

*Politics
of*

COALITION



By

V. Karalasingham

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V. KARALASINGHAM

INTRODUCTION BY

E. GERMAIN

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CEYLON.

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TO
SAM AND DORIS

INTRODUCTION

The present pamphlet has been written at two different times. Section I was originally published in an Internal Bulletin before the LSSP Special Conference at which the question of coalition was posed (incidentally, it was the only document produced for that Conference, which is quite significant as for the degree of preparation for that decisive event in the history of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party !); Sections II and III have been written immediately after the Special Conference, when the author was already a founding member of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Revolutionary Section). Nevertheless, the pamphlet has a high degree of unity. Comrade Karalasingham poses the problem of coalition first on a theoretical and then on a concretely political plane — *i.e.* general theory applied to the specific case of Ceylon today — in a rounded and effective manner, and he advances all the essential arguments which revolutionary Marxism has always opposed to the kind of policies which Messrs. N. M. Perera, Anil Moonesinghe and Cholmondeley Goonewardene, together with the majority of the old LSSP, are today applying in Ceylon, in the interests of the Ceylon bourgeoisie and to the detriment of the Ceylon workers and poor peasants.

The question of coalition governments between working class parties and bourgeois parties has a long history in the international working class movement. It was first posed in 1898, when the French right wing Social Democrat Millerand participated in a “liberal” bourgeois government, in order to “defend the republic,” threatened by clerical and military reaction. A long political struggle

was launched in the Second International around the problem of "Millerandism," in which Rosa Luxemburg won her first laurels as one of the main representatives of the Marxist left inside the Social Democratic movement.

Incidentally, some anarchists and other ultra-left opponents of the Second International tried to extend the responsibilities of "Millerandism" also to Marxists like Rosa Luxemburg or Lenin, accusing them of having "fostered political illusions" and not having "foreseen" Millerand's betrayal, whereas they, the anarchists, had said as early as 1890 that the socialist parties' meddling in elections and "politics" would eventually lead to capitulation before the bourgeois state. Needless to say, there is no truth in this sophistry. Sectarianism is always characterized by the fear of succumbing to temptation. But abstention from elections or expulsions of militants because of their intentions (which have not yet been realized) has never characterised revolutionary Marxism.

The problem of coalition was then posed acutely again in the period of extreme opportunist degeneration of the Third International, starting with 1935, with two high-points: 1935-38 and 1941-48. Leading members of Communist Parties participated in coalition governments with the bourgeoisie in Spain and Cuba (under Batista!), in France, Belgium and Italy, upholding the bourgeois state apparatus and capitalist property relations, and going even to the length of opposing working class strikes in defence of its standard of living, or of proclaiming — like the late Maurice Thorez in France — that there is place only "for one state, one army, and one police." This brazen betrayal of all the basic principles on which the Communist International was built was rationalized by an attempt to "prove" that the state emerging out of the Popular Front or the "resistance" struggle was no more a bourgeois state, a bourgeois democracy, but a "new democracy," a strange being neither fish nor fowl, conveniently falling from the

sky to justify the Communist Party's opportunist class collaboration. Needless to say, a few years later nobody could have any doubt that — de Gaulle's! — state, army and police in France were classical bourgeois phenomena, and that the CP, collaborating in selling them to the workers, had in fact helped the bourgeoisie to rebuild capitalism and to rebuild state weapons which were brought down with bloody might on the heads of the Vietnam, Malgache, Moroccan, Tunisian, Algerian workers; and, occasionally, on the heads of the French workers as well.

In order to justify this complete departure from Marxist principles, in the case of Millerand as well as in the case of Thorez, Togliatti and Co., a series of arguments were advanced which will have a familiar ring for Ceylon readers of comrade Karalasingham's pamphlet. It was said that "circumstances had changed" since Marxists had established the principle not to participate in bourgeois governments; dogmatic clinging to "pure principles" in the face of "changed circumstances" was said to be contrary to the "spirit" of Marxism. It was said that "the left" had to close ranks in the face of "the danger from reaction." It was said that "important reforms" could be realized through such coalition governments, and that these reforms would allow to "introduce socialism step by step."

Rosa Luxemburg proved all these arguments to be fake sixty years ago; Trotsky brilliantly showed their inanity in the case of the Spanish and French "Popular Front" thirty-five years later. And today, they are as worn and stale in Ceylon as they were in those years in France and Spain. Experience will confirm, once again, that far from "stopping reaction" by joining a coalition government with the liberal bourgeoisie, the LSSP right wing probably only laid the ground for a huge electoral victory of the UNP. It will confirm that far from introducing socialism "piece meal," the coalition government

systematically will have to disarm and oppose the working class defence of its immediate and historical interests. Far from "uniting the left," coalition creates disillusion, demoralisation and disorientation among the masses, the first result of it being already a big crisis in the trade union movement and a big set-back to the important move towards trade union unity which had marked the past period.

In fact, not so long ago, someone who should know has summarised the historical balance sheet of all coalition governments with the bourgeoisie, past, present and future, in quite a striking manner. We are referring to Lelio Basso, not a revolutionary Marxist but a left Social Democrat, who in his capacity as general secretary of the United Italian Socialist Party, himself covered up for such a coalition government between 1944 and 1946. Here is the way in which he sums up these experiences :

"Just after the first world war, Karl Kautsky, who specialised in inventing "Marxist" theories to justify all the capitulations by the German Social Democrats produced a "theory" that coalition governments between socialist and bourgeois parties were the necessary transition phase between capitalist and socialist society. Since then, and particularly since the end of the second world war, this kind of coalition government has been tried out many times in several different countries in Europe, and each time Kautsky's "theory" has been proved wrong. Joining coalition governments with bourgeois parties has not helped to effect a gradual transition from capitalism to socialism, nor has it helped the proletariat to conquer power — far from it; whenever a socialist party has joined a coalition government with a bourgeois party, this has just helped to integrate the working class into the capitalist system." *International Socialist Journal*, Number 4, August, 1964, p. 407.

Sad to say, a moderately left wing Social Democrat now has much clearer views on the issue not only than Mr. N. M. Perera but also such old-time Trotskyist cadres like Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin R. de Silva !

Of course, the principled opposition of Marxists is not to coalitions of any kind. It is to coalitions with *bourgeois* parties. Marxists are not on principle opposed to coalitions with *working class* parties, even centrist or opportunist ones. In fact, the "model" socialist revolution, the Russian October revolution, put into power a coalition government of Bolsheviks and Left Social Revolutionaries. And this coalition was not broken by the Bolsheviks but by the Left S.R.'s, who, opposing the signature of the Brest Litovsk peace treaty, organised an armed insurrection against the Soviet power and tried to kill Lenin, Sverdlov and other Bolshevik leaders. Provided the coalition unites various working class parties on the basis of a *socialist programme*, and directs itself clearly towards mass mobilisation in the general direction of overthrowing capitalism, coalition between Marxists and other working class parties is entirely admissible. On the field of propaganda and agitation, it is equally useful and often even necessary — especially in countries where the majority of the working class and poor peasantry divides its allegiance between several parties — to counterpose the slogan of a government of working class parties, based on a socialist programme, to any form of bourgeois government or coalition with the bourgeoisie. In that way, the idea of working class power as opposed to bourgeois power is brought down from the realm of abstract theory into the field of practical day-to-day politics and experience of the masses, and a political axis is given to revolutionary agitation, which can never really lead the masses to power if it limits itself to fight for economic demands, without posing the governmental question in a concrete, realistic way, patiently educating the masses to the idea that everything, in the last analysis, hinges on the question which class exercises political power.

To reject such a policy "on principle" or under the pretext that other working class parties than the revolutionary Marxists are centrist or opportunist organisations, is to equate in fact working class parties with bourgeois parties, *i.e.* to abandon the class criterion and to succumb to sectarian subjectivism. It means to descend into the political arena with one's hands securely tied behind one's back. 1

In the history of the international working class movement, the sectarian refusal to collaborate with opportunist, even treacherous, working class organisations for the defence of the common interests of the working class, has played as disastrous even if mostly less spectacular a role as opportunist collaboration with the class enemy. Be it sufficient to recall the Stalinist so-called "third period" policy which, starting from a correct definition of the German Social Democratic leadership as treacherously class collaborationist, refused to organise a united front with that party against Nazism, thereby keeping the working class split and paralysed before a mortal danger, and contributing in a decisive way to Hitler's victory, which threw the socialist revolution back for at least 25 years in Germany, and cost the European and international working class its severest defeat and 50 million dead....

But nobody really defends the absurd thesis that the SLFP is a working class party! They don't call themselves that. Mr. N. M. Perera doesn't call them that. And even Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin R. de Silva, busily covering up with "Marxist" phraseology a classical reformist class collaborationist policy, haven't dared to advance that justification for the LSSP - SLFP coalition. Once nobody calls the SLFP a working class party, it follows inevitably that it is a bourgeois party. Comrade Karalasingham has brought together many arguments and facts to prove that point, inclusive past statements of the LSSP's right wing and "centre" leaders themselves. We can add that it is a basic tenet of the theory of the perma-

nent revolution — which Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin R. de Silva have not yet publicly abjured! — that the petty bourgeoisie is unable to build parties of its own. It can either follow the lead of a working class party or be led by the representatives of the bourgeoisie, be it enlightened "liberal" ones or reactionaries. In as much as the SLFP is obviously not a proletarian party, it is objectively a bourgeois one, even if its mass base is overwhelmingly petty bourgeois.

This is by no means the first case in history of that kind. The French CP leaders justified their alliance with the Radical Party in the People's Front by saying that the Radical Party was the party of the petty bourgeoisie, a definition on which Trotsky heaped scorn by saying that it was a party which betrayed the interests of the poorer middle classes by tying them to the control of the rich liberal bourgeoisie. Even in the case of the Kuomintang, analogous arguments were used to justify coalition; history has long since spoken its verdict on these kinds of rationalisation. And Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin R. de Silva, who for twenty-five years lectured Ceylonese socialists on the treacherous nature of these arguments in the case of China and France, today find themselves repeating them word for word to justify the shameful capitulation of their own party's majority before coalition with the bourgeoisie.

The honesty and principled character of a revolutionary Marxist organisation is put to a decisive test when it is faced with a choice between principles and material strength. After having remained for twenty years in the Second International together with the big Social Democratic mass parties, and fought their growing opportunism inside that organisation as long as public betrayal of fundamental principles had not come about, Lenin unhesitatingly broke with parties counting hundreds of thousands of members and preferred to stand alone with a handful of international followers, the day the Second International betrayed its

basic programme by supporting the imperialist war on August 1, 1914. History has proved him right.

After having fought for ten years within the ranks of the Third International, its communist mass parties and the CPSU controlling the first workers' state in history, against the growing bureaucratic degeneration of that state, these parties and that International, Trotsky publicly called for an organisational break with them the day that they shamefully capitulated without struggle before triumphant Nazi reaction in Germany, thereby delivering the German and European working class to the deadliest enemy it had ever known.

After having combatted the growing opportunism of the LSSP leadership within the organisation by patient political means, the Fourth International unhesitatingly broke with its strongest section the day its leaders crossed the line from opportunism to betrayal by joining a coalition government with the bourgeoisie. For many years, the Fourth International leadership has followed with growing concern the rise of opportunism inside the LSSP. Again and again it had called upon its leading cadres and militants to correct their course. At its Sixth World Congress, it publicly condemned the opportunist parliamentary support given the Bandaranaike government in 1960, and called upon the LSSP to abandon the wrong theory of the "parliamentary road toward socialism." At its Seventh World Congress, it again publicly criticised grave mistakes committed by the LSSP in applying the United Front tactics, and sent a long letter to the party leaders and membership calling for correction of the mistakes committed. As soon as it was informed of Mr. N. M. Perera's secret negotiations with Mrs. Bandaranaike and his attempts to railroad the LSSP into a coalition government, the United Secretariat of the Fourth International sent a letter to the LSSP's Central Committee on April 23, 1964, condemning any form of coalition with the SLFP. And following the classic

examples of Lenin and Trotsky, refusing to condone both opportunist abandonment of principles and organisational sectarianism, the United Secretariat broke organisationally with Perera and Co, the day they committed betrayal by joining a bourgeois government.

Temporarily, Perera's betrayal has undoubtedly struck a blow at Trotskyism, as Ebert and Vaillant's betrayal of 1914, struck a blow at the international social democracy, and Stalin's betrayal of 1933, struck a blow at communism. But in the long run, principled politics, corresponding to the interests of millions of toilers, prove to be stronger than opportunist leaders. The majority of the educated Trotskyist cadre in Ceylon regrouped in the LSSP (Revolutionary Section) and the unanimity of the world Trotskyist movement have condemned Perera's class collaboration. Together they will educate a new generation of working class and poor peasant militants and cadres in Ceylon who will lead the Ceylon proletariat to its historic victory!

E. Germain

Paris, 11th September, 1964.

I

MARXIST THEORY AND HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE

You want to experiment? But permit me to remind you that the workers' movement possesses a long history with no lack of experience and, if you prefer, experiments. This experience so dearly bought has been crystallised in the shape of a definite doctrine, the very Marxism whose name you so carefully avoid. But before giving you the right to experiment, the party has the right to ask: What method will you use? Henry Ford would scarcely permit a man to experiment in his plant who had not assimilated the requisite conclusions of the past development of industry and the innumerable experiments already carried out. Furthermore, experimental laboratories in factories are carefully segregated from mass production. Far more, impermissible even are witch doctor experiments in the sphere of the labour movement — even though conducted under the banner of anonymous "science." For us the science of the workers' movement is Marxism.

