

Special to the  
*Guardian*

GORBACHEV'S VISIT TO INDIA

— *Bhabani Sen Gupta*

LANKA

# GUARDIAN

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— a black eye for an S.D.I.

**Why Rajiv caged the Tiger**

— *Mervyn de Silva*

**Sri Lanka's Role in SAARC**

— *Mahinda Werake*

**Jaffna Economy and the War**

— *Paul Seabright*

**Muslims Defend Sharia** — *A. M. M.*

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C.R.D. on negotiations **and**  
Human rights, Tamil vote

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One by one, the sacred cows of Sri Lankan socialism are being slaughtered. The step-by-step exercise in slaughter is called "Privatisation", the shining banner of Reaganism-Thatcherism and the IMF is its chief instrument. Many a state corporation has proved utterly inefficient, if not corrupt. Over-bureaucratised and mis-managed, such corporations have been a burden on the Treasury.

While these manifest deficiencies have been powerful arguments for systematic reform, the external pressure for "privatisation" has been prompted less by the logic of economic efficiency than by ideological and political concerns.

In the name of rationality, the "mixed economies" of Third World countries (and even First World 'welfare states' like Britain) are being subjected to enforced re-structuring in order to restore the private sector to its old role of leading change-agent, a far more natural and accommodating partner of international capital, the transnational corporations. Local private enterprise and international big business are "natural allies".

The first 'sacred cow' of the 1956 'revolution', bus transport, a mudalali monopoly, was also the first to get the chop. No clean cut, at all.

What a bloody mess Minister Mohammed has made of it, with his private vans and 'pirate vans' and its 'regional boards' (so-called de-centralisation);

A national daily once exposed the scandal of a "top cop" who ran his own fleet of vans in the city, while in various towns, many VIPs had a share in the transport system.

Down the line came banking, postal and telecommunications services (a more full-fledged exercise is the subject of a top-level committee study) tobacco, sugar, milk etc etc. Even education, a pre-independence area of achievement, was a field for encroachment. And now, the Insurance

business, something of a success story for State enterprise. The amendment to the Insurance Act was pushed with only a little less hastily, but with the same enthusiasm, as the amendment to the Special Presidential Commissions of Inquiry Act.

## WAR BUDGET

An exaggeration of course. This is not a 'War Budget' but in Sri Lankan terms, certainly a strong tendency towards what in some Third World countries has become a permanent, institutionalised feature: the hefty slice of the budget given to 'defence'.

In the current budget, the defence vote is 10.7 billion rupees. If you add the 270 million given to 'Manpower Mobilisation', defence spending approaches 11 billion.

Compare that with Education (4.5) and Health (2.9) and Social services 2.2 billion. The army on its own gets 3.1 billion which exceeds the individual ministry votes of local government and housing, the ministry of public administration, the ministry of lands and land development, the ministry of agriculture and research and the ministry of posts and telecommunication. Of the Finance Ministry's 22.4 billion (the top item) as much as 16.2 billion is for public debt.

(Continued on page 7)

## TEMPLE ENTRY

With regard to D.R.M. Walton's reply, (Nov. 1) the Hindu Kovil built and maintained by Jaffna Vellala caste is out of bounds to harijans. Nevertheless I never held a critical approach to such a State of Affairs as I sincerely consider them as personal property. Still the fact remains that by contrast once constructed a Buddhist Temple is for everybody.

Being 'caucasian' is definitely not a disadvantage while dealing with locals in fact it is advantageous, presumably an inheritance of a colonial past which both Hindus and Buddhists share equally.

Even the locals are been subjected to a levy while visiting Dambulla Rock Temple if you ask for illumination, as electricity costs money.

It is not a logical explanation that anybody needs in our country in order to silence somebody else. A 'shelling' administered even in broken English is enough. That settles the matter.

Ranjith Wickramasuriya  
Kandana

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Editor: Mervyn de Silva  
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MASTERS

# GANDHI CAN DELIVER

NEWS  
BACKGROUND

## ... Delhi's signal to Colombo

Mervyn de Silva

Delhi and Madras work in mysterious ways their miracles to perform. Various versions of what really happened on Nov. 8 in Madras are being put out by the news agencies, by Indian papers and Indian correspondents. (See Venkatnarayan on **Delhi's Denial**). The "smoking gun" was in the hands of the Madras police. Who gave the order? What degree of coordination was there? Sri Lankan observers should not chase hares. They must stick to the fact of 'Operation Crackdown', and draw their lessons from the objective consequences of the police action. What does it signify? What is the message? And to whom?

The name of the game is "delivery capability". Top-rung personalities of the U.N.P., most Sri Lankans and many a foreign observer of the Sri Lankan conflict had come to believe that Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's capacity to crack down on the Madras-based Tamil militants had steadily diminished. They all lamented the fact that Tamilnadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran had become so powerful a political patron of the militants, especially the LTTE, that from the time Velupillai Prabhakaran the Tigers' leader had hid in his private residence when the police were looking for him, M.G.R. and his AIDMK were too strong a protective shield for Mr. Gandhi to ignore.

That growing suspicion which had slowly turned into a firm conviction appeared to find final confirmation when on Nov. 3, the deadline Mr. Gandhi had fixed for responses in writing from the militant groups to the Sri Lankan offer of provincial autonomy, all

five guerrilla organisations appeared to reject out of hand proposals which Mr. Gandhi had so often described as "fairly good". So, what was the point, asked sceptics, of dealing with Mr. Gandhi, the 'honest broker', when honesty apart, he lacked the political clout to deal with the Sri Lankan rebels who were openly cocking a snook at the Prime Minister of India on his own country's soil?

The Indian government accepts Colombo's basic position — whatever the negotiated settlement, it must be within the island's constitutional framework, that its is unitary character.

It is this meeting of minds on that fundamental issue which strengthens Sri Lankan self-confidence and keeps the meditation effort on track.

As for the actual character and substance of the settlement, the principal questions are (a) powers to be devolved to the proposed provincial councils, the degree of devolution and (b) the territorial demarcation of the council's jurisdiction, the unit of devolution.

### BOTTOM LINE

Nearly three long years of tough and tortuous negotiations have revealed that what India would be happy to see is an 'autonomy offer' which comes as close as possible to the Indian constitutional model, the states in the quasi-federal system of that country. **But that is the 'top line' Mr. Gandhi made that clear when he stated publicly that India could not urge Colombo to concede more than**

**what in fact has been granted to the states in the Indian Union.**

If that is the top line, the bottom line has been an autonomy offer which is sufficiently substantial that the Indian government can persuade and or pressure the Tamil leadership, moderate and militant, to accept. In short, once the Sri Lankan offer reached the Indian bottom line, Delhi would deliver.

**Mr. Gandhi's comment that the new package after the TULF talks in Colombo in August was "fairly good" as a basis for negotiations suggested that in his view, Sri Lanka was gradually approaching that bottom line.**

In Colombo, however, there was an attitudinal sea-change. Top-rung UNP'ers began to argue that the party was needlessly exposing itself to attack by the newly formed M.D.N. by making an offer which Mrs. B. and the **maha sangha** say is "far too much" and Mr. Gandhi accepts as "fairly good" but cannot obviously persuade the Tamil leaders, who keep saying it is 'too little', to fall in line.

Mr. Gandhi, in other words, was seen as a 'mediator' who was either unwilling or unable to deliver. The "unwilling" and "the unable" in fact represent two broad schools of opinion in Sri Lanka whose membership includes important segments of the Sinhala intelligentsia right up to key figures in the UNP hierarchy.

Mr. Gandhi had a ready-made reason (some cynics say 'too' ready-made) the killing of a

Tamilnadu social worker, to take a course of action which was a striking demonstration of the capabilities of the Indian delivery system. It was more than striking, it was ideal. The demonstration was not merely of his own ability to assert his authority but of the in-built resilience of the Indian federal system. Thus, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran's visit in Delhi, and the use of the Tamilnadu police rather than the heavier para-military forces, like the C.R.P.F., the Reserve police who take orders only from the Centre.

Now that the Madras police

have pulled in the top rebel leaders, including the most powerful of them, Prabhakaran, disarmed over a thousand "fighters" seized an impressive armoury that included SAM missiles, and issued a stern warning about "terroristic activities" on Indian soil, it is now Delhi's turn to test Colombo's delivery-capability. The Sri Lankan government must do better than "fairly good". It must improve on the present offer. (See Express Editorial).

#### CAN COLOMBO DELIVER?

Can the Sri Lankan delivery-system meet the challenge? The

constraints are obvious, political (the 'Movement for the Defence of the Motherland') and economic.

(See TU's stir) and the effect of both on the UNP, especially its backbenches. (L. G. Nov. 1).

The Madras crackdown achieved more. This dramatic exhibition that the Centre's writ runs to Madras was an answer to those who questioned Gandhi's political authority. Also in doubt, not merely in Sri Lanka but in the region is Indian credibility on "terrorism". Sri Lanka actively supported by Bangladesh and Nepal, and encouraged by Pakistan, has been canvassing actively to make 'terrorism' (and cross-border terrorism) an important item on the agenda of the SAARC summit opening this weekend, in the Indian city of Bangalore.

(Continued on page 5)

### Setback in Sri Lanka

*The rejection of the Sri Lanka Government's peace proposals by Tamil Militant groups is hardly surprising. The differences were clear from the very beginning. The proposals provided separate councils for northern and eastern provinces while the militants wanted the two to be combined into a single unit. Secondly, the proposals vested with the Central Government the right to dispose of Government land for inter-state irrigation and land development programmes. Given Sri Lanka Government's record of forced settlements to dilute the concentration of Tamils in areas where they were in a majority, the militants had demanded that the provinces be given the right to decide on this matter. They were also unhappy with the extent of autonomy proposal to be given to the provinces. They viewed with disquiet not only parliament's powers to legislate even in respect of subjects within provincial jurisdiction but the powers of the Centre under the Reserved and Concurrent lists including control over law and order. . . . By the Inspector-General of Police and the National Police Commission nor could they accept the President's sweeping emergency powers and the silence in the proposals on the future of plantation workers. The four points they had made at Thimpu last year included provision of citizenship rights to all Tamils who had made Sri Lanka their home.*

*The militants' rejection demolishes the hope some harboured for a decisive breakthrough towards a settlement during Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's visit to India to attend the forthcoming summit of the South Asian Association of regional cooperation (SARC). Nevertheless, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi would do well to use the opportunity to persuade the Sri Lanka President to grant wider powers to the provincial councils and restrict the centres overlapping and overriding jurisdiction over provincial matters. Without such a step India will not be able to help in achieving a settlement within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. To be acceptable to the militants, the alternative to 'Eelam' must be substantial and attractive.*

'Indian Express' (5/11)

### Vajpayee hits at Lankan Govt.

Former Indian Foreign Minister and current leader of the BJP, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee has expressed his solidarity with the Tamil struggle and called upon the Sri Lankan Government to ensure that innocent civilians were not subject to atrocities pending negotiations. This was reported in 'The Hindu' on Friday.

