

LANKA

GUARDIAN

Vol. 11 No. 17 January 1, 1989 Price Rs. 5.00 Registered at the GPO, Sri Lanka QJ/84/NEWS/88

POLL '88

Hambantota District

MULKIRIGALA

Premadasa R (UNP)	5952	49.3%
Bandaranaike Sirimavo (SLFP)	5740	47.5%
Abeygunasekera Oswin (SLMP)	382	3.2%
Rejected	663	5.2%
Total polled	12737	19.01%
Majority	212	
Registered votes	66740	

TISSAMAHARAMA

Premadasa R (UNP)	20020	49.0%
Sirimavo Bandaranaike (SLFP)	19655	48.1%
Abeygunasekera Oswin (SLMP)	1192	2.9%
Rejected	1667	3.9%
Total polled	42544	44.7%
Majority	1365	
Registered votes	95245	

Puttalam District

WENNAPPUWA

Premadasa R (UNP)	28407	57.29%
Sirimavo Bandaranaike (SLFP)	20234	40.81%
Abeygunasekera Oswin (SLMP)	941	1.90%
Valid votes	49582	
Rejected votes	736	
Total polled	50318	
Majority	8173	
Rejected votes/Total polled	1.46%	
Total polled/Registered votes	75.96%	
Registered votes	66244	



● **SHELTON
KODIKARA**

● **RADHIKA
COOMARA-
SWAMY**

● **MERVYN DE
SILVA**

● **A. R. B.
MADANAYAKE**

* **Marxian sociology in Sri Lanka** — *Ralph Pieris*

* **KIPLING: a sense of the numinous** — *Izeth Hussain*

Food subsidies, consumption and social unrest

— *P. Abeygunawardena, S. Pinnaduwege*

● **Tamilnadu elections**

● **Vengsarkar**

● **Gorbachev's move**



How To Ensure That Your Stylish Clothes Stay Sewn

Insist they are sewn with
Astra Spun Polyester Thread
- Strong and colourfast



astra

spun polyester thread

- a product of
The Tootal Group



SCL



**TOOTAL THREAD
COLOMBO
(PRIVATE) LTD.,**

P. O. Box 1122

33, Staples Street, Colombo 2.

Telephone : 21380/549575

JANA SAVIYA

President-elect Premadasa will keep his election promise of Rs. 2,500/- per "food stamps" family to make this his Sinhala-Tamil New Year gift. 1.4 million families or 7 million people will benefit from this "Jana Saviya" program, which will be supervised by 11,000 village-level officials, including agricultural officers and **grama sevakas**.

While Rs. 1,458 will be paid monthly as food and consumption assistance, Rs. 1,042 will be deposited in a bank account to the family's credit.

LOOKING UP

Businessmen hail Premadasa victory, said **The Island** after the presidential election. "No doubt. It was a vote for the open economy", leading businessman and former Central Bank Governor N. U. Jayawardena was quoted as saying.

Other quotes: Economists (unnamed) — "An offer by Premadasa of a monthly subsidy

of 2,500 rupees (76 dollars) for 1.7 million poor people swung the vote in his favour".

Lyn Fernando, President of the Apparel Exporters Association — "The victory endorsed the policies pursued by the UNP Government".

Chandra Karunaratne, President of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce — "Future looks good for the industrial sector, because Premadasa is alive to our problems".

Gilbert Jayasuriya, President of the Sri Lanka Nordic Business Council — (Expressing the hope that with Mr. Premadasa's victory there would be peace soon) "Judging by his past record, he is strong enough to achieve it. He is a man of action. He has proved it amply".

The share market, said **The Island**, was brisk. Following the election result there had been "a near total turn-around at the Colombo Securities Exchange".

TRENDS + LETTERS

Human Rights (I)

Would you please be kind enough to give the following matter your attention:

I am a Danish teacher. I have been very concerned about hearing that a fellow-teacher in Sri Lanka Mr. Sumanadasa Kodikarage Nihiluwa, Southern province has disappeared under alarming circumstances.

My wife and I and several of our friends have visited your beautiful country as tourists. We have visited some of your excellent schools too, and we can hardly believe, that a teacher could disappear in this way.

Whatever Mr. Kodikarage has done, I am convinced that he has acted in accordance with his conscience, and at any rate — as your country is a member of the United Nations and accordingly support the Declaration of Human Rights — a person should be placed for a legal process and not just disappear.

We and our Danish friends would like to visit your country again, but how can we, if such things happen?

We hope you will use this in your newspaper.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation in this matter, I am a friend of Sri Lanka.

Vagn Moller Frederiksen

Sandlodsvej 55
4581 Rorvig
Denmark

(To page 5)

LANKA

GUARDIAN

Vol. 11 No. 17 January 1, 1989

Price Rs. 5.00

Published fortnightly by
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd.

No. 246, Union Place,
COLOMBO — 2.

Editor: Mervyn de Silva

Telephone: 547584

CONTENTS

News Background	3
Presidential Election — 1988	8
Opinion	19
The Region	21
Foreign News	23
Food Subsidies in Sri Lanka	25
Correspondence	26
Sports	27
Kipling — IV	28

Printed by Ananda Press

82/5, Wolfendhal Street, Colombo 13.

Telephone: 35975

MONEY · DOES · GROW · ON TREES

YES, WE'VE MADE IT GROW IN EVERY BRANCH OF BUSINESS

Few companies in Sri Lanka can offer services ranging from Finance to Property Development and Engineering.

Mercantile Credit Limited is one of them. When it comes to Hire Purchase our terms are unrivalled — especially for the acquisition of vehicles.

Then there is Lease Purchase, an innovative mode of funding that was pioneered in Sri Lanka by MCI.

Not to mention Leasing, Bridging Loans, Business Loans, Pledge Loans, Trust Loans, Packing Credit Loans, Bill Discounting, Letters of Credit, Letters of Guarantee, Insurance, Project Promotion, Tourism and Hotel Management, Money and Exchange Broking, Stock Broking, Produce Broking, Property Development, Engineering and Shipping.

That's not all, if you're a buyer, a seller, or a manufacturer, MCL has all the answers for you.

**MERCANTILE
CREDIT
LIMITED**



55, Janadhipathi Mawatha,
Colombo 1. Tel: 266119-9

City Office,
185/2, Dharmapala Mawatha,
Colombo 7. Tel: 599267/8/9

Regional Office: Kandy

Branches: Anuradhapura,
Bandarawela, Gampaha,
Jaffna, Kurunegala, Kalmunai,
Kalutara, Matara, Negombo,
and Ratnapura.

WHERE · OTHERS · SEE · PROBLEMS WE · SEE · SOLUTIONS

Democracy with (or under) the gun?

Mervyn de Silva

NEWS
BACKGROUND

It was a "Combined Operation" of a rather rare Third World kind. Perhaps for the first time in Third world history, a politically-conscious people, deeply devoted to the preservation of free institutions, and a 100 percent Sinhala-Buddhist Army engaged in a bitter and brutal counter-insurgency operation against rebels fighting a "patriotic war", teamed up to help a credible Presidential poll! True 55% is way below the average 75%, and the conditions were far from conducive to the sort of 'free and fair' elections we have witnessed in the past 40 years but it was high enough to make most observers say "it was a miracle that it was held at all and a result announced".

The result itself will be challenged in the courts, stated one of the candidates, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, the SLFP President and DPA nominee. That however raises legal questions best debated and settled in the courts. The politics of this fiercely fought out election is paramount, in terms of the current crisis and even more so, the future of democracy and civil society in the 1990's.

Three Sri Lankan contributors to this issue of the *L.G.* discuss the polls result, approaching the matter from different directions. How did the SLFP clutch defeat from the jaws of victory, asks Radhika Coomaraswamy. Did the strategy of the Sinhala militants work? Posing a very popular question, A. R. B. Madanayake examines the low poll-high poll theory in relation to traditionally pro-SLFP/Left constituencies.

In doing so, the writer is in fact addressing himself to a post-election statement of the

Opposition Leader, Mr. Anura Bandaranaike who told *Reuters* that a low poll, a questionable result and a UNP victory served the JVP strategy best.

In our view, the Democratic Peoples Alliance (DPA) talked too much, took up too many issues, and tried to please far too many interest-groups, some of them representing diametrically opposed views. Many an obvious error arose from the loose alliance itself. Timing was terrible. A devolution package and 'ethnic regions' in the East may be a good idea in itself, and quite an advance in SLFP thinking. Yet, it burst suddenly over the heads of committed SLFP supporters, totally confusing a great many and alienating the traditional Sinhala-Buddhist constituency. It was the UNP that carried Ampara and Samanthurai, the sensitive 'border' areas. The UNP exploited to the full this proposal in the DPA manifesto, the Lands Minister Gamini Dissanayake promptly branding it "The Ponnambalam Offer" and a resurrection of "50-50" of his father, G. G. Ponnambalam. Plainly the SLFP's secret talks in the jungles of the Wanni with assorted 'Tigers' simply turned the stomachs of the more traditionalist pro-SLFP voters. Mr. Gamini Iriyagolle's indignant outburst and the reaction of many ranking monks confirmed this opinion.

More important than these issues and their impact on the poll is the singular fact that this was Sri Lanka's most 'militarised' national election. The changing pattern of Sri Lankan society radically altered the character of the election. Guns dominated the campaign and the poll itself.

While guns, the JVP-DJV, the so-called 'Green Tigers', the para-military units and the shadowy militias (PRRA) affected the character of the poll and probably its result, it was also the guns of the State which made the election possible. It is easily forgotten that up to early December, Colombo's most "knowledgeable" observers had made a guessing game (Will He? Won't He) a drawing room and cocktail party sport. "HE" in this case was also "H. E.", His Excellency President JR. Would he postpone the polls? Can they be held?

ARMY OPERATION

It was the Army's massive combined operation in the Southern province, after the tourists left, and the daily cordon-and-search operations under 48-hour and 36 hour curfew on the outskirts of Colombo that broke the back — for the time being, at least — of the southern insurgency. In the Kaduwella, Piliyandala, Maharagama, Homagama, Hanwella circle, over 2,000 "subversives" were arrested and at least 3 large hide-outs and training camps captured, with fairly large arms caches. The dual impact of the two months-long economic disruption and de-stabilisation campaign on mass opinion and moral, and the tough crackdown on the JVP's southern stronghold, saw a spectacular rise in the information-intelligence flow, the National Security Minister, Lalith Athulathmudali told visiting correspondents. As a result, an attack in or on Colombo was pre-empted. The Welikada jail-break shook the government but it did not throw the capital into a state of panic that would force the regime to concentrate on Colombo's security, not the election.

The round-up of 'subversives' especially in the South and the 'terror' plus 'counter terror' have been at alarmingly high human cost, if half the reports in the world media, and the statistics produced by Human Rights groups are true. The majority of the 'prisoners' may be peripherals, the rebels fleeing for refuge to the jungles. But it did disorient the military planners of the insurgency. The rebels must now re-group and re-locate.

In the meantime, a new political situation may have provoked an intense, perhaps acrimonious, debate within their ranks. The 5 percent cut-off point, the outgoing President's master-stroke, is an invitation to the JVP to join the parliamentary mainstream — and President-elect Premadasa lost no time in repeating it publicly. But there was a mailed fist in the kid glove — please decide soon; violence must end, and will

end. There was a quick follow-up of other gestures of conciliation — end to the Emergency on Jan. 15, an offer of amnesty to all but the hard-core, a military stand-off if there was reduced violence etc. Thus, the post-polls quiet, except in some remote areas.

