

EXCLUSIVE

Eyewitness in Grenada — Dionne Brand

LANKA

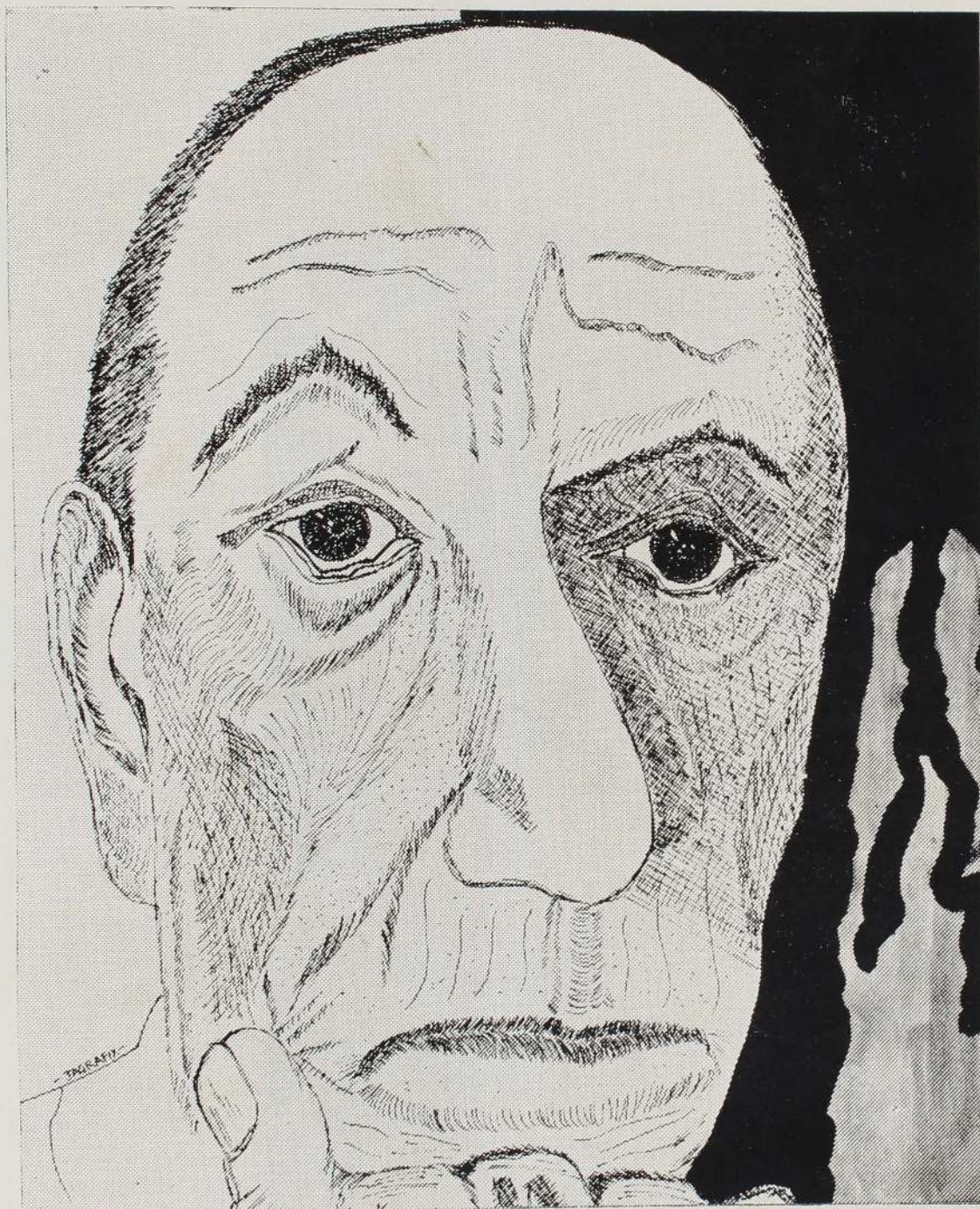
GUARDIAN

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“... We must not
allow nationalism
to be perverted
into a fascistic
belief in racial
superiority . . .”

— J. R.

**ROUNDTABLE AND THE
GATHERING GLOOM**

— Mervyn de Silva

BISHOP LAKSHMAN — The Letter the “London Times” didn’t publish
H. A. I. GOONETILLEKE on A. J. Wilson and other mediators
CRD responses to the “fourteen points”
K. SIVATHAMBY — The eclipse of Tamil parliamentarism

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THE IDES OF MARCH

By the end of March Mr. Ronnie de Mel, will have to submit a report to the World Bank on what he proposes to do with regard to the "demands" made by the IMF-IBRD. On this report and on the IMF-IBRD's response to it will depend the critical policy decisions the government will be compelled to take before the Aid Group meeting in June-July.

Thanks to the Indian decision on tea exports, Sri Lanka's payments position is good enough to meet our most urgent import bills up to the end of March. No more.

For the rest of the year 1984, the government will have to rely entirely on the World Bank's "structural Adjustment Loan" of 210 million SDR's, and that in turn will depend on whether the IMF will release a second tranche of 50 million SDR's.

Both politics and economics will sketch the 1984 Sri Lankan scenario. First, the agencies and the aid-givers must be satisfied that the government has acted forcefully enough to restore 'conditions of political stability'. Translated into ordinary layman's language, this simply means that there will be no recurrence of 'Black July' type situations. The real test of the government's ability (or failure) to meet this condition will be the Roundtable Conference and its outcome.

Secondly, the strictly economic conditions which the IMF-IBRD have laid down. These include devaluation, with the rupee slipping gradually to 30/- to the dollar; a minimum cut-back in public expenditure of about five billion rupees or in the alternative, new or additional sources of income producing about the same sum; the removal of subsidies such as the kerosene subsidy; introduction or increase in taxes such as the water tax in the urban areas, and the tax paid by farmers especially that supplied by lift irrigation; and finally price

increases in other consumer items besides the basic food items which saw price hikes in January.

In an attempt to impress upon the 16 members of the Sri Lanka Aid Consortium the urgency of the economic problems and the highly sensitive nature of the political situation, Mr. de Mel will be travelling throughout the month of March visiting the key capitals. It is not a mild spring that will greet him however but a cold winter. (SEE 'AID FREEZE').

DOUBTING DONORS

Accustomed to the extravagant ways of a UNP regime which has lived on the happy thought that the 'generosity' and the patience of donors are inexhaustible, aid-giving countries have started to express their scepticism about proposed aidseeking projects. Recently, the Japanese Ambassador took a helicopter ride to Jaffna. Besides, acquainting himself with the general political scene (the mood of the people, the refugee situation etc) the Ambassador spent some time at the University campus, asking a great many questions, particularly about Tamil undergraduates displaced from southern campuses after July.

The inquiries, diplomats in Colombo remarked, had much to do with an official request for Japanese aid for the improvement and expansion of teaching facilities at the Jaffna campus. Obviously, the Ambassador wanted to make sure for himself what the actual needs were of the people in whose name aid was being sought.

THE MAFIA

The word "Mafia" now makes a regular appearance in the press. The big-time 'smuggling' racket says the SUN is so well-organised that it controls gold, narcotics and currency. It is run by a MAFIA, claims the paper. When the private van operators went on strike, the ISLAND rebuked the Ministry (Continued on page 2)

'The Vijaya Phenomenon'

Dayan Jayatilleka has done me a grievous and damaging wrong by his statement that I was guilty of "spouting racist rubbish during the Referendum campaign" (L. G. 1 February). How could I have done that when during the whole of the referendum campaign I was behind bars on the equally false charge of being a Naxalite?

I wish to state quite categorically that I have never been, I am not, nor will I ever be a racist.

Dayan Jayatilleka correctly reports at first-hand that "there wasn't any evidence" of racism in my speech during the inaugural mass rally of our party on the 22nd of January. Although we look at politics somewhat differently, I value his opinions.

(Continued on page 2)

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CONTENTS

News Background	3
Bishop Lakshman's letter	6
Defects in Text Books	8
CRD responses to the 14 points	9
Grenada : An eyewitness report	13
Neo-colonialism — (3)	17
Book Review	19
Background to Roundtable — (3)	20
Education for Peace — (5)	23

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Letters. . .

(Continued from page 1)

So I should like to remind him of something he seems to have forgotten. I had the privilege of being on the same platform with him and Father Tissa Balasuriya at Negombo after the second terrible episode of racial violence under the present UNP government. That day as we travelled to Colombo together Dayan Jayatilleka praised me for my condemnation of racism. Let me assure him — and all who care to know — that I condemn racism even today. I believe that we can be the proud inheritors of Ruanvelisaya and Sigi-riya without being racist.

Vijaya Kumaratunge

Dayan Jayatilleka writes :

The reference should have been to the By-election campaign and **not** the Referendum. My article alluded to a particular meeting in the South (Habaraduwa). The report I received stated that Mr. George Ratnayake, a CP trade unionist, rebuked Mr. Kumaratunge and more particularly Mr. Ossie Abeygunasekera for what Mr. Ratnayake considered 'racist remarks', concerning Mr. Amirthalingam, the Tamil dominance of the opposition, the citizenship rights of plantation workers and President Jayewardene's inability to stamp out Tamil terrorism.

Chauvinist posters are said to have appeared during the Habaraduwa Campaign.

If I have been misinformed, I express my regrets — in these circumstances, unreservedly and gladly.

I do recall the Negombo seminar and Mr. Kumaratunge's very impressive contribution.

I maintain that there is an **ambiguity** in the SLMP's policy on the ethnic issue, and I trust that my doubts will **NOT** be proved right. Time will tell.

Vijaya Story (2)

I write to say how much I enjoyed reading your piece on "The Vijaya Phenomenon". I

find the writer's theory-laden journalism most appealing, even if on occasion there is the temptation to sacrifice, if need be, accuracy of characterisation for brilliance of phrase.

What the article has described and analysed will prove to be a major event — perhaps a watershed — in the recent history of our country. I must also thank you for incorporating me in that account, if only by means of a left-handed compliment.

Carlo Fonseka,

University of Sri Lanka
Colombo 8.

II

Congratulations on your brilliant (albeit tantalisingly inconclusive) article on the Vijaya Phenomenon — Return of the Naxalites! Also on the superbly designed cover! I must confess that I have not been able to read the Lanka Guardian much lately (though we get it here) but this time, being ill in bed with malaria, I read it through from cover to cover almost, and was struck by its variety, balance and high quality. Even cricket and Meditations on Marxism by Sadhu Manik! On with the struggle!

Yohan Devananda

Ibbagamuwa.

(More Letters on page 7)

Trends. . .

(Continued from page 1)

for 'capitulating' to the Mafia. But an ex-CTB executive said "If the ISLAND had investigated who these operators are and who got the licences originally from whom, it may have found that the Mafia has a dual personality!"

It was the Minister of Finance who spoke of the "illegal and corrupt practices" that have been proliferated under the aegis of the "Open Economy". And the World Bank knows these operations and 'connections'! So, slowly, do the people.

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NEWS
BACKGROUND

Mervyn de Silva

The floods have probably ruined our buoyant claims of "self-sufficiency in rice", more a seasonal legend and statistical legerdemain, admittedly, than the manifest truth. Tea is still doing strongly largely because of the Indian restriction on exports, the only Indian intervention we do not howl about. Otherwise the economic landscape gets grimmer every passing week. (See **Trends**).

The economic scene is a depressingly appropriate backdrop to the Roundtable conference, the most important political event since the Referendum. Its prospects look increasingly poor and the only optimist around is Mr. S. Thondaman, who told the L. G. that "As the conference spokesman, Mr. Athulathmudali told the press, the two committees are having a joint session and I visualise the focus of the conference shifting to the question of "forms of government" or popular participation because that is in line with the President's thinking on a political settlement that would remove the causes which have provoked violence and terrorism...."

Yet the *sine qua non* of "consensus" (in effect, a pan-Sinhala formula) is SLFP participation. Or better still, Mrs. Bandaranaike's participation.

That raises the issue of Mrs. B's civic rights. Evidently the UNP regards that matter as non-negotiable, thus defying both conventional wisdom and the neatly ordered 'class' analysis of Marxists. In time of national distress, parties forget their differences and a bi-partisan commitment to the country's welfare prevails — the 'war cabinet' in Britain or the 'Grand coalition' in the economically besieged West Germany of the 1960's. Marxist theorists would surely predict as inevitable the same, immediate response of a ruling class threatened by a dangerously destructive crisis. But the 'subjective'

factor has apparently prevailed over the 'objective'.

What is more, the rightist UNP which has always had a visceral hatred of the Left finds comfort in its Roundtable diplomacy only in the support of a decrepit Old Left above ground, and a New Left, underground — put there by a singularly myopic UNP! — and the recently formed S.L.M.P., launched by men denounced and jailed by the UNP as "Naxalites", Sri Kotha's incredible and insolent excuse to postpone elections. Such are the ironies which mock a once cocksure administration and obstruct its own desperate effort to find a way out of the imbroglio.

The S.L.F.P. gave two reasons for its undignified exit. First, Mr. Amirthalingam's alleged violation of the spirit and conventions of the conference, meaning his 'consultations' in India and reported utterances.

