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LANKA

# GUARDIAN

Vol. 19

No. 7

August 1, 1996

Price Rs. 10.00

Registered at the GPO, Sri Lanka

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## **THE JAFFNA SCENE**

— AMAL JAYASINGHE

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# THE MULLAITIVU DEBACLE

Mervyn de Silva

The Defence Ministry wants another 10 billion rupees. Of course. It is not just to replace the weapons that the "Tigers" carried away as a just reward for their cleverly planned and boldly conducted raid on the heavily fortified Mullaitivu garrison. This year's defence vote is 38 billion rupees, nearly 700 million US dollars. But defence spending will rise by another ten billion rupees when Parliament passes a supplementary estimate. So the 'war' or if you prefer the thirteen year ethnic conflict will cost the country at least 880 million dollars on the defence establishment and the war effort.

One important aim of P. A. strategy, and correctly so, was a steady reduction of the defence vote once a negotiated settlement of the separatist conflict was resolved. In the jargon of the day, "the peace dividend", a steady drop in defence spending. And now, farewell to the peace dividend. We shall have a new General to fight, General Inflation. The first casualty will be the middle class and most certainly the ill-equipped lower-middle class family.

The trade unions will be mobilised. Most of the union leaders are P. A. sympathisers, if not active supporters. The L. S. S. P. and C. P. are members of the eight-party 'grand alliance', and party stalwarts hold office, picked by President Chandrika Kumaratunga as ministers and deputy ministers. The defiant speeches of Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakkara is the most glaring example of how this can disrupt an ideologically ill-defined coalition. More serious is trade union unrest, the C. E. B. "strike" the first flare in the sky.

## WORSE, NOT BETTER

President Jayawardene's brilliant Finance Minister, Mr. Ronnie de Mel said in a *Sunday Island* interview that "the economy is in a complete free fall. It will virtually hit rock bottom soon. I admit that there has been a drought which is an act of God....but this drought was foreseen by the World Meteorological Organisation and other world organisations forecasting weather as long ago as Sept-Oct. last year. The C. E. B. engineers also warned the government.

The President who holds the Finance

portfolio had made "two Economic Policy Statements". Those statements prepared us for a budget deficit between 5-6% of G. D. P. But this year the deficit will be double that — 10% or more. Growth will be 4% or less. The P. A. spoke of 6% inflation. But even the Colombo Consumer Price Index, not always realistic, shows 13%, once more double the P. A. calculation. 15% is a possibility. Hotel groups are re-locating. Maldives is a favourite choice. Gherkin cultivation has moved to India. "Far from FORTUNE 500 firms coming here, we will be blessed by "the Misfortune" companies. On the southern tourist belt, all contract and casual employees have been retrenched. We will be importing 500,000 tonnes of rice. The only "redeeming feature" is the demand for tea and rubber from Russia, the C. I. S. countries, Turkey and some Arab countries.

## PROFIT DROP

The first quarter drop in company profits: The Merchant Bank (172%) Seylan Bank (185%) Vanik (84%) Aitken Spence (70%) John Keells (22%) Hayleys (19%).

But the worst hit seems to be the tourist hotel business, with Asian Hotels Corporation, the largest, a massive 232%, Riverina Hotels by 66%. (The Intercontinental, Ramada and Oberoi belong to the Asian Hotels Corporation). The second quarter figures would be more depressing, said the UNP's chief spokesman on economic affairs.

## WAR AND PEACE

In other circumstances, it would be difficult to know what precisely is going on in the north-east, the main front, since the press must have all the copy "passed" by the Censor. And the censor could be quite tough.... understandably, given the circumstances post-Mullaitivu where Velupillai Prabhakaran, the L. T. T. E. commandante, offered to hand over 500 bodies, a clever psy-war gesture.

Iqbal Athas and Taraki of the *Sunday Times* had CENSORED, CENSORED, CENSORED on their copy 30 times! Ranil's critique on Mullaitivu had well over a 1,000 troops. Foreign radio stations, news agencies, INTERNET and C.N.N. make censorship meaningless. "I have not come here to talk of losing

a camp or of losing a battle. I am asking this House to focus on the reality, the collapse of our strategy in the north and the east". By speaking of it as "our strategy" the Opposition Leader chose NOT to make it another UNP-PA battle. In an extraordinarily well prepared speech, plainly a combined operation that included some military experts, the Opposition leader asked that censorship be lifted, that the lessons of the Mullaitivu be carefully studied, the present "command structure" re-examined, re-thinking on the question of a Joint Ops. Command. DON'T POLITICIZE THE WAR.

We have put it differently. The P. A. cannot fight two enemies on two fronts — the L. T. T. E. in the north, the U. N. P. in the south.

LANKA

## GUARDIAN

Vol. 19 No. 7 August 1, 1996

Price Rs. 10.00

Published fortnightly by  
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co.  
Ltd.

No. 246, Union Place  
Colombo - 2.

Editor: Mervyn de Silva  
Telephone: 447584

Printed by Ananda Press  
82/5, Sir Ratnajothi Saravanamuttu  
Mawatha, Colombo 13.  
Telephone: 435975

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# Jaffna's Long Road to Rebirth

Amal Jayasinghe

The only thriving business in Jaffna is run by elderly men filling out compensation claims for war damage. Three men sit outside the bombed hospital in the town helping the less literate write petitions to qualify for government rehabilitation aid. With nearly 80 per cent of homes damaged by years of war, there is no shortage of customers.

Government forces drove out the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) after a series of military operations begun in October last year and brought the entire Jaffna peninsula under their control in May.

The international Red Cross estimates about 400,000 Tamil men, women and children forming about half the peninsula's population have crossed rebel lines and returned home, exceeding the expectations of the authorities.

Mr Somapala Gunadheera, Jaffna's top rehabilitation official, said the priority was to restore food supplies to the refugees who returned to Jaffna and ensure their homes are repaired.

"Food and shelter are the most important things at the moment," Mr Gunadheera told reporters here. "This is not a normal situation but we are trying to get things back to normalcy at the earliest."

Supplies are slow to reach Jaffna because the main land routes are still

under Tiger control and the authorities have only a handful of ships to ferry food and other essentials from the capital, Colombo, 400km to the south.

Mr Gunadheera said urgent reconstruction work in the Jaffna peninsula, was expected to cost Rs18bn (£208m) and the government expected most of the money to come from foreign donors.

The British government had offered to refurbish a diesel-powered electricity generating station in Jaffna and had already sent two engineers to make a preliminary study, Mr Gunadheera said.

President Chandrika Kumaratunge has said she plans to rebuild Jaffna, former capital of Tamil separatism in the country, as a "peace city" and called for international aid for the project. "The government has committed itself to the policy of accelerated reconstruction of the seriously damaged infrastructure in the area," she said.

Mr Mangala Samaraweera, telecommunication minister, says rebuilding the Jaffna telecommunications network alone was estimated to cost at least \$200m and he hoped to get foreign aid for the work.

The government is clearly banking on the Jaffna rehabilitation to lift the flagging economy. The region has not contributed to the country's economy in the five years under rebel control.

Mr G. L. Peiris, justice minister, who is also deputy finance minister, told the Foreign Correspondents' Association in Colombo that the budget deficit, which was 8.4 per cent of GDP last year, will be much higher this year because of stepped up military action against the Tamil Tigers.

"The main reason for the escalating expenditure is, of course, the war. For the year 1996 we had budgeted for a sum of Rs38bn for military expenditure," he said.

"Now the indication are that will be nowhere near sufficient and we will have to substantially increase the amount to be spent on the war...Never in our country has so much been allocated for military purposes."

He said no amount of fiscal incentives was enough to attract foreign investors while the Tamil Tigers were able to carry out terrorist attacks that destabilised the country.

The minister said it was extremely difficult to prepare next year's budget and expected economic growth this year to be substantially lower than the 5.5 per cent of last year.

Almost all private companies have reported disappointing results in the first quarter, compounding the problems of the tiny Colombo stock exchange, which has been on a steady bear run for nearly two years.

## RAJIV GANDHI ASSASSINATION

# Embarrassing Acquittal

Nirupama Subramanian

When Sessions Judge P. Lakhshmana Reddy of the designated TADA court in Visakhapatnam ruled last fortnight that the Indian Navy and the Coast guard had unlawfully intercepted and boarded MV Ahat — a suspected LTTE ship — three years ago, it came as slap in the face of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing Rajiv Gandhi's assassination. The order, by implication, also rebuked the Indian

Government for interfering in the internal affairs of another country.

The Government is likely to move the Supreme Court against the ruling, according to a senior SIT official, "Though we are yet to study it". In its charge-sheet, the SIT had accused the persons on board the *Ahat* of criminal conspiracy, carrying arms and explosives, causing terror, preventing Indian Navy personnel

from boarding the vessels, dumping explosives into the sea and setting the ship on fire to destroy evidence.

The thrust of defence counsel K.V. Ramamurthy was that the coast guard and navy had been instructed to intercept *Ahat* by Indian intelligence agencies which suspected Sadasivam Krishnakumar alias Kittu, a top leader of the LTTE, was on board. According to him,

the Indian Government, fearing its exclusion from Sri Lankan affairs, wanted to catch Kittu before he delivered peace proposal made by some European countries to end the ethnic strife in the island. But, he argued, Kittu was not on board the ship (non of the three bodies recovered from the sea was identified conclusively as his) and the vessels and its crew had no links with the LTTE. "We wanted to delink Kittu from the ship because we apprehended that the Government would justify its actions on the pretext that, as Kittu was a part of the top hierarchy of the LTTE, he had to be examined in connection with some case in India," said Ramamurthy. The other important LTTE member aboard the *Ahat* was Kuttisri, the right-hand man of LTTE arms procurer Kumaran Padmanabha, alias KP. Surprisingly, it was never the prosecution's case that any of the persons on the *Ahat* was wanted by authorities in India.