FAREWELL TO ARMS?

Democracy under the gun is a familiar Third World phenomenon. Elections with guns is an in-between phase for Sri Lanka. In early January a new campaign will start. How free will that campaign prove — free in the first place of organised violence by armed groups? Considering that the SLFP had no protective armour, and its local organisations had been wrecked, it did well to get 45 percent. This would mean a close parliamentary contest where (a) the two major parties could share about 200 to 210 of the 225

seats in the new parliament, giving the minor (and the minority) parties 15 to 25 seats. Not the most stable Parliamentary situation. Even a confrontation between Executive President and Parliament is possible, causing all sorts of political problems best known to French system before de Gaulle, and not strange even under Mitterand. Is an Israeli situation more likely?

The crucial role will once more be assumed by the SLFP. Can it stand alone for another 6 years? Or will it start splitting up — the more nationalist-minded moving JVP-wards, and the left-inclined to the U. S. A. Will the new President seize that chance to work out a 'national coalition'?

If the political situation does not stabilise itself after the Feb. 15 polls, an already militarised Sri Lankan society may never be able to say a farewell to arms.

N-E devolution — Premadasa's priorities

What are the top priorities of President Mr. Rana-singhe Premadasa? After the Service chiefs had paid a courtesy call, Mr. Premadasa summoned a conference of Permanent Secretaries and top officials to discuss how quickly power can be transferred to the recently elected North-East Provincial Council. The Defence Secretary and IGP were also present, at a meeting attended by Chief Minister Annamalai Vartharajah Perumal and his ministers. The devolution exercise began on December 26 and is expected to be completed by Jan. 2, the day on which Mr. Premadasa himself will be installed as the second Executive President of Sri Lanka.

"The speed with which he acted and the keen interest he showed in making Devolution

work impressed us all" commented the Chief Minister later.

The *Daily News* reported:

Mr. Perumal and his ministers are meeting the government agents of the eight districts in the northern and eastern provinces on Friday, to brief them on policy guidelines and a program of work.

Jaffna University's registrar V.N. Sivarajah, has been appointed Chief Secretary of the North-East Province and Trincomalee's Additional Government Agent, G. Krishnamurthy, the Secretary to the North-East Provincial Council.

Dr. K. Vikneswaran has been appointed Secretary to the Chief Minister. Appointments are now being made to the posts of secretaries of the ministries.

Some of the names mentioned are Messers S. Sivathasan, M. M. Mansoor, K. Pathmanathan, Dr. C. S. Nachinarkinian.

"My first task is to restore the historic Hindu temple Thirukoneswaram, and make it accessible to the Hindu's Mr. Perumal said. The public at present is not allowed to visit the temple as the approach road is through Fort Fredrick currently an army camp.

Trincomalee town will be cleared of rubble and debris and restoration work will start next week.

"Money is no problem. A portion of available foreign aid will come through the line ministries and the balance direct to the provincial council. Our responsibility is to use it effectively" Mr. Perumal said.

PARLIAMENTARY PROJECTIONS

Colombo			Kalutara			Gampaha			Ratnapura		
UNP	10+1 (bonus)		SLFP	5+1 (bonus)		UNP	8+1 (bonus)		UNP	5+1 (bonus)	
SLFP	9		UNP	5		SLFP	8		SLFP	4	
SLMP	0		SLMP	0		SLMP	0		SLMP	0	
Matara			Nuwara Eliya			Trincomalee			Batticaloa		
SLFP	4+1 (bonus)		UNP	3+1 (bonus)		UNP	1+1 (bonus)		UNP	2+1 (bonus)	
UNP	4		SLFP	2		SLFP	1		SLFP	1	
SLMP	0		SLMP	0		SLMP	1		SLMP	1	
Galle			Kandy			Jaffna			Digamadulla		
SLFP	5+1 (bonus)		UNP	6+1 (bonus)		SLFP	5+1 (bonus)		UNP	2+1 (bonus)	
UNP	5		SLFP	5		SLMP	4		SLFP	2	
SLMP	0		SLMP	0		UNP	2		SLMP	1	
Hambantota			Matale			Kegalle			Puttalam		
UNP	3+1 (bonus)		UNP	2+1 (bonus)		UNP	5+1 (bonus)		UNP	3+1 (bonus)	
SLFP	3		SLFP	2		SLFP	3		SLFP	3	
SLMP	0		SLMP	0		SLMP	0		SLMP	0	
Badulla			Anuradhapura			Kurunegala			Vanni		
UNP	4+1 (bonus)		SLFP	4+1 (bonus)		UNP	7+1 (bonus)		UNP	2+1 (bonus)	
SLFP	3		UNP	3		SLFP	6		SLFP	1	
SLMP	0		SLMP	0		SLMP	0		SLMP	1	
			Polonnaruwa			Monaragala					
			UNP	2+1 (bonus)		UNP	3+1 (bonus)				
			SLFP	2		SLFP	1				
			SLMP	0		SLMP	0				

On the basis of the same vote, district-wise, the above shows how the parties would have performed, at a parliamentary poll.

Letter

Human Rights (II)

I am a member of a West-German Amnesty-International group. Amnesty International (ai) is a worldwide organisation, which works for the enforcement of human rights everywhere in the world. My group's work has concentrated on cases in Poland, South Africa and in Syria.

Now we are in the process of writing reports of "disappearances" in Sri Lanka, relating to the period before the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement of 29th July 1987.

We are anxious about the fate and whereabouts of the "disappeared" and we wish the relatives to receive clarification. We are working on the case of Ganeshapillai Lalithanandasivam and Ponniah Sitiravelu. G. Lalithanandasivam is 36 years old, married and has several children. He is the owner of a Private Travel Service. He was arrested at the Tampalakamam Army Camp, Trincomalee when he called there at the request of Tampalakamam Army Camp Officials in order to deliver the required car. He was accompanied by

his driver P. Sitiravelu. There is a sworn statement of the arrest of G. Lalithanandasivam.

It would be of great use for our efforts if you could publish an article on our work or an article about the "disappearance" of G. Lalithanandasivam and P. Sitiravelu. I enclose some copies of newspaper articles on our work published in Germany.

Hans-Joachim Karalus

6466 Grundau 1
Weinbergstr. 31
West-Germany

Prime Minister Premadasa's victory speech

The politics of terror has no place in the temple of democracy

"The strength of our victory lies in our ability to protect those who opposed us. I appeal to everyone to refrain from engaging in provocative activities", Mr. R. Premadasa said upon being declared elected President of Sri Lanka at the Colombo Town Hall.

He said in his speech: "This is a great victory for the ballot. The ballots of the people have triumphed over the bullets of brutality. This is a victory for all those individuals and parties who are dedicated to the ballot. The ballot is the vehicle of all those who are committed to democracy. We are all relieved that unity has prevailed over terror

"Today, not only the winner but also those who did not win can share this victory for democracy in Sri Lanka. The Presidential Election is over; the verdict of the people is clear. Mrs. Srima Bandaranaike and Mr. Ossie Abeygunasekera are no longer my rivals, I consider them as two contestants who presented alternative policies to the people. Let us join together to eliminate post-election bitterness. The strength of our victory lies in our ability to protect those who opposed us. I appeal to everyone to refrain from engaging in provocative activities.

"We fought hard. Together, let us now fight harder to defeat fear and poverty. At this moment on behalf of all my countrymen, I have an appeal to make those who have still to join the democratic process. Please make up your mind soon. You have another chance of doing so at the forthcoming Parliamentary Elections. I am available for any consultation with a view to arriving at a practicable solution. Your participation will enable us to eradicate fear and poverty with greater speed.

"This Election has given us many messages from the people. It indicates the appreciation of the people for eliminating scarcities. It endorses the path of development pursued by the United National Party Government. It also approves the policies I intend implementing to alleviate poverty. I am also fully aware of the many liabilities with which my campaign was burdened. Our success will be truly meaningful only if we appreciate the concerns of the people, correct errors and provide an effective government.

"The politics of terror has no place in the temple of democracy. Party supporters have faced frightful threats and attacks. This must and this will end. Let us make no false claims in victory or excuses in defeat. The people have spoken; their voice is clear: our mandate is nationwide, our cause is just, our purpose is welcome. I have always believed that we must learn from the

wisdom of the masses. This is the primary truth that democracy recognises. May this always be so in Sri Lanka.

"Let me thank the Commissioner of Elections and all those who assisted him in conducting this critical Presidential Election. They have ensured the victory of the ballot. I also express my gratitude to all those who voted for me and to all those who worked for me.

"We are deeply indebted to the peace-loving and brave people of Sri Lanka. They demonstrated their commitment to the process of democracy. They did so at the risk of their lives. We bow our heads to all those who sacrificed their lives or sustained injuries and suffered hardships to protect our liberty. It is only by doing everything to preserve this victory of democracy that we can truly honour them.

(Continued on page 20)

Mrs. B to petition court

SLFP leader Sririma Bandaranaike told a crowded press conference at her Rosmead Place residence that the SLFP and the Democratic People's Alliance "do not accept the results of the presidential election" and she will file action in court challenging the election.

She said the election was held in "such a way that state power and wrongful means were used to deprive the majority of the people from freely exercising the right to vote."

She added: "From the information available so far, it is clear that the presidential election has not been duly conducted and my lawyers have advised

me that there is adequate evidence and information to have the election of the UNP candidate declared null and void".

Mrs. Bandaranaike said her lawyers had already collected sufficient evidence to support the election petition and showed seven bundles of unused ballot papers and declared that they were found at a certain police station. She declined to name it.

She said that some of the sealed ballot boxes were taken to that particular police station instead of the counting centre. "Our polling agents who were following the boxes were not permitted to enter the police station.

Ossie: 'I will not betray'

Sri Lanka Mahajana Party (SLMP) Presidential Candidate Oswin Abeygunasekera said that he would not betray the people who were behind him in his struggle to become a socialist society in the country.

Mr. Abeygunasekera speaking after the declaration of the new President at the Town Hall said the struggle to create a socialist country will be a historic event.

The SLMP candidate clad in a dark blue safari suit with a red bandana and accompanied by the party's General Secretary Y. P. Silva arrived in the hall before the final declaration of the results.

He paid a tribute to the election staff, police and security forces for conducting the election under difficult circumstances to protect democracy in the country and in some instances sacrificing their lives.

He also paid a tribute to the voters who polled at the elections despite threats to their lives and various intimidations to protect democracy in the country.

Mr. Abeygunasekera explained that during his campaign he was able to conduct only seventeen public meetings and in the first and third meetings he had to accompany the party vice President and chief organisers to the hospitals while on the day of the elections a few minutes before going to the polls, information was received that the Chief patron of the party, Reverend Dr. Pohodalamulle Premaloka Thero was assassinated.

The SLMP defeated candidate said he would follow the policies of the late founder of the party, Vijaya Kumaranatunge.

