

LANKA

GUARDIAN

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TRENDS

TRoubLED CAMPUSES

The campuses seemed calm when lectures re-opened in January for final year Engineering students of the Moratuwa university. But the quiet was totally deceptive. By the end of the month, "small groups of students, sometimes armed with razors" according to a university official quoted by the DAILY NEWS, "began a campaign of intimidation". The final year engineering lectures were soon abandoned, in Moratuwa and elsewhere.

Meanwhile, the Vice-chancellors hope to re-open all universities on March 2. A new problem has come up. There are two batches of students — the 1986 and 1987 — that have to sit their final exams. How about seniority? The UGC envisages no problem. Even if the universities ask both batches to sit the identical exam., the 1986 batch will carry a certificate which recognises its seniority. Will his become an issue for protest too?

R. AND R.

In current parlance, R. and R. no longer refers to 'Rest and Recreation', the privilege of the US marines. In Sri Lanka today, it means 'Rehabilitation and Reconstruction' — the rehabilitation of displaced families and the reconstruction of their homes, rebuilding roads, schools, dispensaries, bazaars, civic centres.

The World Bank sponsored donor group pledged 474 million US dollars at a 'special

aid' meeting held in Paris in late 1987. About 15 billion rupees of this has been given to the Ministry of R. and R. to meet the needs of 26,500 displaced persons and families. Over 400,000 requests for assistance were received by the Ministry. The Jaffna peninsula with 160,000 claimants will receive the biggest allocation, while Trinco has 24,000 families, Batticaloa 22,400, Vavuniya 14,000 and Ampara, Mannar, and Mullaitivu over 10,000 each.

ANTI-POLL DEMOS

The CID has told the authorities of a 'subversive plan' to hold 'lightning demos' in leading towns in the hope of sparking off anti-government protests. If the demos, organised mainly by student unions, succeed in disrupting traffic and creating a state of panic of the kind that paralysed many major towns before the Dec. 19 Presidential elections,

the 'saboteurs' will advance to the next stage of their plan. The aim is to create a climate of tension and violence in the days before the Feb. 15 general election that would once again reduce the level of popular participation. The aim is to reduce the voter turn out from 55% on Dec. 19 to less than 50%.

U. N. APPEAL

For the first time in the history of the Tamil struggle, a major rebel group has sent a 900 word appeal to the U.N.

The LTTE has asked the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva to mediate in the ethnic conflict. It has accused the IPKF of a brutal war against civilians, and asked the UNHRC to persuade India to agree on an immediate ceasefire. The appeal was signed by an LTTE politburo member and approved by Prabhakaran, now in hiding.

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The IPKF and the changing political scene

NEWS
BACKGROUND

Mervyn de Silva

That was quite a scene in Trincomalee on Independence Day. And quite a speech too. Listen to Mr. Vartharajah Perumal, Chief Minister of North-east Provincial Council, after hoisting the Sri Lankan (Lion) Flag, with the former Army Commander (now N-E Governor) Lt. General Nalin Seneviratne, standing by the Chief Minister, an EPRLF Central Committee member and one-time Jaffna univ. don:

He respected the national flag today. As a grade 2 student and for 30 years thereafter he had neither respected the national flag nor the national anthem of the country. For 15 years, he and other Tamil youth had torn and destroyed the flag wherever possible and had been jailed for doing so.

In those days, they were at war with the governments of the day for denying the democratic rights of the Tamil speaking people who predominated in the North and the East. Now that war was over and the Tamil speaking people had turned to a new page in their history by celebrating Independence Day.

They were extending their hand of friendship and forgetting the past. He hoped to participate at the next Independence Day celebrations not as a member of the Tamil community, but as someone acceptable to all communities in the NE province.

He sought the assistance of the President and the central government to achieve this and was hopeful that President Premadasa would pave the way to national unity.

It would appear that the event and the Chief Minister's speech had a dual significance. It is not just that the Tamil militant youth, with the important excep-

tion of the 'Tigers', have entered the democratic process but also that the Tamil community of the North-and-East is re-joining the national mainstream. Every significant Tamil political group, from TULF to the pro-LTTE EROS and 'Independants', sympathetic to the 'Tigers', is in the field for the Feb. 15 national election. In hoisting the national ('Lion') flag and entering the parliamentary lists, Tamil representatives are making political moves, symbolic and real, both at the periphery and at the Centre. The coalition of the one-time major parliamentary party (TULF) and the one-time armed groups (EPRLF, TELO, ENDLF etc) enhances that significance just as firmly as the fact of a generational alliance does so.

Mr. Perumal's political *persona* is equally interesting. Not just his age and educational background. He is a non-Vellala, and Tamil politics as surely as national (Sinhala) Politics in the South, have been characterised by Vellala ('goigama' in the Sinhala Social context) hegemony. The *goigama* monopoly was eventually smashed only a month after Mr. Perumal became North-East Chief Minister — at the December 19 Presidential polls where the UNP's Mr. Ranasingha Premadasa emerged as victor defeating the (Kandyan) *goigama* Sirima Bandaranaike, the world's first woman prime minister, and twice Sri Lanka's.

Pure coincidence, true. The simultaneous advent of President Premadasa and Chief Minister Perumal and its political implications should not be missed, particularly in the light of P.R., the new Parliament and the likely parliamentary balance.

Ethnic Man

In the first place, President Premadasa is projecting himself as 'the Multi-Ethnic Man'. He has grasped fully the political consequences that flow from Sri Lanka's social complexion, and the lessons, domestic and external, of the national crisis of the 1980's. Thus, temple and kovil, church and mosque. As a political creature, through and through, he has understood the electoral arithmetic which is so deeply influenced, if not determined, by the multi-ethnic character of our society.

In short, the Numbers Game. And that in turn has been radically changed — the rules I mean. It is no longer the simple one man-one vote, first-past-the-post, winner-takes-all system. It is P. R.; it is district-wise; it has a low 5 percent cut-off, bonus seats electorate-wise, a National List.

Already, the Dec. 19 result re-confirmed and doubly underlined the importance of Satyamoorthy Thondaman, the Man Himself. Like plucking tea and throwing the leaves into the basket, the CWC's plantation voters filled candidate Premadasa's presidential basket, just enough to guarantee his narrow victory. Now Mr. Thondaman says that the UNP will win 120 seats — a bare 7 more than the required 113 out of a 225 member assembly. The UNP and President Premadasa keep appealing for 150 seats, a two-thirds majority. Unless a demoralised, and disorganised battered by a systematic campaign of killings and violent disruption, is reduced to less than 50, the UNP will have to rely not just on Mr. Thondaman but on the minorities — the Tamils and Muslims, the TULF-EPRLF com-

bine and Mr. Ashraff's SLMC, probably between 20 and 30 seats. Unless, of course, there is an SLFP split, self-inflicted or engineered, making the way for a 'Grand Coalition'.

In any case, the attention President Premadasa has been paying to the North-East is an important development. He is going through the Devolution exercise faster and more thoroughly than even the most optimistic Tamil politician had expected. Power is being devolved, snags cleared, recalcitrant bureaucrats removed. The P-P (Premadasa-Perumal) compact is evident, and evidently working.

For both, quite obviously the compact is an asset.

It can also be a liability. The key is the IPKF.

SAARC Exercise ?

If the North-East Provincial Council's dependence on the IPKF and the Central government becomes too manifest and too visible, it will start to lose any credibility it enjoys now among the Tamil people. If the 'law and order' it provides in the region is not increasingly founded on its own CVF or police force but on the heavy guns of a foreign army, public confidence will be steadily eroded.

This is truer still of the Central (Sinhala) government, whichever major party (UNP or SLFP) is in office. A foreign army which intervenes (or is invited to intervene) in a divisive (often ethnic) domestic conflict in order to meet the threat of fragmentation — or to help the process of integration — often ends by intensifying the conflict and facilitating the process of fragmentation. The Soviet Army which left Afghanistan last week learnt this elementary lesson. An internal conflict was converted into anti-Soviet "holy crusade" with the local regime and the Red army becoming mutual liabilities.

Incidents in the sensitive, ethnically mixed Eastern province which is scheduled to face a critical Referendum in late July

may be an early warning signal. Along with another incident in nearby Moneragala. In Ampara area, 11 Sinhala settlers, including children, were killed in what was reported as an LTTE massacre. A month earlier, three Indians were killed near Pelawatte. The JVP was blamed.

President Premadasa (See IPKF Battalions...) is plainly quite keen on the phased withdrawal of the IPKF. But at what pace, and in what numbers. At a recent discussion the Centre for Policy Research in Delhi, two matters were taken up — a 50 percent pull-out in 3 months, and a multi-lateralisation of the Peace-keeping force in Ampara (small Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Nepalese contingents) to make it a SAARC exercise.

One of India's most respected regional papers *Deccan Herald* said in an editorial:

"An unfortunate consequence of the developments of the past few years is that Sri Lanka's future is not entirely in the hands of its people and their leaders. It depends also upon the Government of India, which unfortunately, has not always

demonstrated the requisite degree of wisdom in dealing with the issues that have arisen since it despatched troops to the island to perform a peace-keeping role. Although the devolution package evolved by the Jayewardene administration did not satisfy even the moderate sections of Tamil opinion, New Delhi did not initiate timely steps to improve its content. The Tamil groups which have come to power with its help in the North-Eastern Province are so dependent on it for survival that they do not want the Indian troops to leave. But how long can India sustain them? The experience of the United States in South Vietnam and of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan holds lessons which cannot be ignored by any country which deploys troops outside its own borders. President Premadasa has revived Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's proposal for an Indo-Sri Lankan friendship pact on the lines of the Indo-Soviet pact to eliminate what Sri Lankans see as unequal provisions of the 1986 accord. Instead of dragging feet, New Delhi should enter into serious negotiations with Colombo to pave the way for early and honourable withdrawal of the Indian troops."

