

* **Changing scene in Tamilnadu** — S. Murari

LANKA

GUARDIAN

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STUDENT UNREST

Students in Colombo and elsewhere demonstrated against terror gangs, detention and deaths of students. Major trouble spots outside Colombo were Kandy, Badulla, Bandarawela, Matale, Kegalle, Anuradhapura, Matara and Hambantota.

In Kandy, one student was killed and seven were injured when police opened fire.

In Colombo, police used tear gas to break up demonstrations on Havelock Road.

On June 9, inter-university student unions held a mass meeting at the Nugegoda market square, a place much used for political meetings in recent times, to agitate for (according to THE ISLAND) "freedom, the right to exist and other democratic rights." The gathering was massive and young.

WHEN THE IPKF GOES

Five thousand more soldiers are to be added to the 32,000 now in the Sri Lanka Army in preparation for the pull out of the 45,000-man Indian Peace Keeping Force from the North-East Province. Outfitting these new brigades will cost 2,000 million rupees, Army Commander General Hamilton Wanasinghe told the WEEKEND.

The beefing up will start immediately, the General said.

BEGGING TO BE BANNED

Begging is to be banned, it was announced last week. Beggars are to be rehabilitated.

State Minister for Social Welfare Samantha Karunaratne was quoted. The ban will be imposed in Colombo and major towns to begin with. The beginning was scheduled for this week.

There are 50,000 beggars in the country, according to a ministry survey, and 10,000 are in the city.

FOR UNCOVERING PORN SCANDAL?

A policeman who uncovered a porn racket in Park Road has been transferred "with immediate effect". Police investigators have found, a news report said, that a mother and daughter, two sisters, and a woman who came with her husband for film interviews had been stripped, photographed and raped.

Offences were committed even against adult escorts of girls who came for "interviews" for selection as "film stars", the report, quoting police investigators, said.

TRENDS + LETTERS

1983 anti Tamil riots

On the National question and Marxism appearing in the L. G. of May 1st. Dayan Jayatilake states that by the 1985 A'pura massacre, the LTTE transformed the State vs Tamil people contradiction into a State plus Sinhala people vs the Tamil people one. Well, what about the anti-Tamil riots of 1983? was it only the State that was engaged in the pogrom? I might as well state, what was a State vs Tamil guerilla contradiction was transformed into a State plus Sinhala people vs Tamil guerillas plus Tamil people soon after the killing in Jaffna of 13 soldiers in July 1983.

R. Jeyarajah

Jaffna

Error

I wish to point out a factual error in Kumari Jayewardene's excellent article, "Feminism and the Left in South Asia."

She cites Ali Shariati's book "Marxism and Other Western Fallacies". In fact this book was never written by Shariati. It was actually published by Savak without his authorisation and consisted of selective excerpts from notes made by Ali Shariati as a student at Masshad University.

I enclose a xerox of the relevant pages from Ervand Abrahamian's book "The Iranian Mojahidin", Tauris, 1989.

M. Ram

Cambridge, M A
Mass, U S A

LANRA

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AVAILABLE AT LAKE HOUSE BOOKSHOP OR WRITE TO THE SSA

Collision course or pressure move ?

Mervyn de Silva

President Premadasa's pre-emptory "quit notice" to the IPKF with its two-month deadline has placed Sri Lanka on a diplomatic confrontation course with India where Mr. Gandhi's Congress preparing for an uncertain polls battle has its own time-table. Not surprisingly, Delhi has spoken of 'logistical problems', meaning that it is prepared for a phased pull-out, the phase and timing mutually negotiated

In April Mr. Gandhi had told the annual Army top brass conference he was planning to withdraw the "bulk" of troops soon. Bringing the boys back home would have been a vote-winner whereas pulling them out on the 'quit order' of the Sri Lankan President would have been understood by the Indian electorate as a slap in the face of 'the regional superpower', the flattering title recently awarded by a western press, seized by a warm, lingering fascination for the **Raj!** Superpowers, regional or global, are not expected to bow to the dictates of small neighbours.

India is a bustling democracy, with a strong Opposition and a virile press. That makes a difference as many an American President discovered during the Vietnam war.

And the increasingly self-confident Mr. V. P. Singh, and his National Front, issued a strongly worded statement accusing Gandhi of bringing dishonour to the Indian army and to the country by his "costly misadventure" which in the view of the four-party alliance was now a 'total failure'.

Mr. Gandhi has another cause for anxiety. Sri Lanka is now a 'dead issue' in Tamilnadu, the large south Indian state where a cocky Congress 'I' got a thorough drubbing from the DMK of Mr.

Karunanidhi. Karunanidhi, not MGR, is the authentic spokesman of Tamil interests. The name of his party — actually a movement originally — speaks for itself. If the IPKF's withdrawal from north-and-east by the second half of this year coincides with the beginning of the election campaign in India, and there's a bloodbath in the north (say, the LTTE goes for the EPRLF combine) Gandhi will be held responsible by the Dravidian south. And that is vitally important for him since the once impregnable 'Hindi Belt' has been successfully stormed by Mr. V. P. Singh.

AMERICAN PREDICAMENT

So we have a Gandhian predicament that is peculiarly American rather than Brezhnevite Soviet vis-a-vis Afghanistan, another fashionable analogy. The Soviet analogy is applicable, if at all, in relation only to Indira Gandhi's motives for interventionist preparations. For Brezhnev, the threat of US intervention after the Iranian Revolution, and the possible fallout of Islamic fundamentalism on the USSR's Central Asian Moslem Republics. For Mrs. Gandhi, there was creeping US intervention in Sri Lanka during JR's first term — Trinco mainly, VOA, etc. And of course, the fear of militant Tamil separatism spilling over to the true 'traditional homeland', Tamilnadu, the birthplace of the once secessionist DMK.

No. Rajiv's plight is more than American — superpower pride, and electoral considerations, the politics of re-election.

For President Premadasa, newly elected, it is the politics of survival. The JVP-DJV has moved to the final phase of its stunningly successful campaign of terror, disruption, and de-stabilisation —

the anti-India phase, the holy war against the 'main enemy', and its "puppets". As usual, it was the cartoonist who said it best. In the *SUNDAY TIMES*, Premadasa was seen scrawling "INDIAN GO HOME" in huge black letters on a street wall. In the corner, studying the man who was trying to steal his most appealing slogan, was the JVP Leader, Mr. Rohana Wijeweera, wrapped in thought.

Ordinarily, Gandhi may have excused President Premadasa's somewhat unorthodox diplomatic style — the quit order was issued at a temple ceremony — but now he has to weigh the matter most carefully. His own prime ministerial office is at stake. The election is likely to be very closely contested, though the victors may prove a motley lot, a coalition which may collapse quickly.

NATIONAL CONSENSUS

The growing national consensus supportive of Mr. Premadasa's announcement presented problems not only for Gandhi but for the JVP and its allies. There was little doubt that the President was seeking to undermine the JVP's most effective propagandist-agitational campaign. He was trying to steal the JVP-DJV's "deshapremi" clothes. It is NOT as revolutionaries or social reformers that the JVP is now appealing to the widest section of the Sri Lankan electorate. It is as "patriots" who must unite in the common struggle to free the country of a foreign army — incidentally an army bigger than our own. That is the "liberation" that the JVP-DJV is now talking about. And in that struggle, any patriotic Sri Lankan, including capitalists, UNP'ers, Sinhalese, Tamil or Muslim, has the right to join. Thus the mass appeal of the 'anti-India' campaign.

BOYCOTT 'INDIAN'

(A SUN Commentary)

President Premadasa could not let that campaign grow. The other political imperative concerns the LTTE. The first round ended. Contact was made, mutual confidence slowly built. One important fact emerged. The LTTE would advance to substantive issues if the growing trust was reinforced by symbolic gesture — say, a call for the IPKF's withdrawal.

So President Premadasa's "quit notice" was both an anti-JVP/DJV tactical move as well as a demonstration, a symbolic gesture. He chose the temple proper forum for the demonstrative reassertion of his Presidential authority, the authority of the leader of a nation that was still sovereign. In short, he was once again replying to the JVP's popular slogan of "puppet President."

By this gesture Mr. Premadasa was also underlining the legitimacy of the Presidency. (The legality of his election is being challenged in the Supreme Court by Mrs. Bandaranaike, but legitimacy is something else, and often more important). Mrs. Bandaranaike was the first to support the President's unilateral move — a large step towards bipartisan consensus. Soon, other Opposition parties joined the ranks of the widening consensual bloc.

The JVP-DJV however is not impressed. The speeches at the Nugegoda rally confirmed that much. They will back up their anti-India slogans with action.

What sort of action, they have made plain in Rohana Wijeweera's statement, translation of which was published in the LG's last issue, and published, I note, in the (Madras) *HINDU*. How effective will this campaign prove?

Will the targets be exclusively Indian? If so, what will be Delhi's response. The campaign will reach its climax on June 14, the JVP anniversary, as we go to press. (See Boycott campaign)

A call to boycott Indian goods accompanied by banning among other things the importing and screening of Indian films is the theme of the campaign expected to reach a climax on June 14.

The posters that have sprung up throughout Colombo and other areas of the country also refer to the 'Distinguished citizenship offered to the Indians (Sammana Puravasikam). Although it is not clear who these 'Citizens' are it may very well be aimed at the Tamil people of Indian origin who were stripped of their citizenship in the late 1940s and restored their citizenship and voting rights by recent laws.

The Indian government appears to be deeply concerned about the possible harm to the Indians by living in Sri Lanka. The Foreign Minister and the Minister of State for Defence Ranjan Wijeratne has assured full protection to the Indian people living in the country and to Indian establishments.

But what must be realised is that the resources of the government are already extended to the maximum. The Sri Lankan forces are expected to protect the Sinhala villagers living in the East; they have to protect the key installations and maintain law and order in the South; and provide security for the thousands of politicians and officials under threat.

SECURITY

Could the government provide security to all these and add to it the Indian establishments and the Indian people living in Sri Lanka.

Foreign Minister Wijeratne told Parliament that the gov-

ernment would recruit five battalions to fill a vacuum once the IPKF leaves. But that alone would take a few months.

One does not know what the definition of Indian establishments are. Is it the big firms and hotels that are owned by Indian companies? or does it also mean the small time Pettah businessman selling cloths and textiles? and the food stores selling thosai, vadai, chapathi and sweet meats? if it is all those then it is a very wide definition.

And the government probably knows that it can't meet a threat of that proportion, and provide guard to each and everyone of these establishments.

Despite its promises to provide security to Indian establishments, last Thursday a lone youth entered the State Bank of India building and started shouting anti Indian slogans. That in the very heart of Fort, just a few yards away from the Presidents House.

Tragedy may face the country should any group attack and harass these Indians and the shops and establishments.

Ronnie charged

The Attorney-General has filed action in the High Court of Colombo, against former Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel for criminal breach of trust. The sum involved is 2.3 million rupees. Mr. de Mel, it is alleged, has put to personal use foreign exchange granted to him for overseas travel. Four documents have been listed as productions, and the AG has filed a list of witnesses that includes top officials of the Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs.

Indian fears over boycott

COLOMBO

With a week to go before the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna's (JVP) call to boycott Indian goods takes effect, there's a great deal of nervousness among businessmen and traders who deal in Indian goods, as well as among people of Indian origin settled here, who are worried about the prospect of violence breaking out.

The JVP has called on all "patriots" to stop buying Indian goods, withdraw their money from Indian banks and cease all economic dealings with India from June 14. Large, hand-written posters, the JVP's favourite method of communication, have sprung up throughout the city declaring a war against Indian imperialism. Wealthy Indian businessmen, who had been granted distinguished citizenship have been asked to leave the country by June 14, or be regarded as "conspirators against the fatherland" and be treated as such by the DJV, the JVP's armed wing.

"What precautions can we take? asked one prominent businessman of Indian origin. "If the threat was only for a short time we could go away and then come back. But now we have to stand and face this". The businessman feared that factories belonging to people of Indian origin might be attacked or face labour problems".

Govt. quiet: A noticeable feature of the current agitation is the Government's low key response. In earlier instances when the JVP has made threats' the Government has issued appeals to the public to ignore them. This time, there has been nothing from the Government side. Similarly, the police normally strip off JVP posters, or tar them, but in this case, the posters are undisturbed.

Other than local businessmen, high profile Indian establishments are the most vulnerable targets

for the JVP's agitation. The three Indian banks that have branches in Colombo, and Indian Airlines are obvious symbols of India's economic presence in Sri Lanka, and they have all been asked to take extra precautions.

