



LANKA

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Reggie Siriwardena reflects on Russian Nationalism

Serena Tennakoon — Chitrasena's new explorations

Sunila Abeysekera — Counter-insurgency in Peru

Allen Nacheman — The battle for Trinco

Florence Ram Aluwihare — Traditional Homelands

Mervyn D. de Silva — Facade democracy

INTRODUCING "CAT'S EYE"

A column on women by women

Also: Citizen's Committee on Tamil detainees

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WAR OR PEACE ?

**NEWS
BACKGROUND**

By the standards of the BBC, Rupavahini has certainly not come of age. They are still to put across the other point of view; and maybe they never will. But in a remarkable acceptance of the definition of news — hitherto done for them by the incredible Lañkapuwath — the television news one day last week actually had shots of the "separatist Tamil terrorists" sitting quite relaxedly alongside the Indian Foreign Secretary. And did they look like a nasty species of ape? No, they were dressed like the average man in a Colombo street — and looked like one. Will continued exposure at prime time to millions of people all over Lanka help remove the terror and the tarnish from their image?

Is the President trying to phele in this process? He told a largn assembly of Buddhist monks i-Kandy that the "separatist terrorists" were not out to destroy either the Sinhala people or Buddhism. Brave words at this juncture, even if the newly formed National Front seems to have died a natural death. So, has H. E., like many of his countrymen, been secretly listening to Uma's **Eelam Radio**? Has he, of all people, fallen a victim to the diabolical propaganda machine of the Eelamists? Will we see a further revision in the (flexible) constitution of our little island republic?

Probably not, since in the world according to the UNP, a world that is increasingly changing its contours (thou shalt not imitate Dutugemunu, J. R. even told the JSS not long ago), devolution is still not a sine qua non for a solution, or even a settlement, to the national question. The President didn't speak of power sharing with the Tamils to the monks. If that is his point of view, what of the militants? Some of them, he said, want a Marxist state in the whole country while others want a separate state in the north and east. It is in the context of this remark that the quote in the previous paragraph changes character from being merely progressive to radical. The thought that a Marxist state will not destroy Buddhism is not to be paid too much attention in our age, especially when the Nicaraguans have put cassocks in the cabinet. The President has simply realised that to Marxists, religion is no longer the ganja of the people.

All this is not journalistic face-tiousness. Rather, it represents the contradictory thinking at the top of the country. It is not to be doubted that a radical effort in re-educating the people is a necessary adjunct to a successful political solution. But it cannot be done by one speech here and another speech there. Neither can it be done by muzzling certain sections of the press. The right thing to do is to encourage the pursuit of truth. The lack of this,

as well as the contradictory settlements probably indicate that the government is not certain whether it is pursuing war or peace.

The peace talks have stalled over the business of the composition of the ceasefire monitoring committee. And, at the time of this writing, not even the personal touch of Mr. Thondaman has been able to bring about any progress on the working paper. Again, this should not surprise since it is far short of the boys' minimum demand of Federalism/regional autonomy — the implicit sacrifice of Eelam going more or less unnoticed in most sections of the public.

If the peace talks are unlikely to resume soon, and the President unlikely to be able to give the nation the promised present of peace by year's end, the next question is: will we have all out war? Of course both sides are widely reported to be arming themselves for one, and on a scale hitherto unexpected. So, will the illusory prospect of an easy victory spur one side or another to attack? Are the talks merely a time buying exercise? Have most of the militants come across to Sri Lanka in readiness for the final battle? If so, what kind of leverage has Rajiv over the militant leadership? And what kind of influence does the militant leadership have over its own rank and file, let alone the smaller groups now attacking the Forces, albeit less than successfully?

It is probably the reluctance to let the militants gain any kind of advantage or seeming advantage, that has led the Armed forces to make many rounds up of "suspects" over the past few weeks — and every such raid has been duly reported to Bhandari by the militants as a violation of the ceasefire. In the meantime, the government continues to give the widest publicity to the attacks on police stations. Thus, the main Indian interest at this moment seems to be in the

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CONTENTS

News Background	1
Cat's Eye	5
The Open Economy	7
Traditional Homelands	9
Russian Nationalism	11
The 'Dirty War' in Peru	15
Regional Issues & Superpowers	17
Leroi Jone's "Dutchman"	19
Barbara Ward Lecture — (3)	21
The Dance of Shiva	23

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formation of a ceasefire monitoring committee acceptable to both sides which would (somehow?) ensure that peace was maintained while the more important business of negotiations got under way again.

But they don't seem so far to have been able to persuade the government to name a group that would be acceptable. It is clear that the original three were not, even to them, since otherwise the government would have gone ahead. And maybe all the government is up to on that score right now, is stalling for time, until the Sri Lankan people forget they were told the govt would never back down on the composition of the committee. In the meantime, the Council for Liberal Democracy (CLD), in an intelligent yet impassioned statement notes that:

"In these past two years and more the challenge posed to Sri Lanka's survival as a nation worthy of its own past and of the open and tolerant political system which it has been its good fortune to possess, indeed the challenge to the very survival of thousands of its citizens to say nothing of their fundamental human rights has steadily grown. The forces of irrational hatred, sectarianism, racism and intolerance in all its forms have demonstrated a vicious strength, richly led by glib proposed solutions that have sought not the true nature of the Sri Lankan crisis but to avoid a meeting with reality. The continued use by many of the major actors in Sri Lankan public affairs of this grave situation as an instrument of partisan political advantage has done little to bring about a settlement and much to create the impasse in which this country finds itself today.

"As both domestic and foreign sources declare with frightening incessance, the imminence of civil war, liberal values, individualism, political, and social and economic pluralism, respect for the rights of the human person and for the immutable principles of justice, are threatened in Sri Lanka as never before. With ever-increasing might, the forces of populist and demagogic manipulation are

seeking to obviate choice, to stifle dissent, to impose the views created by 'newspeak', 'double think' and by 'lie-factories' — in a word liberal pluralism is threatened with extinction by a grotesque coalition of violence, and a manufactured tyranny of the majority.

"The Council for Liberal Democracy is convinced that that there cannot be a permanent settlement of the current conflict until racism and sectarianism have been eradicated. As the group that dominates the structure of the Sri Lankan state today and has imposed its ideology as the dominant political force in Sri Lanka for almost thirty years, the advocates of Sinhala-Buddhism, need to be combated as strongly as Tamil terrorism if the ideal of a united liberal democratic Sri Lanka is to be achieved.

"Another error in the approach to the current crisis has been the treatment of it as an exclusively racial antagonism devoid of a context. The CLD, however, had been convinced even prior to 1983 that the crisis of Sri Lankan communal relations was one facet of the crisis of liberal democracy in Sri Lanka. The erosion particularly since 1970, of individual rights, the freedom of the press, of the quality and freedom of Parliament which reached a high point of intolerant and manipulative excess with the Referendum of 22nd December 1982 and of the opportunities for political dissent and constructive criticism particularly over the last seven years, has created a climate of creeping authoritarianism which compounded the possibilities for racial hatred."

Situation of Tamil detainees

This is the text of a letter from Professor Karthigesu Sivathamby, Chairman, Co-ordinating Committee of Citizens Committees, to Mr. A. P. Hapudeniya, Secretary, Ministry of National Security, Colombo.

Let me on behalf of the Co-ordinating Committee of the Citizen Committees thank you for

(a) The assurances you gave us regarding matters relating to the detainees at the meeting we had with you on 23.09.1985. and

(b) the prompt manner you organised our visit to Welikade — the first one in which relatives were allowed to see those who are continued to be detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA).

Before placing before you some of the grievances of the detainees, we wish to express our thanks to all the officers — especially Mr. Pahalage (Inspector CID), Mr. Wilson (Jailor Tamil Ward), Mr. Dharmadasa (Deputy Commissioner of Prisons), and Mr. Balasuriya (Asst. Secretary, National Security) — who responded with great warmth and enabled us to go through with the procedures without difficulty.

The permission granted to those detainees who were seen that day,

to speak to us for ten minutes has enabled us to know of some of the hardships faced by those detainees.

We feel it our duty to bring them to your notice to enable you to redress them. The grievances are:—

(i) non-release of those already recommended for release by the Advisory Board,

(ii) continuing to keep in detention beyond the 18 month period without either indicting them or releasing them; detention now being done under the regulations governing Emergency,

(iii) not counting the period of time the detainees were kept in the various army camps for the 18 month-period; very often the 18 months count seems to start with the time they are brought to the prison,

(iv) occasional attack on some of the detainees by some officials (not those who are supervising the wards) while the detainees were taken out,

(v) not serving detention orders on all those who are being kept in detention,

(Continued on page 6)

Trincomalee : once a haven, now a hell

Allen Nacheman

ALITANY of firebombing, abduction and murder has reduced this once-bustling coastal resort, famous to mariners for centuries as one of the world's best natural harbours to a burned and gutted war zone gripped by racial violence and paranoia.

The town's lovely beaches and crystalline waters mark the eastern terminus of a jagged cross-country boundary dividing the island nation's south. Where the Sinhalese majority live, from the north and east.

Here, militants of the Tamil minority are demanding a separate State and waging a guerilla war. The military admits it cannot contain the rebels.

Trincomalee today resembles a ghost town. Almost all shops are closed, many bearing the scars of fires and explosions.

Of about 50 hotels that once thrived, only one — the Tamil-owned Rainbow Beach hotel — was still open late last week. It had four guests. Two of them foreign correspondents. "I'm afraid they'll throw a bomb in here any day now." Said the manager. Mr N. Thinakaran. "It gets worse every day. Tamil civilians are abducted on the streets in broad daylight, taken to the jungle and murdered.

"I plan on closing very soon. I will take my family to India."

Kandarathnam Sivapalan, 65. Tamil head of the Trincomalee Citizens Committee, said two of his seven sons had been assassinated in the past two years. One fell to a Sinhalese gunman on a street in the capital, Colombo, in 1983, the other was killed by a soldier at his home in Nilavali, 18 km north of here, on May 23. He said both sons had been active in Tamil separatist politics.

The latter son's widow, Saras Wathy Gangadharan 32, recalled how a uniformed man with a rifle came to the gate. "I thought he was a soldier," she said. "I saw them talking. The soldier put his gun to my husband's chest and fired.

"He fell backwards. I ran towards him. The soldier pointed the gun at me. I grabbed the two children and ran."

Commodore Justin Jayasuriya. Commander-east of the Sri Lankan Navy and coordinating officer of all military forces in the region. Acknowledged supplying weapons to a Sinhalese "home guard."

