

LANKA

GUARDIAN

Vol. 5 No. 18

January 15, 1983

Price Rs. 3/50

WOMAN AS REBEL

WAITING FOR NORMA RAE?

● **Islamic insurgencies**

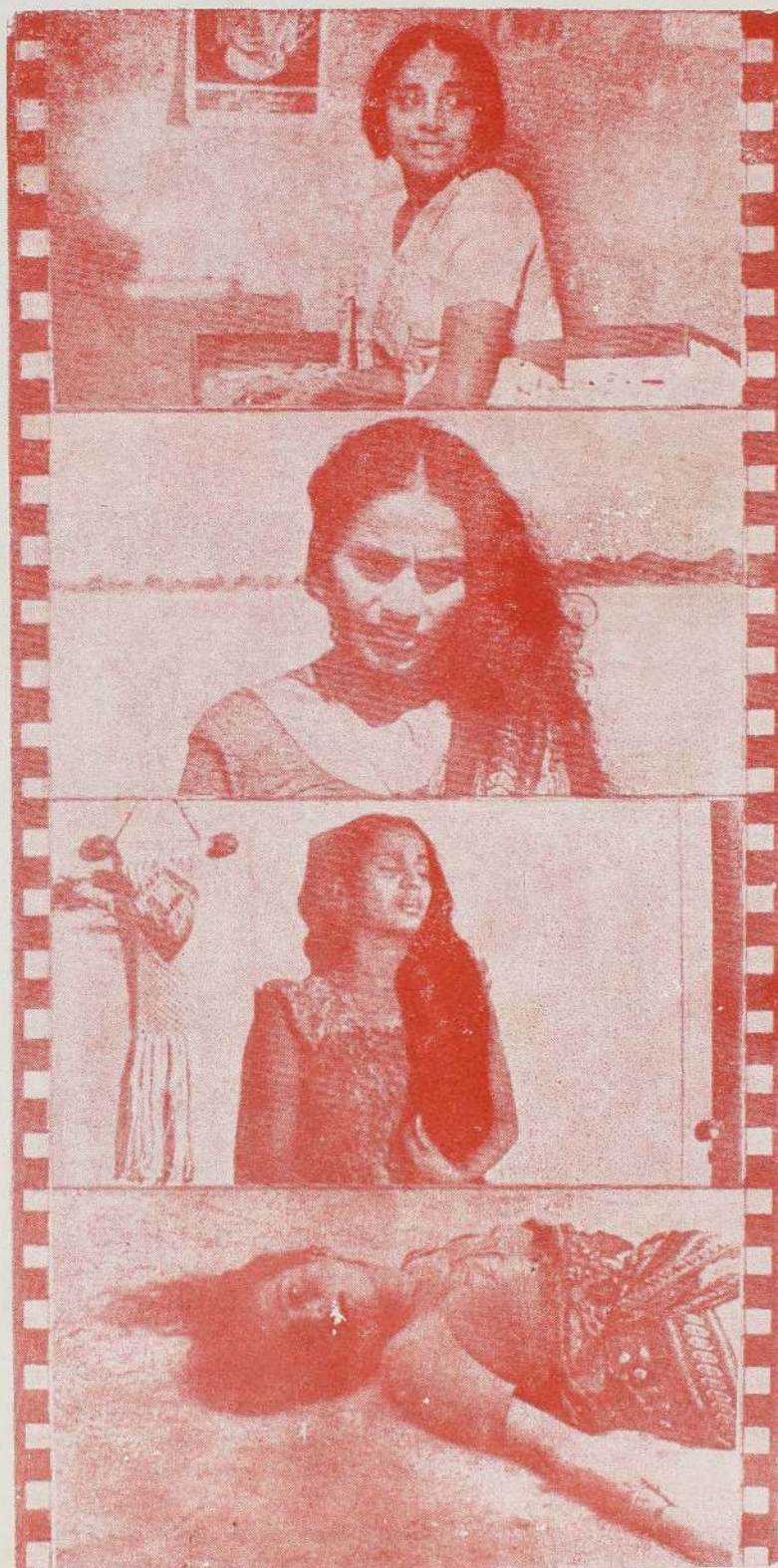
— Ameer Ali

● **Labour Laws**

— Radhika Coomaraswamy

● **Africa in crisis**

— Robert Miller



OBEYSEKERA'S
'DADAYAMA'

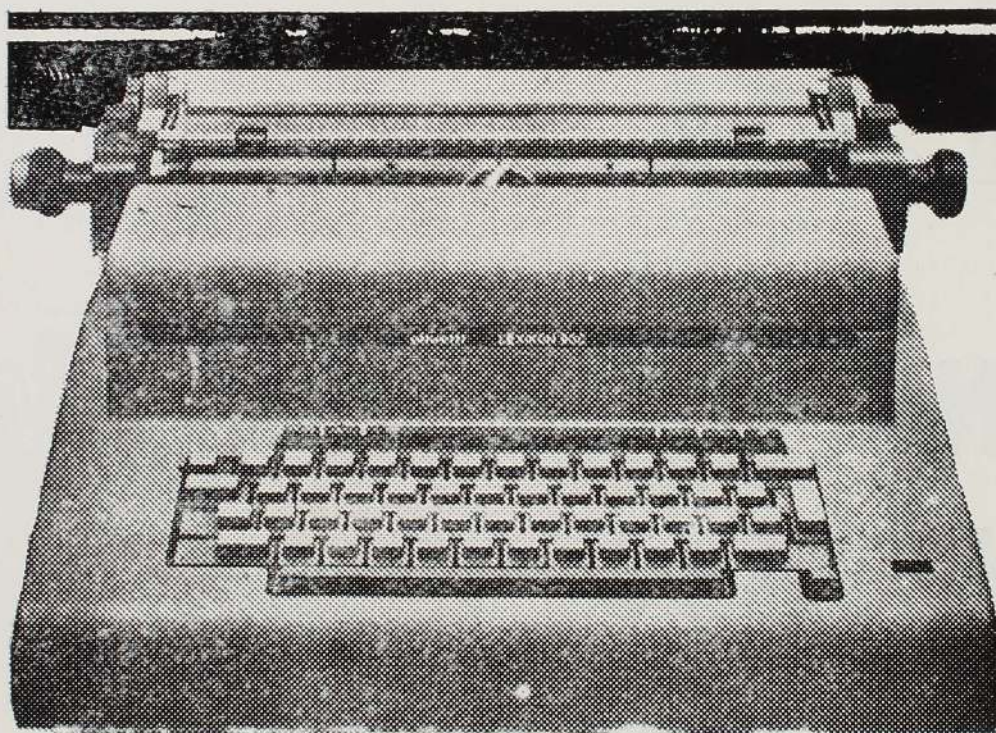
— Reggie Siriwardena

CAMPUS : JVP — SLEP — UNP Combine

Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.
noolaham.org | aavanaham.org

 **olivetti**

Lexikon 90 C for the perfect type



The Lexikon - 90 C is the latest in a long line of typewriters that have upheld the Olivetti tradition of perfection.

At Olivetti, tradition is not a mere sentimental symbol, it is the result of reputed excellence coupled to the demands of progress. That is why the Lexikon - 90 C is designed for those who want precision in performance and ultimate perfection.

The Lexikon - 90 C is elegant, easy to operate and geared to peerless performance. Electrically operated,

sophisticated in design with such streamlined features like interchangeable printhead, ribbon cartridge, fitted with automatic correction device.

Lexikon - 90 C is distinctive from any other 'Golf-ball' typewriter. The 13" or 18" carriage that moves while the printhead is stationary, enables you to type along the entire length of the carriage, giving you maximum typing space. Its intelligent key-board prevents common typing errors.

Worth every rupee of the twenty-five thousand it costs.

OFFICE EQUIPMENT LTD

55, Iceland Building Colombo 3. Phone: 27659.

Branch : 34, KKS Road, Jaffna. Agent : The Central Finance Co. Ltd.,
noolaham.org | aavanaham.org 24, Dalada Vidiya, Kandy.

PHOENIX

PATRONAGE TO HOODLUMS

THE New Year saw the DAILY NEWS come out with an unusually strong editorial titled "GMOA protest". Much stronger certainly than our own "trend" (Jan 1). The simmering discontent in the GMOA, a well-organised and influential trade union, has obviously alarmed the Establishment. As it should. The CDN, happily, did not shy away in its diagnosis from the true cause of the present malady—thuggery with political patronage.

"Sadly the GMOA is not the only organisation that has protested against the extension of political patronage to hoodlums... Sadly enough, it is to be seen in other State-controlled organisations where again the management apparently lacks the strength to enforce discipline on favoured sections or individuals on its staff—no matter how crude their behaviour—and at the same time objects to self-help by aggrieved parties. One thing is clear. No State, no government, no party that condemns Naxalite methods can condone equally outrageous behaviour in any institution under its control. It is futile to denounce thuggery on the one hand, and resort to it or let it go unpunished on the other".

While the 'Daily News' has obviously got the GMOA's message, will 'the political patrons' get the Daily News message?

CAMPUS CONCERN

Whatever the visions of statesmen, however grand the development programs of the planners, when academic standards start to crumble, the future must worry all thinking people. It is precisely because our teaching standards, especially in the Universities have been quite high, that Sri Lankans are over-represented in world agencies, practice their respective professions in all continents and lecture at universities from Canberra to Connecticut. Anywhere in the world, when an educated Sri Lankan speaks, people do give him a hearing. That asset cannot be measured in money terms.

Personal intrigues and cliquism apart, party politics has always made a rude intrusion into campus affairs, under every administration, have had sufficient self-regard and collective pride and integrity to keep the faith and the torch alight.

Outstanding work in one's own field or outside it has to be recognised. It always has. Michael Polyani could move from Chemistry to Sociology; an ordinary pass did not prevent Laski from getting a chair. But if this rule of exceptionality is made so elastic that persons without the required (advertised) qualifications are appointed to high posts, when others far more qualified are ignored, then the first deadly blow has been struck at the prestige of our universities. It is this question that has caused deep concern and distress in our campuses lately.

3 VS 3

The sheer symmetry of the situation dramatises the fact of total division. The SLFP split is indeed right down the middle. Mr. S. D. Bandaranayake MP is obviously on his way to the SLFP (M) and that will make the Maitri camp go from two to three. After Mr. Wijesiri's departure, it was just Mr. Senanayake and Mr. Haleem Ishak.

With S.D.'s likely cross-over, the SLFP (S) will also have a Bandaranaike, Mr. Anura Bandaranaike MP, and two others, Mr. Lakshman Jayakody MP and Mr. Ananda Dassanaike MP.

TRENDS + LETTERS

Referendum analysis

Firstly an analysis of the results shows that under the system of proportional representation as laid down in the Constitution the United National Party would have secured only 93 seats in Parliament and the opposition would have on this voting won 75 seats in Parliament.

Secondly that the Government will be keeping 143 seats in Parliament whereas they are entitled to only 93 seats on the voting. i.e. the Government is depriving the opposition of 50 seats that they would be entitled to on the voting.

Thirdly the United National Party received 31.41 Lakhs of votes out of 81 Lakhs of voters. Therefore 31.41 lakhs of voters will be keeping 143 out of 168 members of Parliament in Parliament for 6 years.

Fourthly the U.N.P. has received 54.56% of the votes polled and the opposition 45.34%. Even on this basis the U.N.P. is keeping 143 out of 168 or 85.11% of the number of members of Parliament by polling only 54.56% of the votes polled.

Fifthly it is seen that even if the elections were held on the system of Parliamentary Constitution (Continued on page 2)

LANKA

GUARDIAN

Vol. 5 No. 18 January, 15, 1983

Price 3/50

Published fortnightly by
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd.

No. 246, Union place,
COLOMBO-2

Printed by Ananda Press
82/5, Wolfendhal Street, Colombo-13.
Telephone: 3 5 9 7 5

CONTENTS

News Background	3
Obeyesekere's Cinema	6
Labour Laws	7
Agro systems of Sri Lanka	9
Lanka's Agricultural Future	11
China — Japan	13
Running Short of Cash	15
Tamil National Question	16
Africa's Economic Crisis	20
Islamic Insurgencies	23

Editor: Mervyn de Silva
Telephone: 5 4 7 5 8 4

(Continued from page 1)

tutions as in 1977 and before (which the U.N.P. described as a system that is undemocratic as the system did not reflect the views of the electorate properly), the U.N.P. would have won only 119 seats and the opposition would have got 49 seats.

Sixthly it is interesting to see that the U.N.P. was defeated in the Referendum in 49 electorates out of which 30 electorates were outside the Northern and Eastern Provinces and out of the 30 electorates 15 electorates were represented in 1977 Parliament by members of the left parties, i.e. either L.S.S.P or C.P.

Seventhly it is interesting to see that in the electorate from which S.L.F.P. leaders crossed over to the U.N.P. just before the Referendum the "Pot" has done better than in other areas. e.g. MulKirigala, Akuressa, Habaraduwa, Kegalle, Galgamuwa, Colombo Central.

