policy. In this context

major parts are to be played by the private sector and foreign capital, modelled on open economies such as Singapore has.

Over the next four to five years a considerable growth in the rate of import is reckoned with, a rate which will probably far outpace that of exports. The resulting larger deficits on both the balance of trade and on the current account

THE PRIVATE MEDICAL SCHOOL

Free education was welfarist Ceylon's biggest boast as an egalitarian society. The present government has withdrawn many subsidies enjoyed over the decades by the poor of this country. Will the private medical school that will set up business soon subsidise the foreigner?

The five year course is expected to cost about 80 to 90,000 rupees or a little less than 2,000 rupees per month per student. This is much less than a third of the fees that any undergraduate has to pay in UK, Canada, US etc.

The Tory government of Mrs. Thatcher has not only increased fees but withdrawn grants to universities and institutes. This has proved a severe blow to Third World students.

A foreign student could come to Sri Lanka and get himself an internationally recognised medical degree for much less than a third of what he would have to pay in his own country. Thus, the poor subsidises the rich. The least that the new medical school's authorities could do is to charge about 4 to 5 lakhs for a five year course and with the extra money offer scholarships and bursaries to poor Sri Lankan students. The income structure in this country is such that only about 1% of our population would be able to afford the

are expected to be covered by foreign borrowing of two billion dollars (Sri Lanka's current external debt is around one billion dollars).

By the way, the country's short-term outlook is not roseate. Especially two factors play a role here: the abolition of subsidies of a large number of consumer goods, which started the inflation spiral moving, and a strongly disappointing crop reflecting the damage arisen due to a spell of extreme drought that began in November 1979. For 1980 a balance of trade deficit of Rs 10 billion (40% more than the peak deficit for 1979) is even reckoned with.

fees fixed by the new medical school.

Of course the project itself has been attacked as a blatant restoration of educational privilege, which makes a mockery of "free education" and equal educational opportunity. Besides this fundamental criticism, the criteria for admission have also provoked much dismay and anger in educational circles. In an article published in *The Nation* and entitled "The proposed private medical school: an institution of privilege and injustice", Dr. Colvin Goonaratna of the medical faculty noted that (a) students must have an excellent command of English (b) that they would be admitted on the basis of an interview (c) that special consideration will be given to the children of doctors and (d) special consideration would be given to the children of the medical faculty teachers who agree to teach at the private medical school.

The "viva" was a typical product of British ingenuity. At the CCS, the viva carried 250 marks and often made all the difference in the final selection. It allowed the colonial administration to pick the "right types" from the "right schools" and "right family background" and, if necessary, "weed out" undesirable.

"Why an interview?" asks Dr. Goonaratna. Good question.

Kalawana: Farewell old politics

All's well that ends well concluded Migara the **Weekend** columnist taking a somewhat sunny view of the Kalawana brouhaha. Rarely has a ruling party tried to fool some of the people most of the time and succeeded in making a monumental fool of itself. Persisting in this habit of mind and speech, UNP stalwarts promptly claimed "if we had contested we could have won" — another gratuitous and ungracious insult to an intelligent people. Even a school boy would respond: "Why didn't you?". The answer is no secret to anybody. As the LG said a month ago, the UNP funk'd it. Besides, there was the Upali factor. In any case, the UNP was absent at Kalawana only on the ballot paper.

Kalawana is significant for two reasons. Firstly, we say farewell to the old law and the old politics. From now on the electorate, the political parties, the candidates and the campaign managers, the pundits and the prophets have to get accustomed to PR district-wise, cut-off points, party lists etc. second-

ly, the victory of the CPSL with the combined support of several opposition parties, including the SLFP and LSSP, has broadened the emerging bloc of oppositional forces with the active possibility of an electoral alliance in 1983.

Teachers: Second thoughts

The Government's decision to leave the reinstatement of public servants who struck in July 1980 to the discretion of individual ministers has created some strange anomalies. Where in some Ministries strikers have been taken back even with no conditions imposed and with back pay, there are others in which a tough line is being pursued at the cost of good administration. A case in point is that of the Education Ministry where Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe announced his intention of not taking back a single teacher who struck. While three thousand teachers languish outside, the Ministry has issued a circular extending the

Even this brief comment must take note of the fact that two individuals holding high public office came out of the Kalawana "mess" with their prestige immensely enhanced — the Chief Justice, Mr. Neville Samarakoon, and the Elections commissioner Mr. M. A. Piysekera.

services of teachers who are due to retire, on the ground that education in some schools has been dislocated by the strike. What this really means is that there is a shortage of qualified and experienced teachers owing to the Minister's intransigence. Recently Mr. Wickremasinghe modified his original declaration to the extent of saying that he has to 'think twice' before taking back any striking teacher. Will the Minister's second thoughts take into account the human problems of the teachers without work (one of them is believed to have committed suicide in desperation) and the situation of schoolchildren without proper teaching?



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JVP : No false modesty

'Red Power' is back. This refers of course, to the English language organ of the JVP, which was not published during 1980 owing to "a dozen drawbacks beyond the party's control," according to an editorial note. (Other sources say that the lapse can be better explained by the dropping out of that group of JVP sympathisers who identified with the Human Rights Organisation and the Ceylon Teachers Union, and also shouldered the major responsibility for the production of 'Red Power'.)

An article on the 22nd anniversary of the Cuban Revolution, while providing an interpretation of that process which was originally put forward by the American SWP and rejected by the Cuban leadership, goes on the basis of that very interpretation, to scoff at "dogmatic Stalinists and Maoists who say that unity with all the many groups and cliques that brand themselves as Left is an inevitable and urgent need today".

The article on Cuba also speaks of "a worldwide struggle to be launched by a World Communist Party" as "the only possible means" to free the victims of imperialism.

The report of the JVP's First Congress is however, the most interesting single feature in the Jan '81 issue of Red Power. It asserts that "after the death of Vladimir Illyich Lenin, the beloved teacher of the proletariat, the International Communist Movement degenerated into Revisionism (via Stalinism and Trotskyism) which, with its opportunist, reactionary and counter revolutionary nature, allowed imperialism, already at its death bed, a new lease of life."

The JVP programme is described thus:

"It can be said, without exaggeration, of this programme, that it is a victorious gain in the giant step taken by the JVP in re-

establishing Leninism, which was distorted by Trotsky, Stalin and Mao tse-Tung after the death of Lenin; that it is a unique and incomparable addition to the International Communist Movement since the death of Lenin.;

Whatever else may be said of Mr. Wijeweera, false modesty was never one of his vices.

On El Salvador

The acting general secretary of the JVP, Mr. Lionel Bopage has issued the following statement on the situation in El Salvador. The statement reads:

"The most elementary human and democratic rights of the people are suppressed throughout El Salvador. The political, economic and military aid of the U.S. and its allies, and Reagan's election as the President of the U.S. has encouraged the unleashing of reactionary violence. We vehemently protest and demand an immediate halt to all the financial and military aid of Washington and its allies to the Salvadoran junta.

"Despite the suppression, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front and its organization have achieved more and more strength, more and more support from the Salvadoran people. We convey our warm revolutionary fraternal greetings to the People's Republic of Cuba, for its active solidarity with the people's of Central America and the Caribbean in their struggle against reaction and imperialism.

"The Central Committee of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna urges the international revolutionary working-class movement and all progressive, democratic and anti-imperialist organizations to be vigilant of any possible intervention by the United States imperialists in Central America, especially in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala".

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Japan : Pacific policeman?

Unlike the hapless Mr. Tanaka who ran into a storm of anti-Japanese protests on his tour of the region, Mr. Suzuki has returned home from his ASEAN tour unscathed. Poor Mr. Tanaka had to sneak out of the Merdeka palace in Djakarta, literally duck for cover in Bangkok, and suffer many other insults.

Reflecting Foreign Office intelligence estimates, Japanese commentators at the time appointed an accusing finger at Peking. Resentful of Japanese 'expansionism', Peking, they argued, had cleverly exploited wartime antipathies and nationalist sentiment and used the overseas Chinese communities in the area and radical students to mount a furious anti-Japanese campaign.

Suzuki's trip last month took place under seemingly different conditions. Japan and China have signed a Friendship Treaty, and China has moved close to the US, Japan's superpower ally. But does this mean that Sino-Japanese rivalries for regional predominance have been reconciled?

Economically, Japan is a superpower. Certainly, it is the economic superpower of the region, which is one of the main suppliers of raw materials (rubber, timber etc) and energy (Indonesian oil). 44% of all incoming foreign investment to the region, as the FT London reported, is Japanese, while 35% of the exports from the area go to Japan.

The same economic imperatives which fuelled Japanese militarism in the 1930's cemented the political coalition between Japanese Big Business and the 'warlords', and encouraged Japan's aggressive thrust into the Pacific and South-east Asia, are valid today. However, Japan has remained "non-militarist" since the war.

In recent years, the United States, pressed by its own economic difficulties, has been demanding that its allies bear a bigger share of the burden of military

expenditure, and undertake more active responsibilities in guaranteeing 'security'. Japan, as NEWSWEEK reported, "must play a more effective role in policing the Pacific".

Last month, Japan's military budget was increased by 7.6%. This does not quite match the US demand for a 9.7% jump, yet the 1981 allocation for defence is an awe-inspiring 11.7 billion dollars.

With ASEAN becoming a Japanese 'sphere of influence' both economically and politically, Sino-Japanese relations will face severer tests, especially on two questions. Forward-policy makers in Japan give high priority to Chinese territorial

claims in South-east Asia. Japanese support for the smaller states against Peking's claims could pave the way for future Japanese penetration of these areas, particularly the energy resources of the continental shelf and islands. The second issue is Taiwan. A delegation from Taiwan attended the inauguration ceremonies of the new US President whose views on supporting Taiwan are well known. There is a strong pro-Taiwan lobby in Japan which stands for 'the independence of Taiwan', and in the new climate of US foreign policy and US-Japanese relations, these groups are bound to feel their position strengthened.

Briefly

FAMILY BANDYISM

THE MALAYSIAN Prime Minister, Datuk Hussein Onn, who has postponed an official visit to Sri Lanka, has been busy recently reshuffling the generals in the country's 300,000 strong army. The top post of Chief of Armed Forces Staff has gone to General Gazali Seth, the prime Minister's brother-in-law. Another lucky general is the 47 year old Lt. General Jaafar Onn who becomes Deputy Army Chief. He is the PM's youngest brother.