Mr. Vajpayee was addressing volunteers from the 'Friends of Eelam' undertaking a month long relay fast in Delhi to protest against alleged violations of human rights in Sri Lanka.

Mr. Vajpayee had said that the situation in Sri Lanka was getting worse and least the Sri Lankan Government could do was protect its citizens. He had added that he still did not see any meeting ground for a peaceful solution to the problem, but hoped that the forthcoming meeting between President Jayewardene and Prime Minister Gandhi would yield positive results.

# DELHI'S DENIAL

S. Venkat Narayan

NEW DELHI, November 9

Several dozen Sri Lanka Tamil terrorist leaders have been put under house arrest in Madras. They include Velupillai Prabhakaran and A. Balasingham of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and V. Balakumar of the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (EROS) among others.

This was disclosed here today by an official spokesman of the government of India. However, he was unable to give the number of terrorists kept under house arrest by the Tamil Nadu government. He could also not give any details regarding the quantity of weapons seized from the one thousand terrorists during a pre-dawn swoop on their hide-outs throughout the state on Saturday.

Journalists were specially called to the spokesman's office on a holiday for this purpose. The spokesman sought to dispel the impression that the Indian Government had a hand in the arrests yesterday. He claimed that New Delhi had no prior knowledge about the terrorist detention.

The spokesman said: "We have been advised by the Tamil Nadu government that the action was taken in the light of developments affecting the law and order situation in the state. He refuted suggestions that the arrests were made by the state government at the instance of the union government.

Law and order being a state subject, he explained, there was no question of the state govern-

ment having to seek or obtain prior concurrence of the union government.

The spokesman also emphasized that the detentions have nothing to do with the good offices of the government of India to find a peaceful solution to the ethnic issue in the island.

According to him, the action of the Tamil Nadu government has nothing to do with the security measures being taken in view of the forthcoming second summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), due to begin in Bangalore on Tuesday. Sri Lankan President J. R. Jayewardene is among the dignitaries from the seven member nations who will be arriving in the Karnataka capital on November 15.

## Gandhi. . .

(Continued from page 4)

When the Madras police warned the militants against engaging in 'terroristic activities' they were also reminded that acts of violence on Indian soil is a gross violation of the privileges they enjoy as "refugees".

While India accuses Pakistan of training Sikh extremists and infiltrating them into Punjab (the charge was more stridently made after the assassination attempt on Premier Gandhi) other SAARC members, notably Sri Lanka hurl the charge in Delhi's direction. After last week's Madras police action, India must hope that 'terrorism' will not be such an irritant, after all, at the Bangalore summit and that there won't be any ugly anti-Sri Lanka demonstration by Eelamists in Bangalore.

## ISRAEL-LANKA RELATIONS

### — major step

Benny Morris

Israeli-Sri Lankan relations took a major step forward this month with the start of Israeli participation in the giant Mahaweli River agricultural development project, for which some \$4 billion in international funds have been allocated.

A sign of the improved relations with Sri Lanka, which last year allowed Israel to open an interest section in Colombo, was the meeting between Foreign Minister Shamir and Sri Lanka Foreign Minister Hamid in New York last month, when Shamir attended the opening of the UN General Assembly session. At the meeting, kept secret until now, Hamid asked Shamir for "explanations" about the Middle East situation.

An Israeli agricultural settlement expert left a fortnight ago for Sri Lanka and a commercial expert is due to fly out next week to study

what Israel can contribute to the project. Israeli economic officials expect that Israeli companies could participate in the major housing and infrastructure work, which aims to resettle some 200,000 Sri Lankans in the Mahaweli River Valley after dams have been constructed and the land readied for cultivation.

Further Israeli experts are expected to travel to Sri Lanka in the near future.

Israel hopes that the project will generate major Sri Lankan import of Israeli goods, and that the multi-layered economic cooperation that will develop will lead to the restoration of full diplomatic relations between the two countries within a year or two.

Sri Lanka's minister of development is due to visit Israel in January.

(JERUSALEM POST) (19/10)

## T. U.'s stir : pickets for 50% wage hike

The organisation of 21 trade unions unanimously decided to stage a picketing campaign on November 11, during the lunch interval, demanding a wage increase of 50 per cent.

At a press conference held at the Moors Islamic Cultural Home, convenor and General Secretary of Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions, L. W. Panditha said that among the other demands are a minimum wage of Rs. 1000 Rs. five for every point in the cost of living index, the reinstatement of the July 1980 strikers and against privatisation.

Mr. Panditha said that members of the organisation in all the

major cities like Galle, Matara, Kurunegala, Ratnapura, Kandy and Colombo will picket outside their workplaces during the lunch break, demanding what was reasonable.

Citing the 1952 cost of living index he said if it was 100 points it was equal to Rs. 202. The present index of 613.9 should therefore be equal to Rs. 1228. At present 60 per cent of the population is living below the poverty line.

He further said that the prices of rice since 1977 has increased 340 per cent and sugar by 1007 per cent as compared to prices in 1977. He said the price of bread, too, had increased by 406

per cent as compared to the price in 1977.

Nearly five million people employed in all types of work were facing difficulties. The government is trying to suppress the trade unions from agitating for wage increases etc by citing the on-going fight against the militants and that it was not the opportune time for demands.

In July 1980 when there was a demand for wage increases there was no war against militants. The government should have considered such demands then. Of the July 1980 strikers 6000 are still to be reinstated.

— Island

## Negotiations: Don't Stop Now

— Committee for Rational Development

Since its inception, the Committee for Rational Development has been urging the government to find a political solution to our current ethnic conflict. We have always argued that a political solution which has the support of the Indian Government and the international community, and which is acceptable to a vast majority of people in the North and the East is the only viable and realistic solution to our intractable ethnic conflict.

Therefore, though we have been strongly critical of the government in the last few years, we have supported the initiative of the present government to set in motion a process of peace negotiations on the basis of realistic package which could form a starting point to negotiation and compromise. It is our belief that any government whether UNP or SLFP, right or left, socialist or capitalist will have to resolve the ethnic crisis through a devolution of power to the Tamil periphery. The relevant questions therefore are not whether devolution, but when and at what cost? Opposition

groups which resist the peace process will only inherit a greater problem if and when they come to power. The sooner a settlement is reached, the better result for all political sections within our national polity.

In an article entitled 'A Negotiated Settlement is More Vital the Ever' which appeared in the *Island* of 5th April 1984, the CRD argued that a realistic package of devolution and a genuine and sincere attempt at negotiations will receive the backing of the Indian Government, the Tamil Nadu Government, a majority of Tamils living in the North and the East and the international community. During the last few weeks, we see that this very process of engagement and discussion is gradually taking place, putting enormous pressure on those who wish single-mindedly to pursue a military solution. We only hope that frustration with the slow nature of the process of negotiation will not lead to anticipatory, short-sighted, military thrusts on the part of the Sri Lankan Government. The

pursuit of military options as every political juncture by the Sri Lankan Government only servet to destroy credibility and to isolate Sri Lanka both regionally and internationally. Given the nature of the consciousness of the Tamil people of the North and East, devolution cannot be imposed, it has to be accepted. Any imposed solution will lead us back within a short period to a cycle of violence and destruction. The government must therefore be committed not only to a package of devolution but devolution which has the open or tacit consent of those living in the North and the East.

As for the Tamil militant groups, the time surely has come for them to accept the processes of peace. No nationality is really strong enough to fight and win a war when it is regionally and internationally isolated. No cause justifies the sacrifice of thousands of civilians who will bear the brunt of an all out military confrontation in the North and

(Continued on page 24)



# Muslim Protest Triumphs

A. M. M.

The national media's scant attention has denied the reading public information on an issue of great emotional concern to the Muslim community in Sri Lanka. Since the Muslims constitute the second largest minority in the island, and a part of a very much larger and highly influential international community, with which Sri Lanka has important diplomatic and economic ties, this sensitive question was sufficiently significant to deserve much more prominence in the press, not to mention study and informed comment. And at a time when the country is so oppressively burdened by an "ethnic conflict" involving the biggest minority, ordinary selfinterest, if nothing else, should have prompted a closer look at the uproar caused in educated Muslim circles by the appointment of a Committee of Experts by Justice Minister Nissanka Wijeyeratne to examine and "report on Personal Laws which require change or complete abolition".

"An avalanche of protests" said AL-ISLAM, a monthly journal (English-cum-Tamil) was provoked by the appointment of this committee which included several non-Muslims entrusted with the job of investigating into Personal Laws, including Muslim Personal Law which is founded on the Holy Koran. The area of inquiry covers marriage, inheritance, adoption etc. AL-ISLAM reported:

Muslims from all over the island belonging to all sections of the community — from lawyers and theologians to businessmen and engineers to students — have expressed strong opposition to the move. All the major Muslim organisations too have condemned the attempt to sit in judgement over Islamic law, which every Muslim believes is of divine origin, and about which the Creator Himself has warned human beings have no choice but to obey.

The Council of Theologians (Jamate-Ulema) has called on the Government to scrap the Committee while requesting Muslims named to the Committee to withdraw.

The Federation of Assemblies of Muslim Youth of Sri Lanka (FAMYS) has Protested to President J. R. Jayawardena against the "appointment of any committee comprising predominately of non-believers in the religion of Islam to sit in judgement over Muslim Law" and has urged the President and the Government to remove from the scope of the Committee any examination of the Muslim Law. The protest letter concludes by stating: "This would reaffirm the faith that the Muslims of Sri Lanka have that your Excellency's Government will not interfere in the personal law of a minority community, particularly in the light of the problems the country is undergoing arising from the Tamil question.

Another Muslim journal, the fortnightly DAWN (English) reported a meeting of Muslim representatives held at the Islamic Centre, Maligawatte. It said:

At such a crucial meeting held at the Islamic Centre, Maligawatte, Minister Alhaj M. H. Mohamed (chairing) assured — the represent-

ative gathering of Muslim lawyers, theologians, educationists etc, that the government would in no way interfere with the Divine Law as practised in this country by its adherents throughout the century.

Giving vent to his feelings, the young lawyer M. Y. M. Faiz declared: "The Muslims Law applicable in this country cannot be changed or amended to suit or satisfy the whims and cravings of any individuals. We cannot permit interested parties to engage in mere academic exercise or intellectual adventurism that would hamper any aspect of the Muslim Laws."