LEON TROTSKY (1940).

MARXIST THEORY AND HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE

THE question of socialist participation in a coalition government under Mrs. Bandaranaike has suddenly become the central political problem. Since the prorogation of Parliament in March, not only has it dominated the newspaper headlines, it is also, the subject of acute and heated controversy within the Left. In fact the very heat of the controversy has already virtually reduced the much vaunted ULF to cinders. Even though by the time this appears in print, a coalition government may well have been established, it is nonetheless important to examine this question from the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism, to define the correct revolutionary attitude to such a government, and to draw for the revolutionary cadres, in particular the youth, the rich and significant lessons of the new experience.

Broad Masses Support Coalition

The overtures of Mrs. Bandaranaike to the official leaders of the Left, and the discreet feelers of the latter to Mrs. Bandaranaike, undoubtedly represent the first serious attempt in Ceylon to form a Centre-Left coalition. Since 1947, two capitalist parties have alternately ruled the country, and, therefore, it is not a matter for surprise that the invitation to the Left should raise the hopes at least of the broad masses who support it. Precisely because this is

the first attempt in Ceylon to draw the undisputed party of the working class to governmental responsibility, it is inevitable that there should be widespread illusions and false hopes, within and outside the LSSP. These have been further strengthened by the open identification of one section of the leadership with ministerial *pourparlers*, and the strange silence, at first, of another section of the leadership, to be followed soon after, not by the repudiation of these discussions, but by their continuance under a different formula. And no less undisputed is the fact that the broad petty bourgeois masses outside, and the backward sections of the working class, are exerting tremendous pressure on the party to accept the invitation of the SLEP to participate in its government. This is of course natural.

In capitalist society, the exploited masses, before they actively and independently intervene on their own behalf, exhaust all possible governmental combinations and parliamentary solutions, not to mention other nostrums pedalled by charlatans of all varieties. But, unlike the professional petty bourgeois demagogues and adventurers, the broad masses seriously believe in the efficacy of what is held out to them. In particular, in a coalition government in which their own trusted leaders are apparently equal participants, they see a simple and direct way to taking the class war itself into the innermost councils of the class enemy. As Trotsky remarked about the first coalition government formed in Russia in 1917: "The masses, in so far as they were not yet for the Bolsheviks, stood solid for the entrance of socialists into the government. If it was a good thing to have Kerensky as a minister, then so much the better six Kerenskys. The masses did not know that this was called coalition with the bourgeoisie, and that the bourgeoisie wanted to use these socialists as a cover for the activities against the people. A coalition looked different from the barracks and from the Marinsky Palace.* The

masses wanted to use the socialists to crowd out the bourgeoisie from the government. Thus two forces tending in opposite directions united for a moment in one."¹

But the Party Cannot Trail Behind them !

But the revolutionary party of the working class cannot take shelter in the "commonsense" argument of the broad masses. Indeed, its historic justification consists solely in its capacity to provide leadership to the exploited people, particularly the working class. This class, unlike all other oppressed classes in history, must rely exclusively on its revolutionary party to provide the requisite leadership in the struggle for political power. Oppressed classes in earlier societies, before they challenged the ruling class for political supremacy, had invariably already established their economic, social and cultural dominance within the old society itself. To the extent that they achieved these conquests within the old framework, the importance of the party as a factor in the political struggle correspondingly diminished. But for the working class conquest of political power is the indispensable precondition for achieving its social and cultural emancipation. The instrument fashioned by the working class to overcome the problems arising from its economic, social, and cultural backwardness within capitalist society is the revolutionary party based on the scientific theory of Marxism-Leninism. It is the very thoroughness of capitalist domination in the social and cultural spheres which invests the revolutionary party with its unique role, namely, the conscious leader of the working masses in their revolutionary struggle against the capitalist class. This signifies that the party, as the vanguard of the class, must boldly face up to its historic task, and not capitulate to alien class pressures, or helplessly and whimperingly surrender its position to the reactionary influences of the more backward elements of the working class itself. At every stage of the political struggle, the general line of the party must be expressed, not in terms of the immediate and ephemeral

* Headquarters of the Russian Provisional Government (1917).

interests of working class or its more privileged sections, but determined by the overall interests of the class as a whole, and formulated in such a manner as to deepen and sharpen the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie. This can only be done on the party's uncompromising acceptance of the method and ideology of Marxism. Historical experience has demonstrated how imperative it is for the revolutionary party of the proletariat to base its decisions on the theoretical foundations of Marxism, even though at particular conjunctures it may well be that these decisions are "unpopular," and may appear "doctrinaire." It is therefore in the light of Marxian theory and historical experience that the demand for socialist participation in the government of Mrs. Bandaranaike must be examined.

Lenin on Methods of Bourgeois Rule

In the passage quoted from Trotsky is also expressed the essence of a coalition government — "two forces tending in opposite directions united for a moment in one." By its very nature therefore a coalition government can arise, or the demand gain support both among a section of the masses and a section of the bourgeoisie, only under certain specific historical conditions. Clearly, where the bourgeoisie rules by direct violence, through an open and naked dictatorship, whether in a Fascist or Bonapartist-militarist form, there can be no question of a Centre-Left coalition. Not even the most desperate seeker of ministerial office would be so naive as to entertain such ambitions, although, to be sure, for a fleeting moment the Weimar predecessors of Ceylon's Soulbury *protegees*, did hope to save their necks by offering their services to Hitler. A political set-up of this kind by its very nature excludes socialist participation. That is why even the most Right wing revisionist Social Democrats of Spain would not think of collaboration in a coalition government with General Franco. A different type of regime, with a basically different method of rule is necessary. In his *Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolu-*

tion, Lenin emphasised these distinct methods of rule: "The world-wide experience of bourgeois and landlord governments has developed two methods of keeping the people in subjection. The first is violence. Nicholas Romanov I, called Nicholas Palkin, and Nicholas II, the Bloody, demonstrated to the Russians the limits of what can and cannot be done in the way of these hangmen's practices. But there is another method, best developed by the English and French bourgeoisie, who "learnt their lesson" in a series of great revolutions and revolutionary movements of the masses. That is the method of deception, flattery, fine phrases, promises by the million, petty sops, and concessions of the unessential while retaining the essential." ^a

This second method referred to by Lenin, that is the method of "deception, flattery, fine phrases, promises by the million, petty sops, and concessions of the unessential while retaining the essential" is what bourgeois ideologues pompously call democracy. In a regime of this nature, an even balance of class forces, or a relationship in favour of the propertied classes, yields an "ideal" division of labour. In the same thesis (Point 8), after stating that the peculiar feature of the present moment in Russia "is the transition at a dizzy speed from the first method to the second, from violent oppression of the people to flattering and deceiving the people by promises," Lenin continues: "Milyukov and Guchkov hold power, they are protecting the profits of capital, conducting an imperialist war in the interests of Russian and Anglo-French capital, and trying to get away with promises, declamations and bombastic statements in reply to the speeches of "cooks" like Chkheidze, Tseretelli and Steklov who threaten, exhort, beseech, demand and proclaim." ^a The division of labour between the Guchkovs who hold power and "get away with promises, declamations and bombastic statements" and the "cooks" like Chkheidze, Tseretelli and Steklov who "threaten, exhort, beseech, demand, proclaim" transcends

national frontiers. Despite the claim made in certain quarters that a peculiar path is ordained for Ceylon, the political regime here has nonetheless exhibited, and continues to exhibit, all the essential features noted by Lenin in the so called revolutionary democracy which functioned in Russia between March and October, 1917. It is only necessary to substitute for the names mentioned by Lenin those of their Ceylonese counterparts to realise how aptly the description given by Lenin is relevant to an assessment of the situation in Ceylon, particularly since 1956. Who can deny that where the leadership of the LSSP did not trail behind the masses when they independently moved into action, their role in relation to the successive Bandaranaike governments was merely to "threaten, exhort, beseech, demand and proclaim," in the manner of the cooks, whom Lenin so mercilessly castigated?

When Bourgeoisie Resort to Coalition

But in a period of transition, where political power changes from one section of the ruling class to another, or from one class to another, the correlation of class forces is extremely unstable. Rapid shifts and new alignments of class forces become the rule and not the exception, and the traditional division of labour in a democracy, between men who wield the power and the "cooks" who "threaten, exhort, beseech, demand and proclaim," is displaced. So long as the mass movement does not encounter a decisive defeat, there soon comes a point in the development of the class struggle, when the men who hold the power are compelled, by the very force of objective circumstances, to seek the active collaboration of the men from the left whom Lenin contemptuously called "cooks." This is sought not to go forward to socialism, but to maintain capitalism.

Two factors from opposing ends facilitate the consummation: the heightened consciousness of the representatives of the bourgeoisie and the weakening of that section of the

leadership of the working class nearest to the mores and customs of the bourgeoisie, a weakening brought about by the very sweep of the developing mass struggle. Soon the cooks are called upon to play a new role, and a new division of labour takes place. In the words of Lenin, "Revolution enlightens all classes with a rapidity and thoroughness unknown in normal, peaceful times. The capitalist, better organised and more experienced than anybody else in the matters of the class struggle and politics, learned their lessons faster than the others. Perceiving that the position of the government was untenable, they resorted to a method which over many decades, ever since 1848, has been practised by the capitalists of other countries in order to fool, divide, and weaken the workers. This method is what is known as "coalition" government, *i.e.*, a joint cabinet formed of members of the bourgeoisie and renegades from socialism." ⁴ In six precious words, which must be instilled into the consciousness of all advanced workers and revolutionary militants, Lenin lays bare the real purpose of the bourgeois offer of a coalition government to the left: **TO FOOL, DIVIDE, AND WEAKEN THE WORKERS.** There can be no bigger crime against the working class and the socialist movement than this, and Lenin rightly brands the accomplices of the bourgeoisie, as renegades from socialism. The "cooks" who in an earlier period threatened, exhorted, beseeched, demanded and proclaimed to their bourgeois masters to do this and that, *i.e.* offered responsive co-operation to the government are now compelled, by the logic of their initial concession, to collaborate in a government with the bourgeoisie, a government whose real purpose is to "fool, divide, and weaken the workers." No wonder Lenin, who at the end of 1917 dismissed them scornfully as "cooks," a few weeks later denounced them as renegades.

Lenin on Role of Socialists in Coalition

And what is the role of the Socialist participants in a coalition government? In the very next paragraph Lenin

states it directly and simply, and the coalition governments formed in all parts of the world in the 47 years since Lenin wrote the *Lessons of the Revolution* have merely served to confirm a hundred times the truth of the following words: "In the countries where freedom and democracy have long existed side by side with a revolutionary labour movement, in Great Britain, France, the capitalists have frequently and very successfully resorted to this method. When the "socialist" leaders entered the bourgeois cabinet, they invariably proved to be figureheads, puppets, screens, for the capitalists, instrument for deceiving the workers. The "democratic and republican" capitalists of Russia resorted to this very method. The Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks let themselves be fooled at once, and the "coalition" cabinet joined by Chernov, Tseretelli and Co. became a fact on May 6." ⁵ Figureheads, puppets, screens for the capitalists, instrument for deceiving the workers — this is the future that is in store for those who abandon their historic positions in the revolutionary movement for portfolios in a bourgeois government. The public utterances already made by the Ministerial aspirants in the ranks of the Left are an ominous warning that even in *Dhamma Deepa* the propositions of Lenin hold good and true.

Mrs. Bandaranaike Profits from History

It is important to remember at this stage that the formation of the first coalition in Russia in 1917 was preceded by what is popularly known as the "April Days" — a series of massive demonstrations of soldiers and workers, which culminated in the open revolt of, at least, one regiment at the Marinsky Palace, the headquarters of the Provisional government. The demonstrations, which commenced with the demand for the resignation of Milyukov, soon extended to include the cry for the resignation of the whole government. The capitalist answer to the rising mass threat was to include no less than six socialists in the

government, and, accordingly, the first coalition government was formed on May 6th, with due fanfare and beating of drums. But the genius of Mrs. Bandaranaike consists in her intelligent anticipation of impending events, and the skill with which she is moving to forestall any possible mass development hostile to her class and government. In the events since the prorogation of Parliament, she has emerged as a true *leader* of her class — displaying both foresight and breadth of vision, the essential attributes of leadership.

