

LANKA

GUARDIAN

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The Last Battle ?

J.R.'s "War"
for
Peace in
Our Time

— *Mervyn de Silva*

THE DEVOLUTION DEBATE

- Mutual Destruction or Return to Sanity
— *Godfrey Gunatilleka (C.C.N.H.)*
- Expand Devolution Scheme — *Charles Abeysekera (M.I.R.J.E.)*
- Unity, Disunity and Federalism — *Paul Casperz (Satyadoya)*
- Accept Plurality — *Dr. Sirilal de Silva (O.P.A.)*

Rupavahini and Foreign Reportage — *Jeanne Pinto*

PPC and the Challenge to Consensus — *Radhika Coomaraswamy*

Also: The IMF's Shadow over the Crisis, South Africa and Diego Garcia *and* Verses by Patrick Jayasuriya, V.P.V.



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FOOD STAMPS

Seven million Sri Lankans, about 45% of the population, live on food stamps. Recently, government MP's complained about anomalies in the scheme which hurt the poorest of the poor families. The Finance Ministry is now trying to find ways to help the "most deserving" a category that probably includes 4 million below the 700/- per month cut-off point.

This stark fact of poverty in the island paradise is often concealed or given a slight shine by the rise in per capita income, growth rates etc, just as these often divert attention from malnutrition and infant mortality.

Comparative figures can also be juggled to create the impression one seeks to convey. Since defence spending has begun to worry not only the Finance Minister and President JR but the IMF and the World Bank, it is useful to compare how much of budgetary resources is reserved for keeping 45% of the island's population alive and how much for nursing the killing fields. It is 1.7 to 2 billion rupees for food stamps, and 9 to 10 billion for military expenditure.

PRIVATISATION

Privatisation was a high priority item on the UNP's agenda. As Mr. Anil Moonesinghe rightly pointed out privatisation is the new panacea of rightwing governments elected in countries with long established legacies of social welfarism. Mrs. Thatcher's Tory party is the most conspicuous example of this "roll-back" program not only in the economic sphere but in the political. The Thatcher government led a frontal assault on local government, principally the London Country Council, the foundation of British democracy.

In Sri Lanka however the UNP's ideological commitment ran into the inevitable problem of employment in publicly owned enterprises (PE's in World Bank lingo) and therefore to trade

union pressure. As for the 'socialist' United Front (70-77) the P.E. became the virtual Job Banks. And so it remained the UNP's J.S.S., the giant trade union federation once headed by no less a person than the Minister of Industries, Mr. Cyril Mathew. That Sinhala-Buddhist champion has been pushed out of the seats of power but Mathewism survived after Mathew, in more ways than one.

Trade union interests were joined by the self-interest of 'empire-building' ministers who frowned on privatisation. The Finance Minister, pressed by powerful aid-givers and the IMF-IBRD, did not have the clout to preside over the liquidation of these little empires. He could complain and protest.

This time the donors and their patron saints, notably the US sent out the message loud and clear. So this month has witnessed the liquidation of the 30 year old Milk Board, and in quick succession, the Fertiliser Corporation, National Packaging Materials Corp. and the Tobacco Industries Corporation.

They have all run at a loss for years. But an explanation by a harassed Industries Minister Mr. Denzil Fernando, who ran into fierce flak from the opposition, is worth noting. The

(Continued on page 11)

10th Amendment Danger to Democracy

The requirement of a two thirds majority for the maintenance of a state of emergency beyond an initial period of ninety days and the requirement that Parliament renew the emergency by such a majority every month if it is to remain in force, was one of the few laudable provisions of the Constitution of the Second Republic (1978). The Government enacted this provision in the first flush of victory, when it was determined to prevent the extensive and quite unjustified use of emergency powers as had been indulged in by the previous Government. The Tenth Amendment demonstrates how soon the insidious allure of perpetual power can infect so many of our political actors. Now the roles have been reversed. Parties that willingly perpetuated an unjustifiable emergency in the 1970's now oppose a step which will make it easy for a state of emergency to be a

(Continued on page 24)

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J.R.'s Super-Salesmanship

Mervyn de Silva

NEWS
BACKGROUND

Even the Delhi correspondent of the **Hindu**, President JR's most irrepressible critic in the Indian media would be hard put to question his commitment to a political settlement this time. For not even during the 1982 Presidential polls when his own second term was at stake did the UNP leader throw himself so vigorously into a nation-wide campaign on a single issue.

The comparison is revealing. Stripped of her civic rights, Mrs. Bandaranike, unarguably the UNP's most resourceful opponent since 1960, could not enter the lists. In any case, the traditional SLFP Left-alliance had been wrecked in the mid-70's and the UNP faced what its electoral strategists have always regarded as optimum conditions — more a three-cornered contest than a straight fight. The LSSP's Dr. Colvin R. de Silva did not seriously represent 'a third force'. The JVP leaders, Mr. Wijeweera did, and that was more than adequate for the UNP's purposes. The radical segment of the large youth vote would go against the incumbent but not in favour of the SLFP's Mr. Kobbekaduwe.

Besides this simple arithmetic so favourable to the ruling UNP and the personality factor in the whole electoral equation; there was another objective circumstance that was enormously advantageous to the President. Just over five years had passed since the 1977 parliamentary elections, and the UNP's fortunes were still on the upswing. Export prices were good, migrant workers were still leaving for the Middle east, the aid was pouring in, business was booming, and the 'open economy; such a

change from the depressing climate of the past, still looked bouyant.

Party Machine

In these highly propitious, nearly ideal, conditions, President JR only needed to travel through the island, except the north, and go through the formal ceremonies of a countrywide election campaign. The economic-political situation was such that all he needed to do really was to rely on the well-oiled party machine. The referendum, a somewhat more arduous exercise, was made relatively easy by the element of surprise (nobody had seriously expected that particular strategem and stunt in this country) and the speed with which it was pushed through.

Today he can no longer depend solely on the party machine. This explains his hectic island-wide campaigning this past fortnight. Criss-crossing the country the UNP bandwaggon rolled on with rallies both week-ends and mid-week. The President himself appeared to be summoning all his reserves of political experience, argumentative acumen and tactical skill and drawing out all the authority of the Presidential office. That is not all.

The UNP itself is a special constituency he must address, persuade and convince. He cannot take it for granted. Therein lies, not always visible to the casual observer accustomed to think in terms of fixed party lines, a shrewd recognition that the issue and the proposed settlement have cut across the boundaries of traditional political allegiance.

The ethnic problem and the accompanying violence which has

created new and widened old divisions between communities and produced splits within communities, has even introduced fissures into apparently monolithic institutions like the Church. (See **LG July 15** and **Aug. 1**) It is now threatening to enlarge divisions within the far less monolithic Sangha. What is more, its unsettling, disruptive power is evidently at work, insidiously more than openly, to spread disunity within a party known as the 'united national party'.

Nation and Party

The truth is that what has happened to 'unity' at the national level is also happening at the party level; that is, within the best established, organised form of political thought and action in post-independence Sri Lanka. What other organisations? The armed forces, for instance, which in normal circumstances, would be one of the most well-knit, tightly controlled of organised bodies. Is this new factor on the national scene part of the "peace constituency" or not? Ordinarily, a peace settlement would be welcome and a triumphant JR could say, like so many American presidents, that it was he who brought the boys back home.

All these questions focus on the fact of spreading divisions rather than on unifying forces. Altogether, it is an ominous hint of anarchic tendencies, of societal dissolution. And that also requires the critical observer to abandon old, established categories of thinking and analysis.

In the past few weeks, President JR has taken personal command of the campaign, an exercise in

super-salesmanship. That much is clear. What is more significant are the constituencies and the opinion-forming groups he has selected for concentrated efforts in high-pressure persuasion. These are the "fronts" which he is defending or attacking.

Three Fronts

First, Islandwide Sinhala opinion.

The public rallies are only personal forays. The "carpet bombing" of the entire constituency is being conducted by the state-controlled media which seems to be far better mobilised today than ever before. The message has a dual character: (a) to explain the proposed devolution plan and identify its virtues in terms of participatory democracy and better government at the provincial level, and (b) to allay the fears in the Sinhala mind about provincial councils and the powers that will be vested in them. Will it be a first step to a separate state? Since that is the sinister suspicion lurking in the Sinhala mind, it is also the central question that is being answered by the media campaign.

In doing so, the media and the UNP are in effect replying also to the SLFP since the question represents the main thrust of the SLFP counter-campaign. The special rhetorical device chosen by the government and the media highlight the fact that SWRD was 'the father of the provincial council concept.'

Second, the UNP itself, all the upper and mid-level echelons, the Ministers, the National Executive, the JSS etc. Almost every Minister is coming before a mike or a TV camera to demonstrate his personal support for the proposals. Some are contributing special articles to the press. They are all signed, personal signature and the official rank! With the National Executive and the JSS President JR is using the question-and-answer format, his version of the Socratic Method!!

The kind of questions posed by UNP members, representative of the party hierarchy both at the centre in Colombo as well as the provinces, is also quite revealing. The questions are of the

same sort that the SLFP is posing. It is a sure indication that those self-same issues are troubling the Sinhala party cadres.

Thirdly, a very special constituency, the Sangha. The meeting at John de Silva Memorial Hall in Colombo was the UNP's reply to the statements of the Malwatte and Asgiriya chapters. Mrs. Bandaranaike has been in constant contact with both chapters. Since Malwatte has traditionally been a firm UNP supporter, the negative response of its Sangha Sabha came as a particularly unwelcome surprise to the UNP.

President JR has pinned his hopes on the average Sri Lankan's all-too human desire to return to normal orderly life, the "enough's enough" Sinhala-Tamil consensus that I ventured to suggest was a growing constituency, in the last issue of the L.G.

