

ETHNIC CONFLICT: ANYBODY IN CHARGE?

— *Mervyn de Silva*

LANKA

GUARDIAN

Vol. 8 No. 17 January 1, 1986 Price Rs. 4.00 Registered at the GPO, Sri Lanka QJ/75/N/83

THE LEFT AT FIFTY



- **COLVIN**
- **PIETER**
- **HECTOR**



Nationalism and Political Theory

— *S. Sathananthan*

Sri Lanka Cricket: In Search of a Fast Bowler

— *Sarath Fernando*

— *H. N. Fernando*

Why Marcos Must Go — *Cory Aquino*

Also: The Indika Issue

A Whiff of McCarthyism **and**

'Sura Doothiyo'

Capital Opportunity

Want to up-date your plant and machinery ?
Or expand ? Or start a new project ?

If capital constraints are your problem, we
can help you.

In the field of equipment leasing, we are the
pioneers in Sri Lanka.

Internationally and locally our resources are
without equal.

Internationally our participants are Orient
Leasing Company of Japan and the International
Finance Corporation (World Bank).

Locally we are associated with the leading
institutions in the banking and private sectors.

We lease any equipment that will help
increase productivity — plant and machinery,
agricultural and construction equipment,
commercial vehicles, medical equipment and
office equipment.

You are free to pick equipment from any
supplier anywhere in the world.

We lease it.

On terms that suit you best.

Leasing also gives you substantial
tax benefits.

We provide a highly personalised service
backed by a wealth of professional expertise

Remember. Profits are earned through
use-not ownership — of equipment.

LOLC **Lanka Orient Leasing
Company Limited.**

1st Floor, Lakshman's Building,
321, Galle Road, Colombo 3.
Tel: 574401 - 7 (7 lines)

1986: BLEAK OUTLOOK

Rarely has Parliament ended its final debate and the year's work on such a depressing note. The messenger of bad tidings was none other than Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel himself. 'The most difficult year since Independence'. Those were his words.

Don't ask for money, he told the Ministers and the MP's. He wasn't prepared to convert the Treasury into a printing press!

The picture he painted was indeed 'gloomy' as the government's own 'Daily News' observed drily on its frontpage.

Here is a quick summary of his 'State of the Economy' report to Parliament:

- Tea, rubber and coconut prices — ALL DOWN.
- Tourism — DOWN
- Remittances from migrant workers — DOWN
- Foreign Investment — DECLINING.
- Military Expenditure
- Debt Service Ratio — UP (approx 20%)

TOWARDS McCARTHYISM?

To raise the educational standards of "remote" and "difficult" areas the Minister of Education has the laudable idea of sending three thousand graduates to these schools with a special bonus as incentive. They will serve those areas for a minimum of three years and for this they will receive a special allowance up to 10% of their salary.

The same newspaper, the ISLAND, had another lead story last week where it was said that the government would not offer employment to youths, however well qualified, if they were known to have "extreme" political views. One passage in the report specified "leftist" views. Did this mean extreme 'Rightist' views, say 'fascist', were okay? Is such a scheme, if introduced, open to challenge as gross violation of fundamental rights? Or would such a policy be practised surreptitiously?

A former minister of education, a politician who has served the country for many decades, noted that if such a policy had been followed in the 1950's and 1960's Sri Lanka's universities, the civil service, the scientific and research institutes would have been denied the services of some of the ablest members of Sri Lanka's intelligentsia.

PLAIN TALK

The new I. G. P. Mr. Cyril Herat, did some plain speaking to his S. P.'s last week. On no account should anybody taken into custody suffer bodily harm while in custody. Every person arrested by the police was in fact in the protective custody, he emphasised.

Observing that the new threat of terrorism had placed unusual burdens on the law enforcement agencies, he argued that this however was no justification for neglecting "basic police tasks" i.e. the anticipation and prevention of crime, and good police-public relations. The public should be able to visit any police station without any fear of the police taking sides or believing that a complaint would be not be investigated.

A good start. But will his officers and men back him up?

TRENDS + LETTERS

Equus rarissimus

As cogent evidence of the validity of his position Dr. Carlo Fonseka has submitted that I am a jackass as well as a dog. I have so far called him nothing. But let me also play taxonomic dialectics; I call Dr. Fonseka Przewalski's Horse, a very rare and nearly extinct animal. Not entirely inappropriate for one with Dr. Fonseka's weltanschauung.

V. P. Vittachi

Colombo 3

"English with an Ismail"

Permit me to correct a confusion in the mind of Mr. Qadri Ismail ("Qadri Ismail Replies to his Critics" LG, 1st. Dec.).

When he quotes Leavis: **English in Our Time and the University** he is referring to a book where Leavis discusses the relevance of English studies to English society in particular. None of us, not

(Continued on page 5)

LANKA

GUARDIAN

Vol. 8th No. 17 January 1, 1986

Price Rs 4.00

Published fortnightly by
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd

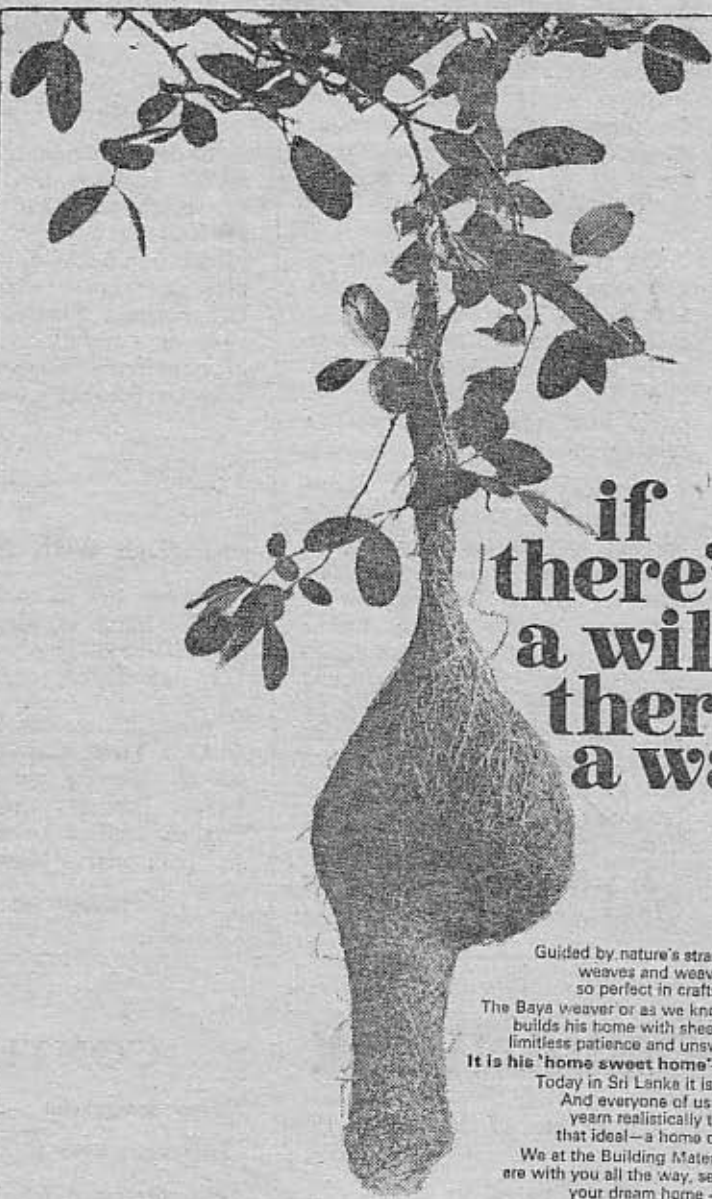
No. 246, Union Place,
COLOMBO - 2.

Editor: Mervyn de Silva
Telephone: 5 4 7 5 8 4

CONTENTS

News Background	3
Fifty years after	6
Past, present & future	7
Marxism and some features of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party	10
Nationalism and the Crisis of Bourgeois Political Theory	15
Cat's Eye	17
Foreign News	19
Sri Lanka Cricket — 2	21

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



if
there's
a will
there's
a way!

Guided by nature's strange powers, he
weaves and weaves a nest
so perfect in craftsmanship.

The Baya weaver or as we know the Wedu Kurulla
builds his home with sheer determination,
limitless patience and unswerving courage.

It is his 'home sweet home'—a place of his own.

Today in Sri Lanka it is building time.

And everyone of us could now
yearn realistically to achieve
that ideal—a home of our own—

We at the Building Materials Corporation
are with you all the way, serving you to make
your dream home — a reality.



Building Materials Corporation

Branches throughout Sri Lanka

The ethnic conflict and Delhi's policy shifts

NEWS
BACKGROUND

Mervyn de Silva

Quite evidently appreciative of what they all perceived correctly as a general change in Delhi's approach after Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the UNP government and a majority of non-UNP Sinhalese admired Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and praised him as a 'honest' and 'fair-minded' Indian leader. They praised him as a 'honest broker' in the run-up to Thimpu and persisted in that attitude even in the immediate aftermath of the abortive negotiations in the Bhutan capital. As I wrote last week, he was seen as 'hugging the centre' and sometimes adopting 'a pro-Colombo stance'.

But a few analysts in India, Sri Lanka and abroad whose judgments were neither coloured by intensely partisan prejudice nor distorted by zany theories about global strategies and superpower geo-strategy in the region have been observing the interplay of conflicting pressures on Delhi, and how this created interesting shifts and nuances in the Indian position.

The 'bandh' in Tamilnadu on the day before the Punjab poll and the revocation of the deportation order on Dr. Balasingham and Mr. C. Chandrasekaran were the first important signals.

Mr. Bhandari's opening remark at Muscat, Oman, "We think you are going for a military solution, and it won't work" was the first public signal of a shift in policy in the context of a re-appraisal of not just the Indian attitude to the Sri Lankan conflict but of what India can do; in short, the limits of Indian diplomacy, and therefore of Indian power.

WORLD ORDER

What we are in fact witnessing in the fag-end of this 20th century is a historic coincidence — the dramatic emer-

gence of new, explosive sources of Third World conflict (in Afro-Asia, ethno-nationalist more than ideological) at the same time as a global economic crisis, and the erosion of detente leading to the near-total collapse of the global status-quo in these the Reaganite years.

The concerted and vicious Reaganite onslaught on the U. N. system, which despite all its shortcomings, remained the only defender of the international order and an arbiter, however weak, of inter-state conflicts, is yet another cause, itself nonetheless a sign of the impotence and frustration of the mightiest nation in the world. It is a feeling of an impotence and frustration that is shared by others as well, notably the post-colonial state, the operative unit of the international system. Neither the state, nor the regional powers nor indeed the great powers can any longer control the 'great disorder under the heavens', to quote Mao.

Mr. Reagan tried to establish a linkage between disarmament, superpower detente and "regional conflicts". This attempt barely conceals an irony, a gross misjudgment and a misplaced faith.

Many of the 'regional conflicts' Mr. Reagan has in mind are, for him, examples of 'international terrorism'. The irony is that he practising his own variety of terrorism through his not-so-covert interventionist arm, openly funded by the Congress, trained by US instructors, and actively operational in Central America.

He thinks — or wants the world to believe — that these conflicts would disappear if the USSR

cooperates, because it is the Soviet Union that is responsible for such conflicts. He has not yet accused Moscow for the Philippines crisis. If he had understood the situation in the Philippines, he would begin to understand the fundamental nature of Third world conflict and violence. He would then know that neither the US nor Moscow nor both can stop them.

New social and political forces have acquired an 'autonomy' of action that has made them the great "de-stabiliser" of world order. That was the true lesson of the TWA hostage crisis. The real hostages were not those helpless human beings taken captive but a superpower, the US, and its powerful regional ally, Israel.