The JVP's campaign has already begun to have effect, as importers of Indian goods have stopped opening letters of credit, for fresh credit, and there are reports that banks are also unwilling at present to open letters of credit for importers.

Economically, India is only tenth on the list of Sri Lanka's trade partners, and imports by India made up only 4.1 per cent of Sri Lanka's total exports in 1988. Sri Lanka imported Sri Lankan Rs. 289.3 crores worth of goods from India, out of a total import bill of Rs. 7032 crores. The major items of import were vehicles (the majority of buses on the roads are from India, and Indian autorickshaws find a growing market), pharmaceuticals, and essential commodities like onions and chillies. Forty to 50 per cent of the onions sold come from India, as does a sizeable proportion of the chillies and dried fish.

Political implications: An economic boycott of Indian goods

is likely to hurt Sri Lanka more than India, since Sri Lanka is not a major market for India, but India is a cheap source of imports for Sri Lanka. But the JVP's agitation has important political implications for both India and Sri Lanka.

As far as India is concerned, the JVP campaign will once again bring to the surface the latent suspicions and distrust of India and whip up a wave of public opinion against the presence of the IPKF. Significantly there are people, who are generally supportive of India and the Indian presence, who now feel threatened by the JVP, and that a departure of the IPKF is the only way to diffuse the danger they face.

As far as the Sri Lankan Government is concerned the JVP has made it clear that its real target is the Premadasa Administration, and the anti-Indian agitation could well snowball into an anti-Government agitation. The Government at present seems content to allow anti-Indian feeling to swell up, since it complements the President's demand for an IPKF withdrawal. But if it is allowed to continue, it might grow to such proportions that the stability of the Government is threatened.

(Hindu)

Kaleel warns Muslims

Dr. M. C. M. Kaleel said the recent demonstrations staged in Colombo by the Muslims showed the resentment of the Muslims against the ill-treatment of their brethren in the Eastern province. The attacks on innocent people and setting fire to their houses and property cannot be condoned by anyone.

But, to continue the protest week after week by the Muslims especially after the decision of the President to send back the

IPKF, is fraught with danger to peace and harmony.

"Mischief makers can make use of these protests to create disturbances which might lead to ethnic conflicts. All Muslims should therefore desist from acting in a way that can lead to communal disturbances", he said.

Dr. Kaleel was addressing the representatives of several national Muslim organisations at Dematagoda.

Pullout, boycott: *Indian perspectives* 'Timeframe not realistic'

K. K. Katyal

NEW DELHI

India has firmly told Sri Lanka that the withdrawal of the Indian Peace-keeping Force (IPKF) from the island will not be possible by the end of July in view of the realities on the ground. At the same time it has reiterated its resolve to pull out the bulk of the forces at the earliest possible stage.

The Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary, Mr. Bernard Tilakaratne special envoy of the President, Mr. R. Premadasa, called on the Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, to convey his Government's latest thinking on the IPKF's role. Mr. Tilakaratne gave Mr. Gandhi a message from Mr. Premadasa — obviously dealing with this very subject.

There was no official word on what transpired during Mr. Tilakaratne's call on the Prime Minister but going by the trend of the former's discussions at other levels, since his arrival here on Saturday night, the Indian stand — that the July 29 deadline mentioned by Mr. Premadasa in his recent public speech was not realistic — was conveyed to him once again.

Blood-bath feared: After Mr. Premadasa's unilateral pronouncement, calling for the IPKF's withdrawal by July 29, the second anniversary of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, New Delhi had been at pains to stress three points. One, India had already made public its commitment to pull out the IPKF. Two, the withdrawal had to be effected in such a manner as to preserve the gains that had been achieved. Implied in it was the fear that a premature pull-out of the type suggested by Mr. Premadasa could lead to

a blood-bath in the North-Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. in view of the LTTE's fierce antipathy to the other Tamil groups Three, the newly-installed EPRLF-led government in this province needed time to consolidate its position, so as to be able to meet the challenges to law and order, with the help of a Tamil police force.

The main argument from the Sri Lankan side rested on Mr. Premadasa's domestic compulsions — the call for the speedy withdrawal was intended to counter the problems posed by the JVP's insurgency in the Sinhala-dominated southern parts of the country.

Later Mr. Tilakaratne met the External Affairs Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao.

New envoy: It was also the day for the presentation of credentials by the new Sri Lankan High Commissioner, Dr. F. S. C. P. Kalpage — the successor of Mr. Tilakaratne — to the President, Mr. R. Venkataraman. Normally such occasions are marked by formal expressions of friendship and cordiality. But what the President and the new envoy said was significant even though there was no specific reference to the latest development.

"It is but a truism to say", said the President, "that the happenings in each country affect the other. We have a stake in your prosperity and you in ours. Similarly, we have a stake in your security and in ours. Both India and Sri Lanka have tried to steer and shape their policies towards each other in the light of this logic. The Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement is a clear statement of mutual trust. The implementation

of the agreement is an endeavour to which both our countries are committed. It is a momentous task to which we need to continue to bring great dedication, understanding, patience and statesmanship".

Dr. Kalpage spoke of his firm belief that "a lasting solution to the problems that exist in our society could be reached through non-violent means — through consultation, compromise and consensus. We are confident that we have the goodwill and support of the government and people of India in this crucial endeavour". This was a reference to the Sri Lanka Government's talks with the LTTE as was evident from the High Commissioner's remark that "our people are seeking to arrive at a consensus.

(Hindu)

Blast near Indian High Commission

A bomb explosion rocked the USAID building adjoining the Indian High Commission and police fired in the air and tear-gassed Muslim demonstrators demanding withdrawal of the IPKF from Muslim areas in the eastern province.

Meanwhile, renewed extremist violence left 17 persons dead across the island, Sri Lankan security officials said.

Eyewitnesses said unidentified men who hurled the bomb from a passing vehicle had meant it for the Indian High Commission but missed the target. No casualty was reported.

Ball now in Colombo's court

(Reports from Thomas Abraham in Colombo)

India and Sri Lanka have agreed that "consultations will continue so that conditions will be created as envisaged in the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement to facilitate an IPKF withdrawal following the visit to New Delhi of the Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary Mr. Bernard Tilakaratne.

Mr. Tilakaratne, delivered a message from the President, Mr. R. Premadasa, requesting the withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) by the end of July. Without saying so in so many words, the Indian Government has indicated that the timetable indicated by Mr. Premadasa was not on, and the presence of Indian troops was linked to the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. A statement issued by the Indian High Commission says that "on the question of withdrawal India has repeatedly reiterated its desire to withdraw the IPKF at an early date".

In Delhi, the Sri Lanka Foreign Secretary met besides the Prime Minister, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, and officials of the external Affairs Ministry.

India's response to Mr. Premadasa's sudden appeal was expected, and the question now is how the Sri Lankan Government is going to present this to the public. Just as Mr. Premadasa did not make an outright demand that Indian troops should be withdrawn, but only requested the Indian Prime Minister to make every effort to do so, the Indian response has not been couched in terms of an outright rejection, but in terms of further consultations to create conditions for an early withdrawal.

Domestic compulsion

The call for withdrawal, which was made because of the various domestic compulsions that the Sri Lankan President is facing, was potentially dangerous for

both sides. India had no intention of leaving until the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement was implemented to its satisfaction. But Indian forces are in Sri Lanka at the request of the President, and to remain in defiance of the Sri Lankan Government's request to leave would have been extremely difficult and would have raised an outcry within Sri Lanka, India and internationally.

Similarly, Mr. Premadasa risked the embarrassment of having India refuse his request outright, which would have proved the JVP's contention that the President had no control over the Indian forces and that the Sri Lankan Government was a puppet in Indian hands. This in turn would have provided added impetus to the JVP's agitation to push the IPKF out.

The LTTE has also demanded the withdrawal of the IPKF as the first step to any peace settlement, and Mr. Premadasa's demand could also have been in response to this compulsion.

The ball is now once again in the Sri Lankan court, and one has to wait to see what Mr. Premadasa's next move will be. The President feels strongly that the

presence of the IPKF has become a domestic liability, and will generate antagonisms that could eventually threaten his stability.

The Indian position is that for the IPKF to leave, the Provincial Government of the North and East has to be strengthened, and more powers have to be devolved on it in order to make Tamil self-Government a reality.

But, this still leaves the question of how the LTTE is to be disarmed and brought into democratic politics. The LTTE's conditions for peace are broadly withdrawal of the IPKF, and a dissolution of the Provincial Government. India will not agree to this, at least not until the LTTE lay down their arms.

Mr. Premadasa is thus in a bind, and has the difficult task of finding a solution acceptable to the various parties involved in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict. But what has once again been made apparent, is that any solution will have to be a result of cooperation and consultation between the Indian and Sri Lankan Governments in the spirit of the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement.

(Hindu 8/6)

Police station raid

An armed gang clad in Army uniform held the police officers on duty at the Tissamaharama Police Station and removed a large quantity of arms and drove off in a police jeep stationed outside the police station, police said.

According to police about ten to fifteen youths in army uniforms had come in a Pajero jeep and told the police constable on duty at the main gates of the police station that they had arrested some JVPers pasting posters and wanted the suspects held in custody in the police cell. The constable

is then said to have opened the gate and allowed the men to enter the station.

Sources said the gang had then held the Reserve Police Officer and a few others on duty at the point of a gun and locked them up in the cell and removed SLRs, shortguns, rifles and automatic weapons from the police station.

Later they had entered the police barracks and threatening the policemen off duty removed their arms too, and sped off in a police jeep stationed outside the Police station. About 47 weapons had been robbed.

Sirima welcomes, but blames UNP too

The leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, welcomed the decision by the President to call for the withdrawal of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force by the end of July.

The statement said: We have always taken the view that internal problems of Sri Lanka should be solved internally.

Even at the time the IPKF was brought into Sri Lanka in July 1987, we vehemently opposed it and continued to do so.

However the then UNP government under the leadership of President Jayewardene chose to ignore our demand for the withdrawal of the IPKF. At that time Mr. R. Premadasa who was Prime Minister, also did not deem it necessary to call for the withdrawal of the IPKF, publicly.

None other than the present President Mr. Premadasa took it upon himself, both in parliament and out-side, to attack India, thereby seriously straining the good relations Sri Lanka had built with India during my tenure of office. In fact the anti-India tirade by the UNP was started prior to the 1977 general election.

The end result was the destabilisation of Sri Lanka and the government being forced to be a party to an agreement which not only sacrificed our unity but also our independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

It is now six months since Mr. Premadasa assumed the office of Executive President.

We are happy and welcome the President's decision even at this late stage to call for the withdrawal.

C.P: Ensure Tamils safety

The Communist Party of Sri Lanka welcomes the decision of the Government of Sri Lanka to request the Indian Government to recall the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF).

The IPKF was invited to Sri Lanka by the Sri Lankan government on the insistence of the Tamil militant organisations, including the LTTE to disarm the Tamil militants and to keep peace in the North and the East.

Whatever the motives be, the presence of a foreign army on our soil constitutes a threat to the sovereignty of our country. That is why the CPSL has always stated that the IPKF should complete its assignment and leave our shores as early as it could.

In seeking the withdrawal of the IPKF the Sri Lankan government should also satisfy the deep-felt security concerns of the people of the North and the East and ensure that it would not pose a threat to the unity and territorial integrity of our country. Steps must also be taken to prevent any escalation of terrorist violence and for the return to

normalcy in the North and the East.

Effective devolution of all powers to which Provincial Councils are entitled to under the constitution to the democratically elected administration of the Northern and Eastern Provinces is another urgent measure that is required of the government.

Professionals back move

The Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka (OPA) has welcomed the call by President Premadasa for the withdrawal of the IPKF.

"The clarion call for the withdrawal of the IPKF by the end of July this year, made by President, R. Premadasa is most timely and welcomed with relief by the Organisation of Professional Associations of Sri Lanka.

The OPA in November 1988, having carefully studied the National crisis, called upon the government to pave the way for the withdrawal of the IPKF. This was one of the four proposals of the OPA to the government to ease the tense situation and lay the groundwork for peace and stability in the country.

The worst flood in forty years

There was no day of national mourning for 300 dead in the worst flood in 40 years. There was however a day of national mourning declared by the Government of Sri Lanka for the death of a spiritual leader in another country, the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran, which was right and proper.