President JR has also pinned his faith on Mr. Gandhi and his

ability to persuade not only the TULF to accept a reasonable compromise, short of a North-east merger or structural linkage, but also some of the militant groups to give 'the TULF and peace a chance.' **And on Mr. Gandhi's capacity, finally to enlist MGR's support (or twist his arm) so that Tamilnadu will gradually cease to be an operational support-base for the militants.** Violence in the north will not end but it will be scaled down slowly to manageable pre-1983 levels. In all this, President JR draws tremendous confidence from the attitude of the Aid Group. **See Importance of the IMF** specially the U.S.

As he approaches his 80th birthday, the old general who has come through so many battles has thrown himself totally and unreservedly into the "War" for "Peace in our Time" knowing that history's eye is fixed steadily on Sri Lanka and its First Citizen at this moment.

UNANIMOUS ENDORSEMENT

The UNP's national executive committee yesterday unanimously endorsed the peace package, the government is putting together, in an effort to end the present conflict and expressed its confidence in President Jayewardene, his cabinet and parliamentary group in their efforts to ensure peace and amity in the country.

Three resolutions supporting the current peace effort were adopted at a meeting of the 2,000-strong executive committee at "Sri Kotha".

They read:

● It is resolved that the National Executive Committee of the United National Party, unequivocally reposes its faith and confidence in the Leader, His Excellency the President, the Cabinet of Ministers and the Parliamentary Group in all their endeavours to take whatever steps necessary, to bring about peace and amity in Sri Lanka.

● We are deeply gratified to note that the current deliberations, resolve the present national crisis that has plagued the country, threatening to break it asunder are directed at achieving a national consensus which will usher in harmony and peace amongst all the communities, so that, vital and urgent development schemes forged by the Government, could proceed without let or hindrance.

● We are glad to note that the provincial councils will, offer ample opportunity to the Youth of the country, to actively participate in the decision making process, so that the real needs and aspirations of the nation as a whole could be effectively fulfilled. The resultant national harmony and peace, will ensure that the money spent on the defence budget could be better challenged into constructive activity, enabling the citizens to live useful lives.

— (DAILY NEWS)

The Importance of the I. M. F., the World Bank

The P. P. C. and the Provincial Councils plan were as much an embattled regime's response to the realities of the economic situation as it was a reaction to the pressure of the military situation — the bombs of April — May — and to the combined diplomatic pressure of India and the donor countries. In an obvious attempt to wake up the people to the grim realities of the economic, President JR told a party rally:

"Our budget can only meet the day-to-day expenditure of the country and pay salaries. All our development efforts are supported by foreign aid."

Another remark focussed sharply on the crippling effect of military spending. **"Most of the housing needs of this electorate can be met from the money we spend on a helicopter"** said the President.

Expectations about aid pledges at the June meeting were more than satisfied. 700 million US dollars was the anticipated commitment, and the final sum given by government sources was 703 million, dollars while a World Bank calculation is 689 million. But the Bank's report notes: **"This level of commitment is unusually high and can be explained by the lumpiness of two hydropower projects (Rantembe and Samanalawewa). In the subsequent two years it would be sufficient to maintain the levels of aid provided in the last four years — i. e. 460 million on the average"**.

So that is not what worries either the Bank or the IMF. Both are concerned about the "surge in defence expenditures" (nearly ten billion rupees, now) the relatively poor export performance, the rising foreign debt, and huge losses incurred by some public enterprises, and evident lack of strict budgetary control. In the

sanitised jargon of the IMF, there has been "an insufficient policy response... to worsening economic conditions". The observation comes from the IMF's annual 'country' report to the IMF Board of Directors.

Structural Adjustment

The drop in commodity export prices, notably tea, was 'cushioned' by the fall in the price of our most costly import item, oil. But that was more or less the only cause for comfort. The rest of the picture is bleak. The fall in export prices entitles us to a special IMF compensatory facility next year — Rs. 3.5 billion. However, we also need a quick injection of IMF assistance in the form of what is called a 'structural adjustment facility'. SAF, as its name, indicates, requires 'adjustment'. In short, it is conditional. And the conditions impose policy choices that are not likely to make the government popular! In fact, it will make life for the vast majority harder, and this at a time when the UNP government is facing a critical political situation.

For the first time in its 9 years in office, the UNP is confronted by a reinvigorated SLFP, its main electoral foe, joined by an assortment of allies, old and new, on an issue which is emotionally charged and explosive. In the urgently necessary effort to respond to the mounting pressures referred to earlier, largely external, the UNP produced the Provincial Councils scheme only to find that this "solution" immediately led to the mobilisation of a once fairly dormant SLFP, supported by extra-parliamentary forces, ranging from the Maha Sangha to the proscribed JVP all adopting an intensely pro-Sinhala and anti-Devolution line.

The dynamics of an increasingly violent conflict and the demands

of two crucially important external constituencies (Aid Group, India) "cornered" the UNP compelling it to yield "Provincial Councils" which action, in turn resulted in energising an enfeebled SLFP and throwing into the extra-parliamentary arena an SLFP-led *ad hoc* coalition of social-political forces that present an unparalleled challenge to the virtual hegemony that the UNP has enjoyed for almost a decade. The attempted solution has created a new problem, a formidable challenge. How far this 'solution' has affected the UNP hierarchy, its parliamentary group, its activist cadres, and its mass support-base, is a question to which no reliable answers are available. Only educated guesswork. But caught this contradiction, President JR and the party leadership are acting with the self-confidence based on the power of government, and the governing party. But soon it will have to take decisions in keeping with IMF and World Bank advice. **What the price of 'adjustment' will turn out to be is a matter that only the future will tell. Meanwhile the nature of the problem is explained by the Bank's report.**

Two excerpts:

1. The problem is, therefore, that exports cannot rise fast enough in the near future so as to reduce the pressure debt service puts on the balance of payments. The debt service is expected to be at some US\$500 million per year, in the next three years implying a debt service ratio of about 30%, the highest in Sri Lanka's modern history. The expansion of exports is, in the long run, the solution for addressing Sri Lanka's debt service problem and satisfy its import requirements and, from that point of view, the policy changes discussed in Chapter I are essential to reach such objective. These policy changes would not, however, have any major impact

(Continued on page 11)

TULF Proposals submitted to Rajiv Gandhi

PREAMBLE

The Tamil people gave a mandate to the T. U. L. F. in the 1977 Election to establish an independent state of Tamil Ealam. At the all party Conference in Colombo we reiterated our mandate but indicated our willingness to consider any viable and acceptable alternative put forward by the Sri Lankan Government. The Government of Sri Lanka has persistently failed to place any meaningful proposals which merit consideration. In order not to frustrate India's efforts to work out a satisfactory solution to our problem, we now submit these proposals to the Government of India.

DRAFT

PART — I

1. Sri Lanka that is Illankai shall be a Union of States.
2. The Northern and Eastern provinces, which are predominantly Tamil — speaking shall constitute one Tamil Linguistic state (See Annexure-1)
- 2.A The territory of a State, once established, shall not be altered without its consent.

PARLIAMENT

3. The Legislative power of the Union shall vest in a Parliament.
- 3.A Parliament shall have the exclusive power to make laws in respect of any of the matters enumerated in List One.
4. The membership of Parliament shall reflect the ethnic proportion of the Union.
- 4.A Special provision shall be made to ensure the representation of Muslims and Tamils of recent Indian Origin who do not occupy contiguous areas.
5. No Bill or Resolution or part thereof affecting any nationality

On December 1st last year, the TULF addressed a 4 page letter to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi with its own draft proposals on devolution, and three Annexures on "the Integrity of the Tamil Homeland", "Law and Order" and "Land", with a special note on the Mahaveli scheme and settlements. We publish this document so that readers can compare it with the Government's draft proposals.
— Ed.

shall be passed, unless a majority of Members of Parliament belonging to that nationality agree to such a Bill or Resolution or part thereof.

PART — II

Special Constitutional Provisions:

1. **Citizenship:** Notwithstanding anything in the constitution or any other law regarding citizenship, all those who are not citizens of a foreign country and who were resident in Sri Lanka on 1st November, 1981 and their descendants shall ipso-facto to be citizens of Sri Lanka.
2. **Official Language:** Constitutional provision shall be made to make Tamil also an official language.
3. **Union Services:** Provision shall be made in the Constitution to ensure that the ethnic proportion is reflected in all Union Services, including the armed forces. Union Services shall also include public sector services.

PART — III

States:

1. There shall be a Governor for each State. He shall be appointed by the President of the Union, in consultation with the Chief Minister.
2. There shall be an elected assembly for each State.

3. Each Assembly will have its elected Presiding Officer.
4. Elections to State Assemblies shall be on the basis of territorially demarcated electorates. Provision shall be made to ensure adequate representation for Muslims in the Tamil Linguistic State.
5. The legislative power of the State shall vest in the State Assembly.
- 5.A The Assembly shall have exclusive power to make laws for such State or any part thereof in respect of any of the matters enumerated in List Two.
6. When a Bill has been passed by the Assembly it shall be presented to the Governor. He may assent or send it back for reconsideration. If the Bill is passed again, with or without amendment, the Governor shall give his assent.
7. The Executive Power of the State shall vest in the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers.
8. The Executive power of the State shall extend to all matters with respect to which the Legislature of the State has power to make laws.
9. The Governor shall appoint the Leader of the largest party in the Assembly as Chief Minister who shall choose the members of the council of Ministers.

10. The State Assembly shall have power to levy taxes, cess or fees and mobilise resources through loans and grants.
11. All the revenues received by the Government of a State, all loans raised by that Government, and all moneys received by that Government shall form one consolidated Fund to be entitled 'Consolidated fund of the State.'
12. Some duties and taxes shall be levied and collected by the Union Government but shall be assigned to the State within which such duty or tax is leviable.
13. The President shall appoint a Finance Commission to be presided over by the Governor of the Central Bank. There shall be three other members, one of whom shall be a Sinhalese, one a Tamil, and one a Muslim.
14. There shall be a High Court for each State and such other courts and Tribunals as are necessary. The High Court will be the Court of Appeal for other courts in the State and shall have superintendence and control over all other courts and tribunals in the State. Appeal will lie to the court of Appeal from Judgements of the High Court. The Supreme Court shall deal with constitutional matters.
15. Each State will have a State Service consisting of:
 - (a) Officers and other public servants of the State; and
 - (b) Such other Officers and public servants who may be seconded to the State.

