LANKA
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TRENDS

MONITORS FOR MINI ELECTION

An international team of observers was in Sri Lanka to monitor the local government elections on May 11. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh were among the countries represented.

A group of eight was present earlier when nominations were being handed in. They were from SAARC countries.

The team present during the pre-election campaign and on election day distributed themselves in the districts where the polls were being held. There was no election in the Northern and Eastern provinces, because of the war with the LTTE.

INFLATION DOWN

Inflation has climbed down from 21 per cent to 14 per cent now, said the Central Bank in a press release. The 21 per cent inflation rate was given in the Central Bank's Annual Report for 1990.

But it is 14 per cent now, the Governor of the Central Bank said. "The Central Bank has taken effective action to bring inflation under control. Forecasts made so far by the Central Bank would indicate that the rate of inflation will decline further in the coming months", the statement said.

COMMISSION FOR TRANSPORT

There will be a National Transport Commission set up under parliamentary statute. It will reserve bus transport for the private sector, the government announced. The bill will discourage provincial councils and other elected bodies from entering the passenger bus business; "there is no need for provincial councils to run bus services", a government spokesman told the press.

Briefly. . . .

● The Central Bank's Annual Report for 1990 estimated the GNP to have increased by 6.6 per cent, which the report described as 'formidable', cautioning however that 'certain disquieting trends emerged which if allowed to continue unarrested would jeopardise growth and economic performance in the future'.

Among the disquieting trends was the persistent inflationary pressure, described by the report as one of the "most worrisome developments". The rate of inflation for 1990 was given as 21 per cent.

"The economy should not be allowed to get overheated but it should not be choked off either", the report said. It suggested the judicious use of monetary policy so as to generate the required degree of monetary stability while also maintaining adequate production incentives.

● An LTTE suicide squad rammed a Navy surveillance command ship with a boat packed with explosives, off the Jaffna peninsula. Five sailors were killed and about twenty were injured; the ship was badly damaged. The LTTE cadres in the boat were blown to bits, Naval officials said.

The Naval vessel, the SLNS 'Abitha' is a 3000 ton merchant ship which had been converted to a surveillance command ship The attack was at 2 a. m. on May 4. It was the second such LTTE attempt to destroy a Navy ship.

● Ralph Buultjens is expected to give evidence in the Colombo High Court in the case in which former minister Gamini Dissanayake is charged, with others, with conspiring to abduct him. Professor Buultjens was on his way to deliver a Felix Dias Bandaranaike memorial lecture when he is alleged to have been abducted in 1988.

Altogether 23 witnesses are expected to give evidence. All the accused, including the former minister, are at present on bail.

As we go to press the International Observer team from SAARC and C'wealth countries has expressed satisfaction at the conduct of the local polls, and commended women for their keen participation.

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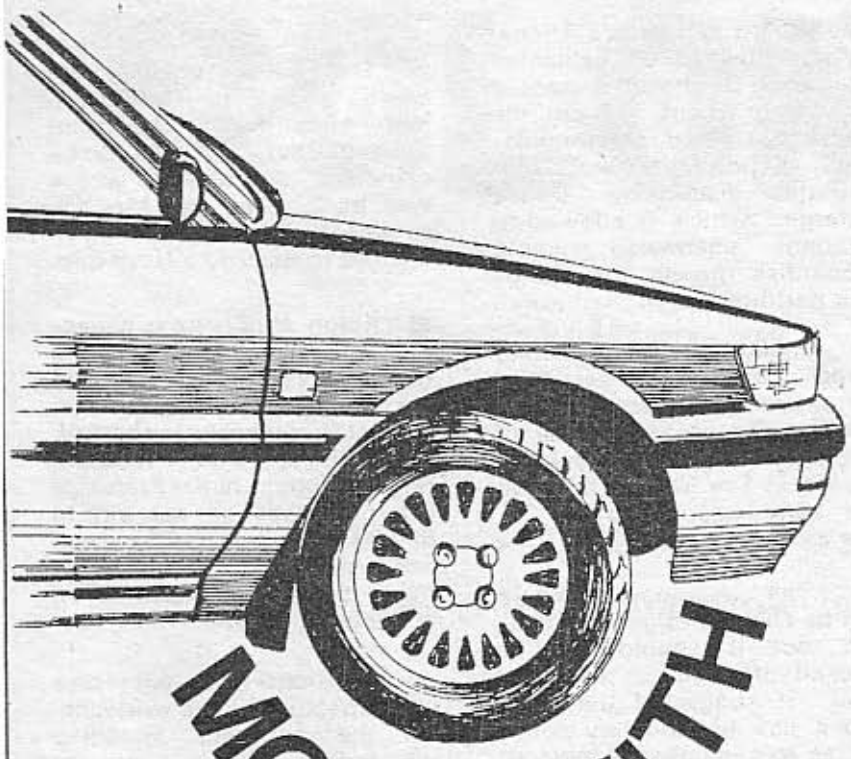

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NEWS BACKGROUND

The "new" UNP beats "split" SLFP and exhausted Left

Mervyn de Silva

The U. N. P. remains the best organised party in the country, whereas the SLFP-led Opposition remains riven by personal and ideological conflicts, and ravaged by cliquism and petty intrigue. All that the Opposition can boast is a single nationally respected and internationally known personality, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike.

The rightwing U.N.P. once the party of the Senanayakes, made a successful, if not entirely smooth, transition from the Senanayakes to Jayawardena and Premadasa. While SLFP remains dominated by Mrs. Bandaranaike a bitter feud between Anura Bandaranaike MP, and his sister Chandrika who leads the B.N.P. has sapped the energies of the SLFP. The present plight of the Opposition is wrapped in a sad irony. The ideological outlook of the SLFP's revered founder, Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, had two noteworthy features — a concern for the under-privileged and a commitment to improve the condition of the socially disadvantaged strata together with a lively responsiveness to international trends and new ideas.

The SLFP and its assorted "Left" partners and associates have allowed Mr. Premadasa to run away with Bandaranaikist welfarism and populism, while they themselves cling on to an enervated Leftism, discredited at home and abandoned abroad. The SLFP has the mass vote. Mrs. Bandaranaike makes the vital decisions ultimately. But the debate within the broader opposition is dominated by Marxist-leftist groupuscules. All these basic problems surfaced sharply in the run-up to the local polls. The furious quarrels that followed — and these were by no means confined to the SLFP-Left leadership — demoralised the anti-UNP voter. As the SLFP's massive May Day procession proved, the anti-UNP voter was psychologically ready to take on the traditional enemy at the local polls, the first major confrontation since the Presidential and Parliamentary elections which were held in the climate of fear, (the JVP assasins) chaos and State repression.

May day proved that the C.P. was right to stay at home: The LSSP and BNP, daring to take to the streets minus the SLFP, presented a sorry spectacle.

Now the Municipal, urban and pradeshaya sabha polls have only underlined the obvious. It's simply not enough to fight together as "Independents" in one place, and SLFP in most other places. The spectacle of division simply (and predictably) demoralises the committed supporter. And let's not forget, the Sri Lankan voter is one of the most street-smart political animals in the world.

Regard the scene. Two years in office; a JVP insurrection ruthlessly crushed in the Sinhala south, an unfinished war in the north claiming more lives, Sinhala and Tamil, military and civilian, each passing month; inflation at 20% last year (14% now, it is claimed officially) and unemployment, especially Sinhala youth unemployment, rising steadily; donors warning of aid cuts unless the regime's human rights record is not visibly improved; the UNP torn by top-level conflicts; a former Cabinet minister with a strong electoral base in the upcountry Kandyan areas, indicted before the High Court; the party's chief executive and government tough guy assasinated in broad daylight in the city.

"Both police and representatives of opposition political parties conceded that yesterday's local government election was relatively peaceful and fair" reported the independent SUNDAY ISLAND.

"Opposition leader, Sirima Bandaranaike said last night that she was not happy with the conduct of yesterday's election in certain areas, but conceded that it was better than in recent years" reported the independent SUNDAY TIMES.

The polls were in fact marred by many, many incidents but no responsible party leader no independent observer (the foreign monitoring team" has yet to release its report) has levelled the charge of widespread rigging... a charge heard quite often in the past 13 years, and on and off at by-elections in the 1970-77 period.

Of 237 local bodies, the UNP has taken 193, winning 9 out of 10 municipal councils. It lost Ratnapura which was under

SLFP control anyway. The UNP won 28 Urban councils while the SLFP won 5. Of the 194 pradeshaya sabhas, the UNP won 156. The 80% turnout was more good by Sri Lankan standards and the UNP's 54% was higher than President JR's at the 1982 Presidental contest against the SLFP's Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwe.

In Colombo, the UNP (119, 795 votes) captured 30 seats, the SLFP (72,319) won 17 seats, the SLMP (3 seats) SLMC (2) and NSSP (1).

The turnout in the city was 68%.

Before the polls, independent analysts concentrated on the following questions:

1) How much support has the UNP lost after 2 years in office? The assumption was basic — governments start losing votes from DAY 1 since the expectations are so high that performance always fall short of pre-election hopes,

2) What impact has inflation made on the lower-middle class and the poor, particularly in the urban/semi-urban areas?

3) Has unemployment, especially youth unemployment regarded as the main factor in the resurgence of the JVP, eroded UNP's support-base? Will this be reflected in the pattern of voting in the southern province?

4) Will the repression of the JVP swing votes from UNP to SLFP-led front?

5) Will Sinhala-Buddhist opinion indignant over the Government's inept campaign against the LTTE reduce the UNP's traditional vote?

6) Will the Muslim vote in all Sinhala areas go with the two established parties or indentify itself with the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress?

7) Has President Premadasa's re-structuring of the UNP, the established conservative party, caused serious fissures in the class-caste bloc that sustained the "old" UNP?

At this writing (13th) it is not possible to take up such matters. But on first impressions, it strikes me that Mr. Premadasa has installed a new power-structure in the party, a new decision-making centre other than the old SRI KOTHA coterie. It is also clear that the South. despite the tough repression, is not as pro-JVP as Colombo "experts" believed. Plainly, more have suffered at the JVP's hands than in the army's counter-attack. Sinhala-Buddhist opinion (anti-Tamil and militarist) has made no serious dent in the UNP traditional Sinhala-Buddhist support.

If victory is the ultimate test of success, it seems to me that it is now the SLFP-led opposition's turn for re-thinking and re-structuring.

President Permadasa will now feel more confident in facing the opposition, the LTTE, the Human Rights critics and the new Indian government.

President's statement

UNP leader, President Ranasinghe Premadasa in a statement issued at the conclusion of the Local Government elections held on Saturday, said the UNP had never been proud and boastful in victory and "on this occasion too, we accept victory with humility and with dedication to service."

The following is the text of the President's statement.

Once again our people have exercised their sovereignty through the ballot. Democracy has triumphed. Reaction has been defeated. This resounding victory of the ballot is of special significance to all of us. It reaffirms the dedication of our people to the democratic way of life. It has demonstrated that those who aspire to gain power through undemocratic means are not welcome.

I congratulate the winners for their well deserved victory. I thank our party membership, our supporters and our well-wishers throughout the country for contributing to this massive victory.

The large majority of our people have reaffirmed their trust and confidence in the New vision and the New Deal of the United National Party. On behalf of the party and myself, I thank each and every one of them. Let me also thank the Commissioner of Elections and his staff, all the government officials and the security services and police personnel who worked with dedication to ensure a peaceful, free and fair election.

Our voters have convincingly rejected political elements who are masquerading as democrats. Our voters have clearly identified political organs that have been engaging in divisive politics by day and disruptive activities by night. The voters have accepted practical action and rejected empty criticism.

The activities of the local authorities touch the lives of our people most closely. Electors are naturally wary in the choice of their very representatives. They have accepted the United National Party as the means to improve the quality to their lives.

We shall expedite decentralisation of powers and functions together with resources brought to the doorsteps of the people. The newly elected local authorities will be entrusted with this important role. We will accelerate all our development efforts. We are determined to eliminate poverty through Janasaviya. We are harnessing all resources at our command for the common good.

The people have placed their trust and confidence in us to renew and revitalise the unity

of all sections of our montherland. A nation divided is a nation weakened. The message to all dissidents and factions is loud and clear. The message is that national issues must be sattled by national consensus. We must resolve our problems through consultation rather than Confrontation.

The outcome of this general election to local authorities brings home clearly another point. It establishes the claim of the United National Party that in an election free of violence by disruptive forces the voter turnout is large. When the voter turnout is large, the triumph of the United National Party is beyond doubt.

