

**SPECIAL  
REPORT**

SLFP's 'secret war' and uneasy truce

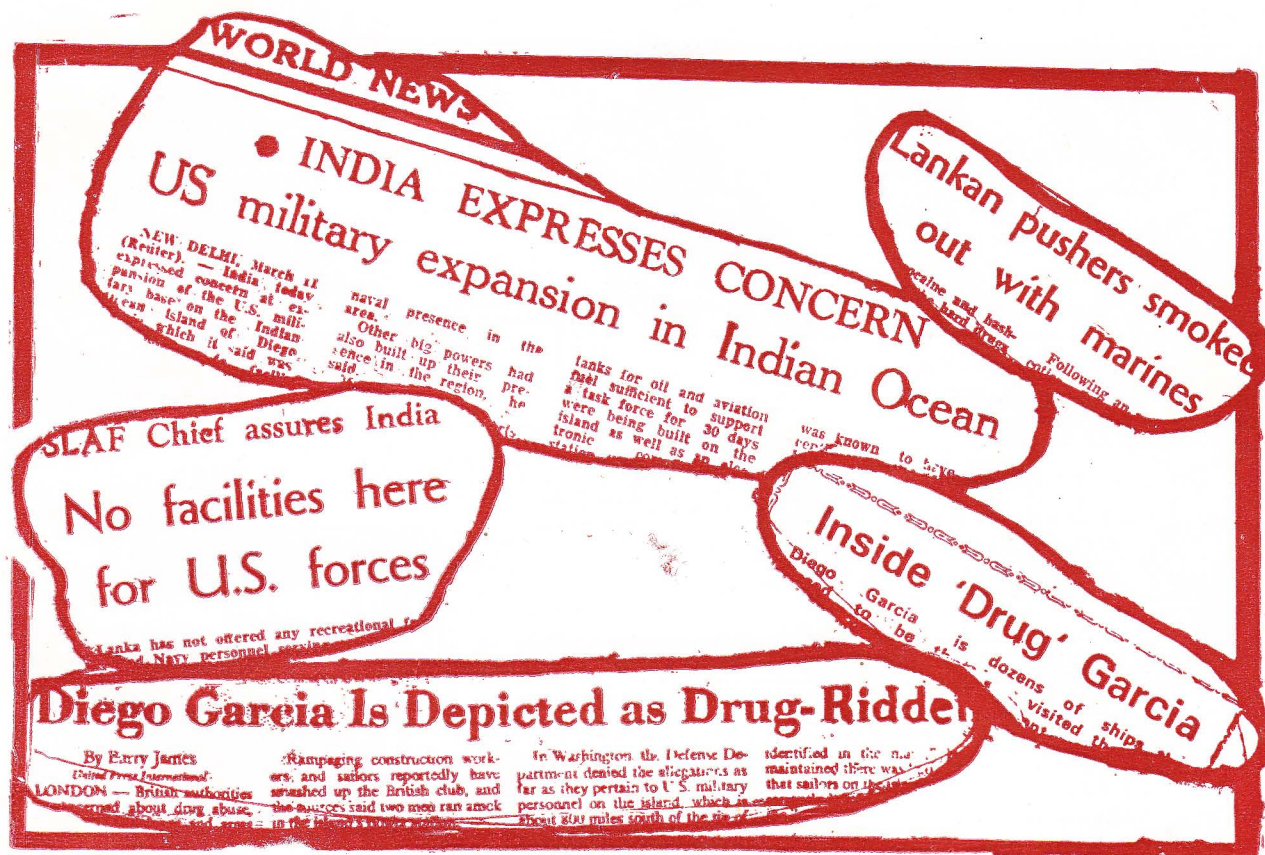
**LANKA**

# GUARDIAN

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Diego Garcia, R and R, Culture Shock, Another '56

## AN SLFP SCENARIO

JVP's Foreign Policy (Interview) — Lionel Bopage  
SLFP and Populism (A reply) — Laksiri Fernando  
Humanising Tourism — Jayantha Somasundaram  
Delhi and the Western Press — Mervyn de Silva

● **MASSACRE IN EL SALVADOR**

● **US MOVES, PEKING'S AIMS**

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## THE CRASH OF '81

Late last year *The Economist Intelligence Unit* reported that both the IMF and the World Bank were "increasingly concerned that international contractors and suppliers are encouraging Sri Lanka into a wild spending spree which will in the end bring financial collapse". Foreign aid, supplier's credits contracts and large purchases have always been the "tender spot" of all administrations and bureaucracies. For the lack of opportunity perhaps, and other factors, Sri Lanka was never guilty of corruption on the scale that Gunnar Myrdal so incisively analysed in "the Asian drama".

But with the massive flow of money since 1977, Sri Lanka was steadily taking its place with Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand etc.

The recent IMF-inspired flat (no air-conditioners, expensive equipment, new projects, high rise buildings, electrical appliances etc) a cold wind is blowing through the new community of commission agents, contact men, kick-back operators and so on. As a result the cocktail circuit is full of news and spicy gossip about in-fights among in-laws over a sharing of spoils and the dividing of (hidden) loot. But the Big Boys in the business are not terribly upset. Said a well known city accountant: "the elephant is a noble beast but the poor fellow was taken for the biggest ride in history in the last 3 years by businessmen who correctly anticipated that the crash will come in 3 to 4 years time. It did. They have not only made their money but safely stashed it away."

## LEFT PREDICAMENT

What a veteran leftist called "the SLFP stalemate" has brought new worries for the SLFP's friends and prospective allies. "We can't get a clear decision even on a simple matter" complained a prominent Trade Unionist whose organisation is involved in joint May Day preparations.

The law and Mrs. B's political future continue to cause nervous anxieties in these parties. The opinion of one of the island's most reputed lawyers is cited: "we lawyers can argue and

interpret, the courts can even adjudicate but remember we are dealing with a government which perpetrated that legal-constitutional-political monstrosity called Kalawana".

## SINGAPORE CONNECTION

The Air Lanka, it is reported, is cutting off the apron strings which tied it to Singapore Airlines. Phasing out the general sales agreement is the official description of the de-linking operation.

Is the Singapore Girl, the idol of the Sri Lankan upper class, slowly losing her chance in the eyes of its once ardent admirers? Two columnists have made this point in their different styles. The *Weekend's* political chronicler cum-commentator gave parathetical emphasis to the fact that Prime Minister Premadasa's Asean itinerary will not include Singapore. Sri Lanka was recently honoured by the visits, in rapid succession, of Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister and Prime Minister. When Mr. Lee was in Colombo on his way Southwards for rest and recreation, Prime Minister Premadasa, accompanied by nearly half the cabinet was marching Northwards. Mr. Lee's visit was covered in his country's leading paper *The Straits Times* in which Ms. Liak Teng Kiat wrote three articles on Sri Lanka. A columnist in *Forward* commenting on the lady's second hand information gathered here on a four day visit makes a headline out of the SIA's celebrated advertising slogan, giving it a sardonic twist. Headline reads: "Singapore Girl, you are a Great one to Lie".

## Reply to Samudran

Poor Samudran! What a pity that just when he mounts the high horse of theory, his perfidious friends should drag him off it, leaving him grovelling in the dust! He sees no counter-revolutionary implications in the ending of San-karam but evidently the playwright himself does: at the most recent performance staged at the Open-Air Theatre, Jaffna, he changed the ending, thereby implicitly endorsing the criticism made by Left groups here. Do I hear Samudran groaning 'Et tu Brute'?

A. J. Canagaratna

Jaffna

## The Final Test

Dr Carlo Fonseka thinks it is perfectly in order for a Trotter leader to preach Marxism-Leninism according to St Trotsky in public and privately offer flowers to the Buddha because he promised his mum he'd do it. It is precisely this kind of schizoid leadership that brought the LSSP, once Sri Lanka's only hope for principled politics free of xenophobia and racialism to the masalavaday phase of its rake's progress and finally to its present total rejection by the masses. On the last occasion it faced the hustings (the Galle by-election) the LSSP polled only 1.7% of the votes cast.

To quote Dr Carlo Fonseka himself, surely the final test of

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# SLFP: uneasy truce

NEWS  
BACKGROUND

What we described earlier as the SLFP's "secret war" ended on March 20th. The existence of warring factions has now been exposed to the party's largest representative body and the word will surely spread right down the line. In that sense the true victory belonged to the man who triggered the war, the general commanding the forces of the SLFP's main enemy the Commander-in-Chief, in his Ward Place, war-room.

Knowing this, but increasingly unable to cope with this challenge, both factions will seek to minimize the damage done in the interests of party unity. Neither the Sirmavoist 'gang of four' nor the 'dirty dozen' dissidents wish to split the party. In an interview with the **CDN**, Mrs. B. had already referred to a "small minority", while the spokesmen for the other group have denied reports and rumours about attempts to "oust" her.

## UNP's game-plan

But the squabbles in the SLFP must always be interpreted in the context of the UNP's game-plan. In that plan, UNP strategists will continue to give top priority to exacerbating divisive tendencies within the SLFP, sometimes leaning helpfully towards one faction and sometimes exploiting the other, especially through the government-controlled mass media. Such tactics will be pursued even more vigorously as the "unity" of the United National Party is looking far less monolithic than it was three years ago.

It is interesting to note that UNP leaders are now given to more and more public assurances of their party's unity. The pronounced tilt towards Mrs. B in the mainstream media in the past few weeks suggest that in the UNP reading of the SLFP crisis, Mrs. B's authority has been too greatly eroded. As the (L.G.) (March 15th) indicated March 20th turned out to be a Lawyers Day. It was not only the lawyers close to SLFP who battled it out over the

legal and practical consequences of the civic disabilities imposed on Mrs. B on October 16th and October 17th, but lawyers who are the pride of the profession in the hallowed halls of Hulftsdorp. The names of S. Nadesan Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, C. Thiagalngam, K. N. Choksy, E. R. S. R. Coomarasamy, Nimal Senanayake and H. L. de Silva, all cropped up in the course of the legalistic exchanges.

## — as secret war comes into the open

Even Mr. Bunty Zoysa, Mrs. B's prosecutor made an appearance by virtue of the fact that a leading figure in the SLFP lawyers' association, it was claimed, was a Bunty supporter at the Bar Council elections.

## Satan's Return

It was a good day for FDB. Cast into outer darkness by his own party and denounced as Satan by Right and Left, FDB suddenly re-emerged in public at Badulla a fortnight ago. Even Mrs. B's stoutest loyalists gasped in consternation. FDB after all is everybody's bete noire. And even those on the Left who like to characterise the factional fight in the SLFP as a battle between "progressives" and "reactionaries" shuddered when FDB took the platform at Badulla, the only ex-minister to do so.

It was clear that FDB had recaptured his old and favourite role as Kissingerian master-mind at a time when Mrs. B was in need of advisers. But Mrs. B must have weighed carefully the conflicting considerations and recognised that FDB could be fully trusted in as much as he was a political orphan and had no where to go.

Having got a public platform at last and returned to his seat near the throne, even if it was a bit shaky, FDB was his old ebullient self again at Darley Road, full of "hi chum!" to the old

comrades who had so eagerly sent him into exile three years ago. But as a lawyer he over-played his hand when he claimed that he had a magic formula to solve all these problems—amending the party's constitution to circumvent the difficulties created by the law and the constitution of the country. How? Sorry, he hadn't come prepared, chum.

## J. R. VS FDB?

Since this could become a protracted legal—constitutional—political battle upto 1983 and after we may soon see another series of duels between the two grandmasters of legal manoeuvre on the political chess-board. J. R. vs FDB. (FDB of course as Mrs. B's adviser). It is a battle of wits which has gone on since the early 1970s. FDB gave the UNP a real scare after the Colombo South by-election when it looked as if J. R. could be "fixed". Since then there have been many other rounds in this long war but JR has out-witted out-gunned and out-manoeuvred his opponent each time.