Goodbye, Human Rights

DOES CARTER'S exit mean the total renunciation of the 'human rights' policy of the State Department? If so, the first casualty is certain to be Pat Derian, Assistant Secretary in charge of this unit. An outspoken critic of Third World dictators — many of whom are staunch US allies — Derian was recently engaged in a TV debate with President Reagan's Ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane Kirkpatrick.

If Moynihan incensed nonaligned delegations by his ill-tempered and arrogant attacks on the nonaligned movement and its so-called 'tyranny of the majority' at the UN, Ambassador Kirkpatrick is ready to plead the cause of friendly tyrants under a new doctrine. She said: "If we are confronted with the choice between offering assistance to a moderately repressive autocratic government which is also friendly to the US, and permitting it to be overrun by a Cuban-trained, Cuban-sponsored insurgency, we should assist the moderate autocrat".

Derian's response, as John Goshko reported in *The Washington Post*, was explosive:

"What the hell is moderately repressive... that you only torture half of the people, that you only do summary executions now and then...? I don't even know what moderately repressive is. The idea that we must somehow stand closer to dictators — people who are cruel to their own people — is absurd."

Chou En-lai : Against ultra-leftism

Chintaka

Born in 1898, Chou En-Lai belonged to a wealthy mandarin family. His grandfather was a district official of the Manchu dynasty. While an honours student at the American supported Nenkai University in Rsientsin, where he first met his wife Teng Ying Chao, Chou became a left wing agitator and was jailed in 1919 for participation in a riot during the patriotic May 4th Movement which swept China at the time. After graduating in 1920, Chou went to Waseda University in Japan and thence to Europe, to further his education. During this period he attained a high proficiency in English, French and German. Embracing Marxism as the sole means of rescuing his homeland from the disorder and decadence of over a century, he joined the French branch of the Chinese Communist Party in 1922. He soon returned home and plunged into the struggle.

In 1924, before the break between the Chinese CP and the Kuomintang, Chou En-Lai functioned as Political Secretary of the Whampoa Military Academy. Young Chou played a prominent role in the 1927 Shanghai uprising against the treacherous repression launched by Chiang Kai Shek, and escaped death by a hairs breadth. Chou went onto play a leading part in the 1927 December Canton uprising as well. After the defeat of the Canton uprising, and with a bounty of 80,000 dollars on his head, Chou En Lai met Mao tse Tung in the year 1928.

In May 1933, Chou was appointed Political Commissar of the Red Army. In 1934-'35, Chou and his wife both participated in the 6,000 mile 'long March' from Kiangsi Province to the Yen-an mountains in the North West Province of Shansi, to escape the 'encirclement and suppression' campaigns launched by Chiang Kai Shek.

The fifth anniversary of the death of Chou En-Lai fell last month.

When Red Army troops captured some Manchurian generals and troops fighting for Chiang, Mao and Chou spent days convincing them of the Communists desire for peace and an Anti-Japanese United Front. Chou then escorted them and their captured troops back to their own lines. It was Chou who also negotiated the formation of an Anti Japanese UF with the captured Chiang Kai Shek in Sian in 1936. Furthermore, he led the Chinese Communist Party delegation in Chungking during the 2nd World War.

After the victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, Chou En Lai became the first Prime Minister of the Peoples Republic of China, a post he held until his death. From 1949 to 1958 he also held the post of Foreign Minister. He was at Mao's side during the signing of the 30 year Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Aid in February 1950 in Moscow. Chou was the chief Chinese delegate to the Geneva Conference on Indo China in 1954. The following year, at the Afro Asian Conference in Bandung he set forth in masterly fashion, the main tenets of the Leninist policy of Peaceful Coexistence. In the period during which the Chinese CP defended Leninism and battled Krushchecite modern revisionism, Chou En Lai represented his party most ably at gatherings of the international Communist Movement. On one occasion, he clashed with Krushchev in Moscow, walked out of the CPSU Congress, and pointedly laid a wreath as Stalin's grave. After a brilliant 1963 tour of several newly independent African states, Chou concluded publicly that the African continent was ripe for revolution.

In the 1964-65 period, following the ouster of Kruschchev, Chou En lai, together with Liu Shao Chi and Teng Hsiao Peng, stood for a reconciliation or at least unity of action with the Soviet Union. Many other Communist Parties which had openly or tacitly supported the Albanian and Chinese CP's in the 'Great Debate' of 1963, (such as the Vietnamese, North Korean, Rumanian, Japanese CPs and the Indian CPM) strongly urged such unity of action with the USSR in the face of growing US aggression in Vietnam. This historic opportunity was lost owing to two factors, namely, the new CPSU leadership's unwillingness to treat the CCP as an equal partner in the world communist movement and the socialist bloc, and also Mao Tse tung's intransigent position as manifested during Kosygin's brief visit to Peking.

When Mao Tse tung launched the Cultural Revolution against the Liu-Teng grouping, Chou En Lai shifted his position on unity of action with the CPSU and went along with Mao. During the Cultural Revolution however, Chou was able to exercise a modicum of a moderating influence and afford some protection to veteran CCP cadres. He was instrumental in persuading Mao to wind down the Cultural Revolution finally. Chou was one of the first to admit that "excesses" had been committed during the Cultural Revolution. Chou played a very positive role in the post GPCR reconstruction period and at the 10th Congress of the CCP in August 1973 presented a Leninist programme for the Socialist modernization of China. His project was opposed to the ultra left ideas of the Gang of 4 which were articulated at the 10th Congress by Wang Hung Wen, who spoke of the necessity for many more Cultural Revolutions in the future. As a corollary of

the programme of socialist modernization (which would utilize foreign technology while being based mainly on self reliance), Chou quietly instituted a policy of rehabilitating veteran cadres of the Chinese Communist Party — Deng Hsiao Peng and Hu Yao Bang being prominent among these.

Contrary to these positive traits in the field of domestic policy, Chou En-lai committed extremely grave errors in the foreign policy realm in the period of the Cultural Revolution and after, that is to say, in the last decade of his life. Not only did he go along with the thesis of capitalist restoration in the USSR, he was also the first prominent Chinese leader to voice publicly the idea that the USSR was 'social imperialist'. This was in August 1968, following the Czech incident. While Lin Biao held to the erroneous line of the CCPs 9th Congress (1969) which envisaged a two front struggle against US imperialism and Soviet 'social imperialism', Chou En-lai took an even more erroneous position. In the wake of the Czech incident, the Sino-Soviet border clashes, and the US retrenchment from Vietnam following the Tet Offensive, Chou and Mao held the view that a US imperialism on the decline was less of a danger to China than a USSR on the offensive. This led to the strategic reorientation of Chinese foreign policy from 1970-71 onwards. Chou En-lai's formulation at the 1973 10th Congress, that the worlds people should unite against the two superpowers, namely Soviet Social imperialism and US imperialism encapsulates this strategic line. Deng Hsiao Peng restated it in his 1974 address to the UN General Assembly which set forth in theoretical form, the new foreign policy outlook of Mao and Chou. This was the famous "Theory of the Three Worlds". The counterrevolutionary Chinese position on the Bangladeshi issue, the massacre of the Sudanese Communists, and the April 1971 Insurrection were the stark examples of the changed course in the PRCs foreign policy, a rightward shift for which Chou En-lai must bear responsibility together with Mao Tse tung. The letter which Chou penned to the repressive bour-

geois regime of Sirima Bandaranaike is surely an ugly blot on the escutcheon of that great revolutionary.

Despite these extremely grave errors committed in the last decade of his life, the positive aspect remains the dominant one in any assessment of Chou. A great Marxist-Leninist and proletarian revolutionary, Chou En-lai rendered enormous services to the victory of the Chinese revolution and the cause of socialist construction in China, and in doing so, made a great contribution to the world revolutionary process. The respect

and love of the Chinese people for the memory of Chou En-lai proved a major obstacle to the designs of the Gang of 4, and the attempt of the latter to revile the memory of Chou, proved an important element in their undoing. The well deserved publication of 2 volumes of Chou's Selected Works this January is symbolic of the fact that the Chinese Communist Party is following his course in struggling against the ultraleft Gang of 4, correctly reassessing Comrade Mao, rectifying style, and pursuing the goals of Socialist Modernization.

A post - script

MAO ON 'TRIAL'

N. Sanmugathan

Since my article on the above subject was inadvertently delayed, I add these few paragraphs.

The exemplary revolutionary courage displayed by Chiang Ching in the court where she almost definitely faced the sentence of death and had been adjudged guilty even before being found guilty, deserves a special tribute.

She has done two things. She has courageously defended her revolutionary past and openly stated that whatever she did she did under the leadership of Mao. She accused the present revisionist leadership of attacking Mao through her.

She is reported to have quoted an old Chinese proverb, "If you are going to strike a dog, think first of its master." She told the court: "I was Chairman Mao's dog. Whomever he told me to bite, I bit."

She has also displayed her fearlessness in the face of death. She is reported to have said that a revolutionary must not fear beheading, divorce, or being driven out of the Party. "She proudly declared, "It is not I but your

small gang that is on trial in the court of history."

Contrast this with the snivelling of Teng Hsiao-ping when he was placed in a similar position during the Cultural Revolution. At a session of self-criticism of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, held in October 1966, Teng declared, "I have not raised high the banner of Mao Tsetung Thought. I have not even raised this banner up!" He ended his preliminary self-criticism with the slogans:

"Long live the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution!

Long live invincible Mao Tsetung Thought!

Long live the great teacher, the great helmsman and the great leader Chairman Mao!

In the hearts of millions of Chinese and as well as people all over the world, Chiang Ching's exemplary and revolutionary behaviour before counter-revolutionary persecution has earned her the title of a heroine on her own right. She was like a caged tiger in court.

JVP — the current situation

Q. Would it be correct to say that you consider the prevailing balance of forces to be such that direct action and mass struggles against the UNP Government are risky adventures doomed to failure? What is your assessment of the present conjuncture and the tasks of the Left in the current situation?

A. We do not, even for a tiny fraction of a moment, consider the existing balance of forces to be such that direct action and mass struggles against the UNP regime are risky and doomed to failure. Although not publicised by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois media, the JVP has engaged and is engaging in direct action and mass struggles against the governing bourgeoisie to a far greater extent than all other parties of the so called left do—which makes your opinion null and void. For instance in Thulhiriya Textile Mills, the Socialist Worker's Union of the JVP embarked on direct action with the sprightly participation of the workers for the first time in the reign of the present UNP government. In fact there are many more examples that can be quoted.

