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AFTER RAO'S DEFEATS

PRABHAKARAN: SONIA'S TARGET?

– Mervyn de Silva

THE WORLD IN 1990'S

Lakshman Kadirgamar

Gamani Corea

PATH TO PEACE

Why Goodwill is Not Enough

J. R.'S 1982 LETTER

A. Jeyaratnam Wilson

SRI LANKA'S SECURITY

Humayun Kabir

INDIA-PAKISTAN PEACE FORUM

Nirmal Mukarji

PRIVATISATION – K. S. Chalam

BOOKS

Shelton Kodikara; David Little

Black Knight

It's your move

JWT MD12283

NEWS BACKGROUND

PRABHAKARAN'S "HERE I STAND"

Mervyn de Silva

An 80,000 strong Indian Peace-keeping force (IPKF), invited by the Sri Lankan government, failed to wipe out some 3,000 separatist Tamil "Tigers" in a full-scale three-year war. Can the international community led by the sole superpower succeed where the regional superpower failed?

The United States, supported wholeheartedly by the island's all-important World Bank-sponsored donor consortium, is engaged in a new conflict-resolution exercise which last week saw a dozen Colombo-based diplomats visit Jaffna, the LTTE stronghold. They did not meet Mr. Velupillai Prabhakaran, the "Tiger" supremo.

The LTTE which runs an international media network that is probably the envy of many a government which commands far greater resources, had meanwhile issued a press statement in Copenhagen, the venue of one of the largest U.N. - sponsored international conferences "The Social Development Summit".

The LTTE claimed that "President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga has lost seriousness about peace talks as she is now yielding to pressures from the Sri Lankan army and various Sinhala chauvinist elements".

The same issue of the *ISLAND* had the LTTE's clearest statement on the stalled peace negotiations. "The problem of the Tamils should be accepted as a national issue".

i) The Tamil people should be accepted as a national entity.

ii) The traditional homelands of the Tamils should be accepted.

iii) The rights and sovereignty of the Tamils should be accepted.

Though nothing could be more explicit the LTTE decided to fire one more shot into our (presumably) thick heads:

"The proposals should include the three fundamentals of nationality, motherland and self-rule".

In terms of conventional military strength, the Sri Lankan army is far stronger than the LTTE can ever hope to be. And yet the nature of this so-called "low-intensity conflict" is such that the "stronger" could be as weak or vulnerable as its puny adversary (4,000 guerrillas to 80,000 troops); an independent nation-state recognised by the world community and a member of the UN, Commonwealth and SAARC, challenged by a Liberation Front, not recognised by a single government.

The Sri Lanka government is exposed to serious pressure because it is so **dependent.** The nature of its economy makes it so; an import-export economy, and an aid-dependent country. Of the tea, rubber and coconut, only rubber matters. We are not a member of OPEC nor do we export uranium. Apart from these "givens" which see that the diplomatic "hand" we have been served is exceptionally poor, it is only the geo-political factor that makes us important — to one major power, India, the region's largest and the worlds most populous democracy, perhaps a 21st century superpower.

But this same geo-political factor makes the northern province-based separatist LTTE a "security" problem for India, which contained a burgeoning secessionist movement in Tamilnadu by amendimg the Indian constitution in the early sixties. The founder of modern India, Jawaharlal Nehru spelt out independent India's regional security concerns rather bluntly:

"Much as we appreciate the independence of Nepal we cannot allow anything to go wrong or permit that barrier to be crossed or weakened because that would also be a risk to our security". Hence the Indo-Nepali treaty — and the Indo-Sri Lankan "Peace accords".

Mr. Prabhakaran has included this axiomatic factor into his own strategic equation. He is aware that the Indian state cannot possibly ignore the assasination

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CONTENTS

of Rajiv Gandhi, the grandson of the founding father of modern India. He has kept the peace talks going and the Sri Lanka army in barracks. The whole world, with the U.S. President himself blessing the P.A.'s peace initiative, has unequivocally supported President Chandrika's effort to resolve the conflict through negotiations. The monitors from Canada, Norway and Netherlands, last week's visit to Jaffna by Colombo-based diplomats and the Pope's formal blessing of the government's path-breaking special "peace mission" to Jaffna were all part of a deliberate build-up of international pressure.

The pressure takes another form too — European governments in particular are tightening the screws on expatriates and refugees. When Norway which has been most accommodating to Tamil asylum-seekers shut the door to 300 Tamils after a long and bitter fight through the courts, the signal, was clear. Opinion-making Sri Lankans would have read with interest an article in the *Daily News* by Dr. Shanmugaratnam who holds a high-level post in a state-supported research institute in Norway. He is now at Peradeniya.

But the LTTE leader also knows how vitally important a negotiated settlement is in the P.A.'s "grand design". The "peace dividend" that Dr. Lal Jayawardena, Economic adviser to the President, has been canvassing since his Bandaranaike Memorial Lecture is what brings the IMF-World Bank, the major donors and the P.A. strategists together.

Knowing how crucially important this "peace dividend" is, Prabhakaran, the seemingly weaker party to the negotiations, can in fact discuss the issue from a position of strength. And that precisely is what he is doing, hoping that the long spell of "no war, no peace" will make the army restive, if not sour and hostile. The PA cannot afford to have an army that is trapped in a no war-no peace situation for long.

"There is little doubt that her overriding concern today is to protect and perpetuate her husband's memory. She will do anything for that."

— **Zafar Agha,** *India Today*

"Narasimaha Rao could not believe it. Each time he opened his mouth to speak at the podium, the sloganeering would begin.

Rajiv amar rahe!

Sonia Gandhi desh chalaiye

Sonia Gandhi Zindabad!

After five minutes of this, Rao's formerly confident features dissolved. into a sulky pout. Congress leaders fanned out to pacify the crowd — to no avail....." (*Times of India*).

Prime Minister Rao's Congress has taken quite a beating at the state polls. This could weaken his position vis-a-vis the Hindu extremist B.J.P., and more significantly for Sri Lanka, his capacity to stand up to pressure from Sonia Gandhi and the "Rajiv caucus" in the governing party. Sonia Gandhi is quite persistent in her demands for "justice" in the Rajiv Gandhi case where the Special Investigation Team (SIT) has piled up evidence against LTTE leader Prabhakaran and his intelligence chief Pottu Amman.

TRENDS

Only one against

Only one against the Emergency when it came up for renewal in parliament on March 6. He was the Hambantota District MP Nihal Galappatty, the sole representative of the Sri Lanka Progressive Front which represents the JVP.

The UNP, the CWC and the other Tamil parties voted with the Government. The count was 180 to 1.

BRIEFLY. . .

Well looked after

Citizens of the North had been well looked after since peace talks with the LTTE began, the Government said, releasing a list of essential goods sent up North by the state. Among them: drugs, dressings and X-rays worth Rs 33.3 million and surgical equipment and other medical goods worth Rs 2.2 million; 37,090 metric tons of rice, flour, sugar, and other food items; 101,423 barrels of kerosene, 1067 barrels of diesel and 89 barrels of petrol.

The Presidential Secretariat said that President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga had written to LTTE supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran indicating the government's willingness to commence immediately reconstruction work in Jaffna if the Tigers would signal their readiness to co-operate.

Japan too

According to informed sources Japan too has been operating radio transmission facilities in Sri Lanka, side by side with the Voice of America.

Japan has been operating two 300 kilowatt transmitters from Ekala, the present VOA site. Meanwhile the new expanded VOA site at Iranawila now under construction is continuing to attract opposition from the local populace.

President J.R. Jayewardene and the Sri Lanka Tamils

A. Jeyaratnam Wilson

Below is the relevant text of President Jayewardene's letter to me dated 19 April 1982. It raises questions about his attitude to the Tamil question. Secondly a background to this letter is provided to clarify matters relating to the unfortunate events of the burning of the Jaffna library.

The President refers to the recruitment of "Home Guards". He discussed this with me. My impression was that he thought the guards would be a protection against rioting by lumpen elements. He was thinking of the home guards in Colombo during World War II. His thinking on matters such as these was always a return to the past. But nonetheless there were instances when he ventured daringly into two modern phenomena. These were the Gaullist style presidency and the open economy. The point here is that he had not intended the home guards to be *fascismos*. In the end they turned out to be so. Much of the blame for this perversion of his intentions lies at the doorstep of his chief Tamil balter and cabinet minister, Cyril Mathew. The President was years too late in dismissing this cruel man. It was one more instance of his monumental blunders. His unconvincing excuse was that he was using Mathew to counter the propaganda of the anti-Tamil elements in the SLFP when I suggested that he dismiss him so that Sinhalese-Tamil relations could improve.

The third paragraph of this letter refers to the riot victims in Jaffna, compensation for the burnt Jaffna library and a Buddha statue in Vavuniya.

On the library, the President did not provide the compensation he promised (ten million rupees). Possibly the anti-Tamil forces in his government obstructed him. From what he told me, there were many Sinhala communal wolves in his cabinet dressed in sheep's clothing (not his words but my inference but he used the term "communal"). His brother, H.W.J. told me during this phase that he took a subscription list to his friends with a request for contributions towards the re-building of the library. In despair, he added that not a single of his Sinhalese lawyer friends in Hulftsdorf subscribed.

The incidents relating to the burning of the library throw interesting light. Gamini Dissanayake (it may have been at the President's request) explained to me on the phone what happened. However Gamini himself may have volunteered to do this, for he was a good friend of my brother-in-law, Samuel Chelvanayakam Chandrahasan with whom he developed a lasting friendship commencing from their Law College days. All I know is that while Gamini talked to me on the phone, the President was by his side. I heard him whispering details which probably escaped Gamini's memory.

Gamini told me that the police were "enraged at the killing of their comrades". On the night of the burning, they, the police, had gone "mad with anger" and were determined to wreak vengeance. He did not explain the reason for Mathew's intervention at the election. He only said that when the President learned of Mathew's plans to go to Jaffna with his fleet of CTB buses, he told Gamini "have an eye on Cyril". I cannot understand why he did not order Mathew to remain in Colombo.

Gamini said that the police and some in the army had that night "looted liquor stores" and boozed themselves to a fury. He, Gamini, was in the front line with the security personnel both alongside and behind him, straining at the leash. He tried to restrain the policemen. These were his words: "they were full of rage". He tried to stop them and failed. For the first time in "my life", he said "I was never so close to death as on this occasion". He instinctively felt that if "I uttered one more word of caution to these men, they would have turned on me and done me to death without any hesitation". He had no option but to let them move forward. He never expected that they would commit the horrendous act of incineration. He concluded by saying that what he said was the truth. The President who met me the next day, confirmed that what Gamini had said was exactly as it happened.

Earlier I cautioned the President not to let his UNP contest the elections. Vainly he believed from Tamil sycophants that his party had some chance to obtain a few seats. I countered, "let them fight it out among themselves. Don't step in there (the Jaffna peninsula)". After the calamitous events, he admitted that he had made "a mistake", adding, Thondaman had given him the same advise as I had.

