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LANKA

GUARDIAN

Vol. 17 No. 13 November 1, 1994 Price Rs.10.00 Registered at GPO, Sri Lanka QD/33/NEWS/94

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ARMY: ONE STEP FORWARD?

Mervyn de Silva

I HAVE FULL CONFIDENCE IN THE ARMED FORCES — Prime Minister. The banner headline in the state-run *DAILY NEWS* became in turn the lead item in the Friday morning bulletin of the state-owned SRI LANKA BROADCASTING CORPORATION (SLBC). Prime Minister Chandrika Kumaratunge of the newly elected PEOPLES ALLIANCE (PA) had been rudely awakened, it would appear, to the facts of life and political realities, in a war-torn little island. In little over a decade, the army has grown and grown; a ceremonial army has become a professional force, an institution. Quantity has led to a qualitative change. For the Paris-educated Chandrika and her high I.Q. counsellors, all members of Colombo's academic elite, two months have been an instant-learning process. The Great Teacher has been none other than Velupillai Prabhakaran, an "O" level drop-out. And Prabhakaran's war has not only militarised southern (Sinhala) society but given the army a decision-making role, a seat in the security council, with a quasi-veto on all matters of war and peace.

But it is elections, parliamentary and presidential, which now concenate the mind of the political elite and the major parties. The demands of the forthcoming battle of the ballot, the army fears, will determine the cabinet's options on the conduct of the war, on operational issues; Pooneryn for example, a strategic base which the LTTE tried to overrun last year and sacrificed over four hundred (400) guerrillas in its massive

assault on the heavily fortified network of camps. The army lost more men than the LTTE but retained control of Pooneryn.

Pooneryn severely restricts LTTE movement between the Jaffna peninsula, the Tamil heartland, and the rest of the northern province. The "traditional homeland" in the Tamil Eelam discourse, this homeland includes also the green fields of the eastern province, at least its northern part, all Tamil-populated districts. What is more it includes Trincomalee, one of the world's finest harbours, an ideal site for "free trade" or export promotion zone. It is economics rather than *lebensraum* which determines LTTE political-military strategy, and its supportive propaganda

Right now, the LTTE feels bottled up in the peninsula. So, its first demand to the P.A. "peace negotiators" is the dismantling of the Pooneryn base where every person going north or coming from the peninsula is subjected to the closest "customs" and army inspection a few LTTE cadres do slip through but 'Tiger' movement is severely restricted. Which is why, the LTTE has built its own "navy", probably the first major guerrilla group to do so. This also explains operations like the recent "suicide attack" on the Sri Lanka navy's training ship. A S.L. navy captain and his mate were taken prisoner.

LTTE supremo Prabhakaran, a militarist and proud of it, may not be conversant with the ideals and practices of democracy but he has an intuitive grasp

of its weaknesses, certainly of those institutional ceremonies that open to a guerrilla commander a "window of opportunity". Prime Ministers and presidents, ministers and opposition leaders, party bosses and M.P's must come out into the open — esplanade, town hall or village green. It is on that sound, reasonable assumption that the LTTE's brilliant intelligence chief, Pottu Amman, mounted an operation were the target was the co-signatory of the India-Sri Lanka "peace accord" under which Delhi sent to Sri Lanka's north and east a "peace-keeping force" twice as large

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Price Rs. 10.00

Published fortnightly by
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd.
No. 246, Union Place
Colombo - 2.

Editor: Mervyn de Silva
Telephone: 447584

Printed by Ananda Press
82/5, Sir Ratnajothi Saravanamuttu
Mawatha, Colombo 13.
Telephone: 435975

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as the island's own army. Prabhakaran, who was locked up in a Delhi hotel until LTTE acquiescence was obtained, never forgave Mr. Gandhi for this gross betrayal and the humiliation that the "Tigers" had to suffer. He settled scores — his way. After, all Rajiv had also betrayed his mother who had trained the 'Tigers' to fight Jayawardene's pro-U.S. regime. Jayawardene is alive. He did not use the "Tigers" for his purposes and discard them. As a Sinhalese leader, he had done his job.

President Premadasa had helped the LTTE with sophisticated weapons to fight the I.P.K.F. because the huge Indian military presence had allowed the dormant J.V.P. of Rohana Wijeweera, a Che Guervaris revolutionary in the 60's and 70's to re-appear in a new, ultra Sinhala nationalist uniform. He was now an anti-Indian militant leader in the same mould as the anti-Vietnam Pol Pottists. Once the I.P.K.F. was forced out, Premadasa allowed the army to go for the "Tigers".

The "treacherous Premadasa" had to be punished. The "order" activated Pottu Amman's department. An LTTE undercover operative infiltrated the President's household. The presidential pattern of behaviour was studied. On May Day, Premadasa the punctilious perfectionist personally supervised his constituency's regiment as it joined the long march to Galle Face Green. The pattern of behaviour was known. Mr. Premadasa was conformist. The suicide bomber had only to wait. A film of the scene that morning is a tribute to the LTTE's covert agency and its "assassination" unit.

Mr. Gamini Dissanayake was not only proud of his role in the "India-Sri Lanka Peace Accord" but publicly boasted about it. And he had been doing just that in recent weeks, certainly after he was chosen opposition leader and then presidential

candidate. The campaign, he knew would be dominated by the "war-and-peace" issue, and he was prepared not only to defend his role in the "peace accord" negotiations but argue that Indian advice and, if necessary, active cooperation and assistance were necessary to resolve the conflict. He explained this in a conversation frank and free, just a fortnight ago.

Watching T.V. in a hotel room in Islamabad, I was amazed to hear Delhi-based commentators nonchalantly reject the possibility of LTTE involvement, and Sri Lankan academics express the astoundingly naive view that the assassination would not affect "the peace talks". The choice of target, the motive, the timing and the *modus operandi* established a patently obvious parallel, I thought, between the Gandhi "hit" and the Dissanayake killing except that the number of "innocents" dead was much larger here.

MESSAGE TO CHANDRIKA

The salient difference lies in the larger motive. The message is addressed to the government, while scores were settled with Dissanayake. The 50 dead in the city is a reminder to Prime Minister Kumaratunge that her capital is vulnerable. Her party barely managed to reach the fifty percent (50%) mark at the parliamentary polls in mid-August. The opposition UNP won 44%. The P.A. government survives on the national minorities — Tamils, Muslims, most of all. She hopes to attract the Indian Tamil vote, about 300,000 tea estate workers, on November ninth. She also hopes that the LTTE will allow two to three hundred thousand Tamils in the north to go to the polls.

She would feel comfortable as Executive President if the P.A.'s majority was double the 400,000 at the general ele-

ction. And then? Back to war-war. Or talk "peace from a position of strength", the Premadasa option. Mr. Prabhakaran had given notice that he is one tiger that cannot be taken for a ride. As Sinhala opinion takes a strong anti-Tiger, anti-Tamil character, the prime minister adjusts her own line on the army.

In a BBC interview on October 18th, she said "the army till now, that is for eleven years reigned supreme. They have been a government unto themselves". But now she has changed the line to concede ground to the armed forces. Mr. Pottu Amman would surely have had something to say in his daily intelligence summary to the Supreme Commander.

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GAMINI DISSANAYAKE

Ceylon (Sri Lanka) was the model colony of the British, the greatest of modern empire-builders. It was also London's compact little laboratory. Universal suffrage was introduced to Ceylon long before it was a right enjoyed by some European countries.

The surprising failure of the Marxist movement, though led by the most brilliant and the most dedicated of that Sri Lankan generation, was as much a tribute to the pre-emptive British intervention as to the native Sri Lankan genius, its gift for adaptation. In any case, our Marxists, Trotskyist and Stalinist, were also products of the British educational system. That era ended in 1977 with the collapse of the United Front and the ignominious defeat of the Bandaranaike administration at the hands of the "new" UNP, the UNP of J.R. Jayawardene, nicknamed "Yankee Dicky" quite early in his political career.

Sri Lanka was the first South Asian country to enter what has been hailed as the American century, but is better described at least by students of 'the Third World' as the IMF-World Bank era. Economics in command. Growth is the battle-cry. The multi-purpose Mahaweli project was Gamini's monumental contribution.

Gamini Dissanayake rather than Ranasinghe Premadasa or Lalith Athulathmudali was the authentic representative of that "new" UNP. The populist Premadasa was somewhat out of place in the Sri Kotha of JRJ. Ideologically, he would have been more comfortable in the company of SWRD or Dudley Senanayake. Gamini, like Lalith, were the standard-bearers of the "new thinking" that was destined to sweep the world of the 1990's and sweep away the Soviet Union and doctrinaire socialism.

In the excitement of the "Impeachment" move and its collapse, Gamini, lost his usual cool. But the recovery was remarkably quick. He was easy to talk to and interview. Though out in the cold, he had a new poise. He knew at last where he was going, the path was clear. And then came 'the Day of the Tiger'. The long, winding queues of mourners; the formal tributes, and the mass support that Srimala, his successor, is likely to receive will be the ultimate tribute.

ECONOMICS

Foreign Capital: Waiting Till February

(A short excerpt from an E.I.U. report)

- **Bureaucracy:** The bureaucracy is heavily overmanned and grossly under-managed. It is not only a drain on government coffers but impedes the growth effort at all levels. No progress at all is likely here, given the political leverage that civil servants exercise in Sri Lanka.
- **Infrastructure:** The outgoing government had no clear-cut policy on build-operate-own or build-operate-transfer projects, hence little progress was made in attracting builders for badly needed infrastructure works. The bureaucracy is also hostile to such projects. This is a legacy of the island's socialist past that the new regime will not find easy to overcome.
- **Taxes:** Tax reform over the past decade has radically altered the fiscal scene in Sri Lanka, with corporate taxes cut in favour of indirect taxation. But further reforms are needed to take the island into the 21st century. These are unlikely to be

forthcoming. The government also needs funds for its welfare programme. It could print money and so fuel inflation. It could also raise taxes to meet its needs. A mix of the two is the most likely outcome.

- **Foreign investment:** The present incentive package for foreign investors, which offers 100% ownership in most industries and tax concessions, is unlikely to be tampered with. That is a risk the new regime will not take.

- **Foreign trade and exchange controls:** The rupee is already fully convertible for current transactions, but exchange restrictions on the capital account will remain, with full convertibility still a few years away. The government is unlikely to modify the regime. In March this year Colombo pledged to refrain from imposing restrictions on current transactions or from engaging in discriminatory currency arrangements by accepting obligations under IMF article VIII. However, given that it will

need cash to fund welfare programmes, it may balk at reducing the maximum tariff from 45% to 35% in fiscal 1995, as was scheduled by the previous regime.