At the end of a long and purposeful discussion this meeting appointed a sub-committee to meet the Minister of Justice with a view to explaining the inherent danger of his Committee dabbling or tinkering with the teachings of Al-Quran and Al-Haids. Alhaj M. M. Abdul Cader (Director, Islamic Centre), M. M. Zuhair, Al-Alim A. R. M. Zerruque, Moulavi A. J. M. Riyal and M. Y. M. Faiz were appointed to this committee.

## Trends . . .

(Continued from page 1)

*Sri Lanka is one of 30 Third World countries — the biggest debtors — which will meet in Mexico this month to discuss the Debt Burden! Since there is a war on, these priorities, however regrettable, may be right. But how about Air Lanka, the bugbear of both Finance Minister de Mel and the World Bank's David Hopper? Daily News reported (6/11) that an American consultancy firm had advised the government to give this "sick enterprise" another injection of capital. So 'Air Lanka' received 1.2 billion to buy new aircraft and equipment. 800 million was allocated in the 1986 budget, and 400 million was released in September.*

## PUBLIC AND SECURITY

*In the old days, tough 'law-and-order' regimes or regimes*

*introducing tough new measures shared a common argument. Their actions came under the protective rubric of 'public security'.*

*In these times of 'national security', the more vogue term, it is the public that takes law-and-order in its own hands and, rightly or wrongly, defends law and justice against the law enforcement agencies.*

*It started with the mob attack on a city police station when residents and passers-by heard a man in custody screaming "M. . . u . . . r . . . d e r"!*

*The riot squad had to be summoned by the Ratnapura police when a crowd of 2000 surrounded the station and demanded the release of 8 persons taken into custody over some dispute about gems. The SUN (8/11), in the same issue, reported another incident at Nikaweratiya when traders closed shops in protest, after a shop-keeper had been assaulted by some service personnel.*

## 'No political prisoners here' — Lalith

'There are no political prisoners in Sri Lanka' protested the National Security Minister when the MP for Maharagama raised for the umpteenth time the question of known political activists detained without trial for long periods. They have all committed offences, he said, and the delay was largely caused by the slow-moving judicial process.

**Mr. Dinesh Gunewardena (MEP — Maharagama)** said there were several persons who had been arrested on suspicion but kept in custody for a long time without being brought before the courts of law. He also alleged that such "political prisoners" were asked to sign a statement promising that they would not take part in politics as a condition of release. It would be better for those persons to be produced in a court without asking them to sign such statements.

**Mr. Dew Gunasekera (CP — Kalawana)** asked the National Security Minister to consider releasing Miss. Pulsari Liyanage who was under detention as soon as investigation were completed.

He said Miss Liyanage was an assistant lecturer in classics at the Kelaniya university and was the first educated Sinhala woman to be taken into custody for alleged subversive activities. She was being held in custody on the fourth floor of the CID and relations have been told that she would not be released until she broke down and confessed.

He was making an appeal to the Minister on behalf of the parents as Miss Liyanage had undergone an operation recently and was not in the best of health.

**Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali**, replying said Miss Liyanage had been arrested on reasonable suspicion.

When an arrest was made on suspicion, there need not be a prima facie case against the person arrested. This person was taken into custody on November 1, and held in the Slave Island Police station. Investigations were made by the CID and such investigations often took a long time. Since this person was a lecturer and she may not disappear if released, he would look into the matter to afford her whatever relief was possible.

Regarding the question raised by the Member for Maharagama, he said he hoped the Member would not use that term "political prisoner" to all terrorists arrested because then they would be all called incorrectly political prisoners.

He said when they receive information about terrorist activity, they had to act fairly quickly.

*(Continued on page 24)*

## Police should refrain from torturing people — DIG

Sri Lanka is a democratic country, governed by a constitution, under which the peoples, freedom from torture has been protected. The Police do not have any rights to torture people. Police officers and men should realise that vital fact and refrain from torturing people, said **Mr. J.D. Mithra Ariyasinghe** DIG Personnel and Training course at the Kandy Police Training School at Asgiriya. Mr. Ariyasinghe was associated with Messrs. Gamini Gunawardhane DIG Central Range, Bodhi Liyanage Senior SP Kandy, Stanley Ranasinghe SP, Attanayake ASP Abeyasinghe CI and Inspector A. K. D. Karunadasa OIC, Training school, at the Inaugural ceremony.

**Mr. Ariyasinghe** said that no one had any rights to deny the people their legitimate and constitutionally protected freedom from

torture. In case that freedom was violated, even by the Police, an aggrieved members of the public had the right to go before a court of law against such Police officers. There was no necessity at all to torture the people.

During the recent past the Police service has been subjected to severe public criticism and the Press had been very critical of the Police. Various opinions on the Police had been expressed at high level conferences. It was therefore necessary to do everything possible to make the Police popular they could come to know of their shortcomings and mistakes only when they were criticised by the media. What the Police should realise most urgently was the need to rebuild a better Police-public relations and win the confidence of the public. ●

## Amnesty for U. N. inspection

Amnesty International has suggested that a U. N. working group visits Sri Lanka to examine 272 cases of disappearance which it had listed in a special report in September. The government's reaction was to invite A. I. to file action in S. L. courts. Amnesty has now sent another letter to the government adding 30 more names to the 'disappearance' list. Its 6 page letter to National Security Security Minister **Lalith Athulathmudali** remains unanswered, A. I. said.

Reminding the government of its obligations as a U. N. member, the A. I. which earlier accused it of 'torture' in another report, urged Sri Lanka to allow a U. N. Working Group to visit the country and study the situation for itself. In the letter to **Mr. Athulathmudali**, A. I. says that such a visit 'could substantially alleviate the sorrow and anguish of the families who, till now, have searched in vain for their relatives...'.  
 .

# Reagan : Rambo to lame duck

**"Vote for me, Ronald Reagan".** That was the plainest of messages from the straight-from-the-shoulder American president to the US electorate just before the mid-term poll. Implied was an appeal to forget candidate and party and place their trust in the President. At issue was control of the all-powerful US Senate, where the Republicans had a safe majority, a contrast from a House dominated by the Democrats.

Ignoring domestic issues (mainly economic) which hardly contribute to Republican popularity, Mr. Reagan, just back from the Iceland Summit, played the S. D. I. 'ace's. He had stood up to the Russians and refused to retreat on S. D. I. At the back of this slogan was the self-same jingoistic battlecry (America No. 1", "America Standing Tall") which, as the first part of this commentary pointed out, carried Mr. Ronald Reagan, the former Governor of California,

and small-time Hollywood actor, to the White House and to win in 1984 another four year term.

At first, Mr. Reagan's electoral calculations seemed sound. The ABC-Wall Street Journal poll showed 60% for Reagan's stand at Iceland ("no concessions", "no deal") 31% of against, and 9% undecided. Even a veteran columnist like James Reston of the NYK Times wrote: **"By all the political trends of the past, the Republicans should lose control of the Senate but the guess here (Washington) is that the president will pull through".** The pundit was wrong. The Democrats have 55 out of 100 seats whereas the Republicans who had 53 earlier was reduced to 45. Mr. Reagan now wears the title of "Lame Duck" President more securely.

While eminent American scientists and defence experts continue to question the technical feasibility

of the SDI program as well as its capacity to fulfil the purposes of a program so lavishly promoted by Mr. Reagan and Big Business, S. D. I. may not be abandoned but the US Congress will be more vigilant over the enormous sums of money Mr. Reagan is demanding to finance 'Star Wars'.

Despite Mr. Reagan's personal popularity, a combination of domestic factors (economic and electoral) and the doubts cast on the program by America's scientific community and the professional elite, together with a growing opinion in the US that the visions of total US military superiority must be replaced by a realistic appreciation of world politics, the global balance of power, and the fundamental problems of War and Peace, have triumphed, for the moment at least, over Reaganite 'Ramboism', militarism, and the lobbying power of the military-industrial complex.

## Gorbachev takes the high ground

Patrick Cockburn (*Financial Times*)

MR MIKHAIL GORBACHEV, the Soviet leader, flew from Reykjavik to Moscow yesterday disappointed at the outcome of the Iceland talks, but having won clear political advantages over President Reagan.

He is unlikely to face much dissension or criticism from Soviet leaders who stayed at home. He can say that the Soviet Union has done everything possible to achieve an agreement on the reduction of nuclear arsenals — indeed by early Sunday morning had largely done so — but was frustrated by President Reagan's insistence on developing and testing the "Star Wars" Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI). Mr. Gorbachev therefore holds the political high ground at home and abroad, but this will not be seen in Moscow as sufficient compen-

sation for the failure at Reykjavik.

The Soviet Union has long wanted to find out if, at the end of the day, a right-wing US Administration like that of President Reagan would make long-term agreements with it. In spite of all the negotiations since Mr. Reagan came into office in 1981 the answer to this question had remained unclear up to the two days meeting in Iceland. Moscow may now feel it knows the answer.

Mr. Gorbachev spelt this out at his Press conference immediately after leaving President Reagan. He said he was not worried by Star Wars because he thought that the US could never create an effective antiballistic missile system to

defend America against Soviet warheads. "I said to the President we are not concerned with the military threat of SDI," Mr Gorbachev said.

On the contrary, the Soviet leader stressed that the true "danger of SDI is political" because it creates "an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust."

### Correction

#### U. S. West

There were two obvious mistakes in the article on 'Reagan's Empire Strikes back'. On page 17, in line 41 and Line 53 Column 3, 'East' should have read 'West'.

# An opinion round-up

(The following brief comments taken from the foreign press reflect 'expert' and 'non-expert' opinion of hopes placed on the Iceland summit and some instant assessments afterwards. Paul Wanke was a top US arms control negotiator and made these comments in an interview with the West German journal *Der Spiegel*; David Broder is a leading political columnist of the *Washington Post* while James Reston now retired was for nearly two decades the doyen of American newspapermen. 'A propaganda Coup' is a passage from an editorial of the *Times of India*).

## Real Understanding on Arms

It is quite possible that (the two leaders) agree on some sort of cosmetic negotiations and some sort of cosmetic statement of success. But nothing really significant can come out of this unless the two sides are ready to compromise both on offensive and defensive systems. (An agreement to reduce medium-range missiles in Europe) could, perhaps, be sold to the Europeans as a breakthrough. It doesn't particularly impress me. . . It in no way reduces the risk of a strategic atomic war.