Maldives coup PLOTE plot

MALE

Last year's attempted coup in the Maldives was masterminded by Sri Lankan Tamils hoping to use the Indian Ocean republic as a launching pad for their separatist struggle, President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom said.

Speaking to Parliament, Mr. Gayoom said Uma Maheswaran, the head of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), had been the main leader in planning the seaborne mercenary invasion of the Maldives on November 3 last year.

The coup attempt was foiled by the Indian troops who flew to the Capital, Male.

Mr. Gayoom said investigation had been difficult as close to 70 Tamils were among the captured mercenaries.

Tamil-speaking officials had been sent from India, and they had helped piece together the story.

Their report had gone to the Maldives' Attorney-General, but no date had been set for trial. The President did not say how many people would be put on trial but around 150 people were detained after the coup failed.

He said Maheswaran, whose Marxist PLOTE had been upsta-

(Continued on page 6)

IPKE battalions pull out

Another IPKF battalion will leave today' announced President Premadasa at a meeting in Jaffna on Feb. 6 when he visited the peninsula for the first time since his polls victory. In a followup statement, the Defence Ministry explained that 2 batalions will leave by Feb. 20. The *Daily News* reported:

"I told the Indian government that the IPKF's job is now over that they can go back. The pull-out is being methodically done" he said, referring to New Delhi's positive response to his request for the withdrawal of the Indian force.

He said India withdrew a battalion soon after he was elected President. And he himself had come to Jaffna to thank the people of the North for their support at the presidential election.

In Colombo, the Defence Ministry elaborated on the President's announcement and said that two IPKF battalions will be leaving the country within the next fortnight. Two battalions had left some time ago a senior officer said.

Meanwhile the DMK chief, Mr. Karunanidhi is expected to discuss a ceasefire in the North with Prime Minister Gandhi when he visits Delhi soon. The Tamilnadu Chief minister wants to give the LTTE 'a last chance' to enter the democratic mainstream after truce talks with the IPKF. However the LTTE's latest statement on the general elections promises no such possibility. What the LTTE is doing is to back EROS-sponsored pro-LTTE candidates and send the word round on the eve of the polls asking Tamil voters to support these candidates. The LTTE is not likely to disrupt elections in those areas — Valvetiturai and the coastal belt for instance — where EROS men have a good chance of winning some seats. In its latest statement, the LTTE condemned the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) for contesting the parliamentary

elections, and accused it of "betraying the Tamil struggle".

The main focus of the statement, is the TULF, which is denounced in harsh terms. "Having wasted six years in self imposed exile in Madras guest house and having alienated themselves from the political struggle when the Tamil people faced genocide from the armed forces and the Indian troops, these self seeking politicians are now begging our people to elect them

to the Sri Lankan Parliament".

The LTTE response to the parliamentary election comes in the wake of efforts by the TULF Secretary General, Mr. A. Amirthalingam to get the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, to support the elections, and so make it more difficult for the LTTE to oppose them. According to informed Tamil sources, Mr. Karunanidhi told

(Continued on page 13)

Karunanidhi Interview

Q. How does it feel to be back in power after 13 years?

A. It is matter of great satisfaction for me and the party. *Aanal, indha maalai, malaiya thonaradu.* (At the same time these victory garlands weigh like a mountain of responsibilities.)

Q. Can you say that your victory is for the National Front?

A. My party is part of the National Front, so my victory is theirs too.

Q. Is this a victory against the Congress (I) or the AIADMK (JL)?

A. It is a decisive verdict against the Congress (I) and Rajiv Gandhi.

Q. How do you view the prime minister's recent campaign?

A. The prime minister has created a war between the Dravidian movement and the Congress culture. If Indian culture is like a crown, Dravidian culture is dazzling diamond on it.

The prime minister converted this poll into a fight between him and the DMK. His campaign was swamped in confusion. First he vowed to rectify the wrongs of the MGR government, then he promised a return to MGR's rule.

Q. Do you think your party would have lost had the Congress(I) joined hands with Jayalalitha?

A. This is a malicious propaganda by the Congress (I) and its agents. They are insulting the Tamil people who have given a clear verdict. The Congress-Controlled TV has been touting the theory that if the votes of the Congress (I) and the AIADMK (JL) had been combined, they would have won. I think it is in extremely bad taste to draw these conclusions once a party has been so decisively elected. Even if they had joined hands, they would have faced a debacle.

Q. But the Congress (I) and the AIADMK (JL) have together polled more votes than the DMK.

A. There is another point of view. If all the Dravidian party votes—which constitute anti-Congress (I) votes—were put together, the Congress(I) would have lost its deposits everywhere.

Q. Are you prepared to invite all Dravidian parties into your fold now?

A. Yes. I would like to appeal to all of them to unite with our party.

(India Today)

SLFP under Seige**Bomb attack on Mrs. B.**

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) leader, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, survived an assassination attempt recently when bombs were thrown at her as she was waiting to address the party's first campaign meeting for the parliamentary election at Hingurakgoda in north-central Sri Lanka.

Around 40 people were injured when firing broke out between the attackers, and Mrs. Bandaranaike's bodyguards and the police. The injured were taken to hospitals at Polonaruwa, Anuradhapura, Dambulla and Kandy.

The attack occurred shortly after 11 a.m. about ten minutes after the SLFP leader arrived at the venue of the meeting. She was seated on the dais, awaiting her turn to speak when three bombs were flung at her. Firing broke out, and Mrs. Bandaranaike pushed to the ground by her bodyguards. She was rushed to Anuradhapura town where she was scheduled to address a meeting later in the day. Talking to reporters in Anuradhapura, she described the incident as a clear attempt to assassinate her.

Statement

A delegation led by the SLFP Leader Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike met the Commissioner of Elections on 6. 2. 1989 in his office to discuss the problems faced by the SLFP in conducting its election campaign, in a free and democratic manner. General Cyril Ranathunge, Defence Advisor to the President and Mr. Neil Weerasinghe D. I. G. of Police were associated with the Commissioner says a party statement.

The SLFP delegation pointed out the unfolding of what looks like a clear plan to destroy the SLFP during this Election period by, inter alia, assassinating its candidates and key

supporters and organisers. This happens particularly in areas where the SLFP had fared well in the Presidential Election.

The delegation gave an account of the shooting and grenade attack on the SLFP propaganda meeting at Hingurakgoda on 5. 2. 89 which pointed clearly to an attempt to assassinate the SLFP Leader at the very commencement of her District Meeting Programme. It was becoming obvious, the delegation mentioned, that if the ballot was allowed to be used in this election, it was meant to be so used only after eliminating or seriously undermining the major opposition Party by a selective use of the bullet. We are contesting in 21 out of the 22 Districts, and the weapons directed against us have little to do with the ways and manners of the democratic process.

From the very moment the nominations ended, the intention to deal with the SLFP by the bullet was marked by the calculated attack on the residence of Mr. Piyadasa Wijesinghe, Candidate in the Kurunegala District, who was meeting a number of other candidates.

The delegation also mentioned how seven SLFP candidates spread over the Kalutara, Matara, Polonnaruwa, Badulla, and Kegalle districts have been brutally done to death, already; while the attempts to assassinate seven other candidates spread over the Kurunegala, Kegalle, Hambantota, Trincomalee, Kalutara and Gampaha Districts, had not succeeded, though seriously injuring or killing a number of their key supporters, organizers or relatives; the most tragic of them being the determined onslaught on candidate, Mr. Mervyn Silva, at Tissamaharama, where in two separate incidents, first his brother, and later his sister and her husband were killed.

Another method used, was of killing key organizers of candidates, the delegation referred to Colombo, Kegalle and Galle districts.

It looks as if SLFP Candidates, organisers, voters are being gunned down, killed or injured, because the Party provides an alternative approach to the problems of the people, in a peaceful way.

LTTE Naxalite Connection

HYDERABAD

The Andhra Pradesh, Home Minister, Mr. K. Kala Venkata Rao, said that there was evidence to show that A.K.-47 rifles were used by the naxalites in the killing of seven policemen in Adilabad district and that these weapons were got from the LTTE. Also, the naxalites had laid land-mines in Rajula village, the spot of the incident, operating switch devices.

Maldives...*(Continued from page 4)*

ged by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in recent months, had planned the coup with dissident Maldivians.

If the coup succeeded, PLOT was to be given use of one of the 1,200 Maldivian islands as a training base for guerrillas and as a port for arms smuggling into Sri Lanka.

It was also promised the profits from one of the country resort islands as a source of funding for the Tamil struggle.

My view of the election

Rohana Wijeweera

The Jayewardene — Rajiv Gandhi pact has created a situation even more dangerous than conceding Eelam. If Eelam was given, Sri Lanka would have lost a third of the country covering the north and east. Now Indian imperialists have brought a third of the country under their invading army, and are setting up an army of EPRLF men for their future plans for the rest of the country.

Of the 26 joint ventures that India has entered into with foreign countries, 18 are in Sri Lanka. Today can the Sri Lankan security forces buy equipment from any country of their choice? Are you aware that India forces Sri Lanka to buy cheap substandard goods it produces? Our information is that recently, when the Air Force wanted to buy helicopters from another country, India opposed it.

The government suppressed the people's opposition to stay in power. In December 1987, President Jayewardene told the UNP annual sessions at the Sugathadasa Stadium that the JVP would be destroyed and the UNP would continue in power with another referendum.

Indian bosses

Mr. Jayewardene and the UNP conducted the presidential election in order to remain in power, not to be kicked out of power by the people.

This election was organised on the instructions of their Indian imperialist bosses, and with their co-operation. They took care to ensure that there was no room for a candidate who was against Indian imperialism to contest. They used the provincial council election in the north-eastern province as a rehearsal.

They ensured that the Janata Vimukthi Peramuna would not be able to field a candidate for the presidential elections. When the attempt to destroy the JVP

through the conspiracy of proscription failed, they attempted to destroy the JVP by making announcements that the proscription had been lifted.