- **Privatisation:** The new regime is unlikely to proceed with any further privatisation for the present. This means that the two state banks, the two insurance companies and the national carrier Air Lanka will stay in state hands. It is a setback, but not a disaster for the privatisation programme, which has already seen some 42 state firms privatised in the last three years.

a clear picture of the new government's intentions will emerge only when the fiscal 1995 budget is presented to parliament in February next year. Both the government and foreign capital have five months in which to make up their minds on how to co-exist.

(Economist Intelligence Unit)

Norway as international peacemaker

Jan Egelands

(A talk given at the Royal Geographic Society, London on 5, October.)

Sometimes real-life events are even more amazing than fiction. At least this was the feeling of the three small groups of individuals who were gathered in the Government's Guest House in Parkveien in Oslo on the night between the 19-20 August last year. The main participants were four Israeli and three Palestinian peace negotiators, hosted by a Norwegian negotiating team of four.

The evening of the 19th of August opened with an official dinner hosted by our late Foreign Minister Johan Jorgen Holst in honour of his Israeli counterpart, Shimon Peres. The conversation revolved around general Norwegian-Israeli ties. Those of us who knew what was to happen after the dinner guests had taken their leave could think of nothing else.

Just after midnight, the Norwegian National Security Police escorted the Palestinian and Israeli negotiating teams in the back way. They brought with them the final, agreed version of the Declaration of Principles signalling peace at last between Israel and the PLO. The last points of contention had been resolved only hours before. It had been our fourteenth secret round of negotiations in Oslo. At one o'clock in the morning, Peres with his advisers and security guards rejoined the small group after an hours rest in his room downstairs. He was present as an observer when the two heads of the negotiating teams, Abu Ala of the PLO and Uri Savir of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, together with Johan Jorgen Holst initialled the historic Declaration of Principles. A greeting from Chairman Arafat was read aloud. No more than 20 people were present, many of whom had regarded one another as enemies only a few months before.

The following day, the two parties again sat down quietly at the negotiating table in Oslo, this time to start work on an agreement that was equally revolutionary - the Declaration of mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO, which was to transform the two parties from enemies into neighbours. This was followed by further rounds of secret negotiations in

Oslo and Paris as new, decisive elements in the peace process fell into place and ultimately lead to Foreign Minister Holst's remarkable shuttle diplomacy with the actual letters of recognition between Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat.

Some three weeks after the secret ceremony in Oslo, the group from the "Norway Channel" had swollen to 3,000 people who attended the highly public signing of the Declaration of Principles in front of the White House in Washington. Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat shook hands before the eyes of millions of astonished television viewers. We witnessed the reconciliation of two men who had been the very symbol of enmity and hostility.

The five-year framework agreement on Palestinian self-government in Gaza and the West Bank was analyzed and discussed throughout the world. Commentators asked whether the agreement could survive at all. Many wondered how the Palestinians and Israelis could agree to postpone negotiations on such fundamental controversial questions as the status of Jerusalem and the Jewish settlements in the occupied territories for two years. And, how did Norway - of all places - come to be in the centre of such an international political drama?

To answer this question, we must go back in time. It is in our recent history that we find the primary reason why little Norway became involved in the peace process by winning the confidence of both parties. The Norwegian people were deeply shocked when they learned the truth about the fate of the Jews during the Holocaust. Many felt that more could have been done for their Jewish neighbours during the Nazi occupation and Norway used her position in the UN to advocate the establishment of Israel in 1948.

There was a particularly close ideological affinity between the Labour Parties of the two countries. The society developed by David Ben-Gurion was seen as part of the same form of democratic socialism as Norwegian social democracy. Close personal ties grew up between, among

others, Golda Meir and Norwegian party secretary Haakon Lie.

However, after Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, a growing number of Norwegians felt our policies were too indiscriminately pro-Israeli and lacked solidarity with the Palestinian people. Among those who urged that a better balance should be found were Foreign Minister Knut Frydenlund and his state secretary Thorvald Stoltenberg.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, when Frydenlund advocated that Arafat should speak in the UN, met Arafat face to face and permitted the PLO to open an office in Oslo, he encountered strong opposition, even in our own Labour Party. Nevertheless, the rapprochement between Norway and the PLO continued, with regular top-level contact between the leaders of Norway and PLO leadership.

For a long time, our own fundamentalists on either side took turns criticizing our close contacts with the "occupying forces" or the "terrorists". It probably seems paradoxical to these same fundamentalists that it was Norway's close ties with Israel that made Norway so interesting for the PLO. Conversely our direct contact with Yasser Arafat made us the chosen "back channel" by Israel. There were countries with even closer contact with the PLO than Norway, and others that were less critical of Israel, but these relations often lacked the extra dimension that Norway had.

Several PLO delegations visited Oslo in 1991 and early 1992, and asked for Norwegian facilitation of direct contact with Israel at meetings with the then Foreign Minister Stoltenberg and myself. Delegations included Feisal Hussein and Hannan Ashrawi from the Territories and Nabil Shaat, Bassam Abu Sharif and - the soon to be secret negotiator - Abu Ala from PLO headquarters in Tunis. When the Social Democratic government in Sweden lost the election in 1991, the outgoing Foreign Minister Sten Andersson, a close PLO contact, advised Chairman Arafat that Norway could serve as a channel to the Israelis, like the Swedes earlier had facilitated contact between the US and the

PLO. Our contact with Israel was also renewed and intensified at the beginning of the 1990s. A new generation of Israeli "doves" had grown up within the Israeli Labour party which won the elections in June 1992 with a clear peace mandate.

Together with the Director of the Norwegian Trade Union Centre for Social Science and Research (FAFO), Terje Rod Larsen, and my colleague Mona Juul, I offered to the new Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin in Tel Aviv in September 1992 to help establish a secret channel to the PLO. We were able to provide the perfect camouflage for such a channel: the extensive standard of living studies carried out by FAFO in the West Bank and Gaza.

It was, until January 1993, banned by law for Israelis to have any contact with the PLO. Nevertheless, Mr. Beilin realized that there had to be unofficial contact between the parties, and he had brought an "unofficial" friend to our secret meeting, professor Yair Hirschfeld. Little or nothing had by then been achieved by the official Middle East negotiations initiated in Madrid in 1991 by the United States and Russia. The Israelis shared the frustration over a stalled process with the PLO, which was prevented from participating as an organization in the negotiations under the "Madrid formula".

After several further contacts with the parties by Mr. Rod Larsen and us in the Foreign Office our Norwegian channel was accepted as a possible supportive and complementary secret tool for the public and official Washington negotiations. It was two courageous Israeli academics, Yair Hirschfeld and Ron Pundik, with personal links to Yossi Beilin, who came for the first meetings with Abu Ala and two colleagues from the PLO in Sarsborg, Norway, January - March 1993.

Our quiet meetings proved to have several advantages. The news media which focus on what divides rather than what unites were not involved. There was no time-consuming diplomatic protocol to be followed and no speeches to the gallery. The participants in the official and public negotiations appeared to spend 100 per cent of their time blaming one another, whereas the negotiators in Norway spent at least 90 per cent of their time awake, meals included, in real negotiations. The many mutual provocations and acts of violence in the field did not derail the efforts of the secret negotiators

as they did the official channel in Washington.

Close cooperation with FAFO enabled us to offer the parties "deniability", i.e. the opportunity to deny that anything had happened, if necessary. We were prepared to keep the secret forever if negotiations broke down. This was important, because both sides feared that it might have disastrous results at home if the news of secret negotiations in Oslo were to be leaked before a possible agreement. FAFO's studies of living conditions were the ideal official explanation for the many visits to Oslo from Tunis and Israel that would otherwise have aroused suspicion.

Since then, the parties have praised Norway. However, there is reason to emphasize that our role was primarily one of facilitator during the process that led to the Declaration of Principles. The credit for achieving an agreement goes to the parties, their courageous leaders and able negotiators. We were the "midwives" who can claim neither paternity nor maternity as regards the text of the agreement.

The parties must therefore also shoulder the main responsibility for following up the agreement. However, this does not make Norway's present or future role any less central. Frequently, the "midwives" still receive requests to coordinate assistance, international meetings or observers to Hebron and elsewhere.

Norway currently holds the chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee of donor countries which are providing financial support for Palestinian self-government. The world community has pledged about USD two billion in such assistance for the five year period covered by the Oslo agreement. Norway has also become closely involved in the establishment of a Palestinian police force, problems associated with water supplies throughout the Middle East, and refugee and other humanitarian issues.

In August, I was able to see, first-hand, tangible fruits of the peace agreement in Gaza. The process culminating in the agreement may have been dramatic, but its results are no less amazing. Gaza and Jericho are now autonomous areas with an independent Palestinian administration. More than six thousand Palestinian policemen have taken over the streets from the Israeli army. Yasser Arafat has come home at last. The first development projects are under way.

Nevertheless, there is still a long way to go, and at times it is easy to feel somewhat disheartened. Both the Israeli Labour party and the PLO have lost ground to the "hawks" on both sides. Pessimists are predicting renewed confrontation, which would result in further uncertainty.

It is therefore important to bear in mind that, just as the negotiating process has been through various phases and setbacks, implementation of the agreement is bound to meet with difficulties. We must not forget that progress is being made towards peace throughout the middle East, as most recently illustrated by the understanding reached between Israel and Jordan. The Gordian knot is finally being untied. Peace has at last been given a chance, and the whole region will never be the same again.

Thus, the Middle East could become an example for the resolution of conflicts in other parts of the world, a model that is more sorely needed now than ever before. The "Norway Channel" demonstrated how a small country with no pretensions of changing its status can bring parties to a conflict together for talks when they are reluctant or unable to reach compromises through the cumbersome, highly publicized process of conference diplomacy.

We must realize that what the British and the Norwegians call the "post-war" period has in fact been one of the bloodiest in human history. Some two hundred wars have been waged in this period, nearly all of them in the Third World. Our shortcomings in building and keeping peace make it necessary for us to intensify our development assistance and diplomatic efforts to alleviate the damage and suffering caused by existing conflicts.

The Cold War is over, and the threat of nuclear annihilation through a superpower war is greatly reduced. In Britain and Norway we breathe easier. But around the world the insecurity and the suffering continues. In my opinion there is no issue which underscores this more than the agony of those thousands of civilians, women and children, who every year are victims of antipersonnel mines. Landmines not only kill but mutilate horrendously, strike blindly at all human beings alike. And landmines continue to spread terror for years or even decades after hostilities have ended.

Land Mines

Today, landmines are being laid faster than they are being cleared, and the ratio of mines laid to mines cleared is only going to get worse in the future unless bold steps are taken.

The international community must devote much greater attention and resources to tackle the serious humanitarian problem relating to use of antipersonnel mines in conflict areas.

Norway as Britain has for many years been involved in UN peacekeeping operations and mine clearing missions and has had the opportunity to get first hand experience of the consequences of the widespread and irresponsible use on landmines. Since 1989, the Norwegian Government has, as part of its humanitarian assistance, undertaken demining operations in war ridden areas, like Afghanistan, Cambodia, Mozambique, Angola, Eritrea, Somalia and Northern Iraq.