Mrs. Bandaranaike clearly is not waiting till she is overwhelmed by a Ceylon variation or modification of the "April Days," that is, a new upsurge of the mass movement directed against the government, to resort to the method of a coalition government. She quite rightly realises that it is better from the standpoint of her class to seek agreement now before the storm breaks. Even before the first tentative exchanges took place between Mrs. Bandaranaike and the official leaders of the Left, there were ample indications of a gathering storm. As was inevitable, the mass enthusiasm which accompanied the new government in July 1960 soon wore down due to the government's congenital incapacity to tackle the urgent problems crying out for solution. Isolated but sustained class actions in different sectors of the working class front (C.T.B. strike of 1962, harbour strike of 60 days duration, bank clerks' strike, 17 days C.T.B. strike, Wellawatta mill strike, etc.), and the extra parliamentary action of the people of the North and the East, soon unmasked the government, which in the face of dwindling mass support fell back on emergency laws to keep it in power. But the very success of the government in handling the working class in a "piecemeal" manner set other processes in motion. The mass organisations of the urban working class began to respond to the idea of a unified struggle on common demands. The organisations of plantation workers, too, joined, and for the first time in the history of the labour movement, all the mass organisations met on 29th September, 1963, to

formulate a list of common demands. The birth of the Joint Committee of Trade Unions, and the direct participation of all sections of the working class in the formulation of their common demands soon roused the class from the earlier mood of dejection, which followed the defeat of isolated actions. And the newly awakening sense of confidence of the working class in its strength received a tremendous impulse in the strike movement of November-December 1963 and January 1964, when the employees of the Port Cargo Corporation, supported by a general strike of the C.M.U., inflicted the first crushing defeat on the government of Mrs. Bandaranaike. The agitation round the 21 demands of the Joint Committee of Trade Unions could not have had a better take-off than that provided by the "thawing" of the government's rigid wage freeze policy which the C.M.U. achieved in the Port strike of November 1963 - January 1964. While the working class was girding its loins for action, the crisis of the government, which the humiliating defeat in the port strike laid bare, was reducing it to virtual impotence. It has ceased to rule and was reduced to discussing its condition — to apportioning blame, finding scapegoats, hunting Judases, etc. All governments as they approach the brink of disaster indulge in this pastime, and the government of Mrs. Bandaranaike was no different. But where Mrs. Bandaranaike has shown her superiority over her predecessors in other countries in similar situations is in preparing her next moves in actual advance of the ultimate or penultimate crisis. Even if her efforts to realise a coalition government fail, due to the working class or its vanguard asserting in time its authority over its leaders, Mrs. Bandaranaike would nonetheless have succeeded in another objective.

Mrs. Bandaranaike's Objectives

Her moves have a two-fold purpose. Her primary object, without doubt, is to enlist in her government, and on her terms, the leaders of the Left to perform those

duties which they are especially hired to discharge, namely, in the words of Lenin, "to fool, divide and weaken the workers." To the credit of Mrs. Bandaranaike, it must be said that in her public statements she has left no doubt as to her intentions in seeking the support of the Left in a coalition government. In the midst of all the double talk on this subject, her's alone is the voice of frankness. At the core of her address to the Executive Committee of her Party is the following :— "We cannot expect any results unless we get the co-operation of the working class. This could be understood if the working of the Port and of other nationalised undertakings are considered. We cannot go backwards. We must go forward. *Disruptions especially strikes and go-slows must be eliminated* and the development of the country must proceed." ⁶ Then, she proceeds to examine certain of the hare-brained schemes to "eliminate" working class struggles, no doubt advocated by elements within her own cabinet, like the setting up of a "dictatorship," compulsion of workers at "the point of gun and bayonet," formation of a "National Government." She summarily rejects them, thereby revealing her more finished appreciation of current political realities than her ministerial Bourbons and Don Quixotes. Immediately thereafter she offers her solution to the common problem of the capitalist class and her government, namely, that of disciplining labour: "Therefore, gentlemen, I decided to initiate talks with the leaders of the working class, particularly, Mr. Philip Gunawardena and Dr. N. M. Perera." ⁷ However brimful may be the illusions of the "learned" leaders of the Left, the housewife with a modest secondary school education who is now the Prime Minister is coldly and brutally realistic in her approach. Whatever the academic limitations, a fifth generation Kandyan aristocrat must necessarily show a subtler and finer estimation of the measures necessary for the defence of property than upstart ministers, lobbyists of special capitalist interests and editorial hacks of the Lake House or the *Times of Ceylon*.

The second object of her move is the paralysis of the mass movement, whatever be the outcome of the bargaining between the government and the left. She has already succeeded in a great measure in her second objective. It is no accident that the parleys commenced just as mass sentiment was beginning to harden around the 21 demands of the Trade Unions, and the workers' organisations were clearing the decks for action. Already while the talks are yet inconclusive, the mass movement has not only receded but is now in a state of suspended animation, and this, too, at a much lower level than before. There is no doubt that in the event of a coalition with the left being realised, in the initial period at any rate, mass sentiment would be with the new government. No less certain is the fact that, even if the present negotiations prove abortive, the mass movement would be put back several stages. In either event, Mrs. Bandaranaike has the last laugh in the current negotiations. If a coalition government is formed, she will triumphantly offer the bourgeoisie on a silver platter the "learned" heads of the Left. If it fails—and this is most unlikely—she would nonetheless have immobilised, at least temporarily, the working class itself. Which other leader of the propertied class would have dared to initiate a single move with the two fold object, either of the decapitation of the official leadership of the Left or the immobilisation even though temporarily of the working class, while at the same time maintaining the facade of democracy? In this lies Mrs. Bandaranaike's pre-eminence as today's leader of the capitalist class of Ceylon.

Lenin's Report on Coalition Government

For the sake of completeness at any rate, it is necessary to follow the fate of the Socialist members of the coalition government formed in Russia on May 6 1917. And in Lenin we have a chronicler whose authority is unquestioned. Lenin first of all notes, "the simpletons of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties were jubilant and

bathed self-admiringly in the rays of the ministerial glories of their leaders," just as already, even before the formation of the coalition government in Ceylon, the supporters of the Right and Centre in the Party who advocate a coalition, give themselves the airs of important and key officials. Although the bourgeois government had made a number of promises to secure the co-operation of the socialists in the government, Lenin records that "the capitalists were all well aware of the puffed up impotence of these leaders, they knew that the promises of the bourgeoisie—regarding control over production, and even the organisation of production, regarding a policy of peace, and so forth—would never be fulfilled."⁸ The "socialist" ministers, of course, were lavish in making speeches and some even went so far as to state "that 100 per cent of the profits of the capitalists would be taken away from them, that their "resistance was broken," and so forth." Then Lenin examines why they could do absolutely nothing. "The Minister renegades from Socialism proved to be mere talking machines for distracting the attention of the oppressed classes, *while the entire apparatus of state administration remained in the hands of the bureaucracy (the officialdom) and the bourgeoisie. The notorious Palchinsky, Vice Minister of Industry, was a typical representative of that apparatus, blocking every measure aimed at the capitalists. The Ministers prated, but everything remained as of old.*"⁹

Certain ministers were put to special use, particularly those with big names. Thus Tseretelli, leader of the Georgian Mensheviks, sentenced by the Czar to hard labour in Siberia and released from prison by the February 1917 revolution itself, was earmarked for the work of subduing the rebellious sailors of Kronstadt. "A most typical representative of the stupid and frightened philistines, Tseretelli was most "conscientious" of all in swallowing the bait of bourgeois calumny, he was the most zealous of all in "smashing up and subduing" Kronstadt, without realising that he was playing the role of a lackey of the counter revolutionary bourgeoisie."¹⁰

But all socialists alike were used for the one job of "white-washing" the coalition government and fooling the people. There are some jobs that even the most liberal capitalist ministers cannot do, and in these fields only socialists can make the grade. Thus according to Lenin, "Wherever a bourgeois minister could not appear in defence of the government, before the revolutionary workers or in the Soviets, a "socialist" minister — Skobelev, or Tseretelli or Chernov — appeared (or more correctly, was sent by the bourgeoisie) and faithfully performed the work of the bourgeoisie; he would do his level best to defend the Cabinet, whitewash the capitalists and fool the people by making promise after promise and by counselling people to wait, wait, wait." ¹¹

But this is not to say that the mountains of the Left did not labour. They not only did but even produced the proverbial mouse. Thus Lenin records that Minister Chernov "was continuously engaged in the useful and interesting work, so beneficial to the people, of 'persuading' his bourgeois colleagues, exhorting them to agree at least to the prohibition of the purchase and sale of land. Such a prohibition had been most solemnly promised to the peasants.... But the promise remained a promise." ¹² It was only on the outbreak of fresh revolutionary action, that even Minister Chernov could get even this modest measure enacted. However, Lenin had no illusion on the adequacy of what was 'accomplished' by the socialist Minister: "But even then it proved to be an isolated measure, incapable of facilitating to any palpable extent the struggle of the peasantry against the landlords for land." ¹³ This was the miserable level of their achievement.

Finally, Lenin sums up the experience of the coalition government as follows: "And so down and down, from step to step. Having once set foot on the inclined plane of compromise with the bourgeoisie, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks slid irresistibly downward, to

the very bottom. On February 28th, in the Petrograd Soviet, they promised conditional support to the bourgeois government. On May 6th they saved it from collapse and allowed themselves to be made its servants and defenders by agreeing to the offensive. On June 9th they united with counter revolutionary bourgeoisie in a campaign of furious rage, lies, and calumnies against the revolutionary proletariat. On June 19th they approved the resumption of the predatory war, which had already begun. On July 3rd they consented to the summoning of reactionary troops, which was the beginning of their complete surrender of power to the Bonapartists. Down and down, step by step." ¹⁴

Opposition to Coalition — Essence of Leninism

The theoretical conclusions of Lenin were proved correct by the experience of the first coalition government formed on May 6 1917. These were reinforced by the course of subsequent events in Russia that year when no less than four coalition governments attempted to rule Russia. Finally on 25th October, the Bolshevik party under Lenin put a merciful end to these desperate attempts by overthrowing the fourth *coalition government*, and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is common knowledge that the Bolshevik victory was possible only on the basis of the correct policy worked out by Lenin, and one of the most important elements of that policy was the firm rejection of anything which even remotely suggested coalition or collaboration with the Mensheviks and the bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties. It is not only the victorious revolution of October 1917 which had proved this. Even in the defeats which the international working class suffered in the period of the Third International under Stalin, and in particular in the experience of the Spanish revolution (1931-39), Lenin's policy received tragic but graphic confirmation. Just as Lenin's defiance of "popular" pressures to enter coalition governments was the very

corner-stone of his ultimate victory in October, similarly, in Spain it can be stated that the adoption by Stalin of the Menshevik policy of collaboration and coalition with the so called "progressive" bourgeoisie doomed the Spanish revolution to ultimate defeat. This is the lesson of lessons of the Spanish revolution and the "theoreticians" of the Centre in particular are fully aware. The Spanish revolution occurred, not in the 19th century, but in the full bloom of their revolutionary manhood. Even though it may well be that while the Spanish workers and peasants were, at the cost of their precious lives, showing to the world that coalition with the bourgeois party is the road of defeat, these leaders were otherwise preoccupied, Leon Trotsky drew for them the lessons of that experience: "From the viewpoint of theory in Spanish politics, Stalin, more than anything astounds one by his complete obliviousness to the alphabet of Leninism. After a lapse of several decades — and what decades — the Comintern has fully re-established as proper the doctrine of Menshevism. More than that: it has contrived to give to his doctrine a more "consistent," and by that token a more absurd expression." ¹⁵ In the year 1964, what can be said of the Leslies and Colvins? That they are "oblivious to the alphabet of Leninism" and are giving Menshevism "a more absurd expression"? This would be a charitable and sympathetic explanation. Not only are they now the vandals of Leninism, even their variety of Menshevism has taken a grotesquely moronic form.

The essence of the differences between the Stalinist and Trotskyist factions within the Comintern (1923-33), and later, between Stalinism and Trotskyism as distinct tendencies within the world working class movement was precisely on the question of the Left collaborating and forming governmental alliances with bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties. What is now sought, and this is admitted on all sides, is a complete reversal of this policy. The least that can be expected is that the new advocates of the

return to Menshevism would at least submit to the party at all levels, from the PB to the smallest local, their motivations for the new policy, and follow this up with documentary amplifications to the Party membership. All the literary talent is with them, but so far they have not thought it fit to do so. Is it that they are contemptuous of the party membership, or is it that they are ashamed to justify their positions in written documents? Whatever the reason, the absence of even a scrap of paper from their side not only makes the current debate somewhat sterile, but also keeps the opposition in the dark of the arguments in favour of the present nakedly revisionist line. Since the less discreet have dared to state at least orally in the CC some of their "arguments," it is necessary both to place them on record and also expose their utter hollowness.

Coalition — the Answer to the UNP Threat

Variations of this theme are the commonest among both groups of coalitionists — that is, of those who want an SLFP - LSSP coalition and those who propose an SLFP - ULF coalition. Playing on the healthy hatred of the masses for the UNP, the leaders of both factions seek to justify their alliance with the bourgeoisie organised in the SLFP as the only means of preventing the resurgence of the UNP. There is no bigger lie than this. In fact, the one certain way of guaranteeing the later triumph of the UNP, or even a more Rightist formation, is by forming a coalition government with the SLFP. When the inevitable disillusionment with the so-called Centre-Left coalition sets in, the very masses who enthusiastically supported it at the commencement will turn away from it and look in the direction of those parties who had the more boldly and consistently opposed it. The disillusionment is inevitable because, in the words of Trotsky, "the theoreticians of the People's Front in essence do not go further than the first rule of arithmetic, that is, addition: the total of "Communists," Socialists, Anarchists and liberals is greater than

each one separately. Such is all their wisdom. Arithmetic, however, is not sufficient in this problem. Mechanics, at least, is necessary: the law of the parallelogram of forces has validity also in politics. The resultant, as is known, is the shorter the more the competent forces diverge from each other. When political allies pull in opposite directions, the resultant can prove equal to zero." ¹⁶

Out of the very wreck of the earlier hopes and illusions of the masses will arise a new sense of urgency, indeed even of desperation, which must relentlessly drive them to those "extreme" parties, on both the Left and the Right, who stood outside the coalition. But if the revolutionary party of the Left is compromised by its association and collaboration with the Centre government, the masses — not prone to draw fine distinctions — will tend to identify the hopelessness of their worsening economic and social conditions as much with the Left as with the SLFP government. In any event, the unscrupulous demagogues of the Right will not hesitate to further confuse matters by directing their fire on the Left as the cause of the misery of the masses. But the position is otherwise, if the revolutionary party maintains its independence in relation to the Centre government and in the period of the latter's rule consistently presents itself as the revolutionary alternative to the people. This becomes the natural pole of attraction to the masses breaking away from the Centre and when this happens a pre-revolutionary situation opens up.