"The terrorists have automatic weapons. Home-made mortars and rocket-propelled grenades smuggled in by powerful speed boats from Tamil Nadu (southern India)." He said in an interview.

"We have neither the men nor equipment to control them. They virtually come and go as they please. We no longer go out on patrols."

Shotguns had been issued to young Sinhalese men to protect their communities against attacks by Tamil separatists.

He said that the Sinhalese and the Government had been victims of false propaganda in the foreign press which had portrayed them as the villains, and the Tamils as the heroes.

Tamil leaders claim the Sinhalese use their government issued weapons and crude petrol firebombs to systematically burn and loot Tamil homes and businesses. Kandarathnam Sivapalan said: "They have given these weapons to the worst criminal elements of the society."

Curfews are still in force and an estimated 8000 Sinhalese and 40,000 Tamils made homeless by

ethnic violence live in what the Government terms refugee camps. The Tamils mostly to the north, the Sinhalese to the south.

Gamini Wickremanayake, head guard on the Sri Lankan national railway line linking Colombo and Trincomalee, said the Sinhalese escalated their violence against the Tamils because three years of terrorism, was enough. "We Sinhalese have run out of patience," he said.

The train on which Wickremanayake works was bombed at the weekend by Tamil separatists. Four passengers were wounded and several carriages damaged.

Early last Friday, two British tourists and two foreign journalists riding in a Tamil taxi — said to be the only taxi operating in town — were taking photographs of a Hindu temple allegedly burned earlier in the month by the Sinhalese home guards.

The car was quickly surrounded by a crowd of angry Sinhalese men. Many carrying shotguns. They shouted. "No pictures! No pictures!" They forced the occupants from the vehicle, checked the foreigners' papers and slapped and punched the Tamil driver.

Ten minutes later a police jeep arrived and escorted the taxi to the police station, a heavily guarded compound surrounded by barbed wire and sandbags. The tourists and the reporters — one from Agence France-Presse, the other from India Today magazine — were placed in an office where, from a window, they saw policeman slapping the driver, a man of about 60, and thrusting rifle butts into his stomach.

An officer who said he was police chief but declined to give his name, questioned the tourists and reporters for about 45 minutes.

(Continued on page 6)

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MASTERS



CAT'S EYE



Custodial rape

RECENTLY almost all the national dailies highlighted the case of alleged torture and molestation of a young school girl of 16, in the premises of the Ratnapura police station, by a police officer of the Kahawatte police. The story (to which the *Divaina* devoted $\frac{1}{4}$ of its front page) is that, on an allegation of theft of a necklace, the girl was asked to come to the police station; there, in the presence of the woman alleging the theft, she was said to have been stripped naked, tortured and beaten. The *Aththa* also gave prominence to the case, even writing a strong editorial on the subject of police brutality; English dailies — the *Island* and *Sun* — carried the story last week. Women's organisations have also been alerted and a woman investigator was immediately sent to Ratnapura to report on the details of the case to a woman's group.

The general increase in violence against women has been highlighted by feminists, who are debating the need for changes in the law of rape, where the victim becomes the accused (you asked for it; you must have provoked him; you have a loose character etc.)

The Ratnapura incident poses the question of **custodial rape** which is said to occur when rape is committed by a male in a

position of authority or custodial control over a woman, who, uses his official status to have sexual intercourse with a woman who would otherwise refuse. The category includes the police, public servants, jailors and the staff of hospitals. (Recently a girl patient was raped in the Children's Hospital by a hospital employee)

In India, the recent famous cases of **Mathura** and **Rameezabee**, who were raped in police custody led to nation-wide campaigns of protest by women and a change in the rape law with increased punishment for custodial rape, measures for the protection of women in custody and new conditions governing the arrest of women. In Sri Lanka too, women's groups are urging that the laws be changed, and are following the Ratnapura case with great interest.

Nairobi meeting

SRI LANKA had a strong contingent of women at the two 'End of the Women's Decade' events in Nairobi last month. There were two delegations — the one for the official conference at governmental level, which included the Minister and Secretary of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Head of the Women's Bureau and delegates of government sponsored organisations such as Seva Vanitha. The non-governmental delegates were from a range of feminist and other women's groups.

The Sri Lankan women caused two minor sensations in Nairobi. One was the discovery that the publication on the 'Status of Women of Sri Lanka' by the Women's Bureau, was mainly copied from a report on women in Sri Lanka by another women's research group; the other was the flurry in the official delegation after the viewing of 'Illegitimacy', a video film based on case studies of 4 unmarried mothers in Sri Lanka — which was thought

to be detrimental to the image of 'paradise'!

Women in Detention

UNDER the PTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act) there are at present 6 women in detention without trial in Negombo, including a mother of seven. They are:

Seethadevi Raveendrarajah (33 years — 3 children), from Batticaloa.

Annapoorani — from Vangelaveli, Batticaloa.

Pavalam Chandra, from Mamankam Batticaloa.

Kandiah Sarveswari from Chankalai (Jaffna) Mother of 7 children.

Kandiah Sellamuttu, from Tampalagamam, Batticaloa and

Vinayagamurthi Malarmalai from Vavuniya.

Female Circumcision

IT is heartening to read that, at least, the question of genital mutilation of Muslim women in Sri Lanka is being publicly debated in the columns of the SNP; what is even more interesting is that liberal Muslims are showing concern. It was widely believed in Sri Lanka that female circumcision was only done in East Africa — in fact the *SUN* published an article on this 'barbaric African practice' some months ago! To which a correspondent Zohra Fawzia Alavi wrote

I would like to point out that it is a bit ironical that while writing about 'darkest Africa', we forget the fact that female circumcision is practised among Muslims in Sri Lanka... This is an unnecessary practice which goes against the rights of women. It is un-Islamic and cannot be justified on any ground.

The letter led to a protest by one M. B. M. Farook (*SUN* 24.8.85) saying that according to texts based on the Holy Quran.

It is *Wajib* (compulsory) to have every male and ever female circumcised.

It is Sunnat (optional) to have the circumcision of male made known, and the circumcision of a female kept secret.

The debate was joined by J. Deshma who asked which verse in the Holy Quran advocated female circumcision; to which Farook replied

I did not say that the female circumcision is based on quotations from the Holy Quran, but what I stated was that the literature "Fathud -Dayan" from which I quoted sets out the important theological and legal principle which is based on the Holy Quran and Hadith of the Prophet Muhammed.

While the men were debating chapter and verse, Ms Alavi wrote again (11 Sept '85) insisting that female circumcision was a pre-Islamic ritual, quoting the famous Egyptian feminist and doctor, Nawal El Saadawi.

Many people think that female circumcision only started with the advent of Islam... but it was well known and widespread in some areas of the world before the Islam era... Mohamed the Prophet, tried to oppose this custom since he considered it harmful to the sexual health of the woman.

Alavi added:

It is, today a cruel relic of a pre-Islamic age which is, mainly practised due to ignorance, the common belief being that virginity and chastity are ensured if females are circumcised.

Sri Lanka Muslims themselves must come forward and raise the issue and work towards eliminating barbaric, un-Islamic customs which can only besmirch Islam. I would therefore urge all enlightened Muslims to speak out against this custom and to mutilate the females of the next generation.

The debate continues and more details were provided by Ms Fatima Ismail (SUN 28.9.85) who wrote—

As a Muslim from the Eastern Province let me add that the community (caste) which performs circumcision among males and females are the Otha. Barbers also belong to this group.

All Muslim women have to be circumcised, if any woman converts to Islam in Sri Lanka she would not be considered a true Muslim until she is circumcised.

This is done today in nursing homes by Muslim doctors, who are perhaps themselves unaware that they are involved in a practice, which is medically unethical to say the least. Today the issue of female circumcision has been raised internationally and is being denounced as genital mutilation in international forums and by organisations like the World Health Organisation.

Before we, in Sri Lanka, become the focus of international attention, let us abolish the practice forthwith.

Women's Centre

SEVERAL women's organisations have moved their offices to the newly established Women's Centre, No. 25, Kirula Road, Colombo 5.

* They include VOICE OF WOMEN which publishes a journal for women's liberation in 3 languages; the last issue, devoted to **Women and Violence**, contains many interesting articles.

* Also at No. 25 is the WOMEN'S EDUCATION CENTRE which has published numerous pamphlets on women, as well as Monica Ruanpathirana's poems on women (Agey Kathava) and Eva Ranaweera's **Sedona** a re-publication of the first feminist novel in Sinhala.

* WOMEN FOR PEACE also has its office at the Women's Centre. They have recently been active in publishing pamphlets against racism and giving lectures in schools on the need for peace, and ethnic harmony.

* THE FEMINIST STUDY CIRCLE, which is also at No. 25, has issued a very valuable document for women entitled 'Feminism is Relevant' (Rs. 10/-) a series of questions and answers on issues affecting women. (Is Feminism a Western Fad?)

Matters ...

(Continued from page 2)

(vi) the paucity of staff proficient in Tamil to get the documents ready for matters relating to prosecution etc., and

(vii) the insufficiency of the food served.

We are sure you would take prompt action to remedy these.

Finally, let us thank you for the following assurances you gave us: —

(i) an unimpeded flow in sending letters to and from the detainees and their relatives,

(ii) permission to allow books for those detainees who are preparing for examinations,

(iii) providing us, as soon as possible (within about 3-4 weeks) details of the exact number of those detained and where, after checking with the police and other authorities,

(iv) taking efforts to speed the process of indictment or release (the delay now being at the level of the Attorney-General),

(v) allowing batches of twenty parents once in 7 — 10 days time to see those who have not yet

been seen by their relatives; (arrangement to be done through G. A. Jaffna),

(vi) allowing visits for each of the detainees once in every two months (arrangement to be done through G. A. Jaffna).

We are grateful to you for the manner you received us and listened to our requests.

We are sure that you would soon redress the grievances of the detainees and help us by instructing your officers to comply with the assurances given.

Trincomalee ...

(Continued from page 3)

The chief confiscated all films, had the four driven in a jeep to their hotel to pick up their luggage, then to the railway station where they were placed on a waiting train for Colombo.

"You have no right to take pictures here," said the chief.

"You have no right to be here. No outsiders are allowed here. This is a combat zone."

— Agence France-Presse
(From 'The Australian' 19.9.85)

Sri Lanka attempts to become an economic miracle

Mervyn D. de Silva

(Dr de Silva was the Advisor — now retired — to the Ministry of Plan Implementation)

In 1977, Sri Lanka aspired to become the 5th star in the constellation of economic miracles following Hongkong, Taiwan, South Korea and Singapore which explains how and why on the political side it became a 5-star "democracy"!