At the same time, they set up armed groups, called Green Tigers, PRRA and SRRA comprising members of certain political parties to destroy the JVP.

The presidential elections were conducted while the state of emergency was in force, and using the emergency regulations.

The presidency was not vacant at the time of the election. Besides the emergency regulations, this helped the UNP and its candidate.

The Parliament, and the cabinet was in existence at the time of the elections. So were the provincial councils, the municipal councils and district councils.

The UNP used all those who constituted these bodies, along with corporation bosses, the IPKF and all security forces in the country.

Boycott election

It was evident right from the beginning that this was going to be the situation. Therefore the JVP declared clearly that it would not participate, and requested the people to boycott the election.

While the majority in the SLFP understood this, Sirima Bandaranaike, Anura Bandaranaike and the Ratwatte clan thought differently. The SLFP was planning to ride to power on the shoulders of the JVP and the patriotic masses through trickery and then to suppress them.

The Indian imperialists knew that their position in the country was not stable. They knew very well that only a small minority was in favour of their presence. Therefore Mr. Jayewardene on one hand, and the Indian imperialists on the other began sending envoys to Mrs. Bandaranaike. Talks were held

between Mrs. Bandaranaike and Mr. Dixit, and Mrs. Bandaranaike and Mr. Jayewardene.

Join common front

Our appeals to the SLFP to join a common front to defeat the UNP and Indian imperialists was like playing "Veena" to deaf elephants. Mrs. Bandaranaike opposed the holding of the general election with the presidential election. What she wanted was to make false promises to trick the people and the JVP in order to sit in the president's chair. To sit there, break all her promises, put her agents in Parliament, and continue with her old game.

She opposed holding the presidential and general elections together. The SLFP split into three over this.

The Bandaranaiques Ratwattes said the SLFP should contest alone, join Mr. Jayewardene after victory, and with India to suppress the JVP. Another section wanted to reach an agreement with the JVP. The third group said Mrs. Bandaranaike should withdraw her candidacy and join the struggle against the election.

Liberation struggle

None of the country's problems were solved by the presidential elections. Neither will they be. Similarly, none of the problems will be solved by the conspiracy of the general elections. We appeal to fellow citizens to boycott them and join the liberation struggle of the motherland. Indian imperialists will not go voluntarily. Jayewardenes and Thondamans will not go voluntarily. Tamil Eelam terrorist will not voluntarily give up the privileges they have got. The country will not escape from slavery. It has to be rescued from slavery.

Extracts from a letter sent to the Lankadeepa by the J.V.P. leader.

(S.T.)

November 1985, the administration made its new position formal and public.

On December 13, Deputy Secretary of State John Whitehead announced that the administration had written a letter to Cordovez pledging to serve as a guarantor. Explaining the U.S. stand, Whitehead said that the United States conditioned its acceptance of the U.N. accord on the resolution of just one of the issues then outstanding: the terms of the Soviet withdrawal. In this speech and subsequent statements, the administration accepted the essential character of the bargain embodied in the accords. A Soviet commitment to a complete withdrawal within a defined period was to be exchanged for the termination of U.S. weapons and to the resistance.

Nothing secret

Since the Whitehead announcement there has been nothing secret about the U. S. position or the basic terms of the accords.

But at the time, the CIA completely discounted the possibility of a Soviet withdrawal. The administration viewed the letter to Cordovez as a harmless psychological-warfare gambit in response to the Soviet offer to be guarantor and to be subsequent prodding from Cordovez. For this reason Secretary of State George Shultz did not discuss the 1985 pledge with the President, even though it was cleared with the National Security Council.

Until the very eve of the conclusion of the accords conservatives in the administration and in Congress continued to disparage the U. N. effort, dismissing mounting evidence of Soviet readiness to withdraw. They suddenly unveiled the secrecy charge, but in the end they failed to prevent the United States from signing the accords.

They did succeed, however, in qualifying the earlier American acceptance of the key aid cutoff provisions, greatly complicating the end game.

A recurring theme in this account is the difficulty both super-Powers have had dealing with their clients. As the possibility of a settlement grew more credible, Babrak Karmal, the first Soviet-installed President of Afghanistan, increasingly resisted Soviet pressures to make concessions in Geneva. Karmal had helped to found the Afghan Communist party in 1965 and believed in its destiny. He feared that the complete disengagement of Soviet forces envisaged in the U. N. agreement would jeopardise the survival of the communist regime. Moscow was able to accelerate the pace of the negotiations once it replaced Karmal in May 1986 with Najib, now known as Najibullah, who was initially thought to be more pliable. In the end, he proved equally difficult to manage.

U. S. problems with Pakistan

The United States confronted similar problems with Pakistan. After slowing down Islamabad's push for a settlement in 1983, Washington faced ever-escalating Pakistani demands for more and better military aid as the price for channelling American supplies to the resistance. In August 1984, the Pakistani regime of Mohammad Ziaul Haq deliberately avoided asking for American approval when it decided to proceed with definitive discussions on the aid cutoff clause in the agreement.

The central conclusion suggested by an assessment of the Geneva negotiations is that the United Nations was uniquely placed to resolve the stalemate in Afghanistan. Moscow did not want to be cast in the role of defendant at the bar and consistently sought to avoid direct U. S. Soviet negotiations

on the Afghanistan issue. The U. N. served as a buffer between the super-Powers by conducting negotiations that were nominally between their Afghan and Pakistani proxies. As it turned out, the U. N. role was in the hands of an international civil servant of unusual political acumen in the person of Cordovez, then Under Secretary-General for special political affairs and now the Foreign Minister of Ecuador.

At the outset of his mission, Cordovez became convinced that advocates of disengagement in Moscow would ultimately prevail, and he persisted year after year despite almost universal ridicule in the West.

Cordovez maneuvered skillfully through the bureaucratic jungles in Islamabad, Moscow, and Washington. More important, he understood the influence of international public opinion on all of the governments concerned, fanning hopes for a settlement even when the outlook was in reality dismal.

"A Bridge of Straw"

Even before Cordovez came on the scene, Moscow had serious doubts about the occupation of Afghanistan. It is still too soon to make a definitive judgment concerning the motivations of Soviet decision-makers in 1979. The historical evidence available so far appears to vindicate George Kennan, who emphasised Soviet fears of rising Islamic fundamentalism, Raymond Garthoff, who has focussed on concern over American intervention in Iran; and my assessments, which centered on the Soviet image of Afghan communist leader Hafizullah Amin as an opportunistic nationalist who might strike a deal with Washington or Beijing. Whatever the mix of factors that figured in the decision, it is increasingly doubtful that the Soviet Union viewed Afghanistan as a military steppingstone to the Gulf.

According to Yuri Gankovsky, a Soviet Afghanistan specialist at the Institute of Oriental Studies who warned against the decision to invade, Brezhnev and his ideological eminence grise, Mikhail Suslov, pushed it through by a narrow Politburo majority over the doubts of Andropov, then head of the KGB. The optimistic assumption was that Karmal could easily win back support lost as a result of Amin's overzealous reforms by pursuing more moderate policies. As early as May 1980, however, against a background of growing U.S. aided resistance activity, Moscow and Kabul made their first formal overtures for negotiations.

Direct talks rejected

Pakistan rejected demands for a direct government-to-government dialogue that would have implied recognition of the Kabul regime. Instead, Pakistani Foreign Minister Agha Shahi insisted on a U.N.-sponsored dialogue in which Kabul would not be represented by the Government. By December, the Soviets had pushed Karmal into dropping the demand for direct government-to-government exchanges; by January 1981, they had agreed that the U.N. could play a still undefined role. But Moscow accused Shahi of bad faith when he suddenly added a new condition — Iranian participation in the negotiations. Moreover, Shahi had run into strong opposition from the conservative Arab countries, backed by the United States, when he revealed his intention to exclude Afghan resistance groups from the projected talks.

Returning from the late January 1981 Islamic Conference summit meeting in Taif, Saudi Arabia, Shahi complained that State Department officials were "giving me a hard time, telling me they don't like what I am doing." Richard Burt, then Director of the Bureau of politico-Military Affairs in the State

Department, stated in a conversation that "we don't trust Shahi at all." Referring to General Akhtar Abdul Rahman, then head of the Pakistani Inter-services Intelligence Directorate, Burt said that "we route everything to Zia through General Akhtar." When Shahi was eased out as Foreign Minister in February 1982, he privately blamed American pressures, citing repeated State Department objections to his encouragement of a U.N. mediating role.

Encouraged by Shahi and the Soviets, then U.N. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim sent Javier Perez de Cuellar, at that time Under Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs, on two missions to Kabul, Islamabad and Tehran in 1981. The Russians want to do something", Perez de Cuellar said in September, "but Kabul is nervous. What we have is bridge of straw, and we shouldn't try to run across it too much." At first, the Karmal regime wanted him to convene negotiation and then leave the room. Next they suggested that he might remain as a silent ceremonial presence.

Finally, Waldheim won agreement that the U.N. could play a good-offices role "We could make suggestions." Perez de Cuellar said, "but not push them."

Soon after becoming Secretary-General in January 1982 Perez de Cuellar appointed Cordovez, who flew to Islamabad and Kabul in April to prepare the ground for what was to be the first of 12 rounds of negotiations in Geneva that June. In contrast to Perez de Cuellar's cautious style, Cordovez soon transformed his good-offices office role into one of active mediation.

First task

His first task was to devise a format and a agenda that would break the stalemate. Kabul wanted a format of direct govern-

ment-to-government talks, while Islamabad would meet only with officials of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party. Cordovez persuaded them to accept indirect government-to-government exchanges as a compromise. For the next six years, when the Pakistani and Afghan delegations came to Geneva, Cordovez met with them separately. It was not until the signal that the two Foreign Ministers met face to face.

The stalemate over the agenda proved more difficult to resolve.