Last year alone ov r 2.5 million citizens obtained paid-up membership of our party. Undoubtedly, their friends and relatives too contributed to our victory. Our party branches, youth leagues, women's organisations and trade unions were responsible in mobilising support for our candidates. The ministers, members of parliament, chief ministers and provincial council members and other organisers of our party gave leadership in this effort. I express my gratitude to all of them.

We have never been proud and boastful in victory. On this occasion too, we accept victory with humility and with dedication to service. The divisions of elections are over. Those who contested us must be treated as friends, not as enemies. They are partners in the democratic process. Let us set an example, like in the last presidential and parliamentary elections, by avoiding post-election bitterness.

Victors must protect the vanquished. Let us forget forgive and go forth together. We welcome and we appreciate constructive criticism. Yet, our democratic attitude must not be mistaken for weakness. all are welcome to join in progress. Impeding progress is a national crime.

May the blessings of the Triple Gem be upon you.

Statements

THE GLADSTONE AFFAIR

(all reports from the Daily News)

11th May 1991

The Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Dear Sir,

I place the undernoted facts before you for investigation and appropriate action to be taken against the abovenamed.

It has been brought to my notice by Mr. H. R. Piyasiri, MP for Matara District and Chief Organiser for the United National Party in the Dickwella division, that the British High Commissioner has made a complaint at the Dickwella police station today (11th May 1991). This statement was made by him during the progress of the polling in Dickwella at the local government elections.

In his statement to the police, Mr. Gladstone has alleged that he had received information to the effect that voters attached to a polling station in Dickwella were being collected together by UNP supporters, that the ink marks on their fingers which indicate their having voted were washed off, and that this was done to enable them to vote again.

Upon receiving informaiton that such a complaint had been made, Mr. H. R. Piyasiri, MP had recorded a statement with the Dickwella police denying the allegation made against UNP supporters by Mr. Gladstone, and stating that Mr. Gladstone was acting malafide.

As your foreign office will be aware, on 7th February 1990, Mr. H. R. Piyasiri, MP, acting in his right as a Member of Parliament made a statement in parliament alleging certain improprieties in Mr. Gladstone's conduct and associations in Sri Lanka. This statement had received publicity in the press at the time.

Mr. Gladstone's statement does nor disclose why he was in Dickwella on polling day. Nor does he claim that he has personally seen any incriminating fact.

It appears clear that the high commissioner in making his aforesaid complaint to the Dickwella police, has acted maliciously. He has undoubtedly chosen Dickwella as the venue for his false complaint in order to bring disrepute to Mr. Piyasiri and United National Party.

You wlli also appreciate that it is highly irregular and improper for a diplomat to involve himself in any manner whatso ever in elections in the country where he is posted. Mr. Gladstone is not a member of the International Observer Group, as you are aware.

In my capacity as General Secretary of the UNP, I lodge this protest and request the Foreign Ministry to institute an investigation and cause appropriate action to be taken against the High Commissioner.

A photocopy of the relevant column of the Hansard of 7th February 1990 is annexed. I shall forward certified copies of the statements made to the Dickwella police shortly.

Yours faithfully

(B. Sirisena Cooray)
General Secretary

Copies to:

R. K. Chandrananda de Silva Esqr. Commissioner of Elections, Colombo.

Inspector General of Police, Colombo.

Complaint of British High Commissioner

British Commissioner has come to make a complaint with ARO Mr. Ananda. Name – Gladstone, British High Commissioner, telling like this: It was brought to my attention that water was being collected waiting at Polling Booth No. 19 by UNP supporters. I went there Polling Station and found that there was a crowd outside the Polling Station and UNP van parked. No. was 60 Sri 1325. There is the allegation that the ink applied on finger being erased of voters, again. That is enough. Sgd. Gladstone. The signature of British High Commissioner.

The mentioned statement I am SI Mahesh wrcte correctly. No complaints. This complaint we informed to our ASP Sgd. SI Mahesh. Informed to every mobile Sgd. SI Mahesh. . . .

Statement of Mr. H. R. Piyasiri

I arrived here on receipt of information that the British High Commissioner—H. E. David Gladstone—had made a complaint re election activity in Dikwella. At this stage Mr. H. R. Piyasiri, the District Member of Parliament for Matara arrives and wishes to make a statement. I now proceed to record the same. 1400Hrs. Handunetti Ranulu Piyasiri, 47 yrs., Member ot Parliament for Matara Districf states:

Today at about 1230/1300 Hrs., when I was in my residence I came to know that the British High Commissioner H. E. David Gladstone had made a statement at the Dikwella Palice pertaining to election activities in Dikwella area. I was informed of this by my clerk Mr. S. Wijesena.

Last year in parliament, I exposed the British High Commissioner H. E. David Gladstone for alleged involvement in drug trafficking and keeping company with personalities such as Manik Sandrasagara who had escaped from Britain, whilst on bail for drug offences. As far as I am aware, H. E. David Gladstone is not a member of the team of observers who have arrived in Sri Lanka as a member of the election monitoring committee. The British High Commissioner, by this act had grossly violated the code of condut and interefered into the internal affairs of Sri Lanka.

I feel that this statement has been made by the British High Commissioner over the exposure I made in parliament.

Read over, Admitted correct Sgd. H. R. Piyasiri Sgd M. Gomes SSP/ Matara 1420 Hrs.

1423 Hrs. At this stage Mr. H. R. Piyasiri wishes to add further to his statemnt and states thus: The allegations made against the UNP is totally false. Sgd. H. R. Piyasiri. Sgd. M. Gomes SSP/Matara.

I certify that the foregoing extracts are true and accurate and that the original is in my custody. SI Mahesh Kumarasinghe, OIC Police, Dikwella.

Mr. Piyasiri's Original Charge

Excerpt from Mr. Piyasiri's original charge in the House.

(As reported in Hansard)

Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise the following question with the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of State for Defence.

During the course of last year, members on both sides of the House brought to the attention of the government the increasing use in drug taking and the peddling of drugs. The government has also taken many measures to combat the menace of drug use. This includes media publicity against the dangerous drugs, rehabilitation of drug addicts and effective measures by the law enforcement authorities against drug pedlars and drug users.

This campaign is now faced with difficulties due to the patronage extended by some diplomats to those engaged in the drug trade. I think this matter is sufficiently serious to warrant the attention of the government and of this House.

This patronage is being extended at the highest level of diplomatic community in Sri Lanka. His Excellency Gladstone, the High Commissioner for the UK in Sri Lanka, is giving patronage to drug pedlars and the those who promote the use of dangerous drugs. Among those who promote the use of dangerous drugs. Among those with whom the High Commissioner keeps company are Mr. Manik Sandarasagara and Mr. Asoka Ratwatta.

(Mr. Lakshman Jayakody) Does the hon. member take full responsibility for what he has stated.

(Mr. H. R. Piyasiri) Yes Otherwise, I would not have read it. I take full responsibility.

(An hon. Member) Why are you worried? – *(Interruption)*.

(Mr. Speaker) Order, please! Please carry on. I cannot help it. *(Interruption)*.

(The Hon. Ranil Wickremasinghe) There is an Adjournment Question. He is on his feet. Let him finish. After that the Hon. member can say what they want. - *(Interruption)*.

(Mr. Speaker) Order please!

(Mr. H. R. Piyasiri) I take full responsibility for what I say.

Mr. Sandarasagara was arrested on 18.6.81 in the UK with two British nationals for possession of 163 kilograms and 800 grams of herebal cannabis and

(All reports from the state-owned DAILY NEWS)

200 grms of cannabis resin. He was charged in court and granted bail in May, 1982. He jumped bail and left the UK illegally, On 6.3.82, he was arrested by the Police Narcotic Bureau. The UK authorities requested the extradition of Mr. Sandarasagara. However, extradition proceedings were not initiated due to lack of material.

Asoka Ratwatta was arrested by the Australian authorities on 8.4.81 for possession of 5.5 kilograms of hashish. This person was sentenced to four years hard labour in St. James Court of Petty Session on 21.6.82 with a minimum term of 12 months, commencing from 23.6.82 and subsequently deported to Sri Lanka on 23.6.83.

(Mr. Speaker) I do not mind your reading it. But what is your question please?

Messrs. Manik Sandarasagara and Asoka Ratwatta are frequent visitors to Westminster House. They are also invited to functions hosted by the high commissioner to which cabinet ministers are also invited. This has caused much discomfort to the people attending these functions. Some of these drug users were present in Westminster House at a function attended by the former President J. R. Jayawardene.

Recently, a party including the UK High Commissioner travelled to Kandy to film the Lankathilaka Viharaya. There were complaints of drug use by some of members of the party during the filming. But investigations have not been made because it involves the High Commissioner for the UK.

The policy of both the United Kingdom and Government of Sri Lanka is to combat the drug menace. Therefore, will the minister speak to the High Commissioner for the UK and request him to refrain from associating with drug pedlars and drug users?

McNamara calls for aid to be linked to cuts in arms spending

By Stephen Fiedler *in Washington*

Aid to developing countries should be made conditional on the their reducing military spending, Mr Robert McNamara, former head of the World Bank, said.

In a wide-ranging speech on the Cold War on military spending, Mr McNamara strongly urged the linking of financial assistance to movement "toward optimal levels of military expenditures". These optimal levels should take into account any external threat being faced by a country.

When decisions concerning allocations of foreign aid were made, special consideration should be given to countries spending less than 2 per cent of their gross national product in the security sector".

Speaking at a World Bank annual conference on development economics in Washington, he said that the huge savings thus made could be used to address pressing economic and social needs.

"I am conscious that application of such conditionality will be difficult and contentious," said Mr McNamara, a former US defence secretary. "Never theless, it is, I believe, an essential part of the solution to the waste represented by excessive military spending in poor countries."

Military spending in the Third World totalled $170bn a year, 4.3 per cent of aggregate gross national product. If that were to be reduced by half over the next decade, it would free up savings equivalent to half current Third World spending on health and education and more than twice the amount of development assistance received from industrialised countries and multilateral financial institutions, he said. By comparison, the US spent 6 per cent of GNP on the military. This proportion could be reduced by half within six to eight years, at a saving of 150bn a year in 1989 dollars, Mr. McNamara said.

Between 1978, and 1988, the Third World imported $371bn of arms, three-quartars of the arms traded internationally. Mr McNamara linked reduction of demand for arms in the Third World to a system of collective security — guarantees by the United Nations Security Council and regional organisations of territorial integrity.

Governments producing arms should also sharply reduce the availability of finance for arms. He noted that some countries spent a lot on security for internal rather than external reasons.

Instability in Sri Lanka

P. Saravanamuttu

The outbreak of fighting in June 1990 in the north-east of Sri-Lanka, between the government security forces and the principal Tamil guerrilla group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE or Tigers), highlights the intractability of the island's nation - and state - building trauma There have been threats of secession and revolution, as well as external intervention by the predominant regional power, India. The separatist war waged since 1983 by the minority Tamils against the majority Sinhalese-dominated government has been preceded and accompanied by internal upheavals within both communities and two armed insurgencies by the Sinhalese nationalist *Janatha Vimukti Peramuna* (JVP) to capture power (1971, 1987-9). In addition, there has been an Indo-Sri Lankan Accord and the installation of an Indian Peace keeping Force (IPKF) to contain extremism and to define the middle ground between the unacceptable and the unattainable. However, no national conseneus within Sri Lanka has been achieved. The article will investigate the background to Sri Lankan insecurity and the prospects for national reconciliation.

Ethnic tension : the parliamentary phase

Tensions between the Sinhalese and Tamils regarding their respective positions in an independent Sri Lanka can be traced to 1931, when the island was granted universal adult suffrage. The enduring Tamil fear since has been that their positions of relative advantage in the bureaucracy (gained through educational attainments and colonial policy), would be irretrievably jeopardized by majority Sinhalese rule. The Sinhalese, in turn, have been eager to redress this imbalance to reflect their majority status and claim of cultural and religious exclusiveness to Sri Lanka, in contrast with Tamil links to south India.

In the prelude to Sri Lankan independence in 1948, Tamil anxieties were expressed in their demands for parliamentary constituencies to be drawn up on a communal basis. Even though this was not granted, population distribution ensured that the 'first past the post' Westminster-style electoral system would lead to political polarization a.ong ethnic lines, with the majority Sinhalese parties predominating in the south and their minority Tamil counterparts in the north. Tamil fears of marginalization at the centre were sustained by the certainty of Sinhalese preponderance in government.

Tamil leaders, nevertheless, committed themselves to the parliamentary process after independence. This strategy exchanged support and participation in government for measures safeguarding minority interests, and attested to the strengh of the inter-communal elite consensus on parliamentary democracy and the constitutionalist ethos of the island's independence movement. But political accommodalion, although subscribed to in principle, was not fully reflected in practice by government policy. Despite setbacks, however, this consensus survived until it was finally eroded in the 1970s.