The reference to "the statue problem at Vavuniya" was to a Buddha statue that had been planted at a junction. There was worry if not fear that if the statue was removed, there would be adverse reactions from the Sinhalese of Vavuniya. The TULF were insistent and I made known to the President their objections. I don't know what happened in the end. I think the statue was removed to another location but I am not certain.

(Continued on page 20)

PRESIDENT OF SRI LANKA

April 19, 1982

My dear Wilson,

This letter refers especially to your letter of the 25th of February.

Home Guards are now being recruited.

The compensation for the Jaffna riot victims has been decided upon; the Library will be rebuilt and Government from the President's Fund will be contributing Rs 10 million which will be sufficient for this purpose. The statue problem at Vavuniya will be solved soon.

Re the Development Councils, the Government has decided upon the extent and manner of the devolution and the TULF has agreed.

There is nothing more to say about the above problems just now. I am awaiting your arrival to discuss the next step or steps.

Politically it is quiet here as the Opposition SLFP-LSSP are all in disarray. It is the rising cost of living that worries me for I can find no solution other than creating employment opportunities and giving adequate wages, which we are doing as best as we can.

The terrorists are still active and a Tamil policeman was shot and killed in day light in Jaffna near his home a few weeks ago. They are, however, being pursued relentlessly.

Mrs. Jayewardene and I send all of you our very good wishes.

Yours sincerely
J. R. Jayewardene
President

Prof. A. J. Wilson

Multilateral Institutions and Movements

Lakshman Kadirgamar *(Minister of Foreign Affairs)*

It is with much pleasure that I accepted the invitation from the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies to deliver the Inaugural Address this evening. The BCIS is a pioneer in the study of international relations in Sri Lanka, a field of study whose origins are relatively new in the country. Additionally this field of study has become more complex as the issues it deals with become more intractable. No longer is it possible to determine new developments in the international theatre at face value, for it requires close dissection and study. The great advances in the field of communication has made quicker decision making an imperative. Taking these factors into consideration the role of the BCIS in promoting the study and understanding of international relations is indeed laudable.

The subject of the Seminar inaugurated today "The World of the 1990s: Its Impact on Multilateral Institutions and Movements" is very timely considering that we have just reached the half-way point of the 1990s - a decade that is definitely a watershed in modern history. Precipitated principally by the end of the Cold War, changes during these five years have come about with a remarkable degree of rapidity, sweeping away Institutions and even countries that once appeared to be permanent features.

One of the greatest challenges posed by developments in the 1990s is its impact on the United Nations System. The UN has rapidly expanded its role particularly in its peace-keeping and conflict resolution activities albeit with a static and sometimes dwindling financial resource base. Therefore the broad basing of its funding system is an urgent imperative if it is to effectively deal with increased responsibilities, it is now called upon to shoulder. Democracy being a key word today, it is appropriate that high office in U.N. bodies be fairly shared by member states. It would then give more meaning to the preamble of the institution that begins with the lofty words "We the peoples of the United Nations". This year being the 50th anniversary of its founding it is indeed a good point at which the United Nations could look back at its past, take stock and plan for the future.

The Uruguay round of GATT has just been completed, and beginning this year, the World Trade Organization has been established. However, somewhat contrary to the GATT concept of a unified trading system we witness the emergence of different economic groupings. The forging of European unity is almost complete. NAFIA is a reality and APEC is fast taking shape. It is necessary that we study these trends considering the strong possibility of developing nations being denied membership in these blocks or, even worse, running the risk of not obtaining some degree of favoured treatment within these markets. For us in South Asia there is an underlying need to strengthen SAARC unity and give high priority to effectively link up with these economic groupings; APEC in particular. Otherwise South Asia, one of the most populous regions of the world which depends greatly on exports for survival, runs the high risk of been denied access to this huge market that spans the Asia-Pacific region.

Third-world debt is of great concern to the developing world in the nineteen nineties. How well can the aspirations and goals of this group be reconciled with those of multilateral financial institutions and donor nations? The time is opportune to rationalise concepts such as structural adjustments and "aid conditionalities", taking into consideration the specific needs and unique social and economic conditions that vary from one nation to another. Development assistance would then become more meaningful to both the donor and the donee alike. Otherwise there is a high possibility of "aid conditionality", having an adverse impact on the macro-economic policies and even social policies of developing nations.

The Non-Aligned Movement has come a full circle since its origins in the 1960s. It is sometimes argued the NAM was a product of the cold war and that it has outlived its purpose. But what is the alternative? It is my view that NAM has the potential but to be effective in today's context a change in its agenda and priorities is necessry. It is only then that the movement could continue to be the effective voice of the voiceless millions that constitute more than half of the world population.

Your Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen, these are some ideas that I thought of sharing with you this evening. I am sure that the seminar that follows will focus on these trends in greater detail.

Clowns Cantos - 11

Taking the Salute

This is our Polit bureau
Surviving, though buffeted
By the veering winds of Reform
Weather beaten inreign and interregnum
Of Revisionism from Nikita to Boris
In the privatized Kremlin Show-biz

Mike read Marx backwards
For the Nobel salute
But this Politbureau is still Red Square
They have combined Das Kapital with the Market
And await bids at Auction and Fair
For land for Workers housing
Raising clenched fist for Market Welfare.

On Rocketing Real Estate
Acquisition is simply Unfair

U. Karunatilake

Multilateral Institutions and Movements

Gamani Corea

I want to say how pleased and satisfied I am that the BCIS has organised this Seminar, giving an opportunity for those of us in Sri Lanka to focus upon and reflect on many of the changes that have been taking place in the world around us and to look to the challenges that arise out of these changes. I want also to say that I feel greatly encouraged that this Seminar has succeeded in securing the participation of a number of very distinguished visitors from abroad. Each of them has been a major actor in the processes that we have decided to reflect upon and examine over the next two days. On behalf of the Council and myself I extend to them a very warm and sincere welcome.

The theme of the Seminar is "The World of the Nineteen Nineties: Its Impact on Multilateral Institutions and Movements". I would like to start these remarks of mine by offering a few thoughts on what seems to me to be some of the major, the pertinent, developments that characterise the world of the '90s.

The first thought that strikes me, and would strike all of you, is that the '90s have already become a decade very different to any of the previous decades since the conclusion of the Second World War. We are living in a different international environment, a vastly changed climate, and it is from this changed environment that we need to draw conclusions about where we go in respect of the international community, in respect of multilateral institutions, and of the several movements that are part of the process of global dialogue and discourse. The changes that we have witnessed in the '90s, by the end of the '80s in fact, are primarily, of course, political. The overriding factor underlying these changes has been the vastly transformed international political climate arising out of the end of the Superpower confrontation, the end of the so-called Cold War. This has created new parameters for the conduct of international relations, and has engendered new hopes for the future of the international community. It was felt, for example, that the new scenario would ensure a world of peace and stability; a world that could now harness and direct its attention to some of the crying problems of international development and poverty; a world that can give attention to the needs of the vast masses of its population. There were also hopes that as a result of the changing political background there could be a major relaxation in the arms race, resulting in a "peace dividend", a substantial part of which could be diverted and applied to world development.

There were also hopes that the new environment would give new vigour to the United Nations, and to the international institutions which had hitherto been constrained by the conflicts among the major powers by the exercise of vetoes and so on. And it was hoped also that, consequent to all this, there would be a new revival of what has been called the "dialogue" between the developed and developing countries, the North/South dialogue, intended to draw attention to the problems of growth, development, and transformation in the Third World.

It is too early to say that these expectations have proved to be fantasies, or that the world in which we now live is very different from the world we have hoped to see. There have been positive developments in the course of the '90s. There has been the end, in one way or another, of the conflict in the Middle East between Israel and Palestine. There has been an Agreement, still with many difficulties and still to be completed and crowned with success. But a significant beginning has been made, which has made a difference to that part of the world relative to four or five decades that preceded us. There has also been the transformation in South Africa, the end of "apartheid" and the creation of a Government of National Unity, marking once again the end of a conflict that had engaged the attention of the international community for decades past.

These certainly are positive developments. But, we are also aware that there have been, at the same time, negative developments since the end of the Cold War. A new equation in international politics has come into being. For one thing, we have seen the continuation, even intensification, of conflicts of various kinds, many of them local, some of them regional, but all of them taking heavy toll of life and human suffering.

There is no prospect yet of the end of these disturbing developments. We do not know what more there is in store for us. But it is a fact that the new world of renewed hope, the new world free of superpower confrontation, has yet to succeed in controlling and ending local and regional conflicts.

We are seeing also difficulties in the former countries of Eastern Europe, engaged in what has been called a process of transition. There were hopes initially that this transition would be relatively rapid and relatively smooth. But I think that these hopes have been belied. The problem of transition has been more complex than many had imagined and there are many parts in Central and Eastern Europe that are grappling to this day with serious problems of social, economic and even political uncertainty.

The World of the '90s has also seen a continued deadlock in the arena of the North/South dialogue. There have been practically no international conferences on traditional issues such as resource flows, the terms of trade, commodity prices, debt and so on. There has been perhaps a dialogue of the deaf in respect of these very crucial matters.

Reflecting all these things, we have also seen changes in the UN. Some of these are good, but some have given cause for anxiety. Many have appreciated the renewed effectiveness of the UN in the political arena, the arena of peace-keeping, and its ability to contribute to the ending of conflicts. But there has, at the same time, been a feeling that the process of decision-making in the United Nations has become less democratic than in the past - partly because of the disappearance from the scene the former Communist countries and the consequent inability of the developing countries to assert a voice of their own, taking advantage of the tensions between the superpowers.

There has been some disquiet that the enhanced political role of the Security Council has been at the expense of a dilution or dimunition of the economic and social role of the United Nations. There has been concern that the increased resources devoted to military operations and peace-keeping have been at the expense of the resources available for the economic and social work of the UN and its Secretariat. There have been curtailments of funds, retrenchment of posts, and a visible thinning down of the cadres of the United Nations engaged in economic and social affairs. There is also anxiety that some of the issues that were traditionally dealt with within the UN have been taken out of that forum to be dealt with in other ways, some of them bilaterally, some of them in more specialised, more exclusive, fora.

So the picture that we have of the world of the '90s in the political setting is certainly a mixed one.

There have been corresponding changes,

some good, some bad, in the economic field as well. On the negative side, the '90s has seen the persistence of relatively sluggish, relatively slow, growth in the major industrialised countries of the world. The growth rates of the major economic powers have declined considerably relative to what they were in the 50's, '60s, and even the '70s. The Industrialised countries did not show much economic dynamism in the '80s and in what has gone by in the '90s. And all the projections that we have from the World Bank and other specialist international organizations suggest that this scenario of relatively restrained growth will, very likely, continue over the rest of the decade.

