

THIMPU: The Ceasefire and after

— *Mervyn de Silva*

LANKA

GUARDIAN

Vol. 8 No. 6 July 15, 1985 Price Rs. 4.00

Registered at the GPO, Sri Lanka QJ/75/N/83

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DEFENCE SPENDING

Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel likes to play with figures, fudging some, some of the time. Like 'zero inflation'!

But on military budgets, he is dead accurate, and his comments candid. Defence spending, he says, has increased seven fold i. e. from one billion to seven billion rupees.

And the National Security Minister, ceasefire or not, keeps asking for more. So said the Finance Minister recently. The armed forces require another 1,500 million. And since that is vital for Sri Lanka's defence, Mr. de Mel will gladly find the money.

Along with this statement however Mr de Mel has warned that if the present negotiations fail, the situation will be 'grave'. He gave yet another figure and told us how much time we really have — just 2 years!

That plainly is the message from Paris, from the Aid Group, the World Bank and the IMF.

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EXIT ISRAEL?

Was the ISLAND right in reporting that the government is taking a second look at "links with Israel"? Or was it just another propagandist kite? According to the ISLAND's lead story of 8/7 the government feels that the Israeli interests section has served its purpose. Evidently, enough Sri Lankan personnel have been trained in intelligence gathering and allied trades.

The ISLAND quotes an unidentified 'government insider' as arguing however that the "real reason" is the long-delayed Saudi loan of 40 million dollars for a Mahaveli project.

This report contradicts the impression conveyed by a story in the independent FORUM. The FORUM report on the lifting of an old embargo on trade with Israel suggests that Sri Lanka-Israel ties are more likely to get closer.

LANKA

GUARDIAN

Vol. 8 No. 5 July 15, 1985

Price Rs 4.00

Published fortnightly by
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd

No. 246, Union Place,
COLOMBO-2.

Editor: Mervyn de Silva

Telephone: 5 4 7 5 8 4

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Printed by Ananda Press,
82/5, Wolfendhal Street, Colombo 13.
Telephone: 3 5 9 7 5

TRENDS
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LETTERS

Guardian Coverage

I was a regular subscriber to the Guardian while I was in Sri Lanka but it is only now that I am abroad that I perceive a gap in its coverage of Sri Lankan affairs. Although the news analysis is always very interesting, I am now more or less ignorant of the actual news events on which the analysis is based. It is sometimes possible to infer the events from the analysis, but this is not always satisfactory.

I would like to suggest that you have a one (or two) page summary of the major, politically significant events of the previous two weeks. More useful and interesting would be to have brief synopses of the news culled from the local press and perhaps arranged under suitable headings such as (a) national question (b) in parliament (c) the economy (d) opposition politics (e) foreign affairs (f) milestones (deaths, appointments, resignations, etc.) and (g) universities and education.

It may be that you do not feel that it is the Guardian's role to fill this particular need. But I think it would be a very valuable addition for those of us abroad and perhaps even to many in Sri Lanka who find it difficult to keep abreast of fast moving events. It will also be a handy reference source as to approximately when any specific event occurred, and the chronological order of several related events. I really hope you will take this suggestion seriously and make a good and much needed periodical even better.

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Los Alamos,
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THIMPU : IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO

Mervyn de Silva

NEWS
BACKGROUND

From the officially announced ceasefire on June 18 to the commencement of the Thimpu talks on July 8, Sri Lanka's harrowing ethnic conflict moved from war-war to jaw-jaw. That change, in itself, is a considerable advance from a situation which seemed so plainly and distressingly, a total impasse, both at the political and military level.

Not surprisingly both sides have offered explanations that are partisan and self-serving. The TULF claims it was always ready for "serious negotiations" with the government, meaning of course that the UNP, for whom the military solution is the ideal option was never genuinely prepared to conceive of a durable political settlement, whatever, Sri Kotha's public and propagandist gestures. To the TULF such gestures were merely token gestures, in short, to appease the government's all-important aid constituency and other critical and increasingly dismayed external audiences — or time-buying exercises necessary for a better organised and beefed-up military effort. The twelve-months long A.P.C. was a classic exhibition in the UNP's true and basic aims and an obvious expose of Sri Kotha's tactics in gaining time. In TULF eyes, the all-party conference was a grand deception operation mounted by the UNP to cover the time-gap between a disagreeable (and apparently imposed) post-July political choice and the much more desirable (and apparently feasible) military objective. But now that the UNP, six months after the collapse of the APC and two years after 'black July', was evidently ready to discuss a political settlement seriously, the TULF was more than prepared to

participate. This broadly is the TULF position.

Given the TULF's pre-July 1983 political past and its uncertain and bleak post-July 1983 political future, this perspective is perfectly understandable and eminently realistic.

Before 1983, the TULF's historic role as authentic spokesman of at least the Tamil community of the north and east, although challenged by a rapidly expanding armed resistance led by the "boys" was never publicly disputed — either by the regime or by the major opposition parties or by the international community, most of all, India and Tamilnadu. A middle-class, quintessentially parliamentarist party, the TULF's main functional purpose in a pluralist democracy governed largely by the numbers game of electoral politics was that of a vocal trade union seeking to promote and protect the interests of the island's largest minority. Typically trade unionist in its psychology and in its response to its own perceived responsibilities and to pressures of its own particular support-base, the TULF placed "Eelam", a separate state, on the agenda, as its maximum and basically rhetorical, attention-getting demand, always ready to settle for much less at the inter-party bargain basement or at the open negotiating table.

Likewise, its name-change from plain 'Federal Party' (the CWC was always an uncomfortably artificial adjunct, and correctly proved a temporary partner, and the debilitated T. C. was an accommodating gesture to 'Tamil unity') to the more high falutin' Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) was just fashionably internationalist. (The

new title, interestingly enough, came in the context of both the debate on 'standardisation' marks at the university entrance examination and Sri Lanka's preparations for hosting the 5th Nonaligned summit).

If the principles and procedures of trade unionism (the give-and-take, largely, of employer-employee relations) can in fact be effectively applied in the sphere of majority-minority relations then much depends of course on the capacity of the majority-controlled regime to "grant concessions". In a Third World country, especially, such political decisions are often determined by economic factors, and these are necessarily external — the terms of trade.

At the risk of over-simplifying this fundamental problem, a connection may be established between the state of health of a pluralist democracy and a nation's political stability on the one hand and on the other, the robustness of its social welfarism. Certainly in Sri Lanka's case, the broad-based social welfare programs — the reason for the island's much advertised POLI rating — were the outcome of pressure from below, from the poor and the disadvantaged in the late forties and fifties. If the response of the Establishment proved positive, the explanation lay as much in congenial economic conditions (tea prices, the rubber boom during the Korean war etc) as in the manageable size of the population and the sagacity of the leadership.

Despite periods of economic misfortune and adverse external trends, this tendency dominated and shaped Sri Lankan politics

and democracy. Up to the 1970's, more or less, with the oil price hike in 1973 commonly used as the turning point.

The Establishment's capacity to give, the area in short for accommodation and compromise, is steadily diminished. And this, significantly is accompanied by periods of 'restricted' democracy or "little bits of totalitarianism" in the memorable phrase of the political personality who dominated the SLFP from 1960, Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike. It took the form of "emergency rule" — its duration getting longer and longer.

Just as much as the lively middle-class led trade unionism that Sri Lanka had known for 50 years has now been paralysed, the trade unionism of the island's main minority has failed, its leaders, the TULF out of action or to a great extent, discredited in the eyes of their own special constituency. With the capacity of the rulers and the regimes shrinking, the Establishment must now think in terms not only of class (the basic majority-minority dividing line) but in terms of race, the other majority-minority equation.

That is why the trade unionist politics of the TULF was perhaps bound to fail, although the TULF tried to overcome the built-in disadvantages of the basic equation by drawing a different dividing line and playing a different divide-and-rule numbers game — between UNP and SLFP.

The UNP election manifesto is a document that UNP'ers like to forget these days. It listed frankly and explicitly 'the long-standing grievances' of the Tamil community: jobs, language, colonisation, university admissions etc. Besides, the UNP promised a roundtable conference to discuss and resolve these issues, a conference that was only to be convened six years and at least four hundred killings later!

According to Mr. Thondaman, the item on Tamil grievances was included in the manifesto, after pre-election talks held in his house between the UNP and

TULF leaders. But the UNP, with its record-breaking polls victory, did not need the TULF. So, instead of discussing Tamil grievances, the gauleiters and goon-squads went up north for the DDC's elections, and gave the TULF supporters a bit of the tough stuff they had served earlier to the Sinhalese opposition in the south!

If therefore TULF "trade unionism" was doomed, its early extinction was guaranteed by the UNP in particular and the Sinhala Establishment in general. Both forgot that trade unionism and welfarist politics play the crucial role of a democratic, non-violent system's safety-valve.

With the bourgeois parliamentarist-trade unionist TULF gradually losing credibility and authority, a new path opened, a newly emergent leadership, lower-middle class based and more rooted in the soil of Jaffna took command. A new generation, a new class, a sort of Tamil JVP, frustrated, desperate, angry and embittered, challenged the TULF. This group not only tried to take control but took to the gun.

However well-intentioned the policy-makers of 'standardisation' and however well-founded the argument for narrowing the opportunity gap between urban student and rural child, 'standardisation' was perceived in the north as an instrument of racial discrimination. In any case, it hit the Jaffna lower-middle class family where it hurt most. The public service said Jennings is the only industry of the north. And education was the passport to a secure job, the only means of upward social mobility. The middle class Tamil in Colombo or the rich parent in Jaffna could send his children to India or to Britain, the US or Canada, where an earlier post-56 generation of expatriates had already built bases and sanctuaries, and an accommodating uncle or cousin could always offer a home. Jaffna's lower middle class had no such choices, no such opportunities.

The National Security Minister says that the "boys" have agreed to come to Thimpu because they realised that they could not win

the war. But as Mr. Reagan said, it takes two to tango. Surely the same logic holds for the government? Why did the government agree to go to Thimpu? Surely it realised too that this was an un-winnable war? Anuradhapura, aid-group pressure (the cease-fire was on the 18th, the aid consortium met on June 20) and US persuasion were decisive.

But it was not the TULF which forced the government's hand. It was the situation on the ground. In other words, the war. And that was possible only because of the sacrifices made by the 'boys'.

This is the dilemma that faces both Colombo and Delhi. Both hold a common position on a basic issue: they are against radical separatist movements which have taken to violent ways. In that sense, they both need the TULF; they both need to restore the TULF's credibility, and maintain its role as **primary** actor, as **chief** spokesman of the Tamil community, its authentic and moderate voice. Yet it was 'the boys' who made Thimpu possible, and Delhi which arranged the meeting.

In the art of compromise, timing is of the essence. What could have been offered (and accepted) yesterday cannot be offered today. It has to be more. And tomorrow it will be greater.

So Delhi has a daunting task. It has to find common ground on the Tamil side (the moderates and the militants) which Colombo is ready to accept or conversely it has to persuade Colombo to offer concessions which are sufficiently large that Delhi, through persuasion, pressure and perhaps threat, can get the Tamils to accept. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's first exercise in demonstrating his new 'good neighbour' diplomacy as well as India's regional pre-eminence with its accompanying responsibilities, is likely to prove an extremely adventurous and risk-ridden enterprise.

