

SPECIAL

WHY DELHI CHANGED ITS LINE ?

— *Dilip Bobb*

LANKA

GUARDIAN

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Doctors, Dentists, Dons, Nurses

THE MIDDLE GROUPS LEAD THE WAY ?

— *Mervyn de Silva*

**LAKSHMAN JAYAKODY ON
PRIVATE ARMIES AND
NEW INTELLIGENCE OUTFITS**

Mrs. B: The Case for Elections

— *Chanaka Amaratunga*

The Stigma of Statelessness — *Paul Caspersz*

Also: Kelegama on Economic Policy,
Canada, Australia, Ireland on Human Rights **and**
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GARADS

DEFENCE AND AID

As usual, Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel spoke to his select audience the ambassadors of the donor countries, reasonably and intelligently and then addressed his much larger audience, the press cleverly. No donor nation has threatened to cut or reduce aid to Sri Lanka yet, Mr. de Mel told the state run Lake House papers. Strictly speaking, he was of course, absolutely right. No aid-giving country has made any threats but Mr. de Mel is fully aware of the mounting dissatisfaction in the donor community over two issues (a) the delay in negotiating a political settlement of the ethnic issue and (b) the island's increasingly doubtful human rights record.

Mr. de Mel, whose term as finance minister is a tribute to his skill for survival, knows that no country actually cuts off aid without warning unless the recipient is guilty in the donor's eye of some terrible, unpardonable crime. What worries an intelligent finance minister are the first signs of disapproval, displeasure and criticism. And that's the stage Sri Lanka has reached.

So, Mr. de Mel used two arguments to strengthen his case which he is already preparing for the Aid Group meeting in Paris in June — falling commodity prices, (tea crucially,) and steeply rising military spending.

To impress both the donors and the government (and to pressure the Ministers and the MP's) he pointed out that since the recent allocation of 2.5 billion rupees for defence is in addition to the 6.2 billion

allocated in the budget, new ways will have to be found to save money. His image, particularly in World Bank-IMF and donor community, is that of an able exponent of sound financial management.

To shock the Ministers and MP's he threatened to virtually dismantle the de-centralised budget (the funds for District Councils and MP's) and proceeded to ask Ministry secretaries to propose ways of reducing their budgets by 25%!

Since the Minister is also the leading anti-militarist in the Cabinet he then told the press which may not always be alive to these subtleties that arms spending has now risen from 1.5% of GDP to 3.5%.

ANTI-CORRUPTION

Yes, it was repression and the worsening economic conditions that swept away the Marcos regime, said one of Cardinal Sin's closest aides in the Philippines Church after it was all over. "But never forget the stench of corruption" he paused to add when interviewed by the BBC. And here in Hulftsdorp, a legal luminary who had once served in an important Commission of Inquiry made a passing comment which underlined the Philippines parallel. "I suppose we should thank Marcos..."

(Continued on page 8)

TRENDS + LETTERS

STATELESS

Your News Backgrounds are probably among the most qualified columns in the Sri Lankan press today. (To some people this might say more about the Sri Lankan press than about you...).

However I must raise my voice in a humble protest when reading your lauding lines for Mrs Bandranaike and the 1964 Indo-Ceylon Agreement.

Possibly it meant the "ultimate elimination" of statelessness, a problem created a decade and a half earlier by her elder colleagues in parliament. Truly, the problem was moved out of sight from Colombo. But for those concerned it was perpetuated.

You brand them Indian though living for generations in Sri Lanka and though a British Commissioner found eight out of ten "permanent residents" in 1946. And how can a person be "repatriated" to a country he or she has never seen?

None of the victims was consulted before the 1964 Agreement. When asked, 70% of these

(Continued on page 24)

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CONTENTS

News Background	3
Human Rights	8
Pressures on Gandhi	9
The Crisis of Sri Lanka	11
U. S. State Dept. on Human Rights in Sri Lanka — III	13
The Beginning and the Desirable End of Statelessness	15
Review of Economic Policies and Progress 1977 - 1984	16
Arms Control and World Peace — II	19
Outrage of Olof Palme Assassination	20
Gorbachev's First Year — II	21
Cat's Eye	23

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There will be no issue of the *Lanka Guardian* on April 15. The next issue will be on May day our eighth anniversary.

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MASTER

MIDDLE CLASS TO THE FORE

Mervyn de Silva

NEWS
BACKGROUND

A discussion or debate based wholly on personalised parallels crudely constructed from the Philippines situation and other Third World countries (Cory-Sirima or Cory-Benazir or any other) can be confusing and misleading. But the impact of IMF-World Bank policies on repressive Third World regimes caught in the grip of global recession produces general conditions in those societies and their politics, on which interesting and perhaps educative analogies may be founded.

In the Philippines a secessionist revolt (the Moro Muslim in Mindanao) was overshadowed in the late 70's by the fast-growing guerrilla movement, NPA, based largely in the countryside. Allowing for salient differences in magnitudes (an archipelago as distinct from a tight little island of 25,000sq. miles) and in culture (the Catholic Church with adherents constituting 85% of the population) the fact of armed revolt and its critical consequences for the economy, the political system and society, do attract comparisons.

These past weeks have seen strong signs of the Sri Lankan state sector salaried, an influential segment of the urban middleclass, engaged in trade union agitation resulting in confrontations with the fiercely anti-trade union regime that crushed the general strike of 1980.

"The first years of martial law" writes Prof. Walden Bello of the State Univ. of New York, "were the 'heroic age' of the reborn Philippine Left. Its mass organisations in the cities were smashed at the outset of martial law". There may have been no such 'heroic age' in Sri Lanka but the next stage in the Philippines came eight years after Martial law

when the external factors (world recession,) and the local situation (slump in commodity prices, inflation, unemployment etc) began to really hurt the middle class. The result was a middle class movement. Discontented, restive and finally rebellious, the urban middle groups swelled that movement.

"The collapse, beginning in 1979, of the export-oriented,

foreign capital dependent economic strategy from a combination of external recession, mismanagement and corruption, and growing resistance from the victims of development triggered the alienation of the middle strata, whose ranks were hit hard by rising unemployment and whose pocketbooks were worn thin by inflationary pressures resulting from World

(Continued on page 4)

The Bhandari balloon and seasonal songs

April's here and the Sinhala-Tamil New Year is on the way. Time to prepare for the festivities. Brotherly love and good cheer soon fill our hearts and homes.

April is also the time for the Finance Minister to prepare his brief for the World Bank and the World Bank-sponsored Sri Lanka Aid Consortium. Time once more to train our voices to sing our favourite seasonal songs "Negotiations" and "Political Settlement". Time also to fly kites and blow balloons. So here goes that Bhandari balloon again. And the kite, this time marked "Union Territories".

In 1984 we had the APC. 1985 was a bit of a hurry up, what with the Anuradhapura massacre, and Finance Minister's plane all revived up to take off to Paris with nothing to persuade the donors that the war would end after a negotiated settlement with the Tamil representatives.

So Sri Lanka sent its own team of 'partition' lawyers to split hairs in rarified realms.

The legal battles in Thimpu, the long-winded Lalith-Romesh

Oxford-Cambridge debate... but no solution. Only the Delhi Accords, and 58 page document which gave a categorical "No" to the TULF proposals.

Meanwhile the Lalith-Neelam 'secret diplomacy' goes on. And finally we alight on that threadbare document, the Indian constitution. And now we study the three 'lists' — powers to the states, powers to the Union territories, powers to the Centre.

But will Bhandari come? And if he does, will it be the same old merry-go-round? (See Dilip Bobb on Indo-Sri Lankan relations).

There's only one significant difference in this time's kite flying and trial-balloon exercise. Mr. Bhandari is expected to come here not only after the New Year but after the Akmeemana by-election. No "offer" to the Tamils should be seized by the SLFP opposition to be made into election propaganda against a "treacherous" UNP which is about to "sell out" the Sinhalese to the Tamils, Tamilnadu and India!

Here we go round the mulberry bush.

bank-IMF imposed devaluations of the peso" says Prof. Bello.

Among trade unions, the GMOA has an elitist image. Traditionally that is. It is not even called a 'union'. It is an officers' association, upper-middle class in self-image.

But the government doctor's pocketbook has been worn thin, unlike that of the private practitioner. The very thrust of the UNP's policies in the field of higher education (the private medical school, the new 'institutes' the dismemberment of the old universities and the deliberate running down of these institutions, the patronage to private hospitals run by mudalalis and the new schools run by medical mudalalis for the children of the mudalalis, have gradually alienated the salaried middle strata. Hence the agitation by doctors, dentists, university professors, ending up with the nurses. Both the hard economic actuality — (pressure on the middle class purse) and the government's

attitude of indifference, contempt and neglect have tended to marginalise these middle groups whose resentment and anger is sharpened by the UNP's equally demonstrative attitude of warm patronage to the "private", as against the State employee and the State institution. Materially and psychologically, the public servant is the victim of the philosophy and policy of privatisation.

The rural voter seems content or, if dissatisfied, is waiting to express himself in the only way he knows by casting his vote against the government. But that option was closed by the Referendum of 1982 as effectively as it was closed by the Martial law of 1972. In the Philippines, rural wretchedness became the breeding ground of the guerrilla movement.

Here, the working class was 'smashed' by the dismissal of some 80,000 workers in 1980. Battered into submission, its political leadership, the old Left, exhausted and helpless, unionism went "underground". Now the

middle class has made a breakthrough. Since the terrain was 'strategic' (the medical institutions, and with a 'war' on) the all-powerful UNP found itself cornered, and finally forced to swallow its pride.

The middle class however has made an opening for the labour unions. Despite the rowdy incidents provoked by disruptors in ultra-left garb but with covert links that lead to sections of the city-based UNP 'Mafia', the National Convention last month signalled the stirrings of a long dormant labour movement. The 21 trade unions which brought several thousand delegates to the Sugathadasa stadium will now have to plan out strategy as the economic picture gets darker, with no hope at all of an early end to the war.

The speeches and the slogans must have caused some anxiety in UNP ranks. The ethnic issue was played down; economics and anti-government slogans dominated.

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Private militia and 'very' secret services

The Court has reserved order on the case of ANANDA SUNIL the SLFP activist whose wife filed a petition alleging that he had been killed by the police. That case has received much prominence in the press and provoked discussion in Opposition circles as well as in Human Rights organisations, local and international. Mr. Lakshman Jayakody MP, former Deputy Minister of Defence, brought up in parliament last month several connected matters which must interest all serious students of the ominous political-social changes which accompany what political scientists now style "The National Security State" or "The State of Siege", a Third World 'refinement' of the old "Police State".

In that connection, the attention of the readers should also be drawn to the paragraphs in the US State Dept's recent report (Feb. 13) to the US Congress. (See Box).