On the economic front, Sri Lanka tamely obeyed All World Bank Dictates. It devalued the rupee at a time when exports were slackening and imports were rising exponentially. It embarked on massive infrastructure development projects. It had an ambitious plan for building multistorey hotels, shopping complexes and office and residential buildings. It accelerated the infrastructure and constructional phases of river valley development, concentrating mainly on awe inspiring Headworks, Dams and reservoirs. It started Free Trade Zones, parliamentary and administrative complexes and spent lavishly on programmes for beautifying the Cities.

The economic result

Our foreign debt which was 4.5 billion in 1977 has increased to 53.68 billion in 1984. Our domestic debt which was about 18 billion in 1976 has rocketed to 52.23 billion in 1984. And, these economic imbalances are primarily due to the fact that Sri Lanka established a level of aggregate demand and associated product prices that was incompatible with its production capacity. Quite boastfully these imbalances are now being supported by loans, with the full knowledge that long term borrowing leads to a debt burden of unmanage-

able proportions, and that debt servicing difficulties will in turn harm genuine growth as they will result in foreign funds being reduced or eliminated.

Social Instability

It is a well documented fact that half of Sri Lanka's population is malnourished, undernourished, living below the poverty line of Rs 350/- per household, a statistic determined in 1979! Galloping inflation is increasing the hardships of the middle and lower income groups while the gap between the rich and the poor is deepening and widening.

The economy is reported to be growing at a terrific rate but the majority of the people are faring very badly. On the other hand a minority benefiting directly or indirectly from the development projects are adopting ostentatious styles of living accompanied with vulgar displays of their opulence. Corruption rampant in high echelons is swept under the carpet no sooner than it appears. The Cey-Nor fraud exposed in Parliament by a Cabinet Minister allegedly naming an incumbent Secretary and a Former Secretary is a case in point. There is criminal waste of men, materials and funds. Bribery is becoming accepted as the only way of surviving by both the bribers and bribees. Violence and crime, drug peddling and smuggling, gambling and vices of all kinds are making their own contributions; And, the new philosophy — the end justifies the means has been made to dominate the minds of people in all walks of life. The only ends

being money and political power. Sri Lanka is certainly treading an extremely dangerous path since 1977.

Methods used to contain discontent

When discontent grows and protests erupt and become violent and vigorous, Authoritarian Asian Leaders resort to undemocratic and repressive measures to preserve the western prerequisite of social stability. Trade union leaders are arrested and the Trade Union movements are liquidated. Newspapers are controlled. Public debate muzzled. Mass movements are undermined violently, supervised or banned, and the constitutional opposition is made weak and ineffective.

How do authoritarian governments survive?

Western countries not withstanding their clamour for the restoration of democracy in non capitalist countries, ironically help autocratic governments to continue undemocratic forms of government. Thus, in order to continue their foreign aid programmes and military commitments they require the dependent countries to have at least the trappings of democracy so that tax payers and voters back home do not complain very much. Sri Lanka following this requirement conducted a series of by-elections in carefully selected electorates and ensured that the ruling party won. It is quite obvious that this was the motive behind the government spending millions of rupees towards maintaining facade democracy by having

a presidential election, a referendum, and by elections in selected electorates in order to give a semblance of democracy. It avoided a General Election in order to escape the dissolution of Parliament. If this was done, there would have been no scope for using the Government machinery for electioneering and/or manipulating. Isn't facade democracy dictatatorship in the foetal stage?

By the Grace of Economic Powers

Authoritarian Right Wing governments survive only by the grace of superior economic powers that provide aid and grants, and the International financial Institutions such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank, which of course are controlled by political powers. These institutions support Authoritarian regimes because they provide the needed stability for economic development and for international capital searching docile cheap labour.

What is the record of authoritarian governments?

Politically there is ample evidence in the literature to show that governments can ill-afford to become too authoritarian to be morally suspect and to be totally unresponsive to the real aspirations of the majority. The overthrow of the military rule in Thailand in 1973, the violent disappearance of dictator Pol Pot from the political scene, Taraki of Afghanistan, Park Chung Hee of South Korea, and the Shah of Iran are good examples for reflection by those in Sri Lanka who may have such diabolical ambitions.

Economic side

On the economic side there is the case of Singapore oft quoted as the outstanding model of high growth based on foreign capital and industrial exports. Today Singapore is faced with an avalanche of economic ills. Its growth rate has dropped to 3% causing stunning effects on the people. Retrenchment is increasing, and manufacturing slackening. It is oversupplied with multistorey buildings of all kinds and therefore

the construction industry is slowing down. This has resulted in a dampening of demand with the inevitable fall in property prices, which in turn have created difficulties for commercial banks because properties are pledged as collateral for huge loans.

Singapore is not the only miracle economy in troubled waters. Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea that organised their economies in accordance with the exclusive model of the World Bank and other lending financial Institutions are moving towards a similar situation. Most of the countries under discussion were told that the open economy policies were by no means confined to the developed countries of the West. Their conviction was further reinforced when they were also reminded of the fact that aid programmes are governed by strategic and political considerations rather than economic incentives. But, by the time these Asian countries woke up (and Sri Lanka may wake up) the economic miracles had led to an exploitative economy based primarily on extraction and characterised by growing dependence on multinational corporations, foreign investors and creditors, the road to an autonomous pragmatic development based on carefully selected priorities with government and local enterprise in partnership was blocked for good.

Sri Lanka's Predicament

Unless Sri Lankans are afflicted with some sort of mental cataract the danger signals are there to be seen. The constitutional opposition has been silenced with the government's chief Sinhala opponent deprived of civic rights for 'abuse of power'. Law and order is in a state of collapse with the emergence of private armies that interfere with the work of the guardians of Law and order. Trade Unions have been "chastened". Religious, moral and cultural values are disappearing in the absence of courageous, forthright and articulate religious leaders. Public hypocrisy, duplicity in justice, political machination,

political and intellectual dishonesty have been made the norms of behaviour by the actions and examples of the members of the ruling party. Bribery and corruption is shocking because of the range and magnitude of the offences. The general elections which should have been held in 1983 was postponed because of a few fictitious "Naxalites". The Presidential election was conducted ahead of the general election, which provided for the entire government machinery to be used by the ruling power. The general elections that was to have followed was cancelled and Parliament which was to expire in August 1983 was extended through an unfairly conducted referendum. And then, to cap it all, on the request of the President the members of Parliament of the ruling party submitted undated letters of their resignation to him. Thus, the elected MPs virtually became political and intellectual hostages along with the people who voted for a "Just and Free" Government in 1977. And with the President also enjoying an immunity which the incumbent Chief Justice was constrained to regard as being inconsistent with the sovereignty of the People, hasn't Sri Lanka economically and politically gone beyond the basic requirements for Authoritarian rule?

Observations

Many of the Asian countries discussed, started out with parliamentary democracy, took to socialist political and economic system, and shifted on to Authoritarianism along with open economy systems. Sri Lanka on the other hand has clung on the Democracy despite changes in the economic systems, but in 1977 flung towards a completely transnationalised economic system. Will democracy have to be sacrificed at the altar of the latter?

Sri Lanka is confronted today with a well organised group of militant youth prepared to lay down their lives for an ethnic cause. It had faced an uprising of unorganised rural youth prepared to lay down their lives

(Continued on page 10)

SOME HOME TRUTHS ABOUT HOMELANDS

Florence Ram Aluwihare

WHAT IS A HOMELAND or better still a **TRADITIONAL HOMELAND**? This query is posed at a time when homelands here and elsewhere are and have been a source of controversy. About three weeks ago, I was surprised to read a bold caption (The Island 22 Aug), "**MILITANTS ARE RACIST**" says Lalith in London when addressing members of the World Federation of Sri Lankan Associations. About the same time a senior journalist had written about the "barbaric terrorists," emphasising that "they kill their kith and kin". Lalith's reason for describing them as racist was reported thus: "they speak of **HOMELANDS, THE LANGUAGE OF APARTHEID**". Did one expect such an explanation from a scholarly and responsible Minister? Curiously enough, the term homelands does not apply only to the human species. U.S. Societies for the Protection of Endangered Species speak of the traditional homeland of the small dusky sparrows as having been the salt marshes of islands off the west coast of America. Recently the Marchioness of Tavistock chartered a plane to send back to China, for a park in Peking, a rare species of deer, since this animal's homeland had been the palace gardens of Chinese royalty.

Although I can claim to be a zoology graduate, I am certainly not qualified to delve into the fields of either the political scientist or sociologist, so may I be permitted to quote relevant excerpts from the lecture titled "Realities and dreams: the ebb and flow in the politics of separatism". The lecture was delivered by Professor Morris-Jones for the International Centre for Ethnic Studies. Professor Morris-Jones is recognised not only as an expert on Indian affairs but also on Ethno-Nationalism and Commonwealth Studies and as

such he ended his academic career as Director of Institute of Commonwealth Studies and Professor of Commonwealth Studies at the University of London. Professor Morris-Jones, interviewed by Qadri Ismail for The Island had referred to homelands, amongst other matters, when answering questions about India. He said: "India is certainly a nation, but one which contains separate groups with fairly clear identities and areas of regional concentrations which I suppose you have to call nationalities. Meaning by that something which is a clear identity in terms of language and a **HOMELAND**, but which is compatible with membership of a larger nation. I think this distinction between nation and nationality is quite useful because it enables one to indicate grades of identity. So I would describe India as a mutil-national nation. And of course it is a state" (THE ISLAND 21 Aug).

Professor Morris-Jones also spoke of homelands in general terms thus: "From the viewpoint of our discussing of separatism the attribute of a homeland is perhaps the most interesting. For, clearly ethnic movements will tend to make different sets of demands according to whether the populations for which they aim to speak are territorially concentrated or instead, dispersed at large among the polity of which they are a part. If they are concentrated, demands can be located at a point on a well defined range, which extends from the diminutive to merely decentralised administration, through a measure of devolution of powers, to regional autonomy, to federalism to looser confederation, to the status of "sovereignty association" devised by Quebec. "Obviously in the case of most ethnic movements is a desire for "recognition of a distinctive cultural identity"... There

are two questions also that we may well consider: "Do movements become dormant when they are weak or when **THEY HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL AND THUS RECONCILED? DO DEMANDS ESCALATE OUT OF CONFIDENCE OR OUT OF DESPAIR?**"

Whilst I was drafting this article I came across two further references to homelands, M. A. H. Isphani writing about Mohamed Ali Jinnah in THE ISLAND of 11 September affirms that it was the discipline or Mr Jinnah's one hundred million followers which enabled him to "wrench from the unwilling hands of the British and Hindus a **homeland** for the Muslims of the sub continent in which Pakistanis and their children **LIVE AS FREE PEOPLE WITHOUT FEAR OF DOMINATION OR PERSECUTION**. (The capitals are mine). Today one is tempted to pose a question. How many in Pakistan fear domination and persecution in their homelands? On the same day (i. e. 11 Sept) G. Ratna Mallawaaratcy under the caption "Some thoughts on how to combat Tamil extremism and violence" writes of the "**STUPID NOTION OF TRADITIONAL HOMELANDS**"! May we leave it to readers to adopt either the views of this writer or the more explicit and scholarly analysis of Professor Morris-Jones?

