

**JAYAWEERA REPORT: Kumar's Protest and  
L.G.'s Reply**

**LANKA**

# **GUARDIAN**

Vol. 13 No. 9 September 1, 1990 Price Rs. 7.50 Registered at the GPO, Sri Lanka QD/79/NEWS/90

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— the first fortnight

— *Victor Mallet*

**S.W.R.D., MANOR, TARZIE AND REGGIE**

— a reply

— *S. Pathiravitana*

## **IPKF and the J.V.P. Offensive**

— *Bruce Matthews*

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## TRENDS

### NO COVER FOR RIOT

Insurance for damage suffered from riot and civil commotion will not be underwritten by the government in future. Assurance for such cover by the state has been withdrawn. Instructions have been issued to all insurance companies not to insure any person or property against riot or terrorism. A government fund underwriting such insurance will no longer be available.

Since war broke out in the North and East on June 11 hundreds of requests for insurance cover have been made from those areas, but they will not be accommodated because of the withdrawal of the fund and also because investigations into claims cannot be made in those areas in a war situation, according to official sources. The suspension of cover however applies to other areas as well.

### COMMON ENEMY

State Minister for Defence Ranjan Wijeratne has appealed to all communities in the Eastern Province not to play into the hands of terrorists by attacking each other. "I appeal to members of all communities not to attack one another but to back government's effort to deal with the common enemy, the LTTE", he said.

### NO LONGER PRIVILEGED

The exclusive right given to nationals of Thailand under a bilateral agreement to export geudas from Sri Lanka has been allowed to lapse. Hereafter the State Gem Corporation will issue licences to any foreigner, at its sole discretion, to buy and export rough geudas from Sri Lanka. A minimum of US \$ 10,000 will have to be remitted to this country to qualify for registration as an exporter.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pseudonyms are NOT banned from our correspondence columns. A letter to be considered for publication in the first instance must however have the full name of the writer and his/her postal address. This is common editorial practice which is also helpful in the event of legal action.

— Editor

## LETTERS

### The Greatest and the Ablest

The caption 'DS the greatest, NM the ablest' (Conversations with JR 3 LG 15 August) could give the impression that though DS was 'greater' than NM, NM was 'abler' than DS. However, as the text makes clear, what JR said was that NM was the 'ablest' of the left leaders, four of whom (besides NM himself) are named: Colvin, Pieter, Bernard and Philip.

I think few would agree that NM was abler than Philip who

towered over the rest of the left leaders. As for being 'abler' than Colvin, Pieter and Bernard (even if JR's assessment is sound, which I doubt) is that such a big deal as all that?

Boyd Almeida

Colombo 4.

### Ablest Left Leader ?

JR's assessment (LG 15 August) was wide off the mark. The ablest left leaders were A E Goonesinghe, Philip, Harbour Piyadasa and Bala Tampoe. NM was accurately described by Bala as 'a mediocrity who got lucky'. Colvin was quick-witted but quite out of touch with political and macro-economic realities. A dogmatist who stretched or chopped the facts to fit his procrustean bed of obsolete theory. Pieter a flounder (a European flatfish) out of capitalist water floundering on proletarian sands. Leslie a decent human being, quite gormless. What can one say of Bernard? Tenth runner-up in the beauty contest?

Piyal Gamage

Colombo 3.

LANKA

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## BRIEFLY . . .

● The media in India has been happy with President Premadasa's Independence Day message to Indian President Venkataraman. The mainstream press displayed it prominently. One publication said that it was characterised by unusual warmth. Another said that it was politically meaningful and in sharp contrast to the "political polemics that marred Indo-Sri Lanka relations at this time last year". This paper (The *Indian Express*) said that the message was an index of the recent improvement in relations between the two countries.

The *Hindu* called the message unusually warm.

● Former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi told the visiting Sri Lankan parliamentary delegation that there was an illegal arms market in India supplying the LTTE, the Khalistanis in Punjab and the Kashmir militants. Disclosing this a member of the delegation, Mr Dinesh Gunawardena, said that Mr Gandhi had categorically stated that Indian soil should not be used to wage war in Sri Lanka.

● Peace committees are being organised in Eastern Province villages inhabited by Muslims and Tamils. In the Kalmuni area the police have made arrangements for the Muslims to attend night prayer meetings in three mosques, under heavy security. Earlier night prayers were held at all sixteen mosques in the locality.

## STOP VIOLENCE

● Indian Prime Minister V. P. Singh, meeting journalists at lunch, called on the LTTE to give up violence and enter the democratic

framework. He said that India could join international agencies to support refugee camps in Sri Lanka; there was no progress over India's proposals to set up camps here by itself, because the LTTE was not agreeable and India had no leverage with that group.

## NO MILITARY SOLUTION

● Opposition Leader Sirimavo Bandaranaike told a five party protest rally at Ratmalana that the North-East problem could be solved only politically; never militarily. The SLFP was engaged in discussions with Tamil groups towards this end, she said.

The opposition leader accused the government of pampering the LTTE while they, the Tigers, were going ahead with an arms build-up.

She said that Premadasa Government should accept the blame fully for the crisis in the North and the East; the government failed to fill the vacuum after the IPKF withdrawal and allowed the LTTE to gain the upper hand.

## MP's TAXED

● Ministers, MPs and government servants whose salaries are now tax free are to be taxed, like anybody else, an *Island* report said, quoting informed sources. The report said that a tax commission had recommended a lowering of income tax and the elimination of wealth tax.

Another possible change in the tax structure was likely to be the dropping of the Turnover Tax, to be replaced by a Value Added Tax (VAT) as in most developed countries.

## CORRECTIONS

The following corrections are necessary in the article entitled *K. Padmanaba: the Political Philosophy and Praxis* by Dayan Jayatilleka which appeared in the last issue of the *Lanka Guardian*.

The last sentence in the concluding para of the third column on page 16 should have read as follows:

"His political work in India is also noteworthy, because until that time the connections between Tamil fighters and India had been with smugglers and social bandits and also with the most hard core Tamil Nadu nationalists."

Para 2, third column, page 18 should read "The evolution of the world Communist and Revolutionary Movement has vindicated Padmanaba's own ideological formation and synthesis."

The first para of the first column of page 19 should read "I will say that Comrade Padmanaba was certainly one of the outstanding Marxists produced by the Tamil nation of this country — the others being Comrades Vaidyalingam, Kandiah and Sanmugathan — the last, Comrade Padmanaba greatly respected."

The concluding sentence of the penultimate para of the article should read as follows:

"Someday when the peoples revolutionary forces of the Sinhala, the Tamil and the Muslim communities wage their combined struggle against reaction and imperialism, the world will know this — for surely at some decisive stage and determinant moment of the struggle, they will unfurl the twin banners of Vijaya and Padmanaba".

# JAFFNA FORT: Symbol and Reality

Mervyn de Silva

Jaffna's 300 year old Dutch Fort under siege since June 10, and the 220 policemen and soldiers free to return to home and family if the Army's operation is successful. The Sunday ISLAND columnist TARAKI, the best informed of columnists on the Jaffna situation, argued that the Jaffna Fort is a "symbol". Of course, it is. But not symbol only.

If it was only a symbol the LTTE leadership would have used it solely as an argument to strengthen their case before the people — the Sri Lanka Lion Flag is no different from the Dutch flag or the Union Jack, the flag of not just sovereignty but supremacy. And so, in reverse, the subjugation of the Tamil minority. Such was the Tiger propagandist thesis and emotionally powerful case.

The thesis didn't end there. It was used with deadly effect not merely to rally the Tamil people but to persuade the Sri Lankan government why the army should move out. In the course of the LTTE-government talks, a LTTE spokesman said "alright, if there must be a symbol of sovereignty and Colombo's authority, why not make it the G. A.'s office, as before, i. e. the civilian administration".

But behind the symbol was the reality. The 200-250 men in the besieged fort — some have died there, some were rescued in a daring operation — gave the government every right to mount military actions, including aerial attacks on the heavily fortified LTTE bunkers. And the planes or the helicopters that came attracted LTTE fire. One helicopter was in fact lost in such an operation. And so, what would ordinarily be seen as a strictly military confron-

tation, bound only by the rules of war, had a political-diplomatic aspect too. As long as the Fort was under LTTE siege and the service personnel inside were virtual hostages, nobody could object to rescue operations. Not even India. (In fact, any government with greater military muscle would have launched a well-planned combined assault to rescue the hostages. The Indian Army would certainly have done so).

The LTTE had a chance to make a diplomatic deal. To make the Fort a "neutral territory", the idea of placing the Fort under ICRC control. The LTTE muffed it by demanding too much — to make the whole area (the town) a de-militarised zone; in short, forcing the Sri Lankan armed services to pull out from all their fortified positions. That was rejected of course.

And then there is the Army. We are at war. Call it unconventional war or protracted war or counter-insurgency but war nonetheless, with the Armed Forces of the State mobilised to the full to physically crush or destroy a well-armed separatist group that plans to divide the country and establish another State. Inevitably, military thinking, and military options, make an increasingly stronger impact on the decision-making process. And why not? It is the army that makes the supreme sacrifice. And casualty figures have been quite high.

In these circumstances, an important consideration in any event, becomes the paramount issue — the morale of the men. That becomes the vital, all pervasive consideration of the Army High Command.

If the Fort is taken, the war will move to a different phase,

The army will hold well-defended positions while the 'Tigers', like all guerrillas will melt away. The LTTE will subject the army to continuous harassment. And one wonders whether civil administration can really be restored. All this on the assumption that the Army will not be content with merely replacing the 230 'hostages' with a fresh battalion both inside the Fort and on patrol in the environs. In short, Jaffna city cannot be brought to the level of normalcy now prevailing in the East... and even there the LTTE has retained a high degree of mobility.

## INDIA FACTOR

The Indian-Tamilnadu factor now re-emerges in that complex equation which we saw written out in the 1983-87 period. Each week, there has been a distinct change in tone and then substance in official declarations in Delhi. The most recent (27/8) shows a distinct hardening of the Indian line. Once again the threat of an exodus is the justification not merely for expressions of 'concern' but blunt "appeals" for an "immediate end to hostilities". In the same statement, the Indian Prime Minister Mr. V. P. Singh said:

"We are deeply concerned with the sharp escalation" of the conflict... indiscriminate attacks on heavily populated areas"... "as a result the flow of refugees from the Island to Tamilnadu will place a heavy burden" on India.

The final message was the old familiar. The Lankan government must take "urgent steps", with an "immediate cessation of hostilities and a return to negotiations. A durable

NEWS  
BACKGROUND



solution to the ethnic conflict cannot be found by military means or violence".

Prime Minister V. P. Singh who recently survived a major crisis in his motley coalition is under pressure from within and without, from Chief Minister Karunanidhi whose DMK is an important partner of the ruling National Front, and from the Opposition Congress of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Addressing District and State presidents of the party's Youth Council, the General Secretary of Mr. Gandhi's Congress accused the National Front government of providing the country with "the weakest Centre in India's modern history... "This government" he added was composed of "two ideologically opposed parties". Under Rajiv's leadership, India had opened a dialogue with China, and the Sri Lankan situation had greatly improved.

#### MADRAS NEXUS

In his reply during a debate on a resolution introduced by him, the Tamilnadu Chief Minister said: "Since a "neutral guarantor" was required to remove the apprehensions the government of India should come forward to play such a role".

The resolution said the "House requested the Government of India to find a political solution to this problem helping the Tamils to get a peaceful life and create a climate facilitating the return of the refugees to their motherland peacefully and without fear."

The resolution said hundreds of Tamils were dying every day due to attacks by the Sri Lankan Army. Besides thousands of Tamils affected by aerial bombing had come to Tamilnadu as refugees after losing all their property the paper said.

Mr. Karunanidhi said about 80,000 Tamil refugees had reached Tamilnadu in the wake of the aerial offensive by the Sri Lankan government and this constituted an indirect aggression the paper said.

## GULF CRISIS: Massive multiple blows

An oil price hike, remittances from expatriate workers in the Middle-east (mostly housemaids) lost, tea shipments to Iraq blocked, the job market in Kuwait and the region crippled, the ranks of the unemployed swelled, and garment exports to the US probably slashed. Freight rates for west-bound cargo have gone up. Never in Sri Lanka's modern history has the Island's economy received so many blows at same time. Meanwhile military spending rises steadily as the Army launches a massive operation to relieve the Jaffna Fort and rescue over 200 servicemen who have been virtually held hostage by the LTTE for nearly 80 days.

With petrol costing more, all transport fares have been raised, and most consumer items cost more.

Iraq was the biggest buyer of our tea, second only to Egypt.

Iraq buys our low and mid-grown teas, so popular in West Asia but not in western markets.

Expatriate remittances came second to tea as a dollar earner. In Kuwait alone, we had about 100,000 workers. Remittances from West Asia represented forty per cent of this income. Sri Lanka has a huge budget deficit which is largely met by foreign aid and loans.

