

EXCLUSIVE

The price of 'adjustment' — *Richard Jom*



LANKA

GUARDIAN

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War in the North, Politics in the South

- * **ANURADHAPURA** — The soldier & the Sinhala refugee
- * **TRINCOMALEE** — A spiral of violence
— *Alain Cass*
- * **MULKIRIGALA** — The ballot and the bullet
— *Mervyn de Silva*

In defence of Peradeniya English

— *Patrick Jayasuriya*

How the 'Open Economy' has fared

— *V. Moonesinghe*

Ethnicity, Communication and Education

— *Radhika Coomaraswamy*

Black conformism in Leroi Jones' 'Dutchman'

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P28
P/P/20

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EARLY WARNING ON INFLATION

MR. RONNIE DE MEL rarely minces his words. With a huge 32 billion budget deficit staring at him, and defence costs rising rapidly, he has sounded an early warning on the dangers of our double-digit inflation taking a typically Third Worldist turn for the worse.

And who should anticipate that first but the men who work in our banks, the Central Bank taking the top place, of course.

With the main unions in the two state-owned banks still engaged in a confrontation on the issue of higher pay, the Central Bank Employees Union has issued a statement which includes the following points:

- a) immediate re-instatement of trade union leaders interdicted when the dispute started.
- b) a forty percent increase in the gross salary of all Central Bank employees.
- c) Rs. 5 payment per each point of increase in C-O-L.
- d) 35% rent allowance on the basic salary — with a minimum of Rs. 100/- and a maximum of Rs. 500/-.

BUDDHIST UNITY

THE Asgiriya Mahanayake, the Ven. Palipane Chandananda said (ISLAND 6/9) that there is a belief among the sangha as well as the Buddhist public, that the Maha Sangha remains silent at times of national crisis, without rising to the occasion and meeting the challenge of leadership. One of the steps he would recommend would be closer coordination between the Malwatta and Asgiriya chapters, the two principal seats of the Buddhist order. The Asgiriya Mahanayake, who was

addressing a deputation of monks from the Malwatta chapter, was the prime mover behind the newly established National Front of which the most prominent political figure is Mrs. Bandaranaike.

Two days later, President J R and Prime Minister Premadasa addressed a conference of Buddhist leaders at the BMICH. President J R who said that he could not at the present time disclose all the details of the devolution scheme the government had offered the Tamil representatives, assured the assembly that all those who have fled their homes (Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims) would be re-settled before any plan is implemented. The scheme would be approved by Government and parliament, and there would be no election or referendum.

A *de facto* "Eelam" would be the direct outcome of any attempt to harm the Tamils living in the South, warned the Prime Minister.

EXPANDING BASE

IN THE last few weeks protest in the North has assumed a new character which should be noted and, if it proves to be a new trend, studied for its possible implications. Students boycott classes, the Mothers Front takes to the street, and hunger strikes are held in kachcheris and campuses. Larger groups of people are being drawn into these demonstrations and the social groups they come from seems far more mixed than before. Sometime ago, all organised protest was totally youth-dominated. Action and reaction, the vicious circle of violence explains this. Its significance is that the popular sympathy-support base of the youth rebels is expanding.

TRENDS + LETTERS

The C. R. M. and the Election Law

THE Civil Rights Movement has called for an amendment to the constitution suspending presidential immunity from legal action in cases arising from the President's participation in an election campaign. The thrust of its argument is that if an allegation is made in an election petition that the President, campaigning in his capacity as president of his party for his party's candidate, had made a false statement about the rival candidate's character or conduct, presidential immunity should not be a bar to his being added as a party to the petition.

(Continued on page 24)

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CONTENTS

News Background	3
The Barbara Ward Lecture	10
The Abdication of Politics — 7	12
US Policy in Central American-Caribbean region	15
Delhi tough on Bhutto issue	17
Leroi Jones' "Dutchman" — 2	18
Reply to Qadri Ismail	21
The 'Open Economy'	22

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Anuradhapura : The Seige City

A Special Correspondent

NEWS
BACKGROUND

In the mind of the average Anuradhapura resident, this is a town fast moving towards 'a state of seige'. On the 14th August, exactly three months to the day since the massacre of more than 150 Sinhalese civilians, a rumour that "kotiyas" (tigers) have been spotted near Vilachchiya, about 15 kilometres saw panic sweep parts of the city for nearly two hours. Shops put up their shutters, offices emptied suddenly and the usually lethargic traffic speeded up causing a few accidents as people ran helter-skelter. Many panic-stricken innocents suffered minor injuries. Slowly this town is acquiring the features of a fortress with a increasing assertive military presence. Road blocks at each entrance or exit now shape the psychology of both long-time resident and casual visitor.

Barricades and check-points have come up to greet every person who tries to leave the town. Manned by service personnel or police and sometimes with that new breed of auxiliaries known as the 'Home guards' these emcumbrances irritate residents not yet completely 'security conscious' or accustomed to these minor physical ordeals. Yet if the stories circulating in town are reliable, native ingenuity can still match the best-laid and well-intentioned plans. Substitute short-cuts can often be found. Nonetheless the road-blocks and the random checking of vehicles, identity cards and baggage is now the norm, part of the routine pattern of life. And then there are the young soldiers, another part of the fast-changed scene. In post office or market or bank, you can no longer avoid bumping into batches of them, or sometimes a solitary pensive soldier waiting to get his own little job done. Casually swinging their dangerous-looking weapons,

leaping in and out of their jeeps or trucks, with a gay abandon, and swaggering a bit now and then, like most young men of their age, the soldier is not just a common sight. He is the much sought-after target of the children, and the school-kids on their way to or from classes. Their uniforms and footwear, an incongruous 'mix' of battle-fatigues and Bata slippers, they joke and laugh, and quickly engage themselves in idle banter with the local 'big talkers', the town pundits and military 'experts'. Songs from an army get-together — the words set to popular tunes — hint strongly of the tension and uncertainty of their lives, and also of the glories of fighting for the fatherland. The sad melancholy words of some songs bring back memories of the anti-Vietnam war movement of the late sixties in America, all popular 'hits' in those soul-searching anguished times. "Even though we set out to fight for country, we may go, have to go home to our weeping families in plastic bags". The unseen menace, the invisible, silent danger is always there for the soldier, and he knows the terrible risk he runs. Alive, carefree, joking and singing one moment; torn flesh blown sky-high by some death-dealing land-mine the next.

While the high-visibility of the uniform and the army jeep is certainly a fact of life in this lately changed landscape, another presence is impressing itself deeply on the hearts and minds of the people of the north-central province of which Anuradhapura is the capital. The "war" has produced a new category of civilian population — the refugee — a telling reminder of the terrible human costs of a still unresolved conflict. While the unpreparedness of the State machinery to cope with the problem of this sudden influx of refugees

— variously estimated at between 50,000 to 65,000 thousand in the districts of Trinco and Anuradhapura alone, with many more in the North, East and even in the South — is quite understandable, this terrible burden is also a grim warning to those who so blithely recommend 'military solutions' from the safety of their homes far distant from the places where innocent people of all communities lose their families, their homes, and whatever possessions they had. Farmers on land, earning a modest income and living a peaceful life, have suddenly found the land they had known for decades as their home, turn into a battleground.

The recent upheavals in Trinco, Vavuniya and the adjacent areas have seen thousands, Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims, flee their homes with nothing but the clothes on their backs and whatever their hands could carry. Most of them had never set eyes on men with guns, with this or that uniform but had fled through sheer fear, the fear of what they had heard directly or through vague reports and stories, fear of "what might happen"

They began streaming into Anuradhapura on foot, in buses, in lorries; infants, old folk, sick people. They didn't know where to go, what to do. They begged on the streets. In a few days several refugee centres were opened at various pilgrims' homes. The saddest thing was to see the refugees having to cope with red tape, bureaucratic bungling and the sheer insensitivity of many an Anuradhapura resident flinging hurtful, thoughtless, and ridiculous questions like "How do we know if you are really from Morawewa?" and "So, why didn't you wait and fight?" And then matters became even more harrowing and complicated.

The Sports Ministry, bless their bleeding hearts, decided to go ahead with the All-Island Sports Festival in Anuradhapura. With VIP's turning up, the town was hurriedly spruced up in a style that is known to every Sri Lankan.

But what happened to the town's eye-sore? The human riff-raff, the holy city's unwanted intruders found themselves carted away to new destinations. They now became not the homeless ones but the unseen ones.

Their new 'home' was a former Probation Department Rehabilitation Camp for Juvenile Offenders, about 25 kilometres away from the city, a place quite inaccessible to anyone but those with private means of transport. The buildings were large but most in a terribly tumble-down condition. The first days, we learnt later, were a nightmare, though conditions were to improve as the days went by.

Right now, there are about 1,000 refugees in this camp known as Senapura out of the estimated 9,000 in the district. Yet many basic questions remain unsolved. Even the provision of basic amenities such as shelter, water, electricity mean little to an empty stomach. The allowance of Rs. 230/- per family of five is a pittance as anybody who goes shopping for food these days knows. There's a bigger problem though. What is their future, and what the long-term plans? Jobs? Schooling for children? Have policy-makers and officialdom considered these matters?

What finally of the average refugees' mood? That question will surely have some bearing on the politics of this issue, and that it has become a political issue was abundantly clear from the Opposition propaganda at the Mulkirigala by-election where we saw the new SLFP/National Front alliance at work.

The mood is a mixed one. Some thirst for revenge and are virulently anti-Tamil. Others still long for their homes, the places where they had their roots deep.

They want to go back when things settle down. But will they, ask many.

Equally interesting in terms of political implications is the impact of the refugee presence on the minds of the Anuradhapura citizen. The sight of people who were obviously not used to begging now forced to suffer the indignity of living on charity, whether the State's or of relief agencies and social organisations, makes people angry. Inflamed passions are the ready-made grist to the mill of the politician with a keen and eager eye on every 'target of

opportunity'. If the refugee question grows bigger, it can easily affect a volatile political situation especially because these camps are scattered all over the island. Hardening Sinhala opinion will make all efforts at a negotiated settlement even more difficult, if the anti-Tamil sentiment also acquires an anti-government character. In Dickwella, in the deep south, a Sinhala refugee organisation has been set up, and many more will surely follow.

Their mood and opinion will strengthen the new SLFP/National Front alliance.

War clouds over aid

The statement put out officially on Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel's aid-seeking visit to Canada need not be read between the lines for its full import to be clear. Though it was obviously not intended as such, the statement is a concise summary of all the multifarious implications of the current crisis, internal and external, economic, political and diplomatic.