What actually happened to the *Ahat* (or *Yahata*, its real name) is not clear. On January 13, 1993, the vessel, sporting the name *Ahat*, was intercepted by CGS *Vivek* 440 nautical miles off the Indian coast, it was joined by INS Kirpan the next day, and the Indian ships escorted it to a point eight nautical miles off Ennore, north of Madras. There, on January 16, the Indian Navy sent in reinforcements: *INS Savithri*, *INS Mithun*, two helicopters and a special assault boat, *SDBT 56*. But before the commandos in the *SDBT 56* could board the *Ahat*, it exploded and went down. Ten persons on board died and, according to the SIT, Kittu and Kuttisri were among them. The navy rescued nine survivors, including the ship's master, V. Jayachandran.

Reddy's order, which acquits all nine, pivots on the argument that CGS *Vivek* intercepted the *Ahat* 220 nautical miles outside its surveillance zone. There was no evidence to show that the ship had any intention of entering Indian waters. Nor was it engaged in hostile acts against the country, the order said. Consequently, the coast guard and the navy had no right to forcibly escort it into Indian waters. The judge also concluded it was the naval ships that had fired at *Ahat* first when it was anchored off Madras, and that it was doubtful whether the occupants had set off the explosion that sank it. Further, he said, the prosecution failed to establish conclusi-

vely whether the ship was carrying arms, but even assuming it was, this was not an offence in itself. The consignment was being taken to northern Sri Lanka for a "political movement" and, at best, was an offence only under Sri Lankan law, he said.

However, Reddy's judgement has left several questions unaddressed, among them, whether the Government had prior knowledge of the ship's movements or

the composition of its crew and passengers, as alleged by the defence counsel. The LTTE too had accused RAW of masterminding the operation in order to kill Kittu. As for Jayachandran and the eight members of the *Ahat* crew currently in Visakhapatnam Central Jail awaiting deportation to Honduras, where the ship is registered, the ruling couldn't have been more welcome. Says Jayachandran: "The Indian legal system and the judges are not biased".

## Waiting — 26

### Letter From USK

*You ask me whether it's Spring  
I wish it was.  
But February here is still harsh Winter  
Seventeen below freezing  
And that blanket I brought from home  
Plus five College blankets over it  
Keeps this cold from seeping into sleep  
It's dismal dark, in the mornings  
When at home I'm sure  
The dawns are gold flecked and warm.*

*Snow, may be, is fun  
No respite for us girls  
When snow balls come  
I took some real hard shots  
But gave it back as good  
All in a day's work  
Outdoors in the wintry sun.*

*It gets dark quite early and we are still at work  
Last evening we trudged a mountain side across wastes of snow  
Rescuing sheep from snowdrifts  
An ewe had given birth  
We tended her in lantern light  
And brought her back safe with child  
Only these mothers can keep their milk from freezing  
When we milk in this cold  
It freezes in the can  
And we have to break it up.*

*No Winter back at home  
But our own country cousins  
Are the lasses who trudge our mountain sides  
Through mud and pelting rain  
Barefoot, without these coats and capes to brave the weather  
To bring the cows back home  
And the milk they coax with anxious fingers  
We see only at cosy tea time  
In an elegant China bowl.*

**U. Karunatilake**

# Adventurous Life of Rao's 'God Man'

Mark Nicholson

The rags-to-holy robes and riches story of Chandraswami, self-styled Indian guru to movie stars, tycoons, kings and sultans and, as of this week, co-accused in a Delhi swindling trial with Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, former prime minister, has for two decades read as fantastically as fiction.

But today, as Chandraswami traipses dejectedly between Delhi's Tihar jail and a court where he faces charges of defrauding a London-based businessman of \$100,000, his tale is one of decline and fall — a decline Indian commentators see as inextricably bound with that of the Congress party Mr Rao led into an historically poor electoral defeat in May.

"His fall is emblematic of the decline of Congress, because men like him have always thrived in what you could call 'Congress culture'," says Mr Sunil Sethi, a newspaper columnist and journalist who has long charted the murky career of India's most flamboyant "god man".

His career began 47 years ago in an obscure north Indian village, from where the young and ambitious Mr Nemi Chand Jain plotted himself a course in his early teens which took him into Congress party politics in Andhra Pradesh, where Mr Rao was a state political leader.

His path reputedly took him wandering through the lowland Himalayan forests in search of spiritual enlightenment before Mr Jain reemerged saffron-robed in the 1970s as Chandraswami, soothsaying mystic and increasingly well plugged-in political power broker.

The 1970s found Chandraswami crisscrossing the globe, claiming to be the "spiritual brother" of Indira Gandhi, then prime minister, and associating with the likes of Ms Elizabeth Taylor, the film star Mr Adnan Kashoggi, the Saudi arms dealer, or the Sultan of Brunei.

Since the 1980s the Indian media began linking the bearded swami, whose base is a three-storey, pink marble ashram in Delhi, with a series of political and financial "scams".

But few media allegations stuck to Chandraswami. He was initially arrested in 1988 on charges of defrauding Mr Lakhubhai Pathak, the London-based foods executive, who then alleged the "god man" duped him into paying \$100,000 to secure newsprint and paper contracts. However, Chandraswami was released a week later and investigations dragged on until this May, when the swami and an assistant were finally arrested on the charges in Madras.

It was during the hearing of the case this week that Mr Pathak's allegation of Mr Rao's involvement prompted Mr Prem Kumar, the presiding judge, to summon the former prime minister. If found guilty, both men face jail terms of seven years, though lawyers say the case against Mr Rao may prove thin.

But their joint appearance in a Delhi court would embarrass Mr Rao and Congress, and give ammunition to opposition parties which allege his involvement in other corruption cases, and strengthen those within the party pressing to depose the 75-year-old leader.

The flurry of cases stems in part

from the increasing activism of the Supreme Court, which in January was the driving force behind bringing to prosecution a political bribes affair which had lain in the files of the Central Bureau of Investigation for five years. Twenty-five senior politicians, including seven ex-Congress ministers, have been charged in the affair. Three more politicians were charged very recently.

In April, the Supreme Court demanded the CBI tarry no further in investigations against Chandraswami, and in March a 50-page public interest petition was filed at the court alleging his complicity in a series of scandals and currency violations. Citing evidence from the "god man's" testimony to another commission examining the background to Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in 1990, the petition also stated Chandraswami had privileged and frequent access to Mr Rao — a "special relationship" Mr Rao denies.

Mr Rao, meanwhile, is also under investigation by the CBI in a case alleging that four MPs from a minority party received bribes in 1993 to vote for Congress in a tight confidence motion.

Whether the CBI's greater freedom and the Supreme Court's added zeal amount to a lasting cleansing of Indian politics — which resumed recently in combative style with the opening of parliament — or merely a licence to proceed against those now out of power, remains to be seen.

What is most unlikely to be seen, though, are Chandraswami's greying locks and flowing robes on Mr Kashoggi's yacht any time soon.

# Force: The Norm in North-South Relations

Farish A. Noor

It is almost impossible these days to watch the news on television or read the newspapers and not be barraged by the incessant stream of drivel that passes itself as serious political commentary on the state of world affairs. This is particularly true of the media in the Western part of the world, which has of late been totally hijacked by that breed of intellectual mandarins whom Edward Said refers to as the 'Cult of the Experts'.

These 'experts' (and the term will henceforth be used advisedly) have warned all of us that the world has, is, and forever will be, rendered vulnerable to a host of imagined terrors and cataclysms that are forever lurking around the corner, just beyond our horizons of imagination. We have been warned that the Western world will be swallowed up by an influx of non-Western refugees whose hordes are massing together on the borders of Europe, and of course, we are now familiar with that classic myth of 'Islamic fundamentalism' which has spawned countless movies, novels and campaigns of popular hysteria whenever the West lets down its guard.

To counter the deception and inaccuracies of these pundits of doom and gloom there were those who continued to seek the truth and identify the real, by going beyond stereotypes and ambiguities. Today the work of the Information Project for Africa based in the United States of America stands as one of the few credible examples of honest and persevering scholarship against a near-overwhelming tide of propaganda against the South and non-Western world.

*Excessive Force: Power, Politics and Population Control* is an example of such serious academic research that ought to be the norm in an ideal world. The work is subtitled 'An Essay on the Benevolent Superpower, Sustainable Development and Other Contemporary Myths', and it delivers exactly what it promises.

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Farish Noor is Deputy Convenor, JUST Chapter in Britain.

The work itself is the result of a joint effort by a number of authors and researchers. Its aim is to provide quick and accessible information not only into the labyrinth of the Western technocrat's underworld, but also to give an insight into the mentality that produces such policies as the Structural Adjustment Programs promoted by the IMF and the World Bank as well as policies regarding Population Control, Environmental Protection, Refugee and Migrant policies, etc. — all of which affect the Third World in particular.

The book is divided into twelve chapters and has at its conclusion two appendices which covers the OPTIONS country by country report as well as an index of Policy Development Projects carried out all over the Third World under the direction of powerful international bodies such as the UN, UNESCO, UNDP etc. under the direction of Western 'experts' and technocrats dubbed as 'bosses with visas'.

What the book effectively does on the whole is give us a general and comprehensive overview of the politics and practices of intervention as they are carried out today. From Educational Exchange and Aid Programs to Policies regarding birth control and sustainable development, the researchers have unearthed a number of hidden agendas and presuppositions that have directed these programs which have been worked out in research centres and social laboratories in the West and then carried out on living specimens in the non-Western world.

Proceeding on a step-by-step basis, the researchers have uncovered the many subtle and far reaching links that make up the 'seamless web of influence' and has allowed the elites of the developed world to continue to maintain their grip on the post-colonial world. One by one some of the biggest myths that have guided the thinking of Western elites in their quest to retain a dominant hold of four-fifths of the world's population are laid bare.

