

RAJIV'S PERSONAL DIPLOMACY:
Conflict-Resolution or Crisis-Management?

— *Mervyn de Silva*

LANKA

GUARDIAN

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- **What was the TULF's Mandate?**

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IN THE KILLING FIELDS

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GAMINI COREA'S WARNING

Sri Lanka's foremost economist and UNCTAD's former Secretary-General, Dr. Gamini Corea has added his authoritative voice to that small chorus of Cassandras that keeps warning of a bleak economic future if the present conflict remains unresolved. In his "N. M. Perera Memorial Lecture," Dr. Corea turned to the current crisis and its economic implications:

"Before I talk of the external environment and of internal policies I must underline an obvious truth. We can look to the future with confidence only if we assume that there will be an end to the internal conflicts that endanger our national unity. The conflict of last few years has already undermined our economy, weakened confidence both locally and abroad, and diverted substantial resources to security purposes.

The future will be bleak and unpredictable if all this continues. This is not the occasion on which to discuss this complex issue. But it will be recognised that there are economic aspects to the communal tension in the country — particularly the inadequacy of employment opportunities for the youth. We had a warning of the unrest of youth in another form in 1971 and this is probably a factor in the present crisis as well.

But whatever the relationship between our economic performance and our political experience, the immediate need is for an end to the extremes of political conflict and to the violence that has gone with it. The prospects for our economy in the years ahead depend on this — although in the longer run we may hope to underpin our internal harmony and national unity with a stronger economic base."

ANOTHER TARNISHED IMAGE

The government and the media continue to complain bitterly about "Sri Lanka's 'tarnished

image", the dirty work evidently of the world press and the Eelam disinformation lobby. Now it is the turn of the government and the state-controlled media to stand in the dock accused of 'tarnishing the image' of a prominent trade union.

The G.M.O.A. which has been very much in the news in the recent past is the accuser.

What makes the reversal of roles noteworthy is the manner in which the government has tried to blacken the GMOA's name, especially its reputation as a non-political independent association of state-employed professionals.

The GMOA says that a RUPA-VAHINI Newscast had put a report which explicitly stated the "the J.V.P. had backed the recent strike of doctors and nurses". The Association describes this as an "absurd and vicious attempt by the government to slander the GMOA". Pointing to attempts to introduce legislation to disrupt the GMOA's unity, the GMOA's press statement mentions a number of new appointments in Colombo hospitals which, it says, "will not go uncontested".

WILD LIFE

Life has certainly got gayer and brighter for the top ten

(Continued on page 3)

TRENDS + LETTERS

FAST BUCK

I have been enjoying the straightforward approach to national problems in your intelligent publication for the past year and a half.

As an American Horticulturalist I have been a keen observer of the carelessness and ignorance with which western pesticide is introduced into the hands of your simple farmer for a fast buck! Therefore I send you an article which I hope you will publish for the good of us all.

I'll be going back to the US soon and would like to receive your magazine there.

John Wooten

Riverdale Road
Kandy

(More letters on page 2)

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Correspondence

WHERE IS THE ETHNIC ISSUE?

In the Lanka Guardian of 15 August 86 the preamble to the TULF proposal, submitted to Mr. Gandhi reads:

"The Tamil people gave a mandate to the TULF in the 1977 Election to establish an independent state of Tamil Eelam".

Would it not have been more correct if the TULF had stated the Tamil people of the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka gave a mandate to the TULF?

But did they?

— The TULF electors voted as follows in the 1977 General Election (% age of votes polled) :—

Northern Province —

Jaffna 58.5% Mullativu 41.7%
Vavuniya 48.4% Mannar 23.2%
Total 42.6%

Eastern Province —

Trincomalee 58.4%
Batticaloa 47.1% Ampara 25%
Total 43.5%

Bringing the gross % for Northern and Eastern Province to only 47.7%!

— It must also be mentioned that one TULF M. P. crossed over to the UNP Government immediately after the Elections, reducing the number of seats won by TULF — 18 — to 17!

With 43.5% of votes polled does the TULF have sufficient clout to justify its claim, though provided for its manifesto, to set up, leave alone The State of Eelam, even one Tamil Linguistic state, or for that matter even one linguistic province either in the Northern or Eastern Province?

— It must also be a matter of Constitutional interest that

Article 5 of the Constitution of Sri Lanka, under which all planning must be limited, read :—

Territory of the Republic

5. The territory of the Republic of Sri Lanka still consist of the twenty four administrative districts, the names of which are set out in the First Schedule, and its territorial waters and amended by the Seventh Amendment to the increased number of twenty five administrative districts.

— It will be noted that there is no recognition of any of the nine provinces appearing on the Maps of Sri Lanka, in the Territory referred to in Article 5.

How then do discussions and planning to meet the demands for the Northern and Eastern Provinces continue in view of Article 5, and with the minority support of the votes cast for the TULF in the Northern Provinces 42.9% and the Eastern Province 43.5%, with an average minority support of 47.7% in both provinces?

— The media, local and international, give the impression that the TULF demands are on behalf of not only the Tamil voters ((leaving aside the Census 1981 population statistics) in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, but also of the Tamils in the other seven provinces, who did not vote for the (TULF did not present candidates), and who continue to live in peace and harmony with the majority Sinhalese community, with political representation in the Multi-ethnic political parties e. g. The United National Party and The Sri Lanka Freedom Party etc.

— Have Rajiv Gandhi and the world been taken for a ride? What of the political opinion of all Tamils and Tamil-speaking people of Sri Lanka?

— The only Tamil candidate (Tamil Congress) who contested the

Presidency of Sri Lanka in 1982, in an election covering all the nine Provinces was able to only poll a paltry 173,934 votes, as against even the 418,200 votes cast for the TULF in only the Northern and Eastern Provinces!

— Shouldn't we wake up from our dream and realize that all these events were a mere nightmare, a fantasy of the political imagination?

Where is the ethnic problem?

Colonel Lyn Wickramasuriya
Colombo 5

NIKAYA SYSTEM

Ref. the short letter by Mr. L. Samarasekera of Alberta, Canada in L. G. August 1 on the deplorable nature of the system of Nikayas based on the caste system.

A criticism levelled against any party or an institution if not constructive certainly amounts to mud-slinging.

There are five heinous crimes in Buddhism. These cannot be altered (a) Killing one's father (b) Killing one's mother (c) Shedding blood from Buddha's personality (d) Killing of an Arahant and (e) Causing schism in the Sangha.

Mr. Samarasekera is attempting to commit the 5th heinous crime in his endeavours.

Be pragmatic Mr. Samarasekera, be pragmatic. We can still afford to practice Buddhism within the rights of three Nikayas. A Siyam Nikaya temple premises is open to everybody. It is not necessary to show your credentials (race, caste, religion etc.) if you were to enter temple premises unlike in the case of a Hindu Kovil.

Remember that it was a Siyam Nikaya priest who crowned Weerahennidige Francisco Fernando as King of Kandy during 1848 rebellion.

Dr. Ranjith Wickramasuriya
Kandana

Gandhian diplomacy: walking a minefield

Mervyn de Silva

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's tortuous and delicate diplomatic exercise as mediator in the Sri Lankan conflict could prove, at best, a conflict-resolution essay as in Mizoram last month and for a time being in Punjab last year, and at second best, a crisis-management operation like that now being conducted in Punjab. But there's a basic difference between the Sri Lankan and the two Indian situations, which makes his job as problem-solver or crisis-manager unusually difficult. He is operating outside his terrain for Sri Lanka is a sovereign state, however much the present exercise itself may indicate an effective slippage of the sovereignty.

In short, there are too many players in the game, over whom he has too little control. For instance in the Sri Lankan opposition, especially the SLFP and its two informal partners the monks and the JVP. He has only indirect control or influence over two other key players in the game or to change the metaphor pieces on the board — the army which he can influence only through the Sri Lankan government and the 'boys' in the north on whom he can impose his will only through thy 'big boys' in Madras.

A single, totally unexpected incident can snap the chain of control, however strong. When a 29 year old bridegroom and the bride's uncle are instantly killed at the Amman Kovil close to the Jaffna Fort, the local "boys" can scarcely control the immediate explosion of anger on the spot or contain their own indignation, especially when it happens a day after there is a widely circulating story of a 'ceasefire agreement'. (The BBC report proved to be premature or a gross exaggeration). That

incident was a sad but telling illustration of how Mr. Gandhi lately recognised by most Sri Lankans as a sincere and helpful friend, is walking in a minefield.

His success will depend on two developments: (a) mutually acceptable Government-TULF Package and (b) how effectively he can involve the militants in the final stage of the negotiating process with a face-to-face encounter that will result in a formal accord. So, there is still a long way to go for we are still engaged in (a).

As regards (a) much ground has been covered and many advances made but not on the strategic issue, the question of a 'single linguistic unit', the sanitised term chosen for Sinhala consumption, meaning nonetheless a 'tamil homeland'.

Then there is a crucial legal-constitutional question still unresolved, and perhaps unresolvable.

Given a parliament whose power is supreme and unlimited and can therefore legislate on any matter anywhere at any time, how does one vest limited legislative powers in a provincial council which cannot be withdrawn according to the whims and fancies of this same parliament?

This also applies to executive power in a constitution where all power is vested in an executive presidency.

Of course you can. By introducing a constitutional amendment and that's hardly new to a United National Party that has given us 10 amendments in 9 years: But there's the massive constitutional catch. It will touch the constitution's entrenched clauses, and therefore it requires a referendum. Once again, the re-

course to referendum is not a choice unknown to Sri Kotha.

But in this instance, would it be safe? Besides, President JR is right when he argues that it is exceedingly difficult to put the myriad questions relevant to the referendum as an issue where a 'yes' or 'no' answer could be reasonably invited.

TRENDS

(Continued from page 1)

percent since 1977. It has become grim for about 50% below the 'food stamps' line, and it is getting more and more difficult for the rest as prices rise. But for all, life has become wild and violent.

Crime, corruption, guns and drugs and big-time rackets, and of course political patronage, with the inevitable cover-up when somebody having powerful 'connections' was arrested. This has been the Sri Lankan scene.

Gun fire breaks the silence of the sanctuary. A few persons are injured; a bungalow is set ablaze.

Who dunit? Now we have two prime suspects that can be paraded, if not physically, at least in the pages of the press: Tamil terrorists And Southern Sinhala Insurgents ! !

And then other theories trickle through... Gang-war? Poachers? Illicit gemmers? Timber Thieves? Factional feuds at the top? Politicos trapped in the bush?

The truth is that it could be all this. Such is the scene today.

S.L.F.P., J.V.P. and the U.N.P.'s new worries

"Strange bedfellows" scoffed a government stalwart but in UNP ranks neither the affected scorn nor the simulated amusement could hide a new anxiety. It had started with Mr. Anura Bandaranaike's call to the J.V.P. to work together with the SLFP against the government's Provincial Councils proposal. At the same hill-country rally, the Opposition leader commented favourably on the organisational capabilities and zeal of J.V.P. supporters as compared to the SLFP's own cadres.

Evidently anticipating a direct challenge in Parliament when the monthly extension of the emergency came up for discussion, the Opposition leader adapted the old dictum about "no permanent friends or enemies, only permanent interests" to justify a working alliance between the two parties, formal or informal, in the current countrywide campaign against government's devolution offer to the Tamils.

Since the UNP has not been a paragon of virtue in the matter of ideological consistency or in the choice of allies (and enemies) the Opposition leader was ready with recent examples to embarrass the UNP and justify the SLFP's present overtures to the JVP. Wasn't Mr. Vijaya Kumaranatunge, a vigorous campaigner for devolution today, the "Naxalite terrorist" whose threat to 'assassinate' UNP and SLFP leaders was the pretext for postponing general elections in 1982 and the choice of a referendum? Didn't the government lock up Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakkara, another supporter, several times, as a dangerous subversive? Wasn't it the UNP which granted an amnesty to the JVP?

The UNP speakers didn't actually say 'true, true' but they did point out that it was Mrs. Bandaranaike, the JVP's arch enemy then (and perhaps, still) who complained bitterly that the UNP had released men who had "committed treason". That too was true. Just as true of course as Opposition Leader

JR's extended "hand of cooperation" to the U. F. government when the JVP insurrection threatened democracy. And the UNP's use of JVP support at the 1977 polls, not to mention its generous political patronage afterwards.

What does all this add up to but a pithy commentary on the cynicism of party politics, and the game of power.

In this instance however the lesson to be learnt is more serious. The ethnic issue is so emotionally charged that the responses to the all-encompassing national crisis it has now produced represent a severe test of the objectivity and intelligence of even the most mature Sri Lankan. Such deep passions are involved that many a Sri Lankan, usually capable of sober judgment, loses his sense of balance. What holds true for the individual is truer still for the country's political parties and the entire party system.