Lakshman Jayakody said:

Now, Sir, I would like to get on to another matter. You might recollect, Sir, that last time I mentioned that there is divided security in this country and that it is not good to have divided security. Today we are having divided security. Now we have divided intelligence also. We know that there is an Intelligence Unit at Cambridge Place coming under the police. That is quite correct. There must be an Intelligence Unit there, and we support that. There is another Intelligence Unit at Longden place. We do not know whose Intelligence Unit that is. This is duplication. I do not know what this is all about. This organization carries on under a separate command. I do not know whether this has been set up with the concurrence of the IGP. I did not ask him. But definitely I know that there are two units because I saw a person who has come from Browns' Group heading that Intelligence Service in Longden place,

one Mr. Seneviratne. He is a former ASP, true, but he was at Browns. He has started a new Intelligence Service. Now you are going to have divided Intelligence Service.

Then what happens? That Intelligence Service goes about in the night in unmarked vehicles. That is there to hunt down political opponents. That is one of their jobs. They go about in non-government cars or some-

times having the Government emblem but is definitely not police. They must be Corporation cars. They all go and prowls about in the night. Then sometimes you find that people are being removed from workplaces. They are removed from homes. We do not know their whereabouts. This type of thing has taken place. I have a letter here, Sir, where it says that a person has been taken away and no one knows where he is. No one can approach the

Disappearance

Although no accurate statistics are available, reported disappearances rose during 1985. There were a number of reports of the disappearance of young Tamil males who had been arrested and taken in for questioning by the security forces. In a practice once limited mostly to the Jaffna Peninsula, police and military patrols operating in the north-central and eastern coastal parts of the country also began making large-scale arrests and detentions of young Tamil males as the insurgency spread to those areas. Amnesty International estimated in October that 180 such detainees had "disappeared" in "recent months." Some of those detained were later discovered by their families to be in detention at police stations or in army detention camps. Others have not been found. In several instances, relatives or organizations seeking information about the missing say they were told the individual had never been arrested, or had been released and departed for terrorist training outside the country, or had been shot while trying to escape. The Government estimated that 60 civilians and members of the security forces were abducted by Tamil militants and are presumed to have been killed. The most prominent case of disappearance in 1985 involved Father Mary Bastian, a Tamil Catholic priest in the western coastal Mannar area. On January 5-6, an army patrol searching for guerrillas opened fire in the vicinity of his church, reportedly killing eight persons. According to some eyewitnesses, among those killed was Fr. Bastian. His body was never found and a government investigation reportedly failed to find evidence that security forces had killed him. At year's end, seven Sinhalese pilgrims travelling to Catholic shrine in

northwestern Sri Lanka were reportedly abducted by militants; their whereabouts remain unknown.

Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The Constitution guarantees that "no person shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment," and in 1982 the government submitted to the UN a unilateral declaration opposing the use of torture.

There have been persistent reports of torture or ill treatment by military and police of persons detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Amnesty International published a special report in October on torture in Sri Lanka. The report cites affidavits submitted by alleged victims, as well as statements by doctors who claim to have treated the victims and said that they were able to corroborate their allegations of ill treatment. The Amnesty International report noted that torture victims are most often those detained for political offenses, either radical leftist Sinhalese or Tamils accused of collaborating with the separatists. The Government states that, because the alleged victims are not identified in the report, it is unable to respond to specific allegations of torture or to pursue inquiries into individual cases.

Amnesty International also alleged that ill treatment of detainees usually occurs in military camps or police stations, but rarely reported in prisons, where regular criminals are held. The Government has stated that no police officers have been convicted of causing physical harm to persons in police custody.

— U.S. State Dept.

places where they are kept. Ultimately that man is lost. I would like the Hon. Minister of National Security to check on what is going on. Ultimately you will be on the wrong track. Sir, we must know from where the threat comes, and then deal with it. The threat is from one place, but we are dealing with people from the South. Please do not think that every Sinhala person is a JVP. By all means take action if there are threats of that nature, but do not think that the SLFPers are that. We are not of that creed. We do not belong to them.

Sir, yesterday I saw two persons who were working in a housing scheme close to where I live. These two persons from the Intelligence Service have been put there to see where I am going and who comes to my house. I spotted these two persons. I wanted to trap them, but I did not want to do it because I knew they were there doing a job of work or probably they were looking after me. They were following me. I do not mind them following me. But what were they doing? They were working as workers where two houses were being put up just next to my house. This is the type of thing that is going on, Sir.

Then there is security for the President. He has a separate Intelligence Service. There is security for the Prime Minister. He has another Intelligence Service. Then there is security for the Minister of Fisheries. My goodness, you should see his security! The others are just nothing compared to that. He has a separate Intelligence Service. Then there is security for the Minister for Rural Industrial Development. The Deputy Minister's boss has also one which he does not know about. — (Interruption). Ah! you know. That is good. This is the thing, Sir. These are not security services. I can understand if these are security services. These are Intelligence Services carrying messages here and there and sending various people to spy on others. Sir, I do not mind having all this provided there is one security pool. Let them all be in one pool under the IGP and no one else.

Then, Sir, we have parallel bureaucracies. In this bureaucratic system we find empire building which has taken place. "He is the Prime Minister's man." "He is the National Security Minister's man." "He is the President's man, this one's man and that one's man." Can you run a Government like this? There should be men under the Government. To tell you very frankly, this is what has happened to our country. The division is within the Government itself. You are divided. It is not a division between the SLFP and the UNP — (Interruption). You are imagining that. You do not know what is happening in the bureaucracy. If you give me two minutes, I will name certain people which I do not want to do. The fact is, you dare not move them out from that organization. — (Interruption) — One person! You dare not move certain police officers who are in those two groups out. But anyway what I say is, they also become millionaires overnight. I have seen big bureaucrats in this country who have come without a single cent in 1977 tarring their roads and becoming huge businessmen overnight. I am warning the hon. Member for Kolonne. Very soon you will see the sale of your paper factory at Embilipitiya. And please stop that. They will keep the paper factory at Valachchenai and try to close the paper factory at Embilipitiya and sell the paper factory at Embilipitiya for a sum of Rs. 50 million or so. But I know that those people also would not buy. There is another party who is going to buy it. You please watch out. It is in your electorate. They are trying to rob your paper factory. A big amount of commission is expected out of it. The Government is getting a part of it only, and therefore ultimately what will happen is, there will be another close down of a factory in that area, because of that factor, they become millionaires overnight, and the best thing is this. Most of those people have green cards to enter America.

The other day — I think sometime ago — we proved to this House that even the Chairman of Air Lanka

was not in this country when we had the Presidential Elections. He was in Bangkok, and he had phoned up Colombo to find out who was winning, and when he found that Mr. J. R. Jayewardene was winning he came into this country and went and saw His Excellency. If His Excellency had lost, he would never have come. By that time he had taken the green card. This is the type of bureaucracy that we have. Therefore, look at these people who are trying to bolt off, in case there is a change of Government. This is the type of thing that is happening.

Then you find a parallel army.

I want to talk about the parallel army. Now we know the army, navy, air force — they are conventional armed services. But now look at your Government. There is a separate army being created with the UNP. Where the home guards are concerned, there is going to be a separate unit altogether. They would not be non-political. You will have a non-political army and a political army if they come under one person. So, this will be another threat. One home guard army will be a threat to the conventional army or the known army. This is to happen, Sir. And then, Sir, what do they do? They pass information among each other. These are fears that one has to see one army talks. This is a home guard. They talk out of their turn. They do not know whether they are coming or going on security. They are not trained properly. They are half trained. They do not know how to shoot properly. They close the wrong eye when they have to shoot. Instead of closing the left eye they close the right eye, and they shoot cockeyed everywhere! Therefore, I would be very grateful to you if you do not have these divided armies. Do not have these separate armies. — (Interruption) — I know those armies are being used to pass information from one VIP to the other. It is real මෙලම මෙලම sort of business that goes on among two VIPs and the කුකුළු පොරො that normally goes on in the Government is that. These people come and give you wrong

Information. They spy on other people. They come and tell මන්ලම to the other crowd. This is what is going on to tell you frankly. That is why you cannot govern properly. But, anyway, I am telling you, this is happening, and they pass information to each other and, therefore, it is a haven for some politicians in power. It has become a haven ultimately for some businessmen in power, and then with these corrupt racketeers that you are talking of this is what is happening.

There is another matter which I want to know. The Government always threatens to say that there are training camps in India. We know that. But what action have you been taking? What have you done? You just talk to Indians? No. If we cannot attack, we have to see that our borders are sealed. What definite concrete action have you taken? Have those borders been secured successfully? Has our naval cordon been very successful in order to see that no people go across from here to India or come from India to this country? That is one question. Have you got a report to find out what the failure is about and why there is a failure? That is a job of the Secretary, Defense.

I have my highest respect for the Secretary of the Ministry of Defence but he has an obligation to this country. He must let us know why there is a failure to prevent the smuggling and people moving from India to Sri Lanka and from Sri Lanka to India. Therefore Sir, he should devote hundred per cent of his time to defence. I will tell you what he should do. Today he is in Air Lanka and he is in the Airports Authority and he is doing a development project there. His is a hundred percent job. A Secretary, Defence under these trying conditions having other work is unheard of. Therefore I would like to say that he has an obligation to this country. The Government must be having an obligation to him. That is a different matter. But he has an obligation to this country. He should be held responsible if anything fails.

Christian Council appeals

As National Unity, Personal Freedom and Socio-economic Justice are basic conditions for a true and lasting Peace in our land, the Commission for Justice and Peace of the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka seeks to help in promoting all efforts to preserve and strengthen them. It is because of this concern that we welcome the Government decision to grant citizenship to 94000 Stateless Plantation Workers. The implementation of such legislation will remove a major injustice with which the National Christian Council with many other groups has been concerned since Plantation Workers were disfranchised in 1948.

Such a decision, however, would be greatly strengthened if it is accompanied by more efforts to remove the causes of violence still prevalent with tragic intensity and danger in several areas of our land.

We deplore all violence not only in the North and the East but wherever it occurs as we believe it is always counter-productive for the building of a humane and responsible society. But when the apprehension and detention of those suspected of violence are under the Emergency Regulations and the provisions of the P.T.A. the sequel too often appears to be protracted incarceration with no intimation to the persons effected of the reasons for such arrest; and this leads not to overcoming but to the commission of further injustices. In these circumstances, allegations of harsh and inhuman treatment, even of torture and other atrocities, keep mounting and much harm is then done to aggravate an already complicated situation and to spoil the image of our land abroad. Today, as the death toll from wanton killings increases, with its legacy of grief for the bereaved, feelings of despair have begun to grip large numbers of our citizens.

It is therefore imperative that to save the situation from worsening a procedure should be devised quickly and scrupulously implemented to ensure that every person arrested under the Emergency Regulations

or the Prevention of Terrorism Act is produced before a Magistrate within forty eight hours of such arrest with a report setting out —

- (a) the person's identity,
- (b) his or her permanent residential address,
- (c) the date, time and place of arrest,
- (d) the address at which the person is held in detention,
- (e) the reasons for arrest and the offence or offences alleged to have been committed for which he or she is to be charged,
- (f) the names and addresses of up to three persons whom he or she wishes should be informed of the arrest and of the particulars at (c), (d) and (e) above which he or she wishes to be communicated.