Eighthly it is very significant that the decrease in majority for the U.N.P. at Colombo Central is directly proportional to the show that was put up spending millions of rupees violating all elections laws and basic decencies.

Lastly at Eheliyagoda which was represented by Mr. Vincent Nanayakkara the "Pot" won inspite of his campaigning vigorously for a benefit of the elections.

Lal Wijenayake

Kandy

Women at work

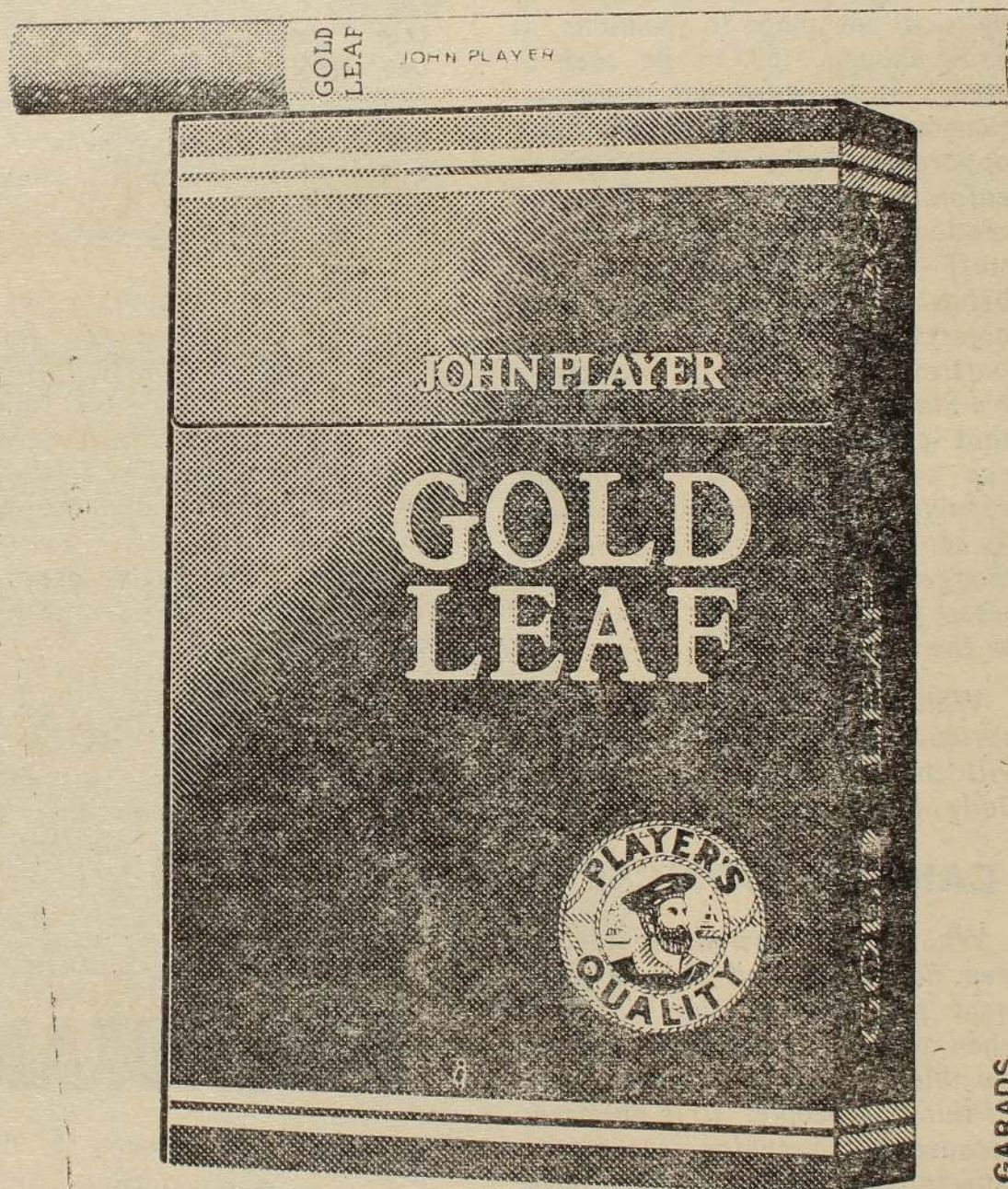
Recently one of the most educated ministers of this government was reported in the press as saying that 30 years ago women in Sri Lanka did not work but now they do. Surely he has forgotten that women have been working on our tea estates since the turn of the century. What of the "servants" who have been reduced to domestic drudgery for so long? What of the self-employed women? What about women in small industry and agriculture?

N. Umagiliya.

Colombo.

John Player's Gold Leaf King Size Filter Cigarettes.

The sign of
rich good taste
around the world



Available in packets of
12 - 7/80 20 - 13/-

CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT-GOVERNMENT WARNING: SMOKING CAN BE HARMFUL TO HEALTH

Waiting for Nora . . . or for Norma Rae?

A Special Correspondent

Ibsen's Nora slams the door. Sumitra Pieris' heroine in **"YAHALU YEHELI"** walks out of her parents' home and the film ends on a note of quiet defiance. In his review of Vasantha Obeyesekere's latest movie **"Dadayama"**, Reggie Siriwardena observes how, under the pressure of experience, the personality of the 'heroine' is transformed from passive conformist to social rebel. In our last issue, Jagath Senaratne reviewed **"NORMA RAE"**, a film about "a stubborn-willed and brave woman-girl, gutsy little person fighting gamely in the grimy everyday battles of life which threaten to consume her"

The conventional view is that the Sri Lankan woman, like most Orientals, is a docile creature, tied by so many taboos. But aroused or cornered, she gets stubborn, strong, defiant. It was the young women at the C.J.C insurgency trial who rejected the offer of a two year reduction in their sentence if they pleaded guilty.

From platform and pulpit, we hear hosannas to motherhood and what is quaintly described as "the traditional role of women". Whatever its virtues (in male eyes), the concept of 'the woman's place is the kitchen' is being undermined and as usual it is economic and social pressures — and, in some instances, official policy — which have an unsettling effect on old values and institutions. The "traditional role" is challenged by "non-traditional activity".

Certainly, the export of housemaids, part of the large exodus of 'migrant workers' is not only "non-traditional" but a foreign exchange earner that is now challenging tea, our truly traditional export, for No. 1 place. And what of the thousands of women workers "servicing" the tourist industry, at one-time our great (White) Hope of Prosperity? Finally,

we have the export-led growth strategy with "promotion zones" as the "platform". Following the example of Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore, (what Andre Gunder Frank in an article in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, called 'the gang of four') many other Asian countries have offered cheap, skilled labour, tax and other incentives to attract foreign investors who establish factories on their own or as collaborators of local businessmen.

In the economic and financial journals of the world, Sri Lanka has advertised the high productivity of its labour (see chart) combined with low wages. In the factories both within and immediately outside the Zone, women workers constitute a preponderant majority. Of the 20 odd thousand within the FTZ, for example as much as 85% are women. And most of the factories manufacture garments.

Servicing the tourist industry, keeping house in the Middle East, or working in textile factories — the feminists argue that these are merely extensions of the women's domestic role as sex object, cook and seamstress.

But it is economics and working conditions that make it a different issue. It is generally believed that willingness to work for less than a dollar a day (the Sri Lanka average of 35 dollars a month is the lowest in Asia) and the "traditional" docility of the woman will prevent these workers from organising unions or resorting to strikes, both of which are not tolerated, anyway.

Though these factories look spick and span and very up-to-date, long hours, compulsory overtime, wages that are fighting a losing battle with prices, and tough disciplinary conditions contribute to producing serious stresses on the average woman worker, especially those who have

uprooted themselves from village and come to the city in search of employment. An ASIaweek survey of factory conditions for young Malaysian women in "zones" there, spotlighted the high incidence of mental disorders and blindness.

In these conditions, the spontaneous stoppage rather than organised strike, is the more familiar response, partly of course because no TU's are functioning. But where they are, on the Zone's outskirts, strikes and stoppages do take place.

Is trade union history repeating itself? Exactly 50 years ago (Feb 1933) the workers of the Wellawatte Spinning and Weaving Mills went on strike demanding the restoration of a wage cut, and a reduction in working hours from 60 to 54 hours per week. Mr. A. E. Goonesinghe, the foremost trade union boss of the day refused to take the initiative. So the leadership was taken by a group of young radicals, mainly Colvin R. de Silva, N. M. Perera, Vernon Gunasekera, Robin Rutnam, Susan Caldera etc. The success of that strike, notes George Lerski in his book "The Origins of Trotskyism in Ceylon" allowed these "young enthusiasts" led by Colvin R. de Silva "to break into the working class field dominated by Goonesinghe". Enraged by this competition, Lerski writes, Goonesinghe's union played 'the role of supplier of scabs to help the management".

Thus, the textile industry has a crucial place in the history of the labour movement, just as the growth of trade unionism is part and parcel of history of the Left.

The textile industry is once more in the news, but with a difference. This time the strikers are all women. The figure given by the strikers is about 700. And they are all workers at a Garments factory, outside the 'FTZ'. It is said to be the longest union struggle by women

As we go to press, the strike has been settled and 7 suspended workers have been reinstated.

workers, and it is the only struggle of its kind in recent times.

According to a statement released to the press, by the branch of the Industrial Transport and General Union, the demands were: a) a Christmas bonus (3 months) (b) a daily wage of Rs. 25 (instead of 18/50) c) 45 days leave per year. d) reinstatement of 7 suspended members. e) A festival advance f) A ten minute grace period for those who report to work late. g) Medical and transport facilities in case of illness.

Most of the workers come from rural areas and are therefore boarded close to the factory at Ekala. Landlords are now shoving them out or demanding higher lodging fees. But the residents of the area have extended sympathy and support and a petition signed by thousands have been sent to the authorities. The strikers have held on stubbornly, in spite of numerous odds.

A spokesman of the strikers told the ISLAND that 18 persons were injured after a baton charge and several had to be hospitalised. The ISLAND also reported a management

spokesman as saying that one and half month's bonus had been offered in response to the demand of 3 months. He also said that only 50% (not 80% as the women claimed) were on strike and the factory was working at full capacity. A settlement was insight, he added.

According to latest reports the 30 day strike is likely to be settled on a formula which was discussed by Management, the Labour depart-

ment and the union. If this formula is accepted, reported the ISLAND in a front page story, the workers will get 1½ months bonus, with another quarter bonus being put up for arbitration. As for the daily wage increase, it will depend on raising the production level from 9 shirts per machine to 15 shirts. The management argued that at other garment factories the production level was much higher

RELATIVE PRODUCTIVITY OF ASIAN WORKERS

LOW-COST MANUFACTURING IN ASIA

(Current average monthly manufacturing wage)

Singapore	46.98
Sri Lanka	41.84
Philippines	41.35
Taiwan	34.03
Malaysia	30.86
Hong Kong	21.78
Thailand	21.41
South Korea	20.85
Pakistan	16.43
India	11.72

Sri Lanka	—	35
Indonesia	—	40
India	—	55
China	—	57
Thailand	—	64
Malaysia	—	100
Philippines	—	100
Taiwan	—	100
S. Korea	—	130
Singapore	—	165
Hong Kong	—	240

US \$225 in foreign owned plants

Source: Business Asia, Hong Kong—June 2nd 1978 Reproduced in official brochure on Sri Lanka FTZ.

Source: Business Week Sp. Report on "Asia's New Bidders for Western Plants", March 17, 1980.

At SPECTRUM we do not just make copies.

We Copy, Reduce, Collate, Bind, Type Project Reports and even Typeset Advertisements, Manuscripts, Newsletters etc.

Crisp, clear copies from A4 - 21 x 29.5 cm to 35.5 x 45.5 cm sizes.

Reduction Copies from 35.5 x 45.5 cm size or smaller originals.

Copying on Transparent Foil, too.

A courteous, efficient service.

Open 8.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. weekdays. 8.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. Saturdays.

Copying on Sundays and Holidays
by special arrangement.

Spectrum Lanka Ltd

NO. 10, KYNSEY TERRACE, COLOMBO 8.

TELEPHONE : 96563, 98648.

THE MOST VERSATILE COPY SERVICE IN TOWN



A mini - National Govt. on Colombo Campus ?

Last month, the new Students Council in the Colombo University emerged as a JVP-SLFP-UNP coalition! On the face of it, a strange misalliance. Still stranger is the fact that neither the JVP nor the SLFP nor the UNP came first at the November polls. Beating all other rival groups, an Independent Students' Union which in fact was in power last year had as many as 36 representatives. The ISU contested all four faculties. And now we have a JVP-SLFP-UNP leadership in the Students' Council with a JVP President and a SLFP Secretary.