Tamil (separatist) nationalism and Sinhala nationalism are autonomous forces. The state cannot impose its will on either. Nor will they yield to what we may see as "reason" or "logic". Nor will the Sri Lankan state bow to the superior strength or 'wisdom' of the powerful neighbour India. It enjoys its own degree of autonomy and has a capacity for resistance to the persuasive counsel or 'dictates' of Delhi that has surprised most observers, confounded the rationalist, and exasperated the donor community and the World Bank! Nor can Delhi impose its will on Tamilnadu, the protective patron of the Sri Lankan Tamil representatives. Thus, the neatly ordered calculations of 'the best informed' and the confident prognostications of the pundits have been so completely and so casually disrupted.

PILOT UNDER FIRE

Still 'hugging the centre' but 'inching away from a pro-Colombo stance' is how I summed up Delhi's

"line" in the last issue of the LG. In the only fall-back position available to Colombo, Sri Lankan diplomacy strove to make a distinction between the Indian government and its advisers, and the "honest" politician, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. This was the last refuge of a Colombo diplomacy crumbling under the pressure fast-changing, unwelcome changes in official Indian pronouncements. Now the "pilot" himself has run into heavy Sri Lankan flak.

The ball is in the "boys" court was amended to read 'the ball is in the Tamil court.' That was Mr. Gandhi's assessment in early November. It was a challenge to the Tamils and a rebuke. Up to that point, Delhi's stand still showed a pro-Colombo 'tilt', at least in Sri Lankan eyes. The TULF paper (and the ENLF memo) made that criticism no longer tenable. The ball was back in Colombo's court. But Colombo has not responded — only to convince Delhi that it is really after a 'decisive military victory' first.

The National Security Minister, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, the most sophisticated of government spokesmen, has taken great pains to draw the basic distinction between 'a military solution' and 'military dominance'. Dominance was destroyed in the north in 1983. In the north it was a military stalemate, with effective day-to-day 'control passing to the ENLF and PLOT. In the East, government's dominance was challenged and is being challenged but the edge is with the armed forces. It would be easier for the government to recover 'total dominance' if India puts a hammerlock on the 'boys' in Madras — the main objective of Colombo's diplomatic-propagandist offensive from the Bahamas to SAARC.

The ENLF has seen the implications of this strategy, and the possible loss of the military initiative it wrested in the North and the destruction of its military capabilities in the other areas. Like the govern-

ment, the ENLF turns to Delhi for help "politically and militarily". Delhi, caught in the middle, sees the immediate, almost inevitable future, which is most unpleasant, and prepares its own options, carefully and craftily.

Both sides are pressing India, in different ways, to help them to achieve a new 'military balance' what will allow negotiations from a "position of strength". What if there is an attempt at a decisive action, initiated by either combatant, and there is another much fiercer round of blood-letting but no side has gained the military dominance it sought? Can the consequences be confined to the physical areas of action, the main northern and eastern theatres of war? If the consequences overflow, what then? What will be the stresses on the government, on the political system, and the social fabric itself?

LSSP — a shaping force of history

Whatever the LSSP's detractors may say, and the number certainly is legion, nobody can deny the immense historical importance of the Sama Samaja movement. As the island's oldest political party, it was undoubtedly a shaping force of Sri Lanka's political development. It had a tremendous impact in the realm of ideas; it was a pioneer in the sphere of organised political action; and it helped to awaken an insular intelligentsia to events throughout the world, especially to anti-colonial struggles and popular movements elsewhere, and lastly to the nature of global power.

Looking back it may be argued that its principal mistake (tragic flaw?) arose from the obsessive preoccupation of its highly intellectual leadership with the most obtruse points of theory, a puritanic concern with theoretical rectitude. Its Trotskyism and its visceral hatred of Stalinism inevitably degenerated into a vulgar anti-Sovietism.

Its fullest sympathies lay with the man who took the train to the Finland station to start the October revolution and change the face of world politics for all time. But Trotskyism, history has decided, also missed the train of history since that momentous event.

It is no surprise then that party leader Colvin R. Silva was happy to announce to the press that the CPSU had sent a congratulatory message to the LSSP. The *Daily News* quoted a veteran party member as saying "Twenty one years after the LSSP was expelled from the Fourth International, the relationship has been established with the CPSU. The LSSP is the only Trotskyist party that has established such a relationship".

This issue of the LG. marks the event with three contributions from party leader, Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, a founding father, from Hector Abhayavardhana, widely regarded for decades as a leading LSSP theoretician, and from the CP boss, Pieter Keuneman, the Com-

munist who took 'the other road'.

Another event, coincidentally, places the 50th anniversary in a different perspective.

Philip the Founder and Son

The eldest son of Philip Gunawardene, the angry young man of the 1930's, has been detained under emergency regulations or under the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. His arrest has led to a habeas corpus application in the Appeal Court which has served notice on the IGP, the CID Director and the A.G. returnable this week.

The national newspapers quoted official sources as placing the number of detenus at 97. The Opposition claims the number is much bigger, all Sinhalese leftist youth, members of a breakaway JVP faction and of another organization with many ex-CPers. Although he served in the cabinet of both SLFP Premier S.W.R.D. and in the government of UNP Prime Minister Dudley

(Continued on page 23)

Letters...

(Continued from page 1)

Professor Halpe even, has held that what Leavis states there about what English literature should mean for England applies to Lanka. What we have seen as relevant here in Leavis (*Revaluation, The Great Tradition, Lawrence the Novelist*) is his approach to literature as something particular, with its own unique method of communication as distinct from other writing. Mr. Ismail continues to be baffled and says that there is no such thing as literature. Perhaps what Tagore told Einstein may be of help to Mr. Qadri Ismail: "There is the reality of paper, infinitely different from the reality of literature. For the kind of mind possessed by the moth, which eats that paper, literature is absolutely non-existent, yet for man's mind literature has a greater value of truth than the paper itself." Mr. Ismail has eaten too much paper.

By the way, contrary to Mr. Ismail's claim, I read this particular book by Leavis before Mr. Ismail began to read English. And understood its real meaning too so that I would not misapply it by quoting it out of context as Mr. Ismail does.

In Hesiod there is an account of farming technique. What is of interest in Hesiod's writing today is not this out-moded farming information but the imaginative work that presents even this practical activity as part of an ordered, meaningful cosmos. But Mr. Ismail sees no difference between what is called creative literature and other forms of writing and wants to "reform" an English Dept. So that all writing is studied without discrimination. Mr. Ismail says that Barthes said that literature "is what gets taught". I say literature is what's left behind after the utility and topicality are gone.

As for Mr. Ismail's god, Austin Warren, he is only a tin god the generalities of whose voluminous writings are a waste of time and no comparison to the economy, intelligence and relevance of Leavis's work. (Relevance to those who know where the relevance lies). Anti-Leavisism is trendy now. This is due to 1. Ignorance and lack of intelligence 2. professional jealousy of inferior academics who are not fit to hold a candle to Leavis (not that one need be a pandankaraya).

Impeccable scholarship is a habit of mind with Professor Halpe and one need not count bits of papers to establish such a reputation as Mr. Ismail requires.

Following the celebrated novel *Portnoy's Complaint*, Mr. Ismail's complaint is a symptom of his own disease — an inability to read English.

Patrick Jayasuriya

Colombo 5

Now you can Eurail

through 16 European countries in comfort and at leisure for only US \$ 260

(payable in local currency)



Yes, for only US \$ 260 you can see most of Europe, travelling First Class by European national railways. The Eurail Pass paid for in Sri Lanka gives you unlimited mileage to travel the length and breadth of Europe. See the splendour of ancient Rome, the Vatican, Naples, Florence, and Venice. Cross the Alps and across Switzerland and France to miraculous Lourdes and beautiful Paris, or if you prefer you can change your pace and take an excursion boat on Lake Geneva, the Rhine, or the Danube.

All this will be yours and more because with the Eurail Pass there are thousands of trains to choose from, the high speed TGV or the luxurious Trans Europa Expresses or the modern Intercities often in less time than by air and certainly at less cost than by car.

We will also assist you, at no extra cost, with your Passport, Visas, Traveller's cheques, Insurance, Airport reception, Hotel reservation and ground transport.

ALSO VALID
FOR EUROPEANS
RESIDENT IN
SRI LANKA

Eurail A key to the heart of Europe... and a memorable experience.

All this will be yours... and much more!

Talk to your travel agent or the general sales agent today -

AITKEN SPENCE TRAVELS LTD.

Lloyd's Building, Sir Baron Jayatilaka Mawatha, Colombo 1, Tele: 27861 - 8, 25414

FIFTY YEARS AFTER

Colvin R. de Silva (*LSSP President since its inception on December 18th 1935, and Party leader today.*)

50 years after the launching of the Lanka Samasamaja Party, it is possible to record the changes in the conditions of the people which were brought about in the years of its life and struggle. However, what needs to be recorded today is the extent to which the gains of the people in those fifty years stand generally imperilled and to a degree reversed.

In its long life and struggle of fifty years the LSSP has had to face and fight hostile forces which were varied in character. The most powerful of these were naturally the British Imperialists who ruled this country which was only a tiny part of the vast territories they ruled throughout the world.

As the situation for imperialists worsened in Asia, compelling British Imperialism to re-order its political relations in her colonial territories, our people successfully freed themselves from British rule and transformed our country into a free sovereign and independent republic in which the people themselves were sovereign.

Today that great victory of our people stands imperilled under the rule of the very people who, unlike us, never even stood for complete independence, but at the highest only for self-government or home-rule. The threat is not the restoration of direct rule by imperialism but the control by imperialism over the policies of those who are ruling our country. Our country is becoming politically dependant on imperialism in a new way. Our own rulers are moving through a pretence of non-alignment into the sphere of influence of the U. S. A.

In our fifty years we fought for what is popularly termed "the upliftment of the masses".

Take the question of poverty amongst the people. The fight for the abolition of poverty is of course the fight for socialism; the fight for socialism does not exclude the fight in the meantime for the relief of poverty. It is in that way that our country got to the rice ration book which in time became a book for rationed quantities of needed basic commodities at subsidised prices. That ration book stands deliberately abolished under the present regime. Their excuse was and is that they needed the money spent on subsidised rations in order to engage in the development of our economy.

It is noteworthy that it is the rich who have been lifted into greater riches by this regime's development. The poor who paid for this development with the loss of their ration book have become poorer. It is no solace to the poor that this is indeed the standard result of capitalist development.

No doubt it will be pleaded that anyhow they have developed seasonal agriculture bringing, as they claim, vistas of future riches to the peasant population. And yet their own researchers now say that the land to be cultivated under the Mahaweli Scheme will bring only Rs. 200/- per month at best from the standard land holding even on the assumption that the cultivated two acres will be harvested twice a year producing 100 bushels of paddy per acre each season.

The officially designated poverty-line is an income of Rs. 700/- per month. The point at which within that figure a person qualifies for public assistance is Rs. 300/- per month. On these figures a Mahaweli family limited to five people is doomed to misery. What we shall see is the reproduction of rural mass poverty in the new areas to which the poor in the old areas are being transplanted in order to become rich.

Take the working class. They had won the eight-hour day the minimum wage, and security of employment, to mention only a few basic things. Their insurance against infraction of these gains has been the building of independent working class organisations such as trade unions. This regime has struck down the independent organisations of the working class which have always been looked upon by them as their enemy. In the meantime what with the ever-soaring inflation, wages have declined and such increases as have been given have proved illusory.