Nevertheless, everytime the JVP put its best foot forward, the petty-bourgeois leadership which is

to the hilt bureaucratic, reformist and barren, was all out to let go the struggle.

No matter whether it is against the ruling UNP or any other bourgeois regime in power, mass struggles must always be correctly guided by a proletarian, revolutionary party. It is quite obvious that no strife can be led to victory in the absence of proper preparation and organization. The 'struggles' launched by federations such as JTUAC failed miserably because they lacked these two transparently crucial factors.

The present bourgeois regime is, no doubt, walking on a tightrope. The political reflection of the bourgeois socio-economic crisis can presently be witnessed all over the UNP, the SLFP and every other petty-bourgeois formation. Acts of repression committed especially by both parties from 1970 to date are more than enough to prove this. Despite all that, there have been instances where the working class (not as a complete force though) militantly came to the forefront of action and expressed its overwhelming desire to be free from the capitalist squeeze. What did the parties representing the so-called left do on such occasions? Didn't they, on the pretext of guiding the struggle, render their utmost assistance to the bourgeois rulers to crush the hopes and aspirations of the proletariat? Didn't they wholeheartedly help the murderous capitalists massacre thousands of proletarian revolutionaries and imprison the rest for life? They indeed did. They who have the blood of the proletariat on their palms must admit the fact that it was their large-scale betrayals that gave rise to the nonchalance and lethargy pervading the working class at present.

Circumstances being so, it is evident that we have two major tasks before us: firstly, to relieve the proletariat of the petty-

Interview with Lionel Bopage

bourgeois, extremely opportunist, utterly sluggish leadership and then to make it rally round a truly revolutionary party of its own. The JVP has struggled, is struggling and will continue to struggle until such time that the proletariat is totally emancipated. Its actions will always be as direct as can be, and by the word 'struggles' it means mass struggles, nothing else.

Q. A party to which you have referred favourably on occasions, the CPI(M), while asserting that the capitalist class was being impelled toward right authoritarianism and this tendency was present in both bourgeois-landlord political formations, went on to identify the Congress (I) and specifically the Indira-Sanjay caucus as the main source of the right authoritarian danger. After identifying this as the main and immediate threat, they adopted flexible tactics (alliances, blocs etc) which enabled them to emerge as the governing party in 3 states and as the main organised opposition to the Congress. Do you see any useful parallel over here? More concretely would you identify the Dias Bandaranaike — Ratwatte family group, with Sirima and Anura at the apex, as the main danger today? Would you say that the central task is to prevent their return to power since that would result in a right authoritarian or semi-fascist situation? Do you envisage a massive suppression of the JVP if the Bandaranaikes return to governmental office? Does the main threat of counter revolution emanate from them?

A. By and large, there are certain issues on which the JVP sees eye to eye with CPI (M). The Moscow Peking controversy could be regarded as one such issue. There we observed with clarity that they be not blindly follow in the footpath of either the Moscow or Peking camp but adhere to their own assessments of the international political situation and frame their own conclusions regarding the same. We could

A graduate in Engineering from Peradeniya Campus, Lionel Bopage, who served 6 years rigorous imprisonment, is the only prominent member of the JVP's (pre '71) 'old Guard' to remain at Rohana Wijeweera's side today. Bopage is the author of a booklet on "A Marxist analysis of the National Problem". He has also translated into Sinhala Lenin's 'April Theses' He is Actg. Gen. Sec. of the JVP.

hardly expect a behaviour of this nature from any of the so-called Communist Parties. Blind imitation, which is one of the causes of the opportunist stands of these Communist Parties is, however, firmly rejected by the JVP. Yet, we are not in agreement with the CPI (M) concerning the line of action and programme of work adopted by it to further the tasks of the Indian Socialist Revolution. Nonetheless, we feel quite able to have a fruitful dialogue with them for the simple reason that they have leaned neither on Moscow nor on Peking.

Despite the fact that the CPI (M) managed to attain parliamentary power in three Indian States, we state positively that their identification of the Janatha Party to be better than the Congress (I) is incorrect altogether. We rigidly maintain that the Janatha Party is as much an enemy of the proletariat as the ruling Congress (I) is. Both these parties of the capitalists can never be chosen between when it comes to the point of Indian Socialist Revolution.

Our attitude towards the twin bourgeois groups—the UNP and the SLFP—down here in Sri Lanka is just the same. Never do we consider either of them to be better than the other. Opposed to the revolutionary movement of a country, is the capitalist class as a whole. The central task is, however, the transformation of the existing capitalist system into a socialist one. Surely, there cannot be anything more central than that.

As for the couple of queries you have raised lastly, **we are positive, in accordance with our assessment of the prevailing conditions, that the SLFP can NEVER again come into governmental office in Sri Lanka.**

Q. The November 1979 issue of your paper 'Ginisi Luwa' warned that the UNP is attempting to concentrate all power in the hands of the individual and thereby build a bourgeois dictatorship. The 'Niyamuwa' issue of April 5th, 1979 spoke of the need to shoulder the immediate task of defending democratic rights. It is

this perspective that doubtless led you to initiate a campaign of united action together with 5 other left parties. The October 1979 issue of 'Rathu Lanka, announced the formation of this action bloc and even had a kind word to say about the JTUAC. Not long afterwards however, this bloc broke up. Soon, by early 1980, you had declared war on the JTUAC. How do you explain this?

If the breaking was due to the LSSP why didn't you attempt to reform the bloc with the other constituent parties or with fresh conclusions? A Resolution of your First Congress states that presently there is neither an objective need nor subjective capacity for united action for democratic rights between parties. Does this not mean that you have changed your perspective which we quoted earlier on?

A We have very clearly pronounced that the JVP is ready to coalesce with any political group prepared to work uprightly for building socialism. As the UNP started enacting all repressive legislation and implementing their plans of terrorism against the working class in 1979, the immediate function we had to shoulder was safeguarding the human and democratic rights of the masses. There the JVP gauged correctly that it would not be possible for it to do this alone, since bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties were holding the majority of the working class in their trade unions. Under these circumstances, the JVP thought it best to enter into the 'action bloc' and appeal thus to the masses led astray to set out on the correct path. No sooner had this been done than the 'action bloc' started 'action' against the JVP in the crudest manner. Though it was by no means a bloc, we remained there for the sake of 'learning' and 'teaching'. During those unforgettable days of 'united action' we reliably learnt that the action bloc comprised all anti-proletarian, anti-JVP elements whose sole aim was to attain their own ulterior motives rather than secure the treasured rights of the proletariat. Before we quit, we convinced the workers of their trade unions, as and when

the circumstances permitted, that they had been tragically misguided.

Even when the first congress of the JVP was in progress, our estimation of the UNP regime was different from those of other contemporary political formations. Most of them asserted that it was a fascist one but we said it was not. It was, and still is, a bourgeois regime using fascist tactics. (If we call the present bourgeois regime fascist then how are we to call the previous SLFP—LSSP—CP one? We, therefore, continue to maintain—as we did earlier on—that there is no objective need at present for united action against a fascist regime.

Further, if at all you say that we had been 'kind' to the JTUAC you are indeed misreporting. We have perceived beyond any doubt that the more we are kind to them, the longer our people will have to suffer, and that's that. We are not so insensible nor insane as to believe that they who murdered those very rights and buried them in the sand of their disgraceful past, will genuinely cooperate with us to dig them up and resurrect them.

Q. In September 1979 you gave a public lecture on 'The SLFP's Final Journey' which was republished in 'Niyamuwa'. In it you stated that the SLFP has always required the support of the left parties to come into office. The formation of the Five party action bloc had deprived the SLFP of such allies or political crutches and therefore the SLFP could not hope to succeed electorally, you said. Taking this line of argument of yours to its logical conclusion could we not say that the break-up of the left bloc has once again supplied the SLFP with these crutches? In other words could we not say that your sectarianism towards your rivals in the left movement has only driven them into the arms of the SLFP? In short, quite apart from the widespread allegation that you are aiding the UNP, is it not a fact that unconsciously and objectively you are helping the SLFP?

A It is quite possible, as you say, that the break-up of the five-party action bloc restores crutches to the paralysed SLFP, for those extremely opportunist, petty-bourgeois formations have been up to that all these years! In other words, if the present trend continues, the eruption of the five-party action bloc may result in a seven party alliance with the SLFP which is toiling vainly to stand erect with the support of its good old henchmen. Although these crutches had been strong and able to elevate the SLFP to victory in 1970, they are all in a dilapidated state today. The Stalinist groups and cliques including the LSSP are so feeble now that they can no longer be a crutch to the collapsed SLFP. Besides, the unsteady position of the SLFP appears to have been worsened by the long-standing conflicts within its structure and we stick to our former assessment that it will never come to power. We have never said the SLFP will never come to power. We have never said the SLFP will never come to power because it does not enjoy the support of the crutches. The SLFP will never again come to power because of its own internal weakness.

Secondly, it was not our sectarianism towards the so-called left that has driven them into the arms of the SLFP. It is, most certainly, their sectarianism that broke up the five-party action bloc. They embraced the bourgeois SLFP once again on account of their class-collaborationist policy, line of action, programme of work etc. etc. and also owing to the fact that the masses are reluctant to confide in them. Just because they have all submerged themselves in the boggy marsh of class-collaborationism, they wanted JVP too, to do so. When we declined the same pointblank they had no other alternative than thundering in chorus that the JVP was sectarian.

Those who are subjected to fair criticism by the JVP, in turn, hurl slanders of every kind, at it. Although the UNP's onset on it is not very conspicuous, its police, C.I.D., governmental/political staff do everything possible in secrecy to cur-

tail the growth and progress of the JVP. Its frequent threats, assaults, espionage are all meant for the complete destruction of our party. Our picket lines are almost always baton-charged by the UNP; very recently in Kamburupitiya, over 50 comrades engaged in picketing were assaulted by its police and six of them were remanded. When everything else fails they, in the last resort, attempt at buying over our comrades.

In spite of all that, the SLFP, LSSP, CP and Maoist cliques keep smearing the JVP to the effect that it is the tail of the UNP. But when it comes to the point of proving it they remain as mute as possible. If the circumstances permit, they are prepared even to brush shoulders with the UNP to repulse us. For instance, at the campus election in the Vidyalankara University, the SLFP and CP joined hands futilely with the UNP to defeat us. They hate us more than anyone else because our justifiable criticism unveils their true selves before the masses. When we divulge their corrupt practices, present as well as past, their policies — if any — their line of action (which often amounts to inaction), and their utterly infertile theory, they struggle fruitlessly to envelope their inability to face the facts with slanderous vilification aimed at the JVP. Nevertheless with all their colourful fabrications ranging from pale blue to green if they think the JVP is ruffled, may be it is the biggest mistake they are making! We are, just one bit ruffled by their calumnious expressions for we clearly know as to why they spread them. There is, and will be, many a dog to bark alongside the path all right, but the caravan will surely move.