## Mrs. B at bay

Before March 20th, Mrs. B made a pre-emptive strike and a surprise move. On her instructions the party Secretary, Mr. Ratnasiri Wickramanayake sent the Election Commissioner a list of the SLFP office bearers, an indication surely that she anticipated a move against her, which, in her estimation had some chances of success. She summoned the All Island Committee (350 members) for a meeting in the morning. Earlier, the only meeting scheduled was that of the 118 strong Working Committee.

The meaning of these moves can only be properly assessed in the context of the "secret war". Before February 1st, when Mr. Gopallawa's death compelled a postponement of the meeting requisitioned

(Continued on page 6)



# Singapore and culture shock

**S**tories in the Indian newspapers, based mainly on US and British reports, about "drug abuse, race conflicts, violence and arms smuggling" in Diego Garcia, and persistent local reports of US interest in 'rest and recreation' facilities for US marines in Trinco (denied by Foreign Minister Hameed) have been made to fit rather neatly into an SLFP scenario for a 'second 1956' at the next elections.

Ever since the SLFP's crushing parliamentary defeat there have been two 'lines' battling for supremacy within the small group of 'advisers' close to the High Command. One school has argued for working closely with the unions and youth groups, while strengthening the party's traditional rural base, for gradually re-building 'the unity of progressive forces' and for a pre-election renewal of the 'united front' with the Left. The UNP's economic policies will fail, economic questions will dominate popular opinion and the electorate will vote with its stomach.

## Cultural Factor

The other school has conceded the importance of material hardships and discontents but has argued that if the SLFP's "separate identity" is to be preserved (and there fore its pre-eminence in any future alliance or 'bloc') the party must emphasise "nationalist" and "cultural" issues. Authentic representatives of the 'spirit of 1956', they maintain that the most potent elements in the policy platform of Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike were precisely these questions, and that his alliance with Left leaders like Philip Gunawardena, was on that basis, and not on "doctrinaire socialism" (i. e. economic prescriptions). Mr. Bandaranaike, it is pointed out was able to maximise the appeal of such slogans because

(a) the UNP, dominated by an anglicized elite, was reduced to a vulgar and exhibitionistic cosmopolitanism in the Kotelawellian years. Thus, SWRD was able to exploit the 'culture shock' of this thuppa-hism, as Philip Gunawardena called it.

(b) the UNP, under Kotelawala, embarked on a foreign policy which was an affront to national self-respect and aspirations for independence. The Dullesian line he took at Bandung was completely contrary to the prevailing spirit of nationalist and Afro-Asian resurgence. As a result, E. B. P. campaigners were able to make good propaganda not only of his remarks about monks but also of Ambassador Goonesinghe's statement about 'Bandung Booruwa'. And Mr. Bandaranaike has the perfect reply in nonalignment and the promise to get the British out of Katunayake and Trinco.

This Sinhala-Buddhist caucus had a 'test run' very early in the UNP regime when the government withdrew the quota scheme on varsity admissions. The UNP took the incipient campaign in the schools etc. so seriously that it launched prosecutions.

The next issue was Development Councils, which was tested out mainly in the Kandyian areas.

The case for a nationalist-cultural propaganda effort got stronger with Mrs. B's loss of civic rights. If she was unable to function freely or effectively as party leader, the Rosmead Place 'think-tank' argued, a campaign must be devised which would suit her political personality and image (i. e. ideologically) and circumvent the legal difficulties (i. e. organisationally.)

## Political Profile

While Mrs. Gandhi and Delhi remain the steadiest sources of inspiration, the problem facing Mrs. B. was different. The political profile was Sinhala-Buddhist (and Kandyian) and the organisational device not a new party, as in the case of the Congress, but island-wide "committees" called Vihara Maha Devi societies. As patron, Mrs. B. could tour the country before elections and address these groups. And of course she could be dressed in white, not blue, a strictly non-political garb, having nothing to do with the SLFP whose official campaign would be led by its deputy leader.

The planning of this campaign strategy is not considered premature because the SLFP leadership expects elections long before 1983.

Events and trends now keep falling into place, as the SLFP's strategists, despite the divisions at the top, search for 'another' 1956

## Second Singapore

(i) While economic dissatisfaction keeps mounting, the average voter is also getting disgusted by the new life-styles created by the new economic policies; the conspicuous consumption of the rich, the vulgar consumerism or the Singaporization of Sri Lanka. This is the 'culture shock'. Increasingly the SLFP (and Left) press is using the slogan 'Sold to IMF' and 'Leased to Singapore'.

(ii) SLFP activists and sympathisers have been receiving a great deal of material from India (see cover) including press reports on questions asked in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha about Trinco and US interest in special facilities, visits of US Admirals and warships, and articles in the Indian newspapers about US activity in the Indian Ocean, 'sabotaging' of the Indian Ocean Peace Zone conference etc.

Has the UNP abandoned the strict nonalignment of the SLFP, and moving steadily to a Singaporean position? This question fits the "second '56" scenario perfectly because of the UNP's pro-US lurch in 1955-56, and Mrs. B's close identification with the Indian Ocean proposal, Diego Garcia etc. It was at the Commonwealth leaders, meeting in Singapore in Jan. 1971 that Mrs. B. singled out Diego Garcia as a threat to peace in the area, and called for the creation of a

(Continued on page 6)

# DIEGO GARCIA 'DRUG RIDDEN'

Barry James

British authorities are concerned about drug abuse, race conflicts, violence and arms smuggling on the top-island of Diego Garcia, which has become the major U.S. base in the Indian Ocean diplomatic sources say.

A Royal Navy lieutenant commander and 26 seamen who are supposed to enforce British law on the island are unable to cope with spreading lawlessness, the sources said, and the drug problem is "out of hand."

Rampaging construction workers and sailors reportedly have smashed up the British club, and the sources said two men ran amok in the island's power station.

With its customary concern for secrecy, the British government has kept details of the deteriorating situation on Diego Garcia from the public, the press and Parliament.

## Rapid Development

When pressed about the problem, a spokesman for the British Foreign Office said, "We acknow-

ledge there is a drug problem and we are working on it, along with the American authorities."

The island is being prepared as a base for U.S. ships loaded with tanks, artillery, ammunition and equipment for possible rapid development in the Gulf.

While U.S. servicemen are deeply involved in drug trafficking the sources said, the major cause for concern for British authorities is the presence of up to 2,000 civilians, including U.S. technicians, crews of merchant ships and construction workers from the Philippines and South Korea. The civilians come under the laws of the British Indian Ocean Territories rather than under U.S. military discipline.

## Through the Mails.

Narcotics and firearms are reportedly sent through the U.S. mails which are not subject to customs searches, and in the baggage of civilian employees. The sources said Britain is asking U.S. military and postal authorities to control the mails.

A U.S. spokesman conceded that "some illegal drugs have been identified in the mails", but he maintained there was "no evidence that sailors on the island have been seriously involved in drug trafficking."

Keith Speed, undersecretary for the Royal Navy, visited Diego Garcia on his way to Hong Kong in December and learned the scale of the problems facing the tiny British naval detachment, which is officially assigned to Diego Garcia as a communications unit.

"Yes, by all means he was concerned," a spokesman for the Ministry of Defence said, "We are closely cooperating with the American military command over practical arrangements for enforcing relevant British legislation."

The United States is using Diego Garcia under a British-U.S. agreement signed in 1976. About 1,100 islanders were evicted to Mauritius which has been promised eventual sovereignty over the territory.

International Herald Tribune

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## Private Medical College

The JVP, the symbol of 'youth/student power' in this country, has sent the following protest note to the President, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Minister of Higher Education.

"The present iniquitous and competitive system of education shuts the doors of our universities in the face of the vast majority of our students who have actually qualified for university admission. Instead of attempting to remedy this highly deplorable situation, there are moves afoot to set up one or more private medical colleges. This is a move afoot which leaves by the wayside, lakhs of students who have passed through the so-called free education system. The ability to pay exorbitant fees, a very good knowledge of the English language, high aptitude for sports, and a good performance at an oral examination are said to be conditions for entry into this college. The net result of this is to limit medical education to offspring of the wealthy classes and to foreign students. This government, like the previous one, is engaged in cutting back on education and in the process, is negating the fundamental right of the children of the working people of this country to a full and free education."

The JVP concludes by demanding that the government halt this class biased, anti people and retrogressive measure of opening a private medical college. It further demands that all who are eligible for university admission should be permitted to do so, and that all students should be afforded equal opportunities to avail themselves of higher education.

## Singapore. . .

(Continued from page 4)

zone of peace. At the Foreign Ministers' meeting in Delhi, Sri Lanka wanted 'Diego Garcia' deleted (The suggestion for deletion first came from Singapore!)

(iv) The story of drug abuse, violence etc. in Diego Garcia app-

## SLFP: Uneasy . . .

(Continued from page 3)

by Mrs. B. and even more actively after February 1st, an island wide campaign of canvassing was conducted. Having been forced into a small minority in the decision making polit-bureau (17 members) she took the obvious tactical course open to her—to mobilise her support at the base, and in the larger committees. The surprise move in summoning the All island committee of 350, leaves the issue of relative strengths in the 118 strong working committee an open question. As it happened, the working committee met for less than half an hour. The explanation is that the members were exhausted.

The only test then is that offered by what went on for nearly 6 hours in the first meeting, which ended with Mrs. B's speech. Since no vote was taken no objective measurement is possible. Thus who participated can only gauge the situation in terms of individual and group response (warm, sympathetic, lukewarm, indifferent, nonaligned, hostile etc) to speeches, arguments, counter-arguments and interruptions 50-50 say some, 40-60 say others and 1/3rd/2/3rd suggest still others. But the percentage game is futile in the absence of clearly declared choices. The fact is that few politicians in this country have led a party for more than 20 years on the basis of almost total obedience—obedience more than obedience.

appeared a few weeks before several thousand US marines landed in Colombo when the aircraft carrier 'Ranger' called here. The 'Sun' had a front page story of what these sailors did to keep our police and Narcotics Bureau busy. What if they were here for "R and R" (rest and recreation). Fulbright called Saigon 'an American brothel'! It was R and R which converted Bangkok into a massive massage parlour.

## NEXT ISSUE

As usual, there will be no issue of the Lanka Guardian on April 15th. The next issue of the journal, a special number, will be published on May 1st, our third anniversary.

Mrs. Bandaranaike has known crisis and challenge and faced defeat, at the hands of her enemies. But in her own house she has been accustomed to complete compliance. As in the presence of royalty, MPs and even Deputy Ministers retraced their steps backwards, bowing with the utmost humility. In cabinet and committee room thorny problems were often "resolved" by the simple expedient of a decision to "leave the matter in the hands of the mathiniya."

The days of unquestioning loyalty are over. Rebellion in the ranks has eroded her authority. For her, the challenge is as much psychological as political.

While the "unity" of the United National party is increasingly suspect, "freedom" has entered the Sri Lanka Freedom party, causing disunity too.

The SLFP-UNP cross-currents of the SLFP "crisis" became clear a few days after March 20th when the CDN reported a speech of Prime Minister Premadasa at Horagolla, the Bandaranaike home. According to the "SUN" Mrs. B. had claimed that President J. R. had told her how several top SLFPers had encouraged him to deprive her of civic rights. The PM now claims, according to the CDN, that Mrs. B had wanted the President to take action against her ministers and deprive them of civic rights too.