Finally, within the limits of the space available to this article, we have the horror of the current so-called "ethnic" situation. This regime has brought us to the point where the country, though it has not been divided into two separate states is certainly not functioning as a single whole.

Law and order and the administration generally of much of the north and east run their own course as if there was no central government. So also, the economy of the same area is running its own course, if it is running at all,

(Continued on page 18)

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

Pieter Keuneman (*President, Communist Party of Sri Lanka*)

The 50th anniversary of the formation of the L. S. S. P. is certainly an important and memorable event. This is so in relation to both the modern history of Sri Lanka and to the history of the Left movement itself.

Although the L. S. S. P. is the oldest existing political party in the country, it was not the first. Earlier, there had been the Ceylon National Congress at the start of the 1920s and the Ceylon Labour Party at the end of that decade. Neither of these two parties lasted very long. However, the L. S. S. P. can justly claim to be Sri Lanka's first political party in the modern sense of the term.

Sri Lanka's Left movement also did not start in 1935, when the L. S. S. P. was first formed, but about five years earlier. Its emergence at this time was the result of a combination of objective and subjective factors.

Objectively, Sri Lanka was, at the start of the 1930s, experiencing in full measure the devastating effects of the first general crisis of world capitalist economy. Retrenchment in the public services, closures of businesses and estates, massive unemployment and mass misery were the order of the day. But the people lacked both organisations and leaders who could show them a way out or mobilise them to fight back. The militant trade union movement of the 1920s had collapsed after the apostasy of its then leader, A. E. Goonesinha. The intelligentsia were deeply disillusioned with the so-called "national leaders" of the day whose policies of collaboration with British colonialism provided no answer to their problems.

Subjectively, it was precisely at this time that several Sri Lankan students, who had completed their higher studies in the West where they had come into

contact anti-imperialist, socialist and communist movements, returned home. These students began to disseminate the ideas of scientific socialism and knowledge about the world's first socialist state, the U. S. S. R. to those looking for a new way out of their misfortunes. Socialist ideas and aims were spread through a network of study circles and by the pioneer work of Dr. S. A. Wickremasinghe, who used the first State Council very effectively as a platform for this purpose. This was followed by the setting up of Youth Leagues in various parts of the country, and by mass campaigns like the Suriya Mal movement and the relief work during the malaria epidemic. By 1935 strong foundations had been laid for raising the movement to the new and higher level of the formation of a political party. The impending 1936 general elections to the second State Council undoubtedly helped to precipitate this process, but were by no means its sole or major cause.

The L. S. S. P. will always be remembered as the first political party in Sri Lanka to proclaim the triple aims of political independence, the abolition of all forms of exploitation and discrimination, and establishment of a socialist society. But in its first stage (1935-40), it was not a centralised party with an elaborated program, common ideology, or definite organisational structure. It was, in fact, an umbrella organisation that sheltered all the various trends in the anti-imperialist and socialist movements of the day. It was open to anyone who subscribed to its broad general aims and paid the membership fee of 25 cents a month.

Although the scientific socialist teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin influenced several of the pioneers of the L. S. S. P., there is no special reference to these

teachings in the early documents of the party. Its inaugural Manifesto of 22 specific demands, which served as a substitute for a program and was supplemented by resolutions adopted at subsequent conferences in 1936, 1937 and 1938, refers to the party's ultimate intention to introduce "socialised production, distribution and exchange of commodities" but does not spell this out in the form of specific proposals regarding the nationalisation of industry or estates or changes in land tenure. The motive force of social change was seen as the "toiling masses" rather than the working class.

Although the L. S. S. P., after merging with the B. L. P. I. was to declare in 1945 that the Manifesto of 1935 was "vague in character", the 22 demands it set out corresponded to the level of social consciousness of different sections of the working people at this stage. These were mainly directed against the colonial bureaucracy, the Planter Raj, and the domestic feudal and capitalist establishment. They became a platform not merely for the 1936 general election but for mass mobilisation in the years that followed. The annual party conferences mostly adopted resolutions on international affairs, while the day-to-day leadership was provided by a handful of trusted leaders.

The First Stage

Despite its shortcomings, the united L. S. S. P. of the 1930s fired the imagination of the masses, sharpened their anti-imperialist and class consciousness, and taught them the all-important lesson that their real strength lay in their own militant unity. In this first stage, the united Left movement, as expressed in the L. S. S. P. of the day, laid foundations for the major contributions it was to make to Sri Lanka in such fields as winning political independence, widening democracy, achieving social

progress, and obtaining social benefits that help to give Sri Lanka the highest level of the physical quality of life in this region of the world.

During the 1930s, there was consensus within the L. S. S. P. on the broad lines of internal and external policy. These were widely outlined in the eloquent Presidential Address of Dr. Colvin R. de Silva to the inaugural conference of the L. S. S. P. in 1935 and given effect to the practical work of the party thereafter.

Internally, the winning of political independence was seen as the main immediate task. Building "a united front against imperialism" was necessary for this. Although led by the working class, it was envisaged that the "united front" would draw in "broad strata of our population which, though neither working class nor socialist, are genuinely anti-imperialist."

In pursuance of these policies, the L. S. S. P. of the 1930s worked to build united fronts of both the broad, anti-imperialist sections of the population and also of the working class itself. The 1936-7 period saw sustained efforts to develop united actions between the L. S. S. P. and the Ceylon Labour Party, led by A. E. Goonesinha, around common demands and united actions like joint strikes and a united May Day rally.

In internationally, policy, as Dr Colvin R. de Silva's inaugural Presidential Address again makes clear, solidarity with the Soviet Union (then the world's only socialist state) and with the anti-fascist and anti-imperialist struggles of the time were the key feature of L. S. S. P. policy. Its campaigns in support of the Spanish Republic and its many solidarity actions in support of the freedom struggle in India showed that these policies were not confined to theory.

Unfortunately this basically correct line of policy, which brought the L. S. S. P. much authority, support and prestige in the 1930s was disrupted in 1939, shortly before the outbreak of World War II. This was also the time when imperialism, both fascist and non-fascist, had launched a massive anti-Soviet and anti-communist cam-

paign throughout the world. The policies of the Fourth (Trotskyite) International gained the upper hand within the Executive Committee of the L. S. S. P., despite strong opposition from an important minority of its members. How this happened is a separate story but the fact remains that the introduction of this new factor, which did not arise from any internal development of the party or the mass movement in Sri Lanka, led to the arbitrary expulsion of the Communists and their supporters and the first major division in the united Left movement.

The second stage of the Left movement, which lasted for over two decades, was overshadowed and coloured by this division. Although the united achievements of the Left movement in the earlier stage could not be completely undone, the advance of the Left as a whole was retarded by this disunity. It was particularly unfortunate for L. S. S. P. itself as it heralded a series of further splits and divisions within the party from time to time.

Those who were not in the movement at this stage — and they include a majority of our population who were not even born — will to-day find it difficult to comprehend how such issues of policy and ideology could have been so fiercely fought over. In the light of historical developments thereafter and the facts of life itself many of these debates must seem artificial and even absurd to later generations. But they nevertheless contributed to the practical disorientation of the movement, to conflicting tactics, and to an overall inhibition of initiatives that could and should have been taken. They provide yet another example of the damage that a party or movement can do to itself if it allows anti-communism or anti-Sovietism to penetrate. It.

It must seem unbelievable to modern generations that there should have been debates over such questions as whether socialism could be built in a single country; whether the U.S.S.R. was a genuine or a "degenerate" workers' state; or whether, after the Soviet Union's entry into the war against fascism, the character of the war had

changed from an inter-imperialist one, which should be opposed, into one in which victory would lead to the weakening, rather than the strengthening, of imperialism and should be supported. Post-war developments have shown which view was correct, for the defeat of fascism led to the spread of socialism and its emergence as a world system and to the overall weakening of imperialism and the rapid collapse of its colonial system.

It must also seem incredible that, under the influence of the policies of the Fourth International, the L.S.S.P. should have concluded at its 1941 conference that "the social tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution (i.e. in Ceylon)... have already been accomplished... Consequently, the development of the struggle against imperialism leads directly to the proletarian revolution". Equally astonishing is the conclusion that the people of Sri Lanka could not develop their own and separate struggle for national political independence. This is denounced as a "false perspective" because "the revolutionary struggle in Ceylon in all its stages"... "will constitute a provincial aspect in relation to the Indian revolution as a whole".

Nevertheless, these incorrect theoretical positions led to serious political consequences. They led the L.S.S.P. to transform itself into the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India (Ceylon Unit), and to transfer most of its effective cadre to India in the vital war years.

Although the above were not the only matters on which there were sharp differences of view, they were the main ones. They embraced a range of matters relating to the stage of the revolution, the role of different social classes and strata in the fight against imperialism, the strategy and tactics of united front activities, and proletarian internationalism.

After their expulsion from the united L.S.S.P., the communists formed first the United Socialist Party and then, in 1943, the Communist Party. They sought to continue and develop the correct policies of the Left movement of the 1930s on the basis of Marxism—

Leninism and proletarian internationalism. The positions they took in many of these debates and controversies proved to be correct and were later accepted as common positions of the mainstream of the Left movement. But, as they have self-critically admitted since, the Communists also committed several mistakes in doing so, both reformist and sectarian.

The purpose of mentioning such matters to-day is not to rub salt into old wounds or to blow one's own trumpet. It is, instead, to stress the need for a combined effort by both the L.S.S.P. and the C.P.S.L. to assist a serious, in-depth, self-critical and comradely review of policies and theories that led to splits and divisions in the Left movement during this second stage. The CPSL has made some efforts in this direction, but these are far from exhaustive. It would be far better if such a self-critical review could be made more comprehensively.

There are several reasons why and the evolution of common conclusions would be useful.

First of all, many features of the present international and domestic situation have strong similarities with those that existed in the first and second stages of the movement. Of course, the situation to-day is more complex, exhibits new features, and has a difference balance of class forces, both internationally and at home. But an authoritative identification of past achievements and errors, as well as the evolution of common conclusions that can be gained from this experience, will be of inestimable value to the new generations of revolutionaries and radicals who will have to lead the struggle for socialism once the pioneers and veterans are no more.

Looking Back

In this connection, the older leaders of the L.S.S.P. and the C.P.S.L. must self-critically accept that they have not done enough to create a second or even third line of leaders who will lead the struggles of the present and the future. Nor have they done enough to make their experience the common property of the contemporary Left movement.

As a result, many young revolutionaries of to-day — and we can be proud of the splendid new generation of militant youth that is emerging now — can be led astray by the canards of bourgeois parties and their ideologists of a conflict between a so-called "old" and "new" Left; or by the self-justifying myths of those who separated themselves from the movement in search of more personally rewarding fields elsewhere; or the prattle of those who prove that the infantile disorder" diagnosed by Lenin at the start of this century can be a long-lasting disease.

It is interesting to note that the critical public discussion that accompanied the celebration of the L.S.S.P.'s 50th anniversary has mostly been confined (a) the peaceful and non-peaceful roads to power and (2) united front tactics, especially in the 1960s and 1970s. Critics from the political Right and Centre have argued that the mainstream Left parties missed the bus because they did not renounce extraparlimentary struggle and adhere solely to the parliamentary path. The familiar tales about Sri Lanka being a "Buddhist", "basically agrarian" or what-have-you country have been trotted out once more. On the other hand, the ultra-Left has accused these parties of "parliamentary cretinism" and forsaking revolutionary perspectives.