And now it looks as if you too try to slander us saying that we are helping the SLFP. If the so-called left is always for a coalition or a front with the bourgeois parties and sectarian to us openly and in secrecy, (that they do everything possible to halt our advancement you already know) then it is they who are consciously and objectively helping the SLFP, not the JVP.

(To be continued)

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Parliamentary democracy in peril

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva

Today, the great and precious heritage, as just described, which our people accumulated in the heyday of parliamentary democracy in Sri Lanka, stands placed in peril by the policies and acts of the Government, which the people themselves, through an overwhelming vote, installed in overwhelming parliamentary power in July 1977. Indeed, democracy itself which enabled the accumulation of that heritage stands gravely, perhaps mortally, imperilled under this Government.

On the political side, the threat has been distilled and given legal force and shape in a new Constitution — the Constitution of 1978. The central and essential feature of that Constitution is the near-dictatorial position given to the so-called executive President it has created. As the Constitution phrases it: "The executive power of the people, including the defence of Sri Lanka, shall be exercised by the People." The elected executive President is "the Head of the State, the Head of the Executive and of the Government and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces." He is also a member and Head of the Cabinet of Ministers, the Ministers being of his own choosing. He may at any time take any Ministry into his own hands. He also chooses, appoints and promotes the Highest Judges of the land, namely the Chief Justice, the President of the Court of Appeal, and all Judges of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal and the High Court, these being the highest Courts in Sri Lanka. Finally, he is also the repository and vehicle of Emergency powers which, when activated by him at his discretion, make him virtually an open dictator.

The extent of State-power gathered into the hands of the President under the 1978 Constitution is manifest from the above summary. Pertaining as his powers do to

every aspect of state-power, his substantial control of the state-structure as a whole is also manifest. The President does not merely head the country; he rules the country. In fact, that he is made responsible to Parliament, of which he is not a member, in respect of "the due exercise, performance and discharge of his powers, duties and functions" does not diminish this fact. Parliament's powers of dismissal of the President rest on so narrow a base and are so difficult to implement that the possession of the power is itself rendered illusory. The President, it should be added is immune from civil or criminal suit.

The Government has also made a root and branch change of the electoral system. As from the next general elections, the British-model system of single-member constituencies, with a sprinkling of multi-member constituencies, as well as first-past-the-post system of choosing the winner will stand abolished. There will instead be a proportional-representation system, operating districtwise and not nationally, with a list system of voting in the assigned number of members from each district. Individual candidacies by 'independents' are made impossible and the small parties are threatened with electoral extinction by introducing a high cut-off point of 12½ per cent. for the eligibility of a list in the apportionment of seats. By-elections will be no more.

It will be seen how these two major political moves are designed to serve not only the immediate but also the long-term interests of the capitalist class and also the consolidation in power of that class's specific instrument or agency for governing, namely the UNP. The new fashion Constitution with draws and substantially insulates the power-centre of the

state-structure from the direct pressure of the concession-seeking masses which characterised, alarmed and ultimately positively endangered the interests and rule of the capitalist class. The new electoral system is intended to ensure the continuous presence of the UNP in or near to the centre of governmental power on the basis that historically, on the one hand, the UNP alone of all parties or combinations operating on the political arena has ever chalked up, as it did at the 1977 general elections, more than 50 per cent. of the total poll in the country; and, on the other hand, that the UNP vote at a general election has never fallen below 33 1/3 per cent. The sharp contraction of democracy and the direct blow at the revolutionary Left through these two moves are manifest. The bourgeois interest is not the explanation of democracy but the constriction and, in certain circumstances, the abolition of democracy. Or, in other phraseology, the capitalist class has found the financial and political costs of democracy too high to be borne. So, away with democracy — as has been the sorry tale in a brutal procession of developing countries.

Harshly using its new-found power, the UNP has been raining a wide range of stunning, and, sometimes, murderous blows, both direct and indirect, on the masses and the mass interest. The taking away of their ration books has left the general body of the masses, including the middle class (except perhaps its topmost layer) helpless and naked before the raging inflation in Sri Lanka (now perhaps of the order of over 50 per cent). Financing of a bounding state expenditure by inflationary means has further accelerated the bounding rises in prices in Sri Lanka. The drastic devaluation of the rupee, which

has floated into further and heavier devaluation since the abrupt and drastic devaluation of November, 1977, has had the same result. The value of savings is being drained away by the runaway inflation; wage and salary increases are being denuded of their intended impact; and the standards of living are being eroded, in some cases to the point of collapse. Malnutrition has become more widespread. Plain hunger and starvation have returned to the scene.

The UNP Government has no solution for the problem of inflation. Its panacea is the provision more widely of employment so as to raise family incomes. The direct relief given to a favoured few through the income-support policy (actually the dole) has been abandoned. But unemployment has kept rising despite extensive over-manning in every sector of the economy. In any event, mass unemployment has continued to characterise Sri Lanka's economy and seems to have become a permanent feature of our social scene. Whether the true figure is fifteen lakhs, as claimed by the Ministry of Plan Implementation, the affliction, socially, is too burdensome to be borne in our little island. Society is sagging beneath the weight of this now perennial problem.

Regardless of the deterioration of mass standards of living under conditions of raging inflation and mass unemployment, the Government has also gone forward relentlessly with another aspect of its socio-economic policies, namely, the dismantling of the welfare state which this country built up in the thirty years of independence upto 1977. Announced propagandistically in the name of the needs of development, the dismantling of the welfare state is in fact a fundamental part of the Government's increasingly open service of the bourgeois interest in Sri Lanka. **The welfare state has over the years steadily eaten into the financial reserves of the capitalist class in Sri Lanka, until it became too costly to be borne by that class. Started by that class in its political interest in conditions of expanding parliamentary democracy, the post-war history**

of Sri Lanka shows that the capitalist class early found itself under the necessity of limiting closely this drain on its resources. The principal symbol of state welfarism in Sri Lanka, namely, state-subsidised rice, came under attack — as was to be expected under a UNP Government — as early as 1953 (Mr. D. S. Senanayake, doyen of UNP leaders, had introduced rice at 25 cts. a measure only a bare one-and-a-half years earlier!) The Government was compelled by the masses to retreat from that measure on that occasion (the great Hartal of August 12th and 13th, 1953); but every UNP Government returned to the task under various guises. But it was only upon the achievement of unchallengable power in 1977 that the UNP could not only return to the attack on the rice-subsidy but also widen the front of its advance to a mounting attack on the rice-subsidy system as a whole. The basket of commodities made available by the state at specially low prices is now part of history and not a current reality; and the consumer has been left on all fronts at the mercy of the rapacity which has always characterised the private trader in Sri Lanka. The policy of passing on to the Sri Lanka consumer every increase in the international price of any commodity — a policy which the abolition of the subsidisation of consumer goods logically necessitates — adds to the burden this policy heaps on the consumer and also adds markedly to the inflationary process. It should be noted that the subsidy-withdrawal affects not only foods and clothing but also transport costs, the health services and even free education, the last two of which are under attack in subtly-conceived ways. It is an offensive against the consumer by Government on all fronts and against age groups, not excluding either the infants and children on the one hand or the aged and the sick on the other.

Another massive aspect of Government policy also has been presented in terms of the attack on the subsidy system, but is really an integral part of its policy of ensuring for private capital an unrestricted reign in Sri Lanka. In terms of that policy, not only the steady growth

of the public sector of the Sri Lanka economy but also the very existence of that public sector is a scar on the face of capitalism. Accordingly, this Government has systematically, and often in subtly conceived ways, set about dismantling the public sector of the Sri Lanka economy. The methods are broadly four: direct handing over of enterprises to the private sector is one (e.g. certain plantations); the conversion of public corporations into joint enterprises of state and private capital is another (the latest example is the Building Material Corporation); a third method is to hand over to private sector firms the management of public enterprises (e.g. the The Thulhiriya-Textile Mill); the fourth is the opening of sections of the public sector exclusively reserved for the state to competition from private capital (the most crying example is the earliest major nationalisation forced by the mass movement, namely the Bus Transport Service. The Thé private bus-owners skimming the cream of the business, are today eating into the very entrails of the Ceylon Transport Board, reducing to shambles many of its operations. The menace of this move of the Government to their jobs has already been grasped by the Corporation's employees. They have reacted with violence against the private buses in several places).

The basic line of the UNP Government's policy is the handing over of the Sri Lanka economy to private capital for unrestricted operation — the so-called free economy. The question is not whether this is an attainable objective. The point is that it is being systematically pursued. And it is of paramount importance that the policy goes, no less for foreign capital than for indigenous capital; perhaps even more so for foreign capital than for indigenous capital. The outcome is the so-called open economy; that is to say a national economy open to the unobstructed operations of the international market and of foreign capital. A necessary incident of the open economy is a system of free imports and exchanges free of serious controls and restrictions; all in the name of a com-

(Continued on page 22)

SLFP / UNP : A basic continuity

Kethesh Loganathan

ECONOMICS

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize the point that my characterization of the Budget as a manifestation of the IMF/IBRD sponsored export-oriented development strategy after 1977, in no way implies that the economic-orientation prior to 1977 was in sharp contrast to that which followed after. It is often argued that import-substitution led industrialization and export-led industrialization are strategies which are mutually exclusive. It is further argued that the SLFP opted for import-substitution led industrialization strategy under the leadership of the state sector since it represented the interest of the authentic national bourgeoisie and their "left" allies harbouring visions of a non-capitalist path of development, while the UNP opted for export-led industrialization strategy led by the private sector, since it met the demands of the other section of the bourgeoisie which it is supposed to represent namely, the *compradore bourgeoisie*.

Theoretically speaking, the Export-Led Growth Model demands viable domestic manufacturing and agricultural sectors. In short, it could be argued that import-substitution is a theoretical pre-requisite for export-oriented industrialization. Thus, it would be incorrect to treat these Models as being mutually exclusive and standing out in stark contradiction to each other. Further, in the case of Sri Lanka there is another factor which establishes a fundamental continuity between import-substitution and export-orientation, namely, that both strategies failed to bring about any industrialization! It must be mentioned that the import-substituting industries were mainly engaged in providing the frills and the packaging of virtually finished imported products, which is no different from the internal mechanics

of the Export-Led Growth Model. In the final analysis, in the absence of an integration between the wage goods sector and the capital goods sector (Department I and Department II in Marxist terminology), neither export-orientation nor import-substitution can provide the impetus for industrialization.