Morover, we favour establishing a voluntary international trust, administered by the United Nations, to promote and finance information and training programmes relating to mine clearance and to facilitate the launching of mine clearance operations.

It is also important to strengthen the legal basis and authority of the UN 1980 Weaponry Convention, that i.a. seeks to regulate the use of antipersonnel mines. Today, non-detectable landmines which do not have self-destructing or self-neutralising capability are posing the greatest danger to civilians. Modern technology applied in production of anti-personnel mines would not have any problems in meeting criteria set for detectability and mechanisms to ensure self-neutralisation. Agreement on certain norms to restrict production and use of mines would require an efficient verification regime to be developed to enforce such provisions. Additionally, we should make great efforts to ban the use of booby-traps against civilian population. A booby-trap is designed to kill or injure unexpectedly when a person disturbs or approaches an apparently harmless object, and any use of such a weapon against civilians is a blatant violation of international humanitarian law.

An additional measure to curb the danger relating to the use of landmines, is to prevent access to landmines by all those entities which do not comply with International law. Norway considers su-

pply control measures as most necessary and does support the establishment of unilateral moratoria on the export of landmines not in conformity with the new standards mentioned.

The effect of mines on low income farming communities is devastating and long-term. It is important to understand that these communities have only one choice - to stay and survive despite the mines, or to abandon their land. For several members of subsistence rural communities the latter is not even a serious consideration. In other cases, huge areas of land have been made inaccessible for decades and is still preventing refugees and internally displaced persons from returning home.

Refugees

Thus, better control of the use of antipersonnel mines will contribute greatly to our efforts in preventing the forced displacement of peoples. As long back as the 1920s polar explorer, and scientist Fridtjof Nansen, became the first High Commissioner for refugees. Today, few challenges are, in my view, as important for promoting peace, human rights and development as the massive forced migration of our time.

Looking ahead, my efforts in this field are inspired by a political goal and a humanitarian dream, but at the same time by a profound fear.

My goal is for us to reinstate refugees and migrants in their rightful place on government agendas all over the world. The fate and the future of the displaced and the homeless should be seen as part of all and second to none of the major international policy issues, including security and economic policies.

My dream therefore is, to mobilize sufficient international political and economic resources for the fate of all displaced peoples, including the many so-called "forgotten refugees". As Europeans we should not forget that nine out of ten refugees are neither European nor in Europe.

Recent events have done more to confirm my worst fears than to promote my goals and dreams. The world is experiencing a nightmare of new wars and new disasters. And nothing is as disruptive to our efforts to care for and help repatriate existing refugees as new, uncontrollable mass movements of people.

(To be continued)

Clowns Cantos - 8

No Marx for the Market

*Chaucer Cheesman (Nobel Laureate)
Consulted on the Recession
Pondered pre-ambly the Malthusian Equation
Tweaked his genetically engineered nose
Then solemnly said, I chose,
A priori, my Hypothesis and of course
My Axioms. Hence
My Algebra is somewhat dense
You can't see through it with a classical lens
My co-ordinates slur
With an indeterminate blur,
Magnetic fields, chips and lasers,
Cannot compute my blazers
In graphic or digital display.
So remembering Picasso and of course Einstein
I await my Space in Time
Till this Century smithers
In sub-atomic fritters
And the great mountains sink in brine*

U. Karunatilake

The Treaty and after

John Field

What effects did the Treaty have? First it clearly separated the two parts of Ireland. Many Protestants left the south, while the 1/2 million Catholics in the north found themselves effectively excluded from the Stormont (Belfast) Parliament. For the next forty years there was no real opposition in Stormont, which represented the interests of the dominant Protestant/Unionist majority. Secondly the Catholics began to move to the towns to work on the burgeoning textile and engineering firms. They were not able to get the best jobs, but stayed because conditions were better than south of the border and because, after World War II, the welfare system was infinitely better. Thirdly the IRA nurtured its yearning to unite the island. Having forced the abandonment of the original terms of the Government of Ireland Act the IRA split and in 1922/23 there was a civil war in the south. The Irregulars were eventually forced to yield, but never accepted the settlement. In 1931 they were declared illegal, but maintained their organisation, turning their attention after the World War once again to the theme of unification.

For a while this cause had little resonance in Ulster, but by the 1960's the welfare state had created a Catholic middle class which became increasingly dissatisfied over poor access to jobs and housing. At the same time the growth of the civil rights movement in the USA gave an impetus to this feeling which was manifested in demonstrations and violence. The IRA at this time went through a period of new thinking adopting a Marxist revolutionary line as a way of forcing change in Ulster. The IRA itself split over the use of violence into the "officials" and the "provisionals" — the latter arguing for terror tactics to force the creation of a united Irish republic. In the early 70's violence increased and British troops were sent to help the hard

pressed police. They were initially welcomed by all, including the Catholics. They still remain, their task to prevent terrorism by any group. Then in 1972, the worst year for violence with 467 deaths of which 321 were civilians, direct rule from Westminster was decreed. Nonetheless a referendum in 1973 showed an overwhelming majority for union with the UK.

The dilemma for the British Government had by now become quite clear. It could not abandon a majority of the Northern Irish population who wanted to remain in the Union, but the IRA's terror campaign forced a military response which polarised opinion. It also made the Unionists even more fearful of the consequences of yielding to the Republican demands. The last twenty years has been a continuous struggle to try to find a way out of this impasse.

In 1972, the Government first suspended and then, in 1973, abolished the regional Parliament at Stormont and introduced the present arrangements for direct rule from Westminster. These were never intended to be permanent, and successive efforts have been made to restore a measure of devolved government. The 1982 Northern Ireland Act provided a framework within which legislative and executive functions might eventually be resumed by a 78-seat Northern Ireland Assembly and executive, and elections to the Assembly took place in October 1982. The Assembly was not, however, supported by the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), the main nationalist party (founded in 1973), and was finally dissolved by the Government in June 1986 (although the powers for convening a new Assembly were retained).

On 15 November 1985, the United Kingdom and Irish Governments signed the Anglo-Irish Agreement, also known as the Hillsborough Agreement. This had the aim of promoting lasting peace and stability, healing the divisions between the nationalist and unionist communities, fostering friendship and cooperation between the

two countries and strengthening security. In this binding international Agreement, both Governments explicitly recognise that any change in the status of Northern Ireland can only come about with the consent of the majority. The Agreement also endorses the Westminster policy of seeking devolution on a basis which would secure widespread acceptance throughout the community. The Agreement set up an Intergovernmental Conference (serviced by a Joint Anglo-Irish Secretariat located near Belfast) to provide a framework for regular meetings between the two Governments at Ministerial and official levels. This Conference enables the Irish Government to advance views and proposals on a range of political, security and legal matters, reflecting the concerns of the minority in the north.

Although still opposed by the unionist community, the Agreement has increased understanding and cooperation between the two Governments, and is a valuable forum for reconciling any differences. Separately from the Agreement, a British-Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body was established in February 1990 to consider political and security matters, European Community affairs, economic and social issues, education, the environment, etc. This body has so far held six plenary sessions.

The Government has tried to transfer substantial power and responsibility to locally elected representatives. It has been prepared to consider any arrangements for the government of Northern Ireland, provided they were likely to prove workable, stable and durable, would command widespread support, and would provide an appropriate and fair role for both sides of the community. To this end, the then Secretary of State, Peter Brooke, spent many months in preparatory discussions with the four main constitutional parties of Northern Ireland and with the Irish Government, and announced on 26 March 1991 that they had all agreed on a basis for formal talks to address these issues.

A paper presented at the "Conflict Resolution" Seminar sponsored by the *Lanka Guardian* and *LAW AND SOCIETY TRUST*. John Field is UK, High Commissioner in Colombo.

Further discussions on pre-conditions delayed the start of substantive talks until 17 June 1991, and these lasted until 3 July 1991. The participants agreed the talks were valuable and produced genuine dialogue. Their resumption was constantly delayed by speculation about the timing of the UK general election. A new round of talks began on 9 March 1992, and after a short hiatus for the general election on 9 April, resumed on 29 April 1992 under the chairmanship of Sir Patrick Mayhew, the newly appointed Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

The talks proceeded in three strands, each addressing one of the sets of relationships involved. The first, between the British Government and the four main Northern Ireland parties, discussed the relationship between the people of Northern Ireland, including that between any new institutions there and the Westminster Parliament. On 6 July 1992, the Irish Government joined the discussions with the consent of all the participants, who moved to consider issues in the second strand — the relationship between the people of Ireland. On 28 July 1992, the two Governments began discussing the third strand, concerning the future relationship between them.

This was the first occasion since 1920 that the two Governments and representatives of all the major constitutional parties of Northern Ireland had sat down together to discuss the political future of Northern Ireland. Although the talks closed on 10 November 1992 without full agreement being reached, the participants agreed that they had identified and discussed most, if not all, of the elements which would comprise an eventual settlement. They also agreed that further dialogue was both necessary and desirable.

This brings us to the Joint Declaration of 15 December 1993 — the so-called Downing Street Declaration — which has now opened the way to a ceasefire and a possible negotiated settlement. The Declaration is not a blueprint for a new constitutional arrangement: it is a set of principles which would underlie the search for such a settlement. In it Britain states that

- it has no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland;

- agreement on the future could include a united Ireland achieved by peaceful means;
- the people of the island alone could exercise self-determination on the basis of free consent to bring about a united Ireland "if that is their wish";
- Britain will introduce legislation to this end or any other agreement.

For its part the Government of Ireland agrees that:

- self-determination for the island as a whole must be achieved with the agreement of the majority of Northern Ireland's population and respect the civil and religious liberties of both communities;
- every effort must be made to build a new sense of trust between the communities;
- recognises the misgivings of the Unionist community. Acknowledges also the presence in the Irish Constitution of "elements deeply resented by Northern Unionists";
- it will amend the Irish constitution to reflect the principle of consent in Northern Ireland.

Both parties agree on a dialogue and on the creation of institutions to enable all the people of Ireland to "work together" in areas of common interest as well as on the permanent end to the use of "paramilitary violence". They also recognise that membership of EC/EU has brought about changes in the British/Irish relationship which would be taken into account.

And so we come to the IRA ceasefire announced on 31 August 1994. This has rightly raised hopes that a negotiating process can begin, but also — and rightly too — concerns about the permanence of the IRA's commitment. I say rightly because we can conclude from the time that it has taken the IRA to reach this position that the decision was contested within the organisation. We can also speculate as to why the decision was reached. Has the IRA really recognised that violence will not achieve their aim? Or do they believe that unification will eventually take place? Are they under pressure:

Protestant counter-violence has increased significantly and recently there have been more Catholic than Protestant deaths. The level of IRA activity has also been declining in the 1980's despite some spectacular bomb attacks. Certainly there would seem to be a growing mood of anti-violence, fed by some equally spectacular IRA miscalculations in killing innocent bystanders. And also the Irish Government is showing flexibility.