We have seen also, partly as a reflection of all this, a severe crisis affecting many parts of the developing world itself. The countries of Africa, the poorest and the least advantaged countries, and some of the countries in Latin America and of Asia have gone through the '80s, experiencing extremes of economic distress and difficulty. Growth rates in many of these countries were negative, certainly in per capita terms but for some even in absolute terms. Commodity prices declined to unprecedented levels, debt problems escalated, protectionist trends increased, new constraints affected the mobilisation and distribution of international aid and a host of other limitations surfaced as well. It is for this reason that the '80s have been described as the "lost decade" for most of the developing world and this despite the launching by the United Nations, of Decades of Development, supported by vast documents the latest of which I myself had a hand in preparing. But despite this record the predictions and the projections from the specialist agencies is that the rest of the '90s will, by and large, be a replay of the '80s in so far as the weakest and poorest of the developing countries are concerned. So that again is a negative factor that is a cause for concern, a cause for anxiety and disquiet.

But there have also been positive developments on the economic side. We have seen, notwithstanding the lost decade for the poorest countries, a remarkable resurgence of growth in the Asian region, particularly in the countries of East Asia and South-East Asia. Asia is now being described as the potential growth pole of the 21st century. There are hopes that these waves of development and transformation that reached out to East Asia first, and then to South-East Asia, may eventually reach out to South Asia and take us also on an upward path of change and transformation. I hope that would materialise. But it is too early to say.

There have also been other developments in the international economic field, some of which are a cause for anxiety. There has been, of course, the successful conclusion, and that is a positive feature by and large, of the Uruguay Round which had led to the establishment of a new regime to govern world trade and to the transformation of the former GATT into a World Trade Organization.

But here again it needs to be said that the main thrust of the Uruguay Round, and the principal issues that engaged the negotiators, were largely those introduced on the initiative of the developed countries, reflecting some of their concerns and preoccupations. The developed countries were anxious to introduce into the world trading system a new regime of rules and regulations to guide the conduct of international economic relations in such new areas as intellectual property and trade related investment, areas in which the developed countries were already major actors, enjoying some kind of a surplus vis a vis the rest of the world. There was a desire also, realised in large part, to bring Agriculture within the ambit of international rules, a sector that had for various reasons remained out.

On the positive side there was progress made in bringing down barriers to trade, the conventional tariff and non-tariff barriers, leaving a world in which such barriers are much below what they were 2 or 3 decades ago. It has been a solid achievement that by a process of successive global trade negitiations GATT has succeeded in bringing down tariffs in an impressive way. But here again this success has not reached out to the developing countries to the same extent as it did for the developed countries. The developing countries still encounter significant barriers, tariff and non-tariff, when it comes to the export of processed and semi-processed goods. There is still an escalation of tariffs in the markets of the major importing countries vis a vis these products. And although the Uruguay Round negotiations did make some progress in that area, this progress falls short of the achievements of the Uruguay Round when it comes to the general reduction of tariffs. It has been said that the benefits to the developing countries from the negotiations of the Uruguay Round, though positive, are somewhat less than the benefits to the developed countries.

Then again, in the economic field there is a trend, in a sense a contrary trend, towards the establishment of regional and sub-regional blocs. Today, regional economic groups are almost universal. I can think of hardly any country, developed or developing, that in one way or another, does not belong to some kind of regional or sub-regional grouping. This can be a good thing. The regional cooperation groupings of developing countries are intended to give a filip to their endeavours at economic growth. But parallel to that, we are seeing also a new kind of regionalism that results in the creation of immensely powerful trading blocs, "mega" blocs, as they have been called involving the most powerful economies in the world. We have the European Union which has established an impressive free trade system among its members. This has been followed by the emergence of NAFTA, initially between the USA and Canada. What is significant is that these vast groupings of developed countries are now beginning to establish special links with selected, rather than with all, developing countries. The European Union has special arrangements with the countries of Africa. It will probably develop special arrangements with Central and Eastern Europe and with countries of North Africa. NAFTA has already brought in Mexico within its ambit, and is to reach out to the other countries of Central and South America. And then we have APEC, the Asia Pacific Economic Community, made up of some of the most dynamic and powerful economies of the world, committed to establishing a free trade area, that will include not just the developed countries but also the developing countries of East Asia and South-East Asia.

Now we have to ask: what are the implications, what is the message, for countries such as ours, the countries of South Asia, that do not belong to any of these groupings and, therefore, do not share in the benefits they are expected to generate? As long ago as 1964, when UNCTAD-I convened, there was a vigorous insistence on the part of developing countries that any preferences extended to them by developed countries should be on a "generalised" basis. They did not want special patron-client relationships between some developed countries and some developing countries, the grouping of countries each under a "rich uncle". So out of that came the Generalised System of Trade Preferences. The GSP system of Trade Preferences still exists, but one has to ask what is its relevance, what is its future, in the context of all these new developments when special privileges and preferences are extended to some but not to all developing countries? The trend towards regionalism is in a way contrary to the trend towards universalism as embodied in the GATT and the WTO. We seem to be having two international trade systems in fact: one the universal system of the Uruguay Round and the World Trade Organisation and the other the system of massive trade blocs with their own rules and preferential arrangements. It is a Federal rather than an Universal Trading System, and this too has its implications for us.

There have also been changes in other areas and particularly in the social area. There has been a welcome concentration of attention on new issues that had hitherto received scant attention from the international community. Issues such as the Human Environment, Human Rights, Social Justice, Population, Poverty Alleviation, Women and Development, Democracy, Demilitarization,

all these and a host of other subjects, are now getting a certain visibility on the international scene, engaging the attention of governments and becoming the subject of international conferences. The United Nations has organized a number of Global Conferences on these themes: Environment, Population, the Social Summit to come, and the Conference on Women and Development to be held in Beijing. Around these new issues have also emerged a relatively new phenomenon. A large number of non-governmental organisations and unofficial actors committed to these questions, are organizing themselves, mobilising their energies and entering into interactions with their counterparts in other parts of the world. This again is one of the phenomena of the changed world of the '90s and I think that these developments are largely positive and to be welcomed.

But I have some anxieties and would like to strike a note of caution. It is important that the new emphasis on such issues as environment, social justice, human rights and so on are not put in juxtaposition and made antithetical to the other imperative of our times - the imperative of economic development, growth and transformation. We must not see economic growth and environment, or growth and social justice, as alternatives. We have to find a way to ensure that attention to these new issues interacts positively with the dynamism of the processes of economic change and transformation. Otherwise there would be conflict where the gains in one area are at the expense of losses in the other - some kind of "zero-sum" game. This is why the concentration on new issues should not be at the expense of a focus on some of the traditional issues. We should not dispense with paying attention to the hard core issues of money, finance and trade. Today, it is hardly possible to organise a global conference on such issues; it is much easier to organise global conferences on the emerging social issues. I do not think that this is a healthy sign.

The emphasis on new issues should not be a kind of escapism from the more difficult issues of money, trade and finance. The new issues may not touch on the "raw nerves" of international economic relations. But even their success, in the long run, is dependent on a world in which growth and development, economic progress and stability, move and advance steadily and consistently. Without that the social goals themselves will turn out to be elusive and difficult to reach. So while we applaud the focus on new issues we should not allow this to divert attention away from some of the old issues which still make up the hard core of international economic relations.

Well ladies and gentlemen, I have touched on some developments in regard to the world of the '90s. It is your task in the next 2 days to assess what significance these and other changes have for the two topics that are subject of your forum - multilateral institutions on the one hand, and multilateral movements on the other.

On multilateral institutions I have just one word to offer. I think we need to take a look at the way multilateral institutions have already been affected by the changes I have described. We must seek to strengthen those processes that are positive, and to arrest and reverse those that are negative. Sometimes we are under the illusion that the recently enhanced political role of the United Nations is an expression of the growing dominance of what is called the "international community" in world affairs, in contrast to nation states. But listening to the News Bulletins that come over the international media, I feel that the word "international" is used sometimes as a code word for the big powers, for those with the power to influence international processes and events. I find it difficult to identify with the "international community", the vast and passive masses of the poor countries of Africa, of Asia, and so on. That is a situation that we need to change. We need to make the concept of the international community itself more representative.

A few days ago, there was issued a Report by a Commission on Global Governance called "Our Global Neighbourhood". It has many good intentions, many high principles. But it is seeking to establish a regime in which this international community would take greater control of world affairs. In that process they have - I have just scanned the pages, and not read the Report carefully - made recommendations that I find quite disquieting. They have suggested, for example, that an Economic Security Council of the United Nations be established to replace the present Economic and Social Council. In the meantime, institutions like UNCTAD UNIDO, ESCAP and the other Regional Commissions should be abolished in the name of "Global Governance". I find this, at first glance, a very strange recommendation because these have been the very institutions that have, up to now, put the focus on development and on Third World problems. To abolish them at a stage in which the Third World is anything but strong is an act that I, for one at least, find questionable.

One word on the Non-aligned Movement (NAM). You very rightly, Hon. Minister, pointed out that NAM continues to retain its relevance despite the changed global scene. Many ask: since the Cold War has ended what is now the continuing relevance of NAM? They do not ask this about NATO however. NATO was nothing but a child of the Cold War. Yet NATO continues, and is being transformed to play a new role. But of NAM we are asked: why should you continue? What is your relevance? I think the answer is that NAM is an association of developing countries devoted to identifying and pursuing their common interests. They seek to do this in dialogue with their partners in the rest of the world. As long as that need is there, there is a need for a Non-aligned Movement. The developing countries certainly have differences. When one talks of the Group of 77, when one talks of the Non-aligned Movement, critics ask how can these developing countries that are so divergent work in common? One does not hear this same focus on divergence and differentiation when one speaks of the global community, of the global neighbourhood, of global governance and so on. But when it comes to Third World cooperation people flag this question of difference and divergence. My answer is that there is differentiation within the Third World; there always was; and it is probbly growing. But there are also common interests. All developing countries need an international economic framework that is supportive of development. They need better terms of trade, more resource flows, better access to markets. These have to be achieved through multilateral negotiations and in those negotiations individual developing countries have but little leverage. They can be only effective if they combine and mobilise their strength. That, I think, is the essential rationale for the continuation of Third World groupings - the Group of 77 and the Non-aligned Movement - in the multilateral context.

One last word and I have finished. I feel that the World of the '90s would need to pay greater attention to the dynamism and success of global development. This after all reflects the need of the vast mass of humanity. But this global discourse will not succeed if in the developed countries, partners in the negotiations, do not recognise that they too have a stake in a world system in which the development process is prospering, in which the vast continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America are victims of the processes of destablization and turmoil. Such processes will surely reach out to the North, no matter what protective walls the North might seek to establish. So I would like to see the North-South Dialogue revived, but not as a conference or discourse between those who ask and those who give, not as a dialogue between those who make demands and those who make responses. I would like to see it as a genuine dialogue within the whole international community signifying the will to create a world of stability, dynamism and progress which is in the interest of all countries. I hope these and other thoughts will be the subject of attention in this Seminar.

One again, I want to thank you most sincerely for having given me this opportunity and to say how much I look forward to the discussions in the days that follow.

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PART 3

Eight-Fold Path to Peace

External Factors

The importance and value of the solidarity of the international Community has to be recognised.

