

Exclusive
Argueles Morales

El Salvador

TARIQ ALI
SPEAKS

LANKA

GUARDIAN

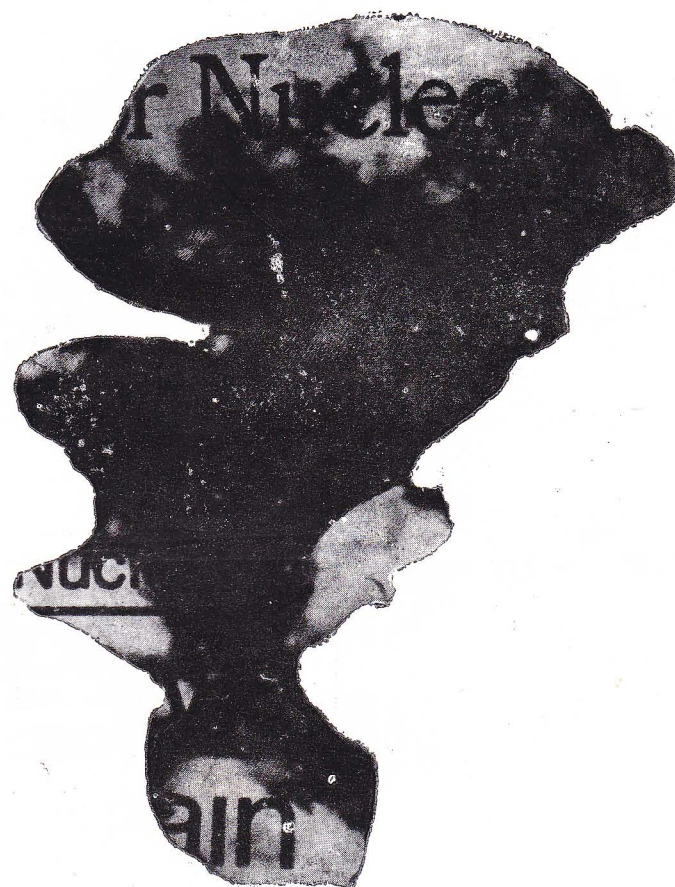
Vol. 3 No. 19

February 15, 1981

Price Rs. 3/50

WHY GO NUCLEAR?

— E. Carlo Fernando



ANAGARIKA AND ARUNACHALAM

— B. Srikanthadas

TROTSKYISM AND THE NSSP

— Shanta de Alwis

JVP ON LSSP, CP

— Lionel Bopage

● ASEAN

● 'NETRA'

● FORM, CONTENT

New Dettol Soap...

the best way to stay nice, clean
and healthy.

Now your search for an ideal family hygiene soap is over. New Dettol soap gives you all you want with its gentle, mildly medicated action.

Try Dettol soap today and you'll swear by it tomorrow and everyday. Because it keeps the skin clean, fresh and tingling with that 'well-scrubbed' feeling.

Dettol soap
-there's nothing fresher.



A RECKITT & COLMAN PRODUCT

ASEAN and NA Conference

**NEWS
BACKGROUND**

On what was described as a 'working holiday' of four days, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, fresh from one of his customary winner-takes-all election victories, had only Foreign Minister Dhana-balan in his entourage. Sri Lankan leaders, Mr. Lee probably guessed, had a full dose of Singaporean economics from Dr. Goh, the city state's miracle medicine-man.

Dr. Goh came, diagnosed our ills, wrote out his prescription and went away, promising to return. On inflation, uneconomic projects and the ailing export sector, he had recommended strong medicine.

On economic strategy, the UNP has certainly leaned Singapore-wards. What of foreign policy?

Emboldened by its success at the UN on the Kampuchean issue, ASEAN has worked overtime to alter the 'consensus' that was reached in Havana by the nonaligned. The Kam-

puchean seat, it was agreed, would remain vacant until the next foreign ministers' meeting in 1981. (The meeting was held last week in Delhi).

The ASEAN campaign on behalf of Pol Pot (and against Vietnam) was led by Singapore and its first shots were fired by Mr. Lee himself at the Commonwealth meeting held also in Delhi last September. Its international propaganda drive is master-minded by Deputy Prime Minister (former Foreign Minister) S. Rajaratnam who actually used his once distinguished journalistic pen to write a fatuous and flatulent polemic on behalf of one of the most successful genocidal maniacs in history, Pol Pot.

Behind the ASEAN campaign which is also anti-Vietnam and anti-Soviet is the U. S. and China.

Since Singapore is a city-state which respectable nonaligned leaders and elites regard with the same mixed feelings they reserved for Mayor Daley's Chicago (it was also very efficiently run) it does not carry much clout. Indonesia does. And President Suharto was busy in December pushing the ASEAN line in Pakistan and India. The Malaysian Prime Minister was also scheduled to visit Sri Lanka before the Delhi meeting. Dr. Goh did a trip to the Maldives from Colombo.

ASEAN and the Islamic conference in Saudi Arabia form the western 'pincer' moves on the Delhi nonaligned meeting.

President JR's Indo-centrism (a settled conviction that a firm friendship with India must be the cornerstone of Sri Lanka's foreign policy) has proved to date, a countervailing force to the heavy ASEAN lobby of the Sri Lankan 'Young Turks', the business community with foreign collaborators, and some pro-UNP academics and F. O. 'experts'.

The Indian Finance Minister, Mr. Venkataraman, said that Indo-Sri Lankan relations were "at their best". He was the first Indian Minister to visit this country after the UNP took office. Mr. Eric Gonsalves, one of Mrs. Gandhi's chief foreign policy advisers, was also here to

clear up any differences between the two neighbours on such controversial matters as Kampuchea and Afghanistan. Both are members of the 36 member Coordinating Bureau where 'consensus' rather than formal vote-taking is the recognised mode of decision-making.

So far, Sri Lanka has played according to the rules of the NAM.

1981 : A difficult year — Ronnie

The 16th Conference of the Governors of Central Banks in South East Asia (SEACEN) was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from January 14-16, 1981. It was attended by Governors and officials from the Central Banks of Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the Monetary Authority of Singapore.

Also present were an Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Director of the SEACEN Research and Training Centre, and their supporting staff.

The Governors and officials were welcomed by the Governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, who was elected the Chairman of the Conference.

The Conference was officially opened by Ronnie de Mel, Minister of Finance and Planning of Sri Lanka. In his address, the Minister referred to the difficult period ahead, particularly in 1981, due to expected slow growth in developed countries, decline in the rate of aid flows, higher costs of capital imports, growing inflationary tendencies and protectionism in the developed countries.

The Governors of the Central Banks also discussed the worsening inflationary situation and its possible impact on the S. E. Asian countries.

LANKA GUARDIAN

Vol. 3 No. 19 February 15, 1981 Price 3/50

Published fortnightly by Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd.
No. 246, Union Place,
Colombo-2.

Editor: Mervyn de Silva
Telephone: 35223

CONTENTS

News Background	1
Foreign News	3
Should Sri Lanka go Nuclear?	9
Anagarika & Arunachalam	11
JVP on LSSP, CP	13
Trotskyism, Vama & NSSP	15
Way to the future	18
Forming of content	21
'Netra' (Review)	23

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

Telephone: 35975

News, views and TNC dominance

"I have never attended an international conference where the reporting by the western media was not slanted". This charge would have been far less astounding if it had come from any media personality who was not as well-known to the world press as Mr. Esmond Wickremasinghe, the first Asian Chairman of the International Press Institute, a veritable bastion of western publishers and editors. He was speaking at the BMICH on the proposed Computerised Data Bank for the Non-aligned countries, a project which President Jayawardene had approved already, he said. The seminar discussed "current problems of the nonaligned movement".

At another seminar, exclusively devoted to the New Information Order, a panel of distinguished

speakers invited by the Marga Institute and the World View Foundation (Chairman, Foreign Minister A. C. S. Hameed) Mr. Neville Jayaweera, former Chairman, SLBC, branded the insidious impact of the multinational news agencies and western dominance of the communications system the "deadliest form of colonialism".

In the discussion on the State of the Media in Sri Lanka, participants heard of the "near-complete dominance of news and views on international events and issues in the local newspapers, radio and TV by the transnational agencies". Only in the pages of **Tribune** and **Lanka Guardian**, it was said, could the Sri Lankan reader find analyses and commentaries which reflected Third World and non-aligned perspectives.

Death of a don — and the academic Mafia

Funerals have a habit of becoming moments of heightened consciousness and political rallying points. So it was with Somapala, the worker, who died on the 'Day of National Protest' in June. Whatever the official versions, his fellow workers believed that he was a casualty of the 'goon squads' and his funeral, as the **L.G.** reported, was "one of angriest" ever held in Colombo. With the funeral procession marking a new point of working class and T. U. solidarity, Opposition politicians, including some not known for their sympathies for the trade unions, rushed to Kanatte to deliver funeral orations.

Dr. H. A. de S. Gunasekera's sudden death and funeral had a similar psychological impact on his own, if smaller, community of academics which now regard him as the tragic victim of an academic-bureaucratic Mafia. After serving the University for over 30 years, and helping educate a whole generation of Sinhala-speaking students, Dr. Gunasekera (the first "first" in Economics from the Ceylon University) took the exacting job of Permanent Secretary, Planning. For reasons of health, he chose to teach in Colombo. The order to return to Peradeniya which has 8 Ph D's in Economics (Colombo

Plea for strikers

Several well known personalities have addressed a letter to Mr. Ranil Wickremasinghe the Minister of Education employment and youth affairs, urging him to reconsider at an early date his decision regarding the re-employment of striking teachers. Bearing the signatures of Sir Senerat Gunawardene, H. A. I. Goonetilleke, Carlo Fonseka, Prins Gunasekera, Paul Caspersz, and Reggie Siriwardena, the letter reads as follows:

"With the opening of the new school year, we are distressed to note the fact that those teachers who participated in the strike of July 1980 have not been re-employed, thereby creating severe difficulties for students and doing damage to the entire educational system. This is in spite of the fact that public servants who participated in the strike in other Ministries and departments have since been re-employed unconditionally, in some cases even receiving back wages. Meanwhile, thousands of teachers and their families have continued to suffer as a result of their being deprived of their means of livelihood, and in at least one case it has been reported that a teacher has been driven to commit suicide because of his desperate situation. Taking into consideration the plight of the striking teachers on the one hand, and the situation of innocent students who start on a new year without an adequate and experienced teaching staff on the other, we earnestly appeal to you to reconsider your decision regarding the re-employment of striking teachers at an early date."

had only one) would have come as a rude shock.

Dr. Sarachchandra, who felt the cold winds of Establishment disfavour after he signed a petition on the issue of Mrs. B.'s civic rights, spoke on behalf of the university at his friend's funeral. He spoke with feeling. This speech is still the subject of concerned discussion among students and teachers on all our campuses.

Tariq on racism in Britain

Britain has to be situated conceptually within Western European capitalism if one is to grasp the phenomenon of British racism. More specifically, racism in Britain can be understood only in the context of the crisis of British capitalism and of Western European capitalism in general. This was the view expressed by Tariq Ali speaking on **'The Economic Crisis and Racism in Britain'** at Colombo's CISIR auditorium. His lecture was organised by the **Movement for Inter Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE)**.

Tariq Ali made his reputation in the heady days of 'Student Power' in the late 1960's. A former president of the Oxford Union and the son of one of Pakistan's best known progressive journalists, Mazar Ali, Tariq was in the forefront of the anti Vietnam War protest movement of 1968-69 in Britain. A founding member and leading personality of the Trotskyist IMG (International Marxist Group) Tariq Ali maintains close links with Professor, Ernest Mandel's Unified Secretariat of the 4th International. The author of several books on the South Asian region, he is a guiding spirit behind **'Socialist Challenge'** which is regarded as the best produced Marxist newspaper in Britain. Tariq also writes for the left oriented **'New Statesman'** and the liberal **'Guardian'**. He spent two weeks in Sri Lanka late last month and addressed the **Political Science Association** at Peradeniya Campus on the subject of **'Class Struggles in Europe 1975-1980'**.