Unemployment has been a major socio-economic cause of unrest, particularly youth revolt.

Though revenue from garment exports has been often over-stated, the actual dollar income is nonetheless considerable. Apart from that, the garment factories, many in the FTZ, have made a significant contribution to employment-generation, of young women mainly. Sri Lanka is probably the one of the worst-affected Third World nations.

## Seminar on Gulf Crisis

The Policy Planning Ministry's Dr. Lloyd Fernando, Tea Trade Association Chairman Michael de Zoysa, the Petroleum Corporation's top executive P. L. Gunasingha, the Labour Ministry Secretary Justin Dias, the Shipping Agencies (Pvt) P. Dissanaika the Sri Lanka Shipper's Council's chairman W. T. Ellawela, the Insurance Corporation's Marine Insurance Manager Roy Balasuriya, the Commercial Bank's Manager, Edgar Gunatunga participated in a seminar on the implications of the Gulf Crisis organised by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce. The following is a summary of the views presented.

Dr. Fernando said that there were no simple answers to the complex problems facing the country. For example, while the government intends to continue its policy of privatisation, public sector organisations provided a stabilising effect in times of recession.

The crisis would give a severe beating to Air Lanka with an estimated loss of approximately Rs. 400 million in foreign exchange if operations to Kuwait were not resumed for the rest of the year.

If the situation developed to a point where airlines would have to overfly the Middle East, more long range aircrafts would have to be deployed and a drop in tourist traffic, particularly from Europe was expected because Europeans might not want to overfly a potential war zone and with the cost of living increasing because of the fuel hikes more Europeans would be reducing their holiday air travel.

Air Lanka and other airlines would have to raise fares due to the hike in fuel costs. Air Lanka has already raised its rates on discounting tickets.

Colombo Tea Traders' Association Chairman, Michael de

Zoysa referred to the crucial importance of Iraqi purchases in maintaining price level at the Colombo auctions. Currently, Sri Lanka's exports to Iraq amounted to about 15 per cent of total exports. Kuwait, although a smaller market, was an important one, particularly for value added teas.

Ceylon Petroleum Corporation Deputy Commercial Manager, P. L. Gunasinghe said that although Iraq was not a major source of crude oil for Sri Lanka, the price of oil in the world market had increased as a result of the Gulf crisis. He emphasised the volatility of the oil market in the past few weeks, with prices changing from day to day.

Labour Ministry Secretary, Justin Dias speaking on emigrants' remittances said that about 500,000 Sri Lankan workers were employed in the Middle East, of which 110,000 were in Kuwait.

Remittances from emigrants had been about Rs. 13 billion in 1989 and had been projected to reach Rs. 16 billion in 1990. He felt that although emigrants' remittances were usually ranked third after tea and garments, if nett foreign exchange earnings were taken into account, emigrants' remittances were the leading source of foreign exchange.

He also mentioned that problems would be created in Sri Lanka if there was a large scale return of Sri Lankan workers from the Middle East.

Ceylon Shipping Agencies (Pvt.) Ltd. Marketing Manager, Parakrama Dissanayake said that shipping services to Iraq were continuing. He added that due to the Gulf crisis, fuel oil had increased from US 70 dollars to US 160 per metric tonne, as a result of which there would be increases in bunker adjustment factors (BAF). He also mentioned that an increase in war risks premium would entail an additional cost of US 150,000 dollars per call for a US 20 million dollar ship.

Sri Lanka Shippers' Council chairman W. T. Ellawala said that consequent to the rise in bunker prices and changes in relative exchange rates, Conferences had imposed increases in bunker surcharges and currency adjustment factors.

Roy Balasuriya informed the members of recent increases in war risks premia on marine insurance policies.

Edgar Gunatunga explained the mechanisms by which transfers of money are made in international trade. Remittances from Iraq would therefore have to be channelled through financial centres and banks in Sri Lanka would have to take note of the current attitudes of financial centres to cash drafts drawn by Iraq. He also referred to the possible recessionary ef-

fects of the current crisis on the American economy.

(S O)

## IMF LOAN

Sri Lanka has asked for urgent IMF help under the Contingency Compensatory Financing Facility (CCFF). An enhanced oil bill will worsen the balance of payments by about 20 million dollars. Oil imports last year was 260 million dollars. If oil imports are not reduced, Sri Lanka may have to pay between 350-370 million dollars. The government is also negotiating with a commercial bank in Colombo for credit facilities to help the USSR Tea Purchasing Board. The USSR kept out of the auctions for the past 3 weeks complaining that interest rates on short-term credit was too high.

## CONDEMN BOMBING

Six opposition parties in a statement yesterday expressed alarm over the killings and disappearances of innocent civilians in the country and said they were disturbed that aerial bombing carried out on the direction of the Government has caused the loss of so many innocent lives and damage to civilian houses and properties.

The six parties and signatories to the statement are — Sri Lanka Freedom Party: Mrs. Sirmavo Bandaranaike; Sri Lanka Muslim Congress: M. H. M. Ashraff; Mahajana Eksath Peramuna: Dinesh Gunawardena, Lanka Samasamaja Party: Athauda Seneviratne; Nava Sama Samaja Party: Vasudeva Nanayakkara and Tamil United Liberation Front: Marni Senathiraja.

They said in the statement that they were perturbed at two statements made by the State Minister for Defence in Parliament in the course of two Emergency debates that (1) For the safety of the innocent civilians they should evacuate and go on a mass exodus to Vavuniya where he would give "facilities" and (2) The alternative for the civilian Tamils is to destroy the LTTE.

"We wish to remind the Government that indiscriminate killings of this sort as a means to an end is an inhuman action against the people of our own country and unfair by our armed forces who are compelled to follow orders," the parties said.

"We demand that the killings of civilians by indiscriminate aerial bombing be halted forthwith," they said.



## SRI LANKA

# A Commonwealth Initiative ?

Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans endorsed proposals by the Federal Opposition for a Commonwealth role in ending Sri Lanka's seven-year-old civil war.

He raised the opposition suggestion in talks with Sri Lankan government leaders, and said later he planned to pursue prospects of a "mediation in the bloody ethnic conflict when he returned to Australia.

Senator Evans, on a two-day visit to Sri Lanka, declined to elaborate, beyond saying he had "some ideas which I want to discuss with colleagues when I get back to Australia".

Opposition foreign affairs spokesman Senator Robert Hill has called for a high-level Commonwealth working party to seek a ceasefire in the conflict between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils who are seeking an independent state in the north-east of the island.

The Commonwealth team would also seek to sponsor peace talks between the government and Tamil guerillas, who have renewed their attacks in recent weeks.

Senator Evans had talks with President Ranasinghe Premadasa. Foreign Minister Harold Herat and Trade Minister Abdul Mansoor.

He said they discussed the future course of the conflict, which claimed an estimated 30,000 lives last year, and the prospects for Senator Hill's plan.

"All I can say at this stage is that those exchanges were, I think, quite productive."

He said he and the Sri Lankan ministers had agreed not to elaborate further on their discussions.

He added: "I will make the general point that a good idea is a good idea wherever it comes from and I certainly start with no inhibitions at all about picking up ideas from

Senator Hill or anywhere else if they can contribute helpfully to the resolution of a very difficult and very sensitive issue."

There has been heightened tension in Sri Lanka after recent attacks blamed on guerilla members of the Liberation Tigers.

In the past six days Tigers have been blamed for the killing of more than 200 Muslims.

Since June 11, when the Tigers broke a ceasefire, up to 2500 people have been killed, including more than 600 Sri Lankan police who were disarmed shot, and buried in mass graves.

Senator Evans has condemned the killings of Muslims as a "callous and calculated bid to intimidate Sri Lanka's Muslim community"

Senator Evans did not meet any Tamil representatives during his visit.

*(West Australian)*

## JAYAWEERA REPORT

### Kumar Complaints

Further to our telegram of 31 July and yours of 4 August regarding the PRIO report on Neville Jayaweera's fact-finding mission to Sri Lanka. I should like to explain the objection to the publication of that report.

Firstly, the interest of the 'Guardian' in the report is greatly appreciated, and I regret that due to my absence on leave in July, you were not informed sooner of the objections to your publication of extracts. However, I am very grateful for your prompt response once you had received an indication that there were objections. It is also accepted that the extracts were published in good faith and we do not accuse you of any malicious intent.

The report, as you may be aware, was commissioned by PRIO from Neville last year. On receipt of the manuscript, we felt it to contain certain insights and recommendations which should be brought to the attention of all parties in the conflict as soon as possible. It was therefore decided to invite, within a period of less than two months from receipt of the MS, several key persons to a briefing conference here in Oslo where Neville could have the opportunity to present his findings. This, as you know, took place on 11 June.

However, PRIO also wished to include in the final version of the report as wide a spectrum of views as possible and so the

decision was taken to include the discussions and comments arising at the conference in the final version of the published report, which is due out later this year. It would have been unreasonable to expect the conference participants to comment on the report if they did not have access to a copy and so a draft version of the report was prepared which included only some of Neville's amendments and was virtually unedited otherwise. This was distributed to the participants on 9-11 June.

It is this report which has somehow come into your possession and from which you have subsequently seen fit to publish extracts in the 'Guardian'. The principle PRIO objections to this are:

1. That the report, as it stands, is incomplete and, as yet, unpublished. This fact was not



acknowledged by the 'Guardian'.

2. The extracts were published without any prior consultation with PRIO. This might, under other circumstances, be acceptable, although not particularly courteous. However, copyright issues apart, in the prevailing climate of conflict in Sri Lanka, some of the material could, without proper balance from the comments made at the conference being included, be misconstrued.
3. PRIO seeks, primarily, to foster peace. It is therefore of some importance that all parties in the conflict are given the opportunity to present their case. If the 'Guardian' publishes, as it has, extracts from an incomplete report, those parties with an opposing view are denied the right of reply, as it were. By any token, this is undesirable.
4. The passages reproduced in the 'Guardian' have since undergone several amendments and additions which alter the emphasis of some of the original passages. It is therefore regrettable that the original version should have been published without these changes.
5. The decision of the 'Guardian' to publish extracts of the report has given rise to considerable consternation on the part of many of the participants at the conference and has caused them to be reluctant to contribute their comments to the final publication. It has also caused PRIO some embarrassment with the donors for the project who have registered their unequivocal objections with us. The argument is that publication of part of the report, and the manner in which this was done, have preempted any impact the report may have had.

On the whole, therefore, your action has put PRIO in a somewhat delicate position. PRIO

must be seen to be acting as impartially as possible. We hope that the final report will be impartial and balanced. However, you must appreciate that the extracts published by the 'Guardian', out of context, do not help that perception. I would therefore ask that, when you receive a copy of the final report, as I shall ensure you do, you publish some of the comments which present an alternative view to that of the already published extracts, and that you acknowledge that the latter were taken from the draft report. This action would be much appreciated.

I would also be grateful if you would grant PRIO the right of reply on the matter, either by printing this letter or by offering some space for us to make our case in a later issue. Should you have any other suggestions as to how the 'Guardian' can attempt to rectify the situation, I should be happy to learn of them.

With all good wishes and thanks for your cooperation so far, I remain,

yours sincerely  
**Kumar Rupesinghe**  
*ECCO Director*

Copy: Sverre Lodgaard, PRIO Director  
Neville Jayaweera.

#### NOTE BY EDITOR

A letter by Dr. Kumar Rupasinghe dated 14/8 and received on 20/8 is published in FULL at the earliest opportunity (1/9).

We are glad that the LG's interest is "greatly appreciated", and that Dr. K. is "grateful" for our "prompt response" to the PRIO telegram (L.G. 15/8) although the LG itself was greatly incommoded. We had to suspend publication of material already sent to the printer and announced in its previous issue. Since Dr. K. accepts our "good faith", his remark 'we do not accuse you of malicious intent' is superfluous and perhaps in poor taste. Nonetheless we accept his assurance in the same spirit in which it is offered.

Dr. K. says that on the receipt of Mr. Jayaweera's report "commissioned" by PRIO, he "felt it to contain certain insights and recommendations which should be brought to the attention of all parties to the conflict as soon as possible". That was also our response when that report, like similar documents (International Alert, Amnesty etc) reach us in the same manner. We felt some of its 'insights' deserve to be brought to the attention of our readers. Sad to say, its recommendations" could not be presented to our readers, in view of PRIO's telegraphic intervention.

The LG is not a daily paper of 40 or 50 pages, only a fortnightly journal of 24 pages. We can carry only excerpts, which is what we did in the case of Eduardo Marino's insightful report on "Political Killings in Southern Sri Lanka" (I.A.) Just for the record, editors edit. It's their job.

