

YOUTH PROTEST IN SOUTHEAST ASIA : A CASE
STUDY OF THE JVP IN SRI LANKA

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P R E F A C E

Sri Lanka's international significance has much to do with its geographical position. An Island on the southern tip of India, the importance of its political position has been subdued by the overshadowing effect of its nearest neighbour. But never has it lost its distinctive identity. So, when an uprising of the nature of April 1971 took place in this territory, the international reaction indicated the role that Sri Lanka was expected to play - neutral, passive and unencumbered by domestic disturbance. The aim here is to study the why and how of such a disturbance - one which broke the fallacy of the peace-loving, non-violent nature of this Island and its people.

For the completion of this study, I remain indebted to Professor Bimal Prasad and my Advisor, Dr(Mrs.) Urnila Phadnis, who gave me inspiration and guidance alongwith a wealth of human understanding. Also, because of Dr.Phadnis, I was able to procure invaluable material without which the thesis would have been incomplete.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Youth protest has been a universal phenomenon regardless of the stages of development which respective countries of the world are undergoing.¹ The correlation between expanding educational systems and student movements is another one.² This has been historically proved. In the 1860s, the Czarist regime in Russia was facing a radical movement of students and intelligentsia as a consequence of

- 1 The term "youth" presents considerable problems of definition and delineation. The socio-psychological approach requires involvement with such factors as mental attitudinal maturity and problems of identity formation, which are quite beyond the scope of this study. Besides, anomalies in the form of classification of older individuals still undergoing the process of "identity formation" etc. would present themselves if only the psyche is used as the criteria for determining the qualities of "youthfulness".

At another level, the use of governmental demarcation (18-21) of youth and adulthood would perforce leave out a large and important section from our analysis.

The 15-25 years duration has been thought of for encompassing most or all of that section of the population which has often been termed the "younger generation". This may appear too prolonged a youth-hood but is necessary also because of the extension of education as a consequence of the requirements of specialization in all countries, underdeveloped, developing and advanced.

- 2 Michael K. Miles, *The Radical Probe: The Logic of Student Rebellion* (New York, 1971), p. 83.

the numerous universities it had established in 1854.³ In China, the May 4th Movement of 1919 resulted after Westernized schools had phenomenally increased their enrolment.⁴ The same has been the case in the United States, Japan, Sri Lanka and Czechoslovakia, despite their varying systems and historical backgrounds.⁵

The term "unrest", however, exhibits an inadequacy in focussing upon the manner of youth disturbances which interest us here. It also implies too vast a field for research than can be encompassed in the study. "Protest" proves a more fitting term for our purpose. A "protest movement" can be understood only in relation and comparison to the more wide-ranging concept of "social movement". One fruitful distinction drawn between the two is the latter's tendency to "spread beyond the boundaries of states or national societies and extend over the entire area of civilization, or even

3 Ibid.

4 E. Stuart Kirby, Youth in China (Hong Kong, 1965), pp. 15 and 24-25.

* Ceylon renamed itself Sri Lanka in May 1972 when it became a republic. Hence the two terms are used interchangeably.

5 Miles, n. 2, p. 103. Also see Tariq Ali, ed., The New Revolutionaryism (London, 1969), p. 252, P.M. Joshi, Indian Revolt in India: Story of the First Indian National Movement (Bombay, 1972), p. 6, and Milica Zichova, "Students in Czechoslovakia", in Philip A. Marston, ed., Student Revolution: A Global Analysis (Bombay, 1970), p. 207.

beyond, as far as the social order that is their target reaches", while the former is limited spatially, "being mostly of local regional or national character; for example, "radical" farmers' or peasants' movements".⁶ This is the only reasonable formulation which can be culled from the description of social movements, as contained in the International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, the rest of which suffers from considerable disabilities.⁷

For bringing more clarity to the concept we shall take recourse to the following differentiation:

Reform refers to one of the responses to alter the existing situation....Dissent expresses dissatisfaction with the existing situation
Protest is a formal declaration of dissent

6 "Social Movements", in David L. Sills, ed., The International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences (London, 1972), vols. 13 and 14, pp. 438-51.

7 For instance, it claims that "all major social movements develop a more or less elaborate, more or less consistent set of ideas which its members must accept more or less uncritically, as members of a religious group would accept a creed". (emphasis mine).

The use of such "more or less" terminology lends ambiguity to an otherwise substantially correct assessment of a social movement. Furthermore, the members of a social movement never accept "uncritically" the ideas of a social movement. The bourgeois uprising against feudalism was not akin to the blind acceptance of a creed. Similarly, the movement of the working class and peasants against capitalism and the remnants of feudalism rest upon an assessment of the advantages that could accrue to each participant upon the completion/fulfilment of aims of the movement.

and represents a more confirmed state of opposition and conflict. 8

A protest movement can lead to or spark off a social movement.

Protest thus, appears to be a somewhat subdued terminology for what could be considered a revolt against the existing structure, emanating from the contradictions obtaining within the same and in spite of having a particularity, being inherently against the whole system. It also has a corollary, or more precisely, an implication of the elemental factor of "power": the power to effect and change the system structure in the short and long run, and to exert more control over it.

Youth has heavily participated in movements ranging on the ideological spectrum, from one end to the other. It has closed ranks behind Mussolini and Hitler as enthusiastically as behind Lenin and Mao. It has asked, demanded and worked as much for a new future as for a return to the past (an example of the latter being the pre-Second World War ultra-nationalism in Japan or the Latin American students' tendency in the 1930 and 1940s to veer in support of fascism).

8 N.S.A. Rao, "Themes in the Ideology of Protest Movement", unpublished paper presented at the Seminar on Discontented Protest, and reform in Indian Civilization at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, 1-3 September 1976.

and conservative nationalism).⁹ Although a few movements of the twentieth century have proved to be of a non-radical colour, they have been short-lived. In the main, social revolutions with radical aims and objectives have succeeded and are succeeding.

Youth protest is one form of collective action which involves a disturbance either against the existing social order in its totality or against some aspect of it, in a bid to dynamically alter the same. This excepts those protests which aim only at acquiring a stake in the system. Those that desire and work for an overthrow generally gain inspiration from a revolutionary ideology or from some form of radicalism.

Youth, the world over, is getting progressively (in larger number) educated which is more than can be said for the adult population as a general phenomenon. But there are, in the underdeveloped world (with a few exceptions), more uneducated than literate youth as opposed to the situation in the advanced capitalist and non-capitalist countries. With every drawback from which a generalization may suffer,

9 Arthur Liebman, E.M. Walker and M. Glazer, Latin American University Students: A Six Nation Study (Lanham, 1972), p. xiii. Also see for account of radicalization of youth in this continent, Alistair Lamont, "University Students in Political Action", in Claudio Véliz, ed., The Politics of University in Latin America (London, 1967), pp. 11-27; Robert Lodge, "The Case Study of Student Political Action: Brazil, 1964 and Dominican Republic, 1964", Latin American Review, vol. 21, no. 2, January 1966, pp. 183-6; Robert Witt, Guerrilla Movements in Latin America (Chicago, 1970).

It could still be contended that this is a legacy partly of the colonial mode of education functioning and reacting to a traditional hierarchic social structure, which lent exclusivity to that aspect of life which should have been regarded as second nature to man in a moving, dynamic world situation. Literacy. As a consequence, students as differentiated from the ~~youth-in-general~~, have been more a privileged social category in these areas of the world. But from the student situation which is a transitional one,¹⁰ this social category is catapulted into the various and more stable (in the sense of being of a longer duration), class situations, within their social systems.

More material seems to have been compiled on student movements rather than upon either youth movements or the youth content of various movements. But though this aspect has not been sufficiently attended to separately, it is evident that youth content and leadership in revolutionary movements is sufficiently important and considerably high. This emphasis on students may have arisen from the fact of their organizational solidarity and identity and much more from the articulate manner in which they have expounded their views. It also must be admitted that students, as a constituent unit of youth, have played a forward role in practically

¹⁰ Alexander Cockburn and Robin Blackburn, eds., Student Power: Problems, Diagnosis, Action (London, 1968), p. 36.

all revolutionary and non-revolutionary movements of the past and the present day.¹¹ Then, as today, they react not only to university problems, but eventually also against the social order and often against the foreign policy conduct which emanates from their ruling class. In 1919, the Chinese students protested against the concessions made to Japan in the Treaty of Versailles through the betrayal of their allies and also the ambiguous stand taken by the Koumintang.¹² The American students agitated against the Vietnam war and the expansion of the American involvement in Indochina; the Thai students protested against the American presence within their country as also the American genocide in Indochina;¹³ the Japanese students stormed through the streets in opposition to the Japan-US Security Treaty in 1960 and later.¹⁴ But

11 Examples are the People's Republic of China, Vietnam, the Indian National movement, Thailand, Dominican Republic etc.

12 Bill Luckin, "Students and the Chinese Cultural Revolution", in *Ali*, n. 6, pp. 115-30.

13 Theodorus Flood, "The Thai Left Wing in Historical Context", Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, April-June 1975, p. 60.

14 In Japan, in 1960, the students came out effectively to demonstrate against the Japan-US Security Treaty of 1960 at the Prime Minister's official residence and the scheduled visit of the American President, Eisenhower, had to be cancelled. Fukuhiro Junro, "Student Thought and Feeling", Japan Quarterly, vol. 16, no. 2, April-June 1969, pp. 143-56.

these are only surface manifestations of a much deeper opposition, springing from the social circumstances in which youth has to function in various areas of the world.

The Advanced West

The 1960s experienced an upsurge of student/youth movements all over the world with hardly any country exempt from the wrath of this generation. Most of the literature upon this phenomena, specially in the advanced capitalist countries, tended to brand them as the consequences of affluence and alienation. This argument found adherents among the 'democratic official liberals'¹⁵ who contended that forces of affluence, combined with a crises of values and cultural modernism led to radicalism. Efforts have also been made to stylize youth and student radicalism as "agonizingly diffuse"; rejecting programmes, emphasizing on action, being a minority phenomenon, verging on anarchism and being anti-intellectual and anti-ideology.¹⁶ Much truth may lie in this assessment but more credit must be given to what has been termed the emerging "New Left" in the advanced capitalist countries.¹⁷

15 "Official Liberalism has two characteristic social hypotheses: The pluralist conception of the political system and the technocratic characterization of the socio-economic realm". Miles, n. 2, p. 71. This study is with reference to the United States but can be generally applied to practically all advanced capitalist countries where the ruling class propounds its own theory of social change and sees no room for all opposition within its structural framework.

16 James Gregor, The Fascist Persuasion in Radical Politics (N.J., 1974), pp. 240-3.

17 For an excellent account see Richard Coatin, The Origins of Modern Leftism (Suffolk, 1975).

All movements, in the effective organisational sphere, are a minority phenomena and such a stand as above is usually adhered to for disbanding an otherwise disturbing event or eventuality by the establishment.¹⁸ Besides, it is contended that "the young left is descended from educated professionals rather than from wealth per se".¹⁹ What is today the New Left in these countries has emerged as a throw out or backlash against what has been perceived as an ineffectual established left movement or party within their boundaries. Britain, the United States, Japan and France are apt examples of this. Beginning from agitations for campus reforms, the youth have raised their voices for total structural revolution.²⁰

¹⁸ Miles, n. 2, brings to our notice that with regard to the United States "The evidence suggests that 10% at a minimum of the student population at elite universities may be aligned with, if not continuously active in the radical movement in advance of any particular contagion of excitement". Another 20% does not oppose direct action and is hence a 'potential constituency' (p. 17). Besides, in 1967-68, the student movement here became a national phenomena when over a 100 colleges experienced protest, in 1968-69 over 500 educational institutions and the same number in 1969-70.

¹⁹ Miles, n. 2, p. 87.

²⁰ For Britain, see Cockburn and Blackburn, n. 10, for U.S. "The Radical Probe", Miles, n. 2, for Japan, Junro, n. 14, pp. 148-56 and "Liberal-democratic Policy Toward Universities", JAPAN QUARTERLY, vol. 16, no. 3, July-September 1969, pp. 57-60; for France Alain Touraine, Revolt and Reform (New York, 1971), and also New Left Review (special issue on France), no. 82, November-December 1968.

The May Movement of 1968 in France, led initially by students and teachers presents a standing example of the uprising which debilitated the Gaullist administration.

"The May Movement was not a socialist movement. Like all the important social movements in high industrialized societies, it was a communist movement. Its struggle involved the whole fabric of society."²¹

It exposed the structural contradictions in a capitalist society. Unlike other uprisings of students, it gave priority to the mobilization of the working class. Although the students led and sustained the action, they took it to the shops, factories and work-places. The youth section in the working-class exhibited greater amenability in aligning with the students.²² More than 10 million people stopped work to come out into the streets.²³

²¹ Touraine, *ibid.*

²² Touraine, *ibid.*, states that "it was the workers closest to the students in age or profession who played the most creative role in the strike movement and plant occupation." (p. 72)

²³ Here I am drawing heavily from Pierre Frank, "May 1968 : First Phase of the French Socialist Revolution", International Socialist Review, vol. 29, no. 5, September-October 1968, p. 11.

"All the country's youth were to be seen in the struggle." (p. 2)

"The revolutionary vanguard... is generally conceded to have been the youth". (p. 24)

"The movement did not include only workers. The industrial proletariat as well as most categories of the

Japan also experienced widespread youth action largely involving the students. In October 1968, the Todai University came to a complete halt for the first time in 91 years as a reaction to the admission of the police into the campus. Repression was increased. In 1968 alone 'riot police' were despatched to the campuses thirty one times; in August 1969 alone thirty six times and by the end of the same year the figure exceeded 300.²⁴ About 7,000 students were arrested between October 1967 and April 1968.²⁵

In the United States the black militants and the New Left contribute to an influence each other but have not found it possible to integrate and present a united front.

white-collar workers were encompassed by it. Besides the teachers and students who originated the movement, the participation of high-school students, and parallel to this, of the large number of young workers, of very young people from 14 to 18 years of age, is an absolutely new phenomenon in history." (p. 11)

Also see "Introduction", New Left Review, no. 52, November-December 1968, p. 1.

24 Lawrence W. Beer, "Japan 1969: 'My Home' and Political Struggle", Asian Survey, vol. 10, no. 1, January 1970, p. 44.

25 "Liberal-Democratic Policy Towards Universities", Japan Quarterly, vol. 16, no. 3, July-September 1969, p. 258.