At his Colombo lecture, Tariq Ali said that Britain had been different from Western Europe in that immigrant labour had enjoyed certain rights in Britain. Now the attempt was being made to bring Britain in line with Western Europe in respect of immigration. Racist movements were gaining ground in Europe as a direct consequence of the economic crisis. Currently there were 10-12 million

people unemployed in W. Europe and the ruling classes needed scapegoats to explain away this situation as well as to divide the labour movement. Hence, anti black racism.

It was a widely prevalent myth that Blacks in Britain occupied marginal jobs which the whites considered too menial, such as manning the London Transport Board. The fact is that Blacks are centrally inserted into British industry, and the car industry, not to mention the National Health Service, would grind to a halt without the participation of Black labour. In the context of economic crisis, when redundancy is inevitable, Blacks are the first to be laid off. The function of racism is to justify this capitalist requirement.

In a now famous pre-election comment, Mrs. Thatcher said that Britain was in danger of being 'swamped' by non whites. This is the same slogan that is used by the National Front i.e., the Fascists. The Immigration laws are now extremely tight and openly racist, and as the economic crisis continues to mount, there'll be support for a 'repatriation with compensation' solution as presently practised in France. The British police are now as brutal as their European and American counterparts. In Southall for instance they went into action with cries of "kill the wogs", and made activists crawl on their knees through a gauntlet, while blows were rained on their heads with truncheons. The highups in the Police Force answer criticisms by saying that Blacks should stay at home and keep out of trouble, thereby implying that any Black who is out of doors after working hours is asking for "trouble" and deserves any that he/she gets. In short, the Blacks are expected to go to work in the factories, come home and then stay home. In point of fact what is taking place is that the Fascists (National Front) and the Police are stepping up coercion of the Black commu-

nity with a view to forcing the latter's acceptance of "repatriation with compensation".

The Blacks are fighting back, however. This is taking place in a spontaneous fashion, as the violent upsurge in Bristol (one year after Southall) revealed. An alliance in action is being spontaneously forged between Blacks and Asians, with the poor whites joining in on occasion. Asians used to consider themselves superior to the West Indians since their skin was a shade lighter, but now the ranks have begun to close and the Asians have begun to consider themselves 'Blacks' as well.

Despite the efforts of some organisations dominated by the older generation which attempt to act as 'dampers', the realization is growing that Racism can be defeated only by **fighting back**, and it is only when the Blacks fight that white attitudes towards them change. As long as the Blacks are quiescent, then the white attitude is one of contempt. "Here to stay, here to fight!" is the slogan of the Black youth today. The Blacks are in Britain today because the British were in the countries of Africa and Asia for two centuries.

The question of racism was never taken up seriously by the traditional organisations of the working class, charged Tariq Ali, who said that even the left organisations within the Labour Party didn't take up the race issue until recently. The overwhelming bulk of anti racist activity since 1960 was carried out by groups **outside the structure of the traditional political Organisations**. For instance it was the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the International Marxist Group (IMG) that were the main motive forces behind the Anti Nazi League (ANL). The utilization of popular Rock musicians such as Tom Robinson to attract working class youth audiences, was one of the main factors for the success of the ANL. Therefore the ANL could not be understood apart from 'Rock against Racism'. How-

ever the ANL could not make the transition from a broad anti fascist front into an anti-racist movement. Now there were attempts being made to regroup the components of the ANL into precisely such a movement.

A 'Strategy for Black Resistance and Liberation' has yet to be developed' admitted Tariq. Discussion were going on in journals such as Race and Class and the Institute of Race Relations headed by Sri Lankan A. Sivanandan (who also edits 'Race and Class') is acting as a powerhouse of ideas in this regard. The Campaign Against Racism and Fascism (CARF) and the Campaign Against Racism in the Media (CARM) also need to be mentioned.

A strategy for Black resistance, cannot mimic the Black Power movement of the U.S. Indeed, such a strategy must necessarily be a working class strategy, since 90% of the Black community in Britain are workers. Black have, therefore, to be liberated both in their workplaces as well as in their communities. The Black cannot be asked to hold on until the Socialist Revolution comes along to solve their problems. Rather, Black Caucuses must be formed in the workplaces for the purpose of organising measures of self-defence against racist attacks. There are presently 3 million unemployed in Britain and as the economic crisis worsens things are going to get rougher for the Blacks who are going to have to get ready for a long struggle. A positive feature of recent times however, is that trade union demonstrations now contain a large contingent of Black people, including women.

Replying to a question on Ireland, Tariq said that the recent 'Dirty Protest' in the 'H Block' of the Maze prison had evoked a massive wave of sympathy and that the mass mobilization which took place around the H Block protests often involved the populace of whole towns. These mass mobilizations were bigger in scale than anything since 1969. This phenomenon had led Bernadette Devlin to have a dialogue with the Provisional IRA and tell that while they should hold on to their guns, the stress should be on building up the mass

movement. Any armed actions that are undertaken should not be ones that would be deleterious to the organisation of the mass movement. It is when the news of this important dialogue reached the Protestant extremists that Bernadette and her husband were shot.

Making a reference to Sri Lanka, Tariq said that he was struck by the progressive role played by the Christian clergy. This was evident in the stand of the church on the question of the strikers as well as the activities of priests like Paul Caspersz on the issue of racial discrimination. Latin America sets a fine example in this regard. Portraits of Lenin and Jesus Christ are a familiar sight in today's Nicaragua, said Tariq in conclusion.

D. Jayatilaka who chaired the meeting said that the Lankan Left was as Anglophile as the ruling elite. This was a negative feature, but that evening they had "turned bad into good", to use a Maoist phrase, and learned much from Tariq's experiences in fighting racism in Britain. The linkages between economic crisis and racism, as well as between racism and fascism, were relevant to Sri Lanka. So too was the link between race and class, that is to say, the interconnections between the struggle for racial equality and workers emancipation i.e. socialism. A facile integrationism had to be avoided and the specificity of the racial question needed to be grasped. In this context the slogan of organizing self defence against racist attacks was particularly relevant in the Hill country plantation areas.

Poem

*After the inevitable
rebirth*

*there is only loneliness
a necessary pain
as quiet as a deep lake
whose waters from the eternal
spring*

*trace a straight path
through the maze of
Centuries of colonial dreams.*

by

K. Kgositsile.

(Courtesy: Sechaba)

With 56 years of
experience and tradition
behind us C. W. Mackie &
Co. Ltd., offers you the
expertise in export of
Sri Lanka's traditional
and non-traditional
products. Not only that,
our well established
Import Department with
it's competent know how
create that unique
atmosphere for
international trade.

C. W. Mackie & Co. Ltd.,

36, D. R. Wijewardene
Mawatha,
Colombo.

Telephone:

34446, 34447, 34448, 34449

Telex: 1209

Briefly

Tragic Toll

IN EL SALVADOR "more people have died....during the past yearlargely as a result of government-condoned Rightwing 'death squad' killings than in all the other nations of Latin America".

This observation which appears in a report of the Council of Hemispheric Affairs, an independent US group representing academic, labour, political and religious interests, is quoted in an editorial of the **Christian Science Monitor**. The Council puts the death toll in 1980 at over 10,000.

While neither the Right nor the Left are described as 'homogeneous groups', the opinion of former US Ambassador Murat Williams is cited. According to Mr. Williams "the heterogeneous Left has the support of more than 80% of the population, with the Centre less of what remains than the Right".

The American casualties in these ruthless killings by the 'death squads' offer an illuminating glimpse into the political nature of the violence and the conflict of interests. The three nuns were working with a Christian Social Welfare organisation, while the two American men were engaged in a land redistribution program.

• The Old Line

INSPITE OF the blistering blasts of the Chinese press, Professor Ray Cline on to his Taiwan theory and the Hsinhua sharp-shooters are at it again. Cline of course is no ordinary teacher and that's why the Chinese keep the heat on. The former Deputy Director (Ops) of the CIA, Ray Cline is now a professor at Georgetown Centre for Studies, which looks suspiciously like the recruiting ground for Reagan foreign policy advisers. (Roger Fontaine is tipped to be an adviser on Latin America).

In an interview with the **NYK Times**, Cline said: "I have long supported the concept of dealing with the two Chinese governments on a *de facto* basis."

Describing this Posture as "Clinewithout the mask of a well-wisher of Sino-American relationsthis scholar-turned-politician has become so overbearing and prejudiced that he sounds as if an old-line imperialist has been resuscitated to lecture the present-day public."

• Sacred Cows

NO RESPECTERS of persons, Washington's columnists and cartoonists are getting to work on all the (new) President's men. But first the President himself, and his lavish inauguration ceremonies in the best Hollywood style and taste, complete of course with Frank Sinatra and the Mafia.

The promise to control inflation probably brought him more than any other issue, Reagan said he would so by slashing government spending. The welfare programs? Mr. Jerry Wurf, President of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees protested: "It would be a disgrace if the Reagan administration tried to launch its anti-inflation program by cutting federal spending on social programs as such food stamps, welfare, health care and unemployment compensation at the same time it hands out tax breaks to corporations, oil companies and the wealthy".

Where and what to cut—that's the dilemma. Just as in Sri Lanka, certain welfare benefits have been 'sacred cows' of the political system. One cartoonist saw Cowboy Reagan appealing to Jimmy Carter for advice as the latter returned to the ranch. Which cows were sacred and which could be slaughtered? "You just hafta ask 'em, Ron!"

Marxists, Christians

Ever since his visit to Salvador Allende's Chile, **Fidel Castro** has spoken out in favour of cooperation between progressive Catholic movements and Marxists. In Jamaica in December 1974 Fidel articulated the idea of "an alliance, not tactical but strategic, between Christians and Marxist-Leninists." Returning to Cuba from a visit to Liberated Nicaragua in August 1980, Fidel restated this slogan and extended it to the extent of calling for 'unity' between Marxists and Christians. This formula of strategic alliance and unity between these two sectors, was an explosive one which would undermine the basis of imperialism in Latin America, said Fidel on that occasion. (Earlier, in a **Time** magazine interview in December 1979, Fidel, commenting on the Iranian revolution and the role of Khomeini, spoke of the possibility of an alliance between Islam and Marxism as well as of the correctness of a policy of support for Khomeini).

Most recently, Fidel's main report to the 2nd Congress of the Cuban CP, while stating that "only the first Christians, in the time of imperial and pagan Rome are comparable to Communists", went on to say that:

"In Latin America, the active participation of the Christian forces which go beyond the conservative—at times reactionary—stands of the Christian Democratic parties in the region and actively join the struggle for social liberation, democracy and social change of our peoples, becomes increasingly important. The fact that leftists are joined in the shoulder to shoulder battle by Christian revolutionaries, including occasionally Catholic priests and high ranking clergy, is a notable aspect of the great historic changes that are taking place in our countries."

El Salvador : Two concepts of war

Arqueles Morales

Panama City January 22 — whereas leaders of El Salvador's ruling JUNTA claim to have 'smashed subversion', leaders of the opposition Farabundo Marti Liberation Front (FMLN) say that their January offensive has 'achieved its aims'.

Experts consider that now that the evidence of what has happened during the 12 days of the offensive can be seen more clearly, the contradictions in the claims of the two sides are due to different concepts of the kind of war being fought in the country.