This is perhaps a good point to consider the use of terror tactics and policies to counter them. It is clear from the history of this struggle that the use of violence does not solve problems as deeply rooted as this. The only way must be to try to remove the cause of the division. In the case of the IRA their campaign, far from removing the division, has embedded it more deeply, introducing a cult of violence and radicalising several generations of the young. The link with international terrorist groups and the raising of funds by extortion has done nothing to promote democracy and responsible government. It has also created a Protestant counter-terrorist movement that is now thoroughly radicalised and which could be a major barrier to negotiation. It would indeed be tragic and ironic if the next stage of the story is dominated by the Protestant terror groups created by the IRA campaign.

So how does one treat the root cause of the problem? For most of the 20th century the problem has been discrimination. The solution must lie in eliminating it by promoting equality of opportunity, equality in justice and the rule of law, and in job creation through development.

The British Government has been committed to eliminating all forms of unlawful discrimination in employment in Northern Ireland and to promoting fair participation in the workforce by both the Roman Catholic and Protestant communities. Discrimination in employment on the grounds of religious belief or political opinion has been unlawful since 1976 when the Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act 1976 was introduced. However, by the mid-1980s, Government statistics were beginning to emerge which showed that, despite the fair employment law, Roman Catholics remained at a serious disadvantage in the labour market compared with Protestants. Following wide consultation,

the Government introduced a radical new Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act 1989, which came into operation on 1 January 1990. Under the Act, all firms with more than 10 employees must register with the Fair Employment Commission established by the Act; monitor annually the religious composition of their workforce; and formally review their employment practices every three years. Where necessary, firms must take affirmative action to ensure fair participation in their workforce by both communities.

The Act also set up a Fair Employment Tribunal to adjudicate on individual cases of alleged discrimination. A number of substantial awards and settlements have already been made.

The working of the legislation is being continuously evaluated and is to be formally reviewed in 1995.

The Commission and Tribunal have, between them, wide-ranging powers to provide information and guidance, to investigate employers' practices and to prescribe affirmative action programmes. They can enforce the law by imposing both criminal penalties (fines and/or imprisonment) and economic sanctions (disqualification from receiving Government grants and contracts). Employers' responses to the legal requirements have been most encouraging. More than 4,000 firms are registered with the Commission and are monitoring the composition of their workforce. In 1993, over 1,500 companies are required to complete their first three-yearly review of their working practices.

It is also a criminal offence to stir up hatred on grounds of religious belief, colour, race, ethnic or national origin. Other legislation outlaws discrimination on the grounds of sex or marital status. The Equal Opportunities Commission as well as an Ombudsman and a Commissioner for Complaints investigate maladministration by the central government and by local governments and public bodies respectively.

As far as the legal system is concerned, the Government deals with terrorism, from whichever extreme it comes, through the normal process of justice. In particular, terrorists are prosecuted only for the criminal offences they have committed, not for their beliefs. There are no political priso-

ners and there is no imprisonment without trial in open court. However, in response to the terrorist threat, the Government has, since 1973, enacted anti-terrorist measures, which are currently incorporated in the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1989 and the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1991.

Although a number of modifications have been necessary to legal procedures because of the nature of terrorism, the central principles of British justice apply: the onus is on the prosecution to prove guilt beyond reasonable doubt, and the defendant has the right to be represented at public expense by a lawyer of his or her own choice. Because of intimidation of juries in the past, terrorist-type offences are tried without a jury in Diplock Courts, but there are powerful compensations for the change. The judge has to set out in a written judgement his reasons for convicting, where that is his decision, and there is an automatic right of appeal against sentence on points of fact as well as of law — in contrast to the situation elsewhere in the UK. The right of an accused person to remain silent is maintained, but in limited circumstances the exercise of this right can be drawn to the Court's attention; it will also have been made clear to the individual that this will happen. This is intended to counter the refusal of certain persons to give reasonable support to the police and legal authorities. Diplock Courts conform with Article 6 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and with the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

An Independent Commissioner for Police Complaints and an Independent Assessor of Military Complaints Procedures have also been appointed. All in all there is a formidable apparatus in place to eliminate discrimination.

The other part of the campaign has been to provide more employment and raise the overall level of prosperity. Northern Ireland now has a good infrastructure and receives very substantial development grants. Funding from Brussels will be nearly £ 1 billion over the next 5 years — some 50% of the UK's share. Government campaigns to attract new industry have achieved results, although not all investments have been a success. In education Northern Ireland now achieves

rather better 'O' - and 'A' - level results than the rest of the UK and the crime rate is lower. The recent recession has not helped Ulster's development, but employment and educational statistics, particularly those relating to the relative position of the two communities, show that progress has indeed been made.

Some final thoughts

It will be apparent to all who have stayed with me this far that the Anglo-Irish "problem" is one with a long and complex past. There have, as is always the case in such stories, been faults on both sides, but, although it is not easy for an Englishman to say, there has been much harshness from Britain's side. But as I said at the beginning, if we let the past dominate the discussion, we condemn ourselves to continued violence and death. Now at last we seem to have most people looking forward.

It is also evident that the Anglo-Irish problem has passed through many phases. It has long since ceased to have the colonial struggle element beloved of Republican commentators. Nor is it a simple struggle between two religious groups. The essential problem now is how to find an acceptable constitutional settlement when the majority of the Northern Irish still vote overwhelmingly — as at the last general election — for the union with Westminster. This is a vital point. A recent survey (1991) showed in fact that 35% of the Catholics preferred to keep the link with the rest of the UK. Furthermore Sinn Fein consistently polls no more than 10-12% in national and local election.

Among other issues affecting a solution is the fact that welfare payments in Ulster are greater than in Ireland. One estimate shows that Ireland's total income tax revenue would be needed to maintain the present level of payments to Ulster. The role of the Catholic church in Ireland is still very powerful and this, too, is a source of concern in Ulster. The Joint Declaration has indicated that there are no outside objections to a settlement, but the key problem of finding a constitutional framework to bring this about has yet to be achieved. One thing is certain — and that is that one hundred per cent acceptability is unlikely, at least initially, given the passions of the past. So political leadership will be essential.

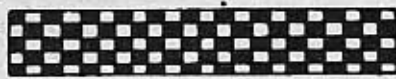
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The Critical Variables

Linda K. Richter

"In India the easiest way for a woman to enter politics is to marry a politician"¹⁴. The 1989 Indian elections illustrated many of the key variables associated with the presence of women in politics. Familial ties were also key elements even when the relationships were more like television's warring clan "Dynasty" than the folksy, loving "Waltons". While there are exceptions, such as Sikkim's chief minister, Nat Bhandari, trouncing his estranged wife Dil Kumari¹⁵ during his party's total victory; Maneka Gandhi's successful campaign based on opposition to her brother-in-law, Rajiv Gandhi; and the feuding evident in the former princely family of Gwalior, the Scindias; in most families the ties were stronger than the differences¹⁶.

Though the Congress Party complained of a shortage of female candidates, that was not the problem in Bihar. Chief Minister Satyendra Narayan Sinha saw to it that his wife, her mother, and his daughter-in-law all got tickets to run. The Janata Dal Party also had female candidacies linked to prominent relatives. Reshma Khan, the wife of Lok Sabha incumbent Arif Mohammad Khan, ran for a Kanpur assembly seat¹⁷.

So prominent has familial politics become that *India Today* noted: "The list of candidates for the coming Lok Sabha and Assembly elections would make any geneticist conclude that human chromosomes have an as-yet-unidentified political gene. The roster of fathers and sons, sons and mothers, sisters and brothers and sisters and sisters contesting simply goes on and on"¹⁸.

The 1989 election was a critical one spelling defeat for the ruling Congress (I) party both at the Centre and in several states. But the gender distribution of electoral votes was undramatic. The pundits professed to see significance in the 1.9 percent more females than males supporting Congress (I) and labeled the Janata Dal as a party "much more male supported" on the basis of a female vote 2.3 percent below the men. The BJP party support by sexes was relatively even¹⁹. Clearly, a "gender gap" is not apparent.

In south Asia where female literacy is quite low, access to quality education is

still confined, markedly so, to the elite few. Just how "elite" most of these women are is reflected in the fact that most speak English fluently (the Bangladesh party leaders notwithstanding) and in some cases use English more proficiently than the national language.

In India at the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha level, women with more diverse backgrounds, including film stars, are moving into politics but most continue to be from well-educated, politically active families. In the Philippines the surrogate variables for social class — for example, the number of years of *father's* education — explained almost all the variance among women in higher education administration²⁰. In postrevolutionary societies like Vietnam, on the other hand, where social class is less an issue, women are extremely scarce in positions of influence²¹.

In Thailand, the number and socio-economic characteristics of female candidates are misleading given the peculiar election milieu. The number of females contesting elections *looks* impressive but it is not in terms of power. In an effort to strengthen parties and discourage their fragmentation, parties were required to field candidates for at least half of the available parliamentary seats and did so by hiring "ghost candidates". Thus "many of the 362 women candidates were unknowns from Bangkok who were paid to run in rural constituencies"²². Also, the Thai monarchy has for the first time put a woman, the current princess, in the line of succession. Despite her popularity, however, she is not expected to displace her brother in the rights to the throne.

Associated with social class is "lifestyle". Particularly in developing nations, high and even middle social class is associated with live-in childcare, cooks, maids, drivers and gardeners. Most of the labor in the private world of the female is assumed by other female relatives and servants. Thus, there is far less of the role change needed by males in order to accommodate women in political or other professional work. In fact, in a survey study done by this writer in 1985, three characteristics of high level female administrators in India and the Philippines emerged. First, nearly all had full-time household help and childcare. Second, most lived in

extended families, allowing more sharing of some female work, while those with children had fewer than the national average²³. Additionally, despite the strong social expectation that women should marry, there was a strikingly high number of single women in professional and political roles, suggesting that hard choices were made in favor of careers over marriage.

Add the name recognition of their families, wealth, and education beyond that afforded 99 percent of their sex, and one can well explain why these women were able to transcend their gender. Still, of those top leaders noted, except for Miss Jinnah who was unsuccessful in her bid for the presidency in 1965, all were married, widowed and/or mothers at the time they held political office or party office. Even Benazir Bhutto acknowledged that she would be far more acceptable politically if married, and despite her modernity accepted an arranged marriage²⁴. She is distinctive also in being the first *elected* chief executive to have a baby while in office.

Still another variable seen as important in the acceptance of women in politics and their successful participation in elected politics in south Asia was the candidates' *association with the independence movements* of their various countries. Romila Thapar, Indian historian, has argued that women in Asia are more likely to be active politically if their country has experienced a long struggle for independence. Her reasoning was that the population as a whole is politicized by the long struggle and that many of the important nationalist families are likely to have their men in prison. Consequently female members of the family have to assume political and business roles, and even go to jail too as they struggle to take their husbands', fathers', sons', and uncles' places in the family²⁵.