Each State will have a State Public Service Commission for recruitment and for exercise of disciplinary powers relating to the members of the State Service.

PART — IV

Special provision for Tamils of recent Indian Origin:

In order to meet the needs of the Tamils of recent Indian origin, and to ensure that they enjoy a sense of security, and to

provide for their participation in Government, suitable administrative arrangements and institutions shall be established, for example the establishment or creation of an administrative district. Gramasevaka divisions shall be modified so as to comprise estates where Tamils of Indian origin are in the majority. Such Grama Sevaka divisions could be brought together to form an A.G.A.'s division in the same manner as the Vavuniya South Sinhala A.G.A.'s division was created. Such A.G.A.'s divisions could be brought together to form an Administrative and/or Electoral District. Tamils of recent Indian origin, resident outside such administrative Districts, envisaged above, other than in the Tamil Linguistic State, should be entitled to settle in such Administrative Districts and pursue their legitimate vocations if they so desire. Likewise such persons should be entitled to settle and pursue their legitimate vocations in the Tamil Linguistic State.

LIST ONE:

1. Defence
2. Foreign Affairs
3. Currency
4. Posts and Telecommunications
5. Immigration and Emigration
6. Foreign trade and Commerce
7. Railways
8. Air Ports and Aviation
9. Broadcasting and Television
10. Customs
11. Elections
12. Census.

LIST TWO: The following among others:-

1. Police & Internal Law and Order (See Annexure II)
2. Land and all its uses (See Annexure — III)
3. Education including University and Technical Education
4. Archaeology
5. Culture
6. Industries
7. Fisheries
8. Local Government
9. Excise
10. Agriculture
11. Irrigation
12. Agrarian Services
13. Health
14. Prisons and Reformatories
15. State Transport and Roads
16. Co-operative Development.

NEWS

Colvin, Vijaya attacks linked?

POLICE investigators yesterday linked the grenades found at the residences of LSSP leader Colvin R. de Silva and SLFP leader Vijaya Kumaranatunga to the same source.

Both grenades were manufactured in Pakistan, police said.

Mr. Kumaranatunga is learnt to have reported to the police he had received anonymous threatening letters for supporting the government's peace initiatives.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, said the unsuccessful grenade attack on him was provoked by his party's support for the peace proposals.

(SUN)

Bodhi pooja disrupted

A BODHI POOJA attended by Sri Lanka Freedom Party leader Sirimavo Bandaranaike in Mandapola in Panduwasnuwara electorate on Saturday was disrupted when a group of persons allegedly stoned and assaulted those taking part.

No one suffered injuries in the incident Hettipola Police said.

The participants were allegedly assaulted around 9.00 p. m. after the power supply to the Detiyamulla Raja Maha Vihara was cut off report said.

The pooja was arranged by the SLFP organiser for Panduwasnuwara, Jayasena Rajakaruna to invoke blessings on the country and the armed forces. More than 100 Bhikkus also attended it.

(SUN)

Calls on Mahanayakes

"No community will benefit from Provincial Councils" – Sirima

Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, Leader of the SLFP, discussed with Ven. Panditha Sirimalwatte Ananda and Ven. Palipana Sri Chandrananda Mahanayake Theros of Malwatta and Asgiriya Chapters respectively last Saturday how best they could take part in the campaign against the government's move to implement proposals such as the establishment of Provincial Councils which will be a hindrance to the peace among the different communities and integrity of the country at large.

Mrs. Bandaranaike first called on the Mahanayaka Thero of Malwatta at his official residence and had talks with the prelate with the Press left out.

Mrs. Bandaranaike explained to the Mahanayake Thero her mission and that she was prepared to forget political and other differences in her endeavour to safeguard the integrity of the country for the benefit of all communities.

She said that no community be it Sinhala the majority community or Tamil or Muslim would be benefited by the introduction

of administrative measures such as the Provincial Councils.

The Maha Nayake Thero explained to the leader of the SLFP the steps taken by him and his Chapter. He had placed before the President the view of the Chapter recently. Later Mrs. Bandaranaike in her discussion with the prelate of Asgiriya which were confined to two of them only said that as many as twenty seven organisations of both the clergy and laity had requested her to come forward to rescue the country from its present crisis and ensure peace and freedom for people.

Mrs. Bandaranaike invited the prelate of Asgiriya to lead the Sangha in their campaign against any moves that would be harmful to the future of the nation.

Ven. Chandananda Mahanayake Thero said that the introduction of Provincial Councils as proposed by the government would bring disastrous results to the majority community and the minorities as well.

He said that there would be eternal clashes between the major

ity Sinhala and the minority Tamils in the country if ever the Provincial Councils were set up.

The prelate has said that the people in the North were a frustrated lot due to lack of leaders and income for them. Their leaders including Mr. Amirthalingam had not been living in their part of the country. The Tamil leaders lived in Colombo in the past and now they lived in South India.

Secondly, the farmer community in the North lost their income from the produce under the present policy of the Government importing everything from foreign countries.

During the regime of the previous government the cultivator in the North had a fair income for their Agricultural produce.

The prelate said that the problems of the people of the North were more economic than political. He urged that a solution to their economic problem should be given preference.

— Island

Professionals for Peace and Amity

The General Forum of the Organisation of Professional Associations constituting 22 professional bodies and associations of different disciplines, that represent over 22,000 individual professionals met on 26th June 1986 to consider the prevailing national crisis arising from the ethnic conflict that is seriously damaging the progress of our country.

The forum was of the view that this crisis has reached such dangerous proportions and that unless immediate solutions of a

peaceful nature through a process of negotiations is arrived at very soon, that this crisis will fracture and fission all sections of our society to such an extent it will make reconciliation and rebuilding difficult for a long time to come.

The OPA appeals to all political parties, non-governmental organisations, citizens and citizens group to rise above partisan politics and sectarianism and demonstrate a spirit of understanding, compassion and love with the sole

intention of reaching an immediate political solution. If there is one time and one period in the modern history of our country, that calls for a spirit of sincerity and puts the responsibilities of citizenship to test, that moment in our history has arrived.

The General Forum of the OPA thanks the Government and the political parties for participating in a dialogue with a view to arrive at a political solution, and appeals to the Government and all

(Continued on page 14)

Devolution Towards a Settlement of the Ethnic Problem

Charles Abeysekera (MIRJE)

The Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE) is glad that, based on the government's proposals for the devolution of power to a provincial level, a process of political negotiation has now begun in order to evolve a solution to the ethnic problem.

MIRJE has examined the government's proposals and wishes to place before the people its observations:

01. Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious polity. From this flows the premise that state and political structures must be such as to favour no particular ethnic group or religion.
02. The major problem that faces the country today is ethnic. The Sri Lankan Tamil people, who form the second largest ethnic group, constituted on the basis of their ethnicity, language, religion, culture and habitation, have been led to demand the creation of a separate state because the existing Sri Lankan state, dominated by the majority Sinhala community, discriminates against them and has been unable to provide them the safety and security that a state should ensure all its citizens. Some sections of the Tamil people have taken up arms in the course of this struggle and have been engaged in an armed struggle for the last 8 years or so.

When examined against this background, the present proposals immediately reveal certain basic deficiencies.

The establishment of provincial Councils throughout the country and the devolution of certain powers to them are the core of the government's proposals. This is being put forward by the government as part of a continuing democratic process which will also solve some of the problems faced by the Tamil people. While welcoming the substantial devolution of power to the level of the province, it is necessary to state

that these proposals do not take into consideration the specific characteristics of the problem before us.

For example, the decision to adhere to existing provincial boundaries and to devolve power on the basis of existing administrative units necessarily negates the desire of the Tamil people for a region in which they can, in unity and security, manage their internal affairs. A similar defect relates to the devolution of power with regard to education. Letting the province exercise power up to the level of secondary education and reserving state universities, professional occupations and training to the state will hardly meet the needs of Sri Lankan Tamils, specially when it is remembered that the victims of a discriminatory system of education originally constituted the militant groups.

It is therefore necessary that the scope of the present proposals be expanded to the point that they amount to a reasonable and just solution of the ethnic problem and meet the demands of the Tamil peoples for recognition as an ethnic community whose rights of self-determination can be exercised within a united Sri Lanka. In that context it is suggested that the present proposals be revised in the following areas:

(01) UNIT OF DEVOLUTION

- (i) The existing provincial boundaries will constitute the limits of the area of authority of the provincial council, excepting in the case of the Northern Province whose boundaries will be redrawn so as to include those areas of the Eastern Province which are predominantly ethnic Tamil. It should be possible to demarcate such a contiguous region on the basis of AGA districts or electoral districts. Given the demographic patterns in Sri Lanka, it is unavoidable that there will be

people of all ethnic communities in each of the units of devolution. Arrangements are therefore necessary to ensure that all ethnic groups participate equitably in the government of the province.

(02) THE PROVINCIAL COUNCILS

- (i) The Provincial Councils should have legislative as well as executive (including financial) powers within their territories in the devolved subjects.
- (ii) The Governor of the Province will be only a constitutional head and should have no independent executive authority.
- (iii) There is no reason why the term of office of each Provincial Council should be co-terminus with that of Parliament. Parliament may be dissolved for a variety of reasons that should not affect provincial administration, which should also possess an autonomous life of their own. Since it is desirable that provincial administrations should face the elections more frequently than the Parliament, it is suggested that the normal term of office of each Provincial Council be limited to 4 years.
- (iv) In order to preserve the autonomy of Provincial Councils and administrations, members of Parliament elected for electoral districts within a Province should have no participation at all in the deliberation of Provincial Councils.
- (v) The Finance Commission which will apportion financial resources to the provinces should be representative of the major ethnic groups.