An FMLN spokesman also blamed some of the confusion on news reports spoke of the Guerrilla campaign as the 'final offensive', rather than the term they really used, the 'general offensive'. The two sides see what has happened over the past two weeks with differing criteria: whilst the government interprets the fact that it has prevented the Guerrilla from taking over the major towns as a 'strategic victory'. The FMLN claim this is not the case at all.

They say that their attack on the towns was aimed at pinning the government forces down and denying them mobility, and to convert the whole of the country into a fighting zone. They point out that until their January offensive the regular army was able to move more or less freely throughout the country, except for a few areas in the North where government control has virtually broken down altogether.

Now they say that the army is restricted to the capital and the larger towns in the interior, and that they themselves control most of the countryside.

Foreign visitors have visited Guerrilla camps in such strategic places as San Vicente on the

Exclusive to Lanka Guardian from INTERPRESS (Third World) News Agency.

slopes of the Volcano Chin-Chontepaque and in the Guazapa Hills in the North.

The Guerrillas have also cut several important routes, and according to eyewitness reports from a number of peasants, the army 'doesn't dare to go into' several regions already in the hands of the opposition forces.

It also seems that although most Guerrilla troops have now pulled back to their bases, groups of them make sorties everyday to attack barracks, police stations and government offices. Thus denying their enemy freedom of action.

The FMLN insist that the four objectives they set themselves at the beginning of the offensive have been achieved. They also regard it as very important that their troops have now been 'blooded' in positional combat and in siege warfare, which they see according to one FMLN military leader, as marking a 'decisive step in the progression from Guerrilla to that of a Revolutionary army'.

The FMLN also say that the offensive gave them the chance to try out their new weaponry, which included new arrivals such as the RPG anti-tank rocket launchers. In their view they have tested and strengthened their zonal Guerrilla groups, and have been able to establish insurrectional defence committees (CDI) which from now on provide the basis for resistance and defence in the fighting areas.

The army takes the opposite view. The Minister of Defence Colonel Guillermo Garcia recently said that 'if the enemy launches an offensive and is crushed, then one has won the war'.

(Continued on page 8)

HUNAS FALLS HOTEL ELKADUWA

**WHERE EVERY
PROSPECT
PLEASES**

RESERVATIONS

PHONE: 31894

121, SIR JAMES PEIRIS MAWATHA,

COLOMBO 2.

Central American earthquake threatens Reagan

The capital cities of the republics of Central America are surrounded, for the most part, by huge volcanoes. Some are smoking and have half the crust torn away to reveal a red hot internal lake of fire. Others are quiescent, silhouettes on the skyline. Eric Wolf, the great anthropological investigator of Central America, called his book on the area, *Sons of the Shaking Earth*.

Today the seismic activity is mostly political. The entire isthmus is absorbing the reverberations of the great Sandinista upheaval in Nicaragua in July 1979 that swept away Somoza. In almost every country new forces are emerging. Simply by existing, without having to lift a finger in support of the struggles elsewhere, the Nicaraguan revolution has changed the atmosphere—just as the collapse of Portuguese rule in Angola and Mozambique gave hope to the blacks of Soweto and Zimbabwe.

All over Central America the old battles between peasants and landlords, between guerrillas, bandits and regular soldiers, are being joined again. The ancient alliance between Church and State has been broken. Even the old ruling class is at odds with itself. The local armed forces, corrupt and divided, turn increasingly to the most barbaric forms of repression to sustain their crumbling position. The grisly work of the officially-inspired death squads continues unabated and unchecked. Priests and nuns, journalists and academics, trade unionists and politicians—no one is entirely safe. But the great bulk of the assassinations take place in the countryside, involving anonymous peasants—a largely unreported and unsung struggle.

Yet the great mass of the people, denied a voice for decades, are now finding new leaders and fresh ways of expressing their grievances. Honduras is still quiescent, but in

El Salvador, units of the recently-united Farabundo Marti Liberation Front are trying to spark off a country-wide insurrectionary struggle. In Guatemala the Ejercito Guerrillero de los Pobres—the Guerrilla Army of the Poor—has embarked on the same project.

And all this is taking place just down the road from California and Texas, in the vulnerable backyard of the United States. If historical precedent is anything to go by, the area will provide the backdrop to the first great crisis of the Reagan presidency. For when

advocate sterner methods of repression.

On the left there is a new mood of optimism. After years of political opportunism and heroic failure, there is a feeling that change is now possible. People are sharpening their pens and dusting down their old handbooks on guerrilla war. The Sandinistas have a slogan, posted on the hoardings around Managua, "El amanecer de ser unatentacion". It means, roughly translated, "the dawn of the revolution is no longer a dream".

Central America could provide the new President's first crisis, writes Richard Gott

has the United States allowed red volcanoes to erupt in its sphere of influence without trying to suffocate them? Guatemala in 1954, Cuba in 1961, Santo Domingo in 1965, Chile in 1973. Against this record, how much longer will Nicaragua be allowed to survive? And can Reagan's America stand idly by while El Salvador and Guatemala explode?

El Salvador is the latest flash-point in the growing crisis, a foreseen and inevitable development. You don't have to be a Pentagon general to have predicted the toppling of the Central American dominoes. The late General Anastasio Somoza maintained an intricate weave of relationships, both economic and military, with all the countries of the isthmus. Without their Nicaraguan godfather, with his easy access to the advice and expertise of the American military in the Canal Zone, the purposeful march of the Central American dictators has been faltering. Confronted with a new and changing situation, even the officers in their armies are divided as to what to do and how to meet the challenge. Some, a minority, demand reform. Others

For the Americans—for the State Department, the Pentagon, the press and the business community—Central America has for long remained a conundrum. For more than a quarter of a century, ever since the CIA helped overthrow the left-wing government in Guatemala of Jacobo Arbenz in 1954, it was terra incognita. State Department policy towards the area was conspicuous by its absence. Propaganda in favour of the reformist slogans of the Alliance for Progress in the Sixties fell on deaf ears.

Oligarchic and military governments were put together and patched up by the Pentagon and American business interests on a purely pragmatic basis. General Somoza was a model for the area. The American press dutifully reported coups and earthquakes but otherwise took no interest.

Now all that has changed. Reporters from the New York Times and the Washington Post travel up and down the isthmus. Think tanks in Washington feed Central America into their computers. Ambassadors on special mission and assistant secretaries of

state jet into the capital cities for emergency consultations. Meanwhile, businessmen and military advisers wring their hands.

The Republicans tend to blame Carter for handing Nicaragua to the Sandinistas on a plate—though that was never the State Department's aim, and the guerrillas had to fight for what they eventually won. Old Southerners argue, more convincingly, that the man who began the destabilisation of Central America was Henry Kissinger—"the faceless wonder in striped pants" as they used to call him—who embarked on the process of "giving away" the Canal Zone. More important than either was the earthquake of Christmas 1972 which destroyed the city of Managua and eventually, in the aftermath of intensified corruption and misrule, helped to destroy Somoza himself.

Whatever the origins of the crisis which has now spread from Nicaragua to the rest of Central America, it is one peculiarly of the Americans' own making, and one for which they alone bear responsibility. Unlike other trouble spots in the world—the Middle East, Africa, South-East Asia, Europe itself—Central America is an area where the Europeans have few interests in play. The United States is alone with its backyard, without allies. The fact that Britain owns Belize and once held the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua is largely irrelevant.

More significant are the recommendations of Venezuela and Mexico, now more than ever important as the suppliers of America's oil.

They are both firm supporters of the Sandinista government and would deprecate any American move to overthrow it. But they need the American market at least as much as America needs them, and in the past they have never been powerful arbiters of hemispheric policies. And their attitude towards the unfolding crisis in El Salvador, which demands the most immediate attention, is profoundly ambiguous.

In their campaign rhetoric, the Reagan Republicans convinced themselves, misguidedly, that what was

going on in Central America was Moscow-inspired. "Must we," said Reagan. "Let Nicaragua, El Salvador all become additional 'Cubas', new outposts for Soviet combat brigades? Will the next push of the Moscow-Havana axis be northward to Guatemala and thence to Mexico, and south to Costa Rica and Panama?"

Seeing the world in such simple terms, the campaign rhetoric went on to demand simple solutions. "If we are confronted with the choice," said Jeane Kirkpatrick, now selected to be Reagan's ambassador at the United Nations, "between offering assistance to a moderately repressive autocratic government which is also friendly to the United States, and permitting it to be overrun by a Cuban-trained, Cuban-armed, Cuban-sponsored insurgency, we would assist the moderate autocracy."

This was perhaps meant as nothing more than the reiteration of an old Republican tradition. But in the Eighties the United States would be hard-pressed to find "a moderately repressive autocrat."

Both in El Salvador and in Guatemala the old conservative interests that the United States has backed for decades are now fighting with every weapon they can find. There is no "moderation" in their policies. Thousands of people have been assassinated in both countries as the dying order struggles to survive.

So in practice the new United States administration (which, in General Htig, has a Secretary of State typically unversed in the detail of Central America) will be forced either to follow the Carter line (with a different rhetoric), or to embark on a programme of military intervention, however disguised. If it cannot patch up governments in El Salvador and Guatemala that try to find political outlets for the explosions from below, as Carter's ambassadors have tried to do it will have to back up the dictators with more than words and money. That is certainly what the campaign rhetoric has led those dictators to expect. And it is exactly what Somoza's son asked for—and was denied—in the weeks before the Sandinista victory.

Would it not be possible, Tachito Somoza asked the American ambassador in Managua, to send in several hundred American military advisers, officers familiar with Nicaragua, to move into the National Guard at command level and stiffen morale?

That is the kind of request that President Reagan's ambassadors in San Salvador and Guatemala City will shortly be receiving. It is a question to which Che Guevara always hoped the Americans would answer yes. "Little by little," he wrote, "the obsolete weapons which are sufficient for the repression of small armed bands will be exchanged for modern armaments, and the United States military 'advisers' will be substituted by United States soldiers, until at a given moment they will be forced to draft increasingly greater numbers of regular troops to ensure the relative stability of a government whose national puppet army is disintegrating before the attacks of the guerrillas. It is the road of Vietnam; it is the road that will be followed in our America..." It is the road that successive American administrations for the past 15 years have tried to avoid.

(The Guardian, London)

El Salvador . . .

(Continued from page 6)

This seems a simplistic judgement of a very complicated situation, and there is good evidence to believe that the army was surprised at the number of new weapons which the Guerrillas had available in the fighting.

Perhaps they should also bear in mind that on June 27, 1979 when the Sandinista troops pulled out of Managua the capital of Nicaragua, after more than 20 days of fighting, Anastasio Somoza boasted that 'the subversive offensive has been crushed at the gates of the capital'.

SHOULD SRI LANKA GO NUCLEAR?

E. Carlo Fernando

(Hydro-power Consultant, Ceylon Electricity Board)

Nuclear Power generation is not a matter for a few individuals to push through in Sri Lanka. I consider the following fourteen basic questions should be answered in the first instance, for the public to know what we are heading for. The points raised in these questions should be of concern to a power industry, responsible for power generation in Sri Lanka. Apart from those, there are many aspects which have to be dealt with concerning other disciplines.

Q. 1 An energy shortage over hydro capability will start in 1987 and develop to 1000 to 1500 MW by the year 2000. System demand in 1987 will be about 700 MW and by the year 2000 it will be between 1700 and 2200 MW.

What is the capacity of the Nuclear plant recommended to meet this requirement?

Q. 2 In the U. S. A. a country with no lack of nuclear technology it takes a minimum 12 years to get a nuclear power plant through.

So can Sri Lanka with no experience in nuclear technology put a nuclear power plant on stream by 1992 as recommended to the Cabinet?

Q. 3 Is not the safety of a nuclear plant a relative matter — depending on the degree of technological development and maintenance standards in a country?