What is most disgusting about this argument is that it completely rehabilitates the fundamental Stalinist position in Spain during the Civil War about the "unity of the anti-fascist forces" as the means of defeating Franco. Trotsky then asked in wonder, "Who will believe that the *Communist Manifesto* was written 90 years ago?" ¹⁷ Legitimately the question can now be asked, "What bloody nerve, what gross indecency to ferret this argument, while the mutilated body of the Spanish revolution is yet warm?"

What about an Agreed Programme ?

The next line of argument is that the Left must "safeguard" itself by seeking prior agreement with the SLFP on a minimum programme, as though such an agreement is anything more valuable than a scrap of paper. When the development of the class struggle compels the bourgeoisie to seek an understanding with the working class, it will not only agree to a minimum programme, but would be prepared to accept the full programme of the socialist revolution itself. Thus it was that the butcher of the Chinese revolution of 1925-27, General Chiang Kai Shek, thought fit to seek admission for his party, the Kuomintang, to the Communist International as "a sympathising" party, but this did not prevent that worthy general, a few months later, from organising a blood bath of the Shanghai proletariat, or thereafter, to engage the workers and peasants of China in civil war, and even now to maintain the pretence of power in the island of Formosa as the direct agent of American imperialism. It is part of the mechanics of bourgeois rule, under certain conditions of the class struggle, to seek agreement (yes, even written agreements) with the party of the working class. That is why Trotsky in criticising the draft programme of the Communist International prepared by Bukharin in 1928, said, "...what is meant by demands that the bourgeoisie wage a "genuine" struggle and that it "not obstruct" the workers? Do we present these conditions to the bourgeoisie itself and demand a public promise from it? It will make you any promises you want! It will even send its delegates to Moscow, enter the peasants' international, adhere as a "sympathizing" party to the Comintern, peek into the Red International of Labour Unions. In short, it will promise anything that will give it the opportunity (with our assistance) to dupe the workers and peasants, more efficiently, more easily, and more completely to throw sand in their eyes — until the first opportunity, such as was offered in Shanghai." ¹⁸ And what is the purpose of

the bourgeoisie seeking such agreements? Trotsky goes on to state that "*it will immediately agree to in order thus to transform us into its guarantors before the working masses.*"¹⁹ How true! In July 1960, the SLFP bourgeoisie needed on "guarantors," and that is why all the laboured courtship of the SLFP by the LSSP Right wing produced nothing. In the final year of its bankrupt Parliamentary life, who can deny that the SLFP is not in urgent need of guarantors? It is not for nothing that the SLFP is now desperately seeking the help of the Left, precisely because now, more than ever, it needs the guarantees of the Left to save it from certain doom.

Once the bourgeoisie has survived its immediate crisis, thanks to the timely assistance of the Left, it immediately proceeds depending on the relationship of class forces to settle accounts with its erstwhile "allies," in the manner either of Chiang Kai Shek who viciously swung back to organise the worst massacre of the proletariat, or of the French bourgeoisie. The latter as is well-known in 1945 took the Communists into the government and with their assistance restored bourgeois "law and order," and most important of all, disarmed the French working class. Once this job was done — and who could take the arms from the working class than the leaders of the trusted proletarian party itself? — the French bourgeoisie threw the Communist leaders out of the government like so many squeezed lemons.

More Portfolios?

What ignorance! More portfolios for the Left means more Left wing errand boys and menials for the bourgeoisie, and nothing more. All the ministries are so many embellishments and no more. Wielding of power requires control of the police and armed forces, and this is the one ministry that Mrs. Bandaranaike will keep for herself. Not that a "Socialist" minister can achieve anything much

better as shown by the Communist Minister of War in the French Cabinet in 1945-47, who was responsible for the continuance of the war against Indo-China. What is conceivable at best is that a determined socialist minister in charge of the armed forces may in a limited manner at least arm a section of the working class.

No "Pure" Revolution — therefore Coalition!

This is the argument of those who want a "theory" to justify their capitulation. The Russian revolution of October 1917 is "idealised" as the "pure" revolution — although Lenin long ago ridiculed the conception of a "pure" revolution. The revolution in Cuba and Algeria are declared to be "impure," since there were many points of dissimilarity with the Russian revolution and from this is drawn the conclusion that through the asphyxiating chamber of a coalition cabinet will emerge the Ceylon revolution. Only hopeless blockheads will search for a common "impurity" in the heroic armed uprising of the Cuban and Algerian peoples and the frantic longing of the Right wing leadership for ministerial portfolios. For all the differences between the events in Cuba and Algeria, on the one side, and the Russian revolution, on the other, it is downright dishonesty to invoke in however qualified a manner the armed struggle in Cuba and Algeria in order to justify support to the formation of a Centre-Left coalition. Even allowing for the wide differences in the scope of events in the Russia of 1917, and Cuba and Algeria, it is remarkable how much is common in all three countries. It is this common feature which constitutes the core of a revolution, namely, the destruction of the old state power and the creation in the course of the uprising of new organs of power, which in the further development of the revolution replaced the old machinery of state, and vested power in the working class. A coalition government comes nowhere near to the accomplishing of this task, or even to giving an encouragement to forces that may ultimately realise it.

All that happens in a coalition government is that certain new faces replace others in the *government*, while the old machinery of *state* with its standing army, police and bureaucracy continues as of old.

But what about Eastern Europe ?

Some vaguely recall the newspaper headlines of the immediate post war years (1945-48), and ask : Did not the Communist Party in these countries first form coalition governments with liberal bourgeois and Social Democratic parties and thereafter edge them out ? Certainly, they did. Ever since the Russian Red Army entered the East European countries in pursuit of the German imperialist army, the real power in these countries rested wholly with the Red Army, the military arm of a workers' state. The very presence of the army of a workers' state immediately altered the balance of class forces decisively in favour of the working class in these countries, and the bourgeoisie, without armed forces of its own, was but a shadow. But Stalin, in order not to strain his wartime alliance with Anglo-American imperialism, maintained for some time the fiction of a coalition government with bourgeois and liberal parties. But even he was soon compelled to recognise reality, however inconvenient this was to world imperialism. Before long the bourgeois relics in the "coalition" cabinets were dispensed with. What assured the success of the Communists in the cabinet was that the real power rested with them and not with the bourgeoisie who were merely prisoners. The presence of the Red Army of the neighbouring workers' state guaranteed this. In the conditions in Ceylon, the state power is with the bourgeoisie and, therefore, socialist ministers in a coalition government can only be their prisoners or servitors.

These are their arguments — and not even a fig leaf !

Responsive Co-operation Leads to . . . Coalition

The impatient reader will now ask : how is it that the leadership of the LSSP, which voluntarily set itself the aim of leading the working class to power and overturning present society, suddenly finds itself on the verge of abject prostration before the very class and state whose overthrow was its dedicated task ? Actually, there is nothing sudden about this development — the "suddenness" consists merely in the vulgarity of the recent public gestures of the leadership. Lenin set the date of the capitulation of the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionaries to their bourgeoisie as the 28th February 1917, although it was not till May 6th of that year that these "socialists" entered the first coalition government. Similarly, although the first serious proposal of seeking a coalition with the bourgeoisie was mooted immediately prior to the July 1960 general election — thereafter held in abeyance and now shamelessly flaunted publicly — this position was long implicit in the politics of the LSSP, particularly since the formation of the first Bandaranaike government in April 1956. Just as the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary participation in a government with the bourgeoisie was preceded by these parties giving the Provisional government "critical support," so too, the LSSP's current bid to join the government of Mrs. Bandaranaike directly flows from the decision of the party in 1956 to give "responsive co-operation" to the then government of the SLFP. Thereafter the evolution of the LSSP leadership followed the same graph as that of the Mensheviks, "down and down, step by step," although the pace of the descent was much slower. But, for all the errors of the Mensheviks, they at least could plead that in following the course they did in 1917, they were merely working out a theoretical prognostication — erroneous though they undoubtedly were — which they had made long years before the actual outbreak of the revolution in Russia. But the LSSP leadership both of the Right and Centre cannot even plead that mitigation which was open to the original Mensheviks. So outrageous is their crime !

For long years the leaders of the Centre in particular offered *puja* to the *April Theses* of Lenin, which elaborated the tactical details of the theory of Permanent Revolution and the writings of Leon Trotsky dealing with the whole historical experience since the October Revolution. They wrote lengthy articles, made innumerable speeches, drafted resolutions, denounced the popular front tactics in all countries, etc. But at the first serious test in 1956 when a "popular" bourgeois government was installed in office they behaved no better than...the Mensheviks of 1917 vintage, or the Stalinists of a more recent period. And before the leadership was the historic example of 1917, which for all the differences in tempo, etc., bore a striking resemblance to what was happening in Ceylon.

In February 1917, the Czar was overthrown and in March a Provisional government set up. Mass enthusiasm was overwhelmingly for the new government and Russia, according to Lenin, was "now the freest of all the belligerent countries of the world." All the "anti-czarist forces" — liberals, democrats, Mensheviks, socialists, etc. — rushed to the defence of the new government, and even some of the Bolsheviks wavered and were uncertain, till Lenin arrived in Russia and made public his *April Theses*. Here he laid down the broad lines of policy: the Provisional government is a capitalist government; no support to the Provisional government; the utter falsity of all its promises must be explained. True the government enjoys the "unreasoning confidence of the masses," but the duty of Bolsheviks is to patiently explain, "so that the masses may by experience overcome their mistakes." Lenin picturesquely summed up the task as "pouring of vinegar and bile into the sweet water of revolutionary democratic phraseology." To the critics who sneered at this type of work, Lenin said: "This seems to be 'nothing more' than propaganda work, but in reality it is most *practical revolutionary work*; for there is no advance for a revolution that has come to a standstill, that has choked itself with phrases,

and that keeps marking time, not because of external obstacles... but because of the unreasoning trust of the masses." 20

Mrs. Bandaranaike — the Unconscious Tool of History

But the LSSP leadership was simply unequal to this task. It is one thing to fight *foreign* imperialism and the hated UNP regime but another thing to stand up to a "democratic" capitalist government enjoying popular support. In the former case, wide layers of the petty bourgeoisie, even if they were not actively with you, gave at least tacit support, and the party leadership suffered no isolation from the masses of their social milieu in particular, as they themselves were an oppressed class both under imperialism and the UNP. Hence this period saw the full flowering of their revolutionary activity to which they gave a socialist colour. Mr. Goonesinghe, having in the twenties given the working class of Ceylon a sense of class consciousness, abandoned that class in the early thirties. It is into this vacuum that the official left leaders of Ceylon stepped in, with their determined anti-imperialist ideas and their equally vague "socialism." But, on the strength of the latter, the leaderless working class held them captive. In that captivity they even "embraced" the most advanced ideas of revolutionary Marxism, represented by Trotskyism. But what is the worth of a prisoner's conversion? In their turn, particularly since 1948 with the spawning of the Nehrus, Aung Sans, Nkrumahs, and Kenyattas, the "Left" leaders have been struggling to release themselves from the grip of this class. That is why under the test of the events of 1956, the LSSP leadership as a revolutionary proletarian leadership collapsed so ignobly. But from the standpoint of their real role as "Leftist" anti-imperialists, 1956 provided them their first grand opening to "freedom." They achieved this under the formula of "responsive co-operation" to the first Bandaranaike. What happened

thereafter was their progressive assimilation to the politics of the bourgeois SLFP. Now at last the "socialism" of the London School of Economics finds its proper resting place in the cabinet of the "liberal" bourgeoisie.

All said it's a sad spectacle. But one must remember the words of Spinoza which Trotsky was so fond of quoting : "Neither to weep nor laugh, but to understand." We have sought to do precisely that, and the reader, we hope, will agree, that we have helped in that understanding. Looked at in this way, it is clear that the developments of the recent period were historically inevitable. The cleansing of the petty bourgeois relics of a bygone age is a necessary phase in the very emergence of the revolutionary proletarian leadership. Not all the iron brooms of the Left Opposition in the Party could have carried out this task with efficiency. But Mrs. Bandaranaike, as the unconscious tool of history, is doing this thankless job with a ruthlessness worthy of that historical task.

Colombo, 15th May, 1964.

II

WHAT IS THE CLASS CHARACTER OF THE SRI LANKA FREEDOM PARTY?

*It was enough for opportunism to speak out
to prove it had nothing to say.*

Rosa Luxemburg (1899)

WHAT IS THE CLASS CHARACTER OF THE SRI LANKA FREEDOM PARTY?