The mainstream Left was undoubtedly correct in rejecting infantile theories that "power grows out of the barrel of a gun" or that a struggle cannot be revolutionary unless it takes an armed form. The disastrous J.V.P. insurrection of 1971, which was carried out by an elite cadre divorced from mass support and at a time when neither the need nor the conditions for armed struggle had arisen, did tremendous damage to the Left and progressive movement at a crucial time. Incidentally, it should be noted that the same J.V.P. which condemned the Left parties for Parliamentary opportunism, was later to promise President Jayawardene publically that they would never undertake such actions in future but adhere to the strict Parliamentary path.

Nevertheless, the mainstream Left parties must critically accept that

the charge against them of an over-parliamentary bias is not without foundation. Although the two Left parties have led almost all the extra-parliamentary mass struggles of any consequence in the past half a century, they have not always been able to strike the correct balance between Parliamentary and extra-parliamentary forms of struggle, in which both weight and priority is given to the latter form. The neglect of work among the plantation workers of Indian origin after they were disenfranchised is also a sorry reflection of this.

As far as united front tactics are concerned, there is still no unity of view between the two mainstream Left parties on the application of these tactics in the period between 1951, when Mr S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike broke from the U. N. P. to form the S. L. F. P., and 1970. It also so in regard to the period of the United Front government of 1970-76. As far as the CPSL is concerned, its 11th Party Congress has adopted and published a detailed and self-critical review of work during this period, emphasising both positive and negative aspects. As these matters still separate many young radicals from the mainstream Left movement, more comprehensive clarity on them is sorely needed.

A new stage in the Left movement began about two decades ago after the L. S. S. P. separated from the Fourth International and began to distance itself from the latter's policies. After this a return to positive positions and traditions of the first stage of the movement but at a new and higher level has become possible. During this third stage, the areas of difference between the two parties have narrowed and the areas of agreement have expanded. Bilateral relations between the two parties are cordial and co-operative, and both are members of a common alliance that includes the S. L. M. P.

Of course, there are still areas where greater clarity and common understanding can be reached. In regard to a just and final settlement of the national question, the left has to examine in greater depth the two views on (1) whe-

(Continued on page 23)

Marxism and some features of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party

Hector Abhayavardhana

The first statement of policy put out by the Lanka Sama Samaja Party is to be found in the Manifesto adopted by its founding conference on 18th December, 1935. Though the cadences of its prose do not compare with those of the famous "Communist Manifesto" written by Marx and Engels in 1848, there is much to testify that the former document had been greatly influenced by the latter. "All the world over there is today," it declared, "a fundamental conflict between two sets of principles, which may form the basis of Government policy: they are the principles of disintegrating capitalism and those of advancing socialism." Even in Ceylon it had been apparent for some time that there was a growing volume of socialist opinion. This had now coalesced into the new party.

The group that launched the Lanka Sama Samaja Party in December 1935 had really been formed in 1933 and consisted primarily of young men returned recently from their studies in Western universities. They had become active in the Youth League movement, in which political ideas were being seriously debated; had — some of them — engaged in the first skirmish against racial tactics in the workers' movement, resorted to by A. E. Goonesinha in the Wellawatte Mills strike of 1932; and had in 1933 launched the Suriya Mal movement that provided the first opportunity to young men and women among the educated middle classes to shun patronising attitudes and go to the masses with understanding of the identity of their mutual interests.

The LSSP had no formal programme during the period of the pre-war years. The Manifesto of 1935 came to be supplemented

by Resolutions passed at the Annual Conferences, which were held regularly in the years 1936, 1937, 1938, and provided the policy directives to which the Party adhered. From time Resolutions were passed on current questions, especially major international problems, by the Party's Executive Committee, in which authority was vested to make decisions between annual conferences.

The Manifesto declared that "the primary aim" of the LSSP was to establish a Socialist Society in Ceylon. This meant a society based on "socialised production, distribution and exchange of commodities." Since the principal obstacle in the way of the struggle for socialism was imperialist rule, it became imperative to struggle against imperialism for full national independence. The "only elements in our society" capable of "whole-heartedly and effectively" carrying out this struggle against imperialism were the "toiling masses." In emancipating themselves, the "toiling masses" would also emancipate all society "from the tyrannies, superstitions and prejudices of class, race, caste, creed and sex which keep society divided and enslaved."

"The Tasks of Ceylon" in an Appendix to the Programme of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India (in which the LSSP had merged in 1942) that was adopted in 1945, declared that: The LSSP was formed in 1935 as a radical mass party with an anti-imperialist programme, which was however vague in character. "A Short History of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party", published by the Party in 1960 on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the LSSP, cautioned that, in order to understand the role played by the Party in the early years, it is necessary to understand first that politics in the contemporary sense did not exist in Ceylon at the time of the LSSP's formation. "Although

A Paper presented to a symposium on Marxism and the Left Movement at the University of Peradeniya on 2-3 December, 1985. He is widely regarded as the leading theoretician of the LSSP.

universal franchise had existed from 1931, elections did not proceed on party lines, and political issues were hardly raised. Voters used to vote on caste, religious or personal considerations. Politics was really confined to the English educated few, and it was customary for public meetings to be conducted in English". In one sense it could be said that the LSSP really introduced politics to Ceylon. "Certainly, it brought politics to the common people, employing a language and terms they could understand."

It is worth noting, in this connection, that the 1935 **Manifesto** nowhere referred to the special role of the working class in the struggle for socialism. It makes mention of the "toiling masses" in several places and refers to them as "the only elements in our society which can whole-heartedly and effectively carry on the struggle against imperialism." It further explains that the victory of socialism will mean "the political supremacy of the toiling masses". This appears to be at variance with the clear and crisp formulation of the **Communist Manifesto** of 1848: "Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product."

In seeking to evaluate this apparent variance, it is useful to remember that the **Communist Manifesto** was written in 1848. By this time, Marx had not yet developed his characterisation of the proletariat as a man divorced from ownership of the means of

production and compelled to produce surplus value for the capitalist who purchases his labour power in the market. The theory of Surplus Value was initially expounded in the second of Marx's seven economic notebooks that have been collected and made known by the title of *Grundrisse*. Marx worked on these notebooks during the seven months November 1857 to May 1858.

As late as 1843, Marx's concept of the proletariat had a primarily philosophical content. The early years of capitalist development, and especially the harrowing experience of the first industrial revolution, had made the proletariat the social archetypal type of the suffering that could be inflicted on contemporary human beings. Such negation of the universal quality of being human made it an imperative task for the proletariat to regain its human condition. This, in turn, invested the proletariat with a world-historic mission. The struggle of the proletariat to emancipate itself from its suffering, and negate itself as a class, could be the instrument of the liberation of all human beings.

Marx quickly realised that it was insufficient to see the revolutionary in the proletarian from the sole angle of his lost humanity. Revolution had to be the response to radical necessity directly experienced by the proletarian. This could not come from theory alone, because theory as such is inoperable and has to be mediated. "Theory", Marx said, "will only be realised in a people in so far as it is the realisation of their needs." Revolutionary theory has to pass into practice as a response to radical human needs. Going out to discover these needs, Marx found them concretely in the proletarian's activity as a producer. The role of production was elaborated into the fundamental premise of all human history.

It was the immiseration of the working people during the period of the rise of capitalism that provided German philosophy with the initial impulse that culminated in the international revolutionary

movement that we know as Marxism today. There were similar conditions of immiseration in the villages, towns and plantations of Ceylon at the time that the LSSP was founded, especially in the early nineteen thirties. Referring to normal conditions in the villages, Sir Ivor Jennings described the standard of living as being so low "that it is evident that the great majority of people in the wet zone — and an even stronger case could be made in the dry zone — are permanently on the verge of starvation." The economic depression that began in 1929 brought the tea, rubber and coconut plantations to a virtual standstill, threw out casual and permanent employees in vast numbers from workplaces and Government departments, made casual labour unemployable in the villages and the peasants' meagre produce unsaleable. Drought further compounded the situation and the epidemic of malaria that followed wiped out between 90,000 and 125,000 lives.

The Suriya Mal activists who, quinine mixture in one hand and packeted foodstuffs in the other, went into the battle against raging malarial fever, could hardly have anticipated the conditions of misery and helplessness that they saw. The feelings that welled within them could not have been entirely of the gentler variety. Sterner emotions broke out of the text of the *Manifesto*: "After a hundred and forty years of British Rule... the majority of our people are condemned to work and die in poverty, squalor, ignorance and disease..." "While the army of unemployed has mounted to stupendous proportions uncalculated and unprovided for, while over 90,000 have in a few months died of hunger and preventable malaria, reducing the countryside to a graveyard, our national leaders have been entertaining Royal Dukes and celebrating Royal jubilees at public expense..." The temper of the men and women who formed the LSSP was perhaps greatly determined by the Marxist ideas they had gathered abroad and the national-mindedness that increasingly came

out of the Youth Leagues. But what solidified their resolve never to relent until imperialist and native capitalist exploitation had been extirpated from our society, was the indelible imprint on their memories of 90,000 to 125,000 men, women and children of all ages going to their deaths shivering fitfully and then blazing with the fever of malaria.

If the LSSP chose the term "toiling masses" to describe the sections among the people that would provide the base of the new movement, rather than "proletariat", this could not have been because its principal leaders were unaware of more precise Marxist categories. As already mentioned, political consciousness hardly existed except among small sections of the English-speaking middle-class, making a direct appeal to class-belonging an unrewarding exercise. Besides, no nationalist movement of any serious significance had as yet come into being in the country, thereby rendering it imperative that the widest possible appeal, embracing all sections of the people, should be made on behalf of the new party. But there was also a further consideration. The "proletarian" or "worker" of 1935 was a far different person from his contemporary namesake. There were no more than a handful of industrial workplaces at the time so that the bulk of manual workers largely performed menial functions. Many of them were illiterate and were immigrants from Tamil Nadu or Kerala. The man whom the Sinhala term "Kamkaruwa" connoted was not only badly paid in relation to other categories of the employed population, but he was differently clothed from the latter and was unable to speak the language of the privileged classes, English.

The dividing line between privileged and unprivileged in society (however meagre the privileges in the majority of cases) was provided by the English language and the Englishman's attire. Jennings estimated that there were 350,000 people belonging to the middle class out of a population of 6,500,000. The urban workers not only belonged to the 6,000,000

others, but they were scarcely distinguishable from most of them. The overwhelming majority of workers were secluded on the plantations, where they worked in more abject conditions, and all of them were illiterate. There was an inferior social status attaching to the manual worker which reflected the impact of prevalent caste attitudes. It is hardly surprising that today, the average worker rejects the word "kamkaruwa" preferring the more statuswise neutral term "sevaka" i. e. "employee."

The appeal to the toiling masses as the basis of a "common front of all elements striving for emancipation" was concretised in the **Manifesto** in a list of 22 immediate demands. The demands appropriately reflect the concrete needs of the working people in both the villages and urban areas and are realisable within the framework of normal capitalist society. They embodied direct remedies for the most urgently felt needs of village cultivators and urban workers and their families. The plantation workers are left out of this charter, it should be noted. The reason must be that the founders of the LSSP had as yet little contact with this section of workers and could not think concretely enough about their problems. There were three demands relating to children: abolition of domestic and industrial slavery and free school books, meals and milk in primary schools. Demands relating to the villages were for free pasture lands, seed paddy without interest, abolition of irrigation rates and access to forests for brushwood and timber. The bulk of demands concerned the workers, including unemployment insurance, minimum wage, 8-hour day, factory legislation and better and cheaper housing. The general demands included Rent Restriction, use of local languages in police stations and lower courts and Government departments, sickness, old age and maternity benefits, and progressive abolition of all direct taxation.