The TULF leaders has now explained the personal circumstances which took him and Mr. Sambandan to Delhi. Next, Mr. Amirthalingam's conversations with Mr. Parthasarathi. What's so 'improper or extraordinary about that? Mr. Amirthalingam asks. It was Sri Lanka that invited Mr. Parthasarathi and it was Mr. Parthasarathi who negotiated the UNP-TULF deal (Annexure 'c') which the government now wants the conference to discuss and, hopefully, endorse in full or part.

The SLFP's second reason concerns the government. The UNP has not given an explicit statement on its own position. The SLFP is deeply suspicious of the UNP's tactful, self-protective reticence. Why doesn't the UNP speak up? It is my impression that the UNP will respond to the SLFP criticism by presenting a fairly well-prepared document of its own.

As for the other SLFP charge about "a pre-conceived plan",

President JR reacted promptly. 'A figment of the imagination' he said.

So, Mr. Amirthalingam has explained, and rejected the charge of improper conduct. If the UNP does produce its own 'position paper', what is the SLFP going to do? Will it turn a deaf ear to the appeal made by the Secretary-General of the Conference?

The answer would depend largely on the real reasons which prompted the SLFP to walk out.

The SLFP is facing a more serious challenge than that which it confronted in 1982 when Maitri and Anura claimed that they represented the true-blue SLFP. It is now threatened by a new party which has a somewhat different image from the SLFP, as it looks now in the eyes of the traditional supporter.

Only an election will show how much the S. L. M. P. represents the 2.5 million vote that Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwe received. A near 40% was the highest the SLFP has received, and Kobbekaduwe, as he kept complaining bitterly even on his death bed, was handicapped by many things — domestic SLFP dissension not being the least important.

The S. L. M. P. has a vigour which the S. L. F. P. now lacks. It is more energetically anti-UNP at a time when anti-UNP sentiment is mounting on both the economic and the political front. The S. L. M. P. has a "progressivist" colouration which has always been a plus factor since the days of S. W. R. D. who knew exactly how to create a political space for himself between the UNP and the established Left. The S. L. M. P's youth appeal is obvious.

At the moment, my guess is that the vast majority of SLFP voters are still with Mrs. B., while the activists, the cadres, the district organisers (youth and women's leagues) are steadily drifting towards

(Continued on page 5)

AID FREEZE : soft loan cut

A dispute between industrial nations and the Third World about whether to hold the regular meeting of the IMF this spring came into the open, reported the FT (Jan. 20). The report added: "Mr. Willy de Clerq, the Belgian Finance Minister and Chairman of the IMF's Interim Committee made a special appeal for "a change of heart by those countries, including the US, which oppose the meeting". No response has yet been announced. But Mr. de Clerq said that a failure to hold the meeting would

be "a body blow" directed at the Third World.

The Third World backed by France and some other rich nations would also like to press for a new allocation of SDR's, the fund's reserve currency to help international liquidity, said the FT, adding "the US and most other major powers are opposed to any large hand-out at present".

Meanwhile, the US has reduced its contribution to the IDA, the soft loans agency, from 950 millions to 750 million dollars, pleading

that the US Congress will not approve more. Alex Brummer, Washington correspondent of the GUARDIAN describes this argument as totally without foundation. And he compares the 'saving' of 200 million dollars as aid to the world's forty poorest countries with a US defence budget of 245 billion in 1984 and 324 billion in 1985! The World Bank chairman, Mr. Tom Clausen, a top US businessman spoke of the negotiations in Washington in mid-January as "sad and disappointing". The following reports are from the GUARDIAN:

The politics of aid

Alex Brummer

THERE can have been few more depressing meetings than that of the World Bank and IDA deputies which wound up in Washington last weekend. It marked the nadir in the American commitment to the Bretton

AFTER three days of intense and difficult negotiations here, 31 donor countries agreed to put up \$9 billion in funds for the IDA. But the US decision to cut its contribution to \$750 million a year compared with the \$950 million in 1983/84 means that the IDA, which makes loans to 40 of the world's poorest countries, will have to reduce sharply its activities. The World Bank says that \$16 billion was needed simply to stand still, and other industrial countries had wanted a pool of at least \$12 billion.

Mr. Clausen, a leading American businessman who was brought to the World Bank from the Bank of America in 1980, was clearly chagrined by the meeting's outcome. At a news conference at World Bank headquarters, a stone's throw from the White House, he said it was both "sad and disappointing" that agreement could not be reached on providing more than \$9 billion.

Woods institutions which have steered the industrial and developing countries since the war.

It is ironic that it occurred at the same time the United States is seeking to interest its allies in another development bank in its own back-yard. A key recommendation in the Kissinger Commission's report on Central America is that a new development institution—the Central American Development Organisation—be formed to help administer the large infusions of aid called for by the Commission.

Given the treatment the allies have just had at the hands of the US Treasury they should think twice however convincing the arguments in the Kissinger Report may appear. Until the US is willing to consider more seriously the problems of sub-Saharan Africa—which will be badly hit by the IDA decisions—the allies would be justified in showing coolness towards an emergent CADO.

Despite the intense lobbying of its allies the US steadfastly refused to shift from its position of \$750 million a year for the seventh replenishment of IDA. The US's attitude in the negotiations could not have been more negative. Indeed, at times it has appeared as if Mr Donald Regan and his men have been relishing

being the bad boys of the development scene.

They have argued continuously and disingenuously that Congress would not approve any more than \$750 million in each of the next three years. This is totally without foundation. In the last year of IDA Six (just being completed) the Congress came up with \$950 million with scarcely a whimper. Certainly, as Mr. Reagan would argue, the US Budget is bloated. But in the sea of \$245 billion defence spending in this financial year and the \$324 billion plus for 1985 financial year the IDA money is scarcely a ripple.

While the Administration cashes in on the Kissinger momentum to propose a six-fold increase in military aid to El Salvador of \$200 million this year and an incredible \$350 million in 1985, it balked at buying development for the world's poorest countries. But more disturbing than this the US has gone out of its way to interfere with those who would do more.

After the United States refused to budge from its entrenched position in early in December, a group of four industrial countries—Britain, France, Japan, and West German—sought to establish a special or parallel fund to make up the difference between the \$9 billion IDA which the American donation implied and the \$12 billion which the European Community had supported.

Moves to implement this were well advanced before last weekend's meetings of the IDA deputies. Then, according to senior officials at the bank, the US "nobbled" the Japanese. Annoyed by the special fund initiative — which was done without consultation with the US — the Americans apparently persuaded the Japanese to withdraw. The Germans, who were lukewarm anyway, called it a day, leaving Britain and France on their own.

In effect, the Americans have not only limited the size of IDA to \$9 billion, but strewn the path of those who would make up the difference with obstacles. Some critics have attributed the US attitude to vindictiveness as a result of their exclusion from the IDA deliberations. A more charitable view is that the US did not want attention to be drawn to the fact that it was being boycotted in a special fund set up by its closest allies among the industrial countries.

The important thing about the US's stingy behaviour over IDA is that it is not an aberration. At the latest deputies' meeting in Washington it has struck a fresh blow at the World Bank. It is insisting that in a break with the past the next capital increase at the bank should not be in line with that at the International Monetary Fund. It is supporting a \$3 billion selective capital increase when the bank and the other industrial countries want \$8.4 billion.

The effect of this particular piece of obstruction will be one billion dollars less of World Bank lending next year — a not inconsiderable sum given the shortfall which IDA will experience. Once again the Administration is using the lame excuse of Congressional opposition. While without doubt pockets of resistance do exist on Capitol Hill it is an insult to the intelligence of its friends to argue that an Administration which can get the MX-Missile out of a Democrat-controlled House cannot get approval for a World Bank capital increase.

The Administration's underlying reason for disliking the multilateral development banks is its lack of political control. Its voting power is simply not enough to prevent

Why the RTC was delayed

(The confession of A. J. Wilson)

The Roundtable conference was not convened before because the government accepted the arguments adduced by A. J. Wilson, professor of political science at New Brunswick, Canada, against the holding of such a conference. This boast or confession is bluntly made in an article published recently.

H. A. I. Goonetilleke comments:

I refer to the article by Prof. Alfred Jeyaratnam Wilson in a book co-edited by him and D. Dalton: *'THE STATES OF SOUTH ASIA' — Problems of National Integration*

In his contribution "Sri Lanka and its future: Sinhalese versus Tamils" he lays bare with a disarming candour the descent into the pit of communal relations since July 1977, and indicates, with a no less forthcoming veracity, his special role as an intermediary since the middle of 1979. "It was at this point that an intermediary in the person of the present author offered his good offices to the Executive President of the Republic with a view to bringing the T. U. L. F. and Government spokesmen together to the negotiating table. President Jayewardene accepted the arguments that this intermediary offered against the convening of a roundtable conference. (p. 309)

The substitute device of a nondescript Commission produced the District Development Councils Scheme in essence the principal formula of its dissenting protagonist, Wilson himself. It has proved a damp squip from the beginning, neither alleviating Tamil fears nor redressing any grievances. Both in theory and in practice this exercise in the supposed devolution of power has signally failed to accommodate any genuine measure

loans to countries it considers politically unsuitable occasionally slipping through. Because the World Bank and the IMF are essentially meant to be economic bodies the political dimension can only be raised surreptitiously.

of regional autonomy or satisfy the aspirations of a clearly expressed national identity. Subsequent events have merely confirmed the inadequacy of bilateral talks (overshadowed by the P. T. A., a military occupation, and successive Emergencies), and the futility of manipulated concessions obtained through elitist barter arrangements, behind the backs of the people.

Perhaps it may not be out of place to conjecture whether the near-total boycott of the May 18th local government polls in Jaffna has provided the spectacular *coup-de-grace* to the basic design of the Wilsonian strategy, and laid to rest the ineffectual logistics of the incompatible union between an impotent T. U. L. F. and an unwilling U. N. P. which has tried and failed to embody the Sinhalese consensus. The national solidarity and distinctive ardour of the Tamil people deserve better than the artful temporizings and preverse fumbings of their elite representatives. The cruise missile from New Brunswick may well have flown its last mission. The self indulgence of some individuals must give way, sooner or later, to the right of self determination of a whole people.

Where every...

(Continued from page 3)

the new party. Quantity favours the SLFP, as long as Mrs. B. is there of course; but 'quality' seems to prefer the S. L. M. P.

Since the S. L. M. P. is 'moderate' on the ethnic issue and in fact supports the Roundtable Conference, the S. L. F. P.'s reaction to the challenge is what is best described by the American expression as a knee-jerk reflex. The SLFP's Sinhala-Buddhist ideological ancestry has always been an asset. To meet the S. L. M. P. challenge and outflank the U. N. P., the S. L. F. P. scurries back to its old Sinhala-Buddhist base from which it hopes to stage a recovery and strike back on both the old and the new challengers.

Bishop Lakshman's unpublished letter to the London 'Times'

8th December 1982

The Editor,
The Times
P. O. Box 7
LONDON WCIX 8EZ

Sir,

I am writing this letter in connection with your second leader entitled 'Capitalist Tea Tastes Sweeter' published on 4th December.

I have hitherto not expressed my views publicly about the current situation in Sri Lanka when I have been abroad, as I do not believe in washing dirty linen in public in a foreign country. But your leader of last Saturday has compelled me to make this exception for reasons given below.

You say that Mr. Jayewardene won the Presidential elections with 52% of the vote giving him a majority over all his opponents combined. This is true as far as it goes — he got 52.9%. But it would be useful for your readers to know that the total opposition vote was 47% and that over 18% of an experienced electorate abstained from voting.

You say that he won a higher vote than his UNP party had in 1977. This is also true as far as it goes. But it is necessary to add that at the Presidential elections his most formidable rival Mrs. Bandaranaike was prevented from either contesting or participating in any way in it.

You refer to previous governments using constitutional changes to curb the chances of the opposition in the future and say that SLFP rule under Mrs. Bandaranaike from 1970-77 demonstrated this. Again, this is true as far as it goes. However, it is necessary

Bishop Lakshman was in England during the Presidential Election & Referendum Campaigns. The following letter, to the Editor of "The Times" of London, was written in reply to a leader, in order "to set the record straight". It was not published.

to add the fact that UNP rule under Mr. Jayewardene manipulated constitutional changes to deprive Mrs. Bandaranaike of her civic rights under a special Presidential Commission whose members were appointed by the same Mr. Jayewardene who was in actual fact both chief complainant and final arbiter of the total period for which she was deprived of these rights. She was thus effectively inhibited from participating in the next Presidential and Parliamentary elections; and her party was left in disarray.

You estimate that a general election under PR, if held, might produce a rather different result in Parliament, though not different enough to alter the balance of power. It all depends on what is meant by altering the balance of power. Under PR the opposition groups would have about 40-45% of the seats in the next Parliament, if we accept the trend indicated in the recent Presidential election. At present they muster only 16%. This enlarged and more accurate representation in Parliament under PR will in fact alter the balance of power in two ways. Since the present inbuilt 5/6th majority of the UNP will be reduced to less than a 2/3rd majority in the next Parliament, the opposition will have

the power to prevent further manipulation of the constitution. Also, their enlarged numbers will prevent the President from dominating Parliament through his nominees. For the fact is that all the present UNP members of Parliament have handed undated letters of resignation to Mr. Jayewardene, so that if he wins the referendum he can nominate whom he wills as members of the post-referendum Parliament. In such circumstances will not the different result through PR that a general election will produce, alter the balance of power in more ways than one?