As regards the argument that the import-substitution strategy under the leadership of the State Sector during the 1970-1977 phase constituted a non-capitalist path to development based on the visions of the progressive national bourgeoisie with the support of the "left" while the export-oriented development strategy of 1977 under the leadership of the private sector was inspired by the UNP which articulates the demands of the *compradore bourgeoisie*, all I wish to state is that it is far too simplistic and shows an incorrect understanding of the character of the State sector and the class basis of the two major parliamentary parties. The Budget Speech of 1976, for instance, enunciated the economic-orientation of the SLFP regime in the following manner. To quote: "what I have rather in mind is an export oriented approach to foreign investment under which the investor 'fades out' once he has performed his catalytic function." The above quotation very clearly demonstrates the invalidity of the import-substitution vs export-orientation argument.

It is my contention that the bourgeoisie in Sri Lanka has two characteristics—one, that it is a 'dependent' bourgeoisie and secondly that it is weak in relation to its capacity to industrialize. Although, the bourgeoisie did once show signs of emerging into an authentic national bourgeoisie, this process was effectively stifled due to factors, both, internal and exter-

nal. The import-substitution phase, I would argue, was an aberration in the fundamental character of the bourgeoisie. For instance, although during this period there emerged numerous firms catering to a captive internal market, the fact still remains that these firms were heavily dependent on the import of raw materials. In short, the so called emerging national bourgeoisie were in fact the 'old' dependent bourgeoisie. What we are witnessing to-day is the full expression of the dependent character of the bourgeoisie, as witnessed by the fact that firms engaged in manufacturing for the internal market are now shifting back to the importing of the same product.

Let us now proceed to examine the character of the State sector during the 1970-77 phase. The State sector basically performed two functions. Firstly, it was a mechanism by which the limitation of "individual" capital is overcome by "combining" them under the auspices of State corporations. Secondly, it was in response to pressure from the *petit-bourgeoisie* for greater employment opportunities and access to the political power centre. In other words, it is my contention that the interest of the **class base** of the SLFP (the dependent bourgeoisie) was during this period somewhat subordinated to the immediate interest of its **political power base**, (the *petit-bourgeoisie*) which was dictated by the dynamics of the parliamentary system. The dismantling of the state enterprises and the formation of public companies, under the present regime, however, is not a fundamental deviation from the scenario depicted above. The joint-stock device is merely another way in which individual capitals are combined and in this

(Continued on page 19)

The future has already begun

Jayantha Somasundaram

Squadron Leader Roy Grenville, commander of the mythical RAF 633 Squadron, said that people don't like to remember their debts. He predicted that those whom he led to their deaths in the battle against the Nazis during the World War II, would in time conveniently be forgotten. But they are not the only ignored creditors—so are the six million Jews who perished in concentration camps at Auschwitz, Dachau, Belsen, Buchenwald and Treblinka. This was the culmination of centuries of anti-semitic persecution in 'Christian' Europe—the ultimate pogrom.

Yet today this holocaust is almost forgotten. The older generation is reluctant to recall the traumatic past. Among the young there is just historical indifference, typified by a 23 year old American University graduate who asked: What holocaust?

Even in Israel the holocaust is remembered with embarrassment as a Jewish defeat and disgrace. And the Sabras tend to subscribe to the grossly over-simplistic view that in Europe the Jews failed to resist the terror.

Even the memories of the holocaust victims are hazy. "How does one remember?" asks Elie Wiesel a survivor of Auschwitz, "it defies language, it defies memory, it defies category."

List of Tortures

The experience of Nazism which men like Martin Bormann provided for a hapless world of both Jews and Gentile dissenters, is too valuable to be forgotten. The diary that Anne Frank left behind in occupied Holland, the tragic drawings and the pathetic poems like "I never saw another butterfly" left behind by children who perished at Terezin camp are relevant to our day—because fascism's past has not ended; in fact, its future has already begun.

Nowhere does past meet present as dramatically as in Chile. Not only did a fascist government come to power through a military coup, not only does it have concentration camps where political dissenters and Jews are imprisoned and tortured, not only does it have a vicious secret police, but it has on its payroll SS Standartenfuhrer Walter Rauff!

Rauff, whom the Vienna *Arbeiter-Zeitung* describes as "one of the biggest criminals of this century" was an associate of Heydrich and Eichmann. He entered Czechoslovakia with the Nazi troops in March 1939. He then went on to institute the massacres of Poland at Poznan and Gdansk. In 1942 Himmler took him across to Tunisia to exterminate 90,000 Jews in the Hava Khebiria ghetto. His speciality was the mobile gas chamber which he used in addition in Belgium, the Soviet Union and Italy. In April 1945 he fell into the hands of the Americans, but he broke jail and escaped to South America. And today he continues the work that he began for Hitler and Himmler.

Gaston Garcia Cantu, a Mexican journalist, who participated in the Mexico City sessions of the Helsinki Commission, has documented a long list of the tortures being used by Rauff in Santiago.

Diving Helmet

"Application of electric shocks to different parts of the body, the genital organs in particular. Plunging into containers filled with oil, Whipping, forcing the victim to witness the torturing and execution of other prisoners. Deliberate fracturing of an injured arm; dropping the prisoners from a height; mutilation (cutting off the hands); pulling out teeth, forcing the prisoners to swallow human excreta. Interrogations under the false promise that torture will be

discontinued provided the victims admit the charges that members of their family have committed heinous crimes. Collective or individual raping of women in the presence of the victim's parents and brothers or sisters. Puncturing and cutting of various parts of the body, Application of drugs, orally and by injection. Placing of infected rats on wounds and introduction of infected rats into vagina, introduction of sharpened bamboo-sticks under fingernails. Dropping from communication towers.

Burning of vital parts with scalding water or acid. Branding with red-hot irons. Injecting air into women's breasts and beating of genital organs. Introduction of bayonets and clubs into vagina, leading to rupture, transportation of prisoners from one place to another by helicopter while hanging from ropes tied around their bodies. Torture known as "diving helmet" which includes the following methods: (a) covering the victim's head with a plastic bag until he or she dies of asphyxia; (b) immersion in barrels full of water or immersion in the sea while hanging from the piers and (c) steel helmet is placed over prisoner's head and the victim is left out in the sun. Application of tourniquets on head, legs and arms. *Pau de arara* (an invention of the Brazilian military) which consists of tying the victim's hands and legs and letting him or her hang from a horizontal bar. Flooding of torture cell with excreta and urine and placing the victim's face down on the floor with his hands and feet tied. Introduction of broken pieces of glass into the vagina (a method applied by drunken Marines in the Quiquina Island Naval base.

Condor Method

"Introduction of the victim into a metal drum which is then beaten with sticks and metal bars. This torture leads to punctured eardrums and loss of mind. Injection of air

into veins, which causes a slow painful death. Prisoners dropped from planes into Arauco Gulf on the southern part of Chile.

"The condor method: prisoner is thrown into a cage with a hungry condor which tears the victim's body — already subject to torture — to pieces." Actions aimed at intimidation. This method was illustrated with the following report: "In the early hours of November 13, the lifeless body of Lumi Videla Moya, wife of Sergio Perez, member of the Central Committee of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), was thrown into the garden of the Italian Embassy. The body showed signs of torture as well as evident signs of an absolute lack of nourishment."

Die Welt one of the most influential West German newspapers writes that "despite military dictatorship, Chile is a country that belongs to the western world, a bulwark against communism and we should accord it our full support: whereby this support is naturally accompanied by pressure for the establishment of democratic structures."

Euro Fascists

Poor, backward South America with its ignorance of democracy is not the only evidence of fascist upsurge, so is North America and Western Europe. The economic crisis in these countries — the traditional democracies — particularly the shrinking job opportunities, is giving rise to racism, anti-semitism, terrorist violence and fascist parties.

"The deteriorating economic situation, particularly youth unemployment has led to a hardening of attitudes," says Maurice Ludmer, editor of the British *Searchlight*.

At the end of a decade of rising fascist terrorism in Europe, with around a hundred deaths to their credit during nineteen eighty alone, West European Intelligence is now convinced that an Euro-Fascist organisation, headquartered in Spain, is master-minding things. Ludmer claims that the Fascists had an European Summit in Bruges Belgium, earlier last year. The Euro Fascists are also linked to the National Socialist (Nazi) Party in the USA.

Britain's National Front has as its target not so much the Jews but the non-Whites from the Commonwealth — West Indians, Indians, Pakistanis and Ceylonese. Mosques as well as synagogues are being defaced. Whilst Britain has never experienced fascist rule, Spain has only recently come out of three decades of it. Terrorist attacks on their opponents have led to the outlawing of several Rightist groups in Spain.

Italy, the home of European Fascism, has an awesome secret group known as the Third Position. They have taken responsibility for the recent explosion at Bologna railway station which killed 84 people. A fascist party which has ten percent of the electorate behind it is said to be linked to an organisation called the Black Terror which systematically assassinates opponents of the Right.

Capt. Dreyfus

France has been the arena of much Fascist activity in the last few months. "France is the classic anti-semitic country," says George Mosse, Professor of History at Wisconsin University, speaking about the country where a Jewish officer, Capt. Dreyfus was framed and sent to Devils Island and where later the Vicky Government sent 75,000 Jews to concentration camps during the War.

In the USA fascism operates both through the Nazi Party and the Ku Klux Klan. Here too the scramble for jobs feeds racism, and Blacks who become competitive by moving into a White neighbourhood are the targets of the Nazis and the Klan. So are labour leaders and liberals. The Nazi Party in the US line up in military formation, wear swastikas, praise Hitler, justify racial discrimination and call for the persecution of blacks and communists.

Canada too is feeling the presence of fascism — recently a Ceylonese family were harrassed by the KKK when they moved into a White neighbourhood. In Canada Jewish synagogues are also being plastered with swastikas by neo Nazis.

In the Netherlands a racist movement the 'Viking Jeugd' publishes a journal called *New Anthropologie*, which claims that "the salient features common to negroes and criminals is their subnormal intelligence." The journal provides 'evidence' of an above average conviction of Jews in fraud and forgery.

Wolfgang Nuerath, the German leader of the 'Viking Jeugd' says that "the coloured (black and brown) races will never understand anything about Nordic culture. Viking members are not permitted to marry coloured people, even to associate with them."