When we read a frontpage newsitem in a leading local daily that the report, commissioned by PRIO, had been presented to a distinguished gathering in OSLO of both eminent NGO representatives and Sri Lankans — a conference sponsored by PRIO—we regarded the document as public. The question of "prior consultation" with PRIO did not arise. Copyright is a matter best left to lawyers, and the judicial process.

We are saddened by the news that the LG excerpts caused "considerable consternation". To whom? Mr. Jayaweera? To the participants? Sri Lankan or foreign, or both? That such a small circulation "little magazine" should have such an electrifying effect is truly amazing. We wonder why it caused such "considerable consternation". Anyway such speculation is idle since we have now suspended publication of further extracts.

(Continued on page 11)

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## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT 1990

Thousands of people "disappeared", died in custody or were victims of extrajudicial executions carried on in the south by Sri Lankan security forces and "death squads" believed to be associated with them. The government failed to clarify the fate of 800 people who "disappeared" in previous years. Thousands were detained without trial under emergency regulations and there were widespread allegations of torture. The Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) reportedly carried out extrajudicial executions in the northeast and numerous reports alleged torture of prisoners by IPKF personnel and Tamil groups allied to them.

In January President Ranasingha Premadasa's interim government lifted the state of emergency which had been in force since May 1983 and released 1,519 people who had been detained without charge under emergency regulations. These regulations, including Regulation 55FF permitting police to dispose without postmortem or inquest, were reintroduced in June amid widespread violent strike action and unrest instigated by the armed opposition group *Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna* (JVP), People's Liberation Front.

Parliamentary elections held in February were boycotted by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the northeast. The JVP, which threatened to kill participants, boycotted elections in the south. The ruling United National Party (UNP) was returned to power after a campaign marked by political violence. Fourteen opposition candidates and several hundred other people, including members of the UNP, were killed. Most of the attacks in the south were attributed to the JVP and in the northeast to the LTTE. Rivalries between parties contesting the elections may also have resulted in some killings.

The JVP and the associated *Deshapremi Janatha Viyaparaya*, Patriotic People's Movement, continued a campaign of violence and intimidation and were widely believed responsible for thousands of murders. The victims included people perceived as "traitors" to the groups, prisoners, security forces personnel

and their families, members of the ruling UNP, senior public officials, broadcasters and left-wing opposition activists, including some Buddhist monks. Members of the two groups reinforced their calls to strike and to demonstrate against the government by threatening to murder those who refused to participate. They also destroyed government offices, post offices, tea plantations and other state property.

Rohana Wijeweera, the JVP leader, and his deputy, Upatissa Gamanayake, were reportedly killed in November in disputed circumstances. The government said that after Rohana Wijeweera's arrest he had taken security forces personnel to the JVP headquarters in Colombo and had been killed there in a shootout. Officials said Upatissa Gamanayake was shot dead soon afterwards while attempting to escape from custody. In addition, several other JVP leaders were reportedly killed.

The LTTE was also considered responsible for political murders. At least 38 people died in April in a bomb explosion attributed to the LTTE. Other victims included about 100 Sinhalese villagers killed in the first four months of the year, a Tamil parliamentary candidate, the Government Agent of Jaffna, and two leaders of the Tamil United Liberation Front.

In April President Premadasa offered an amnesty to Tamil militants and the JVP. The JVP did not respond but in June the LTTE announced a cessation of hostilities against the Sri Lankan Government. However, fighting

continued between the LTTE and the IPKF together with allied Tamil groups.

The Indian Government agreed in September to withdraw the IPKF by the end of the year, provided that arrangements had been made for the safety of the Tamil community in the northeast. Apparently in anticipation of the withdrawal, the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) and its allies abducted and detained thousands of young men and some women for training in a new Indian-backed defence force. Indian troops withdrew from Amparai District in October and the unofficial Tamil National Army (TNA), believed to have incorporated those abducted and trained, appeared in its place. By the end of the year an estimated 25,000 Indian troops remained in Jaffna and Trincomalee districts. As the Indian troops withdrew, heavy fighting was reported between the LTTE and the TNA, and between the LTTE and the armed Tamil groups allied with the Indian forces.

In October the government invited the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to Sri Lanka to trace missing people, visit places of detention and inform the parties to the conflict about the rules of war.

In the south extrajudicial executions were carried out by uniformed members of the security forces and by "death squads" believed to be associated with them. Many hundreds of people were killed, apparently because they were suspected of supporting or sympathizing with the JVP, but it was impossible to establish true total. The identity of many victims was not known because bodies were mutilated beyond recognition, burned in heaps on tyres or thrown in rivers. Some bodies were dumped long distances from the scene of execution. The relatives of missing people were often too frightened to pursue inquiries. However, some people witnessed their relatives being taken



into custody and later identified bodies. Some victims had been taken by uniformed police or army officers; others had been abducted by unknown armed men in civilian clothes, some of them travelling in unmarked vehicles. Security force spokespersons said many victims were JVP sympathizers or collaborators. Other people killed were from villages believed to be collectively sympathetic to the JVP.

In a new development, responsibility for many retaliatory killings following attacks by the JVP was claimed in the name of "vigilante" or paramilitary groups. The government claimed these groups operated independently and without official sanction. However, the security forces were widely believed to have been directly involved or to have acquiesced in these killings. Witnesses said some victims had been in security forces custody shortly before they were killed.

Reports of extrajudicial executions attributed to security and paramilitary forces increased significantly after emergency regulations were reintroduced in June. These regulations permitted security forces to dispose of bodies without postmortem or inquest. Reports of extra-legal killings increased again from August, when the JVP announced it would kill the families of personnel who did not resign from the security forces. Posters, some signed in the name of the Sri Lanka Army, then appeared in public places bearing threats that 10 or more relatives of JVP members would be killed for each killing of a security force member's relative.

Hundreds of demonstrators, many of them coerced into demonstrating by the JVP, were shot dead by security forces. In July hundreds of people, under pressure from the JVP, defied curfew regulations and demonstrated against the Indian military presence in Sri Lanka. About 150 peaceful demonstrators were reportedly shot

dead by police at several locations in the south. Hundreds more deaths are believed to have remained unrecorded.

Lawyers pursuing human rights cases were among those who were apparently extrajudicially executed. Charitha Lankapura and Kanchana Abhayapala had filed hundreds of *habeas corpus* applications with the courts on behalf of "disappeared" prisoners and others arrested in the south. The former was killed by unknown armed men in July and the latter in August. At least 20 other lawyers were reportedly threatened with death in attempts to prevent them from working on such cases. Several people who complained of or witnessed human rights violations by the security forces were also reportedly killed.

By July over 400 *habeas corpus* petitions had been filed on behalf of people who had allegedly "disappeared" or been illegally arrested in the south. Very few petitions were filed after Charitha Lankapura's death because lawyers feared reprisals for taking on such cases.

Information was received during the year about over 2,000 "disappearances" after arrests by security forces in the south. Most victims were young men, many from socially depressed areas, but included some Buddhist monks and students. Some people who reportedly "disappeared" were later released after being held in unacknowledged detention by the authorities. Other "disappeared" people were believed to have been killed, and the fate of many remained unknown.

The authorities arbitrarily arrested thousands of people on the basis of anonymous denunciations and suspected links with the JVP. Some detainees were released after short periods. Others were detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), which permits up to 18 months' detention without charge or trial, or under the emergency regulations (reintroduced in June) which permit indefinite detention without charge or trial. Detainees were commonly held in-

communicado. Many reportedly were tortured and died in custody. Relatives of suspects were also held as "hostages" in the absence of the wanted person. Many of the relatives were apparently beaten in custody and some were killed. The brother of an army deserter was reportedly arrested in Kandy district in place of his brother in July. Next day his body was found in a nearby reservoir.

The trial of three police officers accused of murdering Wijedasa Liyanarachchi in September 1988 (see *Amnesty International Report 1989*) were released on bail in January. The suspects included the Chief Minister's son and several law enforcement officers. Their trial had not started by the end of the year.

In April the Supreme Court awarded damages to several torture victims and people who had been illegally detained. A lawyer received death threats after her client was awarded record damages for torture. A few days after a victim of wrongful detention was awarded damages, he was reportedly abducted and "disappeared".

Several trials for violent political offences in the South began during the year. Five people were charged under the PTA and emergency regulations for a grenade attack on the parliament building in August 1987 (see *Amnesty International Report 1988*) and for other offences. Their trial which began in August, had not been completed by the end of the year. Four people suspected of murdering the UNP Chairman in December 1987 (see *Amnesty International Report 1988*) were put on trial in May. One of the defendants was shot dead in hospital by unidentified armed men in September — he had been admitted after suffering heart trouble in jail. He said he had been tortured during interrogation.

In the northeast hundreds of people were arrested by the IPKF and screened for links with the LTTE. Members of the EPRLF and allied Tamil

groups aided the IPKF in identifying suspects. Relatives of LTTE suspects were also reportedly detained. The Indian authorities did not disclose whether these detainees were held under Sri Lankan or Indian legislation. There were no reports that detainees had been charged or tried. In August the Indian authorities reportedly said 5,489 prisoners were in IPKF custody. Members of the EPRLF and other Tamil groups also regularly arrested and detained LTTE suspects, according to reports, but no information was available on how many were detained.

Both the IPKF and groups allied with them reportedly tortured prisoners. Indian troops regularly beat prisoners and subjected them to electric shocks. Dozens of prisoners were reportedly killed in custody. There were dozens of cases in which arrests by the IPKF or EPRLF were witnessed and after the authorities said the detainees had been released, their bodies were found with gunshot wounds.

Several reprisal attacks by the IPKF after ambushes by the LTTE were reported. Up to 46 people were extrajudicially executed at Valvettiturai in August after the LTTE had ambushed an IPKF patrol there and killed six Indian soldiers. Among the reported victims was a one-year-old child.

Many extrajudicial executions in the northeast were reportedly committed by the EPRLF and their allies, acting with the backing or acquiescence of the IPKF. The EPRLF was allegedly responsible for scores of extrajudicial executions. Ahilan Thiruchelvam, the son of the editor of a Jaffna-based newspaper, was detained in May by armed men seeking his father. The son's body was found soon after with gunshot wounds.

Information was received during the year that at least two of six Tamil asylumseekers who were forcibly returned to Sri Lanka from the United Kingdom in February 1988 had been tortured after their return.

One of the victims was reportedly tortured by the IPKF in Jaffna, and the other by police in Colombo.

In January Amnesty International welcomed the lifting of the state of emergency and the release of prisoners detained under emergency regulations. It urged the government to repeal indemnity legislation passed in December 1988 (see *Amnesty International Report 1989*). The organization proposed a visit to Sri Lanka by an Amnesty International delegation to discuss human rights issues with the authorities.

Throughout the year Amnesty International urged the government to adopt effective safeguards to protect detainees from torture, death in custody and "disappearance". It recommended that the PTA and the re-introduced emergency regulations be amended to protect human rights. The organization expressed particular concern about increased reports of extrajudicial executions attributed to the security forces and to "death squads" apparently working with them. It urged the government to withdraw Emergency Regulation 55FF, to institute an independent commission of inquiry into extrajudicial executions and to clarify the fate of the "disappeared". Amnesty International also requested effective protection for people who had received death threats.

The government responded in July that Amnesty International's proposed visit should be "postponed for the time being". In August the Minister of Foreign Affairs informed Amnesty International that the "Sri Lanka Government has not repeat has not given orders to execute anybody", and that "subversives" had been killed by the security forces during exchanges of fire in combat.

Amnesty International urged the Indian Government to investigate reports of torture, deaths in custody and extrajudicial executions committed by the IPKF and allied Tamil groups in the northeast. The organi-

zation also called for safeguards to prevent such human rights violations. It appealed to the Northeastern Provincial Council to halt the abduction and forcible detention of "recruits" to an irregular security force and to release people held for training against their will. The council responded to Amnesty International that the recruitment was voluntary.

In May Amnesty International published a report, *Sri Lanka: Continuing Human Rights Violations*, which detailed its concerns in both southern and north-eastern Sri Lanka. In December it published *Sri Lanka: Reports of Extrajudicial Executions*.

## Kumar...

(Continued from page 7)

Dr. K. says that the passages already published have seen "several amendments". How were we to know? Or that the report was "incomplete"? Nobody informed us. On the first PRIO response in this regard, we acted instantly, a token of our respect and regard for PRIO.

"Proper balance" "alternate views" etc. are quite plainly problems for Dr. K., as Director, organiser, editor or as individual.

As a Sri Lankan, Dr. K., who seems to be puzzled (upset?) by the way in which this report "somehow" came into (our) possession, will be relieved to hear that it came somehow via the not always super-efficient General Post office.

It is precisely because we have appreciated PRIO's efforts to help resolve the Sri Lankan conflict that we have always given a prominent place to PRIO reports.... although one such report, a bibliography, earned the L. G. a rude remark from a Sri Lankan Ambassador, who I am glad to add is now a suitably chastened L.G. reader.