Perhaps Gorbachev can make the president understand that he simply cannot permit deep cuts (in his nuclear arsenal) because that would put the Americans in the position of being able to build their strategic defenses and thus regain strategic superiority. He instead might propose something like this: the beginning of yearly reductions of the strategic arsenals, but only insofar as the president is ready to satisfy himself for the next five years with research on SDI, and not testing.

— Paul C. Wanke  
(Former U.S. arms negotiator)

## No clear idea

As one with limited expertise in these matters, I would just say that arms control is an area where the supposedly strong pre-

sidency of Ronald Reagan has most often been exposed to evident pulling and hauling. My belief for four years has been that Mr. Reagan is sincere in his desire for effective arms control, but that he has no clear idea how to get there or even how to control those in his administration who are determined to prevent any agreement which would slow the pace of the American nuclear buildup.

The first-term evidence for this proposition is best summarized in Strobe Talbott's excellent book, "Deadly Gambits." The second-term evidence in dozens of newspaper clippings reporting continued infighting among the Pentagon, the State Department and the National Security Council over the terms and timing of Mr. Reagan's initiative and responses to sophisticated Soviet arms control diplomacy.

— David S. Broder  
(*Washington Post*)

## A Propaganda Coup

The Russians knew all along that the Reagan administration would not give up SDI research, that in effect this was nonnegotiable at Reykjavik. So by linking truly astonishing Soviet concessions on strategic and intermediate-range forces with at least a 10-year stoppage of non-laboratory research on "star wars," they have managed to focus world, and

above all American, public opinion on this issue in a most dramatic fashion.

— *The Times of India (New Delhi)*.

## Why no Consultation

What has surprised many observers in Washington was that the president did not listen to the new Soviet proposals and say they were so important that they required serious study and consultation with the allies and the leaders of Congress. Instead he insisted on a confrontation with Mr. Gorbachev on the "star wars" issue, which produced the stalemate. This is regarded by many as bad diplomacy and bad politics.

Mr. Gorbachev and later the president himself were arguing about proposals that affected the security of many nations, not only in NATO but in Asia as well. Mr. Gorbachev could scarcely have objected if the president had insisted on time to think things over and consult with other interested parties.

On the political front, with control of the Senate riding on next month's congressional elections, it would have been helpful to the Republicans if the president had come home with Mr. Gorbachev's new proposals in his pocket and the SDI issue postponed. Instead he drew the SDI line, gathered up his papers and walked out in disagreement.

He was careful, however, to avoid any sharp break with the Soviet leader. His invitation to have another talk with Mr. Gorbachev still stands, he said.

The NATO allies, meeting with Secretary of State George Shultz in Brussels, have mulled their criticism. But they are under pressure from public opinion for an arms deal, and with elections coming up in Britain, West Germany and France they are likely to be urging the president to amend his SDI program and try again for arms reduction before he ends his term.

— James Reston

## Reagan's Contra-dictions

It was Chairman Mao who taught Marxist meophytes how to "correctly handle contradictions". Always inimitable in political style, Mr. Reagan has no problem at all in 'resolving' contradictions. He is world's most moralistic preacher on 'State-sponsored Terrorism'. The principal sinners in his eyes are Libya, Syria, Iran, Cuba and a few others who come and go from his Ramboite 'hit list' according to his own personal fancy, and his administration's fluctuations.

But Mr. Reagan himself has got various branches of his government

to mine the ports of other countries, and to ignore the judgments of the World Court which say that the US is blatantly violating international law. He fights bitter battles with his own Congress to extract money to pay for thugs like Jonas Savimbi whose UNITA is conducting a war in Angola with not just the active support but in the company of the South Africa army. Only in September, he did just that in the case of the 'Contras' in Nicaragua, operating from Honduras, El Salvador etc, with money voted by the

US Congress; 100 million dollars to be exact.

Are there US advisors, mercenaries, etc helping the 'contras'? Of course not. There may be 'private citizens'. Nothing is "official". But this thin dividing line was bound to prove illusory, sooner or later.

Thus, the *Financial Times*, London, gave the aptest of headlines to a report from its Washington correspondent, Lionel Barber: "The accident that was Waiting to Happen". **Excerpts:**

## Finger points to White House

Seven days after a C-123 cargo plane and its mainly American crew was shot down in the sweltering jungle of southern Nicaragua, the full story of the bungled mission and the men behind it has yet to be revealed.

The Reagan Administration, which has encouraged private US citizens to support the guerrilla war against the leftist Sandanista Government in Nicaragua, denies any official involvement.

But that does not lessen the controversy surrounding the ill-fated flight and its lone survivor, the broad-shouldered ruddy-faced former marine from Wisconsin, 35-year-old Mr. Engene Hasenfus.

Mr. Hasenfus, who was captured by Nicaraguan army officers last Monday, has named two alleged CIA employees who he said ran a rebel resupply network based in El Salvador.

Hasenfus's testimony before the press in Managua was almost certainly made under duress. But the names he revealed have shed some light on the murky world of private contract airlines and independent pilots.

The key man named is Mr. Max Gomez, A Cuban-American. He has been reported by several US newspapers as being linked to Mr. George Bush, the US Vice President.

Mr. Bush denied this weekend this he was directing or co-ordinating any covert operations in Central America. But he admitted meeting Gomez on several occasions and described his role as "to help the Government of El Salvador put down a Marxist-led revolution". He also added, tantalisingly, that Gomez was a "patriot".

Such statements will doubtless win Mr. Bush, a leading Republican candidate for the presidency, plenty of support from the right-

wing. But it will only fuel suspicion that he and others in the White House know a great deal more about the "freelance" operations in Nicaragua than they are prepared to say.

This is why, in the past few days, attention has switched away from the CIA to the White House. Influential senators such as Mr David Durenberger, the Minnesota Republican who chairs the Senate Intelligence Committee, say they believe the CIA's adamant denials

(Continued on page 12)



## STAR WARS AND PEACE

### *An Admiral's testimony*

## The Business of 'Defence'

A few months ago, Admiral Hyman Rickover, known as 'the father of the Nuclear Navy', died at the ripe old age of 80. He was the longest serving officer in the history of the U.S. armed forces. In 1982, Rickover testified before the US Congress on US military spending — on how defence budgets were planned and who really decided on how the money should be spent, the individual projects and the priorities. The *New York Review of Books*, as its name suggests, is almost exclusively given to reviewing books hot off the press. It made an exception of Admiral Rickover's testimony and printed large extracts from the 'Record'. These excerpts are from the [NYRB:

*As you know, I have testified often before congressional committees, including yours, on various aspects of this problem. In some cases, Congress implemented my recommendations for reforms. Eventually, however, defense contractor lobbyists have generally learned how to get around them or have them rescinded. Now patent lobbyists are pressing Congress to extend that giveaway practice to large contractors. This would generate more business for patent lawyers but, in the process, will promote even greater concentration of economic power in the hands of the large corporations which already get the lion's share of the government's research and development budgets.*

*Many large corporations, because of their economic power and influ-*

*ence, have ready access to high-level government officials who, although not always familiar with the subtleties of the issues presented to them, all too often act without consulting their subordinates. This undermines the subordinates and does not always protect the interests of the taxpayer. Some large defense contractors know this and exploit it.*

*Often the largest business those least subject to the restraints of free enterprise are the most outspoken advocates of the capitalist, free-enterprise system as an effective safeguard against these excesses. They want the public to believe that they behave in accordance with the free-enterprise system, when in fact they escape many restraints of that system. Consistently they lobby*

*against new government regulations. They herald the virtues of competition and the marketplace as if they were small businessmen subject to these forces. Yet at the same time, they lobby for government—that is, taxpayer—assistance in the form of tax loopholes, protected markets, subsidies, guaranteed loans, contract bailouts, and so on.*

### Finger points . . .

*(Continued from page 11)*

that it was not involved in the mission.

After all, the incident occurred just days before the CIA would be back in business in Central America with £100m in new funding, expected to be released this week when Congress completes approval of the budget for fiscal year 1987.

To jeopardise this for the sake of a few hundred rounds of ammunition and some jungle boots — the supplies carried by the C-123 — looks at the very least ill-conceived.

That point is underlined by the unprofessional nature of the mission. Mr Hasenfus was the only occupant wearing a parachute and numerous documents including flight logs, identification cards, business cards and personal papers, were on board.

Mr Hasenfus himself, by cooperating so swiftly with his captors appeared less as professional undercover operator than a befuddled anti-hero.

In the light of the Administration's support for such private operations to help the Contras — before the organised aid comes through from Congress — the Hasenfus debacle was an accident waiting to happen.

### CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

*It was a time of Civil War.  
The Tongues of flame came to the scholar.  
It was a time to read and write  
And to be patient.  
For war was not his business  
But to show the cause of sickness.*

— Patrick Jayasuriya

## Castro speaks

# War and Poverty : the deadly dilemmas

(An excerpt from speech at Harare Summit)

**O**ur world faces two hitherto unknown, deadly dilemmas: peace or complete self-destruction: a just international Economic Order or the most horrifying future for the immense majority of the peoples represented here, even were there to be peace.

Our peoples of the Third World are the once who are threatened by the worst of both dilemmas: we can be wiped off the face of the earth in a war for which we are not responsible and in which we will not take part, and we can be crushed by hunger and poverty because of a world economic order that we did not create and that came into being and developed in spite of and against our will.

Many years ago, speaking at the UN, I said, "Let the philosophy of plunder cease and the philosophy of war will cease."

That philosophy of plunder, pillage and exploitation of other peoples was the basis for the conquest and colonization of last century, at the cost of the peoples of America, Africa and Asia. A handful of European powers raped, killed, massacred and uprooted tens of millions of people from their lands to enslave them. From our soil, those powers took all the gold and silver they could get their hands on: and from the sweat and toil of their slaves, they obtained tons of sugar, coffee, cocoa, tea, cotton and other products to be enjoyed by their colonial societies. This is how capitalism was born, oozing blood from all its pores, and this is how imperialism and neocolonialism followed later.

There's no need to study this in any Marxist book because it's written in indelible mark on the flesh of all our peoples.

What is underdevelopment if not the end product of that historical plunder?

The two World Wars, that signified such rivers of blood for humanity, arose from the philosophy of plunder, the old repartition and attempted new repartition of the world among the imperialist powers. That same philosophy is behind imperialism today unleashing the greatest arms buildup ever in the annals of history.

The developed capitalist power cannot resign themselves to losing our natural resources, raw materials, markets and cheap labor. They cannot accept the fact they can no longer sell their products at ever higher prices, while paying increasingly lower prices for ours. They refuse to give up the systematic plunder of our economics. They cannot resign themselves to the existence of forms of production and distribution of social wealth other than those or their obsolete and rotten capitalism. In short, they cannot resign themselves to the existence of real national independence in their former colonies and a people's liberation movement.