You have not given the reasons which Mr. Jayewardene himself has publicly stated for holding a referendum, to avoid general elections next year. He said that a Naxalite group within the SLFP had planned a series of political assassinations if their candidate won the Presidential elections, and that he did not want this group to enter Parliament after the general elections as the dominant element within an enlarged SLFP representation. But the fact of the matter is that the next general election need not have been held until one year after he made this allegation. There was ample time for him to ensure that the investigations were completed and charges framed against the alleged conspirators in the interval. With fifty years of adversarial politics behind them, the voters could have assessed the evidence provided by both parties and made their own decisions. Mr. Jayewardene had a precedent before him. He had released the jailed leader of the 1971 insurrection after he came into power, and that person trailed far behind both UNP and SLFP candidates in the recent Presidential elections. Indeed, the

only charges to be framed at the moment according to newspaper reports relate to something that is alleged to have taken place in October 1980 rather than in October 1982 and information about the former had been provided to a Parliamentary Select Committee in 1981. So far no indictments have been made against the alleged conspirators of October 1982, and the voters are faced instead with a referendum on 22nd December.

It may not be known to your leader writers that Mr. Jayewardene's government has extended emergency rule and that in all likelihood the referendum will be held under such rule. To say the least, this is undesirable in a democracy and also creates bad precedents.

In addition to alleged Naxalite conspiracy, there are further allegations against fraudulent rice ration books in connection with the presidential elections, about incitement to communal violence and about support for terrorist activity in northern Sri Lanka. The UNP claim that it has had to take necessary action for reasons of public order and security. Certain opposition newspapers have been banned and allied printing presses sealed. There have been short-term arrests, detention and repeated interrogation at the local level of SLFP workers and supporters. The SLFP headquarters were raided and membership registers and other records were seized, and its General Secretary along with some others have been kept under arrest. Though Mrs. Bandaranaike has been allowed to take part in the referendum because deprivation of her civic rights did not cover such a referendum, the SLFP Organisation has been harassed and hampered. And it is the only formidable rival to the UNP.

The newspapers have reported that the opposition groups have complained to the Commissioner of Elections that placards and posters with the symbol of the UNP have been posted in various places, in contravention of the law relating to a referendum. Finally, the Police chief directed police officers to have these posters removed from public or private premises as reported in the news-

papers. On the day your leader appeared in London, a national daily in Colombo reported that the police had warned a group of people in a certain area led by Buddhist monks and Christian clergy, not to hold a meeting in a public place opposing the UNP in the referendum, as they risked assaults by thugs. But the police could not prevent these thugs from assaulting those who had assembled in the temple premises as an alternative venue, and damaging their property. A Christian clergyman was given a rough handling. Allegations of such disruptions have been made by the opposition.

To add to all this, there has been an unprecedented exchange of letters between the Chief Justice whose appointment was made from the unofficial bar after the UNP introduced its new constitution, and the President. The Chief Justice said that 'during the past few years there has been a gradual erosion of the position of the Chief Justice and indeed of the Supreme Court Judges, by executive action', in addition to mentioning other matters. The president's reply denied this and other allegations. But the action of the Chief Justice is significant at a time when the referendum was adjudged not inconsistent with the provisions of the constitution by a majority decision of 4:3 of a seven-member bench of the Supreme Court, and when court action against the Presidential elections, the holding of the referendum and for habeas corpus relating to persons under detention, are being reported in the newspapers.

Whether the allegations made by Mr. Jayewardene and the UNP against their chief opponents and whether the actions taken in the alleged interests of public order are justifiable or not will become evident long after the referendum takes place. In the meanwhile a climate of fear has begun to spread among opposition groups and the general voter. All this will be to the advantage of the UNP. All that is needed to win the referendum and bypass the general elections is a 1/3rd vote

of the entire electorate, as the Prime Minister himself has been reported to have stated. In a climate of fear many voters are likely to abstain and the UNP can count to obtain that 1/3rd which constitutes 2.7 million votes.

The upshot of all this is not whether capitalist tea tastes sweeter or more bitter. It is that the Sri Lankan voter is being offered 'guided democracy' by Mr. Jayewardene by the device of the referendum. The rituals will be there but the substance of liberal, representative democracy will be eroded.

yours faithfully,

The Rt Rev. Lakshman Wickremesinghe.

Chairman, Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka.

Letters...

(Continued from page 2)

Monkey Tricks

Since it is not difficult to get together six mental lightweights from **any** ethnic group to subscribe to **any** forcefully presented view, however wrong, I submit that the CRD makes no point at all with its claim that six out of nine of its 'core numbers' (members?) are Sinhalese. If it relies on this argument at all it should **name** the six.

What they are saying in the bazaar is that the effective 'Sinhala' component of the CRD comprises two urbane gorillas (not to be confused with urban guerrillas), one a Trotskyist monkey and the other a Stalinist Commissar manque.

Ari Kumaradasa

Colombo 6.

NOTE

The letter "Ethnic Quotas — a reply to C.R.D." was written by W. S. M. Fernando of Colombo 6. His name was inadvertently omitted.

Open letter to the Minister of Education

DEFECTS IN TEXT BOOKS

Hon. Sir,

While appreciating all the good measures you have taken in the direction of educational reforms, I should like to write this rather long letter with a view to bringing to your notice some of the mistakes, blunders and misrepresentation of facts contained in school text-books issued by the department of education. As they are too many to be enumerated in one letter, I restrict myself to quoting just a few examples from the Grade 10 Social Studies (Sinhala) Text.

Sir, If we take the version of democracy given in the text, Sri Lanka and India can no longer be considered a democracy; again, for all the ill-effects of ecological tension the blame is put on the negative consequences of the scientific and technological revolution.

Page 104 According to the text the world democratic system is represented by NATO while the Warsaw Pact is explained as the body representing the world socialist system. The position of non-aligned countries is not clear.

According to the text-book version of democracy Sri Lanka and India cannot be considered democracies. Nevertheless, the dictatorship — form of government that prevailed in Portugal under the leader of Salazar, prior to 1974, too could be considered a democracy, had this text-book been printed during that time. Because Sir, Portugal has been a member country of the NATO body right from the very beginning. Again, countries like China, Yugoslavia and Albania can no longer be considered "socialist" because they do not hold membership to the WAR-SAW pact.

Although a doubt has been cast in this text-book about the degree of impartiality of non-aligned nations no such doubts has been expressed about the purity or genuineness of NATO democracy and WARSAW Pact Socialism.

A military pact is one thing. A political system is another thing. Sir, in the text book, these two contradictory elements have been mixed together for no apparent reason. Is not such an approach highly detrimental to the interest of the entire education process?

In the first lesson many things have been said about the current ecological tension. And it is the authenticity of those facts plus the

Although the number of sciences is countless they can all be divided into three groups — (1) Natural Sciences (2) Technical Sciences (3) Social Sciences.

Sir, is it not the uneven-development of these three sciences that causes this ecological tension? If so, is it not the harmonious development of these three sciences that is needed to overcome this problem?

* **Sri Lanka and India are not democracies!**

* **GDR has colonies in Africa!**

* **Science is blamed for ecological tension**

approach on the part of the text-writers to the subject-matter that calls for your attention. Here the ecological tension is explained as dependent upon the development of technical sciences. For all its ill-effects the blame is put on the negative consequences of the scientific and technological revolution.

This view is not acceptable to an intelligent person. Undoubtedly such an approach would not only fail to clarify the broader meaning of the concept of science but would also create an anti-science attitude in the minds of children. Sir, would it be right to regard technical science in its modern and rather complicated form as an independent science developing at the junction of natural and social science? Is not such an approach highly detrimental to the interest of the educational process itself? Again, does this not defeat the very purpose of the integrated-curriculum aimed at in our education program?

Again in page 127 there are two diagrams illustrating the difference between the 'democratic' and 'dictatorship', forms of governments. In the diagram No. 1 there is a uniformed dictator with his threatening finger raised at the civilian people. In the diagram No. 2 there is a democratic executive listening to the civilian voters.

Sir, as the text books says that NATO represents democracy a question does arise about the other diagram depicting the dictator. Which zone does this dictator belongs to, is now a question? Is it the Socialist BLOC? or is it the Non-aligned bloc of which Sri Lanka and India are members?

Again in this text there is a lesson about democracy. In the particular lesson the democratic socialist Republic of Sri Lanka is nowhere referred to as such, and everywhere it is referred to as Sri Lanka.

(Continued on page 12)

Committee for Rational Development comments on the "fourteen points"

1. *The District Development Councils in a Province be permitted to combine into one or more Regional Councils if they so agree by decisions of the Councils and approved by Referendum in that district.*

CRD is of the opinion that this is a very sound proposal. We would like to suggest that the referendum to decide the merger of the DDC's within the specific districts be staggered in the following manner:

ie : 1st provincial referendum	—	A Sinhala province in the South.
2nd " "	—	Another Sinhala province in the South.
3rd " "	—	The Eastern province.
4th " "	—	A Sinhala province in the South.
5th " "	—	Another Sinhala province in the South.
6th " "	—	The Northern province.
7th, 8th and 9th " "	—	Sinhala province in the South.

Whatever the **specific form** of the agreement reached at the All Party Conference, CRD strongly suggests that an Island-wide/referendum in all nine provinces be not held simultaneously. In addition we suggest that the government make the regional councils scheme more attractive by adding a financial package as an incentive for amalgamation.

2. *In the case of the District Councils in the Northern and Eastern Provinces respectively, as they are not functioning due to the resignation of the majority of Members, their union within each province to be accepted.*

CRD is of the opinion that this is a very sound proposal.

3. *Each Region will have a Regional Council if so decided. The convention will be established that the leader of the party which commands a majority in the Regional Council would be formally appointed by the President as the Chief Minister of the Region. The Chief Minister will constitute a Committee of Ministers of the Region.*

CRD is also in support of this suggestion. As presently constituted the powers and stature of the District Minister (the equivalent of the Chief Minister of a province) are most unsatisfactory. Within the context of the existing legislation, the District Minister is appointed by the Central Government (the President of the Republic is the final authority) and as such his primary responsibility is to the Central

Government. His political authority is not derived from the District Council, neither is he fully responsible to it.

While the District Minister is an elected member of the Parliament, he/she normally belongs to the governing party. But this party may be a minority in the district to which the District Minister is assigned. Such an anomaly will not take place when it becomes standard practice to automatically appoint as Chief Minister the leader of the party commanding the majority of the provincial Council. However, CRD would venture to point out that if this proposal is implemented, the Westminster model of government will operate at the local level; the Presidential model at the centre. This may cause certain anomalies.

4. *The President and the Parliament will continue to have over-all responsibility over all subjects not transferred to the regions and generally for all other matters relating to the maintenance of the sovereignty, integrity, unity and security and progress and development of the Republic as a whole.*

CRD is of the opinion that the following areas should be under the control of the Central Government —

(a) Central Finance, (b) Armed Forces (excluding Police powers) (c) Foreign Affairs.

Central Finance

(a) Central Finance should include the Annual Budgetary allocations for the provinces, computed in relation to a set of criteria uniform to the nine provinces. Allocations would depend on different provinces/districts, and while the recurring expenditure of the more developed areas will be high, reasonably high quantum of resources will also have to flow into the less developed areas.

It is quite possible that Central Government resource allocation will become a bone of contention when the future provincial administrations are set up. Therefore, it is CRD's position that the procedure and quantum of Central Government resource allocation be done through open and free discussion between the provincial administration and the Central Government. An objective measure of allocations based on certain criteria may have to be constitutionally protected. Such allocations would to some degree have to be linked to whether the province is above or below the national level of development. As the budgetary imperatives acting upon the Central Government itself must be included in the framework, the provinces must be called upon to state their development plans for the budgetary year. The Central Government budgeting should however attempt to establish as near as possible to the national average. Any further development work will have to be funded through resources mobilised by the provinces themselves. In this position it will be possible to counteract the tendency for the already advanced provinces to acquire a disproportionate quantum of resources.

When we come to the trans-provincial economic and infrastructural

development projects (e.g.: Mahaweli programme, transport, telecommunications, power), it is the CRD's contention that the costs for these should not in anyway be imputed to the provincial government. If these colossal expenditures are imputed to the respective provinces, not only will the 'National average' be exceeded but there will also be very little funds available for other provincial district level development activities.

(b) Armed Forces :

It is CRD's contention that the Armed Forces, whose primary function is to assure the sovereignty and security of the island should, be a Central Government Institution.

The Police Forces, whose primary function is the maintenance of Law and Order on a day-to-day basis, and who come in contact with the civilian population on a much larger scale, should be the responsibility of the provincial administration.

It is possible to anticipate the need for a Central Government police force to investigate trans-provincial crimes and certain types of crimes, such as narcotics violations, large-scale robberies, special types of murders, etc, but their area of operation must be clearly demarcated so as to avoid any conflict between the provincial police and the Central Government Police Force.