Nuclear is said to be safe, provided that all the stipulated standards and precautions are taken. What is the estimated gap in years between the advanced countries like the U. K., U. S. A., Germany and a poor country like Sri Lanka in this respect?

The answer to this question is quite evident if we just consider Sri Lanka's performance in the following —

- train services which never run on time;
- hardly any manufactured article is upto international standards;
- to get a telephone call one has to wait for hours;
- practically every day there is a power failure;
- All the automatic controls of boilers and turbines at Kelanitsa Power Station have been out of order five years after commissioning. It is to be noted here that nuclear plants have fully automatic controls.
- It is rare if a devoted Sri Lankan professional can be found who will be prepared to work in a remote place where a nuclear power plant could be sited. The alternative is to have the nuclear plant in Colombo. So it is a matter for the citizens of Colombo to say whether they wish to have it in their backyard or not.

Q. 4 Where is the power plant to be sited?

Q. 5 What are the arrangements to dispose of nuclear waste material.

Q. 6 Australia has large uranium resources, but she has ruled out nuclear power in this century. The reason given is that she does not want to depend on foreign technology. Do we plan to depend on foreign technology and if so to what extent?

Q. 7 Energy policy makers in India advocate a go slow approach in nuclear power. Why should we go fast?

Q. 8 In Hong Kong with a fairly large power system the largest operating units in the colony are the 200 MW sets and even if there were an interconnection between the two networks the combined system capacity would not support the currently available nuclear systems at an economic level. A study made by the International Atomic Energy Agency in 1975 revealed that even a modest programme of two 600 MW units in the mid 1980's would cost more than double the \$ HK 2 billion estimated for fossil fired plants of equivalent capacity — Comments?

Q. 9 Sri Lanka's installed capacity is almost at the bottom of the list of international power systems. Can she with 300 MW compare herself with giant power systems in advanced countries, as in the UK, USA and so on, with systems of over 50,000 MW range?

Q. 10 What is the capacity of the smallest power system to which nuclear power has been added on a commercial scale? Taiwan's power system was 4000 MW when the first nuclear plant was added.

Q. 11 From where can we get nuclear fuel without aligning ourselves with power blocks. Recently India had to face the crisis of having her uranium supplies cut off. This matter was dealt with at the highest level in the US Congress.

Q. 12 Thorium is available in beach sands in certain parts of Sri Lanka. As a by-product from the Mineral Sands factory at Pulmoddai about 10 T of thorium could be had per year. Supplies here are said to last 20 years. Have we got the capacity to open similar factories at other products ilmenite, rutile, zircon?

Moreover the thorium cycle is an advanced fuel cycle and it is only academic at present. It is expected to be introduced commercially only by the turn of the century. The use of thorium is based on fast breeder technology. It is certain that this technology will not be available to Sri Lanka as it leads to the production of plutonium used in the manufacture of bombs.

Q. 13 According to the conclusions reached at the world Energy Conference 1978 on the World Energy Resources 1985-2020:—

- beyond 1980, known resources are believed capable of supporting a maximum level of annual production approaching 110,000 tonnes uranium, achievable by 1990.

- from 1990 the production rates from known resources will decline.

- some 300,000 tonnes of uranium per annum gap between production from known resources and

uranium demand following anticipated introduction of commercial breeders in the late 1990's, will develop between 1990 and 2020

- this deficit will have to be met by development of new sources.

- the task of providing the world with uranium at the rate required, even under the rather optimistic demand assumptions based on introduction of commercial breeders, is truly immense.

Can a poor country like Sri Lanka base her future power development plans on such uncertain nuclear supplies and nuclear technology?

Q. 14 It is claimed that nuclear is the safest source of energy, even safer than hydro and that radiation hazards posed by the small leak in the Three Mile Island Plant in Pennsylvania, U. S. A. has been exaggerated. If these statements are correct why is this plant now one year after the accident, still kept closed?

Met-Edison Power Company estimates it will take at least three years (Federal authorities put the figure close to five) to re-open the plant. How is that such vital data has been hidden when nuclear energy for power generation was proposed to the Government?

If the world's most technologically developed country U. S. A. has to take so many years to re-open this plant which suffered a small leak, on what grounds can Sri Lanka with no nuclear experience whatsoever be qualified to do better than the U. S. A?

A responsible power industry cannot face the consequences, if a 600 MW nuclear plant has to be kept shut, may be permanently, if a similar accident were to occur here. Just consider the economic damage this nation has suffered in recent months due to just 50 MW power cuts.

**Next: The cost factor
by J. Diandas**

INVITE US TO CATER FOR YOUR PARTY

**6
to
60
or
more**

PAGODA

Catering is our speciality.

We cater for any function large or small: weddings, engagements, cocktails, luncheons, dinners.

PAGODA RESTAURANT too

is available for your party.

Phone: 23086, 29236



PAGODA

105, Chatham Street,
Colombo 1.

Cyril Rodrigo Restaurant

* Free Public Lecture on Christian Science **UNDERSTANDING GOD'S SCIENTIFIC LAW**

by

WILLIAM A. BAXTER C. S.

Member, Christian
Science Board of
Lectureship,

Sat. February 21st, 5.15 p.m

Dutch Burgher Union Hall,
114, Reid Avenue,
Bambalapitiya

Free Literature
No collection taken

ALL ARE WELCOME

* *Auspices:*

**Christian Science Society
Colombo.**

Anagarika and Arunachalam

B. Sriskanthadas

Commenting on the series of articles on ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA which appeared in LANKA GUARDIAN one finds that while some are dispassionate others have been tendentious in their approach. Anyhow I do propose to confine myself in these columns to the analysis of certain perfunctory comparisons and unmarxist overtones in Nihal Perera's article. Nihal Perera who sees hair splitting differences between a catalogue of characters who lived during the latter part of last and early part of this century throws a common halo around ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA and PONNAMBALAM ARUNACHALAM by calling them those "who strove to create a truly national liberation struggle....."

Though both these men belonged to a particular period of our political history, it should be noted, that the outlook adopted by them to the then prevailing problems differed a great deal. Arunachalam has been in his early days an admirer of the British Liberal Party and their leader Gladstone who was the architect of the second REFORM BILL, which was intended to give votes to working-class householders. And it is said that he staunchly supported the Labour Party in later years. During his undergraduate days in Cambridge, Arunachalam became a close friend of the socialist writer and poet Edward Carpenter who introduced this young man from the orient to socialist liberal thought and the trade union movement. This moulding at an early age helped Arunachalam to look at problems in a perspective which was diametrically opposed to that of his contemporaries including his conservative brother Ponnambalam Ramanathan.

The following sentences used in his address show what was in his mind and in what direction he was moving. "The inherent evils of a Crown Colony administration remain. We are deprived of all power and

responsibility, our powers and capacities are dwarfed of inferiority, and we can never rise to the full height to which our manhood is capable of rising. We have hypnotised ourselves to thinking that we are weak and inferior.... "We are exploited by European nations, and now also by Japan and America. We have become their milch-cow. Much of our wealth goes abroad. What is left imparts an air of prosperity to the professional and commercial classes. The real makers of the country's wealth—peasant and labourer—are steeped in poverty....."

"We ask to be in our country what other self-respecting people are in theirs—self-governing, strong, respected at home and abroad; and we ask for the grant at once of a definite measure of progressive advance towards that goal. Ceylon is no pauper begging towards that goal. She is claiming her heritage....." (The Life and Times of D. R. Wijewardena by H. A. J. Hulugalle p. 66-67).

Arunachalam espoused the cause of those oppressed amongst whom he lived though they didn't belong to his faith or community. He trusted the ordinary people and was quite aware of the manner and fortitude with which the Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims defied the foreign invaders. He too, was not unaware of the fact the Sinhalese it was only the well to do who were obsequious and betrayed the entire cause for a mess of pottage. As police magistrate in Kalutara in 1880, he openly encouraged the Buddhists. Let us see what he has to say on all these—"Under British rule there has been a tendency towards Christianity on the part of well-to-do Sinhalese who think it is a 'respectable religion'.... being the religion of their masters.... Since my arrival here I have done as much as I can to support.... Buddhism and the people are pleased to have an official in my position doing so. We shall soon succeed

in knocking all idea of respectability as attaching to Christianity out of (their) heads. (Letter to Edward Carpenter, Carpenter Collection, Sheffield City Library, MSS. 271 No. 28). It is also apparent from the above document that Arunachalam identified British rulers as the main enemy of the people of our country and felt the need not to create a division in the anti-imperialist camp—that is among the Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Catholics. He was aware, just as any reasonable person, of political acumen, that all these people had antagonistic contradictions with the rulers as opposed to the friendly contradictions among themselves.

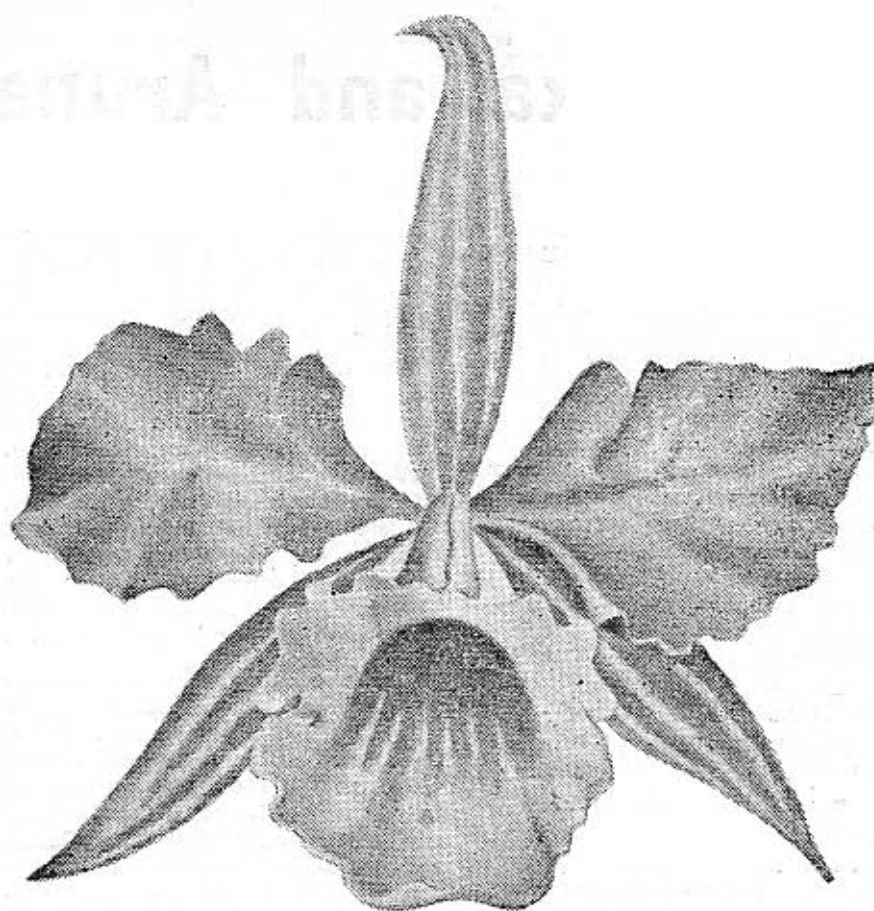
In contrast to this Anagarika Dharmapala failed in identifying the main enemy of the people. He was caste conscious to the core. Prof. Ralph Pieris commented on this. "He justified the caste system. He writes of a 'spy' in Calcutta, one Bodhipala, 'a Sinhalese Catholic of the fisher caste'. It is likely that his animus against the Sinhalese was directed against the activities of the Karava Christians, who launched a campaign against him bringing to the attention of the Governor allegedly seditious articles in his journal SINHALA BAUDDHAYA, especially in the issue of 30 May 1914." (LANKA GUARDIAN Vol. 3, No. 11) He let loose a barrage of attack against the Catholics without realising that a sizable section of them had contradictions with the British rulers and that their living conditions were appalling. According to Anagarika "Roman Catholic nuns are excellent matchmakers. These nuns are not virgins." (The Feudenberg Translation cited by Prof. Ralph Pieris. LANKA GUARDIAN Vol. 3, No. 11) The Sinhala Bauddhaya which didn't see any difference between the rulers and the indigenous non-buddhist population referred to Tamils, Moors and Europeans as 'infidels of degraded race' (Rise of the Labour Movement in Ceylon

by Dr. Kumari Jayawardena. p. 170). The paper was so venomous in its attacks on the Muslims during the height of 1915 riots that the Government had to take a decision to ban this. In a letter to the Secretary of State for the colonies, on 1915 riots he says "The Muhammedans, an alien people, who in the early part of the 19th century were common traders, by Shylockian methods became prosperous like the Jews.... What the German is to the Britisher that the Muhammedan is to the Sinhalese." (Return to Righteousness p. 540-41)