The three hundred dead were not in Colombo, but in remote villages, where the poor live. Disasters, natural and otherwise, are not uncommon where the poor live. Poverty, it would seem, attracts disaster. Those dead in the floods and landslides were mostly the poorest of the poor. This was the worst in forty years, but there have been floods and landslides in these places almost every year.

The accumulated effect of the relentless rape of forests contributed to this disastrous flood this year. After each major flood there is always talk of flood protection measures, but nothing gets done; there is never any money for such schemes. Besides, these disasters do not occur in the cities where the rulers live.

In Colombo, Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijeratne called in the heads of foreign missions and told them that 300 persons had lost their lives up to then and 250,000 people had been displaced by floods and earthslips in the Ratnapura, Kegalle, Kalutara, Colombo, Galle and Gampaha districts. He solicited assistance from their countries in the form of food, medical supplies and other forms of relief.

Several ambassadors said that they were already in communication with their governments.

IPKF PULLOUT**TAMIL VIEWS****EPRLF, ENDLF oppose move**

The Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front and the Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front have protested against the "unilateral declaration" of the Sri Lankan Government that the IPKF should pull out of the island before the end of July, and said "this would not bind us in any manner".

In a joint statement here today, the EPRLF and ENDLF said: "We will not agree to the pull-out of the IPKF until we feel that we are capable of protecting our people on our own, with our own law and order system and police set-up, under the power and control of the Provincial Government".

"We feel it is our duty to tell the Sri Lankan Government that this kind of approach on its part would only lead to the division of the country", the statement said. The doubts expressed by the EPRLF and ENDLF during the signing of the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement that the Sri Lankan Government would not be sincere in implementing the Agreement had come true. Even the Government of India, which was one of the signatories to the Agreement, had not been consulted before Colombo took this decision, it said.

Powers not fully devolved

Though six months had passed since the formation of the elected Provincial Government in the North-East, the powers had not been fully devolved to it as agreed upon. Colombo was using delaying tactics and attempting to sabotage the effective functioning of the Government. "Unless and until the powers are fully devolved to the Provincial Government, and proper arrangements are made under the direct control of the Provincial Government for en-

suring the protection of the Tamil people, the IPKF should not pull out", the statement said. This was also the desire of the Tamils.

The joint statement was signed by the EPRLF's secretary-general, Mr. K. Padmanabha and the ENDLF's general Secretary, Mr. Gnanasekaran.

LTTE supports

The political Committee of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in a statement issued from its headquarters on June 5 branded all those who wanted the Indian occupation army to stay in the island as traitors to the cause of the Tamil speaking people. "No self-respecting person, whether he is a Tamil, Muslim or Sinhalese will permit a foreign army to continue to occupy this country," the statement declared.

"The Indian Prime Minister has repeatedly stated that the Indian army was sent to Sri Lanka purely on a peace-keeping mission at the request of the Government of Sri Lanka and that the army would be withdrawn if Sri Lanka makes such a request. And now Sri Lanka government has made the request calling for the total withdrawal of the Indian troops. Therefore, India has no option other than withdrawing its troops. But strangely enough the Indian government seems to be very reluctant to pull out its troops. We wish to know on what grounds India wants to keep the army on our soil when the entire people of this island — the Tamils, Muslims and the Sinhalese — want the Indian army to be totally withdrawn" the LTTE's political committee declared.

EROS wants timeframe

The Eelam revolutionary organisation (EROS) has said that a timeframe for an "immediate" withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force from Sri Lanka can be fixed through discussions among the Government of India, the Sri Lankan government and the representatives of the Tamil groups.

In a statement recently EROS said, "We don't have any contradictory opinion that the IPKF should pull out of our areas. But the time fixed for the pull-out of the IPKF should depend on the security of the Tamil speaking people. It is through discussions among the Government of India, the Sri Lankan Government and the representatives of the Tamil groups that a time-frame should be fixed for the immediate withdrawal of the IPKF."

The IPKF and the statements in the Sri Lankan media for the withdrawal of the IPKF obscured the real problems of the Tamils and aimed at deriving political advantages, the EROS said.

The arrests and the killing of innocent civilians and the destruction of their property should be immediately stopped. Hence, it was necessary that the forces interested in the welfare of the Tamil-speaking people should reach a joint solution based on the politico-military situation in the North and the East of the island, it said.

The mistakes by Colombo in handling the ethnic situation led to the arrival of the IPKF on the island.

LTTE the gainer

Thomas Abraham

The first stage of talks between the Sri Lankan Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam has ended after a little over three weeks, with no firm date fixed for the next round of negotiations.

This recently concluded round — which began formally on May 3 when the Sri Lankan Air Force helicopter flew Mr. Yogi and his associates in from Vavuniya — has been very much to the LTTE's advantage. Without having to lay down weapons or accept any other preconditions such as accepting the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, the Tigers were given a forum in which to publicise their demand for the removal of Indian Forces from the Northern and Eastern provinces, and present the IPKF as the "root cause" of the problems of the people of the North and East.

Tigers detail 'excesses'

According to Sri Lankan sources, the LTTE did most of the talking, while the Sri Lankan side confined itself to listening and taking notes. The LTTE tabled a number of documents detailing what it described as human rights abuses by the IPKF and by the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) led Provincial Government in support of its demand for a withdrawal of the IPKF and a dissolution of the provincial government. The other issue discussed during the three-week-long session was Sinhalese colonisation of the Northern and Eastern Provinces. The LTTE once again produced a mass of documentation and figures in support of its contention that the ethnic composition of the Eastern Province had shifted in favour of the Sinhalese due to years of State sponsored colonisation.

Thus far, the LTTE has been elaborating on its perception of the situation in the North and East and the problems faced by

the people of the region. It has argued that a withdrawal of the IPKF is an essential precondition for any eventual peace settlement. But no substantial discussions on the contours of an eventual peace settlement have taken place, and this is believed to have been reserved for the next round of talks.

Balance shifts

The most significant development in the current round of negotiations is the shift in the balance of relations between the four parties involved in the North and East — Sri Lanka, India, the LTTE and the EPRLF and other militant groups allied with India. A month ago, the LTTE, with its leaders holed up in the jungle, appeared to be on the defensive and under pressure, while Indian and the EPRLF Government appeared to be in control. India could with some justification state that it had achieved what it set out to do in implementing the accord. A Tamil Government was in place in the North-East, three

Massive patriots' rally

A crowd estimated at 30,000 thronged the Nugegoda market square last Friday to listen to speakers at a mass political rally.

Thousands of university students, bhikkus and trade union activists were prominent among the large gathering, while unarmed policemen skirted the perimeter of the market square.

Speaker after speaker lambasted the Government for its policies. They maintained a virulent attack and condemned the Government on what they termed as "atrocities against the people". Many speakers decided to remain anonymous.

Among the known speakers were former SLFP parliamentarian S. D. Bandaranayake and the General Secretary of the

sets of elections had been held despite threats from the LTTE, power was gradually being handed over to the North-East Government, and the LTTE had been confined to the jungles.

But once the talks began, both the EPRLF Government and the Indian Government were pushed on the defensive. The LTTE's charges against the IPKF were reproduced in the communiqués issued after each negotiating session, and the Indian High Commission was forced formally to respond to these charges. The LTTE also went on some kind of "military offensive" against the IPKF in order to prove that it was not negotiating from a position of weakness.

The tigers also launched a successful attack against the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOT), which once again acted as a morale booster for its cadre.

The future of the EPRLF Government also began to come into question following the LTTE's demands for fresh elections. The EPRLF has responded by threatening to take to arms again if the Provincial Government is dismissed without justification.

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Eksath Lanka Janatha Party (ELJP) Gamini Wijeysekera. Several student leaders and trade unionists also addressed the gathering.

Organisers and other activists maintained tight security during the meeting frisking persons at random while entering the market square. Press Photographers were restricted to taking a shot or two from preplanned locations.

No close-up shots of the speakers were allowed: organisers, however, later apologised on these restrictions saying it was unavoidable under the prevailing circumstances.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and proceeded beyond 7.00 pm.

Janasaviya — A Structural Approach (I)

Sunil Bastian

Why poverty alleviation?

It is important that in understanding a poverty alleviation programme questions should be asked beyond the framework of the programme per se. In other words it is possible to ask a basic question of 'why poverty alleviation now?', or why should a national level programme for poverty alleviation emerge at this point of time? What are the circumstances and conditions which had made this possible?

These questions could be answered in several ways using different perspectives. Some of the answers are from a moral or a humanitarian perspective — suffering of a large section of our population from poverty is not a condition that a society can morally accept, and therefore the need for a poverty alleviation programme. The second answer is given from an economic point of view. Poor peoples have to be economically uplifted in order to bring them into the economic main stream, so that they could be productive citizens. This argument is found in the Janasaviya (JSP) programme as it has been presented. Finally, there is a third argument from a class perspective which keeps the interests of the ruling sections in focus. The focus of analysis here is on reasons that drive the ruling classes to begin a poverty alleviation programme now. Moral and economic arguments for a poverty alleviation programme had been there all along. But what is crucial is its emergence precisely at this moment of time.

Keeping within this last perspective, we would argue that the prevailing situation of social unrest is the most important reason for the emergence of this programme. The poverty alleviation programme is a product of the social unrest prevailing in the society now. It is dictated

primarily by the need for stability in the system. When the liberalised economic policies were introduced in 1977, social and political stability were key words. This was mentioned as a sine qua non for economic growth in general and to attract foreign investment in particular. The performance of the economy during the last eleven years bears this out. It is very easy to divide the performance of the economy during this period into two parts. The first period was 1977 to 1983 and the second after 1983. The aggravation of the ethnic conflict since 1983 began to have an affect on the economy in many ways. The social instability that the framers of the liberalised economic policies feared came primarily from ethnic tensions rather than from social tensions as expected by some of them. This expectation was found in the analysis of those in the left as well. Since the middle of 1987 the unrest and violence has spread to the southern part of the country as well. There are many reasons to believe that it was this instability of the country that produced the platform of poverty alleviation during the Presidential election of 1988. Mr. Premadasa, the candidate of the UNP, was politically alert enough to come forward with this proposal. The proposal was concrete enough for it to be a good election platform. It was amazing to see how the candidate of the party which to a some extent was responsible for the prevailing poverty situation, making this his main election slogan, while the main opposition candidate responding to it in the language of World Bank/IMF monetarists whom they have criticised all along. Thus Janasaviya was one of the political responses of Mr. Premadasa to the prevailing situation of social unrest.

Having stated the importance of looking at the proposed poverty

alleviation programme from a perspective of the need for social stability, it is also necessary to differentiate this approach from conspiracy theories and a moral analysis of capitalism which it could degenerate into. The need for social stability is a requirement of any social system, whether capitalist or otherwise. The important question to ask is whether the structural dynamics of the system itself will allow it to succeed. In other words, if one dismisses these policies as some sort of an 'election gundu' of the rulers which they will never implement, we would miss the main point in the analysis. This latter perspective which concentrates on 'good' and 'bad' intentions of the rulers takes us away from understanding the structural dynamics of capitalism better and responding to it politically. Therefore, as far as this thinking goes, it is not possible to expect the representatives of this system to implement a 'genuine' poverty alleviation programme. Even if they implement it, it should be a part of a conspiracy of the rulers to be something 'evil.' Very often capitalism is analysed as some sort of an 'evil' or a 'demon', that is responsible for social injustice and the conditions of the poor. It is not that capitalism is not responsible for them. However it produces it not because of any intrinsic negative qualities of it which could be understood in moral terms, but because of its structural characteristics. It is these structural characteristics of capitalism that have to be understood without depending on a 'moral' analysis of capitalism.

This 'moral' approach influenced most critical writings on Sri Lanka since the implementation of liberalised economic policies. Therefore many ended up with populist cliches rather than serious analysis. The question here is not so much the intentions of capitalism, if it

is possible to understand capitalism in such anthropomorphic terms. But so much the dynamics of its structures and relations. In other words what we have to see is how much the structures of capitalism itself will allow a poverty alleviation programme to succeed in the present context. This is different from saying that the ruling class has no intention of perception of the ruling classes it is quite possible that they have to implement this programme in their own interest. But the question is how much the nature of relationships in society will allow it to succeed, even if the intentions are genuine. This of course is not to deny the capacity of capitalism to raise the living standards of the poor even in developing societies. Its abilities in this regard can be demonstrated with ample empirical evidence. But the issue is to analyse this capacity concretely within the conditions of Sri Lanka.