The acceptance of political accommodation and parliamentary democracy as the framework for managing societal tensions was undermined by intra-elite competition with exploited ethnic populism for partisan advantage. Explicit identification with ethnic populism has come to be regarded as crucial to electoral success, thus legitimizing the older and divisive bases of identity as the ultimate sources of political power, and exposing the inability of the elite consensus to fuse them into a durable national identity. Herein lies the significance of the 1956 election, which was won in the south by thecentre-left coalition of Sinhalese populist forces headed by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, founder of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), and in the Tamil north by the Federal Party (FP) favouring the constitutional arrangement between the two communities implicit in its title.

Once in governmeut, in 1956 Bandaranaike fulfilled his election pledge to make Sinhala the official language striking at the heart of Tamil fears regarding education and employment. More damaging, his inability to control the Sinhalese Buddhist coalition that had propelled him to power forced him further positions inimical to ethnic harmony. Consequently, his efforts in 1957 to ameliorate the impact of this language policy on the Tamils, with special provisions for the use of their language and the devolution of power to regional councils in a pact with FP leader Chelvanayagam, were obstructed by the innate chauvinism of the Sinhalese constituency and the political opportunism of the United National Party (UNP) opposition. Violent Sinhalese-Tamil riots ensued in 1956 and 1958, the first of their kind in independent Sri Lanka, and were only exceeded in their intensity by the carnage of 1983.

Throughout the next decade the ensuing deterioration in ethnic relations was tempered by the enduring vitality of the parliamentary consensus. The Tamil leadership continued the practice of parliamentary accommodation, even though the first government of Bandaranaike's widow, Mrs. Sirrmavo Bandaranaike (1960–64), vigorously im-

Dr. P. Saravanamuttu is a Lecturer in International Relations, Department of Politics, University of Southampton.

plemented the official language policy and reneged on promises to reintroduce the devolution proposals envisaged in the Bandaranaike — Chelvanayagam Pact. With assurances of this score contained in a pact with the UNP, the FP joined the UNP-dominated national government in 1965. While legislation for the use of Tamil was passed, that relating to the devolution of power was not and the FP withdrew from the government in mid-1969.

Therefore, seen from the perspective of nation and state-building, the 1956 election was a milestone in Sri Lankan politics. In the south, the triumph of ethnic identity amounted to the capture of the state by the majority community for the purpose of political consolidation and control of economic power through nationalization; in the north, it represented the beginnigs of a serious challenge to the unitary status of that state.

Secession and insurgency: the pattern of political violence

The pattern of political activity initiated in the 1970s signalled the collapse of the parliamentary consensus and institutionalized the recourse to violence in the resolution of political conflict.

Disenchantment with elite leadership among both Sinhalese and Tamll youth coalesced into the conviction that their grievances could only be met through armed insurgency against the political centre. In the south, the basis for grievance has been the call for greater access to socioeconomic and political benefits. Originally exemplified by the ultraleftist 1971 JVP insurgency of mainly educated rural youth, it re-emerged in the extreme nationalist JVP reincarnation of 1987 following the external intervention by India. In the north, youth dissent has been founded on frustration with the failure of political accommodation to prevent discrimination most notably the United Front (UF) government's alterations in university admission criteria. By the mid 1970s, the accruing bitterness had spawned a plethora of guerrilla groups, the most famous of which is still the LTTE.

Established political parties, in turn, have deepened this alienation by seeking to extend and consolidate their monopoly of state power at the expense of the parliamentary framework, thus reinforcing the trend towards violent opposition. Both the left-wing UF government of Mrs. Bandaranaike (1970-77) and its right-wing successsor, the UNP regime of J. R. Jayawardene (1977-89), were guilty of this. Both were swept into power with unprecedented legislative majorities which they used for partisan advantage, and both changed the constitution — the first (1972) making Sri Lanka a republic in which the primacy of the majority language and religion, Sinhala and Buddhism, was assured, and the second (1978), replacing the political system with a Gaullist-style executive presidency. Most ominously, the UNP introduced the dubious precedent in December 1982 of a referendum to postpone elections for 11 years, thereby compounding the unrepresentative character of the legislature and sealing it off from radical opinion.

The common stand in the establishment's response to what in the JVP case was a threat to the character of the state and in the case of Tamil militancy a threat to its territorial compositton, was its attempt to delegitimize both challenges by defining them as essentially terrorist in nature. In the south, however, given an armed insurgency from within its own ethnic constituency, the government's sense of danger was more acute and consequently its response more political. Sinhalese-dominated governments, regardless of ideological orientation, defended the political establishment with brutal determination while simultaneously moving to placate the radical elements within their ethnic group. This 'carrot-and-stick' approach was adopted towards the JVP by Mrs Bandaranaike in 1971 and by Jayawardene s UNP successor President R. Premadasa in 1989. Alternatively, when confronted with Tamil secession the response was uncompromising and militaristic; the search for political solutions was necessitated only by military stalemate and impending bankruptcy in the Jayawardene era.

The response of the Tamil leadership was conditioned by the need to preserve political credibility in the new era of militancy. Interpreting the chauvinistic bias of its proceedings as the effective abandonment of minority rights by the UF government, the FP walked out of the Constituent Assembly in 1971 and closed ranks with other Tamil parties to form the Tamil United Front (TUF) a year later. In 1976 they adopted the Vaddukoddai resolution calling for a separate state of Tamil Eelam to be established, through armed struggle if necessary, thus transforming themselves into the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF).

However, when the TULF won a popular mandate for the separatist platform at the 1977 general election, it returned to the National Assembly as the single largest party in opposition, and its leader, A. Amirthalingam, accepted the official title of Leader of the Opposition. Nevertheless, the limited hope generated by this and the Jayawerdene regime's promise of an all-party conference to address Tamil grievances soon evaporated; that forum was not convened and a district development council scheme was rejectad as indequate by the TULF. In addition, the excesses of an indisciplined army empowered with a draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act, combined with inflammatory rhetoric from within the cabinet, ensured that the vicious cycle of ambush, atrocity and invective destroyed any prospect of ethnic reconciliation.

This was irrevocably confirmed in July 1983. The mismanaged funeral arrangements of Sri Lankan soldiers killed in an LTTE ambush served as the catalyst for the most savage outburst of anti-Tamil violence and all-out war. Thousands were massacred or made homeless; many of the survivors fled to refugee camps, the north, to India or abroad. Extensive damage was done to property, with the worst atrocities being committed in the capital, Colombo. Most damning were the reported acquiescence and participation of sections of the security forces in the terror, and allegations that elements within the ruling party were behind its instigation.

The government belatedly responded by effectively blaming the victims. In a move openly designed to placate Sinhalese chauvinism it passed the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution which effectively outlawed advocacy of secession and, to counter adverse international publicity, blamed ultra-leftist groups for the slaughter as part of a determined conspiracy to destroy democracy in Sri Lanka. The JVP, whom Jayawardene had legitimized and whose leader R. Wijeweera had unsuccessfully contested him for the presidency in 1982, were proscribed along with other radical left-wing parties. The cumulative impact of these measures was to conclude the parliamentary phase to nation-building with the exclusion of the Tamil and anti-establishment Sinhalese parties. This also enabled the government to cultivate an image of itself as the embattled champion of the democratic political establishment against the forces of extremism and terror.

Ethnic war: the external dimension

As full-scale ethnic war ensued, the external dimensions of the conflict were highlighted. Given its domestic Tamil Nadu constituency and the influx of refugees from Sri Lanka, India offered to mediate. However, when the determination of the Sri Lankan government to compromise even its policy of non-alignment in pursuit of a military solution became apparent, Indira Gandhi adopted a subtle two-pronged strategy. While presenting itself as an impartial mediator, India also offered sanctuary to the Tamil guerrillas in order to sustain the military stalemate indefinitely and to impress upon Jayawardene the imperative of a political solution. This also forcefully reminded Sri Lanka of India's overarching strategic priority — denial of the subcontinent to interference by external powers.

Jayawardene's plans to use the West to counter Indian leverage on behalf of the Tamils fell apart because of the West's reluctance to compromise relations with New Delhi over a conflict which it deemed to be of marginal significance. Nevertheless, numerous countries facilitated indirect assistance to the Sri Lankan government in the purchase of weaponry and counter-terrorist expertise. The latter was channelled through an Israeli interests section located in the US embassy in Colombo and through private sources, notably the Channel Islands registered organization Keeni Meeni Services. Equally galling to India was military assistance and training provided by Pakistan.

The elaborate Indo-Sri Lankan charade of pseudo-deterrence and counter-manoeuvre only temporarily obscured the hard strategic realities of the conflict. Neither the Sri Lankan government nor the Tamil guerrillas could achieve a military solution on their own and, given the geopolitical and ethnic dimensions to the conflict, whatever objectives they pursued impinged upon Indian security concerns. Furthermore, in terms of a political solution this also meant that the most New Delhi would contemplate on behalf of the Sri Lankan Tamils was the approximation of Eelam through provincial autonomy rather than its attainment through secession. Accordingly, Indian mediation attempts focused on convincing the belligerents to agree to a package that would encapsulate the minimum interests of all concerned — recognition of legitimate Tamil grievances while maintaining the unitary status of Sri Lanka.

Although hostilities persisted, by late 1986 there were signs that the Jayawardene government would accept provincial autonomy in principle, but not the Tamil claim that the north and eastern provinces (with significant Sinhalese and Muslim minorities), constituted their traditional homeland. Unable to break the impasse, the Sri Lankan government ordered the Army into a fresh offensive in May 1987. By the end of the it was ready to commence the battle for Jaffna, the northern stronghold of the LTTE. Mindful of the enormous civilian casualties this would incur as well as the domestic political repercussions, underlined by then Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran's donation of US$ 3.2 million in humanitarian assistance to the Tigers, the Rajiv Gandhi government dramatically embarked upon direct involvement; first by sea and, when that was thwarted by the Sri Lankan Navy, a much publicized air-drop on 4 June. This was largely designed to demonstrate Indian power-projection in the region and to remind the Sri Lankan government of New Delhi's determination to obstruct a military solution. By 29 July, Colombo had absorbed this basic lesson in regional geopolitics and, apprehensive too of the severe economic toll of the war, agreed to the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord.

Next: Accord and After

The Left Side of the Wheel

Mineka

Casinos are a much discussed topic today, at the market place, at clubs and seriously debated in Parliament. Are casino operations justifiable in Sri Lanka? Two areas that need careful examination, are the moral aspect and the material benefits that would accrue to the country.

Most of us frown on gambling. It is an avocation of the loafer, the idler. It is evil, it leads to crime, it is dysfunctional, it undermines disciplined work habits. These arguments are based on cultural, ethical and religious sentiments.

However conventional opinion on gambling in the casino is not so demoralizing. It's new, it's plush; good for tourism. Play boys and popular film stars have hit head-lines playing the Wheel in Monte Carlo, which was synonymous with casinos in the past, before Las Vegas lights illumined the desert sky. To some casinos reflect rich gentlemen in black tie and pretty ladies in jewels and evening dress! It is considered a pastime of the Occident — Westernization and sophisticated. Hence is it permissible?

It is not Westernisation any more, nor super-sophistication. Casinos have sprung up in Asia — Macau, Malaysia, Nepal and recently in great number in Sri Lanka; within a distance of two miles from the Fort one can count ten casinos. It is no longer the playground for the rich and the few. It is patronized in numbers. The attire is of little consequence but the green backs collectively are. It is nothing but hardcore, unaduletrated gambling in opulent and plush surroundings — and in Sri Lanka, unrestricted and uncontrolled by Government authorities, virtually allowing tax-free earnings to the operators.

Though the pastime is Western in origin most countries in the West do not permit the operation of casinos on moral grounds. And those that do, with a few exceptions, have rigid controls. What is astounding is that neither the moralists nor the religionists, have objected to the emergence of casinos in our country — and ironically when a "Dharmista" society was proclaimed

In this permissive epoch when modern thought supports exposure in favour of curtailment for the developing mind, a liberal view can be justified. Nevertheless can our society steeped in prayer and meditation, participating in pinkamas and poojas, invoking religious blessings and advocating moral conduct, vindicate this standpoint, except for patent and tangible benefits to the country. Is there revenue generation to the government, or is it a stimulus to the tourist industry that earns foreign exchange, or does casino operation create massive employment opportunities?