In November 1968, the intensity of violence resulting from turbulence in the Japanese universities can be gauged from a Japan Times Report which claimed that some 4,000 policemen had been injured in clashes. Properly put, this would mean 1 out of every 10 policemen in the Metropolitan Police Department. World A.C. Service, "Japanese Students: Camps or Campuses?" International Review, vol. 11, no. 52, 26 October 1968, p. 712.

The cause may lie in the diversity of their problems. Unemployment among the blacks is double that among the whites. Up to 15 and 20 per cent of black youth is unemployed.²⁶ The New Left in this country has been "provisionally defined as that movement largely of young people, associated with the Student Non-violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)."²⁷ It is opposed to "corporate liberalism" which it believes strongly to be "corporate exploitation" screened by liberal rhetoric. The Berkeley and Kent State University revolts of 1964 and that in Columbia in 1968, followed by a blood-bath as a consequence of police intervention, are manifestations of a discontent from which liberals believed a developed society to be exempt.²⁸

²⁶ Ernest Mandel, "Where is America Going", New Left Review, no. 64, March-April 1969, p. 4.

²⁷ Staughton Lynd, "The New Left", Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, vol. 382, March 1969, pp. 64-72.

²⁸ It would be interesting to quote this following unconventional view:

"American democracy depends, I believe, on the systematic humiliation of potential elites to keep it going. There is, perhaps, no other way in which an increasingly educated middle class, whose technical services cannot be spared, can be induced to acquiesce in the political demands of a derelinated and invidious populace, reluctant to accept any measure of social improvement, however, generally advantageous which might bring any segment of the society slightly more benefits than would accrue to it."

Edgar Z. Friedenberg, "The Generation Gap", Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, vol. 382, March 1969, p. 42.

Britain had practically no serious tradition of youth strategy or student solidarity and action prior to the LSE affair. This was a 9-day sit-in (March 1967) beginning with a demand for the withdrawal of the suspension orders against two student leaders. It based its strategy on a sum of eight demands concerning themselves with university structure, reform and change in the status of the student through executive responsibility. This was followed by occupation, demonstration and administration ^(by the students themselves) in the other universities of Hull, Hornsey and Essex.²⁹

Theoreticians of these countries have examined the structure of society and concluded that universities serve the purpose of factories in the capitalist system and are an inherent and exploited part of the productive process. The Japanese have aptly termed it "mass puro" or mass-production education. Everywhere, educational industrialization, i.e. transformation of the universities into recruiting grounds for an increasingly complex technological society; plus the

²⁹ Gareth S. Jones, Anthony Barnett and Tom Wengraf, "Student Power: What is to be Done?" New Left Review, no. 43, May-June 1967, pp. 3-10; Ben Brewster and Alexander Cockburn, "Revolt at the LSE", New Left Review, no. 43, May-June 1967, pp. 11-24; Tom Petherick, "Hull", Tom Cairn, "Hornsey", and David Friedman, "Essex", New Left Review, no. 50, July-August 1968, pp. 53-64, 65-70, 70-71.

exclusivity which is lent to the sphere of higher education in an effort to isolate the social goals from the subject matter under study, have all been challenged by the student. The factor of rapid expansion of the youth population in the sixties as a consequence of the post-war baby-boom must also not be thrust aside as negligible. It is probably one of the major contributors to the frustrations that confront and involve the youth the world over. The realization that students must work with the peasants and workers has appeared in some of the radical movements in the advanced capitalist countries. The revolutionary zeal of students may be tremendous but their potential must be subjected to examination by the working class with whom they must cement together, a revolutionary bloc.

"However subjectively subversive students may be they cannot by themselves bring the whole social process to a halt, as can the actions of the working class".³⁰ This is proved by movements in all the countries we have so far referred to and is the basic tenet from which we shall examine the rest of the movements.

The Socialist Countries

The advanced and developing non-capitalist countries which have espoused socialism as their political system and

30 COCKBURN AND BLANKENHORN, n. 10, p. 15.

way of life according to their own interpretations and
 situations have also not been exempt from youth and
 student movements and disturbances. In their respective
 revolutionary movements and upheavals they experienced youth
 participation in matters of leadership and guidance, in a
 large way. Youth involvement, including peasants, workers
 etc. has, unfortunately, not been measured and can only be
 surmised. With a degree of accuracy one can claim that they
 are the most receptive to new ideas and ready to change and
 break traditional societal and parental bonds, to embrace an
 anti-imperialist nationalism and simultaneously to recognise
 the fissures and weaknesses of their existing system. This
 last task they have not surrendered even in the post-revolution
 period. China is a critical example of this but such countries
 as Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Hungary bear ample evidence
 of the uncompromising stance of the younger generation.³¹
 Even today they oppose bureaucratization, or what they perceive
 to be dogmatism or revisionism as the case may be. They
 preserve the dynamism of their societies through constant
 vigilance.

The Third World

Practically all of what is today the Third World,

³¹ Ali, n. 5, pp. 115-30; J. Plazenic, "The Belgrade Student
 Insurrection", New Left Review, no. 54, March-April 1969,
 pp. 61-79; John Israel, "Reflections on the Modern Chinese
 Student Movement", in Albion, n. 5, pp. 177-203; and
 Miluse Kubickova, "Students in Czechoslovakia", in Albion,
 n. 5, pp. 207-225; Pavel T. M. ek, "The Student Action:
 Report from France", New Left Review, no. 53, January-
 February 1969, pp. 13-20.

underwent nationalist struggle against their colonial masters. Needless to say, the youth played a major part in them, and in fact, led many of them. The upper-class student community which was fiscally in a position to study abroad experienced exposure to and imbibed new ideas. "Thus youth movements in Asia" (and elsewhere e.g. Africa)"became in a sense the pioneers of Europeanization in their acceptance of progressive and radical standards of morality and social life as opposed to the traditionalism of the elders."³² Alongside this acceptance was a simultaneous and inherent rejection of European imperialism which lent content to their zealous nationalism. The youth also formed the vanguard of terrorist organisations in their desire for rapid change through physical extermination of the imperialists.³³ But these

32 Sagar Ahluwalia, Youth Revolt (New Delhi, 1972), p. 74; also see Aileen J. Loss, Student Unrest in India: A Comparative Approach (London, 1969). In Africa, the intelligentsia, composed mainly of students and graduates of French universities, spearheaded the anti-colonial movement. Paris remained the hub of student activity at least till the mid 1950s. Since then student unions, specially in North Africa have been among the best organized and most active in the third world.

33 e.g. see David Laushey, General Terrorism and the Marxist Left (Calcutta, 1975), p. vi.

constituted only a meagre though volatile section.

The 1960s were for the Third World also, a period of quite extraordinary number of youth outbursts against the system. From a period^{of} opposition against university authorities, the youth in general swung in favour of opposition to the whole socio-political set up and began to express an overwhelming desire to bring about astronomical changes. In Southeast Asia in particular, a region fraught with the politics of violent and dynamic change, the youth have and are participating in revolutionary struggles. In Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge has been led not only by pre-1954 cadres but also leftist intellectuals and students.³⁴ In Thailand, the student uprising of October 1973 was in actual fact a re-emergence of the urban left-wing movement after a long period of extreme repression and with more widespread support than ever before.³⁵ In Burma, despite heavy suppression of student political activity, many support outlawed parties and

34 Herald Munthe Kees, "Cambodia: The Red Awakening", Far Eastern Economic Review, vol. 69, no. 32, 6 August 1970, p. 57.

35 Flood, n. 13, p. 55. For details of student unrest here see, Jeffrey Race, "We have certainly been ravaged by something....", Asian Survey, vol. 14, no. 2, February 1974, pp. 192-203; Ruth-Inge Heinze, "Ten Days in October - Students vs. the Military: An Account of the Student Uprising in Thailand", Asian Survey, vol. 14, no. 6, June 1974, pp. 491-503; I. F. Zimmerman, "The Student 'Revolution' in Thailand: The End of the Thai Bureaucratic Polity", Asian Survey, vol. 14, no. 6, June 1974, pp. 503-29.

guerrilla movements.³⁶ From overt action in the pre-independent days till 1962 (with the clamping of military rule) the youths are today engaged in clandestine activity against the regime. Students have chosen to leave their universities and join their ethnic groups in underground movements.³⁷

South Asia as a region has witnessed volatile youth action in the last decade. ^{In the immediate past,} student unrest has also become almost a day-to-day phenomena. ^{In the immediate past} student movements took place in the states of Gujarat and Bihar in India, in Pakistan at the end of the Ayub Khan's era, in the Bangladesh liberation struggle and in Sri Lanka.

In Gujarat in August 1974, the State Government and administration was brought to a standstill through the students' plea of maladministration and corruption. They were able to secure the resignation of the Chimanbhai Patel

³⁶ John Silverstein, "Burmese Student Politics in a Changing Society", in Altbach, n. 5, pp. 135-54.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 146.

Philippines and Malaysia have also experienced intense youth action. With the death of four students in January 1970, in the former country, the Philippine youth have not rested content and have succeeded in considerably politicizing the masses. Frances Starner, "Philippines: Whose Bullet, Whose Blood?" Far Eastern Economic Review, vol. 69, no. 42, 17 October 1970, pp. 25-30.

In Malaysia students occupied the university against the Government's silence on the arrest of two students, in 1974.

Ministry. Patna followed Gujarat in exhibiting the violent face of student power with the students laying siege to the State Assembly as the Governor was inaugurating the budget session.³⁸

The Naxal movement in West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra and other parts of India also possess a young cadre. Most of them were educated, uneducated and unemployed frustrated and disillusioned by the tactics of the established, parliamentary left parties in the country.³⁹

In Pakistan the student demonstrators played a vanguard role in dramatizing the tyranny of the Ayub regime. It was only after they critically highlighted their displeasure that opposition politicians and the rest of the public began to express dissent.⁴⁰

38 See for Gujarat, H.M. Trivedi, "The Lesson of Gujarat", National Herald, 8 August 1974; Sunil Das Gupta, "Background of Present Trouble in India", Search Light, 15 August 1974; Chanakya, "The Congress and the Alienated Youth", Assam Tribune, 29 August 1974.

For Bihar see, Newal Kishore, "Shifting of Blame", National Herald, 6 August 1974; Partha N. Mukherji, "Bihar: Making of a Movement", Indian Express, 6 August 1974; Narendra Panjwari, "Bihar Students: The Capacity to Act", Times of India, 11 August 1974.

39 See Mohan Ram, "The Urban Guerrilla Movement in Calcutta (1970-71)", The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses Journal, vol. 4, no. 3, January 1972, pp. 281-301, and Anish K. Roy, "India's Third Communist Party", The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses Journal, vol. 7, no. 1, July-September 1971, pp. 33-70.

40 Lawrence Hill, Students and Politics in Pakistan: A Study in Social Change (London and New York, 1971), pp. 90 and 100.

The Bangladesh freedom struggle brought its younger generation to the fore and involved them in a most violent and brutal conflict. They formed the majority in such fighting organizations as the Mukti Bahini and Rakhi Bahini as well as other guerrilla groups. Often they had as leaders very young and fiery men.⁴¹

Sri Lanka

By far the most notable and model type of youth movement in this sub-continent was the ^{Uprising} insurrection in Sri Lanka in April 1971 under the inspiration and guidance and with the following of a generation aged 10 to 35. Approximately eighty per cent of the membership of the Janata Vimukti Peramuna or People's Liberation Front (JVP) were those below the age of 25 years.⁴² These were, in the main, vernacularly educated but unemployed sections and included peasants and labourers. The demography of Sri Lanka was also amenable to such a movement since 5,882,829 of its population of 12,712,277 is between the ages 10 and 35. This constitutes 46.3% of the total. This becomes more important when we note that the

41 For instance Kadir Siddiqi more popularly known as the "Tiger" was only 23 years of age.

42 Ganenath Obeyesekere, "Some Comments on the Social Background of the April 1971 Insurgency in Sri Lanka", Journal of Asian Studies, vol. 39, no. 3, May 1974, p. 303.

0-14 age-group constitutes 39.3% of the Island's population.⁴³

This youth, which had begun organizing itself around the mid-sixties and had built a fairly sophisticated communications network covering practically the whole island, challenged the existing socio-economic and political structure within their country and threatened its overthrow, as was evident from the JVP uprising of April 1971.

What were the causes historical, social, political and economic, which led to this uprising? What was the socio-economic background of the participants in this movement? What was the nature of their organizational set-up? Did they possess a definite policy and programme? What was the strategy and tactics adopted by them? How did the other parties - ruling and non-ruling - perceive their protest? Finally, how did the ruling United Front Government cope with the 1971 crisis?

In the context of these queries the following set of propositions are presented which may be of relevance for studies of similar situations pertaining particularly, to several third world countries.

1. The greater the injustice of the existing imbalance (of the structure of society), and the higher the perception

⁴³ Department of Census and Statistics, The Population of Sri Lanka (Colombo, 1974), pp. 33-34.

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of this same, the larger is the possibility of the initiation of a movement or a struggle for the destruction/transformation of the existing structure.

To elucidate, the combination of structural imbalance and the factor of high literacy may provide us with a potentially explosive situation which may engender organized violence. At the same time alternate situations may exist in which there does exist deprivation and high literacy and yet no organised violence (e.g. Kerala). The intervening variables would have to bear examination here. Hence, alongwith high literacy and consciousness, factors such as demographic imbalance favouring the young, as well as the identification by the deprived, of the inadequacy (inability to deliver the goods) of the historically continuing leadership and others, may also contribute to such a movement.

2. These movements generally gain momentum through reference to a revolutionary ideology;
3. In the initial stages, their clandestine nature may lend to them, a greater degree of cohesiveness;
4. Prematurely instigated uprisings may not only be generally unsuccessful in their immediate outcome, but also, may prove to be a considerable, though temporary, set-back

for such a movement. (The prematurity mentioned here is with reference to the mass base of a movement).

5. The processes of suppression/containment/absorption (depending upon the strategy and tactics employed by the ruling class) of such a movement, may lead to a greater centralization and militarization of the State machinery.