(c) Foreign Affairs

The Foreign policy of the nation as a whole must be the responsibility of the Central Government. If foreign aid packages from foreign governments are to be negotiated by individual provinces, the Central Government should be a participant to the whole negotiating process. The Central Government would have the right to veto a part of, or the total aid package, but it would have to show cause to the provincial assembly. There should be some provision for the provincial assembly to appeal to the Supreme Court if there is an alleged unfair or arbitrary rejection of an aid package.

Other than economic and social aid negotiations with foreign governments to which the Central Government is a constant participant, the provincial administrations should have the authority to deal with

foreign agencies and NGO's. Grants above a certain amount from foreign agencies to provincial state agencies may, perhaps, have to require the approval of the Minister of Finance, again subject to a review procedure. If the above general policy orientations are adhered to, the economic and social progress of the provinces can take place under the benevolent umbrella of the Central Government, with a healthy process of give-and-take internal to the relations between the provincial administration and the Central Government.

5. The legislative power of the Region would be vested in the Regional Councils which would be empowered to enact laws and exercise executive powers in relation thereto on certain specified listed subjects including the maintenance of internal Law and Order in the Region, the Administration of Justice, Social and Economic Development, Cultural matters and Land Policy. The list of subjects which will be allocated to the Regions will be worked out in detail.

CRD feels that this is a very sound proposal. CRD also suggests that the government also consider areas of "concurrent jurisdiction" in certain fields where both the national government and the provincial government have an interest. The list of subjects should be worked out in detail so as to prevent unnecessary deadlocks in the future.

6. The Regional Councils will also have the power to levy taxes, cess or fees and to mobilise resources through loans, the proceeds of which will be credited to a Consolidated Fund set up for that particular Region to which also will be credited grants, allocations or subventions made by the Republic. Financial resources will be apportioned to the Regions on the recommendations of a representative Finance Commission appointed from time to time.

The provinces should also be given the option of negotiating with foreign donors, with the Central Government participating in the whole process, as outlined above.

7. Provision will be made for constituting high Courts in each Region. The Supreme Court of Sri

Lanka will exercise appellate and constitutional jurisdiction.

CRD supports this measure but also suggests a decentralisation of appellate jurisdiction. This will help reduce the present burden in the Court of Appeal at Hultsdorf. The Supreme Court should have the highest appellate jurisdiction with powers of certiori, along with mandatory constitutional jurisdiction as specified above.

8. Each Region will have a Regional Service consisting of (a) officers and other public servants of the Region and (b) such other officers and other public servants who may be seconded to the Region. Each Region will have a Regional Public Service Commission for recruitment and for exercising disciplinary powers relating to the members of the Regional Service.

CRD fully supports this measure. The regional public service should reflect ethnic proportions in relation to rank and designation, within the province. With regard to the Public Service Commissions, the Commissions should adhere to nationally uniform and standardised rules and procedures, and all efforts must be taken to minimise any intra-provincial bureaucratic rivalry or conflict. The Committee should also cover the regional police force.

9. The armed forces of Sri Lanka will adequately reflect the national ethnic position. In the Northern and Eastern Regions, the Police forces for internal security will also reflect the ethnic composition of these Regions.

CRD supports these measures despite scepticism as to the importance of ethnic quotas. The armed services require special consideration in the context of a state of confrontation between the armed forces and a particular ethnic group. Undoubtedly one of the reasons for the exacerbation of the ethnic conflict has been the behaviour of the armed forces and the police towards the Tamil ethnic group in general, and the Tamil youth in particular.

It is often said that the armed forces and police behaved differently in the riots of 1958 because of the multi-ethnic composition of the armed forces and police at that time, stretching from the rank and file to the highest echelons of the officer

corps. Although the political and socio-economic issues which underlie the present conflict are of great complexity, the responsibility for the short-term containment of irrational violence is in the hands of the armed forces and the police.

The progressive metamorphosis of multi-ethnic forces which had broadly national characteristics and traditions into single religio-ethnic entities ultimately led to the situation which we witnessed in July 1983. The inner paralysis and organisational dysfunction is the result of the armed forces and police losing their national identity, and acquiring an ethnic identity (i. e.: Sinhala identity). The degree to which this has destroyed the internal (professional and secular) logic of the armed forces and police can be recognised in the cry heard before and during those days in July to the effect that — “the armed forces must save the Sinhala nation and the Buddha sasana” — while the civilian institutions which they were constitutionally bound to protect were in a state of disarray.

As presently constituted the armed forces are predominantly Sinhala-Buddhist in character and while recruitment of personnel from the minority ethnic groups is a definite step in the right direction, CRD also venture to suggest that fundamental organisational changes along the following type be taken:

— That army units which were created in the post-1956 period be reorganised under different unit names. (*Gemunu Watch, Sinha regiment, Rajarata Rifles* etc., are all linked to the martial history of only the Sinhalese and as such act as a powerful focus of Sinhala-Buddhism and precludes the development of a truly national ethos within these units. Merely absorbing a percentage of their personnel from the minority ethnic-religious groups will not suffice unless the virulent, exclusive Sinhala-Buddhism which now characterises these units is also contained.)

— That the personnel of the armed forces and the police be thoroughly educated and schooled in the multi-ethnic nature of our society, and in the appropriate “plural” ethos which should guide their respective units. All efforts should be made from the very inception to imple-

ment a programme of ethnic and political broadbasing within all units of the Armed Forces so as to defuse any inter-unit and/or inter-service rivalry and conflict.

10. *A Port Authority under the Central Government will be set up for administering the Trincomalee Port and Harbour. The area which will come under the administration of the Port Authority as well as the powers to be assigned to it will be further discussed.*

CRD broadly supports this policy measure as it will allay the fears among the Sinhaese ethnic group. Especially in the light of the strategic military significance of Trincomalee harbour and the foreign efforts to gain access to it, both confirmed and alleged, CRD is of the opinion that the safest and least controversial compromise is to bring the port under the authority of the Central Government.

CRD stresses that this measure should in no way affect the provincial autonomy of the Eastern Province, and that the Central Government civilian authorities and the military establishment should have clearly demarcated spheres of operation. We further stress that the military units based in Trincomalee be placed under the firm authority of a necessarily strong civilian arm of the Ministry of Defence, operating from the Centre. CRD ventures to suggest that a specially constituted unit of the Ministry of Defence having close links to the President of the Republic the three Chiefs of the Armed Forces, and other civilian authorities be put in command of the port of Trincomalee.

11. *A national policy on land settlement and the basis on which the Government will undertake land colonization will have to be worked out. All settlement schemes should be based on ethnic proportions so as not to alter the demographic balance subject to agreement being reached on major projects.*

CRD agrees that a national policy on Land Settlement must be worked out at the Round table. Once such a settlement is agreed to, we suggest the following principles of application:

(a) As far as possible decentralized units should have substantial control of settlement policy.

(b) A state-aided settlement policy must not radically alter the ethnic composition of a particular district, especially in light of the present conflict and strife in Trincomalee.

(c) The first priority should be given to the landless within a given district. Thereafter a rational plan of settlement which will meet the real needs of the landless in other districts should be devised. In any event, settlements motivated by a sense of ethnic confrontation must be discouraged and land should be allocated according to bona fide criteria of poverty, need, income level.

12. *The Constitution and other laws dealing with the official language Sinhala and the national language, Tamil, be accepted and implemented as well as similar laws dealing with the National Flag and Anthem.*

CRD supports the measure to fully implement provisions dealing with Tamil as a National language as-stated in the Constitution. We also urge that lack of knowledge of the official language should not be used as grounds for discriminatory practices in the public sector.

13. *The Conference should appoint a committee to work out constitutional and legal changes that may be necessary to implement these decisions. The Government would provide its Secretariat and necessary legal offices.*

As this is the first Round table or multilateral conference held in Sri Lanka with such important implications, the work of the Secretariat is specially important. CRD suggests that the Conference draw on the advice and services of the many Sri Lankans in the international or national Civil Service who have experience in the procedure and methods of a multilateral conference. The Conference should attempt to include well known devices of Committee procedure — including the presence of a small but active Steering Committee committed to the goals of the Conference and the formulation and constant revision of “single negotiating texts”. Without such procedure and flexible methods of constant and informal consultation and mediation, the Conference will evolve into a parliamentary forum of

debate and one-upmanship. The roundtable, committed to a goal of consensus, not debate, requires a completely different set of procedures. Without the proper institutionalisation of this process, the Roundtable will find it difficult to meet its objectives.

14. *The consensus of opinion of the All Party Conference will itself be considered by the United National Party Executive Committee and presumably by the executive bodies of the other Parties as well, before being placed before Parliament for legislative action.*

The CRD feels that this opportunity of veto is not wellfounded given the present crises. The Executive Committee of every party should remain in a constant state of consultation. The "Consensus" or "opinions" of the All Party Conference should be reached only after their consideration at the Executive Committee level. Such consultation should precede, not come after the final resolution of the Conference.

CRD also suggests that if a Roundtable solution is agreed to and implemented the following confidence

building measures should be also adopted: so as to revive and strengthen the rational and democratic process in this country:

- (a) Amnesty for members of the Tamil political underground.
- (b) Removal of the Armed Forces from Jaffna and the Eastern province and repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act.
- (c) Removal of the proscription of the JVP and NSSP.
- (d) Restoration of Mrs. Bandaranaike's civic rights.
- (e) Reemployment of all July 1980 strikers.

Defects...

(Continued from page 8)

In the context a student may question "Is it because Sri Lanka is neither democratic nor socialist"?

Again in page 89 there is a paragraph about colonial expansion in Africa. See the ambiguity of the language there..... and Karl Pieterze of East German Africa were the persons who were responsible for the spread of colonialism in Africa. There, Sir, it is wrong phraseology that misleads the student.

East Germany is a communist country in Eastern Europe, and it has no colonies in Africa. Hence it should be corrected as "German East Africa."

Sir, it is important to find a clear, unambiguous definitions of the terms involved. It is clearly impossible and in fact useless to confine the definitions of these concepts to its erstwhile and more limited purely lexical meaning.

S. C. C. Atukorale
Weliwe,
Morawaka.

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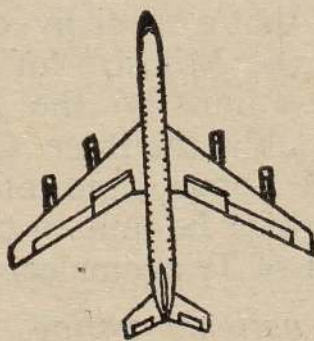
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GRENADA : AN EYEWITNESS REPORT

SPECIAL TO THE L. G.

Dionne Brand

The New Jewel Movement was a party which took power by revolutionary means in March of 1979. Its leadership had learned of an order to assassinate then Prime Minister Eric Gairy during his absence from the country. In a bloodless coup the NJM assaulted the True Blue barracks of the G'dian army, took over the radio station renaming it Radio Free Grenada and seized power by popular means from the dictatorship of Eric Matthew Gairy. The revolution inherited a country with its economy in a shambles, its working people in a state of abject poverty and its international reputation discredited by the buffoonery and ruthlessness of the dictator Gairy. Gairy had ruled Grenada for twenty five years through a system of patronage, feudal relations, intimidation and corruption. He had been able to siphon off and amass a personal fortune of some 20-40 million dollars stashed in banks in the United States where he was given refuge after the revolution triumphed on March 13th 1979. In Grenada he had surrounded himself by a gang of thugs known as the Mon-goose gang, who upon his beckoning brutalized or killed opponents of his regime including the father of Maurice Bishop the leader of the March 13th revolution.

The task for the New Jewel Movement was a monumental one to turn a country and a people with a history of slavery, colonia-

lism and neo-colonialism into a peoples democracy; to extricate the island from the mantle of poverty and dependent development which marked its course and the lives of its people to eradicate illiteracy; to lower its unemployment rate from its 1979 figure of 40-45 per cent; to lift the standard and quality of living of the working people of Grenada.

In the last four years the People's Revolutionary government had accomplished major successes in economic social and political change in Grenada. Grenada had an economy whose base was agriculture and was largely dependent on the export crops, banana, cocoa and nutmeg. One of the major programmes of the revolution was to diversify the base of the economy in a effort to reduce dependency on these export crops which were seeing a steady drop in prices on the world commodity market. The legacy of a plantation economy where all the resources of the islands of the Caribbean were exploited for their production of raw material for export to advanced capitalist countries and importation of manufactured goods, was the legacy which Grenada was trying to rid itself of. Its high import bill for basic food items and consumer goods far exceeded its revenue on export crops. In this effort and in its effort to reduce its unemployment (largely among youth and women) the P.R.G. encouraged and supported the development of agricultural co-operatives. Two thirds of the arable land in the country lay waste under absentee landlords and exploitative landowners. Through his system of patronage, the dictator Gairy had given away land to his friends and taken them back as they lost or gained his favour. The P.R.G. turned some of these estates into state farms, employing some 900 workers on them and distributed

land to young agricultural co-operatives. Through the National Co-operative Development Agency, a statutory body, these young co-operatives were given support in training in farm management and arrangement of soft loans for agricultural imports. A minimum daily wage of \$ 8 (E. C.) for agricultural workers was also established. In the social services the P.R.G. made enormous strides by providing free medical and dental care, a right which is not respected in any other island of the caribbean. A literacy campaign was waged in the last 3 years some 7000 adults learners attended. Education in Grenada was dismal.