The Canadian Aid Agency (CICA) which financed the Maduru Oya project, a major component of the Accelerated Mahaveli programme, was one of several agencies which pledged assistance to the Maduru Oya downstream development scheme. In this aid-package, the main contributor was Saudi Arabia which pledged nearly 50 million US dollars. Without the Saudis, the scheme cannot get under way. But the opening of the Israeli interests section in the US Embassy introduced a sudden chill into the Sri Lanka-Saudi relationship.

Would some other country pick up the Saudi pledge? The Japanese were approached but they said that the Saudis had not given a definite "No" officially. So the Japanese who do billions of dollars worth of business with the oil-rich Arab Kingdom would not dare offend King Fahd.

So the Canadians expressed "disappointment" that work on

the main and branch canals on the Maduru Oya right bank had not gone according to schedule. As much as 110,000 acres of new land would have been irrigated if the project had been completed

It was more than disappointment however that Canada expressed on the question of the "security situation" in the downstream area of the same river. It goes into the eastern province and the Canadian authorities voiced "serious concern" over the escalation of violence.

"Fears were also expressed by the Canadian authorities that rapidly increasing defence expenditure might make it difficult for the Sri Lanka government to undertake its share of the local cost of the scheme from the budget" the statement adds.

It also says "The Canadian government expressed the hope that eventual land settlement under the scheme would be implemented on a fair and equitable basis, taking into due consideration the needs of the ethnic minorities already living in the area".

It was left to Sri Lanka's Finance Minister to show why the problem of the long delayed Saudi loan was so 'extremely urgent'. The reservoir cannot be put to use until the down stream work was completed.

Mulkirigala : guns, race and caste

Mervyn de Silva

Gun-play, at least three killed, curfew. Violence is Mulkirigala's message. Not that violence has not marred elections or by-elections before. But since 1977, it was the Opposition that accused the UNP activists and goondas of unleashing a terror campaign. This time, it is government supporters who have been killed and it is the UNP that accuses the Opposition of terror tactics. And so we are once more reminded of that incisive observation made by Prof. Gananath Obeyesekere of Princeton who spent four months travelling through the island just after July 1983. "The institutionalization of political violence" he wrote had emerged as a major phenomenon in post-1977 social-political environment. ("Politics and Thuggery" LG July 1, 1984).

"We will get the votes but the UNP may win the election" said SLFP leader Mrs. Bandaranaike with a sardonic smile two days before the by-election. Prime Minister Premadasa was not amused. He had correctly

predicted a close contest... about a 2000 majority, he told the LG mid-week. But it was the SLFP and its Mulkirigala party machine which was, relying on knife and muscle, he said.

The issues were more national than local. "A vote for the UNP is a vote for concessions to the Tamils" was in fact the Opposition's main vote-catching slogan and understandably so, considering the emotionally-charged political situation today. The plight of the Sinhala refugees — another highly emotional issue — and the failure of the UNP to combat 'terrorism' effectively were the two questions on which the SLFP relied heavily.

The opportunistic and fickle policies of the SLFP (President JR's main line of attack) and the SLFP's conspicuous failure to propose a credible alternative to the UNP approach to the separatist challenge (the chief weapons in the armoury of Premier Premadasa and National Security Minis-

ter Lalith Athulathmudali) were the targets of the government's counter-attack.

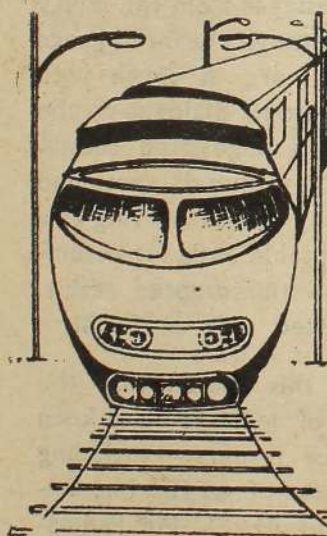
If 'race' fashioned the national issue, caste became the dominant local factor. Mulkirigala, a 100% Sinhala-Buddhist electorate, is also a 'goigama' stronghold. It is also a traditionally anti-UNP, Rajapakse family-dominated area.

"We can now go ahead with our plans for resolving the ethnic issue," National Security Minister Athulathmudali told the L.G. While only the future can decide what part Mulkirigala played in that unfinished drama, it is wise to note that there is a curfew in Trinco, and even for a day, a curfew in the deep south. Will Sri Lanka's North-South dialogue of separatist and government guns become closed North-South circles of separate sorts of violence?

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INDIA WANTS EARLY TALKS WITH EELAM LEADERS

G. K. Reddy

NEW DELHI, Sept. 5.

The Government of India is now giving the highest priority to the consolidation of the ceasefire in Sri Lanka, before the expiry of the three-month period soon, by persuading both sides to refrain from further violations, before anything else can be done to carry forward the negotiating process for settling the Tamils problem.

According to latest reports reaching Delhi, there have been some more attacks on military convoys in the North-central and Eastern parts in the last 48 hours, while the situation in Trincomalee, where a curfew has been imposed, is under control with no fresh incidents. But in the Batticaloa area of the Eastern province, there have been further attacks on Tamils by both Sinhala and Sri Lankan troops leading to an exodus of some 6,000 refugees from the district. These incidents are regarded as part of a deliberate attempt by the Sinhala chauvinists to reduce the Tamil majority in the district before a political settlement is reached on the degree of devolution of powers to the Northern and Eastern provinces.

Working paper discussed

At the cremation of the two assassinated TULF leaders in Jaffna today, some anti-LTTE slogans are reported to have been raised by the local Tamils along with a bitter denunciation of the Sri Lankan Government for its deplorable failure to protect them.

The Sri Lanka President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, did discuss the details of the working paper with

his Ministers yesterday in Colombo, although it was not formally included in the agenda for the Cabinet meeting. The Government of India has been assured that Mr. Jayewardene and his colleagues stand fully committed to the contents of this working paper as a basic structure for further negotiations.

But Mr. Jayewardene has not yet taken into confidence the leaders of other political parties, not even Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, who is leader of the Opposition in Parliament, about the contents of the white paper, pending the response of the Tamil militants in Madras. The Tamil Nadu Government has informed the Centre that the initial response of the ENLF is not negative, although the militants feel that there is need for considerable improvement in both the concept and scope of devolution.

As the Government of India see it, the inordinate delay in the response of the Tamil militants to meet the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, in Delhi has broken the momentum of its conciliatory efforts, with the result that what was being done at the political level to settle the problem has been completely overshadowed by the senseless killings and ceasefire violations. The Indian authorities have been exerting enough pressures on the Sri Lankan Government to restrain its armed forces, while parallel steps are being taken to urge the Tamil militants, in particular the LTTE, to refrain from planting land mines and ambushing the security forces.

The general impression in official circles here is that the Madras-based militant leaders are not able

to exercise adequate control over their cadres in Sri Lanka who feel that any talks at this stage with the Jayewardene Government would mean an abandonment of their basic struggle for an independent Eelam. This may or may not be a correct assessment of the notion, but the absence of direct communication between the top ENLF leaders and senior Indian officials in Delhi has been hampering a proper appreciation of the militants' position.

Apart from utilising the Tamil Nadu Government's contacts with them, the Centre is to get across or receive messages from the ENLF leaders only through the intelligence agencies that are in touch with them. But a proper dialogue on the prospects for a negotiated settlement, with the proposals contained in the working paper serving as a mutually acceptable basis for resumption of the interrupted talks, can be discussed only in Delhi.

It is for this reason that the Government of India is quite keen that the ENLF leaders — including Mr. Prabhakaran of LTTE, Mr. Sri-Shabaratnam of TELO, Mr. Padmanabhar of EPRLF and Mr. Balakumar of EROS — should come to Delhi along with Mr. Uma Maheswaran of PLOT for talks with the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Romesh Bhandari, and others dealing with Sri Lankan affairs here.

(Continued on page 7)

WILL TO PEACE

THE KEY — Thondaman

MADRAS, Sept. 6

The Sri Lanka Rural Industries Minister, Mr. Thondaman today, met the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran here and had a discussion on the working paper prepared in Delhi for a settlement of the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka. The Electricity Minister, Mr. M. B. Ramachandran, who is currently holding a dialogue with the leaders of Tamil liberation groups, was also present.

Mr. Thondaman later told *THE HINDU* that the paper was not a final document, but only a basis for discussion among the various parties concerned. If both sides had the will, the proposals could be stretched to "cover such points that each one wants."

Misunderstanding cleared: Was he optimistic about the talks held at the initiative of the Government of India for a settlement of the ethnic problem, he was

India wants . . .

(Continued from page 6)

The Prime Minister who has been in close touch with Mr. J. R. Jayewardene will be meeting him next month at the Bahamas during the Commonwealth conference and perhaps also in New York a few days later at the U.N. General Assembly session. The Government of India is, therefore, quite anxious to get the negotiating process into stride before these meetings, so that Mr. Rajiv Gandhi can personally discuss the sticky issues with Mr. J. R. Jayewardene in an effort to clear the way for a mutually acceptable accord, if it is at all possible in these circumstances.

— *THE HINDU*, Sept 6, '85

asked. Mr. Thondaman said that some time back, there was a misunderstanding on the part of the Government of Sri Lanka as to the intentions of the Indian Government.

"This has been cleared. Now Sri Lanka is satisfied that the Indian Government is genuinely interested in finding a solution without taking sides". To that extent, the climate appeared favourable for a settlement, he said. The outcome of the current discussions would ultimately depend on the responses of the Tamil groups to the working paper proposals.

Thondaman, who is now in India for a family get-together in his home town, said that before leaving Sri Lanka, he met the President, J. R. Jayewardene who gave him a broad picture of the proposals in the working paper. His assessment was that the President now had a better appreciation of India's role.

Asked about the cease-fire violations even as the peace talks were going on at Thimpu. Mr. Thondaman said both sides were accusing each other of violations. His own impression was that nowhere in the world were cease-fires observed without any violation.

Killings condemned: The Minister, however, condemned the abduction and brutal killings of the two ex-MPs early this week. Describing it as 'very unfortunate' he said that the two had been dedicated to the cause of the Tamils. And now they had made the supreme sacrifice for the cause. "This is the only way we could console ourselves," he remarked.

Will these killings stand in the way of resumption of the peace

talks? He said that if there was a determination to find a solution, they need not be a problem.

Mr. Thondaman said in the up-country areas of Sri Lanka where plantation workers of Indian origin lived in large numbers, the tension was diminishing after the Government started realising the genuine intentions of the Government of India in the Tamils issue.