Nihal Perera wants us to treat all these deep seated reactionary views of Anagarika as mere 'short comings' and 'understand in the light of historical conditions, while conveniently ignoring certain significant political and social developments. Anagarika (1864-1933) lived at a time where organised working class agitation in Europe created ripples which lapped the shores of our country. The printers strike of 1893; The laundry workers strike of 1896; The carters strike of 1906; The railway workers strike of 1912; The general strike of 1923 are a few examples. Also, it should be noted, that this was the period in which the Great October Revolution of 1917 took place. In this milieu Anagarika's speeches writings hurling aspersions at the non-Buddhist local population would have only helped to retard the progress of the organised working class. This, too, facilitated the rulers to put into operation their divide and rule policy rather effectively.

Nihal Perera in his endeavour to teach Gunadasa Amarasekera, the difference between a Marxist and a Patriot throws himself into a labyrinth.. He cites what Mao Tse-Tung has said about Dr. Sun Yat Sen, in a different context to give Anagarika the veneer of a patriotic leader. Nihal Perera wouldn't have been in such a dilemma if he had ever read what Mao Tse-Tung has said in unequivocal language on patriotism - "There is the 'patriotism' of the Japanese aggressors and of Hitler,

(Continued on page 14)



An invitation.

Whenever you want orchids ...
whether it is a solitary stalk,
a beautiful presentation basket,
or a gay profusion elegantly
arranged for an important occasion ...
come to the Fern & Flower
for orchids that are beyond words.



HOTEL TAPROBANE, FORT. TELEPHONE: 20391

JVP on the LSSP, CP

Lionel Bopage is Actg.
Gen. Sec. of the JVP.

Q: You are on record as having repeatedly addressed the young elements at the base of the CPSU and urged them to change their leadership and make a self-criticism. If this was done, you pledged that the JVP would willingly enter into united actions with the CPSL. Owing to a variety of factors, internal and external, a self-criticism was made, a leadership change effected, and a re-orientation of the general line took place concerning the SLFP, the national bourgeoisie etc. But far from responding favourably you have continued to attack the CPSL (except for a brief interregnum). Why do you refuse to enter united actions with this party? At an earlier period you had expressed your willingness to enter into united actions with those sections of the left which had not participated in and had condemned the repression of April 1971. At a press conference given immediately after your release you even expressed willingness to enter into united actions in defence of democratic rights, with the Devil's grandmother. Why have you abandoned these positions?

A: You are right when you say that we urged the young elements at the base of the CPSL to change their leadership and make self-criticism concerning the betrayals entered upon by it plus its extremely class-collaborationist policy. Also, we declared there that it was only after these requirements were met that we should consider whether any united action with the CP could be possible.

It is true that a leadership change was effected and some self-criticism was made, but this was all for the purpose of deluding the membership of the CP and, on the whole, blindfolding the working masses of the country. The re-orientation of the general line of the CP must however, be tested in practice. When the said 're-orientation' of the CP is scrutinised with care, it is not too difficult to perceive that it is deliberately done

to take the masses for a ride. We know that there had been several instances where the CP was on the brink of repudiating the so-called re-orientation. (Maybe the CP found it difficult to resist the appetising memories of the old intimacy, and almost rushed to plant a couple of kisses on the cheeks of its ex-love, SLFP). Their virtual state of being class-collaborationist, their unaltered policy of following Moscow blindly, and their unceasing sectarian activities to undermine the organisation of the JVP made it impossible for us to enter into united action of any kind with them. Those sections which did not take part in and had condemned the repression of April '71—especially the CMU—too have developed close relations with the SLFP and become class-collaborationist. We endeavoured our best to convince them that they have taken the wrong end of the stick but they were reluctant to deviate from their course. We very much appreciate their uprightness in the face of the massive repression but it's a pity that now they are against that uprightness a lot more than they were for it in 1971.

We, however, still maintain that we are willing to enter into united action provided that our allies—to be truly socialist. If there is a party or a group ready to work genuinely for building socialism in Sri Lanka—regardless whether the devil's grandmother too belongs to it—we would love to be in its company.

Q: In 1977, the 'Niyamuwa' carried a 3 part series on the LSSP, entitled 'The last Journey of the LSSP'. In it is stated that the LSSP leaders embraced or propagated socialist ideals solely to outflank the traditional political leadership and gain popularity among the working class. The 'Rathu Lanka' in its April 1978 issue went on to say that the old left actions were 'not accidents or mistakes, but conscious and deli-

berate betrayals'. Is it your contention that the LSSP has never made a positive contribution at any stage in its 45 year history? Furthermore is it not ironic that your party has now adopted many theoretical positions that the LSSP articulated in its anti-Stalinist heyday? Then again, why have you refrained from commenting critically on the LSSP's Trotskyist past?

A: The LSSP, as a political formation, has been striving throughout to secure the class rights and interests of the petty-bourgeoisie of Sri Lanka. This can be proved by analysing its doings in the last 45 years, both theoretical and practical. But as a consequence of the organisation of the working class which the LSSP did solely for the purpose of attaining its class aims, there had been, so to speak, numerous by-products. Among these gains, which were totally accidental, was the struggle to disperse Marxist ideology. Yet their deliberate attempt was not to equip the masses with Marxist-Leninist Ideology but to inject a concatenation of petty-bourgeois thoughts into their brain cells.

We are of the firm opinion that the 45-year old LSSP has never made a positive contribution to the Socialist Revolution, whereas owing to the doings of the petty-bourgeois groups such as the LSSP, CP, MEP etc. the working class had been able to acquire some sporadic benefits which were not less than incidental. And we did analyse Trotskyism in the LSSP some time ago. There we asserted with precision that we have major and fundamental differences with Trotskyism.

Q: While you ardently support national liberation struggles the world over, from Puerto Rico to East Timor and from western Sahara to Namibia, you are vehemently opposed to the slogan of an independent, secular, socialist Tamil Eelam and you also reject armed struggle to achieve this

goal. Furthermore you have taken up a position which equates, and denounces equally, Sinhala chauvinism and Tamil nationalism thereby ignoring the fundamental Leninist distinction between the bourgeois nationalism of and oppressed nation which has a democratic and progressive content. Owing to this you have been denounced and have denounced in turn, the militant Tamil youth organizations who should have been your natural allies. Is your internationalism only for export?

A: We have always made the distinction between the bourgeois nationalism of the oppressor and the oppressed. Hence if someone says that we have denounced, Sinhala Chauvinism and Tamil nationalism equally or equated them, he is badly mistaken. We have proclaimed enough that Tamil nationalism is bourgeois nationalism induced by Sinhala Chauvinism. Thus we have truly recognised the democratic and progressive content of the struggle of the Tamil-speaking people.

We do recognize the indisputable right of the Tamil speaking people to self-determination, i.e. to separation, and continue to agitate so as to make these rights recognised by all. Can anybody say that this is not the genuine Marxist-Leninist position concerning the matter in question? We are, however, opposed to the slogan of an independent, secular, "socialist" Tamil Ealam since it runs counter to the socialist social revolution which is our supreme aim. Therefore in principle we do not agree on the contents of this slogan but this, by no means, means that we do not recognize their right to separation. In case the Tamil-speaking people arrive at the decision to be separate, they have the right to choose the sort of struggle they should adopt. As far as we are concerned, never have we suggested them either to accept or to reject a particular form of struggle.

It is indeed true that we voiced our disagreement when terrorist tactics were in progress, for we believe that any form of terrorism would drive the masses away from the revolutionary movement. Altho-

ugh there are several militant organizations of Tamil youth that claim to have taught Marxist-Leninist positions regarding the National Question, we reliably understand that they have not.

Prior to conclusion, I wish to mention that our internationalism is nothing other than Proletarian internationalism which is based on genuine Marxism-Leninism.

Letters

UNP and Balogh-ney

The more I read 'Chintaka' the more I am reminded of Thomas Balogh's observations on the Oxbridge type of education which "Placed a premium on dialectic skill rather than knowledge of the world". The reasons why 'The only true alternative to the UNP have remained where they are, are plain to see. Will these intellectuals never re-educate themselves?

Gangoda

G. Punchirala

Anagarika . . .

(Continued from page 12)

and there is our patriotism. Communists must resolutely oppose the 'patriotism' of the Japanese aggressors and of Hitler" (Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tse-Tung, p. 113). It would seem that Dr. Kumari Jayawardena was also prompted by a similar outlook when she gave Anagarika the label of a "Buddhist Nationalist" while making the following observations about Arunachalam — "But Arunachalam was more than cultured and liberal minded: he was radical in both his politics and his approach to labour. In many of his public speeches on political and social issues, he had to restrain his views in order to accommodate the more conservative opinions of other Ceylonese political leaders." (The Rise of the Labour Movement in Ceylon, by Dr. Kumari Jayawardena, p.204)

YOUR SELECTION FOR A PROTEIN RICH MEAL

ATTA FLOUR

IT IS MOST NOURISHING AND HEALTHY

PREPARE A PALATABLE MEAL WITH

ATTA FLOUR

Rs. 229/- PER BAG OF 50 Kg.

RULANG (Semolina)

FOR SWEETS
MADE OUT OF HIGH
QUALITY WHEAT

Rs. 376/- PER BAG OF 55 Kg.

Please Contact

Sri Lanka State Flour Milling Corporation

No. 7, Station Road,
Colombo - 3.

Telephone: 21300, 23152, 28008

Trotskyism, Vama and the NSSP

Shanta de Alwis

Chintaka has replied to my article on the "NSSP and popular frontism" using the standard Stalinist techniques of slander, vilification, distortion and falsification. I will ignore the personal attacks and concentrate on the political questions he has raised.

Trotskyism

Let me first take up the points about Trotskyism in general. Essentially he makes two points: One is that "all victorious revolutions hitherto, have seen fit without exception, to incarcerate and/or liquidate Trotskyists precisely because of the infernal nuisance they make of themselves by their incessant nagging...."

This point cannot be answered fully without a detailed explanation of the concept of deformed workers states and the Marxist theory of colonial revolutions.

Since the main subject of controversy, the historical record of the NSSP, must be dealt with in some detail I will content myself here with the following brief remarks:

If the Trotskyists were merely an "infernal nuisance" why was it necessary to destroy them physically? The reason is that all these revolutions, due to various causes which I have not the space to elaborate on here, spawned forth parasitic exploitative bureaucracies which cannot tolerate any kind of dissent. Least of all can they tolerate Trotskyism which advocates the overthrow of these bureaucracies and the establishment of workers' power. Even if Trotskyists are numerically insignificant, the bureaucracies realize the potential power of their ideas. If for example the Polish Stalinists had not liquidated the Polish Trotskyists, the Polish workers would not have stopped half way, thus leaving the way open for the bureaucracy to reassert itself in time and remove even the limited concession wrung out of them, as happened in 1956, 1970, and 1977. Instead, the workers

On January 31st, the Social Science Association's Current Affairs Study Circle sponsored a discussion on the S. L. F. P.