The JVP's Samajawadi Shisya Sangamaya contested 3 faculties and won 19 representatives. The SLFP's Pragathisheeli Shisya Sangamaya contested 2 faculties and won 6 representatives. The UNP union was the only other body to contest all 4 faculties. It won 20 places. A group called 'the Pioneers' (non-political) dominates the elite Medical Faculty. The second strongest is the UNP union which was also prominent in [the Law Faculty but no longer. The chart below shows the Nov. 26 polls results. An analyst of student politics should examine it not only in terms of "places" won but in relation to the faculties, and the varying social complexion of undergraduates in Arts, Science, Medicine etc.

Several interesting questions arise, especially if the student leadership takes the "line" from the party

At the Election for Students Council Leadership 3rd Dec. 1982

	Independent	J.V.P.	S.L.F.P.	Pioneers	Votes rejected	No. of reps.
President	35	46	—	—	14	95
Vice President	—	—	—	uncontested	—	95
Secretary	35	—	58	—	02	95
Deputy Treasurer	38	53	—	—	04	95

bosses, or key party figures who keep an eye on campus affairs.

How did the JVP which is known for its implacable hatred of the SLFP come to a deal not only with the SLFP but with the UNP — two 'capitalist' parties often described in JVP polemics as two sides of the same coin?

Also interesting is that soon after the results, the UNP's were ready to support the JVP. The SLFP's made a straight deal — support for the JVP in exchange for the post of Secretary. The uncommitted "Pioneers" were inclined to support any group which enjoyed majority support in the other faculties. Since the ISU had a majority earlier, the Pioneers had half decided to back the ISU when the JVP-UNP-SLFP combine persuaded them that the new "coalition" could muster more votes than the ISU. The three unions had 45 representatives. As the Sunday ISLAND reported (Nov. 28) there was a distinct possibility of the UNP helping the JVP in order to wrest the leadership from the Independent Students Union.

The final results for the 4 key posts are also given above. (Note that in the Colombo University, there were 14 rejected votes out of 95!).

Why did all three unions, despite fierce conflicts between them, unite in defeating the I.S.U.? A former student who played a key role in establishing this genuinely independent and radical students union says; "The I.S.U., fearlessly criticised all attacks on the working class, the trade unions and the student movement. So it earned the wrath of the pro-UNP students. But what is more important I think is that the I.S.U. not only protested against all anti-Tamil propaganda and politics but it was the only union and Colombo the only campus with which the Jaffna university had open links. This incensed the basically racist SLFP as well as the petit-bourgeois JVP which lives on the fame of April uprising and collaborates with the butchers of 1971?".

Results of the Election held on 26th Nov. 1982

			Independent		U. N. P.		J. V. P.		Pioneer		S. L. F. P.	
	No. of Votes	No. of Reps.	No. of Votes	No. of Reps.	No. of Votes	No. of Reps.	No. of Votes	No. of Reps.	No. of Votes	No. of Reps.	No. of Votes	No. of Reps.
Arts Faculty	361	09	260	07	371	11	—	—	189	05		
Science „	333	11	—	—	253	07	—	—	—	—		
Medical „	—	—	269	07	—	—	469	14	—	—		
Law „	—	—	22	01	28	01	—	—	12	01		
Education Faculty	146	09	83	05	—	—	—	—	—	—		
	950	36	634	20	652	19	469	14	201	06		

Obeyesekere's cinema: from 'Palangetiyo' to 'Dhadayama'

CINEMA

Reggie Siriwardena

At the last International Film Festival in New Delhi, Sri Lanka was represented by Vasantha Obeyesekere's 'Palangetiyo'; at the New Delhi Festival this month the Sri Lankan entry will be Obeyesekere's new film 'Dhadayama'.

Dhadayama (The Hunt) is recognisably a film by the director who gave us **Palangetiyo** a few years ago. Both are fundamentally anti-romantic films, and both exemplify Obeyesekere's gift for transforming what might have been in other hands the material of popular melodrama into serious and meaningful cinema. But what a great leap forward for him, and for Sri Lankan cinema, **Dhadayama** represents!

Palangetiyo was an honest and intelligent film that was nevertheless restricted to a simple theme — collision of romantic feeling with the realities of class and economic circumstance. **Dhadayama**, on the other hand, is a rich and complex work; overwhelmingly immediate in its emotional and sheer physical force even on a first viewing (and I believe it will be so for popular audiences as well) it grows and deepens in meaning with further viewing and reflection, and demands to be seen and pondered so for a full apprehension of the subtleties of its texture.

Superficially, **Palangetiyo** is the film with the broader social canvas and the wider range of characters, since **Dhadayama** centres its plot on a single relationship between two people. Yet this structure means that the film gains in concentration and energy, while at the same time Obeyesekere has been able with great insight and penetration (as in

Palangetiyo; he is his own script-writer) to focus within the central relationship of the film meanings which go to the heart of our social life. Essentially, **Dhadayama** is a film about woman — woman as victim and rebel. And where **Palangetiyo** suffered by the limitations of some of its playing, Obeyesekere has here in the lead an actress of enormous range, sensitivity and power (surely this performance will confirm the fact that there is no finer women player on our screen today than Swarna Mallawaratchi), supported by a solid, if less complex, character-portrait by Ravindra Randeniya.

The great advance that **Dhadayama** represents over the earlier film comes out in the considerably greater creative freedom and imaginative depth with which Obeyesekere handles his medium here. **Palangetiyo** was tied down to a simple naturalism of style (that is perhaps why, when he departed from this mode in the romantic fantasy sequences conceived as a parody of popular cinema, the style seemed rather out of key with that of the rest of the film). In **Dhadayama** Obeyesekere has opened out his cinematic form, giving it a new flexibility and multi-dimensionality.

The sharply cut memory flashes in the early sequences which take us into the heroine's inner consciousness and which strikingly juxtapose lost innocence and hopes with the disillusionment of present time are evidence of this new freedom. Obeyesekere's use of music is very different from the conventional employment of it as 'background'. There are probably only about ten minutes of music in the entire film, and the music serves a specific purpose: it is used throughout to

represent the illusory and the falsely romantic. This is evident, for instance, in the sequence leading up to the seduction. The sequence, in its visual images and its romantic mood — music, is again a critical parody of the conventions of popular Sinhala cinema: since this is a flashback, and we already know the girl has been deserted, it is charged with irony; and what it leads up to is the shot in which Ravindra opens the door of the resthouse room, says to Swarna, 'Come in', and shuts the door. The music abruptly stops: the dream has ended. Another and highly innovative element in the style of **Dhadayama** is the dissociation, in some sequences, of dialogue from image — that is, where the dialogue that is heard over a particular sequence of images is taken from another context than that to which the images belong, making possible sharp effects of contrast, irony or foreboding.

Dhadayama borrows its basic situation from a real story of a quarter-century ago, but Obeyesekere has transposed it into present time, setting it in the more highly competitive and consumerist society of today. The characters are drawn from this social context: she, a village baker's daughter, educated and ambitious; he, a school-teacher, an adventurer bent on social climbing. She is dazzled by his flashy car and the atmosphere of affluence that surrounds him, and so, in spite of their original moral qualms, is her family. The traditional moral norms are seen in **Dhadayama** as eroded by the new values of acquisitiveness and self-advancement, leaving only an empty shell behind. Once he has got what he wants from her, the man disappears, his

(Continued on page 24)

The Indian Supreme Court accepts a challenge of destiny

Radhika Coomaraswamy

"The poor too have civil and rights and the Rule of Law is meant for them also, though today it exists only on paper and not in reality. If the sugar barons and the alcohol kings have the fundamental right to carry on business and to fatten their purses by exploiting the consuming public, have the chamars belonging to the lowest strata of society no fundamental right to earn a living through sweat and toil?"

So writes Justice Bhagwati in his historic judgement, **People's Union for Democratic Rights Vs. Union of India**. The judgement delivered on September 18th 1982 is indeed a landmark decision in the annals of constitutional jurisprudence. It is in many ways a genuinely honest attempt by a developing country Supreme Court to come to terms with the disturbing realities of poverty and underdevelopment.

The People's Union case is historic and far-reaching for a number of reasons. Firstly, for the first time in the non-western world, the concept of "public interest" litigation is given a special and important place in fundamental rights litigation. Special flexible procedures may throw open the portals of the Indian Supreme Court, giving much-needed access to the poor and the needy. Secondly, the judgement gives special constitutional sanction to protective social welfare legislation as being important fundamental rights, inherent in the concept of "human dignity". Thirdly, **The People's Union** case frames unique Court orders which allow for on-going judicial review of certain practices which the Court finds inimical to the spirit of the Constitution.

Radhika Coomaraswamy who has a Masters Degree in Law from Yale University works for the Marga Institute, Colombo.

Inherent in this judgement are new ideas on the role of the judiciary in developing societies and the nature and content of human rights. No Supreme Court before this, not even the U.S. Supreme Court in its most activist days, has raised such fundamental issues which challenge many accepted tenets of Constitutional jurisprudence.

The facts of **The People's Union** case spring out of the Asian Games. The massive construction projects in Delhi associated with the ASIAD (1982) were sponsored by Indian government agencies which engaged many contractors to finalize construction on the ASIAD itself, on various fly-overs and also on large hotel projects. These contractors hired their labourers through middlemen or jamadars. For work done by the labourers, the contractors paid these jamadars Rs- 9.50—the minimum wage. The jamadars in turn subtracted a rupee fee from each labourer before handing over a final payment of Rs. 8.50. Also, women labourers were only paid Rs. 7/- a day and children under the age of fourteen were also employed at various sites. In addition, migrant workers were not given the amenities necessary to ensure "a decent living with human dignity". The People's Union for Democratic Rights, a public interest organisation brought these facts to the notice of the Supreme Court under Art. 32 of the Indian Constitution alleging that the Indian government agencies were violating the fundamental rights of the workers by (1) paying workers less than the minimum wage, (2) paying women less than the men, (3) by hiring child labour and (4) by allowing migrant workers to live in sub-standard conditions. In May 1982, the Court made its order and in September 1982, the Court gave its far-reaching decision, setting out its reasons and rationale.

The People's Union case judgement begins dramatically with the Court's acceptance of the concept of "public interest" litigation as being in many ways a constitutional necessity. In doing so, the Court goes beyond the traditional judicial requirements of **standing**, ie that only those whose legal rights are directly violated can approach the Court for judicial redress. In **The People's Union** case Justice Bhagwati writes, "any member of the public acting bona fide may move the Court for judicial redress... by addressing a letter to the Court ... The Court would cast aside all technical rules of procedure and entertain the letter as a writ petition. "Thus, any public spirited individual or institution can bring to the attention of the Supreme Court any injustice being perpetuated by what Justice Bhagwati calls a "cruel and heartless" society. "Now for the first time the portals of the Court are being thrown open to the poor and the downtrodden."

Even more extraordinary, however is Justice Bhagwati's approach to human rights, given special legal validity through his interpretation of Article 21 of the Indian Constitution with regard to "the right to life" and Article 23 with regard to "Prohibition of traffic in Human Beings and Forced Labour". In this way, he allows **The People's Union** Case to be maintained under the fundamental rights jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. Justice Bhagwati's unique contribution is that he has given "economic rights" prime of place alongside civic and political rights. Raising labour laws to Constitutional standards he in effect gives special constitutional sanction to minimum wage regulation, social welfare legislation, and equal remuneration for women. Prohibition of child labour is included in the text of the Indian Constitution...

This interpretation of Fundamental Rights to include labour laws and social welfare benefits is unique in the history of Anglo-American jurisprudence. They have always been seen as products of the largesse of the State and not as fundamental economic rights of the citizenry. Once raised to this level of constitutional scrutiny, they can only be changed after careful evaluation by the Supreme Court or by Constitutional Amendment.

With a missionary zeal, Justice Bhagwati castigates human rights activists who are only concerned with political rights. "Moreover, these self-styled human rights activists forget that civil and political rights, priceless and invaluable as they are, simply do not exist for the vast masses of our people. The only solution for making civil and political rights meaningful to those large sections of society would be to remake the material conditions and restructure the social and economic order so that they may be able to realize economic, social and cultural rights. "Though he grants that such remaking is the province of the legislature and the executive, he states that the judiciary must bear responsibility for making these programmes effective. Neither the judiciary nor the State agencies can "fold their hands in despair and become silent spectators."

Throughout his analysis of Economic rights, Bhagwati's test of conscience is the concept of human dignity — a phrase which ironically has little legal history in Anglo-American jurisprudence. Yet, Bhagwati uses it creatively to carve out a unique approach to fundamental rights protection. He interprets "the right to life" provision as including the "right to live in basic human dignity". In this he is aided by previous decisions of the Indian Supreme Court. The right to dignity is interpreted to include rights or benefits under the provision of social welfare legislation relating to living, medical and other facilities to be provided to construction workers.

This same concept of "human dignity" leads him to treat violations of Minimum Wage regulation as being "forced labour" akin to slavery. "It may therefore be legitimately presumed that when a person provides labour or service to another which is less than the minimum wage, he is acting under force or compulsion... He may have been faced with Hobson's choice either to starve or submit." Justice Bhagwati goes on to construe "forced" as including circumstances of extremely unequal bargaining power.