Problem of stateless: Mr. Thondaman, who is also president of the Ceylon Workers Congress, said that during his meeting with Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, he had urged that the problem of stateless persons be solved. The Governments of Sri Lanka and India had, as far back as 1964, agreed to end statelessness. Although 21 years had passed the problem still continued. "We should put an end to statelessness rather than going by the numbers," he had told the Chief Minister.

He said that when he arrived in his home town in South Tamil Nadu, he heard that Mr. Ramachandran wanted to meet him. That was why he was now in Madras. He would be going back to his village in a couple of days and from there return to Colombo.

The TULF Secretary-General, Mr. A. Amirthalingam called on Mr. Thondaman this evening and had an exchange of views on the situation in Sri Lanka.

MGR conveys condolences: In a message to Mr. Amirthalingam, Mr. Ramachandran expressed his deep shock and sorrow over the killing of M. Alalasundaram and V. Tharmalingam in Jaffna. He asked the TULF leader to convey his sympathies to the bereaved families.

— *THE HINDU*, Sept. 7, 1985

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TRINCOMALEE

THE NEW FRONT LINE

Alain Cass (Asia Editor, 'Financial Times,' London)

IF YOU WANT to catch a tiger — the Tamil, not the striped variety — then first secure a bicycle. That was the unofficial advice of the Sri Lankan army at the guard post on a stretch of beach road dotted with abandoned luxury hotels outside the strategic harbour of Trincomalee.

This is the new front line between Tamil separatist guerrillas, the so called Tigers, in the northeast of the island and the predominantly Sinhalese government troops. They are fighting a frustrating shadow war against an enemy they rarely see. Half a dozen troops armed with automatic rifles and grenades stood guard behind a makeshift road block beyond which no Sinhalese dares venture for fear of his life.

"Your car will be hijacked by the terrorists, and your driver will most probably be killed because he is Sinhalese. The Tigers are two miles away. I suggest you take a bicycle," said the obliging Sri Lankan officer.

The army was more than usually nervous as six navy personnel and a civilian woman had been killed in a land-mine explosion 15 miles from the city on Tuesday. Local Sinhalese residents were already taking reprisals against what they claimed were Tamil sympathisers as the smoking and gutted ruins of two houses testified.

At the road block, two bicycles were produced by helpful residents for the Financial Times and the BBC. We set off across no-man's

land, negotiating a bridge which had been largely destroyed by the guerrillas last week, to reach the edge of an area of around 350 square miles which appears entirely in the hands of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

Trincomalee has a peculiar importance in this unpleasant little war because of its deepwater harbour which sits astride the sea lanes of the Indian Ocean. In its time it has been used by the West and coveted both by the Soviet Union and India. Sri Lanka intends to hold on to it at all costs.

Tamil separatists claim it as their own along with the Jaffna peninsula in the north even though the city has a mixed population of Tamils, Sinhalese and Moors.

Thousands — mostly Tamils — have fled the city, as Sinhalese mobs with the tacit, and occasionally active, support of the armed forces have hacked people to death, looted their shops and burnt their houses.

The city is caught in a dangerous spiral of violence in which Tamil attacks are followed by Sinhalese reprisals which in turn provoke yet more separatist incidents. Tension has been mounting since the disappearance two weeks ago of 37 Sinhalese fishermen.

Tourists, with their desperately needed foreign currency, usually much in evidence at this time of year, have vanished. All but two of the dozens of hotels are shut, and Trincomalee is deserted, economically destitute, tense and sometimes hostile.

By contrast, the area controlled by the Tigers seems calm. A local unit commander of the Tigers, and another guerrilla, whom we reached on our bicycles, gave us a guided tour of the area on motorcycles, cradling hand grenades in their laps "for our security," according to commander Vijay.

Between 10,000 and 12,000 Tamil refugees have crossed into the area, the Tigers say, to fill four makeshift refugee camps. Food is scarce and local health officials claim the Government is only supplying the camps with three days' rations for a week. "The refugees eat one meal a day and sometimes none. We have no medicines, and no beds to treat the sick," said a local doctor.

At the camps refugees told harrowing stories of intimidation. One woman claimed her sister had been shot while trying to leave her home which was under attack. She and other independent sources in Trincomalee claim that the army and police stood by two days ago as dozens of Tamil houses near the city were set ablaze by Sinhalese mobs.

Senior army officers deny that their men have indulged in widespread abuses although they admit to some misbehaviour. For the time being the army does not seem to have the strength or the political will to take on the Tigers, around Trincomalee. This may change if the peace talks currently taking place in New Delhi break down irretrievably. However, for the time being, Tiger commander Vijay seems justified in claiming that "we can hold on to the area as long as we want."

— Courtesy FINANCIAL TIMES

ADJUSTMENT WITH A HUMAN FACE?

Richard Jolly

One would need a novelist's skill and a poet's words to be able to describe fully the emotions that I feel in being allowed to give tonight the second Barbara Ward Lecture. I first met Barbara in 1964 and in the last ten years or so of her life, I was privileged to be with her many times — to be charmed by her sparkle and mischievous enthusiasm, to be inspired by her vision and commitment, to be challenged and motivated by the power and brilliance of the proposals for action she put forward.

Many of us in SID could speak of the wonderful diversity of her talents — and how she applied these talents to raise the tone and imagination of discussion on international policy from the 1940's to the early 1980's; of her fatal facility for fashioning the words of many Economist editorials in the 40's and 50's, of her stream of books, the very titles of which convey both the direction of her message and vision, and its evolving ethics over time:

The West at Bay
Faith and Freedom
The Interplay of East and West
The Rich Nations and Poor Nations
The Lopsided World,
The Widening Gap
Only One Earth
Progress for a Small Planet

One of her first pamphlets was on "Italian Foreign Policy"¹ written during the early years of the Second World War—and bearing the marks of this conflict in

analysing 70 years of Italian diplomacy. But even in what she described as the "international jungle" and "disasters of today", she could end by looking forward to a "fully organized European Society of nations in which Italy could play a leading part".

Barbara so brilliantly conveyed the long vision. And, in the first Barbara Ward Lecture three ago, Robert McNamara set out the case for a World Central Bank and urged us to recognize that our international economic problems will never be fully resolved until we establish internationally this basic piece of economic machinery, already accepted as an essential piece of national economic management in virtually every country of the world.

Tonight, I ask you to turn your minds from the distant vision to the pressing immediacy of adjustment policy, to that process of national economic restructuring required — and often forced — by the current international economic situation and institutions. To many, probably the majority of developing countries today and certainly the majority in Africa and Latin America, this is the dominant national economic pre-occupation — all too often driving out time and concern for longer development goals and plans.

The two subjects — adjustment policy and the need for a world central bank as the centrepiece of international institutional reform — are of course linked, in the sense that our failure to achieve financial reform forces adjustment policy to be more wrenching, more rapid and often much less successful than otherwise might be. But in the absence of international reform, adjustment is

a painful but inescapable fact of life and for this reason deserves our attention this evening.

I will structure my thoughts in three sections:

1. The Urgent need for a broader approach to adjustment;
2. The Elements of a more human focussed approach to adjustment;
3. New roles for the United Nations agencies and the international community in developing and supporting this broader approach.

The urgent need for a broader approach to adjustment policy

With this audience, there is no need to document at length the tragic and deteriorating human situation in many parts of the world today — of rising malnutrition increasing poverty and a general slow-down and often reversal in the human indicators of development. Already, it is clear that historians of the future will document the early 1980's as periods when malnutrition in many parts of the world started to rise again. The most obvious and the most extreme situation is that in Africa, where the disaster of drought coming on top of a decade or more of misdirected development, national and international, which has pushed some 30 million persons to the extremes of hunger, starvation and often death. But this is only the visible tragedy. There is a much broader crisis of growing malnutrition, which too often remains hidden elsewhere, through lack of visual and statistical evidence. The World Bank estimates that the number of persons malnourished in Africa has risen from 80 million to 100 million since 1980. UNICEF has been

¹ Barbara Ward, "Italian Foreign Policy", Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs, No. 48, Oxford 1941, p. 32

documenting the evidence of child malnutrition from a number of countries, the majority of which show rising levels of both moderate and severe degree malnutrition, among the 0-5 age group, the most vulnerable of all. In Ghana, for example, not a drought country, the rate of malnutrition among children six months to three and a half years doubled from 1980 to 1983. Evidence from Botswana, Malawi and Kenya shows a similar picture. In Zambia, comparison between surveys of the early 1970's and early 1980's show an increase in stunting and a decrease in weight for age among all age groups and for both sexes of the under-15 year olds.

Reverse multiplier

In Latin America, starting from levels of nutrition and welfare much higher than in Africa, there is evidence from a number of countries of rising levels of malnutrition, increases in morbidity and a slow down in the long-term downward trend in infant mortality — and as in the case of Costa Rica, even some increase in infant mortality. In Asia, where economic growth and dynamism has been better maintained, the picture appears to show continuing progress. But even in the industrialized countries, the tougher economic policies adopted are probably having a dilatorius effect on the poor. In the United States, for example, the percentage of households nationwide below the poverty line has started rising again. In New York City, for example, the proportion of children in poverty is reported to have increased from 15% to 40%.

These reversals are the result of both national and international factors — and in no way should one pretend that the causes are always or, in most cases, even mainly international. In most cases, international and national factors are inextricably linked in ways that are causing severe downward pressures on living standard and welfare services, particularly for the poor. UNICEF, two years ago, undertook a survey on impact of world recession on children which analyzed the process in a diversity of a dozen countries, rich and poor, left wing and right wing,

around the world. This revealed that a reverse multiplier mechanism was at work — transmitting the impact of recession in the industrial countries to the developing countries, and within the developing countries, from urban to rural and to different income groups and classes. At each stage, the linkages mostly served to multiply the impact rather than diminish it, as one moved further along the chain, from rich to poor. We termed this "a reverse shock absorber effect", in which the impact on poverty and vulnerability was increased rather than absorbed.

But none of this was inevitable. The reverse shock absorber reflects the ways policies and institutional mechanisms, national and international, are allowed to work. It would be possible to arrange them to work in a different way, like a normal shock absorber.

Conventional adjustment policy is a crucial part of this mechanism. As it mostly operates at the moment, adjustment policy, national and international, transmits and even multiplies the impact on the poor and the vulnerable. The result, as shown in many countries, is rising malnutrition in the short run — and in the long run, reinforcement of a style of development which will primarily rely on accelerated growth and trickle down, if it works at all, to modify malnutrition in the future.

Yet this form of adjustment is no more than the form of adjustment conventionally adopted at present. There are alternatives. It would be possible, consciously to recognize that the human consequences of adjustment should not be left as an inevitable and unfortunate by-product — but treated as an essential concern. The protection of minimum levels of nutritional status and other basic human needs could be monitored and considered as much of a part of the objectives of adjustment as the balance of payments, inflation and economic growth.