Foreign aid, for instance, is shown to be what it truly is: 'a system explicitly intended to create an ideological atmo-

sphere, to draw recipient nations towards a particular set of beliefs or alignments, and to maintain lines of access' (Chapter 1). Rather than actually try to help the recipient countries themselves, 'development schemes were never intended to produce self-sufficiently in recipient economies at all, but rather to serve as instruments of bureaucratic surveillance and economic control'. This the authors have demonstrated by providing the necessary figures and statistics which point to the number of students and technocrats being exchanged between universities and research centres in the developed world and the developing world. The pattern of intellectual dependency and intellectual straight-jacketing is further developed in other parts of the book which considers the mechanics of creating client states, proxy leaders and encouraging intellectual handicaps amongst the elites in the South thanks to the lopsided relation of power and knowledge between the richer and poorer section of the globe.

Population control and the myth of 'population explosion' that threatens to engulf the world are also exposed as the tools of intervention and control that they really are. In the chapter on the politics of Population Control Programs (Chapter 4), for instance, the researchers have argued that the real reasons behind the fears of the 'population explosion' lies not in the fear of depleted resources or damage to the global environment (all of which could be better managed if it were not for the unequal distribution of power and resources between the richer and poorer halves of the world), but rather the fear on the part of Western elites that the global domination of the West over the rest will come to an end if and when the powerful elites of the North can no longer disguise or sustain such an unequal balance of power between an increasingly small select minority of elites and an ever-growing global community which are becoming increasingly aware of the unjust and corrupt nature of this skewed New World Order.

Even more enlightening are the portraits and vignettes of the Western technocrats and politicians that litter the book; from Maurice Stans, the budget

director of US President Eisenhower's cabinet who thought that 'many Africans still belonged in the trees' (Chapter 3) to Allan Dulles, head of US Central Intelligence who argued that Islam is a backward religion which 'has a natural appeal to black Africans' (Chapter 3) by virtue of their own 'backward' and 'superstitious' character and culture. The racist preconceptions and biases that contaminate the understanding which underlies the policies that these technocrats from the metropolitan centres of the West comes to the surface as the researchers carefully document and record their testimonies and interviews in records that have long been kept away from public scrutiny.

All in all, the evidence drawn together by the Project's group of researchers have revealed that underlying the policies and programs of the dominant and powerful states and international bodies such as the UN, World Bank, IMF, UNESCO and others is a set of assumptions and beliefs that fall far short of their universal credentials. By laying bare not only the politics of international superpower intervention that makes itself

under the guise of 'benevolent aid' but also the internal politics within those institutions themselves that have ensured that the new mandarins of the post-Cold War order are drawn exclusively from a staple stock of like-minded technocrats and elites who share an unswerving belief in outdated theories of racial difference and cultural superiority of the North over the South, they have shown that the misguided and ill-conceived programs proposed by such powerful interest groups from the North will remain forever 'worse than misguided altruism' (Chapter 12).

The authors have concluded their introduction with the following words: This book was prepared because its investigators believe that the peoples of the Southern hemisphere have a right to information that has up until now been held mostly in secret by governments, and that they also have a right to know what is being contemplated for them. And, above all, it is intended to provide to all persons the background information they urgently need to play their rightful role in the debate about the future of humanity'.

While one would be hard pressed indeed to disagree with the sentiments being expressed, a word of caution needs to be introduced nonetheless. The cliché that 'knowledge is power' has been proven to be patently untrue by now. Those living in the developing world have always been able to get to the truth and to develop their knowledge for themselves somehow, but without a corresponding increase in their powers to govern themselves and direct their own lives.

Sadly, *knowledge is not power*, nor does knowledge make one powerful for its own sake. Therein lies the crux of the problem, for knowledge without political will and struggle does not lead to emancipation and development. The research work by the Information for Africa Project has done much to inform and educate those who have read this book, but the task of political struggle remains an urgent one. Perhaps in this regard, the most poignant lesson to be learnt from the book is that there is still so much work to be done in the political arena to counter the Excessive Force of the elites of the West.

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## Do Elections Really Mean Democracy?

Pushkar

**In many parts of the world, says the writer, elections have proved a handy weapon for dictators and military regimes seeking to legitimise 'limited', 'controlled' or 'protected' democracies. And in many formal democracies, checks and balances on elected leaders are so ineffectual that national politics appears more authoritarian than democratic.**

**E**lections are considered inseparable from democracy. There is simply no other way we can have a democratic government. The relevance of elections to democratic regimes is thus taken for granted. However, it may be worthwhile to ask: how much or how little do elections reveal about the nature and content of a democratic regime?

In this essay, we look at elections across continents, going beyond India where elections have been a regular feature of national politics in the five

decades of independence, to argue that elections are also, as a cartoonist put it, the 'noise of democracy'. The specific examples we take are from the Latin American region where for a period of at least two decades, from the 1960s to the 1980s, military regimes put to an unceremonious end the practice of elections, at least those that could be described as free and fair.

The one point we must concede at the outset is that there is no substitute for elections — whether they represent 'voice' or 'noise' — and they must necessarily be held to uphold democracy. Elections legitimise democratic rule, even if there be only a formal

democracy or one that in the Latin American context has been labelled 'electoral democracy' or 'electoralism'.

In several democracies of the so-called 'developing world', India included, the voter rules only at the time that elections are held. Once he has done the needful, that is, cast his vote, the elected leader goes about his business unmindful of those who elected him in the first place. Not surprisingly, a recent opinion poll found respondents describing the work done by their respective Members of Parliament as amounting to 'nothing' (53%) or 'very little' (17%). The ability of the elected leader to do 'nothing'

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*The writer is Assistant Professor, Centre for Latin American Studies, Goa University, India.*



or 'little' for his people is not new but on his part, the politician argues that voters are too demanding, they expect miracles, which he is incapable of.

If voters in 'old' and 'consolidated' democracies like India expect nothing short of 'miracles' from their elected representatives, just as those in 'new' democracies in Latin America like Chile, Argentina and Brazil do, the reason lies in the growing impoverishment of the masses. In all these countries, a shift from import substituting industrialisation policies of the past to the tenets of free market ideology has imposed an enormous burden on the bottom half of society. Further, a freer flow of information has made people more aware (and less tolerant) of the misdeeds of their rulers.

Brazilians were quick to punish the erring Fernando Collor de Mello on charges of corruption (he was forced to resign), Argentines did not take kindly to President Carlos Menem's pardon of military officers involved in human rights violations during the 1976-83 period when they were in power, and in Chile, where the military still evokes fear, justice is being sought for those who suffered at the hands of over-zealous anti-Marxists.

Democratic rule, whether in 'consolidated' or 'new' democracies, throws up the issue of justice in its many facets to the political leadership. In Latin America, calls for justice are directed against lack of jobs, increasing socio-economic inequality, deteriorating social services (especially health and education), and in those countries which were previously under military rule, at the men in uniform who in the name of the father (mother) land, legitimised death and torture. In India, corruption of the political class has emerged as the single most important issue for 'justice-seekers' along with deepening socio-economic inequality and equality before the laws of the land.

In this context, elections remain the single most important means by which

people can seek justice. There is a growing awareness that since elections legitimise formal democratic rule, the voter must also extract his pound of flesh. Formal, since once elected, political leaders often go about functioning in a most undemocratic manner.

Ayesha Jalal has recently argued that there is only a superficial difference in the manner in which politics in India — a democracy since 1947 except for the two years during the Emergency — and Pakistan — a country that has alternated between democracy and military rule umpteen times during the same period — is conducted. Jalal makes a strong case of authoritarianism in Indian democracy and even though her term 'democratic authoritarian' is inappropriate for India, there is little doubt that, for example, regularity of elections, even if free and fair, say much about the 'quality' of democracy.

In many parts of the world, elections have proved a handy weapon for dictators and military regimes seeking to legitimise 'limited', 'controlled' or 'protected' democracies. True, no-contests where opposing parties and groups are often barred from participation, provide only a shadow of legitimacy but the fact also is that in many formal democracies, checks and balances on elected leaders are so ineffectual that national politics appears more authoritarian than democratic.

One may, therefore, argue in favour of looking at elections as merely providing a showcase of democracy. In the so-called 'democratic decade' of the 1980s, when military regimes all over Latin America gave way to representative governments, elections were taken as a crucial indicator pointing to a return to democracy. Of course, exaggerated views by some analysts suggested that elections meant that all was well with Latin America, the first step 'back to democracy' would automatically lead to steps two and three. Rumbblings by the military in Argentina, Chile and importantly, in Venezuela (two failed

coups in 1992), a democracy for over three decades, called for caution.

Regular, free and fair elections would not only consolidate 'electoral democracy', everyone agreed, and also something more; but there is still no agreement on what this something more must mean — greater economic equality, political freedom, etc — before such 'new' democracies could be considered democracies in the sense of Western ones.

Mexico provides a good example of the limits of regular elections and formal democracy. For seven decades, the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) pretended that the country was a democracy. Elections were held at regular six-year intervals (what the Mexicans call *sexenio*) and each time the PRI candidate returned a 90-plus % of the popular vote (until the 1988 elections, that is)! Reeling under a massive debt problem, the PRI resisted political liberalisation and almost lost. Though the party remains in power after the troubled 1994 Presidential elections — the costs are painfully visible.

India has had fewer problems with its democracy. While regular elections are a characteristic of political life, discontent with the quality of governance has the potential to spill out of 'electoral options' to naked opposition to the curious variant of democracy that the country practises.

The response to this possible 'break-down' has already come in the form of calls for presidential rule, rule by a 'national government' — and in the extreme case, military rule. The logic is simple: if the present form of democracy that has so well served the interests of the elite class is under strain, devise another form of government that preserves the status quo. Peace, stability and progress are the concerns of those in power, however limited and defined, not those for whom democracy merely means heading for a voting booth every few years!