Class Struggle

In South Africa a fascist regime upholding a totally racist ideology is in power. Bertolt Brecht has said that "fascism transforms the class struggle into a racial struggle."

Klaus Altman former chief of the Gestapo in Lyons who was sentenced to death *in absentia* in France had occasion to thank the Supreme Court of Bolivia for rejecting the French request for extradition. Altman was convicted of the murder of hundreds of children in France and of the famed resistance fighter Jean Moulin.

Kurt Lischka of the Gestapo sent 73,000 French Jews to their deaths at Auschwitz and Maidanek. A Paris court has sentenced him also to death. But the Federal Republic of Germany where he lives will not allow him to be extradited to France. The French request is being stalled in the German Bundestag by MP Ernst Achenbach, who was in Paris during the war working at the German Embassy.

Achenbach, according to *Die Tat* "was the author of the order to take 2,000 Jewish hostages for an assault on Hitler's army. The 2,000 were deported to Auschwitz where the gas chambers awaited them."

In an opinion poll in the Federal Republic of Germany 31 percent of the respondents expressed the fear that the rise to power of a new Hitler is possible if Germany were to be engulfed by a severe crisis with more unemployment.

SOUTH ASIA — (6)

LINKAGE AND REGIONALISM

N. M. M. I. Hussein

After the adumbration of the case for regionalism in South Asia, it seems useful to alert against undue optimism, not about the possibility of useful and meaningful regionalism, but rather about the benefits that might be expected to accrue to the under-developed countries in South Asia and other regions.

There are sometimes illusions about the possibility of, and benefits to be derived from, the de-linking of the economies of the South from those of the North. This is obviously the consequences of disillusionment over the prospects for re-structuring the international economy. It is questionable whether a de-linking is desirable, even if it is feasible. Certainly, with the western economic recession going on for the foreseeable future, the prospects for the under-developed countries look bleak. But there is a growing recognition in the west that the further dynamic development of the west cannot be dissociated from the development of the economies of the South; to put in very simple terms, the South has to be strong enough to produce the raw materials required by the West in increased quantities, and they have to be rich enough to buy more of the products of the West. The inter-dependence of the North and South for further dynamic development is recognised, and there appears even to have been re-thinking about protectionism as shown, for instance, by statements made by the French President, Giscard d'Estaing.

The vogue of regionalist ideas today seems to be partly due to the dynamism of the Common Market, the vibrancy shown by the Andean Pact, and hopeful expectations about ASEAN. The success of ASEAN seems to be of a thoroughly ambiguous nature. Despite all the tariff reductions, only 15% of the trade of the ASEAN countries is intra-

regional. As for the five ASEAN industrial projects adopted for implementation by the Bali Summit of 1976, their failure to get off the ground has been provoking cynical comments. The five ASEAN countries may show a better economic performance than most other Afro-Asian countries, but this may be due to a greater degree of linkage with the developed economies rather than because of regional economic co-operation. The truth appears to be that the dynamism of the Common Market is due to the internal dynamism of the constituent countries. The ASEAN countries have nothing like the same internal dynamism.

The important question is how to make the under-developed countries recover their dynamism, without which regionalism and collective self-reliance will probably prove to be largely meaningless. Economic dynamism could depend on non-economic cultural factors, on the dynamism of a society as a whole. Reischauer's analysis of the cultural factors, making for dynamism in societies with a common Confucian background, dynamism whether in war or in peace, seems very relevant to an understanding of the problems of economic development.

The process of cultural change and the re-invigoration of moribund or static societies has depended throughout history on their interaction with developed centres, except where an autonomous transformation of a society takes place under very exceptional circumstances. Progress through interaction with a developed centre is the norm. This is a process that cannot be understood in purely economic terms. A people modifies its way of life and becomes dynamic "owing to the adoption of new knowledge or beliefs, or to some change in its view of life and its conception of reality." (Christopher Dawson).

It is appropriate to consider some aspects of imperialism. Marx, while

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recognising the obvious predatoriness of imperialism, also viewed it as a progressive phenomenon, a sweeping away of moribund feudal structures by higher capitalist societies, which thereby initiated a new phase of development towards socialism in the underdeveloped countries: "What we call history is but the history of successive intruders who founded empires on the passive basis of unresisting and unchanging societies." In his view, the "weakness and backwardness" of India pre-destined her to conquest and the question was not whether Britain had a right to conquer her but "whether we are to prefer India conquered by the Turk, the Persian or by the Russian, to India conquered by the British".

In terms of Marx's views, the countries that were colonised should have been better off than those that were not. In fact, this was the case: Sri Lanka was more developed at the time of its independence than Afghanistan, Nepal or Thailand. The only exception is that of Japan, which is usually explained as demonstrating what the Afro-Asian countries might have done by themselves if they had not been colonised. The explanation is rather to be found in unique developments peculiar to Japan.

The fundamental problem seems to be that of re-invigoration of societies, on which economic performance depends, and for which interaction with developed centres might be more effective than interaction with other under-developed countries. What is required is a sensible and pragmatic approach towards regional co-operation, without illusion.

South Asia is a region characterised by tensions, and sometimes conflicts, but there should be no insuperable problem in bringing about co-operation among the small nations of the region. There has been increasing bilateral interaction in the region, and increasing regional consciousness, which should facilitate regional co-operation.

There should be no insuperable problem about effecting regional co-operation, at least to some extent, involving India as well, although this may be more difficult both for political and economic reasons. In any case, there need be no

undue anxieties about patterns of dominance and dependence in the region.

The enthusiasm for collective self-reliance has led to a great deal of theoretical study of the prospects for regional co-operation. The practical possibility of regional co-operation in South Asia has to be explored in detail, a matter which falls outside the purview of this paper.

In recent years, it has become a commonplace that the "political will" is lacking to bring about a restructuring of international economic relations, by which is meant that the "political will" is lacking in the North, not in the South. But it is a familiar complaint that the representatives of the South have sometimes shown themselves to be insufficiently prepared at international fora dealing with North-South problems, which is usually explained away as the consequence of institutional deficiencies. It might equally be the consequence of an insufficiency of "political will" in the South. It remains to be seen whether the "political will" exists in the South to bring about regional co-operation except to a marginally important extent. The question of the internal dynamism of Third World countries, to which this paper has referred, is relevant in this connection.

(Concluded)

SLFP/UNP...

(Continued from page 15)

sense, they perform the same function as state enterprises. Further, the shift towards a one-party dominant parliamentary system and the emergence of the UNP as the "sole political agency" of the dependent bourgeoisie has, in a way, effectively neutralized the pressure from the political power base—namely the petty-bourgeoisie thus, rendering the political function of the state enterprises redundant. However, it will be incorrect to conclude that the State sector will completely fade away from the scene. Foreign and local capital will continue to depend on the state sector for the provision of the infrastructure necessary for private capital accumulation. The above function is now being carried out by providing the state with equity participation in the public companies which are now beginning to emerge.

(Concluded)

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Principles cannot be negotiated

— Fidel Castro

Reagan and his advisers have announced that they intend to establish an alliance with the rightist, reactionary and fascist forces in this continent. But the peoples of Our America will never submit themselves to this ignominious subjugation. The workers, the peasants, the intellectuals, the students will know how to resist such cruel fate. Our hemispheres' recent history has demonstrated our peoples' combat capacity. It is useless to despise, ignore and underestimate them; Nicaragua, El Salvador, Grenada and Guatemala have proven that so doing is an error.

How many Yankee and fascist soldiers will be needed to subjugate hundreds of millions of Latin Americans? There are no longer any Switzerlands in our America. Chile and Uruguay are eloquent examples of such illusions. There are no longer any masks to disguise our oppression. There are no longer military or repressive mechanisms developed by the U. S. intelligence agencies, no matter how cruel and sophisticated they may be, capable of curbing the insurgency of the peoples. Who can prevent our peoples from fighting sooner or later? Oppression will not last forever, terror and fear will not rule forever. The awakening of the peoples has become more frightening than anything the oppressors have devised to submit them. One must be blind not to see that. The crueler internal tyranny is, the stronger Imperialist oppression becomes, the more rebellion there will be! And this rebelliousness will be invincible!

It is truly incredible that in today's world some should speak of military interventions and of applying the "big stick" policy again in our continent. They should best awake from such dreams. Others also dreamed of dominating the world and turned into ashes. Currently the peoples have many varied forms of struggle. Latin America

and the Caribbean have a population of over 300 million; their surface area is twice that of the United States.

Reagan has said that in Vietnam the mistake was not making war but losing it. In Latin America the mistake of making war might represent a greater defeat than that of Vietnam. Who has told Mister Reagan that making war means the right to win it?

There is talk even about a probable intervention in Central America. All Latin-American peoples will fight with determination and courage against Yankee intervention in their territories. If Yankee marines or intervention forces land in Central America, the people of the United States will again witness the painful scene of their soldiers' coffins arriving home. Those who go to kill Latin Americans will also have to resign themselves to die. The blame will fall on those who refuse to acknowledge the lessons of history and the irreversible changes that have taken place in our world. No one is threatening life in the United States, but no one, will accept, without a determined and heroic struggle, the threat of the United States against our lives.

The time has come to say that Latin-American peoples do not fear anything or anyone; that, outraged, they reject the stick and furthermore scorn the imperialist carrot. The myth must cease! The repulsive intent of intimidating Latin-American patriots, the sons and daughters of Bolivar, of San Martin, of O'Higgins, of Sucre, of Hidalgo, of Morelos, of Morazan, of Maceo and of Marti must cease!

Reagan and his advisors speak of a military blockade of Cuba, under any pretext, even if as they assert, the Soviet Union were to carry out an action in any other part of the world. This is a repulsive and cynical thought.

Cuba will be ready to defend itself against any military blockade or imperialist Yankee invasion! In this country the struggle shall not cease as long as one single patriot remains capable of fighting, and there are millions ready to do so to their last drop of blood. "whoever tries to seize Cuba," Antonio Maceo, the Bronze Titan said, "will gather the dust of its soil drenched in blood, if he does not perish in the struggle."

The world knows that the United States authorities conceived, organized and promoted the assassination of leaders of the Cuban Revolution and of other governments. The CIA was the center of those repulsive practices. What can be expected now of that institution, when Reagan's advisers state that it will have carte blanche, and when no less a person than Goldwater will be the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee?

We believe that one of Reagan's first statements should be that his administration shall not organize, authorize or allow any CIA plans to assassinate leaders of other countries.