To Islamabad's call for the withdrawal of foreign forces, Moscow and Kabul countered with a demand for the private termination of Pakistani "interference" to be guaranteed by Washington. Islamabad, in turn, responded that it was not interfering, and American guarantees were unnecessary. "Second determination," which was emphasized by Islamabad, had been categorically ruled out by Moscow and Kabul as inadmissible in a U.N. negotiation between member-States. The other issue that all parties had agreed to discuss with the return of the 2.5 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan "in safety and honour."

Cordovez won acceptance of "non-interference" as an agenda item by proposed mutual pledges of future good behaviour toward Afghanistan. Without admitting past or present misdeeds, both sides would make pledges, to be effective on a given date, not to interfere in each other's territory. He then made the key procedural proposal that enabled the negotiations to begin. Instead of arguing about each item separately he maintained, it was first necessary to accept the concept of a "comprehensive settlement" in which agreement on the withdrawal of foreign forces, on mutual non-interference guaranteed and on the return of the refugees would be interdependent.

(To be continued)

Soviets master the endgame in Afghanistan

Jonathan Steele

There is something increasingly distasteful about the official Western attitude to the endgame in Afghanistan. While the special Soviet envoy Yuli Vorontsov rushes hither and thither to promote a coalition Government before the last Soviet troops pull out next month, the West does nothing but call for the present Government's resignation while continuing to arm and encourage its opponents.

Mr. Vorontsov has been talking to the Afghan Mojahedin in Iran. He hopes to see representatives of the Pakistan-based groups for what will be their second round of talks over the next few days. In the first week of January he was in Rome for consultations with the former King. Meanwhile, Sir Geoffrey Howe says President Najibullah should unilaterally abandon power. The contrast between one side's efforts at finding a compromise and the other's bid for all-out victory could not be more pronounced.

If military victory were certain, and sure to be painlessly achieved, the Western line might seem valid. But no such certainty exists. For the past six months the cities of Jalalabad and Kandahar have been without Soviet troops, yet neither has fallen to the Mojahedin. Nor is there any guarantee that Mr. Najibullah's departure would safeguard the thousands of Afghans who have joined his side or have legitimate worries about a Mojahedin triumph. To refuse a negotiated compromise means that hundreds more Afghans will die as a bloody battle for the country's major cities moves into higher gear. Is this what the Mojahedins' main backers, the United States, Britain and Pakistan, and their allies on this issue, those well-known bastions of liberalism, Saudi Arabia and Iran, want?

Outrage Condemned

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was an outrage, which the majority of the world's nations rightly condemned. It was illegal, immoral and a mistake, and turned what was a low-level civil conflict into a full-scale high technology war in which thousands of civilians have died, and thousands of others have been driven from their homes. The superiority of Soviet and Afghan firepower was the prime cause of death. But the manner of the Soviet departure has been nothing but honourable. It deserves recognition from the West. U-turns are not always wrong in politics, and they merit more than sneers. Governments which admit mistakes ought to be encouraged, nor humiliated.

Let us look at the history of the Soviet change of mind. The cardinal decision to start the withdrawal from Afghanistan was taken in Moscow within less than a year of Mr. Gorbachev's advent to power in early 1985. Pressure was put on the then leader Mr. Babrak Karmal to broaden the base of his Government and make his offers of national reconciliation more convincing. When he demurred, Moscow prised him out. Three months later, in July 1986, in a speech in Viadivostok, Mr. Gorbachev said the Soviet Union wanted to see the Afghan opposition join coalition Government. This meant accepting the legitimacy of the armed Mojahedin and an end to the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan's monopoly of power. It was a crucial step. In the West there is a romantic myth that it was the supply of American Stinger missiles which finally turned the tide of war and made Moscow see reason, a kind of Afghan version of the strategy of "peace through strength." The facts do not bear

this out. The Stingers did not come into action in large numbers until the autumn of 1986 when the pull-out had already been decided on. What led to the Soviet U-turn was a combination of factors: the political mistakes of the PDPA, awareness that the entry of Soviet troops had turned a civil war into a holy crusade and made things worse, and recognition that the Mojahedin could not be defeated. It has required a new political leadership in Moscow to accept what Russians privately had known for many months.

Everything since then has been a refinement of this theme. There has been continual pressure on the PDPA to go for compromise, though this has been a hard task. There have been endless public appeals and overtures to the Opposition, though they were long stymied by Mojahedin insistence that they would only talk to the Soviets, while Moscow insisted that the PDPA must do the talking. Last November, the Soviets made a new concession and allowed Mr. Vorontsov to talk without the presence of the PDPA at his side. Soviet officials now admit that it would have been better to accept the Mojahedin's offer of talks somewhat earlier. Finally, there have been constant approaches to Pakistan and the West to persuade the Mojahedin to go for a middle course.

Position Reversed

For a time during 1987 the Soviets were conditioning their agreement on a coalition Government. They reversed that position a year ago, and at Geneva they virtually accepted an unconditional pull-out. Soviet diplomats hint that the final deadline of February 15 might still not be met unless Pakistan stops the Mojahedin operating

from its territory. But no one takes this seriously.

The fact is that Moscow has no more cards to play. All it can do is argue plead and warn of a bloodbath after it has gone. The time for pressure has passed. It is in this situation that the West should play a more statesmanlike role. Soviet officials say Mr. Najibullah's position and the role of the PDPA are negotiable, but they cannot simply be ended without com-

promises by the other side. The then UN mediator, Mr. Diego Cordovez, who worked so tirelessly and skilfully to achieve the Geneva accords, argued last year that there had to be a role for the PDPA, though not necessarily for the present President himself. That is a reasonable proposition.

Assessments of what will happen after the Soviets withdraw vary widely. Some claim the regime will unravel in a few

days. Others claim that it will last for months, or even indefinitely, given the disarray on the Mojahedin side. Developments may have gone too far to be settled promptly by political means. But if so, the onus for the failure will be on the Western side. The way the Soviets came into Afghanistan was a disgrace. The manner of their going has been impressive.

—The Guardian

South Asia and the Bomb

China aside, no Third World country claims a nuclear bomb, and the United States has rightly sought to keep it that way. The question is hottest in South Asia where a fearful India, to match China's bomb, surreptitiously went to work and exploded a "peaceful" nuclear device in 1974. A fearful Pakistan stepped up its own surreptitious bomb program. Washington protested. Pakistan pleaded its key role in supporting the Afghan resistance. That bought unhappy American tolerance for a decade, and in that time Pakistan brought its program to a point where the United States may now be required by its nonproliferation law to cut off Pakistan's considerable aid.

Except there's a new wrinkle, Pakistan has become, at least formally, a democracy. The military permitted the opposition candidate, Benazir Bhutto, to run, win and take office. This is a fine achievement. It is also becoming the new basis on which Pakistanis, friends of Pakistan and friends of democracy call for an understanding of the Pakistani nuclear program. The rationale for not cracking down on Islamabad in the 1980s was conservative; the rationale for the dawning 1990s is liberal. Help Prime Minister Bhutto assert civilian control over a military little accustomed to it, it is suggested. Don't

undermine her by cracking down on aid, Bend the law.

The relevant body of law was meant to serve nuclear nonproliferation, not democracy. It has to be applied. But still, the underlying situation needs review. This is one of those laws passed in the post-Vietnam period when an ascendant Congress was legislating foreign policy directives. This particular law has had a decade's test. How is it doing? Terribly Pakistan has moved ever closer to a bomb. Enforcing the law, however, would validate Pakistan's determination to pursue a go-it-alone nuclear program. In other words, enforcing the law may undercut nonproliferation even more than bending the law.

It's time for basics. Why is Pakistan working on a bomb? To provide security against nuclear-capable India, whose nuclear ambitions are surely no smaller than Pakistan's but which is much less dependent on U.S. aid and much less open to U.S. pressure. How else can Pakistan gain security? By improving its relations with India. This is the path Benazir Bhutto and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi have committed themselves to. Encouraging the two young leaders' effort may serve nonproliferation better than resuming the frontal attack of the past.

—The Washington Post.

IPKF Battalions...

(Continued from page 5)

Mr. Amirthalingam at their meeting in Madras last week, that he would only make a statement after meeting the Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, soon.

The LTTE statement is mainly a critique of the TULF's performance since 1977, but it also contains the militants reason for rejecting the Provincial Councils and the parliamentary elections.

"Provincial Councils are not going to put an end to Sinhala colonisation of Tamil areas, nor stop military atrocities. The Tamil people will not be able to build up their national economy nor their language and culture under this defective framework. The parliamentary representation subjected to the tyranny of the Sinhala majority will not secure the interests of the Tamil people. Therefore the arguments advanced by the TULF and other quisling groups of India in favour of temporary solutions and interim arrangements are misguided notions calculated to cheat the Tamil masses."

Struggle will continue

The LTTE continues to refer to the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement as a "charter of servility" and pledges that "the struggle for self determination will continue with more vigour and determination irrespective of the desperate efforts by India and Sri Lanka to crush it militarily."

JANASAVIYA: how to make it work

Dayalal Abeysekera

The Poverty Alleviation (or JANASAVIYA) Programme proposed by the President is to form the country's main development thrust. Thus its importance at this critical juncture. It is heightened by the fact that it is designed to reach 7 million or over 40 percent of the population, all of whom are living below the official poverty line (i.e., those families earning less than Rs. 700/- per month). Though almost the same sub-set of population was reached by the Food Stamp Programme, the proposed JANASAVIYA programme goes beyond a mere dole or a handout. Janasaviya aims at providing a consumption component (of Rs. 1,458/-) for an eligible family of 5 or more while it also provides a savings/investment component (of Rs. 1,042/-) per month for a period of 2 years beginning from April 1989. While the consumption component is meant to improve the level of basic satisfaction of basic human needs, the investment component is designed to free the family from the vicious cycle of poverty and deprivation. For its realisation, an accrued investment of Rs. 25,000/- at the end of two years is identified as the major ingredient though assisted to some degree by raised consumption standards.