Justice Bhagwati's activism is also imprinted in the orders given by the Court to implement its decision. The Court directed government agencies to hold inquiries in any cases where workmen are not receiving minimum wages. The Court suggested that in the future, state contracts for wages not include middlemen such as jamdars. In addition the Court appointed three Ombudsmen requesting them to make periodical inspections to see whether benefits under social welfare legislation are being implemented. Finally, he urges Magistrates that in punishing violations of Labour Laws they should not mete out "meagre fines" but view such violations with "strictness ... imposing adequate punishment."

Though Bhagwati's judgement is inspiring to all those who value social justice, it has far-reaching implications which have to be analysed directly by third world legal scholars. The most basic question raised by the judgement concerns the role of the judiciary in a developing society. Justice Bhagwati is clear — the judicial system must become "an effective instrument of social justice, for without it, it cannot survive for long." Justice Bhagwati's approach calls for flexible interpretations and the enunciation of broad principles to uphold the spirit of the Constitution and the dignity of man.

And yet, Justice Bhagwati's anguish and the desire for judicial activism in the economic and social sphere raise the spectre of **Lochner**, the famous case where the U. S. Supreme Court was equally fervent but in upholding the economic rights of industrialists and capitalists under "freedom of contract". Since then, judges have been wary to intervene in any matters of economic and social significance. Labour laws were implemented by Labour tribunals and the Supreme Courts were only concerned with technical principles of interpretation.

However, it could be argued that the ghost of **Lochner** has for too long haunted the Supreme Courts of the developing world. In his often quoted critique of the Indian Supreme Court, Upendra Baxi writes "Indian justices are simply not Frankfurters, Holmeses, Blacks, Cardozos, Warrens, Dennings or Atkinsons. Justices of the Indian Supreme Court flourish in a wholly different cultural, political and social milieu, even if their concerns are broadly liberal, their problems are distinctively Indian." In the **People's Union** case the Indian Supreme Court has, for better or for worse, stamped the mark of its own identity.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

(Inclusive of postage)

	1 Year	6 Months
Local	115/-	60/-
ASIA	US\$ 18.50	US\$ 10
US/EUROPE	US\$ 37.50	US\$ 20

Cheques and money orders to be

made out in favour of

Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd.

ADDRESS

The Commercial Manager,
Lanka Guardian Publishing Co. Ltd.
No. 246, Union Place, Colombo-2
Phone: 547584

Impact of modernisation on agriculture

Ranil Senanayake

ANOTHER significant benefit obtained from the drought refugia is the large number of insectivorous fishes it supports. These fishes are among the first aquatic organisms that travel upstream with the new rains to colonize the rice fields and wet areas. It has been demonstrated that waterbodies incapable of being colonized by such insectivorous fishes become the ideal breeding habitat for the malaria vector *Anopheles culicifacies*. The lack of drought refugia will reduce the potential of the rice fields to be colonized, as the colonizing fishes will have to migrate over a greater distance. The process increases the number of habitats suitable for large populations of the malaria vector to arise from. As the level of insecticide spraying for malaria vector control is determined by the level of the vector population, any increase in the vector population will cause a corresponding increase in the level of spraying. Even if the ecological ramifications of intensive insecticide spraying was discounted, each spraying round represented a cost of Rs. 100/- per household in 1980.

Mature drought refugia with good vegetative cover act as an island of stable habitat for many species of plants and animals, much of the surrounding area being subject to constant perturbation and change by man. Two examples will be drawn to demonstrate the supportive links that extend from the drought refugia to the farmers' agroecosystem. The first is the snake *Ptyas mucosus*. This snake commonly known as the Rat snake is non-venomous and left unharmed by the villagers. In fact, the farmers welcome the snake as it comes into the fields at grain ripening time to feed on the rats and mice. It has been estimated that a single Rat snake can consume over twenty rodents per month. The snake has been deemed as one of the most important biological control agents of the small mammalian pests of rice farmers and an international programme has been recently launched to promote its use in rodent control. The Rat snake is incapable of breeding or maintaining a population in rice fields and open areas. It requires a wooded habitat or

dense thicket to serve as a safe nursery area for the juveniles. Such a habitat is found only around drought refugia in rice field areas. It also demonstrates a strong partiality for the vicinity of water, again a condition met with in the drought refugia.

The lizard *Varanus salvator* has been respected by the farmers as a part of their tradition. It was assumed that this tradition arose due to its habit of eating poisonous snakes. Later work demonstrated that the farmer received another important benefit from this lizard; this was the removal of the crabs that weaken and destroy the bunds of the rice fields. The fresh water crabs of the genus *Paradelphusa* inhabit most lowland rice fields and habitually make their burrows in the bund. These burrows create leaks in the upper field which may loose its water retention ability or may weaken the bund and cause it to collapse. A heavy infestation of these crabs can require the farmer to devote 3 to 4 man days to bund maintenance work in each cropping season. The *Varanus* lizard, like the Rat snake, requires a moist thicket or similar set of conditions as a nesting and nursery area. It too is incapable of maintaining populations in dry areas devoid of drought refugia.

Table 2
Opportunity Cost of Tractorization of the
Traditional Sri Lankan Rice Agriculture.
(Per Household)

Item	Cost (per 6 months)
Milk and Curd	2160.00 ¹
Dung	180.00 ¹
Herdsmen (salaries) @ 15/- per day	1620.00
Malathion spray for malaria @ 100/- per 3 months	200.00
Bund repair	200.00
Fisheries input 2/- lb.	200.00
Grain loss to rodents	?
Losses due to reduction of predators	?
Employment in coconut thatch weaving	600.00

¹Computed at the rate of 1 pair of animals per household.

Now a more real assessment of the impact of the introduction of the tractor as a tool of development can be attempted. Table 2 lists the opportunity cost of introducing a 4-wheeled tractor to 20 acres of rice fields with a 2-acre buffalo wallow, but it becomes evident that many more links have to be examined and measured before the final cost of the impact can be attempted.

For instance, crop losses due to a reduction of beneficial insect predators have been shown to be substantial in various agroecosystems. The links may also extend to other human activity; the last item in Table 2 (Roofing thatch) demonstrates another set of linked relationships.

Roofing thatch refers to woven coconut leaves, and is produced by weaving the coconut leaves to form a mat. The coconut leaf is pliable and easily worked only at the green stage. When they mature and dry they become brittle and difficult to work with. However, no green branches are cut for the purpose of weaving as the removal of branches effects the yield of nuts negatively. The dry branches are made pliable by soaking in water for about 2 to 3 weeks. In many rural areas in Sri Lanka the buffalo wallow is the resource used for this work. The weaving of roofing thatch may be done as a casual or a regular mode of employment within the village community. The loss of the buffaloes is usually followed by the development of the wallow for agriculture or industry as the village thatch weavers do not possess the economic strength to preserve their resource. The village now loses its ability to supply roofing needs and has to resort to importing alternate roofing material such as asbestos or tiles, the cheapest alternate material being tile. Each tile costs approximately Rs. 2.00 and it requires four tiles to give the cover afforded by a unit of roofing thatch. At the current cost of 20 cts for a unit of roofing thatch, the alternate ends up costing the village 80 times what the endemic material would have. Further the burning of the tiles require energy (firewood), and the major source of firewood is the forests. With the area under utilizable forest dwindling from a cover of 44% in 1956 to 22% in 1976, and to 6% in 1980, any extra pressure on the forest resources would tend to hasten complete deforestation.

The goal of agricultural 'development' can become a potentially dangerous objective if only a set of narrow perspectives determines the criteria of acceptance or rejection of an innovation. The complexity of the interactions observable in the

traditional agricultural system of Sri Lanka suggests that some forms of modern agricultural innovation can have a disruptive effect due to its insensitivity to this complex nature. As agroecosystems evolve with time, the strength or the pressure that any agricultural practice exerts on a given ecosystem is dependent on the history of both the practice and the ecosystem. When there has been a long history of co-evolution it is suggested that the practices that reinforce stability should be conserved and the transmission of this information be achieved by being embodied into the cultural practices.

The impact of modern agriculture on the rice agroecosystem of Sri Lanka can be summarized by the farmers description of it. They claim to get a higher yield than through traditional methods but say that through these practices the field 'gets burnt'. A formal explanation of this description has to include such factors as differential settling of the soil and the breaking up of the hard pan by tractors, reduction of soil quality through the application of pesticides, changes in the carbon nitrogen ratio as a lack of organic matter, the destruction of the aquatic fauna by the application of fertilizer, and the addiction of the agricultural system to high energy inputs. The farmers questioned suggested that it can take between 2 to 3 years to build up the quality of the field so that it could be farmed again in the traditional manner. As most farmers cannot afford to rebuild the biological productivity of the fields or to keep them fallow for 2 to 3 years, the 'modernization' process continues as a positive feedback loop, building an increasing degree of instability into the agroecosystem.

Energetically, the 'modern' method of farming has been shown to be very expensive. In Sri Lanka the 'modern' method requires a 5-to 10-fold energy increase over the traditional methods, similar increases being recorded for other parts of the world. An important consideration is the fact that the increase is wholly in units of 'external energy' where 'external energy' is defined as energy derived from a source outside the geopolitical boundaries of a

nation. The modern method of farming was promoted in Sri Lanka due to its potential for increasing the yield. The use of high yield varieties was adopted and by 1960 the government began to subsidize the cost of fertilizer. On first perusal the introduction of modern farming seems economically sound. Even if a 50% increase in yield is achieved, the cost of production will be lowered. However, the energy cost of accomplishing this feat is a 5-to 10-fold increase in input energy, an increase not particularly salient during times of cheap energy but of great importance when energy prices escalate. In Sri Lanka where all the fossil fuel based energy has to be imported, it means the transference of global energy linked inflation to the agricultural production base. Subsidies become a temporary control of such inflation but at tremendous national cost. The Sri Lankan government paid Rs. 1,000 million as fertilizer subsidy in 1981. A future problem with this method of agricultural development is the creation of vast monovarietal regions; Table 3 illustrates the spread of the high yield variety H4 during one decade, the area under this variety amounting to 67% of the total rice sown in the main growing season of 1970.

Table 3
Introduction of high yield
variety H 4

Season	Extent
1959/60 Maha	1,000 acs.
1964/65 Maha	455,100 acs.
1969/70 Maha	800,000 acs.

Source: Izumi & Ratatunga, 1974

The value of the traditional system of rice agriculture and the problems associated with developing it to simulate the high energy model would seem to be evident. What reasons then can we attribute to the persistence of the promoters of such a destructive model? During the colonial experience a premium was placed on western education and "this inevitably led to the neglect of the traditional education systems of the colony." This process continues

(Continued on page 24)

The question of National Heritage

Jerry A. Moles and James V. Riker

SERIOUS questions are being raised within the country concerning the wisdom of current food and agricultural policies. One such questioning voice is that of National Heritage and of its founder, Mr. Upali Senanayake. In the pages which follow, we report upon National Heritage, explore some of the questions it raises for national and international debate, and present three of its positions for alternative solutions to current food and agricultural problems.

Our position from this point forward in this presentation is privileged. We have been allowed to participate in the formalization of the ideas of National Heritage in terms of committing them to paper in English. In this position, we have become a part of the development of these ideas in ways which make possible their accessibility to Western audiences. From August to December 1981 and September 1981 to January 1982, the two of us were engaged in a unique cross-cultural circumstance in which it was discovered that we shared more profound values with our hosts than would normally be expected from people coming from very different traditions. We were exposed daily and deeply to National Heritage and in a sense, have violated the old and fraying objectivist and positivistic tradition of Western social science in that it could be claimed that we "have gone native." We would prefer to claim, however, that we have been "native" in a more fundamental and universalistic sense from birth and have simply encountered our intellectual and ethical fellowship in Sri Lanka.

Much of what follows was written as a complication of discussions with various participants in National Heritage. An attempt was made

by one of us to construct in English the various interpretations of what is being done by a number of people in Sri Lanka in searching for wisdom of the past which is relevant to contemporary problems. National Heritage became the topic of inquiry and Mr. Upali Senanayake, its founder, our host. All discussions were in English and various participants have read and corrected a major portion of the manuscript which follows. Much of the remainder of this paper is an organization of the words and thoughts of Upali Senanayake which, on occasion, will be linked to some contemporary debates in the development literature. He is a scholar in the truest sense of the word and the information he offers comes from years of study, observation, and reflection. Always being close to power but never in power, Mr. Senanayake has viewed the transformation of his nation from a British colony through the formation of the social welfare emphasis of the government to the present day from a privileged position. Many share the hospitality of his home and contribute to and learn from the never ending seminar on the future of Sri Lanka and its peoples. It is to the spirit of this seminar that we offer this work and hope that our words represent some of the same truth that it offers.