(3) DEVOLUTION OF POWERS

The subjects and functions exclusively reserved to the central legislative and executive authorities should be amended as follows :

(i) National Policy on all subjects and functions is too broad. This may be used to over-ride provincial legislative and executive authority on all matters. It is desirable that this power be restricted in respect of functions devolved on Provincial Councils by making consultations and concurrence mandatory in those areas.

(ii) The subjects — mines and minerals, inter-province/district trade and commerce and professional occupations and training need not be reserved exclusively to the central government.

(iii) While national broadcasting and television may be handled by the central government, it should be possible for provincial administrations to operate or licence the operation of local broadcasting and television stations.

(4) INDUSTRY

(i) The management of existing state-owned industries can be transferred to the administration of the provinces in which they are situated.

(ii) Ministry appraisal of new projects should only be necessary when foreign investments or loans are involved.

(5) EDUCATION

(i) The devolution envisaged — up-to-secondary level — is totally

inadequate. Provincial Councils should have the right to establish and maintain universities as well as institutes of technical, technological and professional education from their funds or to permit such private institutions, subject, of course, to standards set by the Universities Grants Commission and professional bodies at the national level.

(ii) It is also enough to state that national education policy will be non-discriminatory. This will have to be spelled out in detail.

(6) LAW AND ORDER

(i) The objective should be to ensure the greatest degree of autonomy to the provincial administration with regard to the maintenance of law and order.

(ii) For this it would be more desirable to have separate Police forces in the provinces and a central police force with linkages at the level of D. I. G. rather than the divisions — central and provincial — that are now proposed.

(iii) It will then follow that recruitment in accordance with nationally accepted standards, discipline, etc., in the provincial police forces will be attended to by Provincial

Police Commissions, constituted of the D. I. G., a nominee of the Chief Minister and a nominee of the presiding High Court Judge of the Province, and that the size of the provincial force and other matters including the type and nature of fire arms will be determined by the provincial administrations and the Provincial Police Commissions.

(iv) Training of recruits may be handled by the Provincial Police Commissions at lower levels and by the National Police Commission at higher and more specialised levels.

(v) It will also be necessary to ensure that the National Police forces operate in the provinces only in consultation with the Provincial Police

(vi) The provisions with regard to break-down of law and order need amendment. It is open to the President in such circumstances to declare an Emergency, assume the powers of the chief executive and move in with the central police force or the armed forces. However, in the event of an Emergency not being declared, the President should be able to do so only if he is specifically requested by the Chief Minister of the Province.

(vii) Together with the devolution of police functions, it would also be necessary to decentralise the functioning of the Attorney General Department so that each province has a Director of Public Prosecutions.

(7) LAND AND LAND SETTLEMENT

(i) It is agreed that land should be a devolved function. However, the present proposals envisage that state lands will remain outside the control of the provincial administration. This is not correct. State lands within each province should be vested in the provincial administration

To a Certain Ultracrepidator* Afflicted with Cacoethes Scribendi

(* Apelles invited a cobbler to comment on the sandals in a painting. The cobbler, having said what he thought of the sandals, proceeded to criticise the legs. Apelles admonished him: 'Ne sutor ultra crepidam'. From this bon mot comes the English word 'ultracrepidate' meaning to venture beyond one's sphere of knowledge.)

The witless effusions you frequently write
Are vulgar. I'll give you this hint:
Don't think that foolishness turns out all right
Just because it is displayed in print.
Your puerile patter is not worth a cuss
Your logic is shot full of holes.
You're just a thallu-start CTB bus
Though you like to pretend you're a Rolls.

— V. P. V.

"*Multa fero, ut placem genus irritabile vatum*" — Ed.

with the proviso that land required for the purposes of the government in respect of subject not devolved on Provincial Council will be made available without any restrictions.

- (ii) The National Land Commission should be representative of provincial administration.
- (iii) The stipulation that all inter-provincial irrigation and land development projects should be the responsibility of the central government is too broad. While it is possible to accept that schemes like the Mahaweli, Walawe, etc., that straddle several provinces should be the central government's responsibility, there may be a large number of smaller projects which concern only two provinces. In such cases it should be possible for the two provincial administrations to work together in consultation and determine such matters as size of holding principles and criteria for selection of allottees, etc.

(1) OTHER MATTERS

There are certain other matters that are outside the present proposals which should receive consideration if a satisfactory political settlement is to be achieved. Among these are the following:

- (i) The state should be a secular institution with no partiality towards any particular religion.
- (ii) Sinhala and Tamil should both be declared official languages.
- (iii) Institutional arrangements for the protection of civil, linguistic, religious and cultural rights of individuals as well as of groups, this be done through appropriate constitutional amendments or through the establishment of a Council of State in which all ethnic groups find adequate representation and whose concurrence

would be necessary for any legislation affecting fundamental rights.

MIRJE hopes that all progressive political parties, other mass organisations and elements in Sri Lanka will assist in expanding the scope of the present proposals to the point that they amount to a reasonable solution of the ethnic problem and in mustering popular support for their implementation.

Charles Abeysekera
President (MIRJE)

The Importance . . .

(Continued from page 5)

on exports in the short period analyzed here. In the short run, therefore, investment, growth and imports will have to bear the brunt of any adjustment of the balance of payments, as it is clear that imports cannot continue to grow as they did in the past.

2. The continuation of past trends would, indeed, lead to an untenable balance of payments situation. Assuming for example, that foreign aid remains at its historical level in real terms, and that the elasticity of the demand for imports in relation to GDP remains at its 1978-85 level (0.8), the maintenance of GDP growth at 5% per annum would require Sri Lanka to borrow substantially from commercial sources to finance the current account deficit and thus the debt service ratio would increase to 35% by 1995. Such anticipated debt service ratios — very high for a country with an insufficiently developed export sector — would, per se, preclude access to commercial borrowing in the amounts that would be necessary. In other words, this alternative is not really an option. The more likely scenario in the event fiscal policy remains overly expansionary is that the Government might revert to direct controls to protect the balance of payment. This is not a desirable course as GDP growth would ultimately decline substantially.

TRENDS . . .

(Continued from page 1)

Packaging and the Tobacco Corps. where losses were comparatively small, were in fact pushed to the wall by government's own import policies which robbed the Corps. of a monopoly of the market.

It is not just mismanagement corruption or over-staffing that have undermined national industries but external economic interests nourished policy. Already, foreign interests (Indian, Iraqi and Pakistani) and at least one multi-national, Kelloggs, are interested in these, 'liquidated' state enterprises. Japanese and British and Canadian 'giants' are also keenly interested in Telecommunications, which is on the 1987 list.

STUDENT UNREST

Privatisation in another area continues to provoke unrest of various kinds. Free state education was the shining symbol of Sri Lanka's social welfare system. 'Free education' in fact was a pre-independence social achievement. In the past few years, through diverse legislative and managerial devices, the children of the rich have been given access to university education in institutions run by private or semi-private agencies. When the Colombo North Medical College was founded, there were angry protests from students of the Medical Faculty of the Colombo University. Negotiations followed and various 'agreements' were reached. Claiming that one such accord of 1983, had been violated, students of the Colombo Medical Faculty clashed with students of the Colombo North Medical College when the latter were allowed to use the clinical facilities of the Kynsey Road Neuro-Surgical Unit.

Opposite of unity is not federalism but disunity

— Satyodaya

What seems to us at Satyodaya to be even more necessary than discussion of minutiae is to achieve a mighty consensus against the futility of both military and terrorist violence and for the only solution worthy of a civilized people namely, a negotiated settlement.

Settlement of what? Not of terrorism which is not the original evil but only a symptom or an effect of the evil. Not even of the demand for Eelam, which is only the result of the unredressed grievances of the Tamil people.

Settlement of what? The present Government answered the question with commendable forthrightness both in its Election Manifesto and in its first Statement of Government Policy in Parliament as early as 4 August 1977:

"My Government accepts the position that there are numerous problems confronting the Tamil-speaking people. The lack of a solution to their problems has made the Tamil-speaking people support even a movement for the creation of a separate State. In the interest of national integration and unity so necessary for the economic development of the whole country, the Government feels such problems should be solved without loss of time."

The problem is therefore not principally one of violence. Neither is it one of a demand by some for a separate State. It is a problem of the redress of grievances which give rise to the separatist demand and to violence. Redress the grievances and then the demand and the violence will progressively be muted!

Much time has already been lost and at tremendous cost — in human lives, money, jobs, socio-economic development, in the loss of peace, security and wellbeing. It is time for our common humanity to rise up and cry, Enough! The President's Address has not come a day too early.

There are three special emphases which Satyodaya wishes to make in the present climate of discussion. The first regards the estate population. It may be said that

the estate people hold the key to the solution of the present problem. For, on the one hand, their presence in such large numbers outside the North and East should make the separatists think again about separation. On the other, leaving the grievances of the people of the North and East unredressed is only to invite the escalation of the problems of the North and East into the plantation areas. We therefore urge both anti-separatists and separatists to bear in mind the needs and aspirations of the estate people. On their part throughout the past 150 years they have humbly served to develop the country. They can now provide invaluable assistance in order to keep it united. The proper acceptance of the estate people into the mainstream of civic life in the country is thus a vital need for a lasting solution and for peace.

The second concerns the authority to implement whatever decisions are taken in the field of devolution and in the fields of land settlement, language, education and employment which were recognized as the chief problematic areas in the Government's Election Manifesto to the people and in its first Statement of Policy. The letter of any proposals of redress will be as important as the spirit in which they will be implemented. It is hence of the utmost importance that there be set up an implementation body in which integrity and fearless impartiality will be, and be seen to be, inherently inbuilt.