The response of the parties however are largely determined by the challenges and opportunities presented to government and opposition. These challenges and opportunities disrupt traditional alignments while making nonsense, sometimes, of ideological inclinations, those familiar categories called "Right" "Left" and "Centre".

The SLFP position is that the Government's offer is a "treacherous sell-out" to the separatists, taking Sri Lanka's unitary state one step towards division.

The JVP, characteristically more doctrinaire and analytical sees the "peace initiative" as a subtle conspiracy of the Indian bourgeoisie, supported by US imperialism, using separatist Tamil chauvinism as a tool to split Sri Lanka.

So the SLFP and JVP become 'natural allies' in their vehement opposition to the UNP.

For the SLFP there is another larger consideration — its demand for a general election, a natural

demand from a party that maintains, and with justification, that the electorate was illegitimately denied a chance of voting for a new Parliament by the 'Referendum' of Dec. 1982. If the SLFP can exploit the situation to mobilise the people on this demand it can mount a sufficiently strong pressure campaign to force a politically and economically besieged regime to make just such a concession. So, the question we raised months ago becomes even more relevant. Can Mrs. B. do a Cory Aquino? Or to be a little more up-to-date, can she take the path of Benazir Bhutto?

The SLFP is essentially a 'soft' party like most parties of the democratic-socialist 'Centre'. It gets tough only when it enjoys State power. The JVP has faced fire and brimstone. It has a youth base; it relies on youth energy, militancy, commitment and organisational muscle pointing again to a natural alliance and a combination of complementary assets, the SLFP's mass "vote", and the JVP's special strengths as a chiefly youth movement with islandwide support as Mr. Wijeweera's 275,000 votes in Oct. 1982 suggested.

By the same token, the 'merger' is a danger to the UNP. For other reasons too, a particularly worrying consideration. Chauvinism is at a high pitch today, and it was Mrs. B.'s younger daughter, Chandrika, now S.L.M.P. president who described the 'ideological character' of sections of the armed forces as "basically chauvinistic" at a seminar addressed by National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali, Dr. Colvin R. de Silva and Dr. Neelam Tiruchelvam. If her reading is accurate, then any regime in these extraordinary circumstances where the armed forces have a new role in politics and society, must have serious misgivings about current developments.

— M. de S.

TULF memo to Rajiv

ANNEXURE — I

THE INTEGRITY OF THE TAMIL HOME-LAND

The Northern and Eastern provinces have been traditionally recognised as Tamil Speaking areas from the days of British rule. This was the position at the time of the British conquest of the Maritime Provinces of Ceylon. Sir Hugh Cleghorn in a report to the Colonial Office in 1799 stated as follows:-

"Two different nations, from a very ancient period, have divided the Island. First, the Sinhalese in its Southern and Western parts, from the river Walawe to that of Chilaw; and secondly, the Malabars in the Northern and Eastern Districts" (Malabars" is used to refer to the Tamils).

Throughout British rule and even after independence the Northern and Eastern provinces have been treated separately for administration e.g. recruitment of Divisional Revenue Officers, Assistant Commissioners of local government, local government clerical service etc., For all these purposes the Northern and Eastern provinces were treated as a separate unit.

Under the Constitutions of 1972, and 1978 the Northern and Eastern provinces were recognised as a single linguistic entity wherein the Tamil language shall also be used as the language of Administration, for the conducting of business by local authorities and in the courts of original jurisdiction. These two provinces are predominantly Tamil speaking. The Northern province is 97% Tamil Speaking and in the Eastern province 75% of the population have Tamil as their mother tongue. In the combined Northern and Eastern provinces the Tamil speaking people form over 85 percent of the population. In the same way that India has solved its multilingual problem by creating

linguistic states the Tamil linguistic area i.e., the Northern and Eastern provinces should be made into one unit.

The preservation of the integrity of these areas as the Home-land of the Tamil people was the basis of the agreements and pacts between the Tamil leaders and the major Sinhala parties in 1957, 1960 and 1965.

The preservation of the Northern and Eastern provinces as the Tamil homeland is intimately linked to the security of the lives and property of the Tamil people. After every wave of violence several thousands of Tamils have returned to these areas and sought permanent settlement there. After the Island-wide violence against Tamils in 1958, 1977, 1981, and 1983 the Government had to transport hundreds of thousands of Tamils who had sought refuge in camps, by ships or in convoys overland, to the Northern and Eastern provinces. Since 1977 as a result of repeated pogroms against Tamils in the Sinhala areas over 2,00,000 Tamils from the plantation areas and several thousands from other areas have become permanent residents of the Northern and Eastern provinces.

When the Tamils in these areas became targets of attack by the Sinhala Armed Forces they started fleeing across the sea to South India. The influx of Tamil refugees into India did not take place prior to 1983 because all the refugees from the other seven provinces were able to live in safety in these two provinces. The refugees in India can go back only to these two provinces and if they are to be rehabilitated and enabled to live in safety the creating of a unit consisting of these two Provinces with adequate powers in the hands of the Tamils is essential. A substantial number of these refugees are youths between the age of 18 and 30. They have to be rehabilitated on a planned basis over the entire Tamil home-

land and not in one province. The Sinhala Government will never do this and the return of these refugees to their homes will prove elusive.

Historically the Northern and Eastern provinces have been predominantly populated by the Tamil People. In 1921, according to the Government Census, Tamils constituted an absolute majority of every district in Northern and Eastern provinces, viz., Jaffna, Mannar, Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts. (The present Amparai district was part of the Batticaloa district till 1960). In the entirety of the Eastern province the Sinhala population was less than 5 percent. State sponsored colonisation of the Tamil areas with Sinhalese has resulted in the erosion of the territorial base of the Tamils. (This is dealt with fully in the section on land policy) However, Tamils today constitute 92.5 percent in the Northern province and 42.1 percent in the Eastern province and 68.70 percent of the Northern and Eastern provinces taken together. The balance 18 percent of the 86 percent of Tamil speaking people are Muslims. Given the chance the vast majority of the Muslims will throw in their lot with the Tamils and if devolution of power to the Tamil linguistic unit becomes certain suitable arrangements with the total support of the Muslims in the Eastern province can be made. Their leaders from the province have assured us of this. Fear of reprisals against Muslims in the other seven provinces (who are two-thirds of the total Muslim population in the Island) is what stands in the way of their openly identifying themselves with the Tamils.

The vast majority of the people of these two provinces have democratically signified their desire that these areas be treated as the Tamil homelands, in the elections to the District councils in 1981. The T.U.L.F. got an absolute majority of the votes cast in the Jaffna, Vavu-

niya, Mannar, Mullaithivu Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts. The only exception was the Amparai district which is most affected by Sinhala Colonisation. The absolute majority that the T.U.L.F. got in the Trincomalee District is an indication that a majority of the Muslim Voters also had made common cause with the Tamils. In the Batticaloa district more than two-thirds of the voters voted for the T.U.L.F. in the District Development Council elections. In the Trincomalee district elections were held to elect 23 members to parliament since 1947. 14 of these members were from the Tamil parties, three from the U.N.P. three from S.L.F.P. and three were independents with Tamil support. It was only in 1977 that a Sinhalese member of parliament was elected from the Trincomalee district for the first time. In addition to all these reasons Trincomalee has to form part of the Tamil linguistic unit for reasons of geographical contiguity.

Dr. H. W. Jayawardane stated at the Thimpu Conference, on 12th August, 1985 that the Northern and Eastern provinces "Would in effect cover approximately 30 percent of the land area and 60 percent of the sea-coast of Sri Lanka" In evaluating the land mass which should equitably constitute the Tamil Homeland, we should have regard to the fact that the entirety of this land is in the dry zone and is substantially undeveloped. Even in this area a substantial percentage of the irrigable and developed land has been settled with Sinhala people (e.g. Padaviya, Allai, Kantalai, Pavatkulam, Mahavilankulam and Gal-oya Schemes) On the other hand no Tamils have been settled in any of the irrigation schemes outside the North and East. In the Amparai District the major part of the irrigable land has been settled with Sinhala people. It has become almost impossible for the Tamils to own property or to earn a living outside the North and East. The Northern and Eastern provinces are economically backward and do not enjoy the infrastructure and the resources of the rest of the country Thus it will be seen that no prejudice is caused to the Sinhala people by

the incorporation of the two provinces into a single unit.

ANNEXURE — II

POLICE AND INTERNAL LAW AND ORDER

Upto the early nineteen-fiftys, a fair number of Tamils served in all ranks of the island's police force. There used to be direct recruitment to the rank of Assistant Superintendent of police and a fair number of Tamils were recruited to that rank.

The number of Tamil police officers of all ranks made it possible for a sufficient number of them to be posted to all police stations in the North and East and to some police stations in the plantation areas.

These Tamil Police Officers, were never found wanting in maintaining law and order in the Tamil areas. Even during times of political stress and mass agitation, Tamil police officers strictly maintained peace and order and even took action wherever necessary, against Tamil politicians.

But there was a distinct change since the late nineteen fiftys, when the police force became politicised and when racial and political considerations come to play an increasingly important part in recruitment. There was a sharp decline in the recruitment of Tamils to the lower as well as higher rungs of the police force. In the nineteen eightys a bare 5% were Tamil in the police force and a miserable 2% in the Armed Services.

This racist composition was naturally reflected in the conduct of the police towards the Tamil people. There was a progressive deterioration in the standards of police behaviour, when they no longer observed neutrality as between the Sinhalese and Tamils. At first, passively and later actively, the Police favoured the Sinhalese, as against the Tamils.

August 1977 witnessed the sad and tragic spectacle of the police getting involved directly in the attacks on the Tamil people. In Jaffna, they shot at and killed

Tamil civilians; they set fire to the Jaffna market and other business premises. In other parts of the Island, they actively encouraged Sinhalese hoodlums to attack and kill or injure Tamils and destroy the property of Tamils.

From then on, at frequent intervals, the police and Armed Services operated jointly to kill, maim and rape Tamils in the North and East of the island. Property worth many millions was looted or destroyed. The burning of the Jaffna Public Library with 90,000 books, the destruction of newspaper offices and presses, the burning of house of Members of parliament and party office, the killing inside houses and along streets of 53 innocent Tamil Civilians in one morning in July 1983 — all these and many were the reprehensible action of the police and Armed Services.

The genocidal attacks on the Tamil people between July 1983 and today are too well known to need repetition. On a modest estimate, over 5,000 Tamil civilians have been brutally murdered whole villages have been destroyed, many thousands have been rendered homeless and destitute. This is the grim record of the police and Armed Services of the island. Solutions to problems will naturally differ according to differing circumstances and situations. The intense hatred between the Sinhalese and Tamils, the bitterness left by the tragic events of 1983 onwards, a police force and Armed services who have grown to be dangerously trigger-happy, a feeling among the police and armed services, which has been nurtured by the political leadership, that they can commit any crime against the Tamils with impunity, the language barrier — all these have to be considered when a solution to the law and order problem in the Tamil Areas is worked out.

In this background, the need for a State Police force for the Tamil areas is an inevitable conclusion. Whatever be the form of Government, be it federal, quasifederal or unitary, a police system with separate police forces that are locally administered, has been set up.

England, Australia, United States India all have such police systems, although their systems of Government differ. There is every reason for such a system in the Island.

The following measures are suggested to achieve the twin purposes of maintaining law and public order and ensuring the security of the Tamil people in the Tamil areas —

1. In the list of subjects to be transferred to the state there shall be among others —
 - a. public order (but not including the use of any naval military or air force);
 - b. police
 - c. Jurisdiction and power of all courts, except the Supreme Court and the Appeal Court, with respect to any of the matters transferred to the State.
2. There shall be constituted in each State Police force which would be locally recruited and subject to the control of the State. Such a force will be called the State Police force.
There shall also be a Central Police Force.
3. The Superintendent of the police throughout the State shall vest in and be exercised by the State and except as authorised by state under the provisions of this-law, no person, officer, or court shall be empowered to supercede or control any police function.
4. The State may pass laws providing for preventive detention of persons in the State for reasons connected with the security of public order or the maintenance of Supplies and Services essential to community. Such laws shall supercede any other law on this subject.
5. **Composition of state police force:** The State police force shall consist of:—
 - a. one Deputy Inspector General of police (DIG)
 - b. Two Superintendents of police (SP)
 - c. As many Assistant Superintendents of police and other ranks, as may be decided

from time to time by the State Unit.

The DIG shall be posted to the State by the Inspector General of police (IGP) in consultation with the Chief Minister of the State and as long as he serves in the State he shall be responsible to and under the control of the Chief Minister.

The Superintendents of police shall be selected by the IGP in consultation with the Chief Minister from among the Assistant Superintendents of the State.