In their circular to participants, the S. S. A. wrote: "The articles on Sinhala Populism by Vickremabahu Karunaratne which were recently published in the *Lanka Guardian* have generated a great deal of controversy and debate regarding the nature and character of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party".

The article in the L. G. by Dr. Vickremabahu Karunaratne, who led the discussion at the S. S. A., followed a contribution to this journal by another leading member of the N. S. S. P., Prof. Shanta de Alwis, on the N. S. S. P. and Popular Frontism. A reply to this by Chintaka was published in subsequent issues. In view of the current interest in this and related issues, we now publish a rejoinder to Chintaka by Shanta de Alwis.

would have moved on to overthrow the bureaucracy and establish workers' power. This would have enormous repercussions all over Eastern Europe and the USSR, as all the bureaucracies in these countries are extremely unstable, for they are unable today to resolve the crisis of bureaucratic planning.

The second point he makes is about the antipathy of various revolutionaries to Trotskyism.

Name Dropping

Now if name dropping is a measure of theoretical literacy then Chintaka deserves the equivalent of a Nobel Prize and I'm guilty of making in Chintaka's words, a "ludicrous exhibition of himself flaunting his theoretical illiteracy" and should be duly punished by being deprived of the right to make use of the *Lanka Guardian* as a platform. However I believe the editor of this journal has a more mature appraisal of such matters. As for the people he mentions, excepting Gramsci, none of the others can be considered a Marxist revolutionary.

Che Guevara was a romantic heroic figure, a revolutionary in some

good sense. However, he cannot be considered a Marxist. Marxism holds that the working class is the only revolutionary class in this era, and Che Guevara certainly did not base himself on the working class. His tragic attempts to reproduce the 'Cuban Model' in other South American countries like Bolivia, show the essentially petit bourgeois romantic nature of his thinking. His hostility to Trotskyism is hardly surprising.

Practically all Third World revolutionaries have had similar conceptions. This is a consequence of the petit bourgeois nature of these societies. The domination of Stalinism which is a petit bourgeois deviation from Marxism, over the left movements of those countries, is hardly surprising. The consequence has been that in spite of enormously favourable objective conditions, revolutions in the Third world have been relatively few and even in those cases, they have taken place in a distorted fashion.

As for the various authors he mentions, I am not unaware of their hostile attitude to Trotskyism. In fact that is exactly what I would expect from them. Let us take a few examples.

Explicit Stalinist

Althusser was once an explicit Stalinist. Today he has broken away from the ideology of the parasitic counter-revolutionary bureaucracies of the workers' states and not having been able to come to a Marxist position, finds himself in a theoretical and political wilderness. Debray is today a leading adviser to the French reformist leader Francois Mitterand. Furthermore, he propounds a reactionary thesis of French Messianism! Emmanuel produced a weighty tome to "prove" that workers of the Imperialist countries exploit the workers and peasants of the Third World. It is clearly not possible for me to give a detailed analysis of the theoretical positions of all these people, but I should emphasize that many of

them have clearly reactionary positions and the others have thoroughly confused ones.

The only exception is Gramsci. However Gramsci's writings, in spite of many profound insights, are perhaps as a result of the difficult conditions under which he was writing, full of ambiguities and paradoxes. Indeed it should be noted that Euro Communists (especially the Italian ones) trace their political ancestry to Gramsci's conception of the "war of position" which he contrasted with the "war of manoeuvre". The latter (revolutionary offensive - valid for the East not for the West) he wrongly attributed to Trotsky. The irony of this was that it was Trotsky who (together with Lenin) criticised the ultra Leftism of the Italian Party (led by Gramsci) in 1921-22 and advocated the United Front (war of position).

The point is that Gramsci was writing during the so called "third period" phase of the Comintern, when it had rejected the UF tactic. His criticism of the Stalinist Comintern and Trotsky's criticisms of that time are practically identical.

NSSP and Vama

Let me now deal with the main issue; the question of the attitude of Vama Samasamajaya and the NSSP to coalition politics. In my original article I pointed out that the NSSP from its origins as the Vama Tendency within the LSSP, was distinguished by its consistent opposition to the popular frontist policies of the leadership. Chintaka seeks to dispute this claim. In the process he has completely distorted the history of the NSSP.

Let me first deal with his factual errors both minor and major.

(a) Kumar David has not left the NSSP as Chintaka claims.

(b) Oswin Fernando had absolutely nothing to do with the notorious "Hansa Regiment", (see Lanka Guardian 15 November 1980) Reggie Mendis however, who flirted with us for a few months, found a more confessional place to expiate his guilt regarding that episode, in the JVP!

(c) As an example of the "fact" that Vama had "no clear conceptual

grasp of the SLFP and consequently did not articulate a clear position on the question of relations with that party" Chintaka quotes the "famous Second Resolution of the LSSP conference in July 1972". The fact is however that "the famous Second Resolution" at the conference of November (there wasn't one in July) 1972 was not a Vama resolution.

Vama Position

The Vama position on the second Resolution is clearly stated in a letter to the General Secretary of the LSSP dated Feb 20 1973.

"From the beginning it was clear that there were differences between us (i.e. between the Second Resolution tendency and Vama). We thought that the Second Resolution ought to be based on a fundamental critique of principles and we strongly opposed any concessions to petit bourgeois radicalism. When we made a draft of the resolution it was rejected on the grounds that it was too abstract and theoretical.

"A split was inevitable but we agreed to give critical support to their attempt and to publish our position in an internal document.

This letter together with the two documents "Whither Bound" and "An Introduction to Philosophy" which put forth the Vama positions (circulated inside the party in 1972) are published in "An important question within the party."

(d) "Then again nobody heard very much of or from, 'Vama' during the 108 day Bank strike...."

As a matter of fact 'Vama' took a very clear stand in defence of Trade Union rights during the Strike. In an article on the bank Strike ('Marxwada') Sept-Oct 1972) it pointed out that "every trade unionist must fight for the defence of TU rights. This implies that in this period when the democratic rights of the working class are being threatened, the slogans that the struggle be launched with in every TU in defence of this fundamental right becomes a crucial one"

As a consequence of our stand on the Bank strike the Party bureaucracy threatened to suppress the magazine.

(e) The April 6th 1977 press release which Chintaka refers to is not a Vama Statement. It was issued by the group which was expelled (or left the party) with Vasudeva Nanayakkara. It incorporated many centrist currents as well as Vama members. Vama hegemony was established only at the December 1977 Conference.

Theoretical position

Vama's basic theoretical positions are contained in the documents collected together in the booklet "An important question within the party" (Feb 1, 1974) and the magazine *Marxism* especially the article "Socialism and Statism". Later on the theoretical (middle page) articles in *Vama Samasamajaya* elaborated on these positions.

The fact that the fundamental critique of the coalition (yes from 1964 onwards) strategy of the LSSP leadership and a clear analysis of the SLFP was present from its inception may be verified from the documents of 1972/73 contained in "An important question....".

The document "Whither Bound" is in fact the draft that Vama prepared as a second resolution for the 1972 conference, and was rejected by the leaders of the "famous resolution" tendency. The Vama documents is an analysis of the rise of populism during the 50's and '60s. Furthermore, it critically analyses the LSSP's relationship to the populist movement.

Let me take a few quotations. "Although during the Bandaranaike era the working class thought its struggles and the rural masses through its influence (on the movement) won certain concessions, fundamentally its content was the consolidation of a new bourgeois (mudalali) class" (An important question...." p.12)

"We may identify it (i.e. the SLFP) as a populist movement which bases itself on the aspirations of the struggling middle class in order to make the changes in the social framework necessary for a developing bourgeoisie. While the UNP exists to defend the existing capitalist framework the SLFP arose in order to widen the capitalist framework by cutting off certain "reac-

tionary" capitalist sections if necessary." ("An important question..." p. 14 - my emphasis).

These are just a few highlights of the analysis of the SLFP contained in the above document, but even they make it abundantly clear that Vama had not only an extremely clear understanding of the capitalist class character of the SLFP but also of its specific role in contradistinction to that of the UNP. That is precisely the point I made in my previous article.

Chintaka writes "One had to wait until late 1975-76 to hear from the Vama group, a clear denunciation of the 1964 betrayal." Let me quote again from the same 1972 document.

"The SLFP was unable (by 1961-62) to carry on with its inflationary welfarist policies. The working class which had been politically quiescent began to move into political class struggles. The 1961 General Strike is the mass example of this. However our party (the LSSP) which had been accustomed to evaluate political trends only through the parliamentary process did not believe that it was possible to go forward, taking the country as a whole in the above fashion. Our leadership argued that the rural masses were definitely bound to SLFP politics and they questioned how strike struggles would help to bring about the separation of these masses from the SLFP, and unite them with the working class. Their conceptoin is as roughly as follows:

"While the SLFP has been pushed towards taking anti-imperialist democratic measures it has also won the confidence of the masses. In the face of today's crisis it will move further left. Taking them forward is our responsibility. While according to Trotsky's theory as these tasks are being accomplished the working class acquires leadership, to the extent that the working class becomes active the government's for-

ward movement will also take place. Truly a workers' and peasants' government similar to Lenin's conception would be formed and this process will lead to the working class becoming the principal motive force.

However the true situation was that by 1962 in the face of the crisis the SLFP had to move rightwards and the masses began to move away from the SLFP and look for new paths. **The support obtained by the United Left Front made this extremely clear.** It was especially clear that the working class had entered the path of class struggle. As a result of this and the 1962 right wing threat, the SLFP badly needed to protect itself through a compromise with the working class. The Leftward switch of 1964 must be understood in this way. The SLFP arose because of the needs of a developing bourgeoisie in a period of boom. When the boom was over and the SLFP was on the verge of falling again into third place its fall was broken by our (i.e. the LSSP) support." ("An important question" p. 14).

"Because of the strong boom in capitalism in the 1950's and '60s it seemed as if capitalism was free from crisis. While in this period the way was cleared for various reforms, these very reforms were actually necessary for capital investment to take place. As a result of this "new" situation, bourgeois ideologies began to seep in to the workers movement, and some formerly revolutionary intellectuals were led even to abandon the thesis "confidence in the working class, the path of socialism is the proletarian revolution." Undoubtedly our leadership was caught up in this empiricist current" (ibid p 19). "To split or not to split?

"The question which arises in the minds of every comrade who reads the above critique of principles in whether we should split or not split from the coalition. But isn't it most likely to be dangerous to break away is the question they ask in the end? If we can split under favourable circumstances we should work towards that goal. Verily, the question arises in the way. The question today is not

whether to split. It is whether we are going to use the coalition and parliament in order to create a favourable situation for us under which we can split the very near future, or whether in we are going to continue to attempt to work through the coalition. There can be no debate about this. To have confidence in working within the coalition is the path of defeat. Organising to take an independent road rapidly is the path of victory." (ibid p. 18)

The popular front in Chile was far more "Left Wing" than the Sri Lankan one. It was dominated by the working class parties with only a small bourgeois component. However even with regard to that front Vama pointed out in October 1972 nearly one year before the coup d'etat; "that front will be a forerunner to the victory of imperialism." (ibid p. 21).

My apologies to the reader for quoting at such length from Vama documents, but the unique and complicated nature of the history of the tendency and the distortions made by Chintaka made that absolutely necessary in order to put the records straight.

(To be continued)

NEW RATES

In view of the new postal and airmail charges the Lanka Guardian has been compelled to change its subscription rates.