In every operation there is generation of some employment. This is not exceptional. Indirect employment is also negligible. However employment is not restricted to locals only. The recent raids amply demonstrated the illegal employment of foreigners, specially pretty ladies.

The tourists from the West come to Sri Lanka for its beautiful beaches and tropical sun, and a handful patronize casinos by the way. In truth, it could be a deterrent to tourism. Most casinos are located in tourist hotels and if the two coeval professions coexist side by side, death leaps and aids scare may drive them away. However, there is an increase of tourists from the Far East arriving on special junket tours -- a lump sum is paid overseas to an agent of the casino operator and its equivalent is given at the casino. The winnings too are paid abroad. So another Central Bank exists, transacting foreign exchange at special rates outside our country.

We then come to the most important question. Is this a rupee and foreign revenue generating source to the Government. Examples are numerous of countries and cities that have permitted casino operation for the specific purpose of economic growth. A third world country like ours should have done so only with the dual aim of filling the country's coffers and bolstering our foreign exchange earnings. Las Vegas was a barren desert that could not support plant life, let alone a community, until the casinos erupted. Freeport, in the Bahamas has a similar history. Atlantic city is more recent and became casino country to alleviate poverty and generate employment and in Western Australia to enhance government revenue.

The intake of most casinos in the world is rigidly controlled by the government who has its officers or banks to monitor the encashments and count the sealed boxes. A very large percent of those takings are revenue to the government and from the balance, legislation ensures that a reasonable percent goes back to the public by way of prizes and jack pot bonanzas. Million dollar jack pot winners are common in the States. In Sri Lanka there are no financial controls and the casino owners and not the players hit a tax free jack pot daily. And who are these operators? Almost all of them are foreigners — a wandering tribe and some with a past. They have no loyalty or patriotism to the country, and to infer that foreign exchange abuses are rampant is not imaginative. When official channels are blocked, the black trade

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Special to the L. G.

UN AND GULF WAR

Ramses Amer

Preface

In the light of the war of destruction against Iraq launched by the United States and a number of other states in the name of the United Nations, it is of relevance to make a comparative analysis of the United Nations reaction in the Iraq-Kuwait case and in a few other cases of foreign military intervention.

The cases

The seven cases that I have chosen from the period 1979 to 1990 are the following :

- Vietnam's intervention in Kampuchea in late 1978 which led to the downfall of the existing government and the establishment of a new one in January 1979.
- Tanzania's intervention in Uganda which begun in late 1978/early 1979 also led to the overthrow of the existing government in April 1979 and to the creation of a new government.
- In September 1979, France intervened in the then Central African Empire. The Emperor Bokassa was overthrown and a new government was established.
- In December 1979, the Soviet Union intervened in Afghanistan, the existing government was overthrown and a new government was established.
- In October 1983, the United States intervened in Grenada, the existing government was overthrown and a new government was established.
- In December 1989, the United States intervened in Panama, the existing government was overthrown and a new government was established.
- In August 1990, Iraq intervened in Kuwait, the existing government was overthrown and a new government was established. Later, in August, the two states were brought together in a "comprehensive and eternal merger".

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The United Nations reaction

The United Nations has reacted to five of the seven cases above. The only two cases which have not resulted in any reaction by the United Nations are Uganda and the Central African Empire.

In the case of Kampuchea, the United Nations Security Council decided to consider the intervention twice, in January 1979 and then in February and March 1979. The draft resolution failed to be adopted on both occasions due to a veto by the Soviet Union. Apart from the Soviet Union only Czechoslovakia voted against the draft while the other 13 members of the Security Council voted in favour. The General Assembly of the United Nations has been dealing with issues related to the Kampuchean conflict since 1979. For four years, 1979 to 1982, the question of Kampuchean representation was subject to vote, and on all four occasions, the General Assembly decided to allow Democratic Kampuchea, the overthrown government, to continue to represent the state of Kampuchea at the United Nations.

The second Kampuchea issue at the United Nations has been the agenda item entitled: "The situation in Kampuchea" which was subject to vote from 1979 to 1989, and the General Assembly adopted a resolution critical of Vietnam's intervention in Kampuchea (although Vietnam was not mentioned by name in the resolutions) by a growing majority over these years. In September 1990, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 668 dealing with the Kampuchean conflict. In October 1990, at the 45th session of the General Assembly, a resolution on the Situation in Kampuchea was unanimously adopted for the first time.

In the case of Afghanistan, the United Nations Security Council decided to consider the intervention once, in January 1980. The draft resolution failed to be adopted due to a veto by the Soviet Union. Apart from the Soviet Union only the German Democratic Republic voted against the draft while the other 13 members of the Security Council voted in favour. In this situation the majority decided to convene an emergency special session of the General Assembly, which was held in January 1980. At this emergency special session as well as at the ordinary sessions of the General Assembly up to 1987, a resolution critical of the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan was adopted (although the Soviet Union was not mentioned by name in the resolution). In 1988 and 1989, the resolution on the agenda item: "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security" was adopted without a vote, The new government of Afghanistan was allowed to represent the state of Afghanistan at the United Nations.

In the case of Grenada, the United Nations Security Council decided to consider the intervention once, in October 1983. The draft resolution failed to be adopted due to a veto by the United States. Apart from the United States no other state voted against the draft but 11 members of the Security Council voted in favour and Togo, the United Kingdom and Zaire abstained in the vote. The issue was then taken over by the General Assembly, which dealt with it under the agenda item: "The situation in Grenada". A draft resolution critical of the United States intervention in Grenada was adopted by the General Assembly (although the United States was not mentioned by name in the resolution). This was the only year when the General Assembly dealt with the

agenda item: "The situation in Grenada". The new government of Grenada was allowed to represent the state of Grenada at the United Nations.

In the case of Panama, the United Nations Security Council decided to consider the intervention in December 1989. The draft resolution failed to be adopted due to a triple veto by France, the United Kingdom and the United States, Canada also voted against the draft and Finland abstained in the vote while the other 10 members of the Security Council voted in favour. The issue was then taken over by the General Assembly, with a draft resolution critical of the United States intervention in Panama adopted by the General Assembly (the United States was directly referred to by name). The new government of Panama was allowed to represent the state of Panama during the work of the General Assembly, and it voted against the resolution criticizing the United States' intervention in Panama.

In the case of Kuwait the United Nations Security Council decided to consider the intervention and subsequent events related to it at several meetings since August 1990. The Security Council adopted twelve resolutions between August and November 1990. The most important of these resolutions are the following: The first resolutions (660) was adopted on 2 August, with 14 votes in favour and one state which did not take part in the vote, Yemen. Resolution 660 was a reaction to the intervention. The second resolution (661) was adopted on 6 August, 1990 by 13 votes in favour and two states which abstained, Cuba and Yemen. Resolution 661 decided to implement economic sanctions against Iraq. The third resolution (662) was adopted on 9 August, by 15 votes in favour (consensus). Resolution 662 declared that the "comprehensive and eternal merger" between Iraq and Kuwait was illegal. The fifth resolution (665) was adopted on 25 August, by 13 votes in favour and two states which abstained, Cuba and Yemen. Resolution 665 gave the right to the member states of the United Nations to use military force if needed to uphold the economic sanctions against Iraq and Kuwait. The ninth resolution (670) was adopted on 25 September, by 14 votes in favour and one state which abstained, Cuba. Resolution 670 banned all air cargo traffic, except for food in humanitarian circumstances, to Iraq and Kuwait. The twelfth resolution (678), the war resolution, was adopted on 29 November, by 12 votes in favour, two votes against — Cuba and Yemen — and with China abstaining in the vote. Resolution 678 included the following operative paragraph two:

> "Authorizes Member States cooperating with the Government of Kuwait, unless Iraq before January 15, 1991 fully implements, ..., the foregoing resolutions to use all necessary means to uphold and implement Security Council Resolution 660 (1990) and all subsequent relevant resolutions and to restore international peace and security in the area;"

Comparing the United Nations reactions

The only two cases which have resulted in the same reaction from the United Nations are those which have not been subject to any United Nations decision. The other five cases differ to a higher or lesser degree from each other.

The United Nations reaction towards the Vietnamese intervention in Kampuchea is the most extensive in terms of the reaction as well as in the unique decision to continue to recognize the overthrown government.

The new governments in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Grenada, Panama and Uganda have all been recognized by the United Nations. In the case of the Central African Republic and Uganda, this happened without any opposition at all. In the case of Afghanistan and Grenada, there were only limited verbal protests. The case of Panama is very surprising particularly when compared to Grenada, since the new government of Panama was so swiftly granted the right to represent the state of Panama at the United Nations in 1989. The new government of Grenada had to wait at least until after the issue of intervention had been subject to a decision by the General Assembly in 1983.

Another interesting aspect of the case of Panama is the "weak" majority voting in favour of the resolution condemning the United States' intervention in the General Assembly. Only 75 states voted in favour compared with 108 in the case of Grenada, 104 in the first vote in the case of Atghanistan and 91 in the first vote in the case of Kampuchea. Seventy-five states represent less than half of the 158 member states of the United Nations.

The reaction in the case of Panama both in the Security Council, with four negative votes including three permanent members, and in the General Assembly with less than 50% of the member states voting in favour of the resolution would indicate that the international community (in particular the Western world) has become more prone to accept foreign military intervention in the internal affairs of other states.

This is contrasted by the United Nations reaction in the case of Kuwait. That reaction would indicate a very strong rejection and condemnation of foreign military intervention in the internal affairs of other states. In fact the reaction has been so strong as to generate a decision by the Security Council to go to war.

France, the United Kingdom and the United States vetoed the attempt to condemn the United States intervention in Panama, but they have actively sought to gather support among the other members of the Security Council, first in order to condemn Iraq's intervention in Kuwait and secondly, in order to launch a military action against Iraq.

The logical explanation to this obvious double standard by the United Nations on two similar

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EXCLUSIVE

World and Asian Development Perspectives in the 90s

Gamani Corea

Asian Development Bank: "Distinguished Speakers Series" Lecture, Manila. April 16, 1991.

I do feel honoured to be here today to deliver this address under your "Distinguished Speaker" series. I am particularly glad to be able, in this way, to renew my acquaintance with the Asian Development Bank, an acquaintance that goes back over a long period of time. I have seen the Bank evolve over the years and I must say that it is with much pride that I have watched it grow to be a major institution in the arena of international finance and development, an institution whose influence in the region continues to increase.

When, some time last year, the title for this lecture was discussed with Mr Hakchung Choo I had the privilege of being the Chairman of The United Nations General Assembly's — to give its full title — "Ad Hoc Committee of Whole on the Preparation of an International Development Strategy for Fourth United Nations Development Decade". Both Mr Choo and I felt that my involvement in the process might give me some orientations, some ideas, about the decade of the '90s and about the prospects for world development. Well, the work on the Strategy is now over. There is today in existence an International Development Strategy for the 90s, adopted by consensus by the General Assembly on the 21 December last year. The Fourth United Nations Development Decade has already commenced. It began on the 1st January 1991 and will end on the 31st December of the year 2000.

What can I say to you today on the basis of this experience of preparing the Strategy? Perhaps, the first thing I should say is that last September, when the final stages of the negotiations on the Strategy were in progress, the crisis in the Gulf had already broken out. It was not practical at that time for the Strategy to do more that refer to that situation and to underline the need to keep its possible impact under review. Since then we have seen the crisis lead to war — a war which was brought to a conclusion within a relatively short period of time. Some of the worst fears linked to uncertainties about the scale and duration of the war have not been realised. It is, perhaps, still pertinent to ask what these events mean — not just for the Strategy itself but for the prospects for development over the decade and indeed for the political and economic state of the world. There were forebodings about the disruptive effects of the war on the economies of the Middle East and indeed of some countries of the Asian region. The anxieties about what could happen to oil prices and supplies have now lessened. But there are continuing concerns about the impact of the crisis on export earnings, on remittances from migrant workers, and on the impact of the war and of post war reconstruction on the aid budgets of donor countries.

It remains to be seen how all this will work out. But it is now apparent that the war in the Gulf has not vitiated the Strategy. The Strategy has stressed the urgency of reactivating development in the 90s. The events in the Gulf underline that urgency. The Strategy has pointed to the actions needed to achieve this end. The events in the Gulf underscore the relevance of such actions. A disturbed world will, certainly, make the tasks set out in the Strategy more difficult to achieve. On the other hand, an upsurge in international cooperation in the aftermath of the war will help their attainment. Thus the broad thrust of the Strategy remains pertinent. It is, I believe, still a valid perception, on the part of the international community, of what needs to be done to make the 90s a genuine decade of development.