The third concerns the distinction between the unity and the form of government. A firm commitment to the unity of the country should not stand in the way of effective devolution of powers to provincial or regional authorities. Our option may be clearly for a united State but this by no means implies an option for a unitary State, for it is important to be aware that a united State can also be federal in structure. The opposite of unity is not federalism, but disunity.

More than ever before in our post-Soulbury history is there a need today for all of us — political parties, political leaders, trade unions, study circles, religious and voluntary organizations — to cooperate in the search for a honourably peaceful solution to this great problem of our time. Let the political games of the past, however unfairly played, be forgotten for the sake of all the people of this land which is the land of our birth and the land of our love.

Satyodaya therefore earnestly appeals to every group and to every person in the island to support and carry forward the current initiatives towards a just and fair solution with honest and genuine care for the different ethnic, linguistic and religious groups, each of which contributes so indispensably to the rich pluriculture of our society.

Mr. Sansoni concluded his Report of Inquiry into the Incidents of 1977 with an extensive quotation from one of the authors of the present statement. We shall therefore conclude with the same words:

"The ultimate solution of the problem of the inter-communal relationships in our country lies in the establishment of a genuinely socialist society. In this society every man, woman and child will be given due place... because one is a human being with inalienable human rights and human responsibilities. The immediate solution lies in all the leaders of our country... getting together to provide the climate for the rapid socio-economic development of our country... The leaders of the majority community and the majority religious group must realize that the minorities have their rights and that the redress of their grievances needs to be given full weight. They must remember that parliamentary democracy is the rule of the majority with the consent of the minorities... The country must not fritter away its time and its energy in inter-communal violence and conflict, while the main task that awaits it is the liberation of all our people from poverty, unemployment, hunger, ignorance and disease."

Paul Caspersz
Coordinator

Lalith Abeysinghe
Deputy Coordinator

The two paths before us

Godfrey Gunatilleka (C. C. N. H.)

The events of the recent weeks have added a new dimension of brutality and terror to the ethnic conflict. Four aspects of the emerging situation bring into focus the crucial choices facing the Sri Lankan people:

In the North and the East we are witnessing a rapid intensification of the military conflict. Both the government security forces as well as the group of armed Tamil militants have acquired much greater destructive capability with larger forces and more powerful weapons. These militant groups appear to be in virtual control of several parts of the Northern Province. As a result, the security operations, particularly in the Jaffna peninsula and the adjoining parts of the Northern Province, have assumed the proportions of a full-scale battle with fearful and tragic consequences for the civilian population in these areas.

The militant Tamil groups have directed their violence on the South with acts of terror which are ruthlessly calculated to cause deaths of innocent civilians and widespread destruction of property and productive assets. These forms of premeditated violence have added a new factor into the conflict. No Sri Lankan can feel free from the deep sense of insecurity and the threat of unpredictable violence that has gripped the entire nation.

The problems are further aggravated by the conflicts among Tamil militant groups, and the objective of each to consolidate its military strength and control over the North and East vis-à-vis other groups. These objectives and the internal struggles they generate are likely to further intensify combat between the militants and the security forces in which the latter are

The Citizens' Committee for National Harmony welcomes the proposals for a political solution of the ethnic problem presented at the Political Parties' Conference held on 25th June 1986. These proposals provide a framework which contain the main elements on which all parties concerned can conduct constructive negotiations for a political settlement of the ethnic crisis and bring an end to the present violence. The proposals contain an unequivocal commitment to the establishment of provincial councils and thereby select a unit of devolution which has gone further than all past proposals in meeting the aspirations of the Tamil community. There is also provision for inter-provincial coordination of matters of mutual interest. Further, the proposals have outlined schemes and formulae on the more controversial issues that have so far stalled a solution — law and order and land settlement. Above all these proposals have been made in a spirit which leaves room for further improvements which can resolve the outstanding differences and create a durable basis for a unitary Sri Lanka.

We are heartened by the response most political parties have made to the proposals and the constructive support these appear to have been received in India. The Citizens' Committee for National Harmony intends to study the proposals in greater depth and express its views in fuller detail thereafter.

In the statement that follows, the Committee reviews the events of the recent weeks which have added new dimensions of brutality and terror to the ethnic conflict even while hopes of a political solution were emerging. These aspects of the current situation bring into focus the crucial choices facing the Sri Lankan people.

likely to take increasingly drastic action to prevent militant groups from establishing their control over these areas and rendering it impossible for the government to maintain its authority.

In the midst of the rapidly deteriorating situation, there is evidence that the government is making a renewed and determined effort to reach a political settlement with as broad a national consensus as possible. The main elements of the system proposed have gone further in the direction of autonomy and devolution, both in terms of the unit and the substance of devolved power, than the proposals of the past. A system which offers a provincial government elected by the people of the province within the framework of a united Sri Lanka and

with reasonable solutions to the vexed problems of law and order and of land settlement, can provide a promising foundation for reaching a political settlement and putting an end to violence.

The alternative paths that are open to the Sri Lankan people, and in particular to both the Sinhalese and the Tamils, have been clear from the beginning of the present conflict. It has become much clearer with the developments during the recent weeks that have been described above. One path inexorably leads us into conditions which plunge us deeper into retaliatory violence and a process of mutual destruction that we may find it impossible to reverse for a long period. The other is the path which will help us to restore sanity to our society,

preserve our common humanity and create a united Sri Lanka in which all communities live with dignity and self-respect. The path on which we move and the choices we make in the crucial weeks ahead will depend on the response of both leaders and the common people in all communities in three areas of critical importance — first, to the proposals for a political settlement; second, to the trials and problems facing the entire nation and all communities between now and the implementation of a settlement and, third, the restoration of normal conditions and a democratic way of life in all parts of the country in the post-settlement phase. When we examine the problem in each of these areas, the formidable challenge that faces all peace-loving citizens, both Sinhalese and Tamils, strikes us forcefully.

The greatest hope at present lies in the government's new initiatives to find a political solution that holds promise of a broad national consensus and acceptance by the majority of the Tamil people. The responses made by several political parties such as the Communist Party, the LSSP and the SLFP, have helped to strengthen the prospects of peace. The outcome, however, will depend vitally on two conditions. First, the capacity of the two main political parties, the UNP and the SLFP, to collaborate in forging the national consensus for a political isolation and in effectively implementing it. Second, equally important, is the response of the TULF initially and all the Tamil political groups who are prepared to accept a solution which offers a reasonable system of devolution within a united Sri Lanka.

We earnestly hope that the two major parties, the UNP and the SLFP, act together in a spirit of reconciliation and national responsibility that will transcend partisan considerations and firmly establish the political basis for the restoration of peace. Failure to do so would be to betray the trust that large sections of the people have placed in each of these parties. No political party can act on the assumption

that the opposition can gain electorally by the failure of the present government to solve the ethnic problem. Not only would such action reflect a political cynicism which shows no concern for the national interest, it would also be entirely self-defeating. A continuation of the present conflict and the inevitable escalation of violence it portends, will fundamentally erode our political institutions and economic stability with no advantage to any political party. If majority parties fail to take the ethnic issue out of partisan politics, in every succeeding phase of the conflict, the problems confronting any government are likely to become increasingly intractable. The governing party on the other hand, should give full weight to the importance of reaching a national consensus which includes the SLFP. It will enable the government with other political parties to mobilise public support for the settlement and carry it out without serious internal discussion and protest. A national consensus of this kind will give greater confidence to the Tamil people that the solutions proposed will be durable.

In regard to the responses of the Tamil community, it is essential, first, that the TULF approach the present initiatives in a spirit which would enable them to negotiate constructively. Past efforts at negotiation have been thwarted by the absence of any readiness to compromise and seek common ground on the part of both negotiating parties. It would appear that the proposals have been guided by the basic principle agreed to between the Sri Lankan and Indian officials in the accord which, we are informed, was reached in August last year — that is, maximum devolution within a constitutional framework which does not radically alter the unitary character of the constitution and require a national referendum. In such a context, the TULF has a responsibility to participate constructively in negotiating a political settlement on the basis of these proposals. But the response of the Tamil people is

complicated by the fact that the militant groups which are carrying out an armed struggle may not want to make any response to these proposals, or may reject them outright and stand in the way of moderate groups who may wish to negotiate. However, a recent statement made by some of these groups to the effect that they are ready to abide by a solution which is less than Eelam, if it is accepted by the majority of the Tamil people, offers some slender hope. In such a situation it is of the utmost importance that all sections of the Tamil community who support a system of devolution within a united Sri Lanka, who desire a speedy end to the present violence and a restoration of democratic processes in the North and the East, speak explicitly and strongly in support of the initiatives for a political settlement and peace and join their voices to those of other communities who demand a peaceful and just political solution. The government and the people in the South must make it possible for the moderate Tamil voices to be heard through the public media. It might be worth considering the role of citizens' committees and other similar social organisations in the North and the East and inviting them for an exchange of views on the present proposals and the political future of the North and East.

(To be continued)

Professionals. . .

(Continued from page 8)

political parties to accept the mechanism of constitutional reform as a basis to arrive at a form of Government compatible with the plurality of different cultures, races, languages and religions.

The OPA on its part, offers its services and that of the professionals and professional bodies constituting the OPA to help in anyway they can towards the process of a speedy settlement and also to allay the fears and doubts that impede the formulation of a solution.

Dr. Sirilal de Silva
(President)

Towards a consensus ?