Subscription Rates

(Inclusive of postage)

	1 Year	6 Months
Local	115/-	60/-
US/EUROPE	600/-	400/-
ASIA	400/-	200/-
INDIA	350/-	175/-

Cheques and money orders to be made out in favour of
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd.

NEW ADDRESS

The Commercial Manager,
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd
No. 246, Union Place, Colombo-2
Phone : 35223/37584

THE WAY TO THE FUTURE

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva

As will be realised, and as is now becoming apparent, large sections of the people have begun to be not merely uneasy but to positively resent the adverse impact on their daily lives of the consequences of Government's above summarised policies. Government itself is not unaware of this resentment. How has it met the situation? Characteristically, by a hardening of its law and order policies. Characteristically also, it turned first upon the working class organisations whose activities were anyhow seen as an obstacle to the free functioning of the economy the Government was sponsoring.

No other section of the masses has moved against this Government during three and-a-half years of UNP rule in the manner that the working class has moved. But the Government, not unconscious of the possible reaction of the masses to the blows it has been striking, has engaged itself systematically in the same period strengthening its repressive apparatus and arming itself with various repressive laws.

The aim of the legislation referred to, such as anti-terrorist laws, which cast a wider net than is generally realized, may be defined as that of passing in the ordinary law much of the repressive powers which previously were taken by Government only during declared emergencies. It is the steady strengthening of the repressive apparatus of the state against possible public disorder that is more striking. The police and armed forces have been doubled in these three-and-a-half years; they have been armed with deadlier modern weapons and trained in their use, not against any foreign foe but against the mass of the civilian population of their own country. The feared upsurge of the masses in desperation against their sharply deteriorating condition is what is being prepared against by the dispersal of armed centres

of specially armed and trained police, as also military units, throughout the country in preparation for instant action anywhere against any sign of mass action. Despite bold words from the President, this Government fears the masses they are oppressing.

On this day of our forty-fifth anniversary what is necessary to realise first of all is that this UNP Government has moved into a critical phase despite the cruel display of its vaunted strength, for instance during the July upsurge of the working class. The crisis derives, not from the actions of the masses, but from the unanticipated difficulties the Government has run into in respect of the financing of its boasted development policies. It is not merely that the vaunted open and free economy is in distress, calling for some revision of policies. The true source of the crisis is that the Government's finances are in a state of near-collapse. The cause? The runaway inflation which is, in the main, its own creation, that is to say, the consequences mostly of its own policies.

The announced central aim of the UNP Government has been the achievement of a rate of development which will overtake and dissolve the mass unemployment which has become a permanent feature of Sri Lanka. Hence, for instance, the attempted high acceleration of the Mahaveli scheme. High development connotes high investment; and the investments contemplated were colossal in terms of the Sri Lanka economy. The required finance simply could not be generated by Sri Lanka's under-developed economy. This had to be found from abroad. The principal agencies which could arrange the finance were the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; that is to say, the major collective lending agencies, set up in the interests of world capitalism and dominated in their own financing and policy-making by the

the Governments of the advanced capitalist countries, principally USA.

Banks are not philanthropic institutions though bankers often speak in philanthropic terms. So, in fact, does our local village money-lender also. Big banks lending big money for investment not only assess projects and scrutinise estimates with care, but also ensure that the borrower's policies accord with the lender's concepts of the needs of protection of the Lender's investment. This has in fact been the source and cause of the policies followed by the UNP Government. These policies were an essential part of the terms on which the money was lent to the UNP Government.

The runaway inflation of the last three years has sent the originally approved estimate hay-wire. Costs have escalated three-and-a-half times in the course of the three-and-a-half years of UNP rule. And our last state is worse than the first; for, if the escalated costs of inputs cannot be met, the original investment itself stands imperilled to the point of becoming fruitless. A partially built dam which has to be abandoned were for better not built at all. It is like pouring money down a sink.

That is the correct situation of the UNP Government. It is unable to raise the money necessary to finance the escalated costs by a long chalk. The economics of the Aid countries are in serious recession and, in consequence, they are not ready to contemplate increase of their Aid beyond the amounts originally promised. They demand of the UNP Government both that it turns further the screw of deprivation of the masses (e.g. the recent increases in bus and rail fares) in order to protect the investments already made and that it slows down development, by abandoning planned works or postponing them for better times.

The political consequences of the course of action demanded by the IMF and the World Bank can of

course be disastrous to the masses also. The consequent slowing down of the functioning of the total economy can be calculated in money terms but cannot even be measured in human terms. It will affect every section of the people and reduce the masses to penury and misery.

This is the prospect for the UNP Government and the masses under its rule unless the IMF and the World Bank relent and the Aid countries cough up the necessary cash, or other aid is found from other suggested sources (e.g. from private foreign capital through bank consortia or from the OPEC countries which a Hameed-Led delegation is soon to visit). **This is what makes a deal over Trincomalee with the USA a possibility even if it has not already been entered upon.** A desperate UNP Government will not hesitate to resort to desperate remedies. That is what makes the domestic prospects portentous. A failure of Aid can only result in the UNP Government resorting to intensified repression to stamp down on the restless masses. So that whatever remains of democracy will be the first victim. It is a grim prospect unless the masses intervene in time to impose their own Socialist solution.

And there's the rub. The organised working class has just suffered a major defeat in strike struggle against the Government. The mass of the victimised in that struggle is so large that recovery in the short run is not easy. It will require sustained intense effort.

At the same time, if the financial crisis of the UNP Government deepens and spreads, as it must in that event, to the general economy, sections of the masses are bound to rise in protest and to resist the Government. The task for the parties in Opposition to the present Government is urgently to prepare the masses for such protest and resistance, organizing them and educating them to a realisation of the situation and of the necessary courses of action.

Why do I say: "It is for the Opposition parties"? For two main reasons. No opposition political party can cope with the task by

itself going it alone. **A broad coalition of parties is necessary to cope with the task.** The second main reason is that the masses too need to unite broadly to generate the strength necessary for successful confrontation of the Government's repressive apparatus. This process too requires a broad coalition of the parties in which the various sections of the masses place their trust. **Thus, the urgent need of the day is a broad united front of the political parties which can work together to prepare the masses to demonstrate in protest against the Government's ever-spreading attacks on their living standards and on their democratic rights.** The nucleus of such a front already exists in the Five Party arrangements for joint agitation and action on agreed mass issues. **The required broad front of political parties opposed to the UNP Government can well develop out of the joint activities of the Five Parties, if those activities are carried out systematically and in close relation to the developing political and economic situation.**

Developing this anti-UNP front, however, is only part of the responsibility that rests on the party's shoulders right now. The wider and no less urgent task of bringing the masses to the concrete programme of measures our Party has worked out for the solution of especially the problems of inflation and mass unemployment has to be simultaneously performed by us. The performance of that task will have the added value of providing the masses in action with the necessary perspective along which to advance. The perspective of course is the perspective of the Socialist transformation of society in Sri Lanka—a transformation which can neither be initiated nor carried through successfully without the participation of the masses at every stage of the process. That concept is basic to our philosophy and our politics.

A word about this programme, any exposition of which is not

intended to be a part of this address. For an authoritative and lucid exposition of that programme, I refer you to Comrade Leslie Goonewardene's publication entitled "The Way Ahead" and the resolution of the 1978 Conference of the LSSP on the "Road to Socialism in Sri Lanka". What I wish to do here is to stress the concreteness of the programme; that is to say that the programme speaks of what concrete steps will have to be taken by the masses in power to get themselves on the road to a socialist society and to advance along that road. It is the duty of everyone in the Party and its ancillary organisations to study closely and master in detail this programme which we must actively take, individually and collectively, to other people, other parties, other groups and to the masses.

—Before I finish, I would like to make an earnest appeal to our membership. We are observing our forty-fifth anniversary in a changed and changing world and country, as I pointed out at the outset of this address. As I have pointed out in the second stage of my address, all of importance that we have achieved over the years of our existence as a party has been put in issue all over again and brought under ever-mounting attack in the last three years, which are years of rule of a revamped and reorganized UNP, **using the more modern instruments of politics and political activity with which the masses of Sri Lanka are not familiar.** This virulently reactionary and solidly anti-Left Government came into being with our Party, like the Left generally, pushed right back into the background of politics by the greatest electoral defeat that we have suffered in our history. That defeat threw us into a critical phase of our own history which now coincides with a critical phase in the life of the UNP Government and the movement of the masses.

The required effort to lift ourselves out of this critical phase of the party's development can best succeed through our throwing

(Continued on page 24)



A unified and unique contribution through diversification

The Browns Group of Companies cover almost every aspect of trade, industrial and agricultural development in Sri Lanka. With the accent on Group Progress through diversification and specialisation, each Member or Associate Company is equipped to provide services and goods of the highest standard. Yet the Group, as a whole, is based on a concept of unified service, which assures you of the overall benefits of its combined resources.

THE BROWNS GROUP OF COMPANIES

481, Darley Road, Colombo 10. P. O. Box 200, Tel. 91171 - 8
AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY, ENGINEERING, TRANSPORT,
TOURISM, EXPORTS, TRADE.

Content has many dimensions

Sagara

Seen in the broadest historical perspective, art that has permanent meaning and value did not arise always in periods of great historical change or of heightened social turbulence nor, necessarily, derive from an ideological standpoint which we would consider progressive. Some of the greatest works of imagination were created in the service of slave dynasties and feudal kings and lords and was based on the oppression and exploitation of the working masses, celebrating and enriching the life of the ruling classes and upholding and entrenching ideology. Nor were these creations limited to a period when these dominant classes were in a historically creative or revolutionary phase, but also appear in periods of stability and achievement as well as in periods of disintegration. This is equally true of modern times. Much of the great literature, theatre and painting of the 19th and 20th century were produced in a bourgeois or petit-bourgeois milieu, if not directly in the service of the bourgeoisie, at a time when the capitalist world order and the civilization of the bourgeoisie is in a state of acute crisis. Thus, the fears and confusions of the fractured world of the bourgeoisie, the social, cultural and psychological chaos that has been created under its leadership, the precariousness of the individual predicament, the dehumanisation and distress of the masses are all intensely reflected in the artistic creations of modern times.

Marxist criticism makes a complex appraisal of all this from both an artistic and historical viewpoint. It views the art of class and pre-class societies as part of man's long and continuous record of cultural achievement and draws on uses this great body of artistic experience to enrich the art and literature of struggle and, in societies where that is possible, of socialist construction. In assessing

the art of the past it pays special attention to the genius of artists and craftsmen, who rarely belonged to the dominant classes and sees that all artistic creations were, in the final analysis, drawn from "the congealed blood and sweat of the working people of all time". It analyses the origins and structuration of a work of art and examines how its significance and social function has often changed from age to age and audience to audience. It attempts, in other words, to achieve the broadest and deepest assessment of it.

But that is not all. The 19th and 20th century also sees the beginnings of the struggle of oppressed classes and peoples on a worldwide scale and their attempt, for the first time in history, to create societies of a new type (or types) with socialist aspirations. This has had its reverberations in the sphere of art and culture in general. That these primary attempts at an art which supersedes or at least which attempts to go beyond the art of earlier or existing social formations are cruder and less 'finished' or less successful than, let us say, the highly developed art and literature of the bourgeoisie, does not automatically render them less valuable. Marxist criticism has a special responsibility towards them; a specific interest in their development, an appraisal of the positive and negative aspects of their achievement and a highly sensitive awareness of the historical conditions in which they have emerged and the historic role they have to play. Especially in countries like ours, where the achievements of art produced in a bourgeois or petitbourgeois milieu are not substantial, progressive art and literature — i. e. an art of struggle, criticism and aspiration — plays an important, if not a dominant, role in the formation of modern culture and ways of thought and feeling. To confuse the nature of this achievement and the conditions in which

it arises with that of the well-developed traditions of capitalist societies is a basic error, while to ignore the dialectic which exists between feudal, popular or traditional and bourgeois art, on the one hand, and the emerging art of the oppressed classes and peoples is also a mistake.