# US moves, Peking's aims

The appointment of Ambassador Tommy Koh of Singapore as President of the Law of the Sea Conference has been warmly greeted in Washington at a time when the Reagan administration is not only 'reviewing' US Indian Ocean policy in line with 'strategic and economic interests' but retreating on former commitments made by Mr. Carter. As Louis Winitzer wrote in the **Christian Science Monitor** "the US government has cast a long shadow over the Law of the Sea Treaty which was to be concluded this month." The main reason, writes the **Monitor's** UN correspondent is that "leading American firms intent on exploiting the riches lying on the ocean bottom (mostly polymetallic nodules containing nickel, manganese, cobalt, and copper) see that too many concessions have been made to developing nations by previous American negotiators. They feel that a better deal can be extracted for US interests from other participants in the conference, most of whom possess neither the financial nor the technological means to engage in deep seabed mining."

These companies, primarily Kennecott Copper Corporation, are known to have high-level contacts in the new administration. They feel that the treaty, in its present form, unreasonably limits the amount of minerals to be exploited (60 percent of the yearly increase of the present world consumption) and puts an excessive financial burden on the US by forcing US firms to transfer precious technology to potential competitors. The US is also drained financially by providing funds to an international seabed authority supposed to manage deep seabed resources as "a common heritage of mankind."

Furthermore, some military advisers in Washington are reported to feel that "US concessions" on seabed mining in return for the Navy's global sailing rights—which have been secured in the treaty—are not really necessary. They are reported to believe that instead

of signing a worldwide treaty, the US should deal bilaterally with the coastal nations involved. Other strategic considerations have also been taken into account by some officials in the new administration.

"By placing the mineral-rich nodules under UN supervision and by limiting our rights to exploit them, we may be losing a unique opportunity to help ourselves to much-needed raw materials," says one such official.

Until now it appeared that the US Navy had obtained all that it wanted from the Law of the Sea Conference. At a time of expanding claims of coastal jurisdiction, the Navy had secured the rights to sail and to take up station without having to defy any challenge to its rights. "Using naked force and disregarding claims of sovereignty entails political, economic and even military risks," says a high-ranking Western official who has been a prime mover of the conference.

## Outflanking ASEAN

A Singaporean conference chairman has re-assured Washington hardliners who hate to be 'hustled' by the Third World lobby at the U. N.

Like Thailand, Singapore is one of the countries in South-east Asia with whom regular top-level consultations are held by US officials. Recently, the US told Thai and Singaporean counter-parts that Peking has re-activated its plans for military-naval bases and other facilities in the coastal and island states of the Indian Ocean. The US regards this as a far-reaching step with serious global implications in that the end-objective seems to be an 'outflanking' of South-east Asia from the west. While Thailand and Singapore have always been aware of China's regional ambitions, and the need sooner or later, to thwart Peking's plans, the two ASEAN members do not regard the time particularly propitious. They are ready to go along with US estimates of Chinese intentions but believe

that the Kampuchean problem must be given first priority. Consequently, the US is being persuaded to desist from taking any concrete steps to check Peking's moves until a 'settlement' is found for Kampuchea, and for this Chinese cooperation is necessary.

## El Salvador

### 'Charges are false...'

As a member of the Salvadoran revolutionary leadership, Ruben Zamora, 38, has emerged as a principal spokesman-in-exile for the leftist guerrillas. Two weeks ago he was in the Nicaraguan capital of Managua. And in an exclusive telephone interview with **NEWSWEEK'S** Tessa Namuth, Zamora responded to the Reagan Administration's charges that Nicaragua and other outside meddlers are assisting El Salvador's rebels. Excerpts:

**NAMUTH:** What are you doing in Nicaragua?

**ZAMORA:** I am attending a meeting of the political and diplomatic commission of the leading Salvadoran opposition groups to analyze the current situation. The commission is made up of Salvadorans only and has no connection with the Nicaraguan Government.

**Q:** How do you respond to the U. S. charge that international Communism has financed your revolution?

**A:** The U. S. charges are based on documents that are fake. Remember, the Salvadoran security forces produced them, and we know they can manufacture fake papers, possibly with CIA help. They are all invented facts to justify the present American Government's political action.

**Q:** Some Nicaraguan officials admit their country is an arms conduit. Aren't your straining your credibility if you don't admit this is happening?

(Continued on page 8)

# PSYCHODRAMA IN EL SALVADOR

*CAN IT be that there's method in the madness of tying President Reagan's prestige to that of a junta in a coffee-bean republic?*

*In a flash, the El Salvador junta's struggle against 4,000 guerrillas has been made front page news. The Kremlin is told that fateful negotiations over nuclear arms depend on that junta's success. Diplomats tour the world warning that whoever does not side with the United States in this effort invites retribution. Cuba has been threatened with blockade, and Mexico has been thus provoked into a show of sympathy for Cuba. All this for El Salvador?*

*There can be only one rational explanation. Mr. Reagan foresees a quick victory over the guerrillas and wants to advertise U.S. muscle by making an exhibition baseball game look like a World Series triumph.*

*Disconcertingly, his effort recalls our (ignored) advice to Jimmy Carter four years ago: that new presidents should demonstrate their machismo in a safely controlled episode, to avoid having to prove it in a costly crisis. For in the logic of nuclear deterrence, the more certainly a president is perceived as daring enough to go to war, the less likely it is that he will ever have to. How then can he prove himself? The Bay of Pigs, the slide into Vietnam, the rescue of the Mayaguez have all been chapters in this psychodrama.*

*One can almost hear the Reagan calculus: If the United States is to regain respect, it must rattle a few dishes somewhere. If the Russians are to be deterred from hauling Cuban troops to places beyond the reach of the United States, then threaten a blockade of Cuba now, when it's not really needed. If allies are to*

*be herded into line in situations where they have divergent interests, test the prod in El Salvador, where they have none. Don't just parade force in Central America by reasserting a sphere of influence; declare the contest a metaphor for superpower competition the world over.*

*The only trouble with the idea is that Salvadorans may now play their parts in Washington's histrionics.*

*Given the country's geography, it should be easy enough to deprive the guerrillas of Soviet bloc weapons. But those recent arms shipments did not ignite this rebellion. The totalitarian left feeds on profound discontent. It can be defeated only by a progressive political program that the present junta proclaims but has been unable to defend against the totalitarian right.*

*The junta may need more economic aid. But to lavish weapons on it now will only strengthen the right-wing extremists in its ranks, the ones who have been frustrating social justice and land reform and turning peasants into rebels.*

*Perhaps there is still time to cobble together a democratic center to wage what Mr. Reagan calls a three-way civil war. If so, the worst possible strategy against the left is to make common cause with the violent agents of a deposed oligarchy. And the worst possible strategy against the extreme right is to leave it thinking it holds a U.S. president hostage.*

*If the president really means to show his toughness in El Salvador, he has to prove that the United States cannot be panicked into desperate alliances and military responses to a fundamentally political challenge. He has to summon the skill and*

*patience that may still arrange a reconciliation between the democrats who serve with the junta and those who have bolted to the insurgents.*

*That effort requires not bellicosity in Washington but shrewd diplomacy by all the Caribbean democracies, notably Mexico and Venezuela. Without an effective political program, Reagan's ostentatious strutting in a place of no strategic moment will indeed impress the world, but not in the way he intends.*

— New York Times

## Charges...

(Continued from page 7)

**A:** The foreign arms come to El Salvador from three sources—the neighboring countries of Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Honduras—but without these countries' active support. It is our own underground that brings in arms by any possible means, including truck, boat and plane. To my knowledge, no Nicaraguan official has said they are involved.

**Q:** Why did the American Government release its so-called White Paper claiming outside meddling in El Salvador?

**A:** The United States is up to its neck in support for a genocidal government and has presented documents as a coverup for continued backing of the Salvadoran junta. I fear that this could be a justification for the Reagan government to intervene militarily in El Salvador. It's so similar to what the United States was saying just before its 1965 intervention in the Dominican Republic. My personal feeling is great sorrow.

# Victims of the massacre that the world ignored

David Blundy

**L**OLITA GUARDADO was awoken at about 4am by a strange noise. There was the usual sound of the persistent drizzle pouring through the roof of closely packed palm leaves and through the walls of mud and sticks.

But outside, across the Sumpul river, she could hear men shouting. Groups of peasants gathered anxiously in the grey dawn to watch as Honduran soldiers formed a line on the far bank and ran to and fro, carrying stones from the riverbed. They built a low wall. Only later that day, after her family, friends and neighbours had been slaughtered, did she fully understand why they were there.

Lolita, her husband Genaro and their eight children are Salvadorean peasants. They lived, along with about 1,500 others, in Las Aradas, a settlement which lies a few yards inside the Salvadorean border on the banks of the Sumpul, the frontier with Honduras.

There were few comforts. Lolita was considered fortunate because at least she had a hut. Most of the others lived under trees, with sheets of plastic to protect them from the rain. There was no electricity, no clean water, no medicine, barely enough food and no road. But Las Aradas, they believed, had one virtue. It was so remote that they were safe from the violence between the left and the right that wracks El Salvador. They had fled from their houses and land—away from the soldiers, the national guard, the secret police, the right-wing death squads and left-wing guerrillas to this haven.

That morning a group of 300 peasant refugees, mostly women and children, had arrived after a three-day trek through the Salvador mountains. Few of them would survive the day.

## *The horrifying story of the day El Salvador went on a 'cleaning' operation*

As Margarita Lopez, a bright and pretty 16-year-old was preparing tortillas for the new refugees, 300 Salvadorean soldiers from Chalatenango army base were already taking up position behind the nearest hills. Beside them merging into the forest, were two olive-green helicopter gunships, each with machineguns and bombs. On the other side of the Sumpul, 150 Honduran soldiers stood behind their stone wall.

El Salvador and Honduras, although technically still at war after 11 years, were about to carry out their first joint military venture. The Salvadoreans call it an "operation de limpieza"—a cleaning operation.

The decision to carry out the attack was made, according to Honduran sources, at a joint meeting between Honduran and Salvadorean military commanders at El Poy, a town on the border about 13 miles from Las Aradas.

The motive was clear. In the border area are the camps of the left-wing guerrillas, against whom the Salvadorean ruling junta has been fighting a bloody civil war. It is also one of the main channels for arms shipments from Nicaragua and Cuba. The Hondurans were keen to help because they feared both the war spilling over into their territory and their neighbour falling into communist hands.

The only flaw in the plan was that Las Aradas was not a guerrilla base. It seems not a shot was fired in defence by the people there. But for the Salvadorean military mind, the distinction between peasant and guerrilla is academic: they are, indeed, often one and the same.

Also, the guerrillas need peasant support if they are to achieve

popular insurrection and more immediately they need the peasants to provide food and shelter when necessary. For the Salvadoreans this made the peasants a fair military target.

The "cleaning" began at about 10 am on May 14 last year. Margarita remembers a deafening explosion of gunfire which would continue for the next six hours: "the bullets came in fistfuls. They went through the walls of houses, people were falling and cattle were dying. The bullets were everywhere."

Genaro Guardado heard the thud of bombs falling outside his hut. With his 17-year-old daughter, Ernestina, he grabbed five children, all under 12, who were standing outside, and ran. Rosabel Sibrian, a 22-year-old, saw the gunships buzzing low over the trees and heard the rattle of their machineguns. Then he saw soldiers standing round his friend, Amanda Rodriguez: "She begged them not to kill her. They all opened fire. They shot her 11-year-old son."

The troops had surrounded the settlement. The obvious escape route was across the river into Honduras—that was when the peasants learnt the function of the Honduran soldiers.

The peasants "ran to the river in flocks," said Genaro. It was the beginning of the rainy season and the river was flowing deep and fast. Margarita ran into the water and found it came up to her neck. "Children were drowning. The Salvadorian soldiers stood on the bank and fired at us. My two friends were killed next to me."

As Genaro jumped in to the water with about 70 people, his daughter Ernestina was shot dead in the back of the head. First he



walked, pulling the five children across to the other bank. He left them there and went back for Ernestina's body. Then, carrying the body, he walked up the bank towards the Honduran soldiers: "They grabbed Ernestina and threw her into the river. Then they pushed us back into the river. We pleaded with them. Begged them. They just pushed us. They didn't fire their rifles, but they wouldn't let us through."