This is the main reason for the enormous accumulation of nuclear arsenals, strategic missiles, long-range bombers, giant aircraft carriers, battleships, submarines, rapid deployment forces and imperialist military bases the world over. This is the reason for the frenzied efforts to deploy weapons in space, so that one day man will not even be able to look at the stars without the view being shrouded by the thought that he's surrounded by a deadly arsenal of nuclear arms, laser rays, particle beams and similar devices. No country in the world will be able to feel safe. Space weapons have no other objective than robbing man of his possessions on Earth. This is why the imperialists refuse to abide by the law of the sea, drawn up and approved by the immense majority of the international community. They

want for themselves all the oceans and all the minerals in the seabed within reach of their sophisticated technology.

No one should be surprised by my calling things by their name. Should the United States achieve the world military predominance it so desperately seeks, all those present here know that their oil, iron, copper, chromium, bauxite, rubber, lead, zinc and other natural resources and raw materials would again be divided up among the big capitalist powers, to satisfy their insatiable consumer hunger, and we wouldn't have a single weapon with which to defend ourselves.

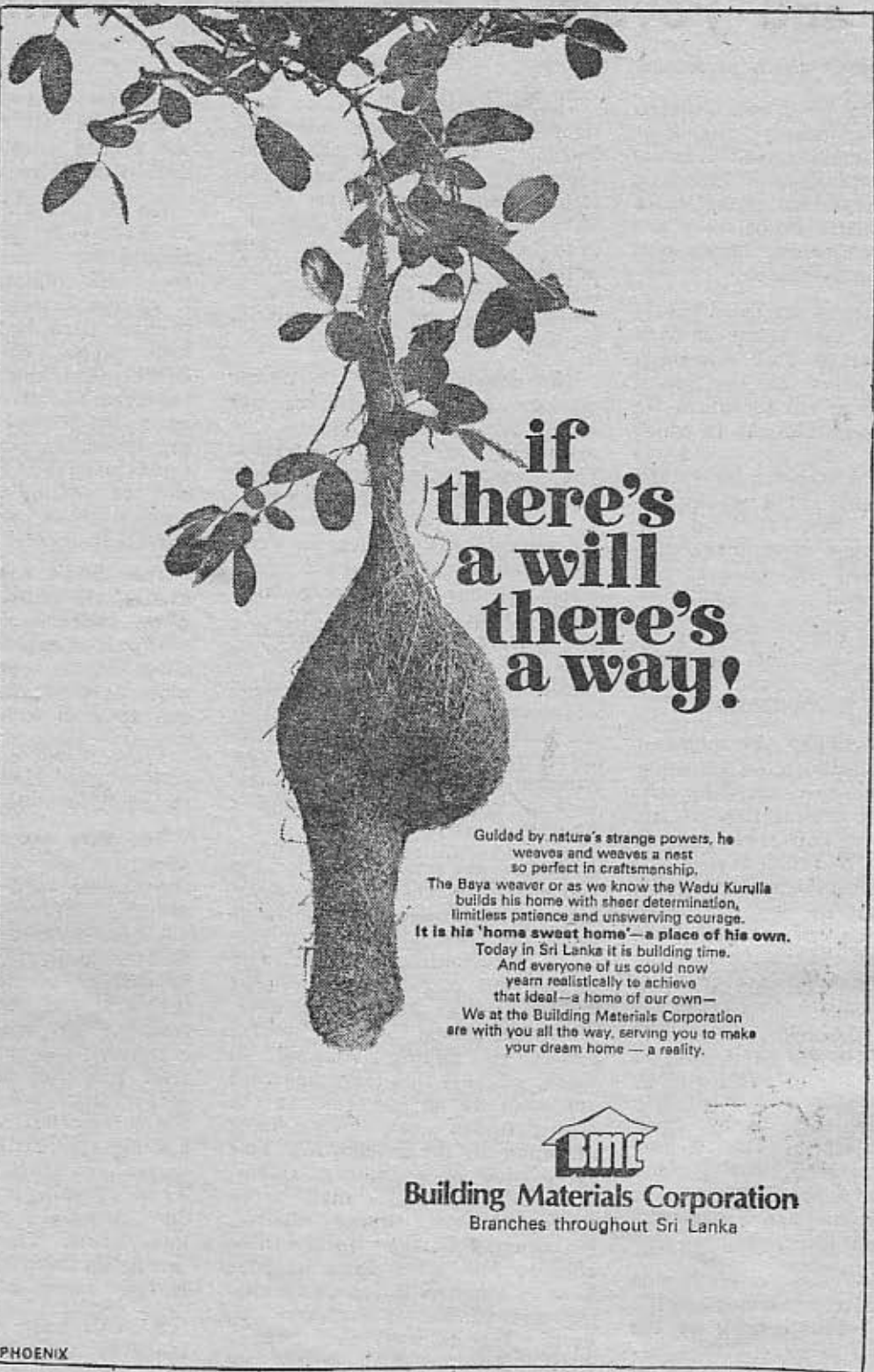
This didn't happen at the time of the oil crisis, simply because of the existence of a new balance of forces since the birth of socialism and the over 100 countries that have freed themselves from the yoke of colonialism.

Cuba, a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement, is proud to be a socialist country.

The very essence of socialism is alien to war and to exploiting the sweat and toil of peoples and their natural resources. Socialism has no need to invest abroad, to have military bases beyond its borders or divide up the world. It does not need to produce weapons in order to boost the economy and make monopolies rich. It knows perfectly well that resources can and should be invested in factories, hospitals, schools, housing, recreational and cultural centers and other worthy projects. Arms spending is the heaviest burden imposed on socialism by imperialism. Our country, only a few miles from the United States, is fully aware of this.

At this hour of decisive importance for all peoples, it is precisely imperialism and not socialism that refuses to put an end to nuclear

(Continued on page 21)



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

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

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## Gorbachev Visit

# India — a high Soviet Priority

Bhabani Sen Gupta

“India is a great power, growing into a world power. It continues to be one of the steadfast friends of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has contributed to India's development into a great power. It will welcome India as a world power, and will contribute whatever it can toward that desirable objective.”

This is how a member of the central committee of the CPSU described the Soviet perception of India to me in Moscow last week. Many other Soviet men and women, in the Soviet-Gothic building of the external affairs ministry, in the secretariat of the central committee, and in the plush or austere cabinets of three major social science research institutions echoed the same sentiment though not exactly in the same words.

“India is our friend, Indo-Soviet relations are friendly — *Druzhestvennyy*. When Sino-Soviet relations are normalised, these will be good neighbourly, *Dabrasosedskiy*,” emphasised a 31-year-old brilliant scholar, Andrei Valin, of the Institute of Oriental Studies, who is not a member of the CPSU. In my ten days in the USSR, I realised that he was speaking for the entire Soviet people. There will not be once again the brother-friend dichotomy of the late 1950s. Even if party-to-party relations are restored between the USSR

*Prof Sen Gupta, who is author of “The Fulcrum of Asia” works at the Centre for Policy Research in Delhi. He was on a 2 week visit to the USSR last month.*

and China, and perhaps that is not too far off, China will remain a good neighbour, India a friend.

Indeed, dramatic progress in normalisation of Sino-Soviet relations has enhanced for the Soviet Union the importance of a friendly India. When Mikhail Gorbachev comes to India on or around November 25, he and prime minister Rajiv Gandhi will build new and strong scaffoldings of a friendship that is valued in both countries.

“The two have a great mutual rapport,” said ambassador T. N. Kaul who and his colleagues are working hard with Dobrynin and others to draw up the agenda for the Indo-Soviet summit in New Delhi.

Soviet spokesmen point out that India will be the first country outside the bloc that Gorbachev will be visiting as general secretary of the CPSU. He has gone to Geneva and to Reykjavik to meet Ronald Reagan, not on official visits to Switzerland and Iceland.

This alone puts India very high in the vision of the Soviet public. It was also pointed out to me that Gorbachev, in his Vladivostok speech of July 28, named “the Great India” before naming any other nation in the Asia-Pacific region, with which he would like to work for a more secure and less poor planet.

Soviet spokesmen pointed out that Indo-Soviet relations have proved to be the most stable and friendly bilateral relations of the post-war world. Even Anglo-US relations were severely strained during the Suez crisis

of 1959. No Indian visitor to the Soviet Union can help being struck by the affection, regard and friendliness with which the Soviet men and women talk about India. In no other country in the world does India enjoy such an uncritical teflon image.

It is, however, realised in the CPSU secretariat and the Soviet foreign office that though the horizontal base of the Soviet-Indian relationship remains very strong and will so be for a long time, the vertical pillars that were erected on the base in the 1960s and 1970s are not that strong in the declining eighties. Gorbachev will be coming with many concrete proposals to build new vertical pillars — power plants, nuclear plants (if India wants them), oil drilling rigs, coal mining plants and so on. As many as 50 items have already been identified for joint projects both in India and the Soviet Union.

Unlike other Soviet leaders, Gorbachev will invite India to take part, on the basis of mutual equal benefit, in the further development of the Soviet economy. “India is the world's 12th largest industrial power, it can now help us as we help India for further development,” observed an official of the Soviet external affairs ministry.

I found a willingness in Moscow to help India build civilian jet aircraft, if this kind of a proposal is submitted to the summit. A large civilian jet aircraft joint project could be set up in India to meet India's own civil aviation requirements as well as for export. Soviet civil aviation jets, including the Soviet airbus, are

EXCLUSIVE

no inferior to the planes India buys from the West spending huge amounts of hard currency. China bought six Soviet jets in 1985 for its airline and has ordered ten more for delivery this year.

I found no anxiety in Moscow that under Rajiv Gandhi, India is turning to the United States. Not one of the score of Soviet personalities I was able to meet, asked what might happen during Caspar Weinberger's visit to New Delhi. The Soviets are confident that India's threat perceptions will not change in the foreseeable future, nor therefore, India's defence policy, postures and military doctrines. Indians may try to "down play" the Indo-Soviet Treaty at times of peace, but they know it is an impenetrable defence shield at their disposal, whenever they need it.

I also noted that Soviet specialists' understanding and analyses of global economic and trade trends and processes reassure them that India has no chance of being flooded with American private capital nor deeply penetrated by western multinationals. "There's not that much surplus investible capital in the United States and Western Europe; besides American multinationals tell us that they cannot hope to make one-third of the profit in India of what they could easily make in the developed countries themselves and in a host of third world countries," said Gleriy Shirokov, an acknowledged authority on Indian industrialisation. Moscow's India watchers have also noted that the "Indian open door" policy has lost much of its zest, that the doors and windows are being slowly closed, that the government is falling back on the traditional lines of self-reliance and restrained international borrowing.