AT the Special Conference of the LSSP, the Right and the Centre made a feeble effort to hide the obviously class collaborationist nature of the proposed coalition. Both groups found their “theoretical” justification in the common premise that the Sri Lanka Freedom Party is a middle class and not a capitalist party. Since any call for a coalition with an admittedly capitalist party would have met resistance, the new characterisation of the SLFP as a petty bourgeois formation was not the product of fresh research, but merely a handy and convenient label for passing off coalition with the bourgeoisie in less offensive language. Less inhibited on Marxist theoretical questions, the Right did not hesitate to state their position, in however guarded a manner, in their resolution. The Centre, on the other hand, heavily committed to Marxist evaluations in the past, did not dare on this question to introduce anything new fangled in their resolution. However, the speeches of their spokesmen at the Conference left no doubt that they too shared the views of the Right on this matter.

Lenin once remarked that “people will always be the stupid victims of deceit and self-deceit in politics until they learn to discover the interest of some class behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises.”²¹ How much greater is the danger if a

political leadership is unable to recognise, or erroneously identifies, the class interests behind a political party? Every political party is nothing but the direct instrument of one class or another and any mistake on so vital a matter is an open invitation to disaster. Hence a correct appraisal of the SLFP is not a question of abstract politics but is an immediate practical question.

The resolution of the revisionist majority after posing the question, "Does coalition with the SLFP mean class collaboration?"²² immediately seeks to reassure the readers on this score. It boldly declares, "nobody would dispute that the UNP is a party of the capitalist class in Ceylon."²³ Thereafter it states that, "the SLFP is a party based on the radical petty bourgeoisie and the lower middle class,"²² and that the main pressure on the government has been from the lower middle class and to some extent even from the working class." Finally, in the next paragraph, after reviewing the legislative activity of the two Bandaranaike governments, the authors conclude their estimation of the SLFP as follows: "When the cumulative effect of these changes are considered, it will be quite apparent that the SLFP is not a capitalist party. The fact that it is functioning within the capitalist framework does not necessarily make it a party of the capitalist class."²²

What are the legislative changes which, according to the authors, "make it quite apparent that the SLFP is not a capitalist party?"²² The resolution itself summarizes them as follows and in fairness to the authors this portion is quoted in full: "It has taken over bus transport, the port, private schools, insurance. It has taken steps to abolish private practice in medical service. It has established the People's Bank and taken over the Ceylon Bank. All these and, above all, petrol which is a direct blow at both imperialist power and capitalist power it has undertaken ... the SLFP Government and the MEP Government

before it has carried forward a national struggle in this country by removing the imperialist bases in this country. Voting rights have been conceded to those above 18 years. The reorganisation of the headman system has taken place. A substantial filip has been given to national cultural activities. The power of the entrenched Catholic Church has been weakened and Buddhist tradition and culture have been given their due place. The ordinary man has been given a place in the political and social life of the country which centuries of imperialist domination has deprived them. The workers have felt the benefits of a number of ameliorative measures including May Day as a paid public holiday."²² The resolution also states that "the cumulative effect of these measures must result in a serious inroad into the capitalist structure of the economy."²² (Our italics).

It is hard to believe that even a Right wing faction in an allegedly Trotskyist party could have produced a resolution containing so much arrant nonsense. That a right wing faction did produce it, shows how much the Trotskyist LSSP was eroded by alien and hostile elements who found in Dr. N. M. Perera their natural leader. The underlying idea of the Right that statification of certain sectors of the economy is socialism, or that the party introducing it is "not capitalist" betrays a truly amazing ignorance not only of scientific socialism but even of the real world of modern capitalism. Clearly the authors' conception of socialism belongs to one of the varieties of pre-Marxian utopian socialism, while their knowledge of capitalism is limited to the early Victorian era.

Capitalism in its classic *laissez faire* form in the 19th century signified the non-intervention of the state in economic affairs and the ideal capitalist state was that, which gave the fullest freedom to the owners of the means of production, transport, exchange, etc., to develop the economy. The early pioneers of capitalism — Britain,

France, United States — alone had the privilege of such development. All countries which came late to capitalist development, needed state intervention for the further development of their economy. The history of modern capitalist countries which commenced their capitalist development late, like Germany and Japan, either late in the 19th or early in the 20th century, shows the dominant role played by the state in economic development. The state intervened in several ways: it made direct subsidies to the capitalist class, or entered into partnership with private capital, or itself directly participated either by taking over established industry or entering on a monopolist basis in new ventures calling for large capital investment. By these means the late starters on the path of capitalist development were able to catch up with, and in some instances even outstrip, the original capitalist "pathfinders." Already by the end of the 19th century the intervention of the state was so pronounced that many socialists of that time saw in this "a serious inroad into the capitalist structure of the economy." Fredrick Engels himself answered these innocents, and as this passage has acquired a new relevance, we quote it below: "...since Bismarck went in for state ownership of industrial establishments, a kind of spurious socialism has arisen, degenerating now and again into something of flunkeyism that without more ado declares all state ownership even of the Bismarkian sort, to be socialistic. Certainly, if the taking over by the state of the tobacco industry is socialistic, then Napoleon and Metternich must be numbered among the founders of socialism. If the Belgian state, for quite ordinary political and financial reasons, itself constructed its chief railway lines; if Bismarck, not under any economic compulsion, took over for the state the chief Prussian lines, simply to be the better able to have them in hand in case of war, to bring up the railway employees as voting cattle for the government, and especially to create for himself a new source of income independent of parliamentary votes — this was in no sense, a socialistic measure,

directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously. Otherwise, the Royal Maritime Company, the Royal Porcelain Manufacture, and even the regimental tailor of the army would also be socialist institutions, or even, as was seriously proposed by a sly dog in Frederick William III's reign, the taking over by the state of the brothels." ²³ At another place in the same book, after tracing the development of capitalism, Engels declares: "The official representative of capitalist society — the state — will ultimately have to undertake the direction of production. This necessity for conversion into state property is felt first in the great institutions for intercourse and communication — the post office, the telegraphs, the railways." ²⁴

In backward countries which have to catch up with nearly 2 centuries of capitalist development, the native property owning classes are too weak to undertake the task of development. Their resources are inadequate for the high investments of capital required. The state steps in directly in those fields which entail heavy investment, like in Ceylon, cement, iron and steel, oil refining, chemicals, while leaving the "lighter" investment industries, like soft drinks, cosmetics, garments, etc., to private industry. Inevitably in the second half of the 20th century the area of state economic activity is much wider than in the time of the Iron Chancellor. This has been the pattern of development in Nehru's India as in Nasser's Egypt, and this is what the SLFP has been attempting to do in Ceylon. Such a policy will naturally call for the nationalisation of the most profitable existing industry, since this will give to the state an economically powerful lever for further investment. Hence it is that a Nasser is compelled to nationalize the Suez Canal, even though in doing so, he comes up against foreign imperialism. And that is why it is conceivable that some government in Ceylon could well nationalise the tea and rubber plantations and yet remain thoroughly bourgeois. In these nationalisation measures there is, as Engels pointed out, nothing "socialist," because it is the

capitalist state which takes over private industry and prepares the ground for the growth of the capitalist class in other sectors of the economy. What gives a socialist character to an economy is not any kind of nationalisation, but nationalisation by a workers' and peasants' state, *i.e.* a state in which the working class is the ruling class in society and the party of the working class wields the state power. The essential precondition for a socialist economy is the conquest of political power by the working class through its class party, and the creation of a new state with new organs which defend the working class against the exploiters. The nationalization of the Bismarckian variety, whether carried out by Nehru or Bandaranaike, General Ne Win or President Nasser, is merely the form which capitalist development itself imposes on backward countries. It alters nothing in social relations—the capitalist class continues its exploitation of the working class, directly in the sector reserved for private capital and indirectly in the nationalised sector through its control of the capitalist state which “owns” the state industries.

It is not without significance that the rise of the SLFP should have ushered in statification measures in Ceylon. Under the regime of the UNP these would have been impossible, just as in the Egypt of King Farouk, the nationalisation of the Suez Canal and other “progressive” measures would have been inconceivable. The UNP was, and still to a great extent is, primarily the party of the big landowners, tea and rubber planters and the compradore merchants of Colombo. These constituted the dominant native propertied interest under imperialism and, to their party, imperialism transferred power in 1948. But already under the exigencies of the last war, a new property owning class emerged, based on the enormous profits of war contracts, wartime profiteering and ancillary industries. This *nouveau riche*, by and large, came from a lower social layer than the established landowning aristocracy who formed the leadership of the United National Party, that is, the

Senanayakes, Bandaranaiques, and Kotelawalas. Not only was this leadership unwilling to share power with the new parvenus but it did hardly anything to aid the incipient industrial entrepreneurs among them. Indeed as far as the latter was concerned the political change over from direct colonial rule to independence under the UNP signified no change. In comparison with the landed interests, they were so weak that they were unable for some time to throw up a party of their own, and still less could the new interests compete with the revolutionary left for mass allegiance in order to challenge the United National Party. But the crack-up of the ruling caucus of the UNP and the break-away of Mr. Bandaranaike in 1950 opened to the new bourgeois elements a rallying centre of their own. A class without a leader and a leader without a class resolved their mutual problem and founded the Sri Lanka Freedom Party! And within 5 years under the aegis of this class Mr. Bandaranaike came to power.

But is not the SLFP, based on the radical petty bourgeoisie and the lower middle class as the revisionist majority resolution claims? It certainly is! But this does not signify one whit that *it ceases to be a bourgeois party*. The social composition of a party is never the determinant of its class character, any more than the numerical strength of the various classes in society determines the class character of that society. What class interest does that party serve and what class controls the real levers of power? These are the vital matters, and not the numbers of workers, peasants and lower middle class or radical petty bourgeois elements who constitute its membership or vote for it at elections, that determine the class character of a party. In the words of Trotsky, “Bourgeois society as is known, is so constructed that the propertyless, discontented and deceived masses are at the bottom and the contented fakers remain on top. Every bourgeois party, if it is a real party, that is, if it embraces considerable masses, is built on the self same principle. The exploiters, fakers, and

despots compose the minority in class society. Every capitalist party is therefore compelled in its internal relations, in one way or another, to reproduce and reflect the relations in bourgeois society as a whole." ²⁵

It is not the base but the "summit" of a party which is decisive in ascertaining the party's real role. In the heyday of the so-called progressive role of the Kuomintang, during the Chinese revolution (1925-27), the Stalin—Bukharin faction in the Comintern sought to justify its policy of collaboration with the Kuomintang on the ground that "nine-tenths" of the party was left, since it was based on the workers and peasants. Trotsky's answer is worth recalling: "The 'high' summit of the Kuomintang of whom Bukharin speaks so ironically, as of something secondary, accidental, and temporary, is in reality the soul of the Kuomintang, its social essence. Of course the bourgeoisie constitutes only the 'summit' in the party as well as in society. But this summit is powerful in its capital, knowledge, and connections: it can always fall back on the imperialists for support, and what is most important, it can always resort to the actual political and military power which is intimately fused with the leadership in the Kuomintang itself. It is precisely this summit that wrote laws against strikes, throttled the uprisings of the peasants, shoved the Communists into a dark corner, and, at best, allowed them to be only one-third of the party, exacted an oath from them that petty-bourgeois Sun Yat-Senism takes precedence over Marxism. The rank and file were picked and harnessed by this summit, serving it, like Moscow, as a "Left" support, just as the generals, compradores, and imperialists served it as a Right support." ²⁶ And to Bukharin's question, "What about the Kuomintang masses, are they mere cattle?", Trotsky's reply is also the definitive answer to those who now show a simulated anxiety about the SLFP masses: "Of course they are cattle. The masses of any bourgeois party are always cattle, although in different degrees. But for us the masses are not cattle,

are they? No, that is precisely why we are forbidden to drive them into the arms of the bourgeoisie, *camouflaging the latter under the label of the workers' and peasants' party*. That is precisely why we are forbidden to subordinate the proletarian party to a bourgeois party, but on the contrary, must at every step, oppose the former to the latter." ²⁷

Is the attitude of the SLFP summit any different from that of the Kuomintang or the Indian National Congress? And one is talking not about the rag, tag and bobtail assembled in Formosa, or the Indian Tammany Hall machine, which even the blind bats of the revisionist Right wing can recognise as bourgeois, but of these organisations at the pinnacle of their mass influence, when they were leading the "nation" against one or another imperialism. The SLFP is as much the conscious instrument of the capitalist class of Ceylon as the Kuomintang was the classic party of the Chinese bourgeoisie or the Indian National Congress was, and is, the party *par excellence* of the Indian bourgeoisie. Both the Kuomintang and the Indian National Congress of Gandhi and Nehru immediately represented the industrial bourgeoisie of China and India and not the land-owners and compradores. The Ceylon equivalent of the Kuomintang or the Indian National Congress, *i.e.* a mass bourgeois party, representative primarily of industrial interests, is a comparatively recent phenomenon which arose only in the post war years. It had to be so, because Ceylon till recently, was almost in the literal sense, a plantation outpost of imperialism. But once an organisation of that type appeared with the springing up of a native industrial interest, it exhibited all the essential features of its more developed first cousins—the Kuomintang and the Indian National Congress, although to be sure in Lilliputian proportions.