Direct recruitment shall be done locally at three points

- a. Assistant Superintendent of police
- b. Sub-Inspectors
- c. Constables.

The Superintendents of police of the State shall be entitled to be promoted as DIGs.

6. Recruitment, transfer and disciplinary control Qualification, made of recruitment, standards of conduct and conditions of Services shall be laid down by the State from time to time.

Two alternate bodies are suggested to perform the above function.

- a. The State police Committee consisting of the Minister of Executive Committee in charge of the subject of police; one other elected member of the Council, the DIG, a Judicial officer and a permanent citizen to be nominated by the Chief Minister or
- b. The State Public service commission which when sitting to perform the above functions shall co-opt the DIG and a Judicial Officer.

7. **Training:**— There shall be State Training Centres but for training in specialised subjects like forensic medicine, finger print identification and ballistics there shall be a central training centre.

8. Powers etc:—

Members of the State police Force shall be deemed to be police Officers under the police ordinance and the criminal procedure code. They shall also

be deemed to be public servants for purposes of the penal code and the bribery Act.

The State police Force would be responsible for the maintenance of law and order within the State and shall more specifically be engaged in —

- a. The effective protection of persons and property within the State
- b. The detection, investigation and prevention of all crimes within the State

Investigation of offences against the State, offences in respect of currency and stamps may be undertaken by the Central police force.

In respect of any offence which the State Police Force is empowered to investigate, where the Attorney-General is of opinion that such investigation involves issues of a complex and technical nature he may in consultation with the Chief Minister direct that such investigation be undertaken under the supervision of the criminal investigations department.

- c. Enforcing the law passed by the State

9. Special powers of Chief Minister:—

If in the opinion of the Chief Minister, there is a break down in law and order within the State or any part thereof, he may request the Assistance of the Central police force to restore and maintain order but such unit of the Central Police force shall be responsible to the Chief Minister during its presence in the State.

10. President's powers:—

Where the Chief Minister request or where the President publishes an order in terms of part III of the Public Security Act that Public Security in any area has been endangered he may with the concurrence of the Chief Minister send all or any of the armed forces or the Central police force the maintenance of public order in that area.

* **Proviso:** Provided that in the deployment of the Armed forces in any at times of emergencies, the choice of the regiment of the

Armed forces to be so deployed, shall be such as to ensure that there is no repression of any ethnic group in a State by any section of the Armed Forces.

ARMED SERVICES

To ensure the security of the Tamil people it is not sufficient in the present climate, to have a State Police force only. Certain measures in respect of the Armed services too have to be adopted.

1. The Armed Services must be withdrawn from the North and East. The position can be reviewed by the President in consultation with the Chief Minister after a period of five years.
2. The composition of the armed services shall be brought in line with the national ethnic ratio within five years.
3. The creation of a separate Tamil and Muslim regiment shall be undertaken.

JUDICIAL POWER

There is yet another aspect of internal law and order that needs consideration. Judicial power in the State must go along with legislative power and control over the police.

1. There shall be a High court in the State
2. Other subordinate courts and tribunals as may be determined by the State shall be established.
3. The High Court Judges shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the Chief Justice and the Chief Minister.
4. Other judges and judicial officers shall be appointed by the Judicial Services Commission in consultation with the High court Judge and the Chief Minister. Among other qualifications a sound knowledge of the Tamil

language shall be a necessary qualification.

5. Officers and employees of the High Courts other courts and tribunals shall be appointed by the State Public Services commission in consultation with the Senior High Court Judge.
6. The State Assembly may make laws as to the conditions of service of such employees and officers.

PLANTATION AREAS

The Superintendent of each estate in consultation with Trade Union Representatives select a set number of volunteers from among the employees to ensure the security of such employees. They shall be trained in the use of fire-arms. They shall be under the direct control of the Superintendent of the estate and the overall supervision of the DIG of the province in which the estate is situated.

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Mao as Marxist-Leninist Thinker

N. Sanmugathan

Comrade Mao Tsetung was not only a great Marxist-Leninist revolutionary but also a great Philosopher. It is not possible within the scope of a single article to analyse all Mao's contributions to philosophy. I shall try to dwell on one or two basic points of Mao's philosophy.

On Contradiction

One of Mao's main philosophical works is his essay "On contradiction", in which he deals with the universality of contradiction in men and matter and how development takes place as a result of clash of the contradictions that are always present. The first sentence in this essay states; the law of contradiction in things, that is, the law of the unity of opposites, is the basic law of materialist dialectics". It is a most profound statement.

Simply, this law means that motion is inherent in all forms of matter and that motion, that is, development takes place as a result of the development and clash of the contradictions that are always present; and further, between the different aspects of

each contradiction there is both identity and struggle; and, that, through the process of developing contradictions a thing or a phenomenon changes into its opposite. Thus, Comrade Mao Tsetung has in one sentence explained the basic law of materialist dialectics.

A most systematic exposition of Marxist dialectics by one of the founders of scientific socialism, Engels, is to be found in one of his famous works "Anti-Duhring". This is a very important book because it refutes all forms of fallacies spread so assiduously by Duhring. The most important mistake of Duhring was that he had negated the law of contradiction. He held that contradictions were artificial. Engels made a comprehensive criticism of Duhring and refuted his wrong theories. He established the fact that the law of contradiction was an objective law of matter. He stated that movement is contradiction, that is to say, things are moving and developing because of inherent contradictions; and that by the law of contradiction we mean the law of the unity of opposites.

In his book "Science of Logic", Hegel, the Philosopher, had stated that there were three basic laws in dialectics. They were: (1) the law that quantitative and qualitative changes give rise to one another, (2) the law of the unity of opposites, (3) the law of the negation of the negation.

These were the three basic laws of dialectics put forward by Hegel. Marx and Engels recognised and affirmed these three

laws but put them in the opposite order. Hegel had presented these laws not as the law of objective dialectics but of subjective dialectics. That is, he did not regard these laws as inherent in objective things but only as governing the law of man's thinking i. e. in the logic of the thinking of men. In other words, Hegel interpreted dialectics from an idealist point of view.

However, according to Marx and Engels, the law of contradiction, the law of the unity of opposites, was a law that is inherent in objective things where as man's knowledge of contradiction is but a reflection of the objective law in man's thinking. Therefore, Marx and Engels had satirised Hegel and pointed out that he had stood truth on its head.

Marx and Engels reversed this position and pointed out that these laws of dialectics are inherent in objective things. This was made clear by Engels in his "Anti-Duhring" and "Dialectics in Nature"

In Lenin's time, the question arose as to which of the three laws of dialectics is the most basic. Comrade Mao Tsetung refers to Lenin's article "On the question of Dialectics" and points out that Lenin often called this law (i. e. the law of contradiction) the essence of dialectics; he also called it the kernel of dialectics".

Although Lenin pointed out that this law the kernel of dialectics, he did not live to point out the relation between this kernel and the other two laws of dialectics

MAO COMMEMORATION

A public meeting to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the death of Mao will be held at 5 p.m. on September 9th at the Centre for Society and Religion, Dean's Road, Maradana.

— Mao Commemoration
Committee

* The writer, founder of the pro-Peking C. P., met Mao on four occasions.

Later, the philosophical circles in the USSR put these three laws in different order. In 1938, in the "short history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union" (Bolsheviks) Stalin put the law of the unity and struggle of the opposites as the last, instead of first.

Comrade Mao-tung systematically studied the laws of Marxist-Leninist dialectics and developed Lenin's thesis contained in his work "On the question of Dialectics". Comrade Mao Tsetung does not deny the law about quantitative and qualitative changes or the law the negation. Engels had dealt with all these things in his Anti-Duhring. What Comrade Maotung did point out is that out of these laws, the most basic law is that of the law of contradiction, the law of the unity of opposites. In this way, he has put this question in a monistic way. He has refuted theory of putting these three basic laws on a parallel footing.

By asserting the primacy of the law of contradiction, the law of the unity of the opposites, Comrade Mao Tsetung creatively developed Marxist-Leninist philosophy and dialectics.

"Correct Handling of Contradictions among the people"

In this work, Mao deals with the question of how to handle contradictions among the people as opposed to how to handle contradictions between the enemy and ourselves. He also deals with the theory of how contradictions of different natures can be converted into each other. He also uses the law of contradiction to explain how to deal with the struggle between different views and ideas inside the party.

Mao had pointed out in his essay "On contradictions" that "opposition and struggle between ideas of different kinds constantly occur within the Party; this is a reflection within the party of contradiction between classes and between the new and the old in society. If there were to be

contradictions in the party and no ideological struggle to resolve them, the party's life would come to an end".

This was the first time that Comrade Mao Tsetung used the law of contradiction, the law of the unity of the opposites to explain the question of opposition and struggle between different ideas within a party. This is a creative development of Marxism-Leninism.

Class Struggle

Are there still class struggle in a Socialist society, particularly after the socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production has in the main been accomplished? Do all the class struggles in society still centre round the question of the fight over political power? Under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat do we still have to make revolution? Against whom should we make revolution? And how should we carry out a revolution?

These were questions that were raised by Mao for the first time in history. Marx and Engels could not possibly have solved this series of major theoretical problems in their time. Lenin saw that after the proletariat seized power, the defeated bourgeoisie still remained stronger than the proletariat and was always trying to stage a come-back. At the same time, the small producers were incessantly generating capitalism and the capitalist class anew, thus posing a threat to the dictatorship of the proletariat. In order to cope with the counter revolutionary threat and overcome it, it was therefore necessary to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat over a long period of time. There was no other way. However, Lenin died before he could solve these problems in practice.

Stalin strengthened and safeguarded the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union. But where he failed was in not recognising, on the level of theory, that classes and class struggles exist in society through out the

historical period of the dictatorship of the proletariat and that the question of who will win in the revolution had yet to be finally settled; in other words, if all this were not handled properly there was a possibility of a come-back by the bourgeoisie. However, the year before he died, Stalin corrected himself on this point, in his last work, "Some problems of economy in the Soviet Union".

One of the specific contributions of Comrade Mao Tsetung to the treasure house of Marxism-Leninism was his summing up of the revolutions in the Soviet Union, China and other countries and his conclusion that classes and class struggles exist through out the entire historical epoch from Socialism to Communism; that there existed the danger of capitalist restoration and the danger of the dictatorship of the proletariat being lost and subverted.

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Face to face with the guerrilla commander Cyanide martyrs bar way to peace

Jon Swain

He looked like an eccentric but rich undergraduate. He had brash good looks and a tame monkey called Bill, who furiously scratched his shoulders. But on a string round his neck he wore a suicide capsule filled with potassium cyanide.

Slung from his hip was a 357 magnum loaded with homemade dum-dum bullets that are capable of blasting a hole as wide as a saucer in a man. He boasted that he had made them himself by drilling a hole in the top of each bullet.

At 26, Kittu is the most wanted Tamil terrorist on this warm and beautiful island of Sri Lanka. He has carried out a rash of bloody attacks on military and civilian targets here over the past three years, including the 1983 slaughter of 13 soldiers.

Today Kittu, a senior commander in the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the biggest guerrilla group, has a price on his head of £ 10,000. Yet in the northern city of Jaffna, which his guerrillas have controlled for the past year, he nonchalantly chatted to me last Wednesday morning in a sunlit villa scented by tropical flowers, barely 10 minutes drive from the main Sri Lankan army camp in the area, an old Dutch fort.

There was only a single sentry at the villa gate, and Kittu was sitting at a table playing with his monkey. Books on small arms and the tactics of guerrilla warfare, including a well-thumbed edition of Che Guevara's memoirs. The faint tinkle of temple bells added to the general air of fantasy.

"The cyanide capsules are the secret of our success," Kittu boasted. "We know that no human

being can stand up to torture, so all our full-time members are issued with them. If they are captured they undertake to swallow the poison. As a result not one of them has been taken alive and our organisation's secrets are intact."

Today the continuing threat of violence from the Tamils is the gravest issue facing the government of President Jayawardene. In an attempt to stop the slaughter, he has come up with a peace package, supported by India, which offers the Tamils extensive autonomy in their areas of the country.

In July, moderate Tamil politicians spent 11 days in Colombo studying the proposals and are due to return there from India this week for more talks.

However the extremist views Kittu expressed last week indicated that the prospects of an early end to the troubles are not bright. He said the Tamil militants would refuse to surrender their arms and would veto any settlement reached between the Tamil moderates and the Sri Lankan government. Their aim remained the establishment of Eelam, an independent Tamil state in the north and east of Sri Lanka.

The Tigers are the main Tamil guerrilla force fighting for a separate state. Kittu is their commander in Jaffna, the capital of the island's northern peninsula where 850,000 Tamils live, and commands hundreds of well-armed and ruthless men. His views cannot be ignored.

For six hours the previous night, Kittu's "boys" had exchanged mortar fire with the Sri Lankan army in the most sustained shelling Jaffna had seen for many weeks.