He returned to the Salvadorean side to face the guns. "The Salvadoreans fired from the hip and kept their guns low. I suppose they didn't want to shoot the Honduran soldiers. But they fired into the river." Those who survived the crossing were herded together by the Salvadorian soldiers, who tied their hands and made them lie, face down on the ground. "They beat us with their rifle butts. They kept asking, 'Where do you keep the guns? Who are the guerillas?'"

"They took groups to one side and machine gunned them. I had my children with me. Then a soldier cut my bonds. I don't know why he did that. But I ran with my children. Only three others survived."

Rosabel Sibrian, who hid between some rocks, says the main slaughter took place on the river bank, near Las Aradas: "There were 50 soldiers and they gathered a big group together. Then they shot them. The people were screaming. Those who would not die were beaten on the heads with rifle butts."

He says, and this is corroborated by other eye-witnesses, that the soldiers were aided by members of Orden, a paramilitary right-wing group, distinctive in their black shirts with skull-and-crossbones insignia. "Some soldiers and Orden people gathered children and babies together", said Sibrian. "I saw them throw children into the air and then slash them with long machetes. They cut their heads off and slit their bodies in two". One soldier told the mother of a child: "We are killing the children of subversion."

Sibrian tried to run downstream, carrying his baby son. Soldiers



chased him and a bullet smashed into Sibrian's leg: "I couldn't run with my baby any more. I left him beside a small ditch, then rolled away and crawled through the bushes. I thought the soldiers would kill him." But, in one of the few acts of humanity carried out by the Salvadorean army that day, they did not. "They picked him up very gently and carried him away. Later I heard they bought him milk in a local town. I think he is in a children's camp. I am trying to find him," said Sibrian.

Lolita was not so fortunate. Just after the first bombs dropped at 10 am, she had lost sight of her husband. So with her brother-in-law, Angle, and three of her children, she made her way slowly upstream, hiding for long periods in the bushes until soldiers and paramilitary men had passed. She went for a mile along the Sumpul until the cordon of Honduran soldiers on the opposite bank had ended. Then at about 4 pm she started to cross the river.

She walked over the rocks and had just reached the water when she heard rapid firing behind her and felt "a burning pain" all over her body. She fell backwards into the Sumpul. Her body lay in the water her head resting on a rock. She had been hit by 15 bullets, in an arc from her thigh across the small of her back. One bullet passed through her hand. Two of her children lay dying in the water

beside her. One, died quickly—a bullet had passed through his armpit into his chest; the other, shot in the testicles, did not. "He lasted half an hour," said Lolita. "I couldn't move. I couldn't comfort him." Her brother-in-law was dead too. She lay with her surviving child three-year-old Ovidio, clasped to her breast. He had been hit in the leg and the scalp.

"Ovidio kept crying and shouting. He called out 'Uncle Angel, Uncle Angel! Come. Come see my mother. Her leg is bleeding into the water.' " He kept talking to his two brothers long after they were dead. He shouted at them: "Why don't you talk to me?"

After dark, Lolita says that occasionally soldiers walked along the bank. She tried to hold Ovidio still and keep him quiet: "The baby cried with pain, but I told him to be silent. I heard a soldier say: 'Hit them. Hit them again.' But another soldier said: 'I have hit them already. Let's not shoot again. They will just die'."

"I had a terrible thirst. The water was full of blood. It was the blood of my children. But I kept drinking water, drinking water."

That night she felt an object bump against her in the river. Then it floated off downstream. It was, she says, the head of a child. The next morning a Honduran fisherman pulled in his nets. They contained the bodies of three dismembered children.

Lolita lay in the river until after dawn, when a group of four Honduran men saw Ovidio moving. They crossed the river and put Lolita in a hammock, then carried her to a Honduran's home. It was another 15 days before she received hospital treatment.

For the peasants, the behaviour of the army at Las Aradas was not new, just a little more extreme than usual. The Salvadorean soldiers have a single tactic to discourage peasant support for guerrillas — terror. Lolita and her husband had fled to Las Aradas after soldiers had decapitated some of their neighbours. The heads had been left neatly by the side of the road to ram the lesson home. Most refugees have stories of such appalling brutality it is difficult to believe that it became almost a way of life.

Officially they were all victims of a massacre that never happened. The government of El Salvador has denied that any killings took place at the Sumpul river on May 14. On June 25, the military leader of Honduras, President Policarpo Paz Garcia, said on national radio that the massacre did not happen. One of his army chiefs, however, Colonel Ruben Montoya, head of third military region, denied that the Honduran army had taken part, while admitting that the incident took place: "The Honduran troops did not help in the killings of civilians."

At first the American embassy in Tegucigalpa, the Honduran capital told reporters that there was no evidence to support claims of a massacre. But like the government, the Americans later changed their line, admitting "something happened" at the Sumpul river that day.

At noon the day after the massacre, a Roman Catholic priest from the Capuchim order walked over the hills towards the Sumpul. If he had not, then the massacre might have become just peasant folklore. Father Earl Gallagher, 35, comes from Brooklyn, New York City. He has worked in Honduras for four years. Because of his prematurely grey hair and prowess at climbing the hills, he is known by the peasants as "the old billy goat."

He noticed that the river banks looked strangely black. When he got closer he saw why. They were covered in a thick carpet of buzzards. In the village of Talquinta he met his first survivor, a 10-year-old boy with bullet wounds in his mouth, thigh and shoulder.

"I heard that Salvadorean troops were coming back to kill the survivors," said Gallagher. "I felt I had to make it public and perhaps that would help them." It did not help the little boy. A month later he fled from the Honduran army back to El Salvador, where he was killed.

Gallagher returned with a camera and tape-recorder and took down the stories of dozens of survivors. He could not visit the Sumpul itself because it was still patrolled by members of Orden, who shot intruders. Meanwhile, dogs and buzzards picked the bodies clean.

On June 24, Gallagher's report condemning the massacre and the role of the soldiers of both El Salvador and Honduras was published as a joint declaration by the priests of Santa Rosa de Copan.

Gallagher immediately received death threats over El Salvador Radio. He was threatened with expulsion and condemned by the Honduran government. The then minister of foreign affairs, Eliseo Perez Cadalso, said on July 1: "The church declaration responds to a well-orchestrated campaign with the purpose of destabilising the convivial and highly democratic climate in which the people of Honduras live."

Gallagher's report reached Washington, where the only person who paid attention was Senator Edward Kennedy. He had it placed on the congressional record on September 24, and said: "I am deeply concerned by reports of increasing hardship and often death that face innocent men, women and children who try to escape the escalating violence in El Salvador."

But the world paid scant attention, inured perhaps by the daily stories of violence in Latin America. The Sumpul massacre was mentioned in a few newspapers which ran part of Gallagher's report. It was almost completely ignored by the American press at the time. "Our

thing was: it happened. come and have a look. And nobody did," said Gallagher.

The misery for the Sumpul survivors and the 29,000 refugees who have fled El Salvador for Honduras did not end on May 14.

"They live in fear," Gallagher said last week. "Their only hope is international attention."

He and other priests have compiled a list of incidents against refugees since the massacre. It runs into several pages, a litany of murder, rape and cruelty.

Hundreds of refugees have been handed to Salvadorean troops to face certain death. In the Honduran town of Santa Rosa last week an 18 year-old girl described her life in El Salvador. She lived near the Honduran border with her husband until soldiers took him away and shot him. She moved in with her four brothers. Last year, Salvadorean national guards took them out of the house and sprayed them with liquid from cans they carried. "Their skin went black. Their eyes melted," she said. Her brothers were pushed into a cornfield and killed with machetes.

Last week we spoke to Lolita, who now lives with her husband and five remaining children in an adobe hut deep in the Honduran hillside. Life for her is not convivial. She is afraid, and for good reason. The Honduran government has refused, at the urging of El Salvador, to grant Lolita or the other refugees "status." This means their movements are tightly restricted and they cannot find work. They are constantly treated with expulsion.

There are also signs that the Honduran government is growing more repressive. A week ago a colleague of Gallagher's Father Fansto Milla, was arrested by security men. He was blindfolded and interrogated for three days. He had just returned from a human rights conference in Mexico City where he presented the testimony of Lolita and other Sumpul survivors.

The day we saw Lolita, she had been visited by a Honduran security man, who threatened her with expulsion back to El Salvador. "They may as well kill me here," she said. "It's easier,"

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# How the agencies reported

Mervyn de Silva

The 53 page (114 para) Delhi Declaration devotes six paras (3 pages) to the transnational information agencies (AP, UPI, Reuters, AFP and DPA or the 'Big Five') and notes that they "tend to interpret events in and disseminate information on developing and non-aligned countries in a biased and prejudiced manner. Misinformation and incomplete and biased information produced by the media of the developed countries have affected the stability and development of developing countries in many respects. Colonial and neo-colonial dependency characterise the organisation and flow of information depending on their narrow predilections and interests".

The attention paid to this question (South-west Asia, meaning Afghanistan, receives two paras as does South-east Asia) is a measure of the growing realisation since Algiers (73) Lima (75) and Colombo (76) of the strategic importance of the global news network and the danger it represents to the unity and progress of the NAM and the well being of the member states.

If the authors of the Delhi document were challenged for fresh evidence all they had to do was to point to news-agency coverage of the Delhi meeting itself. The narrow predilections and interests of the media giants were so much in evidence that their general performance offered instant support for the non-aligned critics. Whether a Sri Lankan reader studied these despatches carefully or merely glanced at the headlines as some newspaper readers often tend to do his final impression of the ten day conference would prove a fair test.

Singapore's Foreign Minister, Mr. S. Dhanabalan was the "man of the moment", the gallant general leading the "genuinely non-aligned" and the "moderates" into victorious battle against the "extremists" and the "hardline militants", the brave

little (democratic?) David slaying the totalitarian Goliaths. And so, for the first time at a non-aligned meeting, the Soviet Union and its friends, notably Vietnam and Cuba were badly battered, while the West carried the day. This would be, more or less, the composite image projected by the media to their global audience. How true or how close to the truth is this "message"?

issue has earned only two paragraphs in the final document. Of course, length in itself means nothing, particularly in declarations made by diplomats who are trained practitioners in the periphrastic passage, the equivocal harangue, in ambiguity and evasion.

A short sharp paragraph or two could speak volumes. What matters is content and tone. How does

## and what the Declaration said

A methodical Mr. Dhanabalan did produce a studied speech; in fact, it was, as secondary school students would have it, in point-form, its passages neatly numbered right upto 9. But Mr. Dhanabalan showed neither the forensic flair of his Prime Minister, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, nor the literary brilliance of his guru, Mr. S. Rajaratnam, his predecessor. Indeed, a lack-lustre performance altogether. Was his evident success then the result of a clever PR job? The Singaporeans do not have to exert themselves in search of publicity. On its own the western press lays it on. At Third World conferences western correspondents who do not have delegations from their own countries, rely heavily on Singapore and like-minded countries for confidential documents, private briefings etc. This is easily understandable. There is a perfect harmony of views founded in a near-identity of interests. In the ultimate analysis, the news agencies serve the basic economic and ideological interests of their countries. Within the NAM, Singapore says what the western press loves to hear and likes to circulate.

### Afghanistan

All the commotion created by the western press corps was about Afghanistan. Certainly the Soviet Union with its troops in that non-aligned country was at the centre of that controversy. And yet this

the surprisingly brief thirty line statement on Afghanistan stand up to this test? Here is the key passage: "The Ministers noted with grave concern the situation in South-West Asia and agreed that it carried dangerous consequences for the peace and stability of the region. They agreed that the continuation of this situation poses serious implications for international peace and security. In this context, the Ministers viewed the situation in Afghanistan with particular concern. They urgently called for a political settlement on the basis of the withdrawal of foreign troops and full respect for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of Afghanistan and strict observance of the principles of non-interference."