Highschool education which historically depended on class and money, became free for working people in 1979. The first high school ever built by the state since the turn of the century was built in 1980. Teachers who had any training migrated, during the Gary years as did other technical workers. By the end of the Gary dictatorship most Grenadians (400,000 lived outside of the country.

The most exciting and significant phenomena of the four year old revolution was the process of participatory democracy which marked the making of national policy in Grenada. A phenomenal 20,000 people were directly involved through zonal and parish council meetings with the development of the nation's budget. Their recommendations, brought down through public debate of the economy and the future of the country, led to the final budget document and were implemented in the 82-83 83-84 fiscal years. Nowhere else in the Caribbean (perhaps in the world) had such a process been tried. For a people emerging from centuries of colonization where decisions were made

Dionne Brand is a Toronto Black poet. Her books are 'Primitive Offensive', 'Epigrams to Ernesto Cardenal' and 'Winter Epigrams'. She also works around grassroots issues in the Black and women's communities in Toronto. She spent several months working in revolutionary Grenada.

at Westminster and emerging from 25 years of dictatorship where decisions were made at the whim of a neo-colonial, a process which saw them as the makers of their present and future through their own will, was a magnificent leap toward freedom which had eluded them so doggedly.

Never have detractors of the 4½ year old revolution attacked the gains of the revolution. External criticism from other countries in the region and the United States of America were based on thin and spurious charges about Soviet-Cuban influence and the absence of electoral politics. It never seems necessary that their detractors prove their charges. It was sufficient to unearth the Soviet-Cuban bogey man cold-war rhetoric, to discredit the genuine gains of the Grenadian people in the last four and one half years.

The tone of criticisms, particularly from the United States became increasingly hostile. On the economic front the U. S. had blocked IMF loans to Grenada, and had encouraged (without success) the European Economic Community to withhold aid and other loans to Grenada. On the political front, it had encouraged its surrogates in the Caribbean to isolate Grenada politically and had continually referred to Grenada as a threat. In a televised speech in March of '83, the President of the United States called Grenada a threat to the national security of the United States of America. This ludicrous charge was accompanied by satellite photographs of Grenada building a new airport and claims as to its "military purpose". The fact was that Reagan could have acquired photographs of the new airport with much less sophisticated technology, in fact any one of the American medical students who jogged on the air strip could have provided him with much more detailed information about the completely innocuous airstrip. As for Grenada posing a threat to the national security of the U. S. its (Grenada's) 1000 person army could only be compared with the nuclear and conventional armaments of the U. S. (in the mind of a mad man).

A Washington Post article of early this year spoke of a CIA plan to destabilize the country and government of the people of Grenada and a 1981 military exercise Code-named 'Ocean Venture' staged a mock invasion of Grenada called 'Amber and the Amberdines'. It is within the context of these events and hostilities that one must look at the invasion of Grenada. The political impasse and tragedy which enveloped and overtook the N.J.M. in the September and October 1983 provided the opportunity for the United States to carry out what it had planned and practiced for 4½ years. It did not provide the reasons or the right for the invasion of Grenada by the U. S. military.

Flying over Grenada many months ago I remember glimpsing the island covered with vegetation, a few houses here and there. The tiny airstrip on which the plane landed and the small terminal buildings placed the attitude of the U.S. Administration against Grenada's new airport project in its venile perspective.

During the next nine months I had a chance to see the very real very practical ways in which the revolution was changing the lives of Grenadian people — farmers, women, men, children, workers. At parish council meetings, at rallies, at farmers meetings — these were the new instruments and new institutions of democracy. I visited farms, schools, agricultural co-operatives and women's co-ops.

One could sense the concerted effort to breakdown the customary authoritarian power relationships between the people and governments in the Caribbean. At parish or zonal council meetings, workers lambasted or praised government ministers, called policies into question and solved community problems. Once at a meeting of the Banana Growers Association in Goave, I listened to a farmer complaining about the handling of bananas at the dock. He went on to a long and eloquent speech about the problems of the banana growers and what remedies the association should apply. Some moments after, the Prime Minister Maurice Bishop drop-

ped in on the meeting. The farmer rose again saying that he regretted that Maurice had missed his speech and launched into his attack one more time for Maurice's benefit.

The easy relationship between the people of Grenada and the People's Revolutionary Government was palpable and visible. Government ministers and ministry technicians facilitated zonal or parish council meetings to answer questions and give information to workers. At these meetings which I attended agricultural workers, technical workers, dock workers, bank workers, all, debated questions of national and community interest. I had never seen such a process never witnessed that level of participation, never witnessed that level of responsibility in a nation or in a people. These are the things which will not be discussed today. They are the things that have to do with people's everyday living. Today it is the political conflict which tore the NJM apart which the world will look at. The images of the third world which appear only periodically and only in coincidence with a major tragedy will persist in the North American media. The people who view or read it through those channels will not know of the importance of land reform, free medical care; they will not know Grenadians are a sober people who don't even heckle at cricket matches, who go to the beach on Saturdays, who enjoy the cinema or long walks on Sunday evenings and who for a moment lasting only four and a half years shared the responsibility of determining their own lives.

The events leading up to the 19th of October — the assassination of the leadership of the revolution

On Friday the 14th of October a rumour hit the street that Maurice Bishop the Prime Minister had been placed under house arrest. There was no official announcement, just a rumour. People left work took their children out of school, some gathered in the market, many around the offices of the 'Free West Indian' Grenada's weekly newspaper asking questions, demanding to know what was going on. Before this

rumour, there had been no indication that anything was wrong in the country. In fact things seemed to be working out. The Point Salines airport was nearing completion for the fifth anniversary of the revolution; the new generators for the power station were to arrive within days and Maurice Bishop, Uni Whiteman and George Louison had just completed a successful aid trip to Eastern Europe.* There was a great deal of hope for the employment and revenue which the new airport would generate. So it was with some surprise and anxiety that we heard the rumour and its confirmation of Maurice's house arrest. Evidently he had been placed under arrest since Wednesday 12th of October. No public explanations were forthcoming from the government or the party until Saturday 15th and then only in a belligerent announcement by Major "Bogo" Cornwall accusing unnamed persons of rumour-mongering. In the market place on that Saturday many people were about, arguing with N. J. M. members on the question of the house arrest. The population was in obvious disagreement with the party as to their decision. We saw Kendrick Radix, the Minister of Industry and Fisheries try to mount a demonstration to free the Prime Minister but most people stayed in the market place arguing, debating, quarrelling with party members on the arbitrariness of the arrest. This spoke for the discipline of the Grenadian people even at a time when part of their leadership had erred so grossly. It was also significant of what the NJM had built in the 1st four and a half years — a people who understood that finally it was they who should decide the fate of their leadership, and that in this most crucial of periods, they were not consulted.

On Sunday, driving to Mt. Morris, just outside St. George's more of the same. People, young, old, women, men, in clusters, talking, debating. Their concern — to hear from Maurice himself, the nature of the conflict and his side of it. That night Hudson Austin, head of

* Two weeks before, an IMF loan of \$14.6 Million had been negotiated by the PRG, the first such loan in four years.

the army, speaking as a member of the Central Committee of the N. J. M., made a 10 minute announcement on the radio. This announcement, more even-toned than Cornwall's. Saturday's diatribe, gave an explanation of the party's decision to put Maurice Bishop under house arrest. It put forward two allegations for the house arrest: a) that Maurice had reneged on a decision for Joint leadership of the N. J. M. b) that he was being investigated as the source of a rumour that Benard Coard and Phyllis Coard were trying to kill him. The framing of the allegations made it clear that the party had already deliberated on the matter and had moved to the precipitous decision of the house arrest of the Prime Minister. The difficulties which this led to made apparent the distance between the party and the people. Though Austin tried to explain the internal party nature of the conflict it was inconceivable that the house arrest of the Prime Minister of the country would not become a public matter. All the events in Grenada from Oct. 13 — Oct. 25 are tinged with an irony which multiplies as they unfold. Austin's stated reasons for the secrecy of party conflict were so that external forces could not exploit the conflict and destroy the revolution.

On Tuesday 18th, the town felt tense, and apprehensive. There had been no more substantive announcements, no more information. By midday I took a walk into the town center and market to see what I could pick up by way of news. A friend called me over to speak. He seemed pained, worried as he talked of his uneasiness about the situation. He said 'the scene didn't seem irie', something was wrong. He didn't like the sound of the announcements, he wanted to hear things from Maurice's mouth. On Tuesday a demonstration in Grenville led by school children made its way to Pearl's Airport, stopped a couple of flights from landing. The demonstration's chanting "No Bishop, No Revolution, No School". That night we heard on corners, in rum shops, that the next day there would be a strike and demonstrations in St. George's.

At 8 30 a. m. On Wednesday, thousands of people began gather-

ing in the streets of St. George's. They circled the town, more and more people joined in, and finally went up to Maurice's house. Going past the guard who fired above their heads, the people freed Maurice and took him down into the town, supposedly to speak in the market place. The mood on the street was joyful. One woman heard in the crowd said "If he's done anything, we're the ones who will deal with him." More irony — in her statement the revolution had triumphed. There were at least 10,000 people in the streets of St. George's that day. The narrow, vertical Market Hill was packed. On Lucas Street, On Church on Young, people happy, beaming laughing — "We got we leader" was the chant. People waited in the Market place for Maurice to come and speak. Maurice did not come to the market, he went to the Fort — Fort Rupert. About an hour and a half after his release, three armoured vehicles shot across Lucas street and up to Fort Rupert. Three explosions mixed in with gunfire, people running, crying, and the day which was the most crucial for the Grenada Revolution ended in the killing of half of the leadership and the abatement of the progressive forces in the Caribbean as a whole.

I had been up at the fort only fifteen minutes before the armoured vehicles had seen Jackie Creft, the Minister of Education on the balcony of the building raise her arms to us in the crowd — had seen Vincent Noel, the union leader also come into the balcony to speak with the people; had waited to hear Maurice speak but then upon the urging of a co-worker, after waiting for 45 minutes, left to go back to the office. By the time the armoured vehicles rushed toward the fort, I was standing on the balcony of my office looking across the narrow harbour between the 'rock' and the fort. The sight of people jumping the forty foot walls of the fort, trying to escape the armoured vehicles was one of great shock, pain and still unimaginable. In the hours after, we waited for news, waited to hear what we thought happened, that the rumours we heard that day were untrue. At nine o'clock that night we lis-

tened to the announcement that among others killed at the fort, six members of the leadership were dead. They included Maurice Bishop, Prime Minister; Jacqueline Creft Minister of Education; Vincent Noel and Norris Bains, union leaders; Unison Whiteman, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Fitzroy Bains, another Cabinet member. The announcement by Gen. Hudson Austin went on to say that the People's Revolutionary Gov't was dissolved; that a Revolutionary Military Council was taking over, that the country was under curfew for the next four days and that anyone violating curfew would be shot on sight.

The four days of the curfew were days of listening to the radio add reflecting on the massive tragedy that had occurred. Clearly the revolution if not dead had been set back some ten years. The military council had no internal support whatever and coupled with the political and economic sanctions which would be applied by Grenada's neighbouring states, their's would be an ineffective government. By Saturday 22nd. at 2 p.m., the R.M.C. showed signs of addressing the realities of their blunder. In a statement delivered by Major Christopher Stroud, a member of the Revolutionary Military Council they acknowledged for the first time that the country had been through a tragedy. They called for national reconciliation, said that they did not intend to rule and that they would name a civilian government within the next ten to fourteen days. The statement went on to outline an economic policy not different from the P.R.G.'s, in fact pledging the continuation of a mixed economy, diversification of agriculture and plans for the tourist sector. We felt a tiny bit of hope. During the curfew there had been no incidents. Violations were evident. People walked in the streets (certainly not the usual number) children swam in the harbour. No one was shot for violating curfew. Stroud's announcement was made prior to the Caricom emergency meeting to begin that day in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad. The next day, contrary to the hopeful signs of a proposed meeting between Austin and St. Vincent's Prime Minister Cato the presence in the Island of British,

U. S. and Canadian diplomats; announcement of the lifting of curfew and return to work on Monday; opening of the airport to regular commercial flights; the poll revealing that only 10% of the thousand American medical students wished to leave the island — contrary to all these signs it was evident that the Americans intended to invade. They would not waste the opportunity to level the Grenada revolution to the ground.

During that weekend we had been contacted by an attache at the Canadian High Commission. We were told that if we wished to leave the Island a plane would be provided on Monday the 24th. One day before America would eventually invade.

We were not advised to leave the Island. A number of CIDA Contractees had decided to remain. When we got to the airport on the Monday, the plane which was supposed to leave at 3:30 never arrived. Three of the invading countries had denied permission to the (Canadian-government chartered) plane to leave Barbados to land in Grenada. By the time the Canadian government was able to negotiate its citizens' safety — it was too late for the plane to land given the lack of night-landing facilities at Pearl's Airport.