What cannot be gainsaid is the massive potential encompassed by the Janasaviya Programme. Nearly one half of the country's population is to be reached, the very same group whose contribution to the nation has been marginal. If at least

a 10 percent increase in their productivity can be engineered, this will constitute a tremendous shot in the arm for the national economy.

Concerns Problematic

The most crucial concern is the potential of the Janasaviya Programme (JP) to propel at least two thirds of the beneficiaries into new economic orbit. It is necessary to identify the critical junctures at which the programme is liable to go awry so that a concerted study of those aspects could be made and definite steps taken to ensure goals. Three such concerns are listed below:

1. Once the logistical details of Janasaviya disbursements are made, (which initially would consist of the consumption-directed allowance), would there be an automatic reorientation on the part of the Janasaviya Beneficiaries (JBs)?

Ans: Most unlikely, unless some activity is initiated to instil the need to reorient.

2. What are the chances of the average beneficiary utilising the Rs. 25,000/- as a capital investment rather than consumption when it reaches him in two years?

Ans: Very remote. This demands business acumen and management skills that is not usually available to the average beneficiary. A very definite intervention strategy is needed to safeguard the capital from being frittered away on consumption, gambling etc. which are the most attractive alternatives for the average beneficiary. Innumerable instances emanating from the Middle-East "gold rush" serve as historical fore-runners for such scenarios. In fact, such sorry

tales may have been enacted by persons drawn disproportionately from a stratum above that of the average JB and the performance of the latter might be much worse.

3. Even with tolerably adequate management skills, what chances will a Rs. 25,000/- investment capital have of propelling an investor family of five or more towards a sustained economic take-off out of the cycle of poverty?

Ans: Left to their own devices, the chances are very remote. The chances of the same exploitative forces (which, in the first instance, were responsible for cocooning the family within a cycle of poverty) operating within the social milieu, impinging on it and sucking off the Rs. 25,000/- investment capital would be overwhelming. The result would be the reinstallation of the status quo with added vigor through newly acquired resources. Even greater polarisation between the social strata can precipitate a more explosive situation in the countryside.

In sum, we think that without a definite interventionist strategy calculated to stimulate, catalyze and galvanize an organisational base from within the JB's at the village level, the likelihood of the Janasaviya Programme fizzling out as yet another ameliorative measure are high. On the other hand, we also firmly believe that with a well conceived, constantly monitored mobilisation strategy backed up by political will and commitment, Janasaviya has the potential to become a pioneering exercise in poverty alleviation. It could be an example to other Third world countries.

(Continued on page 18)

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Sri Lanka's Presidential Election

S. W. R. de A. Samarasinghe

Incumbency

On the UNP side state power given by incumbency helped. The use of TV and radio for publicity and programs favourable to its candidate is one example. This, however, was by no means a critical factor. All candidates had equal access for party broadcasts. In any event, past experience shows that in Sri Lanka the control of state media by the governing party was no bar to it being electorally defeated.

Campaign

More important was the relatively strong campaign of the UNP. Mr. Premadasa is perhaps the first presidential candidate in Sri Lanka who conducted a presidential campaign in the classical style that focussed more on the individual candidate—'his' policies and personality—than on the party that he represented. For obvious reasons he had to distance himself from the weak points of the Jayewardene administration while claiming credit for its success.

This he successfully did by focussing a great deal of attention on Premadasa the man who represented, as he claimed, genuine change the country was yearning for while assuring continuity. In contrast Mrs. Bandaranaike's campaign was never fully presidential but appeared more like a parliamentary campaign. One reason for this was a rather awkward commitment to abolish the Executive Presidency if she was elected to that office. Second, her age, past record as Prime Minister and her relative weakness as a debator (compared to her two rivals) prevented Mrs. Bandaranaike from personalising the campaign too much.

Perhaps the most important factor that explains the result is the nature of the support base of the two main parties. The UNP had approximately 3.25 ml (35% of the 1988 electorate) and the SLFP 2.40 million (26%) surviving voters from the 1982 presidential election. The by-elections and provincial councils elections held after 1982 indicated that the UNP had retained its hardcore 25% supporters. This was not surprising because the beneficiaries—1.0 million who got jobs, 200,000 middle east workers, the large numbers who got land for cultivation under the Mahaweli scheme, houses under Mr. Premadasa's one Million Houses Programme etc—of UNP government policies had a vested interest in preserving the regime. Thus, even if all one million unemployed were willing to vote against the government, there were at least an equal number who were indebted to the government for the jobs they had.

Minorities

Mr. Premadasa did exceedingly well among the minority groups who accounted for about one-third of the total vote he polled. With the help of Cabinet Minister Sooriyamurthi Thondaman and his Ceylon Workers Congress the UNP polled about 185,000 (7.2% of the total UNP vote) Indian Tamils votes. In addition the UNP got about 325,000 (12.7% of the total UNP vote) Muslim votes (Table 2). Mr. Premadasa also polled a plurality of the Sri Lankan Tamil vote. Although Mrs. Bandaranaike attracted more Sinhalese Buddhists voters who account for about 70% of Sri Lanka's electorate, it was not sufficient to offset Mr. Premadasa's lead among minority voters. Largely due to the support of the EPRLF Mr. Abeygoonesekera polled a sizable Sri Lankan Tamil vote in the NEP.

The DPA partners of the SLFP had no capacity to mobilize large blocs of voters. On the one hand, the relatively modest size of the Sri Lankan Tamil vote (130,000) for the SLFP indicate that the ACTC leader Mr. Kumar Ponnambalam failed to mobilize the expected support. Even the DPA promise of a permanent merger of the north and east had not impressed Tamil voters. On the other hand, the DPA manifesto which had been drafted by a group that failed to appreciate the natural constituency of the SLFP, had the effect of alienating traditional SLFP supporters. For example, the proposal for a permanent merger of north and east, the creation of a separate Muslim provincial unit in the east, an "immediate freeze" on all ongoing distribution of state land in the north and east etc were almost totally alien to what the average SLFP sympathizer believes in.

In this respect the most inexplicable was the promise made by the DPA to entrench section 29 (2) of the discarded 1947 Soulbury Constitution in a future new constitution. Section 29 (2) prohibited legislation which discriminated against any religious or ethnic minority. Some Buddhist leaders saw this clause as a barrier to Buddhism being accorded a special status by the state. Section 29 (2) was dropped from the 1972 First Republican Constitution adopted by Mrs. Bandaranaike's 1970-77 government and it was not included even in the 1978 Second Republican Constitution adopted by Jayewardene's UNP government. In point of fact Section 29(2) was never an issue outside the narrow "liberal" circle in Colombo. Having known Buddhist opinion on the issue, it was politically counter-productive for the SLFP to include it in the DPA programme.

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In short the DPA programme appeared to be a document hastily prepared by a set of people who were far removed from the SLFP political reality. The negative response it provoked from the SLFP constituency was evident in the criticism levelled against it by bodies such as the Buddhist Theosophical Society and, more importantly, in the embarrassed silence maintained by the pro-SLFP Bhikkhu leadership after the programme was published.

Pattern

There are some interesting aspects to the regional distribution of the voting pattern. The UNP core support came from Colombo city, the narrow "Catholic belt" to the north of Colombo, Puttalam, southern Kurunegala, Kegalle, Ratnapura, Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, and Digamadulla (Ampara). These areas account for one-third of Sri Lanka's electorate but provided almost half (46.4%) of the total UNP vote. The SLFP core support came from the Colombo suburbs, and the districts of Gampaha (excluding the Catholic belt), Kalutara and Galle. Together they account for about one-quarter of the Sri Lankan electorate but the they provided almost two-fifths (38%) of the SLFP vote.

The strong support of the UNP in Colombo city is explained by Premadasa's personal popularity especially in the poor working class neighbourhoods, and by the support he got from the Muslims and Tamils. Mr. Premadasa's popularity in the Kandyan (central highland region) provinces is partly explained by the Indian Tamil and Muslim support. But more importantly, he seems to have attracted the poorer class of Sinhalese voters in those areas as well. This is a remarkable political achievement because conventional wisdom normally identified the rural poor, especially in the Kandyan areas, with the SLFP.

It is acknowledged that in Sri Lankan elections caste usu-

ally plays an important but subtle role.⁵ Mr. Premadasa was the first 'commoner' in Sri Lanka's post-war history to make a serious bid for the nation's highest office. He belongs to a minority caste from the Kandyan aristocracy and belongs to one of Sri Lanka's so called "traditional ruling families." In any way event the main question was whether the Sinhalese *Govigama* (farmer) caste who consider themselves to be at the top of Sri Lanka's caste hierarchy would shy away from Mr. Premadasa on caste grounds. The *Govigama* are believed to account for about 50% of the Sinhalese electorate and also form much of the core support base of the UNP. The election results suggest that Mr. Premadasa managed to hold the large majority of the traditional UNP support base probably signifying the triumph of class interests over that of caste. The good results for him in certain districts such as Kegalle and Ratnapura with known concentrations of depressed caste communities seems to hint that a fair number of voters from these groups were probably attracted to him by the caste factor.

It is not surprising that the SLFP did well in Gampaha district where Mrs. Bandaranaike's own hometown and electorate are located and considered a traditional stronghold of the party. In Anuradhapura and north Kurunegala the SLFP re-established, albeit on a low poll, its traditional hegemony. The left-leaning traditions of the western coastal belt south of Colombo and the southern coastal belt also helped the SLFP. However, it is the excellent performance of the party in suburban Colombo electorate that should encourage its leadership planning for the February 15th parliamentary elections and conversely create anxieties in the UNP leadership. Of course although the UNP won almost all these electorates in the 1977 parliamentary elections with large majorities, traditionally most of them have

been held by SLFP or left party MPs. Thus swing of some degree against the UNP was inevitable. Nevertheless, the fact is that the Colombo middle/lower middle class, who reaped much of the benefits — jobs both local and foreign, housing schemes, transport, technical and vocational education, consumer goods etc. — of UNP economic policies backed away from the party in large numbers. The question is why?