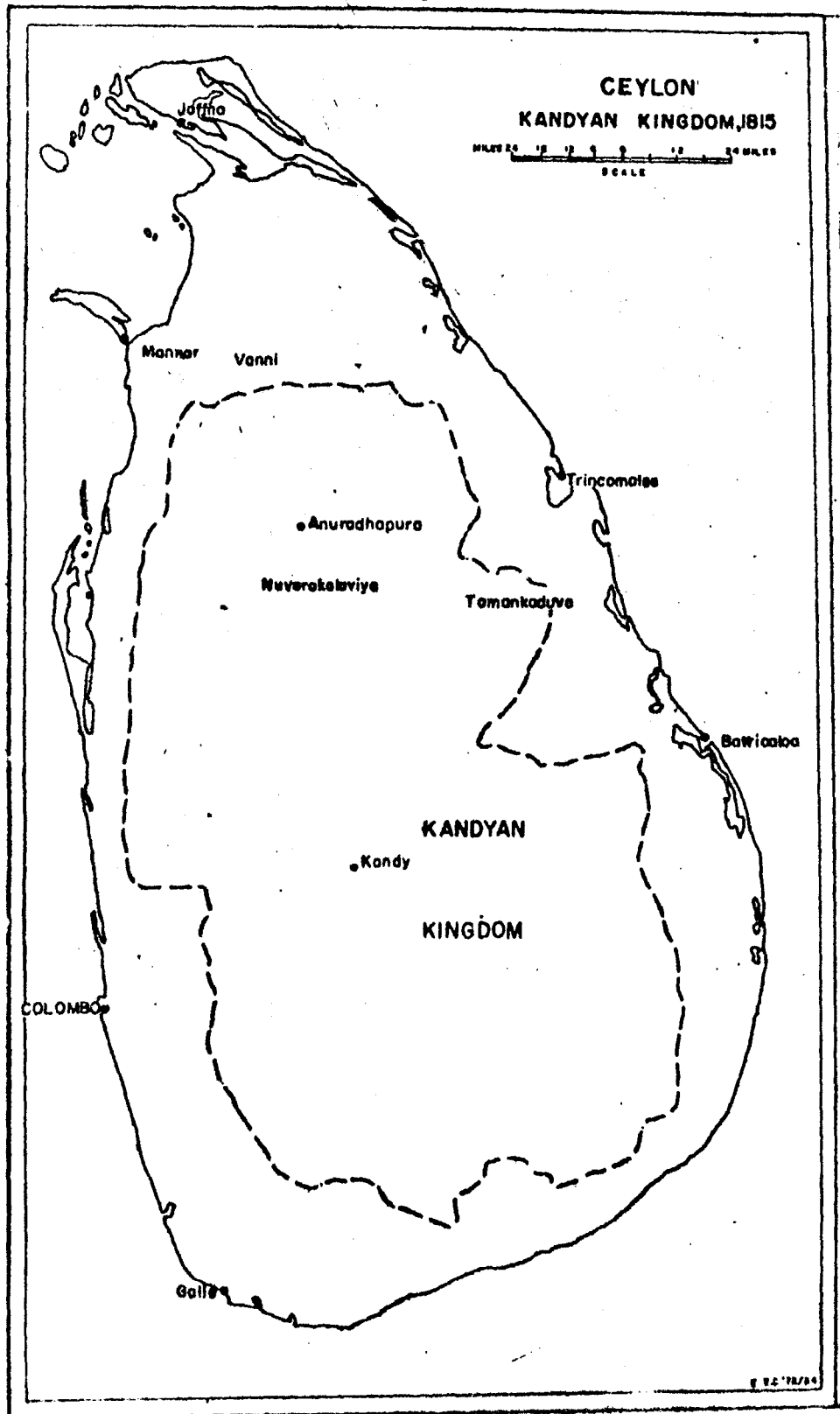
These propositions entail an inquiry into the historical foundations of such a movement in Sri Lanka. Since April 1971, was an onslaught on the leadership and the socio-economic structure prevailing upon the Island, we need to analyse their historical antecedents dating from the pre-colonial era.

....

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND PATTERNS OF LEADERSHIP

The Island of Ceylon experienced almost four and a half centuries of European colonial rule, of which, 133 years covered every inch of this Emerald Isle. This formed the major part of the period of British rule. The British, although they came in 1796, were able to bring the whole Island under their control only in 1815. This was why, despite the fact that Western colonialism had arrived three centuries prior to their advent, they were to have, by far, the deepest erosive effect upon the traditional structure of the Island. The Portuguese (1505-1656) and then the Dutch who succeeded them (1656-1795), were unable to bring the Central Highlands, namely, the Kandyan Kingdom (see map) under their political purview. It is natural then, that a certain distinctiveness developed and adhered to the Sinhalese community inhabiting these highlands because of its insularity and relatively short contact with an alien rule and mode of life. Not only this, even in the pre-colonial era, the coastal areas naturally had greater contacts with foreigners which may have lent a greater laxity to their social structure. Along with such intra-community differences into low-country and Up-country Sinhalese, certain other pre-colonial features also persisted, e.g. the caste system. We shall refer to these as we proceed.



Source: K.M. De Silva, (ed.), HISTORY OF CEYLON
(Peradeniya, 1973), vol. 3, Map II.

Pre-Colonial Ceylon

Pre-colonial Ceylon was feudal and caste-ridden. The King's position was, however, divinely ordained and his power was ultimate. Theoretically and practically he owned all land. That which was with a person was given to him and could be taken away. That which was nobody's was his. Practically everyone owned land by his grace. In return for this ownership of land, he owed services to the King. This system, known as *rajakariya*, included "the duty to the King in the form of grain tax; exceptional personal service in wartime, and national emergencies and duty to the King and/or his representative in consideration of land holdings by way of present service and/or dues in money or in kind".¹

Although *rajakariya* was a universally applicable system, it made sure that the service allocated was commensurate with the particular caste-dignity and traditional vocation of a person.

There existed three categories of land ownership, forms of which persist to this day.

1. Crown lands or *Gabadagam*, from which the total produce would go to the Government.
2. *Nindagam* or lands which may comprise a whole village, which was made over to a private person by the Crown, the

¹ Ralph Pieris, Sinhalese Social Organization: The Kandyan Period (Colombo, 1955), p. 95.

individual being entitled to the dues and services which were formerly paid to the King;

3. Viharagam or temple lands, which functioned in the same way as the previous one with the difference that the endowment to a temple was generally permanent and the tenants were exempted from any tax or service except during emergencies.²

Along with hajakariya, there also existed the exploitative caste system. But unlike the Indian caste structure it was in effect, a bipartite one where the cultivators (goyigama) and the shepherds (nilamakkarayal or pattivala) corresponded to the Vaisyas in India and were the higher caste. The 'low castes' or Adu Kula were akin to the Sudras. This goyigama or "farmer-aristocracy", constituted in fact, the majority of the population. But these 'good people' as they were called, were themselves divided into ranks, the highest of whom were entitled to the highest offices. Consequently only a minority had access to power.

"In general, goyigama people were entitled to services from the 'low castes'....In everyday life...the 'good people' required the 'low castes' to perform a variety of menial services and tailors, barbers, washermen, cooks, drummers, potters, and weavers, were all of low caste."³

² Ibid., see Part 2, "The Village", pp. 39-73.

³ Ibid., pp. 173-4.

Such a structure of social organization was accompanied by an administrative structure which was a hierarchical one with the village being the lowest unit therein. This latter it is noteworthy, was, however, practically self-sufficient. The combination of this factor with the system of land ownership and services to the King, contributed to the absence of a money economy. Exchange operated at three levels, viz.,

1. reciprocal arrangement within a village or between villages for exchange and distribution of goods and services, based on the ascriptive division in the society;
2. local barter; and the most important,
3. the exchange between different social classes wherein each class received certain services and goods according to its ascriptive position.⁴

Consequently, there was hardly any trade in the hands of the local population; trading activities were carried on by the foreigners - Moors and Malabars - before the advent of colonial rule.

Conclusively, we note that leadership in pre-colonial Ceylon was in the hands of a feudal aristocracy which was further entrenched and secured by its position

4 Urmila Phandis, "Changing Social Structure in Ceylon", Report prepared for the UNESCO Research Centre (New Delhi, 1965, unpublished), p. 30.

in the caste hierarchy. It was constituted of the highest sub-caste within the highest caste from which were also chosen, the chiefs of the various provinces. The degree of their power depended greatly upon the strength of the ruling monarch.

The Portuguese and Dutch Era

The Portuguese occupied the maritime provinces and except for replacing the highest officers in the administrative hierarchy, they brought about very little change. The organizational structure and Rajakariya were retained and the latter were exploited through engineering wars and using the local populations to fight them. In the course of placing new personnel in high offices, a lower sub-caste from within the boyigama began to come to the forefront. These were the "ambitious families who welcomed the Portuguese" as well as the Dutch "as their allies in their struggle for increased social status",⁵ and in many cases, embraced the "official religion" of the colonial rulers, i.e. Christianity.

The Dutch retained the system during their period of rule except for bringing notable changes in the legal sphere.

Needless to note, both the periods of colonial rule left their residue of religious converts (Catholics and

5 Marshall Singer, The Caste in Ceylon: A Study of Political Organization in Ceylon (Columbo, 1964), p. 23.

Protestants) apart from an_ending a community of Burghers, of mixed blood. The land ownership and tenure, more or less, continued as before till the advent of the British.

The British Colonial Era

The coming of the British, the defeat and takeover of the Kandyan Kingdom and the consequent establishment of the plantation system, were all events which contributed to a turmoil in the old system and the destruction of parts of it, for giving way to a new order.

There is no steadfast evidence to the contrary that the capitalist sector (plantation specially) was a European imposition. That it was not a British introduction is a known fact, for there were introduced on the Island, cinnamon plantations by the Dutch in the latter half of the eighteenth century.⁶ But from the point of the view of the Island's social structure and economy, the most significant era of development in plantations took place in the nineteenth century.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the Ceylonese economy became directly linked with and dependent upon the metropolitan centre acquiring the character of a supplier of commercial crops in the world market. The

6 Michael Roberts and L.A. Wickremaratne, "Export Agriculture in the Nineteenth Century", in K.M. de Silva, ed., History of Ceylon (Colombo, 1973), vol. 3, pp. 32-53.

feudal, self-sufficient subsistence economy was gradually though not completely, replaced by commercial plantation agriculture. The last struggle of feudalism in its death throes was manifested in the Kandyan rebellion of 1818 and 1848 which was simultaneously also, a struggle against British overlordship. Meanwhile, a segment of the feudalistic element had already begun a process of adjustment and collaboration with colonialism.

It is a notable fact that from as early as the 1830s, a small section of the Ceylonese had also involved themselves in cash crop plantation agriculture, with certain low-country Sinhalese leading the way.⁷ Coffee, coconut, tea and also rubber were invested in coinciding with the booms and depressions engendered by the successive crises in the world market. The capital was usually acquired by them, from their urban property holdings as also from their previous evidently profitable investments. Ceylonese with capital also took to other proliferating areas of capitalist enterprise, usually spillovers from the expansion of the plantation system, for instance, trading in foodstuffs and other commodities, arrack industries, building and allied

7 Ibid., p. 92.

And in fact, "for Ceylon as a whole, even during the nineteenth century much the greater proportion of Crown land was purchased by non-Europeans." p. 96.

Also in the same volume, Michael Roberts states that "at least 13,500 acres of plantation coffee land were in the hands of Ceylonese by 1880 and investments in coffee plantations contributed towards the social advance of a handful of families." Michael Roberts, "Elite Formation and Elites, 1832-1931", p. 265.

trades, forest clearing etc.⁸

Apart from this capitalist class, there also arose a body of Ceylonese administrators and professionals (doctors and lawyers) to service the needs of colonial domination over the island. It is evident that many of these latter converged with the rising capitalist class, for, at least till the end of the nineteenth century, education (medical or legal) was a heavy investment arising from the expense involved in undergoing the same in the metropolitan country. The Goyigamas who were generally synonymous with the Mudalliyars, sent their children abroad to study.⁹ But the Karava, Salagama and Durava castes were not left behind. Having lived in the coastal areas, they were more familiar with market devices, less tied down by tradition and more mobile and flexible. In taking advantage of the inter-Asian trade of the 17th and 18th centuries, some of them had amassed considerable wealth and with this capital they quickly took advantage of the widening economic opportunities

8 Michael Roberts, "Some Features of the Nationalist Movement in British Ceylon" (Cyclostyled paper), p. 3.

9 Only in 1870 was a Medical College established on the island and the Council for Legal Education was born in 1874. University education arrived as late as 1921 with the setting up of the University College in Colombo. Roberts, n. 7, pp. 272-3. Also see Michael Roberts, "Reformism, Nationalism and Protest in British Ceylon: The Roots and Ingredients of Leadership" (Cyclostyled paper), p. 11.

during British times. The 19th century hence, saw the phenomenal growth in the status of the second, third and fourth castes in the hierarchy.¹⁰

The promotion of the English language and education within the Island and outside was perceived since the governorship of Lord North, as beneficial. Later Colebrook was instrumental, through his 'reforms' in education, in creating an English-speaking section, catering to British needs. For instance, he recommended that the knowledge of English be a prerequisite to their employment as teachers and until such a condition was created, the retired government clerks and surgeons could be employed. The establishment of a higher English institution with an English headmaster for pupils already competent in English was also conceived by him. Through missionary efforts and in other ways, this education penetrated into the rural areas as well, and as early as the 1870s, it was stated that English educated youth were abandoning the paddy fields and setting their sights on "some small government post the demand for which just now is far in excess of supply".¹¹ A section of the English educated Sinhalese, on the other hand, urged the British to divert resources toward elementary vernacular

10 Roberts, n. 7, p. 281.

11 L.A. Wickremaratne, "Education and Social Change, 1832-1900", in Silva, n. 6, p. 181.

education for the rural masses, as also the closure of English schools; demands emanating from a perceived threat. Following this, in the course of the late 19th and early 20th century, vernacular education had become almost an Island-wide phenomena.¹² It was as a consequence of this long-drawn legacy that we find such a high literacy rate in Ceylon with the formal departure of the British. It was also the seed of the troubles which fructified in the mid-twentieth century and after, because of high literacy, population explosion and a combination of many other factors.