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# Education for Peace and Unity: Active Listening

Ananda Welihena

Education for peace and unity is a felt-need in our country. It is a requisite for the successful realization of the first peace (devolution) proposal that the Peoples Alliance (PA) government presented in August 1995.

Gill Fell, (see, 1988, 'Peace'. In David Hicks, ed., *Education for Peace*, London: Routledge) a British peace educator has underlined the significance of skills that can be employed during peace negotiation and dialogue. She identifies **ACTIVE LISTENING** as a single most important skill that can be cultivated and applied to promote peace. As she writes:

*"Much of education concerns itself with teaching the arts of written and spoken communication, but in peace education the emphasis is on listening, and communication is an active two-way process" (Fell, G., 1988, 78).<sup>1</sup>*

There are passive and active types of listening. The passive listening allows the listener to play the role of a spectator, often referred to by educationists as the Jug and the mug exercise or what Paulo Freire calls the banking concept of education: here the person observes and listens to the speaker and takes into the mind as if some liquid is poured into a receptacle, and that is it. This type of listening does not possess the capacity for constructive, critical or creative thinking.

Active listening leads to creativity and originality. It is a **SKILL** that can be practised and applied. One can cultivate this skill constantly in day to day life to gain success. A person who has acquired the power of mindfulness and awareness can secure this skill without much difficulty. It is important to note Gill Fell's two characteristic features of active listening.

She indicates the capacity to remain listening carefully and mindfully to a person or disputant without interrupting for some time. As she writes:

*"..... to pay full attention to what the other person is saying, without asking questions, passing comments or giving advice" (ibid., 79).*

Interruptions or interventions do not occur haphazardly, but only when the speaker has finished and if and only if it is really necessary. This type of listening is difficult, and it is an art that deserves constant practice. Its principal task is to construct a mental space into which the disputants can send in ideas and thoughts. The listener welcomes them eagerly into this space without hesitation.

The second aspect of active listening is more significant. It is the capacity to reflect on what has been received and understood. It is as Gill Fell says:

*"The essence of what the speaker has said, both the gist of the content and the feeling that lies beneath it" (ibid.).*

What is important is to acquire the ability to comprehend the emotive dimension concealed beneath the verbal symbols of the speaker or the disputant. It leads to empathic understanding of the person's inner feelings. It is different from extending sympathy to the other.

These two cardinal principles of active listening must be practised in order to interiorise them, especially by applying them to day-to-day-activities. It helps to overcome or resolve conflicts that arise at diverse levels. This practice enables the person to resolve conflicts that occur between two disputing parties. But to gain this competence one must practise always and everywhere. It can be done at three fundamental levels. The result is that one can learn to resolve conflicts and promote peace and unity among people. The three levels that one can practise the two principles of active listening are:

- 1) **At the level of the person,**
- 2) **society, and**
- 3) **environment or the ecology.**

## 1) At Personal Level

Conflict is the reality, and it exists in each and everyone. It is clearly evident at the level of **a) thoughts, b) sensations and c) breath.**

### a) Thoughts:

Thoughts can be of two varieties. They can be either pleasant or painful. The capacity to name and identify them is not easy. Much training and practice are required and patience, diligence and persistence are indispensable. How should one try and approach a painful or a pleasant thought? The following measures would be fruitful:

First, one must gain the skill and capacity to receive a pleasant or painful thought. It is important to be positive or to have an **open mind**. It is to create a mental space in order to allow the thoughts to gain free entry. There should be hardly any pleasant or painful **reactions towards these thoughts**. One must observe these in-coming thoughts with awareness and mindfulness.

Secondly, the art and skills must be acquired to comprehend not only the nature but also the functions of these thoughts. It is important to identify their antecedents or causes of the arising. The understanding of the nature of thoughts would reveal their inconstancy or impermanency (similar to that of a water bubble): they arise in order to pass away.

### b) Sensations:

The approach to sensations is similar to thoughts: sensations are predominantly bodily feelings of pain or hatred and pleasantness or craving. Mental space has to be provided for them so that they may gain entry. Resistance or reactions towards them should not be allowed. When sensations are distasteful or painful, one is inclined to hate them. When they are pleasant one begins to cling to them tenaciously. If one wants

<sup>1</sup> Fell, Gill, (1988) 'Peace' in Hicks, David, *Education for Peace*, London: Routledge.

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to encounter these sensations, then one must reflect on the behavioral pattern of these sensations and their impacts with awareness and mindfulness. The result is that one learns to be cordial and friendly with unpleasant feelings and careful or mindful with the pleasant feelings because they are certain to pass away. The person can conclude that both types of sensations are really impermanent or passing phenomena.

### c) Breath:

One can learn to observe one's mechanical or habitual breathing habit pattern with awareness and mindfulness. The two above perspectives must be kept in mind: he/she must be able to create a mental space for the breath to take place at its own sweet will and then to reflect on their nature and functions with awareness: how it enters and touches the nostrils and causing sensations of diverse types. All this must be mentally noted. The person then will feel peaceful, calm and still. With mental space provided for the entry breath and the departure breath, it is possible to be aware of the nature and function of the breathing; whether it is soft or hard, slow or fast, constant or ceasing. A restless mind enables fast breathing and a calm mind produces soft, slow breathing. Awareness of the nature and function of breath becomes useful to slow down the speedy breathing process. It can help overcome hasty decision making leading to conflicts, despair and disappointment in life because when breathing is slow the intensity of emotions are less.

### 2) Social Level:

It is possible to overcome conflicts that arise at the level of social relations by applying the above two principles of active listening. The word 'social' refers to the relationship between two or many human beings or groups. When hostile relations caused by anger, hatred or jealousy between two or more persons exist, he or she must be aware of the nature and functions of this negativity. The options available now are either to become involved in this negativity and make it exacerbate or try and resolve it without becoming victimised by it. If the intention is to resolve the conflict then the first task is to provide a mental space for those emotions that are produced by the conflict to enter freely and secondly reflect on what would really happen thereafter. It is to welcome with

an open mind without being afraid or nervous anything that is conflictual or hateful. A person who has inflicted pain on another, out of anger, ill will or hatred encounters conflictual relations which could be resolved by the art of observing the existing pain and hatred with mindfulness and awareness. There is hardly any necessity for any negative reactions to emerge. All that is required is to create a mental space for the arising conflict and welcome the accompanying emotions. It is to be in it but not of it. The next strategy is to gradually reflect back on its nature and impact: how did the emotion arise? How long it lasted? Was it difficult or easy? These measures would generate an in-depth understanding of the conflict and the person who inflicted. The result of this exercise is that the imagined enemy will be converted to a generous friend or a companion. One will not react mechanically; it means without mindfulness or a second thought to the enemy's thought, word and deed. All this shows that one can listen actively to that which happens at the level of the person's inner self when he or she is impacted by externally induced factors.

### 3) The Ecological Level:

Every person has to live within an ecological environment constructed by man. He or she encounters problems and difficulties while living in it. Peace and reconciliation are determined by the capacity to deal with them in a harmonious manner. Noise and pollution disturb the healthy, peaceful life of man. The first human reaction against noise is to resist or hate it. The reaction to a pleasant wind or the sound consists in clinging or craving for it. One can come to grips with these realities by establishing a right relationship. These two principles of active listening can be useful for this exercise if they are correctly applied. The habitual pattern of the mind will detest noise. How would it be possible to encounter this menace and overcome its negative impact? How is peace possible in this situation? How can a person remain balanced when he/she experiences the impact of noise. It is the ability to accept and live with it without reacting hastily. It would be much easier to listen to a bird's singing and watch the leaves being tossed by the wind rather than to accept and be with something unpleasant or distasteful. What is to be done is to provide a mental space for this experience and accept it without reaction and resistance. The

next step is to reflect deeply on its nature and functions by looking inwards: it is to take a mental note of the impact and to think of the possibility of being free from it. It can be done by being accommodative and friendly.

Peace can be gained by active listening at all these three levels. It provides a person with the capacity to relax and rest with the forces that are inimical to him. To live in peace is to relax with oneself, the fellow beings and ecological context around by practising the two principles of active listening.

### Guru-Sishya Relationship

The principles of active listening are practised when the *Guru* and the *sishya* meet each other. The integral development of the *sishya* is caused by the interaction of these two principles of active listening. Oriental education and culture are imparted through this process of learning. This is how the student acquires a calm mind. The education for peace originates from the relationship established by the oriental *guru-sishya* tradition of learning. Active listening propels the *sishya* to be obedient to his/her *Guru*. The *sishya* practices the principles of active listening by being with his/her *guru* which is **Responsive Listening**. The *guru* reveals his/her love and invites the *sishya* to share in it. The *sishya* responds to the *guru's* love by offering his/her lovingness. The *guru* offers the *sishya* the truth and the *sishya* offers the *guru* in return the understanding of that truth imparted to him/her. Active listening is converted into responsive listening. There exist a profound sharing between the two persons. Alienation disappears and it is replaced by a feeling of fulfillment.

Buddhist and Hindu cultures have maintained active and responsive listening to gain new knowledge. The Hindu tradition contains three inter-related dimensions of learning to gain peace. They are:

1. *Sravanam*,
2. *Mananam*,
3. *Nididhyanam*.

*Sravanam* means that the *sishya* listens carefully and actively to what is spoken; *mananam* means that he/she grasps the meaning of what was listened to and begins to reflect intelligently. *Nididhyanam* means that he/she responds creatively to what was listened

to and understood. It is here that active listening is converted into responsive listening. Active listening is now translated into a social commitment: it is to transmit what has been learned or experienced on a personal level to a wider community.

The Buddhist tradition has a method of learning which is equally impressive. It has three inter-related phases:

*Tasmahi bho kichcha majjappahaya sunatha dharetha charatha dhamme.*

It means: "Leave aside, the devoted one, all your assignments in order to listen, understand and reflect and finally act with a changed pattern of life based on the Dahamma".