As an expert in conflict-resolution we are certain Dr. K. will solve his problems. Somehow.



# J.V.P. : Politics of the Underground

Bruce Matthews

## Introduction

Recently in Sri Lanka the activities of the Sinhalese political party and terror organization, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (People's Liberation Front) and its three satellites, have become an equal if not more pressing challenge to the destiny of the country than the unresolved issues of ethnic discord between the majority Sinhalese and the minority Ceylon Tamils. The party was outlawed in 1983 (blamed for the infamous race riots of that year). Despite the fact that this proscription has been lifted in the interim, the JVP has remained largely clandestine and quiescent, only to emerge suddenly and unexpectedly in 1988 as a strong, committed force. It is a testimony to their remarkable revival that for five weeks prior to the presidential election of 19 December 1988, it was uncertain whether the JVP might not actually capture state power. They did not succeed, but at the very least, the JVP set the political agenda for the island during the tumultuous months surrounding the presidential election and, as importantly, the parliamentary (15 February 1989) elections. They are still as serious a threat to the stability of the state as were the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam prior to the Indo-Lankan Accord of 1987. Frankly said, the JVP continue to have the potential to paralyse government economic initiatives and social policies, either by force of arms or by manipulating political discontent and rancorous opposition parties to their advantage. No one knows for sure how large the JVP is because its size fluctuates according to its needs. Its nucleus may consist of only a few hundred men and women. Inspired and well-trained, they are superbly organized by its founder and

leader Rohana Wijeweera. They are a cunning and merciless terror group committed to a doctrine unmodified since they first set down their Che Guevarist revolutionary programme two decades ago. Anarchic rather than classically Marxist, nihilistic and as violently anti-Indian as they are anti-government, they appeal to a broad spectrum of young Sinhalese who provide an endless stream of initiates. These devotees generally serve the JVP in 'cells', and perform random acts of terror, unknowing of the chain of command or of the membership at large.

This paper seeks to analyse this situation from three perspectives. First, it reviews those recent events in Sri Lanka that have made it possible for the JVP to return to a position of influence after years of low visibility. Second, the paper describes the present JVP ideology and constituency. Third, it replies to the question of how serious a threat the JVP is to society and state, and what strategies are involved in an attempt to check or defeat that.

## PEACE ACCORD

The JVP was successful in regaining the offensive at the time of the signing of the July 1987 Indo-Lankan Accord. They and others interpreted the Accord as a affront to 'nationalism' and to 'patriotism'. The Accord provided an unexpectedly opportune recovery of strength for the JVP. Using it as a symbol of Sinhalese humiliation the JVP recognised its capacity to mobilise ethnic fears prejudices and dark jealousies. These are the forces in the past that had been harnessed and moulded by the JVP and other Sinhala chauvinist groups to see their purposes. The Accord was indeed timely for an organization that was all the while waiting for the appropriate catalyst to thrust it back into mainstream of political life.

In addition, the exhausted state of the United National Party's 'Long Parliament', and the impending chaos of an election year, fell to the JVP's advantage. The UNP did not have a record with regard to elections. Its referendum in 1982 (instead of a parliamentary election? was a warning enough to create suspicion in the public mind about UNP intentions for the presidential and parliamentary elections of 1988-89. It was widely rumoured that President J.R. Jayawardene would attempt once again to run for office, or to find an excuse for not holding the elections at all. Thus the months of uncertainty leading up to the presidential polls in December were an ideal context for the JVP.

Rohana Wijeweera, still in his mid-forties, cleverly manoeuvred his party to have full advantage of anti-government sentiment and of the vacuum created by the lack of a strong political alternative to the UNP. This was accomplished in several ways. For example, JVP hartals and disruptions to public life as symbols of protest were potent challengers to government authority. So widespread and paralyzing was the hartal of 10 November 1988, for instance, that it is questionable whether the government had lost control of the situation altogether. In the long run, these incidents were costly to the JVP because it was alleged that they were the consequence of public submission to terrorism, and not a genuine response to JVP ideology. In the short run, however, such actions lowered public morale, exasperated and confused the government, and caused outbreaks of panic that closed down the economic, educational and administrative infrastructure of the whole country. They proved fertile conditions for a political convulsion, not a successful series of elections.

(To be continued)

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# Kuwait: diary of an occupation

**VICTOR MALLET** flew into Kuwait just as Iraqi tanks were rolling across the border to invade the oil-rich Gulf emirate. For 11 days in Kuwait City, during most of which communications to the outside world were shut down, he was the only British journalist watching the rape of a country. Here is his eye-witness account

## Thursday August 2

Iraq invades Kuwait before dawn, taking the population completely by surprise despite the collapse of negotiations between the two countries in Jeddah the day before. People are still commuting to work in the city centre hours after Iraqi forces had crossed the border and taken the capital. I am among thousands of civilians caught in the fighting and I am kept under guard out in the open by Iraqi soldiers before being released. At first it seems that Kuwaiti troops have only fought back in the city centre, particularly at the royal palaces of the ousted Al-Sabah family, but the burned-out tanks and armoured cars I saw later in Jahra area to the west show that there were battles outside the capital as well.

Kuwaitis are shocked and can hardly believe that their country has been overrun. Some of them assume that President Saddam Hussein of Iraq is simply making a show of force to extort money from Kuwait. Thousands of foreign workers from the Arab world, Asia and the West are also caught unawares and trapped in Kuwait. "It's chaos," said one British diplomat during the morning fighting. "We don't know what's happening. We're alarmingly near to it here. The embassy is near the Emir's palace."

Later in the day a radio broadcast on an unfamiliar wavelength claims that the free provisional government has over-

thrown Sheikh Jaber, the Emir, and invited in the Iraqis. No one believes it, and suspicions are later confirmed by Iraq's annexation of Kuwait. Meanwhile the Kuwaiti television airwaves are still in the hands of the old regime, and the television broadcasts an appeal for resistance by Sheikh Saad, the Crown Prince. "They have come to kill the sons of Kuwait and its women," he says. "Our patriotic army is repelling the aggression. Kuwaitis should stand behind them." In fact the army has all but fled and the television is apparently broadcasting from a secret location, although isolated pockets of resistance will continue to trouble the Iraqis for several days to come.

Senior members of the ruling family have escaped to Saudi Arabia.

## Friday August 3

Iraqi troops consolidate their hold on the country but resistance continues and there is further fighting both at the Emir's Dasman Palace and at the military barracks near Shuwaikh. Near the conference centre for the Gulf Co-operation Council we see three shot-up Iraqi pickups which have evidently just been ambushed. Four corpses lie by the roadside. The Iraqis appear to have chosen the Sheraton Hotel as their headquarters and they position tanks along the seafront next to Arabian Gulf Street. Residential areas are largely left alone.

Baghdad Radio announces that the new government, declaring the Al-Sabah to be corrupt, has confiscated all their wealth, but there is still no indication as to who is in the new leadership. They later turn out to be Iraqis. Rumours that former Kuwaiti opposition figures such as Dr Ahmed Khatib might be involved are vigorously denied. Resistance in the barracks seems to have been crushed by the evening. Throughout Kuwait the number of dead and injured is estimated at about 800, although there are no accurate figures available.

Some shops, including the Sultan Centre supermarket, are open by the afternoon and only milk and bread are in short supply. Queues form at petrol stations and *muezzin* call the faithful to Friday prayers from the mosque minarets. Kuwaitis are still stunned by the Iraqi attack. "They cannot just do this, even if they oppose the Kuwaiti Government," says one civil servant. "A country has its dignity." Like many Kuwaitis, he says that people want to run away to Saudi Arabia if they can. International telecommunications are cut in the evening, although telex lines to Saudi Arabia function intermittently until Saturday. Local telephone lines have worked throughout the crisis although, after a few days, numbers beginning with the digits 24 — including several ministries and the British and US embassies — stopped working.

## Saturday August 4

The fiasco of the Iraqi-imposed government becomes more pronounced. Kuwaitis scoff at the fact that their supposed new leaders have not shown their faces and that the announcers of the new Iraqi-controlled TV station speak in Iraqi accents and do not know how to wear the *ghutra* — the traditional Ku-

waiti headdress. Even Kuwaitis with grievances against the royal family are now completely alienated by Iraq's crude propaganda. "I think this is nonsense," one Kuwaiti newspaper publisher. "I have absolutely no idea what's going on. There are lots of rumours."

The first reports of looting — latter to be confirmed — surface in Kuwait. Residents say the gold souk has been ransacked, although it is not clear who did it. Civilians mount a resistance campaign in the Keifan district of the capital. The Iraqis meanwhile have opened prison gates, apparently taking away a group of Kuwaiti Shia Moslems convicted of bombing western embassies.

A handful of Britons also freed approach their embassy for passports. For the first time there is an eye-witness report of westerners being driven away in buses by the Iraqis. Frenzied shoppers continue to empty the shelves of the Sultan Centre. Tinned foods — except for quails' eggs — are running out, but cherries from the US and cabbages from Holland are still available. I am astonished when the cashier accepts my credit card and gives me tickets for a luck draw. Such is the unreality of war. The prize for draw, a car, was later stolen.

In the afternoon a helicopter circles around the Holiday Inn Hotel when guests with nothing to do and nowhere to go sunbathe by the pool. Even after the fighting began the hotel's telex machine cheerfully and automatically answers back to desperate callers: "Welcome to a new age of elegance."

### Sunday August 5

Resistance continues. I had some colleagues have to stop our car and dive for cover as gunfire is exchanged across the main road. From where we lie in the dust it seems that resistance forces are attacking a pas-

sing Iraqi convoy. Such ambushes seem to be common. Just beyond the shooting an Iraqi soldier flags us down and asks over-optimistically for whisky.

Civilian resistance also begins to grow and in one part of the town 150 women demonstrate against the occupation. Kuwaitis see Iraqi civilians moving into Kuwait following Baghdad's announcement that 100,000 people in southern Iraq have volunteered for a popular army. They say Iraqis are knocking on doors and asking for *dishdashas*, the traditional male robe worn in the Gulf. Anti-Iraq graffiti is now widespread. Kuwaiti flags and pictures of Sheiks Jaber and Saad are plastered over road signs and hung from bridges. The Holiday Inn, however, decides that discretion is the better part of valour and finally takes down the pictures of the two sheikhs in the lobby.

Tanks are seen entering Keifan to crush the resistance there. From Rumathiya a resistance member calls me and says: "It's still going on. One of my cousins is injured. We've received a message from the Emir saying that he is getting ready to come back with tanks and helicopters to help us. I have to go now. There is shooting outside." Two Kuwaiti Air Force aircraft which escaped during the invasion are said to have bombed an airfield or a police station in the Jehra area although details are unclear. One of the many wild rumours circulating has it that aircraft bombed Baghdad and injured Saddam.

### Monday August 6

Shortly after midnight we see a televised appeal to the nation from Sheikh Jaber on satellite television but he reads from his notes and does not look charismatic. Concern among foreigners about their fate increases following veiled threats from the Iraqis. Halfway through breakfast I and other hotel guests are ordered to our rooms by

the management amid fears we will be rounded up and taken to Baghdad, as others have been.

Confusion reigns. The crews of British and Moroccan passenger aircraft trapped in Kuwait are told to take the planes to Baghdad empty. But they never take off. Embassies — sometimes without telephones — are struggling to find out how many of their citizens are in the country during the summer holidays. The system of district wardens used by some embassies seems to be chaotic. "We are feeding ourselves mostly with 'rumours,'" says one Soviet diplomat dealing with an estimated 1,000 nationals. "We must be together now." Some embassies are having problems with their short-wave transmitters which they use to keep in contact with their capitals. Ragged Iraqi civilians are said to be moving into some residential areas but not all accounts can be confirmed. The Iraqi authorities urge people to go to work. No one seems to take any notice but essential services are still functioning. A 7 pm to 7 am curfew has been declared but many Kuwaitis ignore it.

### Tuesday August 7

Refugees continue to head for the border with Saudi Arabia but it is closed. We encounter a washing machine which has fallen off a vehicle in the middle lane of the highway to al-Salmy in the west. We are turned back by an Iraqi roadblock.

More looting is reported in the city centre and there are reports that ration cards are being issued in some areas. The days are becoming quieter but resistance fighters continue to snipe at the Iraqis by night. Soldiers at roadblocks are friendly, even to British citizens, after the British Government has declared support for the US and Saudi Arabia in their confrontation with Saddam. At least one reported rape is confirmed by diplomats.



A resistance leaflet appears calling Saddam "The Hitler of the Gulf." There is feverish speculation among hotel guests about the future, and the mood is not helped by opinion polls on US satellite television suggesting that the US should take military action against Iraq.

### Wednesday August 8

During the night Kuwaitis have assembled on rooftops and shouted defiance at the Iraqis together with cries of "God is Great!" They are encouraged by the belief that their demonstration will be seen by American spy satellites. Resistance members have started to remove street signs to confuse the occupying forces.