Middle Class

There are several reasons. Many middle class people wanted a change of party and people in power and were not convinced that Mr Premadasa represented adequate change. This urge to change was largely motivated by the belief that the ruling party was insensitive to public opinion especially on issues such as corruption. Second, the breakdown in law and order, the education system, electricity and transport badly affected the Colombo suburbs and adjacent areas and the government was blamed for it. Third, there is considerable evidence to suggest that a very large number, probably a majority of state sector employees (excluding the security forces personnel) and many professionals were not willing to support the UNP candidate. For example, the SLFP won 49.3% of the postal vote given by government officials who took up election duty and one suspects that the 46.5% UNP share in this came mainly from the armed forces and possibly from the government omnibus workers.

IV

IMPLICATIONS

Parliament

The next immediate hurdle for every political party is the February 15th parliamentary election. For the UNP it gives an opportunity to strengthen its popular mandate beyond the 27.4% of the total registered vote it polled in December 1988 (in October 1982 Mr Jayewardene

got 42.4%). Even more importantly, the party will be keen to get an absolute majority (113 seats or more) in the next parliament which will have 225 members. The Tamil-dominated north and east will have 36 seats and probably only about three are winnable by the UNP. Thus it must find 110 seats from the south. If the southern seats were to be distributed on the basis of the Presidential election vote the UNP would get 104, six short of the target.

The deficit of six can be made up provided there is a reasonable "winner's" swing back to the UNP. In this respect a split in the anti-UNP vote in the bigger districts with the minor party votes not reaching the minimum 5% required by law to qualify for a seat will help the UNP.

UNP

In a bid to win the Parliamentary elections the UNP is trying to project a fresh image to the electorate. It has dropped about 50 sitting members including about 10 ministers and 10 deputy ministers and nominated a large number of new candidates. The UNP campaign will have to specially target the suburban middle class in Colombo and elsewhere. Honest and competent candidates will help. So will better propaganda to explain to the voter what it already has achieved in fields such as education and what it hopes to do in the next six years. The restoration of peace and the reopening of schools were two promises that President Premadasa will have to keep to attract the floating vote. A reduction in the 50,000 strong IPKF force is another of his commitments. In early January India announced the withdrawal of 2000 troops. However, unless more follow before February 15th, Sri Lankans, who will recall a similar token gesture made last June just before the Provincial Councils election, will be sceptical of President Premadasa's ability to get India to withdraw its army.

For the UNP the greatest electoral asset in the current campaign is President Premadasa. The advantages of incumbency with a fresh mandate is one obvious help. Even more importantly, he is attractive to an important section of the Sinhalese Buddhist constituency that attaches considerable importance to the fostering of "national" culture and the Buddhist religion. President Jayewardene's administration was criticised in some quarters, rightly or wrongly, for neglecting these aspects. Mr. Jayewardene in office never developed an intimate relationship with the Buddhist Bhikku leadership who claim a traditional role as advisors to the Sri Lankan rulers. In such a context it was notable that Mr. Premadasa's official induction to office on January 2nd in the Buddhist holy city of Kandy took the form of a religious consecration lasting almost two full days.

The CWC that represents the Indian Tamil vote has joined the UNP to contest the parliamentary elections. The latter, however, will have to work hard for the Muslim vote. In fact if there is a substantial loss of the Muslim vote to the newly formed Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) the 113 seat target could become elusive.

SLFP

As for the SLFP the DPA was an improbable coalition that brought parties with strong communal views on both the Sinhalese as well as Tamil side and, as expected, it broke up soon after December 19th. Whether the DPA program will be adopted by the SLFP remains to be seen. Politically it may be disadvantageous to do so because many key aspects of it are not acceptable to traditional SLFP supporters. In December there was not much time for these negative aspects to sink in and alienate SLFP voters in large numbers who were all keyed up to throw out the government. But now the UNP can be expected to conduct a

strong campaign to attract the "floating" SLFP sympathizers. The SLFP may be served better if it were to adopt the manifesto it is supposed to have prepared over the last several years. However, just now the SLFP appears to be planning to request the people for a mandate to throw out the Executive Presidency via constitutional reform. This appears to be a non-starter. The people in Sri Lanka who are hungry for stability will hardly support a recipe for a constitutional crisis and further instability. The best bet for the SLFP would be to revive spirits of its supporters and field the best possible slate of candidates and stress the importance of a balanced or hung parliament that will force president Premadasa to consider all-party "national" government or, at least, a strong opposition that can keep a UNP government in check. However, several prominent SLFP candidates who having lost the prospects of government office have withdrawn from the February 15th contest thereby weakening the party's bid for victory.

Long Term

Finally, assuming that the UNP wins an absolute majority in parliament what are the long term implications of the December results for the Sri Lankan polity? The UNP has already established a new record in Sri Lanka's post-independence history by winning a third consecutive national election. If peace and normalcy are restored and the UNP implements its promised program with a clean government, the party is probably set to guide the country into the 21st century. It has enough leadership talent to do it and it has emerged from the crisis of the last two years with renewed confidence.

For the SLFP a bad result in the parliamentary elections will compound the crisis within the party. As a centrist party it is finding it difficult to prepare a

programme that can challenge the centre-right UNP which is riding high on the rightist wave that is sweeping the world from US, to Soviet Union to China. The UNP has marched with the time from the liberal-aristocratic leadership of the Senanayakes (1947-70) to the liberal-technocratic leadership of Jayewardene (1970-88) to the present populist-technocratic leadership of Premadasa. In contrast the SLFP is stuck in the liberal-aristocratic leadership of the pre 1970s. The scope for new leadership development in the party is limited for two reasons. One is the control exercised by one family, the Bandaranaiques. Second, without office it is very difficult for politicians to develop a national-level leadership base. Thus, it is conceivable that due to the weaknesses of the SLFP the UNP might increasingly assume the role of "natural" party of governance in Sri Lanka.

Left

As regards the "left" the performance of the SLMP is further confirmation that a party with traditional left ideas (nationalization, state control, more socialism etc) has very limited appeal in Sri Lanka. However, the growth of the LTTE and other radical Tamil nationalist groups in the north and the radical Sinhalese nationalist JVP in the south and their appeal to rural youth suggests that there is scope for strong nationalist radical political parties. Whether the LTTE, JVP, or any other group will have the ability to define itself clearly, equip itself with a popular ideology and a coherent program and enter the electoral process yet remains to be seen.

Minorities

The December presidential election result clearly demonstrated the decisive role that the minorities will play in Sri Lanka's elections. On the positive side this will force Sinhala-majority governments and political parties in the south to be sensitive to minority grievances and aspirations. On the negative side

minority communal political parties could try to exploit the situation in an unreasonable manner. Shrewd political judgement and statesmanship on the part of the national political leadership will be required to strike an acceptable balance.

Note

5. See Jance Jiggins, *Caste and Family in the Politics of the Sinhalese, 1947-1976*. Cambridge University Press, 1979.

JANASAVIYA:...

(Continued from page 14)

We shall try to share some ideas on how the Janasaviya Programme (JP) could be fortified into a trail-blazing exercise. Some of the same thoughts or variations of it may already be incorporated in the planning of the JP. If there is repetition, it is due to our ignorance of the full scope of the programme.

Assumptions

An important assumption implicit in most of the thinking below is the fact that the JB's will be in a much better position to break out of the cycle of poverty and deprivation if the resources are mobilized as a whole within each village unit rather than as atomized family units. There is obvious strength in numbers. This is more so the case when economic resources are also involved; rupees and cents added have a habit of enhancing the economic viability of a venture, *ceteris paribus*.

A second assumption made is the absolute necessity of an organisational base of the JB's which would provide a bulwark for the anticipated economic take-off. The JB's being recruited from the lowest socio-economic stratum are the least likely to have organisational membership, experience or a strong understanding of the efficacy of an organisational base for social and economic emancipation.

Setting up a JB Organisational Base

When should this organisational base be set up? Should

it wait until April 1991 when the first JB's will start receiving their Rs. 25,000/- investment capital? Our answer is a firm NO! In fact, we think that it should start immediately. How is one to begin immediately to form an organisational structure of the JB's when the first proceeds of the programme are to reach the initial recipients only in April, 1989? Obviously, innovative social engineering skills on the part of change-agents are required.

Beneficiaries would be identified and located shortly (vide. 7.5 of Jana Saviya Programme Implementation Guidelines No. 1). It is proposed that the first crucial organisational grouping of the JP be set up as the Village Janasaviya Committee (VJC) constituted by at least 10 members elected from among the village JB's.

JANASELA or 'Ape Kade'

The VJC is charged with the duty of running the village JANASELA or the village "Janasaviya Store" which will stock and retail all necessary commodities to the JB's at below the retail price of the private trader. This can be done and has been done by many a small group of consumers since they control the purchasing, retailing and consequently the profits of this economic activity. The cost-benefits accruing to participants from such an exercise have been found to be around 15 percent of the turnover among small groups and could be even greater when the scale of operation is moderately enhanced.

Once the Janasela achieves some degree of economic stability, it may be possible to expand its retail sales service to the community beyond the JB's on a cash basis, provide a consumer-concerned service and through that inculcate a sense of consumer protection to the community at large. This may serve as a guard against the indulgence in unscrupulous practices by private traders.

(To be concluded)

Polls and political violence

Vasanthi Amarasinghe

Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa's recent victory over Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, candidate for the DPA (Democratic People's Alliance), in the Sri Lankan Presidential Election on 19th December, may not have come as any great surprise to international observers. Nor does it seem to have brought about anything more than a quiet academic response from those commentators and analysts whose writings were the first visible reactions to the results. Observers more intimately connected with the Sri Lankan political process may view the event somewhat differently. But, as in the case of the Sri Lankan Referendum of 1982, which has been called "a watershed" in the country's electoral history, perceptive and critical analysis will no doubt be much slower and more cautious in appearing.