We were then told to return the next day at noon, at which time our chartered aircraft would arrive. Of course Tuesday was the invasion.

Obviously Canada was not privy to information about the invasion. And obviously the much-publicized pretext of rescuing American students would have evaporated if people had been able to leave the Island.

Clearly the U. S. and the invading Caribbean countries did not deem it necessary to inform the Canadian government of their intentions. And given that permission was given to land on the next day the same day of the invasion, the Canadian government more than not being informed, were deceived by the invading countries. The best excuse is that the invading countries did not know about the decision to invade. At frightening worst Canadians on the Island were used to provide media fodder for the American war on Grenada.

(To be continued)

VASA OPTICIANS

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For Appointments

National Independence only through Socialism

Dayan Jayatilleka

Yet another reason for industrial investment in the periphery by international monopoly capital is to utilize the opportunity to shift high pollution industries such as synthetic textiles, to the 'Southern' areas of the global. This of course enables the transnationals to cut costs by avoiding the installation of anti-pollution safeguards since "developing countries with a per capita income \$1000 or less can't afford the luxury of worrying over pollution" (Sabura Okita, former president of the Japan Economic Research Centre and currently Japan's Minister for Foreign Economic Relations as quoted in the *Washington Post*.)

All this has resulted in a shift in the sectoral composition of foreign investment in the periphery, from the 1960's onwards. Under colonialism and in the early neo-colonial period, direct foreign investment was concentrated in the plantation sector, the mining and extractive industries and in public utilities. In the past two decades however there has been a shift to the manufacturing industries. According to the OECD Development Assistance Review 1970, the percentage of export of direct private investment for all Less Developed Countries (LDC's) in the year 196 /68, viewed on a sectoral basis, was as follows: Oil — 33.5%; Extractive — 10.9%; Manufacturing — 35.0%; Other Sectors — 20.6%;

According to the same source, the percentage of net private investment in the manufacturing sector in Asia and Oceanic in that same period was 38.5%. The corresponding figure for Latin America was much higher, as can be expected, amounting to 54.5%.

According to another source, this time the Survey of Current Busi-

ness 1961-1969, 43% of new U.S. investments abroad in the 1961-1968 period and 44% of British investments (exclusive of oil) in the 1960-1966 period were in the manufacturing sector. Thus, the periphery had witnessed a general proliferation, under neo-colonialist auspices, of auto-assembly plants, textile industries, petrochemical industries, consumer electronics industries, light industries processing food materials for export etc. etc.

Similarly, there has been a rapid growth of the industrial proletariat in the periphery. Soviet Professor Tyagunenko cites the following indices of employment in manufacturing industry in the 'Third World' in his book 'Problems of Industrialization in the Developing Countries'. (1958 = 100).

1948	1963	Difference
72	125	+53

Taken together, what all this goes to show is that there has been a very significant degree of capitalist industrialization of a **dependent character** in the periphery. This has however not been given due weight by orthodox Marxist analysts, some of whom who consider such a development impossible, as indeed it was under colonialism.

What are the consequences of this process of dependent industrialization? Firstly, a changed role for the periphery within the world capitalist system from that of a predominantly market/garden to that of an agro-industrial 'export platform' supplying finished goods to the capitalist world market.

Secondly an ever tighter, one may even say the fullest possible, integration of the peripheral economics into the world capitalist system, thereby completely negating

any possibility of an autocentric capitalist development. Autocentric, i.e. 'self sustaining' or 'normal' capitalist development as obtains in the metropolis' is a pattern of growth where the relationship between Department I (producer goods) and Department II (consumer goods) is fuelled by home market demand. Capitalism in the periphery is, on the contrary, 'dependent' or in Samir Amin's phrase 'extraverted'. That is to say, the relationship between Department I and II is determined by external demand. In other words, the impulses for growth in the peripheral economy emanate from external sources. The famous 'production decisions' are made externally and not within the confines of the domestic market. Peripheral capitalism produces primarily for export rather than for consumption in its home market, while what is consumed domestically is not produced domestically, but rather is imported.

Certainly, 'extraversion, was the most important structural characteristic of peripheral economies ever since their integration under colonialism, into the world capitalist market. What is new however, in the present period of even greater internationalization, centralization and concentration of capital, i.e. of tighter integration of the world capitalist system, is that **any growth of capitalism in the periphery has inevitably to be of a neo-colonial dependent character**. It is now impossible to speak of an independent or 'national' capitalism, except in those states (Iran, India, etc.) with a sufficient resource base. These states we could locate in the semi-periphery.

This means a heavy erosion of the national independence and sovereignty of the 'Third World' coun-

tries. The new needs of the local bourgeoisie are reflected in the economic policies of the various governments that represent in the main, the interests of this class. Given the under-developed capitalist structure of the peripheral economy, the level of internal savings is low since mass poverty is great. Therefore accumulation for investment from domestic sources is low, and must be supplemented from external sources. Necessary conditions for foreign investment must therefore be created. In other words, 'Third World' governments correctly perceived that the only possibility for further capitalist growth in the present phase lies in a strategy of large scale collaboration with (in reality, dependence on and subordination to) international monopoly capital. As A. G. Frank states;

"Given the present economic structure of Latin America, local capital is scarce: given the present political structure, foreign capital is 'welcome'".

(Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution)

We may add that this is true not only of Latin America but also of almost the entire periphery in the present period, proving Lenin's contention that:

"When their class profits are at stake, the bourgeoisie will sell their country and strike a bargain with any foreigner against their own people".

(Col. Works Vol 28 pp 17-34).

Apart from the profit motive, which is an economic factor, there is a second factor, this time socio-political, which impels the local bourgeoisie into an unequal alliance with the metropolitan bourgeoisie. This the rapid growth of the proletariat owing to the process of dependent industrialization, and the consequent intensification, of the class struggles within the peripheral societies. As Lenin said:

"We the proletariat have seen dozens of times how the bourgeoisie betrays the interests of freedom, motherland, language and nation, when it is confronted by the revolutionary proletariat."

(Lenin Col. Works Vol 6 'National Question in Our Programme 1903)

And as the Theses on the Eastern Question adopted by the 4th Comintern Congress accurately predicted:

"At first the indigenous bourgeoisie and intelligentsia are the pioneers of the colonial revolutionary movements, but as the proletarian and semi-proletarian masses are drawn in, the big bourgeoisie and the bourgeois-agrarian elements begin to turn away from the movement in proportion to the coming to the forefront of the social interests of the lower classes of the people."

One implication of this is that it is no longer possible to count on the national bourgeoisie as an ally in the struggle against metropolitan capitalism. In a stricture that would apply to certain sections of the left today Stalin said in 1927:

"It would appear that the Opposition thinks that alliances with the national bourgeoisie in colonial countries should be long lasting. But only those who have lost the last vestiges of Leninism can think this way." (Speech at Plenum of CC and CCC of CPSU 1st August 1927)

We may even go further. Since the national bourgeoisie has 'sold its country', 'struck a bargain with the foreigner' and 'betrayed the interests of motherland, language and nation' (Lenin); since this bourgeoisie has 'sold national sovereignty and national interests for dollars' (Stalin 1952), **it is no longer possible to speak of a national bourgeois ruling class**, though it is permissible to refer to middle bourgeois fractions, i.e. non-ruling bourgeois fractions, as 'national bourgeois'. **In the contemporary neo-colonial period, characterized as it is by a high degree of internationalization and concentration of capital and consequently the tight integration of the world capitalist system there can be no independent 'national' capitalism. Therefore no ruling bourgeoisie can genuinely represent the national interests and stand truly for national independence.**

This does not mean that there is absolutely no contradiction between the peripheral bourgeoisie and their metropolitan masters. Indeed,

there is a competition between the two over the re-division of the surplus value expropriated from the working masses of the periphery. The intensity of this competition varies from country to country and region to region according to the various levels of capitalist development in those countries and regions, the specificities of that development, the degree of integration into the world capitalist system and the degree of autonomy of the given peripheral bourgeoisie, the balance of class forces in the given country and the region as whole, and other such factors. The true dimensions of this competition must be understood in its proper perspective, neither under-rating it as Trotskyists do, nor over-rating it as the Soviets and Chinese are wont to. This contradiction must be comprehended as an intra-class contradiction rather than an inter-class one. It is a contradiction between 'riven fractions' (Lenin's phrase) of the world bourgeoisie, and the peripheral bourgeoisie cannot be regarded in any sense as an **exploited** class if the word is to have any meaning at all. Since this is not a class struggle, but an intra class competition, the predominant tendency is towards compromise. In contrast, however, is the antagonistic contradiction which exists between the metropolitan and peripheral bourgeoisies on the one hand and the direct producers of wealth i.e. the working masses of the periphery, on the other. This contradiction is antagonistic and permanent because the two forces involved are dialectical polarities which they are mutually exclusive and contradictory because of their inherent class nature. It is **this** contradiction that is the main one determining the direction of development of peripheral socio-economic formations today.

What this means is that only the resolution of the contradiction monopoly capital/peripheral proletariat allied with the peasantry and urban poor) in favour of the latter, could strike at the root of the neo-colonial dependency of peripheral economies. In the contemporary period, neo-colonialist penetration cannot be resisted to a

(Continued on page 24)

A lack of theory

Asoka Bandarage

BOOK
REVIEW

THE DISINTEGRATING VILLAGE. Social Change in Rural Sri Lanka. Edited by Barrie M. Morrison, M. P. Moore, and M. U. Ishak Lebbe. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Lake House Investments. 1979. 271 pp. £5.50/US\$10.00, cloth; £4.50/US\$7.50, paper.

IN THIS BOOK, a team of Sri Lankan and western social scientists documents the disintegration of the "traditional" socio-economic organization of rural Sri Lanka through six village case-studies. The villages selected represent a good cross-section of the diverse ecological and cultural regions of the island.

While dispelling popular myths about the equality, harmony and autonomy of the traditional village, the authors explain that the traditional village rested upon the interdependence and cooperation among the villagers in the cultivation of paddy. The village socio-economic organization was paddy-centric. Paddy was the staple food; its cultivation, the primary economic activity as well as a determinant of social status and a source of ritual practice for the villagers.

According to the authors, the most drastic changes in these paddy-centric socio-economic structures have taken place in the post-colonial era. The focus is on the 1970-77 period, when Mrs. Bandaranaike's Sri Lanka Freedom Party ruled the island, and all of the case-studies in this collection are based on field work undertaken during that period. They describe the disintegration of the traditional village in the wake of "modernizing" forces such as population expansion, extension of cash-crop agriculture and the politicization of the village along party lines. The studies demonstrate how increasing numbers of people, unabsorbable by paddy agriculture, move on to non-agricultural work inside and

outside the village. Those with financial and other resources turn to the cultivation of more profitable crops — such as vegetables — or seek white-collar employment. As the importance of paddy declines, power shifts from the old landlord classes to traders and politicians. Traditional patron-client relations and collective labor arrangements quickly disappear. Villagers are integrated more and more into the world outside the village through education, jobs and political patronage. (One "colony" of a village studied has become entirely a residential area for commuters.) Not everyone benefits from these changes, of course; many families become destitute in the process.

The disintegration of communal life is the general pattern in most villages described in this book. However, in two villages — Chemman and Minitalawa — where a large proportion of households depend primarily on village land for livelihood, "a high degree of popular involvement and concern with village affairs" continues to be evident.

The book may somewhat exaggerate the historical centrality of paddy in all villages and the image of Sri Lankans as a nation of paddy-cultivators and rice-eaters. In most villages, dry-land cultivation was a supplementary but necessary form of subsistence and a realm of political autonomy for the cultivator class. Some Dry Zone villages were entirely dependent on slash-and-burn agriculture at various historical periods. Pre-colonial Sri Lanka — not to mention colonial Sri Lanka — imported rice from neighboring lands. Nevertheless, the thesis of the book is significant and challenging. While there were shifts away from paddy in pre-colonial and colonial times, the centrality of paddy in the rural society remained basically intact. As this book argues, in more recent decades that historical focus of village life — paddy — has been fast disappearing.

What is the general direction of these changes? What alternative structures are emerging? In the introduction, the editors label the "growth" which is taking place in rural Sri Lanka as "dependent capitalism." However, there is no adequate discussion of this controversial concept in relation to the descriptive material of the case-studies. "Dependent capitalism" is a term that has been formulated by other writers analyzing colonialism and neo-colonialism. No attempt is made in this book to discuss the integration, if any, of the disintegrating Sri Lankan village into the world capitalist economy.

In the preface it is stated that these studies are concerned with the description of change rather than with making a contribution to social theory. Yet social science perspectives are, by definition, theoretically informed and must attempt to make sense of the general patterns and directions of social processes. The difficulty of providing an overall theoretical perspective is understandable given the different focusses of these village studies and the different ways they are organized. For example, only one case-study — Meegama — pays attention to the development of capitalist forms of agriculture, and only a single study — Weligalagoda — makes any reference to the impact of the forces of change on the sexual division of labor and on women in particular. Comparative information on these issues from other villages is needed if any worthwhile generalizations are to be made.