Some time must be devoted to another important feature of the nineteenth century. This was the phenomena of Indian Tamil plantation labour which had been introduced into the Ceylonese economy by the British springing from the economic advantages that accrued to it. The reason given for the need for this immigrant labour sprang from the general belief among the Europeans, of the easy-going nature of the Sinhalese. It was, in reality, a fact that the Sinhalese were an oppressed section who were most often, not paid regularly. "Several headmen of this district", wrote a Britisher, "tell me that villagers have so often been duped and cheated out of their due that some have

12 By 1890 there were in all, government-aided, grant-aided, and unaided, 106 English schools and 3,500 vernacular schools.

* These Indian Tamils who came mainly during the period of British rule must be differentiated from the Ceylon Tamils who came in the 10th-12th centuries A.D., and earlier.

given up work and others daily become more averse to work on the Estates."¹³ Between the Ceylonese Sinhalese rice-growing peasant and this immigrant labour, there developed an estrangement, born greatly from the forced isolation imposed upon the latter as also from the increasing pressure on land which adversely affected the peasant and brought him around to believe that the situation of the plantation labourer was a privileged one. The economy was definitely lopsided. Despite the fact that 85 per cent of the population was rural and relied heavily on traditional activity of paddy cultivation, almost all export trade was in the hands of the modern sector to which also accrued 78.6 per cent of the total export receipts.¹⁴ This sector had only a minimal effect on the traditional sector. Most of the surplus from exports was remitted outside the country, some was reinvested in the estates and some came into the hands of the locally resident British as also Ceylonese who maintained a life-style much above that of the masses.

In the first two decades of this century, the English-educated leadership indulged in peaceful agitation for constitutional reforms. It is evident that much of the rural population was alienated from them. Those in the

13 S.F.C. Anandak, The Modern History of Ceylon (London, 1966), p. 68. For details on the history of land administration see S.L. Gunasinghe, Land-Settlement and Administration in Ceylon (Colombo, 1967); and R.N. Gunasinghe, Land-Settlement and Administration in Ceylon (London, 1974).

14 John H. Coatsworth, Ceylon: An Export Economy in Transition (Illinois, 1966), p. 66.

front of this passive national movement made it clear, furthermore, that they would tolerate no nonsense from the emerging working class. This gap in the leadership of the working class was hence filled by one of their fringe members, A.E. Goonesinghe, who believed in his chosen role as a leader. After a decade of glorious domination and agitations, he was seen to be leading the movement into the non-Marxist lines with frequent appeals to communalism and racialism. His eclipse laid the foundation upon which the left parties and groups began to build up their following in the 1930s.¹⁵ With the adoption of the 1920 Constitution which submitted only partially, the demands of the isolated leadership, differences began to arise among it and in the rank and file. These were many-intra-communal, communal and ideological. The up-country Sinhalese split up and formed their Kandyan National Assembly in 1924; the European Association, the Ceylon Muslim League, and the All Ceylon Moors Association were formed in 1927, the Sinhala Maha Sabha in 1934, and the All Ceylon Tamil Congress in 1944. The Left groups had by 1935 formed themselves into the Lanka Sama Samaj Party (Lanka Equal Society Party (LSSP), the only noteworthy party of this period.

¹⁵ For details see Kusari Jayewardene, The Rise of the Labour Movement in Ceylon (London, 1972). For a useful problem and history, see Communalism and Labour in the Island of Ceylon (North Carolina, 1967).

Initially, despite the proliferation of these interest groups (leaving out the Left) the leadership continued to work together. As a consequence of this, the United National Party (UNP) was hastily formed to meet the 1947 General Elections.¹⁶

Post-Independence Ceylon and the Patterns of Leadership

But this unity, referred to above, did not last long. Some of the national bourgeoisie, whose interests were opposed to and at the same time, coinciding in some spheres, with those of the comprador bourgeoisie, found greater advantage in separating. (The difference between national and comprador is here in the degree of dependence upon foreign companies and interests) The national bourgeoisie in Ceylon could not break the hold of colonial control but they did not openly foster collaboration with it. They were forced to recognize it because these foreign companies held key enterprises and also the important

16 For details on the process of the transfer of power see Sir Charles Jeffries, Ceylon, The Path to Independence (London, 1962); Robert G. Newbery, The Independence of Ceylon (London, 1973), and Howard W. Callaway, The Independence of Ceylon (New Jersey, 1960).

by Lewis etc.¹⁷ Colonial and personality politics also played an important role in the developing disunity (evident from the earlier groupings that had taken place). S. A. D. Bandaranaike and his followers, grasped within their hands, the loose ends of the student revivalist national movement of the 19th century, and decisively commanded its course

17 However, the bourgeoisie in Ceylon especially of the indigenous variety, had always been weak; having only a minimal impact upon the industrial development of the country. There are many reasons for this but it was certainly not because they lacked in enterprise. For instance, with the outbreak of the Second World War, Ceylon was "the most attractive domestic market for British goods since history" (p. 78-79) and "both government and private business in Ceylon" (p. 77) took advantage of these dramatic increases in demand placed in the country of imported commodities. In the hands of the "right" entrepreneur, local industries, for instance, clothing, "all sorts of" and "cellulose" was not only profitable but also a source of employment. Textiles, for instance, were a sector which could be developed. It is true that it is at present (p. 78). Even such a small industry as footwear, which had been neglected for many years, is now being revived, and many other goods, such as paper, chemicals, and many others, are being produced. The way has been opened to revive it. (p. 78)

As it is, the bourgeoisie of this country was a class which was weak, unlike the bourgeoisie of the 19th century which was confident and strong in its early stages, especially with saving for investment. This is why, in the early stages of the development of the country, the bourgeoisie had to be developed by the state. The severe limitations upon the private capacity of this sector because of this, was the main reason "the state became of responsibility for the production of investment... upon the government." p. 127. Sinagra, A. M.

to serve their purpose. Beginning with the formation of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) in 1951, this process culminated in the ousting of the UNP from the seats of power and the landslide victory of the SLFP coalition in the elections of 1956.¹⁸

Following the ouster of the UNP in 1956, Sri Lanka experienced general elections at fairly regular intervals with no ruling party or coalition staying in power for more than one term. Every general election had also witnessed a steady increase in the aggregate of votes polled. Not only

¹⁸ Despite the fact that English culture had been imbibed by a considerable portion of the leadership, there was a minority which continued to cling to its own culture and initiated a movement for its revival. This Buddhist resurgence movement had its roots in the mid-nineteenth century. An incipient nationalism combined with this revivalism to scorn and oppose the British and their emulating native counterparts. Such leaders as Aliguttawatte Ganananda (who carried out and triumphed in the great religious debate with the Protestant clergymen in 1873 and later / Jagarika Dharmapala, who carried it forward, seemed to give back to the Sinhalese their lost identity, and a pride in their religion. This movement held the greatest appeal for the rural population which was nevertheless, not the peasantry. This village intelligentsia composed of Sinhala speaking merchants, landowners, tradesmen, school-teachers, ayurvedic physicians, minor government officials and well-to-do village businessmen, mobilized the village vote for the first time in 1956, bringing Bandaranaike into power. In other words, "Bandaranaike, though himself unaware of it, reaped the heritage of Dharmapala". Gananath Obeyesekere, "Sinhala Nationalism and Culture in Relation to the April 1971 Insurgency in Sri Lanka" (Cyclostyled Paper), p. 9.

this, the phase from personalized to party politics had come a long way. Independents and new parties and groups found it increasingly difficult to survive and the two major parties--the UNP and the SLFP--succeeded along with their allies, in capturing about three-fourths of the votes polled. Last but not the least, the decreasing number of invalid votes polled, indicated a politically maturing electorate. This despite the fact that the voting age had been lowered from 21 to 18 years in 1959.

Confrontation and Conformation in the
Regime of Coalition Politics

In the formation of governments following successive general elections, the pattern of coalitions had been a dominating feature. The governments of 1947, 1956, March 1960, 1965 and 1970 were all coalitions. A subsequent conclusion which may be derived from this pattern is, that differences between party programmes and policies were progressively reducing. All parties of the left, right and centre had adjusted their action and programmes in such a manner as to best derive the support from another party/group and its following.

Within the combination of the development of the party-system and the rigorous demands of a parliamentary system, could be perceived, a trend towards submersion of radically different postures and a progressively un-

differentiated politics of the various parties. The areas of convergence in ideologies and programmes widened to accommodate a politics of opportunism. Consequently, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party and the United National Party, both proclaimed themselves social democrats. The former spoke of a State based on 'socialistic' principles and the latter of a "democratic socialism" in which each capitalist enterprise would not be curtailed but rather, spread over a large number of people. They were, as it were "opposed to total state ownership and management on the one hand, and ownership and management by a few capitalists on the other."¹⁹ The SLFP in its 1960 manifesto stated; "Private enterprise will be given all incentives to participate in industry, by tax relief and protective measures."²⁰ The LSSP which in this year (1960) termed the above parties as the 'various contending capitalist parties' with their 'various capitalist programmes'²¹ proclaimed in 1963;

The SLFP Government has proved its incapacity to conduct a resolute fight against imperialism and the forces of capitalist and feudal reaction in Ceylon. The bankruptcy of its 'middle way' policy has become clear.

19 United National Party, For Stability and Progress a UNP Manifesto 1970 (Colombo, 1970), p. 1.

20 Ceylon Daily News, Parliaments of Ceylon 1960 (Colombo, 1960), p. 193.

21 Ibid., p. 202.

its anti-working class policies and its distrust of the masses have turned the sympathies of the people more and more away from it. 22

This was contained in the United Left Front Agreement of 1963 soon after the making of which Mrs. Bandaranaike left it in shambles by having a coalition agreement with the LSSP. The latter had, thus already come a long way from its revolutionary mass-action programme of the pre-1960 and early 1960 days. The degree of submergence of its politics with that of the SLFP was evident in 1968 when it decided not to issue a separate election manifesto.²³ By 1970, it had formed a United Front with the SLFP and the Communist Party of Ceylon (CPC) (Moscow oriented) to fight the elections and to form a "People's Government of the three parties and other progressive forces, with Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike as Prime Minister."²⁴ The need for its shift in policy arose from the adeptness with which the SLFP had utilized the 'socialist' banner and slogans to leave the Left prostrate.

22 United Left Front, United Left Front Agreement (Colombo, 1963), p. 1.

23 Ceylon Daily News, Parliaments of Ceylon 1965 (Colombo, 1965), p. 175. Incidentally, the CP (Moscow), decided to take the same position, also endorsing the SLFP manifesto.

24 Ceylon Daily News, Parliaments of Ceylon 1970 (Colombo, 1970), p. 173.

In the midst of this confrontation and conformation, the younger generation seemed to have been "left out in the cold". The political scene remained dominated by the stalwarts, the pioneers and builders of the political structure which had evolved over the years. Consequently, despite the fact that younger elements penetrated even up to the middle-rank of the leadership, they had rarely been able to reach the top.²⁵ And this, despite the fact that the voting age was reduced to eighteen years as early as 1959. Every general election had ushered in another mass of 21 and later 18 year olds with their hopes and aspirations. Free education had brought to the Core a politically conscious population with demands which a parliamentary system had failed to confer or absorb, not only because it had failed to restructure social relations but mainly, because it did not essentially wish to change it. The absence of timely dealing with problems before they became acute were glaring failures of successive governments. The bourgeois native and compradore, despite having a stance of confrontation also possessed overlapping interests because of the foreign control of key areas of

²⁵ The average age in the cabinet ranged from 45 to 55 years. In the Lower House, the age-group drawing the largest numbers had been 36 to 50 years. M. A. Dutt, "Socio-Economic Background of Legislators in Sri Lanka, 1947-1970" (Unpublished Paper, 1975). See also W. A. Wiswawardanapala, "The Formation of the Cabinet in Sri Lanka: A Study of the 1970 United Front Cabinet", Political Science Review, vol. 12, nos. 1 and 2, January-June 1973, pp. 121-33; W. A. Wiswawardanapala, "Composition of Cabinets 1948-60", Young Soci. List, vol. 2, no. 5, pp. 267-72.

enterprise. Agency houses were one such sphere.²⁶

All the parties, in their economic programmes stressed the bestowal of welfare services, out of which sprang some of the major ailments from which the country suffered and continues to do so to this date. The enormous foreign exchange deficit created by them compelled the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development to group the Island with three other countries, as being a bad debtor who has "accumulated such large amounts of debt in the past, and whose development is likely to be such a prolonged process" that it is "likely to encounter serious and protracted debt service difficulties unless large amounts of aid are made available" to it.²⁷ The economic infrastructure of the country exacerbated this problem. The Island remained a primary crop exporting economy. More disheartening was the fact that the primary crop that it exported (tea) hardly possessed a dynamism in demand strong enough to induce greater foreign exchange earnings. This was compounded by the lack of adequate diversification of the economy, so that, despite a large agriculturally active population, self-sufficiency on the food front had not been achieved and considerable foreign exchange was expended upon it.

26 Betty Weerakoon, The Tea Worker and the Nationalisation of Sri Lanka's Plantations (Colombo, 1975), p. 3.

27 Nihal Kapragoda, "The Cost of Foreign Aid", Marga, vol. 1, no. 3, 1972, p. 4.

As in most underdeveloped countries, a high percentage (72%) of the population of the country depended upon domestic agriculture. Paddy, the major domestic crop was grown in over one million holdings all over the Island. Sixty per cent of these landholdings were less than one acre in area.²⁸ Out of the 72 per cent engaged in agriculture, 23 per cent, as of 1971, were landless and another 26 per cent owned land less than half an acre. Fifty-four per cent of the rural families were in debt.²⁹ Absence of adequate land and the rising population combined to contribute to unemployment. As of 1969-70, nearly 18 per cent of the labour force in the country was unemployed and more than 75 per cent of the unemployed work force belonged to the rural areas.³⁰

Most of the problems that confronted the country had been there when independence was achieved and persisted despite their recognition by all parties concerned. Population growth, unemployment, decreasing agricultural production and consequent rural poverty and indebtedness were some

28 N. M. Perera, The Economy of Ceylon: Trends and Prospects (Colombo, 1971), p. 12.

29 Politicus (pseud), "The April Revolt in Ceylon", Asian Survey, vol. 12, no. 3, March 1972, p. 261.

30 International Labour Organization report, Matching Employment Opportunities and Expectations: A Study of the Labour Market in Ceylon (Geneva, 1971), p. 3 and 26.

of them.³¹ But the absence of revolutionary social change in the countryside can be attributed to a leadership at the

31 Even prior to independence, the LSSP brought out a pamphlet on unemployment, which was a rejoinder to a questionnaire circulated by a Departmental Committee appointed in 1937 to look into this problem. Its authorship and title were as follows:

Colvin I. De Silva, Leslie S. Coonewardene and S.A. Wickramasinghe, Unemployment in Ceylon: Some Aspects Shows the Way Out (Colombo, n. d.).