There is in Moscow a lot of sympathy with India's quest for higher technology; Russians see much in common between their and India's need for modernisation and acceleration. With all their ideological and sentimental affection for the Indian public sector, toward the construction of which

the USSR has made no mean contribution, people in Gorbachev's Russia have no patience with large state projects that go on losing money, be they in their own country or in India. Moscow's India specialists strongly stress the urgency of making Indian public sector projects self-supporting and profitable.

I did not meet a single Soviet man or woman who took a dark view of normalisation of India's relations with the United States. This is a new Soviet outlook emanating directly from the world view of the 27th CPSU congress and the foreign policy guidelines that emerged from it. Lowering of all bilateral tensions and improvement of all bilateral relations stalled by conflicts of interests or values are now welcomed in the Soviet Union as contributing to global peace and security. The Soviets value India's role not merely as the leading figure in the Non-Aligned Movement but also for leading the non-aligned effort for a comprehensive test ban treaty and nuclear arms control and disarmament. Rajiv Gandhi's strong opposition to SDI or Star War weapons enhances his leadership value for the Gorbachev team. The Soviets realise that the USSR stands to gain, not lose, from modernisation of Indian industry, from an upturn in the Indian economy. They are not disturbed by Indian purchase of select military high-tech from the US. They know as much as the Indian government knows that as long as India's threat perceptions remain unchanged, there can be no "defence cooperation" between India and the US. Nor any strategic understanding.

Soviet decision makers also fully understand Indian misgivings about normalisation of Moscow's relations with China. Particularly, about the coming Sino-Soviet border accord. "Once, when you were moving to normalise relations with China, we got nervous. It is only natural that you will feel nervous about our normalisation efforts with China. We have taken every measure to reassure your prime minister that normalisation of our relations with China will

not in the least be at the cost of Vietnam or India. We shall do everything possible to strengthen our relations with India further," said Primakov, and this was repeated to me by spokesmen of the International Department and the foreign office.

At the same time, the Soviets would like to see India-China relations normalised as soon as possible. I got the impression that Moscow would like India to make counterproposals to Beijing, and to elevate the talks to the political level. Moscow is willing to help bring about negotiation between Beijing and Hanoi. It may also be willing to help India and China settle the border issue. But it has to be asked by both. It hasn't been by either.

Does Moscow see a role for India in settling the Afghanistan problem? To this question, the prompt answer I got was, why not? but what kind of role? Mediation? For that, the US and Pakistan must also ask India, which they shall not. The Soviet Union would like India to be one of the guarantors of an agreement on non-intervention in Afghan internal affairs but would the US and Pakistan agree?

There is a man in the Indian embassy in Moscow who finds in Mikhail Gorbachev some kind of a Nehruvian vision of a world of peace, security and development. He is the deputy chief of mission, Ranganathan. It was nice to hear this from an Indian diplomat. Gorbachev is the only political leader in the world today who is showing unmistakable signs of statesmanship. While Reagan, Thatcher, Kohl, Mitterand and lesser mortals in the world chancelleries are trapped in the jaws of nuclear and Star War weapons Gorbachev alone takes a politically, institutionally and economically integral view of the world and has risked his leadership, yes risked it! on achieving a comprehensive nuclear test.

More than any one else in today's world, Gorbachev regards Rajiv Gandhi a co-sharer of his global vision.

# Jaffna's War-time Economy

Paul Seabright

## Disturbances in Trade

Against this background, it is to be expected and it will be seen that the ceasefire has led to a significant easing of stress upon the internal economy of the peninsula. What it has not done is to improve trade much between the peninsula and the rest of the island. Table I gives estimates agreed by two independent and reliable sources,<sup>18</sup> of the daily flow of lorry traffic from Jaffna town through the isthmus at Elephant Pass to various destinations in the South, for six main phases of the ethnic conflict so far. The reason for the failure of trade to pick up significantly since the ceasefire appears to be that while hazards to vehicles and drivers have diminished within the peninsula, south of Elephant Pass they have remained high.

Some 20–25 lorries and their goods are estimated to have been lost during 1985, six of such cases having taken place at the time of the Vavuniya incidents in

August;<sup>19</sup> I have no reliable estimates of the numbers of occupants killed or injured. After a lull in September and October, a lorry driver was reported shot on November 18 by soldiers at the Elephant Pass army camp after being passed through the police check point there.<sup>20</sup> A result of the danger has been to raise the salary paid to drivers to some 500 Sri Lankan rupees for the Jaffna–Colombo round trip, from a level of about Rs 175 before July 1983; at especially difficult times it has risen to Rs750.<sup>21</sup> There are other costs as well: some 8–10 cases of hijackings of entire lorry-loads of goods (the lorries themselves being sent back) have been reported in 1985; diversion of small quantities of goods at road check points are said to be common though I have no means of estimating their frequency; however, monetary demands are reportedly rare.<sup>22</sup> The goods sent out of the peninsula consist mainly of onions, chillies, tobacco, potatoes, gingelly oil, cement and asbestos sheets; those coming in are primarily

essentials such as groceries and textiles. A reduction in transport of chemical products, such as caustic soda, has been noted by the "Central Bank Review of the Economy 1984" (CBRE) as contributing to the poor sales performance of the Paranthan Chemical Corporation.<sup>23</sup> And trade in electronics and other consumer goods has dropped severely, both because these are non-essentials and because they invite pilferage. Before the troubles, importers of consumer goods in Colombo reported brisk trade with the peninsula (a trade no doubt swelled by possibilities of smuggling to India); one such, 50 per cent of whose turnover was in Jaffna, now reports a complete cessation of trade.<sup>24</sup> There is a further reason why trade in consumer goods has been particularly cut. Within the peninsula, though threats from the security forces are now rare, vehicles are prone to be taken by militant organisations. Often these are borrowed and returned, if not always in the same condition as when taken; but several informants report that the brunt of these demands falls on business and commercial enterprises in Jaffna town and that farmers are rarely troubled;<sup>25</sup> this may be due to a combination of the ideological sympathies of the organisations concerned and a concession to the fact that the rural areas, where camps are based, are where they most require public support or at least acquiescence.

As might be expected, trade in vegetables and other perishable commodities which fell significantly during the troubled period, has not reached its former level, for journeys still frequently involve delays as well as risks, and vegetables that arrive in the South may not be in condition to fetch good prices. In vegetables produced in Jaffna this has meant much lower prices in the peninsula: tomatoes, at Rs 3 per kilo

Table I

### Daily Flow of Lorry Traffic from Jaffna for Phases of Conflict

Date	Phase	Lorries Per Day	Comments
Before July 1983	I	100	
July 1983 — April 1984	II	40–50	
April 1984 — November 1984	III	20–25	
November 1984 — July 1985	IV	20	Journey time increased due to curfew.
Late May 1985	V	Nil	Aftermath of Anuradhapura killings; many Tamil vehicles stopped and drivers killed.
After July 1985	VI	20–25	

in Jaffna, compares with Rs 15 in Colombo; brinjal at Rs 3 compares with Rs 12 in Colombo; grapes at Rs 8 to Rs 10 per kilo in Jaffna are sold for up to Rs 30 in Colombo; during the mango season the famous Jaffna mangoes were at Rs 1.50 against a Colombo price of about Rs 4.50; manioc at Rs 1.50 a kilo in Jaffna is now reported at Rs 6 in Batticaloa.<sup>26</sup>

Nonetheless, although overall trade volumes have not picked up significantly since the ceasefire, in certain categories of goods shortages and distortions have been clearly eased. Most important of these categories is fuel. Since the ceasefire the civil authorities have issued permits to private traders in petrol and kerosene, as a safer way of ensuring supplies than by using government transport. Most petrol in Jaffna is now purchased at the roadside in bottles; these sell for Rs 17 per bottle against a value of about Rs 11 at the controlled price of Rs 13.50 per litre. During the curfew period petrol rose to a price of Rs 80 per bottle. Kerosene is now Rs 10 per bottle against a controlled price of Rs 7.35 per litre,<sup>27</sup> so the price remains somewhat more distorted. But it did not earlier reach heights comparable to those of petrol, the demand being regulated more by unavailability than by price (a difference due perhaps to the greater ease of finding effective substitutes for kerosene).

What is striking is that markets for different products have behaved in very different ways, so that relative prices have undergone great and continuing change. Table 2 shows the behaviour of prices of an unsystematically selected shopping-basket of items, grouped into seven main categories of price behaviour. It is notable that goods of which Jaffna produces a surplus have seen large falls in price within the peninsula due to inability to export customary quantities: grapes, coconut and mangoes are striking cases. However, this has occurred only in goods in which the impact of the disruption to trade has been greater than that of the disruption

to production; by contrast, fish and potatoes, which have both seen production severely reduced, suffered overall rises in price in spite of their being among Jaffna's main traditional exports.<sup>28</sup>

It should be borne in mind also that the insecurity in Jaffna has led to a fragmentation within as well as between markets, requiring us to take some liberties with the very notion of a market

price. It is clear that grapes, for example, currently sell for prices that can change sharply from day to day and locality to locality, as supplies come irregularly onto local markets that have not in the past been used to dispose of surpluses (the price quoted in the Table are in such cases an approximate average). To complement this picture of local trade it is now necessary to consider the disturbances in production.

Table 2  
Retail Prices of Assorted Items

(in Sri Lankan Rs)

Group	Item	Unit	Present Price	Highest Price Last Year	'Normal' Price
I (high price rises)	Blackgram	kg	32	32	18*
	Greengram	kg	28	18	14
	Milk powder	$\frac{1}{2}$ kg	29.90	29.90	17
	Shoes	pair	120	120	80
II (lower price rises)	Eggs	each	1.60	1.60	1.40
	Mutton	kg	55	55	42
	Chicken	kg	50	50	40
	Coffee	kg	90	90	80
	Tea	kg	70	70	60
	Mysore dal	kg	29	29	25.50*
	Sugar	kg	14	14	12*
	Bread	loaf	3.15	3.15	3.05*
	Cooking gas	cylinder	210	210	185
III (rises, then moderate falls)	Rice	kg	13	15	8
	Fish	kg	30	40	15
	Potatoes	kg	14	25	12.50
	Chillies	kg	32	70	32
	Petrol	bottle	17	80	11*
IV (rises, then large falls)	Kerosene	bottle	10	12	6*
	Grapes	kg	8	20	12
	Coconuts	each	1	15	2.50
	Mangoes (in season)	each	1.50	10	3
V (small falls)	Soap	bar	2.95	3.10	3.10
VI (large falls)	Coconut oil	litre	9	22	22
VII (no change)	Flour	kg	4.90	4.90	4.90
	Milk	litre	5.50	5.50	5.50
	Textiles (local)	metre	22	22	22
	Textiles (foreign)	metre	28	28	28

Note: \*Controlled price.