Far from "criticising", "deploring" or "condemning" the Soviet Union, there is not even an explicit reference to the USSR, although it is hardly a secret that the only foreign troops on Afghan soil wear Soviet uniforms. Why such coyness? In my last article I offered an answer — "the rhetoric of diplomacy coming to terms with the realities of power".

The key is Afghanistan's neighbour, Pakistan, chairman of the Islamic conference. At the first Islamic conference at Islamabad, it was all fire and brimstone, and a holy war (Jehad) against the

communist infidel. By the time the UN General Assembly met six months ago, a highly harassed Mr. Agha Shahi, Pakistan's Foreign Minister, was seen fussing about frantically, from delegation to delegation, including most of all the Islamic states, persuading them to "soften" any criticism of the Soviet Union, in the interests of "diplomatic negotiations" and a "political settlement". UN diplomats noted that Mr. Agha Shahi had a one hour meeting with Mr. Gromyko at the Soviet mission. Correspondents reported that Mr. Shahi had emerged from the meeting looking "extremely grave". In New York, the most widely shared view was that Mr. Agha Shahi had been posed a blunt question. Could Pakistan actually afford to play the dangerous game that was being promoted by the US, China and the conservative Islamic States? Ever since a Communist regime was established in Kabul, many governments including India and of course Afghanistan itself, have been convinced that Pakistan has been used as "an operational base" for "de-stabilisation" and "subversion". Egypt's Sadat actually boasts that his officers are in charge of training camps for Afghan rebels on Pakistani soil. The Saudis pour in dollars. President Reagan recently argued strongly for military support for these rebels, and the Commander of one such rebel group told a press conference that he is in receipt of Chinese light arms. Pakistan was being prodded into accelerating this process of de-stabilisation.

Was this in Pakistan's interests? More pointedly, had the Zia regime calculated the risks involved? A self elected "transitional" ruler who promised elections in four months General Zia has obviously overstayed his welcome. The world has witnessed last month events which dramatised his unpopularity and the isolation of his narrowly-based regime. Pakistan economy is in pretty poor shape and the IMF, under US pressure, has embarked on the biggest ever rescue operation. Exactly 10 years ago Pakistan lost its East wing. Even today its "unity" is suspect and Baluchistan bordering Afghanistan and Iran is the sensitive spot. Last week Iraqi President

Saddam Hussein threatened to arm the minorities in Iran and mentioned the Baluchis. (It took several divisions of the Pakistani army more than a year to quell the Baluchi revolt of the early '70s) At a Delhi press conference, a reporter's question about the Bangladesh war left Mr. Agha Shahi visibly shaken. When he was asked why Pakistan was not ready to talk to the Kabul government as it did with India after the Bangladesh war Mr. Shahi replied sombrely "need we talk about the past". In fact, Islamic delegations to the Thaf Summit held just before the Delhi meeting were told that Pakistan was even prepared to talk to Mr. Babrak Karamal as "leader of the ruling party", and not as "head of government".

With one point three (1.3) million refugees divided into 37 squabbling groups all going through the charade of leading a resistance movement, the domestic burdens cast on Pakistan by the post-Afghanistan situation are becoming intolerable. Thus, at Thaf, Pakistan adopted an even more "conciliatory" line in private while of course making strong demands in public.

#### US option

What burdens has it placed on Pakistan's foreign relations? I put the question to Dr. Bhabani Sen Gupta who produced that excellent book on the geo-strategic problems of this region "The Fulcrum of Asia", when he studied at Dr. Brezeinski's Institute at Columbia University. Dr. Gupta now works at the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi. "Pakistani policy planners" he said "face a special predicament in what they perceive as a basic asymmetry in the regional power relationships. Whether we agree or not with this view, Pakistan sees the Indo-Soviet relationship as a partnership or quasi-alliance and because she is no longer in CENTO and has no security pact with the US or China, Pakistan feels naked and insecure. So she is tempted today by the American option".

Is this because of the rapid militarisation of US foreign policy under Reagan and the massive

(Continued on page 24)

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# Humanising Tourism in Asia

Jayantha Somasundaram

**R**on O' Grady of the Singapore-based Christian Conference of Asia titled his study: **Tourism, The Asian Dilemma**. It is a dilemma to which the Asia Partnership for Human Development has also given its mind to. The partnership, a coming together of development centres from both the First world and Asia, has as its Executive Secretary Sri Lanka-born Renzie Rupasinghe.

The Partnership itself has recently commissioned a study on Tourism in Asia by Dennis Shoemith of the Asian Bureau, Australia. Tourism is an imperative where Asia is concerned for two reasons: first, because of the phenomenal growth of tourism in Asia, second, because of the wide disparity in incomes and life styles between First World tourists and Asians in the host country.

In the last decade, tourist arrivals in Asia sprang from five million to twenty million. In South Asia, the rate of increase is twenty percent. In the Philippines it is about thirty three per cent. Singapore with a population of two and a half million, received two million tourists in 1979.

In **Future Shock** written a decade ago, Alvin Toffler predicted that "We shall also witness a revolutionary expansion of certain industries whose sole purpose consists not of manufactured goods, nor even of ordinary services, but of pre-programmed 'experiences'". Today tourist spending, computed at one thousand million dollars a day, is the largest single item of world trade.

## Big business

Tourism is big business, and the impetus comes from the global companies. Thus as early as 1946 Pan Am set up the Intercontinental Hotels chain, TWA came up with the Hiltons and Scandinavian Air System controls the Sheratons.

The development model being pursued by Sri Lanka and the ASEAN countries make them conducive to

tourist traffic. Yet only a fraction of the tourist earnings ends up with those employed locally in tourist-service occupation. Most of it goes back to the First World.

The disparities in incomes and lifestyles between the tourist and the local inhabitant is reflected in the contrast of per capita incomes, Rs. 100,000 for the USA and Rs. 3,500 for Sri Lanka.

Prominence is given to night life in order to attract tourists from the West and Japan. A study carried out in the Philippines estimates 500 massage parlours, saunas and bars in Manila have 10,000 prostitutes operating through them. It is claimed however that the women involved get only one fifth to one eighth of the takings—the rest goes to bar proprietors, hotels, police officers, agencies, pimps, guides and taxi drivers.

In the final analysis the tourist is also exploited to the extent that he too is a component in a packaged-tour with little or no opportunity to encounter and experience life as it really is in Asia.

## Exposure method

The Asia Partnership for Human Development has therefore been at work, developing the Exposure method in order to humanise tourism. As distinct from mass tourism, the Exposure is a carefully worked out programme for small groups from the First World. Its objective is to maximise encounters between the visitors and the people in the host country and every attempt is made to 'expose' the visitor to as broad a spectrum of Asian life as possible.

The Exposure discounts luxury hotels, resort complexes, standard tourist attractions and shopping centres. It thus becomes a cheaper but more meaningful experience for those who want to see and meet the real Asia.

The local programmes are planned and executed by the Partnerships Asian Centres who are already at

work amongst the underprivileged and the marginalised. Thus access to the people and sights that the tourist brochures forget is ensured.

In the interior the visitor lives not in hotels, travels not by helicopter and eats not Western cuisine. more important, their experience with Asians is not limited to the ultra-sophisticated who themselves are bored by the shows and sights they have to put up for the foreigners and who ultimately see in the tourist a source of income.

Rather, the Exposure method is an attempt to give the visitor from the First World an insight into life styles, range of values and dignity of Asians, more it seeks to acquaint them with the real issues and problems that Asia confronts and also to present the aspirations and hopes of Asians as they seek to find ways and means to deal with their own lives and societies.

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# The SLFP and Populism

Laksiri Fernando

A reply to Vickremabahu Karunaratne

**D**r. Vickremabahu's article on "Sinhala Populism" (L. G. Vol 3, Nos. 12 & 13) deserves a reply not so much because of its thought provoking quality, but because of the nature of the questions he raises, i. e. concerning the SLFP. To be more precise, "the controversy and rift among the left" has centered on the question of the **class character** of the SLFP during the last period, and the **programmatic attitude** that a workers party should adopt in relation to it, and not on the question of the **general or political character** of the SLFP. One needs to evaluate Karunaratne's article in the light of these two problems.

Karunaratne characterises the SLFP as a populist party, perhaps for reasons best known to him. This characterisation was first vaguely used by the American political scientist Robert N. Kearney, in his attempt to emphasise the SLFP's move away from the UNP's 'elitism' towards 'populism'. It referred to the SLFP's relatively more popular base and Bandaranaike's demagoguery. What Kearney used as an adjective to describe the SLFP, Karunaratne uses as a noun. He defines the basic character of the SLFP as 'populist'. Then one wonders what he means by populism.

## What is populism?

A discussion was held at the London School of Economics in May 1967 with the main purpose

of defining Populism. This discussion became a forum for many experts on Populism. Though their attempt to define Populism was significant, they ultimately failed to define it in a coherent manner. Why? They had to confront two 'worlds' of thinking on the subject - one Marxist and the other non-Marxist. However, in the end, they agreed to disagree in defining Populism. Since then many political scientists and writers have used the English expression *Populism*, the Spanish expression *Populismo* and the French expression *Populisme*, with the implications that the word means the same as the Russian *Narodnichestvo* - to cover a multitude of unconnected, heterogeneous tendencies and movements. In sum, the term populism has become a hotch-potch in political science vocabulary.

Now, Dr. Karunaratne picks up this term and uses it with a certain boldness to characterise the SLFP and to justify the NSSP's past, present and future strategy and tactics towards the SLFP. But in the process, unfortunately, he evades the basic question of the class character of the SLFP.

His point of departure in the analysis of populism is in itself a misconception. To him "the bourgeoisie, a tiny minority in society, dominates the politics of capitalist society by its ability to manoeuvre the petty bourgeoisie of town and country". Thus he isolates one aspect of bourgeois domination in capitalist society and emphasises it as the main. He emphasises the incidental as the fundamental. The materialist method disciplines as to take our departure from the weighty facts of the social structure. To be sure the bourgeoisie dominates the politics of capitalist society primarily through its **State power** which based on the **ownership of the means of production**, i. e. the economic power. As a part and parcel of this domination, they control the ideology and consciousness of the masses - both of the

petty bourgeoisie and the working class. In this domination, they primarily rely on their own ideological-political weapons, i. e. the mass media and their own political parties not on one party but on several parties, depending on the circumstances.

The fact that the bourgeoisie uses the petty bourgeoisie in achieving certain historical objective (Jacobinism, anti-imperialist nationalism, and Fascism) does not deny **any** independent political role for the petty bourgeoisie. The Sinhala dominant Ceylonese bourgeoisie, through its alternative party the SLFP, utilized the rural petty bourgeoisie in an extremely 'moderate' way within the electoral confines to achieve certain concessions from British Imperialism in 1950's and early 1960's. In the process they openly suppressed and undermined the emerging Tamil bourgeoisie and the masses. The dominant ideology of the SLFP was nationalism and more precisely Sinhala nationalism. Sri Lanka did not experience an independent petty bourgeois movement with any political significance until the J. V. P. was formed. However in Russia, even before the dawn of an indigenous capitalist class, a forceful petty bourgeois movement emerged. That was the Narodism. It is Lenin's analysis of this movement that Marxists take as their point of departure in the interpretation of Populism.