Swedish media denied visas

A team of two journalists employed by the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation and sponsored by SIDA, the Swedish Aid Authority, has been denied visas to enter Sri Lanka. The team has expressed wishes to cover the Presidential elections held on Monday, Dec. 19, and to record a Programme on the Kotmale project, Sweden's major single aid project ever.

The first visa application was made in April this year. Submitted proposal contained a programme on the Kotmale project and one on the situation in Sri Lanka on the anniversary of the Indo-Sri Lankan Peace Accord.

No answer came from the Sri Lankan Embassy in Stockholm. Then one of the reporters phoned the Embassy in early July and he was informed that "the President is occupied right now in preparing (PC) elections, so you will have to wait."

After the Presidential elections were announced, the team reiterated its request for visas referring to the suitability in covering the election on December 19. No answer from the Embassy. In November one of the reporters visited the Embassy, and then he was informed that

no visas were to be given due to "the impossibility to guarantee your safety."

The journalists then contacted the Swedish Charge d'Affaires Mr. Sven Backlund who contacted the relevant authority in Colombo where he got the message that the team from Sweden would not be granted visas. He was further told that there is no general ban on foreign journalists, i.e. this case must be seen as an individual one. But Mr. Backlund's request for a reason behind this negative decision was refused.

"It hurts, but I must see this as an unfriendly act", says Thomas Bibin, one of the two member team. "Both of us are professional and well-reputed senior journalists, and it's only an irony that we have been sponsored by the SIDA", he adds.

Mr. Bibin and the other team member, Olle Ohlsson, have reported on international affairs many times earlier, however not jointly. "I have been reporting on many of our contemporary world conflicts for the television", Mr. Ohlsson says. "But I have so far only been denied entry openly by the South African regime."

Voting pattern 1947 - 1982

Percentages of votes polled by the UNP and the SLFP since 1947.

	UNP	SLFP
1947 general election	39.81	—
1952 general election	44.08	15.52
1956 general election	27.44	39.96†
1960 March general election	29.62	21.12
1960 July general election	37.57	33.59†
1965 general election	38.93	30.24
1970 general election	37.92	36.63†
1977 general election	50.6	29.7
1982 presidential election	52.93	39.07

† The SLFP contested under a no-contest pact with the main leftist parties.

Presidential election 1988

Final all island district results

<i>Dist. Electoral no. district</i>	<i>Registered voters</i>	<i>S.L.M.P.</i>	<i>S.L.F.P</i>	<i>U.N.P.</i>	<i>Valid votes</i>	<i>Rejected votes</i>	<i>Total polled</i>
1 Colombo	1088780	34020 4.63%	339958 46.23%	361337 49.14%	735315	11295 1.51%	746610 68.57%
2 Gampaha	969735	22467 3.09%	355553 48.83%	350092 48.08%	728112	10054 1.36%	738166 76.12%
3 Kalutara	570118	13375 3.69%	179761 49.57%	169510 46.74%	362646	6537 1.77%	369183 64.76%
4 Mahanuware	628240	6296 1.47%	186187 43.65%	234124 54.88%	426577	6167 1.43%	432744 68.88%
5 Matale	214938	1135 1.77%	25825 40.37%	37007 57.85%	63967	1110 1.71%	65077 30.28%
6 Nuwara Eliya	229769	3371 1.87%	64907 35.98%	112135 62.15%	180413	3320 1.81%	183733 79.96%
7 Galle	571303	6417 2.29%	148615 53.09%	124912 44.62%	279944	4461 1.57%	284405 49.78%
8 Matara	451934	2922 2.76%	57424 54.30%	45399 42.93%	105745	2003 1.86%	107748 23.84%
9 Hambantota	295180	2478 2.98%	39343 47.39%	41198 49.62%	83019	3855 4.44%	86874 29.43%
10 Jaffna	591782	42198 35.15%	44197 36.82%	33650 28.03%	120045	8517 6.62%	128562 21.72%
11 Vanni	142723	3500 18.45%	4889 25.77%	10580 55.78%	18969	708 3.60%	19677 13.79%
12 Batticaloa	215585	38243 31.63%	21018 17.38%	61657 50.99%	120918	5163 4.09%	126081 58.48%
13 Digamadulla	265768	10352 5.45%	83137 43.78%	96420 50.77%	189909	3802 1.96%	193711 72.89%
14 Trincomalee	152289	14103 17.49%	29679 36.81%	36841 45.70%	80623	1326 1.62%	81949 53.81%
15 Kurunegala	784989	7717 1.99%	182223 46.89%	198662 51.12%	388602	4281 1.09%	392883 50.05%
16 Puttalam	319003	4093 1.83%	94823 42.28%	125339 55.89%	224255	2965 1.30%	227220 71.23%
17 Anuradhapura	334074	2529 1.91%	73154 55.15%	56951 42.94%	132634	2207 1.64%	134841 40.36%
18 Polonnaruwa	163741	957 2.01%	20173 42.45%	26392 55.54%	47522	1157 3.38%	48679 29.73%
19 Badulla	329462	3440 2.56%	50223 37.36%	80779 60.08%	134442	3276 2.38%	137718 41.80%
20 Moneragala	161927	697 2.61%	9123 34.18%	16872 63.21%	26692	851 3.09%	27543 17.01%
21 Ratnapura	457224	8516 2.44%	159879 45.81%	180622 51.75%	349017	4113 1.16%	353130 77.23%
22 Kegalle	437178	6923 2.34%	119769 40.54%	168720 57.11%	295412	4277 1.43%	299689 68.55%
Total	9375742	235719 4.63%	2289860 44.95%	2569199 50.43%	5094778	91445 1.76%	5186223 55.32%

Poll '88 — why the SLFP lost

[with the benefit of hindsight]

Radhika Coomaraswamy

It was said to be a classical Third world case-study: a government in power for eleven years, weakened by civil war, repressive legislation and creeping economic stagnation. Moral issues such as deaths in custody, para-military killings and the presence of a foreign army seemed paramount. For commentators on our political life, the stage was set for a mass movement, an opposition rallying around a charismatic figure heading toward a landslide, electoral victory. The Philippines constantly figured in the language and the discourse of the opposition. Mrs. Bandaranaike was supposed to resemble an older version of Corazon Aquino leading a combined opposition to victory. Most SLFP supporters believed that her charisma and the political moment would combine to bring about what was "historically inevitable". But, history again turned tables on Sri Lanka.

There is of course the question as to whether this was a free and fair election. Given the history of the referendum and the provincial councils election there is no doubt that this is a serious concern. However, in both those elections, the SLFP party machinery was not in place. It was hoped that the presence of this countervailing force at the present election would have been an adequate safeguard. And yet, even if all the voters had gone to vote, the SLFP would not have won by a landslide. Mrs. Bandaranaike may have pulled through but only after relying on the preferential votes of Ossie Abeyagoonsekere. How did the SLFP "clutch defeat from the jaws of inevitable victory?" In retrospect, and with the help of hindsight, an exploration into this question may provide some insights into the ongoing political process.

One of the primary assumptions of the SLFP campaign was that "there was a genuine and profound desire for change". This change they felt required the complete dismantling of the UNP's hold on our public life. This assumption led to an SLFP campaign and manifesto which emphasised moral political concerns. The type of language and discourse used was characteristic of a "pre-revolutionary" situation. The DPA was going to abrogate the Accord, write a new Constitution, set up Commissions of Inquiry, and generally rewrite our political alphabet. But was the public mood really in accordance with this assessment? In some areas the answer is a definite yes. Those who still continue to believe that there are military solutions to our political problems need only look at the election result to see how heightened military activity lessens political legitimacy, increases desire for change and leads to a general alienation from the national political process. The Colombo suburbs such as Kaduwela, Kesbewa, etc. which have been constantly subject to prolonged curfew hours, adhoc search and seizure operations, along with Matara and Galle either voted for the SLFP in large numbers or did not vote at all. But in other areas the situation was very different.

In October/November of this year after the death of Liyanaraachi and the three medical students, the atmosphere was charged with moral political concerns. But, the hartal of November 10th and its immediate aftermath may have changed public perceptions. There was a growing desire to be apolitical and to be left alone. The draconian emergency regulations enacted after the hartal, received little public protest when only a

month earlier thousands demonstrated at the funeral of the brutally massacred students. By December, the desire for "change" was gradually being replaced by a desire for continuity and stability. The DPA manifesto of "moral righteousness" may have been released at a time when the public was becoming fearful of moral crusaders.

The concept of "change" must also be analysed more closely. The DPA manifesto was putting forward a programme for constitutional and institutional change. In addition an SLFP victory would have meant a change of personalities and the system of political patronage, drawing in more of the disgruntled sections of society. But, the UNP candidate was also projecting himself as change; a change of social class with a semi-populist political vision. As one commentator remarked, the sense of Ancien Regime does not apply, the Tsar has abdicated in favour of a Narodnik. The SLFP was determined to change the macro-structures of State; Mr. Premadasa concentrated on civil society. Many votes were cast for Premadasa the man, especially in Tissamarama and Annamaduwa where his program have borne fruit.

One major factor which may have contributed to the electoral defeat of the SLFP was ideological incoherence on the major political issue — the ethnic conflict. After all, the SLFP was galvanised into political action after years of lethargy because of the Indo-Lanka Accord. The SLFP led the legal protests against the thirteenth amendment before the Supreme Court by arguing that devolution was tantamount to dividing the country, that Buddhist shrines in the North and East were not safe etc. . . . By December 1988, the

DPA was offering a political package to resolve the ethnic conflict involving "ethnic regions" without much reference to Buddhist shrines, let alone Sinhala Buddhists. Many of us may welcome the SLFP's open and unequivocal commitment to the concept of devolution and there are many strengths in some of the proposals put forward. But, coming at the last moment, they would have confused the Sinhala Buddhist electorate and the much published non-deal with the LTTE may have discouraged many SLFP voters from braving threats to exercise their votes in the traditional areas.

The risk taken by the SLFP may have been an interesting political gamble if the Tamil voters of the North and the East turned out in large numbers. But, as one observer in the North commented that while the Sinhala voter in Matara and Galle may not have voted because of intimidation, the northern voters approached the elections with "monumental disinterest". The disinterest was patently obvious from nomination to polling day. The East however provided a different picture. While the Jaffna peninsula continues to sulk at the state of political affairs, the provincial council elections in the east had set in motion an alternative, albeit, fragile political and civil process. The DPA manifesto demanding the abrogation of the Accord was not well-received by the Batticola Tamils who have begun to experience a period of relative calm in the last few months. As for the Sinhalese their verdict was even more unusual. Digamedulla (Ampara district) had an exceptional voter turnout of 72.89% and the UNP received 50.77% of the vote. In the provincial elections held last month none of the Sinhala voters in Ampara seemed interested in participating. In Trincomalee though the UNP lost Seruwila by a few hundred votes they took the district. As for the Muslims, their votes in Kalmunai, Samanthurai and Mutur appear to have gone to the UNP. Their

vote in the East can be characterised as "Ashroff's revenge".

The UNP sweep of the East was quite extraordinary given the fact that it was for the candidate of the political party which agreed to the temporary merger of the North and the East greatly alienating Sinhala and Muslim sentiment, and the candidate of the political party which had unleashed the STF on the Tamils of the area until over a year ago. The SLFP was denied victory in the East because it put forward a political programme without appreciating the recent changes in the political process in the areas. As an addendum it should be pointed out that Wellawatte voted overwhelmingly for Mr. Premadasa and gave him double the votes. The desire for stability had obviously overcome the anger and hatred generated by the 1983 riots.