As for Colombo, the UNP government finds itself trapped in a monstrous irony

(Continued on page 6)

THE SUMMIT AND THIMPU

A view from Madras

S. H. Venkatramani

The summit ended with the mutual agreement that only a reduction in the violence could create the climate for "progress towards a political settlement". In order to achieve that, India will clamp down on the Madras-based militants and stop any flow of arms and men to Sri Lanka across the Palk Straits. Colombo will reciprocate, once the de-escalation is seen to succeed, by stricter control over military operations.

On the other hand, the militant Tamil groups in Madras are dismayed at what they see as a victory for the Sri Lanka Government in the summit outcome, namely, New Delhi's agreement to pressurise the militants to lay down arms and check the arms flow into Sri Lanka. However, there is very little they can do if the Indian Government gets tough — India is their only hope for attaining their demands and it is India that has been providing them sanctuary.

But they insist that the ball is still in Sri Lanka's court. Says Professor A.S. Balasingham, spokesman for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam: "For us to announce a cease-fire, we insist on the Sri Lanka Government fulfilling a few conditions. They should send the army from the northern and eastern provinces back to the barracks; they should remove the restrictions on free movement in certain areas; they should withdraw the concept of the Prohibited Zone and they should stop indiscriminate arrests." They also insist that any package concessions should be with the consensus of the Sri Lankan opposition parties and the Buddhist clergy.

But the attitude of the four militant groups constituting the Eelam National Liberation Front is somewhat different. In their view, the Sri Lanka Government is only seeking to buy time. Says a spokesman: "The Sinhalese people are themselves disillusioned with the Jayewardene Government for its failure to protect Sinhalese lives. That is why Jayewardene is so desperate to get a cease-fire agreement so that he can consolidate his position and strengthen the Sri Lankan army. The whole thing is a trap."

In that context, the strategy worked out at the summit still has some hurdles to overcome. The strategy is based on the supposition that while the violence is abating — there is agreement on a three-month-long cease-fire — the two sides will thrash out a scheme of devolution. But New Delhi will first have to deal with the diverse militant groups with their deep-rooted suspicion of Colombo's motives. It will also have to deal with the moderate Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) and the Tamil Nadu Government. Colombo, on its part, has to control the war on the ground and see that the senseless killing of civilians and the creation of refugees comes to an end. More important, it has to produce concessions large enough to be acceptable to at least the TULF but not too generous to go against hardline Sinhalese opinion. The climb to the summit was smooth and swift. The descent to peace and political settlement will obviously be far more difficult.

— INDIA TODAY

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No blank cheques for solution – *Sirima*

It was the duty of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party to be closely watchful of everything that's being done in the discussions and drafting of necessary laws so that the vital interests of all the people are preserved, notwithstanding the fact that the present bargaining process began only after the irresponsible neglect of the government that led to the desecration of the Sacred City of Anuradhapura and the plight of the Sinhalese from Trincomalee district in despair because the government did not protect them.

This is stated in a statement issued by the Leader of the SLFP Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike shortly after her return to Sri Lanka. She says the SLFP welcomes the efforts to reach a political solution but will give no blank cheques. The full context of the statement is as follows:

"When I left Sri Lanka on the 8th of last month, there was no evidence even after the Summit meeting in New Delhi, that terrorist activities would subside; and I had therefore thought it would be helpful if on my way home from Yugoslavia I stopped over in New Delhi to see if I could make any personal contribution to ease the tensions we were experiencing in this country on account of this human problem that has unsettled us for quite sometime. But since then, a situation that may be described as a cessation of armed hostilities has taken place; and I did not think it necessary to visit New Delhi at this stage. I am happy to note that there is another phase in the terrorist problem, with an attempt being made to talk over the matter and arrive at a peaceful solution.

"We have always maintained that cordial relations with India should be a vital premise in any effort to reach a political solution to this problem; and whatever may

have been said and done in the past to befoul our relations with that country, it is only to be welcomed that the Government now appears to be more realistic in its appraisals.

"But here again we have to be cautious in deciding what is best for our country. A settlement must be a just settlement; just to the Sinhalese, the Tamils, and the Muslims. Devolution of power, decentralisation of administration are valuable concepts by themselves but in the present situation, it is our belief that the real essence of any lasting solution should be justice; justice to all sections of our people; and we have to determine the steps that should be taken to ensure that people stop fearing and suspecting each other and decide to live together as friends to whom just opportunities for fulfilment and advancement are available within the system.

"If in this context any devolution of power is thought to be necessary, some questions that would then become relevant are; what is the proper unit of devolution? And what are the powers and functions that should be entrusted to such unit? And further. What are the mechanisms that should be devised to ensure that the unitary concept of the State remains unimpaired?

"It would therefore be our duty as a party to be closely watchful of everything that is being done today in the discussions and the drafting of necessary laws, so that the vital interests of all our people are preserved, notwithstanding the fact that the present bargaining process began only after the irresponsible neglect of government that led to the desecration of the Sacred City of Anuradhapura and the flight of the Sinhalese from the Trincomalee district in despair

because the Government did not protect them.

"We welcome the effort to reach a political solution; but we give no blank cheques, we shall ever be vigilant; and advise the people with the utmost responsibility on all matters that arise in this connection; for in our view it is our people, and not any others however respected and honoured, that must finally decide what is right and best for them.

"I would be very humble, therefore, to call upon every citizen of this country to be wide awake at this supreme moment of decision in its history; and think only of the interests of the people and the country before any considerations of person or Party; and I am glad to be back at this juncture so that I can contribute whatever I can for the peace, stability and well-being of our people."

Thimpu : it . . .

(Continued from page 4)

Anticipating or confronted by 'threats' to political stability, Third World elites and regimes create newer and newer forms of authoritarian control. Some forms are nakedly dictatorial, some not. Some are openly military; quite a few, a mixture of civilian and military.

Whatever the form, the pith and substance remain centralisation and concentration of power. In our own political experience, the 1978 Presidential constitution represents the highest point of such centralisation. And now everybody, the UNP most of all, is discussing devolution and de-centralisation. The leader of the government delegation in fact complained that the 'boys' didn't even know what devolution means!

Feminism in Sri Lanka in the decade, 1975-1985

Kumari Jayawardena

'Then what is this ho-ha about women's liberation?' asked the *Island* in an editorial in 1984 on International Women's Day, which was marked by the arrest and assault by the police of several women demonstrating for peace. Many others too wonder what the 'ho-ha' is about, and why Sri Lanka, with its high PQLI (physical quality of life) for women, needs feminist organisations of various hues, to agitate about discrimination against women and their continued subordination. But as feminists in Sri Lanka have realised, the vital statistics for women, literacy 83%, life expectancy 67 years and a maternal mortality of 1.2 per thousand births may be comparatively good, but yet in society, in the family and at work, women still have a subordinate position. During this decade (1975-85), which will be evaluated at the Nairobi conference organised by the UN in July 1985, the status of women has been more intensively discussed and debated than ever before and feminist consciousness has made notable advances in Sri Lanka.

The period was one of important economic, political and social changes in the country; politically, Sirima Bandaranaike the world's first woman prime minister, was replaced by the government of J. R. Jayawardena in 1977; the new constitution in 1978 was a change from the 'Westminster model' to a presidential system, and the referendum in 1983, to postpone elections until 1989, was one important sign of the shift to authoritarianism. After 1977, the economic changes included the strategy of the 'Open Economy', with liberalisation of imports, devaluation, the opening of the Free Trade Zone and the encouragement of foreign and local private

The UN Conference in Nairobi on the end of the Women's Decade begins this week.

capital, leading to some growth of the productive forces; one of the main features of the open economy being the growing absorption of female labour power into the production process as cheap labour. The overriding crisis of the decade has, however, been the ethnic issue, Sinhala-Tamil riots occurring in 1977 and flaring up again in 1981 and 1983, when there was a pogrom against Tamils, involving killings, arsons, loot, rape and continuous blood-letting on both sides subsequently.

In this period of social & political upheaval and continuing conflict, it is not surprising that the women's issue has come to the forefront; today, it is undeniable that the women's movement is a part of national political activity, the annual ritual state violence against feminists on March 8th—Women's Day, serving perhaps to prove the point.¹

In Sri Lanka, the women's movement was not imposed on women by the United Nations or by Western feminists, but has an independent history. Women participated in the cultural revival of the 1880-1910 period, educated themselves and began to enter the professions, (the first woman doctor qualifying in 1899), and in the 1920s, the Women's Franchise Union led the demand for female franchise, which was obtained in

1931. In subsequent years, many organisations including the **Women's Political Union**, and the **All-Ceylon Women's Conference**, agitated for equal rights. Women were also active in trade unions in the 1920s and in the first Leftist party of the 1930s where women were active in the anti-imperialist struggle and the battle for basic economic and social changes; the first autonomous women's feminist socialist group was the **Eksath Kantha Peramuna**, formed in 1948, led by women of the Left parties. By 1975, women had already made important strides, not only in obtaining political rights, but also in education, employment, literacy, life expectancy and health.

The 'Year of the Woman', proclaimed in 1975 by the U.N. served to bring the issue to the forefront again. Almost all political parties, trade unions and non-governmental organisations celebrated the event. Feminists travelled around Sri Lanka speaking on the women's issue and meeting with a good response from all classes of women. Feminist literature from abroad also influenced many local women, who began to write on the issue and to translate feminist writings. New organisations arose ranging from liberal to Marxist, which represented various shades of feminism. Foreign funders, pressurised by their own feminist movements, began to support local women's movements and projects—both at governmental and non-governmental level. The result of this activity was a forging of links internationally between women's movements, especially with Indian and other Asian women's groups.

Brahmin ideology

In order to understand the various types of Sri Lankan feminism, that have emerged during the

1. In 1984 & 1985 women demonstrating on Women's Day were arrested tear-gassed and assaulted with batons by the police, & in 1983, Vivienne Goonewardena and other women petitioning for peace on Women's Day were assaulted at the police station.

decade, it is useful to highlight the anti-feminist attitudes that have traditionally prevailed and still persist in our society, often referred to as 'Brahmin ideology' (**bamunu matha**). While the Sinhalese have no Brahmins, and the Tamil Brahmins of Sri Lanka are usually confined to ceremonial temple functions, the concept of 'Brahmin ideology' is widely understood, even in popular parlance.

In the elitist literature (especially reflected in the 15th century **Kavyasekera**, in the Brahmin's advice to his daughter), a classic model of female behaviour among the upper classes and castes is projected, involving subordination to the male. The 'do's' included chastity, modesty, servility, self-sacrifice, confinement to home, preoccupation with children, husband, relations and husband's friends, not to mention looking after his property; there were also several 'dont's', including loud talk, laughing, running, idling and keeping the company of independent (therefore bad) women.

The essence of 'Brahmin ideology', in both Sinhala and Tamil cultures, is that woman's role is that of wife and mother, that women have no brains, are fickle, emotional and cunning, leading men astray, and also that women have prime responsibility to look beautiful. Thus woman emerges as a devoted mother, a beauty queen, an evil temptress and a stupid housewife.