A definition of National Heritage is in order. According to its founder, Upali Senanayake, National Heritage is an idea in action. The difficulty with this definition is that the "idea" cannot be stated simply. Better said, National Heritage is a sophisticated ideology based upon the traditions of the past, an interpretation of the present, and projections for the future. The assumption which infuses the ideology is that there is much of merit

in Sri Lanka's traditions and before they are destroyed by the encroachment of Western oriented materialistic philosophy and lifestyle, it is vital to the national interest to explore the past and save, if at all possible, what is valuable. If such a historical revaluation is not undertaken, the risk will remain that mistakes might well be repeated and new mistakes made which the ancient Sri Lanka people and their descendants have already learned to avoid. A nation with a cultural integrity lasting over some 2,000 years of recorded history should have inbuilt wisdom which could be explored and protected. Such wisdom cannot be judged, however, unless some problem requiring solution is selected to serve as a testing ground. For the participants in National Heritage, the question selected against which to test such wisdom is "Can Sri Lanka as a people and a nation survive as a distinct civilization through the continual re-enactment and protection of their traditional values?"

A fundamental question for National Heritage is "over what forces must people have control in order to insure their future as a distinct people?" The answer which emerges is that people must control the production and reproduction of their resources. This is fundamental. These resources must be controlled in order to create a sustained agriculture upon which the survival of a people depends. As do people everywhere, Sri Lankans wish to enjoy a long and contented life and wish the same for their children and grandchildren. At the same time, there must be an appreciation that if neighbours do not enjoy the same prospects for themselves and their families — if they are denied their right to the bounty of the cultivated environment — there exists the possibility

that the opportunity to live prosperous and contented lives for all is diminished. Thus, it is the position of National Heritage that everyone should have a fundamental right to the "products" of nature in sufficient quantity and quality to adequately sustain life. Equality and equity must be a part of agriculture, there must be a sense of fairness towards cultivators and others who provide the labour and wisdom which goes into food production. The value of these people to the nation cannot go unnoticed in terms of value returned to them for the energy and thoughts they expend. Cultivators must be given the resources to become content with their lot because the sustainability of agriculture resides within their hands. They must have the freedom and the power to act decisively to protect natural resources, they must be allowed the education and resources benefiting their position in society given the fact that they keep everyone alive. Nations should strive to serve cultivators better rather than worse. Said simply, in terms of its ideology, National Heritage is agrarian based with a strong identification with Sri Lanka cultivators.

In reviewing the current government's policies, participants in National Heritage find little concern for the sustainability of agriculture. Policy seems geared to the increased productivity of the short-term alone and there is little or no appreciation of a value of the past or an extrapolation into the future. This is little different from patterns to be found in other Asian governments. Morrison, (:633) in his discussion of the "persistent rural crisis in Asia" notes "... in the midst of great concern to improve production, little effort has been given to understanding the existing agricultural systems of Asia. To the best of my knowledge, few analysts or policy-makers have attempted to understand the cultivation systems. Why have they taken the forms they have? What are the physical and social constraints within which they have had to function? What have been the realistic options for change within these limits? Indeed, it is apparent that the systems have not been seen as sys-

tems at all, but only fractured pieces of the whole." Persons participating in National Heritage continue to inject into the national dialogue broader issues concerning the long-term survival of the nation and well-being of the people.

The Practicality of National Heritage

THE PRACTICALITY of the ideology and actions of National Heritage must be mentioned. Is it possible to protect the wisdom embodied in the cultivators and their families in ways which make possible the determination of its values in solving today's problems? Does National Heritage, in fact, offer any reliable alternative to the path selected by the government and, even if the alternative proposed is viable, are there any means by which such an alternative can become a living agricultural and national reality?

There is a degree of urgency in answering these questions because, with current government policy, Western materialism is entering the nation rapidly through the media and an infusion of new consumer goods. While the affluent benefit directly from these goods, the less affluent only learn of their existence. The "new" is claimed to provide "the answer" to problems and, by implication, the "old" is seen as being of little value, something which should be discarded. New styles, new dress, new technology, new information, and new values come with introduction of products from the materially more advanced nations.

Whether or not National Heritage can alter the course of human affairs and turn the cultivators and the nation toward a sustainable agriculture which is equitable and flexible remains an open question. Participants realize the impossibility of protecting tradition and cultivators from the onslaught of material dazzle in any direct manner. Each person, as is their right, must answer to their own interpretation of the present as they go about creating their future. In this context, National Heritage becomes a reminder of past ways and values suggesting that some old solutions

are good solutions. It also serves as an observer of the present from the perspective of traditional values. The purpose of National Heritage is interpretative and educational in striving to understand the realities of current day Sri Lanka and providing information to assist persons and the nation concerning the options open to the future and the possible consequence of each option. Information is organized in ways to assist the nation in learning how to retain control of its destiny and thereby protect itself as a civilization.

There is concern that if the current industrial transformation of the nation continues much longer, non-Sri Lanka and non-agricultural interests within the nation will continue to gain power. Thus, the topic of autonomy is important to the participants in National Heritage. Information is produced to lead the nation toward the realization of food self-sufficiency and agricultural sustainability while at the same time, retaining in the hands of the people control over their national endowment. In fact it is sometimes suggested that if people do not have control over the resources of a nation, self-sufficiency and sustainability may not be possible. National Heritage strives to educate people about their options in terms of what choices can be made to protect the values they hold most dearly.

National Heritage participates as fully as possible in the national press raising issues based upon its particular concerns. It also produces information for the people of the country which is passed to them by members of the Buddhist clergy. Research is a continual process in National Heritage as the participants attempt to keep abreast of the nation and probe more deeply into matters of concern. Finally, National Heritage has been involved in large self-help efforts in which cultivators repair and improve traditional irrigation systems. The availability of personnel and funds determine the magnitude of these activities.

Next: Three Position Papers of National Heritage.

CONTAINING PEKING

The Chinese prime minister, Mr. Zhao Ziyang will probably be returning home when Mr. Nakasone, the Japanese premier, gets ready for his first official visit — to Washington. And now, before leaving for the States, Mr. Nakasone is visiting South Korea on what Reuter called "a hurriedly arranged" trip.

Premier Zhao's ten nation African tour has reminded every observer of Chinese affairs of Mr. Chou en Lai's famous "safari" in the mid-sixties. Western analysts who had described as a Chinese bid for Third World leadership quickly pronounced it a failure because Mr. Chou's statement that Africa was ripe for revolution had rattled even the African radicals. But those were the days when revolutionary zeal was at its zenith in a Mao Tse Tung dominated China.

Once again, foreign affairs commentators, both western and non-aligned, are reading into this extensive tour an attempt by Peking to wrest Third World leadership. This has been strongly denied by Foreign Minister Wu who said in Rabat that the Third World does not need "a leader". What he did emphasise was the oft-repeated statement that China was a 'developing country' and belonged to the Third World. It shared a common history of colonialism, imperialism and exploitation.

In short, China is trying to identifying itself more closely with the Third World. As Frank Ching, Peking correspondent of the *ASIAN WALL STREET JOURNAL* noted, such an identification became increasingly difficult when implacable hostility to the USSR turned into "an obsession", and China, in the eyes of the non-aligned appeared to accept the role of a junior partner of the U.S. in the post-1970 period. A more even, independent policy allows Peking much greater possibilities for closer

links with the developing countries, especially in Asia, of course.

And in Asia, China is the political colossus to Japan's economic giant. Commenting on the recent Asian games in Delhi, an Indian analyst saw symbolic and political significance in the fact that China had emerged with more "golds" after the keenest of contests with Japan. Chinese influence is spread from the Korean peninsula to Burma and Pakistan. Besides, there are sizeable Chinese communities in South-East Asia.

US pressures on Japan for a military build-up and US moves to incorporate Japan and ASEAN in the Pacific-Indian Ocean 'strategic belt' have coincided with US-Chinese differences over Taiwan, and the Peking-Tokyo quarrel over the textbook affair. Besides, the advent of the strongly pro-US Nakasone administration has followed signs of a Sino-Soviet thaw. For these reasons, the need to check Chinese influence in Asia has become a major priority for the US and Japan.

Mr. Nakasone has many problems on his plate when he goes to Washington, what with US mounting pressure on "burden-sharing" (a bigger military role) and against Japanese protectionism.

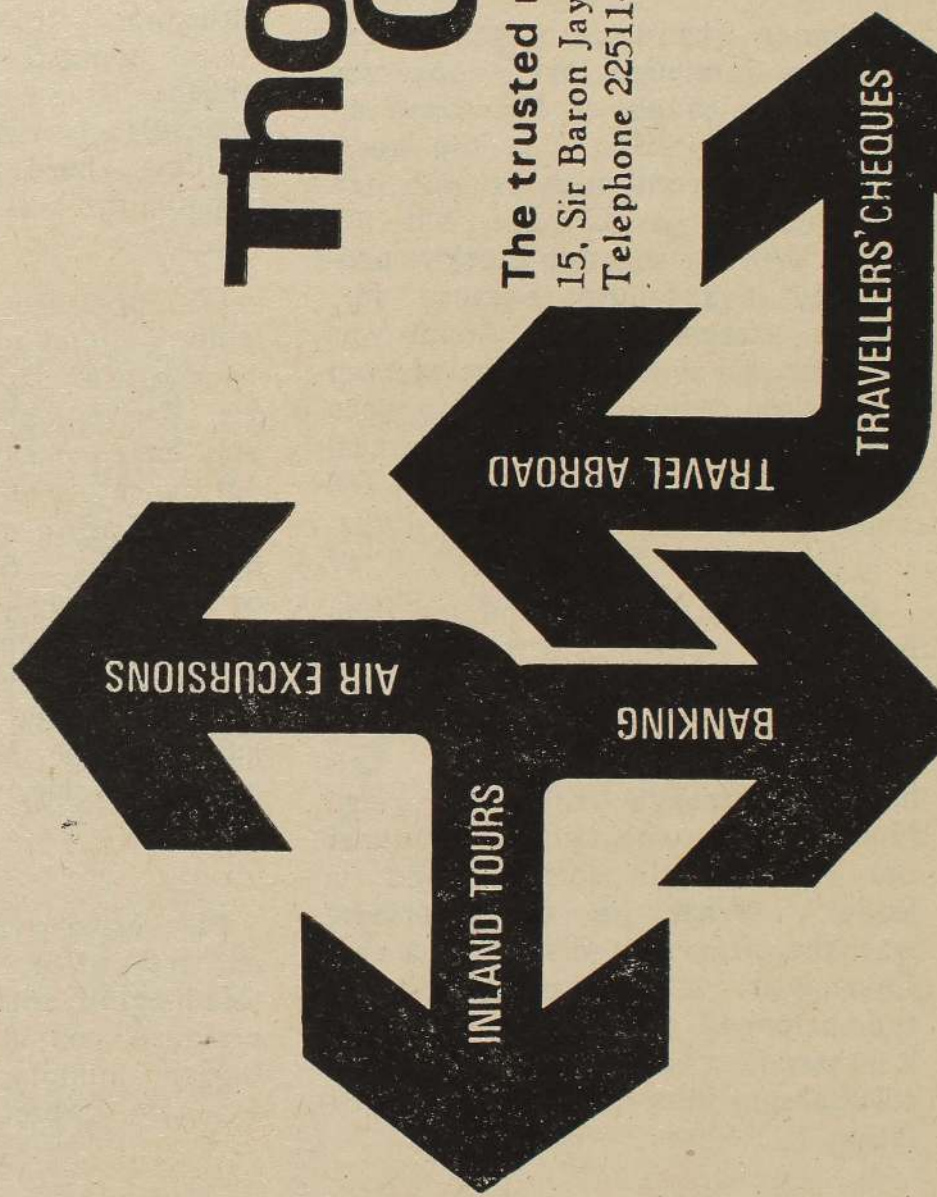
Jurek Martin, former US correspondent of the *Financial Times*, and now Tokyo correspondent, reports that the recent visit of Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, the former Defence Secretary as a "special envoy of President Reagan" also brought up the question of America's "long standing request for a transfer of Japanese military-related technology to the U.S."

But it was the earlier visit of Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger

which allowed both US and British correspondents to focus on US-Japanese joint action to 'contain' China. In the first instance, the two countries will cooperate in the study and analysis of China's "policy projections" (foreign relation and its main objectives) in areas which impinge or imperil US-Japanese interests. Practical steps have been mapped out to implement this by making maximum use of South Korea and Taiwan. Correspondents covering the Nakasone visit to the US will look for confirmation of current speculation about a special agreement between the two countries on the China question.

Major-General Anthony Moore wrote in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Dec. 23): "strategic coordination between Japan and ASEAN nations will be necessary in the overlapping security zone south of Ryukyu Islands, and north of the Philippines where North-East and South-East Asia meet". General Moore who served in the Korean and Vietnam wars was Deputy Director of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and later commander of the US forces in Japan. He added: "US forces can serve as a catalyst and facilitator in establishing this coordination by training with forces from both geographic regions along the security boundary. These expanded security links coordinated concurrently with existing economic ties can strengthen the interdependent bonds of modern East Asia, easing the old distrust and wary feelings of the past. A regional community can be coming of age".