Such a broader approach to adjustment is not only a matter of human welfare. To miss out the human dimension of adjustment is

not only a human tragedy. It is an economic error of the most fundamental sort. Much evidence already exists of the economic returns to investment in human resources. To fail to protect young children at the critical stages of their growth and development is to wreak lasting damage on a whole generation, the results of which will have their effects on economic development and welfare for decades ahead. In the short run, it is plainly absurd to imagine that economic dynamism can be fully restored when an important fraction of a country's workers remain malnourished — or even remains, as among small holder peasants in many African countries today, with too few basic goods to buy to provide incentives for extra effort. These needs are a matter of proportion and degree. Not every cut-back on consumer expenditure is wrong or counter-productive. But there comes a point beyond — or rather below — which the cut-backs and reductions of an adjustment process become absurdly counter-productive to the economic process, let alone to the political and human viability of a country.

Women

Let me also add here a particular word on giving special concern for women in the adjustment process. In part because many of the important activities of women are not counted in the conventional economic statistics, their vital economic contribution is often under-estimated. This is likely to be even more the case with adjustment, where many forms of cut-backs impinge especially hard on women, especially those engaged in small scale and informal sector activities. Yet, there is much evidence to show that in terms of economic contribution, use of local resources in place of imports, returns to investment and employment creation, many women engaged in household and informal sector activities make a disproportionately large contribution to the economic welfare of the poorer sections of the population. Their contribution should, therefore, be especially encouraged in the adjustment process, not ignored, let alone cut back.

(To be continued)

Nationalism, ideological control and the State

Radhika Coomaraswamy

The Brazilian case is an example of how complex factors can undermine the policies of the developmental state, even from within. The Brazilian miracle from 1967-1974 was engineered by a coalition of forces determined to meet the populist challenge from below. The coalition which made up the Brazilian State included the military, foreign capital interests, financial interests, and members of the national bourgeoisie.⁶³ P. B. Evans in his article entitled "State, Local and Multinational Capital in Brazil: Prospects for the Stability of the Triple Alliance in the 80", argues that the post miracle policies of the Brazilian State favoured foreign capital and alienated the national bourgeoisie which had expected to receive special incentives during this phase of nationalist policies.⁶⁴ It was this element of the power-bloc which finally defected and helped lead the struggle for democratisation in Brazil.

This analysis of the Brazilian context may then indicate how for example, the policies of the IMF and other financial institutions may meet their demise if they ignore the political reality of "the developmental state" in a given context. Already, in what is termed a second generation NIC, Sri Lanka's national bourgeoisie is beginning to express its discontent over liberalization. Many feel that the violent ethnic conflict of 1983 was a result of this discontentment especially with regard to the perceived differential impacts of the open economy on ethnic relation.⁶⁵

Using Sri Lanka again as an example one could attempt a similar analysis with regard to the pre-

1977 period. In 1971, the United Front government won an overwhelming victory on the platform of "socialism". A coalition of centrist, left forces, including the national bourgeoisie, workers, peasants, etc. came to power. At the international level Sri Lanka began to take a leading role as head of the non-aligned, spearheading development in UNCTAD, the Law of the Sea and being involved in programmes for the restructuring of the United Nations. By 1975, despite its international prominence, the United Front supporting the government began to fall apart. The left-wing parties were asked to leave, and the regime then found legitimacy only among (1) "petit-bourgeois interests" — those members who manned the bureaucracy and the state apparatus and who were in a position to dispense state patronage and (2) the national bourgeois elements who had received state patronage and developed their enterprises under government economic protection and programmes for import substitution. In 1977, this coalition suffered an overwhelming political defeat, 4/5 of the parliamentary seats going to the opposition party. At the time of this debacle, international agencies — except perhaps for the IMF — continued to herald Sri Lanka as the "democratic-socialist" model, the PQLI wonder story. In fact, two months after the defeat, international experts from all over the world came to Sri Lanka to discover why it was such a developmental success. Naturally, these international experts were specialists in health, education, child care, etc., not in international finance or corporate institutions. The Marga

Institute, Sri Lanka's foremost research institution, after compiling a document setting out this welfare success, even articulated the Sri Lankan model as "the pluralistic strategy of development".⁶⁶

Instead of coming to terms with the forces and attitudes which defeated this social-democratic model — a general dissatisfaction with not only the economy but with state incompetence and abuse of power by politicians and state officials, the progressive forces which made up the united front became defensive only to devise theories of international conspiracies, concepts of "fickle electorates" etc.

Seven years after defeat, they have yet to devise a coherent programme of political action which is based on a critical understanding of past failures. Since the State was the primary political and economic factor during that particular phase of Sri Lanka's history, a critical appraisal requires an honest analysis of the forces which actually made up the State and the elements which contributed to incompetence, indecision and abuse of power. Without such an analysis, including an honest appraisal as to the extent of the competence of the State to generate a high growth economy and meet consumer expectations, the liberal-left forces will remain in their tragic state of disarray. The mystification of the post-colonial state remains a major problem not only for development theorists at the international level but for all national political movements unenamoured with the IMF and the new orthodoxy.

Ideological Control

Almost all theorists of different political persuasions agree that the enormous power of nationalist ideology rests on the fact that nationalist in the third world have a monopoly over the means of communication. They control the vernacular press, primary education system and perpetuate nationalist myths and a sense of national community. The post-colonial state which is the creator as well as the instrumentality of this ideology usually owns the broadcasting media, the TV and the radio.⁶⁹

Increasingly, the study of semiotics and social discourse have pointed to the enormous power of communication systems and their relative autonomy from material forces of production in certain given contexts.⁷⁰ As the opening quote suggests, nationalist symbols may be easily manipulated to overcome class interests, political disagreements and even long-term rational self-interest. In situations of crisis, control over the means of communication and the success of that control may determine the nature and extent of public reaction. Though the nationalist enterprise must be linked to certain types of material and productive forces, the ideology of nationalism has an autonomous momentum of its own, which overcomes economic imperatives and even processes of "rational" decision-making. Unless its power is recognized much of the phenomenon in third world countries from militant Islam to Ethnic conflict cannot be explained.

A Coalition of Class Forces

In discussing the power variables behind the nationalist enterprise, one is forced to confront the questions raised by Anthony Smith, Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner — does the nationalist phenomenon in third world countries point to the emergence of a "new class" or class coalition — new in the sense that it does not fall into the classical four-tiered system of landed aristocracy, the capitalist class, the working class, and the peasantry. Has nationalism in the third world, in its peculiar statist manifestation,

created a new class coalition with a different material base — the resources of the post-colonial state? Marxists would of course argue that the State is only the reflection of forces in civil society and that the state bureaucracy is manned and supported by classical "petit-bourgeois" elements — those white collar workers a step ahead of the working class, the small shop owners etc., those in between the primary class forces. Is this really an adequate explanation of this phenomenon? Even if it is, have there been many studies of petit-bourgeois class interests in third world societies? Isn't the term usually expressed in a dismissive sense, receiving very little empirical analysis in scholarship or in policy?

In discussing the emergence of a new class coalition, the dependency theorists would be sceptical as well, since this coalition according to them is so completely dependent on metropolitan interests that it cannot be analysed without primacy being given to the international factor. Given the tenacity of nationalism, it is important to reconsider this question with more sensitivity and honesty. One must analyse whether the forces which lead the nationalist movement, state bureaucrats, vernacular speaking elites, the military, professionals and the national bourgeoisie, have actually merged into what may be termed a "nationalist class coalition" — arguably ridden with internal contradictions — but with a common vested interest in the power variables of nationalism — territorial homeland, the right to self-determination emphasis on the post-colonial state for patronage and resource distribution, control over ideology and cultural symbols and an all encompassing belief in "national sovereignty" as the most important value in political life even over human rights, and social justice.

Conclusion

"Nationalism remains then as the cement that holds together the State: even though it is increasingly clear that the cement is mainly sand".

Hugh Tinker

In conclusion, it may be necessary to clearly articulate what this paper is not attempting to say so that the arguments in the paper may be placed in a correct perspective.

1. This paper is not arguing that there are no constraints on the nation-state. It takes as given that the international economic and political system does determine the outer limits of national autonomy and that in certain contexts developing states are greatly dependent on the prevailing system for trade and aid. In addition, the politics of aid and trade minimize the freedom with which developing countries can make autonomous decisions. This analysis, theoretically put in terms of metropolitan and periphery, has been the central debate in third world countries for over two decades. This paper argues that it is time that international development theory went beyond dependency and neo-classicism, not only to "squeeze" the NICS into the framework, or to experiment with market alternatives but to begin a discussion of political and social variables at the sub-national level as part of the international development debate.

2. This paper is not arguing that there is only one political model of nationalism and the post-colonial developmental state. Yet, at this particular moment of history, the anthropological alternative — "every context has its own particular and unique development" cannot be the answer either. Typologies based on post-colonial experience, whether it be the East-Asia Model, ASEAN, Islamic, Bureaucratic-Authoritarian, South Asian — etc, can be and should be developed. These typologies may then figure as political and social variables in international development discourse.

3. This paper is not arguing that aid to third world societies should be curtailed unless they prove to be politically "correct", i.e. that the State represents the nation, the officials are incorruptible and that the most vulnerable sectors are going to receive maximum benefits. It is not an argument for aid cut-back but for effective

analysis of aid utilization. Unless political factors begin to have prominence in development policy planning — effective aid utilization will only succeed in a few, exceptional third world societies.

The Neo-classical orthodoxy which prevails in international financial institutions has deflated the momentum of those theories of international development which placed a high priority on social equity and social welfare. In responding to the neo-classical challenge, many development theorists have begun to formulate new alternative programmes and perspectives for development with social justice. These fall into basically two categories. The first, which may be termed "rear-guard action against the NICS" attempts to incorporate the elements which made the NICS a success — State guidance and intervention in the market system without nationalisation or state control. The second, which may be termed "rear-guard action against neo-classical economists", attempts to technocratize social justice. The problem, people argue, is that liberal-left concerns are full of "soft" humanitarianism — rural poverty, women's rights, consumer protection, labour conditions, etc. and pay very little attention to growth, capital and management. It is time, therefore, to introduce cost/benefit analysis and the computer to support progressives as well as the IMF.