A few days earlier two soldiers were killed by a mortar. This time there were no army casualties but one civilian was injured three houses were damaged and shrapnel spraved the Ashok Hotel, gouging a hole in the stairway and causing its only guests, two journalists, to pass a sleepless night.

The guerrillas have been the masters of Jaffna and the peninsula for the past year. In May, the armed forces mounted an offensive to wrest control of the area from the Tamils. The guerrillas repulsed the attack and the army has since remained behind its fortifications.

The city in fact, is under dual control. Government employees continue to collect their salaries from Colombo and keep the essential services functioning, but they do not dare to take a major decision without Kittu's approval. As Jaffna has been without a police force since the police station was blown up, law and order is in the hands of the guerrillas.

The ultimate penalty is death and recently several prominent Tamil community figures and suspected informers have vanished, their lifeless bodies found hanging later from lamp-posts. One recent victim was the headmaster of a well-established Jaffna school, who was murdered on Kittu's orders for the crime of playing football with the army.

Two moderate Tamil politicians were kidnapped and murdered, probably to deter any others who favour a political solution. Their deaths have prevented A. Amirtalingham, the leading Tamil moderate politician who is negotiating with Jayawardene's government, from venturing to Jaffna.

The popularity of the guerrillas in Jaffna has plunged as a result of their outrages. A few months ago when they broke the army's offensive and forced the soldiers back to the heavily barricaded fort there was a euphoric atmosphere in the city and the people were right behind the guerrillas.

Now there is despondency and among some Tamils a growing fear that the guerrillas are gradually slipping out of control. One man, a committed Eelamist a year ago said privately that he feared the future. "They are in danger of turning into fascists," he said. "Perhaps we have given birth to a Frankenstein monster."

There is a strong and persistent air of fantasy about the whole place which begins on arrival at the airport where the beat of helicopters is a vivid reminder of Vietnam. Nothing could be more incongruous than the Northern Sporting Rooms, Jaffna's club, where I found a group of gentlemen betting on the 2.30 race at Ripon.

People are confused because their fear is mixed with gratitude to "the boys", as the guerrillas are known for having "saved" them from the excesses of the army.

Amid the worries about the guerrillas ruthless behaviour there is also a genuine desire to involve them in the peace process and to recognise that their struggle has forced the Sri Lankan government to compromise. Everyone agrees that the sticking point is how to disarm the boys and convince them to come to the negotiating table.

Kittu insists forcefully. "The boys will veto any settlement arranged by the Sri Lankan government." To the alarm of many, he says the Tigers are revolutionary socialists whose ultimate aim is the creation of a "one-party socialist state".

This revolutionary zeal would not matter if the guerrillas were not so strong. But the chilling fact is that they are much better organised and armed than anyone including Jayawardene's government and the Indians who are backing a settlement imagined.

In the last six months, anticipating that India and Sri Lanka would arrange a peace deal and that they could be forced out of Tamil Nadu in southern India their sanctuary for several years, the Tigers have established five guerrilla training camps around Jaffna.

Visiting one 20 minutes from the city last week was a chilling experience. Boys of 15 upwards in neat Tiger camouflage were being instructed how to fight. Boobytraps and demolition were on the syllabus and at one point trainees had to monkey-crawl across a rope strung between two coconut trees 20ft above the ground and directly over coils of barbed wire.

Already after only one month's training the recruits moved in disciplined formation. Eighty of them have been passing through the camp every three months. Not all went into the Tigers' fighting units. Those who did were immediately issued with a cyanide capsule. "One is never too young to die" said Kittu.

Nearby was the "Tamil Eelam Ordnance Factory" a private house surrounded by a bouganvillea hedge. There six men directed by a renegade government servant were each day turning out on a lathe 25 six-inch mortars filled with rusty iron filings. "We prefer our own mortars to the ones we have bought" said Kittu. "They have a better killing power."

— Sunday Times
10th August, 1986.

A Ruthless Puritan Among Tamil Guerrillas

Barbara Crossette

To the world's roster of guerrilla leaders whose strategic brilliance is matched by their ruthlessness, people here say they have added a name.

His followers call him "Tamby" — Tamil for "Little Brother." Velupillai Prabhakaran was born 32 years ago in the north of what is now Sri Lanka, the center of Tamil nationalism.

Over the last few months this leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam has risen to the top of the ethnic separatist movement that threatens to split Sri Lanka, a nation of 16 million people.

Mr. Prabhakaran's violent seizure of power this spring in the northern city of Jaffna, a rebel

stronghold, cost the lives of at least 175 fellow Tamils. It also involved the killing of his most prominent rival in the Tamil separatist movement, according to members of Mr. Prabhakaran's organization and Sri Lankan military officers.

He is an intransigent opponent of plans for limited autonomy being discussed by the Sri Lankan government and more moderate Tamils.

It is a matter of debate whether Mr. Prabhakaran was directly responsible for a series of bombings in Colombo this year, including the destruction of an Air Lanka jet and the Central Telegraph Office. But people in Sri Lanka, whether for or against

the Tamil cause, seem to agree that the rise of Mr. Prabhakaran and the Liberation Tigers has changed the face of the decade-old insurgency.

"The Liberation Tigers were always viewed by us as the most disciplined and rigid of the Tamil militants," said a Tamil in Colombo who has no ties to the separatist movement. "They have an unwavering commitment to their goal and a puritanical approach to their life style. It is almost an order rather than an army. No drinking, no girls."

To ethnic Sinhalese, who constitute 74 percent of Sri Lanka's population, the Liberation Tigers "are the most fearsome of the

groups fighting the army," a Colombo resident said.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam — the last word means state in Tamil — are one of the oldest of more than 20 militant separatist groups among the Tamils, who make up 18 percent of the population. The organization was formed in 1972 as the Tamil New Tigers, taking its animal symbol from an ancient Tamil kingdom's flag. It was reorganized in 1976 under its present name.

Much remains uncertain about the bitter fighting between the Liberation Tigers and the less violent Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization that led in May to the death of Mohan Sri Sabaratnam, the leader of the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization. It was followed by an attack on that group's exile headquarters in Madras, India, and warnings to

all other Tamil separatist organizations that dissent would no longer be tolerated by the Tigers.

Residents of Jaffna, where the Tigers control large parts of the city, say one of the reasons Mr. Prabakaran's organization swept away its opponents was that other guerrilla groups had become involved in petty thievery and general lawlessness, which was discrediting the cause.

Nevertheless, officials say Mr. Prabakaran is "a thug, a bandit, a killer." They hold him responsible for, among other acts, the assassination last summer of two Tamil former members of Parliament.

Mr. Prabakaran remains something of an enigma to Tamil intellectuals who began the movement for ethnic rights within the bounds of Sri Lanka law.

In a society still very conscious of caste, the intellectuals and professionals are quick to point out that Mr. Prabakaran is of low birth. He is a *Karayar*, a member of a fishermen's caste, and had only a few years of schooling.

Tamils say the political theoretician of the Tigers is Anton Balasingam, a resident and citizen of Britain. He and Mr. Prabakaran talk about establishing a socialist state.

In an interview last year, President Junius R. Jayawardene said he did not believe the Tamil rebels were supported by foreign governments. Most diplomats agree, saying that Tamil exiles have raised more than adequate money for guerrilla weapons.

Sri Lankan officers say they fear the Tigers have or may soon get SAM-7 missiles, which would threaten Colombo's last link with Jaffna, an air route.

— New York Times

Islands can be shared

This is how peace could return to Sri Lanka

The government of Sri Lanka need not blush about the "concession" it is offering to its Tamil minority. By telling the Tamils that they can have — at long last — a genuine degree of autonomy, the government will dismay those members of the country's Sinhalese majority who believe that small islands need only one, central, government. In fact, the tight-little-island idea is a fallacy, when the island in question contains two lots of people who feel markedly different from each other. Ireland's Protestant minority insists on separation from the Catholic-run part. Cyprus's Turks will accept only loose confederation with its Greeks. Few now question the division of Hispaniola, New Guinea, etc. If the offer of more elbow-room for Sri Lanka's Tamils leads to agreement in the negotiations that reopen on August 16th, one of the world's more endurable bits of bloodiness may at last be ended.

Until this June, President Junius Jayawardene's government

had refused to hand over any serious amount of power to the Tamils, despite a growing civil war in which the number of Tamil guerrillas had swollen from a few hundred in 1983 to possibly 10,000 Tigers now. But by June a powerful combination of forces was pushing the government to make a deal. The army said it could not beat the rebels by guns alone, just as Tamil terrorist bombs were spreading to the capital, Colombo. The countries which finance Sri Lanka's development budget handed over an extra 20% this year, but hinted they might pull out next year if the war went on. India, which had been helping the government to talk to Tamils, said it was fed up with the government's refusal to be more flexible.

I'm Tamil too

So, on the day before the aid donors' meeting in Paris in June, the Jayawardene government made an offer that Tamils who do not want to go the whole separatist hog ought to be able to accept.

With one addition, and determined Indian support, this new offer could settle the matter.

The government proposes to set up nine provincial councils, which will be given money by the central government but will also be allowed to raise some revenue themselves. The provincial councils will run the police (though top-ranking officers will be appointed by Colombo), and will have some control over the distribution of newly irrigated land; the Tamils complain that Sinhalese are now favoured when such land is handed out.

The TULF seems to be attracted by the provincial-council idea. The trickiest remaining question concerns the Eastern province, which is divided fairly evenly between Tamils, Sinhalese and Muslims. Until recently the TULF was demanding that this territory should be merged with the largely Tamil Northern province — creating, in local miniature, a mirror-image of the island's majority-

(Continued on page 14)

Behind the Tamils' lines

(From Our Special Correspondent)

In the Jaffna peninsula, the Tamil guerrillas' stronghold, not everybody is impressed by the latest effort to end Sri Lanka's civil war. The government's offer to give provincial councils wide powers is the first of its kind but many Tamils in Jaffna say they have heard peace talk before, and it is always followed by more fighting. In other parts of the island the army and the guerrillas are inflicting brutal reprisals on civilians on both sides. But in the 50-mile-long Jaffna peninsula, on the northern tip of the island, the guerrillas have got the soldiers bottled up, and themselves maintain order.

According to the local guerrilla commander, the Jaffna peninsula contains 1,500 guerrillas, three-quarters of them armed. The guerrilla group now running the show is the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. In May the Sri Lankan army tried to advance up the peninsula and was driven back; since then its 1,200 men have seldom ventured out of their 11 camps. The soldiers in the old Dutch fort in Jaffna town shell the surrounding buildings most nights. They hit, among other targets, the bar of the Ahsok hotel where the journalists and diplomats, who are the only foreign visitors, stay. But Jaffna's residents seem remarkably untroubled.

The buses that used to make the run from Colombo, the capital, in eight hours now take 17. The road is potholed and sometimes mined; bridges have been destroyed. At each of 13 checkpoints passengers are ordered off, their luggage is searched, and the soldiers expect the driver to pay 100 or 200 rupees (\$3.5 or \$7). After the last army post, at a place called Elephant Pass on the narrow strip of land that links the peninsula to the mainland, a boy gets on the bus with a bowl of sandalwood pastes for the passengers to mark their foreheads. The marks show they are Hindus, and therefore Tamils.

Few truck drivers will make the run, so many things are scarce and expensive in Jaffna. There is no cooking gas or medicine. Fish, formerly a local mainstay, is hard to come by; last year, the government banned fishing off the coast, to make it harder for the guerrillas to bring arms across from India.

The peninsula's normal population of 850,000 has been swollen by more than 100,000 Tamils from other areas. North of Vavuniya, which marks the beginning of the war zone, most houses are abandoned and fields uncultivated. The remnants of Jaffna's civilian administration still run its water, electricity and other services. But the official machinery of justice has collapsed, and the locals have set up committees to handle civil disputes.

The Tigers deal with "criminal" cases, and their justice is rough. The banks, which got robbed too often, have given up, except for the Bank of Ceylon, and Jaffna is running out of banknotes; some people simply hand over their salary cheques to shopkeepers. The guerrillas tax cigarettes and raise levies from the more prosperous inhabitants, who are usually wise enough to pay up promptly.

The Tigers, who are a little puritanical, have closed the illegal bars that opened up after the police force collapsed last year. The cinema cannot get films, but three pirate television stations have started up, and twice a week the Tigers put out their own programmes from a mobile transmitter with a 16-mile range. Street-corner blackboards provide a news service, with war bulletins each evening.

Until recently, the collapse of the area's main industries—fishing and the export of professional people to the rest of Sri Lanka—helped the Tigers, because unemployment brought them recruits. But now that they are in charge in Jaffna, they are trying to keep its inhabitants busy.