Other factors of importance which may have affected the final electoral result, are what may be termed "bread and butter" issues. The DPA programme was singularly uninterested in these issues even though the SLFP had to overcome a legacy of scarcities and shortages. There was no extra effort to give confidence to the voter. The mere presence of Mr. Ronnie De Mel in the opposition ranks may have not been enough. A concerted effort to ease people's fears may have brought more dividends than a one up-man-ship poster campaign of prices then and now. Infact Mr. Premadasa was the only candidate who inherited the political benefits of the open economy but who was offering a concrete proposal for its major short-coming, the alleviation of poverty. Whatever reservations one may have about his programme, he gave it centreplace, realizing that if the electorate is politically confused, it will finally vote for who it thinks can actually deliver the bread and butter.

When the election campaign began. Most political commentators were predicting that the

UNP would strive for a law and order platform, the SLFP for peace and change. The UNP never explicitly adopted law and order but after the offensive began in the South, there was no question that this was a hidden issue. The SLFP was hoping that the student unrest of October/November would work in their favour. And yet, if one looks at the periods of great student unrest in other parts of the world, especially when the student unrest attempts to pioneer social change, the results are not always positive. In the late 1960's in western Europe and the U.S.A. student unrest culminated in the election of strong law and order governments, Richard Nixon for one. Only in south Korea, in confrontation with military authorities was there some success and even there the more conservative political candidate won the hustings. A worker and peasant uprising is fundametally differnt because it involves the forces of productive labour. Society is far more impatient with students and there is a definite public reaction demanding increased discipline in society.

To have won the elections, the SLFP had to bring out its voters in full strength in the face of threats and intimidation. At the same time it had to be vigilant against the arbitrary use of state power. And yet this led to contradictory political tendencies. The more one exposes the failings of the democratic process, the less confidence voters would have to come out and exercise their votes. If the SLFP did believe that a high voter turnout was crucial for their election then it may have been more fruitful to have minimised the "anti-electoral process" rhetoric and maximised their organisational ability to get out the voters. The task may have been awesome in the face of JVP and paramilitary violence. It could have only been accomplished with a powerful party machine and a strong party organisation. In that sense a leaf has to be taken out of the LSSP of the 1940's,

(Continued on page 28)

A District-wise assessment

Prof. Shelton Kodikara

Sri Lanka has had the reputation of being the most bouyant democracy in Asia, but that image was becoming tarnished in recent years. Whether the presidential election concluded on December 19th (1988) and the forthcoming General Election scheduled for February 15th (1989) can resuscitate the former image remains to be seen. The presidential election held in December was certainly the most tension-ridden of elections held in the whole history of the electoral process in Sri Lanka. Before the election, doubt had been expressed by sections of political as well as non-political opinion whether the election could be held in the prevailing political conditions in the country. The weeks immediately proceeding the election were among the most chaotic in Sri Lanka's recent political history. Political assassinations, bomb attacks, disruption of public meetings, disruption of transport and electricity services, banking services, the normal functioning of government offices, and, overarching all these things, a whispering campaign connected with anonymous directives given to members of the public or public servants by letter or telephone or word of mouth, to close shops and offices, even to refrain from voting at the election — these constituted the background against which the election was held. These conditions affected the election campaigns of all three presidential candidates to a greater or lesser degree. It is not the purpose of this article to explore the political background against which the election was held, or even to pronounce a verdict on the conduct of the election itself. There are no doubt other persons and bodies — the SAARC Ob-

server Team included — which would be in a better position to do this than the present writer. But the political conditions which prevailed in the country at the time of the elections certainly had an impact on the low election poll. Voters were either frightened to vote in some places, or they were prevented from doing so. In some places, voting facilities were not available at all, or they were available only late in the day. Again, it is not the purpose of this paper to apportion blame or point an accusing finger. This writer does not possess the evidence to indulge in that sort of exercise anyhow. What is intended here is to offer some tentative comments on the significance of the low poll.

The turn-out of voters at the election averaged fifty-five per cent, a low figure for a Sri Lanka election. In some areas, the voter turn-out was much lower than the national average, plunging to an all-time low of 4.5% in the polling division of Hakmana in Matara District. Since the voter participation was obviously related to the general conditions which prevailed in the country at the time the elections were held, it is necessary to examine whether the low poll was advantageous to one candidate and disadvantageous to another. Mrs Bandaranaike told a Reuter correspondent that a low poll would favour the UNP, and the interpreted the UNP's insistence on carrying on with the election on December 19th and its failure to dissolve Parliament before the election on this basis. The election results show that overall the low poll benefited the UNP, but there was no uniform pattern of voting in the country as a whole, and the "swing" against the government was operative only in

specific parts of it. Mrs Bandaranaike did exceedingly well in the coastal districts extending from Colombo southwards to Matara. Colombo District was evenly shared between Mrs Bandaranaike and Mr. Premadasa, but south of Colombo, Kalutara, Galle, and Matara Districts voted SLFP, while further south, Hambantota District, the stronghold of the JVP, voted for Mr. Premadasa. Mrs Bandaranaike also came out on top in Anuradhapura District, the Sinhalese Buddhist heartland, but Mr. Premadasa was the "winner" in the adjacent Polonnaruwa District. Up in the North, the honours were about evenly shared by Mrs Bandaranaike and Mr. Ossie Abeygunasekera in terms of votes, with Mrs Bandaranaike winning in a majority of polling divisions in Jaffna District. In the Vanni, however, the Tamil votes went mostly to Mr. Premadasa, and he won in all its polling divisions — Mannar, Mulaitivu, and Vavuniya.

Table I below shows the voting pattern in the three districts, Galle, Matara, and Hambantota, which constitute the Southern Province of Sri Lanka. It will be observed that all the polling divisions bar two each both in Galle and Matara Districts were won by the SLFP, while all the polling divisions in Hambantota District were won by the UNP.

Votes polled as per cent of total votes was lowest in Matara District (23.5%). Hambantota, with 27.7% was marginally better, while Galle District, with 44.2% compared favourably with the national average of votes polled (55.3%). Of the four areas which had the lowest poll in Matara District, two were won by the SLFP (Hakmana and Kamburupitiya), and two by the UNP. In Galle District also, the UNP won one division

[The writer is the International Relations Program Director at the Colombo University]

Table I: Polling Patterns and Percentage Polled in Southern Province

District & Polling Division	Total Votes	Percent Polled	Political Party	Majority/Plurality
Galle District				
Karadeniya	47,887	21.0	SLFP	1304 (Majority)*
Habaraduwa	61,369	50.4	SLFP	6092 (Majority)
Bentara-Elpitiya	65,597	33.0	SLFP	2787 (Majority)
Baddegama	65,351	75.2	SLFP	5752 (Majority)
Akmeemana	57,724	70.6	SLFP	5348 (Majority)
Rathgama	60,877	43.3	SLFP	708 (Majority)
Hiniduma	65,310	70.3	SLFP	318 (Plurality)
Galle	56,083	68.1	UNP	926 (Majority)
Ambalangoda	49,885	14.2	SLFP	162 (Plurality)
Balapitiya	41,220	22.0	UNP	1264 (Majority)
Matara District				
Kamburupitiya	63,590	7.3	SLFP	1806 (Majority)
Hakmana	65,407	4.5	SLFP	126 (Majority)
Matara	64,438	48.4	SLFP	5014 (Majority)
Weligama	70,591	38.0	SLFP	4919 (Majority)
Deniyaya	59,342	37.1	SLFP	238 (Majority)
Akuressa	67,076	14.1	UNP	1529 (Majority)
Devinuwara	62,490	15.6	UNP	485 (Majority)
Hambantota District				
Mulkirigala	66,740	19.0	UNP	212 (Plurality)
Tangalle	70,422	25.0	UNP	266 (Plurality)
Beliatta	62,773	21.2	UNP	734 (Majority)
Tissamaharama	95,245	45.9	UNP	355 (Plurality)

* Majority denotes a majority of votes over the other two candidates. Plurality denotes majority over the nearest rival candidate. Rejected votes have been included in computation of total votes polled.

Balapitiya, with a low poll of 22%. Three of the polling divisions won by the UNP in, Hambantota, too, polled less than 25%. Thus both the UNP and SLFP candidates won in areas with a low poll in the Southern Province. However, in three of the four polling divisions in Hambantota District, the UNP's margin of votes was less than the combined votes of the other two candidates, and the plurality of UNP votes over those of the nearest rival candidate was also consistently small (below 500), indicating that a larger poll might have led to a different result. For the purposes of the Presidential election of 1988, polling divisions corresponded to Parliamentary electorates, and were relevant to this election only as an organisational arrangement to facilitate the conduct of the election and the counting of votes, and perhaps also to gauge the popularity of the MP of

the area. The showing of the party at the elections was at least to some extent determined by the influence of the MP of the area.

With its five-sixths majority in Parliament, this organisational arrangement should have given the government party candidate for the Presidency, Mr Premadasa, an edge over the other candidates, and it would seem, by and large, that it did. But in the Southern Province, the figures in Table I would appear to indicate a clear anti-government trend. Apart from Hambantota, the SLFP lead in the polling divisions in Matara and Galle Districts was, with two exceptions in Galle, by a majority over and above the votes of the other two candidates combined. In five divisions in these districts, the majority was over 4000, in nine of them over 1000. It might be inferred from this that if the poll was larger

on the average in these two districts, SLFP majorities also would have been larger.

Table II below gives the voting figures and pattern in the two districts of the Northern Province, Jaffna and Vanni. Here, too, one sees a contrast between the voting behaviour of the Tamils of the two districts.

In Jaffna, the UNP led only in one polling division, Kayts, with a plurality of votes. In the other ten divisions, the result was in favour of Mrs Bandaranaike (six polling divisions), or Mr Ossie Abeygunesekra (four divisions). In none of these was there a clear majority for any candidate. The poll was low but the contest was keen; the leading candidate only had a plurality of votes over the nearest rival, and the leading candidates votes were less than those of the other two combined.

Table II: Polling Patterns and Percentage Polled in Northern Province

District & Polling Division	Total Votes	Percent Polled	Political Party	Majority/Plurality
Jaffna				
Kayts	49,481	26.0	UNP	125 (Plurality)
Kopay	56,450	23.8	SLFP	508 (Plurality)
Manipay	58,230	23.1	SLMP	1088 (Plurality)
Kilinochchi	53,604	20.2	SLFP	271 (Plurality)
Vaddukoddai	58,522	31.5	SLFP	1243 (Plurality)
Nallur	61,936	14.2	SLFP	438 (Plurality)
Udupiddy	52,084	16.3	SLFP	280 (Plurality)
Point-Pedro	40,175	25.4	SLFP	1011 (Plurality)
Jaffna	49,229	22.6	SLMP	70 (Plurality)
KKS	60,386	16.2	SLMP	723 (Plurality)
Chavakachcheri	51,595	21.4	SLMP	319 (Plurality)
Vanni				
Mannar	47,060	15.0	UNP	2034 (Majority)
Mullaitivu	41,264	14.8	UNP	340 (Majority)
Vavuniya	54,039	11.8	UNP	1163 (Plurality)

Leaving aside Moneragala District where the low poll of 18.2% was determined partly by the fact that forty-nine polling booths catering for 44,000 voters could not function, the average poll in the Vanni (13.8%) was the lowest for the country. The average poll in Jaffna District (21.1%) was even lower than that of Matara. As in the case of Matara, it could be argued that a higher poll in Jaffna might have resulted in proportionately increased pluralities for both the SLFP and the SLMP, which together came out on top in ten of the eleven polling divisions in this district.