Understanding 'Poverty'

Before we go on to discuss the poverty alleviation programme per se and how it emerges in a society like Sri Lanka it is important first to understand what we mean by 'poverty'. What is understood by planners and governments under this term is various dimensions of standards of Living. Whether we look at nutrition, education, health or housing, these are different dimensions of living standards of the population. These can be measured using various indicators and they constitute 'statistical facts' of 'poverty' used very often by most planners. There are many methodological problems in determination of these. But in order to get an idea of the dimensions of the problem, these figures are useful with certain limitations.

Of these different dimensions of poverty, nutrition has become the one that is most widely used to determine the so called 'poverty line.' This is mostly because it is possible to determine a certain minimum level in this dimension so as to arrive at a 'cut off point'. This is the minimum level of nutrition neces-

sary to carry out the basic metabolic functions of a human body. That section of the population who do not get this minimum are considered to be below the 'poverty line'. The other dimensions are such that it is not easy to determine such minimum levels. Because of these methodological problems, nutrition has become some sort of a standard measure used to measure 'poverty' and thereby has acquired a normative value as an indicator of development. In other words nutrition standards are equated with the term 'poverty', and if a country takes care of nutritional problem it is as if it is overcoming the problem of 'poverty'. This is very common in development literature. We must be careful of the ideological trap associated with this substitution.

'Poverty is much more than just nutrition or any other dimension of living standards. it is,

(a) A set of conditions, relationships or structures that maintain certain groups of the population in a particular position within the society;

(b) for those below the 'poverty line', these conditions, relationships or structures are **reproduced**, so that their position within the society is also reproduced;

The groups that are below the 'poverty line' are therefore characterised by these structures, conditions or relationships that produce and reproduce their position in society. Of course these positions in turn are characterised by various dimensions - low standards of living, fewer chances for mobility, lesser capacity for making decisions about their own lives and most of all, lacking power in society. However these are symptoms of a dynamism found within social processes. Most of the attempts at arriving at minimum levels of living standards are concerned with symptoms of poverty, rather than the process that creates it in the first place. Most of the conventional approaches towards

poverty alleviation is based on this more 'static' notion of 'poverty'. They do not attempt to address the dynamic social processes that create and recreate it.

The structural processes which create and recreate poverty can operate at various levels. Some of them could be more fundamental than the others. Therefore their breaking down can also take place at various levels and in various spheres of society. It is a much more complex process than one that can be taken care of by a single event like a 'revolution.' A 'revolution' will certainly create possibilities of reordering some of the more basic structural elements. But it does not mean that it automatically takes care of all structural relationships that confine sections of the population in different ways. This reductionist interpretation of 'revolution' which hopes that all 'retrogressive structures' of society will be altered in 'one big bang' is based on a reduction of all the problems of society into one or two so called 'fundamental' relationships. The one that is identified most often is 'the relations of production.' It is not that this is not an important aspect which determines conditions in society. However it might not automatically take care of all the structures and relationships responsible for 'poverty' in the wider meaning of the term. This desire to look for a 'fundamental cause' for social problems is similar to the search for an 'absolute truth'. It has led to a fundamentalism of a left variety. If one can reduce the problems faced by the society to an 'absolute truth' (relation of production), then one only needs to take care of it, in order to take care of all the other problems as well ... However human societies are much more complex than that. It is extremely difficult to reduce the problems of society to one or two such 'fundamental causes'. Such an approach can lead to a simplistic notion of society. But the bigger danger is it will lead to a type of politics similar to that seen in other

fundamentalist currents, including religious fundamentalism.

On the other hand a more pluralist approach can be adopted towards the structural analysis of society. In such a view it is accepted that structural relationships can have various levels. The reordering of them can also go on at various levels, changing various dimensions of the society. Perhaps it is even difficult to look at these changes in a unilinear fashion — society going through stages of development, the stage following being more 'progressive' than the one preceding it. It is well known for example that the capitalist process of development does change structural element in society. The breaking down of feudal relationships in the history of so many societies is one classical example. This is of course an example of a more basic social relationship. It could happen at

other levels as well. Our task should be to look at the changes taking place more concretely in order to understand them and to find the necessary responses to it.

In this article we will be analysing the poverty alleviation programme of the government within a pluralist approach towards structural analysis. In other words we will be asking whether the programme as it is envisaged now addresses the social processes that create and recreate 'poverty' in the Sri Lankan society at one level or the other.

The poverty alleviation programme of the government is one that is taking place within dominant capitalist relationships. It does not in any way question these, nor are there any attempts to change them. No amount of populist jargon will alter it. However the social crisis faced by the society is forcing the system to address the issue of 'poverty'

in a qualitatively different way from the past. Therefore it is also not a going back to the situation prevailing before 1977. The welfare package implemented during that period served capitalism then. The same approach is no longer valid for the problems faced by the society now. So it is not a case of 'Premadasa going back to a pre-Jayewardena ideology'. What is needed is a more concrete analysis of the programme, keeping in mind the dynamics of the social system in general. A more pluralist approach towards structural change accepts the possibility of certain changes of structures that are responsible for poverty within capitalism. This could happen at different levels. Our task is to see whether this is possible through the JSP as it is envisaged now.

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Premadasa and the post-colonial State

Laksiri Jayasuriya

Earlier this month Radio Australia's ASIA-PACIFIC PROGRAM featured China, Japan, and Sri Lanka. This program is conducted by the ABC's top interviewer Peter Mares.

Mares interviewed Prof. Laksiri Jayasuriya, of the Univ. of Western Australia, and Mervyn de Silva, editor of the L.G. The following are excerpts from the interview with Prof. Jayasuriya:

MARES: Since Mr Premadasa's victory in last December's presidential elections, many analysts have been surprised by the resolute manner in which he has tackled Sri Lanka's problems. Professor Laksiri Jayasuriya, of the University of Western Australia, is critical of the social and political philosophy of Mr Premadasa, and his United National Party. However, he believes by employing a mixture of coercion and consensus, Mr Premadasa may have some chance of restoring stability to Sri Lankan politics. Professor Jayasuriya sees Mr Premadasa as a populist leader whose election was symbolic of a new alignment of class forces in the country.

DLJ: The old guard of the United National Party, the comprador elite, the English, educated, westernised, middle classes who were in the seats of political power for a long time, especially during the UNP regime, have certainly now begun to occupy a less important position. Now, the emergence of President Premadasa sees this new alignment of class forces, represented by the new rural middle class combined with the commercial classes, the professions, and the bureaucracy; and it should be borne in mind that if you look at the electoral votes of Premadasa in the general election, he really has ridden home to power on a very substantial minority vote. These are not just the minority votes of the Indian Tamil vote in the Estates, the Moslem vote, the Catholic vote, but also very significantly the minority caste vote of the Sinhalese. In other words, the upper caste vote

which dominated the UNP, no longer was the basis for Premadasa's victory — he was able to capitalise on the lower caste vote among the Sinhalese majority; and therefore he begins to represent this new realignment of class forces which suggests that the shift of the power base away from the comprador elite and a weakening of the dominance of the metropolitan centre, the Colombo syndrome, the urban bias, which really has been one of the draw-backs of much of the earlier political regimes.

PM: Apart from this shift in the class and caste representation of the government, are we also seeing a confirmation of the change from what was a Westminster Parliamentary system to a very much more a Presidential system with real power vested in the Executive, rather than the Parliament?

DLJ: Indeed. I just want to elaborate on that. It is beginning to see the emergence of a new post-colonial state in Sri Lanka which shows the emergence of centralised state power; it is a strong Executive power. The powers of the President are vast and extensive and President Premadasa has made it abundantly clear that he will not be constrained by the remnants of the Westminster political system such as cabinet government, and parliamentary government. Indeed, I think that the role model for President Premadasa is Lee Kuan Yew; it is well known that he has always admired the Singaporean style of government and he has certainly wanted to establish the kind of state control, authoritarian structure in Sri Lanka.

His political credo is very vividly expressed in one of his earlier speeches after assuming office when he said that he was really interested in **unity** and **discipline**. Discipline was a very key feature of much of his political speeches and certainly unity too is a central slogan in much his recent speeches and he seems to be working towards a model of consensual politics and an accommodation of various interests groups. This, I think, is significant in understanding the kind of negotiations he is trying to establish not only with the Tamil minority groups but also with the rebel, the Sinhalese groups in the South. I think it is the new elite, both of the Tamil and the Sinhalese, who really would have to be accommodated and President Premadasa may be the catalyst who can bring about the accommodation of this new political elite. In this sense, it is significant that this is more likely to occur in a Presidential style of government with centralised state authority, than through the bargaining process of political accommodation in the Parliamentary system.

In this context, it is extremely significant that one of the most interesting features of the Sri Lankan political scene over the last few years has been the emergence of power and influence of the military. Sri Lanka never used to spend much on the armed forces or the military but now it spends roughly 15% of its public expenditure on the armed forces and the military establishment and the "militarisation" of the country is an extremely significant force; so it is the coalition of the State and the military forces which may augur well for the future of the political stability of the country.

PM: Isn't there though a real concern that the militarisation of Sri Lanka, the build up of military forces, as an organ of

(Continued on page 18)

India's interests, LTTE and the local Left

Dayan Jayatilleke

Even India's interests would have been better served had it allowed the Sri Lankan army to march on Jaffna, supplied the LTTE to hold it off (and the others to ward off the LTTE!), allowed the belligerents to cut each other down to size and then gone for a **tripartite** rather than bilateral accord, thus avoiding the major flaw of the settlement eventually arrived at. Indian policy however, was to permit the overall weakening of the LTTE while it stiffened it to a degree that it could launch counter strikes on the Sri Lankan army (e.g. Nelliaddy). It was a policy of tactical stiffening but strategic weakening. The whole exercise was designed to make the LTTE agree to a December 19th type negotiated solution, but much more importantly, to enhance the LTTE's (and the Tamils') dependence on India.

However, as we know, the post-Vadamarachchi Indian deterrent worked and Colombo backtracked. The flaws (perhaps fatal) of the Accord that ensued were the following:

1. The **timing** was prompted primarily by the domestic political considerations of a Prime Minister — Rajiv Gandhi. Will he be re-elected for a second term.
2. It was mediated by someone — M. G. Ramachandran — who could hardly function physically, let alone grasp the intricacies of the subject.
3. It was imposed on and therefore unsigned by the Tamil militants, most importantly V. Prabhakaran.
4. It was imposed even more harshly on the Sinhalese, by an unpopular President — J. R. Jayewardena — who was re-elected in 1982 chiefly because he violated the rules of intra-elite competition by depriving his main political opponent of her civic rights.

5. It was ratified by a Parliament perceived as illegitimate, due to the coercive and fraudulent Referendum of 1982; with an Emergency, curfew and Press censorship in force and Indian frigates anchored off Colombo and Galle!

All this resulted in the UNP having the worst of both worlds — unvanquished Tamil guerrillas and an unplacated Sinhala constituency whose expectation of a decisive knockout blow and the planting of the Lion flag in Jaffna was frustrated, and whose anger rises with further guerrilla strikes.

Looked at in this way, the lesson of the Accord and its aftermath is perhaps that the struggle of opposites should not be suppressed and should be allowed to go the limit. The dialectic should be permitted to work itself out relentlessly to its conclusion.

State terrorism

Flashback time: In December of 1986, a Jaffna university student called Vijitharan disappeared. He allegedly 'ragged' Kittu's girlfriend, a medical student. One still does not know what happened to him. The EPRLF protested against this. They went on demonstrations, the university student community joined them, and **that** is what led to the attack on the EPRLF in Jaffna, when there are disappearances under a bourgeois regime like the Sri Lanka Government one can at least write to Amnesty International! There is **some shred of accountability**. The state has, some rationality (albeit bourgeois), some procedures, norms, and restraint by law (however unjust, like the PTA). It is imperative that this be borne in mind when comparing the JVP's Polpotist exterminism with state terrorism. A wild, demented, demoniac populism is a force that is far more difficult to com-

bat than is the State. Also to be borne in mind is that liberation forces are supposed to set higher standards of behaviour, because the morality is supposed to be qualitatively higher than of the oppressed.