Whatever the doubts any honest socialist may have had on the question of the class character of the SLFP in the past, today, in the light of the experience of the two

Bandaranaike governments, there can be none. Even though May Day is a paid holiday (have the revisionists forgotten that this was so even in Hitler's Germany?), the class whose direct interests the SLFP regime protects and promotes are those of Ceylonese industrial and Sinhalese commercial interests. Only the truly dull witted or the dishonestly partisan, who do not want to face facts, would fail to discern in the actions of the two Bandaranaike governments the working out of a conscious policy of promoting the Ceylonese capitalist class. This is the essence of its policy, everything else is incidental. Even these incidental matters, "the filip . . . given to national cultural activities," ²⁸ and "Buddhist tradition and culture have been given their due place" ²⁸ which appear so important to the revisionists, serve to emphasise the wholly bourgeois character of the SLFP. The traditional war cry among property owners in their internecine struggle, as well as against their common enemy, the revolutionary working class, is religion. In practically every country, during the early period of development, oppositional trends among the bourgeoisie have invariably asserted themselves, in the first instance, through new theological doctrines against the established religion. These doctrines express in the language of religion the demands of that section of the bourgeoisie seeking to gain supremacy. Thus according to Engels, "And when the burghers began to thrive, there developed, in opposition to feudal Catholicism, the Protestant heresy . . . The Middle Ages had attached to theology all the other forms of ideology — philosophy, politics, jurisprudence — and made them subdivisions of theology. It thereby constrained every social and political movement to take on a theological form. The sentiments of the masses were fed with religion to the exclusion of all else; it was therefore necessary to put forward their own interests in a religious guise in order to produce an impetuous movement." ²⁹ In Europe the domination of the Roman Catholic Church was so complete that all such movements (Lutheranism, Calvinism, Method-

ism, etc.) naturally had a Christian base, but in the East these movements had necessarily to draw their inspiration either in Confucianism, Hinduism or Buddhism "in order to produce an impetuous movement." And as the Church was the handmaid of imperialism, inevitably bourgeois political movements in China, India and Ceylon had strong Hindu or Buddhist overtones and therefore potentially anti-Christian. Sun Yat Sen invoked Confucius and Gandhi drew on Lord Krishna and the *Baghavad Gita*, while Mr. Bandaranaike as a good Ceylon bourgeois leader turned to Lord Buddha. The more aggressive militancy of the Buddhist revival, which seeks a theocratic state, is merely the obverse side of the economic and material poverty of the Ceylon bourgeois organised in the SLFP.

The capitalist character of the SLFP is shown, not only in its nationalisation programme, which is the essential structural form for the limited development possible under capitalism. Its cloven foot is revealed in the industrial private sector. By its import policy, the government has assured a guaranteed home market for a number of "light" consumer industries, while substantial tax reliefs and loans at nominal interest further assist the new industrialists. The "wage freeze" rigidly enforced, the low import duties on machinery and raw material, as also the provision for industrial know-how, are designed to help the industrial entrepreneur outgrow his swaddling clothes. While the capitalist class has been nursed with almost loving care, the working class and other oppressed masses have experienced the full blast of its anti-working class policy. The deliberate "wearing down" of strikers, the use of emergency powers both to smash strikes and suppress the oppressed peoples of the North and East, the passing of ever more stringent repressive and anti-democratic laws directed at the mass movement, the tear-gassing of peasant demonstrations, the deliberate policy of dividing the mass movement on religious and linguistic lines — these and others — reveal the truly capitalist character of

of the SLFP. Indeed the experience of the SLFP in office confirms the Marxian analysis of its capitalist character, made long years ago.

Today, however, cowardly petty bourgeois worshippers of power (Doric de Souza, etc.), spineless intellectuals who do not want to break the comfortable routine of their lives (Colvin and others), and greedy seekers of office (N. M. Perera and others), who needed an alibi for their treachery have now attempted to give Mr. Bandaranaike a new dimension and his party a new characterisation. But soon after the formation of the SLFP, a recognised spokesman of the LSSP raised the questions "What is the SLFP as a political party? What is its class character?" and himself answered them as follows: "The answer is that it is a capitalist party though, like every major capitalist party, it has also a wide petty bourgeois membership and following. The SLFP is in fact the *alternative party of the Ceylon capitalist class*. It is nurtured and maintained by the capitalist class itself to hold the leftward moving masses within capitalism's general framework, if and when the capitalist UNP government is defeated or overthrown. In other words, it is the Ceylon capitalist class alternative to the UNP; the alternative capitalist party held in reserve by the Ceylon capitalist class — and its foreign imperialist masters — against the eventuality of the UNP going down in defeat before the masses." ⁸⁰ The fact that the author of the above quoted passage is now grovelling before the government of the SLFP does not invalidate the characterization. What that fact shows is that a keen intellect and a good pen do not make a revolutionary. Trotsky himself emphasised the essential qualities of a revolutionary in a letter he wrote to a successful Parisian lawyer whose sojourn in the movement he abruptly terminated: "Revolutionaries may be either educated or ignorant people, either intelligent or dull; but there can be no revolutionaries without the will that breaks obstacles, without devotion, without the spirit of sacrifice." ⁸¹ When these are lacking the first serious crisis sends these people, however educated

and intelligent, straight into the enemy's camp, no doubt there to constitute the "Left" wing.

But even assuming that the SLFP leadership is petty bourgeois, does this fact introduce a *qualitatively* new element? Out of that vast laboratory of the revolution which China indeed was, between the years 1925-27, C. R. Govindan, better known as Colvin R. de Silva, drew for the revolutionaries of India an important lesson: "The Chinese revolution also provided a full proof that the urban petty bourgeoisie does not provide to the revolutionary masses an alternative independent leadership. The Wuhan government conclusively demonstrated that the petty bourgeois is not only as much an upholder of existent property relations as his big bourgeois brother, but is so tied to the latter as to be unable to take any independent course of action. Faced with the revolutionary mass movement, he knows no other course than to coalesce with the big bourgeoisie in order to crush it." ⁸² In parenthesis it may be added that the existence of the Palk Strait does not limit or diminish the importance of this lesson for Ceylon revolutionaries as well.

All honest socialists — persons to whom the "word socialism is not a hollow sound but the content of their moral life" (Trotsky) — will see that any link-up with the SLFP is a downright betrayal of the working class. That is the essence of the politics of coalition. The irony is that the warning was sounded more than 10 years ago, by the LSSP itself, when the Communist Party sought to campaign for a "United Front" on the basis of the programme of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. After pouring justified scorn on the proposal Colvin R. de Silva went on to say, "The CP game is now clear. Its whole aim is to hitch the working class and the general masses to the SLFP under cover of a fake 'Left' United Front." ⁸³ But today not only is the CP game clear, but clearer still is your game, Dr. de Silva. Need he be reminded what he told P. C. Joshi that the wages of sin is death? ⁸⁴

III

THE COLLAPSE OF THE OLD LEADERSHIP

*Bourgeois revolutions, like those of the eighteenth century, storm swiftly from success to success; their dramatic effects outdo each other; men and things seem set in sparkling brilliants; ecstasy is the everyday spirit; but they are short lived; soon they have attained their zenith, and a long crapulent depression lays hold of society before it learns soberly to assimilate the results of its storm-and-stress period. On the other hand, proletarian revolutions, like those of the nineteenth century, criticise themselves constantly, interrupt themselves continually in their own course, come back to the apparently accomplished in order to begin it afresh, deride with unmerciful thoroughness the inadequacies, weaknesses and paltriness of their first attempts, seem to throw their adversary only in order that he may draw new strength from the earth and rise again, more gigantic, before them, recoil ever and anon from the indefinite prodigiousness of their won aims, until a situation has been created which makes all turning back impossible, and the conditions themselves cry out: *Hic Rhodus, hic salta!* Here is the rose, here dance!*

Karl Marx (1852)

III

THE COLLAPSE OF THE OLD LEADERSHIP

EVEN before the Special Conference, all sections of opinion within the Party were agreed that the Right wing group of Dr. Perera would get a majority in favour of its line of forming a coalition government with the capitalist SLFP. But the actual voting figures on the three resolutions, that is the resolutions of the Right, Centre and the Left showed an overwhelming support for the resolution of the Perera faction which received over 500 of the 700 votes. This disproportionately large vote in favour of an openly and nakedly revisionist position reveals that the LSSP as it was constituted at the time of the Conference was clearly not what it claimed to be, namely the vanguard organisation of the revolutionary working class.

It would be idle to blame the Party rank and file who in such numbers voted for the resolution of Dr. Perera. To the best of their ability they thought out the problems before them in the limited time and voted for the resolution which promised them an opening to "socialism." It is no fault of theirs that these votes added to give the revisionists an absolute majority. What is unfortunate is that they were called upon to vote on a fundamental theoretical Marxist question, though in the specific form of a coalition with the SLFP. For this, the blame entirely rests on the leadership of Leslie who was mainly responsible for their recruitment into the Party and their continuance as members on an abysmally low political level. The

leadership made no attempts to raise the political level of these new members and an ignorant membership was looked on as a distinct advantage in the fight against the Left since loyalty to the established leadership was the test of admission. So long as the political leadership of Leslie — Colvin was accepted by N. M. Perera, both groups happily went along utterly indifferent to the political education of the Party rank and file, the Youth Leagues, the Trade Unions, and the Party periphery generally. It was not only a matter of the Marxist education of the membership. Even political discussions on current questions were discouraged, and, in the last few years, new forms of activity were specially devised in order to avoid political discussion even on occasions when it was traditional to hold them. Thus, commencing with the Anuradhapura session of the Youth Leagues in 1961, the farce of *Shramadhana* was introduced and several hours were sliced off political debate and delegates physically exhausted in labour not profitable either to the Party or the movement as a whole. The disease of *Shramadhana* spread down the line. At the next session of the Youth Leagues, at Balapitiya, the leadership shamelessly avoided all political discussions by organising a meaningless 50 mile march which did not even take the form of a demonstration against the Government. It is no accident that all this commenced after the LSSP decided on close collaboration with the government of Mrs. Bandaranaike, following the general election of July 1960 when the Party leadership voted to support the Budget and Throne Speech of the SLFP government.

In this manner the entirety of the post-1960 party members was denied the political inner life of the Party which is sustained through education, discussion, debates, internal bulletins, etc. Out of the new recruits, a docile membership distinguished only by its obedience to the leadership of Leslie was sought to be created. But history plays funny tricks with the best laid plans of mice and men.

Leslie Goonewardene, who built up an organisation to keep the Left in a perpetual minority, was soon to be crushed and demoralised by the very members whom he brought into the LSSP. When N. M. Perera showed his pro-coalitionist stand, the entire membership which Leslie nursed to life turned against him to support coalition of the LSSP and SLFP. For whatever else the Conference showed, it revealed with absolute clearness the wholesale rejection of the politics of the Leslie — Colvin group.

Till recently, Dr. Perera never claimed to provide political leadership to the LSSP. In the early years of the Party, it was Philip Gunawardena who played this role, and after the latter's defection, Leslie and Colvin constituted the political leadership of the party.

During all these years N. M. Perera dutifully accepted the political line as determined by the leadership. However much he and his cohorts may sneer at their revolutionary past, with its alleged "sectarianism," it was precisely the Marxian character of the old political leadership of Colvin-Leslie which made of N. M. Perera the revolutionary public image so familiar till his absorption into the cabinet of Mrs. Bandaranaike. It is an open secret that Dr. N. M. Perera was far from being a Marxist — he was, and is, at best a Laskian in politics and a Keynesian in economics. This fatal combination of Laski and Keynes in a backward country like Ceylon would have long ago ruined Dr. Perera. But thanks to the Marxist orientation of the LSSP, given by Philip Gunawardena, and later, by Leslie and Colvin, Dr. Perera not merely averted a premature political death, but was able, on the very back of that revolutionary Marxist movement, (today labelled by him as "sectarian, doctrinaire, sterile, ingrown, etc."), to scale the "heights" of Mrs. Bandaranaike's cabinet.

The first time Dr. Perera ventured to political leadership was at the Party conference in May 1960. And

significantly on the first occasion he sought to act independently, either of Philip Gunawardena or of Colvin-Leslie, it was to propose a coalition with the SLFP! The Party conference accepted his proposal but subsequent events, particularly the return of the SLFP with an absolute majority, saved the Party. Never before had History given a warning signal so sharp, and what is more important, so timely — to avert an impending catastrophe. The lesson of N.M.'s revisionist victory was not altogether lost on the leadership of Leslie-Colvin since the latter, too, met the Opposition elements to discuss the new danger represented by the emergence of N. M. Perera with his independent political line, based not on Marxism and Trotskyism, but on petty bourgeois and bourgeois theorists like Harold Laski and Maynard Keynes. After the July 1960 elections Colvin and Leslie lost all interest in saving the LSSP from the pestilence of N. M. Perera's open espousal of basically anti-working class ideas. Actually they were themselves moving closer to the capitalist SLFP government — relentlessly driven to that course by the 1956 policy of responsive co-operation. They made out, however, that they were adapting themselves to N. M. Perera's revisionism in order to save him from the final and irretrievable debacle of open class collaboration. But all to no avail. A scientist must be strictly objective and, if he tries to cheat himself on imagined facts and phenomena, he can only blame himself, if he is later overcome by a crisis, which he could have avoided through a proper, honest and objective appreciation of facts. Every science is a terrible discipline, and the science of Marxism is no different. Leslie and Colvin disregarded all the storm signals and now they are caught up in the deluge of N. M. Perera's revisionism.