In interpreting populism, it seems that Karunaratne amalgamates or conflates two notions. On the one hand, he uses the terms populism in an arbitrary manner to line up the SLFP with the Russian Narodniks and the Social Revolutionaries. If this is an innocent academic exercise one does not need to worry much because there have been very many strange theorists who place Russian Narodism, Peronism, Castroism, Maoism, Nazism (and even Trotskyism) in the populist category! But when it comes

Laksiri Fernando, an alumnus of Peradeniya Campus was a member of the 'Virodhaya' group and its subsequent organizational form the (Healyite) Revolutionary Communist League, which is better known as the 'Kamkara Mawatha' group. He left this group and later joined Edmund Samarakody's Revolutionary Workers party, of which he was a leading personality. Mr. Fernando who is now an independent Marxist, is lecturer in Political Science at Peradeniya University. He pursued his Post graduate studies at the University of New Brunswick in Canada, and holds a Masters Degree. He is the author of a standard text on Sri Lanka politics.

from a leader of a workers party, the equation between the SRs and the SLFP takes quite a different meaning.

On the other hand he postulates a pseudo-Trotskyist theory that Narodnik type (populist in a Marxist sense) petty bourgeois movements cannot entertain a political existence independent from the bourgeoisie. Referring to Russian Narodniks, he says that "in effect, populism arises as an instrument of capitalist expansion" and referring to the SLFP he talks about populism as the alternative policy of the bourgeoisie in an underdeveloped country". This interpretation of populism is quite contrary to the Lenin's interpretations of populism, i. e. Narodism.

In discussing the class basis of Narodism Lenin said: "it is a protest against serfdom (the old nobility stratum) and bourgeoisdom (the new middle-class stratum) in Russia from the peasants', the small producers', point of view" and "its content is representation of the interests and viewpoint of the Russian small producer, the petty bourgeoisie." On the basis of Lenin's interpretation of Narodism one can distinguish two basic aspects of Populism: (1) their program is anti-capitalist (2) their social basis is (not the working class but) the petty bourgeois. Because of the contradictory nature of these two aspects of populism these movements are most likely to disintegrate and dissipate through splits, especially when challenged by strong working class forces. This is exactly what happened to Narodnik and Social Revolutionary movements in Russia. Now Vickramabahu Karunaratne, who has grasped this aspect of Russian Populism grafts this analysis on the SLFP as a scheme and talk about the "Rise and fall of 'Sinhala Populism', i. e. the SLFP" It is our view that the present dilemma of the SLFP is quite different from the dilemma of a populist movement.

Leon Trotsky emphasised, as a general rule, that the petty bourgeois movements (i. e. the peasantry) are incapable of achieving and retaining political power. "However, there are certain exceptions to

this norm. As a class the petty bourgeoisie vacillates between the capitalist and the working class. When the class struggle intensifies, sections of the populists capitulate to the bourgeoisie and in the process become their instruments. That is what Karensky and the SRs did. Lenin once remarked that "when you scratch the Social Revolutionaries you will find the bourgeoisie" But you do not need to Scratch the SLFP to find the bourgeoisie. They are the bourgeoisie! This is the difference between Populism and the SLFP. A populist movement is a pettybourgeois movement, while the SLFP is a bourgeois movement.

### Origins of the SLFP

Populism is not merely a Russian phenomenon. In many peripheral countries petty bourgeois movements contain and represent traits of Populism (Narodism). These movements are clearly distinguishable from bourgeois and national bourgeois movements although they do have many common factors at certain historical points. Populist movements display three main characteristics: these movements are (1) petty bourgeois (2) anti-capitalist and (3) revolutionary. The ideology of Populism has a long history. Beginning with its lone fore-runner Herzen, this thread of thinking runs through Chernychevsky to Frantz Fanon. The heir of populism in Sri Lanka is not the SLFP but the JVP.

Given the above stated interpretation of Populism, no Marxist would dare to evaluate the historical development of the SLFP as a development within the Populist movement except, of course, Vickramabahu Karunaratne. Vickramabahu Karunaratne tries to trace the 'populist' basis of the SLFP to the early stages of Bandaranaike's politics. This is sheer nonsense.

S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, from the beginning, was a bourgeois politician. He returned to Sri Lanka in 1926 after his studies at the Oxford University and joined the Ceylon National Congress forthwith. He organised the so-called Progressive Nationalist Party as a pressure group within the CNC and become the joint secretary of

the CNC. He contested a Colombo Municipal Council seat in 1927 as the bourgeois candidate against A. E. Goonesinghe, the working class candidate and won the seat with the support of the capitalist forces of the area.

*The acid test of any politician during this period was the question of the universal franchise and the attitude towards the anti-poppy, i. e. the anti-imperialist movement. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, while opposing the granting of universal franchise, stayed away from the anti-poppy movement.*

It is true that with the introduction of the universal franchise in 1931, every bourgeois politician had to rely on the people's support. In order to enter the state council. In this sense not only Bandaranaike but all bourgeois politicians suddenly became 'populist'. The unique feature of Bandaranaike's political rhetoric was that he spoke for "welfarism" on the one hand and for Sinhala communalism on the other. The decade of the 1930's marked a decisive period in economics and politics. This was the period of the world economic crisis. The intensification of the class struggle was one of the main results. The LSSP, the first leftist party, was formed in 1935 and it became strong, influential, and popular with the Bracegirdle incident in 1937. It is in this year that the Sinhala Maha Sabha was formed under the leadership of Bandaranaike. Whatever their pretended objectives, the actual role and function of the Sinhala Maha Sabha was to undermine and confuse the class polarisation by means of communal polarisation.

There were no traces of radical nationalism (let alone populism) in Bandaranaike politics. He opposed the universal franchise. His slogan was self government under the British flag! He fanned Sinhala nationalism (-Communalism) in a period when Sinhala-Tamil unity was essential to achieve independence. He whole heartedly supported the imperialist Second World War. He accepted the Soulbury Constitution. His Sinhala Maha Sabha was a constituent partner of the UNP when

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# JVP's FOREIGN POLICY

*Q: While claiming to be a champion of unsullied Leninist proletarian internationalism you initially remained silent on the Afghanistan issue and then condemned the Soviet intervention in defence of the Afghan revolution. Is this not contradictory? Then again on the question of Iran you have taken a stridently anti-Khomeini stance while you consider the Iraqi Baath Socialist Party a fraternal party. You also imply at the same time that the JVP considers the Fedayeene Khalq, a fraternal party. But the Fedayeene, whose theoretical line is quite different from that of your party, lends critical support to Khomeini against the Iraqi's. Does this not expose yet another contradiction in your foreign policy positions?*

*A:* The phrase you used in the first half of your question that we condemned the Soviet intervention in defence of the Afghan revolution requires correction. We did not condemn it but, to the contrary, lauded the Soviet Union for doing so since it was in full agreement with Leninist Proletarian Internationalism. So as to safeguard the precious gains of the Afghan revolution the intervention on the part of the Soviet Union was an absolute necessity. And it still is. In fact we would love to see the Soviet Union provide more and more material aid to the people of Afghanistan and at least some ideological and material support to all other proletarian movements in the world which are genuinely struggling to root out capitalist and or imperialist domination. The true purpose of this kind of intervention is no doubt to help the revolutionary party concerned overcome the acts of repression or counter-revolution committed by the elements of capitalism/imperialism. In that particular country. Yet, in case the said, 'support' extends to interfere heavily with the doing of the proletarian revolutionary

party, isn't it true that it becomes yet another menace to the people?

That sort of intrusion into the thoughts of the very people to whom assistance was first afforded by no means represents Leninist proletarian internationalism. It is to the Soviet Union's behaviour of the above nature in Afghanistan that we are opposed. Lenin never wanted things to happen that way.

On the question of Iran, we are as against the feudalist clerical regime of Khomeini as can be, there is simply no question about that. Meanwhile, we consider it to be our duty to lend unconditional support to the militant people of Iran for it is freedom—bona fide freedom, not a travesty of it—that they all crave for. By genuine freedom is meant freedom with all its aspects within it—political economic, cultural etc. etc. We expected the Fedayeene a Khalq to guide the Iranian people towards this goal and that is the reason as to why we treated it as a fraternal party.

Today it has become quite evident that Khomeini had been misguiding the freedom loving thoughts of the people of Iran with a view to laying his hands upon the ruling power. This is no doubt large scale fraud but Khomeini continues to curtain himself and his doings with a finely woven religious mesh—work.

Circumstances being so, it is the urgent task of the Fedayeene Khalq to organize the Iranian masses in order to overthrow the Cleric, feudal regime of Khomeini and then to establish a Socialist government in Iran. But instead of doing this, they lend critical support to the ruling rogue and, consequently, contribute to strengthening the ties of bondage—reactionary mediaval dictatorship—that have been binding the people for ages. We cannot possibly comply with this move of theirs.

Our party, however, considers the Arab Baath Socialist Party to be a fraternal party and support it because we see eye to eye with them in struggling against the US imperialism, zionism and all their agents to free the Arab land. We believe that the Arab Baath Socialist Party is acting in accordance with a genuine anti-imperialist programme of work which is quite capable of leading the Arab Socialist Revolution to victory. Further, we do not observe any contradiction in our foreign policy postulates, as you depict in your question.

*Q: You frequently characterize the states of the socialist community as degenerate / deformed workers states, states ruled by a parasitic and privileged bureaucratic stratum which has to be overthrown by means of a political revolution. Yet on occasions you also refer to these countries as 'socialist'. For instance the October, 1978 issue of Niyamuwa describes the Soviet Union as "the most powerful socialist country". Is this not inconsistent? What is your real position?*

*A:* The relations of socialist production established by the socialist revolution in the said countries are very much in existence still. Therefore, we treat these countries as the ones that represent the socialist community. But those in authority in some of these countries have clearly deviated from the socialist path and assumed bureaucratic positions. That is why we rightly state that they belong to the parasitic and privileged bureaucratic stratum and that this infringement of genuine socialism can be done away with by means of a political revolution.

*Q: The November 1979 issue of Ginisiluwa describes the JVP as the 'Lankan detachment of the world proletarian revolutionary party; while the April 1980 issue of the same paper speaks of the need to form a 'World Communist Party'. The message you took to*



*the International Youth Conference in Havana also stressed the need to 'rebuild the Leninist International'. Doesn't this reflect a Trotskyist type of undifferentiated globalism which overlooks the law of uneven development and the relative autonomy of the nation-state (i. e. the political instance?)*

A: No, it does not reflect any type of an undifferentiated globalism. In Sri Lanka, we build a proletarian revolutionary party based on the principles of Marxism—Leninism. In fact, we want to unite and work together with the Marxist—Leninist movements in the Indian sub-continent and the world over. **We move forward with the intention of resurrecting and rebuilding the Third International.**

We have a clear and definite right and a proletarian internationalist duty to fight against opportunism and also against those who turn towards that marsh. Those who want to lean on and to share with the other schools of thought other than Marxism—Leninism have complete freedom to jump into that marsh. It is the duty of the proletarian revolutionary party to clearly and definitely counterpose internationalism in deed to internationalism in words, at a time when all revisionists and reformists swear by internationalism and call themselves internationalists

Today, where, social chauvinism and centrism reigns over proletarian internationalism, the distinctive feature of the genuine proletarian internationalists is the complete break with social chauvinism and centrism.

If we have successfully and mercilessly attacked our own 'Petresovs' and our own 'Chkeidzes and Isere-tellis', violated the 'socialist family discipline' destroyed 'Unity' with the centrists and chauvinists and gone against all of them, then we are happy of being so, as these acts show that we alone represent socialism in Sri Lanka, the proletarian cause, the proletarian revolution. All the rest is a 'stinking curse'. When the existing 'socialist camp' does not completely break with social chauvinism and the third International was dissolved

by the orders from 'above is it' Trotskyite type of undifferentiated globalism overlooking the law of uneven development and the relative autonomy of the nation-state, to agit to rebuild the Leninist International, ie, the world communist party and to identify ourselves as the 'Lankan detachment of the world proletarian revolutionary'?