## Disturbances in Production

**Fisheries:** Approximately one lakh persons (over 10 per cent of the population) are dependent upon fishing in Jaffna district.<sup>29</sup> This group has been economically the single hardest-hit sector of the population, for under the terms of the prohibited zone introduced in late 1984 it was required to leave the shoreline and move inland, thereby abandoning its livelihood. Some 15,000 families were issued with government food stamps,<sup>30</sup> but at Rs 40 per person per month these were clearly inadequate to meet even basic necessities. A study in April of fishermen's children under ten years of age in a camp in the north of the peninsula found evidence of marasmus (protein caloric deficiency) in 45 per cent of those examined,<sup>31</sup> as well as high incidences of skin and other complaints. As will be seen, sudden and severe malnutrition has not been confined to the fishing communities, for agricultural labourers have also been seriously affected by the situation. But even now at Jaffna hospital it is reported that many of the patients in the children's diarrhoea ward are children of fishermen, and that around 95 per cent of patients show signs of acute under-nutrition.<sup>32</sup>

Since June 18 the prohibited zone has been relaxed though not officially lifted, and fishing can take place up to three miles offshore.<sup>33</sup> This limitation on distance still severely restricts both the volume of catch and its value, for many of the larger fish are to be found only in deeper waters. The result of this is that while supplies to the local market have somewhat improved (as evidenced in Table 2),<sup>34</sup> exports from Jaffna to the rest of the island remain negligible. A daily traffic of ten lorries carrying ice fish and one carrying dry fish from Jaffna to Colombo has fallen to a rate of a lorry only every five days or so.<sup>35</sup> This represents a fall in value of exports of some Rs 250 million per annum<sup>36</sup> from the peninsula alone. The Northern and Eastern provinces together are estimated to supply some 55 per cent of the island's requirements of fish,<sup>37</sup>

In particular they supply much of the high quality fish (especially crustaceans and molluscs) exported from Sri Lanka. So it is unsurprising that the country's exports of fish in the first six months of 1985 were Rs 123 million (nearly 40 per cent) down on the same period in 1984.<sup>38</sup> The increased disturbances in the Eastern province since then mean this trend can only accelerate.

In addition to production losses there has been considerable damage to fishing boats and equipment. **The Gurunagar Fishermen's Association reports about 100 boats destroyed by the security forces in 1985;** other sources suggest the true figure for the whole peninsula may be much higher, with up to a quarter of all craft destroyed or seized.<sup>39</sup> Boats are taken both by militant organisations and by security forces; most of the former and some of the latter are said to be returned.<sup>40</sup> Despite the relaxation of restriction fishermen are subject to continued harassment by security forces, with some ten per cent of craft stopped, portions of catch taken and crew members assaulted.<sup>41</sup> (However, accounts from other districts indicate it is not Tamil fishermen alone who face hazards: 37 Sinhalese fishermen were kidnapped by unknown Tamils in September in the Eastern province; some bodies have been found and the others are reported killed, though there has been no official confirmation.) Given the high visibility of fishing as an occupation, and its dependence on expensive and vulnerable equipment, it is unlikely that fishing in the North and East of Sri Lanka will be able to return to anything like normal (whatever the state of official restrictions) before a resolution of the current conflict as a whole.

(To be continued)

### Notes

- 19 a s.
- 20 Saturday Review, November 30, 1985.
- 21 a s. All sums in this paper are in Sri Lankan rupees, which are worth a little less than half their Indian counterparts.

- 22 a s.
- 23 CBRE, Table 27 and p 56.
- 24 a s reliable.
- 25 a s corrected.
- 26 a s. Here as elsewhere in this paper the word "now" refers to mid-November 1985.
- 27 a s corrected.
- 28 a s and a s corrected (various)
- 29 Most recently estimated at 99,760; a s reliable.
- 30 a s reliable.
- 31 a s reliable, 117 children were examined, and weights below 70 per cent NAS reference of CARE-Sri Lanka were used to identify the undernourished. Compare a national study (which has been reliably quoted to me but of which I have not yet been able to trace the reference) which reported in 1982 an incidence of acute undernutrition of 4.9 per cent in children under 5 in Jaffna; there is no reason to think the incidence among the fishing communities to have been any higher at that stage.
- 32 a s reliable. Of course, the "normal" incidence in a diarrhoea ward would be higher than in the population as a whole. But here normal incidence is less than 50 per cent and normal symptoms less acute than those currently found.
- 33 With exceptions in other districts such as a nine-mile stretch between Talaimannar and Pesar.
- 34 The Gurunagar Fishermen's Association (hereafter GFA) estimate local supply to be still some 50 per cent below normal. Producer prices are about 35 per cent above normal, it says.
- 35 *ibid.*
- 36 *ibid.* Calculated at Rs 60,000 per lorry of wet fish, Rs. 100,000 per lorry of dry and estimating current traffic at one wet fish lorry per five days and one dry per twelve days.
- 37 a s reliable.
- 38 Central Bank of Ceylon, *Bulletin*, July 1985, Table 43.
- 39 a s reliable. The total registered craft number about 3,500 I do not have any basis for deciding between these accounts, except that the GFA does not cover the whole of Jaffna district, so their figure may be underestimate. The higher figure, though from a responsible source, is avowedly a guess and may be unintentionally inflated.
- 40 GFA.

## Correct Figures

One does not know from where the erudite Col. Lyn Wickremasuriya (L. G. 1/9) got his figures regarding 1977 General Elections! As it is necessary to correct this wrong picture given by him, I give below the voting figures from the Publications by the Centre for Society and Religion in its book 'Race relations in Sri Lanka' and by the Daily News in its '8th Parliament — Statistical Survey':

Parliamentary Constituencies	Total valid votes polled	Votes received by TULF	percentage %
Northern and Eastern Provinces — 26 seats including Amparai & Seruvila electorates not contested by TULF.	714,558	390,350 (includes votes polled for FP B'caloa & Mr. V Navaratnam, Kayts)	52.6
If the total valid votes polled in Amparai & Suruvila are excluded:-			57.9
Jaffna Peninsula — 10 seats	311,235	232,136 *(includes Mr. V. N's votes)	74.5
Mainland — 4 seats (Kilinochchi, Vavuniya, Mullaitivu & Mannar)	95,022	54,830	57.7
Northern Province — 15 seats	406,257	286,966*	70.6
Trincomalee — one seat (E. P)	22,260	15,144	51.7

It should be noted that the existence of two multi-member constituencies and the creation of two separate electorates, Amparai & Seruvila and carving out Amparai district out of Batticaloa district as a result of large scale state-aided colonisation, a realistic assessment is difficult. It is evident from the figures (population) shown by the Dept. of Census and Statistics that a market change has been effected in the demographic pattern of the Traditional Tamil areas by state-aided colonisation.

Year & District	Sinhalese	percentage	Tamils	percentage
1921 — Trincomalee	1,501	4.4	18,586	54.5
1981 — Trincomalee	86,341	33.6	93,510	36.4
1921 — Batticaloa (includes Amparai)	7,243	4.6	84,665	53.3
1981 — -do-	157,017	21.8	315,941	43.9

It is also clear from the following voting figures that the people of N & E provinces did not give the mandate sought by the UNP to constitute the so-called Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka of 1978 or the earlier constitution of the ULF of 1972:

Year of General Elections	Total valid votes polled in N. & E. Provinces	Votes received by UNP/ULF	percentage %
1977	741,558	UNP — 167,306	22.5
1970	676,878	ULF — 95,502	14.1

Constitutions are framed by consensus and not by majority community imposing its will on the minorities. UNP and ULF have wrought vast changes in the political structure although they secured only 51% and 49% of the popular vote respectively.

The Indian constitution has provided ample safeguards for protection of minorities and their rights and is even designed to protect minority regions from massive encroachments. This was never seen as a threat to unity.

T. S. Kumaresan  
Jaffna

## 1977 : The last hurrah

As a Buddhist I state that it is disconcerting to see some members of the Buddhist clergy participating in politics with hysterical bellicosity. This behaviour highlights that they have failed in their duty to remind the politicians who invite the priests to dabble in politics to turn back and look at their political past. It is indeed correct if they pointed out that the period of the crisis go back to the fifty-fifty demand of Mr. G.G. Ponnambalam. Secondly, Mr. Chelvanayagam's federal demand, thirdly the de-citizenising of Indian Tamils by Mr. D. S. Senanayake, fourth the Sinhala only Act. The end result of power arrogance, false steps taken, false proposals made then have made it difficult to retrieve now. All these, coupled with power arrogance, have resulted in the emergence of a demand for Eelam, and also the emergence of the Tiger movement.

In this stance Jennings deserves to be remembered. He stated — "The true democrat has a suspicion that he may not always be right". Indeed it is with this in view that the government held conferences regarding the settlement of the ethnic problem, and may have many conferences of similar nature in the future.

The irony is that the government should have done all this spade work before 1947. The first commitment was in 1947.

To those political leaders who oppose the provincial councils, priests should further point out that they are a group of persons taking the country to self destruction, or, redemption. I wish to echo Shakespeare "Proud man drest in brief authority plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven and make Angels weep. Further they should have pointed out that we should not forget that we won our independence together. Therefore we should live together. We must not lose it. If the opposers to the Provincial councils have any viable

alternative they should bring to the notice of the government and the general public through the news media. How well do their counterparts of other religions refrain from politics. They do not even imitate their counterparts overtly or covertly in the same hijinks. In this stance I wish to remind the reading public of John Milton's celebrated "Lycidas", where the author has poured scorn and scathing denunciation on the Protestant clergy. As much as Milton deplored the growing deterioration of the protestant clergy of the earlier Elizabethan era. Similarly the Buddhist laity should protest against some sons of the Buddha dabbling in politics, and becoming prodigal sons, by breaking a law of the Great Teacher embodied in His code of discipline for the monkhood. It is justifiable thinking that such groups, or sections have stealthily entered the clergy either to earn their livelihood or to seek it by secret, or underhand means.

Is not the clergy a non-class force, and a social group? Why should they intervene in the political domain? Do they know that class conflict is never absent from the political domain? Is not the Sangha such a non-class force which has attained a degree of ideological coherence, as (L.G.1/1) Dr. Gunasingha has observed.