The primary responsibility of working for peace and making decisions in the peace-making process lies, undoubtedly, with the Government and peoples of Sri Lanka. The preservation of national sovereignty, self-respect and dignity is paramount.

However, Sri Lanka is part of the community of nations and there are certain relities involved in this that have to be taken into account. There are both external as well as internal factors that have to be considered in understanding the issues of war and peace in Sri Lanka. There are many external factors that have a determining effect on conditions in general in Sri Lanka and therefore on the causes of the war itself and its continuance — the dominant world economic system with its open-market, multi-nationals, arms-industrial complex and aid-procedures, affecting the daily subsistence of the people as well as the political processes, and the cultural repercussions, affecting the values of the religious and social establishments as well as the values of the peoples of Sri Lanka.

Vigilance

So in actions for peace in Sri Lanka the solidarity of the international community is vital. Certain people in Sri Lanka are particularly apprehensive about foreign influences that are partial to one side or the other. Also there are the influences of foreign power blocs that seek to advance their own vested interests. Such influences must be resisted so there has to be vigilance. But there are also impartial, committed progressive forces in many parts of the world. Sri Lanka, especially since she is a small country, will need the solidarity support of the progressive forces in the international community to exercise all possible pressure on those who have the responsibility to bring about a just peace for all in Sri Lanka.

Solidarity Actions

WSF/SL is in touch with other branches of WSF in different parts of the world, which have been trying to develop understanding of the issues of war and peace in Sri Lanka and act in solidarity. There are innumerable organisations throughout the world that are in touch with and involved in various ways with Sri Lanka. Then there are Sri Lankans of all communities living abroad who have links with Sri Lanka. **The more such individuals and organisations understand the issues of war and peace in Sri Lanka and act in solidarity with Sri Lanka, the more chance there will be of peace.** They can influence their own governments to act in solidarity with Sri Lanka, as well as directly act in solidarity with the Government and peoples of Sri Lanka. **The solidarity actions of innumerable concerned groups and individuals throughout the world over a long period had a tremendous positive impact on the peace process in South Africa. The same has happened to some extent in Sri Lanka and this must continue.**

For instance, expatriate Tamils have been a powerful influence on the situations in Sri Lanka. In some ways, this been a positive impact. In other ways, it has been a negative impact. Dissemmination of a true understanding of the issues of war and peace in carefully thought-out specific offers of devolution are made by the Government of Sri Lanka, supported by progressive forces in Sri Lanka, this would greatly increase the likelihood of positive response of Tamils abroad as well as in Sri Lanka. This has been specially emphasized in this memorandum.

The actions of other communities, groups and individuals abroad, in consultation with the Government and progressive forces in Sri Lanka, could likewise have a powerful positive impact on the peace-process in Sri Lanka.

8
STRATEGY, MEDIATION AND MONITORING

Lessons from the Past

It is absolutely essential that we learn the lessons that have to be learnt from the past. So many peace efforts have failed and, even when certain peace arrangements have been made, there have been failures in implementation. Good-will is not enough. There has to be careful thinking, planning, and action by several forces working together. Peace is a collective and inter-related process. Hence the importance of strategy, mediation and monitoring.

The Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE, in consultation with other parties and authorities in this country, should agree to mutually acceptable mediating and monitoring bodies, while at the same time preserving national sovereignty, self-respect and dignity. The help of distinguished citizens from different groups and sectors in this country and the help of international mediation would be invaluable in participation with the Government and Opposition regarding effective formulation and implementation of promises and arrangements to be made regarding cease-fire, demilitarization, protection of human rights, restoration of democratic processes, including multiparty system and elections, devolution of power and autonomy, with co-existence and mutual-dependence. A peace-keeping force whose impartiality would be guaranteed through supervision by distinguished citizens in participation with the Government and Opposition would also be invaluable.

There are some simple, plain truths that have to be faced by us all, especially those who hold the reigns of power at the various power centres. These truths are so unpleasant that some people find it difficult to face them or acknowledge them. There has to be a change in attitudes and approach. It is because we are not prepared to face certain truths and change our attitudes and actions that the destruction and the carnage go on.

As this is being written there has been another bomb explosion (at mid-night on October 23rd), killing the Leader of the Opposition and over 50 others and injuring over 75 others. The usual responses have poured forth: "Cowardly and dastardly!", "shocking and revolting!" and the finger of accusation is being turned on the "terrorists!" But that is not enough! The question must be asked: "Why do these things happen?" and the answer must be given: "It is because — all these long years — no solution has been found, no reasonable and acceptable formula for peace has been worked out by responsible." Then, the finger of accusation will have to be turned on ourselves, especially those in the seats of the various power-centres, both secular and religious, and we shall have to see ourselves as we really — those who have failed the masses, those who have failed our youth and thus equally worthy, in fact more worthy, of condemnation, though, perhaps, somewhat different epithets may have to be used: "Smug and complacent!", "callous and disregarding!"

No doubt, all are not equally responsible. Some have seriously searched for alternatives. But, as a society, there is a certain common responsibility we all have to bear.

There are other questions that have to be asked. Elders in the South have been shocked beyond measure when some of our young people first took to the shot-gun in 1971 and then the T-56 in 1988. The campaign of intimidation, arbitrary use of force and assassination that they launched and the counter-campaign of even greater ferocity of the Government security forces had the most fearful and horrendous effects. The same epithets mentioned earlier poured forth! But how much did we stop to think what drove them to it? **What were they led to expect and what did they get? What remedial measures, at any cost to ourselves, have we taken as a society? Is it not true that the elite groups, both religious and secular, by and large, have wallowed in more luxury than ever before and thrown a few crumbs to the masses and our youth?**

Then some of our youth in the North and East have gone even further. Why have they taken to the cyanide tablet and the high-explosive suicide bombing? Even young women are now right up in the front. Does it not say something not only about their devotion to a cause, whether mistaken or not, but also about their lack of hope or security in the future? Is it not because as a minority the Tamil youth in the North and East are in an even more alienated, disillusioned and desperate condition than our youth in the South?

At this point, it must be said categorically that WSF/SL does not justify or condone either the JVP or the LTTE. We have made our position clear on this much earlier: "It is important that a correct strategy has to be worked out in consultation with the masses. **Unwise short-cuts are counter-productive and help the anti-people forces in their work of repression and discredit revolutionary forces in the eyes of the people. So campaigns of intimidation, arbitrary use of force and assassination, however much they may have been provoked by government repression, and may bring certain successes in the short-run, will not succeed in the long-run.** Ultimately, extreme left methods become indistinguishable from those of the extreme right. They both serve the cause of reaction and are inimical to the progressive people's movement." (From World Solidarity Forum Report of Inauguration Programme in Sri Lanka and Thailand, May 1990, p. 53)

However, it is inevitable that different people in society will react to oppression in different ways, depending on their background, education and understanding. The JVP and the LTTE have reacted according to their perceptions. What others — liberals, progressives, left parties, both of the North and the South, who knew or ought to have known better, may have to admit is that their responses to the repressions of neo-colonialism at the time — whether due to lack of correct strategy, sufficient commitment or any other reason — were inadequate and so the initiative passed to the militiants.

In the South the JVP leaders were killed and insurrection brought under control for the second time in twenty years. The JVP, for the present, has failed, though, at least for a time, they shocked many into an awareness of certain basic realities. But the basic problems of the masses and the youth in the South have not been faced and solutions worked out. The JVP is not dead. It came up with two and a half lakhs of votes (250,000) at the 1982 Presidential Election. And at the recent General Election a candidate related to them was elected from Hambantota. So it may well surface for a third time sometime in the future.

In the North, it is possible that Velupillai Prabhakaran may be betrayed and killed as Rohana Wijeweera was, or some great military victory may be achieved by the government at great cost, but if the basic issues of the North and East are not faced and a reasonable peace settlement not worked out, there will be no end to the conflict. But, ofcourse, the reality is that Prabhakaran and the LTTE are still going strong. They are the de facto Government in the North. Some Tamils and even some others, both in Sri Lanka and abroad, believe that it is the resistance of the LTTE, whatever its faults, that has saved the Tamils from slavery to Sinhala domination and that if the LTTE were wiped out tomorrow, Tamils would be subjected to the terrorism of the Sinhala army, which would be worse than the domination of the LTTE. So in their eyes the LTTE have a certain legitimacy, which has been achieved by considerable skill, with immense sacrifice and heroism, against tremendous odds.

Ofcourse, there are some other Tamils, both here and abroad, who think differently and some of them have paid for their independent views with their lives or are languishing in LTTE prisons. Then there are Tamils who do not strictly belong to one category or the two. But the situation they are in is such that Tamils often find it very difficult to come out openly, though some have done so, for peace and against war and acts of violence, in the absence of reliable guarantees from the South of a just peace settlement. **Tamils have been so let down time and again that they find it difficult to raise their voices against war and for peace. They need assurance that their rights will be given them.** The Sinhala people have to understand this.

Progressive Movement

Now it has been said earlier that the responses of the liberals, the progressives and the left parties proved at one time to be inadequate and the initiative passed to the militants. However, after the collapse of the militants in the South, the progressive movement surfaced again. For instance, on the peace front, a considerable amount of work has been done in many parts of the country through discussions, seminars, workshops and peace-walks to prepare the people to understand the issues of war and peace and be ready to support solutions for peace. Now, with the coming into power of the People's Alliance, there is hope there will be a real break-through. The People's Alliance had put down racist forces within its ranks at some considerable risk to its electoral chances. It made it clear that it had serious intentions to settle the ethnic issues fairly. For this it received a clear mandate at the Elections. After the Elections, it started to translate those intentions into reality.

Review Initiatives?

Now, after the last bomb explosion, the question is being asked again: "Will the peace initiatives have to be reviewed? If the LTTE is not serious about peace, then will it not be necessary to revert to military action? (Some hard-liners in the Army high command say the price of 10,000 lives to launch a full-scale assault on the peninsula to smash the LTTE is worth paying in the long term). But there is nothing new about this line of thinking. It has not brought peace so far and the possibility of it bringing peace in the future is extremely remote. Several attempts to crush the militants in the North by war have failed, since J. R. Jayawardena first gave his nephew Brigadier Weeratunga carte blanche in July 1979 to wipe out terrorism by the end of the year. In the South, 60,000 lives were sacrificed to crush the JVP in 1988 to 1990. What good has it brought and to whom?

So the bomb explosion and whatever other provocation there may be should make us all the more determined to continue the search for peace as a matter of the utmost urgency, realistically facing the difficulties and evolving strategies for peace accordingly.

PART 2

The 'India Factor' in Sri Lanka's Foreign and Security Policy, 1948-94

Humayun Kabir

1. Determinants of Sri Lanka's Foreign and Security Policy

The foreign policy of a country is to be understood in terms of its purposes or goals and objectives that it seeks to achieve, its determinants, the means of serving the set purposes and the process of policy-making. All these four variables interact with and modify each other.[6] Broadly, the core functions of the foreign and security policy of a country are to ensure its security, to enhance the welfare of its citizens and to preserve and promote its national values. The main purpose of Sri Lanka's foreign policy since its independence in 1948 has been to safeguard its security and to advance the economic welfare of its population.[7] This section is devoted to discussing the determinants of Sri Lanka's foreign policy.