In 1987 there was an attack on Kittu. It is common knowledge that the attack on Kittu was by the faction which was opposed to Kittu within the LTTE. Earlier, Mahattaya was in charge of Jaffna. He was senior in the movement to Kittu and he was trying to get back to Vavuniya and then some of Mahattaya's men killed some of Kittu's men. These things are well known in Jaffna. The EPRLF men taken into custody by the "liberation fighters" were executed. This reminds one of the Welikade massacre of 52 prisoners. There were 60 EPRLF activists in two rooms and after the attack on Kittu, Aruna, one of the LTTE officers killed almost all of them with an M-16. So, 60 people were killed in cold blood. I would like to quote once again from the article written by us which appeared in the EPRLF's '**Eelam Spokesman**' of 1985 in which the grim prognostication was made:

"Historical experiences as diverse as the setting up of Israel in 1948 and Pol Pot's Kampuchea teach us all that not every armed struggle for national liberation culminates in the setting up of people's democratic or socialist state. If tendencies of the sort manifested in Kokilai, Nairu and Anuradhapura are not checked we honestly doubt that a healthy socialist Eelam would result from the struggle. Rather, internecine warfare (of the sort currently raging in Lebanon and in Zimbabwe between ZAPU and ZANU) would probably result, together with border clashes with Sri Lanka, be it capitalist or socialist (e.g. USSR-China, China-Vietnam,

Vietnam-Kampuchea). **We therefore honestly fear for the very lives of those belonging to the genuinely Marxist-Leninist ranks of the Eelam national liberation movement."**

Both the Sinhala and Tamil left had become marginalised. There was total deadlock. Such situation of deadlock, is a situation where neither the Tamil nor the Sinhala Left could give rise to forces that could break through chauvinism. Chauvinism is a mass phenomenon. Chauvinism is not only what the bourgeoisie uses to manipulate and divide people — it is that too. But particularly in areas where the classes are in formation, and there are myriad links between the working class and the rural petite bourgeoisie, chauvinism is particularly vicious. It exists among the intelligentsia and even factions of the Left,

The Sinhala Left, parliamentary as well as extra-parliamentary, supported the Accord. We did not do so because we were in least happy about the intrusion or induction of an external force into the internal politics of Sri Lanka. In fact as far back as 1984, in a talk delivered at the Centre for Society & Religion in Colombo and later published in its journal 'Logos', in the Lanka Guardian magazine, as well as in a book entitled *Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict: Myths, Realities and Prospects*, produced by the **Committee for Rational Development (CRD)** and published in 1984 by Navrang, Delhi. I had explicitly predicted that if the Sinhala and Tamil oppositions could not break through this log-jam then it is the neighbouring country that would propel some kind of settlement and may even back up the Sri Lanka repressive forces with the physical presence of their own coercive apparatus!

"... Why don't the Forces just go in, seal off the peninsula and zap them? The fact that the Tamil issue has been internationalised on the one hand because of the Tamil diaspora and the ethnic and human rights nature of the conflict; (it is not an overtly ideological conflict),

and on the other hand has also been internationalised in India's internal politics, means that the regime cannot adopt scorched earth tactics. It cannot adopt "strategic hamlets", napalm bombing and other sorts of quasi-genocidal methods that many regimes adopt. The SLFP did adopt such methods to a degree in 1971. Someone can, of course, try. But then therepercussions in Tamil Nadu will be such that Delhi will be forced to take extreme action". (Pg. 238)

"... In other words could we have an authoritarian regime, but one which is rational? One which will effect some kind of devolution and after that go and kill off whoever is opposing it." (Pg. 239)

"... then I can imagine a condominium of the United States and India which would support the individual or sectors who put that into operation. But I have serious problems in thinking that would work." (Pg. 240)

"... So it does not seem possible that a recomposition of the power bloc will be able to come up with a solution unless it is an externally propelled recomposition of the power bloc.

In other words if there is no local actor, no endogenous force capable of refashioning the power bloc in such a manner as to resolve this ethnic conflict, and if the ethnic conflict escalates to such a pitch that it is intolerable to our great and friendly neighbour then it is possible that our great and friendly neighbour might take a somewhat more active hand in the proceedings. In such an event one could envisage this externally propelled or induced recomposition of the power block. To put it in much plainer fashion kind of national consensus achieved by cracking a couple of heads together. A roundtable conference kind of constellation of forces and Annexure "C" implemented. Implementation needs a degree of coercion and if the local state apparatus is incapable of providing

thht coercion, perhaps the element of coercion brought to bear will be external. So that is one scenario that I would want us to bear in mind very clearly." (Pg.240/41)

"... Then one of two things are possible — either an externally propelled solution or a challenge to the system itself. Even an externally propelled solution is not likely to be long lasting — Lebanon is a case in point." (Pg. 241)

India's interventionary and hegemonic role was not inevitable, but rather, was brought about primarily due to the faults of —

1. the UNP regime which refused to dialogue honestly with the Tamil militants, and
2. the SLFP (and the Left), whose record and rhetoric rendered them a non-option as far as the Tamils were concerned, forcing the latter to ask for Indian guarantees and underwriting.

Thus the erosion of our national sovereignty, the involvement of an alien power, was primarily due to the Sinhala bourgeois and petite bourgeois parties' approach and attitude to the Tamil national question.

The attempt of some of us dubbed ultra-Left, adventurist and unpatriotic, was precisely to forestall such an outcome, because we knew that such a thing is both undesirable and unviable — as was proved in Lebanon. But our country's tragedy was that the endogenous forces within the Sinhala and Tamil national formations were not capable of breaking this historical deadlock. Like the Iran-Iraq war, it had a suffocating effect on class and democratic popular struggles on both sides. It was chauvinism and xenophobia in command. So such a war had to stop. We are not pacifists, but peace was imperative for the resumption of the class and democratic struggles. There had to be peace for the appeal of hard-line chauvinism on both sides to be muted. So, **we had to critically support that which we would have otherwise**

opposed. This was because the balance of forces had evolved in such a way that there were no internal forces — Sinhala left, Tamil Marxist or **peace constituency** — capable of stopping **either** the Sinhala military or the LTTE.

We never thought that the Accord would make for a permanent solution to the Tamil national question. We were just looking for an interim settlement i. e. a **respite**, hopefully long term.

In making decisions Marxists always remember what the "key link" in the chain of politico-historical development in any given period. The "key link" in Sri Lankan politics at that time was the critical support of the settlement and the battle for the hearts and minds of the Sinhala people — the battle to give peace, deep and popular roots; to popularise and defend devolution. That was the cutting edge in the fight against chauvinism which is the main form of opportunism within the left and the main danger within the anti-systemic ranks, especially among the youth and students. It is in accordance with this, that we positioned ourselves with Vijaya Kumaratunga and the rest of the left. Needless to add, when the conjuncture changes, the key link

too, becomes a different one.

Peace is a powerful sentiment, a sentiment that has to be respected. It is a sentiment which, if politically deployed properly can have a revolutionary cutting edge as well — which is why the slogans of the Bolsheviks in 1917 were the "land; peace; bread". The war for Tamil Eelam **started out** as a national liberation war albeit not one of the classic sort which takes place in a colonial or semi-colonial context. This was a national liberation struggle taking place within a politically independent, post-colonial State in the so-called Third World. With the attacks on civilians, **quantity transformed itself into quality** and it wound up half way between a national liberation war, which is a progressive phenomena, and a reactionary war — one between two reactionary forces. **The progressive aspect and potential of the Eelam struggle as we knew it, had been exhausted; had reached an end.** The counter-revolutionary aspect of the LTTE was becoming (had become?) its primary aspect. One could not and cannot be oblivious to the Polpotist type of state the LTTE will set up. A democratic solution, i. e.

one of structural reforms **within the capitalist Sri Lankan state**, is preferable to such an outcome, just as it is preferable to JVP rule in the rest of the Island. **Hence the progressive content of the slogan for peace.** In the situation of an increasingly reactionary war, which was blocking the class and popular democratic struggles on both sides, then peace is a must for social progress. And in a practical sense, peace is a very powerful phenomenon. It has a powerful magnetic effect. The Tamil people experienced a peaceful economic life for a few weeks after the Accord.

While I am sure there is significant sympathy and support for the LTTE in Jaffna remember that the IPKF does not represent the **traditional** foe of Tamil people. The traditional foes are the Sinhalese — especially, the Sinhalese armed forces. In an armed struggle, when you mobilise the people it is a problem when the identity of the enemy keeps changing. I expect a shrinkage of the LTTE's support base — because the Indians are not the traditional foe, and in fact are regarded as blood brothers or close relations.

(To be continued)

Premadasa and...

(Continued from page 15)

state power because in the past, it has been a lack of discipline on the part of the Sri Lankan military — some of the atrocities committed that have really been seen to send the circle of violence in the country into a spiral.

DLJ: Yes, that is true; but it certainly remains to be seen whether the political authority will be exercised over the military and the political control will prevail over the military. Now, this is, I think, the uncertain part of the future. At the moment, one can't see any 'young Turks' emerging. Of course it is a possibility that one must not exclude that if there is a complete break-down of the political authority of the

State, then there is always the very real threat of the military taking control. The conventional systems of rule of law as we understood in terms of a parliamentary system of government, have now to be renegotiated and reinterpreted and reunderstood in the context of a Presidential style of government. President Premadasa seems certainly committed to preserve the rule of law and maintain law and order but this is certainly within the structures and constraints of a Presidential system and not within a Parliamentary system. But you must also remember in this context that the back-drop to all this is the acceptance of the geo-political realities; and ironically, Mr Premadasa has come to accept this more than anybody else in terms

of accommodating Sri Lanka to a recognition of the fact that Sri Lanka belongs to the Indian sub continent in terms of its political influence. Now, it is very clear that whatever happens, the question of geo-politics is going to occupy a centre stage in Sri Lankan politics for the foreseeable future. This is the monro doctrine of Rajiv Gandhi, that Sri Lanka belongs to the Indian sphere of influence, and this has been accepted by all the Eastern powers. Consequently, Premadasa has really to fight on two fronts really — one to gain acceptance of the geo-political realities and then to work towards establishing some kind of political accord between the competing interests groups in Sri Lanka, both the ethnic and the Sri Lankan youth.

AFTER THE BUDGET

Prime Ministers Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto presented their budgets last month. On the political scene, post-budget two leading analysts, Indian and Pakistani comment.

RAJIV'S NEW ELECTION SLOGAN

Turning bad into worse

Nikhil Chakravarty

The budget session of Parliament has ended with a bang, reaching its dramatic climax on the very last day.

It was typical of the Rajiv Gandhi establishment that along with the tub-thumping demagoguery that accompanied the introduction of the constitutional amendment meant to usher in Panchayat Raj came the Government's reluctance to present the report of the Controller and Auditor-General, who has reportedly passed strictures on the Government for the Bofors deal. By sheer force of its majority in the Lok Sabha — a majority secured in abnormal circumstances — the government unashamedly held back the CAG report as it knew that this would have exposed once again its involvement in the kickback scandal. In other words, the image of the messiah delivering Panchayat Raj had to be desperately saved from being disgraced by one more exposure to do with the Bofors scandal.

MISCONDUCT

And to crown it all, the Prime Minister exposed his ill-temper when he repeatedly called an MP a liar — a blatant parliamentary offence unworthy of one holding the office of the leader of Lok Sabha and conduct unthinkable under any of his predecessors in office, including his mother and grandfather. No other Speaker would have permitted such misconduct. But Mr. Balram Jakhar, already bent under the weight of the fodder scandal, failed pathetically to pull up Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. In the bargain

the standing of Parliament itself was brought several notches down.

However much Mr. Gandhi and his cronies may shout, the Panchayat Raj Bill is patently an election gimmick and it is acknowledged as such by friends and critics alike of the Congress(I). The high-pitched campaign over it is expected to give a boost to the Congress(I)'s sagging morale so that its poll campaign can begin with a catchy slogan and a no-holds-barred offensive can be mounted against the Opposition, particularly the Janata Dal.

EXPECTATION

A senior Minister of fairly long standing confided to this writer: "So long we were on the defensive, feebly trying to ward off the Opposition charge of corruption. Now, we can go on the offensive with at least a tangible promise to the voter."

Realists within the Congress(I) do not expect their party to make much headway with the new slogan of Panchayat Raj in States where the Opposition parties have a strong well-knit base — in Tamil Nadu under the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, West Bengal and Kerala under left fronts, Andhra Pradesh under the Telugu Desam and Karnataka and Haryana under the Janata Dal — because the bluff of Panchayat Raj will not work here as these parties already have an organisation at the grass-roots level. It is only in the Hindi heartland that the Congress (I) hopes to make headway with the new slogan of Panchayat Raj as it

thinks that the Janata Dal does not have a well-knit party organisation in these places and therefore will not be able to counter its campaign.