Radhika Coomaraswamy

THE PRODUCT OF OUR OWN HISTORY :

1. Before analysing the substantive contents of the PPC proposals, and its implications for consensus, I would like to put forward a few preliminary remarks. The first point that I would like to make is that the proposals before us today are the product of our own history, the history that we as a society have chosen to create. Most of us here who are bilingual have been brought up or trained in the liberal, social democratic or Marxist traditions of political thought. We do not really like the word ethnic. Nor do we favour political boundaries drawn in terms of ethnic factors. And yet, history has deprived us of the opportunity of drawing political lines based on more objective criteria such as administrative efficiency, geographical similarity or economic backwardness. Instead our recent history presents us with an intractable ethnic conflict waged over ethnic boundaries. This has been waged at a primordial political level, involving issues of territory and physical security. In appraising the proposals before the PPC, or any proposals for that matter, we have to move away from what we may ideally favour in terms of political structure to an appreciation of historical processes and historical necessity. This realism is fundamental if we are to survive as a nation-state. And I believe that it is this realism that will allow us to build a future society where more universal values which transcend ethnic boundaries will be nurtured. In other words, it is a realism rooted in an awareness of an ethnic give and take which will move us toward a greater humanism away from the injustice and brutality of the past few years.

THE PPC PROPOSALS DISTINGUISHED FROM PEACE PROCESS :

2. The second point I would like to make as a preliminary remark is that for the sake of clarity, we must separate the PPC proposals themselves from what may be called a peace process. Aspects of the proposals can be rejected but there still may remain a commitment to the peace process — a process based on negotiation, barter and compromise. We do not know what the final outcome will be, but if this current process continues for a longer period, I think that we will find that the major contradiction will no longer be between Tamils and Sinhalese, but between those who want a just peace and those who want a tribal war; those committed to a political solution and those committed to a final military solution.

It is premature to predict which political groups are on which side of this contradiction, but if the peace process in operation today gathers momentum, then I think the groupings will also become more clear. In this context, we must accept the fact that a commitment to peace must be based on a rejection of a military solution, and the desert civilisation which must inevitably follow the pursuit of such an option. The Sinhalese who want a final military solution are ready to brook genocide — one speaking to me not realising that I was a Tamil said without batting an eyelid, "well about 8000 Tamils will have to be killed before we can break the back of the movement and get a final solution." They cling to the belief that they can impose Central government authority on the Tamil periphery without its consent. This in the face of historical experience in other parts of the world. In addition, Sri Lanka is not a super-power and is in fact a

small island state extremely vulnerable to geo-political realities and international economic and political pressure. It is my belief that pursuing a final solution on the Sinhalese side will not only mean a measure of genocide against Tamils but also lead to the tragic brutalisation of Sinhalese culture and civilisation as we know it. Tamil commitment to a final solution on the other hand is based on the belief that a generation can be sacrificed and any means used to achieve the goal of a separate state. This assertion of Tamil rights to statehood, if pitted against the will of our neighbours and in violation of others rights may lead to debacle and catastrophe. A movement which is justified in terms of preventing the genocide of the Tamil people may, unless tempered by reason, lead the Tamil people toward ethnic suicide. I say all this because unlike in 1983, we cannot have recourse to political innocence, an innocence which we Sinhalese and Tamils lose and find at our own convenience. The past few years have shown us in concrete, real terms what ethnic conflict means, what violence means, what intolerance means, what brutality means. We know the forces we have set in motion on both sides whether it be torture chambers of the Special Task Force Commandos or the bomb squads of the Tamil militant movement. Given these ugly truths, political parties which accept or reject proposals with the ease with which they rejected the B-C Pact or the D-C Pact can only be seen as callous and opportunistic. In doing so they cannot really expect to be regarded as providing the country with a future alternative. I am not saying that the present proposals in themselves are an answer or that democracy can be regained, but they have set in motion a political process, a process which should be encouraged not boycotted, guided not rejected.

CONSENSUS OF THE SELECT

3. This brings me to why I am speaking about consensus. I would like to state at the offset that there can never be a complete consensus on the resolution of

* A talk given at the Centre for Society & Religion — July 18th 1986.

our ethnic conflict, especially if any political group sees ethnic loyalty as the supreme value. Those who believe that even though 25% of this country consists of minorities, Sri Lanka is not a multi-ethnic society, cannot be made to accept political concepts of sharing power. They cannot form part of a national democratic consensus. Their idea of a solution is the imposition of majority will even in areas where the so-called majority is less than 2% of the population. On the other hand, those who believe that the Ceylon Tamils have a historical destiny to create a separate state in the North and the East also cannot be made to accept a broad-based negotiated settlement. Their romantic notion of the future will find it difficult to compromise with the imperatives of the present. Destiny and consensus are irreconcilable words in the Sri Lanka context. When we talk about consensus then we can only mean consensus among those who do not regard ethnic loyalty as the supreme political value, those who accept modern strategies of bargaining, negotiation and compromise over feudal loyalties based on myth, destiny and promised lands. I am willing to concede, that in defining consensus in this manner, we may exclude a large number of Tamils and Sinhalese. But my consensus is aimed at the consensus of the future, the "ethnic compact" which will have to emerge if we are to survive as a civilisation. Today this may seem to be the "consensus of the Select", but I am convinced that it will not be the "consensus of the bereft."

FORCES BEHIND A CONSENSUS:

7. Given this reality, I think we have to accept the fact that the present proposals, with all their shortcomings, have set in motion a process which may, and I want to emphasise the word may, lead to a consensus. Already the forces aligning themselves behind this process both at the national and international level are quite formidable. We Sri Lankans have a cultivated "xenophobia" and this exists precisely because we are so vulnerable to regional and international pres-

ures. However, we must also be realistic. The PPC proposals have received tremendous international support; the same mixture of strange bedfellows who always appear to come to Sri Lanka's rescue. Any group which decides to go against the peace process therefore risk being categorised in international eyes with all the other international pariahs, whether in South Africa or Israel, who see their race and their tribe as the only factors of importance in world history and civilisation. Both Tamil and Sinhalese extremists become vulnerable to this charge. What about other major actors? Let us begin with Tamil Nadu, unlike at Thimpu, the PPC proposals and the peace process has approval in Tamil Nadu as represented by their Minister in the Central Government, Mr. Chidambaram. He has put on the record not only Rajiv Gandhi's reputation, but also his own. There may not be overt pressure from India on the respective parties to this conflict, but only a very naive political scientist will be oblivious to the subtle but dynamic pressure applied by both the Indian Centre Government and certain sections of the Tamil Nadu Government.

As for the Tamil movements, the TULF has already come to Colombo and judging from interviews given to the media they are taking the process seriously. But one can legitimately ask who do they represent? They do have the expertise to iron out a solution which may be more acceptable to the Tamil militant groups especially if it is done without public posturing and declaration. But in the final result without the endorsement of some of the militant groups, a political solution is impossible. Therefore the process in operation must be a two phase project — the first phase involving negotiations between the government and the TULF to work out the blueprint. The second, negotiations which include the militant movements, I think that it is well known, despite the protests in Jaffna against the present PPC proposals, the militant groups themselves are divided on the issue of the inevitability of a separate state. There are those who have

transcended their ethnic loyalty to accept at least in theory a solution short of Tamil Eelam. If the current process is successful and provides a meaningful alternative, the left groups within the Tamil Movement will reconsider. Their main problem, I think like everyone else's is the lack of trust they have in the "on again, off again" Sri Lankan Government. Even if a solution is reached, will the government implement its promises? What about the Sinhalese political parties. Again, there is a strange mixture of bedfellows. The UNP, the SLMP, and the traditional left favour the PPC proposals. Political gossip has it that despite the unanimous endorsement for public consumption the SLFP itself has been divided on this issue. If the process succeeds the left flank of the SLFP may give it their tacit support.

What we see then is the gradual inching together of the middle with widespread regional and international support. It is still a delicate process and one does not know whether it will succeed and yet such a historical conjuncture has not existed with such intensity before. The intensity is conditioned by the fact that both sides are running out of other options. Unless one seizes the time, there may be little hope for a non-violent future.

POLITICAL WILL?

8. Given the past history of the government, we must also ask — Is there a political will to negotiate, and to genuinely solve the problem politically. My answer is yes, **some** members of the government have the will not because they are visionaries, statesmen or humanists. They have not shown any of these qualities in their approach to the ethnic conflict. I hold no brief for them. But at this time, even they have begun to see the writings on the wall. As a cabinet they have, I think, come to terms with the intensity of our crisis and what that means for their future. Let us be grateful that this realisation has come now, even if we condemn the fact that they have allowed so many lives to be lost and so much suffering to take place. Will they really

(Continued on page 19)

Apartheid Diego Garcia and the West's Indian Ocean Strategy

One word and phrase was common to the comments and commentaries on the recent Commonwealth mini-summit in London. It was "isolation", the isolation of Britain, in a community of nations once styled "The British Commonwealth".

The transformation of the British Commonwealth to a unique body of almost 50 states, black, brown and white, big and small rich and poor, embracing six continents, was perhaps the supreme diplomatic achievement of post-war U.K., rapidly changing from 'Great Britain' to 'Little England'. Prime Minister Thatcher's own individual contribution to that history is now indisputably the "isolation" of Britain in the community which Britain created.

What accounts for the seeming obtuseness and obstinacy of Thatcherite policy on south Africa? Is it Mrs. Thatcher's ideological attachment to aggressive Reaganism? After the Libyan aggression, Mr. Dennis Healey, Labour's shadow Foreign Secretary said "When Reagan tells Maggie to jump, her only reply is 'How high?'. But behind the cutting wit is an ill-concealed political partisanship. The fact is that "America First" has become the cornerstone of British foreign policy under Mrs. Thatcher.

Is economic interest then the real explanation for the US-UK joint front against effective sanctions against the racist regime?

Certainly, the material stakes are very high as I explained in the first part of this article. Anglo-American investment alone amount to well over 20 billion dollars in a

country rich in strategic materials.

Is it the personal factor, the pro-White proclivities of the leaders that make their rapport with racist Pretoria a natural choice? That too, yes. But there is a far more important reason, a very special Anglo-American connection that precedes both Reagan and Thatcher which has been greatly strengthened with the elevation of these two hard Right leaders to presidential and prime ministerial office. It is Indian Ocean strategy, and more specifically Diego Garcia.