What is more important in the present context, is that the result of this election will have a significant bearing on the parliamentary election that follows close on its heels on February 15th. Even if it does not reach the voting public, a quick assessment of this result may at least help to put into circulation a very different interpretation from much of what has appeared so far. It will also give expression to feelings and views that can be heard in most parts of the country.

The most striking thing about the presidential election was the paper-thin majority of 0.43% which saved the victor from a count of the preferential votes. Though this may not have changed the final outcome, it would have highlighted dramatically the arithmetic of the result. To put it bluntly, 2,569,199 cast their votes for UNP candidate Premadasa, while 2,525,587 or more voted against

him, and for the SLFP and the left-wing coalition the USA. The margin between the votes for and against Premadasa was only 43,612. 91,445 votes were spoilt. 4,189,519 chose not to vote at all or, more pointedly, were prevented from doing so.

The crux of the presidential election lies here. Sri Lanka has an unvarying record of high voter turnout. The last three nationwide elections involving all the major parties, in 1970, 1977 and 1982, saw a turnout of 85.2%, 86.7% and 81.1%, respectively. This time only 55.32% voted.

The reasons for the present low turnout were the conditions of extreme political and social turbulence that engulfed the country in the months preceding the presidential election. This particular chapter of political violence began with killing of a student leader, Daya Patirana, in December 1986. It attained new levels after the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement in July 1987 (popularly referred to as the "Peace Accord"), and

reached a crescendo in the weeks before election. It moved from rampaging university students and schoolchildren, to innumerable assassinations of politicians, big and small, and hundreds of innocents, and widespread conditions of violence and terror. Official statistics of political killings and robberies of firearms (other than in the North and East) indicate the spread of terrorism in most parts of the island.

The unrest reached such proportions that the very "ability of the country to survive" was questioned. There was widespread breakdown of transport, power, fuel and food supplies, post and telecommunications, in many parts of the country. Schools, universities, factories and workplaces were closed down. Public life and civil order was disrupted more extensively and for a longer period than at any time in living memory. Large numbers of professionals and nervous sections of the upper and middle classes left the country "on holiday. At the onset of the main tourist season, tourists were officially asked to leave. Incoming tours were cancelled. The excerpts from the press are examples of the comments that appeared almost daily in November and December:

Political and other Murders, and Robberies of Firearms outside the North and East (Presented in Parliament during Debates on the Extension of the Emergency)

(from 20/12/87 to 14/12/88)

Period ending	Political murders	Other murders	Robberies of firearms
15/1/88	10	25	34
20/2/88	8	31	17
18/3/88	10	41	16
15/4/88	6	44	13
14/5/88	20	18	19
14/6/88	43	23	87
14/7/88	24	65	40
15/8/88	23	88	158
15/9/88	51	99	163
14/10/88	75	132	166
14/11/88	112	212	673
14/12/88	82	323	115

"What is tragic about the present crisis is that while every political party and grouping realises the country is tottering on the brink of disaster, party interest appears to be taking precedence over national interest... There is perhaps only a few days more when absolute disaster will strige us. Thus we do hope that all realise there is no time to lose... History will judge all the present leaders in the way they acted during this moment of peril... pettifogging politicians or patriots." (*Island* editorial 8/11.)

"Only the wilfully purblind will refuse to accept the fact that we are confronted by the most profound national crisis of contemporary times... established wisdom and conventional opinion finds itself unable to grapple with the enormity of the situation." (*Island* editorial 9/11.)

"Our motherland is in turmoil crisis and its citizens are all living in mortal fear. The present state affairs has been brought about by a whole series of cause and many are to share the blame. Violence is a daily occurrence and it is from all sides. The oft repeated cliché that violence begets violence has proved itself to the hilt and still we refuse to learn, hoping for victory by eliminating the other side.

"Democracy is in peril. The long awaited elections are in danger of being sabotaged or of not being held at all... Without free and fair elections, the results will be of no use to anyone. Even after that, if there is no assurance of justice to all sections of society... there will be no peace." (from an appeal issued by the Catholic Archbishop of Colombo on 22/11, published in *Daily News* 24/11.)

"For more than a year, Sri Lanka has drifted from calamity to crisis... What is indisputable is that this

beautiful, agonised, little country is tearing itself to bits... Many Sri Lankans fear that the election is at best a cruel farce, and that at worst it will mark the final collapse of their country. Nowhere is that fear closer to realisation than here, at the island's southern extremity.

"Food is in short supply and petrol desperately scarce. The tourist hotels are closed, the shops have little to sell and nobody to buy. Upcountry, the tea estates are deserted and the managers fleeing to Colombo, Administration is paralysed. Buses can ply only with heavily armed soldiers on board. The only commodity in abundant supply is lies.

"The government says the banks are working, that power lines destroyed by the JVP are being restored and that fuel and food are once again on sale. The fact is that banks, even under heavy guard are opening at most for half an hour at a time. There is little rural credit, and little way of cashing wage cheques or dipping into savings. People are hungry, even starving.

"Vast swathes of the south are without electricity or telephones; the lines are hacked and blasted by the side of the road. Government offices are open but only because the people in them have been literally driven to work by the army" (Derek Brown in the *Guardian Weekly* 4/12.)

"Anybody with eyes or ears today must also realise that prospects for holding a countrywide election are very grim at the moment. Public anxiety is centred on the fact whether adequate security can be provided to voters and election officials and whether the conditions exist in the country for people to take part in the electoral process in large numbers." (*Island* editorial 16/12.)

This unprecedented wave of violence created by subversives and called "Southern terrorism" (as opposed to "Northern terrorism" which had been going on for many years in the north and east), was generally believed to have been caused by the extremist organisation, the JVP (Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna or People's Liberation Front) and by an armed group known as the DJV (Deshapremi Viyaparaya Peramuna or Patriotic People's Front). The JVP had spearheaded the youth insurrection of 1971.

There is also a widely held and plausible view that the SLFP, or elements of its grass-roots supporters, played some part in this scenario, giving it tacit approval and even active support.

Later on there also appeared on the "southern scene" other armed organisations like the government's Special Task Force (STF), the "Green Tigers" a euphemism for goon squads, and, in the middle of the election campaign, a mysterious organisation, the People's Revolutionary Red Army (PRRA). The complexities of the situation can be seen in the following extract from an interview given by President Jayewardene to Edward Gorman of the *London Times*, reproduced in the *Sunday Times* of 18th December:

Q: What is happening in places like Matara, a town I visited a few days ago, where there are bodies lying on the road every morning and people are killing on all sides? There are these various groups, like the peoples Revolutionary Red Army. Who do you think these new groups are, like PRRA?

A. Well we have been arming a large number of people for security purposes to protect the Members of Parliament, members of our party, members of the so-called USA. So weapons are available. They are being used for protection.

Q: Are there any connections between the government and the PRRA?

A: There may be some people. I don't know.

Q: So you think there could be some connection between the government and the PRRA?

A: Not a connection. But there may be members who are supporting the government who are in these groups.

The crescendo of political violence experienced after President Jayewardene's announcement in September of Premadasa's selection as his successor to contest the post of President, seemed a natural heightening of the prenomination pattern of events.

With hindsight, it is now being questioned whether there was a logical development between the earlier and later scenarios or whether the acute post-nomination crisis was caused by the entry of entirely new factors.

The observations that trigger off this questioning were that the low poll in areas affected by the violence was especially damaging to the opposition candidate Mrs. Bandaranaike, while the public violence itself came to a sudden and abrupt halt with the announcement of the result and Premadasa's victory.

The effect of the low poll on Mrs. Bandaranaike's performance at the election has been referred to in several of the preliminary analysis. For example, A. T. R. Madanayake observes that 17 electorates which were SLFP strongholds were critically affected by the violence (*Lanka Guardian* 1/1/89). Analysts have failed, however, to stress several other important indications that would require us to note that the benefactor of the violence was the ruling party. It was the columnist Kautilya who came closest to implying this when he wrote, "50.4 per cent is what Prime Minister Premadasa got, with his rival,

the DPA's Mrs. Bandaranaike almost 45%... a political party (the DPA/SLFP) which waded into the contest un-armed when almost everybody else was toting automatic weapons, polled 2.8 million." (*Island* 25/12.) While many had doubted whether the election could be held at all, large sections of the public had anticipated a very different result.

Expectations

By November there were many indications that a highly electoral conscious society which in previous decades had consistently voted against an incumbent government, was about to do so again. The massive crowds that milled to hear Mrs. Bandaranaike were not the only signs. More telling is the fact that 36 Ministers and government MPs, are said to have left the country (according to the *Sunday Times* 11/12) at the height of a countrywide election, along with an unknown number of highly-placed politically appointed officials, clearly anticipating an electoral defeat.

One of the last bills to be debated in Parliament was the controversial Indemnity (Amendment) Bill, in early December. This indemnified ministers, officials and security forces against legal action or punishment for "any act... legal or otherwise, done or purported to be done with a view to restoring law and order" during the period of office of the Jayewardene government. The bill could only muster 56 government MPs in its support, a record low poll, in a parliament in which the Government Whip was heavily wielded. This was probably due to a reluctance on the part of many MPs to be associated with the bill, and the absence of a large number who had gone abroad.

The lack of the usual outburst of celebration and widespread attacks on the defeated by the victors, has been explained by the fact that the mass of SLFP voters, who had

been confident of victory, and had prepared themselves for an orgy of post-election violence, were stopped in their tracks by the sharp reversal of expectations. Others have suggested that lukewarm UNP voters had no cause for wreaking revenge on opponents who had been repeatedly defeated in one way or another since the massive UNP victory of 1977.

(To be continued)

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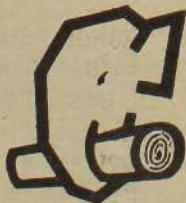
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MONTAIGNE: The First Essayist

S. Pathiravitana

It is rare today to find a person who is more entertained by reading Montaigne (1533-1593), the French Essayist, than by watching TV. Rarer still to find him in the person of an emperor, like the Emperor of Japan, Akihito. Time may have distanced Montaigne from modern audiences, but not what he says:

In my experience with myself I have enough to make me wise if I were only a good student of it... Every man carries within himself the whole condition of humanity.