The foreign policy decision-makers are constrained in their action by certain factors which are both domestic and international by origin. Reynolds has identified them as a state's geography, its economy, its demography, its political structure, culture and tradition, its military-strategic situation, the norms and institutional structure of international society, and the policies and actions of other internationally-acting bodies, of which the other states are usually the most important.[8] Luxman Siriwardena and Gamini Keerawella have simplified them putting them in three categories: the national attributes, the socio-political systems, and the international environment.[9] National attributes include the size of the country, its ethnic composition, its stage of socio-economic development and resource availability for defence. The socio-political factors are economic organisation, economic policy orientation, nature and political orientation of the regime, class composition and their relationship to the state power, public opinion and pressure groups, change and continuity of political structures and processes. And the international environment variables are identified at regional and global levels. For Sri Lanka, regional setting may mean South Asia and the Indian Ocean. For the purpose of the present study I shall consider Sri Lanka's party/political system, its ethnic conflict, its foreign policy decision-making process, its economic system/circumstances, its international setting, and its strategic significance.

The structure of Sri Lanka's ethno-political system and the economy have been the two major domestic factors that have had a determining impact on the country's foreign policy and security perspective. Sri Lanka has been a multi-party democratic polity since its independence in 1948. The UNP of D.S. Senanayake and the SLFP of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike were claimed by their leaders to have been 'national' parties, although their ultimate support base essentially lay in the majority Sinhalese community. The UNP, which inherited power from the British and ruled the country until 1956, was supported by the indigenous capitalist class, upper middle class professionals, the Catholic Church, rural gentry and the powerful newspaper establishments. It, therefore, preferred the *status quo* to change in the country's domestic realm. The UNP leadership's attitude, ideology and interests were, in large measure, pro-Western, an orientation which had a determining effect on Sri Lanka's foreign and security policy. The SLFP, on the other hand, was formed as party of the less privileged and less prosperous sections of the country's population, essentially representing the Sinhalese interests and aspirations. It was a party of the social democratic variety and as such had a 'progressive' worldview and a 'liberal' approach to Sri Lanka's external relations.

The Tamils of Sri Lanka have their own political parties. The Tamil Congress (TC) and the Federal Party (FP) were founded to represent exclusively the interests of the Sri Lanka Tamils while the Ceylon Workers' Congress (CWC) and the Democratic Workers' Congress (DWC) represented the Indian Tamils. Subsequently, there were, of course, mergers, splits and emergence of new Tamil parties, especially after some of the Tamil parties turned secessionist in the 1970s. As most of these parties have always had frequent contacts of various nature with New Delhi and with their counterparts in Tamil Nadu, the Sinhalese majority have tended to suspect the bonafides of their Tamil compatriots occasionally creating tension in inter-state relations between Sri Lanka and India. Although the Muslims of Sri Lanka have their own party, Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), most of them have tended to identify themselves with the majority Sinhalese mainstream parties. The electoral significance of the Muslim vote bank has been reflected, for example, in Sri Lanka's generally pro-Arab stance in its Middle East policy.

Sri Lanka has had many Marxist political parties, but the principal two are the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) and the Communist Party. The radical views of these parties on domestic issues and their international linkages maintained through their devotion to the principle of proletarian internationalism and the Communist International (Comintern) were incompatible with what the UNP had stood for in its approach to foreign and security policy as well as in the realm of domestic policy. The SLFP, while in the government, was influenced in its internal and external policies by the LSSP and CP not only as coalition partners but by their backing from the opposition benches as well. The leftist coalition partners in the present ruling PA government are also exerting influence on policies having bearing on the country's foreign policy. This will be dealt with later on in the present analysis.

One of the central characteristics of Sri Lanka's post-independence socio-politi-

cal system has been that there emerged two internationally significant divisions between the political parties. First, there was a division between the right-wing forces led by the UNP and the left-wing forces led by the Marxist left, particularly by the LSSP, during the period, 1948-1955. Its prominent reflection could be observed in the UNP governments' strident anti-communist bias in the country's foreign policy. Second was the division between the UNP and SLFP from the mid-1950s onwards. The foreign policy manifestation of this division was, however, not so starkly contrasting, because of the fact that the ideological stridency of the UNP and SLFP was gradually sobered by the country's deteriorating economic conditions as well as the relatively relaxed international situation. Another characteristic of Sri Lanka's ethno-political system has been the Sinhala-Tamil communal polarization since the mid-1970s, which snowballed into a crisis following the July 1983 communal violence severely straining Indo-Sri Lanka relations until recently.

Foreign policy decision-making process has also had an important effect on Sri Lanka's external relations and security perspective. Under the Ceylon (Constitution) Order in Council 1946, the Prime Minister was required to hold the portfolios of Defence and Foreign Affairs. The conduct of foreign and defence policy was thus brought within the very epicentre of the government. In the Republican Constitution of 1972 no explicit provision was made for the attachment of the foreign affairs portfolio to the Prime Minister, but the head of government did continue to hold it until 1977. Since 1977, there has been a separate Foreign Affairs portfolio under a Foreign Minister. However, Sri Lanka's head of government has never relinquished the defence portfolio. In the absence of effective collective responsibility of the Cabinet, it rarely has been able to play a significant role in the making of foreign policy of Sri Lanka. The Chief Executive, whether Prime Minister or President, has been relatively free from effective parliamentary control as there were either no Standing Committees in the legislative organ of government or these were weak as institutions. The successive Heads of Government, therefore, have tended to exercise a personal control and direction over the conduct of foreign affairs. However, it should be noted that since the 1980s certain individual Ministers, the media, public opinion makers, pressure groups, and even the Parliament and its relevant Committees have contributed to foreign policy making. Factional squabbling and power struggles within a ruling party and the influence of its coalition partners at times have also affected the content and direction of Sri Lanka's foreign policy.

Sri Lanka's foreign policy has also been greatly determined by her economic circumstances. Sri Lanka is an export-import economy. Until the end of 1970s, the traditional 'tripod' or 'three shaky legs' of her economy, tea, rubber and coconut, were the principal sources of the country's foreign exchange earnings. Since then manpower and garments items have also become export commodities, fetching more foreign exchange to the country than any other export commodities. The island nation has to import foodstuffs as well as large volumes of manufactured goods, raw materials and fuels. The export-oriented economic structure and dependence on foreign aid has been the bedrock of Sri Lanka's economy. Its economy is vulnerable to the vagaries of international market, a situation on which Sri Lanka's rulers have very little influence. Fluctuations in the prices of a few primary export commodities have had a major effect on Sri Lanka's balance of payments, resulting in her increasing dependence on foreign aid for economic survival and development. The situation has been complicated by her growing population and the continuing social welfare services. These economic facts did and do raise strategic and diplomatic considerations with regard to maintaining access to supplies and markets. Sri Lanka's leaders concerned with foreign policy, therefore, have had to take these economic factors into account.

Sri Lanka has pursued several paths of development. These are the basic human needs strategy, open economic and trade policies, growth with equity, and participatory development.[10] Each strategy has had its own successes and failures domestically, but it also had its implications for the country's relations with other countries. The ruling People's Alliance government of President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga is also facing the same problem. Her government's economic philosophy and policy appear to be in conflict with the post-Cold War reality — the triumph and enlargenment of market economies. This has obvious implications for Sri Lanka's foreign policy and its relations with a number of important countries.

The strategic significance of Sri Lanka has been another contributing factor in its relationship with the outside world. The mid-point location of the island-state in the Indian Ocean accords it strategic importance in terms of naval and air traffic from the West to the Far East, Australia and New Zealand. The main strategic significance of the island, however, comes from its Trincomalee harbour, one of the finest natural harbours in the world. It is, therefore, not in the interest of great powers to see Sri Lanka in control of hostile powers or forces. However, strategically Sri Lanka is much more important to India. Firstly, because Sri Lanka falls within the security perimeter as defined by India; and secondly, because of India's strategic ambition in the Indian Ocean area. With adversary control in Sri Lanka, India's island possessions, such as the Andaman and Nicobar islands, would be vulnerable, offshore installations would be destroyed, sea trade disrupted or a direct attack launched on the Indian mainland.

Although the end of the Cold War has shifted the focus of global and regional debate from geo-strategy to geo-economics, it does not mean the end of the struggle for power and influence among nations.[11] Therefore, Sri Lanka's strategic significance has not diminished permanently, and surely not for India. The rulers in Colombo have to always take this factor into account in their foreign and security policy conception, formulation and implementation.

Sri Lanka's Foreign and security policy has been, of course, influenced by the global and regional settings. When Sri Lanka emerged as an independent state in 1948, the central balance of power was already experiencing the traumas of Cold War division, soon afterwards formalised by the creation of East and West power blocs. Subsequently, the Cold War virus crept into the peripheries of the international system through regional security organisations, such as the Baghdad Pact (later

the CENTO) and the South-East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), and through communist infiltration and insurrection. Most of the countries of the developing world were thus caught up in the high tide of external influence. Although Sri Lanka was not a member of any security organisation, she had granted on her soil military bases to Great Britain which were there until 1957.

Although the Marxist LSSP and CP sat in Parliament, their linkages with the Soviet Union and China and the non-recognition of Sri Lanka by the USSR until 1955 gave rise to serious misgivings in the minds of the island's rulers, the UNP administrations. A Communist government in the state of Kerala in India in the 1950s, the Communist insurgency further afield in Malaya, the Korean war, and the Indo-Chinese conflict demonstrated the tug of war between the Communist spectre and the imperialist West for gaining as well as maintaining spheres of influence.

In the 1960s and 1970s the central balance had become less tense (barring the Berlin and the Cuban crises) while the peripheral security organisations had remained intact before they collapsed in the late 1970s. In the late 1970s the East-West detente broke down as a result of, inter alia, wars in the Horn of Africa and Afghanistan until superpower relationship again began to improve from the mid-1980s when Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in Moscow. Now the break-up of the bipolar global power structure presents new challenges before the small states. Thus, Sri Lanka has had to tread a difficult course during all these years, given her commitments to democracy, social welfare services, economic development, and her dependence on foreign aid and external insurance for her perceived security threats.

Since the late 1940s Pakistan has been a challenge to India's predominance in South Asia while China has been a serious and more powerful contender with India for leadership in Asia since the 1960s. Since the late 1960s the Indian Ocean had become another arena of great power competition, contributing to the sense of vulnerability of the littoral states like Sri Lanka. All this posed serious challenges in terms of her foreign and security policy. With the end of the Cold War, the US and other great powers are apparently not active in the area. But for how long will it be so and who would benefit from such situations? Sri Lanka has to think hard and devise appropriate strategies for that.