**What's in a name?
Everything~
when it's Thomas Cook.
870 offices in 145 countries.**



**Thomas
Cook**

The trusted name in travel. Everywhere.
15, Sir Baron Jayatilleke Mawatha Colombo 1.
Telephone 22511-13 Telex 1278

GARADS

Running Short of Cash

US and its allies scramble to head off a global financial crisis

As a cold rain pelted against the windows, finance ministers from the United States, Britain, France, Japan and West Germany met last week in an ornate palace near Frankfurt to find a way to avert a **global economic collapse**. The meeting had been scheduled to discuss increasing the resources of the International Monetary Fund, the multinational agency that lends to countries facing temporary economic distress. But before departing for Europe, U. S. Treasury Secretary Donald Regan made it clear that he would push for a far broader agenda. Economic dangers were mounting: in recent weeks the United States had arranged \$ 3.3 billion in emergency loans to Mexico, Brazil and Hungary and was trying to arrange a \$ 1 billion bailout for Yugoslavia. But as the worldwide recession continued into its third year, such stopgap efforts would clearly not suffice. "The potential is out there for even more problems", warned Regan. "We have to try to head off any worsening of the situation".

As recently as last summer, U.S. officials were arguing that no extraordinary measures were needed to ward off a monetary crisis. Since then, the situation has deteriorated alarmingly. Thirty-five nations — from Argentina to Zaire — are facing extreme difficulties in repaying hundreds of billions in international debt, and jittery bankers are endangering the solvency of other borrowers by dramatically curtailing new loans. Faced with a drought of credit, borrowers are drastically cutting their imports; trade is slowing, and the global economic downturn threatens to become even worse. Yet without a quick recovery, says economist Ronald Napier of Data Resources Inc., "there are going to be more and more countries on the danger lists, and more and more countries needing large amounts of new loans which at

this point the banks don't seem in any mood to extend." The crisis may be self-perpetuating, and if it is, some major borrowers may be forced to default. And that, says economist Lawrence Krause of the Brookings Institution, "would unquestionably dump the world into a depression. There's no way normal lending could be quickly restored."

Surprise :

Until recently, such a scenario was highly implausible. Last week in Frankfurt, though, it seemed increasingly real. As a consequence, Regan and his counterparts discussed a number of proposals designed to bolster the world's defenses against any catastrophic surprise. One idea was to increase the IMF's lending authority by 50 percent to over \$ 90 billion. Recent loan requests by Mexico, Argentina and Brazil alone would drain \$ 1 billion of the fund's resources, greatly reducing its ability to meet the new crises that are almost certain to arise. In addition, the ministers explored the idea of having the big industrial countries set aside perhaps \$ 20 billion to make emergency loans before the usually ponderous IMF is able to act. Finally the United States floated a vague proposal for the creation of some sort of international agency to protect private banks against major international losses, but even Regan seemed puzzled about how the agency would work. "I am suggesting that we concentrate on the problems," he explained. "If I knew a specific solution, I would offer it."

Yet many experts question whether those measures would be enough to cope with an increasingly widespread shortage of cash. "Getting a little more money out of the banks or the IMF will only paper over the situation for another three to six months, not solve it," says one New York banker. Geoffrey

L. Bell, director of Schroder International Ltd., figures that the developing nations will need \$ 80 billion next year to cover their international deficits. But it is by no means certain that they will get it. "This year the banks provided over \$ 50 billion," he says. "Next year I think that we will be lucky if they provide half that amount." In the absence of new loans, many developing countries will have no option but to tighten their belts even further. "Austerity means that the developing countries will have to cut back their imports," says economist F. John Mathis of Continental Illinois National Bank. "And since the developing countries absorb nearly 40 percent of America's total exports, this austerity will have an effect at home." One out of eight U. S. jobs depends on exports; further declines in trade mean higher U.S. unemployment.

In fact, the developing nations are caught in an almost impossible bind. Recession has drastically cut the demand for the goods that they sell, even as still-towering interest rates vastly increase the costs of debt service. In addition, those debts must be repaid largely in dollars that have soared in value over the past two years. Last week, for example, it cost an American visitor to Ecuador just \$ 17 for a sumptuous dinner for four. Given Ecuador's estimated \$ 1.3 billion debt service requirement this year, the drain on its internal resources is very real.

Mess :

To many experts, the only solution lies in a partial relaxation of the tight money policies of the industrial nations — particularly the United States. "It has always been clear that worldwide restraint can be overdone and a decline can

(Continued on page 21)

The National Question and Left misconceptions

Gail Omvedt

LAST year a major wave of guerilla struggle broke out in Sri Lanka, followed by widespread rioting. It was just ten years after the youthful JVP insurrection shattered forever the peaceful image of an island which had achieved its independence without any major mass struggles at all. Now once again a youth-led armed struggle is brewing only the struggle now centres not for an immediate social revolution but for the national liberation of the Tamil minority.

The demand for Eelam was first made by the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) at its first convention in 1976, replacing the original six-point programme for democratic rights for Tamils in a single secular state under pressure from below. When the TULF became the sole parliamentary representative of the Tamils and thus the second largest party in the country and went on to compromise this demand a militant underground organisation, the Liberation Tigers, sprang up. Since 1979 the Tigers began to organise killing of police and Tamil 'traitors' and an upsurge in killings led in August 1981 to a major riot by the Sinhalese against Tamils throughout the island in which dozens were killed and hundreds rendered homeless.

Repression and internal dissension have almost destroyed the Liberation Tigers since then. But Tamil nationalism continues to express itself with the rise of new organisations, including the Tamil Eelam Liberation Front (TELF), the Tamil Illaignar Eravai (Liberation Front) and Tamil-based communist organisations. It appears that both bourgeois parties and the revolutionary left in Sri Lanka are thoroughly split on national lines.

The situation is complicated even further by the fact that nearly half the Tamils in Sri Lanka are 'Indian

Tamils'. In addition the 6.5 per cent of the population who are Muslims also speak Tamil but do not identify so far with the Hindu Tamils. Plantation workers and descendants of plantation workers brought over by the British, the majority of these were rendered stateless by the 1948 constitution. India agreed in a pact to take most of these back but so far the 300,000 who have returned have spent much of their time in camps, with no homes, no jobs, no land in India itself. About 150,000 have been given Sri Lanka citizenship, but the 600,000 remaining are without any rights in Sri Lanka itself, expecting to be resettled in India but with little guarantee of security here. With their own tradition of trade-union organising these workers whom many call the "hard core of the Ceylon proletariat" have had little real contact with either the Sinhalese left or the 'Sri Lanka Tamils' whose homeland is the northern part of the Island, and have not yet emerged with any political voice at all.

The 1981 rioting has had several major repercussions. First the international complication of the 'Tamil national question' was revealed when resulting anti-Sinhalese demonstrations in neighbouring Tamil Nadu resulted in deaths from self-immolation after Karunanidhi, the leader of the demonstrations was arrested. Tamil rebels from Sri Lanka have to some extent used India as a base and their popular support was demonstrated when five Liberation Tiger leaders were captured by Indian police last May and found support from nearly all the political parties in Tamil Nadu against their extradition.

Another result of the riots was heightened anti-terrorist legislation. Such laws as the Public Security Act and the Essential Services Act now enable the government to dec-

Gail Omvedt is Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of California and the author of several books. A member of the Editorial Boards of the Journal of Contemporary Asia and the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, she has been working in the last few years in India, particularly with grassroots popular movements. She has contributed regularly to the Lanka Guardian. This article appeared originally in the Economic and Political Weekly, Bombay.)

lare strikes illegal ban any political party advocating violence and detain accused persons anywhere without trial. The most recent law which gives the executive powers to decide where accused can be kept in custody, came after the Supreme Court ruled that Tamil youths detained in an army camp, should be placed in the custody of the judges in a remand prison or jail.

In addition, Sri Lanka under the leadership of the right-wing UNP has been instituting a presidential system that perhaps may be a model for Indira Gandhi's own aspirations giving the executive what President Jayewardene himself has described as the 'power of a king'. Jayewardene who is ready to use such powers has declared a state of Emergency several times on the island since coming to power (once in 1979 in the Tamil northern area; once in 1980 to repress a general strike, once following the 1981 riots, and finally again this year following Sinhala-Muslim rioting), and has deprived his most powerful bourgeois political opponent, Sirima Bandaranaike, of her citizenship rights.

Nevertheless, the fact that popular discontent is increasingly taking a national form in Sri Lanka as well as in India among the Nagas, Mizos, Assamese and others or in Pakistan among all the non-Punjabi nationalities, is one example of a major aspect of the revolutionary situation in the world today.

Historical Conflicts Intensified

While Sri Lanka's capitalist path of development has intensified the current Tamil-Sinhala conflict, its roots lie deep in Ceylonese history itself.

Who the original inhabitants of the island were is not known. But Tamil speaking Dravidians (who were at one time spread over most of India and perhaps a part of the middle east as well) were very likely on the island at the time of the Sinhalese arrival — around 5th century BC. The fact is that while the Sinhalese-Tamil difference is conceptualised as a racial division between Aryans and Dravidians such a racial-linguistic identification is as risky in the Ceylon case as elsewhere. From the beginning the Sinhala speakers maintained close connections with the neighbouring Dravidians, connections that included commerce and marriage as much as warfare, with the Sinhala elite taking wives and skilled artisans from the Tamil kingdoms in India.

Thus Tamils had a constant presence on the island, and India-based Tamil kingdoms occasionally invaded it. But it was only in the 13th century, in a period of decline of the Sinhala Buddhist kingdoms, that an independent Tamil feudal state could consolidate itself in Jaffna in the northern part of the island.

Ceylon had one of the longest colonial histories of any Asian nation being conquered first by the Portuguese then the Dutch and finally the British. But its economy remained an export-oriented plantation economy, based first on cinnamon and spices then on coffee, and finally on tea and rubber. Little industry developed and thus the industrial proletariat and native bourgeoisie remained minuscule. Instead with the British owning most of the plantations and controlling all of trade and finance a mainly comprador Ceylonese bourgeoisie grew up, along with a numerous petty-bourgeoisie centered on the highly developed educational and social welfare system funded especially after the 1930s by the profits from the plantations.

As a result, there was little anti-imperialist mass movement. In con-

trast to the Indian National Congress, the Ceylonese bourgeoisie organised no mass-based political party, and independence was granted 'from above' with little agitation. As a result the Ceylon workers and peasants, whether Sinhalese Buddhist, Tamil Hindu, or Tamil-speaking Muslims, had almost no experience of common struggle against oppression.

At the same time colonial rule actively acerbated communal conflict. This began with imperialist alliances that used and intensified rivalry between Tamil and Sinhalese kingdoms, but it was most uniquely fostered by the plantation economy itself. As always local peasants (in this case the Sinhalese) who had any lands of their own to maintain themselves refused to work under the brutally exploitative conditions of the plantations. The British then turned to outsiders importing mainly scheduled caste, debt-bound labourers from nearby Tamil Nadu. Conditions were so bad that for a long period nearly one fourth of such migrant labourers died within a few years; yet the Sinhalese peasants bitterly blamed the loss of their lands on the labourers as well as the planters, seeing them as part of a single alien economic system.

Finally, the petty bourgeoisie that developed under colonial rule fostered a cultural revivalism that substituted for a genuine mass-based national culture. Among the Tamils this took the form of a Brahmanic, Saivite Hindu revivalism, and among the Sinhalese of emphasising their Buddhist identity. This became so extreme that the first volume of the "Freedom of Lanka" history series, published in 1946, dealt with "The Struggle Against the Tamils and focused on the now highly emotive and symbolic struggle of Duttagamini a 5th century Sinhala king. Thus the whole colonial period left the island with a heritage of economic and cultural disunity rather than forge any common national anti-imperialist spirit. The objective and historical bases for unity — Tamil-Sinhala economic and social exchanges and cultural borrowings. Tamil low-caste resistance to Brahmanic Hinduism peasant anti-feudal strug-

INVITE US TO CATER FOR YOUR PARTY

Catering is our speciality
We cater for any
function large or small,
weddings, engagements,
cocktails, luncheons,
dinners.

PAGODA RESTAURANT too

is available for your party.

Phone: 23086, 29236.



PAGODA

105, Chatham Street,
Colombo 1.

Cyril Rodrigo Restaurant

gles — were all overlooked Strikingly also. Buddhism which in India itself has been (and continues to be seen as) part of a low-caste, equalitarian and non-Brahmanical tradition came to be experienced by even poor and low-caste Tamils as an alien cultural force.