The Vanni, however, may not be comparable to Hambantota. The voting pattern in Vanni, (clear UNP majorities in two of its three divisions and lead by a plurality in the other) seems to suggest that a higher poll might have resulted in proportionately increased UNP majorities/pluralities.

Voter turn-out by polling division indicates particular hazards

which operated in particular areas which might have had an effect on the overall electoral result. However, rather than looking at the voting in individual polling divisions, a more profitable method of ascertaining voting trends and behaviour is to

consider the election results district-wise, since there appear to be marked variations in the voting behavior from one district to another. Table III gives the voting figures for the three candidates by district for the Northern and Southern Provinces.

Table III: Votes Polled by Political Parties by District

	SLMP	SLFP	UNP
Galle District	6,417	148,615	104,912
Matara	2,922	57,424	45,402
Hambantota	2,478	39,343	41,198
Total (Southern Province)	11,817	245,382	191,512
Jaffna District	42,198	44,187	33,650
Vanni	3,500	4,889	10,580
Total (Northern Province)	45,698	49,076	44,230

Figures computed from newspaper reports, and subject to errors and omissions.

Poll '88

What the figures show

A. T. R. Madanayake*

The overall results were as follows:

<i>Presidential candidate</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Votes Polled</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Premadasa, R.	UNP	2,569,199	50.43
Bandaranaike, S.	SLFP	2,289,860	44.95
Abeygunesekera, O.	SLMP	235,719	4.63
Total valid votes		5,094,778	100.00
Total Registered Voters		9,375,742	
Percent who polled		54.34%	

This election is unprecedented in the 41 years of post-independence exercise of universal suffrage in Sri Lanka mainly because of the uncast vote. This is the lowest percentage of polling ever recorded in Sri Lanka's election history. Since 1952, polling at a general or presidential election has consistently been about 70 percent reaching a peak of 86.7 percent in 1977 (70.7% in 1952, 69.0% in 1956, 77.6% in 1960 March, 75.9% in 1960 July, 82.1% in 1965, 85.2% in 1970, 86.7% in 1977, 81.1% in 1982 presidential elections and 70.8% in the Referendum of December 1982). During the last quarter century, at least three quarters of the electorate has turned out at the elections.

The low voter turnout is attributed to death threats issued by both the Southern and Northern militants who have rejected the prevailing form of democracy and the exercise of it. The Peoples Liberation Front or the JVP of the South and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam LTTE are commonly believed to be against the holding of elections. However, what is more intriguing is the hypothesis that the JVP through their intimidation engineered the victory of Mr. Premadasa since they believe that their goal of wresting political power within the country is best served under the continuity of the same regime rather than under the helm of a different leadership, more inclined towards a social welfarist policy.

Sri Lanka has 160 electorates encompassed within 22 electoral districts. These electorates and electoral districts have remained unchanged during the 6-year interregnum between the two presidential elections and the comparative voter turnout during the elections and the Referendum are given in Table 1. In historic perspective, at least 75 percent of the national electorate would have polled in the 1988 election if not for intimidation. This becomes most plausible when one notes that even during the 88 election more than one quarter of all the electorates polled more than 70 percent (see Table 2). However, more than 1/5th of the national electorate (20.7 percent) who would have normally voted did not turnout to poll. What is even more important is that the differential voter turnout across electorates and electoral districts had a wide variation which tended to affect the result of the presidential race. This becomes quite critical when one notes that the UNP candidate barely made it to the finish on the first run with a mere 21,801 votes. This is equivalent to the 0.43 percent of 5,094,778. If the winning candidate did not get this 21,801 votes, the preferential vote cast for the third candidate (SLMP) would have been added to the first two candidates votes and the results decided on this calculation. The outcome could have changed then.

Table 1 reveals that seven of the 22 electoral districts were critically affected at the '88 elections with more than 45 percent of the normally voting population keeping away from the poll. Of these seven districts, Jaffna and Vanni were due to Tamil militancy while Matale, Matara, Hambantota, Polonnaruwa and Monaragala were engineered by the Sinhala militancy. In addition, another 6 districts were substantially affected where between 20 to 45 percent of the normally voting population did not vote. Only Nuwara Eliya and Ratnapura districts polled beyond 75 percent; the former consists of the Tea Estate Tamil population, predominantly under the wing of the Ceylon Workers Congress headed by Mr. Thondaman who is a Minister in the current UNP Cabinet.

[* A senior research officer in a state-run organisation]

Table 1

Percentage votes polled by electoral districts in Sri Lanka during
the two presidential elections and Referendum

<i>Electoral District</i>	<i>President. Electn. 82 %</i>	<i>Referendum Dec. 82 %</i>	<i>President. Electn. 88 %</i>	<i>Deviation from 75% voter turnout</i>
Colombo	77.8	65.1	66.0	- 9.0
Gampaha	83.4	68.9	73.5	- 1.5
Kalutara	84.5	69.3	53.1	-21.9 †
Kandy	85.8	75.8	67.3	- 7.7
Matale *	86.4	80.5	29.3	-45.7 Δ
Nuwara Eliya	85.6	80.1	78.6	+ 3.6
Galle *	82.2	67.4	48.2	-26.8 †
Matara *	83.5	72.6	23.3	-51.7 Δ
Hambantota *	81.5	67.2	28.0	-47.0 Δ
Jaffna ‡	44.2	59.3	20.3	-54.7 Δ
Vanni ‡	59.4	63.3	13.4	-61.6 Δ
Batticaloa ‡	69.6	70.3	55.5	-19.5
Ampara	78.8	75.7	71.2	- 4.8
Trincomalee *‡	70.0	68.7	52.1	-22.9 †
Kurunegala *	86.4	76.8	49.5	-25.5 †
Puttalam	81.4	67.9	69.6	- 5.4
Anuradhapura *	82.2	71.6	39.4	-35.6 †
Polonnaruwa *	82.8	69.3	29.0	-46.0 Δ
Badulla *	85.8	77.8	40.8	-34.2
Monaragala *	82.0	71.7	16.4	-58.6 Δ
Ratnapura	85.9	76.2	75.7	+ 0.7
Kegalle	85.3	73.1	66.8	- 8.2
SRI LANKA	80.1	70.8	54.3	-20.7 Δ
Registered Voters	8,144,016 (100.0%)	8,144,016 (100.0%)	9,375,742 (100.0%)	---

* Electoral Districts affected by Southern (Sinhala) militancy

‡ Electoral Districts affected by Northern (Tamil) militancy

Δ Critically affected — almost 1/2 or more of normally voting persons deprived of the vote

† Substantially affected — 1/5 to 1/2 of normally voting persons deprived of the vote

In order to explore the hypothesis of whether or not the Sinhala militancy embarked on a strategy to ensure the continuity of the UNP regime in order to sustain the momentum of disruption generated by them, the lowest polling electorates were selected for further analysis. The presumption in this analysis was that if Sinhala militancy did implement such a strategy, then it would be revealed in the depression of voter turnout in the traditionally SLFP or leftist voting electorates. Thus, if there was a high concentration of traditionally SLFP or left voting electorates among those with the lowest polling record in '88, then there is a case for sustaining the above hypothesis.

Of the 160 electorates, the polling in one was not counted in the summation due to heavy delay in the release of results. Table 2 reveals the frequency and percentage distribution of the polling record of the 159 electorates. While 51 percent of the electorates polled over 60 percent the remaining half polled less than 60 percent. The polling percentages ranged from a dismal low of 4.4 percent to a high of 84.0 percent.

The tenability of the above hypothesis was pursued by selecting the 45 electorates polling less (than 40 percent. 15 out of these 45 electorates were in predominantly Tamil districts of Jaffna 11), Vanni (3) and Trincomalee (1). These were taken out of the analysis since they have been traditionally voting for the Tamil parties (the Federal Party or the Tamil United Liberation Front) rather than for the SLFP, UNP or the leftist parties. (Later, we shall comment briefly on the response of the Tamil areas to the Presidential Election of '88.)

Table 2
Frequency and percentage distributions of polling record of electorates
at the Presidential elections '88, Sri Lanka

<i>Percent Polling</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
< 10 %	4	2.5
10 - 19.9 %	14	8.8
20 - 29.9 %	16	10.1
30 - 39.9 %	11	6.9
40 - 49.9 %	16	10.1
50 - 59.9 %	17	10.7
60 - 79.9 %	39	24.5
70 - 79.9 %	38	23.9
80 % +	4	2.5
	<u>159</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Four out of the remaining 30 low polling electorates were newly carved out and came into existence from the 1977 elections and as such, we are unable to trace the antecedent voting history of these (they are Karadeniya, Tangalle, Wellawaya and Medirigiriya). Within the remaining 26 electorates, the party winning each electorate at the General Elections of March 1960, July 1960, 1965 and 1970 were traced. (The voting at the 1977 elections were left out of the reckoning because there was a landslide victory for the UNP when they collected a total of 140 parliamentary seats.) In 15 out of the 26 electorates, either the SLFP or a leftist party had won the parliamentary seat at all four elections; in two others, SLFP/leftist parties had won 3 out of the 4 elections. Six electorates were shared by the UNP and SLFP/left parties at two elections each with the remaining seat won once by the SLFP/left. Thus, 17 out of 26 or nearly two thirds of the low polling electorates were traditional SLFP/leftist strongholds. The UNP had not won a single of these 26 electorates at all four elections. In other words, none of the lowest polling electorates at the '88 elections was a UNP stronghold. (It would be interesting to know if the obverse is also true; i.e., if there is a disproportionate concentration of traditionally UNP strongholds among the highest polling electorates as well !)

Table 3 provides the list of the 17 electorates in the south with low polling which were traditionally SLFP/leftist strongholds with the percentage polled and the deviation from a 75 percent voter turnout which would be a most acceptable cut-off. It becomes apparent that voters in 13 of the electorates in Table 3 were critically affected in their ability to vote. In more than half the electorates, 60 percent or more of the normally voting population were denied the opportunity to vote. These 17 electorates contained 902,824 voters which is just under 10 percent of the voters in the country. The voter turnout as a whole within these electorates is less than 20 percent which means that over 55 percent of the normally voting population in these traditionally SLFP/left voting electorates did not have a chance to cast their vote. When the final tally was made, in 13 out of these 17 traditionally SLFP/left voting electorates, the UNP had gained a majority of votes over the SLFP.