We sincerely hope that these practices will not be repeated; otherwise, the United States Government would be institutionalizing and stimulating the worst form of terrorism in the world, and it will be responsible and will answer for all the consequences of its acts.

If there is an olive branch, we shall not reject it. If hostility continues and there is aggression, we shall respond strongly.

Cuba believes that for the world it is a historical necessity that normal relations exist among all countries, based on mutual respect, on the acknowledgment of the sovereign right of every one and on non-intervention. Cuba considers that the normalization of its rela-

(Continued on page 21)

Notes from Dr. Fonseka's Lecture

(At C. V. Dias Memorial Hall, 23-12-80)

*In the Grand Central Station
Blood arrives at destination
Of the heart
Only to depart
For purification of carbon dioxide
In the lungs and to go on another ride
Down the thin tunnels of capillaries, veins
That feed nerves that gather pleasures and pains
That are transmitted to the brain
Where they in memory remain.
The heart is not the centre
Of feelings but the palpitating register.
Feelings, like thoughts, reside in the powerful brain
Travelling and alighting like a passenger from a train.
He said, to him, a physiologist,
Incidentally a rationalist,
Everything is physical
And nothing mystical.*

Patrick Jayasuriya

Letters . . .

(Continued from page 1)

at only because they exercise their right of freedom of movement and only because they dare to disagree with the opinion of their regime-

H. Wockel

Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany.

What Next?

Probably I am open-minded. I have been born into a U.N.P. family; baptised into the S.L.F.P. group; nurtured in a Communist fold and in this Third World find myself — in Kennel Club parlance — "a ridge-backed Dobbermann Pincher". Today I am, as I said before "OPEN-MINDED" — a mere 'naturally born "British" subject!

Quite by chance I came across your paper — "The Guardian" of 1/5/80 "and a picture of Anura Dias Bandaranaike reminded me of his father. "Sonny Banders" of Oxford.

Politicians talk of 'Dharm-ista' societies and "Diya Sevas" but it would be wise to be true to yourself! Nevertheless your paper, brought me a

"new-life" — like the one spoken of about by "born-again" Christians!

May your paper "The Guardian" be my guide in the years that are left.

Evan Jayasekera
Church Organist

Principles . . .

(Continued from page 20)

tions with the United States would improve the political climate in Latin America and the Caribbean and would contribute to world detente. Cuba, therefore, is not opposed to finding a solution to its historical differences with the United States, but no one should expect Cuba to change its position nor yield in its principles. Cuba is and will continue being socialist. Cuba is and will continue being a friend of the Soviet Union and of all the socialist States. Cuba is and will continue being an internationalist country.

Principles cannot be negotiated.

(Concluding remarks of the main report presented to the 2nd Congress of the Cuban Communist Party)

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N. M. — Past vs present

H. A. Seneviratne

Can a political party that has declined in spirit and consequently in its influence among the masses, uphold and vindicate its past however glorious it might have been? This question ran in my mind after seeing the documentary film entitled 'Suriya Mala' based on the life of Dr. N. M. Perera, late leader of the L. S. S. P. The answer to this question, I finally realised, was to be found in this film itself.

The life of a political leader represents the tempo and the character of that stage of historical development of the society in which he finds himself. Conversely, an individual leader's outstanding calibre, the all-embracing intellect and the unyielding moral integrity and strength, which in themselves are indicative of the potentiality of the society in which he is born, also place their indelible imprint on the historical development of that society. The greatness of a political leader depends, in other words, on his ability not only to follow the masses but also on his ability to lead them. The L. S. S. P. leadership was able to live up to this standard to a certain extent until it took a sharp turn to the right in 1964. Having failed to lead the masses at a crucial hour the LSSP leadership lost its capacity to follow them. These historical truths, no artist or recorder of history can ignore.

Tissa Abeysekera, director and script-writer of 'Suriya Mala' was obviously faced with a difficulty, for he was apparently trying to conform to the requirements of the establishment and also of the present LSSP.

The author, a well known Sinhala short story writer, novelist and literary critic, was an activist in the Ceylon Mercantile Union. At present he is putting the finishing touches to the second volume of his commentary on the left movement entitled "Beyond Opportunism". Mr. Seneviratne is a lawyer by profession.

'Suriya Mala' does not give an indication as to whether Dr. Perera and his party possessed any philosophical and theoretical foundation what so ever. How come this serious lapse? Does it suggest the abhorrence on the part of the artist for such philosophical and theoretical foundations as Marxism, Leninism (and Trotskyism) which the LSSP leadership professed to follow? Or is it the natural outcome of the LSSP leadership's own self-destructive annihilation of those very foundations, when confronted with the historic test of the deepening class struggle leading to the inevitable question of political power under the banner of the working class?

The handling of available material in the film 'Suriya Mala' is demonstrative of an emphasis on the death rather than on the life of Dr. N. M. Perera. But the film is not devoid of a desire to say something more than that. **Therefore, it is normal for an audience to look forward to see, in visual form, the saga of the class struggle of the first phase of the left movement in Sri Lanka in which Dr. Perera and the LSSP did play a key role.** The reticence in so far as the early struggles of the plantation workers, the general strike of 1947 and the whole series of important strikes are concerned is indeed unpardonable. The Hartal of August 1953, the profoundest contribution of the LSSP to the history of mass resistance to capitalist exploitation in this country, has been treated with half-heartedness and meekness in the film. Instead, a hypocritical attempt has been made to give a Buddhist coloration to the life of Dr. N. M. Perera and to call it "the correct ideology"! Attempts of this nature can only lead to contempt and ridicule in the eyes of the masses who have now grown up through the bitter experience of the ruthlessness of the crisis-stricken capitalist system.

CINEMA

'Suriya Mala'

There is little doubt that 'Suriya Mala' will be able to reach the public not merely through private shows but through the official film circuits of the State Film Corporation without a single cut. There appears to be so much self-censorship, so to say. This film might even be screened at political meetings to draw crowds. But its impact will of course be just the opposite of what is expected.

It is apt to conclude this brief comment with a quotation from Trotsky himself, the teachings of whom the LSSP leadership professed to follow: "The old era will leave the stage with its men while the new era will find new men." In this case we have only to substitute the word "screen" for the word "stage" for appropriateness.

Parliamentary . . .

(Continued from Page 14)

petitive process which has long been overtaken in the capitalist world by monopoly processes.

Unrealistic policies, however logically they may be pursued, lead to unanticipated results. And so it has been with the open economy policy. The sector of the economy to which this policy has given a genuine and strong impetus is that of the import trade. Our country has been flooded with a surfeit of imported commodities of the greatest variety which moved fast at the beginning but whose movement has slowed down in most cases to a point at which the financing has begun to break down because of the weight of unsold stocks and of unliquidated debts. Thus the import trade itself has come under new risks and dangers.

(To be continued)

The forming of content

Sagara

“All art”, said Lu Xun, “is propaganda, but not all propaganda is art”. This statement goes to the heart of the discussion on content and form which Samudran’s article on contemporary Tamil literature and theatre has provoked. It illuminates two major aspects of the Marxist approach to art, and, by implication, touches upon a third; firstly, that all artistic creations are expression or reflections of their social — or to be more precise, their class — origins; secondly, that the validity of a work of art depends on the dialectical unity that exists between its content and its form; and finally, that the work of art is not a delimited, self-contained entity but one that exists in a social context and serves a social function, sometimes complex, sometimes simple, but always ultimately in response to the demands of the historical moment. It is necessary, I think, to take these aspects separately and together... as does the dramatic counterposition and tense logic of Lu Xun’s categorical maxim.

Any discussion of the form-content relation from a Marxist viewpoint must proceed from the social basis of art, with regard to both its social origins and its (contemporary or subsequent) social function. This, I believe, Samudran’s original article did, in essence. Of course, as Samudran himself points out, art also has its own internal laws of development and the dialectical unity or interdependence of form and content is a major aspect of these internal laws. But dialectical unity is not the same as the equivalence of form and content, which interpretation, I think, constitutes the essential drift of Reggie Siriwardena’s argument, although he uses the terms “inter-dependence” and “perfect fusion”. Siriwardena puts it so well that we are almost convinced; “There

can be no perfection of form in a work of literature except in relation to the content it articulates and there can be no significant content beyond what is embodied and realised in the medium of form”.

This is a fine technical argument and any disagreement with it must be posed at a deeper theoretical level, i. e. it must go beyond that statement and subsume rather than contradict it. Thus, the dialectical unity of form and content is an aspect of the internal laws of development of artistic activity, but it is also part of a greater dialectic, the relationship between art and society. This is precisely what Lu Xun meant when he talked of all art being propaganda. It is also the position that is reflected in Samudran’s article and replies, where he insists not only on the unity of form and content, but also on the primacy of content over form. However, this is a dimension which seems to be missing from Siriwardena’s observations — at least at an explicit theoretical level. Perhaps he was diverted by the polemical drift of his argument, where he tends to vulgarize the Marxist standpoint of the “primacy of content over form” by describing it as one that involves treating form “as a mere sugar coating for the ideological pill”. The inadequacies or mistakes of Marxist practice must lead, not to the abandonment of theory — or the refusal to grapple with it — but its further development and refinement and its more exacting application. Praxis requires the continual testing of theory against experience and reality and vice versa.

The concept of the interdependence of form and content is not in its essence a Marxist formulation but one that predates Marxism.

Marxism has absorbed, clarified and added a further dimension to it; the primacy or dominance of content over form. In order to understand what this really implies it is necessary to examine at least some of the many levels and facets of meaning that such a proposition involves.