These simple demands were designed to serve also as a platform on which the party would

fight elections to the second State Council that were due the following year. Philip Gunawardena and N. M. Perera, who won their seats, continued to fight for them from within the State Council in the context of a blistering campaign against the British rulers and their native henchmen. Many of these demands were introduced and passed as motions in the State Council, though some of them were not implemented. Free meals for school-children, use of local languages in lower courts and police stations, restrictions on child slavery, restoration of Estate Duty, abolition of irrigation rates were demands that were won. Others were defeated or rendered innocuous. But the fight that was conducted by the two LSSPers in the Council, backed by relentless pressure on the Government from outside, took the message of the party into large areas of the country.

It has to be said, however, that most of the LSSP's agitational campaigns in the villages were related to oppressive acts of the Government or the need of welfare arrangements for the people. Questions of land ownership and tenure or of productivity and prices in agricultural production did not engage the party's attention. A lengthy resolution on village problems was passed at the 2nd Annual Conference of the party in 1937. But the demands made were: (a) as much land free of rent as peasants can cultivate; (b) free pasture land in each district; (c) seed paddy free of interest; (d) abolition of irrigation rates; (e) stop arbitrary seizure and shooting of cattle; (f) no restrictions on tapping of palm trees for sweet toddy; (g) repeal of all restrictions on chena cultivators.

The first real programme adopted by the LSSP was after its affiliation with the Fourth International, when a secret conference attended by 42 delegates met in April 1941. This programme had the following to say about the agrarian problem:

"The bulk of the peasantry are still proprietors although of uneconomic holdings. The frag-

mentation of holdings and the joint ownership of fragmented holdings, the heavy load of peasant indebtedness, the absence of credit and marketing facilities, and the heavy indirect taxation of necessities, all continue to drive the peasant into a chronic state of degradation and misery. At the same time, the number of landless peasants has increased and is increasing even more rapidly...

"In Ceylon the social tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, namely the liquidation of landlordism and other feudal forms, have already been accomplished... Consequently the development of the struggle against Imperialism leads directly to the proletarian revolution... For this purpose, the working class must win the support particularly of the peasantry with whom links exist already in the landless peasants and the small peasant proprietors working on capitalist estates. The proletariat can win for itself the support of the peasants by the slogan of "Land to the landless" and establish with this support the dictatorship of the proletariat."

In 1945, nearly three years after the merger of the LSSP in the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India, a new programme was adopted for the LSSP in Ceylon. This had the following to say about the agrarian problem:-

"The peasantry appears today as a class of paupers, either the proprietors of wholly uneconomic

plots of land, or share-croppers for absentee landowners. In a majority of those cases, they are compelled to work part-time as hired labourers on the plantations and elsewhere. The peasantry face only greater ruin and pauperisation under imperialism. Their sole future lies not in the schemes of agrarian reform concocted by the big native bourgeoisie in order to win political support, but in their taking the revolutionary road along with the proletariat...

"The BLPI (Ceylon Unit) puts forward the following immediate

demands on behalf of the Ceylon peasantry:

No Tariffs and Taxes on Necessities; Abolition of Irrigation Rates; Free Pasture Lands; Crown Lands to the Peasants.

"Apart from these special slogans and demands, and the qualifications noted above, the transitional programme of the BLPI is an adequate guide to the work of the Ceylon Unit of the party in the transitional period."

The early agitation among the peasantry was not accompanied by any attempt to bring them together in mass organisations. Agitation invariably took on a direct political character and, especially in the post-war years, the LSSP Youth Leagues were considered organisations that were appropriate for mobilising the peasantry for partial struggles of any kind. Organisational effort was concentrated on the building of trade unions in urban areas. The plantation workers were not forgotten, however. They were always regarded as the main detachments of the working class and the task of organising them in trade unions was accorded high priority. Indeed, the Bracegirdle episode of April 1937 arose out of the alarm of the British tea planters that a white man resident on the plantations should fraternise with plantation "coolies" and maintain suspicious relationships with "Communists." The defiance of the Governor and the court and parliamentary battles that followed had a deep impact on the entire country. The plantation workers could not but have been influenced by it.

When Jawaharlal Nehru arrived in Ceylon in 1938 to report on the problems of people of Indian origin in Ceylon to the high command of the Indian National Congress, it became clear that he had a mandate to set up an organisation of Ceylon Indians that would be affiliated to the Indian Congress party. The provocation for this step was provided by the anti-Indian agitation that had been let loose by the Baron Jayatillaka — D. S. Senanayake ministerial combination. The LSSP leaders made a fervent

appeal to Nehru to desist from forming a Ceylon Indian Congress since this would make the plantation workers a pawn in the communal machinations of Indian businessmen in Ceylon. The appeal failed and the Ceylon Indian Congress was formed in 1939. Despite this, the LSSP was able to proceed with its organisational work on the plantations. A wave of strikes commenced in November, spread rapidly in the Central Province and thence to Uva. The militancy and determination displayed by the plantation workers appeared to confirm their fitness for the role of leadership in the revolution that the LSSP envisaged. The British Governor was alarmed by the situation that was developing in the midst of the war that was on. The order went out for repressive action against the party and the arrest of its leaders.

The commencement of the war, the strike-wave on the plantations and the repression against the party called for a radical change in its agitational methods and form of organised functioning. The first step taken was to ensure that there was no criss-crossing of political lines within the party, deriving from undeclared entanglements with organisations not approved by the party itself. The Stalin-Hitler pact was endorsed by a group in the LSSP and it was clear there would be many complications for the future if there continued to be a tendency in the LSSP that followed a line dictated by Moscow. The next step was to build an illegal apparatus for the party and to align its programme with the Fourth International to which the LSSP pledged its support. The new programme of 1941 declared that: "The only class capable of leading the struggle against imperialism to a successful conclusion is the working class." Further, that the working class was "the natural and inevitable organiser and leader of the toiling masses for the overthrow of imperialism". This programme was amended in 1945 on the ground that it was "Unsatisfactory in its theoretical aspects, chiefly because it adumbrates a 'national' revolution in Ceylon, which is a false perspective". The essence of the correction was as follows:—

"The overthrow of British imperialism is the indispensable condition for the liberation of Ceylon from its backwardness, and of its people from their present misery and economic slavery. At the same time, the revolutionary struggle in Ceylon cannot proceed in isolation, and with its own independent forces, to the stage of the overthrow of the imperialist regime. Even at its highest point of mobilisation, the revolutionary mass movement in this island alone could not, unassisted from outside, generate the energies required to overcome the forces which the imperialists would muster in defence of their power in Ceylon, which is for them not only a field of economic exploitation, but a strategic outpost for the defence of the Empire as a whole..... On the other hand, the complete emancipation of India itself is unthinkable while Ceylon is maintained as a solid bastion of British power in the East. From this point of view, we may say that the revolutionary struggle in Ceylon will be bound up with that of the continent in all its stages, and will constitute a provincial aspect in relation to the Indian revolution, as a whole".

This formulation of the intimate connection inherent in the revolutionary struggle against imperialism in Ceylon and India was, of course the thinking that lay behind the formation of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India in which the LSSP was the Ceylon unit. It is difficult to say whether the LSSP leaders really believed that the Ceylon party could permanently retain this relationship to an Indian party if the BLPI had taken shape as a viable organisation. Even if the Indian national struggle had resulted in the revolutionary overthrow of British imperialist rule, the LSSP would have needed a free hand to develop the anti-imperialist struggle in Ceylon. If, as seemed probable however, the result of the national struggle in India would be a transfer of power by the British to Congress hands, the vested interests in Ceylon were almost certain to have stirred up anti-Indian feelings in the masses to save themselves, if nothing else.

The LSSP would then be gravely handicapped if it functioned as the Ceylon Unit of an Indian party.

The LSSP leaders in the BLPI were not unaware of this problem. But their immediate wartime need overshadowed all post-war possibilities. The task was to throw the full weight of the LSSP into building a viable base for a unit of the Fourth International on the Indian subcontinent. Rather than ignore the entire problem of Indo-Ceylon relationships, they limited themselves in the **Programme for Ceylon** of 1945 to a clarification of any doubt about the sovereignty of the Ceylon state. The unity of the revolution in the two countries, said the **Programme** did not mean that the Ceylonese people would surrender their right of self-determination. That right did not currently exist under British rule and could only become effective after the liberation of Ceylon. This liberation would not become a reality without a successful Indian revolution — this was the basic position of the **Programme**. In the context of a successful revolution "the Ceylonese people and they alone will decide the political future of Ceylon, i.e. whether Ceylon will enter an Indian Federation, or having entered such a Federation, whether she will at any time secede therefrom."

Post-war problems were a matter of the future in 1942 and 1943. As the British armed forces retreated before the Japanese advance, the threat of invasion appeared a likelihood in Ceylon. In that event, it would be imprudent to leave the LSSP leaders who were already in detention to the doubtful mercies of fascistic Japanese. The decision was accordingly taken to take the detainees out of jail and eventually help some of them, at least, to get across to India. This was carried out by mid-1942. Philip Gunawardena, Colvin R. de Silva and N. M. Perera thus joined Leslie Gunawardena who was already in Bombay, where the BLPI headquarters were located. Four powerful political personalities, with a wealth of mass experience, were introjected into a fledgling organi-

sation seeking to acquire an All-India image and a local mass base in a few provincial capitals and some other areas. Having to operate secretly, they were subject to severe restrictions, at the same time as they had to cast a wide propaganda net if they were to be effective. The Indian collaborators of the LSSP leaders had little experience of mass activity, the bulk of them being youthful elements drawn into the new party in the context of the proceeding anti-imperialist struggle. Some of the older local personnel had cultivated leadership fantasies of various kinds and were not easy to work with. Clashes of personality were inevitable in such conditions.

Philip Gunawardena was not only an impetuous personality, but he also was never a respecter of persons. It was never his way to be conciliatory in getting over problems; he preferred to take them headlong and impose his will on them. It was not easy for people of equal stature to keep his goodwill without submitting to him. For people of less stature it was virtually impossible to do so. It was inevitable, therefore that personal hostility should build up against Philip on trivial considerations. His mode of reacting to such hostility did not permit others always to take Philip's side. The antagonism extended to other matters invariably and to areas outside Bombay, even to Ceylon. As quite often happens where people are withdrawn from society for one reason or another, antagonisms vanquish all other relationships and find other pretexts for expansive personal warfare. The factional battle that sprang up in the BLPI in Bombay had few repercussions anywhere in India, but it led to a catastrophic split within the LSSP in Ceylon.

When the war came to an end in 1945, Philip Gunawardena and N. M. Perera were once more prisoners in Ceylon, having been arrested in Bombay in 1943 and eventually handed over to the Ceylon authorities. On their rele-

ase, Philip, N. M. and their faction reconstituted themselves as the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, refusing to have any connection with the opposing faction which still functioned as the Ceylon Unit of the BLPI. They issued a call for the setting up of a Left Front which appeared designed to rally all those who had belonged to the pre-1942 LSSP under their leadership. The result was the formalisation of the split in the Ceylon party. Though efforts at conciliation united both factions for a while at the end of 1945, the emergence of two separate parties seemed unavoidable. Philip and N.M., the best known of LSSP leaders with an unrivalled record of militant championship of the rights and interests of the common people from the platform of the State Council, had an advantage over their opponents. The latter were led by Colvin R. de Silva and Leslie Goonewardene who returned to Ceylon towards the end of 1946. To avoid the confusion of two parties using the LSSP name, the BLPI unit later changed their name to Bolshevik Sama Samaja Party.