Table 3

Electorates that are traditionally SLFP/leftist strongholds which have polled low and their deviation from a cut off-of 75% polling

Name of Electorate	% polled in '88	Deviation from 75% voter turnout
Matale District		
Dambulla	10.5	— 64.5 Δ
Rattota	33.0	— 42.0 †
Galle District		
Balapitiya	21.7	— 53.3 Δ
Matara District		
Hakmana	4.4	— 70.6 Δ
Akuressa	13.7	— 61.3 Δ
Kamburupitiya	7.3	— 67.7 Δ
Devinuwara	15.5	— 59.5 Δ
Hambantota District		
Mulkirigala	18.1	— 56.9 Δ
Kurunegala District		
Nikaweratiya	38.9	— 36.1 †
Anuradhapura District		
Kalawewa	36.7	— 38.3 †
Mihintale	24.3	— 50.7 Δ
Kekirawa	31.1	— 43.1 †
Polonnaruwa District		
Minneriya	9.3	— 65.7 Δ
Badulla District		
Badulla	26.9	— 48.1 Δ
Uva-Paranagama	11.1	— 63.9 Δ
Welimada	27.0	— 48.0 Δ
Monaragala District		
Monaragala	5.3	— 69.7 Δ

Δ Critically affected — almost 1/2 or more of normally voting persons derived of the vote

† Substantially affected — 1/5 to 1/2 of normally voting persons deprived of the vote

* Majority of votes gained by UNP

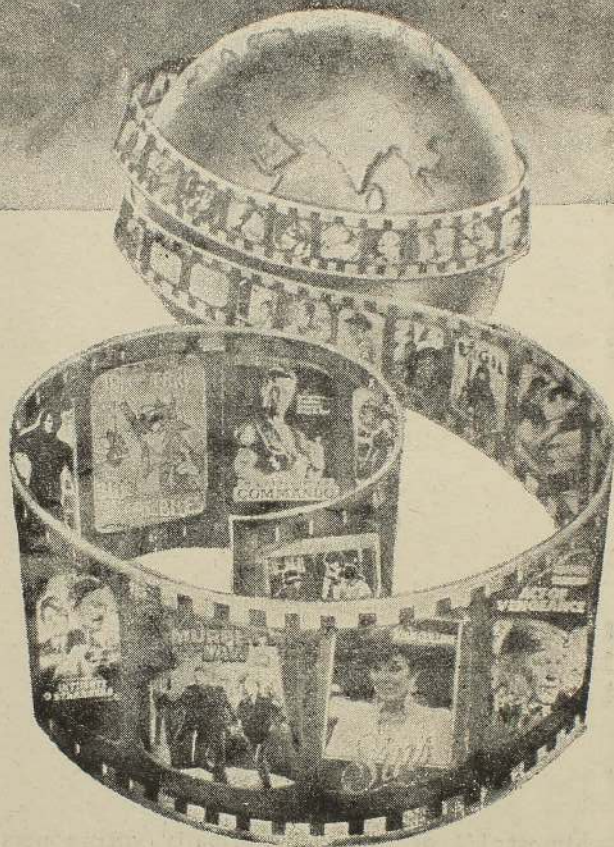
The foregoing discussion provides a substantial basis for the tenability of the hypothesis that we set out to explore. It appears that southern militancy may have actively sought to prevent the traditionally SLFP/left voting electorate from casting their ballot. The beneficiary of this strategy of course is the UNP candidate who ultimately won with a razor thin majority of votes necessary to clinch the presidential race on the first run off.

What of northern militancy? With Jaffna and Vanni districts polling 20.3 and 13.4 percent respectively, it is more than apparent that northern Tamils are far from accepting the principle of the unitary state, the Peace Accord and the resulting devolution package of a merged North-East Provincial Council. The recently constituted Provincial Council under the stewardship of the EPRLF appears not to have gained currency which is worthy of a legitimate claim to govern. Through either intimidation or persuasion or a combination of both, the LTTE though tattered as a military force, still appears to hold the heart and the mind of the Northern Tamil.

The best video in Town

LARNAS

Video Home Entertainment



**AN EVER INCREASING GALAXY OF
SUPERLATIVE 'A' GRADE MOVIE SPECIALS
FROM HOLLYWOOD AND WESTERN FILM CAPITALS.**

IF IT'S ON VIDEO CASSETTE.... IT'S ON LARNAS PLAYLIST LEGALLY
SUPERLATIVE VIDEO FILMS OF UNMATCHED QUALITY TO TURN YOUR TV
SCREEN INTO THE MOST ENTERTAINING MOVIES JUST FOR YOU!
THESE MAKE LARNAS THE CHOICE OF SRI LANKA'S MOST DISCERNING
FILM FANS.

SO TAKE HOME THE BEST VIDEO IN TOWN



LARNAS (PTE) LTD.

302, HAVELOCK ROAD COLOMBO 5.
TELEPHONE 589926

SRI LANKA'S FIRST NAME IN VIDEO HOME ENTERTAINMENT

OPINION

A victory for the small man, said *The Island*. And the *Sun* said it was the will of the people. That was how the non-government owned English language dailies saw the election of Prime Minister R. Premadasa as President.

The *Island* said: "Obviously the peoples of Sri Lanka have opted for continuity emphasising the new deal he has in mind for the poor including the payment of Rs. 2,500 for the families of food stamp holders as part of a thrust against poverty and malnutrition. Mr. Premadasa obviously feels that while the open market economy of the last 11 years has managed to liberate the economy, it has also heaped some burdens on the poorest of the poor which have to be mitigated by new welfare measures such as poverty alleviation. It is reasonable to assume that this part of the UNP manifesto would have appealed to the urban and the rural poor. And the masses of Sri Lanka will no doubt look to him to alleviate their lot.

"Mr. Premadasa is actuated by a personal concern for the poor and the under privileged, for he himself has risen from their ranks".

The *Sun* said:

"The will of the people could not be broken by the way of terror and intimidation. It portends good omens for the future of Sri Lanka as a free and democratic nation where people will always remain the ultimate 'king makers' ...

"Basically the people who voted him as the new leader did so with the hope of defusing the explosive situation of a fast exploding law and order situation.

"But the fact remains that the vast majority sought no change in the political and economic policies of the ruling party.

"Despite the recurrent hardships they opted to endorse the liberalised open economy which has now become popular even in hitherto controlled communist countries including Russia, China and Cuba".

The most striking feature of the Presidential Election 1988 is the very low percentage of the total poll. The total number of votes cast does not exceed 52 lakhs when it should have been a poll of at least 80 lakhs going on the percentage of 1982 election which stood at 81.06%.

By no criteria can we accept this election as a democratic decision of the masses in view of this victory being based on a mere 25 lakhs of votes out of a clear 80 lakhs, that should have been polled. And this huge number failed to exercise the vote only because they were forcibly prevented from doing so. These results only demonstrate the bankruptcy of the so-called front lead by the SLFP. The main factor in the UNP's victory is the coercion and force exercised in order to prevent the people from voting by the JVP and other semi-fascist forces which grew with the succour and assistance of the SLFP.

A crisis would come about in the SLFP. Of those who will be demoralized by the actions of the leadership the more developed sections would join the left and others may move towards guerillaism. This so-called victory of the UNP is only another forward step of the counter revolution in a democratic guise. But yet the effects of it may be delayed due to the plantation workers vote contained in the UNP's victory.

Even in areas where plantation workers were recently settled the UNP got a sizable vote.

However inspite of what happened it is with satisfaction that one notes the absence of any feudal and caste considerations by the masses who exercised their vote.

The left alliance can be content with the vote it received in view of the deadly attacks it suffered and the delayed start it had. We had to even cancel our meetings in the last week of the campaign. Further the lack of confidence in our own camp also worked to our disadvantage.

We must mention with due respect the Tamil and Muslim people of North and East who voted with us in the hope and expectation of national amity on a secular basis.

Dr. Vickramabahu Karunaratne,
General Secretary,
(Nava Sama Samaja Party)

Mr. Premadasa who has all along been living in the shadow of the veteran, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, has now come into his own. The mass housing programme that he took on as his major project, the grassroots support he built for the UNP and the fact that he pulled away gradually from the rest of the UNP leadership to emerge unquestionably the No. 2 have all helped make him seem Presidential in the people's eyes. Given his long association with the Jayewardene administration, there will no doubt be some element of continuity in both domestic and foreign policy. However, as many moves and policy directions were uniquely Mr. Jayewardene's own and reflected his personal convictions, it is difficult to predict if the orientation of the Premadasa administration would remain unaltered. This question assumes significance in the context of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord and the presence of the Indian Peace

New political alignments for a crucial election

In Tamil Nadu, making electoral alliances is a far more formidable task than the tortuous process of matrimonial match-making. The Jayalalitha faction of the AIADMK and the Congress(I) realised this when after weeks of hectic talks their efforts at forging an alliance got bogged down on the question of chief ministership. Neither Tamil Nadu Congress(I) Committee (TNCC-I) chief G. K. Mooppanar nor Jayalalitha, who believes that she is the rightful heir to MGR's political legacy, was willing to give up their claims to the throne. But finally on December 11; the Congress(I) high-powered Committee meeting in Madras decided to take a major gamble and go it alone after 15 years. In a sudden move, K. Karunakaran, Kerala's former chief minister and Congress Parliamentary Board member, announced; "Since we have been asked to recommend candidates for all the seats, it is clear that we will fight it out alone. "The

decision which makes a major shift was taken at the insistence of Mooppanar who opposed the moves to take a piggyback ride to power. He argued that the Congress(I) was better placed than it was a few years ago and with the AIADMK badly fragmented, the territory was fertile.

Soon after the decision was taken many Congress(I) leaders who were worried about getting lost in Jayalalitha's shadow exuded a quiet confidence. Says Thangabalu, TNCC(I)'s general secretary: "We have decided to fight alone because the people of Tamil Nadu want Rajiv Gandhi's rule. They are fed up with the chauvinistic attitude of regional parties"

The Jayalalitha faction also heaved a sigh of relief, though a four-cornered contest can shatter its vote banks. Says S. D. Somasundaram, the faction's deputy general secretary: "We

were never keen on an alliance because we don't need any crutches to walk. We are sure we can establish our majority."

The Congress(I)'s confidence stems from the changing cast equations in the state. The leadership feels the DMK has lost its base among the muslims and the Vanniyars. This is because of a spilt in the Muslim League that was allied to the DMK and because the Vanniyars have launched an agitation against the reservations policy for jobs and admissions for backward classes favoured by the DMK. The AIADMK has also lost its pre-eminent position as a regional party because of a three-way spilt.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi seemed impressed with this argument and in one of his speeches during his barnstorming tours of the state he announced that Mooppanar would be the chief-minister.

(India Today)

Jayalalitha Interview

A. President's rule, was imposed to promote the Congress-(I)'s interests in the state. It has not solved any major problem. I personally respect Dr. Alexander who is honest and a good administrator.

Q. What is your stand on the role of the IPKF in Sri Lanka?

A. I think it is one big mess which the Indian Government has got into. They should not have gone there in this way.

Q. Will you demand the IPKF's withdrawal?

A. It is a difficult question. Having once stepped in, it is difficult to withdraw. But when the elections are over in Sri Lanka, they may find it difficult to remain there.