I meet a resistance leader, a younger member of the Al Sabah family, who says: "We have a political and military undercover structure now. We are in contact with our leadership outside." He says the Iraqi soldiers have been fed lies about a supposed Israeli attack on Kuwait which they have come to beat back. The 30-year-old resistance leader, part of an amateurish but courageous network of opponents of Saddam, says: "My place is in Kuwait. Saddam Hussein will leave whether by force or voluntarily. It may be today, tomorrow or in a month's time, but he will leave. There is no man, child or woman who will help him."

The resistance is urging people not to report to work and to ignore the Iraqi-controlled media. "We are not taking too many prisoners," says the resistance leader I meet.

### Thursday August 9

The Iraqis force shopkeepers to accept that one Iraqi dinar offered by a soldier is equivalent to one Kuwaiti dinar, although before the invasion one Kuwaiti dinar was worth 10 Iraqi dinars on the free market.

The Iraqis are buying everything from cans of Pepsi to tea cups to take home to Iraq. Soldiers are seen handing out melons and bottles of cooking gas to hundreds of poorer residents of the city.

The Iraqi army is beginning to dig in to defensive positions in Kuwait. The soldiers are filling sandbags or sitting under beach umbrellas and makeshift shelters in the heat of the day at their seaside bivouacs. Most of Kuwait's Egyptian population has come down firmly on the side of the west and the former Kuwaiti regime, but Palestinians are divided. Many of them resented the arrogance of Kuwaitis and their refusal to grant citizenship to Palestinians who had lived in the country all their lives. Palestinians also see Saddam as a strong leader who stands up for their rights against Israel and the rest of the world.

In the Mishrif area 300 middle-class women stage a further demonstration against the occupation. A car bomb is said to have exploded during the day, apparently driven by a man on a suicide mission whose female relative was killed by Iraqi gunfire during a previous protest.

### Friday August 10

Iraq has ordered embassies to move to Baghdad, further raising fears among foreigners about their protection. Embassies have been given different dates by which they must leave, some on August 14, others on the 24th. Travellers see large missiles — possibly Scud-Bs or upgraded Scuds — on the road to the south. Some residents have also seen face masks and mobile equipment which appears to be for decontamination after a chemical attack.

Foreigners are increasingly afraid of the possibility of chemical war although the immediate horizon is clouded by the possibility that they may be

used as hostages by Saddam. The Iraqis tried to publish a newspaper at the old premises of Al-Qabas, but I have not seen a copy. They are also trying to reopen the banks and to get the administration working again but it seems that only a few expatriates hoping for their end of services bonuses have shown up for work.

Conditions among the poorer communities of foreigners worsen. Hundreds of Filipinos with little money to buy food are living in insanitary conditions at the Filipino embassy.

### Saturday August 11

Women demonstrate again outside the Rumasiya Mosque. Four resistance fighters are said to have been killed in an attack upon Iraqi positions. Iraqi soldiers are becoming increasingly nervous and no longer sit relaxed by the roadside or in their vehicles.

### Sunday August 12

A Briton is reported to have been shot while trying to escape over the Saudi border. There are increasing reports of desertions and mutiny among the Iraqi troops although at least some of it is likely to be wishful thinking.

Most Iraqi tanks and heavy equipment has now left the city centre and seems to be concentrated at Jahra which gives easy access in all directions. A diplomat sees a group of Iraqi civilians being bussed in for a pro-Iraqi demonstration which will later be shown on Iraqi television. The city is looking increasingly shabby, even if the damage from the fighting is not extensive. Damaged vehicles and garbage litter the once immaculate streets.

### Monday August 13

I escape with friends but many foreigners remain against their will.



# Kuwait dithered as Iraq prepared to pounce

Victor Mallet

The Kuwait Government was fully aware of a military threat from Iraq two weeks before the attack on August 2, but its ministers apparently failed to anticipate a full-scale invasion or take the necessary military precautions.

Notes taken by a participant in a crucial cabinet meeting on July 18 — and seen by the Financial Times — give a fascinating insight into Kuwait's confusion about Iraqi motives and intentions.

They show that Kuwait had recently refused Iraqi demands for up to \$10bn (£5.26bn) in aid, had offered a paltry \$500m over three years instead, and had turned down Iraqi demands that billions of dollars of Kuwaiti loans during the Gulf War be written off.

The cabinet met on July 18 to formulate a response to an Iraqi memorandum which had demanded compensation for \$2.4bn of oil 'stolen' from the Rumaila oil field on the Kuwait-Iraq border.

Iraq had suddenly intensified pressure on its neighbour earlier that week, prompting King Fahd, the Saudi leader, to offer mediation between Kuwait and Iraq. Washington had meanwhile offered the first guarded indications that it would support its Gulf allies against possible Iraqi aggression.

Many assumed that Iraq was simply stepping up pressure on Kuwait to ensure that the Opec meeting, which ended in Geneva on July 27, raised the reference price for oil and enforced production quotas previously flouted by Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

The first speaker recorded in the notes is Sheikh Ali Khalifa al-Sabah, the hard-working and energetic Finance Minister and former Oil Minister. He suggested that Iraq was trying to

salvage its economy and blame the Gulf states for Iraqi economic failures. "Iraq's tone will not change, even after Geneva. Iraq is going to continue escalating the level of confrontation," he predicted.

He proposed that a solution should be sought through the Gulf Co-Operation Council, which embraces Kuwait, the UAE, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, but excludes Iraq.

Mr. Badr al-Yacoub, the Minister of State for the National Assembly, intervened to say that Iraq's objective was to extort money.

Sheikh Salem al-Sabah, the interior Minister, then asked whether other Arab states had supported Iraqi claims against Kuwait. He was the first to suggest that Iraq may have profited from the political turmoil in Kuwait which preceded the elections to the interim national assembly on June 10. (Kuwait pro-democracy activists had been demonstrating for restoration of the parliament suspended by Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad al-Sabah, the Emir, in 1986, but the Emir, had only approved the interim assembly.)

Sheikh Nawaf al-Sabah, the Defence Minister, spoke next to deny the Iraqi accusations that Kuwait had violated the countries' disputed common border. It was Iraq, not Kuwait, he said, which had pushed its military installations and farm land across the frontier.

Mr. Abdul-Rahman al-Awadi, the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, returned to the view that Iraq was attempting to extort money. "We must keep cool," he said. But he added "the Iraqis are going too far," and that Kuwait would need to move very quickly to find a political solution to the crisis. Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, the Foreign Minister who had been accused by Iraq of being

a US agent at the war of words between the countries escalated, said the issue was an economic one. Nevertheless, the cabinet notes make clear that he recognised the military danger.

"There is a possibility of Iraqi aggression," he says, adding that the border issue was explosive. "We have to start intensive diplomatic contacts with GCC countries."

Sheikh Sabah suggested asking Abdullah Bishara, the head of the GCC, to contact "our brothers in the GCC" and also proposes sounding out Egypt and Jordan. He correctly predicted that Libya and Algeria might lean towards Iraq.

But Mr. Dhari al-Othman, Minister of Justice, was equally concerned that Iraq, freed from conflict with Iran by the 1988 cease-fire, would try to bypass Arab mediation in its claims against Kuwait.

"The Iraqi memorandum is just the beginning. God knows how far they will go," he said. He rightly concluded that the oil price issue raised by Iraq is a pretext for something else. Iraq and Kuwait were like a wolf and the lamb, he said.

Mr. Habib Hayat, Communications Minister, then made reference to a map from a French company showing that Iraq was planning to establish some sort of base on the border. Mr. Abdul-Wahab al-Fawzan, Health Minister, urged quick action by Kuwait in response to the crisis.

Mr. Fahd al-Hisawy, Minister of State for Municipal Affairs, echoed the view of other ministers that Iraq may act before it talks and that Kuwait must be prepared for a military threat. "This is just the beginning," he said.

Mr. Salman al-Mutawa, Minister of Planning, was one of the

few ministers at the meeting who appeared to have misjudged the gravity of the situation. He said the Iraqi memorandum was weak and easily answered.

But Seikh Saad al-Abdullah al-Sabah, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister who fled to Saudi Arabia, took the floor and raised the prospect of an attack. "The Iraqis could take military measures," he said, but he predicted a limited operation to seize land in the border areas of Ritga and Qasr. He urged the Ministries of Defence and the Interior to be on the alert.

Kuwait did proceed after the meeting to cancel military leave and raised the state of alertness of its, in the end, ineffectual forces.

Sheikh Saad then launched into an analysis of the history of the border issue since 1963. Iraq, he said, was demanding Bubiyan Island, which lies off Kuwait's northern shore, and access to it by a bridge or causeway. Baghdad was also claiming that the smaller Warbah Island was Iraqi territory.

Iraq, it seems, wanted to lease land (presumably Bubiyan) for its naval forces, but this would have to be agreed by the GCC. The possibility of Kuwait electricity supplies to Iraq and the provision of port facilities was also raised.

At this point, the cabinet discussed Iraq's war debts to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. (Little information about the loans has been released, although they have been estimated at about \$35bn.) The notes are not clear about the distinction between cash loans and the proceeds of oil sales from the Kuwait-Saudi neutral zones, but they show that Kuwait gave aid of at least \$13.5bn to Iraq, including three tranches of \$2bn each. Saudi Arabia is said to have given \$9bn (but this may be its cash contribution only.)

At this point, one of the participants said that Kuwait should keep the loans on its books, in spite of Iraq's insistence that they be written off. Responding to the Iraqi allegations that Kuwait had stolen oil from the Rumaila field, one

cabinet member said that Kuwait had been producing 30,000 barrels a day from the field, compared to Iraq's 400,000 b/d.

Sheikh Sabah then called for an urgent session of the National Assembly, for a GCC meeting in Kuwait, for moves to get the Arab League to intervene, and for preparation of the Kuwaiti memorandum, which appeared on July 19.

This week, Sheikh Sabah said in an interview in the al-Mussawwar magazine in Egypt, that Iraq's war debt to Kuwait lay between \$14bn and \$15bn. He also said Kuwait had finally agreed at the August 1 mediation talks in Jeddah to write off the debt and lease Warbah Island to Iraq as an oil outlet for the Rumaila field.

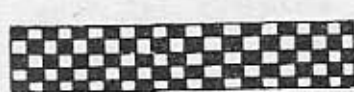
"Iraq asked us to drop the debt and we did not object," he said. "Iraq asked for Bubiyan Island. We agreed to give them Warbah Island instead."

The day after Kuwait made these concessions Iraqi forces swept across the border and began the conquest of Kuwait.

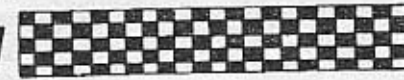
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# On Throwing Stones from Glass Houses

S. Pathiravitana

I missed the urbanity and customary spit and polish in Reggie Siriwardene's review (LG May 1) of James Manor's *The Expedient Utopian: Bandaranaike and Ceylon*. In fact, there was more spit than polish, hence, this intervention. Had he refrained from offering his personal experience, more of this in a while, as one more witness to what Manor is saying, this note may not have been necessary. There is enough stuff in Manor's book to both damn or praise Bandaranaike, if that is the purpose. But, that, as Manor makes it perfectly clear, is not his purpose.

"My purpose is neither to debunk nor to deify — there has been quite enough of both," says Manor tersely. (p.9). A pity Mr. Siriwardene missed this. Though Manor shows Bandaranaike, as he says with warts and all, his point is that he is a complex man, and complex people, as fighters for human rights should know, cannot be summed up easily in a single sentence, something that Manor himself tends to forget.

As far as Manor is concerned Bandaranaike is yet another leader "of that generation of Asian and African politicians who guided their nations through the transition from imperial rule to independence," among whom, to recall at random, were Nehru, Nasser, Nkrumah and Nyerere.

"They all," Manor says, "tended to indulge in degrees of hypocrisy, naivete and egotism." And he does not take them to task for that either because he says "this was understandable. It was less the result of venality on their part than a logical outgrowth of the culture of anti-colonial politics on which they had battered for so long.

*(The writer, a leading journalist, was Editor of the DAILY NEWS)*

It would, therefore, be unfair to judge them too harshly for these failings — though failings they remain," (pp. 4 & 5). I hope Mr. Siriwardene is listening.

And now to come to Mr. Siriwardene's own 'personal experiences'. I don't want to deprive him of the version of Bandaranaike he holds, after all, each of us has his or her notion of the man and his deeds, for haven't all of us seen Rashomon? So, he should not be too displeased if I reject his part first-hand and part-third-hand 'personal experiences', not because they are tosh, but because they are as they say in the halls of justice, weak evidence.

Anyway, let us take what he says he saw in the House of Representatives — Banda telling off Robert. It could very well have taken place, except that what took place is capable of different interpretations — since some of us have the habit of seeing what we want to see and others hearing what they want to hear.