There is some support for this argument in the number of female candidacies in India and Pakistan in the years following independence — and in the anecdotal accounts of many such candidacies. Even those not directly involved were politicized by the example of their parents and friends running for office. Indira Gandhi, for example, recounted how as a child she would

stand on tables and give political harangues to the servants even as she tried to cope with the loneliness of being separated from her imprisoned parents. Even today, the Indian feminist magazine, *Manushi*, contends that there are two types of women ministers: "those who belong to the tradition of freedom fighter families and others they describe as *parvenue sycophants*"²⁶.

Nelson Mandela quoted Jawaharlal Nehru to the effect that an experience of prison was good training for leadership²⁷. Substituting for those imprisoned is also a political education of sorts for the spouses of those imprisoned, as Winnie Mandela or many of these women could testify.

For those not a part of the independence struggle, the prison experience was both character building and a political education. Both the wife and daughter of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto spent time in prison and struggled to keep his Pakistan People's Party intact even as they confronted the threats to his life from the Zia government that overthrew him. After his execution, they inherited his political legacy and have reshaped it to a new generation of Pakistani politics.

Corazon Aquino had a longer political apprenticeship. Not only did she come from a political family and marry into another political family, but for over seven years during which her husband Benigno Aquino was imprisoned by President Marcos she was his link to the Philippine political scene. Thus, she was scarcely the improbably housewife figure the media loved to claim.

However, while an independence struggle or imprisonment may politicize those women and help them earn the respect and admiration of male and female peers, the experience may have little lasting effect on the percentages of women elected and appointed to office. Some, like Indian scholar Kusum Nair, argue that for many female activists in the independence struggle the arena of concern after independence was social and cultural work, not political power²⁸. Yet, many of her contemporaries did stand for election and the percentage of female candidacies and victories was higher in the three general elections after independence than in subsequent elections. But what of those who did not run again? Did they lose interest? Was a new generation of women looking at alternative careers? Or were the political parties less interested in promoting women per se? A study of women in Indian magazine fiction suggests that following independence there

was a desocialization of women not unlike that in the U.S. which encouraged women to leave the work force after World War II³⁰, and Arlene Eisen notes that, following the war in Vietnam, there has been a resurgence of traditional values among men. She says that after the war women moving into leadership roles in their villages were resisted by men as if they were "frogs jumping on the altar."³¹ There was not a lessening of interest by women but an unwillingness to share power on the part of men. This was coupled with the strains of unifying the more liberal north with the more traditional south. "Everybody recognizes women can work, but it is more difficult to accept that women can govern"³². In the 1976 elections, 32 percent of those nominated in the north were female while only 23 percent of those in the south were female. Still the rejection rate of female candidacies in the north (the only area for which data exists) was 26 percent compared to 18 percent for men. Others point out that the dramatic drop off of the number of female office holders in Vietnam is related to the growing numbers of intellectuals now being elected, intellectuals having tended to be male — in turn reflecting the greater access men have had to higher education. Equally sharp declines in female representation are also being found at the level immediately below that of the National Assembly, the People's Provisional Councils³³.

Another variable that has been shown to facilitate the emergence of new political groups is the *structure of the electoral system*. Women have been better represented in systems with very large numbers of legislators and in systems utilizing proportional, multi-member districts rather than in single-member districts³⁴. Why this should be so is not clear but it is assumed that in a system with a large number of seats, women are advantaged by having smaller territories in which to canvass for elections. Also there are simply more pieces of the "electoral pie" to allocate which may mean the stakes are smaller and so the number of politically ambitious easier to satisfy. Proportional representation is assumed advantageous for women in much the same way it is for smaller parties and it is assumed that because less than majority support still results in proportionate gains, parties may be more willing to list women among their nominees if several seats are at stake rather than just one. These assumptions, however, can be neither substantiated nor refuted in the south and southeast Asian context because most of those systems have single-member districts. Bangladesh and Pakistan do have reserved seats in their legislatures for women which

prevents the representation of women from falling to levels characteristic of western democracies. Women may also choose, as the Bhutto women have, to contest general seats³⁵.

In conclusion, patriarchy, familial ties, martyrdom, social class, female lifestyles, the independence movements, prison experiences, and even electoral arrangements are characteristic variables which facilitate the emergence of top women political leaders in south and southeast Asia. Though such factors may also explain the emergence of some male leadership in these regions, men seem to have a wider choice of routes to power, while for the top women these variables seem to be the dominant *patterns* to power.

(To be Continued)

Notes

14. *India Today*, 30 November 1989.
15. *India Today*, 15 December 1989, p. 32.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 15-51.
17. *India Today*, 30 November 1989, p. 82.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 83.
19. *India Today*, 15 December 1989, p. 52.
20. Linda K. Richter, "The Status of Women in the Philippines" in Daniel B. Schirmer and Stephen Roskam Shalom, eds., *The Philippine Reader* (Chicago: South End Press, 1987), pp. 135-40.
21. "The Status of Women in Vietnam," *Christian Science Monitor*, 4 November 1987.
22. Clark D. Neher, "Thailand in 1986: Prem, Parliament and Political Pragmatism," *Asian Survey*, vol. 27, no. 2 (February 1987), pp. 219-31.
23. Linda K. Richter, "Women in Philippine and Indian Higher Education Administration," a paper given at the NGO Forum, Nairobi, Kenya, 1985.
24. Benazir Bhutto, *Daughter of the East* (London: Mandarin, 1989).
25. Romila Thapar, *Illustrated Weekly of India* (Fall, 1972).
26. Rita Manchanda, "Women in Parliament," *Manushi*, no. 47 (1988), pp. 28-30.
27. Nelson Mandela, ABC Television interview, 13 February 1990.
28. Linda K. Richter, "Philippine Politics From Marcos to Aquino," in Carl H. Lande, ed., *Rebuilding a Nation* (Washington, DC: Washington Institute Press, 1987).
29. Kusum Nair, personal interview, Manhattan, Kansas, 10 October 1989.
30. Linda K. Richter, "Roles of Women in Indian Magazine Fiction," *Journal of South Asian Literature*, vol. 12, no. 3 and 4 (Spring-summer, 1977), pp. 81-94.
31. Arlene Eisen, *Women and the Revolution in Vietnam* (London: Zed Books, 1984), p. 242.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 245.
33. *Ibid.*
34. Wilma Rule, "Twenty-three Democracies and Women's Parliamentary Representation," a paper presented at the International Political Science Association Meeting, Paris, July, 1985; also see R. Darcy, Susan Welch, and Janet Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation* (New York: Longman, 1987).
35. Craig Baxter, *Government and Politics*.

Burgher Christian Vs. Sinhala Buddhist

Kumari Jayawardena

The Christian woman began to figure in the polemics and diatribes of the period and in works of fiction. European women were dismissed as whores and the Virgin Mary was written about in obscene terms¹. The Burgher woman became the standard stereotype of the immoral temptress who not only appeared in public with men, but danced and drank with them. When westernized Sinhala women began to dress in European fashion and socialize freely with men, they were denounced as loose women who had been contaminated by Christian and Burgher influences. This mixture of race and culture was seen as a sign of the decline of the Sinhala nation seen in its most deplorable form in the behaviour of women; if the women were corrupt, then their progeny too would be corrupt and the Sinhala nation would have no future. The protection of Sinhala womanhood against this degeneracy then became one of the main tasks of the Buddhist revival.

This attitude is apparent in the Sinhala novels of the period, particularly those of Piyadasa Sirisena, one of the leading propagandists of the revival and a protege of Dharmapala. For example, in 1906, he wrote a novel *Jayatissa & Rosalin* that became one of the best-sellers of the time; Jayatissa, the hero, is a Sinhala Buddhist, while his fiance Roslin is Sinhala but Catholic and therefore, unsuitable as a wife and mother unless she converts. All the villains are denationalized, rootless Catholics (with names like Donald Silva, Alphonso Perera and Vincent Perera) who try all manner of ploys to prevent Jayatissa from marrying Rosalin and converting her to Buddhism (Amunugama, 1979). Sirisena's novels are full of moral preaching, directed mainly toward mothers and would-be mothers, concerning the necessity of bringing up children to be worthy members of the ethno-religious community. His heroes and heroines, as Roberts notes, "give lay sermons, engage enemies of the Sinhala... in debate and emerge triumphant"; he also points out that "the corrupting influence of Burghers, especially Burgher women... was standard fare" (Roberts, 1989: p.11). In Sirisena's 1909 novel *Apata Veccha De* (What Happened to Us), a Sinhala youth, who goes from his village to Colombo, the capital city, gives up his studies for sports

and dancing, became a wastrel and marries a Burgher girl; on hearing all this the mother sickens and dies. "Alas, what has happened to us," is his father's lament (p.15) in *Maha Viyavula (The Great Confusion)*, also written by Sirisena in 1909, a Sinhala woman from a wealthy family declines into distress and poverty after becoming the mistress of a Burgher who is eventually reduced into earning a living by repairing shoes (p.254). It is of course implied that an even greater confession would result from these unions; they would be producing a progeny that would not be brought up to be proper Sinhala Buddhists.

Although Sinhala Buddhist consciousness has passed through some changes of emphasis during the subsequent periods, this theme has persisted over the decades and has found its way into other forms of popular art. In many Sinhala films, the virtuous Sinhala hero is temporarily led astray by a loose Burgher woman. In popular television serials, an alliance with a non-Sinhala or Burgher woman inevitably corrupts the male; he is diverted not only from the path of filial and familial duty, but also (more importantly) from ethnic duty. Marriage to a non-Sinhala and the creation of half-Sinhala or non-Buddhist children is seen as a real threat to the Sinhala Buddhist nation.

The concept of a Sinhala Buddhist woman was thus constituted, at the early stages of the revival, in opposition to a concept of white or Burgher Christian womanhood. There was one dominant construction of a virtuous Sinhala Buddhist wife/mother, formulated, accepted and promoted by both the religious and lay Buddhists. There were also, however, other acceptable roles for women within a Sinhala Buddhist framework Buddhism, which is often claimed to be a liberating doctrine, allows some freedom within patriarchy to women who have passed the child-bearing age and to a few who choose to withdraw from that task. All these formulations drew upon certain strands of the Buddhist tradition but also responded in diverse ways to contemporary needs. I propose here to outline two such constructions: the Buddhist wife/mother formulated during the early stages of the nationalist revival and the mother of heroic sons,

crafted to meet the threat of the current separatist struggle. I shall describe the traditions upon which they have drawn and illustrate them with some examples. I shall thereafter deal with two other approved roles; the benefactor of Buddhist causes and the *religieuses* known as *dasa sil mathas*.