It is also essential that the number of Magistrates and other Investigating Officers should be increased sufficiently to enable expeditious handling of these cases.

We urge that these recommendations and those made by the Sri Lanka Bar Association in this regard, be implemented without delay as we need —

- (a) to ensure humane treatment and justice to all persons so arrested,
- (b) to relieve relations and friends of persons arrested of the quite unjustified tension and anxiety from lack of information about where a person is held, in what condition of health, and even whether the person concerned is alive or dead, and
- (c) to reduce as far as possible, occasions for the filing of habeas corpus applications with their inordinate costs, delays and frustrations of waiting indefinitely for their disposal.

We are convinced that vigorous and conscientious action on the lines we recommend could begin to restore the right spirit among us.

Owing to the grave urgency to do all that is possible to help

(Continued on page 8)

Statements in Geneva

Canada

We must, however, also take note of situations where developments have been less encouraging. In Sri Lanka, we are saddened by recent reports of bombings by the Air Force in densely populated Jaffna Peninsula. We deeply regret the loss of life by innocent civilians on both sides in the current conflict and urge the Sri Lankan government to make its best efforts to find a peaceful political settlement. We welcome the efforts of the Government of India to facilitate negotiations between the Government of Sri Lanka and various Tamil groups and urge that these efforts be continued.

Australia

The Australian Government shares the widespread international disappointment at the recent deterioration in the communal conflict in Sri Lanka. We continue to watch developments closely. In the spirit of our long standing friendship with that country, we have several times expressed our concern to the Sri Lankan government that the human rights of all Sri Lankans should be respected. We have urged the Government of Sri Lanka to sustain a policy of moderation and reconciliation in its handling of the communal problems and have made clear our support for India's mediatory role in this complex and delicate matter. We stress our hope that all in Sri Lanka will eschew violence and renew their efforts towards a peaceful political solution. We also hope that the government of Sri Lanka will facilitate all appropriate efforts of the international community, including such bodies as the ICRC, to ameliorate the situation of affected parties.

Ireland

The announcement last summer of talks between delegations representing the Government of Sri Lanka and the main Tamil parties, together with an agreement on a ceasefire, gave rise to hopes that

a solution would shortly be found to the tragic situation in Sri Lanka. We regret that the talks were not successful and that, with the increasing number of violent incidents, the situation continues to give grave concern.

Recent months have been an increasing spiral of violence. Terrorist attacks have brought the deaths of numerous civilians and members of the security forces. It is reported that hundreds have died as a result of indiscriminate retaliatory action by members of the security forces. My delegation unreservedly condemns all such killings, no matter who the perpetrators may be. It is of course the responsibility of the authorities to ensure that the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Sri Lanka citizens are fully safeguarded. It is also their responsibility to ensure that, in carrying out their duty of maintaining law and order, members of the security forces comply with domestic law and with those internationally accepted human rights principles from which no derogation may be made. In particular, Mr. Chairman, my delegation reiterates that terrorist outrages may never be used as an excuse for summary executions, mass punishments or arbitrary arrests by members of the armed forces or the police such as have been reported.

Christian . . .

(Continued from page 7)

forward a Political Solution to our present conflict and to create an atmosphere of truth, trust and credibility in accordance with basic teachings of the great religions professed in our land we appeal to all concerned to take immediate action to foster a language of discourse and a strategy of action involving direct human and personal contact between the leaders of the Government and the Tamil leaders in the conflict far more than the indirect contact, so that

it can help mutual understanding, goodwill and compassion, between the contending groups. We trust therefore that all who are in positions of leadership in all political groups will act according to the spirit and principles of the religious professions made and that all citizens of Sri Lanka will lend their support to such action with the urgency that the present situation demands from us all, if there is to be reconciliation and peace in our land.

TRENDS

(Continued from page 1)

But the response to the news of Justice Percy Colin-Thome's appointment went beyond the boundaries of Hulftsdorp. The best man for the job, was the reaction even among the most anti-UNP of public servants and professionals.

The UNP has been in office for almost nine years. So the appointment of the Commission can hardly be seen as premature. The unparalleled flow of aid has multiplied opportunities beyond the wildest dreams of the so-called 'new mudalalis' of the SLFP.

ARMS BAZAAR

A current joke in the city catches the mood of the times as the defence budget expands at the expense of the development or social welfare ministries. On the day that press publicised the fact of an extra 2.5 billion rupees allocation, Colombo's businessmen were trying to ferret out how many new 'dummy' companies were being formed. These would be the "fronts" behind which the handful of Sri Lankans who are the busiest in the local arms bazaar would operate. Wives, daughters, sons-in-law and cousins would become the "directors" of such ad hoc firms which would probably close down after every deal is won or lost.

The last minute inclusion of newspaper proprietors, editors and editorial staff and the office-bearers of trade unions raised eyebrows and provoked sardonic comments.

The ticking time-bomb

Dilip Bobb (Associate Editor, *India Today*)

The sudden and strident exchange of charges and countercharges telegraphed between the two countries last fortnight clearly marked an ignominious and abrupt end to the cosy honeymoon New Delhi had naively embarked upon with Colombo. It also signalled the Indian Government's belated determination to adopt a markedly tougher posture in its role as peace-broker between the two warring sides.

In what was easily the strongest statement to emanate from South Block since Rajiv Gandhi came to power, the Indian Government accused Sri Lanka of trying to "find an alibi for the failure to engage in constructive negotiations" and of "casting personal aspersions" on External Affairs Minister Bali Ram Bhagat, who in the midst of a stormy Lok Sabha debate over the Indian Government's handling of the Sri Lankan crisis, had issued the provocative remark that the action of Sri Lankan security forces had "the elements of genocide". Bhagat also suggested that it was time the Sri Lanka Government came up with a time frame in which to find a political solution to the problems. Bhagat's remarks predictably produced an equally provocative tirade from Colombo, which fell back on its time-worn tactic of once again accusing India of assisting and encouraging training camps for Tamil militant groups in Tamil Nadu. Colombo's statement also said that: The value of the proffered good offices of the Indian Government stand impaired and its credibility diluted."

The Indian Government then put the seal on its abrupt about-turn by taking the rather extreme step of stopping the Indian cricket team's impending visit to Sri Lanka for the Asia Cup, scheduled for end-March. The sudden and mutual escalation in the verbal war has fragmented the fragile

hopes for peace that the negotiation process initiated by the Indian Government in 1983 had tentatively raised. But in many ways, it was somewhat inevitable.

The clincher came when Colombo sent signals that they were willing to consider the three crucial issues contained in the latest amended proposals worked out between Foreign Secretary Romesh Bhandari and the moderate Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF)—the land settlement issue, the law and order proposal asking for a Tamil police force and the proposal to merge the northern and eastern province. Sri Lankan strongman Lalith Athulathmudali, indicated that they were willing to give in substantially to the first two and would even be willing to negotiate further on the third. The peripatetic Bhandari once again put a Colombo sticker on his bags and flew to Madras enroute to Sri Lanka. The day he left, a special courier arrived from Colombo with a 58-page document containing the Sri Lankan reaction to the TULF proposals. "They bore no relation to the discussions we had been engaged in uptill that time", said a foreign ministry source. An embarrassed Bhandari had to fly back from Madras, sadder but wiser.

The bottomline, however, is that the Indian Government seems to be finally convinced that President Jayewardene and his advisers have decided that there is only one solution to the problem—the military option. Sri Lanka's indisciplined security forces, bolstered by the recent acquisition of a wide variety of weaponry from rather dubious sources, have escalated their brutal anti-Tamil offensive alarmingly in the past two months through their cordon-and-search operation (*INDIA TODAY*, March 15). The fact that the

main victims of the crackdown—concentrated in the eastern province—have been innocent Tamil civilians put additional pressure on South Block to undertake a major review of their policy.

Finally, political realities, hitherto ignored, put the torch to the funeral pyre of India's peace initiative. Apart from the uproars in Parliament last fortnight, with members, not just from Tamil Nadu, baying for the Foreign Ministry's blood, the AIADMK Government in Tamil Nadu has made it clear to the Congress (I) that the sole reason for its shock defeat in last month's municipal elections was the electorate's disgust with its attitude towards the Sri Lankan situation. In the latest round of high-level meetings chaired by the prime minister to review the Sri Lankan policy, the participants included G. Parthasarathi, who had been sidelined on Sri Lankan affairs at the request of the Jayewardene Government, and Tamil Nadu's Electricity Minister, S. Ramachandran.

Neither could the Indian Government ignore the fact that the refugee population from Sri Lanka has started to reach alarming levels in terms of the financial burden involved in their upkeep. Since December 1983, a total of 1,24,828 Sri Lankan Tamils have fled across the Palk Straits in fear of death or destruction of their homes by the Sri Lankan security forces. In fact, the Indian Government has now asked Sri Lanka to share refugee expenses.

THAT Colombo had decided to concentrate on its desperate search for a military solution was patently obvious. But the increasing involvement of Pakistan in that hitherto futile search was added reason for India to harden its stand.

According to defence and intelligence sources, the major source of Sri Lanka's arms acquisitions in recent months has been Pakistan, followed by South Africa, Israel, UK, China and Singapore. From Pakistan, the Sri Lankans have acquired a large amount of heavy and medium artillery in the form of 25 pounder field guns, 130 mm medium guns and rocket-propelled grenades, apart from an estimated 10,000 small arms in the form of rifles, light machine guns and mortars. Latest reports say that the Pakistan Government has also promised Colombo six helicopter gunships.

Pakistan's involvement extends well beyond weapons supply. In the last one year, an estimated 8,000 officers, junior commissioned officers and other ranks have returned from Pakistan having completed courses in counter-insurgency, artillery, junior commanders training and basic training. Pakistan is also reportedly training Sri Lankan air force and naval pilots. In Sri Lanka itself, their security

forces are being trained by the comically-named Keeny Meany Services, an outfit made up of former Special Air Services (SAS) veterans who have served earlier in Oman and usually do not operate in foreign countries without the tacit approval of the British Government.

In addition, Sri Lanka has acquired 150 armoured cars and personnel carriers from South Africa and Israel, 21 Bell helicopters from Singapore which are being converted into gunships, six SIA Marchetti aircraft from Italy for strafing and an equal number of Cessna 337's for surveillance. It has also bought 50 patrol boats and 40,000 landmines in the past year. All these acquisitions have inflated the country's defence budget from Rs. 17.71 million in 1982-83 to Rs. 57.65 million in 1985-86, and encouraged further confirmation that the only course the Government is bent upon taking is a military one.