The most important factor in Sri Lanka's foreign and security policy has been India. Sri Lanka is a small island state in the Indian Ocean, separated from mainland India only by a narrow stretch of 22 miles of the Palk Strait. India is her nearest neighbour, the other land masses being far too far away. India is also the home of about sixty million Tamils, who have natural sympathy and even concerns for the fate of their ethnic brethren in the island. For Sri Lanka, its proximity to India and the ethnic and linguistic overlapping between the two countries do tend to cause a deep sense of fear. Three reasons may be attributed to this threat perception: the historical memories of repeated invasions of the island from India, India's attitudes, the pronouncements of the Indian policy making elite that Sri Lanka is integral to India's security, and the fact that the Sinhalese seem to suffer from a curious 'minority complex' when they juxtapose themselves to the whole Tamil population in the region, regardless of state boundaries. Thus, this 'locational determinism' has been a major factor in shaping Sri Lanka's security perceptions and patterns of external relations.

(To be Continued)

Notes

6. For a fuller exposition on these variables see P.A. Reynolds, An Introduction to International Relations, op. cit.
7. J.R. Jayewardene, former President of Sri Lanka, put it slightly differently but essentially meaning the same thing. In his address delivered at the seventh Convocation of the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies at the BMICH of Colombo he stated: "The main purpose of any foreign policy of a country is the preservation of its independence and thus its defence. The second important factor would be the preservation of its food supplies. Thirdly, its trade, both export and import". The Sunday Observer, Colombo, 25 October 1987.
8. P.A. Reynolds, An Introduction to International Relations, op. cit., pp. 51, 97.
9. Luxman Siriwardena and Gamini Keerawella, "Internal Dynamics in the Evolution of Sri Lankan Defence Policy: Some Observations", Paper presented at a seminar on... in..., Colombo, p.2. These scholars quote Stephanie G. Neuman who defines national attributes as "those geographic, human and material factors that affect the amount and quality of resources a state has at its disposal and its ability to use them". Stephanie G. Neuman (ed.), Defence Planning in Less-Industrialized States: The Middle East and South Asia, Lexington Books, Toronto, 1984.
10. For details of these four development strategies see Patrick Mendis, "The Role of Indigenous Culture and Evolving Development Strategies: Is There a Right Policy Mix for Sri Lanka?", Marga Quarterly Journal, Marga Institute, Colombo, Vol. 13, No. 1, 1994, pp. 1-32.
11. Samuel Huntington wrote in response to Francis Fukuyama's 'End of History' thesis that "the end of the Cold War does not mean the end of political, ideological, diplomatic, economic, technological or even military rivalry among nations. It does not mean the end of the Struggle for power and influence. It very probably does mean increased instability, unpredictability and violence in international affairs. It could mean the end of the long peace." Samuel P. Huntington, "No Exit-The Error of Endism", The National Interest, No. 17, Fall 1989.

Privatisation — for and against

K. S. Chalam

The concept of privatisation has become popular in public debates in recent times. It has become significant in the country particularly after 1985. Privatisation is a new term which is gaining prominence after the recent economic policy of the Government. Every sector of the economy including the social sector is persuaded to pursue this option to achieve efficiency. It is now haunting the education sector also. Social scientists and politicians have started putting arguments and counter arguments in favour of and against privatisation in education. It therefore becomes essential to understand the concept and its scope, before using it in the education sector.

The term is defined by an American social scientist as, "the act of reducing the role of the Government, or increasing the role of the private sector, in an activity or in the ownership of assets." It means that it is a change from one set of arrangement to another particularly with reference to the ownership of assets. This process, takes place in a phased manner. Four strategies have been suggested to put this theory into practice.

One, the Government should encourage the market place and voluntary organisations to supply goods and services that it now provides. This is what they call as 'load shedding' that is the partial or complete withdrawal of the Government from an activity.

Two, where the Government involvement in an activity is necessary, the Government's role should be reduced by devolution, that is making greater use of the private sector through vouchers, franchise, and contracts.

Three, user charges should be introduced and levied to make the true cost of Government services more evident, and

Four, competition should be introduced and promoted whenever possible.

The greatest advantage that is claimed in favour of privatisation is economic efficiency. In fact, a number of efforts have been made in the past both in India and elsewhere to create an atmosphere for the concept to take its roots. Concepts such as Planning, Programming-Budgeting — Systems (PBBS) Zero Based Budgeting, Management by Objective, worker incentives, performance budgeting, centralising — decentralising, productivity councils, computerisation, operations research, etc., have been introduced in the public sector. But the impact of all these on the efficiency of the Government has been modest not only in India, but even in the U.S.

External benefits

Now the question before the social scientists is whether the concept can be extended to public goods or 'merit goods.' Merit goods like education are private goods whose consumption generates external benefits. Realising the importance and the difficulty in assessing the consequences of it, the father of political economy and champion of Laisez faire, Adam Smith had reserved education as one of the three important functions of the State, the remaining two are Defence and Jurisprudence.

The concept of privatisation in education can be understood in contrast with public education or Government support for education. As far as Andhra Pradesh in concerned, there is no private party operating in education in the formal educational system though in the informal sub-sector, (eg. coaching centres, computer centres, etc) privatisation has come in during the last ten years. The existence of private aided colleges ever since the grant-in-aid system was introduced in Andhra Pradesh, is not a case in point as these colleges receive grants from the State and are controlled by the Government.

Interestingly, privatisation did take place in education at the school level in the form of public schools and convents which are not directly controlled by the Government. In fact, education in Andhra Pradesh like in many parts of the country was provided by private individuals and families in the medieval period. It was the British Government which brought it under the control of the State through democratisation in the 19th Century.

According to Adams report and Dharmapala 'The Beautiful True,' it is reported that scholars used to pay their teachers at the rate of one anna to one rupee depending on the status of the student. This kind of privatisation did take place in the medieval period as compared to ancient India where the responsibility of providing assistance to ashrams, learning centres, Agraharams, etc., rested with the king.

Adam Smith had also proposed a scheme for teachers wherein the teacher is expected to collect the fees from the students without fixing any salary and the efficiency of the teacher through the free play of market forces it is expected, would ultimately determine the income of the teacher. A similar proposal has also been mooted by Prof. V. M. Dandekar recently for the university and college teachers to make privatisation effective in higher education.

About three decades ago i.e., in the 1960s a debate was intiated in the western countries particularly in the U.K. and the U.S. as to the need for private funding of higher education and the complete withdrawal of State support. A scheme of vouchers in the form of coupons to parents of students had been proposed with which the parents could supplement their spending and create a market for education. Along with this scheme, a graduate tax had also been proposed to finance higher education. Both these proposals had been opposed by the public as well as by social scientists on the ground that such a scheme would lead to parochialism, fragmentation of society and encourage denominational schools. These countries had put forward these arguments at a time when 6 per cent of their GNP was used on education and 30 per cent of the people in the corresponding age group were in higher education.

The World Bank and IMF which proposed privatisation in higher education seem to have drawn examples of success stories only from one or two Third World experiments. They do not indicate why the developed countries did not prefer privatisation in education during the early part of their developmental efforts. The following are therefore, some of the issues that need to be answered before any effort is made to introduce privatisation in education at different levels.

Is there a theoretical framework to develop a market theory in education with categories such as price, supply, demand, elasticity of demand, market, etc., in education?

Can education be considered only as a 'merit good' or is it not be considered as a means to achieve an elusive end that is, achieving equality of opportunity?

In a democratic modern society positions of power, distribution of benefits and privileges take place through the process of recruitment where education plays a dominant role in determining the individual's share. Under these conditions, will privatisation be able to solve the problem of inequality in a society like ours where inequalities are inherited and education may reduce such disabilities if it is used effectively by the State?

In case, efficiency and accountability are ensured and strictly implemented in education, particularly in higher education, is it still necessary to privatise the whole of it. Are there any other sub-units like maintainance of buildings, equipment, infrastructure etc., (to cite a few) be given to the private sector without compromising on the content of education. Is it not possible to introduce user charges for library, computer, teacher's additional time, games and sports and other services of education to recover a major part of unit cost of education.

The common property resources like lands and other assets under the control of various religious denominational categories could be properly tapped for education.

Is it not possible to reform education with new ideas like teacher and student accountability, Accreditation and Assessment councils, etc. which may help to resolve some of the contradictions in the system.

What are the lessons to be learnt from the consequences of privatisation which was manifested in the form of racial violence in the U.S. about which social scientists have been pointing out with reference to education.

Road to Peace Between Pakistan and India

Nirmal Mukarji

The people of Pakistan and India want genuine peace and friendship. Their governments do not. For they have engaged in the politics of confrontation for nearly five long decades. The yield has been nothing but tension and conflict. The people have not benefitted in any way. In these wasted years other countries, especially in East Asia, have gone far ahead both in material progress and in human development. These very fruits could be ours also if only the governments of Pakistan and India were to honour the wishes of the people.

In the absence of peace and friendship, the foreign policies of both governments in relation to each other have been heavily militarised. In essence these are no more than defence policies, formulated on the basis of mirrored threat perceptions, each government treating the other as its chief adversary. The enemy's military capability has had to be constantly matched, preferably outmatched. The resultant arms race has burdened both countries with massive, wholly unaffordable defence budgets. It has also made both governments aspire for nuclear weapons status, without a thought for the nightmarish consequences for the people. The military-nuclear lobbies in the two countries have come to dominate relations between Pakistan and India.

Domestic policies too have not remained unaffected by militarisation. Independent India started with just two battalions of armed police at the centre; it now has over four hundred battalions spread over numerous para-military forces. It has armed itself with draconian laws, the most notorious being TADA. It uses the army in domestic situations with alarming frequency. The coercive arm of the state that these instrumentalities constitute has been freely used not only to suppress ethnic and other uprisings but against the minorities and disadvantaged sections. Punjab, Kashmir and the Northeast have become virtual police states. Large tracts elsewhere are not far behind. The rule of law, human rights and democracy itself all are under severe threat.

Pakistan has had the misfortune of being ruled by military dictators for twenty-two years. Of these fifteen were under martial law, often extremely oppressive and brutal. After 1988 democracy has resurfaced, but there are barriers still to be overcome. Some of the restrictive laws and constitutional amendments enacted by Zia-ul-Haq which violate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have yet to be replaced. The tribal and feudal structure of Pakistani society provides fertile ground for the exercise of arbitrary power outside the pale of law. It thus constitutes a serious hindrance to establishing a truly democratic dispensation accountable only to the people.

In both India and Pakistan much needs to be done to protect the lives and honour of citizens, especially women, children, the poor and other weaker sections. But in both countries the assumption has pre-

The writer a former Cabinet Secretary of the Indian Government, was a governor of Punjab.

vailed that if only the coercive instruments of the state could be further strengthened the so-called law and order situation would improve. Armed with immense power to misrule, the ruling elites are now able to combine business with politics and politics with business. The apparatus of the state, in collusion with them, is able to oppress, exploit, perpetrate any crime, violate any law and go unpunished. Such are the wages of militarising domestic politics.