The Buddhist Wife/Mother

The construction of the ideal wife and mother by the intelligentsia of the Buddhist revival was made both in terms of Buddhist values and also in terms of the social and economic transformations of the time. The construction was thus one of a middle-class wife who would be an asset to her husband, presentable in colonial society, modestly dressed, educated (but not too much, and preferably in English) and knowledgeable about Buddhism and local history. She also had to be an asset to her community in reproducing a new generation of good Sinhala Buddhists. It was important for the "new Buddhist woman" to be appropriately middle-class in her behaviour and to be educated out of, "uncouth lower-class or rustic habits"; a bad woman, according to Sirisena, is one who scratches her head, laughs loudly, talks a lot, weeps unnecessarily, eats too much, stands in doorways and wipes her face with the clothes she wears (Sirisena, *Debera Kella*). Just as missionary schools and convents were making "ladies" out of local girls, the Buddhist girls' schools undertook a similar project; the difference was that of religious atmosphere. Here we can also see a curious example of a congruence between the values of the Buddhist revival and the values of Victorian womanhood that the colonizing power was trying to introduce. There is no doubt that the latter set of values played a part in the formation of the ideology of the revival, and that "Protestant Buddhism" (as Gananath Obeyesekere has called it in Gombrich and Obeyesekere, 1988, pp. 215-222 and elsewhere) included reforms affecting women.

Selected Buddhist texts were used in the construction of this middle-class Sinhala woman and much stress was laid on the economic stability that women could bring into social and family life. The emphasis was not so much the sensuous, beautiful Panchakalyana image, but the

industrious, thrifty, loyal wife who ordered her husband's social and economic life, paying special attention to his belongings and property. An important Buddhist text used for this purpose was the *Gihivinaya of the Sigalovada Sutta*. The wife had to serve the husband in five ways: duties well performed, hospitality to the relations of both, faithfulness, watching over the goods he brings, and skill and industry in discharging her work. The husband has to be faithful and conscious of her needs, thus deserving her respect, and also must bring her gifts. This utilitarian emphasis on work, discipline and thrift was also buttressed by the use of texts from the *Anguttara Nikaya*, where the Buddha states that a girl should be trained to be a willing worker after marriage, to revere her husband and be hospitable to his friends, to be industrious in doing and getting things done, to know the capabilities of each one in the home and to be thrifty and safeguard the family possessions. As Harris has noted, "The teaching delineates clear roles for men and women; the wife manages the hospitality and the household and the husband brings the goods" (Harris, 1989, p.7).

This amalgam of Buddhist and middle-class virtues is well illustrated in *Dingiri Menike*, another novel by Piyadasa Sirisena. There, a well brought up and virtuous Sinhala youth lays down the qualities he expects of a wife: that she (1) treasures Buddhism more than her life; (2) respects Sinhala family customs; (3) behaves in strict accordance with such customs; (4) is humble; (5) is satisfied with what is available; (6) is happy and contented; (7) looks after the welfare of others even at the risk of her own; (8) rejects all vices; (9) dresses in accordance with custom and situation; (10) is beautiful; (11) can read and understand; and (12) has a good knowledge of the Sinhala language. In explaining some of these qualities, great emphasis was laid on a wife's duty to care for household goods and the family wealth. She should have a proper understanding of her husband's income and order household expenses within it; her attire must be in conformity with income; she must clean and take good care of the house and garden.

In the formation of this ideal Buddhist middle-class wife, a good education was seen as being of fundamental importance. In *Debera Kella*, a later novel, Sirisena imagines the ideal finishing school for Sinhala Buddhist girls, which he calls *Subhadra Vidyalaya*. The school was restricted to girls over 12 who had had six years of schooling; this means in effect that it was for girls who had reached

puberty and therefore needed to be indoctrinated into their ethnic roles. The selected girls had to have Aryan Sinhala names; their mothers had to be of blameless character; their fathers could be farmers, traders, entrepreneurs or government servants who were teetotalers and nongamblers. Class was important and the children of manual workers were specifically excluded. The curriculum was primarily based on a study of the Sinhala language and its classical texts, particularly the *Kavyasekaraya* with its famous stanzas advising women on marriage to be docile and obedient. Buddhism was to be taught with some emphasis on the duties of lay persons, exemplified, for example, in the *Sigalovada Sutra*. In addition, home management (cooking, sewing, gardening), health care, child care and sex education were included so that "pupils brought up with such knowledge and attitudes would give birth to good well behaved Sinhala children who would grow up to rescue the Sinhala nation from its present degeneracy" (Ibid). The crux of the problem, as far as the continued existence of the ethnic group was concerned, was the production of suitably socialized middle-class children who could be entrusted with the tasks of preserving an advancing its cause.

Western Women Construct the Eastern Wife and Mother

One of the unusual characteristics of the period of nationalist revival in Sri Lanka, as well as in India, was the support local leaders obtained from Western women in the project of restoring and inventing tradition and constructing the ideal Aryan woman. These women, who were dissenters in their own societies and were critical of Christianity, patriarchy and colonialism, were somewhat paradoxically involved in promoting the 'ideal' Buddhist or Hindu wife and mother. The most famous of them was Annie Besant (1847-1933), who had earlier been a free thinker, socialist, feminist and champion of birth control and higher education for women. As her biographer remarked, Besant knew "how to wear sandals in India and shoes in the rest of the world" (Nethercot, 1963, p. 469). She promoted a traditional education for women, urging them not to modernize or take up the Western model of higher education and employment. Another such Western woman was Swami Vivekananda's disciple and soul mate Margaret Noble (1867-1911), who achieved fame as Sister Nivedita; she was noted for her insistence on traditional values for women and the idealization of Hindu family life. Discouraging Western education for Indian women, she said, "Shall we, after centuries of an Indian

womanhood, fashioned on the pattern of Sita or Savitri... descend to the creation of coquettes and divorcees?" (Nivedita, 1973. Vol. III:4).

Dharmapala greatly admired strong independent foreign women like Besant, Nivedita, Blavatsky and Theosophist women because of their opposition to the Christian societies of the West and their admiration of Eastern religions. Theosophy was associated with women's emancipation and many of the most famous leaders of the movement were charismatic women like Madame Blavatsky and Annie Besant who were active in the cultural, religious and political awakening in South Asia. Many Buddhist Theosophist girls' schools in Sri Lanka had, in their formative years, Western Theosophist women as their principals and teachers. For example, Marie Musaeus Higgins, Hilda Kularatne (nee Westbrook), Clara Motwani (nee Irwin) and Lu Vinson Halliday were associated with leading girls' schools - Musaeus College, Ananda Balika, Visakha Vidyalaya and Sri Sumangala, respectively. Significantly, these women were graduates of Western universities and brought with them new ideas on modern education as well as firm views on women's right to higher education. The presence in the Buddhist movement of white women who were, in effect, opponents of colonial domination no doubt gave it a greater legitimacy.

Although some Sinhala Buddhists had stressed traditional dress and codes of conduct for middle-class Buddhist women, the need for Buddhist women to be educated in both Sinhala and English was also recognized. The Sanghamitta School for girls was begun in Colombo in 1889, with an English woman Theosophist as principal; it was superseded after her sudden death by Museaus College started in 1893 by Marie Musaeus Higgins (1855-1926); she was a German Theosophist who had earlier been a teacher at the Sanghamitta School. Her new school (with provision for boarders) gave a secondary education in English to children of the new class of Buddhist entrepreneurs, professionals and government servants who felt the need for wives and daughters, educated in English on the western model, but in a Buddhist atmosphere. Here again the emphasis was on giving girls a selective education in English with the aim of creating an enlightened younger generation.

The Evolution of Sinhala Buddhist Consciousness and Gender

Before directing attention to the other construction I referred to earlier - woman

as the begetter of heroic sons - it is necessary to look at some of the massive political, economic and social changes that Sri Lanka has gone through since the beginnings of the Buddhist revival in order to locate this phenomenon in its setting.

A democratic political system based on universal adult suffrage was installed in 1931. The country gained independence from British rule in 1948. Since then, Sinhala Buddhist consciousness has been primarily directed toward maintaining the hegemony of the majority within the country and keeping the ethnic minority groups in a subordinate position. At a political level, Indian immigrants of recent origin working in the plantations were disenfranchised in 1948. At the linguistic level, Sinhala was made the only official language in 1956; this effectively served as a barrier to Tamils gaining state employment. Entry to higher education was

subjected to a standardization process that restricted the numbers of Tamils gaining admission to universities and other institutions at the tertiary level. State-aided colonization was used to change ethnic ratios in provinces with a Tamil majority. These various forms of discrimination led to a crisis in ethnic relations in the country that finally took the form of an armed conflict between the state and Tamil militants. These political developments posed the Tamils as the antagonists of the Sinhalese and had implications in the field of gender.

Economic developments, too, had similar effects. Women have become increasingly a part of the labour force in the modern sector. Besides their traditional roles in the peasant sector and in the plantations, women are a major part of the work force in garment industries in the

Free Trade Zones and in tourism; they also form the bulk of migrant labour in the Middle East.

The effects of these new developments on the construction of gender have yet to be studied in depth. However, I offer here one construction that is a direct outcome of the militarization of the ethnic conflict: the concept of the mother specifically in the role of the producer of heroes who ready to offer their lives in the protection of their country, religion and ethnic group.

(To be Continued)

Notes

- 1 A notorious pamphlet banned by the colonial government was "Kanni Marilyage Hati" (The Truth about the Virgin Mary). In the late 19th century, GW. Foote's Freethinker (published in London and popular in Sri Lanka) had ribald stories about women biblical figures and other satires against Christianity.

U.N. AND WAR (2)

No effective U.S. leadership

Horace Perera

The proximate cause of the wars in the former Yugoslavia was the declaration by three of its constituent republics of independence from what was called the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Two republics, Slovenia and Croatia, declared their independence in June 1991 and the republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina in March 1992. In all three cases Serbia resorted to military action. Nevertheless, the E.C. and later other countries, including the USA, extended diplomatic recognition to the three breakaway republics. The Serbian attack on Slovenia was repulsed in ten days but the Serbian war for Croatia continued in spite of cease-fires brokered by the E.C. or by Member States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) The war for Croatia can in a sense, be said to have ended in February 1992 with a Peace Plan worked out by the UN mediator, Cyrus Vance, and by the deployment of United Nations Protection Forces (UNPROFOR) as a peace keeping operation. The Serbs, however, continue to control some twenty-five percent of Croatia territory which the Yugosla-

vian army seized when it intervened following the Croatian declaration of independence. UN Security Council resolutions have periodically reaffirmed Croatian sovereignty over these areas. The Serbs occupying them refuse to accept anything short of independence. So far UNPROFOR troops have with some difficulty kept the two sides apart. But the UNPROFOR mandate is due to expire in September and the President of Croatia, Franjo Tudjman is vowing not to renew the mandate. It is true that since March 1992 events in Croatia have been overshadowed by the ferocious fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the appalling atrocities that have accompanied it. At the time of writing the attention of the international community is concentrated on securing acceptance of the Peace Plan by the Bosnian Serbs: a plan which, for all practical purposes, has been imposed on the parties by a "Contact Group" composed of the USA, the Russian Federation and the E.C. In the United Nations serious consideration should be given to the explosive situation which will result in Croatia if the UNPROFOR's mandate is not renewed or if the unexpected happens and the Bosnian Serbs accept the Contact Group's "diktat".