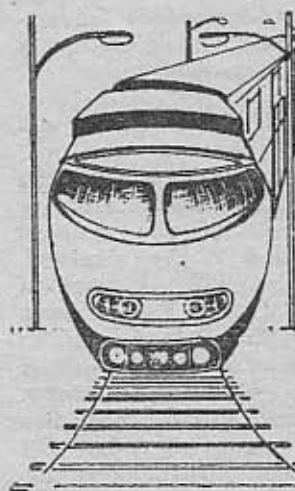
The Indian strategy, with its peace initiative having virtually

collapsed, is to mount an international campaign to put external pressure on Sri Lanka. Much of its hopes rest with the US. During his recent visit to Washington, Bhagat raised the issue with the US Administration which has reportedly expressed support for the move to get the Jayewardene Government to exercise more restraint on its security forces and adopt a more reasonable attitude towards finding a peaceful and mutually acceptable solution to the ethnic crisis. At the same time, India strongly condemned Sri Lankan atrocities before the Human Rights Commission in Geneva last week, indicating that New Delhi is determined to pull out all the stops. But that could also mean that New Delhi might just be in the mood to allow the Tamil militants to resume their arms training on Tamil Nadu soil, which would put the clock back to a level where it would once again resemble the ticking of a time-bomb.

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The Crisis of Sri Lanka, a General Election and Mrs. Bandaranaike

Chanaka Amaratunga

That Sri Lanka is at present enshrouded in a grave crisis is a matter of unanimity. Any attempt to identify the nature of this crisis, any analysis of its causes and its possible resolution, however, brings us into the realm of contention. It is perhaps even impossible to particularise the Sri Lankan crisis to the degree of recognizing what seems to me obvious, that it is a political crisis without inviting sharp dissent; for there are some who see our present travails as no more than the nihilistic work of terrorism which is not admitted as being political. The rhetoric of a significant proportion of popular discourse that believes that there is no more to our crisis than 'the war against terrorism' or alternately of 'terrorism's war against us' and refuses to acknowledge that the travails of this country at the present time are the symptoms of a far more complex, and in the final analysis more dangerous crisis of which terrorism forms a deplorable part, continues to muddy the waters of rational analysis and render more difficult the achievement of a lasting settlement of the crisis.

There has been much discussion over the past two and a half years of a possible 'settlement'. It seems to me however, that a significant reason for the failure of a 'settlement' has been the loose and simplistic way in which we have identified the nature of our crisis. Before we can arrive at a basis for a settlement we must have a clear and accurate understanding of what it is we are attempting to settle. The specific proposals embodied in a settlement as well as the modalities by which such a settlement can be achieved are inextricably bound

up with our perception of the crisis we propose to resolve.

In a crisis such as ours which threatens the survival of Sri Lanka as a peaceful, united, liberal democracy to say nothing of the physical survival of many of its citizens, we cannot afford to lose sight of the wood for the trees. This, it seems to me, is precisely what we continue to do. To view the Sri Lankan crisis as a crisis of race relations is to focus our attention on a few trees. No one can pretend that the Tamil Problem has not festered and grown over many years leading to legitimate dispute as to its source. But it is the joint adverse contribution to the crisis of spokesmen of nationalism, both Tamil and Sinhala, that they have concentrated their energies upon an analysis of the recent past in terms of the advancement or decline of racial ethnic interests. While it seems to me incontrovertible that real grievances suffered by Tamils over the last thirty years and more have contributed not a little to the bitterness and violence of today, it is tragically one-dimensional not to recognise that there are important, I would even say vital, extra-racial factors which have exacerbated the Tamil Problem from 1983 and made a solution impossible of achievement. For this continuing tragedy both the Government and the Tamil separatists are responsible. For the one in a deliberate policy designed to lead Sri Lanka upon a road to authoritarianism, the other through a myopia brought on perhaps by the blinkered politics of ethnicity, has refused to recognize that the crisis of Sri Lankan communal relations is but one facet (albeit a very powerful one) of the crisis of liberal democracy in Sri Lanka.

This realisation, that our crisis is moral and institutional has not

been widely understood principally because we have become increasingly dependent for our perception of events on information and analyses emanating from the State. There seems a widespread acceptance as objective of a presentation of facts that is subjective in the most obvious and gross way. This is not to say that there is some objective reality which the popular instruments of analysis have concealed. Political analysis, more than most other pursuits, is subjective. What I do believe is that most of us are denied a healthy plurality of analysis which would allow us greater scope for making informed, subjective judgements. What I am attempting to assent is that there has been far too little work on establishing the close correlation between the decline of pluralism, in its widest sense, in Sri Lankan society and the steady increase of politically motivated violence and its attendant social and economic dislocation.

To my mind it is no accident that the decline of respect for liberal values — for individual liberty, for the best traditions of an independent and healthy parliamentary democracy, for diversity in all its many creative forms, for tolerance at both the political and the social level, since 1970 has paralleled the increase of political violence among supporters of the principal parties outside the Northern and Eastern Provinces as well as racially motivated violence and a violent reaction from Tamil separatists. The sharpest increase in political violence in this country has occurred and continues to occur in the 1980's, the period in which Sri Lankan liberal democracy reached to its lowest ebb thus far. The deprivation of the civic rights of Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike and others in October 1980 and the postponement of a General Election via the unprecedented step of the

Mr. Amaratunga recently received a Ph.D. from LSE and is the General-Secretary of the Council for Liberal Democracy.

Referendum in December, 1982 (conducted under a state of emergency in a manner that caused grave concern among all liberals and most democrats) were the high points of a consistent movement towards the devaluation of an open and tolerant political process. It must also be emphasised that the many steps taken to circumscribe the independence of Members of Parliament and to devalue the position of Parliament as a genuinely representative institution contributed towards the increasingly authoritarian atmosphere in this country today. That this authoritarian atmosphere is punctuated by some genuine manifestations of political pluralism and many ritualistic expressions of devotion to the democratic process should not obscure from us an accurate appreciation of its essential nature and more importantly, of its ultimate purpose.

The record of the Tamil United Liberation Front during its presence in Parliament suggests that the parliamentary/moderate wing of Tamil nationalism had a partial appreciation of the close relationship between the travails of the Tamils and an extra-ethnic movement away from a liberal democratic Sri Lanka. The subsequent emphasis of Tamil nationalism and indeed of significant strands of non-Tamil opposition to the contemporary United National Party, on an exclusively ethnic approach (e.g. an approach to the question of provincial autonomy on the basis of greater self-government for Tamils rather than on the wider case for decentralisation and the reduction of the power of the Government) (and the converse of that, an identification with protection of the interests of the Sinhalese) has obscured the ideological and institutional roots of our crisis and prevented the identification of a common purpose among those concerned with the rights of all Sri Lankans irrespective of race, class, religion or any other sectarian distinction.

My argument is therefore that any analysis of our current crisis that seeks a long-term and just solution must recognize the inex-

tricable link between lack of respect for individual rights and lack of respect for minority groups, violence against minorities, and terrorism, and violence against the person, intolerance of the political aspirations of the Northern and Eastern provinces and intolerance of political dissent throughout the island, lack of representation of the Northern and Eastern provinces with the general lack of genuinely representative institutions. Sinhala racism and Tamil separatism are not then, the only obstacles to a 'solution' of the crisis. A resolution of what is a crisis of liberal values requires a restoration of the liberal values of respect for the human person, of individual liberty, of genuinely representative democracy, of economic and cultural pluralism. It is from an understanding of this, from a recognition that the deprivation of Mrs. Bandaranaike's civic rights, the Referendum to postpone a General Election for six years, the anti-Tamil riots of 1983, terrorism and the atrocities of the Sri Lankan armed forces are all facets of the same crisis of liberal democracy that we must approach two issues of recent and continuing significance, the restoration of Mrs. Bandaranaike's civic rights and her demand for a General Election.

My view has consistently been that the deprivation of Mrs. Bandaranaike's civic rights "marked the beginning of a new and powerful phase in the tragic decline of Sri Lankan parliamentary democracy" (1) Accordingly, I hope it is not erroneous to believe that the restoration of Mrs. Bandaranaike's civic rights marked the retracing of a step on the road to authoritarianism. Whatever might have been the Government's intention in restoring Mrs. Bandaranaike's civic rights, and speculation is all that we can indulge in on the subject, it does seem that the return of Mrs. Bandaranaike into the political arena as a free agent has strengthened the Opposition and so the democratic process. The enhancement of the Opposition has been secured by her resistance to the twin blandishments of returning to Parliament by nomination and of

standing in a by-election. The single-minded concentration by Mrs. Bandaranaike on the demand for a General Election has created an issue which has the potential to unite a wide coalition of convictions and interests.

The issue of a General Election raises moral as well as 'pragmatic' considerations though even the latter are not devoid of moral content. The moral considerations that are thrown up by the infamous Referendum and the extension of the present Parliament for a full term beyond its natural life involve representative democracy and the legitimacy of our political institutions. The 'pragmatic' considerations involve the political context in which elections are demanded and the possible consequences of elections. Mrs. Bandaranaike's campaign for a General Election, in which she has the support of a constituency wider than her own party, and the arguments of the Government for not having one until 1989 must be analysed from both the moral and pragmatic stand points.

Fundamental to the moral considerations for or against "an immediate General Election" is the legitimacy of the present Parliament. (2) On this there is no dissent for the contestants join issue on the basis of their differing opinion on legitimacy. The President, the Prime Minister and Members of the Cabinet assert the legitimacy of Parliament on the basis that the verdict of a majority of those who voted at the Referendum to extend the life of Parliament, is sufficient justification for this Parliament continuing in office until 1989. To the Government's moral argument two positions are axiomatic — a) that the postponement of a General Election and the extension of a Parliament beyond its natural life are within the scope of what may be done by a referendum and b) that the results of the Referendum of December 1982 was free and fair. Neither of these positions is capable of standing up to rigorous examination.

(To be continued)

Part III

U. S. State Dept. on Human Rights in Sri Lanka

Section 3 Respect for Political Rights: The Right of Citizens to Change Their Government

Sri Lanka is an open, working, multiparty democracy. Citizens enjoy universal adult suffrage, and voter turnout is generally over 80 percent. Traditionally, the UNP and the other major political party, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), both of which draw their following mainly from the Sinhalese majority community, have alternated in forming governments. The current UNP government came to power in the general elections of 1977, gaining 51 percent of the popular vote and 83 percent of the seats in Parliament. The UNP government formulated a new Constitution, adopted by Parliament in 1978, which established the office of a directly elected executive president and provided for a proportional representation system in future parliamentary general elections.

Jayewardene became the first President under the 1978 Constitution and was returned to office in the presidential election of October 1982, gaining 53 percent of the popular vote. General elections to Parliament due in 1983 were not held. Instead, citizens went to the polls in a referendum held in December 1982 to vote on a constitutional amendment to extend the term of the 1977 Parliament from 6 to 12 years. Restrictions were imposed on the activities of opposition parties during the referendum campaign, and some voting irregularities were reported. The amendment was approved with 54.5 percent of the votes and Parliament's term now runs until August 1986. UNP candidates have won most of the by-elections held since 1977, including the two held in 1985. President Jayewardene's United National Party now holds 140 out of 153 occupied seats in Sri Lanka's unicameral legislature.