Proceeding in this manner, we begin to see that the meaning of **content** has so many dimensions to it and that it also pervades the very concept of **form** itself, that is to say, the form and style of a work of art is itself imbued with the historical and social context of the period associated with its formation and development. The fact that we can identify the distinctive forms and styles of a period or a culture is the clearest manifestation of this, just as the phenomenon that the forms created by one age or culture may be re-used or re-interpreted (or for that matter may arise quite independently) in entirely different contexts and perhaps with very different signification, reinforces the idea of the primacy of content over form. While the effectiveness of a work of art and its power and vitality derive from the interdependence of form and content, Marxist criticism compels us to see that the very form and content itself and the meaning and function of that work relate to much wider parameters, both internal and external to the work itself.

Reggie Siriwardena's song from Shelley is indeed a useful test to which he himself should turn his critical powers and knowledge of European literature and society. He makes a fair point in quoting that poem and drawing our attention to the freshness and power of Shelley's language and imagery, but I think it necessary that he should go further. The present writer knows little about Shelley or the specific context in which his work was written and received,

(Continued on page 24)

Voluntary Sterilization For All

Incentives by Government

1. A Minimum of Rs. 500 will be paid to both males and females — whether employed or unemployed

(This Payment is made to meet incidental expenses)

2. 3 days full-pay leave for male employees
7 days full pay-leave for female employees

(This in addition to the full pay leave for which the employee is entitled)

Contact

**your nearest Government
Hospital or the AGA**

**FOR HEALTH AND PROSPERITY
PLAN A SMALL FAMILY NOW**

(Issued by the Ministry of Plan Implementation)

'Netra' : Countering racism

Just as the inequities of the International Economic Order are replicated within the national economies of most 'Third World' countries, the imbalances and asymmetries of the global information order are mirrored in the domestic information systems of our societies. This is why radicals have always linked the struggle for a new international economic order with the struggle for new domestic economic order. This is also why the call for new international information is being identified by the more enlightened elements in the 'Third World' with the call for a new domestic information order.

In the absence of such a dimension the slogan of a NIO merely translates itself into an effort by the governing elites of the 'Third World' to close off their countries' information system from news flows which have a critical character.

Under representation and misrepresentation have been identified as the characteristic defects of the Western dominated global information system. These features of under representation and misrepresentation are also characteristics of the domestic information systems, specially as regards certain social strata, national minorities and dissident political currents. This is no surprise, since the classes that own and control the means of material production also own and control the means of mental production, which is why the dominant ideas in any society during a particular period are the ideas of its dominant class. It is only recently however that progressive elements in our country have begun to pay serious attention to the ideological state apparatus (ISA), that is to say the apparatuses through which the ideological dominance of certain social groups is ensured and the subordination of other broader social layers is maintained.

Since the dominant social groups are numerically much smaller than the dominated layers, it is necessary

to promote divisions and exacerbate existing splits within the ranks of the working masses. This is particularly so during a period of deep structural crisis in society. Polarising the masses along ethnic and religious lines is one of the obvious methods of preventing, or breaking up, a unity along socioeconomic (i. e. class) lines which would have immense negative consequences for the ruling elite. This is why the propagation of chauvinism, both overt and covert, is countenanced if not actively fostered by the governing authorities. It is not that the personnel who manned the country's mass media are engaged in some dark conspiracy together with the ruling elite to keep the populace divided along racial lines, but rather that these personnel themselves have been **socialised** into the dominant values of our society and continue to disseminate these selfsame class biased and ethnocentric values and outlooks in their daily journalistic practice. The proprietors of the private newspaper groups, and in the case of the state owned media, the 'commissars' who run them however push this chauvinistic line with a far greater degree of class consciousness and anti-people sentiment than do the journalists themselves. The net result is that the readers are subtly suffused with chauvinistic sentiment almost on a day to day basis and the dominant divisive ideology is reproduced continually.

This is why radicals have called for "counter information" or alternative systems of information. In Britain for instance there exists the Campaign Against Racism in the Media (CARM). In Sri Lanka a similar organisation, the Council for Communal Harmony through

the Media was set up after the seminar in July 1979 by a core group of 25 people. The function of this organisation was being to be the promotion of healthy intercommunal relations and the exposure of undesirable communal manifestations in the media. To this end the council organised a seminar on 'The Film as a Medium of Cross-Cultural Communication,' and has initiated two research studies, one, on the reporting by the press of Sansoni Commission's proceedings and the other on school textbooks and communal relations. The results of these two research studies will be published when they are completed in the course of the year. The Council has also begun a regular monitoring of the media in respect of material which affects communal relations.

The products of this monitoring is contained in a 4 page newsletter entitled **Netra** which is issued in Sinhala, Tamil and English. The first of these newsletters containing material derived from monitoring the media in the period mid September to mid December 1980 has just been published by Reggie Siriwardena. In an introductory comment the CCHM requests readers to draw its attention to any items in the press, the radio, film or television in this country which may affect communal relations of good or ill and which seemed worthy of comment in the news letter. The CCHM would also be glad to receive the names and addresses of those interested in reading the newsletter. Those in sympathy with the work of the CCHM could write to Mr. Reggie Siriwardena, CCHM P. O. Box 601, Colombo. - D.J.

Content has ...

(Continued from page 21)

but I recall that Shelley was something of a social revolutionary and a follower of Godwin and other Utopian socialists. What little poetry of his that I have at hand while writing this, seems deeply imbued with the conditions of the time—social, political, epistemological and of course literary. It is not Shelley's craft (smanship) — certainly a vital aspect of the poetry — which determines the poem but the coincidence we might say of his personal and social being. Critical appraisal of the poem which limits itself to its message and sentiments and an analysis of its poetic structure, i.e. the way in which it works, is a valid, but an inadequate basis for contributing towards a general theory of art and criticism.

If Marxist criticism is to fulfil its creative social functions it has to go beyond a polemic that dwells on its mistakes or inadequacies,

or the limitations of one particular school or tendency and strive towards a clearer grasp of its theoretical basis as well as the vigorous application of that theoretical approach to current developments. Theory in this sense can no way be held to mean knowing 'Marx's Capital by heart'!

It would not be unfair to say, I think, that Samudran's articles have shown that he has a clearer view of these responsibilities than most of his critics.

(Concluded)

The way to ...

(Continued from page 19)

ourselves collectively and individually into the task of organising the masses in the defence of their interests against this UNP Government with a view ultimately to confronting that Government and prevailing over it. If we fail ourselves under this test, challenge and opportunity, we shall be failing in our duty in a bigger cause, the cause of the masses in the struggle

for socialism at a most difficult juncture.

Whatever be our weakness at any given period, history shows that the LSSP has unfailingly risen to the occasion. I am confident it will be the same on this occasion too when we find ourselves at perhaps the most difficult juncture in our history facing wholly new tasks. Let us get to our tasks, collectively and individually, with confidence in our own and the people's future. We have the correct line, we have the correct programme. With correct activity among the masses and along with the masses, we can win the battles ahead and help open the road to the socialist future. Let us prepare ourselves also as we prepare the masses and thus become participants in the victory of the masses over the UNP Government. That is the next stage of political development in our country and also the next stage in the development of the Party itself. We have a role to play and we shall play it!

(Concluded)

FOR WELL OVER A HALF A CENTURY

ARISTONS HAVE BUILT UP

GLOBAL REPUTATION IN THE FIELD OF EXPORTS AS WELL AS IMPORTS

ARISTONS HAVE OPENED OUT NEW VISTAS IN NON-TRADITIONAL

EXPORTS IN AN ENDEAVOUR TO CONTRIBUTING FOR NATIONAL GROWTH

HEAD OFFICE

ARISTONS LTD.

5, Gower Street,
Colombo 5.

ARISTONS TOURS
No. 5, Gower Street,
COLOMBO 5.

EXPORT DEPARTMENT
140, Front Street,
COLOMBO 11.

Phone : 88436, 82102, 81036

Cables: 'TURNIDE'

Telex: 21302 RUWANI



The Winged Bean

(Dambala - දඹල)

*its virtues extolled by
ancient Indian Sages..*

Quality

PLANTING MATERIALS

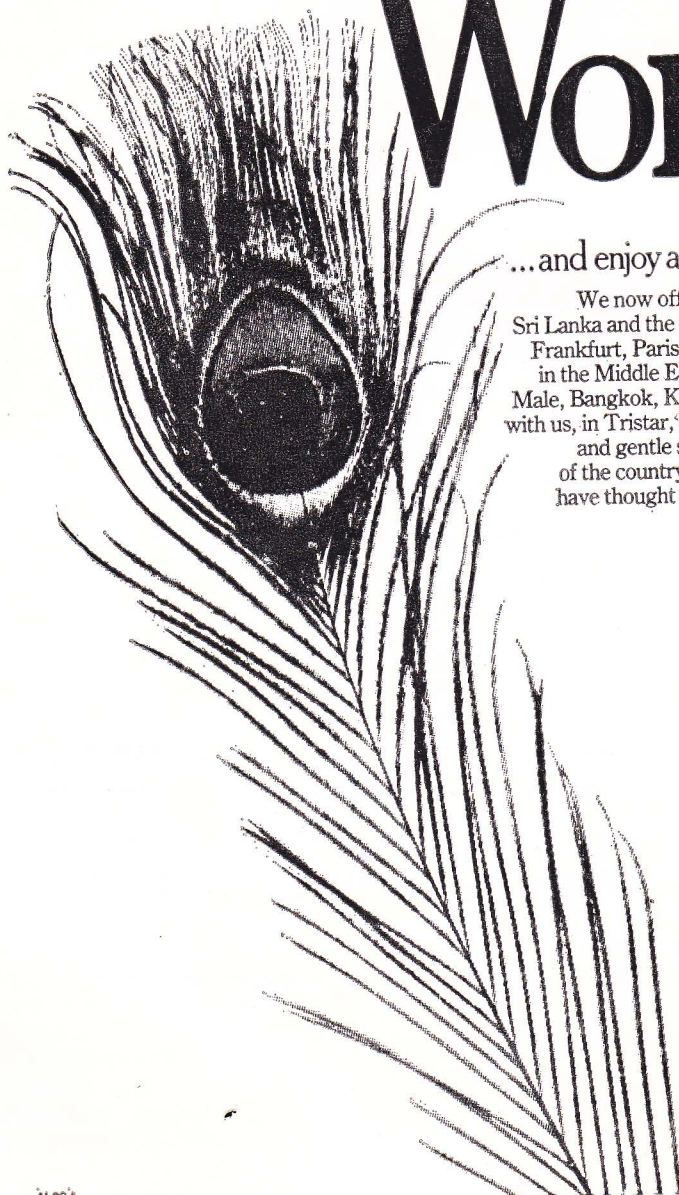
(Both seed and potted plants)

NOW AVAILABLE AT



THE NURSERY
Water Resources Board
TORRINGTON SQUARE
COLOMBO 7.

Fly Air Lanka's World



...and enjoy a taste of Paradise along the way.*

We now offer more than 60 flights weekly between Sri Lanka and the world. Our network stretches to Zurich, Rome, Frankfurt, Paris and London in the west; Dubai, and Bahrain, in the Middle East; Karachi, Bombay, Madras, Trivandrum, Male, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore. And wherever you fly with us, in Tristar, 707 or 737 comfort, you'll be served in the warm and gentle style you'd expect from the airline of the country that travellers throughout history have thought of as Paradise. **AIRLANKA**



A taste of Paradise

Call your Travel Agent or Air Lanka