Robert, not being the best of orators in English, could indeed have infuriated SWRD, the eloquent orator in English that he was, and would have been told off to use a more familiar language.

At this point, Mr. Bandaranaike is reported to have said, "Why don't you speak a language you understand? Speak Sinhalese." Mr. Siriwardene who, as they say, was close to the scene of the murder, says, "His tones (sic) left no doubt that this was a language for the lower orders." Now, that is pure Siriwardene.

As additional proof of what he is saying, Mr. S. says those remarks were removed from Hansard. If that is so, then it speaks for the good sense of

SWRD, the gentleman that he was, whose fault as Manor goes to great lengths to depict was trying to appease too many people who, in my opinion, were misconstruing what he said and did.

Proof of what I am saying about how in these instances observers are influenced by their observations could be judged from what James Manor is saying about the veracity of another Lankan journalist — Kalasuri Tarzie Vittachi.

Vittachi, who is looked upon as somewhat of an expert on Sinhala-Tamil relations after his Emergency '58, appears to be disclosing his weakness for exaggeration; exaggeration is, of course, a form of *Alankara* admired in the Indian theory of aesthetics.

For the section of the Ethnic troubles in Bandaranaike's time Manor has dipped considerably into Emergency '58 and has discovered that, in many areas, the statements in the book are unsupported by evidence. Let Manor do the speaking:

Bandaranaike stands accused of several misdeeds in the fortnight after the declaration of the state of emergency. It is time that these claims were reassessed. Robert Kearney writes that after the declaration, 'Bandaranaike virtually abdicated to the Governor-General to deal with' the crisis. Essentially the same point is made in a sarcastic, polemical manner by Tarzie Vittachi and, with far greater care, by A. Jeyaratnam Wilson. Vittachi suggests that the outbreak of rioting left Bandaranaike paralysed and frightened, that he turned the country over to the Governor-General for the duration of the troubles and retired to the Orient Club to play billiards.

... Much of this is unfair to Bandaranaike. Witnesses who saw him receive the first reports that serious violence had spread beyond the two original flashpoints have said that he was deeply shaken for a moment, but he quickly recovered his composure and never lost it thereafter. Vittachi's implication that he was incapacitated by the news is false (pp. 295 - 296.)

Vittachi's claim that the Governor-General and others deliberately exaggerated disruptions in Tamil areas at this time (Vittachi's Emergency '58 pp. 72 - 75) finds no support in numerous interviews with journalists, military commanders and politicians of various linguistic and party backgrounds. (Footnote 88 p. 291)

On the next night (the 23rd), near Eravur, another train was derailed, resulting in three deaths. The train was then attacked and most of the injured were Sinhalese. Tarzie Vittachi implies without supporting evidence that this attack was of a piece with the previous incident and that it was the work of Sinhalese. But given the Tamil predominance in this area, and the violent doings of the Tamils which welled up there at this time, it seems far more likely that it was the work of Tamils reacting to the news of the violence at Polonnaruwa (p. 288).

Tarzie Vittachi's claim in Emergency '58 (London, 1958) that provisions for the reasonable use of Tamil were left out of the Sinhala Version of Bandaranaike's election Manifesto is false. See Mahajana Eksath Peramuna, Prakashanaya (Colombo, 1956), p.2. Footnote 79 p. 233)

That should be enough to show how people, even journalists, at the best of times hear what they want to hear and see what they want to see, a phenomenon in view of which we may have to reverse the famous apothegm which journa-

lists wear like a badge of their tribe into 'Facts are free, comment is sacred'.

It has been customary on the part of most of these witnesses to lay all the blame for the country's ethnic troubles at the feet of SWRD. Is there nobody else guilty? Manor is also inclined to think that SWRD's "naivete", his attempts to "manipulate parochial sentiments", his "kid gloves" response to dangerous provocation, contributed quite a bit to the debacle.

But, he has also this to say about the others who indirectly aided and abetted him in that process, among whom are our dear old friends the Marxists, both Trotskyists and Stalinists who do not come out quite clean:

And yet to pillory Bandaranaike alone is to mislead. The leaders of every (Manor's emphasis) major party — with the possible exception of the Federalists — made substantial contributions to this mournful episode. The well-nigh moronic mishandling of Sinhalese grievances by Sir John Kotelawala and his colleagues in the old UNP government had bequeathed to Bandaranaike an alarming situation. Once in opposition, UNP leaders ran a scurrilous campaign in their Sinhalese newspaper and elsewhere in order to woo the bigots from Bandaranaike's camp. Responsibility is also shared by the leaders of the two left opposition parties: the Communists and N.M. Perera's version of the LSSP. They scrupulously refrained from communalist actions but, in April and May 1958, they had cynically staged strikes while communal tensions ran high. They called the men out without consulting them, suppressed many of the workers' grievances, despite the fact that the strike caused severe distress among strikers who feared dismissal; and then called the strikes off without consulting the men and without gaining any

significant concessions. This produced bitter frustration among the strikers which in many cases found an outlet when the rioting began. (pp. 294-295)

Reading James Manor may not help to remove the monumental prejudices help by a greater part of the English educated elite in this country against Bandaranaike, but at least it may help the percipient reader to realise that Bandaranaike had only been dragged into a problem which had already been created for him not by some ignorant yakkos talking the vernacular, but by well-mannered, highly placed, cultivated gentlemen whose language of intercourse, whatever community they came from, was English. The same English that is being touted today by Minister Athulathmudali and others as a panacea for our ethnic troubles. How simple, if it could be done like that.

What the learned and polished gentlemen who entered politics before Bandaranaike, the James Pierieses, the Ponnambalam Ramanathans (Manor does not delve that far too closely) were unable to agree among themselves, despite their great proficiency in the English language, was about conceding a Tamil request to carve out a separate seat (separation was in the air even then) for the Tamils in the Western Province.

No doubt minority communities everywhere tend to show the chip on their shoulder. But unlike the rest of the minorities in this happy Island, the Tamil leaders are also troubled by certain notions they have about themselves. For instance, Jaffna is the land where the purest Tamil is spoken. It is superior to the Tamil spoken in Batticaloa or Trinco. It is even superior to the Tamil spoken in the original home where it has come to be 'adulterated', it is claimed. And as for the Tamils in Jaffna, they are the creme de la creme of Tamils everywhere.

(Continued on page 27)



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# Some policy conflicts

Mick Moore

## III. Economic Liberalization

The SLFP-Marxist United Front coalition which governed Sri Lanka between 1970 and 1977 initially exhibited greater ideological coherence and sense of purpose than any previous such alliance. It also dominated Parliament more completely and was forcefully reminded that there was a constituency for thorough radicalism by the 1971 Insurgency. Its policies took Sri Lanka considerably further than it had previously ventured towards a state-controlled economy and a quasi-autarkic economic strategy. As a result of nationalizations, the extension of economic controls and the expansion of the public corporate sector, the state came to dominate international trade and payments, the transport, plantation, financial and industrial manufacturing sectors, and to play a major role in domestic trade. At all levels opportunities for commercial profit were seen to depend on good political connections. This was not a happy time for most owners of capital, especially the more established formal sector enterprises. Bad weather and serious reverses in the terms of trade in 1973-75 added to the gloom. Foreign capital was moving out wherever possible and neither the major aid donors nor the international financial institutions were enamoured of the Non-Aligned foreign policies or the 'socialist' economic policies of Mrs Bandaranaike's government. 'Queues', 'shortages' and 'controls' were ready made themes for the UNP's campaign in the general election of July 1977. The UNP took over eighty percent of the Parliamentary seats, reducing the SLFP to a handful of MPs and excluding the Marxists entirely for the first time since the introduction of universal suffrage.

The programme of economic liberalization initiated in 1977 has more than undone the shift towards economic statism effected by the previous government. The programme is comparable in scope to that introduced in the UK since 1979 by successive Thatcher governments, albeit with significant differences in emphasis. In Sri Lanka as in the UK, the programme developed over time, becoming more extensive and radical than its proponents initially envisaged. Indeed, it is unlikely that in 1977 any senior figure in the UNP had any clear conception of the range and scope of liberalization measures that were to emerge from the party's commitment to put an end to controls, queues and shortages. For the UNP was not, and still is not, ideologically committed to the free market and private enterprise in anything like the way that Margaret Thatcher's governments have been so committed. Not only was the party adapted to operating a political system organized around the distribution of state patronage to masses of cadres and voters, but the very circumstances of the 1977 election victory had intensified the pressures to extend such patronage. For, in the four years since he had become leader in 1973, J. R. Jayawardena had reorganized the party into a more populist, centralized and professional machine. At the local level there had been some displacement of the 'natural' cadres — the local 'notables' — by younger men, sometimes unemployed and of relatively low social status, who expected immediate rewards from an election victory.

Unless it were to jeopardize its party machine in the electorates, the UNP could not have ignored the patronage demands in favour of sound

economic policy, the disciplines of the market and the superiority of private enterprise. And 'private enterprise' was not in practice strongly committed to economic liberalism. Private businessmen certainly wanted a reversion to much freer access to foreign exchange in order to meet consumer demand — their own as well as that of the 'market' more generally — and to replace much obsolete capital equipment. But the private sector had otherwise grown up in symbiosis with a large state sector and a relatively interventionist state, and did not generally demand any radical change in those arrangements.

The UNP government did not, however, face any hard choice between liberalizing the economy or meeting demands for political patronage. For the rapid and massive inflow of foreign aid and the consequent expansion of the absolute and relative size of the public sector (see below) provided abundant patronage resources. True that, at least after an immediate post-election splash, public sector employment was expanded to a far lesser extent than the historical norm might have justified. However, the massive aid-financed increases in public investment generated many new government contracts, especially in the construction sector. And a major public housing programme, while of far less help to the undernourished than the food subsidies for which it was in a political sense a partial substitute, did arguably have the merit of being more targetable on party supporters. The withdrawal of food subsidy entitlements from half the population has also opened up new opportunities for this kind of targeting. The large array of public corporations engaged in manufacturing and the provision of economic



services has in some cases been exposed to greater market competition. Yet there had been scarcely any privatization in the narrow sense of the term, i. e. direct transfer of assets from public to private ownership. Further, the subsidization of the public sector has become one of the major *de facto* objectives of fiscal and tariff policy.

An explanation of this apparent paradox — an expansion of the public sector in the course of 'liberalizing' the economy — could take one deeply into economic doctrine. For present purposes it is adequate to point out a duality or dichotomy in the doctrine of economic liberalization which, in the Sri Lankan case at least, has assumed the status of a contradiction. The benefits of liberalization are normally anticipated to flow through two main channels: through 'privatization' (i. e. the expansion/liberation of private initiative and enterprise); and through 'competitive price determination' (i. e. through the more efficient resource allocation which results from reducing the degree of political regulation of the terms of economic transactions, and thus permitting competitively-determined prices to guide economic decisions). Within the conceptual apparatus of neo-classical economics these two channels are virtually the opposite sides of the same coin: the private and the price-regulated economy are seen to reduce to the same set of phenomena in practice. That may or may not be true in the long term. In the short term of Sri Lanka's experience in the decade after 1977 this was not the case. Considerable 'privatization', in the broad sense of that term, took place in the context of a large net inflow of new foreign aid resources which were provided on concessionary terms and channelled almost entirely through the public sector. A large volume of resources were allocated to the public sector thro-

ugh political mechanisms. These resources were provided partly in explicit support of economic liberalization. They ended up creating what are from the point of neo-classical economic doctrine a whole new set of economic distortions favouring the Sri Lankan public sector. These succeeded the pro-public sector distortions of the previous, statist economic regime. The nature of the foreign support for Sri Lanka's economic liberalization is thus an important component of our story.

#### IV. Liberalization's Foreign Friends

There is no doubt that the initial steps in economic liberalization — reductions in controls and expansion of business opportunities — were responses to electoral pressures and to the general orientation of the UNP to business and middle-class interests. The early measures were truly popular, and the basic concept of a liberalization programme largely reflected forces internal to Sri Lanka. What is problematic, in terms of previous Sri Lankan history, is (a) why the UNP was able to avoid the reimposition of economic controls the moment economic weather turned foul; and (b) why the liberalization programme became entrenched and intruded into areas where domestic political opinion was either agnostic or hostile. The answers to both questions lie in the major role in foreign aid in supporting Sri Lanka's new economic policy and, more specifically, in the way in which the government of Sri Lanka and the major international aid and financial institutions — notably the World Bank but also the International Monetary Fund and major bilateral aid donors — became locked into an embrace around the liberalization strategy.

In the early 1980s Sri Lanka became, on a per capita basis,

one of the most heavily aided nations in the world.