Sri Lanka's political parties represent a variety of political views. Most opposition parties function freely, several operate their own newspapers, and the activities of their leaders are covered by the media. One party, however, the extreme leftist Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP), has been proscribed since July 1983 for alleged involvement in communal riots during the last week of that month. In addition, the civic rights of the leader of the SLFP, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, were suspended in 1980 for a period of seven years on the grounds that she exceeded her authority during her tenure as Prime Minister from 1970-77. Until her pardon on January 1, 1986, the suspension of her civic rights prevented her from serving in Parliament and campaigning on behalf of her party's candidates in elections.

Tamils, who comprise approximately 18 percent of the country's population, are primarily represented by two parties. The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) claims to speak for the Ceylon Tamils resident in the North and East, and the Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC), which is also a trade union, represents the Indian Tamils. The President of the CWC serves as a minister in the present Government.

Indian Tamils, who make up about one-third of the country's Tamil population, are descended from Tamils brought from India in the 19th century to work on the plantations. They do not qualify for Indian citizenship under Indian law and were denied citizenship under Sri Lankan law at independence. Under a 1964 agreement between the governments of Sri Lanka and India to address the problem of one million "stateless" Indian Tamils, many were repatriated to India or granted Sri Lankan citizenship. When the agreement expired in 1981, there were an

estimated 94,000 Indian Tamils plus their offspring born since 1964, who remained "stateless." The Government estimates that the total number of stateless Indian Tamils is currently around 150,000 persons. The Sri Lankan Government has stated its intention to grant citizenship to those remaining stateless but no action has been taken to date and these Tamils remain disenfranchised.

Section 4 Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights

The Government is sensitive to adverse reports on its human rights situation but generally does not interfere with investigations. Senior government officials frequently make themselves available to visitors looking into human rights issues. There were several special reports on human rights in Sri Lanka in 1985.

A representative of the Human Rights Standing Committee of the Law Association for Asia and the Western Pacific (LAWASIA) visited Sri Lanka on a factfinding mission in February. The mission's report concluded that the situation had deteriorated since LAWASIA's last report in 1983 due to the escalating violence and the erosion of democracy and the rule of law. Also in February, two members of the British parliamentary human rights group visited Sri Lanka and concluded that "in the present situation human rights are being violated or infringed to a substantial extent."

The chairman of the Australian parliamentary amnesty group visited Sri Lanka in June and presented his findings, an update of his initial report of June 1984, to the Emergency Committee on Sri Lanka, an informal international group of human rights activists. He found

the ethnic conflict to be "destroying the economy, violating human rights and undermining the progress of development programmes supported by many governments over many years." In October an Amnesty International newsletter included a special report on torture in Sri Lanka, based on affidavits and doctors' reports on the victims. The Government follows a practice of not responding to Amnesty International reports, which it says do not identify, victims of alleged abuses and are based more on hearsay than hard information.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has a branch in Colombo which has been active in rehabilitation projects. Several local nongovernmental organizations monitor human rights in Sri Lanka. They collect information from families of victims or members of citizens' committees near the site of alleged incidents. Their periodic reports and appeals for change, however, are generally not addressed by the Government. Some attorneys represent defendants pro bono in those human rights cases which reach the courts.

At the end of 1985, the Government was considering a proposal to establish a Civil-Human Rights Commission modeled on U.S. institutions which would be empowered to mediate grievances.

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SITUATION

Sri Lanka's population of 16,334,000 is growing at an annual rate of 1.8 percent. The high rates of growth (over 6 percent) in the gross national product (GNP) Sri Lanka enjoyed from 1978-81 have decelerated somewhat in recent years (5.2 percent in 1984). The balance of payments situation deteriorated in 1985 due to a fall in tourism, lower world prices for tea, and the economic and social disruptions caused by the island's continuing ethnic strife. Lower government revenues and greatly increased defense spending have produced a record budget deficit which is expected to fuel inflation and contribute to depreciation of the currency. Development expenditures may also be curtailed to reduce the deficit.

Under the current Government's market-oriented economic policies, the expansion of the private sector has been encouraged. Foreign investment has been welcomed but most has gone into the tourist and textile industries. Sri Lanka's rapidly growing textile exports now constitute its third leading earner of foreign exchange. Unemployment, chronically severe, was estimated at 11.7 in 1981, down from a post independence high of 24 percent in the mid-1970's.

Agriculture, contributing nearly a quarter of GNP and employing almost half of all Sri Lankan workers, is the largest and most important of the country's economic sectors. Lowlands are farmed by smallholders raising rice, fruits, coconuts, and vegetables, while the central hill country produces tea, largely in government-owned estates, and rubber. In 1948 Sri Lanka was very nearly self-sufficient in rice and overall was a net agricultural exporter. However, lower tea prices and production difficulties in the government-owned estates hurt the agricultural sector in 1985.

The ambitious Mahaweli scheme, a series of modern dams and irrigation systems aimed at providing hydroelectric power and watering large tracts of underutilized arid land, has become a bone of contention in the current ethnic troubles. Some Tamils object to government settlement policies that are altering traditional local ethnic balances in newly-irrigated areas. Militant Tamils have attacked Sinhalese settlers in some sections of the Mahaweli scheme.

Citizens have the right to acquire, hold and dispose of property, but each individual may own only 1 house and no more than 50 acres. The Government permits noncitizen residents, except "stateless" Indian Tamils, to own property.

Sri Lanka's quality of life is higher than that of countries of equal income. Life expectancy at birth is 69.9 years. The infant mortality rate is 28.4 per 1,000 live births. The calorie supply as a percentage of requirements is 98.4 percent (1977) and in 1980

one of three Sri Lankans had access to safe water (65 percent urban, 18 percent rural). Although a majority of Sri Lankans are poor by developed country standards, there is virtually none of the starvation-level poverty experienced in some other developing countries. Sri Lanka's free public health care system is generally good by Third World standards, though it is frequently plagued by shortages of medicines and modern medical equipment. In 1983 there were 280 hospital beds and 13 doctors per 100,000 population.

Sri Lanka provides free education from primary school through university level. The primary school enrollment ratio is 102 (male 104, female 99). The overall adult literacy rate is 87 percent and is constituted as follows: males 91 percent, females 81 percent. Nearly 18,000 students (44 percent female) are enrolled in Sri Lanka's 8 universities.

Under Sri Lankan labor laws, employment of children under age 12 is prohibited. Those between age 12 and 14 are called child workers and may not be employed in industry or dangerous occupations; employment of young persons between 15 and 18 is subject to certain restrictions. Employees under age 18 cannot be required to work outside of specified hours. In addition, employers are required to provide annual leave, rest periods, and meal breaks. In practice, however, there is a child work force, probably numbering at least several thousand, who work illegally in Sri Lanka, mostly at jobs in rice cultivations, as domestics, or as street peddlers. Efforts to address this problem have been hampered by the fact that, in some cases, child workers are a major source of family income.

There is no minimum wage, but wage boards for 34 different trades set minimum wages and working conditions. Actual wages and working conditions generally exceed these minimums. Most permanent full-time workers are covered by laws which provide that they shall

(Continued on page 24)

The beginning and the desirable end of statelessness

Paul Caspersz

The category of the stateless was created by the Citizenship Act No 18 of 1948. By the provisions of this Act the estate worker and other 19th century immigrants from South India were in effect denied citizenship. They were not the only section of the people then living in the island who were potentially subject to these provisions, but they were the only section of the people who were compelled to actually abide by them. The basic flaw of the Act thus lies in its motivation leading to the restricted range of its effective applicability.

S. U. Kodikara admits that the provisions of the Act "were undoubtedly rigid and restrictive, but...this Act was not intended to provide for citizenship for the vast majority of Indians in Ceylon" (*Indo-Ceylon Relations*, p. 109). But to know what was not intended by the Act is surely less important than to know what was. And the intention was precisely to exclude from citizenship and consequently to render stateless the same category of persons.

D. S. Senanayake, Prime Minister in 1948, himself is said to have admitted that he would have found it difficult to produce the birth certificate of his father if he was asked to prove that he was a citizen of Ceylon. Pieter Keuneman in Parliament on 15 November 1960 said that he was assured that D. S. Senanayake did not have even his own birth certificate and hence his son, Dudley, then Leader of the Opposition, and later Prime Minister, would not be able to prove his citizenship. And if anyone could not produce the birth certificate of the father the consolation the Act gave was to ask the person to produce the birth certificate of grand-father and great-grandfather! This neither D. S. Senanayake nor his son Dudley would of course ever have been able to do. However it was

presumed that they, and hundreds of thousands like them — Sinhalese, Tamils of the North and East, Muslims and even Burghers — were citizens. Only those known or suspected to be estate workers or other 19th century Tamil immigrants were asked to prove that they were citizens. Not being able to produce proof, they were declared to be non-citizens, stateless.

The Indian and Pakistani Residents (Citizenship) Act No 3 of 1949 sought to assuage this indignity by offering the thousands made stateless by the 1948 Act the possibility of obtaining, under certain conditions of domicile, citizenship by registration. The Ceylon Indian Congress at first advised the workers not to apply for citizenship under the 1949 Act, also on the grounds that to do so would indirectly connote acceptance of the 1948 Act. After some months, however, the Congress relented. Thus, within the 2-year period allowed under the 1949 Act for application for citizenship by registration, no less than 237,000 applications were filed by the stateless persons on behalf of a total of 825,000 persons. It was obvious by this alone that most of the immigrants considered in 1949 that Sri Lanka was their only possible home and that they had nowhere else to go.

Investigation of the applications was dilatory and was never made with any sympathetic appreciation of the real difficulties faced by the estate people in the matter of furnishing evidence of domicile, as required by the law. Hence by 1964, by which date all the applications had been investigated, only 134,188 persons or only 16.2 per cent of the total seeking citizenship were admitted to citizenship be either Sri Lanka or India continued to in the category of the stateless. The Parliamentary Elections Amendment Act No 48 of 1949 compounded the in-

justice by decreeing that only citizens had the right to vote.

Between 1948 and 1964 there were several joint attempts by the Governments of Sri Lanka and India to confront the problem of the stateless. These were the parleys between Oliver Goonetilleke Dudley Senanayake and C. C. Desai in 1953, followed by the Dudley Senanayake and Jawaharlal Nehru discussions in London in June 1953 the Neru-Kotelawala talks in New Delhi in January 1954 and again in October 1954, the S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike-Neru informal discussions in Delhi in 1957. All these talks were inconclusive.

As long as Nehru lived, he held steadfastly to the position that the problem of the stateless persons was not created by India and that, while India would receive all who were of recent Indian origin and wished to return to independent India (from Sri Lanka and other countries) of their own accord, he would never be party to an agreement that would in way force those who did not wish to return in fact to return. But Neru died in May 1964.