A militarised, or even semi-militarised, polity becomes a breeding ground for undemocratic forces. Both Pakistan and India have witnessed the rise of religious intolerance in recent years; Islamic fundamentalism in the one case and Hindutva extremism in the other. Short of outright military dictatorship, militant communalism is the most lethal for civil society. For it generates social strife and increases the persecution of disadvantaged sections, especially among the minorities. Consequently religious intolerance must be curbed at all cost. Otherwise there could be a re-enactment of the contemptible demolition of the Babri Masjid and the unspeakable outrages of Surat and Bombay, as also the mindless destruction of temples in Pakistan and Bangladesh and the deadly bomb blasts of Bombay.

Kashmir has had to suffer the militarised policies of both India and Pakistan. India has suspended democratic governance there and imposed rule by the army and paramilitary forces. Pakistan has not hesitated to train, arm and infiltrate militants for its own ends. Both have acted on the premise that Kashmir is merely a territorial dispute between the two of them. Neither seems able to see that a peaceful democratic solution involving the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir is the only way out. Such a solution is essential for promoting peace in the sub-continent.

For peace to be promoted the policies of the two governments, both foreign and domestic, will have to be shorn of militarisation. Only then will it be possible for the democratic voice of the people to be heard. Thus peace requires the strengthening of democracy in both countries. Not just feudal democracy as in Pakistan or elitist democracy as in India, both marked by gross corruption and abuse of power, but grassroots democracy which enables the mass of the people to share power, impact policies and enforce accountability. Conversely democracy needs peace through the elimination of militarism in both countries, both external and internal. Peace and democracy go hand in hand. History records no instance of two genuine democracies having gone to war against each other.

If the two people's cry for peace and democracy can lead to a solution of Kashmir and the reduction, if not eradication, of religious intolerance these would be dividends enough. But if the people's demand were also to result in an unconditional no-war pact immediately, without yielding to any third party pressure, there would be the inestimable dividend of freedom from fear of war. And if it were further to compel denuclearisation, the dread of total annihilation would go. If it were simply to commence a significant cutback in defence expenditures, there would be resources enough to meet the genuine needs of the people.

In an atmosphere of peace and friendship, the border between the two countries could be opened. The peoples of Pakistan and India could then begin to re-discover each other. Trade barriers could be lowered, or better still removed, fetching incalculable gain to both sides. There need be no room thereafter for the multi-billion dollar clandestine trade that is there at present. Pakistan and India would mount the first rung of the ladder to prosperity and well-being for all their citizens. Above all the two great countries would together rather than be ranged against each other in world forums.

These broadly were the issues and concerns a convention organised by the Pakistan-India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy discussed recently in New Delhi (Feb.24/25). Around two hundred delegates in roughly equal numbers from the two sides participated. It was the largest such gathering till now. Its wholly non-governmental character and its squarely political agenda clearly distinguished it from all previous exercises.

The biggest gain of the convention was that it was held at all. To everyone's surprise the Indian authorities gave the necessary visas to the visiting delegates and the Pakistani authorities did not stop them from coming. Both sides opened their hearts and minds in an atmosphere of warm friendship. What came through was an earnest desire to bury the hatchet once and for all. Equally impressive was the yearning on both sides for truly democratic governance. Some kind of chemistry was at work which made the delegates feel that perhaps they were making history. There were no illusions about the difficulties ahead but the occasion was seen as the beginning of a turnaround.

The area of agreement was considerable. There was common ground that war offered no solution and further that nuclear weaponry made no sense. Following this a call was made for a reversal of the arms race between the two countries as also for the elimination of all nuclear weapons from the face of the earth. Both sides were categorically opposed to religious intolerance. They demanded truer democracy, with the accent on accountability, decentralisation and concern for, and protection of, all disadvantaged sections, especially the minorities, the poor, women and children. On Kashmir the delegates agreed that the aspirations of the people had to be taken account of. They called upon their two governments to take positive steps to promote peace and tranquillity and establish democratic process on both sides of the line of control.

The convention decided to reassemble in Lahore around October, 1995. Between now and then, the delegates pledged to spread the message of peace and democracy far and wide in their respective countries. Amongst the measures suggested to open communications was one sure to gladden millions of Indians and Pakistanis, the immediate resumption of cricket tours.

The conclusions of the convention deserve the support of all right thinking people in both countries. The two governments would do well to pay heed to them.

David Little, SRI LANKA: THE INVENTION OF ENMITY

(Washington, D.C., United States Institute of Peace Press, 1994)

David Little has brought out some of the salient features of the Sinhala-Tamil conflict in Sri Lanka and focused his mind on what he thinks went wrong with two peoples who had co-existed for over two millennia. Little's subtitle offered much promise. He has not however elaborated very much on it. One factor might throw light on "the invention of enmity". He might have looked into whether Sinhalese and Tamils were the same people divided only by language through some quirk of history?

Little's inference that cultural revivals preceded political nationalism appears valid. The key figures in this metamorphosis which occurred in the nineteenth century were the Sinhala nationalist leader, Anagarika Dharmapala (who died in 1933) who was influenced by Western sympathisers. Among the Jaffna Tamil Saivaites, there was Arumuka Navalar. The latter's base was South India. Navalar did not even know much about the territories occupied by the Sinhalese (he never set foot in Colombo). But while the Anagarika was militant and condemnatory of the Tamils and Muslims. Navalar concentrated his fire on the Christian proselytisers. The two nationalisms therefore were modern nineteenth century phenomena. Hence the question arises as to whether the ancient wars were no more than predatory conflicts between marauding kingdoms, not a contest between two nationalisms.

Little's Tamil and Sinhala sources are somewhat limited. The late Robert Kearney's *Communalism and Language in the Politics of Ceylon* (Durham NC 1967) and his many articles on the rise of Tamil secessionism published in *Asian Survey* and *Pacific Affairs*, would have benefited him. His recourse to the Sri Lanka-based Tamil intellectual, Neelan Tiruchelvam (legal) and to the published works of academics such as the Harvard anthropologist, Stanley Tambiah (a Sri Lankan Tamil) and myself (a political scientist, also a Sri Lankan Tamil) enabled him to obtain a limited but diversified account of the worldview of the Tamils. Further reading and a few more interviews would have enriched his thesis on "the invention of enmity". The same could be said of his Sinhala sources.

Little's readers would have profited (if he had attempted it), with his interpretation of two landmark pieces of legislation, viz., S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike's Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Act of 1958 and Dudley Senanayake's Tamil Regulations of January 1966. Could they have, in his opinion, been sufficiently meaningful? It should be noted that both acts, though palliatives, recognised the Northern and Eastern Provinces as Tamil-speaking areas as did the constitutions of 1972 and 1978 and the pacts between the Tamil leader S.J.V. Chelvanayakam and Prime Ministers S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike in 1957 and Dudley Senanayake in 1965. Modern day international relations would acknowledge these contemporaneous documents as valid (for example Saddam Hussein's undertakings to the Kurds).

An indispensable fact is that the skills of leaders in new states are tremendously beneficial for their developmet. Sri Lanka unlike India suffered from a dearth of such talent and Little makes this quite clear. The role of the "Father of the Nation" (really the Sinhala nation), the first prime minister, Don Stephen Senanayake, is critically discussed. Little's reference to Senanayake's speech in April 1939 while he was minister of agriculture (1931-47) is pregnant with meaning. Senanayake had stated "We (meaning the Sinhalese) are one blood and one nation. We are a chosen people" (p.57). This was evidence enough of the future path that Sinhala Buddhism would take. Dudley Senanayake, three times prime minister was hardly different. Former President J.R. Jayewardene, Little states, was alleged to have had regnant ambitions, supposedly a throwback to Sinhalese kings.

The author provides some valuable clues in regard to the consequences emanating from foreign aid. Ironically the West, particularly Canada and the UK, was responsible for the Accelerated Mahaveli Scheme (AMS). This resulted in the traditional Tamil-speaking Northern and Eastern provinces being colonised by state-aided Sinhala settlers. Little quotes one unconvincing source (obviously Sinhalese) as having told him that the Tamils were not willing to take their allotments. This could hardly be an explanation for an important reason for the war that the Tamils are fighting against the Sinhala state, namely the restoration of "their occupied territories".

Ironically when the Tamils took up arms against, among other things, this trend towards state-aided Sinhala settlements in the Tamil homelands, armament dealers from among the very same states that promoted the AMS, supplied weapons to the Sinhala army to fight the Tamil insurgents! And to make it sound all too farcical, these weapons were in the end either captured by the Tamil Liberation Tigers from fallen Sinhala soldiers in the battlefield or bought outright at blackmarket prices.

Was there any need for the AMS? The argument is that this was one way of shifting (Sinhala) population from the overcrowded southwest quadrant of the island. But was it worth it, considering, on a cost-benefit analysis, the armed conflict that it gave rise to. There is questioning even on the economic side as to the worth of these grandiose ventures? Mrs. Bandaranaike's 1960-5 government despits some state-aided Sinhala colonisation concentrated on industrialisation of the predominantly Sinhala southwest as one way out, a policy which could well have paid better dividends. Her governments was in the first of the four stages of industrialisation through its encouragement of ISI (import substitution industries). Had the next three stages been followed, Sri Lanka with its developed infra-structure could well have become one of the NICs (newly industrialised countries) in the style of Singapore, Hongkong, Taiwan and South Korea, thus avoiding the agony of internecine strife.

Leadership was sorely lacking as was vision. If any, it came from the much faulted (by UNP ideologues) Bandaranaikes. The "social democratic" Trotskyists and Communists ("social democrat" being a contradiction in terms, for professed Marxists) also claimed that they were following the policies of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike which had been put together for a Sinhala Buddhist ethos; these parties provided leaders who assisted the Bandaranaikes. Unfortunately both husband and wife were forced by reactionary right wing elements in their governments to expel their Marxist partners. One looks in vain for a discussion or observations on these vital leadership questions.

The last chapters, "Prospects for Peace" and the "Conclusion", provide clues and insights that could lead to a way out. These were tantalisingly short. There are impediments to peace and these could have been spelled out. A more extended discussion as to the reasons for the strong mutual distrust and ways and means of minimizing these could be pointers towards a guided solution.

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Towards New Boundaries

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL THEORY
Co-Edited by Radhika Coomaraswamy and Nira Wickramasinghe
Konark Publishers, 1994, pp. 147,
Rs. 200.00

The interface between theory and practice is by now a well-worn area of interest for academics and activists. Yet, in the Asian context, there is substantial room for a further exploring and fleshing out of this at times tenuous relationship. Where the legitimacy of entire nations is sought to be redefined almost daily, any meaningful contribution to the dynamics of such a process is useful. The slim volume under review succeeds well in the need to give a regional focus to 'inherited' social theories in post-colonial societies. As Radhika Coomaraswamy says in her succinct introduction, "in times of societal crisis the task of social theory has to be different" (p.1). The lectures, which constitute the book are edited versions of those presented at the International Centre for Ethnic Studies in Colombo in 1992 where a number of the authors are affiliated. The essays look at social theory, particularlly new history and post-structuralism. While these "are very neglected fields of theory in the Sri Lankan context" they have "gained ascendancy as the most dominant schools of social critique in the western world" (p.6). Keeping this in mind the authors focus on a range of interesting ideas and issues.