They have started small factories which make soap, jam, fruit juice and arrack, as well as mortars and grenades. Jaffna's people are visibly scared of the Tigers, but dislike the army even more. They want peace; but until it comes they are grateful for the local calm the guerrillas have provided.

— The Economist

Islands . . .

(Continued from page 13)

minority bitterness. Now the TULF accepts that the Eastern Province could be sliced up into mainly Tamil and mainly non-Tamil parts. The government should be able to go along with that. The present provincial boundaries were drawn by the British around the old kingdom of Kandy; when politics change and populations shift, it is sensible to draw new lines.

President Jayewardene deserves support. It has not been easy for him to do the right thing. Many "superior" Buddhist Sinhalese hate giving an inch to "inferior" Hindu Tamil. The main opposition party, beating a Sinhalese drum, has attacked the government's proposals. All the more important that Mr Jayewardene should get the backing he needs from India. If a peace deal is struck, the Tamil guerrillas based in southern India—who have lately been behaving like straight terrorists—will try to destroy it. India's Mr Rajiv Gandhi says he will throw them out if they do. The government of the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu, where the guerrillas have their camps, seems to be willing to help. Indian performance does not always match Indian good intentions. This time, with real Indian help the Tigers can be tamed.

— Editorial (The Economist)

Why the U.S. is the target

Reports from Harare as the Zimbabwean capital prepared to play host to the 8th Nonaligned summit, confirmed our impression that the South African crisis will overshadow most other issues debated at a conference which is the world's most representative gathering outside the U.N. And when South Africa is discussed, the Third World's guns will point at the United States and Britain. Both but more particularly the Reagan administration, its spokesmen, and sections of the western media will all moan that another NAM meeting has conducted the customary exercise of US-bashing. The Non-aligned are not 'genuinely' non-aligned, the all-too predictable criticism will go.

Yet, this time the NAM will surely have an effective and ready reply to that oft-repeated objection. Did the NAM or its African members create the crisis or was it South Africa and its brutal racist regime? Was it NAM members in the Commonwealth which resisted the idea of sanctions or was it Britain? Was it the NAM or the US president who denounced his own Senate for proposing 'some' sanctions?

The thesis behind this familiar attack on NAM is that it should always be equally critical of the two superpowers. True, NAM's fundamental position is that it adopts an independent line on international issues without being guided by or dictated to by either the US or the USSR. But it is each issue that determines the responses. No intelligent individual or responsible government approaches an international problem with the pre-conceived notion that

he (or it) must accept as his first duty to criticise the superpowers equally. The first task is to examine the issue and judge the merits and demerits of each superpower's attitude or action. This is the NAM's basic principle — an independent, objective approach to general issues of war, peace stability, economic development etc, and to specific problems or situations — debit, commodity prices, Middle-east, Libya, Nicaragua Afghanistan, Lebanon, etc.

On Afghanistan, NAM will definitely re-affirm its total opposition to all forms of intervention and interference in its affairs and a restoration of its non-aligned status but it cannot ignore the recent announcement by the Soviet leader of a withdrawal of six regiments. Of course, that has been criticised as inadequate; it is. But is it a step forward or step back? Does it help the UN negotiations on a settlement or doesn't it help? To both questions the answer has to be a positive one.

On the other hand, has there been a matching response from the US? Has the US said it would cut the vast sums of money it is funneling through Pakistan to help the anti-Kabul rebels, with full logistical support and arms aid from nonaligned Pakistan? No.

It was not the USSR but the US which wantonly violated international law by conducting bombing raids on non-military targets in Libya, killing innocent civilians, including children. Surely, it is inevitable that the NAM will condemn that action on a member state. It is South Africa that is actively assisting Jonas Savimba's

UNITA to pursue its 10 year war against the Angolan government, and it is Mr. Reagan who openly funds UNITA. It was the same South Africa's air planes that attacked Zimbabwe the NAM host and Zambia, host of 3rd summit. Would it not be a surprise if these two countries, and African neighbours, demanded a resolution branding such 'operations' as acts of aggression?

It was the US that the International Court held guilty for mining the ports of Nicaragua, and financing the 'Contras'. Would a NAM resolution not be in order?

The whole issue was placed in its proper perspective by the *New York Times* correspondent who covered the recent meeting of 6 leading Third World nations in Mexico.

Flora Lewis wrote:

The United States is losing now on the two most crucial, emotional issues that stir opinion around the world — arms control and South Africa.

This was evident at a meeting here leading up to a six-nation summit conference on peace and disarmament. It has been evident in Europe lately, and it is likely to be thunderously evident at the huge meeting of the nonaligned nations in Zimbabwe.

The summit here will be the second of leaders of countries on five continents: Argentina, India, Tanzania, Sweden, Greece and Mexico. In their New Delhi declaration last year they called for a ban on nuclear testing and space arms. Predictably, Mikhail Gorbachev answered their appeal with a warm endorsement. Ronald Reagan did not bother to reply.

That did not make great waves at the time. Since then, though, Mr. Gorbachev has announced his moratorium on testing, publicized a series

of proposals for arms reduction and showed some willingness to permit new measures for verification. He has convinced a lot of worried people that he wants to cut back on the arms race Mr. Reagan has not.

Similarly on Asian issues, it is Mr. Gorbachev who has taken the initiative, and it is not merely a matter of style, although it is abundantly clear since the first summit that the Soviet leader is now beating the 'Great Communicator' at his own game by willing to make bold, fresh and imaginative moves which even the Soviet Union's critics are obliged to sit up and consider. An Asian-Pacific Helsinki may take, as Mr. Kapitsa explains (see

interview) ten years. So did Helsinki. What matters though is the readiness to re-think old positions, identify possibilities for compromises that are mutually beneficial and are broadly conducive to the reduction of bilateral or regional tensions.

"We require a radical break with traditions of political thinking...with views on problem of war and peace, ... and on international security" he said in his Vladivostok speech which inspired the **Far Eastern Economic Review** the best known journal of regional affairs, to put Mr. Gorbachev on its cover, with a

ten-page report entitled "Moscow's Asian initiatives", edited by the Review's diplomatic correspondent Richard Nations. Noting that the breath of vision informing Gorbachev's appeal was characteristic", he highlighted Moscow's new approach to ASEAN, the new Soviet presence in the South Pacific, the troop-withdrawal announcement, and his call for an Asia-Pacific Disarmament conference to reduce naval forces, remove foreign bases, and control nuclear weapons in the area — a proposal which captures the spirit of Sri Lanka's Indian Ocean peace zone resolution in the UN in 1971.

— JAY

KAPITSA INTERVIEW

ASIA—PACIFIC HELSINKI

In the expansive and self-confident style typical of many Soviet officials, Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Kapitsa discussed in an interview with the REVIEW Moscow's proposal for an all-Asian forum. Excerpts follow:

"Asia is the biggest continent in the world, with the largest concentration of populations, and yet it is the most unhappy of continents. Since the end of World War II there have been 30 wars, and currently there are four wars continuing — the one in the Near East (Lebanon), the Iran-Iraq war, Afghanistan and in Indochina.

Now we are about to enter into the 21st century, when the region will be the centre of the most dynamic of activities. So we must think about how we are going to live on that continent and how we are to tackle the security and economic problems arising.

"Now we have the example of Europe, with the (1975) Helsinki Conference involving all the nations of Europe, plus the US and Canada. And this gave us a code of behaviour (which has

allowed) Europe to live in peace for 10 years.

So why don't we try to do the same in Asia? Some say that the situation is different in Asia. OK, so it took some eight years to get Helsinki under way, so maybe it will take 10, 15 or even 20 years of a similar conference in Asia. But we must have some goal!

"At Helsinki, the problem was strengthening borders, but some say that in Asia this approach cannot bring results. OK, let's put borders aside. Let's concentrate instead on the preservation of peace, the reduction of armies, the creation of nuclear weapons free zones, the preservation of the environment, the expansion of human contacts and the region's economic security.

"The Soviet Union would propose the reduction of naval fleets, the decrease of military activities along the main sea lanes of communication and general confidence-building measures.

"Some say that half of (the Soviet Union) is in Europe and that it would be preferable if only purely Asian nations would

put forward proposals. Fine! We don't ask for credit for this initiative. We welcome ideas from all countries. Let us think about the proposals put forward by India, by Indochina. Why not take up the Mongolia initiative to sign a convention of non-aggression and non-use of force for the nations of Asia? The important thing is to get started.

"We want America to participate. But the Pacific belongs to everybody — to Fiji, Australia, to all who live there. So when (US Deputy Defence Secretary Richard) Armitage says that the borders of the US extend 5,000 miles from the American West Coast, well that is rubbish — pure imperialism — and no body can agree if America tries to convert the Pacific into its internal lake.

"The US has 300 bases, six aircraft-carrier battle groups and the strongest fleet in the world based in the Pacific. And they are trying to create a new military bloc in the Pacific called the Pacific Community. But why do we need many new Natos?"

Part II

The two paths before us

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

In this context, the positive role which India, and the State of Tamilnadu in particular, can play can have a decisive impact in accelerating a political settlement and creating the conditions in which militant Tamil groups move from military confrontation to the acceptance of a just political settlement. At the same time, more positive and broad-based contacts and relationships between Sri Lanka, India and the State of Tamilnadu need to be established and strengthened to promote better understanding of the complex nature of the ethnic problem and its repercussions for each country. This should help all parties to make a more objective and balanced appraisal of the real situation and create the goodwill and support for a reasonable political settlement. In this connection the initiatives already taken by several non-governmental groups as well as members of political parties such as the LSSP and the SLMP are in the right direction. A constructive dialogue with Tamilnadu political leaders can make a vital contribution to the peaceful resolution of the conflict. Such a dialogue ought to be promoted at a high political level.

Adjustments between now and the political settlement

However, the speed and success with which we reach a peaceful settlement would depend vitally on the behaviour and the response of the Sri Lanka people to the trials that they may have to face in the immediate period ahead, between now and any effective agreement on a political settlement. There is great concern among all peace-loving citizens that the new wave of violence and terror which has reached the South may lead once again to a back-lash of retaliatory violence against citizens. After the violence of July 1983, one of the most hopeful aspects

of the present situation that has developed has been the capacity that has been demonstrated by the common people as a whole to act with reason and restraint in the face of several brutal and inhuman acts against innocent civilians committed by the militant groups. It is in this capacity that the greatest strength of our people lies. It is only if we are able to protect and renew it in the midst of the terror and violence that assails us that we would be able to preserve our common humanity, uphold our spiritual heritage to ourselves and the world and maintain the stability and discipline of an orderly civilised society. It is only then we can succeed in defeating the objectives of violence and restoring peace and unity to our country. The present situation in fact is the moment of greatest trial to Sri Lanka. The way the people act now will determine the quality of our society which we preserve and build for ourselves and for our children.

Sri Lanka is a small nation which urgently needs the goodwill and assistance of the international community, both for the solution of the present conflict as well as for our economic progress and political stability. This goodwill and support depends crucially on our ability to manage the present conflict and the violence it has generated with a profound concern for justice and respect for human rights. This message has to be heard in every home, in schools, and wherever people congregate. The Political leaders, party organisations and the media must constantly propagate this message and keep it ever present in the consciousness of the people.

The recent acts of terror committed by militant groups and directed indiscriminately against civilians have been different from almost all other manifestations of violence

that we have witnessed, whether they be army reprisals or mob violence or isolated acts of violence. All these acts of violence, in whatever form they manifest themselves, have to be unequivocally condemned. However, in the strategy of terrorist violence which we have recently witnessed, there is a deliberate and premeditated rejection of all human considerations which are not amendable to the controls and sanctions normally available to society. People of all communities, including those groups which have regarded the struggle of the Tamil militant groups with some degree of sympathy, must explicitly condemn these acts. The international media, the advocates of human rights and other non-governmental groups who enjoy some influence among the Tamil militant groups and who are able to reach their conscience must voice their moral condemnation and create an environment which can become an effective sanction against further escalation of violence.

The terrorist acts in the South have created an environment of distrust and suspicion which if affecting all Sinhala-Tamil relations. Tamils living in the areas outside the North and East engaged in their legitimate occupations and pursuing their normal activities, tend to be perceived collectively as security risks. The evidence that some of the acts could not have been committed without involvement of persons in the South, has reinforced this mistrust. There is no doubt the people as a whole have to be in a new state of constant vigilance and alertness.