Apart from the Opposition onslaught, Mr. Gandhi is concerned with the problem of shifting loyalties within his party. With the new slogan of Panchayat Raj, Congress(I) strategists expect that their regional bosses will have no option but to support the new line as they might find it very difficult to stay away from the campaign for grass-roots democracy. The calculation is that brisk propaganda for Panchayat Raj will force the recalcitrant provincial bosses to fall in line with the Centre. In short, this slogan of Panchayat Raj is meant not only to help in the poll campaign against the Opposition but also to reinforce Mr. Gandhi's personal standing *vis-a-vis* the provincial bosses and to avert their going over to the Opposition — a prospect which cannot be dismissed.

BASELESS

The claim that this new Bill on Panchayat Raj will eliminate power-brokers at the village level is totally unwarranted. Given the present balance of forces in the countryside, particularly in the Gangetic basin, there is no question that most of the panchayats in this region will be captured by the powerful landed gentry - cum - moneylender - cum - gun - toting - anti-social elements. What happened during the recent municipal elections in Uttar Pradesh — where local goondas with guns at some places chased away all the prospective candidates and got themselves elected unopposed — is bound to be repeated on a large scale all over the country.

It will no longer be booth-capturing but the turning of many panchayats into pocket boroughs of local toughs. In an overwhelming number of cases, such persons are the musclemen of the Congress(I). So, instead of eliminating power-brokers, Mr. Gandhi's new measure will

(Continued on page 21)

BENAZIR'S BUDGET AND AFGHANISTAN

Testing time ahead

M. B. Naqvi in Karachi

Two significant events impend and political forces in Pakistan are manoeuvring themselves into positions to support Ms. Benazir Bhutto's Government suitably or attack it with maximum effect.

The budget presented before Ms. Bhutto embarked on a tour of the United States to meet President George Bush. Both these coming events are seen as make-or-break ones for Ms. Bhutto's leadership and will affect the length of her tenure in office.

The Opposition is nursing high hopes that the budget's severity will provide it with an opportunity to launch a broadside against the Government. The deficit has now reached crisis proportions. The latest known figure is for 1987-88. The figures for the year closing June 30 will be known only when the budget for 1989-90 is presented. In 1987-88, the deficit had climbed to 8.5 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP), which is regarded by the International Monetary Fund as very high and requiring structural adjustments. According to the best estimates available, the current year's deficit may be lower, but still way above 7 per cent, perhaps even close to 8 per cent. The balance of payments has been chronically in the red so that it forced the Government early last year to go to the IMF for not only normal facilities and stand-by credit but also for a \$843-million loan under the structural adjustment facility (SAF) over three years.

IMF CREDIT

Pakistan's financial troubles are a long somewhat sordid story. The IMF was unhappy with the profligacy of the Zia regime and was dragging its feet over giving Pakistan additional facilities. Negotiations that started in early 1988 dragged on and on.

But when Gen Zia-ul-Haq died in an air crash in August last year it sat up. It began to watch the steps of the caretaker government and chose to clinch the deal on the very eve of the election — just one day before the polling on November 15 last year. That, in theory committed the next elected government to all the conditionalities that go with SAF credits — over which riots have broken out in country after country that has taken such loans.

The Pakistan People's Party Government, when it took over two weeks after the polls, was faced with a *fait accompli*: it could either accept the conditionalities in toto or reject outright. But in the latter case it would have had to find substantial foreign money to carry on because it assumed power when monetary reserves were sufficient for only about a week's imports. The crisis in balance of payments was thus very painfully immediate.

NEW PACKAGE

The PPP Government had, in fact, indicated its acceptance of the IMF advice package a week before it took over and this was one of the more or less clearly and widely known conditions on which President Ishaq Khan agreed to swear in Ms. Bhutto as Prime Minister. Having accepted the IMF terms in toto, she indicated that they needed some renegotiating. The IMF happily complied and even offered additional funds. It said that Pakistan qualified not only for SAF credit but also for what is called the enhanced structural adjustment facility (ESAF). The additional conditionalities were only marginally more stringent; indeed it was pointed out that taken together, they became somewhat easier because of the longer

time-frame for carrying out the more stringent adjustment. The advantage to the Benazir Government, the IMF and its Pakistani enthusiasts pointed out, was that in the initial year the incidence of total conditionalities would be lighter.

The Government has swallowed the bait, although the ESAF deal has not yet been signed, sealed and delivered. But the IMF "concessions" have been publicised: Pakistan was to bring down its budget deficit in the current year to 5.6 per cent of the GDP and enhance revenue through higher user charges by a given percentage. The relaxation allowed in the deficit is 6 to 6.5 per cent. The effect for this and even the coming (1989-90) year of the relaxed percentages on most of the targets being insisted upon by the IMF would be somewhat less severe. But the cost is going to be very considerable: in subsequent years the imposts will have to be much heavier and more stringent targets will have to be fulfilled, apart from a steep rise in debt servicing liabilities. Experts think that Islamabad will face a far worse crisis in 1991-92 and afterwards, though IMF experts argue that if the adjustments suggested by it are implemented in full, the country will be in clover.

But all Pakistanis and some IMF experts know very well that given the rigidities of the country's economy, none of the expected benefits from adjustments can realistically be expected while the cost element — in the shape of almost continuous devaluation of the rupee and galloping inflation — will make life very hard for the Benazir Government. In fact, the Opposition alliance, the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad, is already planning a countrywide agitation against

the new taxes now being expected as a result of the commitments made to the IMF.

The Opposition is also apprehensive of the June 6 meeting between Ms. Bhutto and US President Bush. US support for Ms. Bhutto was at first not thought to be total though it is now known that the US administration prefers an elected civilian government that agrees to support its stance. Ms. Bhutto has so far given the US no cause for complaint. Despite Americans on spot, especially those who deal with Afghanistan matters, preferring the IJI, it is common knowledge that Ms. Bhutto's rating with the US administration and the Western public is high enough to prevent the IJI from entertaining too many hopes of a US-supported change. However, the fear now is that things have become far more complicated than even in November, especially because of developments in Afghanistan.

US SHIFT

Old certainties about firm US support for the Mujahideen cause, as commonly understood by the Pakistani elite, have faded. Nobody knows where the Bush administration stands on the question of a political settlement of the problem. It has so far apparently supported the interim government's stance of not talking to or accepting the participation of the people's Democratic Party of Afghanistan in any solution. But after the failure of the Jalalabad offensive, Washington has been sending out mixed signals. No one now takes it for granted that the US will indefinitely continue to refuse to talk to the Soviets until the Mujahideen are able to seize and hold sizable part of the country. Since it has become wholly uncertain whether the Mujahideen can win and retain any major Afghan city and operate from there, US steadfastness too cannot be taken for granted.

It is now known that continuing the Zia policy on Afghan-

istan was one of main conditions on which Ms. Bhutto was allowed to assume office. But it was also a major embarrassment to her represented a climb-down that made her vulnerable *vis-a-vis* her natural supporters. Her own inclinations and the PPP's earlier stand on the issue were wholly against Gen. Zia's preference for a military solution. Her acceptance of this policy was reluctant and she is now seen as discreetly trying to distance herself from the embarrassments that have resulted from the Jalabad fiasco.

MISTRUST

The likes of Gen. Fazle Haq who, as Governor of the North-West Frontier province for many years under Gen. Zia, was intimately associated with the Inter-Services Intelligence's Afghan schemes, do not trust Ms. Bhutto and the PPP, as is the case with the IJI. Thus it is difficult to say what may be cooking in the White House on June 6.

But Pakistan is under tremendous pressure from domestic public opinion and from the Soviets and the Kabul regime to agree to a political settlement that accommodates the PDP in some fashion. This makes total nonsense of all the objectives Gen. Zia had set for himself. His legates are still hankering for an outright Mujahideen victory and destruction of the PDPA regime that will give Pakistan an Afghan regime that is beholden to it and will listen to it. The US, when this was only a dream, affected to support Pakistan and the Mujahideen. But now it looks like the US will do what suits its national interests.

This has made IJI backwoods-men paranoid. The only targets they have to vent their spleen and frustration on are the PPP and Ms. Bhutto for they fear the US may stab them in the back with the active help of Ms. Bhutto. Hence their consternation and the attacks the Benazir Government will face in the coming months.

LTTE...

(Continued from page 10)

Ground regained

To sum up the situation after the first round of talks, the LTTE has managed to regain some of the ground it lost by boycotting the Provincial Council and Parliamentary elections, while the Sri Lankan Government — besieged by an insurgency in the south and separatism in the North — has gained some political mileage by holding out the prospects of peace at least on one front. But the next round is likely to be the difficult one. Then the outlines of an agreement which will satisfy Sri Lanka, the LTTE, India and the other militant groups will need to be worked out.

(Hindu, 30/5)

Turning bad...

(Continued from page 19)

virtually hand over the power of attorney to local power-brokers, thereby making a mockery of grassroots democracy.

ANOMALY

The Congress (I) propaganda pitch is raised so high that any criticism of the Bill is promptly distorted and such critics are denounced as opponents of the concepts of the Panchayat Raj. And in this game, Doordarshan seems to be one step ahead: it has virtually ceased to care for the facts of any case and has unashamedly reduced itself to Rajiv-darshan.

An extraordinary anomaly is being foisted on the power structure by this panchayat measure. Centre-State relations have not been thrashed out even after the submission of the Sarkaria Commission report. Instead of first settling this issue, Mr. Gandhi has pushed this new Bill to create misunderstanding between State governments and panchayats. This amounts to accentuating the existing tension in the present set-up.

In the coming months all these issues will come up as the nation is bound to furiously discuss the new measure being pushed through by the Prime Minister himself. But who can stop Mr. Gandhi from rushing in where wise people fear to tread?

Shifting loyalties, changing equations

S. Murari

MADRAS

With elections to the Lok Sabha fast approaching, a realignment of political forces has begun in Tamil Nadu.

The in-fighting in the Tamil Nadu Congress (1) Committee, which came to the fore following the replacement of G. K. Moopanar by Mr. Vazhapadi K. Ramamurthi as President last April, has intensified with the Moopanar group refusing to reconcile itself to the leadership change and the high command firmly ruling out any reversal of the decision. As a result, this group is getting increasingly isolated though it still remains the dominant faction.

The entire TNCC(1) Executive under Mr. Moopanar resigned last February owning moral responsibility for the party's defeat in the Assembly elections. But the high command was in no hurry to change the leadership. Before announcing the change, it called Mr. Moopanar to New Delhi and informed him, though it did not consult him, about it.

The Moopanar group never expected that the choice would fall on Mr. Ramamurthi, who had advocated an alliance with the Jayalalitha faction of the All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in the Assembly elections. Congress(1) President Rajiv Gandhi had not only accepted the Moopanar line that the party should go it alone but also taken the unusual step of projecting him as the party's candidate for chief ministership. With the elections having proved him right, Mr. Ramamurthi lost no time in holding Mr. Moopanar and Union Ministers P. Chidambaram and M. Arunachalam responsible for the fiasco and calling for a leadership change.

He was backed by a fellow trade unionist and party MP, Mr. P. Rangarajan Kumaramangalam, who lost the election, besides State-level leaders like youth wing chief K. Thangabalu.

When Mr. Moopanar was elected as the leader of the 26-member legislature party despite the brewing revolt, it became evident that he would be relieved of the TNCC(1) presidentship before long on the ground that one man can hold only one post. Mr. Moopanar, who is cut out only for party management, was never at ease in the Assembly. On top of it, he was expected to work shoulder to shoulder with the Opposition leader, Ms. Jayalalitha, a prospect he relished even less. After the March 25 incidents in the Assembly, he could not prevent his party moving closer to the AIADMK.

With the Lok Sabha elections hardly a few months away, the Congress(1) high command wanted to build on the understanding reached with the AIADMK to pave the way for a formal alliance. In these circumstances, Mr. Moopanar had to give way to a pro-Jayalalitha leader and the mantle fell on Mr. Ramamurthi.