We too have our scholars in various fields, such as history, political science, journalism and sociology, as well as some outstanding members of the United Religions Organisation. All have made invaluable contributions to peace one must also mention the Citizens Committee for National Harmony, the Movement for Inter-racial Justice and Equality and the Civil Rights Movement. How often have their suggestions fallen on deaf ears and met blind eyes. It was

however heartening to read in the *ISLAND* of 11 Sept. the point of view of the Ven. Sirimalwatte Sri Ananda Mahanayake Thero which he expressed when speaking to the newly appointed Brigadier Cyril Ranatunga, Commander Joint Forces. The Mahanayake Thero was adamant that there should be no further delay in solving the national crisis. He emphasised that "the present crisis needs a permanent solution, rather than temporary patching up". He added that "every citizen of the country no matter to which race or religion he belonged to must be ensured the freedom to enter any part of the country and make any corner of the country his home WITHOUT FEAR OR PRESSURE (Capitals are mine)

Can any right thinking intelligent Sri Lankan disagree with these sentiments? But our rulers must recognise that Government sponsored settlements of tens of thousands of new residents anywhere in the country is a very different proposition and can be a source of much tension, misunderstanding and ill will. It can never promote communal amity and peace.

It was a pleasure to read all that His Excellency the President said when addressing election meetings just prior to the polling day. He spoke of leading the country to victory, in his own way. If that way is similar to Mahatma Gandhi's peaceful pathway to victory, (as is suggested by the report of the President's speech in the press) then and only then, all must surely support him, even to the point of accepting the President, for a time, as a benevolent dictator. During those days when speaking he covered a wide range of subjects and included the years from 1926 through to 1933 and the decision to make Sinhalese and Tamil official languages. He recognized S W R D Bandaranaike as the intellectual

who pioneered the need for a federal form of Government as long ago as 1926 in multinational and multireligious nations. He presented his audience with a historical survey briefly commenting on the BC Pact of 1957 and the DC Pact of 1965 and so on. We were able to read rather more than bold headlines: we could read between the lines and readily understand the sources of the present sad conflict. Votecatching tactics of politicians and the system of "adversary democracy" has led to this impasse. S. D. Bandaranayake bitterly criticises what he calls the Westminster model and rightly so. Must we continue to lose time and dilly dally until it is too late? When will sanity and wisdom prevail? May I mention one name only, not because his views are wiser than the views of others but because he has been a outstanding young person from the age of 16 when he had the distinction of touring India, Pakistan and China as a member of Sri Lanka's Davis Cup Tennis Team. From that time he has won awards and scholarships here, in Pakistan and the USA Jehan Perera (who incidentally is the grandson of a UNP senator Dr. M. G. Perera) spent two years on leave from Harvard while holding the Knox Fellowship to study communal conflict, full time in Sri Lanka. He lived with rural families in Anuradhapura and Kurunegala and even studied ploughing technologies in Sri Lanka. This brilliant and versatile young scholar is dedicated to finding a way to solve the present tragic situation. I wish to suggest that interested politicians and others should read the pamphlet which was published in August 1984 by the Centre for Society and Religion, 81, Deans Road, Colombo 10. A second booklet was published early this year on "Articles on the Ethnic Problem." Jehan in 1985 endorses SWRD's 1926 view point. Did we have to delay for four decades? Nowhere worldwide has federalism led to separation says Jehan. The situation is grave and urgent and a decision is called for such as federalism or regional autonomy. We urge our rulers to give all Sri Lankans the solace of living in

a progressive multi-lingual 'Asian Switzerland' rather than in a 'war-torn' Lebanon, where civil strife would not only mean the tragic loss of thousands of lives, but would also create total chaos and turn back the pages of our history half a century or more.

Sri Lanka ...

(Continued from page 8)

for an ideological cause. The writing is on the wall, and if the question raised in the previous paragraph is to have a negative answer, then, the country cannot be allowed to go on in the present direction without adequate structural, constitutional, political administrative and economic adjustments. True Democracy must be restored, and with it genuine development. A Development that may be defined as a process leading to more economic well being for all, more social justice, collective self reliance, more participation by the people, not in words but in deeds, and as a process fundamentally concerned about the majority still living below the levels of poverty. To do this we have to overcome the limits of our ideas, convictions, and ways.

We must identify ourselves with them and together combat the causes of poverty in order to change that which is wrong and outdated. Learn from them serve them, plan with them, start with them on what they know and build with them on what they have.

Authoritarianism can never be a solution, because it does not leave decisions to the people. Its basic premise is that people do not know how to decide, a myth perpetuated to modern times. All authoritarianism can do and will do is to repress and obstruct any meaningful changes, and maintain the structure of power and privilege of the elite that has close alliances with industrial, commercial, trade and other bureaucratic power structures.

(Concluded)

The Bronze Horseman —

Some currents of Russian Nationalism

Reggie Siriwardena (A paper read at the International Centre for Ethnic Studies)

I want to begin by outlining the scope and structure of this paper. What I am attempting is to establish certain continuities in Russian nationalism of the pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary eras. The paper consists of three sections. In the first section I examine the views of certain nineteenth-century Russian thinkers regarding Russia's future, and relate these views to the peculiarities of Russia's historical development. In the second section I elicit certain themes from three works of Russian literature, and interpret them through the socio-political tendencies which find articulation in them. For drawing this material from literature I have three justifications. The first is that this is the intellectual terrain with which I am most familiar. The second is that the creative imagination can sometimes reach down to attitudes, conceptions, motivations, which may find no direct expression in overtly political discourse, but which nevertheless form part of the national currents of thought and feeling which affect political policies and actions. The third justification is that while the political controversies of the pre-revolutionary era are remembered only by historians and students of history, the creative literature of the past is in its major works still alive for Russian readers of today and continues to affect contemporary consciousness. The evidence of literature is particularly significant for my purpose since I am trying to unearth some underlying continuities which persist beneath the far-reaching political and social changes of modern Russian history.

Finally, in the third section of the paper I examine certain ideological developments of the post-revolutionary era as a new expression, in changed forms and under different historical circumstances, of issues which had already arisen in the nineteenth century.

I

IN THE opening chapter of his *History of the Russian Revolution*, Trotsky wrote: 'Russia stood not only geographically, but also socially and historically, between Europe and Asia. She was marked off from the European West, but also from the Asiatic East, approaching at different periods and in different features now one, now the other.' This duality of Russian society, in its European and Asian characteristics, has been a recurrent theme of historical writing on Russia. Marx, for his part, referred to Russia as an 'Oriental despotism' — a phrase which was taken up in the title and argument of a book by Karl A. Wittfogel which achieved notoriety in the cold war intellectual propaganda of the 'fifties. In using the phrase Marx was assimilating Russia with the kind of society he described in his *Letters on India* — a society organised on the basis of scattered and self-sufficient peasant communities, with a centralised bureaucratic and despotic state imposed on them. To discuss this view fully would involve an examination of the validity of Marx's concept of the 'Asiatic mode of production' — a thorny and controversial question which I don't propose to go into. Whatever characterisation one may adopt of medieval India or China,

there seems to me no doubt that serf-owning Russia can properly be described as feudal, but that its feudalism was of a different type from that of England or France. The difference lay in the much greater power of the central imperial state, which regimented the feudal classes while it also inhibited the growth of a merchant bourgeoisie. Russia's was then a bureaucratised feudalism. These specificities of Russian society were at the root of the ideological debates about its future which animated its intellectual life in the nineteenth century. Was Russia to catch up with Western Europe by taking the same path of industrialisation, capitalist growth and liberal democracy, or was she to persist in her own historic course? This was the question which was at issue in the debate between the Slavophiles and Westerners in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. One must be wary of seeing this opposition in terms of a simple division between right and left, reactionaries and progressives. It is true that the Slavophiles were often conservative upholders of the monarchy, the authoritarian state and the institutions of the Russian Orthodox Church. But Slavophilism, in some of its adherents, took the form also of a kind of conservative populism — exalting not the state but the people as the incarnation of social and moral virtues. In Dostoevsky's thinking, for instance, Slavophilism was bound up with a nationalist Christianity: Russia's messianic destiny was to redeem Western Europe by bringing her the authentic spirituality which was

alive in the Russian people. 'That star will rise in the East,' says Father Paisy in *The Brothers Karamazov*. The idealisation of native popular tradition as a response to material inferiority or political subordination to stronger foreign powers is a phenomenon familiar to us from the later experience of third world societies. But what I want to make clear here is that part of the outlook underlying the Slavophile positions was shared across the political spectrum by thinkers and ideologues whom one would describe as liberals or radicals. For instance, not only right-wing Slavophiles but also figures like Herzen and Chernshevsky saw in the Russian peasant commune — the *mir* — an institution which embodied certain collective ways of life, and with it a co-operative spirit and fraternity, which made it superior to the atomisation and individualism of Western Europe. The idealisation of the *mir* was inherited by the Narodniks, who believed that through it Russia could by-pass capitalism so that the village commune would become the nucleus of the socialist society of the future. It was Lenin's role, early in his political career to dispel this Narodnik utopia by demonstrating that, particularly since the abolition of serfdom in 1861, the disintegration of the village commune, the social differentiation of the peasantry and the growth of capitalist relations in the village were already dominant realities.

II

I TURN now to my three literary examples. The first is Pushkin's poem *The Bronze Horseman*, which takes its title and central motif from the equestrian statue of Peter the Great, which still stands in Decembrists' Square in Leningrad. It is a piece of monumental heroic sculpture, erected in the eighteenth century, and it depicts the Tsar on a rearing horse, with his right hand raised in a commanding or menacing gesture. Pushkin's *The Bronze Horseman* is not only the masterpiece of the greatest of Russian poets: it is also, to my mind, the great

test single work of Russian literature. Unfortunately, I can't present the text of the poem here, not only because it is 481 lines long, but also because I know of no acceptable translation. In fact, I doubt whether *The Bronze Horseman*, which enlists to the utmost the density and concentration of expression that the Russian language makes possible as well as its distinctive sonorities, can be translated adequately into English. Maurice Baring said long ago that it was 'worthwhile learning Russian simply for the sake of reading Pushkin', and I agree, but I am inclined to refine this statement further and say that it is worthwhile learning Russian for the sake of reading *The Bronze Horseman* alone. However, this paper isn't an essay in literary criticism, so it will be sufficient for my purpose to paraphrase and summarise the content of the poem.