On the whole, the book is to be commended for its important and interesting contribution to the literature on contemporary Sri Lanka.

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The collapse of parliament as an effective national forum

Prof K. Sivathamby

The parliamentary elections of 1977 brought out in clear terms the pattern of political polarization in the country. Except for a few seats in the East (e.g. Kalkudah) the TULF emerged the dominant political party of the Tamils. The SLFP debacle (8 seats) made TULF the major opposition group in the parliament and Amirthalingam, the leader of the Opposition. It is true this leader of the opposition was not in any way the alternate Prime Minister, as the British parliamentary practice would have it, but in this leadership, the collapse of the left and the inevitable ethnic polarization of the country was fully manifest. The writing was on the wall.

Since independence it has been the parliamentary practice to have one; at best two, Ministers from the Tamil community and allocate to them such portfolios as Posts or local Government; this was done to express the composite "national" character of the government. The ULF government of 1970 had to get a non-elected member to the Cabinet. The UNP did not have such a problem. K. W. Devanayagam was already there and was made Minister of Justice. But the art of Cabinet making is also the craft of cutting the grass under the feet of the political opponents. The UNP government of 1977 resorted to this by weaning away C. Rajadurai the first M. P. for Batticaloa, and considered one of the pillars of the TULF in the East. The government had to legalise this break way by an amendment to the constitution. But the most important inclusion was that of Thondaman which, in terms of UNP strategy, assured the breakdown of the TULF, and more than that, ensured smooth labour relations in the plantation sector.

The J. R. Jayewardene Cabinet is significant in the history of Sri Lan-

kan Tamil politics, in that, for the first time now, there was no Minister from the North. It was difficult to get a break through among the TULF M.P.'s; also the strategy was to show the absence of Tamil participation in the UNP Cabinet is one relating to the North only; and that other Tamil interest were represented adequately.

Having thus singled out the North for special treatment, an attempt was made to make a UNP thrust into the North through the party organisation. UNP branches were opened and organizers (for electorates) were appointed. This system of political patronage of the party in power was not something new. The SLFP had in the period 1970-77 established the norms and traditions of this practice.

At this point, it is necessary to refer to an important aspect of the sociology of the political culture of the Sri Lankan Tamils, esp. those of Jaffna. Jaffna, because of its long colonial subjugation, the longest in Sri Lanka has perfected over the centuries the art of plucking socio-economic benefits from the government in existence, pretending ideological concurrence, but never, allowing any change in its basic socio-economic relations. In fact this game of "being close to the ruler" was played with manifest devotion and commitment to maintain and fore-serve the social dominance of the retailers of authority at the grass-roots level. In a community that was away from real political power, back-door retailing of political patronage was developed as an art. There was a time when one had to pretend to be a Christian. Now, it was only a case of erecting a few pandals and ordering a few garlands. Another line of communication for patronage was through such forms of association with Sinhalese as classmates.

The system had been perfected so well that there had always been somebody "influential" with some Minister. Perhaps the only exception was the Dahanayake Cabinet. Not that Dahanayake did not have a Tamil friend. But his period of office was too short for such relationships to develop. Thus there were SLFP organizers in the early and the mid seventies, now there were the UNP organizers. The system was so well entrenched that even the leftist leaders in the UF Cabinet were considered accessible to some. But such men were not the acclaimed left leaders. The leading leftist of Jaffna were never suspected of political opportunism, but those SLFP and UNP organizers were. This explains this hostility of the youth towards these black marketeers of political patronage.

The UNP had one advantage in its early years. There was a feeling among the English educated senior citizens, the opinion leaders of Jaffna, that J. R. Jayewardene, unlike the plebeian SLFPers, would do something tangible.

But the most disturbing feature in the UNP approach to the national question was that while on one hand there were these attempts to dismember the TULF at geographical and sub-cultural levels, there was a vociferous anti-Tamil, Sinhala-Buddhist lobby at work in the Sinhala areas. Cyril Mathew, the Minister for Industries, was the leader and ideologist of this movement.

The main thrust of this propaganda went against the very basis of the UNP's name on the national question as publicized in their election manifesto. With such forces within the party in power, the round table conference referred to in the manifesto was an impossibility. Nevertheless, the Tamil problem was a **real** one and effort had to be taken to solve it.

The TULF position was equally self-contradictory. Here was a party that had won the election on the pledge that "the members, when elected, will besides being members of parliament, will also be members of the National Council of Tamil Eelam working out a constitution for Tamil Eelam and taking steps, through peaceful means or direct struggles to bring into existence Tamil Eelam and to consolidate it".⁵

Such a party has been called upon to voice the discontents of all the people, Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers against the government. The TULF was not ideologically ready for such a role.

However, getting caught to a situation like this, in which there is a gap between what has been declared and what is immediately around — the reality — was not something new to them. There had always been a gap between their rhetoric and the reality. The dominant partner of the TULF was the FP, which, when it demanded federalism (Samasti or Kuttatei) had called itself the Illankai Tamil Arasu Katchi the Sri Lankan Tamil State Party. It was the semantics of the term "**Tamil Arasu**" that had been exploited against the FP and its demand.

This time they had additional problems. Its own youth wing and the emerging movement of youth militancy wanted them to reject the parliamentary road to Tamil liberation.

With increasing polarisation of view, it was not possible for the new Executive President to satisfy the TULF with a nominal raising of Tamil to the status of a national language. Something substantial had to be given in terms of regional autonomy.

The District Development Committee was the concept that was developed to meet this need. A Presidential Commission was appointed with a TULF nominee also in it (Neelan Tiruchelvam). In the report submitted, the majority commissioners took the view that the "Commission was not appointed to or required to examine the ethnic problems which have manifested themselves in the demand for a sepa-

rate state (but)..... directed to devise a system of devolution and democratic decentralisation which would enable the people of the twentyfour districts to define their development priorities, to energise the district administration and give impetus to the process of social and economic transformation".⁶

TULF's acceptance of the DDC proposal created a major split in the party. Coming as it did after the racial riots of 1979, the TULF had to face bitter opposition from its rank and file. Their youth wing collapsed and the "Sutandiran" group, (Sutandiran was the official organ of the party. The paper was owned in main by the family of the late S. J. V. Chelvanayakam) led by Chandrachud, Kovai Mahesan, Dr. Tharmalingam and Eelaventan broke away from the TULF. Objective analysis made of the DDC Act said it was too little too late.⁷

Balakrishnan in his analysis of the DDC Act stated —

"The main provisions of the Development Council Act relating to the organizational structure and the relationship between the different institutions do have a resemblance to the principles and arrangement suggested in the dissenting report (of Neelan Tiruchelvam). But this is only in form and not in substance, for the actual power relations between the Centre and the districts have been weighed more in favour of the agencies of the Centre",

and predicted —

"The Development Councils scheme and its major provisions, presented as they are now are not adequately geared to achieve such objects (decentralization and devolution of power). For this reason, as well as others; which could be political, the TULF may not be able to work the scheme in the districts coming within its purview with that degree of "independence" and "autonomy" it could hope for".⁸

Before this prediction ultimately proved correct much to the bitterness of the TULF, the elections held for the DDC's eroded the very concept of electoral democracy —

"A grama sevaka an office messenger (peon) several village level cultivation officers, junior clerks and assistant teachers were amongst those who officiated as senior presiding officers at the elections to the Jaffna District Dev. Council. There were not officials duly elected by the Commissioner of Elections but were hand picked by the high command of the United National Party. Altogether 150 officials picked by the

Commissioner of Elections were replaced by nominees of the ruling party just before the poll".⁹

Several ballot boxes were missing and were never recovered.

The elections were held during the period of police and army excesses unleashed after the Neervely Robbery of People's Bank money. The DDC elections were held three days after the burning of the Public Library. It is important to note that TULF was the only opposition party taking part in the DDC polls, trying to fulfil its part of the obligation. In spite of the major disruption caused people voted en masse for the TULF.

It is interesting to note that in the context of contemporary events the entire idea that the DDC's were primarily aimed at the question of solving the problems of the Tamils was lost sight of.

Commenting on the parliamentary debates on the police excesses in Jaffna, the Lobbyist of Lanka Guardian (15.6.1981) said :

"Lands Minister Gamini Dissanayake did not contradict any of the basic facts given in Mr. Amirthalingam's detailed and vivid account of the days and night of terror and rampage in Jaffna. Explaining the situation, the Minister spoke of near mutiny in the police. Surely that points to the first step. The vast majority of the people of Jaffna desire to live their ordinary day to day lives in peace. Those who are duty bound to guarantee peace and order cannot be the instrument of lawlessness, disorder and security. **When normal conditions are restored (not merely physical but psychological) then real political solutions be considered if the main parties to the dispute are capable of facing up to that daunting challenge.**"

The emphasised part reveals clearly that the whole idea that DDC's in themselves were an attempt at a political solution was forgotten at that stage. Such had been the extent of mishandling of the democratic processes.

This was followed by the No-confidence motion on the Leader of the Opposition moved by Neville Fernando; this itself contributed to the loss of the credibility of the parliamentary system to evolve the necessary framework for a meaningful solution to the Tamil question.

The Presidential Election of 1982 revealed the loss of faith of Tamils in Jayewardene. The SLFP candidate

polled more Tamil votes than the President in Jaffna.

What was left of the faith in parliamentary politics was further eroded with the referendum in late 1982, which sought to lengthen the life of the parliament up to 1989.

The local elections of 1983 were a landmark in that the militant youths called for a boycott of the elections and forced many of the contestants to withdraw their candidature. Many of the Chairmen and members of Councils decided not to take office.

The manner in which the Tamil question was treated by the parliament also reveal the gradual devaluation of parliament as an effective forum within the executive presidential system.

The increasing pressure of the militant youth movement and the impact of their extra-parliamentary tactics was soon brought within the parliamentary focus, when the TULF decided to nominate Kuttimani, one of the militant youths held in detention, to the vacant seat of the Vadukodai constituency. This symbolises in a way the fusion of the lines of

Tamilian struggles, and quite understandably provided the extremist Sinhala force with the opportunity of changing that the TULF was completely involved in terrorist activities. The TULF, in its turn, argued that it was done to highlight the state repression that the Tamils are facing.

When it was ruled that Kuttimani could not sit as an M. P. in parliament, the TULF nominated Neelan Tiruchelvam, their leading intellectual and by now their chief negotiator. His nomination was taken as an indication of the leadership of the TULF, unaccustomed as they were to the styles of metropolitan lobbies, accepting the need for a Colombo-based person to make itself more effective in such dialogues.

With the July events and the logical expression the ideology behind the events in the sixth amendment, designed to pacify the Sinhala demands, parliament ceased to be the national forum in which the Sinhalese and Tamils could meet in amity to agree or disagree.

It would not be out of place, at this juncture, to analyse the situation

of the CWC and S. Thondaman. The presence of Thondaman in the Cabinet has no doubt enabled him to get certain benefits for the up-country Tamils, like franchise in local government elections, but these gains are very marginal, compared to what, as admitted by Thondaman himself, the could not achieve —

"In 1948, they robbed us of the citizenship and then afterwards, our representation in Parliament. As a result a large number of persons are still stateless. President Jayewardene said in Delhi at the NAM Summit he will resolve the matter.....He repeated this when the Indian foreign Minister Mr. Narasinha Rao came here. Then what happened? Extremist elements, racist groups who think they represent the Sinhalese people created a situation what the President's good plans have been wrecked and thousand are fleeing to India"

(Lanka Guardian 1. 11. 83)

These reveal the general inability of the Tamils to make use of the existing institutional structures to work out an agreeable solution.

And that brings us to the question of youth militancy and violence in the Tamil areas.

(To be continued)

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FRESHNESS AND FLAVOUR GOODNESS OF



TEAM

Has U. S. lost the lead in atomic weaponry?

L. N. T. Mendis

There are many who have challenged the foolish belief that the economy will collapse if arms expenditure is reduced. The most authoritative official document, however, which impugns, this false assumption is a document prepared by the United Nations in 1977 called the 'Economic and Social Consequences of the Arms Race,' reminding readers that the 'nuclear weapons arsenals of the two major nuclear powers in respect of "missile-deliverable warheads.... has increased from about 3,700 in 1970 to nearly 12,000 in 1976" a rise by a factor of more than three in 6 years the report points out that the **"growing expenditure on armaments is not an efficient way of combating recession."** The report also points out that expenditures on education, health, housing and social welfare are more effective for both economic and social reasons. There is however, a snag and this is where world public opinion will count. If expenditures on education, health and social welfare, even if they are mediated through the private sector do not fetch the same amount of profits as the arms business, there will be great reluctance on the part of the companies to switch to civilian production; to cite just one instance, the Trident submarine of the Ohio class was subject to a cost escalation from US\$ 800,000,000 to 1.2 billion in a relatively brief period of time! The arms manufacturers make money hand over fist.