The Civil Defence Commission, which is being established by the government, can serve a very useful purpose if it strengthens existing precautions and introduces new disciplines which can habituate people to take preventive action as well as respond in an

orderly manner and take prompt remedial action when terrorist outrages do occur. An efficient system of this nature when in operation, should help reduce the traditional sense of insecurity that can be indiscriminately directed against all Tamils living among us. The routines which can ensure this state will then apply without obvious discrimination. Policies which single out Tamils as security risks in their places of work and adopt measures which keep them away, as has happened, can have far-reaching consequences in destroying what remains of the trust and confidence between the Sinhalese and Tamils. The dilemmas facing the government in the current situation are indeed extremely difficult. Nevertheless, every effort has to be made through stricter security systems where appropriate and more discriminatory identification of security risks to enable Tamil citizens to continue their normal lives. The long-standing relationships of trust and friendship which cut across ethnic divisions, wherever they have grown need to be strengthened and nurtured by the people of all communities during this period of ordeal. Trade unions and workers in work places must devise means of ensuring security without further eroding Sinhala-Tamil relations, and the Tamil sense of citizenship as Sri Lankans. The peace-loving Tamil people must themselves work together with the other communities to help in dispelling the mounting fear and suspicion. Religious bodies and non-governmental organisations can provide the leadership in these efforts.

The response to the brutality of the terrorist acts committed by the militant groups has to be balanced by an honest recognition of the tragic conditions in the North and the East. The action of the security forces to deal with the present situation in resulting in the deaths of many civilians, the destruction of homes and the large-scale disruption of normal life. The decision of the security forces to resort to aerial bombing and coastal attacks by the navy are drastic examples. We are fully aware of the military

reasons that have been urged in justifying some of these acts. It has been pointed out that the aerial and naval attacks have been essentially efforts to provide protective cover for troops who were carrying out security operations. However, it has to be realised that the method of wholesale military attack which is involved in aerial and naval attacks are normally undertaken in international warfare when such attacks are directed at hostile territory and when the responsibility for protecting citizens has to be assumed by the hostile government. In the present situation innocent civilians are exposed to these attacks with little or no effort on the part of the state to protect them from the consequences of the attacks. Therefore, in situations of internal conflict resort to methods of warfare of this type has to be avoided at all costs. Repeated assurances have been given by the army that operations are conducted with the utmost concern for civilian life and every effort is made to keep civilians out of the direct line of fire. The imposition of curfews and the avoidance of direct attacks on civilian settlements and places of worship are cited as examples. However, the nature and scale of the present combat is such that the actions taken by the army to attack armed Tamil groups in their locations, or to repel attacks by such groups on army camps, invariably result in great suffering for non-combatant civilians. The only effective way of safeguarding human life is by ending the present violence and moving with utmost speed toward a political settlement. If this is not done, the path before us leads us into conditions in which each side retaliates with increasing violence and engages in a process of mutual destruction which will soon become irreversible and cause enormous damage to the way of life cherished by every community. The success with which a political solution is accepted and implemented will depend crucially on the concern and the responsibility of the state for the large majority of non-combatant civilians in the North and the East. One common agreement is that the state cannot assume responsibility

for the deaths and damage caused by civil disorder and insurrection. This is reinforced by the charge that the civilian population as a whole is hostile to the government and sympathetic to the armed struggle. Such an approach will inevitably alienate the majority of civilians who will realise that they cannot look to the Sri Lankan government for support and succour. The state must act clearly on the assumption that the death of civilians and the damage to property in the course of military action calls for some form of relief and rehabilitation.

Establishment of the appropriate machinery to provide such relief in the case of civilian grievances and losses will help a great deal to restore confidence and to create the conditions for reconciliation.

Post-settlement phase and militant groups

We need to give thought right now to the problems which will face the country, particularly the North and the East, after a political settlement is reached. Indeed, the imponderable character of some of the issues in the post-settlement phase the vagueness and uncertainty effecting many of the Tamil groups taking a leading part in the military action, has a direct bearing on the settlement. It must influence their approach to a settlement and their willingness to accept it. The essential consequences of a settlement would be hopefully an end to the armed conflict, and the establishment of a system of provincial devolution within the framework of democracy for country as a whole. All those involved in finding a solution to the present conflict must give careful consideration to the future of the militant groups and the way they accommodate to the new political regime. Here again various groups which have been sympathetic to the militant groups and extended moral and material support to them can help in this critical phase of transition. Can these groups, after their long and bitter experience of violence and terror, transform themselves into mainstream political parties within a

(Continued on page 21)

Will Kipling's flanneled fools unite or divide S.A.A.R.C?

It all started with Ashis Nandy's 'Tiruchelvam' lecture in Colombo on Ranjitsingji and Nationalism. Using Nandy's provocative reflections on Imperialism and nationalism as a point of departure, a Sri Lankan writer contributed an article to the Hong Kong-based *Far Eastern Economic Review* which posed the semi-serious question whether the cult of cricket now spreading through South Asia, and old colonial outposts like Hong Kong would help re-unify the fragmented British Empire. Or would the fierce conflicts on the field splinter the lately established S. A. A. R. C?

In his weekly column *Travellers Tales*, editor Derek Davies, then made a marginal comment (May 22) on the divisive forces at work in the Indian sub-continent, while cricket-loving readers from Washington to Singapore and Malaysia joined the lively debate on the current cricket craze. Finally, Ashok Mitra writing from Calcutta reported on the Australasia Cup in Sharjah which still being watched on TV screens in Sri Lanka by enthusiastic fans.

The Ashok Mitra article and the letters and comments are taken from issues of the *REVIEW* published between May 1 and July 31.

Traveller's Tales

Only a few months ago, many of the political clouds over the Subcontinent appeared likely to roll away; now they have thickened again. Perhaps the onset of Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting, will help reduce the temperature in Pakistan, where the mass enthusiasm inspired by Benazir Bhutto

must have taken the government aback, and in Bangladesh where the opposition's strength also surprised the authorities and threatened the election. In Nepal the "party-less" formula is under challenge. In India the Punjabi voices of moderation are once again being drowned out by the screams of extremists. And now, President Junius Jayawardene states that unless India ceases its support for the Tamil separatists, he must unleash the full might of the army — otherwise he envisages a partitioned Sri Lanka. Even the game of cricket, as reported by Mervyn de Silva (*REVIEW*, 1 May), has set the Subcontinent at each other's throats.

And, only a few short months ago, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi seemed to be taking much of the heat and light out of India's relations with its neighbours. Politics — and of course religion — always seem to get in the way in South Asia where "the best lacks all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity."

Derek Davies

Leather, willow, mystique

Mervyn de Silva (*REVIEW*, 1 May) must surely have been bowling off the wrong foot, or else tating on a sticky wicket, to say that the "The Kiplingesque mystique" was "shattered long ago." Kipling, who sneered at "flannelled fools at the wicket" hardly conferred any mystique on this elegant game. True, its mystique has departed, but only after the very last Gentleman vs Players match at Lords and when batsmen started wearing helmets. But some

mystique lingers: the game's most tricky ball, the "googly," is also known as the "Chinaman" though neither the Middle Kingdom nor its Nanyang progeny have taken kindly to the game.

The other prince — not mentioned by de Silva — to reach "the pinnacle of the game" besides Ranji and Pataudi was Ranji's nephew, Duleepsinhji, "the very perfect gentle knight" (Robertson Glasgow), who played for Cambridge, Sussex and England. I remain, sir, "not out."

Anand G. Chandavarkar
Washington

Bowled over

Anand G. Chandavarkar (*LETTERS*, 3 July) was obviously trying to impress with his "intimate" knowledge of cricket. However, he goofed. Bowlers are left-or right-armed and not left-handed as he put it. Batsmen, though, are described as left-or right-handed.

Johor Baru

Ho Fee Ying

Defending the 'apostle'

The recent 50th anniversary of Rudyard Kipling's death became another occasion for reevaluation. Some critics continued the rescue operation started in the 1940s by T. S. Eliot, from the ideological Right, and later by Edmund Wilson, from the Left. While the solid literary virtues of some of Kipling's poetry and a few of his stories do indeed make him a writer of quality, his quintessential work earned him the accolade "Apostle of Empire." That judgment abides.

*Thank God you made the British Isles
and taught me how to play,
I do not worship crocodies,
or bow the knee to clay.
Give me a willow wand and I
with hide and cork and twine
from century to century
will gambol round my shrine.*

Reader Anan G. Chandavarkar's reference to Kipling's "flannelled fools," (REVIEW, 5 June) does not meet the basic point I made about the "Kiplingesque mystique." The imperial order received moral sustenance from a code of behaviour which bore a quasireligious sanctity. Thus, "not cricket" was the ultimate taboo, an instant reason for ex-communication from the Englishman's exclusive club.

For reader Chandavakar the mystique departed with the last "Gentleman-versus-Players" match. Not so according to Birley's well-researched study which argues convincingly that the distinction was never very real, the great Victorian "gentlemen" being capable for the most unspeakably caddish things like suborning umpires. The religion of cricket flourished nonetheless to portray the Englishman as a special breed whose exceptional values were epitomised by the great game. "In the golden age," writes Birley, its god was Kipling's and Sir Theodore Cook's and Newbolt's — undoubtedly an upper-class Englishman.

Thus, surely, "The Chinaman," one of a lesser breed, an allusion originally to the rival German imperialists but in fact to all breeds save the Bulldog. Who else but a "Chinaman" (the racial slur is clear) could be bad enough to bowl an "off-break" with his left arm to a right-handed bat.

If I did bowl off the wrong foot, I was only emulating the example of Lala Amarnath, another great Indian player who did just that and with stunning success, sir. Chandavakar looks to the pavilion for cheers but I hear no applause from your readers who obviously saw no straight drive to the fence, only a feeble attempt to steal a steady (cheeky?) single.

Colombo

Mervyn de Silva.

Recently, the REVIEW has run a number of articles on cricket. As an avid reader of your magazine, I would like to submit the following definition of cricket.

CRICKET

*You have two sides in the field,
One team that's in and the other
that's out
And when the side that's in goes out,
The side that's out comes in and
tries to get those coming in out.
And when both sides, have come in
and been out (including the
notouts),
That's the end of the game.
Howzat?*

Radhakrishna Narasimham
Hongkong

China's offbreak

I sent down a "no ball" in my letter (LETTERS, 5 June) by confusing the "googly" (an offbreak bowled with a legbreak action) with the "Chinaman," which is an offbreak bowled from the back or side of the hand by a left-handed bowler. The name derives from the Chinese bowler Ellis Achong (West Indies) who practised such bowling though he did not pioneer it. The Nanyang did produce a cricketer of status.

Anand G. Chandavarkar
Washington

Wrong region

Anand G. Chandavarkar unfortunately seems to have bungled again (LETTERS, 3 July) while correcting his previous letter of 5 June. This time though, it isn't a cricketing error, it's over the Chinese word, Nanyang which in Chinese literally means "South Seas" or the region south of China — in effect, Southeast Asia,

The Japanese equivalent is Nanyo and in my own Chaochow dialect, it is Namyo.

As Ellis Achong was from the other side of the world (West Indies), Nanyang could not have produced him. Evidently the letter writer confusedly thought the word meant the Chinese diaspora.

Singapore

J. Chia

Cricket frenzy unites a dishevelled subcontinent

By Ashok Mitra in Calcutta

When India met Pakistan on a cricket pitch in Sharjah for the finals of the Australasia Cup in April, at least 15 million of their compatriots were gathered around TV sets for the occasion. It was a dream final. The last ball of the match: Pakistan wins if it can score four runs or more from it. Chetan Sharma, the young Indian bowler, plans to deliver unplayable swinging sorker; he ends up bowling a tame fulltoss, which Javed Miandad, the Pakistani swashbuckler, heaves for a huge six; jubilation in Pakistan, gloom in India.

Cricket and the people have come together, at least in Sri Lanka, Pakistan and India. Transister radios followed by TV have been the catalysts. The British departed almost 40 years ago, but their quintessential gift, cricket, remains. Thanks to Australian Kerry Packer and his channel Nine, the colonisation which is cricket is complete. And in India for one, it is the major unifier of a fractured nation.

Like the legacy of the English language, cricket too is a many splendoured phenomenon. In the Caribbean isles, it has been rendered into a most joyous weapon with which to torment the White folks. It was not quite so in the beginning. The West Indians started playing cricket much in the manner they sang the Calypso: man, it makes you feel great — bowl a sizzler of a bouncer, make an impossible catch in the first slip, launch on a ferocious cover drive.

Things changed in the 1970s, maybe as a consequence of an indiscreet remark on the part of Tony Greig, the English captain, on the eve of a West Indies tour: "We will make them grovel." Monotonously, for the past 10 years, the Caribbeans are showing who will make whom grovel. In 10 successive test matches against the West Indies,

England has gone down to ignominious defeat, and controversy whether the feat is to be described as a whitewash or a blackwash.

Cricket in the West Indies has currently reached such a pinnacle of excellence that talk of competition from others is treated with a contemptuous disregard. It is a fascinating combination of brutality and Poetry, as if cricket were the answer for the ignominy of the slavery and indented labour spanning beyond four centuries.