The Bronze Horseman consists of a prologue and tale. In the prologue Pushkin begins by re-enacting the historic moment when Peter the Great, standing on the banks of the Neva amidst primeval swamp and forest, conceived the idea of building a city there which would 'cut a window through to Europe'. Pushkin then makes a transition to his own time: Peter's dream has been realised, and the poet goes on to celebrate the grandeur of the city and the elegance and refinement of St. Petersburg civilisation. The tale which follows has a very different tenor. It is the story of a clerk in the city, Evgeny, who has his own simple dream of personal and domestic happiness with the girl he loves. But during the disastrous flood of 1824, when the city is inundated by the Neva, his beloved Parasha's house is swept away by the waters, and there is no trace of her. Evgeny goes mad and becomes a vagabond roaming the city. One night he wakes from sleep and finds himself in the public square beneath the towering figure of the bronze horseman. He grits his teeth and shakes his fist at the statue, with an angry whisper:

'All right, you wonder-worker! Just you wait!' Terrified immediately after by the fact that the Tsar seems to turn his face menacingly towards him, he turns to run, and as he does so, he believes that he hears the rider and horse, with its bronze hooves, clattering in pursuit of him through the square. A few days later he is found dead on a little island by the shore, his body fallen on the threshold of a ruined cottage which has been washed there by the flood.

The Bronze Horseman has been read most often as a dramatisation of the conflict between individual and state. But it is important to see this confrontation in its specifically Russian context in the poem. Evgeny shakes his fist at Peter's statue because the Tsar, in his pursuit of imperial grandeur, had built his city where it was exposed to the threat of flood, and is therefore responsible for the shattering of Evgeny's dream. Evgeny's loss can be taken to stand for the human price that had to be paid for the forced development of Russia by the great modernising and Westernising Tsar. There is an opposition in the poem between the granite and iron of the city and the water which invades it: it is as if primeval Russia is taking its revenge on the Tsar who sought to transform her. However, the dialectic between prologue and tale mustn't be forgotten. Pushkin cherishes the achievements of St. Petersburg civilisation of which he was a part ('I love you, Peter's creation,' says a line in the prologue) as much as he shares the rebellious impulse of the mad Evgeny. (It is worth noting that the square which is the setting of Evgeny's act of defiance was that in which the Decembrists had gathered eight years before the writing of the poem to stage their abortive uprising against the Tsar.)

It is the ambivalence between Pushkin's prologue and tale that makes the poem still immediately meaningful to Russian readers. It

has often seemed to me that many Russian intellectuals today would probably feel a similar ambivalence in regarding the figure of Stalin, unable either to deny his constructive achievement in modernising Russia and raising her to the status of a great power, or to forget the cost of this achievement, both in lives and in liberties. Stalin was, in fact, often compared with Peter the Great by his laureates, and his most objective biographer, Isaac Deutscher, has applied to him what was said of Peter, that he 'drove barbarism out of Russia by barbarous means'.

It is perhaps a characteristic of great literature that it lends itself to being interpreted in different ways, even in ways of which the writer may not have been cognisant. John Bayley has said of *The Bronze Horseman*: 'The poem has an enduring fascination for intellectuals and theorists, and their ideologies — often of great interest and subtlety — feed on its art and produce interpretations which the very perfection and inclusiveness of that art make quite compatible with one another.'

Accordingly, my second example concerns the use that Dostoevsky made of the figure of the bronze horseman. This passage comes from one of his last novels, *The Adolescent* (that's what the Russian title means, though Constance Garnett retitled the book *A Raw Youth* in translating it into English). It expresses one of the reflections of the young hero of the book, Arkady, and the occasion is a typical St. Petersburg misty morning:

'A hundred times, amidst this mist, a strange but insistent dream has occurred to me: "What if this mist were to thin and float upwards, wouldn't this whole rotten, slimy city fly up with it too, rise with the mist and vanish like smoke, and the former Finnish swamp would remain, and in the middle of it, perhaps, for effect, a bronze horseman on his hotly breathing, overridden horse?"'

The allusion to Pushkin's poem is clear, but equally explicit is Dostoevsky's transformation of it:

the great imperial capital whose splendour Pushkin celebrated in his prologue has become the 'rotten, slimy city'. In Arkady's fantasy, after the city has vanished with the mist, the figure of the bronze horseman stands, as if in mockery of Peter's achievement, in the midst of a landscape regressed to the virgin swamp amidst which he conceived his dream.

The two variations on the theme of the bronze horseman convey somewhat differing visions of Russia's history and destiny. Pushkin shares the elan of Peter's modernising imperial drive even while he recognises the cost it involves and has apprehensions of the enduring resistance of old Russia. But in Dostoevsky's variant, what comes through is a single-minded questioning of the solidity and permanence of the Petrine legacy, to him as insubstantial as mist. The voice that speaks through Arkady's vision is that of Dostoevsky the Slavophile. It must be remembered that St. Petersburg had always been (and still is, as Leningrad) the cosmopolitan city, the 'window on Europe' that Peter intended it to be, as contrasted with old traditional Moscow. For the Slavophiles Russia had taken a wrong turning under Peter the Great, and it was time for her to return to her Muscovite roots.

My third example from literature will serve also as a bridge to the post-revolutionary era. It is the poem *The Scythians*, written in January 1911 by Aleksandr Blok, the greatest Russian poet then living. Blok's symbolist and profoundly prophetic poem adopts as a persona the figure of an ancient Scythian chief. The Scythians were a nomad people who occupied in the days of the Roman Empire the territory that is now southern Russia. They were hemmed in between the Romans to the west and the barbarian tribes to the east. In Blok's poem the Scythian addresses the Romans: 'There are millions of you: of us, there are swarms, and swarms, and swarms.' The chief identifies himself and his fellow-Scythians as 'Asiatics'. He goes on:

'Russia is a Sphinx. Rejoicing and grieving,
and pouring out black blood,
she gazes, gazes, gazes at you,
with hate, and with love.'

Blok's poem returns afresh to the old dilemma of Russian identity, and the two faces of Russia — turned west and east. His Scythian symbolism recalls a favourite image of Herzen, who in Western exile, became disillusioned with Western liberalism after the failure of the 1848 revolutions, and looked to Russia to regenerate Europe as the barbarians had reinvigorated decadent Rome. But the crucial element in Blok's poem is the dual attitude to Europe — of love and hate. The Scythian chief holds out to the westerners his last offer of peace and fraternity: if it is rejected, he says, 'we will turn to you our Asiatic face.' In Blok's vision the Russian revolution is appealing to old Europe to comprehend and come to terms with it before it is too late. The poem ends:

'For the last time — think well,
old world!
To the fraternal feast of
toil and peace,
for the last time to the
bright fraternal feast
the barbarian lyre summons you.'

Blok's poem, written only a few months after the October Revolution, when the interventionist armies of the West were poised to invade Russia, is a work of extraordinary historical insight. Though, as Blok makes evident in the poem, he clung to the hope that Europe would treat the Russian Revolution pacifically, he seems to have sensed the more likely outcome. In his diary he wrote at the same time: 'We will open our gates wide to the east.' To apprehend the far-seeing nature of Blok's vision, we must recall that at this time, it was to the European proletariat that the leaders of the Revolution, in their beleaguered fortress, were looking for aid. Blok, in a flash of premonitory understanding, anticipated by several decades the shift of the revolutionary centre to Asia and the third world.

(To be continued)

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An episode from Peru's "dirty war"

Sunila Abeysekera

Uchuraccay was a small village of about 500 inhabitants about 30 miles away from the provincial capital of Ayacucho in Peru. Today it has ceased to exist. All that visiting investigators have found left are a few broken down walls and heaps of rubble. The people of Uchuraccay have all disappeared. Looking back at the tormented history of this little village over the last two years, one can clearly see that yet another chapter has been written in its tragic story.

Since the late '70s, the Andean zone of Ayacucho has been one of the areas where guerillas of the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) group have operated openly, challenging the authorities and engaging the military in combat regularly. It is widely accepted that many parts of this area are totally out of the Peruvian government's control and in the hands of the guerillas. At the same time, the armed forces of Peru have, especially since 1983, launched a 'dirty war' in this zone, carrying out 'search and destroy' missions and terrorising the native population. In the 15 months from September 1983 to December 1984, human rights activists estimate that over 100 persons have 'disappeared' in Ayacucho and its surrounding areas alone.

The tiny hamlet of Uchuraccay, inhabited by mostly illiterate Andean Indian peasants who eked out a living, farming the slopes of the mountains surrounding them, first sprang to the limelight in January 1983. In that month, eight journalists from various opposition and left-oriented newspapers and journals in Peru — including one of Lima's leading dailies, LA REPUBLICA, — were invited by the military authorities to visit captured Sendero Luminoso camps and see sites of actual confrontations between the guerillas and the armed

500 Peruvians vanish and village razed

LIMA, Sept. 12

A remote Indian village in the Peruvian Andes where eight journalists were killed in 1983 has been razed and its 500 inhabitants have vanished, according to military sources.

Police searching for the former Mayor of Uchuraccay, 50 km (30 miles) from the city of Ayacucho, yesterday found that the sole remnants of the hamlet were a few walls marking where the church, school and municipal office used to stand, the sources said.

There were no signs of the mostly illiterate dwellers, who are accused of stoning, knifing and hacking to death the eight journalists in January 1983 after mistaking them for Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) Maoist guerrillas.

Police had gone to Uchuraccay to arrest the former mayor, sought by an Ayacucho court on charges of masterminding the killings.

— (Reuter)

forces. The journalists were flown out to Ayacucho by military helicopter. They proceeded to the outskirts of Ayacucho city, guided by a native of the area, who also happened to be the step-father of one of the journalists. They then disappeared.

Two days later, on the 28th of January 1983, their bodies, bearing marks of having been brutally bludgeoned to death, turned up near Uchuraccay. The body of their guide was never found. The reports which reached Lima stated that the villagers of Uchuraccay, seeing strangers approaching their remote village, took them to be guerillas and therefore attacked

them with sticks and stones. There were no eye-witnesses to the massacre. The bodies were flown back to Lima; emotional funerals were held. The families mourned. And so matters rested.