These are important debates and if a new "consensus" does emerge, it will arise out of programmes developed after this type of research and discussion has produced new results. However, neo-classical dominance internationally has also introduced the concept of "conditionality". Most development theorists are very negative about this factor as it fundamentally challenges the right to self-determination, and in the context of the IMF, forces many countries to give up social welfare programmes necessary for the well-being of a large percentage of the population. However, if the "social justice" programmes for the future are to work they will be fully dependent on the post-colonial nation states for implementation. Is it not possible to

argue for a new type of international conditionality which would minimize class and ethnic bias in the internal distribution of international resources. This conditionality would not be comprehensive but provide bottom line protection for vulnerable sectors, and would be negotiated at an international conference, not imposed by the IMF or the dictates of finance capital. Such conditionality, evolving out of the human rights covenants, may force development policy to come to terms with the political and social dimensions of development at both the international and national level.

(concluded)

FOOTNOTES

63. This analysis is taken from a lecture given by Carlos Fortin on "Brazil", Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, January 17, 1985.
64. See P. B. Evans, "State, Local and Multinational Capital in Brazil: Prospects for the Stability of the Triple Alliance" in D. Tusse, ed., *Latin America in the world Economy*, London, Gower, 1983, p. 139-168.
65. See, for example, N. Gunasinghe on the Sri Lankan riots, "The Open Economy & Ethnic Conflict" in Committee for Rational Development ed., *Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict*, Chapter 6.
66. See the Marga Institute, *Welfare and Growth*, Colombo, Marga, 1976.
67. International Conference sponsored by the O. D. A. September 1977, The Marga Institute, Colombo.
68. G. Gunatilleke, *The Pluralistic Strategy of Development*, Colombo, unpublished, Marga, 1980.
69. B. Anderson, *op cit* p. 107.
70. R. Barthes, *Mythologies*, London, Paladin, 1973, see especially the articles on *Myth Today*. Also for a more comprehensive analysis see M. Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, London, Tavistock, 1970, especially p. 217-250 on The Limits of Presentation.

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US policy in the Central American-Caribbean region

Walter LaFeber

(Professor LaFeber is at the Dept. of Govt. Cornell University, USA. He wrote the Afterword to Omar Cabezas' *'Fire from the Mountain'*.)

As the dominant military and economic power in the Western Hemisphere since the late 19th-century, the United States has faced the persistent problem of reconciling divergent strands in its foreign policy. On the one hand, North Americans* have expressed their belief in the principle of self-determination, and they have also been aware — especially during the past generation — of the limits and costs involved in trying to protect their interests abroad through the use of military force. On the other hand, North Americans have both formed a strong consensus against the further appearance of regimes with strong military ties with Soviet-bloc nations and continue to view the Central American-Caribbean region as their "backyard" in which anti-U.S. political alignments should not be tolerated. Because of the tensions between these two sets of beliefs (a tension summarized by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Langhorne Motley's observation that his country wants neither another Cuba nor another Vietnam in Central America), U.S. policy has proven frustrating to all sides in the six years of stormy debate over Central America.

Recent events in the Caribbean-Central American region have increased the frustrations but also its importance for U.S. interests. In the Caribbean nations, deteriorating economics have received little help from the Reagan administration's Caribbean Basin Initiative (whose faith in trade, not aid, as a remedy was greatly undermined by protectionist congressional interests that insisted on keeping certain Caribbean products out of the U.S. market). But the invasion of Grenada in 1983 indi-

cated that the administration would resort to military force if officials could be assured that another Vietnam-type struggle could be avoided. The Grenada affair paradoxically demonstrated the limits of both the administration's tolerance for left-wing regimes in this region and the conditions in which military force would be committed.

In Nicaragua, the Sandinista government has grown more dependent on Soviet-bloc economic and military assistance even as U.S. officials raise the pressure to change the structure of Nicaragua's government. In El Salvador, the election victories of President Jose Napoleon Duarte have masked an economy so ravaged by war that it depends for its life-blood on massive U.S. assistance, have masked a military situation that can produce no clear winner in the ongoing war between the government and the FMLN, have masked continuing human rights violations, and have masked a political situation so badly bipolarized between conservatives and revolutionaries that Duarte — even with strong U.S. support — will be unable to bridge the gap or pass a meaningful reform and reconciliation program. In Honduras, historically the most pro-North American of all Central American countries, worries grow over an economy that stumbles under the military buildup pushed by the United States to help Nicaraguan "contra" forces and the Salvadoran government. Hondurans are gravely concerned over the future deposition of 12,000 or more "contras" based in Honduras if U.S. aid to these Nicaraguans stops. Costa Rica struggles with one of the highest per capita international debts in the world while worrying over sporadic conflict on its Nicaraguan border. It is being increasingly pressed by internal groups and the United States to spend more on its civil

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police for protecting that border. Guatemala proceeds with its "bullets-and-bread" campaigns against rebel groups as internal violence remains high (although down from the uncommon brutalities of 1980-1982). Of the five Central American nations*, Guatemala is least under U.S. influence or (as in the case of Nicaragua and Costa Rica) pressure, but the Reagan administration has steadily tried to overcome Congress's human rights legislation that has prohibited large-scale military aid to Guatemala so that government can receive such assistance. Meanwhile throughout the Central American region non-Western Hemisphere nations and groups especially Libya, Eastern European countries, Israel, and the PLO, have appeared to complicate and heighten the military conflicts.

If the generalizations in this all-too-brief background are correct then discussion might begin with the following four questions.

1. Because the United States is by far the strongest power in the region, what role should it play in helping solve these crises? The answer is complicated by a long North American history in the region that has helped bring about the crises and made U.S. motives and actions suspect to many, hated by others: Even the Alliance for Progress of the 1960s, probably the most positive, original, and widely supported of U.S. policies in Latin America during the past 50 years, finally enriched the rich and further impoverished the poor

* In this paper, North Americans refers to the people of the United States.

* Belize, whose problems differ in important respects from other nations in the region, is not discussed here.

and thus worsened rather than bettered conditions in many Latin American nations. The political preconditions simply were not present to ensure that the wealth produced by the Alliance for Progress would be equitably distributed. Nor are those preconditions currently present in El Salvador, Guatemala, or Honduras.

North American opinion is itself badly divided. Not only groups of experts on Latin America, churches significant business interests, and the majority of informed North Americans oppose the Reagan policies, but within the government itself powerful congressional voices, the uniformed military, and some civilian officials in the Executive branch question the present approach.

A quick answer to the question might be that the United States could largely take the region out of an East-West conflict by assuming that, as part of a larger understanding, the area would be understood to belong exclusively in the North American sphere of influence. Such an approach would be welcomed by the Soviet and East European governments, at least privately, not least because of its implications for the war in Afghanistan. But this approach is not acceptable. Latin Americans would of course not tolerate it. North Americans would oppose it, especially because of its implications for East-West relations. A spheres approach, moreover, is not static and can therefore be most dangerous in the long run: the appetite of great powers can grow with the eating.

A better answer is that the United States should aim at political settlements of the various conflicts, and should do this while (1) working closely with regional powers (as the Contadora group) in controlling the military problems and (2) while cooperating with these powers and also European and Asian nations, seek to deal with the economic crises — especially those in the Caribbean and Costa Rica as well as in the remainder of Central America. This point leads to the second and third questions.

2. Are political settlements possible given the current circumstances in the Salvadoran and Nicaraguan struggles? In both situations a possible middle ground for compromise is either extremely vague or at present (mid-April 1985) apparently non-existent. In El Salvador, Mr. Duarte's victory in the legislative and municipal elections has strengthened his hand (not least in the U.S. Congress), but the military and extreme conservative factions can stop both necessary reforms and fruitful discussions with the FMLN through extra-legal if not legal means. If Mr. Duarte did split the FMLN, a long-low-scale war would never the less continue.

In Nicaragua, the government has refused to deal politically with the "contras," and also with civilians such as Arturo Cruz who, until recently, seemed to offer a political alternative for discussion. The Sandinistas' options, however, have — like Mr. Duarte's — been narrowed even as their power has consolidated. The idea of a "vanguard" party creating a Marxist-Leninist regime might be pursued by some Sandinista leaders, but that idea is strongly opposed not only by the United States but by neighboring nations and by powerful groups within Nicaragua itself. The Reagan policy aims at squeezing the Sandinistas until they splinter politically and/or collapse economically. Meanwhile the socio-economic goals of the 1979 revolution — goals which rallied the Nicaraguan people to the Sandinistas — have faded as the economic squeeze tightens.

There is therefore no political force in either El Salvador or even Nicaragua that can freely dictate the future of its country. There is an opportunity for discussion of political settlements if the United States cooperates (especially by lowering, at least for a time, its own military involvement), and if regional powers are willing to assume responsibility for direct and effective mediation. Discussions within the nations themselves should be between the groups that actually possess the power. In El Salvador this means discussions between Mr. Duarte and the military

on the one hand, and the FMLN on the other. In Nicaragua this means discussions between the Sandinista government and the United States. In both sets of talks the Contadora notions would have to serve as active mediators and guarantors for resulting agreements.

3. Can the Contadora nations and Western European countries, especially who have a special relationships with the Caribbean and Central America, assume such responsibility? As this is written, the answer seems to be that too little evidence exists to indicate that these groups can be sufficiently effective. Mexico, a leading Contadora member, has long mistrusted U.S. aims in the region, and Washington officials have reciprocated the mistrust. Key Contadora nations have severe debt problems that restrict their abilities as mediators, not least because they are perceived to be open to U.S. pressures. Since 1981 Western Europeans have played less of a role in the region as growing problems (East-West arms issues in NATO countries and economic dilemmas in Spain and France) have required attention at home.

The Contadora proposals nevertheless remain the best available alternative to current U.S. policies but those proposals are useless unless the Contadora and Western European nations can coordinate a more active policy to mediate the political crises and, as well, provide more resources to meet the economic crises. The agreement of West European governments at San Jose, Costa Rica last autumn is a first step in providing such resources, but obviously a small first step. The United States must meanwhile cooperate with Contadora in deed as well as (at present) in word.

4. If this is the role the United States should play in the region, what are the chances it will play such a role of cooperating fully with the Contadora approach and encouraging more independent economic aid to the region from other nations?

(Continued on page 24)

Delhi tough on Bhutto issue

NEW DELHI, Sept. 4

After great deliberation, the Government of India has decided to deplore publicly the arrest of Miss Benazir Bhutto and urge the President of Pakistan, Gen. Zia Ul Haq to heed the many appeals made to him for her release.

An official spokesman said today: "The Bhutto family has suffered greatly. It appears there is widespread sympathy in Pakistan for the suffering of the family and the support to the cause they espouse."

This is the farthest that India has gone in all these years in not merely voicing its unhappiness over the continued ill-treatment of the Bhutto family, but also openly acknowledging the fact of widespread public support to its relentless crusade against the military rule in Pakistan.