The three phases of learning include:

1. *Sunatha,*
2. *Dharetha,*
3. *Charatha,*

*Sunatha* relates to active listening to what was told and *Dharetha* means to understand and reflect in silence on what was listened to and *Charatha* means to apply or practise what was interiorised after silent reflection. Active listening to the guru finally ends with responsive listening.

This tradition of learning was practised by many saintly persons of the East especially in India. The best example is the Buddha who learned this techniques from his contemporary Hindu *gurus*, but he acted creatively and responded by adding new ideas to the existing knowledge.

When these two principles have been cultivated at all levels in life it can assist in the resolution of conflicts between two disputing parties. This task can be executed if one is conversant with the three preceding levels of conflict resolution which have been discussed above.

There is another benefit that arises from the practice of these two principles of active listening. In other words, the significant contribution that this practice could offer is the avoidance of two distinct strategies of conflict resolutions. They are:

- 1) the judicial process
- 2) the mediatory process

By avoiding these two strategies one can adopt another strategy of conflict resolution: **direct negotiation** which can be more successful than the previous

two strategies to resolve conflicts, because there are two groups talking, negotiating and interacting with the hope of arriving at a consensus.

### 1) Judicial process

The judicial process involves a distinguished personality who has the knowledge and expertise. He is familiar with the rules and regulations pertaining to the conflict. But he is not involved in the conflict. He is the judge who formulates the verdict after the completion of the judicial process. In this strategy the judge plays the role of 'one man show' for his is the final word. This process is not useful for the resolution of social and political issues for more often they demand creative and participatory actions of the disputants.

### 2) Mediatory process

The mediatory approach is often exercised in the context of a deep cleavage between the disputants: the parties in conflict are incapable of seeing one another face to face. The aloofness and the walls built up are so deeply entrenched that a third party's assistance has to be sought to commence talking and arrive at a viable solution.

The involvement of India as a third-party in the ethnic conflict of Sri Lanka, has not brought much success. The role of the Indian Peace Keeping Force is a clear example. The mediating party is likely to take advantage of the conflicting situation for the enhancement of national interest. The reconciliator or the mediator is only a channel of communication between the disputants. He/she conveys the perspectives and statements of the contending parties. But sometimes mediators are impartial and just and they do not intend to elicit advantages out of a conflict. It is advisable and preferable if the contending parties come around to resolve their own issues through direct negotiation without depending on a third party intervention.

### 3) The negotiatory process

The other contribution that can be derived from the practice of two principles of active listening is the third strategy of conflict resolution through inter-party negotiation on a face to face basis. Communication between them is a two way process (not as in the case of jug and the mug that turns to be a monologue). This strategy takes into account the two principles of active listening that

was discussed at length in the preceding paragraphs.

The first requirement is to create a mental space for the other's thought, word and deed without reacting against them at first sight. The second is to reflect upon thoughts, words and deeds of the other and understand their meaning and inner essence: the gist, content and feeling that lies beneath it (Hicks, 1988, 79).

It is fruitful to apply these two principles of active listening to the on-going peace process between the government and all other peace loving, democratic groups and parties in the country. The practice and application of these two principles can determine the success of the negotiatory process and dialogue. The government is making every effort to rally round the opposition United National Party (UNP), the Tamil parliamentary democratic parties, the remaining small but radical Sinhala parties, the pressure groups of trade unions, religious bodies particularly the Buddhist monks and their institutions. All of them have listened to the inner meaning of 1995 devolution proposals of the PA Government. All parties and groups must be praised for their courage and willingness to enter into a dialogue and negotiation process with the government. It is the first time that the government had volunteered to send its negotiating team of *Sudu Nelum* Movement to every part of the island to convey the need for peace and unity through devolution of power. It manifests the good will of the government to resolve the issue of war, and establish peace, stability and unity in the country by stalling war, threat to sovereignty and secession.

The strategy of negotiatory process would be successful only if these two principles are understood or interiorized at the level of the masses. It cannot be guaranteed unless a steady gradual program of peace education launched on an island-wide basis. The role of *Sudu Nelum* (*white Lotus*) Movement can be of assistance in this endeavour. There is a reason to be optimistic: the voters have given a mandate to the PA government at the August parliamentary and presidential elections of 1994 to establish peace and not war, unity and not secessionism, and stability and not the violation of the sovereign power. In the words of French political philosopher Jacques Rousseau, the mandate of the people constitutes the "General Will".

# Population Control: War Against Women

**Malini Karkal**

**Contrary to popular perceptions, said the writer, population control in India has a detrimental effect on the health of women and the survival as well as intellectual and physical potential of their children.**

**E**xcept for China, India is the most populous country in the world. In 1952 it became the first country to introduce national family planning. At that point, the programme was instigated to improve maternal and infant health, but the objectives altered when the US Congress made population control mandatory for countries seeking assistance of any kind in the 1960s.

India is also one of the exceptional countries (along with Bangladesh, Bhutan Nepal and Pakistan) that have fewer woman than men. In large part this is due to the shorter life expectancy of younger females; from birth to five years, 111 girls die for every 100 boys; from age five to 14, 122 girls die per 100 boys; and from age 15 to 35, 130 females die per 100 males. Only females who live through the hazards of these 35 years can anticipate that their death rate will be less than that of age-matched men.

India's maternal mortality rate is amongst the highest in the world and, like its infant mortality, is comparable with the abject rates in some African countries.

Populationists claim that reduced fertility rates would simultaneously reduce population and maternal and infant mortality. They have popularised notions of contraceptive population control in India and the majority

of other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Central and South America and Africa.

More recently, the dominant funding agency of the populationist lobby, USAID (United States Aid for International Development), spent \$9 billion conducting a National Family Health Survey (NFHS) in India, Bangladesh, the Philippines and Indonesia.

The survey claims to represent 99% of the Indian population, and, because of the extravagant investment and vast numbers involved, the accumulated data is further claimed to be the most reliable to date. Yet, as the following figures illustrate, population control is a crime against humanity, most specifically against women, but also against their children and partners.

## **Sterilisation**

In India, where marriage is early and universal, married women aged 13 to 49 were interviewed for the survey and revealed that 46.9% of women or their husbands were using some form of contraception. However, sterilisation was the most common method, and was eight times more prevalent in women than in men (27.3% compared with 3.5%).

In contrast with the experience in other countries where temporary contraceptive methods are adopted prior to settling for permanent contraception via sterilisation, the data also

revealed that Indian couples generally had no experience with temporary barrier or hormonal contraceptives before they were sterilised, which in itself implies that sterilisation was a coercive rather than personal decision.

The survey also found that 36.2% of women were under 25 years at the time of their sterilisation, and another 36.4% were between the ages of 25 and 29. Translating to three of every four wives being sterilised before age 30, this indicates that the medical and social problems associated with sterilisation procedures such as tubal ligation and tubectomy are the almost exclusive burden of younger women.

The median age, or the age by which at least 50% were sterilised, has fallen from 28 to 26 years during the past 10 years. This probably indicates that the population control programme has become increasingly oppressive over that time.

In the initial years of family planning in India, men had somewhat equally shared reproductive responsibilities with women. However, the survey showed that the burden of population control has increasingly been shouldered by women; aside from the smaller proportion of vasectomised men compared with tubectomised women, only 7.1% of men were using condoms. In effect, population control has reinforced patriarchy and disproportionately exposes women to the hazards of

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temporary contraceptives such as intra-uterine devices and a variety of hormonal contraceptives.

The survey noted that an equal frequency, one in five, of vasectomised men and women using temporary contraceptives complained of one or more side effects.

However, the survey excluded women who had discontinued using IUDs, depo-Provera and Norplant, and it is reasonable to conclude that the incidence of complaints in this group would match the one-four complaint rate of sterilised women. By actively promoting problematic permanent and temporary contraception, the population control lobby has exposed its war against people which, reinforced by patriarchy, amounts to a war against women.

Over decades, indeed centuries, reports consistently indicate that women want fewer children than they actually bear. The NFHS survey also found that women aged 13 to 29 wanted no more than two children, and those over 30 wanted only two to three children. Importantly, neither group desired a large family.

Interpreted by populationists as women's unmet need for contraception this idea has been applied to legitimise long-acting, hormonal contraceptives, such as depo-Provera, Net-En, Norplant and anti-fertility vaccines.

All are provider-controlled and serve to further disempower women who have already admitted their powerlessness to bear the exact number of children that meets their personal aspirations. In this context too, population control plays a major role in bolstering cultural patriarchy to deny women control over both their body and their sexuality.

### Child Mortality

Contraceptive acceptance rates were 5% in women with no children,

20% in those with one child, 46% in those with two children and 60% in those with three children. On average, women gave birth to 3.1 children, but after infant mortality was taken into account, the number fell to 2.6 per women.

The survey failed to demonstrate that child mortality was caused by high fertility. Infant and childhood mortality was spread equally between women bearing one, two, three, or more children.

The survey also established the nutritional status of the children under five years, and found that 53.4% of the children were below standard weight or **wasted**, 52% were below standard height **stunted** and 17.5% were severely malnourished. The survey concluded, 'these levels of undernutrition are among the highest in the world.'

Importantly, the birth order of the child made very little difference to his or her growth lag, which clearly confirmed that family planning had failed to solve the problem of malnourishment within the population.

In India, where 95% of infants are breastfed, the survey found that the proportion of malnourishment increased with age; one in five babies was malnourished within six months of birth, but between six and 12 months, this figure rose to one in two, and clearly reflected the poor health of the mother.

India also reports the highest incidence of low birth weight babies, the proportion of malnourishment increased with age; one in five babies was malnourished within six months of birth, but between six and 12 months, this figure rose to one in two, and clearly reflected the poor health of the mother.