The concept of beauty and good behaviour in women are also stressed by the traditional ideologies. To give a few examples from the elitist traditions — the Sinhala concept of beauty speaks of the **Pancha Kalyani** (five attributes of beauty) namely beauty of hair, teeth, flesh, skin and youthful appearance. In Tamil culture, women had to possess the **Natkunam** (Four Great Qualities) — a sense of **fear, shame, ignorance** (of bad things) and **pretence** (not revealing too much knowledge of reality).

Today, inspite of many economic and social changes, vestiges of the 'Brahmin ideology' remain, and fairly frequently, some socially backward 'Brahmins' in the form of politicians, religious leaders, and

males in high places, get on platforms to give advice to women on how they should behave, what they should wear, how many children they should have, how they should not lose their femininity etc. Belief in the Five Qualities of Beauty of the Sinhalese and the Four Great Virtues of the Tamils still prevail in our society.

To what extent such anti-feminism and 'Brahmin' views persist can be seen from recent editorials in liberal and socialist journals. The 'Island', a newspaper which is the most liberal of the national English dailies, had the following comments to make, in an editorial entitled 'Women's Liberation!' in March 1984.

The feminine consciousness as it obtains today is another article of the contemporary ideological baggage borrowed from the West. In traditional societies, which the ideologues of women's liberation love to scoff at, woman, as wife and mother, had her own preordained place.

The mother was more often than not the real power in the household.

In the last analysis, therefore, she also subtly influenced the thinking and the decision-making in the household.

Then what is this ho-ha about women's liberation? Like most other fads, to which our alienated elite genuflect, this too is a concept hatched in a West riddled by all the problems which a post-industrial society is heir to....

The fashionable women's lib in which our upper-class women engage is merely a chic posture devoid of any meaning to the large bulk of Sri Lanka's women.

Even more surprising are perhaps the comments of the revolutionary Left. In an editorial on Women's Day in 1984 the **Kamkaru Viththi** (Workers News), the Sinhala paper of the NLSSP (the Left breakaway party from the Trotskyist Lanka Sama Samaja Party) fiercely attacked the women's movement; feminists were called 'middle-class canaries, who think women's oppression is due to men's inherent animal like qualities' and believe that if men "crept into the kitchen and helped in scraping coconut...equality would be achieved". On the question of violence against women (which feminists have recently been highlighting) the paper said:

The relationship between a man and a woman is a complex one to which there is no easy answer. To outsiders it may look as if a man is harassing and beating a woman. But if we look closer it is merely a bit of fun and games between husband and wife.

The traditional concept of women's subordinate position still pervades many women's organisations. There are numerous women's associations spread all over the island with very traditional activities for women, including many religious associations of women which organise religious festivities, run orphanages and homes for destitute or "fallen" women, as well as urban-based women's groups who raise funds for charity; these are the tacit proponents of "Brahmin ideology". They take the present structures of society as given and treat any sign of independence by women as transgressions of the social order. All their activities seem designed to perpetuate the subordinate status of women, in the name of tradition and culture.

While this traditional ideology still retains its force, the economic changes in society, particularly over the last decade, have brought into being a new attitude to women — one that seeks to make of the women, not only a mother and wife, but also a productive worker. Women in our agrarian society have always been workers, associating themselves with men at various stages of the cultivation cycle: women have always been the major part of the plantation labour force. But with the need for more labour in the expanding modern sector, an ideology of 'women in development' has emerged.

Liberal feminism & women's projects

Today the most accepted ideology — the one that receives state patronage, approval from foreign agencies and governments and from liberal-minded persons — seems to be the 'women in development' strategy which takes the position that

1) women should be emancipated, have equal political, legal and economic rights — which include equal access to education, employ-

ment and political decision making, and that

2) in the whole process of economic growth, women should be 'integrated into development', by bringing them into new avenues of employment and income-generating projects.

The theorists of this approach generally accept the present economic system, and the view that all nations will develop generally on the lines of Western capitalist growth, provided that enough quantities of capital and technology are available and provided that traditional societies succeed in reforming and modernising their social structures. However, they argue that up to now, the benefits of modernisation have accrued only to men and that it is necessary to devise plans that will specifically bring women within the scope of growth, that will, "integrate women into the development process".

During the decade (1975-85) this line of thinking has become popular in Sri Lanka and is reflected in the establishment of a Women's Bureau (1978) in the participation of official delegations at the Mexico (1975) and Copenhagen (1980) women's conferences, and at Nairobi (1985); in the appointment of Minister of Women's Affairs (1983); and in the increase in women's projects; Such projects, run by governmental and non-governmental organisations, in many cases with foreign funding, are tailored to the prevailing ideology of foreign funders that —

(1) money for development projects should also be channelled to projects for women, especially women from the poorest sectors of society.

(2) the projects should not only be income-generating, but also be 'grass roots' and 'action-oriented', two key words in development conditionality.

Many of the women's projects, however, are confined to traditional areas especially the ubiquitous 'sewing classes' which exist at all levels. Where women's projects venture beyond sewing, they take

to poultry-rearing, growing vegetables & flowers, batik making, bee-keeping, cookery, and if more daring, into electrical & bicycle repairs.

While no one objects to women generating some income for themselves, the limitations of such projects are evident. First arises the question, **how much** income can actually be generated? Second, **who** benefits by the additional income? and third, **what changes does it make in the subordinate status of women?**

Within this approach, there is a tacit assumption that the status of women can be improved by making them economically active members of society, by making them, even in a restricted sense, economically independent. Besides the income generating activities on a self-employment basis, there is also an emphasis on drawing women into the labour force — e. g. into tourist related activities, into the Free Trade Zone, into the Middle East as housemaids — but there is no questioning of the traditional patriarchal structures of society. Therefore, the relative economic independence of the woman does not contribute to her emancipation. She, in fact, becomes doubly oppressed. She has to bear the double burden of (paid) wage work and (unpaid) domestic labour. The developmental approach may therefore result in binding woman more firmly to her subordinate status. Women are, in fact, being integrated into a process of development that still continues to be exploitative and oppressive as it is male-dominated and male-oriented.

The 'open economy', has also had consequences in making the country equally open to cultural and ideological pressures from the advanced capitalist countries. These pressures have had diverse and paradoxical results. On the one hand we have the rising tide of consumerism and commercialism; goods and services familiar to the West are advertised through the television, in the same manner as in the West, thus making us a part of an international market. Women, in their roles as housewives and mothers, play a prominent part in these campaigns — from

the woman who advertises her clean bathroom on TV to the beauty queen who extols the merits of a particular brand of milk powder. Women are also used as sex symbols — to advertise anything from a car to eau-de-cologne. On the other hand, there are films and TV shows which portray women as the equals of men, in politics, in business in spying, in fighting etc. However, that may be, it is possible that the new Western pressures on our culture and values do play a part in forming or changing feminist consciousness.

Many of the 'developmentalist school' while being fully supportive of women in all fields of activity also show vestiges of 'Brahmin ideology' — namely woman's 'obligation' to produce children and look like a beauty queen at the same time. For example, an editorial in the **SUN** (26.2.85) on 'Virtues of Womanhood', refers with approval to the speech of the Minister of State, Anandatissa de Alwis, who in addressing the University Women's Federation, urged women professionals not to lose their femininity. The editorial states:

The amiable Ananda was full of adulation for the role being played by women in professional fields, ranging from politics and public administration to advertising.

Quips and wisecracks apart, Minister Anandatissa's advice to women should not be taken with a pinch of salt. In the fierce competitiveness of contemporary society, a loss of femininity would only make both women and men more miserable, he said in wisdom that comes through long experience and enlightenment.

When the Minister referred to 'loss of femininity' he was apparently not referring to any romantic fiction. Femininity first and foremost, is embodied in the glory of motherhood. Whatever the bra-burning liberators or the professionals of assorted vices may say, a woman's noblest and greatest role has and always will be in the beauty of motherhood.

Woman can reach for the stars, only if and as long as her launchpad is a good home, which she has helped to build. Any other foundation, fashionable though it may be, would be threadbare.

(To be continued)

ETHNICITY IN SOUTH & S-EAST ASIA

Observations and a survey of some of the literature

A. J. Wilson

Has the sovereign omnipotent state reached its outermost limits? In a way the question is answered by such extra-sovereign organisations and alliances as NATO, the Warsaw Pact and the European Common Market. But we are not solely interested in the voluntarily modified sovereignty of the once all powerful national polity.

In the post-World War II phase, ethno-nationalisms and their less pervasive self conscious forms, ethnicity, have become the vogue. This trend has been more common in the decolonised state which European conquerors had held together as outright land acquisitions. They failed to pay attention to their polyethnic inhabitants as well as the customs and traditions of the lands occupied.

This study will therefore not only be an investigation of ethno-nationalism within the boundaries of the sovereign state. We will also examine the stages that led ethnic nationalities within them to launch separatist movements. We will, at the same time look into political designs which can inhibit the actual partitioning of existing states. More significant, we will view the attempt of neighbouring states to encourage if not promote separatist and secessionist struggles. This arises

This is the text of a paper read at the Paris World Congress of the International Political Science Association on July 15, 1985.

from the fact that ethno-nationalist struggles are no longer confined to internal protest. Ethno-nationalisms are manipulated by foreign and neighbouring states for their own political interests. The international relations of internal civil wars are therefore a significant dimension to the problem of majority ethnic or religious dominance, domestic inter-ethnic violence and minority ethnic defensive capabilities.

Among the several monographs and articles written on the subject, Arend Lijphart's works are outstanding for their keen comprehension and attempt to grapple with the problem. Lijphart advocates federalism and consociational democracy as solutions to the problems of plural societies. Consociational democracy is defined in terms of four principles, "all of which", Lijphart insists "deviate from the Westminster model of majority rule: grand coalition, mutual veto, proportionality and segmental autonomy".² Joseph Rothschild's *Ethnopolitics: A Conceptual Framework* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1981) seeks to discuss "the causes, options and consequences of bringing ethnicity into the political arena".³ Quite pertinently he observes that in modern and transitional societies, "Politicized ethnicity has become the crucial principle of political legitimation

and delegitimation of systems, states, regimes and governments and at the same time has also become the crucial principle for pressing mundane interests in society's competition for power, status and wealth."⁴ He adds: "this triadic nexus among ethnicity, political legitimacy and social interest means that hypothetically there are always several possible ethnic or ethnonational cutting edges potentially available for mobilization in a society..."⁵ Rothschild follows most of the implications and consequences of the assertion of ethnic power by interested political entrepreneurs.

Ethnic Resurgence in Modern Democratic States edited by Uri Ra'an'an (New York, Pergamon Press, 1980) has a useful introduction on "Ethnic Conflict: Towards a New Typology".⁶ Ra'an'an rightly points out to the adverse consequences of "alienation",⁷ "emergence of substate actors"⁸ and "centrifugal phenomena and the revolution in weapons technology"⁹ falling into the hands of disaffected groups.