This is an unmistakable reflection of India's great indignation over Pakistan's involvement in the Punjab crisis and the disquieting disclosures of the training given to Sikh extremists at secret camps across the border to confront this country with a growing menace of terrorism.

At the time of Z. A. Bhutto's execution, the Janata Government went to the ridiculous limit of refraining from joining the rest of the international community in first appealing to Gen. Zia for sparing his life and then deploring his decision to carry out the death sentence.

Though Mrs. Indira Gandhi had no hesitation in voicing her distress over the arrest of Mrs. Bhutto and her daughter, Benazir, she was careful not to make any mention of the sympathy for the Bhutto family's plight or support for its fight against General Zia's military rule.

But now for the first time, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's Government has come forward with a statement saying that the arrest of Miss Bhutto in the wake of public demonstrations

of sympathy and support on her return to Pakistan for her brother's funeral was "even more unfortunate."

It remains to be seen how the Zia regime reacts to this public expression of India's distress and dismay over the arrest of Miss Bhutto on this sad occasion. It is bound to characterise this as

uncalled for interference in Pakistan's internal affairs, but such remonstrance cannot conceal its uneasiness over the reality that sooner or later India will hit back if it continued to aid and abet the extremists in Punjab to step up their campaign of terrorism.

—THE HINDU, Sept. 5, 1985

Live Aid concert challenge: war on hunger has no limits

The July 13 Live Aid concerts ate now history. However, their challenge to feed the world's starving millions is still with us.

In one day, Live Aid helped bring the stark reality of starvation into the homes of a billion people worldwide. At the same time it raised some \$70 million in donations towards feeding the hungry in Africa.

Hunger in the midst of plenty became the focus of all participants, including bands and speakers from the United States, Europe, Africa and the Soviet Union.

However the unprecedented outpouring of aid to the world's most impoverished people is confronting problems in the distribution of food.

The U. S. government has used the real famine crisis to undermine Ethiopia's revolutionary government. Food stays stored on docks because trucks have not been provided to transport them. And since 1980, the Reagan Administration has blocked international funding agency loans to Ethiopia for economic technical assistance; agricultural and

irrigation studies; and telecommunications and education projects.

The reality is the U. S. is capable of feeding people the world over. Yet some 40 million people in this country have little or nothing to eat. Why then are people starving?

In the United States, food stored in warehouses is allowed to rot. Large agribusiness concerns are paid for not growing produce. Food is destroyed rather than provided to those who need it most. The government has bailed out whole industries through tax breaks and outright subsidies while cutting back on food stamps and jobs programs.

We are dealing with an economic system based on profit; not for providing our most basic needs.

The Live Aid concerts are a step in the right direction. The movement to end hunger has no limitations. Anyone can get involved in this movement in whatever way is possible. If all hands are necessary to win this fight, then let all hands come together in such a way to achieve real victory.

—Peoples Tribune, Chicago, USA

FOREIGN
NEWS

'Types' and conformity

Tissa Jayatilaka

The drama opens with a brief preamble, a pantomime which gives us some useful and necessary clues to an understanding of the main characters, Lula and Clay. We see a man (we later realize he is Clay) sitting in a subway seat holding a magazine and "looking vacantly just above its wilting pages" (p. 3). Clay is thus holding the magazine, not reading it. To my mind, this is suggestive of his attempt to ape White middle-class manners. Clay is only holding the magazine, using it as it were as a status symbol to demonstrate that he is a middle-class person. He then notices a woman's face "staring" at him. The woman in question is Lula. Her stare is symbolic of the hostility of White America to the Black person. Further on in the sentence her face is referred to as "it."

The man looks idly up, until he sees a woman's face **staring** at him through the window; when it realizes that the man has noticed the face, **it** begins very premeditatedly to smile (p. 4; emphasis added).

Such a reference may reflect the impersonality of White America, its indifference to the plight of the Blacks. We are also told that her smile is not spontaneous but "premeditated"; it is put on, artificial and insincere. In contrast, "The man smiles too, for a moment, without a trace of self-consciousness" (p. 4). However, Jones goes on to describe it as "an almost instinctive though undesirable response" (p. 4). This description seems to me to be Jones's way of saying that Clay is over-anxious to please. His desire to be a part of middle-class society impels him, as it were, to smile eagerly. It is not an instinctive response but "almost instinctive." This distinction, I believe, is crucial especially since Jones proceeds to qualify the phrase with "undesira-

ble." The idea the playwright wishes to plant in our minds at the very outset of the play is ominous. Lula, the White woman, is a crafty and calculating type. Clay, the Black man, is only pretending to act naturally. In other words, neither Clay nor Lula is really what he or she seems to be. There is a wide gap between their reality and their appearance. Such a presentation of his main characters is indicative of Jones's large theme — the difficulty of forging a reconciliation between the oppressive White America and the oppressed Black America. On the surface there may seem to be a satisfactory relationship (the equivalent of the appearances of Lula and Clay), but if one explores beneath the surface one realizes that, in reality, the relationship is a flawed one. The fact that the man becomes awkward and embarrassed and "makes to look away" (p. 4) reinforces the point. Jones suggests that whites and Blacks can never be perfectly at ease with one another, that there can never be possible between them an easy and natural commerce.

This preamble provides an apt backdrop for the play. For what we discover in **Dutchman** through the development of Lula and Clay is the ugly reality of the racial tension they conceal beneath their surface cordiality. They are victims of the society they live in and of circumstances beyond their immediate control. Beneath the friendly and outgoing exterior, Lula hides the contempt she has for Black people. She is able to show friendship only so long as Clay conforms to her concept of what a Black man ought to be. Clay is able to retain his middle-class veneer only up to a point. He takes Lula's taunts good naturedly at the beginning. But, eventually, his true self, the Clay of "the pure heart, the pumping black heart" (p. 34) bursts

While I alone am responsible for ideas expressed herein, this essay has benefited immensely from discussions I have had with Prof. Lee H. Potter of the Dept. of English, Wake Forest University, North Carolina, U.S.A and Prof. Jönnela Butler, Head, Dept of Afro-American Studies, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, U.S.A. It is a pleasure to acknowledge my debt to them.

— T. J.

through the facade to reveal the tensions that lie within

As the action begins we see Lula entering the subway car in which Clay is seated. She is presented as a physically attractive person who attempts deliberately to attract attention to herself. She "is a tall slender, beautiful woman with long red hair..." (p. 5). Her, bright clothes and her nervous gesture of pushing her sunglasses up on her forehead from time to time mark her as a person attempting to attract attention to herself. The lipstick she wears is "loud" and "in somebody's good taste" (p. 5). She has neither the refined appearance nor the polite reserve of a proper middle-class lady. She initiates the conversation with Clay, forcing herself on him as it were. She fishes for compliments while alluringly pushing her legs out (again drawing attention to herself) and complaining of "too much weight" (p. 6). She soon draws specific attention to herself by accusing Clay of staring at her (it was she who kept staring at him) "down in the vicinity of my ass and legs" (p. 7). Soon enough, she admits what her intentions are:

I even got into this train, going some other way than mine. Walked down the aisle... searching you out (p. 7).

Clay comes across as the typical "neo-Ivy League" (I own this phrase to Kimberly W. Benston²) middle-class Black gentleman.

He is dressed in a three-button suit, is mild-mannered, and in the beginning manages to remain unruffled by Lula's awkward behavior and intemperate manner. Very particular about his appearance, Clay is anxious to appear proper. This comes out clearly at the point where Lula first attempts to read Clay's mind.

LULA. You think I want to pick you up, get you to take me somewhere and screw me, huh?

CLAY. Is that the way I look? (p. 8)

Lula embarks on an elaborate process of seduction. She begins to give Clay information about himself, his background and even his inner self. She seems omniscient. She tells him things about his intimate personal life ("You tried to make it with your sister when you were ten" (p. 9). Clay is surprised. Lula begins to get more intimate, offers Clay an apple which the latter accepts. Interestingly he "falls" at this point. He tries to be as flippant as Lula from now on. His neat facade seems to give way. She puts her hand on his knee and draws it from the knee up to the "thigh's hinge" (p. 10) and takes him by the wrist. The initial process of seduction is over by the end of the first scene of the play, by which time we have been afforded a very clear picture of both Lula and Clay and what each of them stands for in the context of the

Mask (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 165.

play. We realize that Lula (her mother, we are told, was a communist (p. 19) is a liberal-minded³ White woman who leads a Bohemian existence (she likes going to parties escorted by a "coloured" man). We learn that Clay is a middle class Black man who lives in a fashionable ("they

don't have lady wrestlers in that part of Jersey" (p. 12) area of New Jersey, wears a three-button suit and striped tie and writes poetry. We also learn through Lula that Clay is really ignorant of his true background. She is able to identify the surface reality of Clay's appearance. Clay is surprised by Lula's knowledge of him. He fails to realize the significance of her statement that she actually does not know him as an individual but as an example of a "well-known type."

LULA. I told you I didn't know anything about you... you're a well-known type (p. 12).

LULA. My hair is turning gray. A gray hair for each year and type I've come through (p. 13).

He is taken utterly unawares when she calls him a "murderer." "You're a murderer, Clay, and you know it. You know goddamn well what I mean" (p. 21). Actually, Clay does not know what Lula means. He, in his safe middle-class cocoon, seems blissfully unaware that he has turned his back on ("murdered") his true heritage (the Afro-American). He seems similarly ignorant that he belongs to that type of Afro-American who has, in Jones's view, sold out by becoming an assimilationist. It is no surprise, therefore, that the full significance of Lula's angry outburst escapes him.

LULA. Everything you say is wrong. (Mock smile)

That's what makes you so attractive. Ha. In that funnybook jacket with all the buttons. (More animate, taking hold of his jacket)

What've you got that jacket and tie on (in all) this heat for? And why're you wearing a jacket and tie like that?

³ This is not to suggest that Lula is a liberal because her mother was a communist. To Clay, Lula is a White liberal, a bohemian type. In the context of the play.

Did your people ever burn witches or start revolutions over the price of tea? Boy, those narrow-shoulder clothes come from a tradition you ought to feel oppressed by. A three-button suit. What right do you have to be wearing a three-button suit and striped tie? Your grandfather was a slave, he didn't go to Harvard (p. 18).

If Clay at this stage is ignorant of his true self, he is just as unaware of Lula's real nature; at least such seems to be the case if we are to judge by his reaction to Lula despite the many warnings she throws out. On more than one occasion she admits that she lies:

LULA. I lie a lot. (smiling)

It helps me control the world (p. 9).

LULA. I told you I lie. I don't know your sister. I don't know Warren Enright (p. 10).