India also reports the highest incidence of low birth weight babies, the proportion being one in three.

According to World Health Organisation guidelines, low birth weight babies, or babies weighing less than 2500 grams at birth, have poor prospects for both survival and normal growth. Low birth weight babies also have dismal educational and employment futures because of their school drop-out rates and sub-optimal performance in labour activities.

Contrary to popular perceptions, this amounts to population control having a detrimental effect on the intellectual and physical potential of the population.

### Marriage Age

Obviously, the issue of child/girl brides lies at the heart of maternal and infant mortality, and as the survey noted, though marriage of girls under 18 years is unlawful in India, 20% of the interviewed women were married at age 13, 37% at age 15, and 68% by 18.

Over recent years, the marriage age of girls has increased marginally, but only to the extent that 50% of the women now aged 20 to 24 were married when aged 17.4 years, whereas those now aged 40 to 49 were married at age 15.5 years.

In the climate of premature marriage, child bearing begins at a young age. The survey noted that approximately 28% of the women were mothers by 17, and another 23% by the age of 19. At the same time, due largely to the impact of sterilisation, child bearing ends by age 30.

In the face of this data, and contrary to populationist gospel, women are undesirous of large numbers of children and are perfectly capable of regulating their fertility accordingly. In spite of this, however, the population control that has supplanted family planning has assured them of neither their own good health, nor their children's survival.

— *Third World Network Features/Green Left.*



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# Germany, European Union and Relevance to Third World Cases

Hartmut Elsenhans

**Federalism and devolution promote consensus but require it also**

Federalism is a system of sharing competences between a central government and normally territorially constricted governments. In a federal system, the different levels of government are defined in a constitutional act where both levels draw their rights from the sovereign power which makes the constitution, in a democratic system people and/or a special constitutional body. Both levels, the federation and the states which constitute the federation, therefore consider to draw their power from the allegiance of the people, its totality or part of it. Whenever there is homogeneity of citizenship, the necessity of a clear binding power of rules makes federalism possible only on a territorial basis. The move of a member of the federation from one territory to another makes him or her immediately member of the state he or she moves into. Where there are divisions in the citizenry which are legally recognised, a federal system can be based also on different parts of citizens according to their special characteristics. In imperial Germany (1871-1914) there was a citizenship of each state which, at least in principle, would have allowed some citizens of the federation enjoying in their state special rights, for example with respect to vote or to the access to the civil service of that state. In multi-ethnic states, such as Cyprus, the ideal of personal federalism has been discussed, where matters relevant to only some of them would have been attributed only to the competences of their bodies, for example marriage or inheritance laws. Such models have been discussed with respect to the reform of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy at the beginning of this century also by Marxist parties. Even in countries with a clearly uniform citizenship such as India, elements of personal federalism can be present as the right of different religious communities of that nation to administer their own personal laws.

Federalism is a system which depends on all component parts accepting multiple allegiances and avoiding to constantly try to change the fundamental distribution of competences. If this is not accepted, the different levels can easily block decision-making processes or provoke opponents to use extra-constitutional or emergency dispositions inscribed in the constitution which destroy the basic consensus which such a system needs in support. Especially no level

should attempt or threaten to attempt to destroy the previously agreed setting and try to abolish the other or empty its attributions.

Obviously, such a balance is more stable if the component states preexist the federation. The well established federal systems such as Canada, the United States, Brazil, South Africa, Australia, Germany and Switzerland are characterised by the fact that its component parts existed before the federation which they founded themselves on the basis of their own constitution-making power. The exception, India, where states existed before the founding of the federation, but where the actually existing states are the result of a redrawing of boundaries confirms this observation in two aspects. In relation to the center, the Indian states are weak, as shown by the practice of president's rule through which the center can take over the government of any state with weak inhibitions. They draw their force, however, from their being based in most cases (outside the Hindi-speaking core) on linguistic criteria which guarantee the adherence of the population of the state to its institutional prerogatives.

Decentralisation is characterised by the devolution of competences of the legislative or the executive powers of the central state to regional or even local bodies on the basis of a decision of the center. Devolution is based on a pragmatical assessment on how to organise the legislative and administrative processes where obviously also representatives of local bodies or minority populations may be consulted, but where the bodies created at regional or local levels draw attributions from an act of the center which is revocable, perhaps not completely at will, but at least according to the assessment of existing conditions through a majority at the center level. A guarantee against such revocation does not exist, whereas in a federal system such guarantees are normally provided by high barriers in the constitution against any change in such rules not only in the form of special majorities required in the central parliament, but also in the form of the necessity of consent by a qualified majority of the states or even the right of secession. The process of "bringing back" the Canadian constitution from the British parliament to a Canadian body and the necessity to achieve for this purpose the consent of the province of Quebec

may be quoted. In Germany, the institutions at the federal level may interfere in the distribution of powers between the federation and the states with constitutional majorities in both houses, a house of directly elected representatives and a house of states, but the substance of federalism is protected by the constitution, so that no majority can abolish the states and their right of substantially participating in the political process.

Neither federalism nor devolution can exist as long as parties to the constituent people claim the right to divorce. Federalism and devolution are projects and arrangements which depend on their members abiding to coordination, compromise and solidarity. Federalism and also devolution are based on the idea of a single body politic whatever distinctions within this body politic.

Incipient forms of federalism can however be an instrument to allow human groups which have not yet developed such a feeling of unity to develop it through the experience that the outcomes achieved at the level of a federation are more satisfactory than the ones possible within the framework of their limited resources. Here, the experiment of European Union can be mentioned as an interesting and quite contradictory example. In order to bring about such a result, other unifying forces are however required because the power of a statist organisation to increase the available resources is normally quite restricted, so that zero-sum games develop at this level. Federal principles of political organisation can enable a unification of an otherwise seriously divided body politic, but they cannot create the will to living together. They have to be built on a consensus that living together should be made possible by putting together resources which should be managed together and keeping separate what does not need being put together. They are therefore based on the principle of subsidiarity, according to which any problem should be dealt with at the lowest possible level of the hierarchy of the institutions and be taken up by higher levels only if the lower levels are manifestly unable to reach satisfactory outcomes, either according to their own views or according to the views of that party on the body politic from which they draw their legitimacy, normally the territorial unit to which autonomous powers are attributed or delegated.

*(To be Continued)*

# Dayton Agreement: No Peace in Bosnia

Dilip S. Samarasinghe

The three year long conflict which had been raging in Bosnia was possibly the bloodiest conflict to take place in Europe since the Second World War. In November 1995, the governments of Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia signed an agreement at Dayton, Ohio in which they agreed to cease hostilities and play a role in rebuilding Bosnia. But the most important aspect of the Dayton Agreement was that US government put the full weight of its diplomatic and military might to restore peace in Bosnia. For three years, the world had witnessed some of the worst atrocities committed in any post-war conflict but no action had been taken to stop the bloodshed.

Because of this belated response, there has been a lot of criticism of Dayton being too late, and cynics even attributed its timing to President Clinton's bid for re-election at the coming US Presidential elections.

While most Bosnians are happy to see an end to the fighting they consider the action as long overdue. The Bosnian Minister of Education summed up this view when he deplored that fact that "when someone kills a man, he is put to prison. When he kills twenty, he is declared mentally ill. When he kills 20,000 he is invited to Geneva for Peace Negotiations. "It can therefore be said that the distrust generated by three years of war still remains and that American military power, in the form of the 60,000 strong Implementation Force (I-FOR) may not provide a long-term solution.

## The Serb Gambit

To understand the rationale behind Dayton, one has to look at the unfolding of events in Bosnia prior to the Agreement. Buoyed by a string of victories, the Bosnian Serbs chose to test the UN's resolve by detaining 200 UN troops as hostages. They had earlier on seized 3 artillery pieces and one heavy mortar

which had been impounded by the blue helmets. They hoped by this action to nullify an earlier agreement which had forced them to give up heavy weapons used to shell Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital.

In response, the UN Special Representative for Bosnia, Yasushi Akashi allowed NATO to carry out air raids against the Bosnian Serbs. An air strike against ammunition dumps near the Bosnian Serb stronghold of Pale was carried out by 15 NATO jets to convince the Karadzic government of the UN's resolve.

The conflict escalated when the Serbs began shelling the so-called UN "Safe Zones" which resulted in the loss of 76 lives. NATO retaliated by launching a second air strike against Pale.

It was at this stage that the Bosnian Serbs took the radical decision to hold 200 UN peacekeepers as hostages. Television screens around the world showed UN troops chained to various installations to deter NATO air raids. UNPROFOR's weakness was shown by this Serb action.

The international community, which feared further losing face was at this stage seriously considering pulling out of Bosnia. Britain and France, which contributed troops to UNPROFOR stated that they were to pull out of Bosnia. President Clinton even suggested sending 25,000 US troops to cover a withdrawal of the UN forces in Bosnia. But to pull out would indicate that the pressure tactics of the Serbs had succeeded, so the NATO allies examined different options.

The alternate approach was the creation of a Rapid Reaction Force. This was a force of NATO troops who would protect UNPROFOR troops from any attacks. They would go about in vehicles which are not painted in white, like those of the UN, and have offensive equipment. In June 1995 60 French Foreign Legionnaires were landed by helicopter near Mount Igman, overlooking Sarajevo. British and Dutch forces joined the Rapid

Reaction Force. They had in their arsenal armoured vehicles and artillery, which boosted the UN a firepower but since their mandate was only to respond in case of a provocation, it was little different to that of UNPROFOR and had the same problem of being only able to respond to the cat - and - mouse game played so effectively by the Serbs.