But two people did not intend to let matters rest there. Juana Lidia Argumedo, the step-sister of one of the journalists and daughter of the guide, rushed to Uchuraccay on hearing the news. Talking to friends and relatives in the area, she unearthed certain facts — for example, the time of the journalists' appointment with her father — which did not tally with the official version of the events as put out by the armed forces.

The father of photographer Willy Retto claimed his son's camera photographic equipment. He was surprised to find not one roll of film — exposed or otherwise — anywhere. The determination of these two persons helped the press maintain unrelenting pressure on the authorities until, at last the government was forced to order an inquiry into this incident. This inquiry was due to commence on the 28th September 1984.

On 16th September 1984, Juana Lidia was arrested on charges of aiding and abetting terrorists. She was tortured, raped and was in such a bad condition that she had to be admitted to hospital. Several attempts were made to kidnap her from hospital, but by then both human rights groups and feminists had taken up her cause and a great public outcry was raised about what had been done to her. Notwithstanding all the pressures against her, Juana Lidia took the stand in October 1984 to testify to what she had learned about her father's death. Corroborated by evidence of teachers and other responsible persons from

Uchuraccay, her statements revealed that in fact the journalists had been seen alive one day after the day on which they were supposed to have been killed. Also, their bodies had been discovered several kilometres away from where they were 'found' by the military and proof of the transport of their corpses was available. In November 1984, cameraman Retto's father came before court with some remarkable photographs. Up to date he will not say where or how he came to possess the roll of film which was probably the last to be used by Willy prior to his murder. These photos clearly showed the journalists on arrival at the outskirts of the village of Uchuraccay, near where they were actually killed. Another photograph showed some village, including the mayor posing for a group photograph together with men clearly identified as 'sinchi's (members of the Peruvian state para-military 'commando' forces), every one of them jauntily holding

a gun. This put the lid firmly on the argument put forward by the military that the villagers of Uchuraccay were unknown to them and in fact 'were innocent peasants who had never even seen a gun in their lives'.

What transpired at the inquiry became more serious each day. Evidence mounted up pointing to a deliberate conspiracy on the part of the military authorities to murder these journalists from the opposition press and then cover it up. It also revealed the extent to which the Peruvian army was using para-military troops and Andean villagers in 'covert' operations which could not be directly linked to the official armed forces.

It was clear that the authorities were becoming increasingly disturbed by the proceedings at the inquiry, and its possible findings. Meanwhile, on December 20, Juana Lidia's elder sister and the sister's oldest son, a boy of 12 years old

were killed by the army 'on suspicion of being terrorists. And, now, on September 12 1985, the village of Uchuraccay disappears. Almost one year since the inquiry into the journalists' massacre began, the entire village of Uchuraccay has been wiped off the face of this earth.

One conclusion one can draw from this chain of events is that the Peruvian armed forces have added yet another inglorious chapter to their 'dirty war'. But the long-term implications are more in relation to the newly elected government of President Alan Garcia and those promises he made to restore basic democratic and human rights to the people of Peru. Perhaps his ability to bring those responsible for Uchuraccay — not only for the massacre of the journalists but for the extinction of the village itself — will be one measure of his ability to re-establish democracy in Peru.

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REGIONAL ISSUES AND SUPERPOWERS

(This article was written at the end of a 10-week visit to the United States, recently.)

Bhabani Sen Gupta

New York

"Regional issues" are amongst the three principal items that will dominate the first summit meeting between the United States and the Soviet Union coming November. The other two are arms control and bilateral relations. The preparatory approaches of the two superpowers to the summit are a study in contrast. While Mikhail Gorbachev has chosen to be conciliatory, the Reagan administration has determined to be "tough". The "tough" line on weapons testing, the determination not to relent on the so-called Star War programme, the decision to involve the White House directly in guiding the military intervention against the Marxist regime in Nicaragua, the freezing of US relations with Cuba, the accusation that the Soviets are using some kind of chemical dust to trace the movement of Americans in the USSR, all of these and several other American actions are part of a whole piece of tactical approach to the first meeting the 75-year-old US president will have with a Soviet leader since he stormed his way to the White House in 1980.

"Regional" issues mean issues in the Third World on which the two superpowers differ radically and are locked in actual confrontation. There are several Third World regions that come under this category. The Middle East. The Persian Gulf, Southern Africa. Central America. The Western Pacific. Afghanistan, and, therefore, South Asia.

Since the turn of the decade of the 1970s, the United States has been urging the Soviet Union to observe "restraint" in Third World

regions so that the balance of power in these regions, which is generally favourable to the West, is not altered "unilaterally." The principles of detente that were written into the 1972 Moscow communique enjoined on both powers to observe restraint. In the mid-70s, however, the victories of Soviet-backed national liberation struggles in the Indochina states, Angola and Mozambique, especially the use of over 30,000 Cuban troops in defence of the Marxist-Leninist revolutions in southern Africa, convinced the US that Moscow would not observe "restraint" in the Third World. The climax, in the American view, was reached when the Soviets intervened with a contingent military force in December 1979 to defend the wobbling Marxist revolution in Afghanistan.

The Soviet Union, of course, never agreed that detente meant a truce in the national liberation struggles in the Third World. Nor did the Soviets see any reason why they must refrain from extending material and moral help to these struggles, which they have always seen as an integral part of the worldwide struggle against imperialism, spearheaded by the Bolshevik revolution. On its own part, the United States has never wanted to concede to Moscow a role in peacemaking in the Middle East. The Soviet Union continues to be co-chairman of the never-held Geneva conference for a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Four American presidents, from Nixon to Reagan, have stuck to the "linkage" concept framed by Henry K. Kissinger in the early 70s. "Linkage" means an organic

connection between detente and status quo in the Third World. It means the Soviets cannot expect to enjoy the fruits of detente — technology, trade and credits together with stable limitation and control of strategic arms — and continue to fuel and support decisively revolutionary struggles in the Third World. On their own part, the Soviets have never accepted "linkage" as a workable basis of superpower relations. In Soviet perceptions, detente stems from a set of objective realities, not from a sudden upsurge of the milk of peace and goodwill in imperialist breasts. The same objective factors which plough the furrows of detente also beat the path of the triumph of revolutionary national liberation struggles in the Third World. The objective conditions are, primarily, a "decisive" shift in the overall global balance of power in favour of socialism and national liberation.

Ronald Reagan stormed his way to the presidency riding the crest of a conservative, hawkish backlash in the United States. In the five years he has occupied the Oval Office, the United States has adopted a firm hawkish line towards both the Soviet Union and its socialist allies and Soviet-oriented national liberation struggles. In fact, Reagan added the glint of his conservative ideology to the Kissingerian concept of "linkage" which was basically realpolitical. In Reagan's view, the Soviet Union was linked organically with each every troublespot in the Third World. If the Soviet Union did not exist, there would have been no violent pressure for radical change in any Third World region. Reaganism, then, ideologically matched Soviet communism. As Moscow saw the Soviet Union as the vanguard of the national liberation struggle, so did Reagan's Washington. As the Soviets perceived the imperi-

alist policies of the US and other former colonial powers of Western Europe, so did Reagan's Washington perceive the Soviet Union as the root cause of Third World upheavals. Indeed, the Reaganists turned conventional concepts of Right and Left, Reaction and Progress upside down. For them the real national liberation struggles were struggles against communist regimes anywhere in the world. The national liberation struggle in Afghanistan is being waged by the Afghan rebels. In the perception of Reagan America, the contras of Central America are progressives; the leftist rulers of Nicaragua are reactionaries. Fidel Castro of Cuba is a tyrannical despot, Duarte of El Salvador is a defender of freedom.

This basic Reaganite, Rightwing vision of Third World conflicts and the ideological prism through which social and political cleavages in the developing countries are seen remain unaltered as Ronald Reagan pours over the briefs that are being written for him in preparation for his summit encounter with Mikhail Gorbachev.

Encounter. That's what the summit is going to be. The American ideological position is as dialectical as the Soviet; they are merely the opposite of one another. Those who are grooming Ronald Reagan for the summit believe that from an encounter alone can the fluids of durable understanding be extracted. Confront the Kremlin jaw-jaw and eyeball-to-eye-ball. They will blink, as Khrushchev did during the Cuban missile crisis. So runs the gist of the American argument.

The Reagan administration appears to have concluded, presumably from the preliminary talks between the US secretary of state and the Soviet foreign minister and the communications that have taken place through diplomatic channel, that there would be no agreement on regional issues at the November summit. Which means that the United States and the Soviet Union will continue to be at loggerheads in all conflicted Third World regions. There is no likelihood of American public opinion protesting effectively manifestations of the Reagan administration's Third World strategies. Mr Reagan's popularity continues to be high. The latest New York Times/CBS Gallup poll shows

that 65 percent of Americans approve the president's handling of affairs. The poll was taken immediately after Mr Reagan's cancer surgery in August. His defence of the South African regime may have slightly reduced public approval of his foreign policy. But few Americans see South Africa in the larger context of Third World politics. The apartheid issue relates more perceptibly to the black-and-white divide in America's domestic politics. Some Republican senators and congressmen are afraid that the president's most equivocal position on the racist regime in South Africa may cost him some black support during the congressional elections scheduled for 1986. The state department, however, has been trying to amend the president. It has called for the release of the president of the banned South African National Congress, Mandela, whom Mr Reagan has all but dubbed a communist, and pressed president Botha to include Mandela in political talks with the blacks, which, in all probability, Botha will shrug off in anger if not in scorn.

The Soviets are not unduly worried about an accord with the Americans on "regional" issues. The cleavages are so deep and rooted to historical processes that accords are indeed difficult to churn out. American foreign policy is generally "now" oriented. Every American president wants to change foreign policy as soon as he enters the White House. Few presidents in recent years have had the talent and the time to frame long-term foreign policies which could survive the occupants of the White House.

If "linkage" has had the support of four successive presidents, it is because American interests in the Third World have not changed in the last 15 years. Each of the four presidents, however, has had his own concept of "linkage". Nixon's concept was realpolitik; he would have leaned on a give-and-take praxis of trade-offs, conceding vital Soviet interests in exchange for vital American interests, a kind of Yalta approach. Ford would have been guided by his secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, to work out geopolitical balances of power on "regional" issues. His main foreign policy success was the so-called Ford

Doctrine that opted for a balance of power in the Western Pacific among the four leading powers, the US, the USSR, China and Japan. It was a balance in favour of the US, but it conceded the legitimate Soviet interests in the Western Pacific. Carter, given time and not beset with the Iranian crisis which doomed his administration's foreign policy thinking to frustration and failure, would have worked with six identified "local influentials" — India one of them — rather than the USSR to build architectures of "regional" balances. Reagan's approach is explicitly ideological.