Ethnic Autonomy — Comparative Dynamics: The Americas, Europe and the Developing World edited by Raymond L. Hall (New York, Pergamon Press, 1979) defines the various concepts used in ethnically autonomous terminology. Most interesting is what he has stated in Note ¹⁰ which he quotes from Abdul A. Said and Luiz R. Simmons (eds.) *Ethnicity in an International Context* (Brunswick, N. J., Transaction Books, 1976).¹¹ A sample of 132 states shows that only 12 (9.1 per cent) are ethnic-free; 25 states (18.9 per cent) comprise

* The author (of the Department of Political Science of the University of New Brunswick, Canada) wishes to acknowledge the help given him by his wife, Susili Wilson in the preparation of this paper; Susili Wilson is a graduate in political science and by profession, a librarian, at the University of New Brunswick.

an ethnic group of more than 90 per cent of the total population; in 25 states the largest ethnic group accounted for "possibly" 75-89 per cent of the population; but in 31 states (23.5 per cent) the "significant ethnic group" comprised only 50-74 per cent of the population; and in 3 states (29.5 per cent) the largest group did not exceed half that state's population. He added that in 53 states (or 40.2 per cent) the population comprised "five or more significant ethnic groups".

Richard W. Sterling in "Ethnic Separatism in the International System" in Raymond Hall's edited work (already referred to) raises cautions about international implications for sovereign states undergoing internal turmoil. "Separation" he states "unavoidably involves the redistribution of sovereignty and the relocation of

national boundaries. It follows that the international power structure will undergo alteration"12

Arnold D. Smith's (Cambridge at the University Press, 1981) **The Ethnic Revival**, especially his chapters on "An Ethnic Revival?", Accommodation and Neo-Ethnicity"¹³ "State Integration and Ethnic Schism"¹⁴ and "Neo-Nationalism"¹⁵ shed further light on this post-World War II phenomenon while Peter Worsley's **The Third World** (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975, fifth impression) with its illuminating chapter (5) on "The Structure of the New States,"¹⁶ the subheadings of which are "The One-Party States," "The Pluralist Politics" and "Differentiation and Conflict" look at the problem from the angle of a political anthropologist with much insight into what is

more in the nature of an extended, interpretive and illustrative essay of Clifford Geertz's "The Integrative Revolution". Worsley is more predictive and expresses little or no doubt as to the outcome in his conclusions.

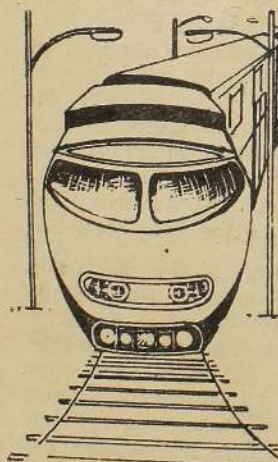
This introductory for an analysis of multiethnicity in the states of South and Southeast Asia cannot be complete without a reference and inferential deductions from John Wood's path breaking piece on "Secession: A Comparative Analytical Framework". Wood looks at the problem squarely and does not diddle around his subject with compromises that can save the sovereign state from disintegration. He quotes Yeats's 'The Second Coming' with approval.

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Wood quite rightly states that "in a world where secessionist struggles have become an almost daily feature of the news, it is regrettable that political scientists have not produced, as yet, a theory of secession".¹⁹ After dealing with the preconditions of secession, Wood concerns himself with central concepts and definitions and then traces the rise of secessionist movements, the central government's response and the resolution of secessionist crises by armed conflict. He raises the question of international means and methods of resolving such issues. How many lives and how much devastation could thus be avoided? Only the merchants of death, the arms manufacturers, will stand to lose. It is appropriate that he ends his essay with a quote from proposals made by Lee C. Buchheit in his *Secession: The Legitimacy of Self-Determination* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1978).

"It is wiser and in the end safer, to raise secessionist claims above the present 'force of arms' test and into a sphere in which rational discussion can illuminate the legitimate interests of all concerned."²⁰

Nonetheless but for a few, the thinking among western writers and even among the articulate in the majority ethnic groups in these decolonised artificial states is that consolidation and national integration are merely questions of time. Clifford Geertz was one of few who expressed doubts in his essay "The Integrative Revolution". By 1973, Geertz was sceptical as to whether the decolonised state had come to stay. He wrote in an essay, "Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States: The Integrative Revolution" (*Southeast Asia: The Politics of Nation Integration*, John McAllister (ed.), New York, Random House, 1973) views which expressed this position. He observed:

.... disaffection based on race, language, or culture threatens partition, irredentism, or merger, a re-drawing of the very limits of the state, a new definition of its domain....²¹

It was evident that many events had occurred by 1972 to modify

Geertz's earlier cautious optimism. This was true of Rupert Emerson as well. In McAllister's volume, Emerson in his "The Nature of the Nation" wrote:

The chances seem greater that China, India, Pakistan, or Indonesia might breakdown into smaller units based on language, regional attachments, or some other formula than that any existing or foreseeable sense of common identity would bring about voluntary mergers among them or with any of the neighbouring states.²²

Karl W. Deutsch too raised questions about the possibilities of the political state resisting contemporary strains. In his essay *The Growth of Nations: Some Recurrent Patterns of Political and Social Integration* he stated

... "All peoples are involved in the growth of national awareness, and (that) soon there will be no people left to play the role of submerged nationalities or underlying populations, or passive bystanders of history, or drawers of water and hewers of wood for their better organized neighbours".²³

Wayne Wilcox was optimistic enough to write his book *Pakistan: The Consolidation of a Nation* (Columbia University Press, 1963) in 1963. By 1967, he became aware of the growing dangers when he wrote: "it was because of geographic-international factors that Pakhtun regionalism tended to alarm Karachi more than the similar demands expressed elsewhere in Pakistan" adding later: "the actual picture showed enormous complexity and diversity: It is this diversity, rather than 'regionalism' which has shaped Pakistan's essential problem on national integration."²⁴ (emphasis by Wilcox). By 1971, East Pakistan seceded to become the new state of Bangladesh. The well-known Pakistani scholar devoted a chapter titled "Causes for the Separation of East Pakistan" in his *Politics in Pakistan: The Nature and Direction of Change* (New York, Praeger, 1980). Sayeed quoted Walker Connor with approval, viz.,

It is a truism that centralized communications and increased contacts help to dissolve regional cultural distinctions within a state such as the United States. Yet if one is dealing not with minor variations of the same culture, but with two quite distinct and self-differentiating

cultures, are not increased contacts between the two apt to increase antagonisms?"²⁵

And in yet another chapter (6) Sayeed dwelt on "Pakistan's Central Government Versus Baluch and Pakhtun Aspirations". Indeed all this was creeping evidence of growing separatism, even in the truncated state of Pakistan.

Ethnicity and Ethno-nationalisms in the New States

Political scientists specializing in the new states of the Third World (and I here refer specifically to most of the States of South and Southeast Asia) have concentrated more on forms, procedures and institutions. The actual process of inter-ethnic competition receives, if at all, only passing mention. Such internal disequilibrium detracts from the glory and majesty of the consolidated nation state in Europe as it was known in its heyday in, especially, the last quarter of the nineteenth century. But even the term "nation state" is a misnomer. It implied a politically and culturally homogenized polity. Not even all states in Western Europe could fall into this category. The question was one of degree. Once we move towards southeastern Europe, the problems become more complicated. Austria was brought back to "the fatherland" by Hitler in 1938, the Sudeten Germans of Czechoslovakia had to be "saved" in 1938, Hungary still has a sizeable number of Hungarians in Rumania, and Yugoslavia is a gigantic crochetwork.

Political forms in the new states of South and Southeast Asia usually followed models of varying patterns, all of which were based on European examples.[†] None of the new states tried to evolve their own unique constitutional experiments. President Nyerere in Tanzania has a system of his own. The late Chairman Mao was the only other leader of stature who tried to fashion a structure in keeping with the needs of his people. There could be explanations for such faulty political behaviour. One was Westminster which exported its models. These failed mainly because the culture of the people on whom the Westminster model was transposed was not prepared for it.

Samuel be Smith's, *The New Commonwealth and Its Constitutions* (London, Steven, 1964) gives instances of how Westminster's adaptations were not quite exact. The new elites, really carbon copies of their imperial counterparts, had the mistaken notion that modernization equalled democratization.

What was missing in the decolonized state was vital to its survival. Linguistic, cultural, religious and tribal heterogeneity made them a mere congeries parcelled together to form an artificial geographical expression. It was only natural that sooner than later fissiparous tendencies would rear their ugly head. Further these states were more or less monocultures with subsidiaries, commercially important for export or useful for domestic consumption. They had not gone through the process of industrialization. They were dependencies. Secondly the ratio of rural to urban population could hardly be reduced. By and large the rural sectors dominated. Politically they were less prone to change, were satisfied with the status quo and ended up voting for "no-change parties". This explained the one-party dominance model in India, the party of government as it might be called, the evergreen oak tree of the Congress Party, under different guises, satisfying the needs of India's middle classes. The same is true of the National Front government in Malaysia which at

independence in 1957 had the name, the Alliance Party. Other states were more blatant. Dictatorships emerged in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines, Taiwan and South Korea. Jeanne Kirkpatrick's reasoning tried to make out a case for these states. It is less difficult, she said, to get back authoritarian regimes on the democratic rails than totalitarian systems.

The native elites of the majority ethnic group were for a significant reason enamoured by the parliamentary traditions of Westminster. It gave them an advantage. Westminster adopts the first-past-the-post electoral system. An ethnic plurality could, if sufficiently coherent, subdue the ethno-national minority cultural groups, a phenomenon which began to manifest itself after the departure of the colonial power.

What is also relevant is that the varying kinds of Marxism and their adaptations to the new countries in which they tried to establish roots did not come to grips with the fact of ethnicity. Marx had failed to estimate the overriding effects of either nationalism in the West or ethno-nationalisms in these new states. Marx took the nation state as it was in Western Europe and prescribed a remedy which he thought was a universal panacea. That panacea had little relevance to the multi-ethnic administrative expressions which emerged as sovereign states after World War II. Two factors disrupted the evolution of cohesive national entities in the new states. The economic foundations on which the nation states of Europe were constructed were absent — gold and other metals that came across to European states in the wake of discoveries of new lands, exploitable empires, unrivalled navies and armies and an astonishing lead in the industrial revolution under which raw materials were bought cheap from colonies and finished goods sold dear in the same places. What was more, the unemployed and the unemployables of the metropolitan country were sent off to the colonies. Social discontent in the states of the West was thus kept at a minimum.

The situation is different in the world of new states. Ethnicity is a factor come to stay. By "ethnicity" is meant the pervasive consciousness of a cultural/linguistic/religious group that it is different from the others within the state. "Ethno-nationalism" moves one step further when ethnicity reaches the stage of a desire and a demand for separateness; for by then ethnic consciousness or ethnicity would have enveloped the ethos of the ethnic group concerned. The limited pie syndrome (not enough employment or the productives things of life to go round) leaves the minority ethnic groups discontented. The majority ethnic groups have the first helping. The dissatisfaction bred gives rise to varying forms of demands for self-determination — decentralisation, devolution, regional autonomy, federalism, confederalism, and sovereignty-association. The ultimate goal is sovereign statehood. The contending groups have their battle lines drawn. Divisions based on class, caste and region within the ethnic group have become blurred. The result is inter-ethnic confrontation.