## Belgrade's Policy Change

An important factor which paved the way for the Dayton Peace was the shift in policy of Serbia. At this stage, the Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic offered to use his good offices to bring the Bosnian Serbs to the negotiating table. He promised US officials that within six months he could help bring peace to Bosnia. While the US had long considered Milosevic in a bad light and blamed him for the bloodshed the Serbian leader's behind-the-scenes assistance in the rescue of a USAF pilot shot down in Bosnia helped improve relations with Washington. Furthermore, Milosevic was also annoyed that the reckless policies of Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader and his military commander Gen Ratko Mladic, could draw Serbia into an unwanted confrontation with NATO. Milosevic also believed that the taking of hostages by his Bosnian brethren was casting all Serbs in a negative light. Milosevic wanted Serbia to be integrated in post-ColdWar Europe. However, even though Serbia had broken with the Pale regime and closed their border for trade, military links between the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) and their Bosnian Serb counterpart remained strong. Many Bosnian Serb officers were seconded from the JNA.

Milosevic therefore had strong leverage on the Bosnian Serbs and could easily deliver their compliance to any peace agreement.

But Milosevic's actions were not totally altruistic but more determined by self preservation. Serbia had suffered severely under UN sanctions but was enjoying at the time a 75 day suspension of the sanctions. Milosevic was keen to see the suspension extended to

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relieve the debilitating economic conditions in the country. Prior to the signing of the Dayton Agreement, it was estimated that 1 million Serbs were unemployed out of a work force of 2.3 million. The country's GNP per capita had dropped from \$ 2,330 in 1991 to \$ 1,225 in 1993. It was also estimated that 2 million Serbs out of a population of 10 million live below the poverty line. This was the heavy economic price Serbia paid to support its Bosnian Serb brethren.

Milosevic was therefore keen to see Serbia re-integrated into Europe as well as becoming economically stronger. He thus decided to support peace in Bosnia, which offered him a passport to respectability and recognition by the International Community.

### **The Dayton Agreement**

The willingness of Serbia to participate in US - sponsored peace talks on Bosnia was also shared by Croatia's President Franjo Tudjman and Bosnia's President Alijah Izetbegovic. Talks were held at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio.

From the very beginning the US authorities were keen that no external influence should jeopardize the talks, so the parties were isolated and the media was specifically kept out. In order to prevent any controversy, all three Presidents were provided with identical housing on the base. The US wanted to show that they were all to be treated equally.

The parties namely Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia could either communicate directly with each other or could do so through the US Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke. If not, they could communicate by using the good offices of Warren Christopher, the US Secretary of State.

The most significant factor was that the most important actors in the Bosnian Tragedy, the Pale Serbs, were kept out. The excuse given was that their leaders Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic were indicted as war criminals by the Hague Tribunal and therefore they would be represented by Serbia. This convenient arrangement encouraged Bosnia to participate without being slighted by the presence of the Karadzic regime.

The discussion aimed to create a new Bosnia. It was decided that the country would be constituted by two entities, the Muslim-Croat Federation and the Republika Srpska (Bosnian Serbs). Each

entity would be permitted extensive rights to form links with Serbia or with Croatia.

Critics of Dayton see this as a recipe for partition since the Bosnian Serbs would be automatically drawn to Belgrade and the Bosnian Croats to Zagreb. But others say that under the present circumstances, Bosnia could not realistically expect to have a strong central government. At best it would have to be a loose federation with a weak central government.

The question of demarcation of the borders of the two entities could also be a contentious issue. The Muslim-Croat Federation would be awarded 51% of Bosnia's territory, while the Serbian entity will get 49%. It has been argued that this legitimizes ethnic cleansing since many territories held by the Serbs were acquired by force.

Dayton also provides for a united Sarajevo, while the Bosnian Serbs wanted a divided city like Berlin once was. They fear that Serbs would be persecuted when the Muslim led government reasserts its control over the city.

As soon as Dayton was signed, a 60 day ceasefire came into effect which was followed by the signature of a Peace Treaty in Paris.

### **Implementing the Dayton Agreement**

The US was keen that the implementation of the Dayton Agreement was not hindered in any way by the "dual key" system, the complicated mechanism where UN and NATO officials had to consult each other before using force against a troublesome party, unusually the Serbs. In most cases the response was too late. After Dayton, NATO was freed of the UN veto and could use force without having to consult anyone.

The implementation of the Dayton Agreement was also facilitated by the fact that the balance of power had radically shifted against the Serbian side. The Bosnian Government had been able to inflict some defeats and regain some territory from the overstretched Serbs. More significantly, Croatia was able to defeat and dismantle the Krajina Serb entity which held one third of the country's territory. The fluid military situation therefore encouraged all sides to examine a negotiated solution to the problem.

Since Bosnian Serb held land now amounted to 49% of Bosnia instead of 70% some months earlier, Karadzic was

willing instead to consider peace talks.

But in spite of all these points, Dayton is a last chance agreement imposed by force on exhausted but still unwilling parties. It relies heavily on US diplomatic and military pressure for success. It is therefore questionable whether the peace will hold once I-FOR withdraws.

This use of coercion was apparent when the US forced President Tudjman not to raise the question of East Slavonia, since this could create tension with Serbia. So Croatia had to put aside its wish to see that break-away territory returned in order that the Dayton process continued without problems.

Similarly, Izetbegovic was warned not to contact the media because Bosnia could make political capital as a victim of aggression. For Dayton to succeed no party could claim moral superiority over the other, at least while the talks went on.

Milosevic too was lectured by US officials for not having done anything about the atrocities committed in Bosnia. This was belated, but still mattered.

It was therefore clear that Dayton was not just an American-brokered peace agreement, it was an American-imposed peace backed by the diplomatic influence and military might of the USA.

### **I-FOR and the creation of a new Bosnia**

The lengthy treaty gave details of the institutions which would exist in the new Bosnian State. There would be a Presidency, a Parliament and a Judiciary. Thanks to the Croats and Serbs, these institutions would be extremely weak. Both Croats and Serbs want to have privileged links with Serbia and Croatia, which leaves the Muslims in a weak position, all by themselves.

But to make this possible, the 60,000 strong NATO-led Implementation Force (I-FOR) was sent. The largest component is the heavily-armed 20,000 strong US contingent. The role of I-FOR is to keep opposing armies apart. These would anyway be in zones of separation two kilometres apart from each other. Heavy artillery and tanks would be placed in "Heavy weapons exclusion zones".

On November 15 1995 the first of these NATO troops were deployed in Bosnia. They have begun demarcating

the land in the two constituent entities, the Muslim Croat Federation with 51% of the land and Republika Srpska with 49%. Each entity will have its own President and legislature.

At the same time I-FOR has to create confidence in the new Bosnia and in this respect has not always been successful. Many Serbs have left Sarajevo after setting fire to their homes, fearing a Muslim backlash in the reunited capital.

Similarly the Muslim side also resent the fact that Karadzic and Mladic, considered war criminals, should go unpunished. Dayton does not endorse the Hague Tribunals indictment of the Bosnian Serb leaders.

The danger of a resumption of fighting in Bosnia cannot be ruled out nor the danger of a Croatian attempt to recapture East Slavonia. There is also the risk that the Bosnian Serbs may seek to occupy the Posovina Corridor which would link the Serb-held territories. While I-FOR's 60,000 strength may seem

huge, the problems and disputes remain considerable, even for a force of that size.

The main concern faced by I-FOR would be to help 3 million displaced persons who in many cases have no place to go. Often their homes have been awarded by Dayton to the other side which confirms that the treaty is an arrangement between governments and has little concern for individuals problems.

### Conclusions

The fact that the US, UK, Britain, France, Spain, Italy, and Russia have all committed troops to implement the Dayton Agreement shows that at last the Western World is making an attempt to end a conflict which had a demoralizing effect on a continent where relative peace had been enjoyed for half a century.

I-FOR undoubtedly will have to spend a long time in Bosnia but even when

it finally leaves, the country is unlikely to be transformed into a happy Balkan version of Switzerland. It remains to see whether once force is removed, the warring factions would stick to the Dayton Agreement or whether they would decide to resume the fighting which for 3 years was screened on the world's television sets and resulted in the worst destruction suffered by Europe since the Second World War.

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## The Garden of Eden

Jeanne Thwaites

The "Garden of Eden" is used over and over again as a metaphor for Ceylon. The Island with its slow pace, gentle population and exotic tropical vegetation must have appeared idyllic, but the travelers talk of an Adam and Eve who lounged on verandahs eating mangoes while served coconut drinks served by obsequious black servants. Naval surgeon William Ruschenberger (1835) quotes a friend who "declared he had never seen anything so Eden-like, and felt himself nearer paradise than he had ever done before," and his next words are, "We alighted at the mansion" (64). In this Eden you didn't even sit under the trees eating mangoes — you sat in a mansion.

Wealthy Clara Rogers (1903) had problems with the Eden-concept: "I said to myself, 'Can this be Ceylon? I think it must be heaven,' but when the temperature rises: 'good bye heaven', says I. 'I must have made a mistake as to the locality' (247).

Mr. and Mrs. Rogers were traveling with two friends, one of whom was Phoebe Hearst, mother of the newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst whose eldest son was to become the most famous Hearst of all. It was he who built Hearst Castle in California — literally hauling home parts of European castles to do so. He lived there with his Lolita, actress Marian Davies, who was thirteen when she became his mistress.

These affluent Americans are hilariously dependent on their servants yet high-handed with them. Mr. Rogers has trouble dressing himself. He had hired two servants from Madras but they had not arrived. So he could dress they hired two more only to have the first two from India also show up. Rogers is playfully overwhelmed. He decides to keep: "David who already looks upon me as his father" (249). David's confirmation of the statement is not available. Phoebe Hearst took two of the men and the fourth was dismissed as "useless." The wages

they paid were fifty cents (\$0.15) a day which did not include board and lodging so their servants slept outside the door or under a table in the corridor. Their employers found this very "queer" (253) but did not think to find them a better place. Rogers merely comments that no Japanese servant would have acted so subservient. Their memoirs give the feeling that the servants were as expendable as cigarette stubs. Playing with people this way, is of course stereotypical of the colonizers whom Memmi says "refuse to consider personal, private occurrences in their servant's life; that life in a specific sense does not interest them, and their servant does not exist as an individual" (85).