LULA. Well, you're wrong. I'm no actress. I told you I always lie. I'm nothing, honey, and

therefore, Lula becomes a symbol of White liberal America.

don't you ever forget it (p. 19). LULA. Well, I told you I wasn't an actress... but I also told you I lie all the time. Draw your own conclusions (p. 27)

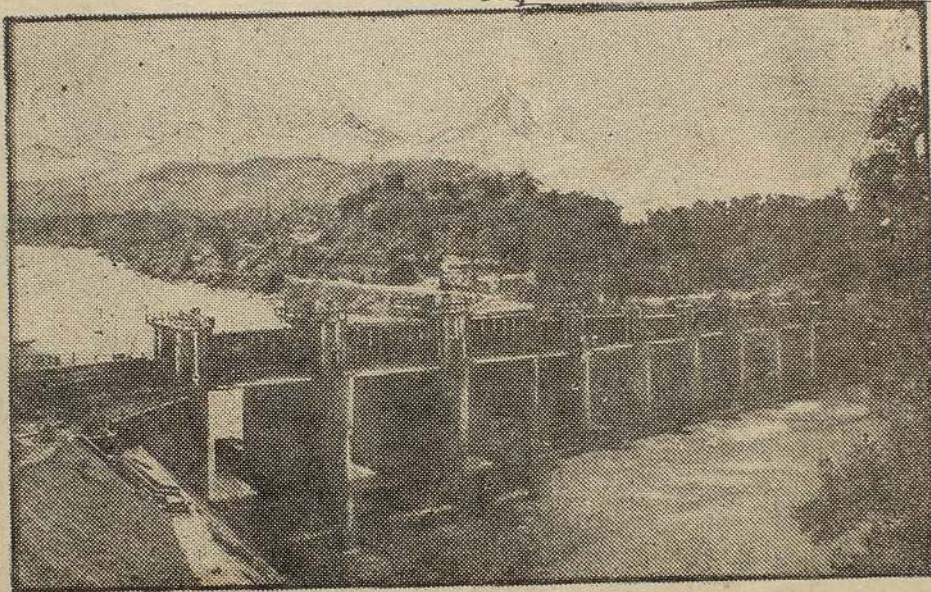
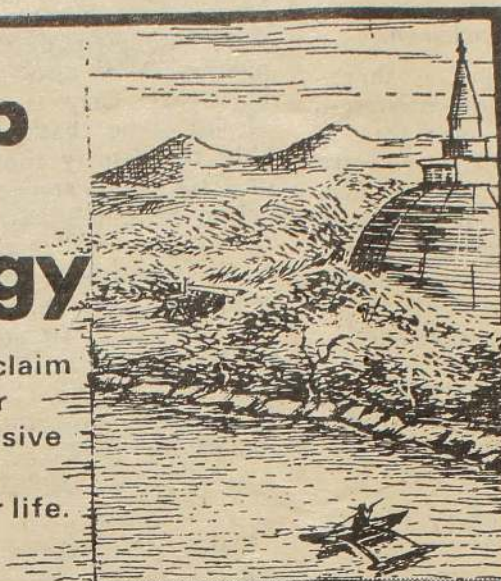
Lula herself is a "type". She belongs to the supposedly liberal wing of White society which, society which, Jones seems to suggest, thinks that going out with a Black man to a party (superficial friendship) ensures harmonious race relations; to that type which accepts Black America so long as the latter conforms to the norms set by it. Black Americans like Clay in Scene I of *Dutchman* are representative of the kind found acceptable by Lula's type. Lula taunts Clay for being what he is, knowing full

² Kimberly W. Benston, *Baraka The Renegade and the Masic*

(Continued on page 23)

to link up with technology

Few other countries can claim that capital invested over 15 centuries ago in extensive irrigation programmes is still contributing to their life.



... and Sri Lanka is linking modern technology to these age old assets through the Mahaweli Diversion Complex which will assuredly lift us into a better life.

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improved*



The Peradeniya University English Department: Change and Response

Patrick Jayasuriya

One of the issues raised by Mr. Qadri Ismail's article in the three issues of the "Lanka Guardian" is whether English literature should be studied as literature, an activity with its own methods, or as sociology or intellectual history. After reading Mr. Ismail's article it still appears to me that what he terms "the more than fifty-year old philosophy of F. R. Leavis" is still quite sound as an approach to reading English literature or French, Italian, Russian, Chinese Swahili or any other. Leavis however did not express himself so crudely as to say that literature was "central... to the study or knowledge, of life."

For Leavis, I think, literature and the teacher of literature were there to engage or incite resources within the individual reader or student. He didn't conceive of literature as a body of dogma and the teacher of literature as a high priest who pontificated on that dogma. "Not dogmatically but deliberately..." Leavis has noted as a motto in one of his books. Mr. Ismail's complaint in the article is that Leavis and the teachers of English at Peradeniya University Department of English don't do what they consider to be **not** their business — to give a theory of literature or make generalizations about literature.

Mr. Ismail writes "What did Ludowyk give his students? Nothing original; Just a watered down version of Leavis. Leavis had no theory. All he had was the passionate belief that there was a fundamental relationship between "literature" and "life" which he could never demonstrate. He never made the general statements that make up a theory." In reference to literature (English or any other) it still seems unnecessary to have a theory to understand a poem, a novel or a play. It is a mark

of Leavis's intelligence that he desisted from propagating a theory of literature or making "general statements". Why make "general statements" about literature when particular statements about particular poems or novels are more relevant? However, Leavis's particular analyses contain a total attitude to life and literature and the relationship between the two that is comprehensive and whole.

I think that the teachers at the Peradeniya Dept. of English had benefited from this essentially healthy attitude to literature and so too have the more responsive students. Of course they would have had other influences besides Leavis. Literature is not like physics where Einstein's pure theory was necessary before the practical possibility of splitting the atom could be pursued. It is not necessary in literature to construct great general theories like Einstein's Theory of Relativity in physics or Keynes' General Theory in Economics. Nor are "demonstrations" as Mr. Ismail requires necessary in English literary criticism, as theory testing in a scientific laboratory. D. H. Lawrence realizes (pardon the cliché) his ideas and feelings about life work and art in his novels and Leavis has shown what the critic can do in writing about such work. What Leavis has shown in writing about Lawrence's novels and stories is their relevance not to "life" in general but to the contemporary world and life there.

Mr. Ismail states "Basically, life has nothing to do with literature it goes on despite it..." For that matter life can go on without religion, music, art (donkeys do nicely without the benefit of any of these!) It is astounding that someone who has had the chance of knowing literature through four

Reply to

Qadri Ismail

years of special study at a university should be unaware of the deep dependence of literature on life and hence the close relationship even though life can "go on" without it. Life can go on without clothes too (especially in Third World countries) but, except for the elitist nudist fringe, people insist on wearing them.

According to Mr. Ismail societal forces are "the very womb from which it ("literary production") springs." But "society" does not write works of literature. They are written by individual authors of distinctive individual genius who are, of course, a part of society but whose relationships and attitudes to society are various and even contradictory. The emphasis on the works studied rather than on the "background" or on "theory" as Mr. Ismail would want it is not congenial to the nature of the subject itself. A literary work, unlike an abstruse theory, creates itself on each reading to the full extent by its own special literary methods, and the background information can only offer peripheral illumination. Extensive study of background or theory can be so much inessential baggage. Hence it may be a good thing that the background syllabus at Peradeniya stops where it is reported to do. As L. C. Knights has said "scholarship" in English studies is useful only in removing obstacles to understanding. Perhaps a student today would meet with such obstacles in reference to the Elizabethan context while that of fifty years ago is accessible to the student without a special course.

Professor Ashley Halpe at Peradeniya has stood firm against the popular tide of reputation-busting

(Continued on page 23)

THE 'OPEN ECONOMY'

V. Moonesinghe

The UNP Government that came to power in July 1977 was committed to a drastic change in economic policy and to radically restructuring the Sri Lankan economy. The justification for the new strategy was that 'autarkic strategies are not practicable in Sri Lanka, given the country's resource endowment and domestic market size... export-led economic diversification and an open economy arguably provide the best possible framework for economy policy' (1). This viewpoint was shared by the World Bank, which argued that hitherto 'there was too much emphasis on industrial import substitution and too little on export promotion' (2).

Consequently, the Government 'opened up' the economy, liberalising trade and payments, re-aligning the currency and offering incentives to investment. These measures were accompanied by a large infusion of money into the economy, mainly financed by foreign aid. As an official view puts it, 'the Government was compelled to step up public sector infrastructural investment so as to enhance the productive and labour absorptive capacities of the economy' (3). The private sector was expected to 'supplement this effort by engaging in quick yielding, surplus generating agricultural, industrial and commercial activities making use of the various incentives and infrastructure facilities provided by the government' (4).

By 1982, the results of the new policies appeared to be impressive. The Gross National Product (GNP) had grown by an average of 5.9% annually since 1977. Over 300 000 jobs had been created in the formal sector of the economy, so that unemployment has been reduced from 25% of the labour force to about 14%. (5) There was an abundance of goods, which compared favourably with the shortages of the 1970-77 era. These factors all contributed to the victory of the UNP in the 1982 presidential elec-

tion, which appeared to confer a mandate for the continuation of the 'Open Economy'. The period of consolidation of the new economic strategy was over and 'the major structural adjustments in the economy which had been activated by new economic policies of the post 1977 period had stabilized' (6).

However, there was some dissatisfaction, particularly among small industrialists, with the direction of growth. Several small industries had folded up in the face of imports, particularly in the field of electronics. The lack of competitiveness on the part of local industry was attributed to consumer preference for imported goods, regardless of quality, and to the relatively high rate of duty on raw materials as compared to finished goods. (7)

In fact, from the point of view of industrial development, the economy had become fairly unbalanced. The share of the productive sectors of the economy in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) had declined from 59.4% in 1977 to 45.1% in 1982. The share of manufacturing in the GDP had gone down to 15.4% from 23.1% in 1977. On the other, hand, Trade, Banking and Insurance, and Ownership of Dwellings increased their share from 21.9% to 23.2%. The bulk of the increase was accounted for by the import trade, which increased from 2.0% of GDP to 4.5%. (8)

The bulk of state investment had been in the construction sector, particularly in the Mahaweli Development and Housing programs, so that growth in this sector was highest of all: by 1982, construction accounted for 8.7% of the GDP. (6) The preponderance of the construction sector is shown by the fact that in 1980-82 Rs 1 226 million was spent on the import of bulldozers, while only Rs 165 million was spent on the import of machine tools. (10)

The avowed government strategy of export-led industrialisation, too, was not living up to expectations.