But startling though it may appear, the fact is that bourgeois reformism is their habitat. That is why within a few weeks of the formation of the coalition government, these men are already doing the dirty work for their new

mistress and masters with zest. Mr. Leslie Goonewardene, displaying a new burst of initiative, is attempting to muzzle the Opposition in Parliament, while his colleague, Dr. Colvin R. de Silva is the principal public relations officer of the government, and together, they are the shadow advisers of two "socialist" ministers. These men and Dr. Perera did not come into the revolutionary socialist movement — they drifted into it, drawn by the force exerted by Mr. Philip Gunawardena. The latter alone, of the early pioneers of the LSSP, was a Marxist, and what is most important of all, he alone was an active and serious participant in the revolutionary movement abroad, in the United States and the United Kingdom. The others, while abroad, settled to their academic routine so diligently that they surfaced to political life only after their professional examinations and University doctorates. And the politics to which they took was the harmless Fabianism of the early thirties, or the equally gentle radicalism of an Intourist visitor to the Soviet Union, or to a variety of Christian socialism. These were the puny heights of their socialist accomplishment. And that too, in the impetuosity of their youth, and in the England of the Depression years with its heightened class struggles, and most important of all a Communist Party, that for all the errors of the ultra-leftism of the Third period, aggressively militant! The organic conservatism of their politics is clearly brought out in the fact that in that turbulent period they came nowhere near even the fringe of the English labour movement. In sharp contrast was Mr. Philip Gunawardena who, abandoning his academic pursuits, was active in colonial student circles, and within the British Communist Party, had moved to open support of the International Left Opposition. The contrast between them was to persist through the years, but the association of the Marxist Philip Gunawardena with the *Herr Doktors* of the London University soon rescued the latter from the rut of conventional bourgeois learning and opened to them new horizons. Under his powerful influence, the more talented among them moved

from "popular frontism," while even the Fabian traits of others receded to the background. And, together with Philip Gunawardena, they constituted a formidable team which has left its impress on history in what is the "heroic period" of the LSSP (1935-47). But the effervescence of their revolutionary activity lasted as long as Mr. Philip Gunawardena himself was in the organised Marxist movement. True, in the years of the latter's independent existence as a Marxist outside the LSSP, the leadership of Leslie-Colvin maintained their Marxist orientation, but competition with Mr. Philip Gunawardena's rival Trotskyist organisation left them no other choice. But once Mr. Philip Gunawardena broke with Marxism and joined the late Mr. Bandaranaike, the bell tolled for the Leslies and Colvins. Within a few months of Mr. Philip Gunawardena's final defection from the revolutionary movement, the Leslies and Colvins, in their own way, broke with Marxism with their policy of "responsive co-operation" to the capitalist government of Mr. Bandaranaike. They were, in fact, beginning to find a road back to the respectable politics of their youth.

But the poor calibre of the leadership is only one aspect, and a subordinate one at that. The LSSP ever since its inception carried within it two sharply defined tendencies, a petty bourgeois nationalist and a proletarian Marxist, and the factional struggles and splits which have punctuated its history reflected the struggle of these tendencies. In the early years of the Party, its loose mass character gave a weightage to petty bourgeois nationalist elements, but the unity of the leadership, under the Marxist Philip Gunawardena, was sufficient to hold the alien elements under control. The adoption of a Marxist programme and the Bolshevik principle of party organisation, without adequate and proper preparation, did not do away with the old conflict but brought it to a head when, in 1945, two Trotskyist organisations functioned. But the bifurcation at least had the distinct merit of reducing the pressure of

the petty bourgeois masses on the genuine Marxist tendency represented by the Bolshevik-Leninist Party. The Sama Samaja Party of N. M. Perera was the natural haven for these elements. But the unification of the two organisations in 1950, revived the old struggle, and in 1953, over one-third of the unified organisation led by Henry Peiris and others demanded that the Party should line-up with Mr. Bandaranaike to form a "democratic government." Leslie and Colvin gave battle. The proposal was defeated but the victors were soon to be vanquished. In less than 3 years, the very men who fought the revisionism of Henry Peiris offered "responsive co-operation" to the government of Mr. Bandaranaike, thereby conceding the basic positions of the 1953 revisionists. The capitulation of the Leslie-Colvin leadership to the politics of Henry Peiris is as much proof of their fundamental incapacity to provide revolutionary leadership, as of the tremendous pressure on the Party of non-proletarian elements in a predominantly petty bourgeois country.

While the Party successfully withstood this pressure during the next onslaught (the Sinhala Only agitation), the impact of the fury of the petty bourgeois masses, no doubt, left a deep impression on the weak leadership. The formation in 1939 by Pandit Nehru of the Ceylon Indian Congress — which later divided to form the Ceylon Workers' Congress and the Democratic Workers' Congress — and its growth as the principal organisation of the plantation workers — and that too outside the influence of the LSSP — and the emergence of the reactionary Federal Party as the spokesman of the Tamil-speaking people of the North and East, further isolated the LSSP from two groups whose direct influence on the Party would have counteracted to some extent at least the increased pressures of the chauvinist middle classes. Thondaman and Chelvanayakam, each for his own class reason, successfully held back the masses supporting them from the LSSP. The healthy mass influences on the party were restricted entirely to

the advanced sections among the urban working class. A revolutionary party no less than any other organisation is ultimately a part of society. The successful containment of the class pressures of the plantation working class in an exclusive organisation under reactionary leadership and the quarantining of the oppressed Tamil speaking in the communal Tamil Federal Party, exposed the LSSP, almost wholly, to middle class influences that were far from healthy.

A leadership of exceptional dedication and strength was required to stand up to the mounting new pressures which increased tenfold, once the SLFP itself had twice dashed the hopes of the petty bourgeois masses who had supported it in April 1956 and July 1960. This the leadership of Colvin-Leslie was not. But thanks to the deep-seated revolutionary tradition in the LSSP, it took over 8 years before the leadership could move further from "responsive co-operation" to actual participation in a SLFP government.

But the transformation of the LSSP from the vanguard of the working class into a bourgeois agency within the working class got under way. The first steps were almost innocuous that only in retrospect have they significance. Thus, the SLFP which was originally denounced as the alternative capitalist party was no longer so characterised, and what is more, neither was the old characterisation officially withdrawn; on the plea, the SLFP is not the UNP, the party leadership patronised state tamashas and soon commenced to fraternise with the class enemy and ingratiate itself with "official" society; the emphasis in party propaganda gradually shifted from the class to the "nation," from revolution to Parliament, from science to witchcraft; new virtues were discovered in Mr. Bandaranaike as "the champion of the common man," although only a few years previously, he was rightly branded as

"that principal crusader against the Indian workers, who is a declared anti-Marxist, anti-Communist, and anti-Soviet politician." ⁸⁵ Soon the pace quickened, and after the return to earth in March 1960, the Party became virtually the fifth wheel in the SLFP bandwagon. Under cover of fraction work, the Parliamentary group attempted to join the government Parliamentary party; the Budget and Throne Speech of the Sirima Bandaranaike government received the support of the leadership, while the members of the Left who opposed it were censured; the principal defenders of the government were N. M. Perera, Colvin R. de Silva and others; where criticism of the government was unavoidable, it was done in the spirit of a loyal opposition, and soon, criticism degenerated into an anti-Felix Dias diatribe; the door opened to the ideas of the Moscow wing of the Communist Party and the leadership became receptive to popular frontist policies; the defence of the Chinese revolution was quietly abandoned, and on the Sino-Indian conflict, the well-known Trotskyist position jettisoned in favour of the thoroughly petty bourgeois appeal to an International Court for arbitration; Soviet diplomacy received open support, and the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty which was directly aimed at China, won the approval of the leadership; in the Sino-Soviet ideological dispute, the first major theoretical debate since Trotsky's own theoretical struggles within the Comintern, the party leadership took up no position, no doubt, out of deference to its new allies, the Moscow wing of the Communist Party. The trade union policy of the Party, too, underwent a gradual change, and strikes were no longer what Engels called "the schools wherein the proletariat is prepared for its entry into the great struggle which is inevitable," ⁸⁶ but a source of acute embarrassment; in the mighty strike action of the CTB in January 1963, the party leadership intervened only to work out a formula of "return to work"; later that year, it openly condemned the strike of government electricians in language worthy of the extreme Right that even Felix Dias raised his hands in horror.

While extra-Parliamentary action was avoided like the plague, Parliamentary manoeuvring proceeded at great intensity. Exploiting the mass urge for unity in action and for the centralisation of their struggles, the reformists of the Party, the CP, and Mr. Philip Gunawardena formed the ULF, a caricature of a united front in that it was expressly conceived for the purpose of Parliamentary and electoral jockeying. This was soon apparent when on the initiative of the CTUF, the trade union centre of the Communist Party (Peking Wing), the Joint Committee of trade unions convened to formulate working class demands and soon geared the class to action; for a time the revisionists performed the impossible feat of running with the hare and hunting with hounds. Then with a cynicism that would even have embarrassed Ramsay MacDonald, Dr. N. M. Perera behind the back of his own party, opened negotiations with the government of Mrs. Bandaranaike, just as the agitation of the working class on its 21 demands was mounting to a decisive climax. In the language of class war, this was high treason, both against the party and the class. But Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin R. de Silva stepped in both to defend a self-confessed Quisling and to pave the way for the final act. The votes of the Leslie-Colvin faction in the Central Committee enabled N. M. Perera to summon a conference at a bare 4 weeks notice in order to give constitutional propriety to his shameful treachery. Thus by their very distortion of the principle of democratic centralism—rigid centralism against the revolutionary Left and full democracy for the revisionist Right—the leaders of the Centre betrayed their real role. They did more. They also hastened their doom because in the events which followed the special Conference, it was not N. M. Perera who was exposed—he had long proclaimed from the house top his bourgeois coalitionist politics. At last events caught up with Colvin and Leslie and there was no retreat for them—either with or against the bourgeois coalition. And, no sooner was it formed than they promptly lined up behind the bourgeois

coalition. In her own way, history now humiliated them for the many liberties they had taken in the past—their own votes not only gave “legality” to N. M. Perera’s capitulation, but these same votes, finally, stripped their seventh veil, to reveal this time, the hideousness of their bourgeois politics.

Of course our enemies are rejoicing. And from the standpoint of their class, what a resounding victory! Despite all the severe limitations to which we have made reference, this was in the context of Ceylon, the incorruptible leadership, feared by the class enemy and looked upon by the masses as their leadership. Its collapse gives the bourgeoisie of Ceylon an unexpected breathing spell, at least till such time as the new revolutionary leadership wins the confidence of the masses. No wonder the bourgeoisie whether organised in the UNP, or the SLFP, or the Federal Party, now takes comfort in the general disarray in the Left since they know well that they now have a new lease of life. And not only the bourgeoisie, even their petty bourgeois intellectual hangers-on have shown a new spurt of activity. The cynics and sceptics, the pessimists and confusionists, the Middle Way preachers and the Bandaranaike apostles are already pulling out their old copy books, prescriptions and universal panaceas. With a new defiance, all the old deserters and cowards who left the movement because they could not keep pace with the tempo of its advance and found solace in Koestler and Burnham, now ask: “Did we not tell you so—they are all alike.” “Three decades of sweat and toil, and what have you to show?” With a malicious grin, they themselves reply, “Three senior and two junior scavengers of the bourgeois state!” Despite the grain of truth in their rhetorical answer, they are all wrong, hopelessly wrong, including the misanthropes who chirp in, “You will do the same, when you are older.”

All alike have no understanding of the inner spring of *development*, that is, they have not comprehended the

dialectic of the historic process which Hegel so elegantly expressed, even though within the frame and in the language of his idealist philosophy: "The general thought—the category which first presents itself in this restless mutation of individuals and peoples, existing for a time and then vanishing—is that of *change* at large. The sight of the ruins of some ancient sovereignty directly leads us to contemplate this thought of change in its negative aspect. What traveller among the ruins of Carthage, of Palmyra, Persepolis, or Rome, has not been stimulated to reflections on the transiency of kingdoms and men, and to sadness at the thought of a vigorous and rich life now departed—a sadness which does not expend itself on personal losses and the uncertainty of one's own undertakings, but is a disinterested sorrow at the decay of a splendid and highly cultured national life! But the next consideration which allies itself with that of change is that change, while it imports dissolution, involves at the same time the rise of a *new life*—that while death is the issue of life, life is also the issue of death. That is a grand conception; one which the Oriental thinkers attained, and which is perhaps the highest in their metaphysics. In the idea of *Metempsychosis* we find it evolved in its relation to individual existence; but a myth more generally known is that of the *Phoenix* as a type of the Life of *Nature*; eternally preparing for itself its funeral pile, and consuming itself upon it; but so that from its ashes is produced the new, renovated, fresh life. But this image is only Asiatic; oriental not occidental. Spirit—consuming the envelope of its existence—does not merely pass into another envelope, nor rise rejuvenescent from the ashes of its previous form; it comes forth exalted glorified, a purer spirit. It certainly makes war upon itself—consumes its own existence; *but in this very destruction it works up that existence into a new form, and each successive phase becomes in its turn a material, working on which it exalts itself to a new grade.*"⁸⁷

Much as the living ruins now languishing in the ranks of the government evoke our "disinterested sorrow," the

fact is that in conformity with the very law of *development* the new life has already arisen out of the disintegration of the old leadership of the LSSP—revolutionary Marxists from the ranks of the *svabhasa*, in particular, the Sinhala educated intelligentsia in the Universities of Peradeniya, Vidyalkara, and Vidyodaya, and the *Privenas* of Ceylon.⁸⁸ These are the elements who take over from now and they do so on the higher plane of the positive achievements and enduring conquests already made. This is the guarantee that the new revolutionary leadership shall take the movement to its historic goal.