Come to the Subcontinent, though, and the game has a different ambience. Its colonial-imperial antecedent has ceased to matter. Rather, cricket, you will be told with a touch of pride, links the Commonwealth nations together. And since the World Cup final in 1983, when the Indian team defeated the West Indies while millions watched on TV, it has been one long frenzy.

In India as in the West Indies cricket has attained an intense political significance. This nation is usually in sixes and sevens with itself. Indira Gandhi was a natural inspirer of divisiveness; her policy of centralising power and resources has been the progenitor of friction and tension. The adheaviness of the nation, an outsider is entitled to suspect, is more an aspect of inertia.

* * *

Scan the nation's newspapers: gory killings in Punjab, sullen animosity between ethnic groups in Assam, caste and communal riots in state after state, raucous battle over finance between the government in New Delhi and the non-Congress administrations in more than half a dozen states. And fights between draught-plagued states over water rights or competing to entice industries, threats to reserve jobs for only native sons and daughters, vociferous protests against the imposition of Hindi on those not born into the language. From the newspapers, it seems the nation has already fallen apart; only a

fuzzy laziness on somebody or other's part still keeps it going

Things are different when an international cricket match is on, whether at home or overseas. While the is on, India, the dishevelled nation, constantly on the verge of chaos, comes together, a uniquely integrated nation, cutting across the barriers of language, cast, religion ethnicity, sex, region and class. It could be a test match of the leisurely, variety or one of the one-day species. For the duration of the match, TV comes alive. Satellite time is hired with a gay abandon; if not Channel Nine itself, the national variants of it take charge.

* * *

Strangers troop into your living room, for you have a TV set. The neighbourhood shop dispensing cigarettes and soft drinks installs a miniature set, enabling customers and passers-by to stop and watch the nation's fluctuating fortunes. By popular demand offices and factories install sets within their premises. Attendance in those places registers a steep decline. Ideological divides temporarily disappear. The leftwing member of parliament is about as vociferous in demanding an adjournment of the House as his arch reactionary colleague across the floor, so that the two together can witness, in the tranquillity of the legislators lobby, the suspenseful final 10 overs of the match.

As the date of the next important international match is announced, sales of TV sets jump domestic and office schedules are re-adjusted, and the nation—at least that part of it which matters, the hungry and the destitute never do—is joined in a single-minded objective.

TV programmes are on every other occasion the butt of severe criticism: they are a conspiracy to foist Hindi on the other groups, they have become the ruling party's propaganda pieces, they are lowering the nation's ethical standards, their excessive display of commercial advertise-

ments threaten to give rise to a vacuous consumer culture, they are ruining the eyes of our children. Live telecasts of cricket matches are a different proposition—the demand is to have more and more of them.

It is a strange denouement. India, a nation in different forms at war with itself for the past several years, discovers its united persona only when indulging in an imperial legacy. One is still not sure whether it proves anything. Certainly it is not just cricket, but cricket as it is served up, with all its allure, real and ersatz, on the TV screen.

The government in New Delhi, worried over the assorted squabbles afflicting the nation, has kept constituting and reconstituting a national integration council, strengthened the armed forces and the internal security apparatus and tried out different educational and cultural formats in order to bring the people of the land together. But with hardly any success. Suddenly, cricket on the idiot box has emerged as the grand conciliator. Televised cricket, while it is on, is the opiate of the people. However, as with the narcotic, here too the effect does not last.

The two paths . . .

(Continued from page 18)

democratic system? Would they be ready to accept the electoral verdict of such a system? Can they be rapidly absorbed into normal responsibilities which enable them to re-integrate themselves into society? At present, with ready access to weapons, and ability to exercise authority over the community, backed by their military capability, they enjoy a way of life and wield power which they will have to abjure, if a political solution is reached. These crucial questions of the post-settlement phase have to be specially addressed by all those who are involved in the negotiations for a Political solution.

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Book Review

No room in the Inn

Paul Caspersz

Yvonne Fries & Thomas Bibin. **The Undesirables: the expatriation of the Tamil people "of recent Indian origin" from the plantations in Sri Lanka to India.** Calcutta: Bagchi & Company, 1984.

Some things hit the headlines. Others, equally important and even sensational, just don't. The opening up of the plantations, the coming of the south Indian workers, their plantation corrals, the denial of citizenship to them in 1948 and 1949, their ensuing statelessness, the Indo-Ceylon inter-governmental Agreements regarding them, the actual implementation of the Agreements, the January 1986 Act to end statelessness — each event following its predecessor with karmic consequentiality — fall, most of them, most of the time, into the second category.

The fate of relative oblivion seems to extend even to comment on the facts. Such comment has not been wanting, however — of, H.A.I. Goonetilleke's selected bibliographies in **Voice of the Voiceless**, the *Bulletins of the Co-ordinating Secretariat for Plantation Areas*, Nos 1-5, August 1980 — June 1981 and the five published volumes of his **A Bibliography of Ceylon**. But notice taken of all such comment has been relatively sparse and tardy.

The book presently under review does not seem to have escaped the fate. It was first published in India in 1984. So far, this is the first public notice directed to the book in Sri Lanka and probably little or no notice has been taken even in India.

Yvonne Fries is a member of the "Swallows in Sweden". she visited South India and Sri Lanka in 1975-6 and was quickly shaken by what she learnt of the situation described in the book. Thomas Bibin has been a frequent visitor to Sri Lanka since 1970. He, like so many other foreign guests in

our country, has been taken by the kindness of our people but, being different from the ordinary run of sun-beach tourists, has agonized by its stopping short at the plantation workers. The result for both is the book.

The first two chapters sketch the historical background from the time of the arrival of the Tamil workers in the first half of the 19th century to the two Repatriation Agreements of 1964 and 1974. By these Agreements, India agreed to grant its citizenship and take to India 600,000 persons while Ceylon agreed to grant citizenship and retain 375,000 — the figure 975,000 having been accepted by both sides as being approximately the number of stateless people in the island 1964.

Not indeliberately do the authors speak of expatriation rather than of repatriation. The Donoughmore Commission in 1928 estimated that about 40-50 per cent of the plantation workers was permanently settled in this country. Ten years later in 1938 the Jackson Report on Immigration raised the figure to 60 per cent. Finally in 1946 the Soulbury commission reported that 80 per cent of the plantation people was permanently settled in Sri Lanka. Complete socio-cultural integration takes much longer than permanent settlement — as the experience of immigrants into other countries has also shown — but it is permanent settlement that should decide the patria for the immigrants and their children.

When the men and women immigrated from South India to Sri Lanka in the 19th century they faced hardships comparable to those of the Africans herded into the Americas as slaves in earlier centuries. They helped the British to build the plantation system and the plantation economy on the base — here as in other plantation societies — of the grin-

ding and continuing exploitation of cheap imported labour. The Agreements of 1964 and 1974 have forced thousands of them to return to the districts of South India from where their ancestors of several generations ago came. The 20th century journey is no less fraught with hardship and is more laden with anxiety than the journey of the 19th. When all this happening to so many people in our own country, in our own day and time, **The Undesirables** makes it impossible for anyone reading it anymore to clam an alibi.

The four chapters in the middle of the 8-chapter book contain a great number of firsthand interviews which the authors conducted in India with persons who had arrived from Sri Lanka. The interviews have been recorded delicately and bear internal evidence of authenticity even in translation. Most heart-rending perhaps are the encounters which the authors had with those who went with high hopes to their **sonda ur** or ancestral village. A thousand memories of this village had been handed down in the dark line-room of the Sri Lankan estate from the elders of one generation to the children of the next, conjuring up visions of the wonders of a heritage that had been surrendered only for a time. And what is the reception accorded in the **sonda ur**? "Oh no, this simply be your **ur**. If you say you had land here years and years ago, it must have been sold or mortgaged long ago. Now there's just not enough for you and for us. Go away — away!" Undesirables twice over, only death will deliver them from the wretchedness of earth.

The two final chapters of the book are unfortunately too much acrimonious and too little constructive. It is true that broader vision and more careful consideration of the citizenship laws of other countries made independent in the aftermath of the War

(Continued on page 28)

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Towards a consensus ?

Radhika Coomaraswamy

INDIAN CONSTITUTION

9. Before discussing the actual provisions of the Proposals, it is important to note that many of the principles and in fact much of the language in the proposals and in the draft legislation which has been circulated is drawn directly from the Indian Constitution. However, the Indian Constitution is the result of a different political and legal process. Constitutional provisions are often copied from other societies, this is not new, but one may have to make adjustments to suit our own reality. Two aspects come to mind with regard to the Indian Constitution. The first is that the Indian Constitution is a federal one while we in Sri Lanka are trying to squeeze devolution within a unitary framework. The Indian Constitution in its very structure recognises the sovereign will of the regions or states, ours does not. We can scrap any scheme with a 2/3 majority in Parliament. Their's is a political devolution, which is recognised and secure, ours is attempting to be a political decentralisation within an administrative framework. Secondly, the Indian Constitution was drafted just after the nationalist movement when trust within the Indian polity, especially trust in leaders such as Nehru and Gandhi was extremely high. Nobody was thinking in terms of maximising safeguards against the Centre but accepted a genuine give and take. It is only in the 1960's that other issues emerged. In our context, these provisions are being drafted at the height of our national conflict in which there is no trust and very little goodwill. Safeguards then become important considerations especially in a unitary framework where the Centre as I said by a mere 2/3

majority can scrap the scheme altogether. Given the political framework, where Tamil voting power regionally based is less than 2/3 of national voting power, this gives a certain measure of insecurity to the minority. Ironically, in reading articles in the papers and also the SLFP statement, it appears that this national control does not seem to give any sense of security to the Sinhalese.

II. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSALS:

FINANCING:

10. In discussing the proposals let us begin with what is not included in the proposals but which is essential if the scheme is to succeed. The first and most important factor is that there are no provisions on Finance. Presumably this will be worked out by the PPC itself. Given the fact that all sides agree that one of the reasons why the DDCs failed is because there was no adequate finance, one would have expected this to be one of the most detailed aspects of the proposals. Perhaps there is something to the statement that lawyers rush in where economists fear to tread. Annexure 'C' of 1984 envisioned a broad range of powers to be granted to the periphery to raise revenue. But, powers are meaningless unless there is also a resource base. In that context, what appears to be developing Sri Lanka today is foreign aid and foreign loans. Will the Provincial Councils have the power to raise foreign loans? What will be the nature of Central Government control? Can foreign loans be denied arbitrarily or will objective criteria for decision making have to be worked

out? These are all questions which have to be faced and answered. Presumably, the finances for the province will greatly depend on a Central Government Finance Commission which will make grants to each Province. But aren't these funds limited? What are the criteria by which such grants will be given? It may be necessary to work all this out in detail beforehand. After all these political efforts, if the scheme were to fail for lack of financial feasibility, then the efforts will be only part of a wasted process.

REGIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE:

11. Another important aspect which is not mentioned in the proposals is the area of a regional public service to administer the Provinces. This is perhaps not as crucial as the section on finances but the terms and conditions of employment, their link to the national service etc... have yet to be worked out.

DISSOLUTION:

12. A third important aspect which is not clearly covered in the proposals is the subject of the "dissolution of the provincial Councils" by the Centre in the event of disagreements with the Governor, or with the Centre. The DDC Act allowed dissolution by the Minister in charge on ground such as mismanagement etc... after an independent judicial hearing. This is dissolution as it operates on administrative bodies and after precedents set up in the administrative laws of this country. However, when it comes to provincial bodies which are elected, this kind of dissolution is not feasible because of the political nature of the body. In this context it may be necessary to work out how and why the Governor or the President can dissolve the Provincial Councils. Perhaps the

provisions with regard to the dissolution of the national parliament can operate at the provincial level with regard to provincial councils, thus ensuring a time-limit and subsequent elections.

DEMOCRATIC CLIMATE:

13. There are many aspects, not directly linked to the proposals, but which will determine the climate for implementation, which have not been included as part of the package. For eg: a ceasefire — in fact a ceasefire should have been a first priority. Also such matters as Amnesty, the Removal of Emergency and the PTA have also to be considered.

The SLFP has also been urging that the proposals be linked to a greater democratisation in the South. In fact it is said that the SLEP rejection of the proposals came after the reading of sections of the Chidambaram papers which stated that provincial Council Elections will be held in the North and not in the South. If the PPC solution is to be seen as a genuine political solution, it cannot be fettered by petty politicking. It should apply to the whole country, as a democratic exercise for everyone. Otherwise, arguments of unfairness will cloud any achievement of peace. In fact the constitutional amendment could be struck down under the equal protection clause of the constitution.