The UN study emphasises that recently recession has tended to accompany high rates of inflation (stagflation and armaments with heavy balance of payments deficits)".... high arms expenditures have proved to be a hindrance to econo-

mic policies leading out of recession. High government expenditure on armaments increases the demand without increasing the volume of saleable.... goods. It thus intensify the problems of inflation...." The report adds that "military expenditures.... lead to restrictionary measures in other fields which tend to prolong recession and unemployment. The report highlights the fact that there is a **tenacious myth** dating back to German re-armament prior to world war II **that high arms budgets protect against unemployment....**" Sometimes governments have publicised the supposed employment from arms procurement without adding "that alternative uses of the same funds would create jobs as well." The report concludes that **"today, there is rapidly accumulating evidence that high military jobs instead of alleviating overall unemployment, contribute substantially to it. Accordingly, "the proposition that military expenditures generate employment at least as, if not more, effectively than non-military expenditure is demonstrably false."** The contention that armaments expenditure produces less employment than in other sectors of economic expenditure should be self evident from the fact that armaments industry is the most capital and technology intensive industry of any developed country.¹⁸

We have already referred earlier in this paper to the criticisms made by the Swedish delegate regarding the retraction of the confirmation position of the United States on the question of the test ban treaty. Theodor Sorensen, President Kennedy's aide at the time of signing of the 1963 treaty, wrote in the *New York Times* in August 1982 "that Ronald Regan

had thrown overboard the nineteen year history of support by both parties in the United States for an overall nuclear test ban treaty. Alva Myrdal comments that in the period before 1963, people instead of being shocked into sanity" as the nuclear arms race went into full swing, "conditioned themselves to live with fear without mobilising vigorous opposition. **Most people still live so**"¹⁹

In 1954, the United States tested the multimegaton thermonuclear bomb at the Bikini Atoll. Its radioactive fallout "barely missed killing thousands of Marshall Islanders,"²⁰ but scored a murderous hit on some Japanese fishermen. It is this event that propelled Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein to start the Pugwash Movement of scientists against nuclear war. Albert Schweitzer called on world scientists to raise their voices in protest. In April 1954 Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India asked for a standstill agreement to avoid further testing. In May 1955, the Soviet Union along with the Non-Aligned nations included the discontinuance of nuclear testing in their disarmament plan. In January 1958 Professor Linus Pauling submitted his now famous petition to the UN²¹. There was a lull in testing but the only definite development was that the Swedish Parliament renounced nuclear arms both in doctrine and in policy. In the absence of any agreement the Soviet Union resumed testing.

One of the major justifications for the increasing of nuclear armaments in the USA has been that USA has lost the lead in nuclear weaponry. The actual facts seems to point in an opposite direction. The USA first tested the atomic bomb in a desert area in the mid-

1940s. It used it for the first time by atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. The Soviet Union developed conventional atomic power only in 1949. The USA exploded its first thermonuclear device (Hydrogen bomb) in 1952. The Soviet Union followed in 1953. The USA carried out two Bikini Atoll Tests on 1st July 1946 and in 1954. The Soviet Union announced that testing would be resumed in the absence of agreement and set off a multi-megaton blast in Nova Zemlya in September, 1961.²² The USA first built a nuclear powered submarine carrying ballistic rockets in 1960 and the USSR followed in 1964. The (ICBMs) Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles were equipped with independently targeted warheads in 1970 and the Soviet Union followed in 1975. Of the latest weaponry, the USA has built the first nuclear powered aircraft carrier in the early 1960s. The Soviet Union has not yet built one. The USA has started work on the new neutron bomb in 1982 and Soviet Union has not yet produced one although an announcement has been made that they have the capacity to do so.

A word about the Neutron bomb. It is a very unusual weapon. It is claimed to be a clean bomb. It leaves buildings or vehicles in which there are people untouched. **It destroys only people.** Another weapon the MARV (Manoeuvrable reentry vehicles) has also been produced. This is a missile with several separate warheads which, when released, are **not aimed at fixed targets but can be manoeuvred in flight.** The MX missiles which are proposed to be stationed in Europe later this year are supposed to carry 10 warheads, **each one of which has a charge of 600,000 tons of TNT** which means that the MX missile has a total charge of 2,000,000 tons of TNT.

(To be continued)

18. 'The structure in the U. S. economy in 1980 and 1985', United States Department of labour Bureau of labour Statistics, 1976. The figures cited refer to 1975.

19. Alva Myrdal Ibid p. 84.

20. Alva Myrdal Ibid p. 84.

21. Alva Myrdal Ibid p. 86.

22. Alva Myrdal Ibid p. 87.

Wanted: Back Numbers

A couple of my friends and I are hunting for some back issues of LG in order to make our LG volumes complete and also for sending to some interested friends abroad.

We will therefore be glad and thankful to LG subscribers who possess back numbers — particularly earlier volumes — and who do not intend getting them bound into volumes, to contact me with details of available back issues so that we could purchase them.

R. Pathmanathan

15/14-A, Sankilian Veethi,
Nallur, Jaffna.

National Independence . . .

(Continued from page 18)

significant degree by any peripheral unit of the capitalist world system and the peripheral bourgeoisie cannot win in any sustained competition with the metropolitan bourgeoisie in the capitalist world market. This is because the economic, technical and financial superiority and highly monopolistic nature of metropolitan capitalism ensures its dominance in the increasingly integrated capitalist world market. No peripheral economy can insulate itself from the operation of the unequal exchange of values in the capitalist world market without breaking away from the world capitalist system, and this it cannot do given the capitalist economic structure dominant within those societies. Since neo-colonial dependence is inevitable due to the capitalist relations of production prevailing internally, an independent economic development, i.e. breaking away from the world capitalist system, is possible in the contemporary period only through a change in the whole economic structure of the given country. In other words, resistance to neo-colonialism is not possible so long as the given country remains capitalist. It becomes possible only if that country itself "finally abandons the capitalist system" (A. G. Frank) and goes over to a socialist economy.

It should be obvious that no bourgeois political party, or political formation in which the dominant interests articulated are those of this or that bourgeois fraction, can accomplish this task. No rotation in governmental office of political parties representing this or that fraction of the ruling bourgeoisie, still less a change of personalities at the apex of such political parties, can carry through this project. Indeed no political formation **even a government of the Left**, which operates within the capitalist structure, can avoid reproducing capitalist relations and thereby enhancing neocolonial dependency. Any attempt by a Left party to transform the existing socio-economic structures through petty reforms will only succeed in strengthening those structures. If perchance, the reforms are sufficiently far-reaching or are accompanied by radical rhetoric, the government will be bloodily disposed of by the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois. (eg. Chile) The existing socio-economic structures therefore cannot be tinkered with or reformed piecemeal, **but must be smashed in a revolutionary manner.** ("You can peel an onion layer by layer, but you can't skin a tiger claw by claw" said R. H. Tawney). **The conclusion therefore is that the recovery and consolidating of national independence can be accomplished in the contemporary period, only through an anti capitalist i.e, a socialist revolution.**

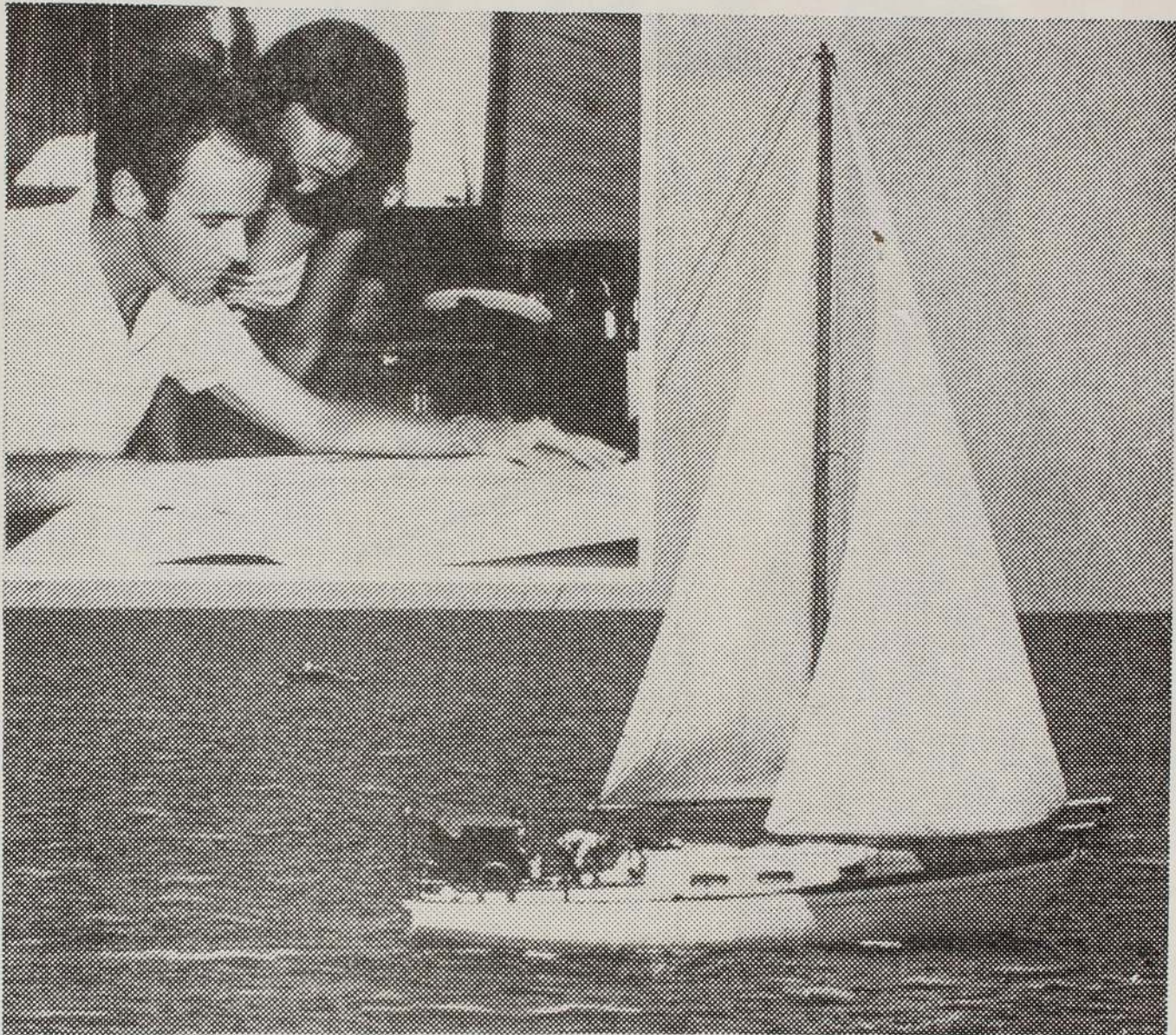
Regis Debray, whose significant contributions to Marxist thought in the 'Tricontinental World' must be studied someday as an independent and major exercise, put it best when he said that:

"The path of independence passes by way of the military and political destruction of the dominant class, organically linked to the United States by the co-management of its interests."

(*'Castroism : The long March in Latin America.'* — Strategy for Revolution)

(To be continued)

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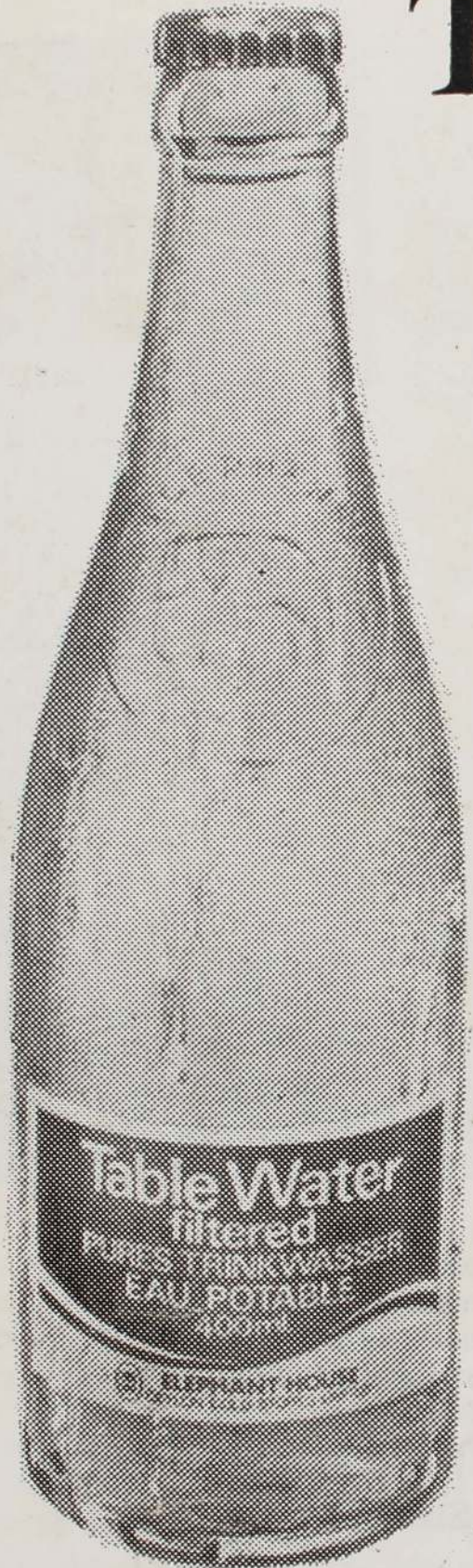
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