The UNP government which took power in July 1977 was faced with an urgent economic problem. If the pre-election spending spree of the previous government were not to lead to rocketing inflation, financing had to be found for a quick increase in imports. There was at the same time a major opportunity to obtain the hard currency needed, and more. For the bilateral and multilateral aid and finance institutions looked very favourably on this new government which (a) was already committed to the language of economic deregulation; (b) offered a good prospect of making an exemplary transition from apparently — unsuccessful statist economic policies to successful, free market policies; (c) was very conveniently democratic and scored well in human rights and welfare terms; (d) was explicitly pro-Western; (e) had nevertheless inherited from its predecessor a powerful position in the then-active Non-Aligned Movement; and (f) ruled over a country so small and poor that a major increase in assistance could be painlessly absorbed within declining global aid budgets.

Here indeed was a deal waiting to be made. But it was implicitly a package deal, and one which had visibly to be in place rather quickly. Continued support from the World Bank and the IMF would implicitly be contingent upon the enthusiasm for Sri Lanka in international business circles and in the foreign and trade ministries of the industrialized countries. But foreign capital would look at Sri Lanka again only if the new government could reverse the country's reputation for political radicalism and electoral instability. Hence a whole series of urgent policy measures to create a new business image, despite doubts about the advisability of individual components on normal evaluation criteria. The

physical infrastructure for an export processing zone was constructed at great cost; one of the major 'achievements' was to hand over a large proportion of Sri Lanka's national textile import quotas in the industrial countries to 'quota-hopping' entrepreneurs from East and Southeast Asia. Liberal investment allowances were used to increase the excess supply of hotel facilities. Domestic bank credit was made available at extremely cheap rates — negative rates at one point.

There was little time or scope for the policy makers to appraise individual parts of the package. One element led to another. The establishment of branches of American banks seemed likely to increase the attractions of Sri Lanka for other foreign investors. American banks meant yet greater demand for modern urban infrastructure, and, despite considerable Sri Lankan civil engineering capacity, only foreign engineering and construction companies were in a position to complete major projects quickly.

East Asian 'quotahoppers', American banks, British civil engineers and Filipino construction firms have come and, in some case, gone. What has failed to materialize is any major new manufacturing capacity, foreign or domestically-owned. Correspondingly, the new economic policy has had little impact on what is arguably Sri Lanka's major economic problem: the lack of adequate new sources of foreign exchange earnings to replace the declining plantation sector. There is a major irony here. For under the new economic policy additional public expenditure, especially investment, has been pumped into virtually every sector of the economy except manufacturing industry. This was reserved for private

initiative, but that failed to emerge. In the absence of major new sources of foreign exchange earnings, the economy has become structurally dependent on continuous net foreign aid inflows. Despite a very respectable rate of GNP growth in the period 1978-1983, the liberal economic strategy — and, in effect, the continued rule of the UNP — became dependent on the support of foreign friends, notably the World Bank, which plays a key role in marshalling aid commitments.

The relationship of dependence between the government of Sri Lanka and its foreign friends was, however, mutual. For the latter, especially the international financial organizations, and even more especially the World Bank, became heavily committed to the survival of at least a liberal economic regime — and in practice to the survival of the present government. Their stake is political and ideological. Any major collapse of Sri Lanka's polity or any substantial reversal of the liberal economic policy would to an important degree undermine the global credibility of the economic stabilization, adjustment and liberalization programmes long advocated and currently widely supported by the global financial institutions. Conditions for major economic transformation have been relatively favorable in Sri Lanka compared to most of the developing world. Above all, the basic physical, institutional and administrative infrastructure has continued to function fairly well throughout. If Washington's economic adjustment formulae cannot work in Sri Lanka, many critics would ask, can one expect them to work anywhere.

The relationship between the government of Sri Lanka and its foreign friends has been more complex than simplistic

notions of aid dependence would imply. It is all the more complex because of different positions taken by different agents within each 'side'. Thus, the Sri Lankan Ministry of Finance and Planning has sometimes appeared as much as intermediary between Washington and its own government as an integral part of that government. It has been a willing conduit for pressures from Washington to pursue the liberalization programme in asystematic fashion, while at the same time resisting, for example, major and rapid privatization of publicly-owned corporations. Quite major economic policy initiatives mounted from Washington have been successfully blocked. At the same time, the World Bank has been enticed into playing a very active role in marshalling bilateral aid for major public sector investment projects which not only seem to co-exist very uneasily with the principles of economic liberalization, but are even dubious viability on conventional investment criteria. The tensions and contradictions between (a) the principles of economic liberalization and (b) the practice of liberalization under the umbrella of major foreign aid inflows into the public sector, have become evident not only within Sri Lanka. They have also surfaced within the World Bank itself, which has been both an important bearer of the doctrine of liberalization and a major *de facto* supporter of the expansion of the Sri Lankan public sector. Thus far the imperatives of public sector banking practice seem to have the edge over liberal doctrine. Major foreign aid programmes originally justified *as means* of encouraging the government of Sri Lanka to introduce economic liberalization seem in practice, and through quite familiar and understandable institutional processes, to have developed a different *de facto* rationale — supporting the government *per se*.

**NEXT: Economics and Political Decay.**



# Gorbachevism : Some Thoughts

Patrick Jayasuriya

Looking to the West is Gorbachev's policy. This has been a Russian tendency even as far back as the time of Peter the Great. Modernization and technological advance vis a vis the West has been a problem for Russia.

A sense of inferiority has marked the Russians in their modern history consequent on a technological lag—a step behind in the process of urbanization. Hence also an imitative tendency as well described by Tolstoy in his novels—the women unable to converse without the French phrase in a sentence. This may have been demonstrated in Raissa Gorbachev's fashion contest with Nancy Reagan which Western correspondents judged she lost by several lengths. So too beauty contests, fashion shows and even sex parlours which were once considered signs of bourgeois degeneration.

It may be said that the USSR lost a chess game with a US defence gambit culminating in SDI (check!) It was obviously a greater disadvantage to a later developing industrial nation to spend so much on a weapons race. Also the USSR did not have the benefit of tapping the resources of economically subject Third World countries in financing such a race. This exertion on the arms race with the USA diverted the USSR's resources from consumer goods to arms and the matter of consumer goods was the key reason for public dissatisfaction in the USSR. The USA with a greater surplus was at an economic advantage in this game. It was like starting with a few extra pieces in a game of chess. The multi-billion dollar space race was also strategically favorable to the USA in the economic chess game with the USSR.

What happened was a consequence also of the lack of

socialist economic cooperation between the USSR and the other socialist countries especially China. A USSR-China economic and technological relationship might have saved the economic debacle.

Another point that one must note is the psychological and ideological aspect. Gorbachev does not have the stature of a Lenin—the heroism and the socialist idealism. He is a technocrat, a middling mind. His innovative ideas are basically nothing but those of Peter the Great, in the eighteenth century. Gorbachev has a "no win" mind.

The consequences of Gorbachevism for the freedom and development of the Third World has to be watched. Ominous signs may be the Russian attack on North Korea's traditional tuna fishing areas and the mass release of Russian Jewish immigrants to colonize the Gaza strip and the West Bank.

Contrary to optimistic expectations, the removal of communism from Russia, if such would happen, would not dissolve the antagonism between the USA and that country. Rather, it might take a more devious and vicious form—perhaps racial. Witness the blatant racist undertones of the campaign against former economic ally, Japan, by the International Ladies Garment Union (ILGU) of America as well as the Detroit auto workers unions.

The power of the US dollar to buy us is formidable. US politicians like Truman, Eisenhower, Nixon, Reagan and Kissinger were paid a million dollars and over for their memoirs. How much has Gorbachev been paid for the publication rights of his book **Perestroika** in the West? Perhaps Raissa Gorbachev can now afford to shop in the Paris fashion

salons and offer better competition to Nancy Reagan.

Bush, ex-CIA man, says that ideologies to improve human nature are out of favour. Maybe we should accept greed as a powerful energetic factor in human nature that is essential at the current human developmental stage for utilizing in the productive process. Maybe man's cooperative instinct is not so developed as his acquisitive instinct. Maybe for that we will have to wait for the twenty-second century, if we survive as a species in the coming free-for-all.

The matter of the re-unification of the two Germanies to which Gorbachev has now given assent, has implications for a number of countries. It will cause a further lowering of the role and significance of Britain in European politics with the rise of a strong, united and armed Germany. The problem of boundaries between Germany and some Eastern European countries established by the victorious allies at the end of World War Two might be revived adding to the crop of international tensions. The ability of Israel to bully Germany with the past to extract "compensations" might be reduced but might also create other problems for Israel. All this would reduce the pre-eminent position the USA reached after the damage caused to European countries by the World War. But more important would be its political and military effect on the USSR which would now be more vulnerable and of reduced international stature. It remains to be seen whether British Historian A.J.P. Taylor's thesis that a divided Germany is necessary for European peace was correct. At least the previous status quo gave Europe peace for forty-five years, one of the longest periods when the warlike Western Man has been at peace in his territories.

### Ethnic Groups

It is evident from his letters in the L.G. of May 1st and July 1st that Sachi Sri Kantha can read. It is equally evident that he cannot understand what he reads. As if this is not enough of a handicap for someone who obviously has a taste for polemics, he has the additional handicap of habitually reading what is not there in the text.

In his July 1st letter he states that in rebutting his criticism I had brought to my defence the names of Rothschild, Suriyanarayana, and Sivathamby, on whose scholarship I had inferred that the Tamils of Tamil Nadu and of Sri Lanka are two distinct ethnic groups. I nowhere stated that I had come to my conclusion just on the basis of their scholarship. Sri Kantha has therefore read what is not there in my text. In support of my conclusion I referred in fact to the extensive literature on ethnicity which has been accumulating since the early 'seventies, about which I wrote a whole paragraph in my letter of May 15th. Sri Kantha had evidently read that paragraph. Equally evidently he failed to understand it.

In his July 1st letter Sri Kantha pontificates on ethnicity, basing his arguments on the findings of biomedical scientists. In my May 15th letter I had already provided material to show that racial identity does not dispose of the problem of what constitutes an ethnic group, in which connection I pointed to the ethnic distinctiveness of the Spanish, Germans, French, and Arabs in different countries. In fact, it is not just a case of ethnic distinctiveness but sometimes of murderous hatred between ethnic groups who share a racial identity, as shown by the com-

munal conflicts that are endemic in India. Bengali Hindus and Muslims regard themselves as virtually identical in terms of race as the infusion of Mogul blood in Bengali Muslims was minimal. Yet they certainly have regarded themselves as constituting distinct ethnic groups, and what is more they were responsible for some of the worst internecine massacres in pre-Partition India. If Sri Kantha can understand what he reads, he has to acknowledge that biomedical criteria cannot suffice by themselves to define an ethnic group.

The biomedical authorities he cites may use the term "ethnic group" for their limited scientific purposes. But no one today writing of ethnic problems in a political context will be so jejune as to try to dispose of the problem of what constitutes an ethnic group in purely biomedical terms. No one, that is, who really knows what he is talking about. The two quotations Sri Kantha himself provided in his May 1st letter demonstrate my point. In the first it was stated that ethnic groups are "distinguished by common cultural and frequently racial characteristics." The term "frequently" means that ethnic groups cannot be defined always and only in terms of racial characteristics. Likewise his second quotation referred both to "physical and cultural" characteristics. He provided those quotations in what he thought was a triumphant refutation of my argument. What they do refute is his simplistic notion that ethnic groups can be defined in purely biomedical terms. Sri Kantha can transcribe quotations. He cannot understand them.

It might be supposed that Sri Kantha merely exhibits the fairly commonplace phenome-

non of slovenly reading habits, compounded by confusions arising out of his obvious unfamiliarity with the problem of ethnicity. But his rigmarole about M.G.R. and Janaki also shows a startling inability to understand simple declarative sentences, and a persistent habit of reading what is not there in the text. In his May 1st letter he quoted me as having written (March 1st L.G.) that M.G.R. and the Tamil Nadu Government had raised no protest over the IPKF—LTTE fighting, after which he quoted my references to Karunanidhi's protest demonstrations in February and March 1988. He thereafter went on to write "Since he died on December 24, 1987, M.G.R. should have arisen from the grave to counter Karunanidhi's demonstrational politicking." The point that I made was that M.G.R. and the Tamil Nadu Government did not protest over the fighting, which should have been possible as the fighting erupted in October 1987 while M.G.R. died only in December. I wrote absolutely nothing whatever to suggest in any way that M.G.R. or the Tamil Nadu Government should have countered Karunanidhi's demonstrations in February 1988. This again demonstrates Sri Kantha's ability to read what is not there in the text. His presumption was that I was unaware of the fact that M.G.R. was dead by February 1988. But just two paragraphs later in my paper (March 1st L.G.) I referred to Janaki as being a widow in January 1988. Sri Kantha must have read it, but he failed to understand that simple declarative sentence.