Using the televised performance of the Independence day celebrations around which the Self (in this case Pradeep Jagannathan) constitutes himself, the author comments that "collective representations of a nation need not be consensual" (p.9); and indeed, looking at the disciplined students (substitute soldiers for students) at the ritualised parade, he is reminded of *Discipline and Punish.* Michel Foucault's notion of the "subjected body" is relevant in a range of contexts. The appearance of Vijaya apparently a mythical figure to whom considerable significance is attached — with the tiger rather than his submissive wife — completes the iconography of competing rather than consensual trends.

In fact, competition, conflict, tension — and a partial resolution of these are recurring themes in all the papers. As a project aimed at creating an awareness of and sensitivity to post-modern discourse, it could hardly be anything else. Picking up from Jagannathan, Regi Siriwardena's argument that the power of language has been well-internalised by those in authority is convincingly argued. He sees a reflection of Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* in the instrumental use of language by new nation states. At the same time, clear definitions of margins and mainstream, centre and periphery, lead to the exclusion of dialects and the privileging of Sinhala, particularly through the state media. Nira Wickramasinghe's analysis of the Annales School and Quadri Ismail's interpretation of Franz Fanon are both intellectually rigorous and stimulating. Arguing from a position which surely many would share that "the writing of history is never innocent" (p.36), Nira goes on to state that the Annales School had a very clear methodological focus: that of giving a voice to the hither to voiceless as well as looking at the workings of impersonal forces such as the discovery of sea routes, gold and so on. Taking note of the important work of the subaltern historians in India, the author ends on a note of despondency that in Sri Lanka such changes have yet to be introduced. She also makes the important point that part of this reluctance can be traced to disciplinary imperialism and the reluctance to share knowledge; her view will surely find a resonance in many academic cultures.

In her paper on feminist historiography, Malathi de Alawis uses the now familiar theme of the production and reproduction of motherhood by colonial and post-colonial discourse in the interests of nation-building. Drawing heavily on Partha Chatterjee's work, she finds similarity in the Sinhala situation where femininities are created. The school, the missionary and later nationalist leaders are all participants in this process of pedestalising the mother image. Of course, for mother in post-colonial discourse one is to read nation. This explanation which relies on an essentialist imaging of feminity which is class and caste bound is not without problems. What is also not explored is the growing area of alternate discourse, of women as active agents in the process of restructuring the Self as well as the Other.

Radhika Coomaraswamy's essay on Michel Foucault, who she feels will soon, like Marx, Nietzsche and Hegel, be regarded as "one of the great masters of suspicion" (p.174) is an extremely well-argued account of madness, sexuality and crime; these are the prisms through which Foucault looked at the world. Taboo and prohibition work through the process of exclusion. The Panopticon — and indeed modern architecture — are not mere structures in brick and mortar. Their ideological underpinnings enter the consciousness and become a part of the discourse of control and authority, discipline and punishment. All of this of course makes perfectly good sense in the South Asian context where power brokers will use all that they can to hold on to authority. In an interesting last essay, Natalic Pickering goes into the history of the terms sex and gender and looks at ethnicity and how that is constructed. She finds "the central task of social theory today" to be "finding new ways of theorizing the body" (p.132).

Clearly then, social theory can soon become a catch all area for those in search of alternate discourses and examination of existing theories and bodies of knowledge. This volume is an important contribution to the process of opening up disciplines to enquiry and re-analysis. In fact, one of the most important contributions is that of drawing attention to disciplinary obduracy and unwillingness to open up boundaries. Quite apart from adequately laying down the parameters — or choosing not to do so, depending on where one is viewing them from — these articles bring to mind another thought: the potential for more dialogue and interaction between scholars in the Asian region. Given that a growing intellectual trend emphasises the need to look for new knowledge rooted in non-western cultures, the scope for collaborative work as well as dialogue is substantial. It only needs the intellectual will to think of ways of how this can be achieved.

Reviewed by
Malavika Karlekar

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Problems native to foreign policy

FOREIGN POLICY OF SRI LANKA
By Shelton U. Kodikara
Chanakya Publications, F-10/14, Model Town, New Delhi-110 019. 1992
Rs. 260. Pp. 246.

The blurb commends the book as the most authoritative on the subject. Written by an academic who did a short diplomatic stint as Sri Lanka's Deputy High Commissioner in Madras in the mid-70s, the book may claim to be based on the experience of an insider in the island state's government as well as the perceptions of a commitment-free outsider.

The book was first published in 1982 and revised and enlarged ten years later, mainly to incorporate the developments in Indo-Sri Lankan relations around the time of escalation of ethnic rivalry and conflict between Sinhalas and Tamils on the island. The South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation also started on its career about the same time and had, therefore, to be included in any presentation on Sri Lanka's foreign policy. Nobody in Colombo can deny that for Sri Lanka, relations with India are crucial and may even be seen as the point of departure of her foreign policy generally. Since the facts of Sri Lanka's geography are unalterable, whoever is in power there cannot afford to ignore the "India compulsions" before his or her government. Kodikara is fully conscious of this. He says that India is Sri Lanka's only close neighbour and, considering the vast disparities in their size and military power, it is not unnatural for Colombo's fears and anxieties on the score of juxtaposition to a colossus.

He concedes that Sri Lanka's status as a militarily weak power limits her freedom to pursue a foreign policy clearly injurious to India's interests. But Sri Lanka, naturally, seeks diplomatic devices to counter-balance her unequal relationship with India. Kodikara sees Sri Lanka's close commitment to the Commonwealth, especially during 1948-56, friendly ties with Pakistan and China, and her major role in the Non-aligned Movement as some of the instruments used.

Sri Lanka had several problems with India to start with. There was the issue of maritime boundary as also the question of citizenship for people of Indian origin resident on the island for generations. After many years of hard negotiations between the two countries, the boundary in the Palk Straits, Palk Bay and Gulf of Mannar was delineated in the seventies. The controversy over citizenship also neared its end, at least on paper, when the Jayewardene government enacted its law for the grant of citizenship to stateless persons. It was estimated that over 2.33 lakh persons, who had not till then been accepted by either country, would benefit. The most dramatic ups and downs in Sri Lankan relations with India occured over the deteriorating ethnic conflict between its Sinhala and indigenous Tamil communities.

With Tamils constituting an important segment of her population and polity, and only a few miles of water separating them from their ethnic kin in Sri Lanka, India had to be concerned with what was happening to the Tamils there. Any problem on the island could easily produce reactions in Tamil Nadu in India. Any irredentist Tamil movement could be a problem for Sri Lanka as well as India.

But from the time the Tamils of Sri Lanka raised their slogan for a separate state when they were convinced that the Sinhalas would not give them enough say in the conduct of their own affairs in the traditional Tamil homelands on the island, a suspicion arose in Colombo of an Indian hand behind the secessionism. Kodikara quotes an American military intelligence analyst's statement that "a massive body of evidence" pointed to the view that India was arming and training Sri Lankan Tamil guerillas.

Why would India actively support the Sri Lankan Tamils' separatist war? According to Kodikara, "it is now generally agreed" that a strong Indian perception after about 1980 that Sri Lanka's foreign policy was prejudicial to India's interests guided Indian policy towards Sri Lanka:

However much spokespersons for the US government might disclaim intentions of making Trincomalee a base facility, the notion that this valued harbour could become a potential threat to India on its southern flank, when it already had two powerful adversaries on its northern flank, became an idee fixe *in the collective Indian consciousness.*

The Rajiv Gandhi-Jayewardene Agreement was, as Kodikara says, a *quid pro quo* arrangement, under which Sri Lanka undertook certain obligations and gave security guarantees in return for India helping bring about a cessation of hostilities and surrender of arms by LTTE and other Tamil militant forces. But when Kodikara says that discharging India's responsibilities under the agreement went by default, he may not be telling the whole truth. This writer himself admits that in two years of operations against LTTE, the Indian Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) suffered more than a thousand dead and 2,000 injured. He does not say that Jayewardene, the "old fox", manoeuvred the inexperienced Rajiv Gandhi into trying to pull the chestnut out of the Tamil fire for the Sri Lankans.

From the Sri Lankan viewpoint, India made its 1987 peace accord with Sri Lanka to safeguard New Delhi's strategic interests, and resolution of the ethnic conflict on the island was only a subsidiary purpose. Again, the agreement for the withdrawal of IPKF was entered into by India, in Sri Lankan eyes, under the exigencies of the oncoming general elections in November 1989. Had Rajiv Gandhi returned to power after those elections, India might have taken the position that Sri Lanka had not adequately devolved power in the north-east in terms of the 1987 agreement.

Reviewed by
Punyapriya Dasgupta

President J.R. . . .

(Continued from page 3)

The fourth and fifth paragraphs reveal the President's seriousness of purpose. He had architectured the Development Councils' scheme. His government had "decided on the extent and manner of the devolution and the TULF has agreed". The reference to my "arrival to discuss the next step or steps" was to the question of getting ministers and their bureaucrats to agree to the extent of devolution and for the President and the TULF to agree on a formula for the disbursement of the much needed finances. When I arrived to discuss these matters, the political situation had changed for the worse, mainly on account of what is stated in the last paragraph of his letter to me.

The President's ministers and the latter's bureaucrats were cheeseparing in divesting themselves of the powers agreed upon. There should have been some uniformity. Each minister devolved certain powers, different from their colleagues. But the rub was that they were unwilling to part with the finances that they controlled in relation to the subjects they devolved. This left the President with the responsibility of finding the funds. By this time, he had been overwhelmed by his "anti-Tamil ministers" (his words). He told me, "I am circled by my communal minded ministers". If you can help me "to jump out of this circle" by "talking to your TULF friends, I might be able to do something". He was to change tack shortly after. Plans to bring the parties together (the UNP and TULF) failed. The President's response now was "let it (the devolution matter etc.) simmer". He was thinking of the local government elections round the corner and presumably did not want an issue raised on this by the opposition. His failure to act proved fatal. Thereafter slowly like a Greek tragedy proceeding to its anti-climax (about which I shall provide more details later) the events of July 1983 enveloped the island.

(Next: The JRJ-AMIR RELATIONSHIP)

ENRICHING RURAL LIFESTYLE

Why there's sound of laughter in this rustic tobacco barn....

There is laughter and light banter amongst these rural damsels who are busy sorting out tobacco leaf in a barn. It is one of the hundreds of such barns spread out in the mid and upcountry intermediate zone where the arable land remains fallow during the off season.

Here, with careful nurturing, tobacco grows as a lucrative cash crop and the green leaves turn to gold... to the value of over Rs. 250 million or more annually, for perhaps 143,000 rural folk.

Tobacco is the industry that brings employment to the second highest number of people. And these people are the tobacco barn owners, the tobacco growers and those who work for them, on the land and in the barns.

For them, the tobacco leaf means meaningful work, a comfortable life and a secure future. A good enough reason for laughter.

Ceylon Tobacco Co. Ltd.

Sharing and caring
for our land and her people.