It is not, however, my intention today to recapitulate the Strategy. It is my purpose instead to single out a few broad themes which I feel are crucial to the prospects for world development during the 90s. Let me start with the projections that have been made for the global economy of the 90s. These came from a number of sources including the World Bank and the United Nations secretariat and were made available to the Ad Hoc Committee at the early stages of its work. The projections attempted to depict the likely course of events on the basis that present policies continue unchanged. Despite relatively minor differences, the broad picture presented by all these projections was remarkably similar. World economic growth would be relatively moderate in the 90s. The industrialised countries would grow at around 2-3% a year. Commodity prices in real terms would not recover significantly from the depressed levels reached in the 80s. The countries of East Asia would remain on the path of rabid growth and the countries of South East Asia would also record good performances. Growth in the South Asian region too would be positive but not spectacular in any way. The worst scenario concerns the rest of the developing world, particularly Africa and Latin America. The countries of these two continents would, according to these projections, remain for the most

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part in the doldrums, weighed down by the effects of external indebtedness and low levels of past investment.

Now this picture provided by the projections will certainly not make of the 90s a "decade of development". What it suggests is that the 90s will not be very different from the 80s, and the 80s have already been called a "lost decade"! The same policies are expected to yield the same results. I must say that I find this prospect of a replay of the 80s quite disconcerting. It is true that there are hopeful prospects for at least some parts of the Asian region. But the prospects are not equally encouraging for all parts. I find the projections for the populous and volatile sub-region of South Asia quite worrisome, specially in the light of current happenings. But I am speaking now of the vast majority of developing countries. I cannot imagine that the economic and social fabric of these countries could withstand yet another decade of relative stagnation without consequences that will be highly disturbing. The developing countiies are not static societies that need only to be lifted out of poverty. There is a strong social dynamic at work in these countries, a dynamic that is being driven by population growth, education, and the impact of communications and the media. The poor are no longer as patient and passive as they were some decades ago; today, young populations, whose aspirations are rudely thwarted, are easily roused to anger. Economic growth is itself, of course, a cause of tensions. But without growth and without resources governments have too little space for manoeuvre. They will be preoccupied with crisis management as the very "governability" of their societies comes into question.

A simple replay of the 80s could indeed make the new decade one of tension and turmoil rather than of development for many developing countries. The international community must realise that in the world of today it is unlikely that trouble and turbulence will stay confined to national boundaries. Interdependence, as the Strategy document points out, is more than a matter of trade and economic linkages alone. Refugees, migrants, drugs, terrorism, all these spill over and reach out just not to neighbours but to far away countries as well. The destabilization of Third World countries because of continued economic failure can affect the global political climate of the 90s. The Third World is different to what it was some decades ago and upheavals there, potentially more violent and explosive than ever before, can affect peace, good order and stability in the world as a whole.

The developed countries have thus a stake, a political stake, in progress in the Third World. A number of motivations have so far underpinned development cooperation between the rich and the poor countries. These have included humanitarian concerns, the cold war calculus, even considerations of mutual economic benefits. But a strong motivation for the 90s and beyond must surely be the link between conditions in the Third World and global stability — political and social as much as economic. If the promise of mutual benefits has proved to be a weak motivation for international cooperation let, at least, the danger of mutual damage be a spur to action. It has been said that the end of the cold war has opened up new vistas for a new world. If East and West are to work together in the area of Third World development the basic motivation must be the direct and overriding interest they both have in an orderly world. This is a stronger rationale for East West cooperation than provided by lesser arguments such as that of improving the efficiency of aid through closer coordination.

It is, I think, one of the merits of the International Development Strategy that it is sensitive to all this. The Strategy recognises the fragility of the political and social balance of many developing countries and makes, therefore, an imperative of changing the picture of the 90s depicted by the projections. The reactivation of development in the developing countries is in fact, the primary goal of the Strategy. But how is this reactivation to come about? This brings us to the realm of policies. What policies and actions are needed? What policies and actions must change? In this regard, there was an active debate in the Ad Hoc Committee on the reative importance to be given to the external economic environment, on the one hand, and to the domestic policies of the developing countries, on the other. Not surprisingly, spokesmen from the developing countries tended to emphasise the former, while the developed country representatives were inclined to stress the latter. Both aspects, of course, were seen to be important. But the issue was one of emphasis. Each side was apt to be defensive about its own responsibilities and inclined to exhort the other to action. Some formulations resembled a "shopping list" of multiple demands on the developed countries. Others came close to making of the Strategy for the 90s a simple "do-it-yourself kit" for the developing countries themselves!

I feel myself that in the course of the 80s the balance shifted too much towards a stress on domestic polices and that the time has come to restore the balance. During the 80s the external economic environment was less favourable to development than, perhaps, in any previous decade of the post war period. The early years of the decade were years of recession in the industrialised countries themselves-essentially brought about by conscious policies introduced to fight inflation. The subsequent recovery of these countries was halting and unevenly shared. There were persistant imbalances and uncertainties and wide fluctuations in interest and exchange rates. Commodity prices plunged and remained generally depressed throughout the 80s. The forces of protectionism were strengthened, aid

budgets came under severe strains, and the external debt burden wrought havoc on many developing countries. The advice to developing countries in this setting was that they should "adjust". Adjustment" became, in fact, one of the key words of the decade of the 80s. There was talk of "adjustment with growth", "structural adjustment", even "adjustment with a human face".

I must confess that I found this term "adjustment" puzzling. Adjust to what, one has to ask ? Not surely to a booming, bouncing, world economy ? One would hardly need to adjust to that ! The real answer must be, on the contrary, to adjust to hard times, for hard times had certainly come. Now, one can hardly quarrel with such advice. Developing countries, when faced with a squeeze on resources, have necessarily to adjust — they have no other option. It is of relevance whether they adjust in an orderly or a disorderly fashion; whether, through sound policies and good management, they could avoid compounding their problems. I consider it valid, even laudable, to advice countries on both the need for and the method of adjustment, all the more so if such counsel is backed up with adequate resources and is shorn of dubious ideological overtones.

But all this is only one side of the coin. Adjustment on the part of the developing countries will not suffice to restore growth if their efforts are continually undermined by an unfavourable external environment. This is surely the lesson to be learnt from the experience of the 80s where despite adjustment by practically every developing country one has still to talk of the need to reactivate development in the 90s. It is something like a man who has lost his job. He could benefit from advice on how to adjust to his new situation. But he should know, or be told, that his belt tightening alone will not get him back his job ! The "lost decade" of the 80s was, unhappily, also a decade of muted voices. One heard much about important topics, often relating to the domestic policies of the developing countries, but all too little about the hard core issues of money and finance, market access, and the terms of trade. As subjects for international dialogue, these latter had ceased to be popular and negotiations were either non-existent or deadlocked.

The time has come, as I said, to restore the balance. It is right to insist on sound domestic policies. But one should not ignore the fact that there has been, over each of the decades of the post war period and despite some contrary examples, a close correlation between the average growth performance of the developing countries and the external economic environment. It is, indeed, difficult to see how the 90s could become a decade of development if the debt problem continues to stifle growth, if access to markets remains restricted, if commodity prices and the terms of trade remain depressed, and if the net flow of resources is in the wrong direction. These conditions may still provide some limited space that a few developing countries could use. But they could hardly permit a general reactivation of development in the 90s. The four subjects of external debt, trade, commodity prices and resource flows figure prominently in the Strategy. There is sufficient clarity in the Strategy in respect of what needs to be done in these areas. But this is not matched, in my view, by firm commitments to take the actions needed, commitments that go beyond present approaches. As I said earlier, it is not my intention to go over the contents of the Strategy. But I would like to express some thoughts on the four key elements of the external economic environment which I believe will be of decisive importance in the 90s.

First, there is the question of the external debt of the developing countries. I think it is generally recognised that the reactivation of development in the 90s will not occur in many countries unless the debt problem is overcome. The subject has had a long exposure to discussion and analysis. The creditor countries have argued that the steps already taken, based on a case-by-case approach, should suffice and point to some encouraging results. On the other hand, there is the view of others, including the South Commission, that a more comprehensive approach is needed. I do not propose to join this debate here except to say that a solution to the debt problem will depend on how far some basic requirements are met: a reduction in the stock of debt — encompassing all kinds of debt — commercial debts, governmental debts, and debts owed to multilateral institutions; an easing of the terms of repayment; and a return to a more stable and dynamic world economy. Whatever the means, however, the debt problem has to be put behind us if the 90s are to be really a decade of development.

Second, there is the question of external resource flows. A reactivation of development in the 90s cannot occur without a resumption of external resource flows to the developing countries. The phenomenon of net resources flowing in the opposite direction — from the rich to the poor countries — is an aberration that does little credit to the very concept of international cooperation for development. As far as I know, the external resource transfers needed to reactivate development in the 90s have not been estimated. But they will surely be considerable if growth rates are to be adequate and there are no miracles on the trade front. From where would such resources come? I do not see that conditions are ripe for a massive enlargement of bilateral aid budgets. On the contrary, the pointers seem to be set in the other direction. The private commercial banks are not themselves likely to be major actors in the light of

recent experience. Direct private investment might prove to be more promising than before but the criteria that determine these flows do not give equal assurance to all developing countries. We are left then with the multilateral financial institutions as the main instruments that are capable of meeting the needs of the 90s. In my view, the time has indeed come when these institutions need to become the principal actor in channelling long term resources to developing countries.

The post war international arrangements have been satisfactory on this score. The Bretton Woods system did not highlight the issue of long term resource needs despite the establishment of the World Bank. The focus of the system was on stability and full employment in the industrialised countries and on the need to avoid the trauma of the pre-war depression. The need for short term resources to support payments balances and stable exchange rates was estimated in quatitative terms and the quota system of the International Monetary Fund was designed to match this need. No comparable exercise was done in regard to resource needs relative to long term growth objectives. Reconstruction from the ravages of war was the primary, though not the exclusive, objective of the World Bank in the initial stages. To the extent that the World Bank was designed to provide long term resources for development its contribution was seen as only a supplement to flows from other sources. Direct private foreign investment and possibly, for the ex-colonial countries, bond issues in the capital markets of the metropolitan powers were probably regarded as the principal sources. Official aid and commercial bank lending for development were hardly known at the time.

It is true that the picture has changed considerably over the years. The World Bank and the regional development banks have become major sources of capital for the developing countries. Official Development Assistance has become part of the budgets of the leading industrialised countries. During the 70s the private commercial banks too became actors in channelling long term resources while direct private foreign investment has also come to play a part. Yet, the situation remains unsatisfactory. There is still no link between what is needed and what is available. The developing countries have still no assurance that the international monetary and financial system will respond to their proven needs. They are still obliged to look, as best they can, to friendly donors and private channels abroad. I believe that this gap in the Bretton Woods arrangement needs to be filled. The multilateral financial institutions should mobilise external resources and channel them to where they are needed — as indeed they do today. But the scale of their operations must be such that they play the major role of matching availabilities to needs.

Over 25 years ago, at UNCTAD 1, an attempt was made to estimate the total "traee gap" of the developing countries — the difference between the value of imports needed to attain an internationally agreed target for GDP growth and the estimated earnings from exports. Strangely, such an exercise is seldom attempted today. This is not, I suspect, because of any scruples about conceptual or technical problems. More likely, it is due to fears that the result could be upsetting! The Strategy did not adopt a target for GDP growth. It cited sustained growth rates of 7% or more as the experience of countries that have, in recent times, undergone successful economic and technological transformation. Whatever the growth objective, there is some merit in estimating however tentatively, the total requirements of long term resource flows in the 90s. This will serve, at least, as a guide to the magnitude of the effort that the World Bank and the regional development banks should be enabled to make in the course of the decade.

There are, of course, technical and institutional issues — and these may well be complex — that would need to be resolved. There is the question of what needs to be done to make it possible for the multilateral institutions to raise resources on a scale far greater than before. There is the issue of reconciling rates of interest on borrowings with the rates charged on loans since concessional terms would remain appropriate for a number of countries. These is, above all, the question of giving the developing countries a greater voice in decision making within some of the institutions and, related to this, the all important question of the extent and character of "conditionality". All these, as I said, are complex issues but they are not insoluble and should not serve to frustrate a genuine political will on the part of the international community to enhance the role of the multilateral institutions. The latter objective may well form part of a wider approach relating to the reform of the international monetary and financial system as a whole. The means for for the creation of international liquidity and for mobilising and channeling structural payments surpluses are matters of relevance to such reform.