Once a person enters the monkhood is he not a member of that Moksha Oriented religious path? Is he not a guardian of the religious path?

Priests who think that the laity is ever-ready to listen to them and get hypnotised when ever they chant, or rant some insipid and ineffective political sermon. Let me point out to them if so, they are sadly mistaken. The country is not in a mood to go back to the days of the 1956. Therefore the masses are no longer ready to carry out the bidding of the political minded priests. It should be borne in mind that there will be swift retribution

to such miscreants who disgrace the principles of a noble philosophy. During the early stages of independence the powers of the demigods were seen during elections. That situation has gone into oblivion as a result of the awakening of the rural youths politically, and educationally.

In this context the question to be posed is — 'how effective would the Sangha be as a political actor in their opposition to the Provincial Councils generated by the S. L. F. P. and its side-kicks'?

Are they aware that the situation facing this country to-day is a commentary on the confidence the people of Sri Lanka placed in the UNP in 1977.

The price paid for the policies of 'power arrogance' is a split of the Sinhala-Tamil communities. Each looks at the other with mistrust.

In conclusion may I remind politicians opposing the Provincial Councils that it is difficult to find a system that would completely satisfy everyone. May I say such a system is, in brief, the Federal system.

The "Hurrahs" of 1977 will not come on any single party in the Sri Lankan political arena again.

E. C. Fernando  
Colombo 5.

## War and . . .

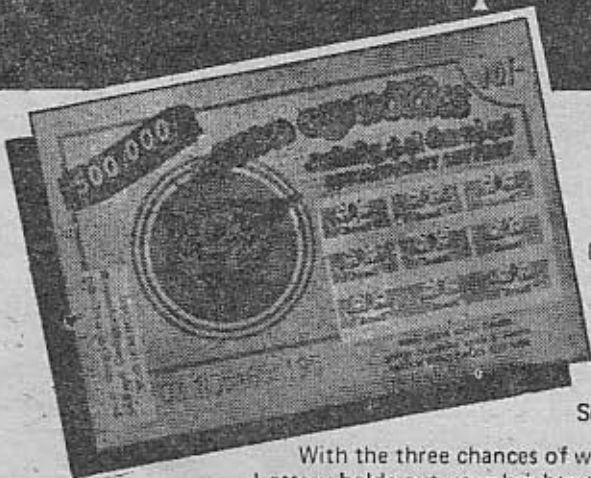
(Continued from page 13)

tests and rejects the only coherent, logical and acceptable policy for all humanity: that is, the cessation of the arms buildup, the banning of chemical warfare and other means of mass destruction, a reduction in conventional weapons and the implementation of a program for the total eradication of nuclear arms in the shortest possible time.

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## BANGALORE SUMMIT

# Cooperation: larger gains open to the smaller

Mahinda Werake

Although the idea of a regional organization for South Asia had been in the minds of some of the leaders of the countries in the region, a concerted effort at forming such an organization did not commence until 1979, when the late President of Bangladesh Zia-ur Rahman mooted it during his state visit of Sri Lanka. Incidentally, South Asia, aside from East Asia, is the only region in the world which did not have a regional organization of some sort. Considering the fact that South Asia is one of the world's poorest regions with almost a quarter of world's population cramped into it,<sup>1</sup> appears to be an ideal place where the idea of any cooperative effort aimed at pulling it out of doldrums of poverty and lack of development would find a fertile ground. However, the political will to take up the challenge and make the idea a reality was not there. The bold initiative of the President of Bangladesh was supported by the Sri Lankan President J. R. Jayewardene. Since then, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have been in the forefront of the attempts to establish a South Asian regional organization.

The idea to establish a regional association for South Asia was not enthusiastically received by all countries in the region at once. The initial support extended by the two largest countries of the region, India and Pakistan, was lukewarm. However, the indomitable determination of Bangladesh strongly supported by Sri Lanka and Nepal finally succeeded in getting their cooperation. Thus, it was possible for the Foreign Secretaries of the South Asian countries to meet in Colombo within a short period of two years. The said meeting which was held in April 1981 was the first definite step towards setting up of the

regional organization. The South Asia Regional Cooperation (SARC) was formally launched in August 1983 at the first meeting of the foreign ministers of the South Asian countries held in New Delhi.

It was felt by some countries that the new organization should proceed slowly and cautiously so that a Summit of the Heads of States or Governments should be called only after giving sufficient time for some of the serious bilateral issues to be settled at least to some extent. Nonetheless, Bangladesh once again used all its resources at its disposal to see that a Summit was held at the earliest possible date. The result was the Dhaka Summit held in December last year.

The Dhaka Summit led to the signing of the Charter of the association, now known as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and adoption of the Dhaka Declaration.<sup>2</sup> These two documents embody the aims and aspirations of the member states of the SAARC. The institutionalization process of the SAARC was further consolidated by the recent announcement to the effect that its Secretariat would be established at Kathmandu in Nepal. Thus within a short span of seven years the Bangladesh dream of a South Asian regional organization has come true dispelling the initial misgivings among some quarters about its success.

It is indeed an impressive achievement particularly in view of the extraordinary diversity and complexity of problems of the region.

The past record of the SAARC shows that it has successfully performed the arduous task of maintaining cohesion despite bi-lateral conflicts and tensions between some of its members. As a matter of fact, one of the important decisions taken at the first meeting of the Foreign Secretaries was to

keep the "bilateral and contentious issues" out of the deliberations of the organization and to take its decisions "on the basis of unanimity".<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, the infant organization was shielded from the likelihood of bilateral issues disrupting the unity that was built with much effort and difficulty. It is to the credit of the SAARC that it should be mentioned that over the last few years it has been successful in injecting a sense of responsibility and commitment into the behaviour of its member states. One of the significant occasions when this was put to test was in May last year when Sri Lanka threatened to boycott the third meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the SAARC countries held in Thimpu, Bhutan as a protest against an anti-Sri Lankan statement made by the then Indian Minister of State for External Affairs, Khurshed Alam Khan.<sup>4</sup> It was noteworthy that the two main adversaries of the region, India and Pakistan worked hard to get Sri Lanka back to attend the meeting.

Even prior to that incident, Sri Lanka, despite being a founder member of the group, had expressed its unhappiness with India for her role in Sri Lanka's ethnic crisis in supporting the Tamil separatists. Therefore, at the Foreign Secretaries Conference held in Male in February 1985, Sri Lanka made it quite clear that there cannot be genuine cooperation without mutual confidence and trust between the member countries implying India of interfering in Sri Lanka's internal affairs.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the bilateral disputes which were purported to be kept out of the association were raised by Sri Lanka twice during the last year threatening its survival. Yet, the SAARC survived both crises without much damage. One interesting feature on both occasions was that Pakistan, despite its longstanding con-

*(Dr. Mahinda Werake teaches history at the University of Peradeniya).*

flict with India came strongly on behalf of the SAARC. To their credit it should be noted that both India and Pakistan have been careful not to let their bilateral problems disrupt the unity of the SAARC. In that context, it was ironical that Sri Lanka, being one

of the erstwhile and ardent supporters of the SAARC at the initial stages, opted to adopt such a policy.

(To be continued)

**NOTES**

1. See Appendix I.

2. *Asian Recorder*, Vol. XXXII, no. 3, Jan. 15-21, 1986.
3. *Asian Recorder*, Vol. XXVII, no. 28, July 9-15, 1981.
4. *Ceylon Daily News*, 11th May, 1986.
5. See, Pran Chopra, "SARC — Survives a Jolt, Island, 20th March, 1985.

**APPENDIX I**

**Some Key Statistical Indicators of South Asia**

Countries	Area (000 km)	Population (1985) mm	Average Annual growth rate	Real G.N.P. Growth % (1985)	Per capita GNP (1984) US \$	Armed Forces (1985)
Bangladesh	144.0	100.5	5.6 (1973-83)	3.1	130	91,300
Bhutan	47.0	1.6	0.1 (1960-79)	—	80 (1979)	—
India	3288.0	762.2	3.9 (1973-83)	4.5	280	1.26(mil)
Maldives	0.3	0.2	13.0 (1975-78)	—	260 (1981)	—
Nepal	140.8	15.0	2.1 (1975-83)	2.8	160	25,000
Pakistan	803.9	99.2	5.0 (1970-83)	8.2	380	482,000
Sri Lanka	65.6	16.4	5.4 (1970-83)	5.4	360	21,500

Source: Asian Development Bank, *Annual Report, 1985*  
 Far Eastern Economic Review, *Asia Yearbook, 1986*  
 World Bank, *World Development Report, 1981*

**Negotiations . .**

(Continued from page 6)

East, especially if that sacrifice will only result in another period of military stalemate and another round of negotiations. The militants must accept the fact that they too have no military solution to their search for Tamil Ealam. The political realities of the region will not tolerate such a solution. To fight for it at any cost is to lead the Tamil people toward genocide and humiliation. The time has come to emphasize the political processes to engage in a genuine attempt to find peace so that the people of the North and the East can emerge out of their current state of siege and insecurity and develop their own part of the country. The Tamil people have made their point. Their political will can no longer be ignored by mainstream Sinhala politics. The scheme of devolution currently being offered accepts the fact that they are a people with a right to autonomy in the regions where they are a majority.

The CRD understands that there are many areas of contention with regard to current negotiations — the North-East Merger, the problem of land, law and order more federal or less unitary. But, the time has come for these issues to be discussed and settled at the negotiation table and not in the "killing fields". The country is tired of this War. Those who prolong the fighting for their own vested interests and out of a sense of bravado will only lead the country, the people and themselves toward death and self-destruction.

**Reggie Siriwardene**  
 for C.R.D. ●

**'No political . . .**

(Continued from page 8)

In such matters if they act at once, then the allegation was made that unwarranted arrests had been made; if the person concerned is allowed to go into hiding by delayed action, then, too, they were blamed.

He then made reference to a recent arrest of a smuggler. When he was arrested, there was suspicion that he belonged to a terrorist group. But then it was established that the suspect was not a terrorist but a common thief and smuggler who had brought in \$100,000 and Rs. 2.5 million worth of jewellery.

If there was reasonable suspicion, then they had to act once. That was how terrorism had to be fought. There were certain categories of police investigation which took a long time. Delay also occurred at the Attorney General's Department though, due to no fault of the department. Anyhow he was now acting on a provision which had not been much resorted to earlier, and he issued "restricted residence order", to give relief to the arrested, where possible.

He said detention conditions here were now fairly good. Foreigners who had looked into it had also said so. Parliament then adjourned till 9.30 a.m. today.



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