The LSSP and the LSSP (Ceylon Unit of the BLPI) went into the general election of 1947 as two separate parties. They did not clash in the same seats because each of them adhered to the allotment of seats that had been made during the period of brief unity at the end of 1946. But the split had done enormous damage to the prestige that the name "LSSP" had acquired in the previous ten years, especially during the war years. Even so the Philip-M.M.-LSSP won 10 seats and the Colvin-Leslie LSSP 5 seats out of 38 seats that both contested. There seems little doubt that, had there been no split to demoralise their supporters and undo the impact of some of their achievements, the election results may have been somewhat different. Not merely in the sense of a greater number of seats for the LSSP but in respect of the role it could have played as the main mobilising instrument of the common fight against the UNP.

(To be continued)

Nationalism and the Crisis of Bourgeois Political Theory

S. Sathanandan

(The author, who received his PhD from Cambridge University, is the son of T. Satchithanandam, who contested Nallur at the 1970 Elections, as the LSSP candidate.)

The current political climate in Sri Lanka has generated new interest among intellectuals in the National Question (for Marxists) or the Ethnic Issue (for non-Marxists), and it has given rise to numerous publications. This literature has (a) explored the historical (including cultural) roots of the problem and (b) examined the process of social reproduction of the related ideology. However, Omvedt's observation that 'Marxism as a political force... is in danger of stagnating while other political forces grasp the leadership'¹ still remains valid.

'National' versus 'Nationalist'

To begin with, the literature in Sri Lanka has made no attempt to differentiate between the 'national' factor and the 'nationalist' phenomenon. This distinction, which has been emphasised by recent scholars in the Soviet Union, is an indispensable analytical tool.

'National' refers to the historical memory shared by a people, be they tribe, clan or nation, which confers upon that people a unique identity, which is transmitted to each new generation as 'culture' through the medium of music, dance, language, literature, religion, etc. This identity of a people is **autonomous** in the sense that its origin is independent of class struggle. Although it distinguishes one people from another, **such identity of one people is not by itself hostile to the identity of another people**. This is evidenced by the fact that different peoples have co-existed peacefully over long periods of time: the history of Tamils and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka is a case in point,

In **national movements**, a class (or an alliance of classes) mobilises a people as a whole on the basis of the 'national' factor in order to capture State power; and they include Bourgeois Democratic Revolutions, Anti-Colonial Movements and Anti-Imperialist Revolutions.

'Nationalist' is an exclusionist phenomenon, which is also based on aspects of the 'national' and is activated by a class (or an alliance of classes) but, in addition, is vested with an ideology hostile to other peoples. Where such an ideology serves to mobilise a people into hostile action against another people, it gives rise to **nationalist movements** or nationalism, examples of which are White Racism and Nazism. 'Nationalist' phenomena are **induced** and are a function of class struggle: because, a people, composed of antagonistic classes, do not autonomously arrive at the conscious and collective decision to engage in hostile action against another people. Instead, hostility against another people is initiated by a class at a particular historical conjuncture in the pursuit of its own specific politico-economic interests.

In other words, the 'national' factor is 'refracted through the prism of class struggle' to produce national as well as nationalist movements. The core ideology of **national movements** is the elimination of social oppression and exploitation; hence the ideological character of national movements has been described, for want of a better word, as 'progressive'. In contrast, the ideology of nationalist movements legitimises the continuation and intensification of exploitation, and often the extermination, of other peoples.

Therefore, any analysis of nationalism must address at least three questions; namely:

- Which class transforms the non-antagonistic 'national' factor into the antagonistic 'nationalist' form?
- How is this transformation effected?
- What are the aims underlying this transformation?

An examination of these questions in the Sri Lankan context is beyond the scope of this modest essay. But it must be noted that the transformation or, rather, the deformation of 'national' into 'nationalist' is a **political** process and that in a class society, this change is crucially determined by the level and intensity of class struggle.

'Nationalist' phenomena arise when a class advances its own politico-economic interests as the general interests of a people as a whole. This achieved by that class when it clothes, its **particular interests** in **universal symbols**, which are drawn from the 'national' factor: for example, it is well known that in post-colonial Sri Lanka the Sinhalese petit bourgeoisie has expressed its own fear of economic strangulation as a generalised 'threat to the Sinhalese language'. Where a class which activates 'nationalist' phenomena has achieved political hegemony, it has been able to use the State apparatus to accentuate nationalism: Apartheid practised by the South African State is a case in point.

Marxism-Leninism has for long been concerned with the study of the production and reproduction of nationalism. Since nationalism creates obstacles to solidarity between working classes of different peoples, the main thrust of Marxist-Leninist analysis has been

- to understand how the 'national' is transformed into the 'nationalist', and

- (b) to overcome the obstacles created by nationalism to working class solidarity in the course of political struggle.

Every revolutionary movement, beginning with the October Revolution, has addressed these issues and the Marxist-Leninist tradition, far from lacking analytical rigor, in fact has provided the most effective analysis of nationalism.

Due to their failure to distinguish between the 'national' and the 'nationalist', non-Marxist scholars have accused the Marxist-Leninist tradition of underestimating or ignoring the 'force of nationalism'; and it would appear that these scholars in fact refer to the neglect of the 'national' factor.

This is true insofar as the Marxist-Leninist tradition has not sought to engage in an abstract study of the 'national' factor divorced from the political reality of class struggle. Since the national factor can rarely be found in society in its pure state, such a study is a sterile academic exercise. The 'nationalist' phenomenon that exists in reality is a product of a complex interaction between the 'national' factor and class struggle in which class struggle is determinant.

But the bourgeois mind seeks to do the impossible: to conceptually disaggregate nationalism and class struggle and to study the 'nationalist' phenomenon in the mistaken belief that what is being examined is the 'national' factor; and it has been assumed that a 'nationalist' ideological construct is not determined by class struggle because the 'national' factor on which it is based is independent of class struggle. Inevitably, the non-Marxist theoreticians who adopt this approach analyse class-determined 'nationalist' phenomena without reference to class struggle.

In contrast, Marxism-Leninism begins with class struggle and 'moves backwards' to reconstruct the 'national' and 'steps forward' to comprehend the 'nationalist'.

Counter-revolution:

Nationalism as Communication

Assertions about alleged weaknesses of Marxist-Leninist theory

are not merely the products of a profound ignorance of the Marxist-Leninist tradition; they also serve a counter-revolutionary function of setting the stage for propagating bourgeois or 'liberal' models of analysis, which are often presented, in the Populist tradition, as neither bourgeois nor Marxist-Leninist but, instead, as a non-existent 'third path' of analysis. Nationalism as Communication² is a case in point.

The basic assumption underlying this approach is a bourgeois view of the population as **consumers** of 'nationalist' ideology, which is seen to be 'packaged' in myths and symbols and is 'supplied' through the means of communications. So, the strategy for combatting nationalism is staggeringly simple: launch an ideological attack to 'demystify' the myths and symbols, not unlike an advertising campaign conducted to undermine product loyalty by educating the public on the dangers of consuming a given product!

The non-Marxist intellectuals seek to educate the working classes out of their propensity to respond to myths and symbols which form part of the 'national' factor. This is to be achieved by (a) gaining access to competing channels of communications to the working classes and (b) engaging in a rational discourse with the working classes to expose the irrationality which underlies myths and symbols.

Thus, the bourgeois mind is incapable of understanding the dialectical nature of change; and it simply cannot grasp the fact that one set of myths and symbols is neutralised only by the **counter-vailing power** of another set of myths and symbols: the Hammer and Sickle is an example. The working classes, without any assistance from non-Marxist intellectuals, learn about the irrationality of the former set of myths and symbols in the course of this dialectical transformation, which is political in character.

Unable to organise the working classes for this political struggle, non-Marxist intellectuals fall back

to a Populist position: they set out on the missionary endeavour of 'teaching' the working classes to separate the good ('national') from the evil ('nationalist'). The fact that these intellectuals will fail to execute this utopian task needs no further elaboration.

Footnotes

1. Omvedt, Gail, Marxist Theory and Nationalism', *Lanka Guardian*, Vol. 8, No. 4, July/15/85, p. 17.
2. Deutch, K., *Nationalism as Social Communication*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966.

REVISED SUBSCRIPTION RATES

(All Postal Rates have been increased after the November Budget. The following are the new subscription rates:)

Air Mail

Canada / U.S.A. for 1 copy L/G
US\$ 45.00 for 1 year
US\$ 25.00 for 6 months

* * *

U.K., Germany, New Zealand, Australia, Netherlands, France, Japan, Holland, Philippines, Austria, Norway, Sweden, China, Ireland, Switzerland, Nigeria, Belgium, Denmark, Paris, London.

US\$ 35.00 for 1 year
US\$ 20.00 for 6 months

* * *

Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Bahrain, Arabian Gulf, Syria, Singapore.

US\$ 30.00 for 1 year
US\$ 17.00 for 6 months

* * *

India, Pakistan.

US\$ 25.00 for 1 year
US\$ 15.00 for 6 months

* * *

Local

Rs. 135/- for 1 year
Rs. 75/- for 6 months

CAT'S EYE



FEMINIST OR FEMININE?

Feminism and the reconceptualisation of gender that it entails is generating some interesting new roles for women. Particularly in the media, we confront not only house-wives, mothers, secretaries and beauty queens, but recently, sharp-shooting military women.

Consider the recent front page news-item highlighting the skill of women pistol-shooters, who were described as "no second to the men". Clearly, these women were admiringly presented as challenging yet another male preserve.

Consider also the sensational new Sinhala film, *Sura Doothiyo* which conflates feminism with macho-militarism and tries to rescue femininity from feminism.

The film is not about brains, in fact dumbness is more than a metaphor in this incoherent blot and unconvincing cast of characters; it is (more) about beauty and (less about) brawn. The three *sura doothiyo* are hand-picked by men, trained by men, hired by a man (the good guy) to mete justice out to other men (the bad guys). As the film progresses (or meanders) it appears that these *sura doothiyo* are only apparent heroines in a world managed by men.

According to actor and stunt-director-turned film director (and this transformation is utterly transparent), Robin Fernando, "Universal feminism is emerging as a new force. They (women) have bargained their traditionally submissive existence for a more socially responsible identity." On a naive and superficial level, the film would seem to agree. The three women are tough

and smart. They can ride a horse, drive a motor-cycle on difficult terrain and steer a motor boat without capsizing. They can shoot straight with a pistol or cross-bow and even strangle karate experts with a deft twist of a shawl. They overcome some very dangerous crooks who include ganja collectors, counterfeit dealers and gun runners.

However, the film's definition of "universal feminism" is really glamourised militarism. A good part of the first half of this stunt film concentrates on how the *sura doothiyo* train for their job. Instructed by men, they swing across pits shoot down rope pulleys, crawl through pipes, race across plank bridges over fire, pits, climb frames and perfect target shooting. In the context of the rapid militarisation of contemporary Sri Lanka, this argument, that participation in male war-games enables women to be equal to men, is particularly insidious. It dulls the impact of and legitimises the horrific (not heroic) consequences of violence and counter-violence.

Sura Doothiyo is clearly uncomfortable with its (militant) feminist heroines. So, the film constantly reassures us through chic clothes, coy looks, girlish giggles and the verbal clichés of pulp romantic fiction, that our heroines have not lost their femininity. (Oddly enough, the seductive innuendoes are hardly explored; in fact, they are either ignored or interrupted.) For the main part of the film, the three *sura doothiyo* have no opportunities to exercise their impressive physical skills. They are able to infiltrate the underworld relying on beauty, not brawn (or much brain). Consequently, in this part of the film, the stunt "action" is handled by the men, notably, the

monotonously noisy, repetitive antics of the motor-bike riders.

The pendulum swings from "femininity" to "militant feminism" in the final climactic sequence of the film. Each heroine overcomes single-handedly, not only the crook she was assigned to but also his particular gang of thugs. Then, collectively, they seek out the elusive ring leader, kill him and rescue their captive employer.