The third issue I wish to touch upon is that of international trade. A decade of development will hardly be consistent with an international trading system in which developing countries encounter barriers to market access. The issues here are well known and I do not propose to go over them. Some years back UNCTAD succeeded in winning acceptance of the concept of a Generalised System of Trade Preferences for developing countries. Since then the GSP has figured in the tariff regimes of virtually all the industrialised countries — albeit on an unilateral basis. Over the years, however, there has been an erosion of the system due to such factors as the reduction of preferential margins following the progressive lowering of MFN

tariff rates, the application of the concept of graduation and, most important of all, the proliferation of non-tariff parriers against exports of manufactured goods from the developing countries. In the present context the need for plain and simple access appears, in fact, to override the question of preferential access. Hopes were placed on the Uruguay Round as a means of reversing the protectionist trends of recent years. But it is still unclear what gains there would be to the developing countries through the implementation of the pledge of "roll back and standstill". The traditional issues in the area of trade negotiations remain, perhaps, of greater significance to most developing countries than the so-called "new issues" such as trade in services or the liberalisation of agricultural trade — relating primarily to trade in temperate zone products.

One factor of relevance to the international trading environment of the 90s is the trend towards integration among industrialised countries and the formation of trading blocs. There has been talk about both positive and negative results arising from this process. Integration is seen as giving more strength to major economies and stimulating world trade in that way. On the other hand, there are fears about exclusive trading blocs — "fortresses" — that may increasingly do business with each other and by-pass the countries of the Third World. There are also indications that such groupings may take on regional dimensions that reach out to developing countries as well. The EEC has a special relationship with the group of developing countries tnat were associated with the Lome Agreement. Special relationships may also develop with such countries as those of the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe. The President of the United States has launched the concept of "Enterprise America" which envisages an eventual free trade area that will embrace the continents of North and South America. There is also the concept a cooperative grouping of the countries of the Pacific rim — or of East Asia — centering around Japan.

These developments pose a lot of questions about the future of the international trading system. At the time of UNCTAD 1, in the sixties, the argument was that the preferential treatment of developing countries should be "generalised" so as to avoid patron-client relationships among particular groups of countries. Present moves are not in that direction. But one needs, nevertheless, to ask where the balance of advantage lies? The developing countries participating in such arrangements have the prospect of favoured access to the markets, the technology, and the finance of the partner countries. On the other hand, they would not presumably enjoy most favoured nations treatment in other groupings. And what of countries — those of the South Asian region for example — that do not easily fit into a regional grouping which includes one or more highly industrialised countries? What too of cooperation among developing countries? Since the days of the Havana Charter the goal of the international community has evolved in the direction of an unified, open and non-discrimina tory trading system, qualified only by the preferential treatment of developing countries on a generalised basis. Will this now give place to some kind of "federal system" made up of trading blocs and sub-systems — a kind of second best solutions reflecting the weaknesses and shortcomings of the principal actors in world trade? I can do no more here than flag these questions as being of crucial relevance to the 90s and beyond.

I want now to touch upon a fourth point. It is one that concerns commodity trade. Despite a decline in the share of non-oil commodities in the exports of the developing countries a vast number of the latter — perhaps the greater number — are still crucially dependent on commodity export earnings for the bulk of their external earnings. It is difficult to see how a reactivation of development during the 90s can become a reality for these countries if commondity markets and prices continue to stagnate at the highly depressed levels reached in the 80s. Yet, the thrust towards international cooperation to support commodity markets has weakened in recent years. In 1974 at UNCTAD IV in Nairobi the Integrated Programme for Commodities was adopted without a vote by all governments. It provided a framework for the negotiation of international commodity agreements and for the establishment of a Common Fund to finance stocking operations. Today, although both the Integrated Programme and the Common Fund exist they are not used as focal points of international policy.

It is sometimes said that international commodily agreements have failed in practice and no longer serve as models for the future. I do not consider this assertion to be valid at all. Commodity agreements have sought to support prices by regulating supplies through export quotas and, at times, through the purchase of stocks. For a number of commodities there has been long history of reasonable success in the operation of these agreements. As far as I can see, there are no technical factors that have now emerged to change this picture. Measures to regulate commodity prices through international agreements have not failed in practice; they have been abandoned because of a failure in political will. Ideological influences — a new emphasis on market forces and an aversion to "dirigisme" on the part of some of the leading consumer countries — have been cited in explanation. But the whole rationale of intervention in agriculture has its roots in classical economic analysis which saw such intervention as a means of improving the functioning of markets. The contribution of low commodity prices to the containment of inflation in the industrialised

countries is perhaps a more pertinent explanation of political attitudes. But again, such a factor cannot endure as a basis for policy. It's immediate advantages could be outweighed by an eventual disruption in supplies, as well as by the consequences of negative developments in the producing countries themselves.

An international commodity policy must, therefore, form part of any approach to improve the external economic environment in the 90s. The argument that technological changes are reducing the world's need for commodities is not, in my view, decisive. Despite technological developments, the volume of commodity exports — and hence the volume of consumption — generally increassed over the 80s. The low level of prices has not been due only to a weakening of demand, an important factor has been the availability of ample, even increasing, supplies. This phenomenon did not accompany cyclical downturns in prices during earlier periods. In the 80s, many of the developing producer countries endeavoured to protect their earnings by sustaining or increasing the volume of exports. One instrument, frequently in use in the context of adjustment policies, was the depreciation of exchange rates. A fall in price should normally lead to a contraction in supplies through its effects on high cost producers and on investment. But exchange rate depreciations play an offsetting role since they do not allow declining world prices to get translated into declining domestic prices. They distort, in this way, the signals of the world market, and contribute, when they significantly affect total supplies, to a weakening of the terms of trade of the commodity producing countries.

One cannot see how commodity prices could improve in the 90s as long as the imbalance between supply and demand persists. In the wake of the weakening of support from the consumer countries for international commodity agreements there has been much talk about other aspects of the commodity economy. The processing, marketing, and transportation of commodities; diversification; and compensatory financing have all been singled out as instruments for alternative approaches. Many of these have merit and form part of the Integrated Programme itself. But their impact is, for the most part, long term and they do not relieve the immediate problem of imbalances in markets. I do not see any good reason why the commodity agreements that are non-operational today should not be renegotiated in the early 90s and new agreements not be negotiated as well. Use should be made of the First Window of the Common Fund that is now in existence. The decisive factor is that of political attitudes. There have recently been suggestions for a new approach towards stability in the oil market involving dialogue and cooperation between producers and consumers. If this makes sense for oil it should make sense for other commodities as well. For the 90s, the alternatives to producer-consumer cooperation on commodities are either the persistence of depressed prices throughout the decade or else initiatives by the producing countries to undertake supply management by themselves.

I have singled out for comment four of the principal factors that will fashion the external economic environment for development during the 90s: external debt, resource flows, the international trading system and international commodity policy. Needless to say, another crucial determinant of the external economic environment, and one that will have an impact on these four factors, is the macro economic policies pursued by the major industralised countries themselves. I presume that assumptions about the continuation of present policies in this area had a dominant influence on the projections made for the 90s. Yet, as the Strategy itself recognises, a policy stance in the industrialised countries that favours growth and dynamism in the world economy and that contributes to stablity in exchange and interest rates is vital to the reactivation of development during the decade. The ground has been well traversed and it is not necessary to elaborate upon these issues here. What I would wish to do instead is to turn to the other set of policy measures that are central to making a decade of development of the 90s — the domestic policies and actions that need to be undertaken by the developing countries themselves.

Part 2: Domestic Policies

UN AND GULF WAR...

(Continued from Page 14)

cases is that the world is moving fast towards a new international order in whioh there is a sole global power, the United States, which is trying to enforce a sort of "Pax Americana", in which the United States can intervene in the internal affairs of other states while Third World states without the protection of one of the permanent members of the Security Council will face a united front of big powers and many minor powers.

An enforcement of the new international order of "Pax Americana" would lead to a situation in which international law is applied only when it is suitable for the United States. The difference from earlier times is that the Soviet Union and China are, as long as they are not directly involved, ready to help promote the United States attempt to enhance its "global power ambitions".

The inconsistencies in the United Nations' reactions to foreign military interventions raises doubts about the credibility of the United Nations as an organization for promotiog peace and understanding among the nations of the world.

The fact that several member states of the United Nations were able to launch a war against Iraq without any control by the United Nations, but with its blessing, will have serious negative consequences for the future role of the United Nations in the international system.

Some observations on English translations from Sinhala

Kamalika Pieris

Translations from Sinhala into English probably started as a dilettante colonial activity, and therefore nobody bothered to ask whether English was indeed the most suitable vehicle for bringing Sinhala literature into the ambit of world literature. It is not surprising that Lakshmi de Silva and Ranjini Obeyesekere have thought it necessary to discuss many of the technical problems that arise in English translation. The thought patterns, sounds and sentence structure in English are totally antihetical to those of Sinhala and it is reasonable to ask whether some other international language would be more suitable to translations from Sinhala. However, apart from the Russian translations of Martin Wickremasinghe and Gunadasa Amarasekera, I do not know of translations in any language other than English.

People seem to have translated into English for a variety of reasons. Some have translated because they had nothing better to do, others because they were asked to translate. One translator simply wished 'to promote among Sinhalese young men who have lost their national ideals and forgotten their noble traditions, the closer study of their language, to give them an idea of their literature.' (Edmund. P. Wijetunge. *Subasitaye,* 1930). There was also a desire to depict the 'cultural and social variety of the Asian scene' *(Selected Asian stories,* Varuna Publishers, 1973). Others have translated for the 'kick of it' as one contemporary translator put it in a personal communication.

These translations have been published both locally and abroad. The local segment includes the occasional effort published in humanities journals and English literary magazines. It also includes *Crest gem of poetry* which shoots us back to the 13th century. But it is the translations of Martin Wickremasinghe which lead the field. Some of the Wickremasinghe material will probably find it's way to libraries abroad through various purchasing programmes but the main readership would be in Sri Lanka. Since most Sri Lankans would have read these in the original anyway, one wonders whether these translations have hit their target. There is no statement of intent on the part of the translator in either *Madol Doova, Lay bare the roots,* or *Way of the Lotus,* though there is a brief analysis of the original work in the first two mentioned.

The translations issued abroad are more significant, in that they are specifically intended to introduce Sinhala literature to non-Sri Lankans through the medium of international programmes for the dissemination of Asian culture. The audience for Sinhala literature is thereby enlarged, at least in theory.

The first of these was *An anthology of Sinhalese literature up to 1815* (Allen & Unwin, 1970) prepared for the literature translations collection of Unesco, at the suggestion of the National Commission of Ceylon for Unesco. It's purpose was to 'give an overall picture of a representative sample of classical Sinhalese literature a literature which is of substantial value, bulk and antiquity, but of which virtually no translations of an adequacy are available at present.' It was designed to introduce the Sinhalese literature of Ceylon to the ordinary reader in the West. The introduction pointed out that much of the beauty of Sinhala classical poetry lay in the metrical patterns, the assonances and the intricate rhyming systems. Since it was not easy to make satisfactory translations of these, particularly to translate it in terms of any form of English verse, some of it was given in prose or a poetic layout. The anthology also carried an appendix, unsigned, on the metres of Sinhala verse.

This anthology was edited by an European (Reynolds) with a foreward by a Ceylonese of European descent (Ludowyk). The introduction said nothing of Sinhala literature's obvious links with Sanskrit and Pali, nor of it's place in the broad corpus of Asian literature, but instead gave us fleeting references to Hardy, Tolstoy and Brecht. (p 10, 17).

Unesco followed this up with *An anthology of Sinhalese literature of the Twentieth Century* part of the Unesco collection of representative works, Sinhalese series. (Paul Norbury Publications, 1987). This anthology attempted the strange task of trying to convey the flavour of trilogies and a long opera by translating bits of Martin Wickkremasinghe and Sarathchandra. It also contained two of the most slapdash and cursory introductions to modern Sinhala literature. I have ever read. However the introduction contains a fairly comprehensive listing of the numerous volumes of Sinhala literature in English translation which have appeared in the west. (p xvii) Two items are missing from this list: D. M. de Silva's translation of *Pemato Jayati Soko* published in the Salzburg Studies in English Literature (1976) and the special issue on Sinhala and Tamil writing of the 1970's edited by Ranjini Obeyesekera, in *Journal of South Asian Literature* 1987.

The best of the anthologies dealing with the modern Sinhala literature is, to my view, *An anthology of modern writing from Sri Lanka* edited by Ranjini Obeyesekera and Chitra

Fernando. (University of Arizona Press, 1991) I would recommend this anthology for the quality of it's translations and for the quality of the introductions. This anthology and the first of the two Unesco volumes cover the field of Sinhala literature very satisfactorily.