No, it is definitely not so. We agitate for the international of the 'internationalists in deed' and they alone represent the revolutionary internationalists mass.

The socialists of this type may be few in the world, but, that does not matter in the long-run. Isn't it so?

Q: *At the commemoration meeting of the April struggle held at Sugathadasa Stadium in 1979 you stated that the JVP can have no strategic alliances with the socialist states but only tactical ones. Wey? Should not the position be just the opposite ie. tactical differences (if at all) with the socialist states foreign policy positions, but a strategic alliance with them? In the 1978-1979 period you were drawing very close to Havana and Hanoi, but since the Afghanistan issue you seem to have drawn away and now seem to be internationally isolated once again. Is this correct?*

A: **We strictly maintain that for us no strategic alliance is possible with those 'socialist' regimes that have transparently degenerated into the abyss of bureaucracy.** Their strategy is not based on proletarian internationalism whereas ours veritably is. They have often proved that they are nationalistic in their approach and, therefore, **JVP does not propose to have strategic alliances with them. Still, we think that we can maintain tactical ones.**

We have been—and still are—very close to the working peoples of such socialist countries as Vietnam, Laos, Kampuches, Cuba etc., to all militant peoples combating reaction, imperialism, zionism etc., and even to the people of countries like East Timor who have

been—and still have to—struggling completely unnoticed and unaided by the so called 'powerful socialist states.' If at all we are internationally isolated now (we are not, not in the least) as you crudely presume in you question, well, it is because we are truly against opportunism, imperialism, and capitalism. It irrefutably proves that we are proletarian internationalists at heart and this, the proletarian movements the world over will perceive sooner or later'.

## The SLFP...

(Continued from page 17)

the party was formed and he became its vice-president. It is also important to note that in 1947 Bandaranaike attempted to form an alternative bourgeois government under his leadership with the support of the left. After the failure of this attempt, he became a key Minister in the first UNP cabinet.

Bandaranaike and his Sinhala Maha Sabha represented not a prototype, but a caricature and a mockery of a "national bourgeoisie". From its inception, the nationalist movement in Sri Lanka, which was the political instrument of the emerging native bourgeoisie, was characterised by its conservatism. The native bourgeoisie was overwhelmed by the compradore sections, which were based on the plantation and merchant capital. This was in contrast to the Indian situation. In India the nationalist movement was dominated by the emerging industrial bourgeoisie and the movement was partially "anti-imperialist". The national bourgeoisie, if one can speak of, was in an embryonic form during the period of pre-independence Sri Lanka. They were within one and the same movement with the compradore sections of the bourgeoisie. Their differences in the political arena were very thin. Their feeble voice was articulated from time to time in Sinhala Buddhist rhetoric (Dharmapala and Bandaranaike) which was not entirely uncommon even among the compradore politicians (D. B. Jayatilake).

(To be continued)

# BETRAYAL OR STRATEGY?

H. A. Seneviratne replies to Dr. Carlo Fonseka

From the standpoint of the class struggle, I am inclined to think of Dr. Carlo Fonseka's reply (L. G., March 1, 1981) to my review (L. G., February 1, 1981) of the film on Dr. N.M. Perera, as a congenitally weak defence of the policy of left opportunism. Laid bare before our own eyes are the results of such a policy followed by his party—the LSSP—"and others of their political ilk". That policy of left opportunism led to class collaboration and finally to the very destruction of the once powerful mass movement of our country. But Dr. Fonseka refuses to see what is clear as broad day-light. He will in all probability continue to be so. Such is the psychology of opportunism, which will form a part of the resistance, along with that of bourgeoisie, to the victory of the masses led by the working class.

Dr. Fonseka refers to what his party did in 1964 as "the LSSP's strategy of working with and through the SLFP for the attainment of specific political objectives." If so what are these "political objectives"? Have they been "attained"? Is there any resultant improvement in the quality of life and living conditions of our people or has there been any political advancement in so far as the working class and its allies are concerned? On the contrary! If, on the other hand, by "specific objectives" is meant the under-cutting and the undermining of the SLFP, in order to gain political hegemony for the LSSP, behind the backs of not only the SLFP but also the people, it would make even a political simpleton smile disdainfully. For it was the position of the LSSP that was undermined to the core!

As far as I can see, feel and understand, that kind of strategy can only

be a "strategy" of betrayal of the working class and its allies. Such a "strategy" will ultimately cause a defilement of everything it undertakes, be it political, social or cultural. This view of mine was strengthened after I saw the documentary film on Dr. N. M. Perera, produced under the patronage of the LSSP.

For Dr. Fonseka, the fact that the faction that left the LSSP during the 1964 split could not make any headway among the masses is proof of the LSSP's correct political line. For him "the verdict of history has been infinitely more cruel" to that faction "than to the LSSP" and by implication the LSSP has, therefore, followed the correct political line. There is a tacit admission in this statement that is quoted here that the verdict of history has been cruel to the LSSP too. Even so, that statement betrays a lack of any scientific method of analysis although the learned professor assures us that he has learnt his scientific method by actually "practising it"!

The reasons that led to the decay and the splintering disintegration of the faction that left the LSSP during the 1964 split are different from those that led to the downfall of the LSSP. But many of those reasons are not unconnected with the intrinsic, all-pervading decay of the LSSP itself. The faction that left the LSSP took with them a bureaucratism wrought with jealousy and cut-throatism that was symptomatic of an already crumbling and decadent party. The collapse and the complete break up of the breakaway faction does not in any way justify or even mitigate the heinousness of the LSSP's betrayal.

The kind of thinking that appears to be going on in the minds of gentlemen like Dr. Fonseka shows to what

extent his party which once had a working class base has now become utterly petty-bourgeois and putrid. Behind such thinking is the urge to preserve the "status quo" under the existing capitalist system whilst pretending to stand for its destruction.

That kind of shameless opportunism will use every religion for its own purposes. Practising one's religion is a private affair. Dr. Fonseka says that Dr. Perera was a good Buddhist. It is not for me to challenge anybody on that score. All that I say is that by 1964, Dr. Perera and party had completely lost faith in the class struggle as the force that brings about the ultimate victory of the working class and the emancipation of the masses.

It looks as if Dr. Fonseka, the seemingly untrained politician he is, does not understand how political conclusions and inferences are drawn from given facts at a given time. One can indeed be a "detector of the feeling of the masses" if one identifies himself with and learns from them. I would not hesitate to conclude that as far as left opportunism is concerned the people have begun to understand it through experience and to laugh and marvel at it, from whatever quarters it may come.

What has to be carried forward and linked up with the present and the future is the class struggle which the LSSP had given up long before Dr. Fonseka became one of its members. This task of replacing the "strategy" of opportunism with the strategy of the class struggle can only be done by a new party with a new leadership.

# The Plantation and the Village

L. Shanthi Kumar

(Joint Secretary, Malayala, Makkal Iyakkam (Plantation People's Movement))

In the village community, which existed in Sri Lanka prior to Western colonial civilization, one can recognise many elements of organised traditional society.

The original village before such colonisation was a feudal society with an appropriate economic and social institutional environment for such a system, which is also termed as a self-sufficient economy with little external trade contacts.

The economy was essentially a subsistence agrarian economy with ancillary crafts and occupations supporting the primary economic activity which is mainly food production of the community. Resource allocation and the division of labour were institutionalised through the caste system, which in turn became a dominant factor in influencing the power structure and the system of ideology. Religion — Buddhism — was accommodated into the structure with a dominant role both in power structure and ideological system of village communities.

With the process of colonisation of the coastal areas of the country from 16th century onwards, the village economy began to be exposed to a new system which caused gradual changes in the nature of socio-economic relationships. This process was geared towards further qualitative changes in the rural economy with the advent of British occupation.

A proper study will have to be made to understand and evaluate the processes and nature of changes of this transitional period. The new powerful element introduced to the country's economic structure is the plantation system of production. It is not the absorption of lands alone to the plantation which disturbed the nature of self-sufficient economy of the village but rather the drawing of such a traditional system into the new monetary economy with vested interest in alien metropolitan centres. It should be viewed through the nature of merchant capital of

which plantation becomes one aspect. Abolition of the Rajakariya system helped the labour mobilisation process towards the money economy and creation of new economical and administrative structures and centres. It will be interesting to note the role of the rural elites in this new process which in turn had its influence in changing the nature of the self-sufficiency of the village economy.

The development of the new political economy followed by the introduction of universal franchise and which was accelerated after Independence, introduced new institutional arrangements to feed and develop the village units in the total national system. The growth of welfare measures in fact is a mode of hidden cash input to the village economy. Free education, free health services, subsidiary measures in food and other consumable items had a practical impact on the rural economy which was reflected in the improvements measurable comparatively through the increasing of literacy, reduction of mortality and infant mortality rates, increasing of life expectancy, etc. in the villages. Apart from this, direct measures were taken to improve the agrarian economy by way of developing of infrastructure, transport, rehabilitation of water tanks, and introducing new agricultural methods. It is also necessary to study the intermediate process agencies and the filtering system to measure the net flow of such measures to the masses at the bottom level of the village communities. A re-valuation of the role of administrative structures, new institutional arrangements such as co-operative societies, and other institutions linked with agrarian activities and their relationship with political institutions is necessary to understand the emergence of the new village economy.

The new village economy could not be evaluated fully without understanding the estate or the

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plantation economy. The degree of impacts is mainly decided by the proximity of the plantation areas. For example, greater impact both actual and emotional could be observed in the villages in the central hills than in the villages in the north central, northern or eastern province.

It was with the introduction of Coffee in the 1820s by the British that plantation agriculture came to be established on a significant commercial scale. With that a new set of economic relations began to evolve.

The factors of production, land, labour and capital were put to new uses at a level of productivity much higher and different than in the past. The estate economy with a high productive system aimed at super profit demanded a labour system which could serve such a purpose. (I view the disfranchisement of the majority of the people of Indian origins in the plantation is a political move to facilitate the continuance of the indentured labour system aimed at super exploitation of the plantation workers. Thus, as far as the plantation workers of Indian origin are concerned, the political independence of 1948 is also a change of colonialism into the ethnic or internal colonialism.)

The problems that emerged from the abolition of slavery were overcome by the indentured labour system decorated with new codes and legal terms. Yet effective elements of the slavery systems continued within the indentured labour systems introduced in the estate sector. It is no accident that many pioneer planters happened to be former slave masters and army personnel. Thus, in the estate even today, we find the system of 'barrack lines' and 'parade system' which have not only structural but terminological links with the supposedly discredited slavery system (by the modern civilization).

The creation of estates around traditional bound villages created an alien atmosphere. The majority of the names of the estates were of British origin. The immigrant labour trapped to be indentured labour system in the estate were ethnically, religionwise, and culturally

alien to the indigenous Sinhalese. The estates were also technologically and organisationally different.

These characteristics created a sense of separateness from the rest of the society. Its characteristics of isolation and homogeneity of the estate community, also shows certain internal structural features based on the fact that in the social and economic relations between the estate management and the estate worker generated by the productive system, the interest of the two are of a contradictory nature. In the estate set up, the system developed by the British enabled the management to acquire an overwhelmingly dominant position and control over all aspects of the life of the worker community. Being migrants in an alien environment, the workforce was captive to the plantation. This control system did not fail to utilise the traditional values among the migrants. The creation and defence of the Kangany system and caste system by the planters provided a good example of such strategies.

The control is not confined to employment, it encompasses various aspects of life and thus creates a high degree of dependency relationship within the estate. As an investor it is the duty of the planter to see that this indentured labour is in physical fitness to dispose his work. For this purpose the estate organised a system of distributing essential food items and providing housing, education and health services. Unlike in the village set up, these activities do not emerge from the welfare policies but rather from the policies of cost of production and thus kept to the minimum standard with minimum cost to increase the volume of the profit margin.