When an economically and militarily weakened Britain decided to pull-back from 'east of Suez', the new leader of the western alliance the US assumed the traditional role of imperialist Britain.

The new superpower must dominate all the oceans, including the Indian ocean. Washington looked for bases, not merely the conventional kind but vital "communication facilities" to link its navies in various parts of the world even as naval strategy was fast changing in an age of nuclear missiles and submarines. The principal target of course was the Soviet Union, the sprawling Euro-Asian landmass. NATO's nuclear armoury and striking power had to be supplemented by sea-based missiles aimed at 'targets' in the Soviet Union, especially in Soviet central Asia.

The other concern of course was the politics and foreign policies of the Indian ocean states, and their economic resources, mainly oil in the Gulf.

With the British withdrawal, the US role in the defence of

western interests became paramount and 'intervention' of different kinds, including military, was a critical policy option.

The atoll Diego Garcia was administered by Mauritius when that country became independent in 1968. Already however Britain had created the 'British Indian Ocean Territory' with military facilities that could be enjoyed by both Britain and the US.

Subsequently Britain "leased" the territory to the US for a nominal fee. By the turn of the decade, the US had already decided to construct a "communications facility" on Diego Garcia. The forcible displacement of the inhabitants was under way.

The entry of a US Task Force led by the US Enterprise into the Bay of Bangal during the Bangladesh war signalled US interventionist intentions as early as 1971.

The creation of the Rapid Deployment Force by President Carter and its emergence as a full-fledged Central command (CENTCOM) after the downfall in 1979 by the Shah, Washington's gendarme of the oil-rich Gulf was another major event in a chain that established the new US strategy.

But Diego Garcia has a place in an even larger US strategic scheme, a truly global project. And South Africa figures in this quite prominently. The 1973 Middle east war and the closure of the Suez Canal only enhanced South Africa's importance in this global design. The Cape route became vital for oil supplies for both the US and the Nato members of Europe.

(p 19)



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South Africa is the vital link between the Southern Atlantic and the Indian ocean, and therefore to the West's global naval strategy. Special facilities in Kenya, Somalia and Egypt also provide support for it.

The crucial importance of South Africa to the Indian Ocean strategy became clear in the very act of constructing Diego Garcia. Not only were western military personnel supervising its construction operating from South Africa but the 'automated Silvermine Communications Centre on the Cape which processes data on surface and submarine traffic' in the Indian ocean was made available to the US. Incidentally, West Germany the third largest investor in South Africa and another opponent of sanctions, helped build the military radar surveillance installations at Silvermine. (The FRG is as much a partner of the racist Pretoria regime, a key member of the US-dominated strategic alliance, as is Israel).

Diego Garcia and the rapid militarisation of the Indian Ocean brought a prompt response from the non-aligned group. It was Sri Lanka that took the initiative to introduce the IOPZ resolution in the UN. While the west led by the US has fought a relentless rearguard action to undermine or at least delay its implementation, the change of government in Colombo saw a less enthusiastic Sri Lanka confront India over this issue. At the 1983 summit in Delhi, it was the author of the IOPZ proposal, Sri Lanka, which battled hardest to avoid all reference to Diego Garcia! Finally, Mrs. Gandhi's government visibly disturbed and angry over Sri Lanka's about-face, persuaded the NAM to refer to Diego Garcia in 'the context of Mauritian sovereignty'. The atoll belongs to Mauritius. This explains why Mr. Gandhi visited Mauritius recently, and why Sri Lanka's efforts to host an Indian Ocean Marine Resources — a diplomatic diversion from the IOPZ, proved futile both in January this year and last month.

— JAY

US and UK 'provided intelligence to South Africa'

Reginald Dale, US Editor, in Washington

US and British intelligence agencies have provided South Africa with secret information about the banned African National Congress (ANC) in return for intelligence on Soviet and Cuban activity in Africa, the New York Times reported yesterday.

While one senior official denied the report, current and former US officials told the New York Times that both political intelligence and specific warnings about planned ANC attacks were given to South Africa by the US under President Ronald Reagan at least into the mid-1980s. Mr Larry Speakes, the White House spokesman, said yesterday that the report was "not true."

A British Foreign office official said last night it was not government policy to comment on reports relating to security matters.

The New York Times said it could not determine whether the US was still providing information on the ANC, nor whether South Africa had used the information to prevent ANC attacks or prepare retaliatory raids on ANC bases in other Southern African countries.

The report, however, included a detailed account of a meeting between high-level US, British and South African intelligence agents at the UK Government communications headquarters at Cheltenham in the mid-1980s.

In an exchange of "tasking requirements," the South Africans reportedly asked the US and Britain to supply an extensive array of political, military, diplomatic and economic data on Africa, including intercepted information concerning the governments of Angola, Mozambique, Zambia and Botswana. The South Africans also wanted information on the movements of Mr Oliver Tambo, the ANC president.

South Africa, with no intelligence satellites, had depended on US and British communications

intelligence for information on black nations beyond the range of its own interception equipment, the New York Times said. In return, the US and Britain were given information on Soviet shipping and submarine activity around South Africa, and on Soviet and Cuban involvement in neighbouring African countries such as Angola.

Meanwhile, Mr George Shultz, the US Secretary of State, carried Mr Reagan's latest campaign against sanctions to Capitol Hill.

Mr Shultz told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that in trying to promote dialogue the US planned to step up its contacts with the black opposition in South Africa, including the ANC. Despite serious concerns over the ANC's links with communism and its use of violence, the US recognised that it had become "an important part of the South African political equation," Mr Shultz said.

— (Financial Times)

Towards . . .

(Continued from Page 16)

implement the proposals in a spirit of sharing power? I think that their pragmatism and will to survival will compel them to do so even if their democratic and liberal convictions have long been silent. Even as I say this, however, we hear of incidents yesterday, in Mutur and Mullaitivu. I am not a believer in conspiracy but in contradictions. I feel that there are sections within the government, the administration and the armed services who will attempt to scuttle the talks. But in the long run, I think or perhaps hope that there is a slight chance that pragmatism will win out.

The main reason for this optimistic introduction is to sustain you through the rest of the analysis, which involves identifying the disagreements and gaps in the proposals themselves.

(To be continued)

Part V

A close look at Rupavahini

Jeanne Pinto

News sequence

Two general rules emerge to with the working out of a news sequence:

1. One should try to lead with the most important story of the hour, national or international. That is fairly obvious.

The viewer will have read or heard something about it already and would naturally want to know more. If this is not given immediately, he would tend to lose interest in the rest of the items.

2. Each story should lead to the next in the order of importance and an easy-to-follow flexible pattern. "The modern trend is to go from the top story of the day, in a pattern that groups similar stories, and flows logically from one topic to the next".

Other rules about news content/sequence are equally simple and self-evident.

- News should go in a straight line from "hard news" (which keeps the public informed); to "in-depth reporting" (which gives one a chance to use facts edited out of day-to-day copy); to "analysis/commentary" (which puts important news into perspective); to "investigative reporting" and "documentaries" (which turn the public eye towards questionable activities or remediable lapses.

(The term "investigative" should have a simple meaning for TV, which has not the budget, staff or time, nor indeed the permission for, or capability of "doing a Watergate", even on the smallest possible scale: it cannot afford and will not be allowed such luxuries: but it can highlight public grie-

vances, within the limits set down for all media.

And the few basic rules applicable to a bulletin aiming for neat, tight professionalism are equally simple:

1. Get into a video tape (or film) story quickly — the "on camera" introduction should be concise.
2. Balance "on camera" (news-reader) with video or film — long stretches of either could be boring.
3. Try to get most items voiced to avoid the monotony of a single voice for 20 minutes.
4. Have extra tape or film stories available — they could be used or dropped if running time runs out.
5. Vary the bulletin with on camera "pad" stories — they should be short, light and lively.

News Readers

The glamour of this particular TV job attracts many, but few indeed understand the complex demands of such a function. Rare indeed are those who can face a camera as if to the manner born: in fact, there is no such phenomenon — "reading on camera" is an unusual act, just as much a "performance" as any appearance before any kind of camera, which has to be learned and rehearsed to appear pleasing and natural.

Television viewers, it has been said, do not want their information from a teleprinter, computer, robot or show-window dummy; they want to be informed, they want to be able to understand, they want, above all else, to believe what they hear and see — and that includes not only the news being imparted, but the news reader, another person like themselves, whom they must like.

These, according to Warner Troyer (the CIDA expert, who was attached to Rupavahini for two years) are the basic qualities demanded of a news reader:

- (a) Credibility
- (b) Camera presence
- (c) Professional reading skill.

This is the reality

Delivery

To begin with, most readers seem to be spiked to their chair-backs, and, with the introduction of the teleprompter, they seem to be transfixed from in front as well — the result is TV catatonia. From the fluttering of the papers on the table, it is obvious that the readers are tied to the text, which, more often than not, is poorly composed — the result is a vicious circle of poor text/dulled, unprepared news readers/all interest abstracted from the text/s, subtly communicated contempt for what is being read/sandwiched between a rictus, born of nervousness and poor control of facial muscles, between ayubovan and good night.

Dress

The de riguer buttoned up coat for males, seems to act as a "chain-mail", further inhibiting the reader; the relative freedom, in wardrobes and hairstyles for women, serves to generate some kind of rivalry, which, at times, tends to take away from the necessary concentration on the main purpose of a news reader's presence — making the news credible.

Diction

There seem to be as many versions of even the most commonplace words, as there are individual news readers.

UPDATE

Especially on the Sinhala News Bulletin there seem to be a whole lot of new readers being tried out. It isn't really necessary to have a large news panel: at SLBC, for instance, this can often work to the detriment of the news, because several of the readers have no active interest in the content.