The SLFP in 1951 stated:

"This Party aims at the elimination of unemployment and will strive with all means at the disposal of the State to provide for the employment of the unemployed and to the guaranteeing of a substantial wage to the worker and peasant with a view to eliminating the sub-human standards in which the vast majority of the people of this country live."

Executive Committee of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, Manifesto and Constitution of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (Colombo, 1951), p. 10.

top which was dominated by land-owners.³² Consequently, while speaking of the colonization of new lands and their dispersal, plus diversification of agriculture had taken place to some extent, not much was done to transform the structure of social relationships existing in the rural areas. For instance, like all other extravagant promises, the

32 A study of the post-independence leadership reveals that its class-character has altered only marginally. An almost negligible number with either working class or poor peasant origin or background have succeeded in entering the sacred parliamentary chambers. The major features which constitute the leadership are:

- (a) the well-educated with a high percentage of graduates foreign educated graduates have been decreasing in number in the Lower House while they have remained the same in the Cabinet;
- (b) ethnically, predominantly Sinhalese;
- (c) economically, capitalist and landlord (big and small) including mainly plantation owners, and also professionals (specially lawyers). In the Cabinet, landowners predominate;
- (d) predominantly goyigama; and
- (e) Buddhist.

Hence, we observe that while in practically all manners it is representative of the population (except age-wise), economically, it fails quite glaringly in this respect. The peasants and labourers who had practically no representative from within sought the same in either the Marxist intellectuals or the landlords and businessmen in their community. Constituency break-up has some role to play in this. Effectively, this demarcation has contributed toward representing regional, religious, caste and generally communal differences. *Kla Dutt, n. 25.*

nationalisation of plantations was not brought about till
 1975. ³² It is a notable fact that of an acreage of 280,000

32 The SLFP's nationalization in 1951:

"All essential industries including large plantations and transport, banking and insurance be progressively nationalized", Manifesto and Constitution, n. 31, p. 11.

Later in 1960, while reiterating its aim of alleviating unemployment and poverty, it changed its stand on nationalisation, stating:

"While we accept in principle that rationalisation of certain undertakings in the interests of the national economy is desirable, we do not consider it advantageous to undertake the immediate nationalisation of estates", p. 194.

The UNP professed a similar stand in this year:

"The forcible acquisition of foreign-owned tea and rubber plantations which now bring in most of Ceylon's foreign income would be ruinous to our economy", p. 196.

The only party which continued to speak of the nationalization of big plantations at this time was the LSSP, p. 203.

Ceylon Daily News, Parliament of Ceylon 1960 (Colombo, 1960).

But this was indeed different from the LSSP's stand in 1960, which proclaimed:

"The Nationalisation of the Land. The transfer of all land (excluding large-scale modernized agricultural enterprises) for use to the toiling peasantry."

It also spoke of the "ending of all forms of colonial subjection to foreign finance capital (Imperialism)".

LSSP, Programme of Action (Colombo, 1960), p. 1.

in tea 150,000 were owned by British based companies and these were also the largest plantations in Sri Lanka.³⁴

Consequently, despite the fact that governments changed hands peacefully (which was a quality much harped upon by Sri Lanka's political enthusiasts) the majority of the people remained poor with their numbers increasing each year, and the goods remaining undelivered. The problems which were there in 1947 remained and became more acute by 1970. The education drive had brought about a literacy level of over 75 per cent. The demographic distribution of the population resulting from a reduction in infant mortality and the prolongation of life-span (the consequence of the anti-malarial DDT drive of the 1940s) made the majority of the population young and the dependency ratio successively higher.³⁵ Consequently, the incidence of unemployment was higher among the young, specially the 15-24 age-group which possessed some secondary education. The rate of unemployment in this latter group reached more than 70 per cent and was still higher in the rural areas and among women. It is notable that only 5 per cent of those who had not even

³⁴ Weerakoon, n. 26, p. 1.

³⁵ By 1971 it constituted 43.6 per cent of the population. Department of Census and Statistics, The Population of Sri Lanka (Colombo, 1974), p. 34.

attended school, were unemployed.³⁶ With the rise in the educational level we see an accompanying rise in the rate of unemployment.³⁷

These phenomena were not something which had gone ignored. It was their enormity which disabled all governments which tried to coincide the motives of preservation of their own economic interests with the preservation of their political power. The latter demanded at least a verbal proclamation of radical change. But radical change within the existing framework proved an increasing impossibility. Hence, while the goods remained undelivered, the enormity of the problems was held as the primary cause of this incapacity.

Left Parties and the Parliamentary Framework

In this process of political development, the Left parties (at least those of consequence electorally) seemed apparently, to have been absorbed. This lent to a greater all-pervading disillusionment among the lower and younger cadres. Even these left parties had remained dominated by old stalwarts like Colin H. De Silva, Leslie Goonewardena,

36 74 per cent in the urban areas, 83 per cent in the rural areas, 94 per cent in the estate areas. On the whole, this age-group constituted 82 per cent of the total unemployed population. International Labour Organization, p. 30, pp. 3 and 26.

37 Ibid., pp. 19-30.

N.M. Perera, S.A. Wickremasinghe, to name a few. This feature persisted despite numerous splits. Hence, even in the sphere of left politics, the young had not been able to acquire positions of prominence. What we are leading up to here, or trying to indicate, is that the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, which was in the forefront of the uprising of April 1971, was an off-shoot of this left-movement, a reaction to it and a child of what were perceived as the shortcomings and insufficiencies of the traditional left movement. In this context a short account of the history and leadership of the Left seems necessary.

The distinctive feature of the Left movement upon this Island as opposed to that in any other country of the world, was the domination of Trotskyism over it almost from its origin until ^{the} 1964 with the expulsion of the stalwart Trotskyite Party, the Lanka Sama Samaj Party (LSSP) from the Fourth International. This party, however, continues to dominate the Left political scene alongwith the Communist Party of Ceylon (CPC) which was formed after the expulsion of the "Stalinists" from within the LSSP itself in 1940. As parliamentary victories are used as a criterion for gauging their strength, they remained the most powerful of the numerous left parties but this same criterion also brings out their inability to progressively expand, through the showing of almost stagnant vote bank over this long

period.³⁸ The other more important Left parties had been the Ceylon Communist Party (Peking oriented) (CCP; M-L) which was formed with a split in the CPC in 1963, and the LSSP (revolutionary)³⁹ formed after the LSSP no-contest agreement with the SLFP.

The LSSP was the seed from which most of the radicalism in Sri Lanka germinated and the gradual disintegration of the movement can be perceived as a process which had acted and reacted dynamically and directly in connection with the international socialist movement, more so than can be said in the case of its larger neighbour, India.⁴⁰

The LSSP, initially, was neither a Marxist nor a Trotskyite party and professed a broad combination of

38 Robert A. Kearney, "The Marxist Parties of Ceylon", in Paul H. Brass and Marcus F. Franda, eds., Radical Politics in South Asia (London, 1973), p. 408.

39 This party has recently renamed itself the Revolutionary Marxist Party.

40 For details see, Mohan Ram, Indian Communism: Split Within the Split (Delhi, 1969). In India, the origins of the 1964 split in the Communist Party of India predate the Sino-Soviet ideological dispute by almost a decade and the split itself was the result more of the contradictions and differences which surfaced in the early 1950s, and in fact, had not much to do with ideology considering that the CPI (M) was confronted by the same just three to four years later.

aims of national independence and socialism.⁴¹ It was more a party of the radical petite-bourgeoisie, "a broad social democratic organisation composed of nationalists and those advocating Marxism in order to give leadership on two fronts, the nationalist movement and the working class struggle",⁴² and reflected their intellectually progressive views.⁴³ But in this conglomerate leadership of the English educated and London School of Economics politicised set, there did exist a highly disciplined, Trotskyist in-group,⁴⁴ composed of such, later to be reknowned, individuals as Dr. Colvin K. De Silva, Dr. N.M. Perera, Philip and Robert Gunawardena, Leslie Goonewardena. It was only after six years of its existence that it officially proclaimed its Trotskyist leanings.⁴⁵

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- 41 On 28 August 1938, Philip Gunawardena adamantly stated in the State Council that "our Party is not a Communist Party....It is a party which is much less militant and less demanding than the Communist or section of the Communist or Third International". George Jan Jerski, Origins of Trotskyism in Ceylon - A Documentary History of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, 1935-42 (California, 1968), p. 26.
- 42 V. Kumari Jayawardena, "Origins of the Left Movement in Sri Lanka", Social Scientist, vols. 18-19, January February 1974, p. 3.
- 43 Ceylon Communist Party, 25 Years of the Ceylon Communist Party, 1913-63 (Colombo, 1968), p. 7.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 56.
- 45 It was only after the expulsion of the "Stalinists" in 1940, that the hitherto vague programme of the Party was concretised, clarified and brought into line with that of the Fourth International.

The LSSP suffered two more splits in its first quarter century of existence--one in 1960 when Philip Gunawardene formed the Viplavakari Lanka Sama Samaj Party (which later titled itself the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna and became almost defunct in a few years). The second was in 1964 when its policy towards the SLFP engendered the split and the formation of the LSSP (R) which was now recognized by the Fourth International. This last organization in effect, condemned any form of coalition by the LSSP with the Bandaranaike Government, and while "refusing to condone both opportunist abandonment of principles and organizational sectarianism, the United Secretariat (of the Fourth International) broke with Perera and Co.", on 23 April 1964.⁴⁶

By now it was clear that two strands existed in the Left movement in Sri Lanka. One which conformed to the parliamentary path to socialism and the other which opposed it. The LSSP and the CTC constituted the former and the LSSP (R) and the CCF (M-L) the latter. But the JVP was a little more complex phenomena. It rejected both the Chinese and the Russian road to revolution and believed that the concrete situation of Ceylon required a different and

⁴⁶ Ernest Gernain, "Introduction", in V. Karalasingham, Politics of Coalition (Colombo, 1964), p. 15.

unique path.⁴⁷

However, there were certain basics on which all the Left parties of this Island agreed. They believed that the forces that must be combated were the foreign imperialists and their local lackeys/agents. The UNP was for them a compradore bourgeois party while the SLFP was the predominant party of the national bourgeoisie vacillating in its support for and against imperialism.

The various parties differed essentially, on the issue of the role that the SLFP can or must play. The CPC believed in collaborating with the dominant and progressive elements within it; the LSSP regarded it as compromisist and not irreconcilable.

The LSSP (h) and the JVP believed that no good would come out of collaboration with the national bourgeoisie. The JVP here seemingly contributed to the one-stage revolution strategy of the Trotskyists which ruled out a united front with any other class than the workers and peasants. They called for a 'socialist revolution'. The CCP (M-L) on the other hand worked towards a two-stage 'People's Democratic Revolution'. None of these three exhibited trust in an alliance with the SLFP. All of them believed that even the 'Left' had betrayed the working class movement in the country and that there was

47 Rohana Wijeweera's statement before the Criminal Justice Commission (cyclotyled), p. 60.

a need for a new leadership. Apparently, it seemed that the JVP had been the most successful in providing this, if not for the working class, at least for the unorganized labour and peasantry in the rural areas. Certain events immediately prior to the outbreak proved to have a cataclysmic effect upon the long-term precipitating crisis within the country. And these combined to explode into an uprising for which the JVP was chosen to provide the leadership.

Conclusion

In hearkening to ancient Sinhala traditions, personalities and events, the JVP was reflecting a historical continuity dating back to the pre-colonial era. It is notable, furthermore, that a large number of the economically oppressed section to which it appealed, also belonged to the lowest castes in the Sinhala social caste-hierarchy, which was in itself, a surviving legacy of the pre-colonial social stratification. This brought to the fore, the persisting age-old dichotomies between caste, class and status which after the advent of western colonialism, particularly the British, manifested itself in varied forms.

The British with the introduction of their welfare measures (literacy, free medical services, and rationing) facilitated the upward mobilization of the hitherto weaker section to some extent. The post colonial leadership, in

continuing to do the same, failed, to a considerable extent, to meet the needs of the majority of the people. This resulted in a deflection from their ranks, of the younger elements which had grown to constitute the larger part of the vocal population of the country. The slow moving machinery of parliamentary democracy, as it had functioned in their land had proved unsatisfactory to them. The governmental policy hitherto followed, combined with ecological factors and the numerous failures had worn their patience thin. The results of a widespread educational system, combined with the effects of a deteriorating and outmoded economic system, precipitated by phenomenal population growth had been factors which warned the leadership of a threat to the existing structure. The problem, however, continued to be that of pre-empting it.

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CHAPTER III

THE INCEPTION AND GROWTH OF THE JANATHA VIMUKTHI FERAMUNA

The period 1965 to 1970 provided the ethos for the development of the Janathe Vimukti Feramuna (People's Liberation Front) or the JVP, as it came to be known popularly. However, reasons for its inception went much further back in time. We have already dealt with the developing and prevailing economic situation obtaining within the country. Not only that, we know that literacy was a widespread phenomenon. Education in Sri Lanka had remained since independence and prior to it subject to the vicissitudes of political life. The content of education underwent no radical change.

...the teaching methods, the curriculum, the whole ethos of the school and university continued to be patterned along the lines offered to the country in the colonial era by the leading English schools in Ceylon and by the universities of England. 1

It had failed miserably in serving the economic interests of the country. Another innovation had taken place in the late 1950s, which was to have a direct impact upon the birth of the JVP. This was the introduction of vernacular education

1 Paul Casperz, "Education, Development to Under-development in Ceylon: A Point of View", Times of Ceylon, 2 July 1970 (Part I in a series of three on education. Others are 4 and 5 July 1970).

at the university level. From the early '60s, annual batches of these graduates came to swell the ranks of the educated unemployed. Their quick absorption, as highlighted earlier, had become almost an impossibility. However, the United National Party (UNP) which was ruling at this time, showed its awareness of the threat by attempting to absorb this element. The 'danger' however, was not allayed.