Under Lal Bahadur Shastri India suddenly changed its line. In September 1964 Shastri sent an official Indian delegation to Colombo to discuss the problem. Finally in October 1964 there emerged the Agreement in Delhi between Shastri and Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. Estimating that there were approximately 975,000 persons of Indian origin who "have not been recognized either as citizens of Ceylon or as citizens of India" (this number not including "illicit immigrants and Indian passport holders"), Sri Lanka and India each agreed to grant their citizenship to 300,000 and 525,000 persons respectively. This is the famous 4 to 7 ratio. The 1964 Agreement stated that "the status

(Continued on page 17)

Review of Economic Policies and Progress 1977 – 1984

J. B. Kelegama

I New Economic Policies and their Background

This paper is a tentative attempt to review the economic policies pursued and economic progress achieved in the six years 1978–83 while comparing them in some areas with the economic policies and progress in the six years 1971–76 in order to explore what lessons can be drawn for future economic development of the country. The attempt is in the nature of an explorative exercise to focus attention on a subject of crucial importance and immediate relevance to the country. It will have achieved its purpose, if it results in a serious and intensive discussion by students of economics.

2. Economic policies in the period 1971–76 were designed broadly to achieve welfare and greater equality in the distribution of wealth and income within a framework of a self-reliant economy; these policies were implemented through state ownership, control and intervention over production, distribution, trade and finance combined with encouragement of national as opposed to foreign enterprise. The new economic policies launched in 1977, on the other hand, were oriented towards rapid economic growth in the context of a free or open market economy by the adoption of measures to encourage and support private enterprise both national and foreign, by minimising of state ownership, control and intervention in economic activities and by allowing the free play of market forces and the price mechanism.

3. The Government, in 1977, reversed the major economic policies pursued since 1970, which it believed, were responsible for the poor economic performance in the period 1971–76, and introduced a package of new economic policies whose main features are as follows —

(a) Reducing the role of the state in economic activities; encouragement of the private sector and ending of preferential treatment of the public sector through curtailing monopolies in the public sector as insurance and telecommunications; introducing competition between the private and public sectors as in bus transport; restoring tax incentives and relaxing trade and other restrictions to private enterprise and encouraging self-employment.

(b) Open door policy regarding foreign investment:— Offer of attractive incentives and tax holidays to foreign capital and invitation to foreign banks, which had hitherto been disallowed, to open branches;

(c) Privatisation: transfer of unprofitable public enterprises to private sector ownership or management such as the National Milk Board accompanied by de-regulation or liberalization;

(d) Transfer of resources from welfare or consumption to investment by limiting consumer subsidies to the most needy groups;

(e) Unification of the basic and FEECs rates of exchange and devaluation of the rupee by 55% from Rs. 7.28 = \$ 1 to Rs. 16 = \$ 1; adoption of the policy of a Floating Rupee thereafter resulting in a gradual depreciation of the Rupee year after year to Rs. 27 = \$ 1.00 at present; the new exchange rates were designed to provide better export incentives and to eliminate price distortions arising from an overvalued currency and stimulate domestic agricultural production;

(f) Relaxation of controls on imports and exchange payments and remittances allowing free imports without controls except in a few items on the basis of a revised and lower tariff structure; trade liberalization was designed to revive domestic industry by free flows of machinery, spares and raw materials as well as to stimulate new areas of private business activity;

(g) Abolition of price controls on most items and other regulations on business activity so as to allow free market forces to operate;

(h) Mobilization of external assistance on a large scale to finance an ambitious development programme centred round the Mahaweli Development Project as well as to meet balance of payments strains resulting from open or free economy and liberalised imports;

(i) Shift of emphasis from import substitution industries to export oriented industries particularly in a Free Trade Zone or Export Promotion Zone and the establishment of the Export Development Board and Export Credit Insurance Corporation towards this end.

4. The new economic policies were launched on the basis that private enterprise oriented economies in Asia had achieved higher and more rapid economic progress than the others, and Sri Lanka's future lay in emulating these countries. Thus South Korea and South East Asian countries, particularly Singapore, were adopted as models of economic development in formulating the new economic policies of the government. The attraction of South Korea and ASEAN countries is understandable, for it is beyond dispute that the free market orientad countries had achieved higher rates of economic growth and higher per capita income than the controlled economies of Asia in recent years.

5. The average annual growth rate of real GDP in ASEAN countries in 1970–75 was 7.8 per cent, that of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore exceeding 8 per cent. Republic of Korea showed a growth rate of 9.8 per cent. In the South Asian countries where there is greater state control over economic activities, on the other hand, growth rate was much lower:— Bangladesh 3.6 percent, Burma 2.5 percent, India 2.5 percent, Pakistan 4.5 percent and Sri Lanka 4.2 percent. Similarly per capita GDP in the free market oriented economies far exceeded that of the controlled economies. In 1978 per capita GDP exceeded US\$ 1,000 in Singapore, Malaysia, Republic of Korea and Hongkong but fell below US\$ 200 in all South Asian countries except Pakistan as shown in Table 1.

(The author was Secretary to the Ministry of Trade and is now an international consultant).

TABLE I
Economic performance of selected Asian
Countries 1970-75

Country	per capita GDP 1978 US\$	Average annual growth rate of real GDP 1970-75	Average annual growth rate of Food Production 1970-75
ASEAN	480	7.8	-
Indonesia	350	8.5	4.2
Malaysia	1216	10.3	4.8
Philippines	508	6.2	4.9
Singapore	3,293	9.8	7.2
Thailand	513	6.4	6.7
East Asia			
Hongkong	3,128	7.7	9.7
Republic of Korea	1,298	9.8	4.7
South Asia			
Afghanistan	175	3.8	4.9
Bangladesh	115	3.6	2.0
Burma	128	2.1	1.1
India	180	2.5	1.7
Nepal	120	2.0	2.2
Pakistan	252	4.5	2.6
Sri Lanka	194	4.2	2.9

Source: UN Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics 1981.

Food production in ASEAN and South Korea in 1970-75 exceeded 4 per cent annum while it was 2.9 per cent in Sri Lanka and was even lower in other South Asian countries except Afghanistan as shown in the table.

6. Growth was so impressive in the four free market oriented economies of the Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan that they have been called the "Four Little Tigers". The Republic of Korea with a growth rate of 8 per cent is now a world class economic power having raised its per capita income from \$100 in 1961 to around \$2000 today. Nearly two-thirds of the Koreans consider themselves to be middle-class and the country has 95% literacy. Singapore's per capita income of \$6,500 has doubled since 1978; it had a growth rate of 9 per cent and there are over 100 foreign banks operating in its territory. Hong-kong is the leading financial centre after New York and London and it is the largest exporter of garments in the world. Taiwan is the world's 13th largest exporter and has an impressive growth rate of 11 per cent. Thailand and Malaysia are two of the best examples of

developing countries which have diversified their exports within a short period and achieved high growth rates. Malaysia reduced its dependence on rubber, tin and timber by developing and expanding exports of petroleum, vegetable oil and manufactures while Thailand added cassava, sugar, fish, vegetables, precious stones and manufactures to her traditional exports of rice, rubber and tin.

(To be continued)

The beginning...

(Continued from page 15)

and future of the remaining 150,000 of these persons will be subject matter of a separate agreement between the two governments".

This separate Agreement came in 1974 and was signed by Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Indira Gandhi. By this Agreement Sri Lanka and India accepted the granting of citizenship to 75,000 persons each. This is the 1 to 1 ratio. Both Agreements added to the numbers the phrase, "with the natural increase in that number". In future statistics the original number (375,000 for Sri Lanka citizenship and 600,000 for Indian citizenship)

were stated to be "the accountable number" while those born after 1964 were "the natural increase". This natural increase is approximately 30 per cent or about one-third of the accountable number).

The first Agreement stated that the granting of Ceylonese citizenship and the process of repatriation "shall both be phased over the period of 15 years" while the second Agreement "will be phased over a period of 2 years". As the first Agreement was dated 30 October 1964 by both Prime Ministers, the Indian Government held that the period for application for repatriation to India ended on 30 October 1981.

There was a sense of a long journey's end in the following statement of the second Agreement: "I am sure that it is a matter of satisfaction to our Governments that with the full implementation of the 1964 Agreement and the present Agreement the problem of all persons of Indian origin in Sri Lanka who have not been recognized as citizens of Sri Lanka or as citizens of India, will have been finally settled".

It was not settled. By January 1986, only 421,207 out of 600,000 accountable persons had been granted Indian citizenship and only 197,535 out of 375,000 accountable persons had been granted Sri Lanka citizenship. The shortfall from the original accountable number — that is 356,258 plus the natural increase since 1964 — represented the number still stateless at the time of the January 1986 Agreement.

The most recent Agreement heralds the desirable end of statelessness. India will grant citizenship to 84,793 persons (who applied before 30 October 1981 but have not yet been granted Indian citizenship) bringing its total to 506,000 while Sri Lanka will absorb the shortfall of 94,000 from the Indian accountable number of 600,000. Then, as the recent Sri Lanka government communique states, "the long-standing problem of statelessness which has been with us since 1952 will be finally resolved".



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Reagan's "Technological Fix"

M. de S.

A curious irony marks the current nuclear arms negotiations. It is the United States that is pursuing "revolution" while the Soviet Union stands for detente the prevailing nuclear balance, the strategic status quo, it is parity or what the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, calls "approximate parity" (the slight advantage lies with the US) which has sustained detente and world peace in the past decades. It is Mr. Reagan and his security advisers who are seeking to regain American superiority and thus upset the balance.

The main means of achieving this is S. D. I. or the "Star Wars" program. Noting a basic confusion about SDI itself, Ian Davidson, foreign editor of the *Financial Times*, observed:

"At the heart of this confusion lies the question whether SDI is intended for reform or revolution of the central ingredients in the geo-strategic balance between the superpowers. The administration has not resolved this question, because it cannot: the research has not been done. In fact, scores of US scientists are joining the debate on side of those who challenge its technical feasibility.

The trouble is that Moscow is convinced the hawkish advisers of a President whose single banner has been "America NO. 1" have "revolution" in mind, pinning their faith in the technological superiority of the U.S.

"But it is sad, yet absolutely characteristic of the nuclear arms race that it should be assumed that the way out of the dilemma 'noted the analyst' is through a technological fix, whereas the real problems are political".

It is a fixation on technology which accounts for this naively optimistic belief in a "technologi-

cal fix. But the history of this issue, especially the late 60's and the 70's, is a clear demonstration that notion of strategic superiority founded on technological advantage is a shortlived satisfaction.

When it built the ICMB's capable of reaching U. S. targets Moscow approached parity in the late 60's. In the same fashion, Moscow maintained its parity of status when the US advance through multiple independently targeted nuclear weapons was very soon erased by a matching Soviet response.