Between 1978 and 1982, exports in current SDR (Standard Drawing Rights) terms increased by 7.3% annually, as compared to 9.8% annually in the previous seven years. There were decreases in the growth rates of export of all items except those in the categories of coconut kernel products, spices, minor agricultural products, graphite, garments and minor industrial products. 'In real terms, annual average growth of non-petroleum manufactured export earnings was 14.8 percent in 1978-82, compared with 32.3 percent in 1970-77'. (11)

Another alarming trend was the growing import dependence of manufactured exports. By 1982, the import content of manufactured exports excluding petroleum was 60%. The fastest growing sector, garments, had an import content of 71%. Furthermore, the bulk of the increase in exports since 1977 was accounted for by firms with direct foreign participation. Hence, other foreign exchange outflows such as profit and dividend repatriation and royalty payments would further eat into the actual earnings. (12)

The liberalisation of imports was the chief cause of these imbalances in the economy. The availability of cheap imports meant that, in order to compete, cost reductions had to be affected, mainly in the field of labour inputs. This was achieved mainly by increasing the proportion of semi-finished goods in the raw materials. Of necessity, these items were imported, and hence the proportion of foreign raw materials increased, from 66% in 1977 to 89% in 1980. The organic composition of capital (the proportion of non-labour inputs in the productive capital) thus increased from 85.9% to 82.4%. The rate of profit decreased from 39.4% to 26.2%, and might have dropped even further had not the rate of extraction of surplus (the ratio of surplus product to wages, in other words the rate of exploitation) not increased to 345% from 280%. (13)

Since it was possible to achieve profits of up to 100% of turnover by trading in imported articles or by usury (a large proportion of the market for finance companies coming from consumers of imported gadgetry to these more lucrative fields. By 1984, the share of manufacturing in GDP had further declined to 14.5%. Of this, the processing of Tea, Rubber and Coconut accounted for 21.5% compared with 20.9% in 1982; this was a reversal of the trend since 1977 towards a smaller in manufacturing for traditional export processing, and could be accounted for by the Tea Boom of 1983-84. (14) Furthermore, 'though there has been some increase in private investment, the overall performance has been disappointing. The tendency has been to choose easy options such as trading activities which yield quick returns with less efforts and enterprise. Unless there is a significant change in attitudes on the part of the business community, we will not be able to put the economy firmly on a path of self-sustained growth and development' (15). In fact, by 1984, private investment actually decreased, being only 10% of the GDP, as against the projected 12%. (16)

(To be continued)

NOTES

- (1) 'Budget 1984: The Government's strategy behind the Budget—An Official View', *Economic Review*, Vol 9 No 8, November 1983, p 5
- (2) The World Bank, *World development Report 1980*, OUP, Washington DC, 1980, p 90
- (3) 'Budget 1984', p 6
- (4) Abeyasekera, Gamini, 'Sri Lanka's Economy in 1984', *Economic Review*, Vol 10 No 2, May-June 1984, p 4.
- (5) Samaranayaka, DNR, 'Development features of the 1985 Budgetary Proposals', *Economic Review*, Vol 10 No 10, January 1985, pp 12-13
- (6) Central Bank, *Review of the Economy 1983*, Central Bank of Ceylon, Colombo, p 12
- (7) de Silva, Richard, Perera, BC, and Devanarayana, Eriq, 'Has the flood of imported goods knocked the bottom off the nascent local industry?', *The Island*, 25th October 1981, p 8
- (8) Central Bank, *op cit*, table 2A
- (9) *Idid*, table 2A
- (10) *Idid*, p 11
- (11) Athukorale, Premachandra, 'Export Development: policies and achievements' *Economic Review* Vol 10 No 3, July-August 1984, pp 9-15
- (12) *Ibid* p 15

(13) Computation from Central Bank Data

(14) 'Public Investment 1985-89', *Economic Review* Vol 11 No 3, June 1985, p 8

(15) de Mel, Ronnie, 'Government's Investment Priorities and expectations of the private sector', *Economic Review* Vol 10 No 2, May-June 1984, p 15

(16) 'Public Investment 1985-89', p 4

The Peradeniya . . .

(Continued from page 21)

that has beset English studies in Lanka during the past two decades. In the historical context of the Peradeniya English Dept. he has held the bridge while the other young lecturers ran away to materially better places in the West and Australia. He has brought as a special strength to the critical period of the Dept. a sound judgement, refusal to get carried away by the fashionable and an impeccable scholarship. The responses he has made to the need for change have been meaningful — the introduction of Commonwealth and Lankan literature to the syllabus, and the background studies which the pre-1956 students did not need but the present ones do. Commonwealth and Lankan English literature have not yet produced a body of work comparable in importance to what English literature has during the past five hundred years and hence is correctly given less syllabus time.

Regarding Mr. Ismail's question about the lines from Ashley Halpe's poem "April '71", "If Halpe actually wanted to know what "they" thought and felt about things why instead of writing a poem about his own feelings did he not go and talk to them?", "know" is used in the poem in a sense different from a question and answer type of knowledge. The quoted lines clearly suggest a gap in experience between the poet and the persons he writes about, ("being too old, salaried, safe and comfortable"), which makes understanding difficult or impossible between the two. What I can't understand is why the poet here feels guilty about "being too old." and why Mr. Ismail seems baffled that life (and Literature) is not all cut and dried.

'Types' and . . .

(Continued from page 19)

well that he will accept such taunting good-naturedly. So long as Blacks conform to this norm, then, Lula's "type", White liberal America, offers them the hand of friendship. No sooner do the Blacks shed this mask of conformity and act true to their real nature (as Clay does in Scene II) than Lula's type seeks to destroy them.

By the end of Scene I, then, we have the two "types" well delineated. Lula the symbol of White liberal America and Clay (up to now) the "dirty White man" (p. 31), the symbol of the Black man who, under the guise of integration, actually becomes an assimilationist, an off-white. Fittingly enough Lula invites Clay to play "let's pretend":

LULA. And we'll pretend the people cannot see you. That is, the citizens. And that you are free of your own history. And I am free of my history. We'll pretend that we are both anonymous beauties smashing along through the city's entrails (p. 21).

Lula and Clay thus attempt to take their minds off the ugly reality of racism that exists in society. They try to pretend that they are both "anonymous beauties smashing along through the city's entrails". Here, the symbolism of the subway becomes clear and apt. Two people (representative of two ethnic groups) blind to reality, ignorant of the truth — the underground, the darkness is symbolic of this ignorance — are "smashing along" — travelling at a furious speed to destruction. The action is underground, suggesting that beneath the surface of conventional social and racial relations lies the hidden truth, the canker of racial animosity.

In the flying underbelly of the city. Steaming hot, and summer on top, outside. Underground. The subway heaped in modern myth (p. 3).

(To be continued)

Letters. . .

(Continued from page 1)

I wish to suggest that this problem be viewed from an entirely different angle. We in Sri Lanka tend to make too much heavy weather over these allegations and counter-allegations that are flung about between rival candidates. They should **not** be grounds for setting aside an election. I think we should trust the voter's good sense to deal appropriately with any false or frivolous allegations. Persons who enter the hustings should be prepared to take such allegations in their stride. It hardly needs pointing out that those who offer themselves as candidates for political office cannot be too searchingly scrutinised and, such open allegations may be helpful in achieving this end. Allegations against candidates can be good for the health of a democracy. The normal law of the land should be sufficient to ensure that the allegations are not wild and reckless. Offenders should be proceeded against in their personal capacity and not as agents of a particular candidate, either civilly by the injured party or, in appropriate cases, even criminally by the state. If our present law on this point applied in the U.S.A. it is superfluous to say that no president, congressman, governor or mayor elected to office would survive an election petition.

V. P. Vittachi

Colombo 3.

National Front

Mrs. Bandaranaike addressing a meeting of the newly formed National Front in Panadura said that a section of the national press of this country has been

pressurised to black out news of the National Front. She has been proved right. Even those national papers that did publish the news did so in a casual manner.

A few days before this meeting Panadura hosted a public meeting jointly sponsored by the LSSP, CP and SLMP to put forward their point of view of the ethnic crisis. This meeting at its peak could not muster more than a few hundreds whereas the National Front attracted large crowds.

Newspapers should be free to express critical views of the conduct of the National Front, if it feels that the N. F. is detrimental to the future well-being of the nation. But they must be equally free to report freely well attended public meetings and thereby show the mood of the people. If they fail to do the latter, they are bound to lose their credibility.

V. K. Wijeratne

Panadura.

U. S. Policy . . .

(Continued from page 16)

The possibility of a much deeper U.S. military involvement in El Salvador, Honduras, and Costa Rica remains high. The probability of deeper U.S. military involvement against the Sandinistas also remains high. The United States cannot, under present policies, win in either El Salvador or — especially — Nicaragua unless North American forces become more deeply involved. In such a crisis, the domestic opponents in the United States could not stop such involvements, at least

in the short run. U.S. public opinion has seldom, if ever, stopped a President from pursuing a short-term foreign policy. In 1983 public opinion polls indicated that two-thirds of those asked said they would support intervention in Central America if another Vietnam did not result. If a Vietnam-type war was possible, however, 80 percent opposed such U.S. intervention. Within the administration itself, control over Central American policies seems to be concentrating in the hard-line group. Top State Department officials concentrate on East-West, Middle East, and arms problems, and seem willing to go along with current Central American policies in order to have the political freedom to focus and have more influence on problems outside the Western Hemisphere.

The crises, both military and economic, in the Caribbean-Central American region will therefore worsen. They could worsen to the point of more direct and massive U.S. military involvement unless the Contadora nations can more effectively pursue political solutions, unless the Contadora group and nations outside the hemisphere provide greater resources for economic development to lessen the dependency of the region on the United States, and unless U.S. public opinion and the Congress can discover ways to force the Reagan administration to make the effort to find peace more multi-lateral. A first step must be the United States deescalation of its military involvement in the region, then a waiting period to see if the political solution can begin to be implemented. If the military deescalation should occur, all of the above political alternatives would have to develop together and in a brief period of time if the current U.S. policies and the current Caribbean-Central America crises are to be changed for the better.

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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- They who protect the basic human rights of mankind
- They who guard the democratic freedoms to which each of us are entitled to as citizens

Each of us is a guardian to others who view us for their dependency in day to day life

BUT THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR GUARDIANSHIP
RESTS ON OUR DEEP CONCERN FOR YOUR FUTURE
WE ARE TRUSTED GUARDIANS OF YOUR HARD-EARNED
MONEY, GUIDING YOU ON HOW TO SPEND AND HOW TO SAVE
FOR YOU AND YOUR DEPENDENTS' TOMORROWS

SO REACH OUT TODAY
FOR YOUR LIFE-LONG GUARDIAN



PEOPLE'S BANK

A Different Kind Of Guardian For You