European Responsibility

Soon after the war for Croatia broke out the major powers, including the USA, decided that the E.C. should take primary responsibility for coordinating the Western response to the developing situation in the former Yugoslavia. This raises two questions. The first is "Did the E.C. at that time have the capacity to effectively coordinate the Western response? The second is "Why did George Bush, the "Liberator of Kuwait" distance himself and his country from a situation that could disturb the stability of Europe; always a matter of great concern to the USA." It is proposed to attempt to answer these questions in the order in which they have been posed.

The E.C. Three European Security Institutions have concerned themselves with the developing situation in the former Yugoslavia. These are the E.C. the CSCE and NATO. The first two did their best, acting within their respective structures and with their limited mechanisms, to restore peace and security in the former Yugoslavia and though not very successful have been commended in resolutions of the Security Council beginning with the first, namely resolution 713(1991). Actually at that time

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the E.C. lacked the mechanisms to discharge the responsibility it had accepted. Moreover the Russian Federation was not associated with its efforts. This was to ignore the fact that the Russians have been considered the tradi-allies of the Serbs. Apart from co-ordinating its member state's policies in peace negotiations, monitoring a situation and peace keeping efforts the principal weapon the Community could use was sanctions. In view of the steadily increasing commercial relations between the former Yugoslavia and the member states of the E.C. it was hoped that this would have an impact. It certainly did, but not to the extent of stopping Serbian aggression. Certain factors were most probably not given all the consideration they merited. Yugoslavia is relatively self-sufficient; it exports electric power; has a number of arms and munition factories of its own; apart from a fair number caches of World War II weapons scattered over the landscape, and is therefore not so much in need of supplies of weaponry from outside. Furthermore, being a landlocked country its borders cannot be fully controlled. Consequently supplies, including oil, have been flowing across its porous frontiers with three of its large neighbours. Its cease-fire negotiations have generally failed, as Lord Carrington, the Chairman of the first "peace process" complained in utter frustration that the Balkan leaders are ready to sign any document put before them with no intention at all of observing what the document requires of them. There is some support for this view as the Security Council has had not only to appeal frequently for respect for cease-fire agreements but even complained of "daily violations." In fact the violations of cease-fire agreements taken as whole by all parties to the conflict would qualify for a place in the Guinness Book of Records. Actually at the time that the E.C. accepted the responsibility for "co-ordinating the Western response" it had not the potential to discharge that responsibility effectively. Moreover it did not seek the assistance of, or even consult, the Russian Federation. This was a mistake in view of the centuries long links between the Federation and the Serbs and the feeling in Russian circles that it was being ignored by the West in important European matters. The E.C. will probably, as a result of the experience gained, develop in the direction of being an effective instrument for co-ordinating the foreign and security policies of the European powers, including those in the East of that continent.

The CSCE consisting today of 52 states also tried to restore peace and security in the former Yugoslavia but its conflict resolution and mediation procedures were found inadequate as the war escalated especially after it spread to Bosnia-Herzegovina. One of its stumbling blocks was the consensus rule that bound its work. The problems it faced led to an indepth study at several meetings of its procedures and some effective restructuring appears to be on the cards. The consensus principle has been done away with and the Council of Ministers, or the commissioners' committee can decide on political action against a state even without the consent of the state concerned. According to Stephen Iwan Griffiths improvements in security mechanisms agreed at the Prague meeting in January 1992 and at the Helsinki Summit in July of the same year "allow for a more active CSCE role in future conflicts." The problem however, according the same writer is that in the post cold-war period "what often looks innovative, or like a great breakthrough, for the CSCE is only something that should probably have been agreed upon a long time ago," if the CSCE is to respond effectively to the developing requirements of the post cold-war world. Consideration is also said to have been given to making NATO the "military arm" of the CSCE. Should such a linkup take place, would the CSCE be able to use NATO for "enforcement action," as according to Article 53 of the UN charter "no enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council....." Ofcourse the CSCE can ask NATO, or some other body as the Western European Union (WEU) to assist it in its peacekeeping activities. To sum up it, can be stated that while the CSCE has not been as effective as one would have wished it be in the crisis in the former Yugoslavia it may be able to play an effective role in future conflicts.

NATO is still maintained in spite of the fact that, since the end of the cold war, it has lost the primary purpose for which it was created. In view of the emergence of new security threats in Europe, as is happening in Yugoslavia, there has been considerable thinking in NATO as to the necessity, as Wojciech Multan has pointed out, of transforming itself from a subregional alliance of the cold war to an all European Organisation dedicated to co-operative security. This will mean, inter alia, the extension of its membership to include all

the states in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. In fact some of them such as Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland have already been knocking on its doors chiefly because they do not want a security vacuum to develop which the Russian Federation may decide to fill. The member states of NATO seem to be rather cautious as to the admission of states from the former "enemy block." The Russian Federation, on the one hand expressed concern about the expansion of NATO to its frontiers. On the other hand it has expressed a desire to join NATO provided its position as a major power is recognized and it is vested with all the powers within the organization which its existing members enjoy. Manfred Womer, the late Secretary General of NATO, is reported to have declared, at the annual Munich Conference on Security Policy, held in February 1992, that what he rules out is the suggestion by some to extend membership or formal security guarantees even to some of the former Soviet republics. Various proposals have been made regarding the applications of some states for admission to NATO. Among these are "Associate Membership," the "Partnership for Peace" and admission to the North Atlantic Cooperation Council which was founded in 1991. This last is considered by some as a step in the right direction and by others as a sop to "unrealistic ambitions." Considerable thinking has continued to take place in NATO. At its November 1991 Summit in Rome there was agreement on a step-by step institutionalization of co-operation between it and Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. The Rome meeting also adopted a document called "The Alliance's New Strategic Concept" which recognizes that the new security challenges are different from those of the past and are more likely to rise from various economic social and political differences as well as from ethnic rivalries and territorial disputes. With the extension of the war to Bosnia-Herzegovina a decision was taken that would permit NATO to support, subject to certain conditions, peacekeeping operations of the CSCE "on a case-by-case basis," if requested. It will be seen later how from February 1994 NATO airpower was used to threaten and later to strike at Bosnian Serb attempts to attack places in Bosnia-Herzegovina which the United Nations had declared "safe areas."

(To be Continued)



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Communication for a New World

Fernando Henrique Cardoso

(Emeritus Professor of Sociology of the University of Sao Paulo and Senator of the Brazilian Republic)

The island mentality, stagnancy and mimicry of the Lankan intelligentsia — particularly its radical and progressive elements — has prevented it from understanding or even referring to the importance of the victory of Fernando Henrique Cardoso in the recently held Presidential election in Brazil, a country of 120 million people. Cardoso, one of most prominent dependency theorists of yesteryear, since turned Social Democrat, is not only rarity in that he is a successful 'philosopher-politician', he offers insights into what could be a realistic Left programme — specially, but not exclusively in the field of economic policy — in the current context of the collapse of Socialism and continuance of (capitalist) povestization of the Third World. The *Lanka Guardian* thanks Ohio State University's Rohan Samarajiva, one of our longstanding supporters, subscribers and occasional contributors, for sending us this material. Cardoso's speech is excerpted from 'Communication For a Better World: Brazilian Perspectives', edited by Jose Marques de Melo. The *NYT* piece was published in 1988.

We are on the threshold of a new era. Just as there was primitive accumulation referred to by Marx, where there was pillage as an initial form of accumulation of capitals, there was an accumulation that was carried out in terms of direct exploitation of man by man. Only, today, this accumulation does not solve the problems of the immense mass of humanity that is not provided for with the resources of intelligence, of new technology, and that is useless for the wealth of the prosperous countries. Said in this way, slightly exaggerated, it seems to be something that hardly concerns us. It concerns "the others", those "over there in Africa", those

in "Bangladesh", whatever. In some countries, however, as in the case of Brazil, as well as in the case of India, Mexico and so many more, there are also sectors that are not good enough even to be exploited. And, as they are not good enough even to be exploited, they remain, as if they were, Hegel-like, to one side of history. There is no more masterslave dialectic. Where there is a master-slave dialectic, the slave is able to refuse the master. When the master is no longer concerned with these segments of the population which may be very large, they are as if they were the "detritus of history". Within this new international order, we are at the same time witnessing the globalizing of the economy, the perspective of new humanism, the end of the possibility of war - or at least atomic war - and the opposite of this as well. (*) We are witnessing the marginalization of immense populations through their incapacity of engaging themselves in the mainstream of history. Today the main drive of history is not the wholesale exploitation of labor and natural resources.

This is the new world order, in which prosperous sectors aspire towards being an island and to building walls against migration, against the plagues that come from abroad, AIDS or whatever, against the fundamentalist religions that are not, according to the point of view of the most rational, capable of being sensitive to technological progress, etc. Islam becomes a threat, poverty becomes a threat.

If you were to ask me: how about dependence? Within the theory of dependence, we are dealing with masters and slaves. There was a dialectic between the exploiters and the exploited. Now there is another phenomenon that also implies conflict, but another type of conflict. It is a situation of a different type that should be thought out in its radicality of being new. We cannot hold to the language of another historical era. The grandeur and the tragedy of the Social Sciences resides in the historicity of its concepts. When history changes, we have to devise new concepts, for in applying the old concepts to the new historical moment, we stumble over the impossibility of the fact that imagi-

nation cannot grasp reality. Imagination should be creative in order to allow us to perceive on what plane new conflicts are positioned, for new conflicts there are. What we cannot do is to try and describe them as if they were like the old conflicts.

Thus, with the new order and its consequences, the problem of the paradigms is immediately jeopardized. In some way, western thought has always been proud, supercilious, and always capable of imagining that reason should be able to contain the definition of globality. Whether Kant or Marx, liberal or socialist, there was always an aspiration towards globality and to the domination of this globality by reason, through concepts that would unify history.

I would say that the Social Sciences today, are a little more humble. Without going in the sense of the vulgar postmodernism that I do not like, in the sense of fragmentation and radicality, of the refusal of the possibility of seeing the whole, they are endeavoring to rethink this whole without the pretension of knowing the end of the story, but with the conscience that it is not possible, beforehand, to know the end of the story.