History's Lessons

"Americans should learn Arms Lessons from History" was the title of an article recently written by John Moakley, a Democratic representative from Massachusetts, the deputy whip of his party. The subject he discussed in the *New York Times* editorial page was the Reagan administration's decision to test a new anti-satellite weapon a step he said that could result in a "dangerous and irreversible arms race in space". All this time, remarked Congressman Moakley, the US and USSR had relied on satellites for peaceful functions such as weather, navigation, early warning, treaty verification and reconnaissance. Now the US was breaking the unwritten ground rules and seeking to gain an unfair advantage. But could it do so? History, he reminded the Reaganites, had taught us otherwise.

"It would be sad to repeat the grievous error America committed more than a decade ago in endowing nuclear weapons with multiple targetable re-entry vehicles. At the time, proposals to ban MIRV's before their deployment were rejected because US defence strategists assured America that the Russians added MIRV's to their warheads only a few years after the US did. Today, these systems threaten us all".

Hence Mr. Gorbachev's assured comment on the matter. Celestine Bohlen, correspondent of the *Washington Post* reported: The Soviet leader said that Moscow's opposition to a US space based defence system was not founded on concerns about being left behind in a technological race. **We have no fear' he said that we shall lag behind in the space race if it is imposed on us. There is no need to test our military and technological potentialities one more time'.**

Top US decision makers nonetheless appear to be thrilled by the mere idea of making US missiles "obsolete and totally important". The phrase belongs to Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger. And his view is more complex than that of his colleagues and White House aides who are tantalised by technology and its miraculous capacity to determine history. In a recent article on Soviet defence spending, Patrick Cockburn, the Moscow correspondent of the *Financial Times*, remarked on how often Communist party officials referred to a 1980 statement of Mr. Weinberger where the Defence Secretary had dwelt fondly on the confident calculation that the Soviet leadership, forced to join the race in space, would in fact undertake their own program and thus break the back of the Soviet economy.

Soviet Economy

As I noted in the last article this was the second consideration uppermost in the minds of the 'SDI' champions to exploit US technology to the maximum in order to inflict punishment on the Soviet Union economically.

A CIA report to Congress, Cockburn noted, had concluded that there were "two distinct periods in Soviet defence spending since 1965; before 1976, growth in defence spending average 4 to

5% per year; after 1976, the rate of increase in spending dropped appreciably to about 2% per year".

Commenting on this Cockburn wrote: "Despite the increase in US defence spending since the last years of President Carter, there has been no parallel jump in Soviet defence allocations, although there have been muffled cries of anguish from senior Soviet military officers".

How advocates of US militarism draw argumentative support from exaggerated reports on Soviet military spending is one of the points made in the annual survey "World Military and Social Expenditure for 1985" by Ruth Leger Seward, former chief of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. While calling on Moscow to be less secretive about this information so that the world need not rely on inflated figures circulated by US agencies, Dr. Seward says that instead of being roughly equal, the Warsaw Pact's spending could be as much as 100 billion dollars less than Nato's.

Third World

The postwar dreams of freedom from fear and hunger, sustained by international cooperation and collective security have not been fulfilled, concludes this report published by the World Council of Churches and the Rockefeller Foundation. On the contrary "militarism is rampant, affecting political and social development". The author's indictment is severest when she remarks on the adverse impact of militarism and the arms trade on the Third World. Is there no other approach to international problems? Militarism has not brought peace but "a less asuitable, less secure world and growing violence in which the world's people to a large degree appear to have lost control of the decision-making process".

"It takes two to tango" said Mr. Reagan. How very true. The superpowers must agree. On their negotiations and decisions depend the resolution of fundamental problems of war and peace. At least it must be said for Mr. Gorbachev that he has taken the initiative.

In fact. Christopher Bertram, former Director of Britain's Strategic Studies Institute who is now the diplomatic editor of *Die Zeit*, the influential West German weekly, argues that Gorbachev has "cornered the initiative" in a contribution to the *Los Angeles Times*. He wrote:

Whatever else may lie behind the Gorbachev arms control plan, it has made painfully clear that America has lost the diplomatic initiative to the Soviets.

By insisting that the Strategic Defense Initiative is not negotiable, the U. S. administration has painted itself into a corner. Now it cannot probe whether Moscow is serious — which is likely — or merely playing to the gallery of public opinion. It cannot find out what price Mikhail Gorbachev is willing to pay for some stability in the arms race while he pursues the mammoth task of modernizing a backward economy. Nor can the administration, even if it wanted to, design a strategy for dealing with the Soviet rival in the decade ahead. U. S. diplomacy is in the doldrums.

Compare this to the fresh wind from Moscow. Mr. Gorbachev, too,

was in danger at some stage of getting hooked on fighting "star wars" and losing all diplomatic flexibility as a result.

The Washington hawks were delighted about this at the time. They saw it as a clear vindication of the president's refusal, at the fireside summit, to suggest restrictions on testing new SDI technologies. The omission in the final agreement, so the hawks argued, indicated that the Soviets did not mind the U. S. program quite as much as their public attacks had led Washington doves and European peaceniks to believe. If you only apply enough pressure, so went their advice, Moscow gives in.

Well, they have been proved wrong. One thing that Mr. Gorbachev's latest proposal makes amply clear is that there will be no arms control deal unless the SDI program is curtailed in one way or another. Yet, while leaving no doubt about his views on the matter, the Soviet leader has not made strategic defense the centerpiece of his diplomacy. This allows him to appear more flexible more imaginative and more cooperative than his Soviet predecessors and his American counterpart.

(Concluded)

Outrage Over Olof Palme Assassination

Olof Palme, the 59-year-old prime minister of Sweden and leader of the Swedish Socialist Workers Party, was shot dead by a mysterious gunman in the streets of Stockholm in the late evening of February 28. Palme's wife Lisbeth was wounded in the assault, which took place as the couple was walking home from a movie theater. Characteristically Palme was without bodyguards, because of his expressed desire to "live like any other ordinary man." The next day, the site of the assassination turned into a spontaneous memorial as thousands of people filed by to drop red roses on the bloodsoaked ground.

For the American ruling class, Olof Palme was the *enfant terrible* of the social-democratic Second International. In 1968 he marched in Stockholm side-by-side with the North Vietnamese ambassador to Moscow in protest against the U. S. war on Vietnam. Palme welcomed U. S. draft resisters and soldiers fleeing from that dirty imperialist war, and infuriated Richard Nixon by comparing the bombing of Hanoi with Nazi atrocities. While yesterday's liberal "doves" have long since joined the anti-Soviet "consensus," lately Palme renewed multi-

million-dollar Swedish financing for a paper mill at Bai Bang in Vietnam. And in 1984, the Socialist prime minister visited beleaguered Sandinista Nicaragua, condemning aggression by the "contras." In the face of U. S. economic boycotts of both desperately impoverished countries, Palme's Sweden provided substantial aid to them.

Speaking internationally for capitalist Sweden, which remained neutral in two imperialist world wars and sold arms to both sides, at home Palme was reviled by the bourgeoisie as a class traitor. "I was born in the upper class," he said, "but I belong to the labor movement." This "aristocrat turned Socialist," as the *New York Times* called him, was wedded to the "welfare state" and the illusion of a "middle way" between capitalism and socialism. He was returned to office last September in a particularly bitter election marked by accusations of being "soft" on the Soviet Union. It is not clear at this point who was behind the assassination. But Olof Palme will be remembered by working people around the world for his frank condemnation of American imperialism's greatest crimes.

—(U. S. WORKERS VANGUARD)

Gorbachev's first year — Acceleration is the catchword

Bhabani Sen Gupta

In foreign policy, too, Gorbachov has maintained a high degree of dynamism in the first year of his leadership. Soon after his elections, he took charge of Soviet foreign policy by elevating Gromyko to the presidency. Then he sprang a great surprise on the world by making his old friend from Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze, foreign minister. Shevardnadze's economic reforms in the Georgian republic had led to dramatic increases in wheat, fruit and vegetable production and raised industrial production by 33 per cent. Without any diplomatic experience, Shevardnadze made his debut at the Helsinki conference in July, and surprised the diplomats and media people from the West with an entirely new style. His rosy round face frequently broke into hearty laughter. His wisps of white hair danced as he indulged in banter and humour. He was easily approachable. He and other members of his team went out of their way to be friendly.

Shevardnadze revealed the central motivation of Gorbachov's foreign policy. "The foreign policy of any state is inseparably linked to its internal affairs," he told the Helsinki conference. "Our party and our state have been directing their main efforts toward accelerating social and economic advancements. To implement its vast plans, the Soviet Union needs a durable peace."

Gorbachov's peace offensive is aimed at the apocalyptic American mindset — total war, global risk, no time. It has put Reaganist militarism on the defensive. However, his initiatives to normalise relations with several key nations of Europe, Asia and Africa are also an integral part of his new foreign policy. In the first 12

months of the Gorbachov era, the Soviet Union built fruitful relations with such diverse nations as China, Japan, Iran and Zimbabwe. Chernenko's funeral brought to Moscow China's up-and-coming political star, vice premier Li Peng, adopted son of Zhou Enlai. Li Peng was educated in Moscow in the 50s and was a contemporary of Mikhail Gorbachov. The two had a long private session. In July 1985, another vice premier of China, Yao Yilin, arrived in Moscow to sign the first long-term trade agreement since the Sino-Soviet break in the early 60s. The five-year trade pact is aimed at raising bilateral trade to \$ 3.5 billion. It reached the level of \$ 1.6 billion in 1985, up from \$ 1.2 billion 1984. The Soviets have returned to China in a big way to build a number of large industrial plants including three powerful thermal stations and an open-pit coal mine capable of producing 20 million tons of coal per year.

Shevardnadze's visit to Tokyo in December, the first by a Soviet foreign minister since 1973, opened the way for negotiations to conclude a Soviet-Japan peace treaty and for larger economic cooperation between the two. Visits by two high-ranking Soviet officials, a deputy foreign minister and a deputy prime minister, within a month to Teheran have warmed up the frosted Soviet-Iranian relationship. The Soviet Union has also built a rapport with Robert Mugabe, of Zimbabwe, who is going to be the next chairman of the Nonaligned Movement. The impact of Gorbachov's daring nuclear disarmament proposals has been the greatest on Western Europe.

More than anything else, Gorbachov's initiative for complete

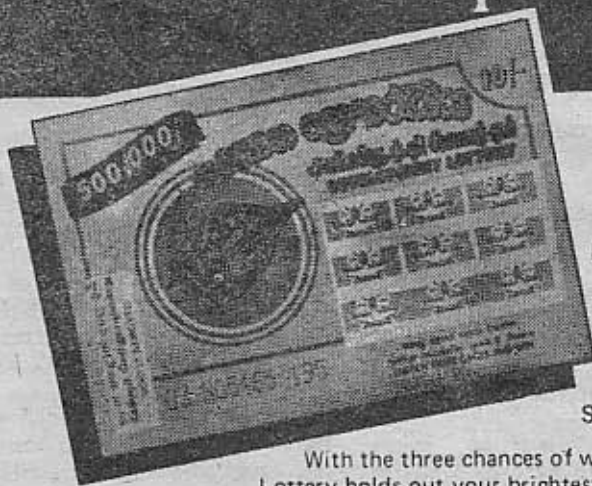
nuclear disarmament in 15 years has cast him in the global limelight. He has made the planet's safety from nuclear annihilation the central point of human affairs in the last lap of the 20th century. And, in doing so, he has won the sympathy and support of a global constituency of people who share his concern that the United States, with its Star War programme, is pushing the world dangerously to the brink of nuclear war.