Starting at the most immediate level, the Marxist critic requires of the contemporary artist or writer and the contemporary work of art or literature that they contribute to the development, enrichment and/or understanding of the social context in which they exist. This, of course, automatically raises the question; whose development and enrichment, i. e. of which social group or class. It is only the vulgarized or mechanical interpretation of this that requires art to directly relate to a specific political programme. It signifies, rather, the place which the work of art takes in the broad spectrum of contradictions which exist both in society itself and in the struggle for artistic expression and development, at a given moment of time. Thus, in a country such as ours, work which does not contribute directly to an art and literature of struggle or criticism, but which nevertheless contributes to the formation of an artistic tradition which broadly takes its position within the national struggle and the class struggle, and which does not confuse or oppose or obstruct them, must be appraised accordingly. In other words, if certain works of art make only a formal or technical contribution, such as extending the language or sharpening the vision of an artistic tradition, while other works within that tradition make a more direct, but perhaps technically cruder contribution, the significant process that the critic must observe and encourage is the dialectical intera-

ction between the two. In a successful work of art, of course, and one that may have permanent artistic validity these two processes would be intertwined. But in a historical perspective, it is possible to imagine that a work of art which manifests the former process might ultimately make a lesser contribution to the formation of an artistic tradition than one which manifests the latter; thus, a work which has a degree of formal perfection might lead to an artistic dead-end, while a cruder, "propagandist" work might have in it the seeds of significant future development. Of course, the opposite could be equally possible. It is one of the responsibilities and hazards of the critical enterprise that it is called upon to make assessments of this nature. Marx's remarks about the growth of science are also relevant, *pari passu* to the development of artistic traditions; "Science, unlike other architects, build not only castles in the air, but may construct separate habitable storeys of the building before laying the foundation stone" (*Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*)

Art, Marxist criticism maintains, is always a reflection of society and artistic development is dependent on and derives from the specific character of the historical moment. This is best seen at times when the lines of struggle — e. g. national struggle or class struggle — are clearly drawn, when artistic activity itself is inevitably brought into a clear relationship with the social context — or (which is in a sense the same thing) when it consciously keeps itself away from it. It is the nature of the historical conditions, their intensity and sharpness in this instance, which raises the problem to another level, beyond the purely political or ideological dimension.

Art — or at least serious, valid and worthwhile art — has never been neutral. The very intensity and vitality of the social context impinges on the sensibility and consciousness of the artist. Often, in a highly complex manner, the external conditions are internalised within the artist and the work of art. The vitality and power of art conceived in such conditions derives essentially from its social origins and, in many instances, from the standpoint which the creative imagination takes in relation to sharply drawn lines of division. The analysis of the art and literature of any society or period characterized by such developments/would, I think, bear this out. It exemplifies, in a clearly perceivable manner, a proposition which has much broader application: that the validity of a successful work of art arises not only from the successful relationship of form to content, but from the **artistic content** as a whole which derives from the relationship between art and society itself. **Content** in that sense becomes a much larger concept than the expression of a relationship between **meaning** ("message", "ideological pill", etc.) and **form** ("technique", "organisation" "structuring", "style", and so on). The talk of the "perfect fusion of form and content", especially in such a context as the one indicated above, is to limit the meaning of **content** to purely technical parameters.

On the other hand, art which withdraws into a kind of false artistic neutrality, which no longer draws its vital sustenance from its social context and which thereby merely reproduces the emptied gestures, symbols, images and motifs of a tradition or derivatives of them — "the emptied shell of form" as it has been called — looking not only social or political / but also artistic content, is what Marxist criticism correctly terms "formalist".

(To be continued)

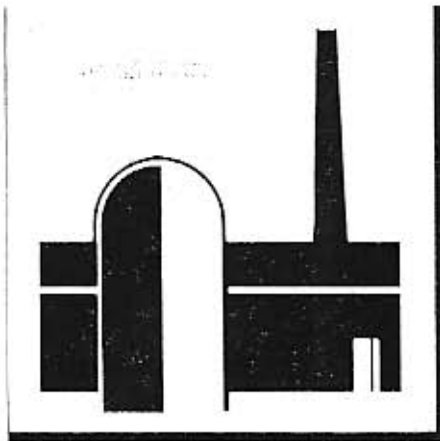
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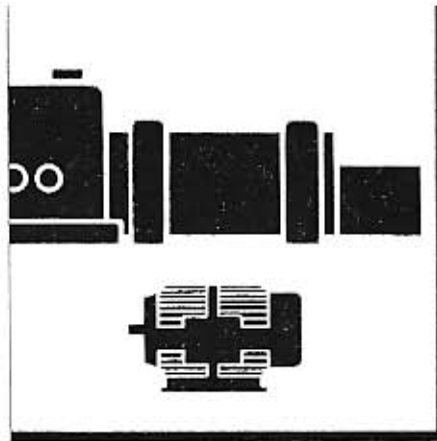
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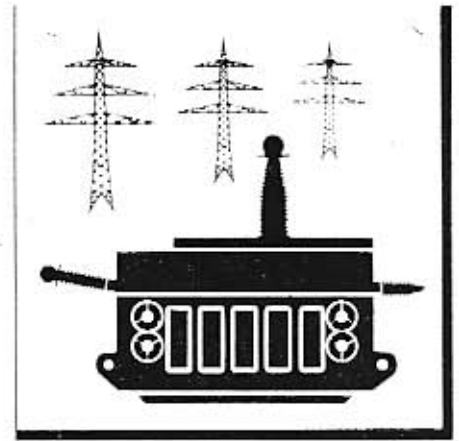
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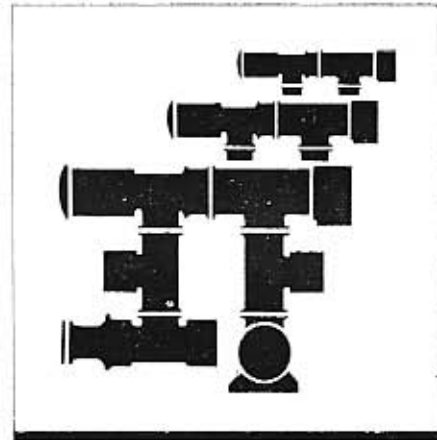
Generators and motors of all types and sizes



Large power transformers



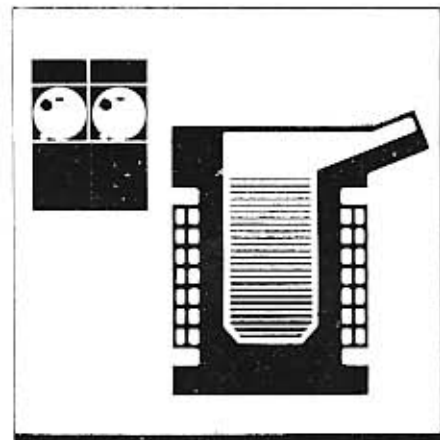
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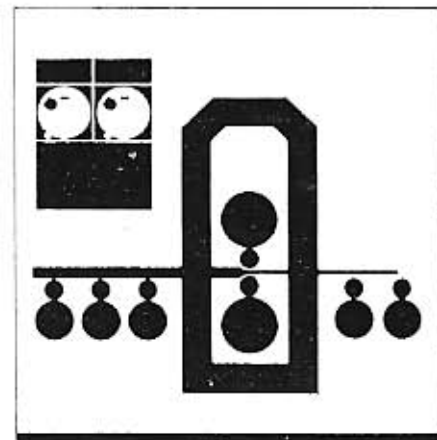
Medium- and high-voltage switchgear up to 525 kV



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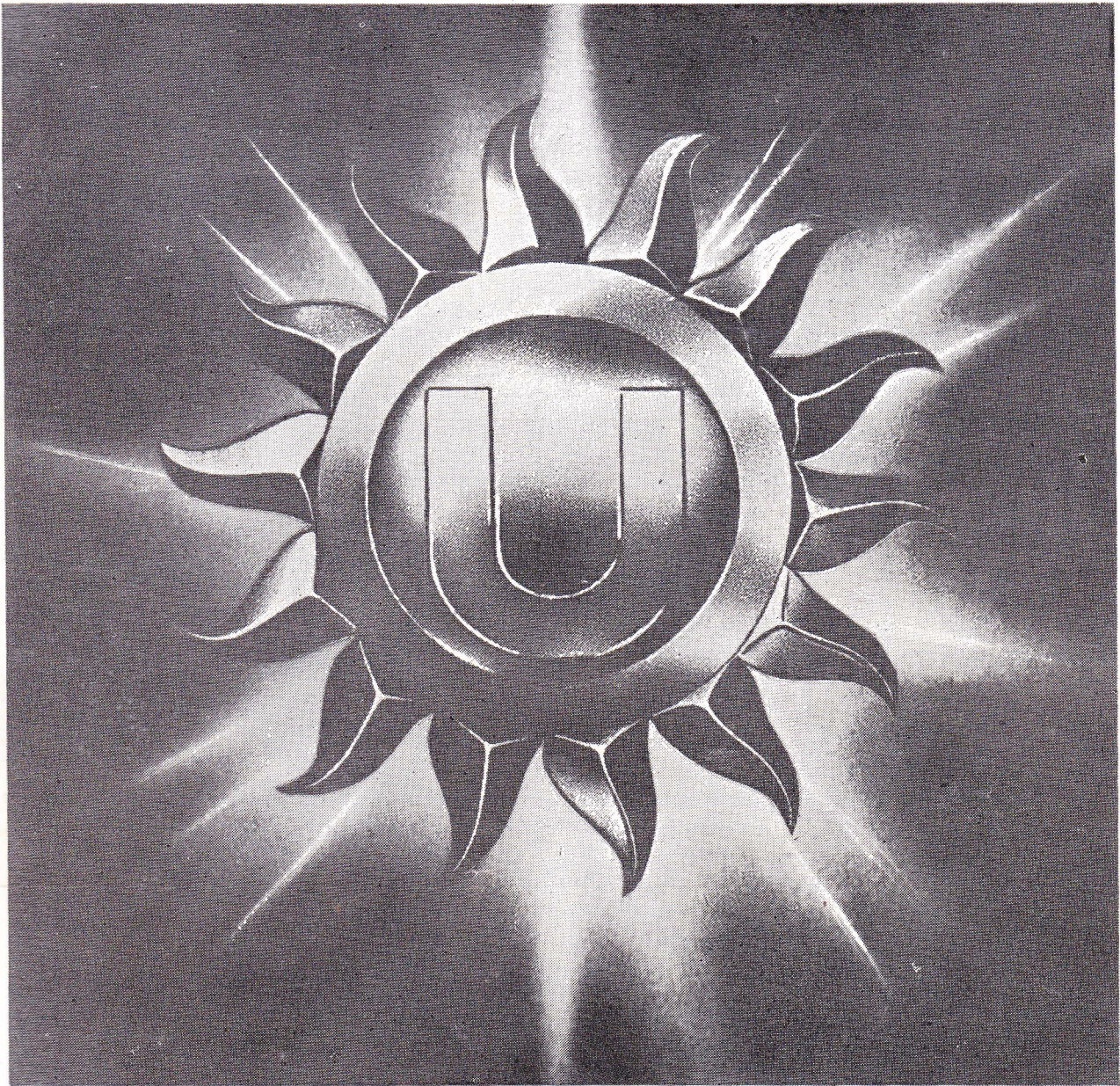
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