Many seem to be carried away by the legal measures introduced in a comparatively earlier period by the British like the Medical Wants Ordinance etc. The practical implication of such acts are to be exposed even in the present context. With all such Ordinances and Acts the estate sector throws out certain realities to witness the nature of implementation of such Ordinances.

(Continued in next issue)

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## Letters. . .

(Continued from page 1)

the validity of a political line is: does it work?

**Dr Costain de Vos**  
Kollupitiya

### El Salvador

When Peru severed diplomatic relations with Cuba on 30th. December 1960, it was announced to the world that there were "authentic documents" to prove Cuba's involvement in Peruvian internal affairs. Philip Agee, then a C. I. A. officer, had this to say after fifteen years about those "documents" in his famous book 'C.I.A. Diary'.

".....But it is also the result of a Lima station operation in November. The operation was a commando raid by Cuban exiles against the Cuban Embassy in Lima which included the capture of documents. The Lima station inserted among the authentic documents several that had been forged by T. S. D. including a supposed list of persons in Peru who received payments from the Cuban Embassy totalling about 15,000 dollars monthly. .... Another of the forged documents referred to a non-existent campaign of the Cuban Embassy in Lima to promote the Ecuadorian position on the Rio Protocol."

Here the 'station' refers to a. I. A. and 'T. S. D.' to Technical Services Division of C. I. A. Philip Agee Served the C. I. A. for many years in Latin America

**Siva Subramaniam**  
Kondavil

### Where's the Action?

In the issue of 15/02/1981 of Lanka Guardian Dr. Colvin R de Silva in his article on The way to the Future states, '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 everspreading 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'.**

It was at the first meeting of the Five Parties summoned by the LSSP and held at the LSSP headquarters on 08/06/1980 that the representatives of the NSSP raised precisely the question of 'joint agitation and action on agreed mass issues'. The Five Parties did not agree. Therefore the NSSP representatives withdrew, stating they were always willing to participate in 'joint agitation and action on agreed mass issues' and hoped they would be contacted in the event of any proposal for joint action. Thereafter the LSSP did not convene any meeting for a discussion of joint action on agreed mass issues. The LSSP ignored the meetings summoned by the CPSL on 21/05/1980 and the NSSP in July 1980. The CPSL did not participate in the meeting of 08/06/1980 summoned by the LSSP; and the LSSP did not participate in the meeting summoned by the CPSL. Only the NSSP participated in both meetings with a view to discuss joint action.

Moreover at a joint meeting of the JIUAC and political parties held on 19/08/1980 the five parties rejected in writing a proposal for a day's Satyagraha to be observed not only in Colombo, Jaffna, Kandy and Anuradhapura as on 08th August, but throughout the country. Further in regard to the Day of Protest to be held by the JIUAC on 11/11/1980, the Five Parties informed the JIUAC in writing that the time was not opportune for such actions. On the other hand so far they have not made any alternate proposals for joint actions.

We also know how the SLFP leadership behaved on the eve of 16th October. Majority of the leaders were instrumental in containing the SLFP rank and file and did a good job on behalf of the UNP!

Finally if there is joint action on agreed mass issues by Five or more Parties, the NSSP will be there.

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## How the agencies...

(Continued from page 14)

build-up of military power, especially in this area? In Dr. Sen Gupta's opinion, American credibility was at its lowest under Carter. Whereas he added India had confidence in the consistency of the Indo-Soviet relationship, no government could completely rely on American support when the risks were really high. The only question, in his view, is on what terms a new US-Pakistan special relationship can be built.

While the basic imperatives of Mr. Reagan's foreign policy are not too hard to discern the aggressive posture and the new stridency in tone will probably outlast any initial reverses and shocks in Central America, within NATO etc. It is still quite blurred however on specifics, such as special bilateral relationships. Policy is still taking shape. Undoubtedly, Washington would like to fit Pakistan firmly into the larger pattern of US strategy in the Indian Ocean area. But what price will the US be prepared to pay Pakistan for a renewal of alliance which withered away in the late '70s? How much economic assistance? What sophisticated arms to 'modernise' Pakistan's military? An acceptance of Pakistan's nuclear ambitions?

This of course would only reinforce the Indo-Soviet relationship. That I think is the 'predicament' which Sen Gupta had in mind.

### Regional role

In any case, my own impression is that a re-armed Pakistan with an alliance-based foreign policy would assume a regional role that would have more of a westward than a sub-continental tilt. Hence all the public palaver about Islam, Islamic state, Islamic ideology, Islamic law etc. meant obviously for the consumption of Saudi Arabia and the little sheikdoms all petrified by the popular upheaval in Iran and the downfall of the Shah. The Punjabi generals, the pukka sahib civil servants, the US-educated technocrats and the Karachi businessmen have far more respect for Saudi money and US F-15's than for the Holy Koran. Pakistan is a far better substitute for the Shah in the now vacant role of regional

policemen than Sadat. It has had military missions (advisers, officers and men) in well over a dozen countries and it has the experience in helping local rulers crush liberation movements (In Oman the Dofari front, and in Jordan the Palestinians, for example). Thus, it can offer the US the necessary local support for the new American interventionist force.

If Washington affords Pakistan such inviting opportunities, Islamabad's policy-makers in the next stage may well adopt a course that may not please Washington at all. Pakistan could come to terms with Afghanistan and India, and indirectly the Soviet Union. Its force-projection capabilities are too inherently limited for Pakistan to play active roles in the Gulf region as well as in the North vis-a-vis Afghanistan and India.

Since everything is on the drawing board, so to say, both in Washington and in Islamabad, Mr. Agha Shahi, uncertain and cautious, used all his much-tested skills to play a role that was far from provocative or intransigent. That is why the Delhi Declaration on Afghanistan gave very little cause for all the self-congratulatory cheers of the western media.

There was the reference to the withdrawal of foreign troops, and the right of return of the Afghan refugees and the incantatory phraseology "the non-aligned principles of peaceful co-existence, respect for sovereignty, national independence, territorial integrity and non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States".

But those who know the precise connotations of these terms and their contextual meaning (i.e., in terms of the diplomatic exchanges which went on in the main committees) understand only too well that if "foreign troops" and "non-intervention" are references to the "unmentionable" USSR, "non-interference" is a concession to the Indian view. As I said before, the Indian position is that one of the causes of the Afghan problem is the interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs by outsiders, i.e. US, China, and some Islamic States operating via Pakistan.

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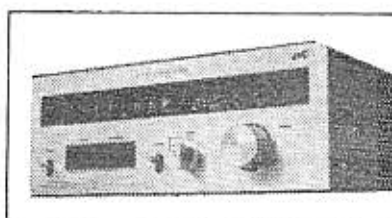
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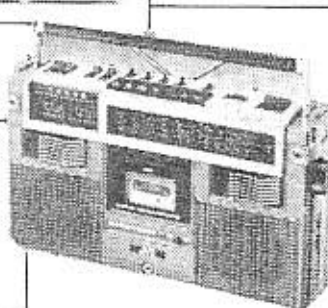
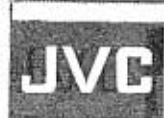
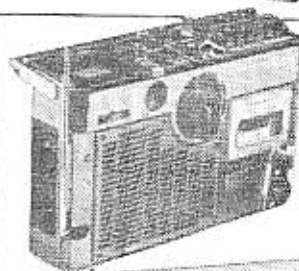
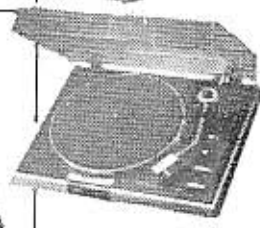
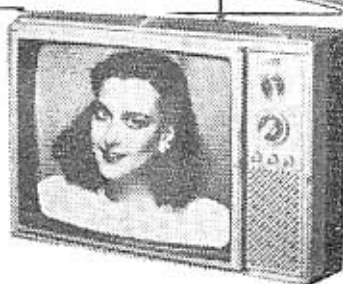
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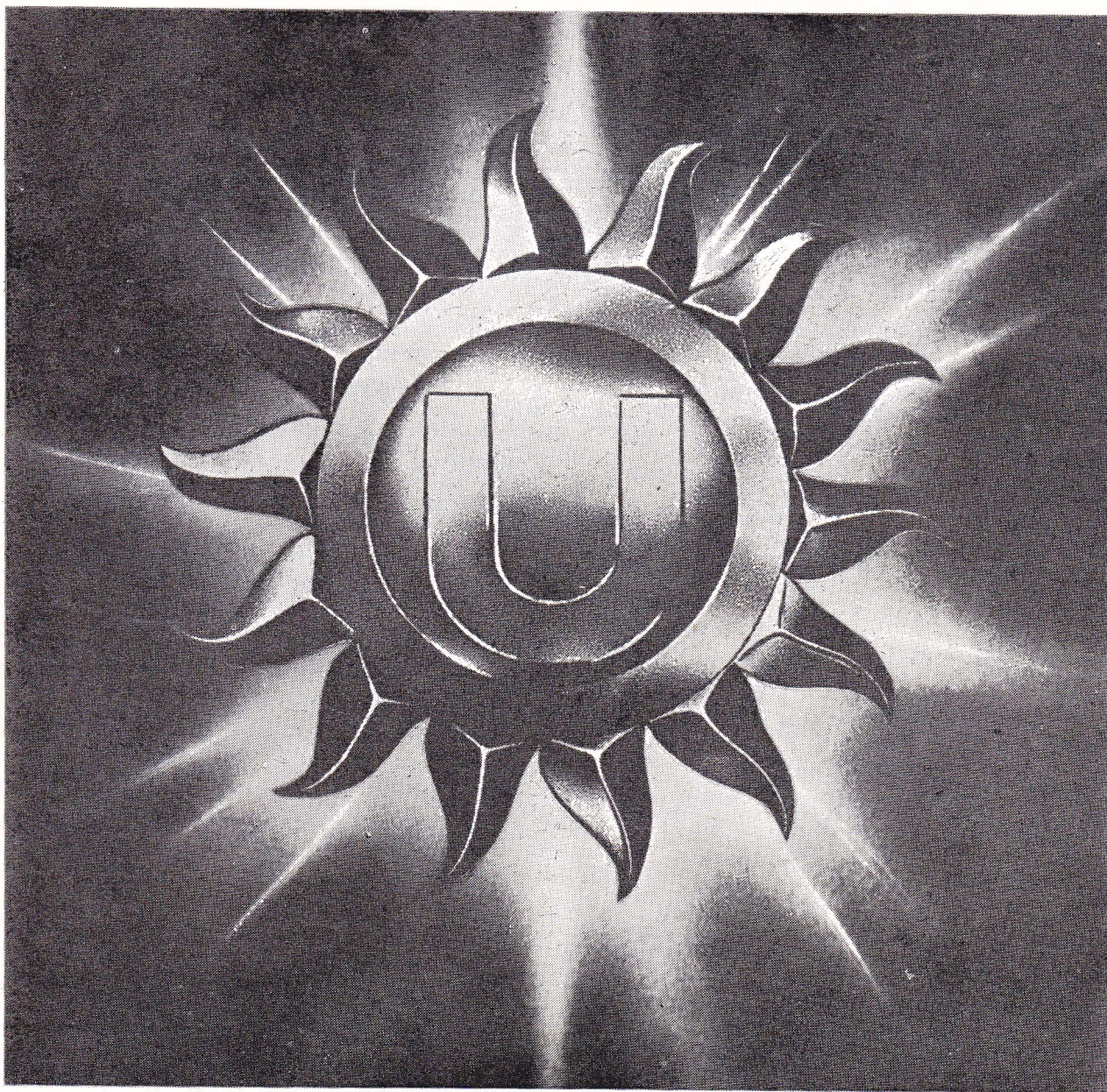
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