One day in January, Soviet ambassador Anatoly Dobrinin walked into the office of secretary of state George Shultz on the seventh floor of the light-gray State Department building at Foggy Bottom in Washington and delivered a set of proposals aimed at ridding the world of nuclear weapons in 15 years. Before the Americans could formulate a response, the Gorbachov plan was dramatically unfolded on Soviet television. An announcer declared that Gorbachov was opening for mankind "the third millennium without nuclear weapons." President Reagan fell between the stools of his Star War nuclear weapons and his declared objective to eliminate all nuclear arms in the foreseeable future. "We are grateful for the (Soviet) offer," he was constrained to say, while his men immediately set out to pick loopholes in them. They didn't have much success.

The Gorbachov plan, which was hailed by the Palme Commission and by Rajiv Gandhi, suggests three overlapping stages for real and total nuclear disarmament. In 5 to 8 years, the Soviet Union and the United States are to cut their nuclear arsenals by 50 per cent, to no more than 6,000

(Continued on page 23)

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CAT'S EYE



WOMEN AGAINST MILITARISM AND AGAINST MALE VIOLENCE

The United Nations proclaimed 1986 International Year of Peace, and many activities have been planned by UN agencies and non-governmental organisations to commemorate the year. However, women all over the world have linked the issue of peace with the issue of violence against women. 'Peace is no Violence Against Women', is a slogan of women's groups.

Women of course have always been particularly interested in peace, since war and violence harm them in many ways. As early as 1919 — after the First World War, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) was formed to campaign against war; this organisation is still active. In Australia too, there were many women's groups in the 1920's active against conscription, militarism and visits of warships.

South Pacific women also has a long history of struggle against nuclear testing — the first protest being in 1967 of the YMCA in Fiji against the French testing. One of the most poignant and spectacular actions of women was in Northern Ireland where two mothers — a Protestant and Catholic (Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan) mobilised women for peace, in 1976 in protest against the killings of 3 children. They launched a massive movement and the two of them won the Nobel Prize For Peace subsequently.

In the 1980's there has been a growth in women's activities for peace — one of the themes of the Women's Decade being 'Peace'; there were the famous Peace Marches by Scandinavian women from Copenhagen to Paris in 1980, and 1981; and in the U. K., from 1981 onwards, women have set up Peace

Camps at Greenham Common in Berkshire where the US Air Force has a nuclear base. In 1983, 2000 women blockaded Greenham and supporters linked hands 12 miles between the Burghfield nuclear weapons factory and the Greenham base. In 1984 the Greenham Common women joined Dutch women to demonstrate in the Netherlands and in 1985, there was an International Forum against nuclear weapons in Tokyo where the 'Tokyo Appeal' called upon women all over the world to unite against nuclear weapons.

But for women peace is more than an absence of war. It also means an absence of violence against women in the home, at the work place and in society. As Charlotte Bunch as stated:

To seek to end militarism without also ending the dynamic of domination embedded in male violence at home would be futile. And so too, the reverse; we will never fully end male violence against individual women unless we also stop celebrating the organized violence of war as manly and appropriate behaviour.

(Bringing the Global Home)

AGAINST MILITARISM IN SRI LANKA

In Sri Lanka too a women's peace movement exists (Women for Peace) uniting women of all ethnic groups in an effort to promote a peaceful rather than a militarist solution to the ethnic crisis. Its journal *Samakali*, in a message for Women's Day, states, 'Let Us Demand a Just Peace':

The 'ethnic conflict' in Sri Lanka has escalated into a destructive war. Today, Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims — whether as members of the Security forces, militants or civilians — are killing each other in the north and the east. More recently, riots in the hill country demonstrated how easily such violence could spread further.

We cannot afford this war. From an economic point of view, we waste seventeen million rupees a day on "Defence". Politically, the Tamils of the north and east are no longer represented in national politics while under the prevailing emergency regulations basic political freedoms have been restricted in all parts of our country. Socially, the war continues to drive the communities apart and those who have lived as neighbours end up as enemies and/or refugees in different camps. Psychologically, the bitterness has hardened the communities concerned as accusations and counter accusations feed the war psychosis. But most important is the human cost of this war, in terms of the lives lost, those who have been raped and brutalised and those whose homes, livelihoods and futures have been shattered.

Gorbachev's . . .

(Continued from page 21)

charges for each. They also dismantle their intermediate range nuclear force (INF) in Europe. The nuclear forces of Britain and France are to be frozen during this phase at their present strength. The United States and the Soviet Union renounce space weapons and stop all testing. In 1990, Britain, France and China begin to dismantle their nuclear arsenals and join the ban on space weapons and testing. Also to be stopped is the development of "non-nuclear weapons based on physical principles, evidently including laser and particle beams." No later than 1995, "elimination of all remaining nuclear weapons" begins. In a bold initiative to disarm cynics in the US, Gorbachov announced that the Soviet Union would accept "on-site verifications" and "any other additional verification measures found necessary."

Gorbachov is utterly uncompromising on Reagan's SDI. "Instead of wasting the next 10 to 15 years by developing new weapons in

space, allegedly designed to make nuclear weapons useless, would it not be more sensible to eliminate those arms and bring them down to zero?" asked Gorbachov. He said if the US insisted on its Star War weapons, the USSR would have no option but to do likewise. That would plunge the world into an entirely new nuclear arms race. In that event, the measure of acceptable risk would go beyond the permissible limit. If a complicated computer technique got out of human control there could be nuclear war! Gorbachov also pointed out the grave risk any nonaligned country would run if it took part in the American SDI, which is a nuclear arms project. If SDI got the use of the territory of a nonaligned country, that country would be helping the US develop a new generation of nuclear weapons aimed at the USSR. In a critical situation, the Soviet Union would be justified in inflicting "a nuclear-missile strike upon the countries who dispose their territories for deployment of the space anti-missile defence components."

The Gorbachov proposals have encouraged the opponents of nuclear war as much as they have frightened the protagonists of endless spirals of nuclear arms race. It wasn't a media coup, warned Pierre Lellouche, associate director Institute Francais des Relations Internationales, of Paris. "It is a sophisticated political war machine aimed at the very foundation of the Western alliance's security system." Cried out *News Week*, on behalf of Washington's confused community of nuclear strategists, "Soviet leader Gorbachov is turning out to be an even more dynamic adversary when the Reagan administration originally expected."

Gorbachov represents a new trend, a new wave in world politics. A peace wave, a cooperation wave, that would leave the cold war and the hot peace behind. He came to power in the USSR after 28 months of leadership paralysis. The Soviet Union had four leaders in the first 65 years of its history. It has had its third leader in the remaining 28 months! At 55, Gorbachov can

expect to remain in power for ten to fifteen years. He will certainly continue to be at the centre of world attention for many more years. The best and most accurate description of the man came from Andre Gromyko who proposed him for the office of CPSU General Secretary just a year ago. Addressing the members of the CPSU central committee, Gromyko said, "Comrades, he has a nice smile, but he has iron teeth." Indians will have a chance to watch him for themselves when he comes to Delhi — probably in a few weeks from now.

Letters . . .

(Continued from page 1)

plantation Tamils wanted Sri Lankan Citizenship. Numerous were rejected on unknown and unchallengeable grounds, families were split apart etc. In short: it meant compulsion. A compulsion underlined by communalist riots against the plantation Tamils in the late seventies and onwards.

Furthermore it is an easily foreseeable irony that those expatriated to India have become a new problem of integration there. They have become outcasts in their new country of domicile. There they are looked upon as foreigners or refugees. They are like "cagebirds let loose to the vultures". The expatriates fate on the Indian side is a great tragedy.

Yes, 1964 was the year for a unique diplomatic enterprise. At last a strong Sri Lankan Premier pressed a weak Indian Premier (Shastri) to take over the bulk of these people. It was a move in the communalist and ethnocentric tradition gaining ground in Colombo at that time.

As is the present day opposition to Mr. President's move to accept another 94,000 stateless estate Tamils.

Sweden

Thomas Bibin

U. S. State Dept. . .

(Continued from page 14)

work no more than 45 hours per week, no more than 9 hours per day or more than 5½ days per week, and that they will receive a 14-day paid holiday annually. Workers in the unorganized agricultural sector are not covered by these or any labor laws, although the Government may investigate individual complaints.

Women have equal rights under the law, including equal property and inheritance rights. The various ethnic and religious groups have their own strictures, however, which place some limitations on women. Some Tamil families believe their women members should not be seen working in public. Some Muslim women are discouraged by members of their community from seeking higher education or employment. Some women fill important posts in the civil service, the professions, and business, but the majority are found in manual and semiskilled jobs and in the home. Women vote in large numbers but otherwise play a more limited role than men in the political process. There are currently six women members of Parliament, including one woman minister of cabinet rank. Sri Lanka had the world's first woman Prime Minister.

The caste system is reportedly breaking down among Buddhists, but it remains important when marriages are arranged, and it continues to be widely observed among Hindu Tamils. Members of virtually all of Sri Lanka's ethnic minorities occupy prominent positions in all walks of public and private life, but since independence the Sinhalese majority has steadily strengthened its relative position of influence in most sectors of society. The miniscule Veddah population in 1985 became even more thoroughly assimilated into larger Sri Lankan society. A number of hunting and gathering Veddah communities were provided with land on which to begin settled agriculture, and a few former hunters were offered jobs in national parks and reserves.

INTER-RACIAL EQUITY AND NATIONAL UNITY IN SRI LANKA

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

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

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

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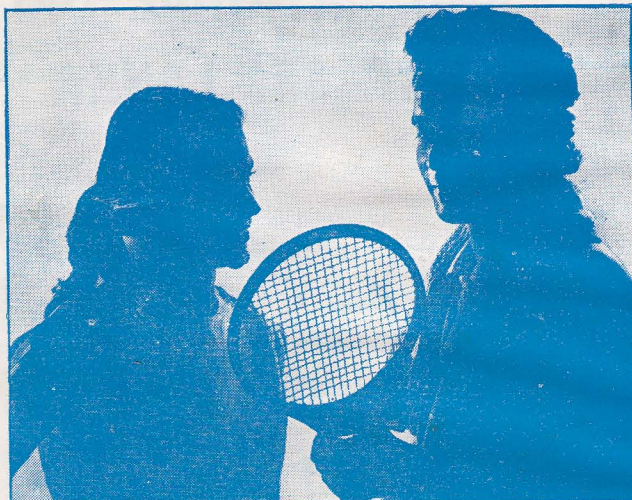
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