3rd July, 1964

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2. V. I. Lenin : *The Tasks of the Proletariat in our Revolution.*
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4. V. I. Lenin : *Lessons of the Revolution.*
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9. *ibid*
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11. *ibid*
12. *ibid*
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14. *ibid*
15. Leon Trotsky : *The Lesson of Spain.*
16. *ibid*
17. *ibid*
18. Leon Trotsky : *The Third International After Lenin.*
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23. F. Engels : *Anti-Duhring.*
24. *ibid*
25. Leon Trotsky : *The Third International After Lenin.*
26. *ibid*
27. *ibid*
28. LSSP Special Conference Resolutions (June 1964).
29. F. Engels : *The End of Classical German Philosophy.*
30. Colvin R. de Silva : *Their Politics and Ours* (Colombo 1954) p. 34.
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33. Colvin R. de Silva : *Their Politics and Ours* (Colombo 1954) p. 33.
34. *Permanent Revolution*, Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 33, July-Sept. 1943 (Calcutta).
35. Colvin R. de Silva : *Their Politics and Ours* (Colombo 1954) p. 31.
36. F. Engels ; *Condition of the Working Class in England, 1844.*
37. W. Hegel : *Philosophy of History*, p. 72 (Constable edition).
38. See "Marxism in Sinhala" — declaration of the Editorial Board, Suriya Books on the role of the *swabhasa* intelligentsia (*Young Socialist*, Vol. 3, No. 4).

GLOSSARY OF FOREIGN NAMES

- BASSO, Lelio (-): Secretary of the United Italian Socialist Party.
- BATISTA, Fulgencio (-): Army sergeant who seized power in 1933 and ruled intermittently till he was finally overthrown in 1958 by Fidel Castro's guerilla movement.
- BISMARCK, Otto Von (1815-1898): Chancellor of Germany; creator of the modern German State.
- BUKHARIN, Nikolai (1888-1938): member of the Bolshevik Old Guard; supported Stalin in the factional struggle in the Russian Communist Party against the Left wing and together with Rykov led the Right Wing. Liquidated by Stalin in the frame-up trial in 1938.
- BURNHAM, James (1905-): American professor who was once active in the Trotskyist movement; broke with the Left in 1940 to lead crusade for "democracy."
- CHERNOV, Vladimir Mikhailovich (1876-1953): An old Russian revolutionary who founded the Socialist Revolutionary Party; Minister of Agriculture in the Coalition government 1917; elected President of the Constituent Assembly which the Bolsheviks dissolved in 1918.
- CHIANG KAI SHEK (1888-): Chinese nationalist. Army officer who at first with Communist support succeeded Sun Yat Sen as leader of the Kuomintang and the Chinese bourgeoisie.
- CHKHEZDE, Nikolai Semyonovich (1864-1926): Leader of the Menshevik fraction of the Social Democratic Party in the Third and Fourth Duma.
- EBERT, Friedrich (1860-1925): Originally close collaborator of August Bebel, one of the founders of the German Social Democratic Party; supporter of German imperialism during World War I and later President till his death of the Weimar Republic which was formed following the defeat of the revolution of 1918.
- ENGELS, Fredrick (1820-1895): Marx's closest collaborator, and one of the founders of modern scientific socialism.

FRANCO, Francisco (1892-): Fascist Right Wing, Spanish Army officer who under the Republic suppressed the revolt of the Asturian miners in 1934, and was later in 1936 to lead the rebellion against the Republic which finally installed him in power in 1938.

FREDRICK WILLIAM III (1770-1840) : King of Prussia.

GANDHI, Mohandas Karamchand (1869-1948) : Leader of the Indian national movement for independence.

GAULLE, Charles de (1890-): In 1945 after the defeat of Germany, he headed the new French government, and with the aid of the French Communist Party disarmed the resistance movement and reintroduced bourgeois order. Overthrew the Fourth Republic in 1958.

GUCHKOV, Alexander Ivanovich (1862-1936) : Wealthy Moscow industrialist; founder of the Right Wing Octobrist Party (1905), President of the Third Duma; Minister of War in the Provisional government.

HITLER, Adolf (1889-1945) : Corporal in World War I, who as leader of the Nazi party came to power in 1933 and instituted the familiar totalitarian state to safeguard German capitalism against the socialist revolution.

HEGEL, George Wilhelm Friedrich (1770-1831) : German philosopher; objective idealist and dialectician. His analysis of idealist dialectics served as one of the sources of dialectical materialism.

JOSHI, P. C. General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (1942-48).

KAUTSKY, Karl (1854-1938): Close colleague of Engels, literary executor of Marx and Engels; originally one of the leading Marxist theoreticians of international social democracy. Later leader of the notorious "Centre" group in the German Social Democracy.

KERENSKY, Alexander (1881-): Rose to prominence as a labour defence lawyer in Czarist Russia; later joined the Socialist Revolutionary in the Duma. After February Revolution in 1917, Minister of Justice in Provisional government. Thereafter Minister of War and Navy in first Coalition and Prime Minister of subsequent coalitions including the Fourth Coalition which the Bolsheviks overthrew on 7th November.

KEYNES, John Maynard (1883-1946): Liberal bourgeois economist who was the first to analyse the disastrous economic consequences of the Treaty of Versailles. His later analysis of capitalist crisis showed his complete lack of understanding, since according to him the "flaw" of the system is the insufficiency of credit.

KOESTLER, Arthur (1905-): Novelist and literary critic; former member of the German Communist Party who broke with Stalinism in 1939 only to join the witch hunt against Communism.

KRONSTADT: Russian naval fortress guarding the approach to Petrograd (now Leningrad). From very early in the 1917 revolution, the sailors stationed here backed the Bolsheviks.

LASKI, Harold, J. (1893-1950): Professor of Political science at the London School of Economics and Left Fabian political theorist who in 1945 was elected Chairman of the British Labour Party.

LENIN, Vladimir Ilyich (1870-1924) : Leader of the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Party. In opposition to the Menshevik view that since Czarist Russia faced a bourgeois democratic revolution the liberal bourgeoisie is the leader of the impending revolution, Lenin advanced the position that the working class was the leader of the revolution against Czarism and the resulting state form he "algebraically" termed the democratic dictatorship of the working class and peasantry. In his *Theses of 4th April (1917)* he gave "arithmetical" content to the old formula and won the Bolshevik Party to the perspective of the working class seizure of power in opposition to the "democratic" government of Kerensky. Prime Minister of the first workers' state, November 1917, and founder of the Third International.

LUXEBURG, Rosa (1871-1919) : Polish Social Democrat who led the Left wing in the German Social Democracy; founded the Spartacus League and later the Communist Party. Murdered by German Army Officers in 1919.

MACDONALD, Ramsay (1866-1937) : Leader of the British Parliamentary Labour Party after World War I; Prime Minister in the minority Labour Government of 1924 and 1929 who later formed a coalition government with the Conservative Party in 1931.

MARIINSKY PALACE: An imperial palace in Petrograd which was the Headquarters of the Provisional Government in 1917.

MARX, Karl (1818-1883): One of the founders of modern scientific socialism.

METERNICH, Prince Von (1773-1859): Austrian Chancellor who was the acknowledged leader of European reaction in his time.

MILLERAND, Alexandre (1859-1925): French Socialist deputy who in 1899 became Commerce Minister in the "liberal" government of Waldeck-Rousseau; held offices in other governments and later organised a contingent to fight against the Soviet power during the Russian Civil War. Later Prime Minister and also President of the Republic.

MILYUKOV, Pavel Nickolayvich (1859-1943): A professor of history, founder of the bourgeois liberal Cadet Party who, in 1903, first coined the word Trotskyism after Trotsky's formulation of the theory of permanent revolution; leader of the Russian Liberal bourgeoisie; Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Provisional government 1917.

NAPOLEON, Bonaparte (1769-1821): French Army officer from Corsica; later Emperor of the French (1804-15).

NASSER, GAMAL Abdel: Army officer, now President of Egypt; one of the organisers of the coup which overthrew King Farouk.

NEHRU, Jawaharlal (1889-1964): Prime Minister of India from 1947 to 1964. The most prominent of the "left" leaders of the bourgeois Indian National Congress.

NICHOLAS, Romanov I (1796-1855): Emperor of Russia 1825-55.

NICHOLAS II (1868-1918): Emperor of Russia, last of the Romanov dynasty, executed in 1918.

NU WIN: Burmese General who overthrew the popularly elected government in 1961. Head of the military *junta* now ruling Burma.

PALCHINSKY, P.: Organiser of the Russian Coal Syndicate in pre-revolutionary Russia and closely connected with banking and industrial circles, Assistant Minister for Industry and Commerce in Kerensky's coalition; later in charge of the defence of the Winter Palace on the night of 7th November 1917.

QUISLING, Vidkun (1887-1945): Norwegian Fascist leader whose name is now synonymous with treachery of all varieties.

STALIN, Josef (1879-1953): Old Bolshevik from Georgia, Minister for Nationalities in Lenin's government and author of an important work on the national question. On Sverdlov's death elected Secretary of the Russian Communist Party. In his last testament now officially published, Lenin called for his removal from this office (see: *Problems of Building Socialism*), a collection of Lenin documents published by Foreign Language Publishing House, Moscow in 1960. After Lenin's death, advanced revisionist theory of Socialism in one country and policy of peaceful co-existence; fought Trotsky first in alliance with Zinoviev and then Bukharin; with the latter accused the opposition of "super industrialisation" and relied on Kulaks and Nepmen; later adopted in a bureaucratic manner the industrial programme of the Left Opposition and commenced the first 5 year Plan. Converted the Communist International into an agency of Soviet foreign policy and adopted old Menshevik policies under the new guise of popular frontism.

SVERDLOV, Jacob - : Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, President of the Soviet Republic. Died 1917.

SKOBELEV, Matev Ivanovich (1885-1930): Social Democrat of Menshevik fraction, member of Fourth Duma, Minister for Labour in the First Coalition; in 1922 joined Bolsheviks.

STEKLOV, Yuri Mikhailovich (1873-): Russian Social Democrat from Odessa who for long stood outside both Bolshevik and Menshevik fractions.

SUN YAT SEN (1887-1925): One of the organisers of the 1911 revolution in China. Founder of the Kuomintang.

TROTSKY, Leon (1879-1940): Joined Social Democratic Party in 1898 but at first stood aloof from Bolshevik and Menshevik factions; later joined Bolsheviks; formulated theory of permanent revolution in 1903 declaring that for the solution of the democratic tasks of the Russian revolution the working class must seize power and that having so come to power the working class would be driven to accomplish the socialist tasks. Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet after the Bolsheviks obtained a majority, he was the head of the Military Revolutionary Committee which organised the insurrection of 7th November 1917. Minister for Foreign Affairs in Lenin's government and during the Civil War, Commissar for War. Expelled from the Soviet Union in 1929 for defence of Lenin's ideas against Stalin's revisionist policies, he was assassinated in 1940 by a GPU agent in Mexico. Founder of the Fourth International.

THOREZ, Maurice (1900-1964) : General Secretary of the French Communist Party from 1930 till a few months before his death.

TOGLIATTI, Palmiro (1900-1964) : General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party.

TSERETELLI, I. G. (1882-) : Leader of the Mensheviks in the Second Duma. He and the entire fraction were tried on a trumped up charge of conspiracy and sentenced to hard labour. Freed by the February revolution in 1917.

VAILLANT, Eduard Marie (1840-1915) : Founder of the French Socialist Party who supported the French bourgeoisie in its war against Germany.

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V. KARALASINGHAM joined the LSSP at a very young age in 1937. He was active in the working class struggles of 1940-41. Early in 1942, he was sent to India; in April of that year the British Governor issued a warrant for his arrest and detention under the Ceylon Defence Regulations, along with Robert Gunawardena and others. In 1943-44, he edited in Calcutta the *Permanent Revolution*, the illegal journal of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India. In 1945 he was arrested in Bombay and subsequently deported and exiled from India and thereafter detained under the Defence Regulations in Ceylon. After the war, he was on the Editorial Board of the *New Spark* along with Indra Sen, Leslie Goonewardene and Hector Abhayawardena. He was elected a delegate from the BLPI to the Third World Congress of the Fourth International in 1951. Between 1952 and 1958, he was in the United Kingdom where he was active among colonial students and his local Labour Party organisation. In 1957 he was called to the English Bar. He contested the Kankasanturai constituency in March 1960 as LSSP candidate. He is a member of the Central Committee.

ERNEST GERMAIN who has written the introduction is a member of the United Secretariat and the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International.