The desperation of this youth, combining with its scepticism, was to foster a volatile though small, group of the disgruntled. Patebendige Don Nandasiri Wijeweera, alias, hohana Wijeweera, the leader of this nucleus symbolized the frustrations alongwith the hopes and aspirations of the youth of the country. A one-time student of Lumsden University (Moscow), he had been unable to procure his medical degree because the Soviet Government had refused him a re-entry visa for what it regarded as his sympathetic views on the People's Republic of China. This left him with very little choice but to join the Ceylon Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) [CCP (M-L)]. But here too, he was given an unfair deal. Shanmugathasan, the General Secretary of the Party, began discreetly to drop from the leadership, individuals whom he believed to be working against the interests of the party.

Hence, the JVP did not, as is often implied, emerge from a split in the CCP (M-L) but, more accurately, was the consequence of the expulsion of hohana Wijeweera,

a leader of some consequence among the youth of this party.² The immediate cause of his expulsion was stated as being his participation in a United Front demonstration, a position which his party had decided not to take. But the underlying and more potent reason, was the criticism that a small group around Wijeweera levelled against the CCP (M-L) regarding its undue and overwhelming concern with urban organization, preparation and operation. But the dislike between Shanmugathasan and Wijeweera, was mutual. The latter denigrated the General Secretary's policy for possessing communal overtones. He stated that he disliked Shanmugathasan's concentration upon Tamil votes. "You see", he said, "if a Communist Marxist tries to win Colombo Central electorate on Tamil votes, it is all wrong. This was when I finally (sic) disgusted of him."³

The Youth Wing of the CCP (M-L) was where Wijeweera had been able to make his mark and upon his expulsion it was natural that some of this group⁴ should follow him out. Since its inception in 1966, the group had functioned under the

2 He was the Vice-President of the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) Youth Movement.

3 Wijeweera's statement at the Criminal Justice Commission sittings (Cyclostyled), pp. 9-10.

4 Ceylon Daily News (Hereinafter referred to as CDN), 6 November 1978. According to Wijeweera himself, about 10 to 15 members joined him when he was expelled from the CCP (M-L).

innocuous title of the Lanka Lions and only in April 1970 did it adopt the name Janata Vimukti Peramuna.⁵ It had no constitution and much of its ideology and organization is brought to light through the few issues of its paper the Janata Vimukti and from the evidence and statements made by the detained suspects in the course of their trials.⁶

Ideology, Strategy and Tactics

The JVP had also developed a set of five lectures in the course of vigorous discussions among the leaders on various questions. They formulated an ideological stand based on the consensus at which they arrived. Many had experiences from their sojourn with the Communist Party of Ceylon (CPC) and the CCP (A-L) and they used their past fieldwork among the population to contribute to this. Those five lectures dealt with the most essential questions, as perceived by the JVP leadership, in the context of the Island's history and experiences.

5 CON, 20 October 1973. Elsewhere Wijeweera states that he wished to name it the Communist Party, but since one by that name already existed, he desisted.

6 The Janata Vimukti was published only during a short period, openly, in 1970 and the beginning of 1971, when the JVP found it possible to function in the open. As regards evidence and statements by the various suspects, it has been found that they must be treated and accepted with a great many reservations. Considering that they are mouthed by various leaders who already took sides in what we shall go further to see as divisions and friction within the JVP leadership, they must be treated with utmost caution.

"The Economic Crisis" was the first lecture. It explained that the economy of the country remained colonial in its outlook and that the problems of the Island could not be solved within this economic framework. A socialist economic system had to be established, through a different framework. The differences between a socialist and capitalist economy were explained. Next, the crisis and bankruptcy of the latter system were brought out, as was the historical development of the crisis within the country. Unemployment and its solution were discussed.

I explained that if this capitalist economy continues, it would turn into a political crisis because it is a bankrupt method. In short, I told them how the economic crisis transformed into a political crisis. 7

The plight of the present farmer was highlighted and his state of landlessness was blamed upon capitalist exploitation through the formation of tea estates.

In the course of discussing the causes for the developing economic crisis, the lecture "On Independence", was formulated. Tracing the political history of the country with the conclusion that it was still a stronghold of foreign rule, it explained this in the light of the political views held by the different parties. The UMP claimed that independence was won on the 4th of February 1948, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party

(SLFP) dated it at 1956, the Lanka Sama Samaj Party (LSSP) on the other hand, believed that only political independence had been achieved.

I analysed and showed that all these three ideas are wrong and that we still have a colonial society with a colonial economy. I discussed this from the political, social and cultural angles and proved that the country had no independence. 8

What we still have here is the Queen's Government. If we consider the constitution, the legal system, plantation economy, the cultural field, the colonial system of education which prevails up to date - all this show that this thing called independence is a mere farce. In other words, it is a colonial device. 9

While arguing on the plight of the peasant farmer (incorporated in the first lecture), they were faced with the need to identify the major cause for this. "Indian expansionism" after much analysis was agreed upon as the root of the problem. This lecture, it is noteworthy, was based on a study of the Sino-Indian conflict as argued by Mao Tse-tung. As much as American and British imperialist influences were felt in Ceylon, there was a threat from India too. In India, the capitalist class had developed more political freedom for itself. Foreign companies had amalgamated with such leading capitalists as the Birlas, Tatas, and Dalmias.¹⁰ This lecture

8 Ibid., p. 53.

9 Ibid., p. 37.

10 Ibid., p. 53. In his statement Wijeweera maintained that at first he did not agree with these views, but later he was convinced that they were correct.

dealing with the politics of the ruling capitalists in India was taken from a booklet entitled Nehru's Political Activities, published in China, with a Sinhalese translation. It also referred to the powerful Borah merchants in the country who adopted racialist reactionary politics and maintained their economic dominance through frauds and contraband trading. Hence, it was not denigrating the Tamil estate labourer, but in fact, revealing, even to him, the role of the oppressors within his own community. The differentiation here was not communal but embodied the economies of the situation.

The lecture on "Indian expansionism" was followed by one on the "Leftist Movement". The factual history of the left movement on the Island, from its inception along with the causes of its deterioration and failure were discussed. Parties which had once been revolutionary, it was alleged, now occupied the seats of power and had forgotten their previous fervour. The CPG, the LSCF, Philip Gunawardena's Party - all of these were discussed and their 'faulty principles' underlined.

These latter had been the cause of the absence, contemporarily, of a revolutionary movement. To overcome them, they formulated what they thought was "The Path the Revolution in Ceylon should Follow". In this lecture "everything is explained theoretically, according to the principles of Marxism".¹¹ The world communist movement was discussed

11 Ibid., p. 59.

for stressing the point that revolution could not be brought about by following the path laid down by another country. It had to be "done according to the conditions in that particular country". The path of peace or violence was discussed in the light of the historical experience of the international revolutionary movement. No country, it was stressed, had succeeded when it had followed another. Examining the prevailing peculiar and particular conditions in Ceylon, the party took the stand that here "there is a great connection between the villages and the towns...workers come to town from villages".¹² Consequently their strategy outlined a co-operation between the "farmers and the working class".¹³ Leadership of the "poor class" was to be in the hands of the latter. The social classes were categorized into the poor classes, the semi-poor class (into which fitted also a large number of farmers), the middle class, the capitalist class and the imperialist capitalist class. "The middle class is akin to the national capitalist class and the imperialist capitalist class....Their intention is to safeguard the capitalist system."¹⁴ But their condition was becoming progressively worse because as a consequence of the developing economic crisis within the country. "Ingh they are not reduced to the same position as

12 *Ibid.*, p. 60.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 61.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 62.

the working class they too feel that they were oppressed although their salaries are comparatively high."¹⁵ The students were not a separate category. They fell into the same class as their parents.

These five lectures were not formulated one after the other. They developed together through dynamic discussion, controversy, agreement and disagreement, to form the basis of the ideology, strategy and tactics of the JVP. It wanted the establishment of a communist society where there was to be "no private property, no class distinction", but where the "system of production will be on a much developed scale".¹⁶

The JVP analysis of Ceylonese society, hence, can be reduced to two essentials: (1) Ceylon was a colonial society and polity which was (2) ruled by the capitalist class, both indigenous and comprador, although feudalism still persisted in many areas. It was believed that Ceylon needed a one-stage (socialist) revolution and not a two-stage (people's democratic) revolution.

On an analysis of the present nature and advantage of social development in Ceylon and the international nature of capitalism, we came to the view that the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks of the revolution in colonial and semi-colonial societies can be carried out only by attending to the socialist tasks, since in the epoch of imperialism (the

15 Ibid., p. 61.

16 Ibid., p. 65.

extension of capital internationally) no anti-imperialist task can ever be effectively completed without socialism....At the same discussion we argued that a proletarian revolutionary party must be established. 17

A one-stage revolution ordained a two-class strategy (the working class and peasantry) and ruled out a broader front. The working class was to lead the revolution in alliance with the peasantry. The middle class was expected to cooperate.¹⁸

Growth of the JVP

Until the time of the 1970 elections the JVP functioned clandestinely. This small group initially adopted a very personal method of inducting individuals into the movement.

Section by section we will make them join the party. We cannot make a person join the party as a mere labourer. He has to be admitted on a political conviction. He should be a Marxist or a Leninist. He should have a knowledge of politics. We must start from where he is. That is what motivated us to make five basic classes on the present political situation. 19

The JVP had entwined a thread of Sinhala nationalism to attract potential cadre, while being firm upon the question of religion it was not against the subtle use of it through reference to historical and mythological characters who had fought to

17 Rohana Wijeweera, "Speech to the Criminal Justice Commission", in Robin Blackburn, ed., Explosion in a Subcontinent (London, 1975), p. 236.

18 For the JVP characterization of the middle class, see n. 15.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 62.

retain the glory of the Sinhala race. As Obeyesekere remarks:

Buddhism does not appear explicitly in the five lectures, but is implicit in the affirmation of past Sinhala history. Wijewardena himself is Lohana ... and Lohana is the centre of Sinhala Buddhist nationalism, most clearly embodied in King Duttagamunu. There were also several insurrectionists by the (assumed) name of Atula, Duttagamunu's trusted lieutenant. I do not interpret this as a native Sinhala chauvinism, but rather as a powerful and continuing historical tradition. 20

This approach, however, may have further contributed to the alienation of the Tamils. For, after all, who did King Duttagamunu fight against, but the Tamil King Elara.

The JVP functionaries met the prospective members on their home ground, both environmental and situational, and attempted to infuse them with their own dedication.

Now we will suppose that you have five children. Of them three are educated but unemployed and they are simply lazing at home. They have come home after graduation ...but get money for cigarettes from the father, who is earning his livelihood as a labourer. Why has he no job? How did he come by this situation...? This is due to the scarcity of jobs. Now we start our conversation with such a topic and after a person understands the position then he agrees to have a political discussion with us....

20 Gananath Obeyesekere, "Sinhala Nationalism and Culture in Relation to the April 1971 Insurgency in Sri Lanka", (cyclostyled paper), p. 1.

Subsequently, we tell them that we are forming a political party and that we are conducting political classes. We ask them whether they would like to join...Then whoever wished to join the classes did so. 21

Gradually, a communication network was established over the larger part of the Island, and coded messages were said to have been sent through the radio and newspaper mass media.

Although the numerical growth of the movement was slow at this time because of its clandestine functioning, it was a positive one. But when the party began to function openly in 1970, although its ranks increased phenomenally, it also suffered its first and major reverses. There arose not only by the easy infiltration of the movement, but also from another sphere. The open functioning and acquisition of 'respectability' necessitated broadening of the movement. This worked against the organization "by establishing," as Wijeweera claimed "relationship with houses...at the early stages, the people in the houses did not know what was happening. Some of the parents did not know what the sons were doing - the wives were ignorant of what the husbands were up to".²²

For the purpose of developing its base, the JVP, while laying emphasis upon organizing its student support concentrated most upon the rural areas. Around 1966, Wijeweera

21 Ibid., pp. 62-63.

22 Ibid., p. 105.

and his supporters set up a farm at Kirinda ostensibly for the purpose of collecting funds through raising goats^{and}/poultry. But much has been made of its strategic proximity to the sea coast and the possibility of acquiring arms and ammunition from that quarter.²³ It was also obviously an important place for the holding of meetings. Other meeting places were a farm at Mihintale, the Land Development Workers' Union Office in Morella, apart from the universities.

During its five years of clandestine activity in the rural areas, it held various camps - one at A'meemana in Galle District (August 1969), one at Tammalvila in Hambantota District (April 1969), one at Elpitiya (March 1969). These camps lasted from four to seven days and followed a rigorous daily schedule. Individuals attending them had to travel at their own expense and also pay for their food which they had to cook themselves in batches. They had to listen to and note down the Five Lectures. Some rudimentary guerrilla warfare was also taught but it seems no intensive coaching took place. One leader speaking of this phase of rural activity says:

We decided it was necessary to visit the villages with the intention of explaining to the people the causes of their oppression. We went to the villages and spoke with the people and convinced them of the correctness of Marxism-Leninism. In the villages we also studied thoroughly and deeply the

L4 but no evidence exists to support this suspicion and subsequently the farm was abandoned in August 1969, shifted to Sogalawa, Kurunegala District, and eventually closed down. ibid., 6 November 1973.

difficulties and problems of peasants, workers, students, fishermen and even street-hawkers and unemployed young men and women. He went all over the island and met the poor masses....24

Sanath²⁵ and Wijeweera were the outstanding ones in this sphere. They got to be considered the 'specialists' on the subject.

In the sphere of student support, the organization was able to establish itself in the three main universities -- Vidyodaya, Vidyalankara and Peradeniya.²⁶ The first was the headquarters of the party up to 4 April 1971.²⁷ Such organizations as the Deshapremi Sisya Sangamaya (Patriotic Students' Association), the Deshapremi Mantha Peramuna (Patriotic Women's Front) and Deshapremi Bhikkhu Peramuna (Patriotic Buddhist Monk's Front) were sections of the main JVF. The Samajwadi Sangamaya (Socialist Association) was the name given to the branches of the Deshapremi Sisya

24 Taken from a quotation in Fred Halliday, "The Ceylonese Insurrection", in Blackburn, n. 17, p. 190.

25 Another top leader who was also the main formulator of the lecture on Indian expansionism.

26 CMB, 9 January 1973. This is evidence from one other letter - ... Jayasinghe alias Loku Thula (16 years old) who turned a state witness. Hence, subsequent evidence by him must be treated with caution.