Marxist parties have attempted to make the people aware of other problems. They insist that the dividing line exists elsewhere, between rich and poor, the wealthy and the oppressed, between exploiters and exploited. But to little purpose. The distinctions between classes within rival ethnic groups are ignored in the face of a common foe.

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTES

1. See Arend Lijphart's, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1977) and his "Consonation and Federation: Conceptual and Empirical Links", *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. XII (1979), 499-515.
2. Lijphart, "Conception and Federation: Conceptual and Empirical Links", *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. XII (1979), 500.
3. op. cit., 1.
4. loc. cit., 2.
5. loc. cit.
6. op. cit., 1-29.

(Continued on page 24)

† even European states today are poor examples; for example Tom Nairn's *The Break-Up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* (London, NLB, 1977); also on Basque and Catalan ethno-nationalism, see Hugh Seton Watson, *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1977) 59-60; J. Reece, *The Bretons against France* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1977) provides an account of the movement for separation in the region of Brittany. W. Douglass, "Basque Nationalism", in *The Limits of Integration: Ethnicity and Nationalism in Modern Europe*, (University of Massachusetts, Research Reports, No. 9, 1971 and M. Heilberg, "Insiders/Outsiders: Banque Nationalism", *European Journal of Sociology*, XVI (Paris) 1975 are useful for insights into the Basque problem.



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A TALE OF TWO VISITS : RAJIV IN MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON

Bhabani Sen Gupta

This article by the Research Professor of the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, was specially written for the Lanka Guardian.

There is a lot of theatre in today's visit diplomacy. Satellites carry the scenes thousands of miles away to home audiences of the principal actors. Technicolour lends surrealistic touches to carefully laid out extravaganzas. In mid-80s, a hundred million Indians watch their political leaders on the TV screen. For Rajiv Gandhi, who, at 40, is the world's youngest prime minister of the planet's largest and most populous democracy, the first official visits to Moscow and Washington were theatre on grand scale. The superpowers are competing with one another to woo India; exclaimed an analyst on the staid columns of Beijing Review. It did look like that to the clusters of Indians who watched in the hot evenings of May and June their youthful prime minister being treated to super red-carpet welcomes in the lush green lawns of the Kremlin as well as the White House. India seemed to have finally arrived on centre stage after long years spent in the wings, waiting for the lines written for a hero.

The like of this didn't happen before. India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, visited Washington in 1949, and Moscow seven years later, in 1955. For Indira Gandhi, too, the first visit as prime minister was to Washington; then came Moscow. Between 1967 and 1971, the process was reversed for India. After 1971, whoever was India's prime minister, the road to Washington has to be through Moscow. That's how it was for Morarji Desai, even though he was prime minister of the Janata government. So it was for Indira Gandhi when she returned to power from the wilderness triumphantly in January 1980. So it has been for her son and heir, Rajiv Gandhi.

It was bad planning, growled some of the analysts. Why provoke people all over the world to draw comparison between two very different journeys? The first to the capital of a time-tested friendly power. The other to the capital of a power that has always denied India what Indians have always believed to be their legitimate role in the affairs of the world. If the provocation was an act of deliberate diplomacy, was it conceived with a wry sense of humour, even fun? For, the pre-visit air in the two capital cities was vastly different. Doubts and apprehensions in Moscow; creased foreheads, raised eyebrows. Rainbow hope and crimson expectations in Washington. Would Indira Gandhi's son, Jawaharlal Nehru's grandson, an airline pilot educated in an aristocratic public school in Dehra Doon, and Cambridge, surrounded by friends and counsellors drawn from the world of computers, multinationals and former native princes, deviate from the asphalted, all-weather road of Indo-Soviet friendship? asked the 54-year-old young Soviet leader who, too, looked upon himself and was seen by the world as a moderniser. Has our time come at last? asked the president's men in the White House, at Foggy Bottom, in the Pentagon, and on the Hills, in Washington DC. Could this young lad, unschooled in realpolitik, and so refreshingly 'modern' be seduced with the magic of Silicon Valley? If he was opening up the Indian economy — the alluringly vast Indian market — to foreign investment and technology, how could he remain a friend of the Soviet Union?

When Rajiv Gandhi returned to the intransigent realities waiting for his attention back home, and

scribes poured over the large and small print of his high-drama diplomacy, they only found another confirmation of Camus' profound papaphorism: so much happens but so little changes! Much indeed did happen both in Moscow and Washington, more in Washington than in Moscow. The Russians are incorrigibly formal, and language is a barrier to informality. Rajiv Gandhi was not invited to address the Supreme Soviet, which, in any case, meets only twice a year, and there are no full-time MPs or Senators or Congressmen in the USSR. He was not even invited to speak to the 13 powerful men, members of the CPSU politbureau, who with an even mixture of old and middle age, run the destiny of the Soviet Union and much of the destiny of the 25-member world socialist community. But Mikhail Gorbachov provided all the informalities the Soviets were capable of: an unexpected, unannounced knock at the prime minister's door ten minutes before an appointed hour, a walk through the Kremlin gardens leaving protocol behind, and a bunch of garden-fresh lilacs for the visitor from India. And six hours' intense discussions through interpreters. The vibrations between the two 'modernisers' were immediately warm and amiable — not "strong and warm" as they were between Ronald Reagan, who lives in the bygone world of Theodore Roosevelt, and Rajiv Gandhi, who says he has a dream — to take India to the threshold of the 21st century in a spirit of service to humankind.

Unlike human relationships, relations between and among nations are seldom stagnant. They either grow or decline. The charmed crux of the Indo-Soviet relationship,

which surprises so many Americans these days, is that it has never declined. Over the 30 years of its life, the relationship has maintained a steady upward curve, sometime slow, sometime sharp. If Gorbachov and his colleagues had any fear that with Rajiv Gandhi as India's prime minister, the relationship might slide down for the first time, that fear was removed in the first day of the prime minister's visit. The Soviet leaders found to their delight that though young and born on the eve of India's independence, Rajiv Gandhi's would view, his perceptions of the South Asian region, his image of India were surprisingly similar to his mother's and his grandfather's. Elite perceptions of world realities are extraordinarily stubborn as Michael Becher discovered nearly 20 years ago! Asked by reporters of what extraordinarily strong stuff was the Indo-Soviet friendship made, Rajiv Gandhi answered with candour and truth: a wide convergence of perceptions of world events, trends and processes.

Which remained missing in Washington, despite the dazzle of contrived theatre. The ceremonial welcome in the lawns of the White House, the lavish grandeur of state banquets, the standing ovations of senators and Congressmen, the nine applauses that punctuated the prime minister's well-composed and better-delivered half-hour speech, not all the perfumes of visit diplomacy could conceal the cardinal fact that on most of the regional and world issues — from Star War to Afghanistan, from global militarization to third world debt burdens, from US arms flows to Pakistan to economic and development philosophies — the world's most prosperous and the world's most popular democracies stood widely apart from one another.

Rajiv Gandhi, however, left a strong impression on the American mind. President Reagan, in his two rather short meetings with the young prime minister from India, looked as dangerously innocent as ever, militant simplicity gazing out from his misty eyes upon a complicated world. The business sessions were left to Secretary George Shultz and other cabinet officers including Secretary Caspar Wein-

burger. Old realpolitikal horses like Henry Kissinger extended a helping hand. With his candour, modesty and transparent sincerity, Rajiv Gandhi left many Americans on the brink of tears or laughter and many American women looked at him with motherly eyes. But the perceptual divide remained un-narrowed. I am not convinced... murmured Rajiv Gandhi as he left for home.

In Moscow, Gorbachov gave him all that he could think of asking for, plus an unsolicited bonus. Agreements and protocols were signed extending Indo-Soviet co-operation to the end of the century. The Soviets offered to finance much of the core sector of India's seventh five year plan... power, steel, explorations for petroleum, coal, transport, shipbuilding. with a billion rouble credit which India had to pay back, with India-made goods, after a three-year grace period, in 20 years at 2½ percent interest. Apart from the 80 percent of India's need for imported arms the Soviets meet, Gorbachov offered Rajiv Gandhi the best and the brightest of Soviet military technologies. He shared the prime minister's threat perceptions, and was some what forthcoming on the question of Afghanistan. While all this and more raised the level of Indo-Soviet economic and technological cooperation to a higher level, Gorbachov place the bonus on the prime minister's Cap. He reiterated Soviet acknowledgement of India's importance as South Asia's leading power, and wanted India to play a bigger role in the affairs of a confused and complicated world. In an extraordinary sweep of diplomatic futurism, he put India and China at the same leadership level in a surrealistic vision of a pan-Asian Helsinki, sometime in the distant future!

Yes, there are problems about raising Indo-Soviet economic collaboration to a higher level, Gorbachov candidly conceded to Rajiv Gandhi. It's a challenge to both of us, he said in his own language. The track record of India's utilisation of Soviet credit is not very good; credits offered in 1980 are still to be fully made use of. He told the prime minister, again in

his own language, I want to modernise the Soviet economy. With new technologies, new incentives, new managerial and structural reforms. You'll see what we can do in the next five years. We may not give you all the sophisticated technologies we may need. But we can give you a lot, at prices cheaper than they, and you can pay back with the produce of your factories and farms.

As if to prove that he meant what he said, Gorbachov assigned five deputy prime ministers to talk for three days in Moscow during Rajiv Gandhi's visit with a delegation of 20 managing directors of as many Indian private corporations engaged in the manufacture of engineering goods and machines. The delegation had gone to Moscow with the prime minister's blessings and had been briefed by him before his departure. The 20 captains of the Indian private sector returned convinced that they could lock in with the Soviet Union in a variety of industrial and technological fields.

Rajiv Gandhi's task in Washington was very different. He saw his mission as one to build understanding. His hosts, after an initial romantic abandon, and sobered by the rhetorics and results of the Moscow visit, settled with a modest objective: it was, they said, primarily a "get-aquainted" visit. Indeed, the "journey of discovery" undertaken by Nehru 36 years before, and the mission to build "bridges of understanding" carried out by Indira Gandhi in 1982 had failed to narrow the strategic divide. The United States had come to the subcontinent in 1948 following a track charted by the departing British, as no less a man than Sir Olaf Caroe has put down on record. That was the beginning of America's conflict with Indian nationalism. Over the years India and America have differed on most of the major world issues, and, more than on anything else, on India's role in regional and world affairs as an independent, uncommitted emerging third world power.

Rajiv Gandhi succeeded in conveying his central message to Americans; this was the great success of his Washington visit. The message was of an India that was not weak but strong, not poverty-stricken

and hungry, but capable of exporting two million tons of grain in 1985, of meeting two-thirds of its petroleum requirements from domestic production, of making 80 percent of the arms and weapons it needs in its own factories, with a large and strong base of industry and technological-scientific-managerial manpower, not crippled by a debt burden, its democracy alive, reasonably well and quite stable. He wanted to make India stronger, and in this he was ready to grasp each and every extended hand of friendly cooperation. He knew that in certain frontier areas of technology, what the US could give could not be duplicated by any other nation. He would be interested in getting high technology from America, but these had to suit Indians terms and conditions. In his much-applauded speech to the joint session of the Senate and the House of Representatives, Rajiv Gandhi's message was firm, clear and modest: we have traversed our own path and arrived where we are today. To modernise we shall introduce the necessary reforms in our system. But we do not intend to move away from our chosen track and go over to the other side. And we intend to rely mostly on our own efforts as we have done all these years.