Independence

Independence came without touching British economic holdings at all and brought into power the party of the westernised upper classes, the United National Party (UNP), committed from the beginning to an 'open economy'. The UNP did nothing for industrialisation or land reform other than 'colonisation' projects to plant peasants, on new lands. It maintained the colonial policy of parity of Tamil and Sinhala as official languages, but its Sinhala chauvinism was shown when it (and every other political party) accepted the mass disenfranchisement of the 'Indian Tamil' plantation labourers in the 1948 constitution. This was done by the simple expedient of placing the burden of proof of citizenship by descent or registration on all those with Tamil names in the central Ceylon area, and few of the illiterate plantation labourers, even those who had lived in the island for decades, could provide such proof.

The reaction to the comprador orientation of UNP policy came in 1956, the 2500th anniversary of the death of Buddha which served as a focus for rising religious-national emotions of the Sinhalese. A new class was coming to the fore, based on the rural elite of landlords, rich peasants, school-teachers monks, ayurvedic physicians — an aspiring bourgeoisie, rural-based but without the ties to the plantation economy of the westernised elite ready to use state capitalist policies to aid its economic advance,

and a combination of 'socialist' rhetoric and Sinhala chauvinism to solidify its social support.

The upsurge of this class was expressed through a new party, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), and through a single slogan, "Sinhala only". The party, organised by S W R D Bandaranaike (himself a member of the elite who converted to Buddhism and took up native dress to identify with the new class), expressed in its very name the new religious identification of the island that had been known as Ceylon. And the slogan expressed the antagonism of educated and semi-educated young Sinhalese who felt that the continuing role of English and Tamil was leaving them at a disadvantage in education and employment.

Anti-Tamil rioting swept the island, and after the SLFP came to power the 'linguistic disenfranchisement' of the Tamils followed. The result was that between 1956 and 1970 the percentage of Tamils in the administrative service declined from 30 per cent to 5 per cent, in the clerical service from 50 per cent to 5 per cent, and in the professions from 60 per cent to 10 per cent.

Worse yet, the left parties of Ceylon fell victim to Sinhala chauvinism. At that point there were two, the Trotskyite Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) and the pro-Moscow Communist Party. Both had won a fair base among the Sinhala working class and peasantry and together won 20 per cent of the vote in the 1947 election. But they had done little to really base party organisation among the masses, and were accused by the young radicals of the 1970s for having done little or nothing to even publish Marxist texts in the vernacular languages. On this background, they began with a vague democratic support for Tamil



**Handmade cotton,
Silks, Cheese cloth,
Tartan, Fancy
Fabrics & Ready
mades, Household
linen furnishings...**

LakLooms

72, CHATHAM STREET
COLOMBO 1.

Telephone: 25521 /
22862 / 24679

-Sinhala linguistic parity, but under the pressure of the rising Sinhala political force they changed it to support for 'Sinhala only'. First the CP in 1960 and then the LSSP in 1963 joined the SLFP in a united front on the argument of supporting a 'progressive' national bourgeoisie against the rightist UNP. It is noteworthy that none of these parties or their immediate successors (various Maoist and Trotskyite splits began to occur in reaction to the SLFP alliance) ever discussed or analysed the Tamil-Sinhala problem as a national question. This began to enter the thinking of Marxist intellectuals only after the Tamils themselves brought the issue to the fore in the 1970s.

The SLFP-LSSP-CP united front undertook the first land reforms in Ceylon; but these were applied mainly to plantations, not to the landlord or rich peasant-owned rice-lands. It nationalised some banks, transport and the port of Colombo. It started a few new industries and instituted strong exchange controls and licensing procedures to encourage the local bourgeoisie. But while these measures could enable some bourgeois consolidation, they could not, obviously, solve the economic crisis hitting the island or provide jobs for the increasing numbers of educated youths turned out by the nation's schools, especially with Sri Lanka having one of the highest literacy rates of any third world nation (78 per cent in 1971).

But the leftist rhetoric fuelled the growing aspirations of the people, and discontent was expressed both in rising strikes and demonstrations by the working class (often against the wishes of their 'left' leaders who were trying to manoeuvre within the government) and in Tamil-Sinhala riots. Then in 1971 a new explosion shook the island.

This was the revolt of the JVP (Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, or National Liberation Front).

The JVP's organisation expressed the leftward turn of innumerable rural and urban petty-bourgeois Sinhala youths, and their frustrations with the traditional left parties whose leadership had remained in the hands of the westernised

elite and whose politics had remained parliamentary and tailist. Organisers first worked underground moving throughout the island for some years to build a mass base among the peasantry, then 'critically' supported the SLFP in the 1970 elections. Then as their mass base and militancy and the resulting state repression began to grow, with the example of the 1965 Indonesian massacre of communists before them on one side and the model of Che Guevara on the other they decided on a policy of insurrection.

The JVP had no real Leninist party structure or working class base, and its politics were clearly adventurist. Worse yet, while it reacted against the revisionism of the established Marxist parties, it shared their Sinhala chauvinism; its famous 'five lectures' characterised the Tamil plantation labourers as a part of 'Indian expansionism' and called for their repatriation "by force if necessary". It also accused the Tamils of being 'nationalist', a conceptualisation that reflected the lack of serious Marxist thinking in the island on this issue. Nevertheless over 15,000 young people (and some estimate up to 50,000) paid with their lives in the brutal suppression of the revolt, it marked a turning point not only for Sri Lanka but also in the international left movement as well. For nearly all the nations of the world, including post-revolutionary societies (with the exception of North Korea) provided immediate material aid to the government, and Zhou Enlai's letter of support to Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike was a major factor leading to disillusionment with Chinese foreign policy in the post-cultural revolutionary period. The continuing fragmentation on the revolutionary left in Sri Lanka and every other country have their roots in such actions.

Searching for Direction

The brutal repression of the revolt, the subsequent failure of the JVP to regroup, and the continued neglect of the Tamil national question left a revolutionary vacuum in Sri Lanka politics. Splits occurred in every major left party with the

Trotskyites and pro-China communists dividing into several groups. **The JVP itself first fragmented and then was taken over by an emerging Trotskyite section headed by one of its early main leaders Rohan Wijeweera.** The original JVP had never been Trotskyite but more or less followed the traditional communist line in its analysis of classes and the character of revolution; but there had been two strategical trends within it — the so-called 'big blow' (insurrectionist) and 'little blow' (protracted warfare). **Following the repression differences intensified and there was even physical infighting in the jails before Wijeweera's group gained control to transform it into a parliamentary party noted for its sectarian refusal to unite with other sections of the left.**

The positive aspect of this period was that a new generation was coming into the working class movement, many of them with the most bitter personal experiences of class struggle raising new issues, studying the problems of the revolution in a new way and working among the masses in various organisations. But throughout the 1970s, no revolutionary vanguard could be born from this, and the split between Tamil and Sinhala masses and activists intensified.

In this absence of a revolutionary alternative, the Sinhalese maintained the SLFP in power until 1977, with its rhetoric of anti-imperialism and practice of state capitalism. Then, when their worsening economic condition showed no sign of improving, they re-elected the UNP. The UNP promptly moved to 'liberalise' the economy and 'rationalise' the state system — on one hand dismantling exchange controls and licensing procedures and opening up the country to multinational capital and the World Bank-IMF, and on the other hand bringing in an amended constitution in 1978 to provide for a presidential system. Strikingly, though the SLFP's Sirima Bandaranaike has often been identified with Indira Gandhi, Bandaranaike's enemy Jayewardene was doing precisely what Indira Gandhi herself is now beginning to do: the changing policy is more a result

(Continued on page 21)

AFRICA'S ECONOMIC CRISIS

Robert Miller

HAD THE OAU Summit been able to convene in Tripoli in November, one of its key tasks would have been to discuss ways of countering the continent's growing economic crisis. Soaring interest rates in the industrialised western countries, the West's refusal to step up its aid to Third World nations, and the collapse of world commodity prices in the face of the capitalist recession have all combined to bring African nations to the verge of bankruptcy.

The most striking measure of the crisis is the scale of Africa's debt burden. Some countries are scheduled to pay interest and principal in 1982 equalling their total export earnings. At least forty of the world's poorest countries, most of them in Africa, are in arrears with their public debt repayments. The accumulated debts of Zaire, for example, now total 55 billion, and western commercial banks are having to reschedule payments that have already been rescheduled. In Tanzania, all development projects recently had to be halted for four months to allow the country to pay off \$24 million owing to the World Bank.

Economists agree that the ratio between a country's repayments and its export earnings should not exceed twenty per cent, yet in Africa forty per cent is now common, and in Sudan the figure has reached one hundred per cent. Even some of the more prosperous African countries, such as Nigeria and Kenya, face chronic balance of payments difficulties, and have meagre foreign exchange reserves to draw on.

Soft loans

In the past, the principal source of financial aid to the developing nations of Africa has been the International Development Agency (IDA), an arm of the World Bank that disburses soft loans carrying zero interest. The IDA, however, is heavily dependent on donations from the United States, and the

advent of the Reagan administration brought with it a callous indifference to the needs of developing countries. The World Bank has been struggling to maintain the flow of loans from the developed to the developing countries, but the US government has been dragging its feet over the provision to the World Bank of 'bridging finance' for the IDA, and in addition has decided that its next donation of \$3 billion will be spread over four years instead of three, regardless of the crisis faced by recipients of IDA loans.

This meanness by the Reagan administration is fully matched by the policies of other western governments fighting the capitalist world's worst recession since the 1930s. At a time when western governments have become obsessed with cutting public spending, on the grounds that it is 'non-productive', aid to impoverished developing countries has been an easy target for reductions, carrying almost no domestic political penalty. In the 1977/78 financial year, for example, British overseas aid totalled £599 million, and by this year the figure had risen by sixty per cent to £959 million. Over the same period, though inflation in Britain totalled 80.1 per cent, and in real terms London's overseas aid disbursements have therefore fallen drastically.

The western recession, however, has had far more damaging implications for the Third World than diminished aid flows. Slumping demand in the industrialised countries has led to the collapse of prices for basic commodities, which account for a major proportion of Third World incomes. Zambia once enjoyed one of the highest incomes in Africa, but 95 per cent of its earnings come from copper, and the depressed world market means that the metal must now be produced at a loss. Cocoa comprises more than sixty per cent of Ghana's exports, but in the past four years the world cocoa price has fallen by two-thirds in real terms.

RECESSION IN the West has meant economic ruin for the developing nations of the Third World. Many countries in Africa are now on the verge of bankruptcy, highlighting the urgent need for regional co-operation to overcome the common problems. Robert Miller reviews Africa's struggle for economic survival, which has important implications for the continent's political independence.

Collapse

The collapse of commodity prices and the lack of development aid have been compounded by high western interest rates, which perhaps constitute the single most devastating implication of the capitalist recession for Third World countries. The feelings of Africans were eloquently summed up by Accra radio recently, when it said: 'The imposition of oppressive credit terms is the method imperialism has perfected'.

Apart from the human misery it causes, poverty has a fundamental political dimension. It places Third World countries at the mercy of the western financial institutions to which they are in debt. Often, the western Banks acts as the spearhead for what amounts to a complete economic and political takeover by industrialised states.

Sudan provides a classic case study. In November, the IMF agreed to extend to Khartoum a one year \$150 million stand by credit. But the political price was heavy. The Numeiri regime was forced to agree to a 44 per cent devaluation of the currency, which will lead to a major rise in prices. Khartoum also has had to tailor public spending to meet IMF approval.

Another condition of the loan was Khartoum's agreement to restrict the extent of central bank financing for government spending. On 19th November the London weekly *Middle East Economic Digest* disclosed that this 'could necessitate public spending cuts of up to 40 per cent over a fiscal year'.

The IMF's power was also underlined in Zambia in November, with the arrival of a bank team to restart talks on payment of an \$850 million loan. Instalments had been stopped when the African country refused to abide by the conditions attached to it.

From such dependence on one or other of the principal institutions of the western capitalist system, it is but a small step to overt political dependence. In Sudan, as in some other poverty-stricken African countries with unprincipled regimes, the process is already far advanced. The Numeiri regime is now a quite open client of Washington.

Faced with the Third World's economic crisis, commercial banks in the West have virtually ceased lending. Given the current structure of international economic relations, the only short term solution for Africa lies in a stepping up of soft loan disbursements by the IDA. Negotiations will start soon aimed at persuading donor countries to contribute at least \$17 million over the next three years. But the only real long term answer to poverty and deprivation lies in more determined efforts by African nations themselves to deploy their resources more effectively, as part of an integrated, continent-wide strategy.

(Courtesy: JAMAHIRIYA REVIEW
Dec '82)

Running . . .

(Continued from page 15)

become self-reinforcing," says Krause of the Brookings Institution. "The U.S. is either going to lead the world into a recovery or we are not going to get out (of the recession)." Economists recall that

following the 1973 oil shock, the United States, and later Germany and Japan, adopted expansionary policies that kept demand strong and allowed the developing nations to expand their export earnings at a rate of 23 percent a year between 1975 and 1980. There was a price to pay in rising inflation, of course, but, says Irving Trust Co. economist Anne Parker Mills, "if we still had 10 percent inflation, we would not be facing debt problems of the magnitude we are facing today." In the past two years, however, tight money accompanied by high interest rates and a muscular dollar have brought the growth of world trade to a halt. At this point, says Bell, "if we don't get the U.S. economy moving forward, then I think that we will be in one hell of a mess."