In his July 1st letter he writes that though Janaki functioned as Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, "as any astute Tamil Nadu watcher (but hardly Izeth Husain!) would state, she was just



a puppet of one faction of M.G.R.'s party. "I had not stated in my paper either that Janaki was a puppet or not a puppet as it was no part of my purpose to make an assessment of her political ability. Again Sri Kantha has read what is not there in my text. He concluded "So, it is ridiculous again for Hussain to compare the actions of M.G.R.'s widow to that of M.G.R." I had made no such comparison anywhere, neither in my last letter. Yet once more Sri Kantha has read what is nowhere in my text. As for the astuteness he ascribes to himself and others in assessing Janaki as a puppet, I must express surprise as it was surely obvious to everyone right through the length and breadth of India, as well as to every Tamil Nadu watcher outside, that Janaki was infinitely less than a political lightweight and could easily have functioned as a puppet. His assumption of astuteness in grasping so obvious a point suggests that apart from knowing nothing about the problem of ethnicity, he knows next to nothing about the politics of Tamil Nadu.

True, I did not deal with Sri Kantha's deductions from the Salamat Ali quotation. Must I really waste my time, and L.G. space, exploding every bit of nonsense I encounter? Furthermore, I thought I had done enough to dissuade Sri Kantha from again exhibiting the results of his curious reading habits. The point at issue is whether or not M.G.R. and the Tamil Nadu Government raised a protest over the IPKF-LTTE fighting. They did not, and the LTTE was disappointed. That does not mean M.G.R. broke links with the LTTE, or turned hostile towards it, and certainly speed-boats could have plyed every night as stated by Salamat Ali. The fact remains that, as I wrote, there was no protest, and no amount of quotations about speed-boats is going to change that fact. I have yet once more to point to Sri Kantha's genius for reading what is not there in the

text. He preceded the Salamat Ali quotation (L.G. of May 1st) with this: "Contrary to what has been written by Hussain, M.G.R. was in close contact with LTTE cadre, until he died." I wrote absolutely nothing about M.G.R. being in contact or not in contact with LTTE cadre.

In Sri Kantha's rather limited polemical lexicon two words figure prominently, one of which is "ridiculous" and the other "ignorant". They are made to function as substitutes for reason and argument, in

### *The Other Dicky*

When I read ex-President Julius Richard Jayewardene's pre-emptive pontification on power that, "it was wisest to retain (power) with the help of the devil, if necessary, rather than to lose and then seek to regain it" (L. G., July 1), I could only think of another scheming politician, who shared the same name Richard and the same sentiments about power — the one and only Richard Nixon. Both did their best to cling onto power by many devious means, though expressing vocal support for democracy.

In fact, Jayewardene's political career shows much resemblance to that of Nixon. Both made their entry into the political arena in the 1940s as exponents of right-wing ideology and in early 1950s reached their first peak of their respective careers — Nixon as the Vice President and JRJ as the finance minister of the first UNP government. Then in 1956 (JRJ) and in 1960 (Nixon), lost the "power" which they more or less worshipped. Even in 1956, Eisenhower seriously thought of dropping Nixon from the Republican Party ticket, though ultimately he kept him. In 1965, JRJ regained the power, albeit as second in command. Nixon reached his political pinnacle in 1968, won a landslide victory in 1972 and resigned in disgrace in 1974. Meanwhile, JRJ consolidated his power after Dudley Senanayake's death

fact as not much more than abusive expletives. There is a problem of communication in dealing with Sri Kantha as he cannot understand the plain meanings of plain words. I will therefore use the language to which he is accustomed, and advise him to stop making himself look ridiculous by polemizing on matters about which he is ignorant. Should he wish to engage in further polemics, I suggest that he first take some reading lessons.

Izeth Hussain

in 1973, reached the top in 1977, won a re-election in 1982 and made his exit much humbler in 1988.

While the first terms of Nixon and JRJ (Nixon, 1968-72; JRJ, 1977-82) were quite constructive, their second terms after re-election (Nixon, 1973-74; JRJ, 1983-88) turned out to be disastrous to their respective countries.

Whatever expertise both claimed on military strategy, they lacked active combat experience. They were both "arm-chair Commander-in-Chiefs". Nixon's nemesis was Vietnam, and a commander named Giap. Though he outsmarted many Tamil politicians (Suntheralingam, Ponnambalam, Chelvanayakam, Amirthalingam) On the parliamentary battleground by his "isolate, weaken and destroy" tactics, Jayewardene met his match in the shape of a tough, wily guerrilla (or in his terminology, 'terrorist') Prabhakaran.

Finally, for all his extensive reading on the tactics of power and wisdom, I guess J.R. Jayewardene has not read what Einstein wrote: "The attempt to combine wisdom and power has only rarely been successful and then only for a short while". If expressed in Einstein's scientific format, it reads as, the concentration of power is inversely proportional to the accumulation of wisdom.

Sachi Sri Kantha

Medical College of  
Philadelphia, USA.

## Dates

At present millions and millions of Rupees are spent every year to import dates to Sri Lanka.

The Jaffna peninsula and other areas of North-East Province and also the Puttalam and Hambantota districts are ideal places to grow Date Palm trees (*Phoenix Dactylifera*) which thrive in hot, dry climates. "Date palms tolerate a fairly high salt concentration in the soil, apparently largely because of their ability to exclude the salt". Perhaps the islands of Delft and Kachchativu could be turned into Date groves. Date palm will grow in any place where the Palmyrah tree will grow.

Date palm produces food, sugar, toddy, sweet toddy, arrack, animal feed, fuel, shade, building materials etc. and will give life to the people. Unprocessed ripe fruit is very tasty to eat. The leaves can be used to make baskets, mats and various handicrafts. The date palm will give very good returns on the investments made and they can be grown on small or big plantation scales and they can support families and create employment like the way the date palm acreages support families in the Coachella Valley area in Southern California. There is very good money in dates.

The city of Indio in Southern California is often called the date capital of the nation and the National Date Festival is held there every year in mid-February. My wife and I made it a point and attended this festival in February 1988 and we have learnt something useful that Sri Lanka can use. Since February 1988 I always feel that we must introduce date palm trees in the dry zone areas of Sri Lanka to improve the economic conditions of the people there.

There are about 12 commercial varieties of date palms which are grown. The most popular varieties grown in California are Deglet Noor and Medjool which

are noted for their size, flavour, sugar content, market demand etc. and has a good export market. There are about 32 amber coloured Deglet Noor dates in a pound and about 14 Medjool dates in a pound. The varieties of date palm trees grown in California were imported 90 years ago from Iraq, Algeria, Morocco etc.

It takes several years to grow date palm trees from seeds and they will not know whether the plant is female or male or the variety until they flower and bear fruits. Hence for planting purposes they use the suckers (off-shoots) that sprout near the base of the parent trees. Female trees produce female suckers and Male trees produce male suckers. In other words the OFF SHOOTS are true to Parent Palm.

The date palm trees begin to flower and bear fruits about 4 years after planting. Female trees produce female flowers which develop into fruits and male trees produce male flowers which produce pollen.

In California they plant 48 Female trees and 1 Male tree to an acre in rows about 30 feet apart. The pollination is done by hand or with blower dusters in order to get the maximum number of date fruits. They use extension ladders or mechanized cherry pickers to climb the trees to pollinate the flowers, to place plastic bags above the ripening fruits to prevent damage from rain, to place netting or porous cloth over the fruit clusters to protect the fruits from insects and birds etc. To save money, time and labour each tree is attached with a ladder on a permanent basis.

In the dry zone the date palm trees can be grown without irrigation like the Palmyra palm or the coconut trees once the trees set their roots and reach the underground water level.

In California they get about 200 to 300 pounds of date fruits from each tree. A pound is sold for U. S. \$ 2.00 (Rs. 80.00) or more. Date palm trees can bear fruits for about 100 years

and can grow up to 100 feet tall and can be interplanted with cash crops like ground nuts, banana, papaya, oranges, lime etc.

Sri Lanka will have to get the date palm suckers (off-shoots) from Saudi Arabia, Oman, Iraq, Kuwait, India, Pakistan etc. Every Sri Lankan working in Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait etc. can help Sri Lanka and themselves when they return home once or twice a year on holiday. At that time they can easily bring as many date palm plants with them by getting a permit from the Director Agriculture in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lankan Government should and must play a big part by commercially importing date palm tree suckers and distributing them for planting. Another tree that can be introduced in the dry zone can be Olive trees to produce oil, pickles, animal feed etc. Olive Oil is expensive and can be exported. Olive oil is monosaturated and doctors say it is free from cholesterol.

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## On Throwing...

*(Continued from page 19)*

The purity of race and language are very dangerous concerns as, indeed, we have seen how it has led to fascism in pre-war Germany and now to its rise in the North and East of Sri Lanka.

It is a great pity that there are so many people ready, willing and able to identify 'Sinhala chauvinism' as a factor leading to the political disharmony in the country, but fail to recognise 'Tamil chauvinism' even when it spits out from the barrel of an AK 47.

The international lobby of the LTTE is so successful that throughout James Manor's book the phrase 'Sinhala chauvinism' is liberally sprinkled, as for Tamil chauvinism, it is almost everywhere invisible. Surely, doesn't it take two to make a quarrel?



## BOOK REVIEW

### Participatory Development and Poverty Alleviation

#### "Women, Poverty and Resources"

by Ponna Wignaraja

Poverty alleviation initially became a matter of major concern in the seventies. A large number of alternative development approaches were explored and promoted but with the major exceptions of Primary Health Care and Basic Services, most were isolated experiments. Even these were overshadowed in development theory and practice by issues of structural adjustments in the 1980s. A rising concern amongst an increasing number of development economists with the effects of adjustment policies on the poor, brought again to the fore the problem of alleviation of poverty.

Ponna Wignaraja was one of the five members of the South Asian team that in the early 1970s produced the pioneer study, truly ground breaking at that time, titled "Towards a Theory of Rural Development". The methodology they identified has informed much of the innovative experiments in poverty alleviation. Since then, working with United Nations, in his writings, as editor of "Development" and also as Secretary General of the Society for International Development, he has continued to pursue the same conceptual path and to refine the methodology of participatory development.

In 1987, UNICEF and IFAD asked Ponna Wignaraja to review his experiences on these issues in a number of countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The result is this book. The starting point of Wignaraja's analysis is that "the poor are left out because the conceptual framework and the institutional framework within which the problem is looked at is inadequate." In this book, he specifically addresses the issue of alleviation of women's poverty, a new dimension which was not highlighted nor developed in the earlier writings of the team.

The issues of gender and equity point to the double bur-

den women have to bear: that of being poor and being a woman. For Ponna Wignaraja, the solutions to women's poverty can only come from actions by women's groups and by their better organization. Individuals cannot address the problem of their powerlessness; this can only be done through collective action. The organization of women around issues of common concern is a prerequisite for effective and sustainable economic and social development. Ponna Wignaraja further states that provision of credit in the absence of this organization is not developmental, but further erodes self-respect, dignity and collective action and leads to depletion of even the resources and assets already available to poor women."

A corollary is that the provision of credit alone has little impact on the economic status of poor women. A holistic approach incorporating awareness creation and group organization, struggle for the fair implementation of various legislations in their support in marketing, availability of various materials, skill training, legal aid, health and child care, maternity and social security, and getting out of debt are some of the key elements that need to go hand in hand with the availability of credit.

To make this happen, political space has to be found and the programmes themselves will help to further widen that space. Where the process does not take place spontaneously, sensitized animators can help to catalyze the process.

These are some of the elements that Ponna Wignaraja considers crucial to enable poor women to move out of poverty into sustainable development.

Numerous case studies have been published on income generating activities for women. These are usually small projects which are never extended nation-

wide because they are not incorporated into the mainstream of economic development. Other studies have highlighted the failures of targeted credit programmes for the poor and poor women through conventional government or credit institutions. A number of case studies have been published on the better known successful programmes with credit components for women, such as, the Grameen Bank or the BRAC, some occasionally written by those who conceived the projects. There are fewer publications available analyzing the conceptual issues underlying the access of poor women to credit, and the possibilities of organization, awareness creation and credit and asset creation together, to strengthen their capacity to survive, to improve their economic and social conditions and that of their children, to go to scale and to sustain this process over time.

Ponna Wignaraja's book belongs to the latter category. The conditions for the sustaining of such programmes in a variety of socio-economic and cultural settings is an especially important theme.

The experience of providing micro-loans is not new to UNICEF. The process of developing and extending such systems and sustaining them within the community-level constraints and within the constraints and pressures of national and international bureaucracies (including their financial rules and regulations) is of great interest to UNICEF.

We hope this book will help to stimulate reflection and discussion and lead to a renewed analysis of the problems and opportunities faced in improving the design of projects and evaluation of programmes for and with poor women.

**Richard Jolly**

(Deputy Executive Director, Programmes  
UNICEF - New York)

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