Q. Who is your enemy one in the state?

A. The DMK. It is going to be a fight between me and Karunanidhi.

CABINET CALL

*The telephone with its single ear and mouth
And its dial, a diabolical eye
Sits mocking him, its wire in curls
Twisting its harsh tinkle round in his heart like a knife*

*He is the tensed marionette
Starting up at its convulsing cry
But each gruff good morning isn't it,
The promise, ten, was it an empty lie?*

*Or is this a scheme for teaching him detachment
Each disappointment a lesson to his vanity
So long postponed the the pent up ambition
So subtly, this driving greed
In silence is dismissed
But there is peril here and blood. 'Make sure he ain't
Being forged into an Ayatollic Saint.*

— U. Karunatilake

Moscow catches West off balance

David White

FOREIGN
NEWS

Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev's announcement of large-scale cuts in troops and equipment, including those deployed forward in Eastern Europe, caught Western governments off balance, although they had been expecting a gesture by the Soviet leader to seize the arms control initiative.

Initial reactions in the US and among the Nato allies was enthusiastic, but officials emphasised that they would have to analyse the figures in detail in order to assess their impact on the Soviet Union's military posture.

UK officials said the proposals were "very good news" if they were put into practice, but more would need to be learnt about exactly where troops were to be pulled back.

According to the latest Nato figures, the cuts would still leave Moscow and its allies with substantial superiority compared with Nato forces, both in manpower and in all main categories of land-based weapons in Europe west of the Urals.

The area from the Atlantic to the Urals is the focus of the planned new series of arms control negotiations, the Conventional Stability Talks, in which Nato is expected to demand even more drastic cuts in Warsaw Pact tanks, armoured vehicles and artillery in order to contain the potential for surprise attack or prolonged offensive action.

The UK officials said it was unclear what the implications

of the Soviet gesture would be for the forthcoming arms talks, but that the unilateral cuts were not to be considered as part of the negotiations. "Let them get on with it if that's what they want to do," they said.

Nato, backed up by independent Western bodies such as the International Institute for Strategic Studies, has argued in recent months that Soviet deployments and the rate of arms production were showing no sign of matching Moscow's stated policy of moving towards purely defensive military stance and the principle invoked once again in Mr. Gorbachev's declarations, of "reasonable sufficiency."

The cuts outlined by Mr. Gorbachev would imply a reduction of almost 10 per cent in the Soviet armed forces overall in the next two years and, more important for the arms talks, a significant cut in the numbers in Eastern Europe, where 50,000 men and 5,000 tanks are to be pulled out of East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Six tank divisions in those countries are to be disbanded. According to the IISS, Soviet ground forces in these three countries total 525,000, with 380,000 in East Germany alone.

The impact of the force cuts was reinforced by Mr. Gorbachev's proposal of a ceasefire in Afghanistan and the sending of a United Nations peace-keeping force, and by the announcement that a large portion of the estimated 55,000 Soviet troops stationed in Mongolia would be brought home — an important gesture to China.

Bringing out still further the flavour of sweeping change was

the announcement — officially unannounced — that Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, the Soviet Chief of General Staff, was retiring on health grounds.

Marshal Akhromeyev, who was instrumental in the intermediary Nuclear Forces treaty under which the Soviet Union and the US are scrapping their medium-range land-based nuclear missiles, was one of the last members of the Soviet military establishment who served in the Second World War. The experience of that war has up to now provided the basis for the Soviet military posture combining defensive and offensive capabilities.

The figures cited by Mr. Gorbachev would mean a reduction in the number of Soviet tanks in the European part of the Soviet Union and in other Warsaw Pact countries from the 37,000 estimated by Nato to 27,000. In addition, the Soviet Union's Warsaw Pact allies are reckoned to have 14,500 tanks. Nato, which has about 22,200 tanks, is expected to propose cutting the total on each side to 20,000, and limiting any one country's tanks in Europe to 12,000.

This would mean a cut of 25,000 on Moscow's part, against the 10,000 covered by Mr. Gorbachev's unilateral move.

In addition, Mr. Gorbachev said 8,500 artillery pieces would be removed from the region, out of a total put by Nato at 33,000, and 800 combat aircraft. Despite Soviet claims that Nato has superiority in non-defensive combat aircraft, Nato figures show 8,250 Warsaw Pact fighters based in Europe, including more than 6,000 Soviet aircraft, against a combined Nato total of just under 4,000.

The writer is Defence correspondent, Financial Times.

BUY

REYNOLDS

Ball Point Pens

For Fine Writing instruments

Penpals Limited

545, Sri Sangaraja Mawatha,
Colombo - 10.

Tel: Nos. **547717 — 21668 - 9**

Government's diminishing role

P. Abeygunawardana & S. Pinnaduwa*

The introduction of liberalized economic policies after 1977 has contributed much towards the changes in the overall economic picture of the country.

Economic liberalization is based on the theoretical justification of the supply side approach to Macro economics suggests total repudiation of subsidies in the (on different aspects of the) economy. Following this the government has reduced several subsidy programmes including those relating to fertilizer and food. The objective of this paper is to examine the diminishing role of the government on direct food subsidies in Sri Lanka over the last decade.

Before presenting the empirical evidence, relating to the subject it is intended to examine briefly the theoretical aspects of the supply side of Macro economics. According to John A. Totam, "supply side economics

is growth and efficiency oriented. It covers the entire range of economic decisions" and states that increased taxes levied to pay for the new goods can reduce the total resources available, shifting the frontier inward" and "increased unemployment benefits, food stamps and social security benefits involve increased transfer and taxes."

Supply sides emphasize that the critical factor in government transfers and spending decisions is that such expenditures are financed either by taxation, borrowings from the public or by increasing the money supply. In general, the alternative decision lead to reductions in the total supply of resources available for production. Therefore, the theory of supply side economics suggests tax reduction (Give incentives to the private sector) and curtailing government expenditure in order to increase the resource availability for produc-

tion.

In Sri Lanka, after 1977, the income tax was reduced from 70% to 40% at the highest levels of income. There are many other tax concessions introduced to increase production. Privatization of (unprofitable) government ventures was considered as a policy to reduce government expenditures. Further, the reduction in subsidies on such items as food and fertilizer was also considered as a means to increase economic efficiency.

The food stamp scheme was introduced in 1979 to replace the food ration scheme with the expectation of reducing government expenditures. However, with the reduced government commitment and increased number of needy people, country's overall situation regarding nutritional status has become serious. The attempts of the non-governmental organizations to help this situation have not yielded any

Table No. 1 — The government expenditure over the period of 1975-87.

Year	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Food expenditure subsidy	1230	938	1424	2162	2326	1668	1830	1568	1961	1821	1828	1954	2025
% of food expenditure subsidy	19.1	10.84	16.15	12.22	11.43	6.9	6.2	4.44	4.28	3.55	3.1	3.14	3.02
Defence expenditure	—	—	—	308	393	457	479	486	779	1274	4613	4350	4016
% of defence expenditure	—	—	—	1.74	1.93	1.60	1.62	1.37	2.33	2.47	7.98	6.99	7.3
Total government expenditure	7186	8654	8812	17687	20339	28532	29405	35287	41838	51404	57788	62190	66887

Source — Central Bank of Ceylon Annual Reports 1975-87

Table 2. Percentage of total Expenditure (include & exclude defence expenditure) on food subsidies between 1975-87.

	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87
% of govt. total exp. with &	17.11	16.8	16.15	12.2	11.4	6.9	6.2	4.4	4.28	3.6	3.1	3.14	3.02
without defence expenditure.	17.11	16.8	16.1	12.44	11.66	6.1	6.3	4.5	4.38	3.79	3.44	3.38	3.29

* Lecturer and Senior Lecturer in Agric Economics, University of Peradeniya.

substantial results to compensate for what was left by the government.

Table 01 presents the recurrent expenditure on food subsidies and defence in Sri Lanka for the period of 1975-87. The total expenditure on food subsidies was 12.0 million rupees in 1975 and it has increased upto 2025 million rupees in 1987. This is an increment of 65% in nominal terms. This means it is not an adjustment to the inflation in the country which increased by 229% during this period. This increment when added on to the increased population (2.8 million or 21%) in the country during the same twelve years period it seems no increment at all for the food subsidies given to the poorer sectors of the population.

The share of the government expenditure on food was reduced to 3.02% in 1987 from 17.11% in 1975 (Table 2). These percentages were calculated with no adjustment to the government expenditures for high cost of defence in the country. One might argue it is wrong to include very high defence expenditure into this analysis because it might overlook the food subsidy in the country. Therefore, it was revaluated without defence component into the government expenditure and found almost to have the same results.

The complete results are presented in the table 2. It is clear that with or without the defence component into the government expenditures, food subsidies in Sri Lanka have reduced significantly over time.

Conclusion

The food stamp scheme was introduced in 1979. It has reduced the number of recipients of government food subsidies substantially and reduced the amount of money spent on each individual recipient. By and large this might have adversely affected the food consumption pattern in the country and this might have contributed to some effect the prevailing social unrest in the country.

Note

1. For example in 1977 the price of a kg. of rice was between 2-3 rupees and in 1987 it rose to 7-8 rupees in average.
2. Reduction of the direct food subsidies to the poorer sectors of the country with a double digital inflation rate (CPI has increased from 203.2 to 697.0 during the period of 1977 to 1987) certainly must have aggravated the growing social unrest in the country.

CORRESPONDENCE

"Liberal", "Marxist" and Marxian Sociology

Dr. Jayadeva Uyangoda's tribute to the late Dr. Newton Gunasinghe (LG 15 November) has belatedly come to my notice. While granting that the death of an able scholar in his prime is an irreparable loss to sociology in Sri Lanka it is unfortunate that, in order to highlight the originality of Dr. Gunasinghe's work there has been an oversimplification and distortion of work of others. The practice of labelling scholars as "liberal", "Marxist" etc is disconcerting to those subject to these ill-fitting categories. It is false and misleading to refer to Raghavan, M.D. GanathObeysekera and myself as "liberal" vis-a-vis the "Marxists". It is not surprising that Marx's own reaction to these simple-minded epigones was to exclaim: "Thank God I am not a Marxist", a term which may be reserved for those suffering from what Lenin called "the infantile disorder of 'left-wing communism'". Louis Demont the eminent French sociologist has more pertinently described me as "the historical sociologist".

I was responsible for introducing Marx as one of the key figures in the history of sociological thought alongside Weber, Durk

heim and Pareto. In the syllabus for the special sociology degree. I have not seen Dr. Gunasinghe's doctoral dissertation but it is a gross exaggeration to say that it "marks the beginning of rigorous Marxist scholarship on Sri Lanka society" (note the use of "Marxist" rather than "Marxian"). In three articles published in the now defunct *University of Ceylon Review* 1951/2 dealing with the period 1795-1850 I undertook an eclectic Marxian analysis following it up over thirty years later with a note to the *University of Colombo Review* on Pre-capitalist Economic Formations in the Kandyan period. In the earlier articles and in my lectures on social class I was confined to sources such as *Das Kapital*, the Communist Manifesto to Revolution and Counter Revolution in Germany and the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. It was at a time when undergraduates were invariably inducted into the polemics of doctrinaire Marxism. There was no serious study of Marxian thought as an organic whole. The post-war discovery of hitherto unpublished works (now included in the definitive Moscow edition of Collected Works of Marx and

Engels comprising 50 odd volumes published circa 1975-1985) particularly the so-called Paris Manuscripts of 1844 and the *Grundrisse* in the late 'fifties and early 'sixties led to new perspectives particularly the concept of alienation on which I published an article in 1961. The newly-discovered Marxian literature led to a reawakening of interest in Marx as a social scientist rather than an economist in the narrow sense. Needless to say Lenin was unaware of this literature and even Engels objected to their publication as they may have deflected from the "rigour" of the purely economic writings. The reactivation of archaic production relations under conditions of peripheral capitalism is a much more complicated matter than Dr. Uyangoda's understanding of the problem. Monetization more developed than primitive accumulation combined inter alia with the technification of agriculture rendered the system of labour-exchange (attam) obsolete. Dr. Gunasinghe himself has studied the system in the process of disintegration recently while others have examined the tattamaru system in the modern context. Marx left notes on such pre-ca-

(Continued on page 27)

Vengsarkar — a top class artist

A tender sapling planted more than a decade ago in the international cricket firmament, today stands like a majestic tree. The roots were not strong enough to hold his own in the initial phase of his career. The winds of change very nearly caused an upheaval in his mind. But these very trials and tribulations acted as a cementing force and time came when he established himself as a top class artist. He had to be in the shadow of two of India's greatest performers. With their exit he remains solitary figure, looming large, everytime he saunters to the middle of action. He has reached a point at which he is literally unstoppable. Obviously the tremendous deeds with the willow since '85 has made him the number one batsman in the cricket World. Nobody need to guess his name. He is Dilip Balwant Vengaskar.