27 CMB, 12 March 1974. Evidence of 15th suspect H.K. Dissanayake alias Hector, alias, Piyasiri, alias, Sumathipala alias H.O. Sumathipala (21 years old).

Sangamaya in the universities.²⁸ Committees were set up in the student sections to carry out propaganda and other activities. Both Bhikkus and lay students were in these committees.

Attempts were made to develop links with the working class through Illanchelian of the Young Socialist Front, a comparatively new organization among the Tamil plantation labour, and Bala Tampoe of the Ceylon Mercantile Union (CMU). Meetings were held on some estates and these two above mentioned leaders spoke at public meetings of the JVP. But not much work seems to have been done in this sphere and accounts of the success with the rest of the rural population quite overshadow these tentative attempts with the unions. Some of the work in this sphere was carried on by Victor Ivan alias Fodi Athula, one of the leaders.²⁹ In February

²⁸ CMU, 14 January 1973, Loku Athula's evidence. In Peradeniya the leaders of the student section were Comasiri Kumariyake (26 years old) and Sarath Wijesinghe; at Vidyalankara they were Jayakody and Subanda Mahendran; and at Vidyalaya they were Ashinda Wijesekera and Dipulasena.

CMU, 9 January 1973. All of them formed part of the top leadership and were listed among the 41 major suspects with the police.

²⁹ Fodi Athula (21 years old), one of the leaders in charge of manufacturing bombs was lost an arm in the process of doing so. He said that he was recalled from Peradeniya (approximately 40 miles south of Colombo) where he had gone as chief organizer, to Colombo for organizing the Trade Union section. H. Victor Ivan alias Fodi Athula's statement at the Criminal Justice Commission sittings, pp. 6-9.

1970, he was called to Colombo to organize the Trade Union section. A series of classes were held for the Postal Department Workers, organized by Madan Jayake; Ceylon Wholesale Establishment, organized by Podi and Loku Jemia and Post Office Savings Bank, organized by Merryl Jayesiri. Besides, lectures were organized at Lake House, (press) and the Land Development Department, organized by T.D. Silva and Champala respectively.³⁰

This was the mode in which the JVP functioned in order to expand its base. Starting from a very personal politics, it was able to build up a formidable organization in the course of its development and experience.

Organization of the JVP

The organizational structure of the JVP is a subject that must be treated as extremely delicate. Upon it act and react the prejudices and frictions that had torn the JVP.

Since a few young adherents from practically every party in Sri Lanka chose to join the new group at its birth, it was natural that disputes and frictions surfaced to stunt

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 9-11.

Richardson G. Amage Merryl Jayesiri (33 years) had been a clerk in the Money Order Department. T.D. Silva (41 years) of unemployed status. Jayabodi P. Premadasa Champala (34 years) was a labourer in the Land Development Department. Podi A'bulu says:

"At this time we had no money to finance our movement. I told all Trade Union people to take loans. A'bulu took a loan of Rs. 1000 and gave to us." p. 10.

what could otherwise have been, a more smooth organizational development of the movement. Simultaneous to the JVP there were groups functioning secretly who advocated violent revolution. Some were known after their leaders - the Pharamsekera group supporting the Castro path of revolution, the Sumith Devinnuwara group, the Gami Yapa group called Mathrubhumi Arakkhaka Sangamaya (Association for the Protection of the Motherland), the Adhiraj Virodhi Taruna Peramuna (Anti-Imperialist Youth Front), led by Premalal Kumarsiri, and another group led by one Sarath Tiramagana. Mahinda Wijesekera, leader of the student group in Vidyodaya, University was constantly under suspicion because he was believed to have sympathy for the Pharamsekera group.³¹ This latter group was expelled from the JVP in April 1970.³² Meanwhile, Loku Athula, along with T.D. Silva and others, was continuously trying to oust Wijesekera from his position of pre-eminence.³³ Despite these splitters and the consequent friction in the JVP, the group led by Wijesekera remained the largest.³⁴

31 Piyadiri's statement, SLI, 13 March 1974, and SLI, 13 March 1974.

32 Wijesekera, n. 3, p. 86.

33 SLI, 13 July 1973. Doyage Lionel alias Lionel Doyage (Doyage) a full-time worker of the JVP. Also, according to him, out of the 12 people who constituted the "splitters", 8 were against Wijesekera, and this group as well as the Pharamsekera group wished to see him dead.

34 SLI, 12 June 1973.

Apart from their differing proclivities, these leaders also differed on matters of party organization. For instance, while one leader stated that there did exist a Central Committee and a Politbureau, although not classical in character, another contended that there existed no such bodies.³⁵ While one leader related the organizational hierarchy of the party with great precision, another stated that it possessed no administrative structure at all. Despite some anomalies, we can draw a few broad conclusions:

(1) That the movement had, over a period of five years, developed some form of hierarchical responsibility which, however, did not always operate effectively;

(2) Despite its clandestine nature it had failed in being internally cohesive to a high degree because of certain objective and subjective conditions i.e. (a) excessive decentralization and (b) factional infighting within the

35 Loku Thule is adamant that there was a Politbureau and a Central Committee but the 3rd suspect, Jasin Uyangoda alias, co-handling alias Koneviratso (21 years old and a student of the Somali University), and Achana Aljowera deny their existence. According to Uyangoda, there were District Councils and District Committees. These latter were the highest bodies. There were also regional Committees. Members of the five-member cells were also members of these regional committees. The District Committee had no authority to look into the Regional Committees and cells. Ibid, 21 September 1973.

According to Aljowera, the leadership in 1970 consisted of Osman, Koneviratso and himself. They wanted to set up an organization on the lines of the Albanian Communist Party. They set up local and District Committees.

leadership.³⁶

The appearance of what could be called a formal structure of the party began to surface in 1970. Prior to this, it had evolved from the status of a group to that of a movement. The necessity of directing the movement through an officially recognisable symbolic organization of a party (the movement was already being directed by an expanding nucleus) required a more positive structural form, rather than remaining a conglomeration of groups. As Wijeweera himself states:

What we started in 1967 was not a party; only a group which propagated our ideals.

It was only in 1970 - actually middle of 1970 - that we held discussions to form a party.

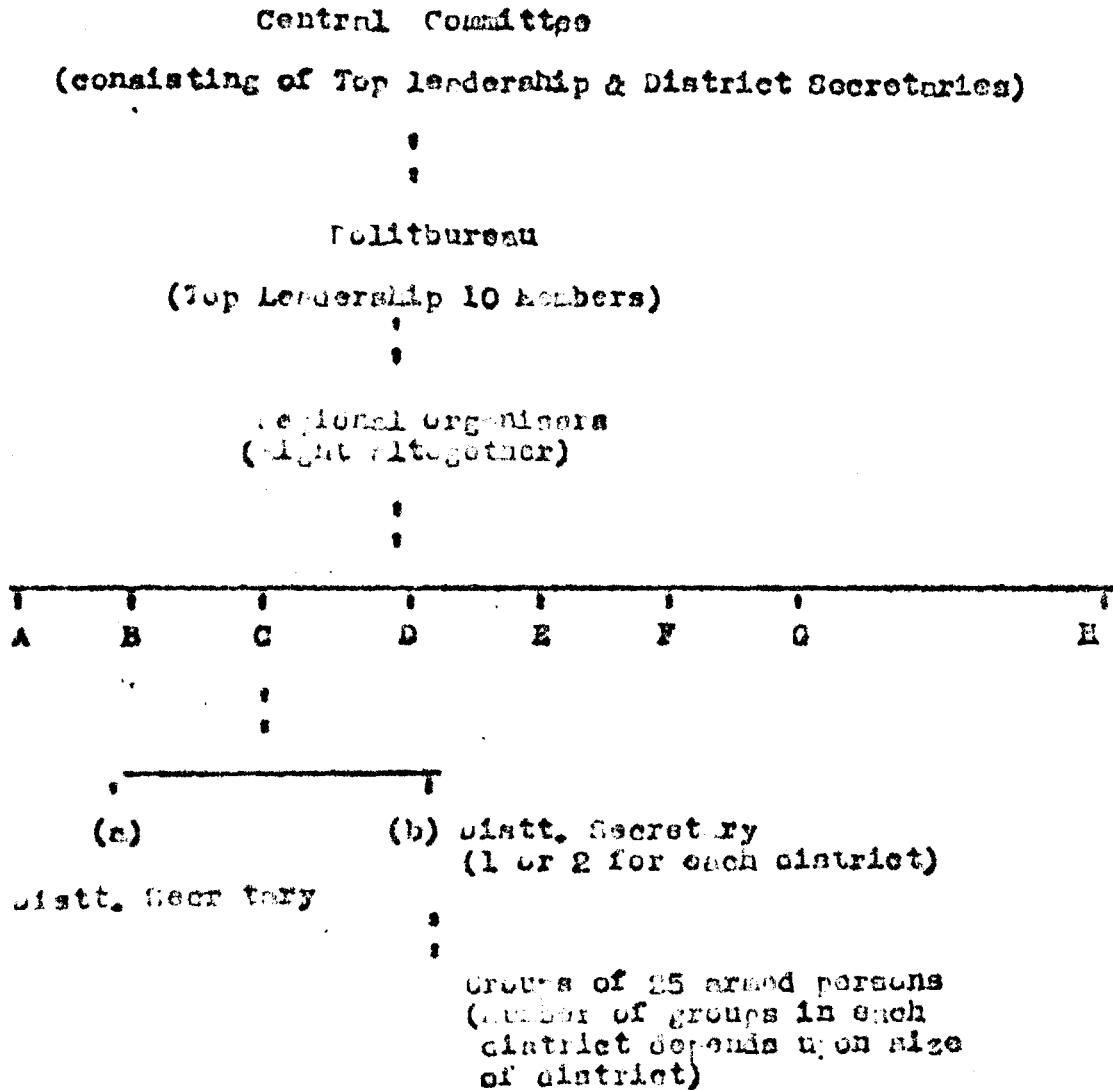
Then it was in 1970 that we organized the party on a district level for the purpose of conducting classes. 37

³⁶ Wijeweera's words bring forth with agonizing clarity the state of things in 1970, after all the hard work of the previous years: "But towards the last stages we had conflicts with regard to theories, on theoretical grounds. I should say it was a repetition of 1968.... Our doom was in sight. What I mean is, to our misfortune and to the luck of the capitalist, the differences of opinion we had had reached its climax. Sir, it was at this juncture that you attacked us. You attacked the man who was already ailing - not the man who was strong on his feet.... We of the revolutionary party were in a serious situation.... After all we were the pioneers; all of us were against each other; this was the condition when this fate befell us.... We had no time to iron out differences." Wijeweera, n. 3, p. 113.

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 31, 31 and 32 respectively.

The only attempted structural format or chart lay out of the organization hierarchy of the JVP has been that presented by Shakuntala Joan Jayasingham.³⁸

Table A

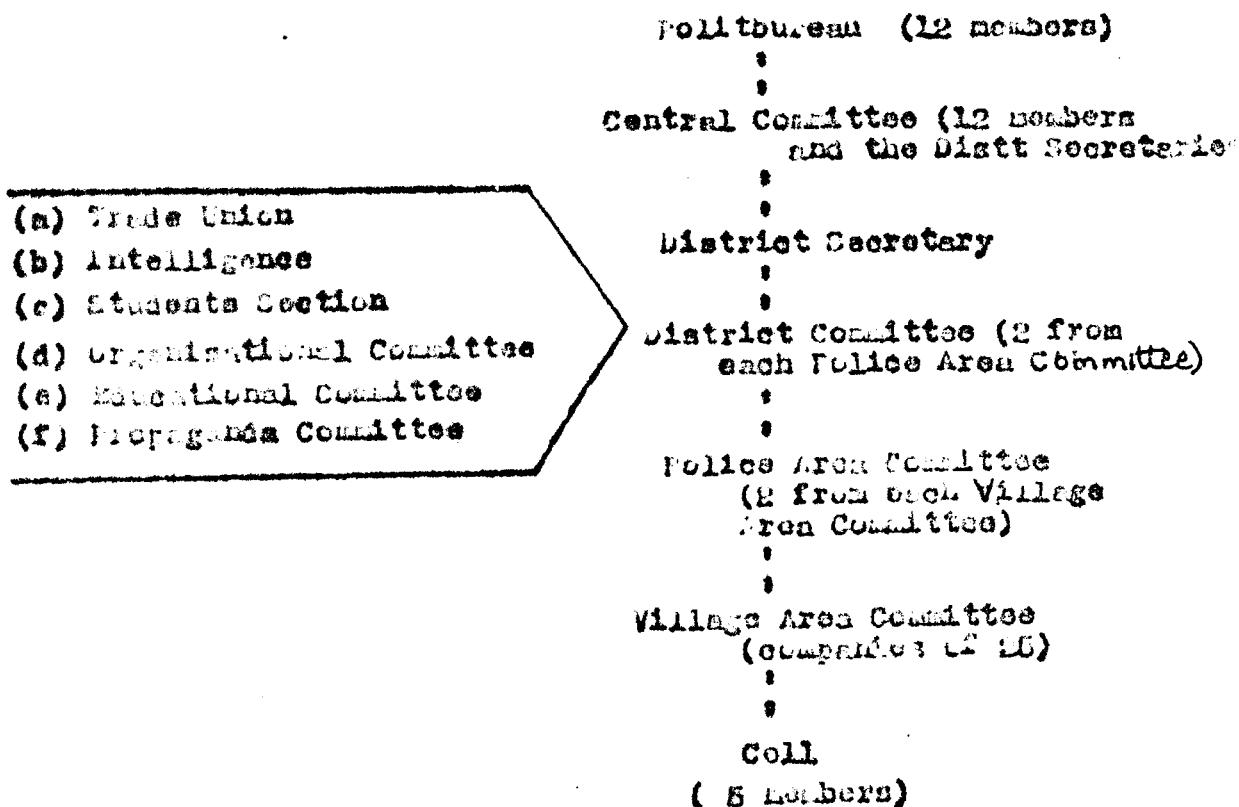


³⁸ Shakuntala Joan Jayasingham, "Janatha Vianthi Perambaram", Uthayan, vol. 9, No. 1 and 2, January-July 1978, p. 5.

But this seems to possess certain shortcomings. First and foremost it must be noted that the Politbureau and not the Central Committee was the highest body in the Party and hence, should rightfully be placed at the top. Furthermore, no mention is made of District Committees, Police Area Committees and Village Area Committees. While being mentioned in the text, the chart is also bereft of the smallest and lowest ^{unit} of the party - the cell of five members with a leader. A more complete picture is sought to be presented below on the basis of the data interspersed in the statements of the various suspects.