Whether or not bilateral US-Soviet relations improve as a result of the November summit, or the path to strategic arms limitation or control becomes somewhat easier, there will be no superpower understanding in conflict-prone Third world regions. In other words, tensions and conflicts in the Third World would continue to be fueled by superpower rivalries and confrontations.

In this game, the Soviets are likely to win in the medium and long run. After Afghanistan, the Soviets are not expected to send in their troops to another Third World country for a number of years. But they will not stop supplying arms to viable militant forces fighting oppressive regimes or regimes seen by regional or national natives as imperialist or colonialist. For instance, the African National Congress will continue to receive arms from the Soviet Union; so will SWAPO which is struggling for the independence of Namibia.

The principal weakness of the United States in the Third World is that most of its local allies are no longer strong enough to play a significant role in building reassuring regional stability. They are indeed getting weaker. Not in military power or arsenals. But in political and economic stability without which military might is often ineffective. This description applies with only minor variations to most of the local allies of America. South Africa in southern Africa and the Horn. Saudi Arabia in the Persian Gulf and Arabias Egypt in the Middle East. Israel. Pakistan in South Asia. Philippine. in the western Pacific. Thailand in South Asia.

(To be Continued)

THE CRITICS

Tissa Jayatilaka

TO say that *Dutchman* raised a critical hornets' nest is to understate the reception the play received. Given the socio-political climate of the 1960's (the civil rights struggle, the Black Power movement, the emerging Black aesthetic) such a response to the play was, perhaps, to be expected. Jones was not only a new voice but a potentially dangerous one — dangerous to that segment of society which views any effort on the part of the Afro-American to better his lot as subversion. The *Newsweek* theatre critic put it aptly:

There are two ways to domesticate an original and dangerous new playwright. The first is to praise his obvious virtues while letting his subtly radical ones go unseen; and the second is to disarm his personal vision by enlisting it in some general social or cultural cause. If, like LeRoi Jones, the playwright is a Negro, the temptation to play lion tamer becomes irresistible. Predictably, the first professionally produced play of Jones's, *Dutchman*, has been hailed for its "raw power" and "explosive violence," and at the same time interpreted as simply one more document on the inter-racial crisis we are undergoing.¹

The *New York Times* theatre critic Howard Taubman felt there was nothing of value in *Dutchman*. In fact he did not even consider Jones's piece a play. In his view, *Dutchman* was "an explosion of hatred rather than a play" and everything about it was "designed to shout."

Mr. Jones writes with a kind of sustained frenzy. His little work is a malange of sardonic images and undisciplined filth. The impact of his ferocity

would be stronger if he did not work so hard and persistently to be shocking.²

The patronizing tone, the arrogant confidence in the breath-taking pronouncement of this critic do not conceal his fundamental confusion. If the theme of the play were not the crucial one it is — at least for those interested in working towards minimizing Man's inhumanity to Man — one would dismiss these injudicious and unfortunate comments of Taubman's as mere critical misadventure.

But this is not all. In similar vein, if articulated slightly more intelligently, is Stanley Kauffmann's essay in *Dissent* (Spring, 1965). Kauffmann expresses the opinion that the playwright has received more attention than he deserves and then promptly denounces him as a fake.

LeRoi Jones has already had more attention, more production of plays, more publication, more criticism and news comment than — at any less opportune moment — he could conceivably merit. But one aspect of his work and persona seems worth further analysis, hopefully as counteraction. This is his place in the Tradition of the Fake.³

Kauffmann's thesis seems to be that because Jones has a White wife and teaches modern American poetry at the New School and Columbia University, he has no right to say such things as "America is the source of Western Culture... a culture whose time has come and which is rotting at the roots...."⁴

Several critics (Kauffmann and Taubman are excellent representatives of the type) complain that Jones's play contains too much violence. However, these same critics overlook the violence in all of Greek drama, which they extol. Almost identical acts of violence can be noticed in *The Oresteia*, in *Oedipus Rex*, and in *Medea* as in Jones's play. One significant difference is motivation: the Greeks seek familial and personal revenge; Blacks seek liberation. Perhaps it is the motivation that troubles these critics.

The reaction of Allan Lewis in his survey of the then contemporary theatre is generally characteristic of critical attitudes referred to above:

LeRoi Jones writes with powerful imagery and savage intensity, but the play (*Dutchman*) is weakened by faulty structure... The play is an aspostrophe to hate, reviling those who pretend friendship only to serve as executioner, and castigating the white for dragging the Negro down to the animal level, but LeRoi Jones's persona catharsis lacks dramatic form.⁵

The curious fact is that in the same study Lewis praises Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story*, a play which smacks as much, if not more, of "personal catharsis" and is as seemingly episodic as *Dutchman* in structure.

One notices therefore a double standard being applied to Jones's *Dutchman*. One perceives a lack of objectivity on the part of the critics who have evaluated LeRoi Jones the playwright. On the whole, the "establishment" critics have tended to dismiss Jones as a mere racial propagandist with little or no sense of the dramatic, while the "non-establishment"

2 Howard Taubman, "The Theater: 'Dutchman'," *New York Times* (March 25, 1964), p. 46.

3 Stanley Kauffmann, "LeRoi Jones and the Tradition of the Fake," *Dissent* 12 (Spring, 1965), p. 64.

4 LeRoi Jones, *Village Voice*, (December, 1964) p. 10.

5 Allan Lewis, *American Plays and Plays of the Contemporary Theater* (New York: Crown Publishers Inc., 1965), pp. 253-254.

1 ("Underground Fury," *Newsweek* April 13, 1964), p. 60.

critics have seen in him a new messiah. Theodore R. Hudson, who has written one of the two major critical works on Jones, discusses this ambivalent attitude very well:

For so controversial a man as LeRoi Jones, objectivity is important, for it is easy to like or dislike his work on ethnic, ideological or political grounds. It is almost a truism that one can tell the ethnic and cultural (and sometimes, political) orientation of a reviewer or critic of a given work by Jones. Too often the non-black, culturally traditional, or artistically conventional critic will find Jones lacking in technique and offensive in content. Too often the black (as different, in current connotation, from Negro), culturally non-traditional, or artistically unconventional critic will find Jones, especially as Baraka, progressive in technique and a well of truth in content. So to various critics, Jones is artist, eyegouger, illuminator, racist, moral conscience, demagogue, or prophet.⁶

It seems to me that the uncompromising reality with which he has exposed the racial myths of American society has brought on the critics' hostility towards Jones. They have permitted their own political convictions to cloud their judgment. They seem unable to face up to the truth. **Dutchman** is good theatre even if we judge it by the touchstones of received literary criticism — that is, by Western literary models. In the context of the present study, however, such a consideration is a non-issue. We know that Jones repudiated such literary models and wished to create his own in his search for a distinctive Afro-American sensibility. He wanted to develop a "Black Consciousness," and for him a necessary prerequisite for such a consciousness was a turning away from conventional Western models:

Clay in **Dutchman**, Ray in **The Toilet**, Walker in **The Slave**, are all victims. In the Western sense they could be

heroes. But the Revolutionary Theatre, even if it is Western, must be anti-Western.⁷

Larry Neal, one of Jones's contemporaries, has also commented on the Jonesian conviction that a Black artist has to shed his predilection for things Western:

The task, as Jones sees it, is to develop "Black Consciousness," a Black spiritual frame of reference based on the humanism of the Bandung (non-white) world. The coming into being of such a spirit implies a revolutionary dynamic.⁸

In the light of the above comments, to dismiss Jones on the basis that his plays lack "universality" or that they are "structurally weak" is to judge him by the literary canons of the very tradition he claims to have abandoned, the Western Christian tradition. To judge him thusly is, to my mind, a futile exercise, but it is the predisposition of "establishment" critics to do precisely this. And in this predisposition we notice the double standard spoken of earlier.

This double standard has been consistently applied. European dramatists such as Bertold Brecht and Antonin Artaud wrote plays that deviated profoundly from received dramatic standards, but neither Brecht's "Epic Theatre" nor Artaud's "Theatre of Cruelty" has been dismissed on the grounds of weak structure or a lack of universality. Arthur Miller's notion of tragedy (in relation to *Death Of A Salesman* in particular) differed significantly from that of Aristotle. Except, however, for a handful of critics who voiced protest, nobody dismissed Miller as a writer of structurally weak plays lacking in universally valid themes. What is needed, then, is to seek a definition of "universality" that is not ethnocentrically based. Lloyd H. Brown has noted that those who support a Black aesthetic

question the scholarly critic's traditional tendency to insist on the universality of art. They see this insistence as a kind of evasion because, in their view, the critic's insistence that "serious" art transcends racial, regional, and cultural considerations simply allows the critic an erudite rationale for shirking the responsibility of learning about those considerations in the first place. The "universal" criterion is particularly susceptible to this kind of attack, but not because black aesthetic supporters necessarily deny that black art can have a "universal" appeal. The criterion is suspect in this context because its application to non-white literature often smacks of a racial double standard. Hence the history of western literary criticism is replete with socio-political, religious, regional and philosophical approaches to Western writers (Shakespeare, Milton, Dostoevski, and Tolstoy, for example); but there has been a tendency to dismiss the social and ethnic themes of black literature as incompatible with serious art since the latter is supposed to transcend mere race and ethnicity.⁹

In order to overcome the confusion of the critics to **Dutchman** and Jones we need, above all, to trace carefully the evolution of Jones's life and career. Such an exercise would help us avoid this confusion and enable us to see the Jonesian achievement in its proper context. It will lead us to an examination of Jones's role in the Black Power movement of the 1960's. Jones together with Larry Neal, Maulana Karenga and other contemporaries, was bent on evolving a Black aesthetic, that is, on giving shape and form to a distinctive and authentic Afro-American sensibility. The purpose of such an enterprise was to give the Afro-American a sense of identity. Literature, for Jones and his contemporaries, therefore, became a means to an end.

(To be continued)

6 Theodore R. Hudson, *From LeRoi Jones to Amiri Baraka* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1973), p. 178.

7 LeRoi Jones, "The Revolutionary Theatre," in *Home: Social Essays* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1966), p. 211.

8 Larry Neal, "The Development of LeRoi Jones," in *Imamu Amiri Baraka A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Kimberly W. Benston (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1978).