It is a mark of the seriousness of the international situation that even Donald Regan seems to agree with that argument these days. In Frankfurt last week he dusted off the old notion that the United States and other major industrial nations should co-ordinate their fiscal and monetary policies to provide gentle stimulus to the world economy. Regan suggested that in return for American efforts to reduce the value of the dollar, Europe and Japan might adopt more expansive policies. Such strategies might temporarily halt the recent gains against global inflation, but they could also stave off financial collapse. Given the depth of the current global recession, the risks of a return to double-digit price increases seem minimal. Meanwhile, the chances of a continued decline seem all too real.

— NEWSWEEK Dec. 20, 1982
HARRY ANDERSON with RICH
THOMAS in Washington, ERIK
IPSEN in New York and bureau
reports.

National . . .

(Continued from page 19)

of the changing needs of the bourgeoisie, not of a particular political party. Sri Lanka's model is now Singapore, the highly dictatorial but industrialising playground of the MNCs, and the UNP is going ahead with free trade zones and the capital-hungry Mahaveli

irrigation-development project. Economic growth rates have risen temporarily, but little has so far trickled down to the masses, and even in the face of a divided opposition the UNP's fate is uncertain.

The Tamils in turn threw all their support to the newly emerged TULF when it took up a programme for equal rights and the call for 'Eelam'. When this party turned to moderation, the Liberation Tigers sprang up as a militant group, and now with the Tigers repressed and the TULF still discredited as too compromising numerous new groups are coming to the forefront. Almost all of these have bourgeois or petty-bourgeois leadership, but Marxist-Leninist forces are also working among the Tamils. These include a breakaway faction from the pro-Chinese Communist Party who are working in the 'Upcountry Tamil Movement' and also organising the mainly scheduled caste agricultural labourers in Jaffna — the first time an agricultural labourers organisation has been formed in Sri Lanka. Their call is for a 'casteless Eelam'.

The division in the revolutionary left in Sri Lanka has so far left the fate of the country in the hands of the UNP and SLFP, the "right" and "left" hands of the bourgeoisie, both headed by the most elite of its sections. But this division itself has its basis, not so much in the international competition between 'Trotskyites', 'Maoists' and 'revisionists' as in the inability to formulate a political line capable of handling the internal contradictions of Sri Lanka society. The most important of these contradictions is the national question, but the role of caste contradictions among the Tamils themselves, the agricultural 'modernisation' that has eroded traditional patron-client relationships and created a growing class of agricultural labourers, and the nature of the bourgeoisie's relationship with contemporary imperialism are all important issues. The resolution of these contradictions depends on developing a living marxism, both at the theoretical and practical level, among the working masses themselves, and it is this process that seems to characterise the present stage of the revolution in Sri Lanka.

PIONEERS

... in ALKYD RESINS

CEYLON RESINOPLASTICS LTD.,

2/2, Gregorys Road,
Colombo 7.

Phone: 597056

Islamic insurgencies

Ameer Ali

In neighbouring Indonesia, the Muslim United Development Party (PPP), a conglomeration of all the Islamic groups, created by Suharto in 1977 in order to destroy them, has been defeated by the government backed Golkar party in the general elections held in May this year and placed in the same position as the PAS in Malaysia. Both the opposition parties have more or less the same objectives and they both are in close touch with each other. Nevertheless, while the PAS was able to capture only a little more than 15% of the votes in Malaysia the PPP in Indonesia won 28% of them. The governments of both countries are aware of the potential threat posed by their opponents and naturally those governments are monitoring the activities of their rivals. It is therefore reasonable to suggest that the change of fortunes away from any of the governments towards its respective opposition party is bound to enhance the strength of the rival of its counterpart.

The Pattani Muslim separatist movement in Thailand has also brought Islam into its political conflict in order to win support from the Muslim countries and organizations. In relation to Malaysia, the facts that the Pattanis are of Malay origin, that their guerillas operate in the Thai-Malaysian border jungles and that the Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO) has links with the Malayan Peoples Liberation Army (MPLA) the military wing of the banned Communist Party of Malaysia (CPM), have made the Thai-Malaysian border problem a complex one. The PULO appears to have mustered enough support in Kelantan, a stronghold of the Malaysian PAS and other fanatical groups. It thus becomes obvious that the success of Islamic fundamentalism in Malaysia will cause great concern to the Thai authorities and may even strain Thai-Malaysian relationships. The Malaysian government is aware of this. This was

why at the 1977 Islamic foreign ministers conference at Tripoli, Malaysia joined Indonesia to prevent representation at the conference of Muslims from Thailand.

The Moro problem is another issue which is political in essence but religious in appearance. Malaysian sympathy towards the Moros is demonstrated by the reference made earlier in this paper to the 120,000 Muslim refugees from the Philippines who were given asylum in Malaysia. The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Bangasa Moro Liberation Organization (BMLO) receive aid from several Muslim sources, including Malaysia and "until 1975, arms and aid came through Sabah, and Tun Mustapha Harun, the Sabah Chief Minister served as a conduit for outside aid before his fall from power". It appears that Harun dreamt of leading Sabah out of the Malaysian Federation and annexing the Southern Philippines to form a

ism in Malaysia can become a potential danger to ASEAN unity. This factor compounds the dilemma of the Malaysian authorities.

Conclusion

This paper was aimed at analysing the contrast between Sri Lanka and Malaysia in respect of the nature and problems of Islamic revivalism in those countries. In doing so it highlighted the significance of the economic, political and demographic variables which determined this contrast. The most important outcome of this exercise is the irony that Muslim fundamentalism found a harmonious environment in a non-Muslim country whereas it created an environment of conflict within a Muslim country.

From this fact and from the nature of the politics of Islamic revivalism some generalizations can be made. For this purpose the nature of Islamic revivalism is summarized in Table.

Islamic Revivalism

Substance	Image	Effect
(1) iman-centered	radical	fanatical, aggressive and socially intolerant.
(2) iman-centered	moderate	passive, voluntary withdrawal, and socially harmless.
(3) umma-centered	radical	politically militant and socially divisive.
(4) umma-centered	moderate	politically gradualist and socially accommodative.

new state with himself at Sultan. The government of Malaysia however is extremely cautious in its attitude towards the Moro problem. It knows that the issue can whip up religious fervour and enhance the strength of the fundamentalists. This is again demonstrated by the Malaysian attempt in the 1977 Tripoli conference to tone down a resolution condemning the Philippines on the Moro problem

Given the complex politics of the ASEAN region, Islamic fundamental-

Depending on the strength of the Muslim population in the society i.e. whether they are ruling group or a subject group, the fortunes of each of the revivalist categories will vary. In both type of societies the first category of revivalism will not be tolerated. It poses a problem to the maintenance of law and order. The second category will be welcomed in a non-Muslim country specially if the rulers want to divert the attention of the

(Continued on page 24)

Islamic . . .

(Continued from page 23)

people away from socio-economic issues. The Middle-East prosperity and the internal ethnic-conflict in Sri Lanka are transient factors that currently strengthens this trend in that island. The third category has no chance of survival in a non-Muslim country while it will continue to keep the society divided between the fundamentalists and "modernists" in Muslim countries. The situation in Malaysia, Indonesia and in several other Muslim countries demonstrate this fact. Finally, the last category, if it survives at all, can only remain as a long term dream in a non-Muslim society, whereas in a Muslim society it will continue, like the third category, to operate as one of the alternative paths to cause socio-economic changes. The internal politics in several Muslim countries is currently dominated by the struggle for power between the third and fourth categories of Islamic revivalism.

(Concluded) ●

Impact of . . .

(Continued from page 10)

to influence society up to the present times. A native Sri Lankan has a much greater opportunity to achieve recognition or enter the decision making process if he or she has received training in the West. Unfortunately, the West had only the western model of agriculture to teach. This model was learnt and implemented. Agricultural development became synonymous with 'modern agriculture.' Further, Western aid to help the "less privileged" flowed through people who were exponents of 'modern agriculture' either by being trained in it or by assuming that the western model was superior in all learning. Lastly, the destruction has been accelerated by unscrupulous businessmen seeking to create new markets for their goods.

The insensitivity of 'modern' agriculture to the complexity of

natural systems may stem from the model of reality it is based upon. An earlier paper hypothesized two models of reality. The mechanical model where a thing in itself is independent of its relations to other things and the ecological model where a thing in itself is a product of its relations to other things. If we were to accept the material model, then the buffalo wallow will be a pool of water, redundant if the buffalo is removed. The loss of fish, lizards, snakes or thatch will have to be described only in relation to themselves. If we were to accept the ecological model, the buffalo wallow ceases to be a thing in itself and becomes a product of its relations to other things. It will be seen that the ecological model is capable of addressing a much wider set of relationships than the mechanical model. However, the history of modern agriculture suggests that the ecological model was seldom used. This neglect of the ecological perspective may have stemmed from the lack of a synthetic perspective: another contributing reason may have been the insensitivity to a set of information that will be hypothesized as 'ecological information'. Ecological information consists of the interactions between the parts of an ecosystem, the information existing only as long as a dynamic relationship between the parts existed. The retention of this information is presently possible only by maintaining that the ecosystem is a physical entity.

If the present trends continue, the traditional agricultural system of Sri Lanka will soon disappear and with it all the information that could be utilized in the design of a low energy, sustainable method of agriculture. It is also pertinent to note that much of this information is contained in the vast network of ecological relationships that have evolved with the agroecosystem, and will be lost when the ecosystem is changed. Can humanity afford such losses?

"We are the product of the strength and the weakness of our forebears. I do believe it is not too late to attempt to eliminate the weakness and conserve the strength." ●

Obeyesekera's . . .

(Continued from page 6)

sights already set on a marriage with a rich girl which will take him further up the social ladder. Yet with a child by him, she cannot let him go; and her hunt begins. At first she clings to her illusions of love; schooled then by the terrible experiences she suffers, she becomes locked in a deadly hatred and a determination not to let him go free, whatever the cost to herself. He meanwhile, has only wanted to cast her off and escape; now, cornered and desperate, he turns round and begins hunting her. The action moves to its inevitable and dreadful denouement.

The last scene, created with a mastery of staging and cutting, is almost unbearable in its shocking power. Yet it isn't just a sensational climax: it concentrates within itself the central meanings of the film. The natural setting in which it is placed (the Wilpattu sanctuary) makes us think of her as the wild animal at bay — an image that is deepened by the red talons with which she tears his face. As they face each other in the final confrontation, the car that had been the instrument of her seduction and is now the murderous weapon seems the embodiment of aggressive and predatory class and male power, and when she shatters its windscreen with the stick that is her only defence, she makes her last stand, as woman and exploited human, against her destroyer. It is part of the significance of **Dhadayama** that the heroine grows with her experience, that by her end she is no longer the naive romantic of the early scenes, that she is no resigned victim, that she dies protesting and resisting in an assertion of her human dignity.

**COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES
NATIONALISMS
AND PROTEST
IN MODERN
SRI LANKA**

Edited By Michael Roberts

SIZE $5\frac{1}{2}$ X $8\frac{1}{2}$ PAGES 600 + TABLES + MAPS

HARD COVER Rs. 120/- SOFT COVER Rs. 90/-

**RELIGIOUSNESS
IN
SRI LANKA**

Edited By John Ross Carter

SIZE $5\frac{1}{2}$ X $8\frac{1}{2}$ PAGES 300

HARD COVER Rs. 60/- SOFT Rs. 45/-

**A STATISTICAL SURVEY
OF ELECTIONS
TO THE LEGISLATURES
OF SRI LANKA 1911-1977**

G. P. S. H. De Silva

SIZE $5\frac{1}{2}$ X $8\frac{1}{2}$ PAGES 450 + TABLES + MAPS

HARD COVER Rs. 87/50 SOFT COVER Rs. 70/-

**BOOKS THAT SHOULD BE
IN EVERY HOME & LIBRARY**

**THE PUBLICATION UNIT
MARGA INSTITUTE**

61, Isipathana Mawatha,
Colombo 5.

Tel: 85186 / 81514



Memories are made of this.

Of Weddings. Anniversaries. Baptisms. Birthdays.
Or even your child's first day at school.
In fact, just about any occasion or incident you'd
want to remember long after it happened.

Marketed in Sri Lanka by



UNIVERSAL MARKETING SERVICES,

158, Canal Road, Hendala, Wattala.

Telephone: 070 - 427 & 520.

Sales and Service in Colombo at

PHOTO KINA LTD.,

90, Main Street, Colombo 11.

Telephone: 28063,

and 275, Galle Road, Colombo 3.

Telephone: 21051.

with an island-wide dealer network.



RJA 384

Fuji. Because a memory happens only once.