Who could foretell the crumbling of the Soviet Union in the way in which it occurred? Nobody! Not even the hundreds of Sovietologists, Americans of the highest quality that foresaw everything except this - nor the dissidents. One of these dissidents I am very fond of - Zimoniev, a mathematician who writes novels. In describing the Soviet world, he did so in the manner of Montesquieu who maintained that every social system has laws peculiar to itself. On describing the characteristic laws of the Soviet world, Zimoniev conveyed the impression that this was an unattainable and indestructible world. And, suddenly, all of that failed and led sociological reason to be slightly more cautious in its ambition towards globalization and in its certainty as to the main lead of history and the end of the story. In some way, we had to introduce to our paradigms, what the physicists who deal with tiny particles had already introduced long before: the notion of uncertainty. The certai-

A lecture given at the principal session at the XVIII Scientific Conference of the International Association for Mass Communication Research, Guarujá, August 18, 1992.

nty of the triumph of capitalism and of democracy that guided the liberals was parallel (with the same degree of ontological aspiration), to the certainty of the socialists that imagined that class war would develop in a certain direction and that it would be possible to build a classless society. Both were certain. Today, neoliberals believe their certainty is proven. I think that they should be more cautious in defining the paradigms and in understanding that there are very large degrees of uncertainty. It is necessary to introduce these degrees of uncertainty in the actual logic of the Social Sciences. There cannot be a theory of change worthy of this name, with a capital "T", except with a certain degree of humility concerning how the mechanisms take place of the transformation of contemporary society.

Many years ago, I wrote an article where I said that we should think of change in terms of a short-circuit. We should have less confidence in the objective factors that lead to the transformation of the subjective ones, or also that the infrastructure will condition the superstructure, or other ideas of this kind - very mechanical. We should think that societies can change, as occurs in a fire. Sometimes, a badly-covered wire is enough for a spark to cause a fire and burn down a house.

I wrote this thinking of Nanterre, in May, 1968, where I was the professor of the class of "Dany Le Rouge", Daniel Cohn Bendit, one of the leaders of the movement. Theories to explain how that occurred, why it occurred, have never convinced me. What I felt was that I had taken part in a short-circuit. There was no conductor wire between what was taking place, in a small college in Nanterre and what happened in the whole of France, with the labor unions in ebullition.

At times, in contemporary society, so long as the sociologists, the "politicologists", the anthropologists and practical men stop believing that they know how it is going to change, it changes almost accidentally. I say almost, because, obviously, I am not here dissolving the structural conditionings. What happened in Nanterre was immediately blocked, further on, by the action of General De Gaulle, who never forgot that in the final analysis, force rules. He went to Germany, where he assured himself of the support of the French forces stationed there, to

be able to carry out his reaction. The French communist party itself played an important role putting a stop to all this, in order to avoid the development of its capacity to lead the union process. Obviously, there are structural forces. But what leads to the first shot? What leads to the spark? It is very difficult to foresee, starting from an ambitious and proud theory that thinks it can tell the end of the story.

Yesterday, in Brazil, we witnessed a similar phenomenon. Yesterday, by a mistake in calculation on the part of the President of the Republic, he produced a spark. He asked for support at the very time society does not want to give him support. Without meaning to, he called an enormous manifestation against himself out into the streets. This was not written, it was not necessary that it should be thus. All of us complained that there was a certain, I would not say apathy, but society was witnessing the political process developing here, almost as though it were a television novella, where we, the actors, over in Brasilia, were followed by the gaze of the population. They could even cheer for some and shout out against others, but the population did not take an active part.

Suddenly, not through the insistence of the forces of the opposition, but through a poorly thought-out gesture on the part of the President, a process was triggered off that mobilized society. This occurs all the time in contemporary society. It happened very recently in Los Angeles. They are not processes that are predictable and their effects, if they have structural conditionings, are also not foreseeable.

The great issue that is posed in reflecting how society changes is: what is the actual essence of the forces present in this society? The great question is that these societies are highly segmented. Segmentation may occur that prevents the fire from spreading, as there are in buildings, those steel doors that prevent the fire from spreading. Up to now we do not have, in the Social Sciences, more complete theories concerning the change, because almost all of them do not take the issue of communication into account.

In this type of segmented society, what allows the fire to consume a great set of segments of the structures, is its degree of intercommunication. In these, there are extremely rapid modifications, the dynamics of which depend on the network of communications. This, in turn, is subject

to highly complicated mechanisms of domination that should be better analyzed.

The theories of communication imagined that societies of contemporary masses, the result of mass production, by the globalization of the economy, would generate passive actors in their great majority - who are not even actors, spectators, which does not correspond to reality.

I may not be very popular to say so, but the Frankfurt school that so enthused me, was completely wrong. Because it was the first moment in grasping what was taking place. But it remained not up to the possibility that this type of society, this type of mass communication is also capable of generating.

It is not right, to my way of thinking, that mass cultures and the "mass media" should produce a society of people that are administered, in the words of Abraham Moles - who seek happiness, of administrators who want efficiency and of creators who want innovation. All of this exists, but there is a dialectic. It does not exist as data, but as a process. Suddenly, the administered person moves and breaks the concept of efficiency. And suddenly, innovation comes not from the intellectual who is made in order to think and to produce the creation, but it comes from the influx itself, the quantity of actors who unleash new process. Within this new society (here I speak as a sociologist and not as a communications expert, which I am not, of the new international order, the paradigms to analyze the processes of change, of the new life-style) it is not true, to my way of thinking, that we should have transformed all of the people who watch television and listen to the radio into robots. The process is a lot more complicated.

In fact, there have been studies in England, even since the fifties, on the life-styles that were produced not by communication in itself, but by the "department stores", these great chains of shops, showing that in the contemporary world, there is a massification of life styles so that classes can no longer be distinguished simply by their clothes, that there is a certain uniformity and that this has changed the English working class, etc. These studies also show that consumers are not passive beings: at the limit, they choose. The listeners are not passive beings; at the limit, they choose. And the information does not project itself as if the

recipient were a being in the negative. There is a process of selection. And, we might say: good, but there are flows of information that are guided from top to bottom, from the rich down to the poor, from the powerful down to the less powerful. All of this is true! But there is also a certain dialectic. Just as society suddenly breaks because of a spark, this mechanism is also subject to transformation. We saw this in France, in '68. We saw this in Brazil, when there was a struggle against the military regime and in 83/84, with the great campaign that took place for direct elections for President, there being a military president in power. We saw how, in some way, at certain moments, all of these mechanisms break. And in order to break them, the system of information itself that always has leaks, is essential. Here, in Brazil, we have seen how the political leaders, and I include myself among these, have failed in evaluating the transforming potential of society.

If I still have a little time, allow me a small digression. The first great mass manifestation against the military regime in this state of Sao Paulo, on January 25, 1984, coincided with the anniversary of the University of Sao Paulo, January 25. I was a Senator, president of the PMDB, that was the opposition party, and a professor of the University of Sao Paulo, although inactive. Then I went to the University of Sao Paulo with the Governor of the State, and we were there when they called us: I was to hasten to the Praca da Se, in the center of the city of Se, in the center of the city of Sao Paulo. We had called a public demonstration and we were expecting ten thousand people, but there were one hundred thousand people and we did not know what to do because we did not even have a loudspeaker that would reach the end of the square. None of us had planned as much. They said at the time, that the great television networks were not transmitting anything. And they were not. But, somehow, a little information via radio, via television, eventually multiplied and produced a great deal of movement, that, later, lead to millions of people in the streets.

Those who participated in the movement against the military regime in Brazil and tried to understand the electoral process, had the same sensation. The first time that we defeated the military government, which was in 1974, nobody knew they would lose at the ballots. Nobody

knew, not even we ourselves. I remember that I was helping the Cardinal of Sao Paulo to do a study on the so-called Pastoral of the world of labor, and I met with many priests who worked on the outskirts of Sao Paulo. None of them believed that the election could be anything else other than mere manipulation by the military regime. Afterwards, I met with them and asked: how did this happen? Where did this train of thought begin? How did this short-circuit take place?

Continuous communication being more complex than is thought, it is not merely electronic communication. It passes through another flow of direct communication and *vice versa*. *Vice versa* has to do with the fact that the very producers of the media themselves, including the electronic media, are in conflict. I do not know if it is class. But a strong conflict that causes even the most powerful networks that want to hold power, at a given moment, to break and no longer be capable of sustaining power.

And then, there also, it is necessary that there be new thinking on what the role of the means of communication is in this kind of society. For it is not only the role of "passivization", not only that of serving at the owner's voice, it is much more complex than that.

Finally, the last point: the issue of democratic participation of the means of participation in these contemporary societies.

I have always been fascinated by the capacity of the media to create actors. Here in Brazil, we watch the invention of the world of unions. Not that the world of unions is inexistent. It existed during the dictatorship, but the leaders were created, designed. They existed as individual beings, dissatisfied with the military regime. In some way, they were created as spokesmen by the media. I saw the media create company leadership that did not exist. I myself was, in a certain way, created by the media. They needed an intellectual who had political influence and I became a senator. This is, to a large extent, the manner in which modern society operates, where the media legitimates, if not actually invents, the actor. And the union movement is the social movement. When, in the poor outskirts of Sao Paulo, there is to be a movement on behalf of creches, or something concerning starting a school, or any kind of protest, the first

question the leader of a community movement asks, is whether there is a local newspaper and whether there is television. In this contemporary world, everything has to exist by means of the television screen and of the radio, because, if not, it does not exist. The social movement itself knows that the "establishment" is real, but that it is permeable. And that if the movement can attract a small part, however small, sometimes only a journalist of less importance, but that later passes to another and to another, suddenly, it will reach the great circuit.

So that I don't think that in the new society, means of communication are only a reinforcement of alienation. One part is so, but I also believe they are the contrary. And that in this being the contrary, they are a necessary part of the movement of the dialectic between the powerful and the oppressed, sometimes between the state and civil society. Civil society realizes this, fumbles, and tries to capture pieces of the system of communication in order to act in them. It is useless to imagine that there can be control on the part of the owners of the media over the whole of the media. Any person with a little more political experience knows this to be impossible, if only because the media is also a complex industrial product that requires many people, several specialties, introducing within the company a dialectic, a dynamics, that does not allow that the flow exist solely from top to bottom. In the day-to-day, it is from top to bottom, but at the times when society boils over, it produces a transformation that passes through these mechanisms and in some way transforms what was formerly the alienating instrument into an instrument of modification, into a critical instrument.

I believe, therefore, that we are, in fact, facing a new society, a new international system, full of injustices, that requires a new way of fighting against injustice, and politicizing the objectives. This implies rethinking not only the new way of producing, but also the new way of communicating. I understand that both can result in an immense alienation and in an immense accumulation of wealth, to the detriment of others. But they may also mean the opposite: the mechanism by which alienation is diminished, injustice is diminished, and the democratic participation in society is increased.

(Next: Debates)

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