That's a penetrating thought which an emperor sitting on a throne rarely has time for. It can serve even less exalted selves, provided they are willing to go all the way with Montaigne.

When I find myself convicted of an error, I not only learn of a new mistake, but, more than that, I learn the weakness and treachery of my understanding as a whole... To learn that you have said or done a foolish thing is nothing. You must learn that you are nothing but a fool — a much more comprehensive lesson.

If there were newspapers published in his day, he may have written for us an entertaining and thought-provoking column. In their absence he invented the essay. The essay was new to literature. Before Montaigne there were narrative writings, descriptions, histories, satires as demonstrated by the Greeks and the Romans.

But with him was born writing at random, conforming to no pre-conceived order but to the urge, 'the wind bloweth as it listeth'. Then again earlier writers wrote about heroic action or deeds. Montaigne's subjects had nothing of that grand quality. They were more about how Alexander bent his head slightly

to emphasise his beauty or how Cicero was in the habit of puckering his nose or, as in his own case, why he needed to scratch his ears so often. They had, what journalist call, human interest. Like this passage for instance:

I do not bite my nails over the difficulties I encounter in a book. After one or two assaults I give them up. If I kept at them, I would lose my time and myself as well; for my mind is good only for one jump. If I can't see a point at the first glance, repeated efforts will do nothing but make it more obscure.

The essays also show how he came through the renaissance. For example, he had a most unusual education. His father who had a touch of the renaissance fever decided to teach his child Latin from the cradle itself. For this he got down the best tutors available in the market, taught the domestics handling the child some basic Latin words and phrases and he himself and his wife trained themselves to talk to the growing child in only Latin.

By the age of six the child had a good command of Latin without ever having to memorise lists of verbs and their declensions. When he started on French at the age of six, it was like learning a second language. As a case study it was so interesting that his tutor had told him he had included this experience in a study he made on language teaching.

This remarkable way of learning Latin, one would have thought, would have helped him retain his skill at Latin for the rest of his life. That was not to be. It so happened that his second language finally took over from what he calls his mother tongue and Latin fell from the first place. Years later, however, Montaigne recalls

that while rushing to the help of his father who had a sudden fall he found his emotions crying out in Latin.

Our image of Renaissance Man needs adjustment after meeting Montaigne. Though liberated to a large extent after reading the Athenian philosophers and wise, after learning how to live and how to die from the Stoics and the Epicureans and at the same time worldly after enjoying the raptures of Venus, Montaigne remained very much the Roman Catholic in his faith and the Royalists in his politics.

This may be disconcerting to some. But such disparities Montaigne could well contain within himself. In fact his response to life was one of fullness or wholeness or as we moderns call it holistic. Unlike the committed people of today his commitment was not to one philosophy or belief or way of life. In that expressive phrase, now deadened by political use, he truly saw unity in diversity.

He was appalled by the smell of burning corpses that came from all sides of France in his time because people's religious beliefs were in conflict.

Belief, he said, had nothing to do with truth, but came along with custom and birth, just as the French were born French and the Germans were born German. This did not, however, prevent him from taking sides as we moderns wracked with doubt may be unable to do. When the time came he took the side of his birth.

If you ask him for a reason he might merely say: "We cannot fail in following Nature... So too must we learn to endure what we cannot evade. Our life, like the harmony of the world, consists of contrary things — of diverse tones, sweet and harsh, sharp and flat, gay and solemn.

If a musician should use but one of them, it would be meaningless. He must know how to employ them all and mingle them together.

"We likewise must learn to blend the goods and evils which are part and parcel of our life — we cannot exist without them."

His confidence in Nature in all matters is so strong that when it comes even to medication he does not take the word of the physician seriously. His father, for instance, lived for three score and fourteen years, his grandfather for three score and nine and his great grandfather for almost four score years.

None of them took any medicine, for them taking anything outside food was taking a drug. Even when an uncle of his fell seriously ill he was told he would be soon dead if he didn't take medicine, he replied, "Then I am dead." Montaigne sees physicians as not being satisfied to treat illness. They treat health itself as a sickness, "lest a man should at any time escape their authority."

He had the same lack of confidence in the various scientific theories propounded at different times before and during the renaissance. He thought that scientists grabbed much more than they could chew — "We labour only to stuff our memory, and leave the conscience and understanding empty." He would prefer to think that science was a game or a toy, "because it was not good to be too subtle and cunning." As the Tuscan proverb puts it, he says, "If you draw the thread too fine, you will break it."

As for learning, Montaigne understood the Professors, (as Montaigne called the academics) were engaged then as now in purely verbal games — "the game may be kept up until the dictionary is exhausted." All that, he says, leads to falsehood and patter. This intellectual dishonesty has turned Montaigne away from the academic world.

"I have seen in my times," he says, "a hundred artisans, a hundred field-labourers wiser and happier than university rectors — and men whom I would much rather resemble."

"Learning has its place, I think, among the necessities of life, as have heroism, beauty and riches; but more remote and more by our opinion of it than by its own nature. Whoever values us for our behaviour will find more excellent men among the ignorant than among the learned, and excellent in every sort of virtue."

The essays of Montaigne provided, once upon a time, a 'liberal education' to the reader. Its impact has grown less through the years because the idea of the full man, the wholesome man has lessened in importance with the divisive impact on our lives of the industrial revolution.

We are now reviewing the terrible effects of the dark Satanic mills on our lives and on our environment. Montaigne provides the philosophy of the need to balance our lives or, as we say today, to live in harmony with our eco-systems. There are quite a few who will understand him today when he says: "As for me, I study myself more than any other subject: it is my physics and metaphysics."

There is evidence that Shakespeare was one who took more than a cursory glance at Montaigne. In his *Tempest* we are given a picture of a just and fair society, (more utopian than dharmista), the origin of which is a report from a witness who has seen it functioning in newly discovered Brazil during a 12-year stay there. Montaigne is quite enthralled and records it more as a criticism of his own times than as an escape from the society into which he was born. Here is Montaigne:

It is a nation with no kind of commerce; no knowledge of letters or numbers; no name of magistrate or political superiority; no wealth po-

verty, or need of servants; no contracts, inheritances, or divisions of property, for there is no occupation save idleness and no respect of kindred beyond the common rights of man to man; no clothing, agriculture, or metal; no use of wine or wheat. The very words which signify falsehood, treachery, dissimulation, avarice, envy, slander, forgiveness, are never heard of.

And here is Shakespeare using it in the *Tempest* to make a few jobs at Sir Thomas More's Utopia or, what may be seen today in Marxist perspective as, the classless society in the 'withered' proletarian state.

GONZALO

I' the commonwealth I would by contraries
Execute all things; for no kind of traffic
Would I admit; no name of magistrate;
Letters should not be known;
Riches poverty,
And use of service, none;
Contract, succession
Bourn, bound of land, tithe,
vineyard, none;
No use of metal, corn or wine,
or oil;
No occupation; all men
idle, all
And women too, — but innocent
and pure;
No sovereignty, —

SEBASTIAN

Yet he would be king on't

ANTONIO

The latter end of his commonwealth
forgets the beginning.

GONZALO

All things in common nature
should produce
Without sweat or endeavour:
treason, felony,
Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need
of any engine,
Would I not have; but nature
should bring forth
Of its own kind, all foison,
all abundance,
To feed my innocent people.

SEBASTIAN

No marrying 'mong his subjects?

ANTONIO

None, man; all idle; whores
and knaves

GONZALO

I would with such perfection
govern, sir,
T' excel the golden age.

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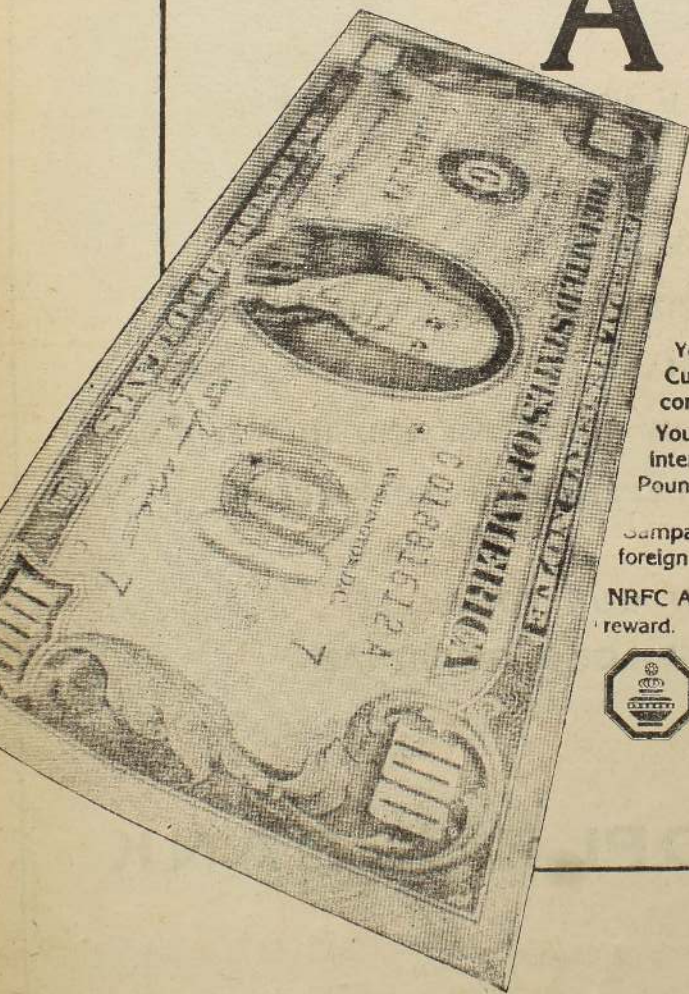
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