In this anthology we find a clear statement of intent and some attempt to place Sinhala literature within the constellation of major and minor world literatures. The introduction stated that the smallness of Sri Lanka and the fact that Sinhala is not spoken anywhere else in the world made it seem almost presumptuous to offer an anthology of its material. However despite its smallness it possessed some distinction in belonging to a literary tradition and language which spanned 2000 years. Literature of Sri Lanka was rarely represented in anthologies of Asian writings because it was often considered an extension of the Indian culture area. It was not represented in anthologies of Indian material because it was distinct and separate from Indian literature. Thus a need for a collection of representative writings from Sri Lanka had been felt a long and this collection was a response to that need. (p xiii)

One interesting by-product of anthologies such as these, is the accompanying evaluations of Sinhala literature. The anthology by Obeyesekera and Fernando is particularly rich in this respect. They both deal extensively with language, a topic to which the Sinhala critic generally pays scant regard. Obeysekera comments that the poetic language of the contemporary young writers was an 'unconscious synthesis of their everyday world and the world of their reading and imagination'. Their worlds were no longer compartmentalised as they were for the poets of the fifties and the result is a living..growing language of the broad urban and rural middle class to which the poets belong and for which they write.' (p 13) Possibly for the first time, there is some reference to the westernisation of these groups. 'Poets who write for this large urban rural middle class no longer run the risk of being considered decadent or anti-national if they reveal western influence in their work, being old fashioned and out of touch if they have recourse to the classical tradition. Their poetry has neither the subconscious defensiveness of the writers of the fifties nor the somewhat strident note of the writers of the first decade of the century' (p 13) Elsewhere, Obeysekera has pointed out that the bilingual intelligentsia were responsible for 'hammering out a flexible, viable and with time richly textured literary prose capable of expressing changing intellectual and social world of their modern experience. It was above all a language close to colloquial speech and thus could be understood by a wide reading public.' (Obeyesekera 1984 p 81).

(To be continued)

Correspondence

Whither Parliament?

I received the *LG* Jan. 1 issue here only yesterday, almost a month after its issue date in the cover. To me; your homily entitled, 'Whither Parliament?' sounds like an old, broken record repeated umpteenth time. Why not face the naked fact that the parliament is a microcosm of the representative Sri-Lankan society? Where there is distrust, tension and violence (inter-ethnic as well as intra-ethnic varieties) among the population at large, it is reflected like a mirror in the parliament. Are we so naive to believe that when a man with a pus in his face looks at a clean mirror, the appearing image will be without any deformity? And what is the purpose in maintaining a 'cosmetic beauty' in the 'face' (parliament), while the whole 'body' (country) is in 'fire'?

The caption of the homily 'Whither Parliament?' itself is erroneous. For something to whither, first it should have flowered. Unlike the other British export cricket, the parliamentary system never flowered in the continents of Asia and Africa since it could work only where the population is basically mono-ethnic and mono-religious. In countries with multi-ethnic and multi-religious populations, the parliamentary system have long been aborted in preference to the *durbar* system of 'kings (and queens) with a support cast of ministers', though they pretended to act within the boundaries of the parliamentary system. Even in a predominantly mono-ethnic, mono religious country like Japan, the parliamentary system has given way to a form of *durbar* of the feudal lords *(shoguns)*, in which each head of the five factions of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party functions like a contemporary *shogun*.

Sachi Sri Kantha

Osaka, Japan

Note by Editor

WITHER: make or become dry; decline, decay

WHITHER: To what place or point? (Concise Oxford)

PART 2

Pax Americana and Counter–Force

Sumanasiri Liyanage

The above trends and developments have been shaping the structure of the new world order (NWO). Needless to say that it is not possible to state something conclusive on this new structure since it is still in the process of 'becoming' Charles Jencks, a writer on architecture and post-modernism, has envisaged the future international scenario as follows;

> What does this strange building look like? It goes against the habitual view of power structures as overarching hierachies controling everything. Hierachical power is not the only kind of system that works, and in this case the structure is the typical post-modern heterarchy — a logical system best exemplified by the game 'stone, paper and scissors'. (Marxism Today, 1991)

This is a more democratic order than the existing system, and combined 'both the traditional hierarchy and an egalitarian network'. How has this structure functioned during the Gulf conflict? There is no doubt that the US had the military power and strong will to act when Saddam Hussain invaded Kuwait. However, it had to seek and get the UN consent in order to make any military action legtimized. Any military intervention against Iraq might not be plausible unless it was backed by the USSR, China, Egypt and Syria. The dominant role of the US has, to a large extent, concealed the heterarchical nature of the world order. Some commentators tend to believe that world has become politically and militarily unipolar. Noam Chomsky envisions that it would produce a more undemocratic world order. He writes;

> While economically tripolar, the "New World Order" has only one military power. Any actor in world affairs will naturally try to shift a confrontation to an arena in which it can hope to prevail. In the evolving world order, the comparative advantage of the United States lies in military force, Diplomacy; international law, and the United Nations have always been regarded as an annoying encumbrance, unless they can be used to advantage against an enemy. With the current configuration of US strengths and weaknesses, the temptation to transfer problems quickly to the domain of force is likely to be strong.

In the aftermach of the Gulf war, it might appear that US military power and its will to act would dominate the world scene in the immediate future. Bush has already expressed that his concept of NWO envisions a system in which the US leads and allies follow. 'Among the nations of the world only the US has both the moralstanding and the means to back it up,' he said. Public opinion polls have shown that the popularity rates of Bush and Major increased in the course of and aftermath of the war. Does this negate the multipolarity in international system and its heterachical power structure? I do not think so. The US is invariably trying to establish its hegemonlic position in the world balance of forces or to dictate terms for other nations. But there are strong counteracting tendencies at work.

(1) No single power can provide the international leadership needed today. International problems are so complex, complicated and multi-dimensional so that they demand a collective and coperative leadership. This is reflected in the fact that international organizations are designed and formed in order to deal with the problems the solutions for which exceed the capacity of a single nation. This vision of collective leadership and international cooperation is particularly evident in Europe. Not only the Soviet Union, but also France have emphasized the necessity of such a leadership in handling world affairs. President Francois Mitterand is reported to have stated that France is not ready to accept or to unreservedly back the US and its policies. In relation to the Gulf conflict, He said,

> The US and France do not have at all the same conception of an eventual international conference on the settlement of the Israeli-Arab conflict. . . It is up to the UN security council to organize the peace. No other authority can serve as a substitute. (Time, February 18, 1991).

The EEC particularly France appear ready to confront Pax Americana that would attempt to dictate terms in international affairs and crises managment. In spite of the fact that the Soviet Union revised its foreign policy approach after 1985, it does not mean that It is ready to play the role of a junior partner to the US. Andrei Kortner puts it in the following words;

> The main goal was achieved, the Soviet Union joined the world community in protest against the aggression, the flagrant violation of intenational law, and at the same time it did not become a junior partner of the US unreservedly backing all the actions. (New Times).

Therefore it is clear that the fear of Pax Americana is not well founded in face of strong counter forces.

(2) The US is aware that it could not alone bear the expenditure of a long drawn military exercise. It was estimated that the Gulf conflict cost $1000 million a day. The daily cost of the Vietnam conflict was $230 million a day in 1991 dollars. According to one estimate, the replacement value of all US military hardware would be $4 trillion. The US wanted to limit its share of war expenditure to only 20%. Paul Kenndy, a Yale historian, has emphasized the fact that the US stands in danger of repeating the mistakes of imperial Spain or Edwardian Great Britain by making commitments of men, money and materials in differant parts of the world that are too massive for its economic and financial base to manage. The TIME magazine (March 4, 1991) carried a special feature article entitled How Many Wars Can the US Fight? This article has revealed the limitations of US military capacity.

> During the cold war Pentagon planners boasted that the US was prepared to battle the Soviet Union while simultaneously waging a smaller conflict against another, less formidable foe elsewhere in the world. Even before the outbreak of major fighting on the ground, the Gulf war had severely strained US military resources and raised troubling questions about America's ability to fight one war defending Western Europe against Soviet onslaught — much less 1 1/2.

The US deployed 75% of active tactical airplanes, 42% modern battle tanks and 46% aircraft carriers in Operation Desert storm 46% of marine corp's manpower and 37% of army personnal were deployed in the Gulf conflict. They were supported by British, French, Saudi Arabian military personnal and hardware.

It is highly unlikely that the US would increase its future military expenditure as such a increase requires a heavy reduction in non-military expenditure. Its budget deficit would reach $300 billion this year.

(3) The presence of a strong democratic movements in the advanced capitalist countries have imposed a restraint on military expenditure and installation of nuclear and other high-tech military hardware. In early 1980s, more than five million people demonstrated in the capital cities of Western Europe against the installation of cruise missiles. The other important aspect of the new peace movement is that it is linked with the Human Rights Movement in the East and the Green movement. Any modern war will be an act of enviornmental carnage. It will also have a devastating effect on wildlife. The peace movement, Green movement and the Human Rights Movement are addressing the issues which are linked with not only the future existence of humankind but also the very existence of all living things on earth.

These counteracting forces act strongly against any Pax Americana design for world domination. Mark Whitaker of the NEWSWEEK (March 4, 1991) has expressed his doubt by saying that 'Bush's dream of a new world order (dominated by the US) isn't likely to come true anytime soon'.

II

Let me now turn to Middle Eastern problems. What could we expect in the aftermath of the war in Middle-east the situation of which is very fragile and extremely volatile. As Fred Halliday in a very interesting article (New Left Review, 184) has corectly and clearly pointed out, 'the issues which Saddam is claiming to confront are real issues' which demand definite and long-term solutions. Any delay in finding solutions for those burning issues may ignite a new middle east conflict. Halliday identified four main issues, namely Arab unification, redistribution of oil wealth, liberation of Palestine and resistence to the imperialist attempt to control Middle-eastern resources. I would suggest adding to this list the democratization and secularization of the Arab polity and the assurance of social justice to the ordinary women and men living in the region.

Most of the critiques of the Gorbachevian foreign policy missed these important aspects of the problem and presented their arguments completely ignoring the post cold war world reality. In the course of the Gulf conflict, some commentors hoped and envisioned the re-emergence of cold-war conflict. This third worldist position which seems to have very close affinity to Bolshevism, took a stand against the war because Saddam did not have a chance to win it. My anti-war position, which is pacifist and social democratic, is completely different from this position as I am against the war because it is and will be essentially destructive and undemocratic. This applied to both internal and international wars. The main weakness of the Soviet foreign policy is not that it led Soviet Union to support the UN resolutions on Kuwait, but it missed as some of its critics did, to raise the above-mentioned issues in a rigourous and effective way in the midst of the conflict.

What would be the immediate outcome of the Gulf conflict? Two misconceptions have surfaced in answering this question. Taking Suez crisis in late 1950s as an analogy, some commentators argued that Saddam Hussain would emerge after the war politically victorious even though he faced a military defeat. Nasser's fight with British and French imperialism in order to gain control over its teritory — Suez canal — differed in many respects from Hussain's invasion of Kuwait. Nasser's notion of Arab unity, as Halliday has pointed out, 'was linked to the question of popular control and of democracy'. The military defeat of Saddam Hussain would necessarily lead to a defeat of his political project because his politico-military project was based on a ferocious authoritarianism.

The second misconception envisages that the allied victory over Iraq would lead to a imperialist dominance in the region.

What flows from this argument is that Saddam's military defeat may aggravate problems in the middle east and make the finding of solutions to those problems more difficult. Here again, I have my doubts. As I mentioned before the war broke out in a different international context which is marked by the non-presence of a single world power. The US was compelled to retreat from its initial position that the Iraq-Kuwait conflict basically differed from the Israel-Arab issue and two should not be linked. It seems that the Soviet-EEC notion of the inter-connection of seemingly distinct problems of the region has received worldwide acceptance. In the midst of and after the conflict, there has been a general consensus that a permanent settlement is required for the larger problems of the middle east. Newsweek (February 25, 1991) summed up this consensus as follows;

> The basic issues are clear enough. There will have to be some sort of formal arrangement to promote stability in the gulf. There will have to be arms agreements to forestall blackmail by countries possessing nuclear or other unconventional weapons, or huge armies. The Israeli-Palstenian wound will have to healed. And, to deprive future Saddams of an issue, the wide gap between the haves and the have-nots of the Arab world will have to be narrowed.