It has been a long journey for the King George educated (academic and cricket wise) Vengsarkar to appear in 100 Tests, which he will be doing on Thursday, November 24 against New Zealand. He will be joining the 100 Tests club bracket along with the legendary batsmen — Sunil Gavaskar (125 Tests), Colin Cowdrey (114 Tests), Clive Lloyd (110 Tests), Geoff Boycott (108 Tests), David Gower (100 Tests) and Vivian Richards (100 Tests).

The rise to the top has really been through each rung of the ladder. Series of eye catching performances for King George, Poddar College and for the University of Bombay hastened his selection of the Bombay team for the Ranji Trophy. And from there on it has been history. The mauling of Prasanna, C handra and Bedi at Nagpur in the Irani Trophy straightaway launched him into the Indian team at a very young age of 19.

Vengsarkar failed in New Zealand and West Indies. Not accustomed to playing on green

top wickets and against moving balls, Vengsarkar discovered what Test cricket is all about. But the words of Clive Lloyd after Vengsarkar's courageous knock at Kingston inspired the Bombay batsman to strive hard.

Vengsarkar met with success and was next only to Sunil Gavaskar and Gundappa Viswanath in terms of batsmanship and run scoring. It was at this point of time he was looking forward to captain India. It did not come to him in the course of time he expected. These were the sad moments mid way through his career. He was none too happy with the treatment dealt to him during the 1983 World Cup, and again being dropped for the first Test against Pakistan. He wondered "why". After all he had scored 90 plus runs in his previous Test against West Indies.

Vengsarkar took everything in his stride. From 1984-85 it has been the elegant Vengsarkar who has ruled the roost in international cricket. He realised the ambition to lead the country against the West Indies. Disaster struck again, in the midst of his run scoring spree. He opposed the Board's ban on players writing during the series. The Board came down heavily, slapping a six month ban.

Vengsarkar perforce had to take it, lying down. But now he is back as the chief. He loves to bat, score runs and be at the centre stage of action. The Asia Cup win and the triumph against New Zealand at Bangalore has put him and the team on the right track in the early part of the season.

And now comes his 100th Test appearance. The India captain speaks to *The Hindu* on his career thus far:

On his 100th Test appearance: As a kid in international scene I never really imagined I would play 100 Tests. But considering the amount of cricket we are

playing today it is not a great achievement.

But the fact that I would be making my 100th Test appearance for the country makes me happy. It would be an emotional moment for me since I would be doing so in front of the home crowd, and in a place where I learnt my cricket.

But it was never in my mind at all. Once you cross the 90s it has to come one day. Perhaps at this moment I feel that I should have scored another 1000 runs in 100 Tests. Perhaps I will do better now, than what I had done in the past.

About his first series against New Zealand: It was really a bad beginning. I was very young then. I was absolutely inexperienced. The cold climate and the green top wickets really put me off. I had no clue to what Test cricket was all about. And then I had to open the innings which made things worse. I was used to playing on hard wickets at home and there I was getting out too soon.

On settling down in Test cricket: It was in the 1977 Australian tour that really I got myself established. I played all the matches and I got runs too. I got the opportunity to play on good wickets and I consistently scored runs. It was from this series I was truly into Test cricket.

CORRESPONDENCE...

(Continued from page 26)

pitalist economic formations and serious studies of the problems involved have been made by scholars like Professor R. A. L. H. Gunawardena. (I do not know whether he should be categorised as a "Marxist" or "liberal".) in the jejune bifurcation of Vulgar Marxism of the incognoscenti in contradistinction to a differentiated Marxian analysis.

Ralph Pieris

Kandy.

Kipling's Homage to Buddhism

Izeth Hussain

This rational approach to a living religion seems to desacralize it, and is not the sort of Buddhism we get in Kim. The Lama expounds Theravada doctrine and morality in all their supposed severity, and his might seem to be the rational Buddhism that was attractive to the British of Kipling's time. But it is to be noted that he is gently tolerant of the Ranee's superstitions, while he himself is not above superstitious practises. On observing a mound of coloured rice surmounted by a metal ornament, the Sacrifice of the Universe to the Lord, he says that he himself used to make that offering daily, and adds "And I do it even now, though I know that the Excellent One is beyond all pinchings and pappings. "At the end of the book he has his experience of Enlightenment, which is totally incomprehensible to the rationalist Hurree Chunder Mukerjee.

The Buddhism in Kim therefore accomodates popular practises and goes beyond the rational to the transcendental. Kipling would have wanted a sense of the numinous in religion, and with his sympathy for very ordinary people which is one of his attractive qualities he would have responded very sympathetically to our old-fashioned Vesak of the paper lanterns and the devotion of the people at the Kandy Perahera. The Wittgenstein who dismissed metaphysical speculation also wrote "There is indeed the inexpressible. This shows itself; it is the mystical." In Kim, Buddhism shows itself.

This paper will now examine the form of Buddhism in Kim. It is Theravada Buddhism, or an approximation to it, not Mahayana or Tibetan Buddhism, a point on which there could be confusion as the central figure in this book the Lama, is Tibetan. But the Lama is emphatic on the point that he has rejected Tibetan Buddhism. Described several times as "Red Hat", he presumably belonged not to the Yellow sect but the Red sect, which followed

a form of Buddhism introduced into Tibet in the eighth century, a form of Tantra which strict Theravada Buddhists might regard as Buddhism overlaid with ritual and superstition. The Lama says "The books of my lamassery I read, and they were dried pith; and the later ritual with which we of the Reformed Law have cumbered ourselves — that too, had no worth to these old eyes". He found that the old Law was not well followed, being overlaid with devildom, charms, and idolatry, and he refers to immense and sumptuous rituals: and intrigue between monasteries leading to a fight in which he was injured: "I did not seek truth in those days, but the talk of doctrine. All illusion. "The only thing he appears to retain from Tibetan Buddhism is the chart of the Wheel of Life, but that of course is esoteric symbolism, not ritual or superstition.

That he wishes to follow the purest form of Buddhism is made very explicit. When Kim asks him which God he worshipped, he replied "I worshipped none, child. I bowed before the Excellent Law." A group of Baltis are described as "degraded Buddhists" presumably because their excessively superstitious practises had left little of Buddhism. A difficulty is apparently presented to a Theravada interpretation of this book by the Lama seeking a river which will bring him enlightenment, a particular river at a particular place, a notion alien to Theravada Buddhism. But, as noted earlier, he comes to understand that the River is a purely symbolic one.

(Last instalment next issue)

With the benefit...

(Continued from page 10)

the UNP of the 1987's and the JVP of the 1980's. The UNP's victory is greatly due to their party organisation and discipline. Without the full weight of a modern party apparatus elections cannot easily be won. The charisma of personalities is no longer enough.

In the final analysis it has to be said that the JVP may have actually lost the election for Mrs. Bandaranaike. Its activities led not only to the lower voter turnout but to a change in the public mood, a resistance to drastic change. During the period of co-operation between the two parties, the JVP obviously felt that it was the stronger organisational partner. The JVP has successfully hijacked social discontent away from the traditional political parties. They were confident and determined to call all the political shots. One must concede that they did infact succeed. They paved the way for the demands of the alliance. What appeared in a JVP underground document in June would appear in an Alliance statement in August. After November and the parting of the ways of the two parties, the very important question remains — who truly represents the forces of social discontent coming out of 11 years of UNP rule, is the SLFP or is it the JVP? The election results clearly indicate that in some areas such as Gampaha, the JVP is no match for the SLFP, But in other areas especially in the South and the North Central Province, the question remains open. The answer to this question will affect opposition politics for years to come.

Which leads me to my final comment. What is most troublesome about the election results is that it shows a terrible alienation on the part of the low country Sinhala Buddhists living in the rural areas of the deep south and the North Central Province. In the late 1987's and the 1980's, the minorities felt this alienation most, their youths taking up arms against the state. Today, politics has come a full circle. It is the heartland of Anagarika Dharmapala and Munidasa Cumaratunga which is acutely disturbed. Unless this is perceived as a national problem requiring national solutions and unless immediate steps are taken to redress the political, economic and social grievances of these areas, nothing else we do is likely to succeed.

Tall and proud... Our legacy for tomorrow

Trees... the very core of existence...
Pulsating life force of nature... so vital for
our survival.

Destruction of Trees... Ultimate
inevitable price of progress as technology
strides ahead of nature, shattering the
delicate ecological balance.

Our contribution - Responding to
the call and need of our country, we have
launched a massive, systematic and
scientific reforestation scheme. We have
already planted 975,000 trees at

Naula, Bowlana and Walapane on land
unsuitable for cropping.

Our target - A breathtaking two
million four hundred thousand trees,
covering 2,000 acres by 1987.

Our objective - Preserving... Re-
establishing the life cycle of nature...
Bridging the gap between progress and
nature... Planning... Planting... Gently
nurturing... for tomorrow's world today...
Giving back to nature what progress
takes out.



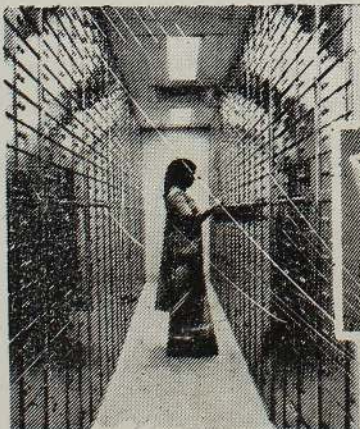
Ceylon Tobacco Company Limited

Sharing and caring - for our land and her people.

**You'll be the loser
if this happens in your home.**



Use the Security of a **Bank of Ceylon** Safe Deposit Locker.



Bank of Ceylon's Safe Deposit Lockers are available in three sizes, small, medium and large; large enough to accommodate all that very expensive jewellery you own, even those very costly sarees you treasure, and important documents, too. At very competitive prices.



Safe Deposit Lockers are available at the
**PERSONAL
BRANCH**
Head Office
75, Janadhipathi
Mawatha,
Colombo 1.



Bank of Ceylon

Grant BUK&E BOC 1719.