News readers should be familiar with the news they read.

Foreign Affairs

The subject of "foreign affairs" is not public-oriented in the sense that the average man does not think of political situations in other countries in the same way as he involves himself with domestic political issues.

This is a truism: and depends on the remote nature of the subject.

This is why the public does not frequent the Foreign Ministry in the way it floods into other Ministries where public business is conducted.

This characteristic of remoteness makes it increasingly difficult for the government to convey, in coherent terms, to the public, what foreign affairs and foreign policy is all about.

Unfortunately, public "knowledge" is usually gleaned from and based on readership of popular newspapers and magazines (like Time and Newsweek), which offer capsuled criticisms of foreign affairs, which are inevitably prejudiced or "angled".

Discriminatory reading, or commentary, is now a serious need in all developing countries, Sri Lanka included: but a greater awareness of the foreign policy of one's own country has to become an aspect of public-orientation.

Thinking on subjects like visits of sports teams to South Africa, this country's role of non-alignment, relationships with India (or other countries or blocs), and so on, needs to be developed on more sophisticated lines.

In the same way that the public is exposed, through the media, to other aspects of government policy, to administrative and economic development, to science, technology, medicine and law — so must thinking on foreign affairs be professionally guided.

Just as there are panel discussions on television on environment protection and medical problems, Foreign Ministry officials should also be asked to do panel duty, where their expertise could be used to explain matters of public concern, at, least, to help create a wider awareness of any given subject, and disposal of wrong notions.

This is particularly important now when Sri Lanka's image abroad is frequently being questioned; and our Missions abroad come in for adverse criticism for supposedly not doing the job efficiently.

In this context, an explanation of how foreign missions function and the duties of foreign officers would help with greater understanding, and encourage constructive criticism, rather than perpetuate the impression that the

life of a diplomat revolves round a battle of scotch.

Among the professional government services, the duties and functions of a foreign service officer, who undergoes a definite course of training in the use of every tool of diplomacy, is only imperfectly understood — if at all. This is partly attributable to the remote and enigmatic nature of the subject of foreign affairs: but it is also due to the lack of basic communication between the Foreign Ministry and the public, either directly, or through public media.

Television, with its powerful appeal to people with little time for reading, who demand and need exposure to the most comprehensive news and views possible within the limitations of the medium and the definite limit to the amount of spoken

SUBTLE WAYS OF SPEECH

*Caught in the bourgeois rat trap
She became an adept at clap trap.
Bottled all natural speech
Like pickle out of reach.
Did not have recourse like workmen
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To the hearty swear and word bash.
So developed a sly psycho-somatic skin rash.*

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information that can be absorbed has particularly neglected this source of expertise.

True, the individual officer is forbidden by the ethics of professionalism to set himself up as an analyst, par excellence, of any specific topic, relating to foreign affairs: as a Foreign Office professional he is not supposed to (and does not) carry value judgments around in his head — but he can state different positions and allow the drawing of conclusions.

His services — with necessary permission on briefing — can be obtained for say, in panel discussions on subjects of vital importance and current interest, that

must be aired: subjects like the situation in West Asia in relation to our labour policies and consular affairs — or Presidential visits abroad, in the context of reasons or needs for such visits, surrounding protocol — and so on.

Analysis/commentary

According to Paul White, the first head of CBS News: "The function of the news analyst is to marshal the facts on any specific subjects and, out of his common or special knowledge, to present these facts so as to inform his listeners rather than persuade them. The analyst should attempt to clear up any contradictions within the known record, should fairly present both sides of controversial questions and, in short, should give the best available

information upon which listeners can make up their own minds. Ideally, in the case of controversial issues, the audience should be left with no impression as to which side the analyst himself actually favours. . . ."

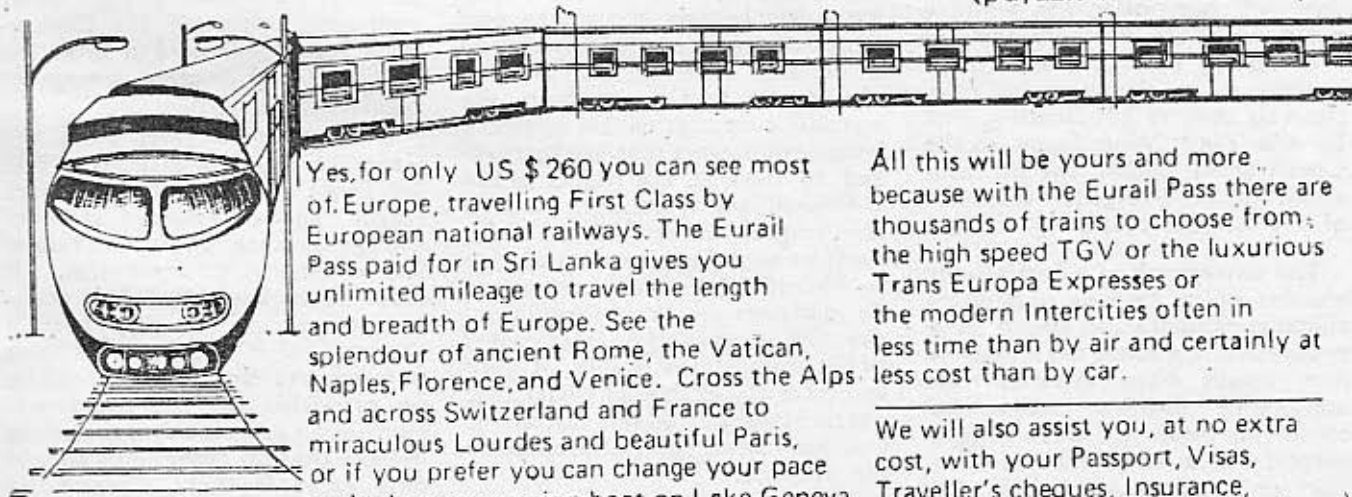
In print journalism there are as many foreign affairs pundits as there are newspapers; on radio there are three. On television, a single analyst can be a disaster.

The reason why an individual's comment, in the complicated and sensitive area of foreign affairs, is suspect, why his competence and credibility can be called into question, stems from the peculiar nature of commentary in this field.

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First, such an interpretative story calls for clarification, explanation and analysis and, therefore, relies on the reporter's **personal** ability to "weigh and filter facts"; second, as there is no set format for such a story, the writer chooses his own and this freedom allows the injection of the writer's own opinions. With this challenge, very few writers can keep their comment/analysis above reproach. Where there is time and space enough for public choice and discrimination in print and radio, there is not this latitude in television: a biased or incompetent programme on television by the individual commentator has immediate impact and far-reaching effects.

Analysis or commentary is inevitably personalised — it is

usually written by the person who reads it "on camera" — and who is invariably identified to the viewer as the analyst or commentator.

The report, therefore, could be in the personal "I", the editorial "We", or the impersonal "One" or "It" — depending on the style favoured by the writer/reader.

UPDATE

In recent months, the "Foreign Report" has been widened to include commentaries in Sinhala and Tamil, by additional readers, who are responsible for the text as well.

These individuals are obviously not trained to talk to TV audiences: the subjects for discussion seem to be arbitrarily chosen — who decides whe-

ther they are important for the people to know; whether they are geared to the intellectual level of the viewers?

The whole exercise is reduced, too often, to little more than a map, some visuals, a talking head delivering chunks of fragmented information — boringly.

A very good example of the dangers of letting the "experts" in Foreign Affairs actually present Foreign Affairs was underlined for us at the end of 1984: the **news staff** produced a flashpack programme, which was presented by two of the readers — it was telecast straight after the usual Foreign Report — and the contrast in sheer watchability was striking.

(Concluded)

Letters. . .

(Continued from page 1)

part of our daily life while a party which so strongly opposed such abuses now uses emergency powers more effectively and restrictively than its predecessors, and by the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution, makes the perpetuation, of an emergency a matter of the utmost simplicity.

The emergence of a Parliament elected on a system of proportional representation would have dramatically altered the situation and would have ensured that emergency powers cannot be conferred upon a Government except for a very brief period (for which provision must be made) unless there was a bipartisan consensus in Parliament that a genuine emergency existed which warranted the use of the wide and almost arbitrary powers that an emergency confers upto the instruments of state. The Tenth Amendment reverses the possibility of that happy situation and ensures that as before emergency powers can perpetu-

ally be enjoyed at the selfish whim of a Government.

The Council for Liberal Democracy emphasises in the strongest terms that even a genuine situation of crisis, such as the present, should not lead us to make the simplistic assumption that sweeping executive powers that are permitted to devalue the rights of the individual are necessary. Indeed the tragedy of Sri Lanka today leads us to the opposite conclusion — That it is the cavalier disregard by elements in the armed forces, the police and other instruments of the state of the rights, dignity and integrity of the individual that exacerbated hatred and discontent and has enhanced the propensity for violence.

The CLD must also emphasise that both under the previous Government and under the present Government emergency powers once obtained, have been used for purposes far removed from the ostensible purpose of the emergency. The violence of Tamil terrorists has led to the restriction of the right of public assembly in Colombo, censorship of criticism

of Government policy has been imposed under a censorship proclaimed in the interests of national security, trade unionists, and other legitimate critics of the Government have been held in detention without trial under emergency regulations.

In the sixteen years since the General Election of 27th May, 1970, Sri Lanka has lived for a much longer period under a state of emergency than under the rule of law in normal circumstances. It must be emphasised that an emergency leads to the suspension of the rule of law. **The CLD does not suggest that there should be no provision for the proclamation of an emergency but it does believe that an emergency should only exist if there is broad and bipartisan agreement that the need for an emergency exists, and even then that the powers conferred on the executive as against the individual must strictly to those regarded as vital for bringing the country back to a normal condition.**

Chanaka Amaratunga

Joint Secretary
(Council for Liberal Democracy)

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