UNHAPPINESS

One factor which weighed with the Congress(1) in deciding on an alliance with the AIADMK was the latter's convincing victory in the two Assembly constituencies to which elections were held after the merger of the Janaki and Jayalalitha factions. But the merger, instead of making the AIADMK more cohesive, has only created new power equations in the party. As a condition for merger, Janaki group leaders like Mr. S. Raghavanandam, Mr. S. Madhavan and Mr. S. Muthuswamy have been given posts

they had held in the undivided party at the time of Mr. M. G. Ramachandran's death. As a result, old Jayalalitha loyalists like Mr. S. Thirunavukkarasu and Mr. K. K. S. S. R. Ramachandran feel let down. Mr. Thirunavukkarasu has lost the post of Treasurer to Mr. Madhavan and Mr. Ramachandran has been replaced by Mr. Muthuswamy as Propaganda Secretary.

The sudden entry of Mr. K. Kalimuthu, a vitriolic critic of Ms. Jayalalitha, into the AIADMK has added to the discomfiture of leaders who had even called on Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi with a letter of support from 50 followers. But he was immediately after evicted from the Government quarters which he continued to occupy even after losing the elections. In pique, Mr. Kalimuthu sought refuge in the Poes Garden residence of Ms. Jayalalitha who made him a General Secretary.

Even as these developments were taking place, Mr. Thirunavukkarasu and Mr. Moopanar had a long meeting at Tiruchirapalli giving rise to premature speculation that they were planning to float a new party. The two down-to-earth politicians are, however, unlikely to take any such risks.

But the old guard of the AIADMK are certainly at the crossroads. Ditched by Mrs. Janaki Ramachandran and former Ministers like Mr. Kalimuthu and Mr. N. Nalluswamy, the one time strongman of the undivided AIADMK, Mr. R. M. Veerappan is now knocking at the doors of the DMK. Mr. V. R. Nedunchezhiyan, the No. 2 in the MGR Cabinet, also at one time toyed with the idea of going back to the DMK. But prominent DMK leaders like Mr. K. Anbazhagan, Mr. K. Manoharan and Mr. Karunanidhi's

nephew and Rajya Sabha member, Mr. "Murasoli" Maran, are against their admission.

VACILLATION

With the political situation in a state of flux, it is not clear what the Congress(1) hopes to gain by wooing Ms. Jayalalitha who is yet to mature into a politician despite mass backing. The pro-Jayalalitha lobby in New Delhi feels that she will gladly give the Congress(1) a lion's share of the 39 Lok Sabha seats in Tamil Nadu now that she has burnt her fingers in the Assembly elections. But Ms. Jayalalitha's recent pronouncements indicate that she is keeping her options open.

When her party MP Mr. P. Kulandaivelu demanded the dismissal of the Bommai Government in Karnataka, she promptly disowned him. She has had a meeting with Janatha leader Subramaniam Swamy. She is now in Bangalore, ostensibly for treatment of her arthritis, but a meeting between her and Mr. Hedge is not unlikely. If any further proof is needed that Ms. Jayalalitha is prevaricating, it is the comment of her deputy, Mr. S. D. Somasundaram, that the AIADMK is not giving unqualified and total support to the Panchayat Raj Bill.

If Ms. Jayalalitha is playing hard to get, Mr. Karunanidhi is certainly going out of his way to woo the Centre, and indirectly the Congress(1), despite his party being a member of the National Front. He has softened his stand on Sri Lanka so much in the last three months as to say that the issue "has gone out of our hands".

Mr. Karunanidhi was also muted in his criticism of the Bommai Government's dismissal, in fact, the DMK dissociated itself from a memorandum submitted to the Governor by the State units of the Janata Party and the Janata Dal, protesting against the dismissal. And for the recent Chief Minister' con-

ference on Panchayat Raj, Mr. Karunanidhi deputed Revenue Minister K. Manoharan who has the right contacts in Delhi.

But now that an alliance between the Congress(1) and the AIADMK looks inevitable despite Ms. Jayalalitha's vacillation, Mr. Karunanidhi has resumed attacking the Centre, starting with the Panchayat Raj issue. He has also been making other moves to meet the emerging challenge from the two parties. Recently, he allowed Mr. Manoharan to invite Mr. Moopanar to join the DMK. Simultaneously, he arranged for a meeting between Tamizhaga Munnatra Munnani leader Sivaji Ganesan and Janata

Dal General Secretary George Fernandes. It is now being said that Mr. Ganesan will merge his TMM with the Janata Dal and take over as the State unit President. Though the Dal is an ally of the DMK, the move has met with stiff resistance from seniors in the party like Mr. Era Sezhiyan and Mr. G. Kalivaradhan.

Mr. Karunanidhi, whose DMK garnered only 35 per cent of the vote in the Assembly elections, is afraid that his Government may be dismissed if the party fares badly in the Lok Sabha elections. Hence his anxiety to be on the right side of the fence.

India may attack Pak, says Pentagon

WASHINGTON

A Pentagon working group envisages the possibility that India may attack Pakistan and the US may not be able to do much about it, and China may again attack India in a border dispute.

India, it says, while focusing on the future security environment of the globe, may seek to destroy Pakistan's nuclear installations or undertake other military action in response to Pakistani provocation.

In the new environment, it warns, the US "tilt" of the kind seen in the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971 would be ineffective.

The names of the working group members are largely unfamiliar to the public but it reported to a commission that included ex-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and ex-National Security Adviser Brzezinski.

Noting that Chinese and Indian military capital stocks are "projected to increase quite rapidly", the working group said the Indian military was always numerically formidable, numbering as it does over 1.25 million men.

New technologies

The Indian Army had also acquired a large range of new technologies (including a nuclear submarine from the Soviet Union), first line aircraft, aircraft carriers, and the wherewithal for long-range projection, it said.

India's intervention in Sri Lanka bespeaks a willingness to use large force in battle to secure its own interests, the working group said.

Moreover India has, and continues to develop, a solid military-industrial base of its own, which can manufacture not only tanks but also the ingredients for a serious space programme.

"At the very least, we expect India to play an increasingly assertive role in the Indian Ocean, its foreign policy drawing strength from the military means available to it", the working group said.

"Nations that greatly increase their military power may become less reluctant to apply military pressure directly against neighbours in longstanding border or other disputes.

Kapferer's Demonology of Political conflict

R. S. Perinbanayagam

In this ceremony the demon — the personification of evil — is presented in the form of various "Indian-categories" — Punjabis, Brahmins, Tamils, Malayalees. Many Sinhalese often become possessed by these foreign demons and in the exorcism ceremony, they are forced to leave the noble Sinhalese and he or she recovers from his *dosa*.

In the political arena, Kapferer argues, the metaphors involved in the myth and the ritual are re-enacted with greater generality and ferocity. The Tamils who are Hindus and the Indians become the demons who have possessed the Sinhalese Buddhists and are harassing them in many ways. These demons object to Sinhalese domination of the state, Buddhist domination of the state, Buddhist domination of the society and the Sinhalese-Buddhist domination of the culture. These various dominations, manifested in a number of political actions, are deemed to be proper, natural and correct and within the terms of Sinhalese/Buddhist cosmology and as such any resistance and denial could only be demonic. Hence, when these denials and resistance-movements reach a certain pitch, the Sinhalese go into an exorcist frenzy which leads into orgiastic rituals of violence against the demons i.e. the Tamils.

Kapferer's argument has an internal coherence and a sweeping narrative logic to it. It has the strong aesthetic appeal of such narratives and does have the merit of addressing some of the puzzling issues of Sinhalese violence. One of these is the extremities to which normal Sinhalese could go in their actions against the Tamils. **The emotionality, hysteria and the extraordinary ruthlessness of the violence — particularly in the 1983 episode, has elicited comments from a number of obser-**

vers. Secondly, the tacit support for the violence given by Sinhalese leaders, intellectuals and other middle-class types during the violence, and the justifications provided afterwards was unusual. Thirdly, the victims were always "types" rather than identified individuals — "Tamils" as an archetype so that even Sinhalezed Tamils who only happened to have Tamil names, were victimized. The violence against the Tamils was what may be termed "Representative Actions" — the murdered Tamils were seen as mere representatives of a group. Even an educated and respected mandarin in the development studies community in Colombo could, for example tell a B. B. C. interviewer, that the Sinhalese were enraged because no Tamil leader condemned the murder of the Sinhalese soldiers. The implication is that since the leaders did not condemn the killing, all Tamils became fair game.

The motivation for these acts and the fundamental emotionality and madness of the attitudes that generated them. Kapferer argues lies in the congruence between current political conflicts and the ones represented in myth and ritual. The murderous rampage was an exorcist ritual, an orgy of expiation of the primordial evil. This enables Kapferer to give a privileged status to certain myths and rituals and give them, if not "causative power" (p. 122) at least a decisive influence. Despite Kapferer's claim that he does not seek to give myths "causative power" the impression that is created is that not only are these myths singularly significant, but that insofar as these myths, ancient and historically sedimented as they are, will remain forever and continue to work at great depth and within the very vitals of the person. Further, insofar as Sinhalese persons act "through the logic of the myth and rite, the

religion of nationalism can even reconstitute the meaning of ontologies in daily life, forcing a consistency upon them, and expanding the contextual relevance of ontology" (p. 19) — the violence will continue forever. That these old myths themselves are resuscitated and used by one class or another and in a definite **periodicity** is being ignored here. Yet he has the evidence within the covers of his own book. Elara the counter symbol to Dutu Gemunu in the very texts in which they are made into national symbols, undergoes a number of metamorphosis. In the *Mahavamsa* Elara is a "righteous king" but in the *Pujavaliya* he becomes an unrighteous ruler who destroyed monasteries. In the *Rajavaliya* he becomes even worse and is compared to the hordes of mara. It is necessary to explain these variations and such an attempt will also reveal whether other factors contributed to these changes. It may also contribute to an explanation of why the primordial myths of Vijaya and Duttu Gemunu acquired a new urgency in the late fifties and whether other factors entered into it.

The Politics of Demons

Kapferer, in common with many anthropologists, makes demons, gods and heroes and the theories and narratives about them, the first premise and economics and politics, the consequences and **results** of such demonological ideology. This is in my view, a mistake. **It reverses the process by which a historical society is constructed and manages itself.** Politics and economics is the first premise: how to manage the social relations of people and the production systems in such a way that they maximize order and sufficiency. Gods, demons and heroes, the narratives that

(Continued on page 25)

C. I. A. on Indo-Pak nuclear plans

The Central Intelligence Agency says Pakistan is "engaged in developing a nuclear capability" while India had begun research that could be used to make thermo-nuclear weapons.

India was seeking to separate and purify an isotope called "lithium-6" an "indication of interest" in thermo-nuclear devices CIA Director William Webster claimed before a Congressional panel recently.

"Clearly Pakistan is engaged in developing a nuclear capability," the CIA chief is quoted in published press reports as having told the Senate government affairs committee in Washington.

Mr. Webster's remarks on the Pakistani nuclear programme about three weeks before Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto visits Washington is seen as effort by the Bush administration to underscore its concern about it.

WARNINGS IGNORED

According to Congressman Stephen Solarz, the implication of Mr. Webster's testimony is that Pakistan has not responded to Washington's warnings that if it did not re-direct its nuclear programme, the US President would be unable to provide necessary certification to Congress for approval of military and economic aid to it.

Under US law, the President must certify to Congress annually that Pakistan does not possess a nuclear explosive device to enable it to get American aid. President Regan had told Congress last November that while Pakistan had not built a bomb, he was "extremely troubled" by the prospect of a nuclear arms race in the sub-continent.

Mr. Solarz said he had heard from a senior American official that Pakistan was responding to Washington's warnings, but

the "implication of this testimony is that they have not responded" he added.

Mr. Webster told the Congressional panel, "what creates problems for the United States is whether that (Pakistan's nuclear) capability has reached a point that it implicates the various amendments that apply to other assistance and relief for Pakistan."

The CIA chief's testimony prompted committee Chairman Senator John Glenn to say that Pakistan's nuclear activity was already sufficient to prompt a cut-off in aid, but that the US had overlooked the violations because it had other interests in Pakistan such as support for Afghan rebels.

"We do not seem to be willing to do anything about this. We are not willing to put teeth into it. The law is very clear on what should be done, and yet we always make some excuse and overlook it somehow," he added.

MISSILE RACE The CIA also expressed concern about "growing missile race" between India and Pakistan.

Ambassador Ronald F. Lehman, Director, US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, noted that India and Pakistan had been seeking "some nuclear weapons capacity and ballistic missiles."

US Undersecretary of State for Security Assistance, Science and Technology, Reginald Bartholomew testified that the immediate problem before the Bush administration was to persuade both India and Pakistan to observe restraint in their nuclear activities so that technical developments did not overtake the chances for diplomatic progress.