He found his American hosts surprisingly understanding and responsive on the economic and technological track of his discussions in Washington. Americans do not wish to lose the bulk of the Indian market to Japan and Western Europe if they can help it. Latin America is virtually bankrupt; Africa is a land stalked by hunger. The once-bulging coffers of the sheikhs of Arabia are becoming alarmingly thinner and thinner. China and India alone offer large, stable, long-term markets. Rajiv Gandhi found his American hosts forthcoming on technology transfers. They were goaded by the apparently incurable slump in America's computer industry, by the slow-down in the U.S. economy, which threatens to swell into another recession, by the on-going trade war with Japan. The United States also offered to sell high military technologies, single or dual purpose, waiving the restrictions they were insisting on in the past negotiations.

On political-strategic issues, however, Rajiv Gandhi and his hosts argued on opposite lines. He wanted the Reagan administration to put greater pressure on Pakistan to abandon its nuclear programme which he insisted had an explicitly weapons thrust. His hosts told him they were doing all that they could, and Rajiv Gandhi said that wasn't enough. His hosts suggested that the best way to prevent nuclear proliferation in South Asia was for India and Pakistan to agree not to make nuclear weapons. But Rajiv Gandhi wasn't prepared to talk nuclear non-proliferation with Pakistan, nor to give up the Indian option to make nuclear weapons. Rajiv Gandhi pressed his American hosts to build down on their arms supplies to Pakistan, pointing out that many of the weapons going to Pakistan could not conceivably be used in Afghanistan. His hosts argued that they had to give Pakistan all the weapons it needed to put up a posture of opposition to the Soviet military in Afghanistan, and that only by supplying high-tech weapons to Pakistan could they expect to keep the lid on Pakistan's nuclear aspirations. Reagan in his banquet speech described India as "the pivotal power" in South Asia. However, in his talks with Schultz and Weinburger, Rajiv Gandhi saw no U.S. readiness to yield to India a pivotal role in South Asia.

His hosts asked him to play a positive role in getting the Soviet troops out of Afghanistan. Rajiv Gandhi told them that Gorbachov had told him that he would like to take the troops out, but how could he, as long as the United States ran the biggest covert programme of arms supplies to "counter revolutionaries" in Afghanistan since the Vietnam war? So, Rajiv Gandhi asked the US to extend whole-hearted support to the UN negotiations, which the Reagan administration has stalled since 1983. Rajiv Gandhi backed direct negotiations between Pakistan and Afghanistan under UN auspices, a track the Americans have not allowed Pakistan to take so far. On Star Wars, on the Indian Ocean, on the Middle East, on Southern Africa, the two sides stuck to their respective positions.

(Continued on page 24)

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Aggression against Nicaragua

FOREIGN
NEWS

WE have been following the development of the United States government's involvement in Nicaragua and we notice with great concern and alarm the several clear efforts of the United States of America to destabilize Central America and the Caribbean.

The U. S. A. has become increasingly aggressive towards the Sandinista government of Nicaragua. The U. S. Administration has continuously engaged itself in acts of aggression and systematically escalated its efforts in the overthrow of the Sandinista government. Instances of such acts include the following:

(1) Since 1981, the United States government has provided military and financial support for the Nicaragua rebel groups or Contras; totalling US\$80 million (up to June 1984). The Contras are being trained and organised by the CIA. The Contras have assassinated and killed hundreds of innocent Nicaraguan citizens and conducted terror attacks on farms and communities. In one such attack on a state farm, the Contras killed 16 people. A survivor of the attack reported: "Eleven were killed in cold blood. Rosa had her breasts cut off. Then they cut into her chest and took out her heart. The men had their arms broken, their testicles cut off, and their eyes boked out. They were killed by slitting their throats and pulling the tongue through the slit" (*The Guardian Weekly, London, November 29, 1984*).

(2) In October 1984, the CIA wrote and published a manual in Spanish advocating the 'use of violence' to 'neutralize' judges, doctors and public officials of the Sandinista government of Nicaragua. The CIA manual which was distributed to the Contras is used to train Contras how to assassinate Sandinista officials and to destabilize Nicaragua by promoting and manipulating civil unrest.

* Sent to President Ronald Reagan and Members of Congress, United States of America. The coordinator of the 3rd World Network is Mr. Mohammed Idris, JP, of Penang, Malaysia.

(3) The United States government has waged economic warfare against Nicaragua by pressuring the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank to stop giving aid to this country.

(4) Since 1982, the United States government has been staging military exercises in neighbouring Honduras to put pressure on the Sandinista government.

(5) The threats and acts of aggression have escalated since the re-election of President Ronald Reagan in November 1984. In that month itself, the U. S. Navy together with Honduran and Salvadorean ships held joint naval exercises in the Gulf of Fonseca off Nicaragua. President Daniel Ortega has said that 'these naval exercises meant that U. S. forces were in a position to launch rapid strikes against Nicaragua' (*Reuter, November 13, 1984*).

(6) Presently American forces are engaged in air, sea and land exercises on Nicaragua's borders. The manoeuvres involve 4,500 U.S. troops, M60 tanks and the nuclear-armed cruiser, USS Iowa (*The Guardian Weekly, London, March 3, 1985*).

(7) In November 1984, Nicaragua protested to the United Nations against U. S. incursions into Nicaraguan airspace and territorial waters. Nicaragua also protested to the U. S. government over incursions by U. S. Air Force SR 71 spy planes flying over Nicaraguan cities and territory. The Nicaraguan government formally protested to the U. S. State Department that U. S. warships had flagrantly violated Nicaraguan territorial waters. These flights, along with the presence of U. S. Navy frigates in Nicaraguan territorial waters are 'a prelude to intervention by American troops' said Nicaragua (*AFP, November 10, 1984*). The United States continued to violate Nicaragua's airspace and territorial waters, despite being told by the International Court of Justice in the Hague to halt such activity.

(8) The United States government has continued to block the peace efforts of the Contadora group of Columbia, Panama, Mexico, Venezuela and the majority of the Latin American countries to bring a "lasting peace to Central America" (*International Herald Tribune, November 7, 1984*).

(9) The United States government has arrogantly dismissed the World Court ruling that the military and paramilitary activities of the government of the United States against Nicaragua are a use of force in clear violation of international law. This is not the first time that the United States has acted in open defiance and violation of international law. Washington was alone in vetoing United Nations Security Council resolutions in October 1983, deploring the United States invasion of Grenada and in April 1984 against outside military intervention in Nicaragua (*New York Times, December 6, 1984*).

(10) The World Court had issued restraining orders against the U. S. in May 1984 to halt any attempts to blockade or mine Nicaraguan ports (by the CIA) and to refrain from jeopardising Nicaragua's political independence by any military and paramilitary activities (*New York Times, November 28, 1984*).

(11) The U. S. President has expressed sympathy for private U. S. efforts to aid the Contras. Private U. S. citizens including combat veterans have been involved in training and assisting Contras at base camps in Nicaragua. These military operations by American volunteers with the connivance of the United States government will only increase the tension between the U. S. and Nicaragua (*International Herald Tribune, December 19, 1984*).

(12) A U. S. Army helicopter unit has been involved in flying military missions into Nicaragua and Central America despite U. S.

laws forbidding such military activities. A U. S. newspaper reported that this took place during 1982 and 1983 during U. S. military manoeuvres in Central America (*International Herald Tribune*, December 17, 1984).

(13) American helicopter crews employed by the CIA fired on Nicaraguan government forces twice in 1984. The helicopter crews comprised American civilians, some with Vietnam War experience, under contract to the CIA (*International Herald Tribune*, December 21, 1984).

(14) In recent weeks, the United States government has openly and provocatively declared that it supports the overthrow of the Sandinista government. In the words of Ronald Reagan, 'you can say were' trying to oust the Sandinistas by what we're saying' (*Reuter*, February 25, 1985).

(15) On February 27, 1985, a Reuter news report informed the world that the Reagan Administration was considering the recognition of the Contras as the legal government of Nicaragua.

Violations against international laws

The above are belligerent acts of war being committed directly or indirectly by the United States on an independent Third World country. We urge the U. S. Administration and the Congress to stop such actions immediately.

In 1984, the U. S. Congress cut off funds for Mr Reagan's programme of covert aid funnelled through the CIA for the Contras, although it approved US\$14 million for the covert programme this year pending further congressional votes to release it (*Reuter*, February 25, 1985). We urge Congress not to approve the use of the funds and to vote against its release.

The Sandinista government in Nicaragua was democratically elected to power by the popular wishes of the Nicaraguan people. The elections which were held in November 1984 was monitored by more

then 400 invited observers from 40 countries including the U.S. Europe, Africa, Latin America and the European Parliament. The foreign observers have called the Nicaragua elections 'free and fair' and part of a 'genuine democratic process', and Nicaragua was not the totalitarian state portrayed by President Reagan (*Reuter*, November 8, 1984). As such it is the sovereign and legitimate government of Nicaragua.

The Reagan Administration's intentions and actions towards Nicaragua is tantamount to a declaration of war on an independent nation. This goes against the United Nations Charter which prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of any state.

This is also against the resolutions passed by the UN General Assembly which specifically states that:

'Every state has an inalienable right to choose its own political, economic, social and cultural systems without interference in any form by another state'.

'No state or group of states has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatsoever, in the internal and external affairs of any other state. Consequently armed intervention and all other forms of interference or attempted threats against the personality of the state against its political, economic or cultural elements are in violations of international law'.

'No state may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another state in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercises of its sovereign rights and to secure from it advantages of any kind'.

Appeal to the U. S. Government, Congress and people

The aggressive stance by the government of the United States has created great apprehension to the Sandinista government and the Nicaraguan people that the inva-

sion of their country by the U.S. is imminent.

We are extremely horrified by the thought that the U. S. A. can even contemplate the possibility of invading Nicaragua. The World has not yet even recovered from the brutal invasion of Grenada by the U. S. A. in October 1983.

The United States government must recognise and respect the sovereignty and aspirations of the Sandinista government and the Nicaraguan people to practise their rights to self determination and political independence.

Independent Third World countries are naturally upset and concerned that the behaviour of the United States towards Nicaragua could well be repeated towards any other Third World government which the United States does not happen to favour or to like.

Such a bullying attitude is surely unworthy of the United States which claims to uphold freedom, justice, peace and democracy.

Therefore, we call on the government of the United States of America and members of Congress:

(1) not to approve the release of funds for covert aid to the Contras through the CIA;

(2) to withhold all financial and military aid to the Contras;

(3) to refrain from all covert and overt activities in Nicaragua and Central America;

(4) to remove from their mind all thoughts of invading Nicaragua and to cease its aggressive actions;

(5) to stop flouting international laws.