The allied victory has not strengthened the US, but has in fact weakened it. The victory has clearly revealed that the US does not have viable political programme to face the post-conflict situation. Therefore, the substance of pre-war French and Soviet proposals remained as the only basis for the permanent settlement of middle east problems. Arab masses appear to have realised that not the authorirarian leaders, but the masses themselves have to come forward to find solution for the problems confronted by their societies. BBC has reported (March 8, 1991) that the masses in Kuwait and in some parts of Iraq are already organizing themselves to demand democratic, popularly accountable rule. Not the victory of Saddam but his defeat has contributed the democratic struggle of the oppressed masses. I do not say that the democratic forces will gain political power in the countries of the middle east in the immediate future, nor do I state that spontaneous processes could successfully achieve peace, democracy and just society. However, I strongly believe that the forces which are at work internally and internationally would create a more favourable condition than that which prevailed in the cold war period, for the achievements of these gains. As E. P. Thompson has stressed that 'there are not only theories and traditions (but also) practices and even social movements' which would decide the final outcome.

Polls and Peedita Panthiya

Zuhail

Although the cost of dying appears to be even more unbearable than the cost of living (the meanest coffin is now a mere Rs. 10,000) it has never aspired to be the mother of political revolutions.

Nor has it had any taker because the *peeditha panthiya* of our politicians have tackled this problem so soundly that I have often wondered why they failed to aply the same technology to solve their hardy perennial — the rising cost of living, with the Himalayan heights thrown in for political colour.

If they would only do so they may even succeed in sending the politician into permanent retirement. If you look around the country you will discover that by far the largest in number and with the widest popular backing are the *Maranaadhara Samajayas* death donation societies,

If you say that this shows people are more concerned about death then life, you are absolutely right. The older world from the days of the Pharoahs and until the industrial revolution burst on the scene, was concerned not so much with gaining immediate ends as with the final end itself.

Hence the pyramids, the menhirs and, with us, still the dagobas. The energy that has gone into the building of these amazing structures is a marvel to the modern world. But it need not be so when you consider that even the kingdom of heaven is within your grasp if you have the right bearings and know where you are going as the Maranaadhara samajayas have so successfully shown.

In nearly every village of the country and even in towns these societies have helped their members to realise what must be one of their felt needs — a good send off to the next world.

On the other hand this same concern is not shown by them when it comes to organising life and living which appears to be taken out of their hands by politicians. The *prajathanthravaadaya* they have been recommended, the very word an unintelligble construction, has hardly touched their lives.

Look at the on-going election campaign to elect representatives to local bodies it is so centrally organised that one would think the elections are for the national legislature and not for the local parish pump.

But a people's organisation like a death donation society, round a concept to which there is immediate response, has rarely gone bankrupt. Whereas a co-op which, like the prajathanthra vaadaya, has been thrust on the people is more vulnerable to man's greed.

There is good news for those who are trusting to people's organisations to deliver the goods rather than governments. Some death donation societies are trying to balance their interests with living concerns too. I read recently of a Maranaudhara samajaya blossoming into a kind of building society to house the living. Now that would be the right sort of approach to make to take charge of our cycle of birth and death.

News from a comet

Halley's commet which failed to present itself in all its promised glory in 1986 is, according to the latest information from the astronomers somewhere far away showing off everything to the high heavens a three hundred fold more with no naked eye to watch the amazing spectacle.

Many earthlings were disappointed when it failed last time to reveal itself as it neared the earth in its regular 76 year cycle of appearance. Some astronomers even wondered whether it was going off track, and that is one reason why ESO, the European Southern Observatory in Chile, has been keeping a close eye even after it whizzed passed the earth in 1986.

The astronomers say that the comet is now well beyond the orbit of Saturn and is moving from the inner solar system to the outer. Its three hundred fold brightness at the time of location has surprised the astronomers who are wondering whether it has hit something.

When the comet is far from the sun it is thought to be a 'mountain-sized ball of various frozen gases, some dust, and may be some rock'. When closer to the sun the dust and the gas boil off its surface and help to form a coat of many thousand kilometres across its body.

When this catches the sunlight the coat and the tail of the comet acquire its outstanding brilliance. But the increased brightness they say may be due either to a collision or to a violent gust of the solar wind carrying streams of particles from the sun across the whole solar system.

This is the first time astronomers have noted such a flare up of a comet furthest from the sun.

Book Review

E. F. C. LUDOWYK. **Those Long Afternoons: Childhood in Colonial Ceylon.** Edited by H. A. I. Goonetileke with a "Memoir" by Percy Colin Thome. Colombo: Lake House Bookshop, 1989. Pp. xix, 96, Rs. 175, paper.

I well remember the first time I met Lyn Ludowyk. In 1950 the University of Ceylon interviewed all candidates provisionally accepted for entry; he was Dean of Arts and chaired the committee for that Faculty. He was, on first appearance, forbidding to the would-be undergraduate — his strong, asymmetrical face and measured movements of head and hands. I remember trying to impress the committee with a recent book by Sir Herbert Read I had recently read, as I do the seriousness and kindness with which he treated those attempts. His life (and this book is part of it) is not only important as that of a Sri Lanka scholar and personality. He is representative of a class, a culture and an historical phenomenon.

Ludowyk was born in the southern Sri Lankan port of Galle in 1906, received a PhD from the University of Cambridge in 1936 and was appointed Professor of English in the Ceylon University College (later to become the University of Ceylon) the same year. He retired early, in 1956, mainly because of his wife's health, and moved to England where he lived till his death in 1985. Throughout those last thirty years he maintained a passionate interest in the counrty of his birth, its people and the multitude of friends, students and colleagues who either continued to live there, as Goonetileke and Colin-Thome, or were scattered around the world. In contemplating the English-educated Sri Lankans of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, he his to me among the most worthy. There would, of course, be much disagreement on any list, but I should say that I do not think our class would be looked on very kindly by commentators of the future. Lyn gave a very special meaning to mid-twentieth-century life in Sri Lanka, particularly to his students.

I would suggest that the fundamental characteristic of this English-speaking class was "vulgarity". This overrode even the very commendable scholarship associated with this class through the end of the nineteenth century and beyond. This is, I believe, a matter of some importance, but needs much more documentary evidence to establish than I can summon now. Nevertheless, a brief quotation from Michael Ondaatje, a Sri Lankan now making a name for himself as a novelist from Canada, may suggest the kind of situation within which Ludowyk was placed and the "meaning" that his life and career has.

> So many songs of that period had to do with legumes, fruit and drink. "Yes, we have no bananas". "I've got a lovely bunch of coconuts", "Mung beans on your collar", "The Java Jive" .. Dorothy Clementi-Smith would sing the solo verses to "There is a tavern in the town" while the others would drunkenly join in on the chorus. Even the shy Lyn Ludowyk betrayed his studies and came out there (a plantation favoured for partying) once, turning out to be a superb mimic, singing both male and female parts for Italian operas which the others had never heard of — so they all thought at first that he was singing a Sinhalese baila (*Running in the Family*, Picador, London, 1984, p. 46)

We have to understand the genesis of this class, partly in the descendants of Europeans, mainly the Dutch and those who worked for them during their period of colonial rule, and partly the natives who transferred their traditional privileges into those of pampered underlings of the British regime. The English language was the necessary instrument of this role, and later the weapon of continuing domination. Though benefits were unequally distributed there was a sub-culture of general inhibited hedonism developing throughout the twentieth century — the hedonism consisting of alcohol and syncopated rhythms, suggestive songs in Ceylon English and middle-class Sinhala, Hollywood films, Bulldog Drummond and the Saint, cricket and rugby, political activism and sweet, milky cups of tea.

It is of course ironic that a popular art form of eighteenth and nineteenth century Italy must now be used as representing high intellectual European taste in the particular contrast we may discern in Ondaatje — but in that too is a lesson. Our vulgarity was not really in the forms with which we indulged ourselves, but that we had no means to do better with them. A few years ago I attended a celebration of the 150th anniversary of my old school which followed a quite rivetting game of rugby played between the school team and their long-time rivals. The celebration was males only, we drank expensive imported scotch out of plastic cups, listened to a rock band playing new versions of old tunes remembered from my childhood and watched the younger "old boys" dance with each other.

Ludowyk's task was to impose standards on this social, political and cultural mess. As Professor of English he tried to convey standards of judgements with which this middle class could approach English, European and world literature. In his creation of English drama in Ceylon, he carried this purpose to a much larger public and in his socialist vision he probably hoped, but never got very far, to convey these standards to the socio-political process itself. As one of his most creative students

wrote, recently,

> Reviewing his own work for the local theatre in *New Ceylon Writing* thirteen years ago, Ludowyk regretfully admitted his failure to encourage playwriting by local dramatists. I think it unlikely that such criticisms and self – criticisms would ever have been made, had Professor Ludowyk not retired prematurely from Sri Lanka and the university. His research into island's culture and history had already borne fruit before his departure in *Robert Knox in the Kandyan Kingdom* (1948). It would sooner or later have yielded more in his teaching and theatre work in Sri Lanka.

Perhaps also in the life of the country at large.

This small, simple book, published posthumously by Ian Goonetileke, creates images of a time long ago, recalls the tones of a familar voice, but here often using the idiom of his chidhood. One Sri Lankan critic has dismissed the work as the ramblings of an old man—vulgarity, it seems, is alive and well. But it is difficlut for one who knew him to evaluate the book objectively. There are things, so illuminating, which one did not know before, but would perhaps mean little to the casual reader. One example is the confession of his dreams of cricket and glory:

> The major passion writ large over this period grew out of the fantasy that I was already a fine cricketer. Some of my friends, undoubtedly, nursed the same hopeful illusion themselves. I persisted longer in my fantasy, even when all the evidence was fatally stacked up against both hopes and dreams.

The last time I saw Lyn was with a friend who had not met him before, His comment on leaving was to the effect that "He is not like a professor at all, he is just like one of us". Lyn's modesty and self-deprecation allowed him to be both the guardian of standards and companion to all who sought his company. Not only did he dream of success at cricket, he attained it at scouting — though one would not know that by his account.

> Scouting, in spite of its many-sidedness, seemed a marginal activity, a hobby, a little bit off centre, pleasant enough while it lasted, with all the attractions of a game, but not really to be compared with cricket. It certainly added to the sum of our pursuits without enhancing their value.

It is Percy Colin-Thome who tells that "by 1919 at the age of thirteen he was the youngest King's Scout in the British Empire".

More important for its analytical implications, partly something to which one may respond having shared the cultural environment, but carrying greater significance, is the passage below.

> I studied Sinhalese up to the fourth standard, but forgot it as soon as more attractive prospects were presented. There was no comparison between the ill-printed, poorly illustrared Sinhalese books with their frowsy stories and the greater excitement of readers in English which took the whole world as their province. So it was with no great sense of loss that my little knowledge of Sinhalase faded. Yet the world which I knew on my senses, the world which responded to the sights, sounds. smells and tastes of everyday objects around me was more readily available to me through colloquial Sinhalese than through English. Even now I can gauge the rough texture of words and phrases which made the world emotionally concrete. A greater part of the range of the natural scene I knew then was named for me through Sinhalese...

Here is the mechanism with which a class creates itself and severs the links with its own hinterland. We may analyze such phenomena in terms of socialization, perceived interest and economic determinism, but here, starkly presented, is the event and its consequences for the individual.

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The Left Side....

(Continued from page 12)

becomes over active; smuggling , over-invoicing of LC,s and under-invoicing at the other end are methods used to keep this market alive.

Casinos are becoming very famous — exceeding Sri Lankan hospitality. Nowhere else in the world are generous servings of expensive foreign liquor and cigarettes, breakfast, buffet lunch and sumptuous dinner offered to all their patrons — totally free. The tribe has been domiciled. Plush houses in Colombo 7, permanent suites at 5 star hotels for change of beds are perks. They mingle freely with top politicos and the elite, and offer handsome donations to government sponsored movements and cash prizes for sports.

Why have we permitted casino operations indiscriminately? And why tax free to a trade whose moral uprightness is questionable, when industries that earn foreign exchange and generate employment are subject to more and more increased taxes?

The government of Sri Lanka has acted very naively to make a band of foreigners millionaires overnight. It has overlooked the impact of moral degradation and cast aside an opportunity to amass much needed revenue and valuable foreign exchange. If casinos are to stay then they should be located as a group in a specially designated area such as an island in Bolgoda. The casino island can eventually develop into — a fun extravaganza with an abundance of water sports, different cuisines, hotels, etc. The land should be leased and the revenue of all casinos, though managed by private owners, should be controlled by the government and sizable percent be fiscal revenue. A study could be made of the methods adopted by other countries to ensure that the government is not deprived of the major earnings, and also to ensure that the gamblers too get a fair deal. This revenue could fund the Janasaviya programmd or at least defray the major costs.

Black Knight

It's your move