9 Lloyd W. Brown, *Amiri Baraka* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980) p. 48.

New roles for the UN and the international community

Richard Jolly

This brings me back to today — and to the greater role which I believe the UN itself could and should play in supporting a broader approach to adjustment as I have earlier outlined it. The UN, in the sense of the core of agencies directly under the Secretary General, has some very natural advantages — one could say comparative advantages, in fulfilling such a role. The technical agencies of the UN are multi-disciplinary and already concerned with a variety of the broader but often neglected areas of development — women's concerns, children's needs, urban problems, environment, etc. They include the commissions with their special knowledge and focus on the main regions of the world. They also include four major agencies with resources to support development: UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, which together provide some \$2.5 billion of grant support to developing countries each year. And outside this circle are the specialized agencies of ILO, WHO, FAO, and UNESCO.

The common element of the core of agencies and the four outside is their human focus and concern, a human focus which is by no means absent from the programmes of the World Bank, but certainly less marked in World Bank and the IMF than in these other agencies. It would be a natural approach to bring the UN agencies together in support of some form of special and coherent commitment to the human dimension of adjustment, not merely as a short term stop-gap arrangement but as a means for strengthening long term revival and development on a new basis.

There would need to be, of course, close links, **closer links**, with the World Bank — but not

so close as to merge identities. There are in my view, great advantages in approaching the human dimensions of development with the human concerns and human centred objective uppermost in ones mind, rather than from the view points of cost-benefit analysis or with an instrumental view of people primarily as human capital or an input into some abstract process of development. Closer links between development agencies of the UN and the World Bank and a clearer definition of their respective roles would greatly help, but a merger would be unfortunate.

The IMF raises different issues. Although some of us passionately believe that the IMF needs to take more conscious account of malnutrition and other indicators of human welfare, there will be, I suspect, a strong consensus for keeping its **operations** limited to the economic and financial mechanisms of adjustment.

The IMF view, as I understand it is that it has neither the staff nor the mandate nor the technical capacity to extend their analysis and actions much beyond the existing frame. This need not matter, **provided** the IMF consciously accepts that the human impact of adjustment in the short run, and not only in the long run, is a matter of vital concern. It also needs to ensure that its own guidelines and approaches are broad enough to permit governments and others to take positive actions to protect the nutritional status of vulnerable groups with whatever priority a country chooses. Note that such concerns are already in **principle** provided for in the IMF's Articles which identifies multiple objectives for funds actions, including providing and maintaining high levels of em-

ployment, incomes and economic development as **primary** objectives.

Indeed there already are precedents for the IMF to look at the nutritional effectiveness of food subsidies and food arrangements. The critical change will be not so much an alteration in their terms of reference but the willingness to be more responsive to specific welfare measures when a government proposes them and the acceptance of a more flexible and pragmatic approach to the use of policy instrument such as targeted subsidies.

In this sense, a macro-frame for adjustment is indeed needed and must be adapted to measures to protect nutrition and improve the income of the poorest in two senses.

Micro rules must permit sectoral efficiency in protecting human needs with the resources available and in ways in keeping with economic, social and cultural context of each country. Approaches to cost recovery of water, education health, services, etc. ought to be matters left to national choice and political style.

I well recognize that may argue that the IMF and the Bank, with their particular voting structures and constituencies had no interest in permitting such flexibility of economic approach, or perhaps, better of political approach. This may well be a justification of certain governments at the moment. But in the 40th year of the UN, there comes a point where the basic values of national sovereignty need to be re-affirmed. Keynes himself recognised that the Bretten Woods organizations ought to operate without interference in domestic polity. There is nothing essentially radical about re-affirming this in 1985.

(To be continued)

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THE DANCE OF SHIVA — BOLD AND AMBITIOUS

Serena Tennakoon *(A student of Princeton and Cornell Universities, the author is currently completing her doctoral studies in Anthropology).*

THE ARTS

IT was with great anticipation that I looked forward to the Festival of Dance presented by the Chitrasena-Vajira Dance Foundation after their 3 years absence from the stage. During this time the Chitrasena School of Dance was temporarily dislocated and is still engaged in acquiring the necessary financial resources to build a permanent School of Dance. The Festival of Dance, which was held at the Navarangahala from 21 — 27 September, was intended to serve as a fund-raiser for this project. Witnessing a half-empty hall on two nights, I hoped that the other nights were more successful. However, given the new trends in cultural activity in Colombo, it is unlikely that dance-dramas can compete with beauty pageants to finance worthy causes.

The Festival of Dance included 5 days of The Dance of Shiva and ended with two performances of their 1978 production of Kinkini Kolama. I will restrict my review to The Dance of Shiva.

The first part of the evening's program, titled Anjali, explored a broad repertoire of dance and music with a clear emphasis on the Kandyan traditions. The curtain opened on an invocation to the gods (Purappad) from Kathakali dance-drama Ravibandu, who has trained at the Kerala Kalamandalam, gave a fluid and gripping performance. The other dance items included Naga Kanya (based on the poetic conceit of woman as graceful snake), Devadatta and the Swan, Dawn and Night, Narileela, Ridmaranga (a selection of Kandyan dances performed by Upeka), festive Indian folk dance and Tridhara. Of these, Narileela used innovative choreography to evoke the various stages in the life of a woman from birth to adulthood. Samanthi, later joined by Ravibandu, captured well the playfulness and lyricism of the musical improvisations of sitar, flute and violin. Tridhara unravelling 3

of the main dance traditions in this country, was the only item which featured Vajira who executed the Kandyan dance with characteristic skill and grace. She was joined by Upeka representing the Ruhunu tradition and Samanthi interpreting the Sabaragamuwa style. Some excellent coordination by the three dancers and their drummers notwithstanding, it was clear that the Kandyan strand dominated Tridhara.

Among the musical items, Bhe-rivunda was outstanding. The vibrant versatility of the Kandyan drum, the gatabera, was displayed with excellent orchestration by the 4 gatabera artistes, Piyasara, Siri Ahugoda, Ravibandu and Sumedha.

This program should be commended for including not only instrumental but also vocal music, again drawn specifically from the Kandyan (folk) tradition. Kanthi Silpadhipathi gave a competent performance although at times she strained to compete against an accompaniment that seemed too heavy.

The Dance of Shiva is a significant new contribution to the modern dance-drama genre in Sri Lanka. Set to Ravi Shankar's Concerto for Sitar and Orchestra, the dance retells the stirring story of Shiva and Sati. There are many refinements of the Hindu myth but the dance deals with the following main episodes.

Sati, the daughter of Daksha, chief of the Prajapatis, performs meditation with the aim of winning the then ascetic god, Shiva. The gods (Brahma and Saraswati, Vishnu and Lakshmi) prevail on Shiva to find a partner and he agrees only on condition that he finds a woman whose meditative powers match his. Sati is the perfect choice. They meet and dance together in joyful harmony. However, Shiva and Daksha antagonise each other: Shiva refuses to greet Daksha at the horse sacrifice arranged by the gods, and Daksha

retaliates by not inviting Shiva and Sati to his celebration. Sati intercedes with her father and decides to attend Daksha's horse sacrifice. When she arrives with Shiva's retinue, Daksha humiliates her by insulting Shiva. Sati grieved and mortified immolates herself on the sacrificial fire. Then Daksha's forces and Shiva's retinue confront each other ending in the defeat of Shiva's men. Shiva hears the tragic news of Sati's death compounded now by his own defeat at Daksha's hands, and his anger knows no bounds. He dances with a furious passion that destroys the world.

During the first half, music mood and movement matched each other convincingly. The opening sequence of the concerto is both cosmic and contemplative. Upeka as Sati moved with meditative grace while the elements — water, earth and wind — echoed and expanded her mood in nature. The tension between creative energy and contemplative repose was perfected in the dance of Shiva and Sati. Channa who excels in extracting emotion from the slightest gesture, danced with a controlled passion matching Upeka's serene bliss.

This rapturous union was superbly contrasted with the confrontation between father and daughter. Ravibandu danced Daksha with an admirable combination of technical skill and angry pride. However, this role demanding tremendous power and personality, could have been more convincingly interpreted by Chitrasena. Sati's transformation from serene joy to anguished shame and finally, the strong determination that guided her to the sacrificial-cum-funeral pyre was handled superbly by Upeka. As in the previous sequence with Channa, Upeka's dancing was beautifully poised between emotional engagement and disengagement.

The close bond between music and dance which contributed to the

success of the first half of the drama, grew loose during the second half leading to an anti-climatic finale. In the confrontation between Daksha leading his men and Nandi with Shiva's retinue, the essential martial spirit could not be sustained by the music. The mimetic force of their engagement was further eroded with an unnecessarily literal touch, the crude, short spears of the warriors. This proved to be a disappointing prelude to a rather tame cosmic dance of destruction. While inappropriate music must be held primarily responsible for its failure, this final sequence also lacked sensitive choreography and lighting. Furthermore, Channa's dancing failed to convey Shiva's terrible anguish turned cosmic wrath. In this context, the dance-drama taken as a whole was more effectively the Dance of Sati than the

Dance of Shiva.

Despite these shortcomings, The Dance of Shiva was a bold and ambitious attempt to match and combine innovative development in eastern and western music with a dance form inspired by Hindu, Kandyan and modern idioms. This synthesis between the traditional and modern was particularly imaginative when the links between stage and shrine were emphasised: at the beginning and the end of the performance, the entire cast payed their homage to the shrine of Nataraja, the dancing Shiva, to the Bhajan music, Brahma Murari.

The Chitrasena-Vajira Dance Foundation has to be congratulated for reminding us of the richness of our collective heritage and engaging us in a rewarding exploration of new artistic frontiers.

REMOVABLE OBJECT

Catch him by the scruff of his neck,
Sit down him — no
force — show him the truth.

Her also.
Without screaming.
Eliminate
all their contorted thinking.

The library burners may rant
Tamil is a dirty word. But
we know this
is a different different people country.

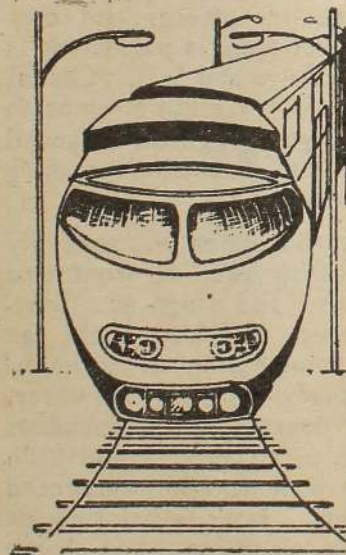
Only, we have to make all equal
And can't bomb the **Mahawamsa**.
Borders don't bother us. No
fear. We
will smash the curse.

— M

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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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dependency in day to day life*

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