SHARING OF POWER AT THE CENTRE:

In addition to creating a democratic climate, no provisions have been set up for the possibility of sharing power at the Centre, for eg: Tamil being made an official language or the creation of a second chamber or the creation of a type by Ethnic Relations Commission. These are also matters for consideration

III. WHAT HAS FORMED A BASIS FOR CONSENSUS:

14. Having looked at what is not there for us to comment upon, we should perhaps move onto what provisions are included, and

which ones appear to form a basis for consensus in light of publicly stated comments and the TULF working paper:

(1) Constitutional Basis:

The first basis that both parties appear to agree on is that the PPCs should take the form of a constitutional amendment which allows for a substantial amount of devolution within a unitary constitution. The nature and extent of devolution and whether it should have a federal spirit within a unitary structure is the possible area of contention. Many people including Jehan Perera, the NSSP etc... have stated openly that Sinhala fear about the use of the word federalism is unfounded and actually inhibits a solution. The need to balance unitary against federal aspects so as to avoid a referendum is an approach which is a basic premise of the negotiation. The Supreme Court will finally decide the outcome but a lot of the Juggling and wording of provisions is done with this concern in mind. This leads to awkward document and prevents a truly effective give and take.

(2) Legislative Power:

There is also agreement on the structure of legislative power that should be devolved to the units and that the councils should be the product of elections. There is also agreement that the Chief Minister of the Council should be one from a party which commands a majority of the house. He should also be generally responsible for the day to day administration of the province.

(3) Judiciary:

There is also agreement about the structure of the Judiciary, the presence of a high court in each province and the location of the courts of appeal in Colombo.

(4) Subjects to be Devolved:

There also appear to be some agreement on the nature of the subjects to be devolved? those included in the DDC schedule along with certain aspect of lands and land settlement and law and order. The details of the devolution have yet to be worked out.

In other words, though there are some minor disagreements, there appears to be a consensus on the principles in the areas outlined above. Most of the principles relate to the structure of the devolved units, the elections to take place and the list of subjects.

IV. WHAT ARE THE AREAS OF CONTENTION:

Now let us come to the areas of contention among the parties. They are indeed formidable, but perhaps not unbridgeable. In analysing these areas I think we have to accept the basic principle behind a process of negotiation. There can never be agreement on bottom line principles or on rhetorical declarations. Creativity in negotiation requires the formulations of alternative principles which will satisfy aspirations on both sides. It is in this constructive spirit that I will go through the contentious areas of negotiation.

MERGER OF NORTH & EAST:

16. The first area of contention and I think the area on which the peace process rests is the issue of the merger of the northern and eastern provinces. The proposals as such accept a separate province for the north and a separate province for the east with inter-province co-ordination. The Tamil groups on the other hand want the recognition of a Tamil Linguistic region and a merger of the north and the East into one provincial council.

The government proposals leave the Tamils of the Eastern province, especially in light of recent events in an extremely vulnerable position. The request of the Tamil groups for merger make the Muslim and Sinhalese populations of the Eastern Province extremely vulnerable. A decision either way will make the east a centre for greater conflict and internecine fighting. Is there any alternative? If there is an alternative, it must rest in a new delimitation of provinces. We do not have to accept British lines of administration. A delimitation may not be ideal, but will in the

long-term lessen, conflict and contention among the communities within the respective provinces. A suggestion for delimitation put forward by some NGO's recently suggests that the Northern province extend to include areas upto Batticaloa but that Trincomalee Port and its environs be under Central Government authority, and that Seruwila District of Trincomalee become part of the North Central Province. A narrow corridor will have to connect Trincomalee District to Batticaloa but given the recent fighting in this area it is already a deserted uninhabited corridor. In addition it is suggested that Amparai become a separate province and perhaps to minimise conflict between the Sinhalese and the Muslims, Amparai electorate could become a part of Moneragala. There is also a suggestion put forward that the Eastern province be delimited into three, predominantly Sinhala, predominantly Tamil, predominantly Muslim and that after a period of years a decision on delimitation take place. Meanwhile inter-province co-ordination can be the means of operation. These are only suggestions.

I know that there is great resistance to this type of map drawing. There is also resistance to the entrenchment of ethnic boundaries. But do we have an alternative? Is it not necessary to make this new type of delimitation so as to contain conflict so as to make the provincial councils viable in the east, otherwise they will undergo a series of dissolutions and any fragile peace will automatically collapse. With time the natural, I mean natural as opposed to state aided, movements of population will perhaps make the ethnic characteristics of these boundaries non-antagonistic and more compatible.

EXECUTIVE POWER:

17. A new area of contention is that with regard to executive powers and the role of the governor. The Tamil groups had earlier suggested the presence of a governor as an intermediary between the President and the provincial council. The Chiddambaram papers envisioned the governor as a ceremonial ambassador of the

Centre in the periphery who may acquire certain powers only during times of emergency. The government proposals on the other hand move far away from such a suggestion and delegate, (not even devolve) executive power to the Governor. He exercises executive power in the province, as an appointee of the President. This, given the intensity of political conflict in our society will prove to be not only un-saleable but also unworkable. Infact it will result in the ultimate centralisation of power. The Governor as an effective instrument of the Centre in the Province will lead to the creation of a presidential administration at the local level, going against legislative power of parliament and the provincial councils. It will destroy the democratic potential of any solution. It is in this regard that I think the only feasible alternative is a ceremonial governor, who may acquire some executive powers only during times of emergency. In normal times executive power could be devolved on the Governor but he would then be required to call upon the Chief Minister to execute such powers with regard to provincial administration.

In India, the governor has no powers except during emergency. He may however comment on bills passed by the State legislature. The final decision rests with the provincial council. On matters which may be of national importance however the bill is reserved by the Governor for the consideration of President who may then submit it for consideration by the national judiciary or national legislature. This Indian formulation can be another alternative which would help prevent the governor from becoming an anti-democratic force within the scheme of provincial councils. However the power of reservation should be only present if the bills appear unconstitutional or ultra-vires.

EMERGENCY:

18. Emergency power is another area which will be of contention between the parties to the negotiation. In the proposals, it is said that in times of emergency, the president can assume the executive powers of the province. The for-

mulation has yet to be worked out so one cannot comment in detail. However, it is envisioned that the provincial Council law will contain emergency provisions, perhaps different from those contained in the Constitution. In such a context, I think it is necessary that we not take provincial emergency power in isolation. We already have a framework for repression which is quite substantial. We have the public Security Ordinance, we have the PTA and now we are about to work in emergency provincial councils and provincial administration. This triple-decker framework for repression may make sense in piece-meal but taken together can result in a further thrust toward authoritarianism. One should therefore be extremely wary about emergency powers appearing in all areas of the law. The public Security Ordinance may be amended to include the possibility of emergency in the provinces, but one law of emergency, and one standard for emergency formulations exist throughout the country. Emergency should be precisely that the term means — an exception to the normal processes of law and due processes — not a necessary amendment to every piece of legislation.

LAND:

19. Another area of contention which has begun to lose its contentious quality is the area of Lands and Land Settlement. The Sinhalese groups have unanimously agreed "that interprovincial settlement projects should be based on national ethnic quotas." The Tamil groups have been equally vehement that the concept of "Tamil traditional homelands" be recognised and that no settlement should take place which alters the ethnic balance of the North and the East. Some type of compromise appears to have been worked out at the practical level. Though the government proposals state that the inter-provincial irrigation projects should be based on a national ethnic quota, in practical terms the only project in existence is the Mahaweli. For that particular project, the government has accepted the fact that the ethnic balance of the North-East will not be altered. All Tamil allotments under the

national ethnic quota will be settled in the East. This practical accommodation will perhaps go a long way in bringing the parties together. However, Tamil demands with regard to "homelands" and the maintenance of the ethnic balance as of 1947 have been excluded. There are some other reservations. Though land is a devolved subject, state lands even with regard to projects cannot be alienated without presidential permission. Also, state lands involved in non devolved subjects can be used by the Central Government without consultation of the provincial authorities. This appears to be somewhat arbitrary and will lead to confusion. A more constructive scheme for consultation and mutual agreement has to be worked out. I think we should pause for a moment on the subject of lands to note that the demands in this area a few years ago seemed to be irreconcilable. Today, agreement seems to be in the realm of the possible. Though I agree that this is only on paper and that it has yet to be implemented we can state that negotiations carried on between the Ministry of Lands and Mr. Chidambaram have produced a more reasonable alternative to what seemed to be an intractable problem.

LAW AND ORDER

20. Finally another major area of contention is the question of law and order. The proposals accept the fact that "internal provincial law and order is a devolved subject." This in itself is a major step forward. It would lead to the creation of a national police force and a provincial police force. However, at the provincial level, recruitment will be only upto Chief Inspector and the cadre will be chosen by a panel in which the balance is held by the Centre. There are three members of the panel, two representatives from the Centre one from the province. Given the fact that there are two police forces, given the fact that recruitment is only upto the level of Chief Inspector, given the fact that the CID can investigate in the province under orders of the IGP, given the emergency powers reserved for the centre and the president's right to bring in the armed forces such

as army, navy and air force, weighting even recruitment to provincial police in favour of the centre in effect prevents any form of meaningful devolution to the provinces. The restrictions are quite substantial and will probably be amended if the negotiations are to succeed.

Discussion of these details of law and order however, does not come to grips with the magnitude of the real problem of law and order. One cannot discuss the issue of law and order without raising some of the larger issues. How long will the armed forces be in the North and the East after a settlement? Given this fact that the Tamil militant groups control the law and order situation in the North and some parts of the East, what is the process envisioned to invite them to lay down their arms and accept this Provincial Law and Order framework? What is going to be done to the new forces set up in the South who have been either trained to kill, like the STF, or who are para-military units such as the Home Guards. Will they be dismantled? These issues are not even raised by the proposals and yet they are perhaps the most determining for in Sri Lanka today.

CONCLUSION:

I have tried to raise some of the issues that have come to my head on the reading of the PPC proposals. They are by means complete but only an introduction to the type of problems and issues we face. I have been trained in the law and social science. The law has always made me optimistic, the legal system believes that for any given situation, there is a formulation for conflict resolution. The social sciences have taught me, that history is always more powerful than the law. If I am optimistic that something may result from this process, it is not an optimism based on scientific reasoning, it is only because I dare not be anything else. In considering these proposals, and the resultant peace process we must be acutely aware of the alternatives. We have had some experience of these in the past year. As I said before, we no longer have recourse to innocence. We have also perhaps learnt relative and absolute truths as part of

our collective experience. We have learnt that there are no ultimate solutions, especially to long-term ethnic problems. Only relative issues of justice and injustice. However, we have also learnt some fundamental absolute truths. Though issues such as land policy, education structure, taxation employment etc. . . are negotiable, human life is not. Even as we accept a new framework for the negotiation of political and economic power, we must do so with the realisation that fundamental human rights such as the right to life and security, the right to the due process of law have to be secured and guaranteed. Any State which consistently refuses to give importance to these values will only lead our society toward national disaster. Conflicts that can be contained will become unmanageable, and problems which can be debated will become intractable. When a community believes that it is fighting for its physical survival, it will do so with a force and determination which cannot be easily repressed. Let us hope that all sides to this conflict have at least learnt these lessons from the experience of the past few years.

No room . . .

(Continued from page 23)

would have prevented the irruption into the Sri Lankan body politic of the running sore of so many stateless people. Indeed, from the mid-eighties, it is legitimate to surmise that the whole course of Sinhala-Tamil relationships might not have deteriorated so colossally if the plantation workers had not been deprived of citizenship and franchise in 1948 and 1949: there would have been a profound catharsis in the Sinhala people and a blunting of the sharpest edges of the Tamil separatist movement.

The apportionment of blame, however, should be less important for the committed socio-political commentator than to read the past in the over-riding light of the portents and prospects of the future. The authors finished writing before the Citizenship Act of 1986 was enacted. It would have been interesting to have their reaction to that Act.

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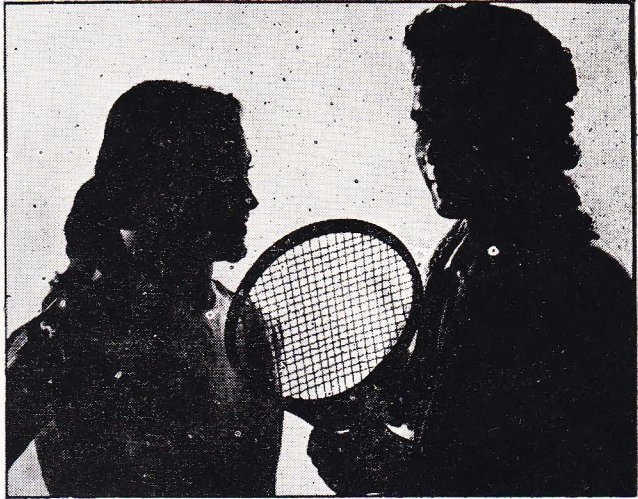
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