The elections in Pakistan last year and the resolution of the Afghan conflict might open new opportunities for better relations between India and Pakistan, including the beginning of a serious dialogue on ways to reduce tensions, he said.

The State Department official described as a "step forward" the Indo-Pakistan agreement to abstain from attacks on each other's nuclear facilities and said, "We hope it will pave the way for further measures to remove the threat of a nuclear war."

The CIA chief noted that "both countries have, within the past 15 months, announced successful test launches of the indigenously developed, short-range ballistic missiles." India had also announced it was preparing to launch an indigenously-produced medium-range missile.

Kapferer's . . .

(Continued from page 24)

contain them and the rites by which they are realized are the **means** by which the maximization of order and sufficiency are achieved. Hence, demons do not cause political and social conflict even as "ontologies": rather existing political and economic contradictions are expressed through the available metaphors of gods, demons and heroes. The demons that Kapferer identifies and the "legends of the people" that a Sri Lankan chauvinist elite had sought to make the "myth of the state" are expressions of a conflict that lies elsewhere.

China

Fighting the founders

Strobe Talbott

Marxist states are given to calling themselves "people's republics." The largest represents 1.1 billion men, women and children, nearly a fifth of humanity. The Chinese are supposed to read the *People's Daily*, entrust their security to the People's Liberation Army and obey laws passed by the National People's Congress, which convenes in the Great Hall of the People, situated, as it happens, on Tiananmen Square.

But something quite extraordinary is happening. The people who live under Communism are rising up and asserting themselves against the party. In China they have done so in defiance of their rulers. In the Soviet Union they are doing so with the help of their leader. While his Chinese counterparts were intriguing against one another last week, Mikhail Gorbachev officiated at the opening of a new government body called the Congress of People's Deputies. For once the name was not entirely a mockery of the political reality.

For these two events to be occurring at the same time was remarkable but not coincidental. The interaction between what has been happening in Beijing and Moscow may lead future historians to look back on May 1989 as the most momentous month in the second half of the 20th century. Forces of epochal transformation are bubbling up from below in China, while they are being marshaled from above in the Soviet Union. But in both cases these changes are driven by a recognition that Communism has failed its subjects, the people, and that the only solution is far-reaching reform of the entire system. In China it is the demonstrators in Tiananmen Square who personify that realization. In the Soviet Union it is Gorbachev himself.

No less an authority than Karl Marx asserted that the political order of a country derives from the economic relations among its citizens (although Adam Smith had figured out the same thing in the previous century). The leaders of the Russian and Chinese revolutions imposed on the people a totalitarian form of the social compact: You give up your freedom, and we'll make sure you live decently. Bread was one of the most common words on the banners that the workers carried through the streets of Petrograd in 1917, and the promise of food was an important theme in the propaganda of the Communists as they swept to victory in China in 1949. The police state would also be a welfare state. For 71 years in the Soviet Union and for 40 years in China, the state has failed to deliver on its end of the bargain. It has provided plenty of police but not much welfare.

* *

At first, the leader of the Great Counterrevolution was Deng Xiaoping. He dismantled the vastly inefficient system of communes. Farms were turned over to families. The results were almost immediate — and impressive. Grain output increased 44% over eight years. Soviet economists looked to China with envy and emulation. Kulaks — rich peasants — came back into fashion.

Deng clinched his reputation as a witty aphorism dismissing the value of ideology: "It doesn't matter whether a cat is black or white as long as it catches mice." Catching mice meant putting food on the table — meeting the material needs of the people. The color of the cat meant the degree to which the economy relies on private incentive and market forces rather than subsidies and quotas — Adam

Smith's recommended mechanisms rather than Karl Marx's.

But while Deng subordinated ideology to the goal of "modernization," he did not downgrade the role or diffuse the power of the Communist Party. Quite the contrary; he has remained an absolutist in defense of the institution that Marx and Engels aptly called the "dictatorship of the proletariat." Farmers could work their own plots and profit from the sale of their produce at market, but under Deng, the *People's Daily* remained very much an organ of instruction rather than information, to say nothing of debate. The doors of the Great Hall of the People were shut, figuratively and often literally as well, to the people themselves. Deng thought that China could have a closed Communist Party that would preside over an open economy.

He was wrong. In all Communist societies, the principal purpose of the party — and the only thing it does well — has always been the preservation and enforcement of its own power. But that naked truth has traditionally been disguised with Marxist economics and ideology. To the extent that he de-Communized the economy and discredited ideology, Deng diminished the party's claim to legitimacy. He left the party all the more vulnerable to the flood of discontent that has so stunned the world in recent days. An improvement in living standards is not enough to meet the needs of the people. As a student banner in Tiananmen Square put it, WE LOVE RICE, BUT WE LOVE DEMOCRACY MORE.

Deng also made himself vulnerable to the supreme, and probably final, irony of his roller-coaster career. He carefully, patiently, skillfully set the scene for Gorbachev to visit China two weeks ago. The Soviet leader was coming on Deng's terms to end the 30-year schism between the Communist giants. Yet not only was this diplomatic triumph overshadowed by the more spectacular events in

Tiananmen Square, but the demonstrators there carried banners in Russian demanding GLASNOST and saying IN THE SOVIET UNION THEY HAVE GORBACHEV. IN CHINA, WE HAVE WHOM?

Gorbachev has not always been a champion of the kind of people power on display in Tiananmen Square. Early in his tenure as General Secretary, his understanding of democracy was closer to Deng's concept of limited managerial and entrepreneurial liberalization. However, the Soviet leader grew to realize that as long as the Communist Party maintains its grip on all aspects of society, significant reform is nearly impossible. The party is too conservative, too resistant to change.

* * *

In a word used by a number of his own advisers, Gorbachev was "radicalized" by the experience of trying to improve the system. The result, two months ago, was a genuine choice for voters in the election to the new Congress of People's Deputies. Numerous standard-bearers of the old order were defeated, including some who ran unopposed (they gathered too few votes to qua-

lify for election). A prominent Soviet historian, Leonid Batkin, asserts that "the Communist Party lost as an institution. Communists won not because they were Communists but despite being Communists." The insurgents suffered a setback in last week's election of a new parliament, or Supreme Soviet, but Gorbachev still intends that body, over time, to serve as a counterweight to the party. He is pulling off an amazing, perhaps unprecedented, feat in the history of statesmanship: he is simultaneously the leader of the opposition.

Gorbachev also has the satisfaction of knowing that he has re-established the pre-eminence of the top man in the Kremlin as the leader of world Communism — but with a twist. He is now the leader of the Communist reformation. It is as though Martin Luther had returned in triumph to Rome to be installed as Pope.

Deng Xiaoping's predecessor Mao Zedong split with Gorbachev's predecessor Nikita Khrushchev partly on the grounds that Khrushchev was a "revisionist." Gorbachev has gone a long way toward healing the rift, but not by returning to orthodoxy. He has carried revisionism to a level

unimagined by either Mao or Khrushchev, and as a result his picture and slogans are on the posters of Chinese demonstrators.

The tumult in China can be used by both sides in the debate taking place in the Soviet Union. Reformers can draw the lesson that *perestroika* must be accompanied by *glasnost* and *demokratizatsiya* or sooner or later the people will take to the streets. The conservatives can argue that *glasnost* and *demokratizatsiya* unleash anarchy and are a threat to the powers that be, notably including the General Secretary of the party.

Despite its current troubles, China has an immense advantage over the Soviet Union, and it gives Chinese reformers an immense advantage over their Soviet counterparts. There really is a Chinese people; 94% belong to one ethnic group, Han Chinese. By contrast, Russians make up only 51% of the population of the U.S.S.R.; they are one of more than 100 ethnic groups. Those non-Russian nationalities — in the Caucasus, in Central Asia, along the Baltic, in the Ukraine — are already straining at the ties that bind them to Moscow.

CHINA

Li asks for probe into US role in student agitation

Chinese Premier Li Peng had asked for a probe into whether any foreign power, in particular the United States, had played a part in China's current pro-democracy student movement, the South China *Morning Post* reported today.

In a front-page report on what it said was a transcript circulated to party members at a meeting last week of "the Communist Party hierarchy," the English-language daily quoted Mr. Li as saying the student movement was "the result of the inculcation of Western ideas about democracy and freedom."

"Is there any (foreign) background behind the student movement," the *Post* quoted Mr. Li

as asking. We have to further investigate this.

"For example, we know that the US is not happy over the visit of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to China.

"Is there an American background behind the student movement," he said, according to the *Post*.

Mr. Li acknowledged that "the deep-seated reason behind the social turmoil is a split within the party, the *Post* said. "There are black hands within the party."

The conservative Premier also attacked his archrival, the Communist Party's reformist chief Zhao Ziyang, who has dropped out of sight since Mr. Li decided

on May 19 to call troops into Beijing to quell the unrest.

Many Mistakes

"Comrade Ziyang has done a lot of work (for reform in China), but he has also made many mistakes," the daily quoted him as saying. "We must ascertain who represents reform — is it comrade (Deng) Xiaoping or comrade Ziyang?"

He was echoed by another participant at the meeting, former President Li Xiannian, who said according to the *Post*: "Conventional wisdom has it that Zhao Ziyang is the leader of the party's reformist faction. In reality, however, it is comrade Xiaoping."

President Yang Shangkun, who was at Mr. Li's side when a military intervention was called 10 days ago, also was strongly critical of Mr. Zhao, said the report.

Mr. Yang said Mr. Zhao had approved a number of decisions taken by the leadership, then went back on them, threatening to resign.

"I told him (Mr. Zhao): 'How can you resign? How can you justify your resignation to the people? How can you stop helping and protecting comrade Xiao-

ping?' I asked him to respect the view of the majority," Mr. Yang said.

The Communist Party chief's unexpected pre-dawn visit to hungerstriking students on Tiananmen Square on May 19 was, in fact, "a subtle way (of revealing to the students) that contradictions exist within the party," Mr. Yang said.

The entire hierarchy of the party agreed that Mr. Zhao "had gone out of line," Mr. Yang said, and they "agreed to impose martial law" in Beijing.

Hasty Step

He acknowledged that the proclamation of martial law had been "somewhat hasty," but said "serious things had happened" and there were leaks of "state secrets" from party and Government bodies.

He cited four think-tanks that had issued a statement on the eve of the proclamation of martial law, mentioning divisions between conservatives and reformists within the party and warning against the dangers of military action.

MANDELA WINS GADDAFI PRIZE

Nelson Mandela, the father-figure of the courageous African resistance to *apartheid*, the most barbaric form of institutionalised (white) racism, has been selected for the singular honour of receiving the newly established Gaddafi Award for Human Rights. Agency reports said that the Award was announced by the Consultative Committee of "The Great Green Charter of Human Rights". The Committee consists of eminent internationally known personalities. One of those invited to join the Consultative Committee was Sri Lanka's Opposition Leader, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, who was however unable to be present at the ceremonies last week in Libya.

The choice of Nelson Mandela at this particular time was singularly fitting. There are still many roadblocks to the full achievement of Namibian Independence thwarted for decades by the combined efforts of the apartheid state and its principal patron, the United States. However now that Namibian independence is on the agenda is largely the result of the valiant struggle of the Namibian people under the leadership of SWAPO, and the even braver battle waged since the beginning of this century by the African National Congress in South Africa itself.

In that struggle for human freedom and African independence, one man stands out like a titan — Nelson Mandela who has spent more than quarter century in jail. Such is his moral and physical courage, and devotion to his people that on his 75 birthday he refused to allow his wife and family to visit him in jail on the "special permission" of the Botha regime. "I cannot enjoy a privilege that my fellow prisoners do not have as a right" he said.

The Gaddafi Award is based on "The Great Green Charter of Human Rights" announced by Moammar Gaddafi Al Gaddafi, the Libyan Leader in Tripoli on 15 Sept. 1988. The Charter itself is an effort to adapt the traditional concepts of "fundamental human rights" as enunciated in the Universal Declaration of the UN, to a new era which Gaddafi calls the 'era of the masses'.

"The problem of contemporary man results from the fact that he is living a traditional, if not archaic era, where societies are governed according to a classic theory of government; a theory which acknowledges the existence of governors and governed, of masters and slaves, of bosses and wage-earners, while the masters are yearning for one thing only: to regain possession of their resources, to exercise their rights on this wealth, to use it for the purpose of fulfilling their needs, and to consolidate their freedom without being dependent on the favours of any benefactor, middleman or representative whatsoever"



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