We urge and beseech all peace loving American people to support the peace proposals of the Contadora groups as the only practical way to promote a lasting peace in Central America and the Caribbean.

S. M. Mohd. Idris, J. P.

Coordinator
Third World Network
87 Cantonment Road, Penang
Malaysia

THE PRIMACY OF LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Radhika Coomaraswamy

Another important theorist who has attempted to understand the ideological force of nationalism is Ernest Gellner. Like Deutsch he is interested in the communications aspect of nationalist ideology. Gellner also sees nationalism and nationalist ideology as the cultural product of the economic and political transformation from dynastic, agrarian societies to modern, urban nation-states. This cultural product, modelled on the French and British nations, placed a premium on "high culture", and the development of a "literal" tradition which aims at homogenising the cultural life and discourse within nation-states. The ideological force of nationalism is therefore linked today to the concept of the State and State control of educational language and cultural policy within a nation. This analysis of Gellner is later developed by Benedict Anderson in terms of the social forces which actually control these areas of cultural life in post-colonial societies. Gellner also highlights anthropological findings on the connection between language and identity. He argues that the most virulent form of nationalism is linguistic nationalism as it has the closest link to individual and ethnic identity and language is the ideal statist tool for homogenising a particular nation.²³

Macroeconomic and the National Interest

F. List, in the nineteenth century argued that the nation-state is the only viable unit for economic management and transformation.²⁴ Implicit in Keynes' economic theories of management was also the

belief that the intervention of the state in certain sectors of the economy to ensure savings, full employment etc., was the only means of maximising full economic potential. By the 1950's and the era of development plans, the concept of the State as the primary agent for national economic organisation was taken for granted by most development specialists especially as private initiative in Third World societies appeared dormant.

Perhaps Dudley Seers in his book, **The Political Economy of Nationalism**, puts forward most succinctly the political arguments for what economists in development studies have taken for granted for many decades. Dudley Seers argues that nationalism is the most important force in the world today and this importance is an extremely healthy and progressive feature in international life. He argues that if it were not for nationalism, superpower interests would provide the contours for economic growth and management. Nationalism, therefore, provides political space for smaller units within the system to realise their full economic potential. He argues that once "national interest" is maximised, then regional voluntary groupings like the EEC will be the eventual step forward toward the integration of the international system.²⁵ Though Seers states that there are realistic constraints on nationalism such as resources, size of markets etc. . . nationalism allows for political bargaining power and the ability to maximise resources at the level of nation-state and therefore a more pluralistic international economy. Since the EEC

is his model of success, his nationalism is also modelled on European success stories.

Nowhere in his book does Seers attempt to analyse the forces which benefit under nationalist policies within the Third World countries that he holds up as examples. Seers provides an historical approach to a problem which has many political dimensions. Though he is arguing for nationalism against the orthodoxy of neo-classical economics, his economic determinism is in constant search for a parallel political thrust. Arguing for a Keynesian, statist model of development, he identifies nationalism as the parallel political force. Seers, like many economists does not envision nationalism as an autonomous political process which in some cases may actually run counter to the economic imperatives and rationalisations of the models he puts forward. If one is more critical of Seers' approach than others it is also with the hindsight understanding that his book articulates the old orthodoxy, still held by many international organisations outside the IMF/World Bank System, and which still influences European and Scandinavian decision-makers. In addition it is the orthodoxy and discourse put forward by most Third World states, even in a hostile international climate.

Nationalism and the Dependent State

The most influential Third World theorist on development studies during the preceding decade were the Dependency theorists, especially Andre Gunder Frank.²⁶ Frank and the dependency school of social theorists, built on the Marxist doctrine of "uneven development" to develop a global theory of exploitation. The countries of the North Atlantic were seen as metropolitan centres of economic power and non-socialist Third World societies located in the periphery, were seen as being subject to an international system of exploitation and appropriation. For the dependency theorists, the process of decolonisation was an artificial political process which did not remove colonial economic exploitation. The search for raw materials, cheap

labour and markets continued. The Third World states, which emerged during the nationalist phase were really neo-colonial dependent states and the ruling cliques, a dependent class. In the final event, the dependency thesis, ordered a particular set of international priorities — the real “enemies” were the metropolitan nations, the Third World states were merely dependent variables. By denying Third World states any autonomy of action, the Dependency theorists served to marginalise State importance. At the same time a generation of Third World scholars influenced by Frank directed their attention toward a global framework of imperialism, paying little attention to the actual character of their own nation-states, the nature of nationalist ideology and the relative autonomy of the political process.

Though it has to be accepted that the global economic system does provide the ultimate limits for economic independence, the ability of certain nation-states, especially the “Four Tiger” NICs, to develop productive sectors within their economy challenged the dependency doctrine. In addition, the dependency school provided no guidelines for actions within Third World nation-states, short of a violent revolutionary struggle. With the identification of the rural sector and the peasantry as the most exploited class in a global sense, many of the later dependency theorists were seen to be outlining a type of “Pol Potism”.²⁷ Though one cannot underestimate the contribution of “depenencia” to the understanding of Third World development issues, by focusing their analysis at the global level, and by attempting to identify the most exploited class in the global sense, they abstracted development issues away from the immediate reality of national and economic political life. The crisis of the international system and the dominance of neo-classical economics was in many ways the “shock treatment” that Third World scholars needed to turn inward and begin a more empirical and detailed analysis of their social reality.

Imagined Communities and the Emergence of a New Class?

The most interesting recent work

on nationalism which attempts to synthesise past theories of nationalism with a realistic understanding of the power of nationalist ideology is the work of Benedict Anderson entitled **Imagined Communities**.²⁷

Anderson's thesis is very convincing. He argues that even though nationalism is often a romantic expression of the uniqueness of a local culture, “official nationalism” has a specific structural and institutional form; the prevalent model, though with varying emphases, devised in eighteenth century Europe and North America. Today, this model is being reproduced and imitated throughout the world under the ironic pretext that it is an expression of a culture's uniqueness.

This western model has its roots in the decline of universal religious communities and the generalised use of sacred languages such as Latin, Arabic etc... It developed as part of “print capitalism” — especially that which is in the control of vernacular speaking class interests. The development of print and mass media allowed for the creation of “imagined communities”. Since these communities were not actual (i. e. with face to face interaction) but imagined, the type of the national community and the ideology which sustained that community was, and is, greatly dependent on the nature of communication technology and the political interests of those who controlled that technology within a given society.

According to Anderson, the ideological appeal of this type of nationalism has its roots in western eighteenth century notions of “popular sovereignty” (i. e. populism) and in the growth of vernacular languages and local historiography. These were only fully developed and disseminated among “the people” after the growth of “print capitalism”. Before “print capitalism and news media”, only scholarly elites were aware of dynasty and history. Anderson also argues that there are universal policy levers for this type of nationalism — which are extensively in use i. e. compulsory state control of primary education, state-organised media, official programmes for the rewriting of history, endless affirmation in public and in the media of the identity of dynasty and nation. These policy

levers, which have become a fact of national life everywhere, are actually recent in origin — a product of eighteenth and nineteenth century experimentation in Europe.

For Benedict Anderson, a Marxist by admission, as for liberal theorists like Anthony Smith, nationalism in the Third World is not spearheaded by the mercantile classes — though it may often serve their interests — but by the intelligentsia educated in a hybrid atmosphere. This intelligentsia according to Anderson retain a monopoly over the means of communication within a nation-state and control the policy levers of the State. They are “vernacular speaking” elites with a special interest in indigenous languages and what Gellner has called “high culture”. They are also advocates of the development state, which is their instrumentality for patronage, resource allocation and ideological control. Anthony Smith comes to the same conclusion but on the basis of liberal political theory. He argues that the most universal gift of colonialism was the concept of State and Bureaucracy — an arguable point — and that those who were in control of this apparatus after independence were those who emerged as the ruling class. If Anderson is indeed correct, then the NIEO and similar international movements strengthened the hand of this particular class and supplied them not only with international finance and capital but also provided the discourse of legitimisation. Though this is not by itself a negative feature, it would be wrong to mystify the concept of State as having served the general public interest at all times. The success of programme of development were greatly dependent on the nature of this “class”, its talent autonomy, and political interests within a particular national context. It may also be interesting to consider what effect the new orthodoxy of the IMF/World Bank of recent years has had on this “class” and how it has responded to programmes of liberalisation. Could it be even argued that this “class” is being challenged in some societies by new mercantile interests which have a

(Continued on page 24)

LIBERALISM AND AUTHORITARIANISM : Expectations

Alexander R. Magno

The martial law regime sees itself as the 'initiator' of development. It sets the political basis for transcending the condition of 'backwardness' by establishing the new political structures necessary for it. The regime sees itself often as 'development' in its political form. It views it as inconceivable outside the framework of the martial law establishment. It is the dynamic political order, the way out of social paralysis characteristic of the 'old society.'

'The new orientation shall be pushed to its logical conclusion and we shall do everything within our power and capabilities to see to it that this country and our people will move along new paths and acquire such a momentum of advance that no matter what political mishaps might occur in the future, never again will our society be disoriented and never again will the purposive movement forward be lost, not even when this nation shall have attained the promise of progress.'³⁴

By situating the focus of backwardness on the political 'paralysis' of society and its 'disorientation' rather than on the periphery character of the economy and its neocolonial linkages, no inconsistency is perceived between the **New Society** and its nationalist guises, on one hand and continued foreign intrusion, on the other. The position that backwardness is due to the Filipinos' own shortcomings and not due to colonial and neocolonial intervention and the subsequent reconciliation of a 'nationalist' regime was stated as official line shortly after the proclamation of martial law:

'We place our hopes on investment, both domestic and foreign, to play the role of catalysts of growth. But at the same time, the main reliance is placed on our people themselves — on the capacity of a

reawakened Filipino nation to overcome their own historic shortcomings.'³⁵

In spite of the corporatist character of the martial law regime and its increasing participation in domestic investments both through government corporations and politically-favored individual capitalists and bureaucrat-capitalists benefiting from specific economic policies, the technocracy repeatedly reassures its commitment to 'private enterprise' within the 'limit of social responsibility'.

The analysis that the regime was the product of rising antagonisms between precapitalist and semicapitalist production forces, on the one hand and capitalist forces closely integrated with those of the centers of monopoly capital on the other, appears viable not only as the regime directs its policies against the 'oligarchs' but also as it mediates in the concentration of domestic capital resources and directs this to the formation of an emerging neocolonial industrial class; this is often mistakenly perceived merely as a case of political favoritism.

Direction outlined

In **Marcos' Notes on the New Society II**, the general direction of the regime's economic alignment is outlined with more definitiveness:

'The objective of economic policy... from the long-term point of view and in terms of the overriding objective of economic development, is to channel the labor surplus to non-agricultural activities, and to start a rapid drive towards industrialization which shall absorb this surplus. How this is to be done, and how the development of industry is to be pursued in order to realize maximum results, is the central problem of economic planning. The mere effort to industrialize

does not constitute a way out of the condition of underdevelopment. Once the choice is made to industrialize, the compelling problem is how to direct industrial growth.