If the film had ended here, the message would have seemed unrealistically radical for this box-office hit-to-be. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the end, "femininity" wins over "feminism". The three heroines shed their sweat suits, caps and arms for the Kandyan *osariya*, (Indian) sari and shoulder-baring wrap-around, and are warmly congratulated by their male employers. The temporary disruption of (conventional) gender stereotypes superficially explored using arms-wielding, tough-acting women, reverts the conventional equilibrium, "universal feminism" notwithstanding.

WOMEN'S SONGS OF PROTEST

At a recent feminist workshop on creativity, joined by women from various parts of the country, progressive new lyrics were composed and sung lustily to familiar old tunes. For example, to the catchy *baila* tune, *Suranganita malu genawa*, Tamil women denounced male chauvinism and the domestic oppression of (Tamil) women. This song was sung together by Tamil and Sinhala women in Tamil and later a Sinhala version of each verse alternated with a Tamil one. Here are some verses of the Tamil original in English translation:

Chorus Sumangali, Sumangali, I brought a thali for Sumangali
Thali, thali, thali, a 10 sovereign thali
I brought a thali for Sumangali

I want a house and a car
A dowry of one lakh
and a long-haired woman who is fair

A woman fluent in English
Some foreign exchange and a sponsor

She must know to cook
She must know to sew
and must bear me just two children

He says he wants a dowry
He says he wants a house
He says he wants me to be his slave

I don't want his thali
I don't want to be imprisoned
I just want to live my own way

The Sinhala women composed a feminist anti-war song which they sang together with their Tamil sisters to the tune of the popular Sinhala song. **Kanda Surinduni** (Kataragama). Below are some lines from this song:

Having borne sons and sent them to war
Mothers of the South are wailing over here
Their sons killed and their daughters raped
Mothers of the North are wailing over there
The tears of both sides are submerging our country.

In a world where men are kings,
where women are trampled down } repeat
In such a world how can there be peace }
Let our voices be heard, may they echo and re-echo

These are but a few examples of recent efforts by women to explore alternate forms of media and share their ideas across those ethnic and class boundaries that have been defined and are maintained largely by men.

Dear Cat,

On 30th Nov. 1985 I went to a society dance at a newly opened luxury hotel in Colombo. It was the usual sort of 'do' which one goes to at this time of the year. However, a local cabaret had had been arranged.

At the start a burly man who looked like a lion tamer appeared on the stage and introduced 2 heavily made up young women in the usual scanty costumes. I was expecting the usual tepid 10 minutes of exotic dancing, but instead the act had the two girls suggestively pawing each other as part of the act. If that was not bad enough to my utter embarrassment, they

stripped down to their g-strings and continued to stroke and caress each other at every stage until the end of the act much later.

I am not a puritan by any means, but I am a modern thinking woman. I cannot express my shame at having to sit through so crude a performance of sexual exhibitionism. The act had no intrinsic value. As an artistic piece it was shabby and second rate. It had no purpose but sexual titillation.

As a woman I burn with shame at the exploitative system that forces women to use their bodies in this demeaning way. No less lowering in the eagerness of the

male audience for this type of vicarious sexual stimulation.

I am equally surprised at the lack of sensitivity of the men who will go to the 'manager' of these women and arrange for such a performance at their special social functions. These men are highly respected members of our society. They are men who belong to service organisations for the betterment of society. Most of all, they are ordinary men with wives, sisters and daughters whose bodies, privacy and 'honour' they would themselves place beyond any price. Yet they are prepared to put their money down to watch the degradation of less fortunate women for a moment prurient excitement.

I place no blame on the dancing women who are, after all, only new slaves to their economic masters just as they have been from the very beginning of 'civilization'.

Yours sincerely,
Yasmin Weerakoon.

FIFTY YEARS...

(Continued from page 6)

separately from the economy of the whole country. Worst of all, large masses of the people in those areas are certainly wondering whether the situation has drifted so far towards a breach as to be irreparable.

It is a terrible thing to have to say to these our rulers and the people of our country that the LSSP warned the country early against the policies which resulted in this terrible trend, and placed before them the only policy line that could reverse it and restore a common life in our common country.

The LSSP has always been a struggle organisation. It will continue its struggle in the new situation where democratic liberties and freedoms, just like elections and referenda, have become a pretense. We are a party that has proved its capacity to continue the class and liberation struggle in the most adverse conditions, as for instance during the last world war!

Management by Illusion — Cory Aquino

If we were to characterize the style of leadership of Mr. Marcos, the phrase that would best describe it is "Management by illusion". But the reality is that the regime of Mr. Marcos is finished. No amount of media manipulation or officious bravado can change the reality of our economic and moral desolation. Mr. Marcos faces the classic dilemma that every dictator must eventually reach—he is running out of illusions and of options, and can only continue in power by the use of force or fraud.

If we are so certain that Mr. Marcos has his back against the wall, is it possible then to displace him without resorting to the use of violence and thereby triggering the cycles of instability and suppression that his removal seeks to avoid? This, I am sure, is a question that ranks high in the minds of investors.

Those of us who believe in peaceful processes know that this is a difficult middle ground to take. But we have to hope. For the sake of our country we have to hope that a safe passage is possible. I am confident that a peaceful political solution is possible. I base my confidence principally on four factors: first, the capacity of opposition parties to unite; second, the electoral militancy of the awakened Filipino; third, the moral leadership of the church; fourth, the reform movement in the military.

I am confident that the opposition will unite under one candidate when the presidential elections are held. For there are more shared values than personal ambition which are deeply felt and will ultimately prevail.

I am confident that, as in the 1984 elections, the ordinary citizen

will appear in great numbers to support the National Citizens Movement for Free Elections and the public school teachers in safeguarding the ballot.

I am also confident that political parties and the citizenry will be able to draw support from two important sectors of society—the church and the military. Both have a dominating presence in the countryside, and this is where the insurgency problem is critical and where sixty percent of the voters reside. We have reason to hope that both sectors will play their rightful role at the proper time.

The moral leadership of the church and how it is expressed and exercised will influence the degree of involvement of the so-called silent majority. The church is already outspoken and active on issues of human rights and total human development. The appeal of its wider mission in society is reflected in the increase of priestly vocations, especially from the rural areas, a phenomenon unusual in Catholic countries today.

With respect to the military, there is not a single scenario for transition in which it will not be a decisive factor. And although I am convinced that misguided elements in the military had a direct hand in the assassination of Ninoy, I am not prepared to condemn all 13,000 officers and the entire military establishment for a heinous crime committed by a handful of Mr. Marcos' most loyal henchmen. I am also encouraged to learn that precisely because the honor and integrity of the entire officer corps has been tainted by the reprehensible acts of a small minority, a reform movement has now emerged within the military establishment, and

is growing in strength. This movement is characterized by genuine military idealism, and is committed to the use of constitutional means. It is also supported by many retired military officers with impeccable credentials.

My friends, in conclusion, let me appeal to you. **Write off the Marcos regime, but do not write off the Philippines.** Although Mr. Marcos has devastated our economy and our democratic institutions, ours is a country rich in both human and natural resources. It is also a country with an innate sense of morality and fair play that somehow surfaces in times of deep crisis.

Ninoy never lost faith in the Filipino. In fact, twelve years ago on August 27, 1973, when Ninoy was brought to trial before a military commission, he declared:

"I have faith in the Filipino. I believe that with all the resources at his disposal and given the facts and the truth, the Filipino can resolve any difficulty and achieve his vision of a good and just society".

In the past two years, I have become deeply involved in the struggle for the restoration of our rights and freedoms. I made a pledge to my husband, when I kissed him in his coffin, that I would continue his fight for the cause of justice and democracy. It would seem that many men and women from almost all sectors of society have been inspired by Ninoy's courage and sacrifice and have also committed themselves to the cause. When teachers, students, priests, nuns, businessmen, laborers, professionals, housewives and even grandmothers

(Continued on page 20)

The Singapore girl is in trouble

In the days of the United Front's 'closed economy' and austerity, Singapore was Sri Kotha's vision of Nirvana on earth. The nearby city-estate and shopping paradise was also the tantalising dream of a frustrated upper-middle class for whom the air-conditioned super market was the symbol of the consumerist Good Life.

The vision has gone sour, the dream is fading. Now an official committee of experts has reported to the government that it should re-think its free-market policy and proceed to protect local industries. Protectionism in Mr. Lee's Kuan Yew's Singapore has been a cardinal sin. And it was to Mr. Lee's Economics Minister, Dr. Goh, the Ludwig Erhard of Singapore, that the UNP turned for advice on the re-structuring of Sri Lanka's own economy. Dr. Goh is no longer in the same post.

Recently, Prime Minister Lee told the *Asahi Shimbun* that Sin-

gapore's economy will contract by 2% in 1985, and he sees no improvement in 1986. The 2% deceleration is one of the severest of any country in 1985. (In 1984 Singapore's growth was 8.2%).

In 1985, several multi-national companies, the 'great white hope' of Singapore's development program, quit the country, leaving at least 50,000 employees out of jobs. The foreign companies blame high costs, and Singapore's resolve to

keep the Singapore dollar strong. Singapore blames the US, its slow growth and protectionism for the city-state's current woes. Singapore is heavily dependent on US trade.

But even if the US economy picks up, Singapore will be in trouble on many fronts, especially its construction industry. As for tourism, four-star hotels are now offering cut-rate prices that compare favourably with the YMCA!

Management. . .

(Continued from page 19)

and grandfathers join us in our protest rallies and demonstrations, then I realize in wonderment and fulfilment that indeed, as Ninoy said: "The Filipino is worth dying for".

Perhaps I can best describe the prevailing sentiments and attitudes

of most of the opposition forces by again quoting from Ninoy who wrote the following in 1977 from his prison cell in Fort Bonifacio:

"I have done what I believe is my duty to do. I have wrested from life the joy and freedom of doing what has to be done, speaking what has to be spoken, and leaving the consequences up to God".

Ceylon Supply and Development Co. Ltd.

W-3 5th Floor, Ceylinco House,
Colombo 1.

*For all your requirements of
Construction Equipment*

Can we produce fast bowlers ?

— Sarath Fernando interviewed by H. N. Fernando (President, Ceylon Teachers Union)

Q. How do you regard our batting?

A. When a batsman joins the Sri Lanka team at a younger age his standard is very high. After a few seasons most players become slow and lose footwork and concentration. When they get established they seem very reluctant to go for their shots and do not play their normal game. This has led to failure. I think with age they try to be extra cautious. Senior players should be allowed to play their normal game. Too much advice by outsiders can ruin a good batsman.

Q. What is the reason for the shortage of spinners at national level?

A. During my playing years at national level same set of spinners were always used against foreign teams. They used Neil Chanmugam, D. S. De Silva, Ajith De Silva and Lalith Kaluperuma. They never tried any other spinners. This was a mistake. And I think is the cause for lack of good spinners today. Take for example the West Indians. After Frank Worrell retired, for several years West Indian cricket was in a crisis because they did not infuse young blood. The only youngster was Clive Lloyd. But then they started trying new faces. It paid very good dividends and they reached the top. Presently the Board is trying a few youngsters like Roger Wijesooriya, Don Arunasiri, Gamini Perera, and Sanjeeva Weerasinghe. I cannot understand why Roshan Jurangpathy was given to bowl only 2 overs after including him as a spinner. Then they should not have played him. Now at a certain

period India had 4 world class spinners in Bishen Bedi, Prasanna, Chandrasekar and Venkatraghevan. When they retired India had a crisis of spinners. They had only Dilip Doshi. Even today India is trying out several youngsters.