The only Ceylonese the Rogers show respect for is a crow who comes in through their open Galle Face Hotel window and flies away with Mrs. Roger's jewelry case in its beak. She gets it back and is forced into a handsome tip by the Sinhalese boy who found it on the Green.

The more open-minded American travelers sought intellectual exchanges with educated Sinhalese or Dutch Burghers. Conversations with Buddhist monks left particular impact. Lucian Swift Kirtland (1926) describes his encounter: "a priest of the temple came up to see me, and immediately — with a strange absence of any barriers whatsoever — we fell into an absorbing conversation" (335). In a witty extended Ceylon/Garden of Eden metaphor Kirtland continues "It is quite true that almost never does one hear of a European being bitten (by a serpent), but you must not understand that this comes about through any discrimination on the part of the reptiles" (338). Other remarks which snip at the English and other Europeans abound.

### Color Prejudices at Home

When the Americans do not speak of the colonized Ceylonese as equals, one must remember that their country had a system of democracy which, for some of its citizens, was as socially restrictive as that imposed by Britain on their colonies. The Sinhalese and Tamils could be expected to be seen as lesser by all but the most free-thinking white-skinned Americans just because of their skin color. But, when confronted with an Asian who was as well-educated and opinionated as themselves most Americans were delighted. An exception is Phillips Brooks (1883), inappropriately dubbed a "divine," who sends home a sniggering poem:

And the people are cheerful and dirty  
And dress in a comical way

.....

Astride on the hips of their mothers  
Are black as a gentleman's hat" (182).

When he runs into an old high-priest teaching a class in a temple, the nasty divine remains nasty: "he asked me 'do you know anything about me?... and I was obliged to tell him that we had never heard of him before in all our lives . . . he got down and toddled away" (184).

Thus, each American reacts as an individual and there are no real clues as to what causes one to cling to his prejudices and another to drop them. An early visitor I have already mentioned, Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens, 1896), is skillful at showing the process of the change. He sets you up to be disappointed in his reaction by describing the cuteness of the natives and their bright-colored body-revealing clothing, describes several little Sinhalese girls wearing western school clothing and suddenly rises like an angry cobra to strike. He about-turns and mourns at the subsequent loss of their beauty. It is the garments not the wearers, he rages, that makes the little girls suddenly ugly and he turns to his own party: "I looked at my women folk's clothes, and was ashamed to be seen in the street with them . . . Then I looked at my own clothes, and was ashamed to be seen in the street with myself" (224). The account ends with Twain biting at Western hypocrisy regarding clothing:

They are on us to expose us — to advertise that we wear them to conceal. They are a sign; a sign of insincerity; a sign of suppressed vanity; a pretense that we despise gorgeous colors and the graces of harmony and form . . . and when we step into Ceylon we realize that we have not even deceived ourselves. We do love brilliant colors and graceful costumes;" (224).

Novelist, Frances Parkinson Keyes arrived in 1926 and is amused when entertained by the Governor's wife

Lady Clifford who, "wore a long white veil flowing from her hat," (323), then, like Twain, coolly nails her point:

One of the most amazing and regrettable facts of modern history is the arrogance and semi-contempt with which the people of Europe and America have long looked down upon Asians, as if her people were inferior, as if her place in the world's civilization and the world's achievement were insignificant..... (329)

### The United States v. The United Kingdom

The time span covered by *Images of Sri Lanka* was one in which the U.S. was undergoing powerful positive changes. The slaves were freed in 1865. Although they were still discriminated against, new efforts were made to protect the Blacks. England was, however, going in the opposite direction. Between 1757 and 1830 Ashis Nandy from India tells us, "Most Britons in India lived like Indians at home and in the office, wore Indian dress, and observed Indian customs and religious practices...but there followed the flowering of the middle-class British evangelical spirit which began to ascribe cultural meanings to British domination" (Nandy 5/6). An uglier side of colonization had begun. William Maxwell Wood (1856), surgeon of the Fleet to the U.S. East Indian Squadron, was the only early writer to sense such an attitude was dangerous and demoralizing to the colonials themselves — particularly to the children. Wood was repelled by hotels and homes in which "whole men, physical, moral and intellectual," (115) had nothing to do but to make him comfortable. He rented a bungalow where he could make his own rules (117). So while the United States was trying to shake free of racial prejudices, Britain was taking them up. The two were never headed in exactly the same direction. *Images* shows Americans racing to embrace change.

One such traveler is Rev. Moncure Daniel Conway (1883), an ardent abolitionist and a feminist in the mo-

\* Unlike the English the Dutch colonizers had settled in the country — that is did not retire in Holland. Some married Dutch women, others married Sinhalese and Tamils. When Holland lent Ceylon to England to protect it from a French take-over (Holland had been invaded by France) most Dutch stayed on in the professions and government administrative posts. They adopted English as their language. The Island proved so lucrative to Britain, however, that it was never given back. Because by now most Dutch families were of mixed blood, the English did not the entire community as equals.

dem tradition. He chances on a fellow student from Cambridge — Judge Arunachalam — and is invited to dinner. The judge's seventeen-year old wife speaks no English but through an interpreter pumps Conway for information on the freedom accorded to western women in contrast with herself. As Conway tells her of women lawyers and doctors. He says, "her colour went and came as she listened" (188). When a Buddhist tells him that Maia, the mother of Buddha, is often represented by a male figure as an honor, Conway responds, "I hope the time might come when it will be believed that a man, by extraordinary virtues, might be rewarded by becoming a woman," (191). He meets a famous Pall scholar of whom he later says: "the elevation and sweetness of his spirit excited my veneration. He was the Buddhist I had dreamed of (191)...What matters any dogma, theology, philosophy, uttered thousands of years ago, compared with the life that is quickening hearts today (195).

One of the most important Americans to visit Ceylon, was Victor Heiser (1915) a physician who worked for the U.S. Public Health Service and who had neither religious scruples or colonial rationalization. He is pure Scientist and wanted only:

To open 'the golden window of the East' to the gospel of health, to let in knowledge, so that the teeming millions who had no voice in demanding what we consider inalienable rights should also benefit by the discoveries of science (276).

He came to protect the Sinhalese and Tamils workers who were dying by the thousand from smallpox and hookworm. Heiser was extremely antagonistic both to the fearful natives who resist his help and to the English who put money before their workers' health. He took them both on so ferociously that he eventually brought them to heel: immunization became compulsory on the English-owned tea and rubber estates, and the life-expectancy of the Tamil, in particular, soared — but only after he had convinced the English

that it was cheaper to keep the existing laborers alive than bring in new ones. By cutting the infant mortality the planters would be breeding healthy labor at very little cost, he explained, and at last they bought it.

Writer Paul Bowles (1951)\* who came to Ceylon looking not for a place to write about — but a quiet place in which to write — was also to take up the cause of the South Indian Tamils many years later. Bowles' political comments are not included in the book, but in *Days* published in 1991, he comments:

Everyone knows that the Tamils did not emigrate to Ceylon on their own initiative. Why did the British want them there? Because they needed an impoverished, helpless group of agricultural workers who could be forced to work for minimal wages (*Days* 17).

The Americans in this remarkable volume *Images Sri Lanka* are shown however through their own words as a people who are strongly patriotic but not all as free of racial prejudices as Bowles. They have a restless energy. They have a sense of purpose and usually a consuming desire to learn about other races. They refuse to fit a pattern — even those in the employ of the U.S. Government do not put forward an "American" point of view. It appears there is no *American* point of view and that's good.

The Ceylonese of all ethnic backgrounds come across very well in the book: intelligent, thoughtful, outspoken, kind. The British appear very much less so: pompous, indolent, narrow-visioned and a bit useless. But it is important to remember that it was an American not a Brit who wrote the much-quoted line describing a Ceylon "where only man is vile," and it was American Christians who made it popular.

Their countryman Rev. Moncure Conway had this to say about that hymn and deserves the last word:

\* Figures in parenthesis after a name, denote the year of the visit to Ceylon.

Poor Columbus! You who saw a world that turned into America, and were welcomed by gentle natives — unarmed Buddhists in their peacefulness — how pitiable you appear. 'They knew not the use of weapons, and cut their hands in handling our swords; they know no evil'... So wrote the discoverer who he thought him of transforming the gentle natives into gold and into Christians. Four centuries have passed and Christendom is slinging of the vileness of the Sinhalese, the most innocent people on the face of the earth" (188).

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**Will privatization mean  
the end of the union  
I represent?  
How will the interests  
of my members be  
protected?**

**- Trade Unionist**

Privatization will in no way dilute or reduce the powers and rights of your union. British Airways was privatized in 1987, and the unions remain to protect worker interests just as before. Some of the world's largest, most powerful and vocal unions exist in the private sector. For example, the United Auto Workers (UAW) represent over 100,000 workers at the three biggest American car companies, none of which are state owned. In fact, there is every likelihood that working conditions will actually improve in privatized companies, since there will be substantial investments made to upgrade facilities and training. You can look forward to representing a considerably more prosperous union.

It is important to realize privatization is a means to an end. It is a means to improve our living standards, foster technological progress, create employment and take our nation into a more prosperous tomorrow. In order to achieve these aims, privatization has to be executed in the appropriate manner.

That is the task of the Public Enterprise Reform Commission (PERC). Its mandate is to make privatization work for Sri Lankans today, and for generations to come.

Every privatization is a carefully considered decision that takes into account the interests of all sectors of society; the general public, the state employees, the consumers, the suppliers, as well as the country's overall economic vision.

PERC's mission is to see that privatization works. In doing so, your interests are always being well looked after.

**With privatization everybody has a stake.**



**PERC**

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