The direction of industrialization, in specific terms, is beyond the regime's complete control. Premised on integration into the world imperialist system, it has opened the economy to foreign investments and has defined the export sector as the leading sector of growth. Thus the laws of monopoly capitalist crisis take over as mammoth capital-resources come under the control of transnational corporations which also take charge over the international distribution system, thus completely preempting independent planning. The economy assumes the contours of the general center-periphery relations characteristic of the world monopoly-capital dominated system. It no longer is external appendage but is a component of its distribution of production functions, as well as its distribution of crisis.

Unable to distinguish the industrial functions of an economic system from its nature and qualitative character and from its long-term qualitative outcomes, the technocracy, ridden by shortsighted liberal economism, operates on a crisis to crisis basis. Such action merely reproduces the general crisis of underdevelopment in ever newer mutations. Thus, it forever evades a revolutionary solution which requires a final break from the world imperialist system.

The technocracy is trapped within its superficial ideology of 'maximum utilization.' It shortsightedly views the problem of underdevelopment merely as a problem of 'inefficiency.' The solution therefore is simply to 'break' the cycle of inefficiency through the momentous 'political will' exercised by dictatorship. Here clearly is a problem of intellectual timidity. Ironically, the technocracy is able to justify in seemingly profound intellectual terms the continued maintenance of dependency relations at a new qualitative stage as well as the existence of dictatorship to hold society together

in its transition to full integration with monopoly capitalism by preventing building antagonisms and resistance from effectively countering and reversing the process.

Shortsighted economism

Marcos, as the main spokesman of the technocracy, reflects this shortsighted economism:

'Economic growth can also be a trap if it does not promote the full utilization of labor. In many countries, rising levels of economic growth have been characterized by worsening unemployment and underemployment. The creation of employment must be in the fore-front, rather than at the rear, of the economic plan. Again, massive unemployment represents a waste of resources beyond imagination and a major cause of social and economic inequality which, like a vicious circle, bring about more serious unemployment.'

It would be wrong to try to see the regime as completely subservient to imperialism. While it basically conforms to the requirements of the world imperialist system, it occasionally exercises relative national autonomy from such a system. But its long-term direction is definitely the internal reconstitution of the ruling classes in a neocolonial society based on the qualitatively new premises of monopoly capital at its most advanced, world-integrative stage. Its antagonism towards persisting 'inefficient' feudal special forms is not from the standpoint of an autonomously developing national capitalism, but rather from the standpoint of a dependent capitalist social formation. The regime does not merely 'reflect' on a unilateral basis, but also 'creates' as a response to building neocolonial pressures. Given its ideological debility, it perceives the feudal social forms merely as 'anarchic' forces that the imposition of overwhelming 'political will' through dictatorship will soon lay to rest.

From its myopic point of view, technocracy has rationalized the open door policy on monopoly capital investments as 'required' by rising unemployment and the land reform program as a counterinsurgency action. The more

advanced social science standpoint, however, views the nature of underdevelopment with more definitiveness. Thus, the long-term consequences of technocratic policies are perceived to be a more functional and efficient social process of underdevelopment on the basis of complete integration with world monopoly capitalism. The 'vision' of a New Society reveals itself to be an extremely narrow ideology. It justifies the regime as the 'take-off' to illusory development that has everywhere accompanied superficial understanding of the qualitative and historically specific character of underdevelopment.

Third World authoritarianism, in its Philippine expression in particular, is not to be understood as merely a right-wing backlash to the growing tide of national liberation movements. Neither is it a mechanical response of the local ruling classes. It is not wholly an imperialist plot carrying out against the masses through mercenaries and puppets. It is not even the classic fascist outcome growing out of general distress. It is beyond all of these and at the same time **is all of these** but only in the last analysis.

To try to explain the martial law regime in terms of the stated stereotypes would greatly be inadequate. The implication here is that both the straightforward dependista analysis or the political scientific 'decision-making' analysis cannot fully answer the task of truly understanding the phenomenon of a 'nationalist' and 'revolutionary' dictatorship in the context of deepening comprehension of underdevelopment. Such would be the case since the former merely looks at the 'concrete' structural source of dictatorship in an economic way unenlightened by dialectical investigation; the latter type of analysis on the other hand, occupies itself with the 'objective' policy influences and in its oppositionist application that looks for 'actual' imperialist policy 'pressure' and decision-making linkage.

The martial law regime, along with its ideological rhetoric is the subjective consensus emanating from

a single, distilled ideological standpoint. It is a response to the crisis of underdevelopment which unfortunately is not understood as such. It is a backlash, partly, but not from the 'right' — but from those who feel threatened by the 'disorder' of rising oppositions and want a way out of a social condition that absorbs and transforms, rather than liquidates, old forms to domination.

It is also partly a 'coup' against the pluralist political expressions of undistilled liberalism, but one that transforms and 'reforms' the old process through distribution of privileges. Here, the fundamental source of privilege is not changed structurally not because it does not will it but because it does not 'see' it. It is not a classic reactionism in the sense that it does not restore and preserve the social process that feeds the centers of domination; rather, it cloaks itself as a 'progressive' reactionism by qualitatively elevating to a new stage the old process of domination.

A new peculiar fascism

Martial law is a new fascism peculiar to the underdeveloped societies because it goes beyond the glorification of the state and renders it metaphysical. It vests on the state the all mandating distinction of being the instrument of society that would finally resolve the crisis of backwardness and 'emancipate' the people.

The martial law regime and its New Society is not solely a by-product of the objective forces locked in the crisis of underdevelopment. It is also the product of an ideologically defined way out. It is a sublimated resolution of the problem of underdevelopment because it represents an incomplete understanding of the nature of underdevelopment.

The dominance of a technocracy working on the premise of the 'social science' of distilled liberalism and reliant on the backbone of military command structures, the problem of the relative autonomy of the state, the possibility of 'normalization' after the mass internalization of technocratic logic,

the 'splits' in the ruling class, among others are not resolved without first taking into consideration the overdeveloping state mechanism and the logic of its own development (both its objective circumstances and its subjective understanding of its own circumstances) should therefore be investigated. Karl Marx warned us against the dangers of analytical simplification and 'non-ideological' pitfalls when doing the type of investigation with which we are now involved.

On the question of the New Society regime, the preponderant tendency has been to justify authoritarianism in terms of the need to resolve the crisis of backwardness. This has been formulated by a well-developed technocratic bureaucracy composed of imperialist-trained 'developmentalist', 'nationalists' and 'progressives' nurtured in the liberal social sciences and seriously engaged in the requisite social engineering for development.

The social questions confronted by the regime as well as those new social issues emerging from the very existence of the regime can no longer be resolved by the distilled liberalism of conventional social science. It has become dictatorship's own justification.

(Concluded)

Ethnicity in ...

(Continued from page 13)

7. loc. cit., XVI-XIX.
8. loc. cit., XVIII-XIX.
9. loc. cit., XIX-XX.
10. loc. cit., XXI.
11. op. cit., 10.
12. op. cit., 418.
13. Arnold D. Smith, op. cit., 8-25.
14. loc. cit., 152-162.
15. loc. cit., 163-183.
16. Worsley, 175-231.
17. In C. Geertz (ed.), *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa* (New York, Free Press, 1963); other useful literature to this writer have been, Charles W. Anderson, Fred R. von der Mehden, Crawford Young, *Issues of Political Development* (Englewood Cliffs,

N. J., Prentice Hall, 1974 second edition, David E. Scomitt (ed.), *Dynamics of the Third World: Political and Social Change* (Cambridge, Mass., Winthrop Publishers, 1974 and Godfrey Gunatilleke, Neelen Tiruchelvam, Radhika Coomaraswamy (eds.), *Ethnic Dilemmas of Development in Asia* (Lexington, Mass., D. C. Heath and Company, 1983).

18. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. XIV (1981), 107-134.
19. ibid., 107.
20. Buchheit, 245.
21. McAllister, 45.
22. op. cit., 64.
23. op. cit., 36.
24. in his "Problems and Processes of National Integration in Pakistan", *The Pakistan Student*, 10.
25. Connor, "Self-Determination: The New Phase", *World Politics*, 22 October, 1950, 49-50.

A Tale ...

(Continued from page 17)

And thus ended Rajiv Gandhi's voyage of understanding. It is to his, and India's, credit that as a result of the visits, India's relations with both superpowers have improved. The big gain from the Moscow visit is an even larger Soviet commitment to India's development and defence through the end of the century. The big gain from the American visit is the certainty that high technology will now flow into India from the United States largely on India's own terms and conditions. If the new relationship works well, and if the United States shows sensitiveness to Indian leadership role in South Asia, India may well by high military technologies from America in the undistant future. The relationship between the two largest democracies will further improve if Americans see India, as the Soviets do, as a developed among the developing nations, with a high and proud political and economic profile, and the ego of a "pivotal power". Technologies alone do not provide the chemistry of a strong relationship. Strong and durable friendships call for subjective fluids which have been missing between India and the US. Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Washington could not release that crucial sap.

The Primacy of ...

(Continued from page 21)

different vision of the role of the developmental state?

A ruling "class" in the classic sense, could not exist within being an independent economic base which in fact controlled the process of production. According to Anderson, the State in Third World countries is the primary economic actor; but it is self-evident that the concepts of value and profit do not operate in their obvious sense in what is really a salaried sector. However, Alavi in his study on Pakistan does conclude that the State, at least in Pakistan, "directly appropriates" surplus to maintain itself and to direct economic activities.²⁹ If one accepts the State as representing the public interest, this appropriation would then be the reflection of a "social ownership" of the productive processes — an argument which was frequently heard in the pre-wrr years. But, if one were to conclude that the State in Third World societies does not automatically represent the collective will of the nation and that it is a "partial" state, representing particular economic and political interests, than Alavi's conclusion provides empirical verification for the theoretical conclusions reached by both Anderson and Smith.

FOOTNOTES

23. See generally, E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1983.
24. See, for example, F. List, *The National System of Political Economy*, trans. Longmans, 1904.
25. See generally, D. Seers, *The Political Economy of Nationalism* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1983 — especially Chapters A and B.
26. See generally A. G. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1971. Also, *Reflection on the World Economic Crisis*, London, Hutchinson, 1981.
27. See, for example, S. Amin, *Class and Nation*. Heineman, London, 1981. Amin was closely associated with Khmer Rouge Party leaders when they were at the Sorbonne.
28. See generally B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, London, Verso, 1983.
29. See generally, A. Smith, *State and Nation in the Third World*, Brighton, Wheatsheaf, 1983.

INTER-RACIAL EQUITY AND NATIONAL UNITY IN SRI LANKA

(The document was produced by the Marga Institute in October 1983, as part of a programme of work initiated by the Citizens' Committee for National Harmony, immediately after the communal violence in 1983 ...

Since the document was first released, more up-to-date information and data on some aspects of the problem have become available — for example the data from the socio-economic survey 1980/81

Nevertheless the document is being reproduced essentially in its original form, both because it reflects the state of the discussions at the time it was prepared, and also as the substance of the report including the factual analysis has not been rendered any less relevant or valid by what has taken place. There has also been a continuing demand for the original document locally as well as from abroad. A few clarifications have been included in the present version.)

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A MARGA INSTITUTE Publication
(Sri Lanka Centre for Development Studies)

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