Q. How is our pace attack?

A. Our pace attack is quite sufficient at the moment. But you must not over bowl them without rest. This what happened to Rumesh, Saliya and Ashantha in Pakistan. They were fully exhausted after the Indian series. But Ravi Ratnayake was very fresh and he did well. You must encourage youngster like Rumesh Ratnayake to indulge in other games like Basket Ball or Football to keep fit during off seasons.

Q. Tell me something about cricket coaching? How competent are our coaches?

A. Correct coaching is needed during the first few formative years of a youngster. After that what is needed is correct guiding and they should be taught tactics. A player can be corrected at an early age. But it is very dangerous to correct him at latter stage. Once they acquire a certain style it is not advisable to change it. They should be advised on tactics. You should use your brain. When I was bowling at a peak in my career a cricket administrator who is still a selector advised me not to bowl several types. He advised me to bowl one type. But in my career I bowled several types (inswing, cutters etc.) And I captured lot of wickets. If I had listened to that person I may not have reaped such

a harvest. Our coaches are really competent. But every Sri Lanka cricketer cannot become a coach. I feel to be a successful coach you need not always be a successful cricketer. There are many good coaches in our midst who have never played even 'Sara' cricket.

Q. What should be the outlook of a cricket coach?

A. He should be impartial. He should not have favourites. All his pupils must be treated on equal terms. A good coach should not bother about family connections. He must be able to spot the talent. That is why I got the opportunity to reach the top. My first coach at Moratuwa Vidyalaya former Ananda cricketer Mr. Bertram De Silva was very good.

Q. In Pakistan the Manager of the Sri Lanka side Mr. Abu Fuard said his team was the best available. Any comments?

A. I cannot understand why he made that statement. It is not clear on what basis he made this statement. Does this mean that these are no players in the island to replace the present team? If he meant that I totally disagree.

And I must point another important factor. There are a lot of talented youngsters who are knocking at the door to enter the test side. So if we say that the present test players cannot be replaced for another few years we are actually discouraging the youngsters.

Q. Does the prestigious Colombo Clubs discriminate against Outstation Cricketers?

A. Favouritism towards cricketers from privileged schools prevail in leading Colombo Clubs. They

usually favour Colombo big school boys. But if they find a player from an outstation school or from a non-privileged school they will readily have him. Suppose he fails in 2 or 3 matches that will be the end of his career. I have played for a Colombo Club after winning the Sri Lanka 'Cap'. In all the matches I was not used as a bowler till the score reached 200. I got disgusted and told the coach that I can't continue. This coach was a gentleman. He persuaded me to continue and even with the old ball I captured wickets. If that is the treatment for a senior player what will be the fate of youngsters from the outstations.

Q. *How is the present Sri Lanka team. Have you played with them?*

A. Present team is quite alright I have played along with Duleep Mendis and Roy Dias. All the others are newcomers.

Q. *Is the present Sri Lanka squad physically fit for a strenuous tour?*

A. I think several players are lacking fitness. I have mentioned earlier about the pace bowlers. A player's fitness can be judged by how he fields and more in the field. If a player is slow on the field that is a clear indication of physical fitness. If a player is not 100% physically fit he cannot give off the best. That's what happened to most of our senior players in Pakistan. Let us analyse our problems patiently.

Q. *Can't we produce fast bowlers?*

A. Why not. You can train a boy to bowl in 6 months. But it is not easy to get physically fit strong runners. A very good example is Darrel Lieversz. He was a top class sprinter and a quarter miler. In the outstations you can find enough good athletes. Take the case of W. Wimaladasa, the fastest quarter miler we ever produced. True that he did not play cricket. But such athlete can be turned into a good

speedster. Take the case of Michael Holding. A good quarter miler. So cricket Board must go to the outstations. Especially to outstation schools.

Q. *You came from an under privileged school what chances have they to produce good cricketers?*

A. In my time there were a lot of talented cricketers in under privileged schools. A very few of them did even get a break to play first class Cricket. Even today there is immense talent in these schools. But it is very unfortunate that when these cricketers come up under difficult conditions they are ignored.

Q. *Do the cricket administrators discriminate against players from such schools?*

A. There is lot of discrimination even today.

Q. *What is your advice for future cricketers?*

A. Young cricketers should be always physically fit. I have said about that before. I mean about other games. Running is also very important. You must be fit throughout the year.

Q. *What is the standard of umpiring?*

A. Standard of umpiring in Sri Lanka is quite high and most of our umpires are impartial. But there are exceptions — there are black sheep.

Q. *Do they favour the affluent? I mean the umpires.*

A. During my playing years (1959-1975) there were umpires who were not impartial. Some of them had their favourites. Now this is a very interesting incident. In a Sri Lanka final I played when I was bowling a particular batsman playing his first over faced me. He was trapped leg before wicket and we made a confident appeal. But the Umpire turned down our appeal. This batsman went on to score 90 odd runs. Then he was out L.B.W. off my bowling in identical manner. This same umpire who disallowed the earlier appeal, ruled him

out L.B.W. He was known to me personally, so after the match I asked him about his first decision. You know his answer? The batsman in question should play for Sri Lanka and that is why he disallowed our appeal. Then I asked him about my chance. Is it that I should not play? My skipper a former Sri Lanka skipper intervened and dragged me out. That was a black sheep, but there very good umpires. Umpires cannot be blamed always. Some umpires get upset in the middle of the ground. Umpires Association must be able to select correct people (who do not get excited) to umpire at national level.

Q. *The Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka has appointed Mr. Abu Fuard as Manager of the Sri Lanka cricket team for a period of 3 years? What is your opinion.*

A. In our country we have a dedicated set of former Sri Lanka Cricketers with immense experience here and abroad who can manage many teams efficiently. The type of appointment for a lengthy period deprives them of managing our test side. And I personally feel when the Chairman of the selection committee is also the manager for such a long period it will have a negative effect on the players. It might lead to internal friction among the players.

Q. *What are the reasons behind our failure in Pakistan?*

A. The two test series against India and Pakistan were played within a short space. There was not enough time between the two series for our players to rest. Our players are still not accustomed to such strenuous work. Our side does not have a single professional player. Professional players are used to this type of play.

Q. *How is our fielding?*

A. Our Sri Lanka side possesses some very good fielders. Among

(Continued on page 23)

PAST, PRESENT . . .

(Continued from page 9)

ther the problem can be solved on the basis of non-discrimination and the devolution of substantial central powers and functions to different areas, or (2) whether it also requires recognition of the Sri Lanka Tamils as a distant nationality to whom Marxist-Leninist teachings on regional autonomy, self-determination and at the same time, the unity of the working people of all nationalities and ethnic groups should apply. Similarly, in the international arena, while all sections of the mainstream Left now accept the great importance of the fight for peace and disarmament, some sections see it as one many important struggles while others regard it as the central and decisive issue in the global struggle against imperialism in the nuclear age.

There are also other questions which require deeper study. How for instance, to develop mass struggles under conditions of neo-colonialism; how to unite and mobilise the working class under conditions of governmental terror on one side, and on the other side, under conditions where the level of proletarianism among the workers is still weak, when petty-bourgeois influences are still strong, and where bourgeois parties have used political patronage to set up divisive trade unions; the agrarian question; the changes within the intelligensia; the fight to defend even bourgeois democratic rights and processes from attacks from the bourgeoisie itself; and the new threats posed by the increasing militarisation of public life.

It will naturally take time for past and present questions such as these to be discussed and, as far as possible, common understanding reached. This dialogue must also take place within the framework of consolidating and carrying further forward the unity that has already been reached.

The 50th anniversary of the foundation of the L.S.S.P. should therefore be not merely an occasion for understandable celebration. It should also be the start of a deeper study of past experience, the unresolved problems that the movement has inherited from the past, and the new problems that it has to face now and in the future.

Can we produce . . .

(Continued from page 22)

our cricketers some are very good fielders. Some are good at covers and gully etc. You must allow them to field at their favourite positions. This cannot be done always. I have found a good fielder is a good batsman.

Q. Cricket is a very expensive game. 80% of our children come from poor families. What should the Cricket Foundation do to help poor cricketers?

A. In my days a pair of boots cost only Rs. 125/- and a Bat only Rs. 200/-. Now a good bat costs more than Rs. 2000/-. Today a pair of boots costs about Rs. 800/-. They should equip all cricketers at school and first class level with all the material at concessionary rates or they must evolve a scheme to provide material freely to deserving players. Cricket Foundation should use all its resources to help Cricketers.

Q. Is it advisable for the players to form their own organisation? That is a Players' Association

to safe guard their interests as in England.

A. I feel it is a necessity. Because the game of cricket depends on the players. So player's interests should be looked after. Even today players have a lot of grievances at Club and National level.

Q. Who is the best captain under whom you played for Sri Lanka?

A. Michael Tissera. He had a very good knowledge about the players under him. And he knew how to get the best out of his players. I was an outstation player who represented Sri Lanka. Under his captaincy he gave all the opportunities to shine.

LSSP — a shaping . . .

(Continued from page 4)

Senanayake, he was best loved and admired as 'the father of the Revolution'.

The detention of his son, Indika, whose brother, Dinesh, now leads Philip's MEP, has prompted a non-party protest campaign which has gained support from the S.L.F.P.

The first meeting was convened by Batapola Anomadassi Nayake Thera, other wellknown monks and Christian priests, and a small group of human rights activists. The second meeting was attended by the Asst. Secretary of the SLFP, Mr. Ariya Bulegoda and the party's trade union leader, Mr. Alavi Moulana. Already, Mr. Amarasiri Dodangoda, SLFP MP had signed the initial statement of CROPP (See LG Dec. 15).

The meeting decided that these events represented a 'new stage in the erosion of civil liberties and democratic rights'. It gave three main reasons for these developments:

(1) The growing economic discontent among the peasantry, the urban wage-earners and the salaried middle classes. (See TRENDS).

(2) The UNP's failure 'to find a just and peaceful settlement to the ethnic conflict.

(3) The alienation of the State from the masses starting from the postponement of elections by the Dec. 1982 referendum.

— M de S.



Our business goes beyond tobacco.

For well over five decades we have been involved in the tobacco industry in Sri Lanka. We are pioneers in tobacco growing, promoting self-employment and generating income for the rural farmer. We contribute to government revenue and earn foreign exchange for the country.

Utilising our expertise, we have ventured into other fields. Horticulture and alternate fuels are just two of them.

We have established a tissue culture laboratory, mainly for the development of new varieties of orchids. We also produce tissue cultured strawberry and house plants for export.

In our search for alternate fuels, we have perfected the manufacture of briquettes out of waste coir dust. These briquettes offer a solid fuel alternative to fuel oil and to firewood.

We also offer consultancy services in energy conservation.



Ceylon Tobacco Company Limited

A member of the B-A-T Group.

INTER-RACIAL EQUITY AND NATIONAL UNITY IN SRI LANKA

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

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

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

Price Rs. 27.50

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

61, Isipathana Mawatha,
Colombo 6. SRI LANKA.

P. O. Box 601

Tel. 585186 & 581514

**Thomas Cook
makes it even more
convenient for you
with their
new
branch office at
Bambalapitiya.**

Call us for:

Travel (Air/Sea)

Tours

Travellers Cheques

Purchasing/Encashment

Drafts

Encashments

Thomas Cook

The trusted name in travel. Everywhere.

245, Galle Road, Colombo 4. Tel. 580141, 580275
(Opp. Holy Family Convent)

Head Office: 15, Sir Baron Jayatilleke Mawatha,

TEL. 545971-4 COLOMBO 1.

GARADS