Table B

Structure of the Jyotha Vimukthi Force



There was no Politbureau or Central Committee on Marxist lines but something similar had been established by the end of 1970.

The island had been divided into twenty six districts for purposes of party operations. Except for Colombo which was divided into five (Colombo, North, South, Central, West and the Kandy road up to Bahera) on grounds of high population, the other 21 districts coincided with the official delineation.³⁹ (See Map) Each had a District Committee, the Secretary of each of them being appointed by the "Politbureau". These Secretaries of the District Committee together with the "Politbureau" members, form a the "Central Committee". The rank and file received instructions from the District Secretaries.⁴⁰ Apart from these district committees, the JVP also organized Police ^{Area} Committees and Village Area Committees.⁴¹

The lowest unit was a cell of five members (each with a leader), each of the five were required to recruit five other members. This was the principle followed for the expansion of rank and file support. But needless to note, it led to some degree of confusion and incoherence. Each member knew very few of the other supporters of the JVP. Each cell

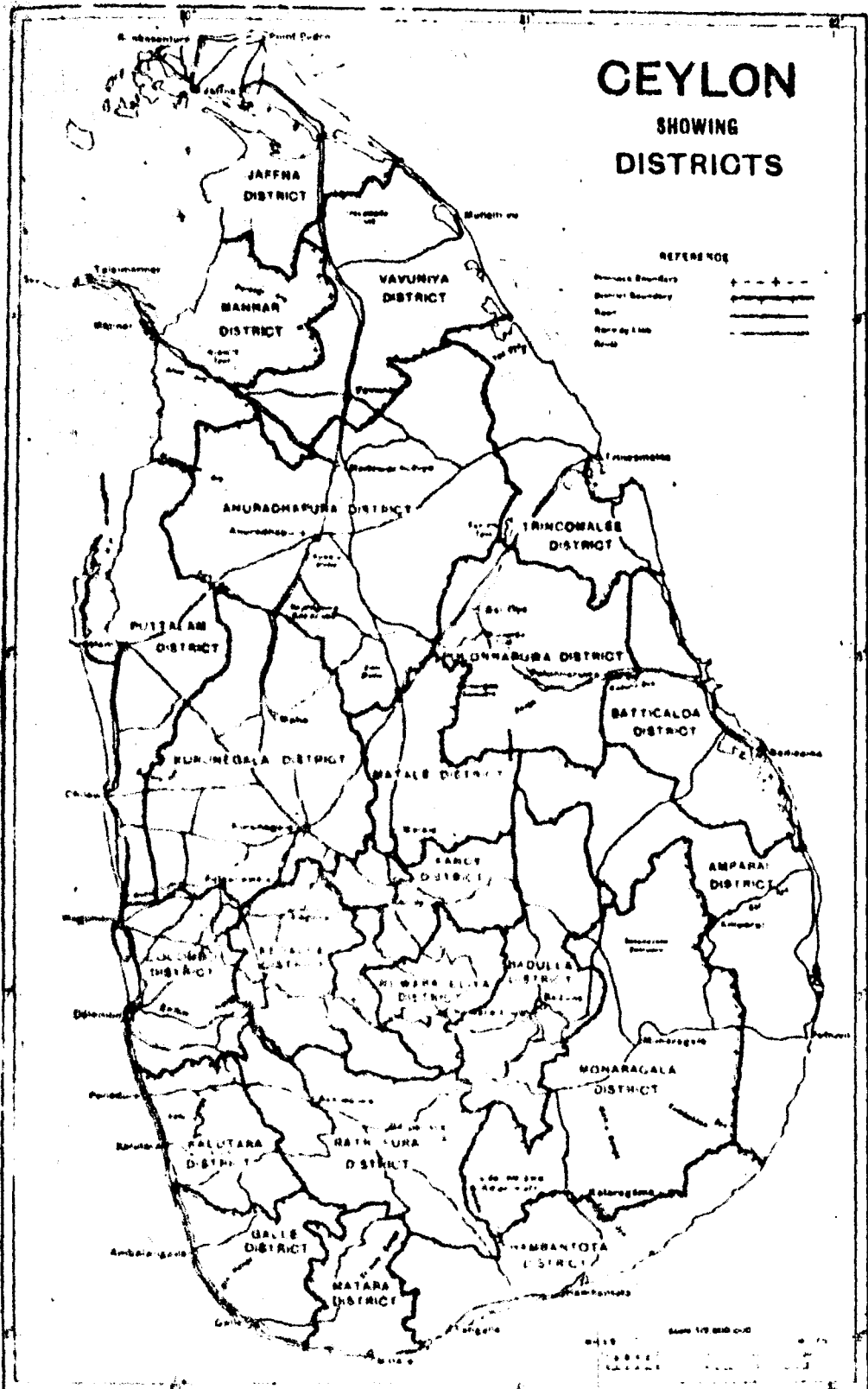
39 Wijesera, n. 3, p. 102.

40 ibid., 13 January 1973. Loku Athula's statement.

41 Ibid., 25 January 1973. Loku Athula.

CEYLON

SHOWING DISTRICTS



Scale 1:500,000

1911

1912

1913

of five members with its own recognized leader was expected to function practically independently.

In August 1970, party work was divided specifically into six sections as given in Table B and this division was carried down to the level of District Committees. The student section was divided into five companies on a functional basis - for holding discussions with the rest of the committees in the party, for holding classes and writing letters and articles for newspapers and books, for propaganda work, to make uniforms, bombs, belts and preparing other materials, and weapons, the collection of arms, ammunition, their distribution, obtaining maps and plans of places to be attacked etc. Piyatilleke was in charge of the students section.⁴²

Wijeweera, along with U.A. Gunasekera, Rev. Devasiri, Umund Silva and Fodi Lucky was in charge of the propaganda section.⁴³ Loku Athula, Fodi Athula and Sarath Wijesinghe were in charge of the manufacture of bombs and firearms.⁴⁴ Merryl

42 Piyasiri's statement, pp. 30-33. Piyatilleke, another leader (29 year old and of unemployed status).

43 U.A. Gunasekera was the second oldest among the leaders (43 years) after S.D. Bandaranaike (53 years). He had been a machine operator at a leather factory. Umund Silva (27 years), Luman J. Munnasinghe, alias, Fodi Lucky (23 years) left his job of Statistical Investigator at the Department of Census and Statistics. He had passed the CCE (A) level exams.

44 Wijeweera, n. 3, p. 15. Ibhana is also supposed to have asked J.P.L. Fernando alias Viraj to try to procure arms from abroad. Viraj (28 years), a Research Assistant at the Agrarian Research and Training Institute, was also to establish connections with other revolutionary parties abroad. He seems to have succeeded in neither of these spheres although he stated he met Marxalites in India and expected help from them and from a 'party' in South Yemen.

Jayasuriya was the head of Intelligence. Uyangoda was in charge of infiltration and recruitment from the armed services and the police.⁴⁵

Besides this structure, in the period between the election of the United Front Ministry and the April 1971, events "the JVP successfully penetrated the ranks of young members of university faculties, school staffs and the public services, where cells were established among occupational groups".⁴⁶

Party membership of the JVP was of two types: (1) full-timers, and (2) permanent members. The former were those who devoted all their time to party work while the latter were those who had attended the Five Lectures and camps and were willing and prepared to fight.⁴⁷ The JVP, it must be noted, had a higher number of full-timers than any other left movement on the Island,⁴⁸ but as Wijeweera states at a later date, most JVP members were not politically

⁴⁵ Loku Athula's statement, p. 89.

⁴⁶ Charles S. Blackton, "The Ceylon Insurgency, 1971", Australia's Neighbourhood, July-August 1971, series 4, no. 70, p. 6.

⁴⁷ Athula, CIN, 31 January 1973. This same suspect continuously harps upon a 'A' list and a 'B' list of JVP members, but this is denied by Wijeweera. It is not clear whether these lists were synonymous with the "full-timers" and "permanent members" but Athula says that there were some 8 to 10,000 members listed in the 'A' list.

CIN, 20 February 1973.

⁴⁸ Wijeweera's statement, CIN, 26 November 1973.

nature. Something to support the former point upon the number of full-timers, can be gleaned from the fact that where, in 1969, there were very few people available to deliver the Five Lectures, by 1971, there were 500 full-timers and a large number of members able to deliver them.⁴⁹

Social Background

The matter of the total numerical strength of the JVP remains a controversial one. One estimate states that around April 1971, membership was about 10,000, but that about 50,000 would have attended the Five Lectures.⁵⁰ Another estimate places 'sympathisers' (i.e. apart from actual members) at the figure of 350,000.⁵¹ One report claims that within a week of the outbreak of the uprising the membership rose to 70,000.⁵² These discrepancies and confusion arise because of the absence of any official list of the JVP itself. This was natural for reasons of secrecy, but then it is improbable that even most of the top leadership would have knowledge of

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 29 November 1973.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 13 January 1973.

⁵¹ Umilla Phadnis, "Insurgency in Ceylon: Hard Challenge and Grim Warning", *Academic and Political Weekly*, vol. 3, no. 18, 3 May 1971, p. 906.

⁵² This report states that the JVP's "2000 fighting members, many of whom belong to Ceylon's educated rural elite, grew to 70,000 or more in last week's fighting." "Ceylon: The Che Guevarist Uprising", *Time*, 19 April 1971.

the exact number. Sometimes, attempts are made to club together the activists and sympathizers to make confusion worse confounded.

This makes problematic, a study of the social background of the participants in the April 1971 uprising, while still leaving it a subject of consuming interest. To bypass the problems outlined above, another method of classification could be used to facilitate a study of this type. This could be of (a) the names incorporated in the police list, and (b) those absent from it. But this method is also not devoid of difficulties. Police data on the socio-economic background exists on fewer than those arrested. And what of those who escaped and died?

The study made by Gananath Obeyesekere⁵³ and the statements made by police personnel at the Criminal Justice Commission sittings are the only documented sources on this subject. But even Obeyesekere's study spans only 10,192 of a total of more than 18,000 arrested,⁵⁴ leave alone the

53 Gananath Obeyesekere, "Some Comments on the Social Backgrounds of the April 1971 Insurgency", in Sri Lanka (Ceylon)", Journal of Asian Studies, vol. 33, no. 3, May 1974, pp. 307-34. Apart from a police report upon 10,192 he has supplemented his work through his own fieldwork. At least on factual data, it is so far, an unparalleled account.

54 The Department of Rehabilitation gives the total to be 18,047 in its report entitled Statistics of Arrests and Surrenders Up to 31st May 1976.

number that escaped arrest or those that died. However, it is on the basis of the two above-mentioned sources that some generalisations on the socio-economic background of the suspect 'insurgents' can be hazarded.

The major points upon which most are agreed are that -

- (a) the predominant number in the movement were youth aged between 15 and 25;
- (b) the majority of them underwent vernacular education;
- (c) they came from dominantly Sinhalese Buddhist areas;
- (d) they had a rural background; and
- (e) a large number of them were unemployed, or underemployed.

Apart from statistical data to support these points, unofficial observations made by participants themselves while relating evidence regarding their meetings, lectures, and camps' attendances, give us no cause to disagree.

Point (a) is substantiated by Table C. 93 per cent of the detainees were between the ages 13 and 32 and 84.2 per cent of them within the narrower age group of 17 and 28. The 'youth' aspect of the movement has, however, been blandished ever much to take away from the revolutionary nature of the movement, and sometimes it has been presented in the light of a generational conflict. But it was obviously not so, for much of the older generation viewed with admiration the courage of the youth while it held its breath upon the fate that awaited it.

Table G

Emigrated Insurgents Classified by Age and Sex

Age Group	Total Number	Percentage	Males Number	Females Number
15-16	296	2.9	282	14
17-20	2,379	23.2	2,292	87
21-24	2,624	25.2	2,529	95
25-28	1,508	14.2	1,476	32
29-32	600	5.9	599	1
33-36	274	2.7	268	6
37-40	182	1.4	142	4
41-44	92	0.9	81	1
45-48	61	0.6	77	4
49-52	49	0.4	45	4
53-56	27	0.3	26	1
57-60	23	0.3	21	2
61 and above	22	0.1	18	4
All ages	10,192	100.0	9,976	216

Source: Gnanath Upaysekera, "Some Comments on the Social Backgrounds of the April 1971 Insurgency", in Sri Lanka (Ceylon)", JOURNAL of Asian Studies, vol. 33, no. 3, May 1974 (abstracted from Table 11), p. 369.

Female participation, although not much numerically, was notable in itself for existing at all. For it is our contention that in the existing rural ethos, these young girls could not hope to return to their families and be accepted once they had joined the movement. This is why, in 1970, when the movement became open they must have suffered most, the estrangement from their old familial ties. Their break was indeed complete as was their involvement in the movement, for they had nowhere else to go.

On the matter of the educational background, Table B reveals the actuality with regard to the 10,192 suspects.

Table B

Suspected Insurgents Classified by Type of Educational Institution Attended

<u>Educational Institution</u>	<u>Total No.</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Unspecified	23	0.2
No Schooling	240	2.4
Private Schools and Tutoring	210	2.1
Maha Vidyalaya	8,081	79.3
Kodys Maha Vidyalaya	652	6.4
Technical/Training Institutes	189	1.9
Vidyalankara University	44	0.4
Vidjodaya University	63	0.6
University of Ceylon, Colombo	36	0.4
University of Ceylon, Peradeniya	59	0.6
Others	595	5.8
<u>Total</u>	<u>10,192</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Source: Ubeyesekera, n. 53, Table VIII, p. 376.

Point (b) is substantiated by the above Table. It is notable that only 2.4 per cent of them had no education, 85 per cent of them had education in high schools in villages, known as Maha Vidyalayas and Madya Maha Vidyalayaa. These rural schools seem to have been the major recruiting ground for the JVP. That most of the JVP suspects came from predominantly Sinhalese Buddhist areas (point c) is supported by Table E, which shows that an overwhelming number had the same religious background.

Table E

Religious Affiliations of Suspected Insurgents

Religious Group	Number	Percentage
Buddhist	9,597	94.3
Hindu	82	0.8
Muslim	57	0.5
Roman Catholic	349	3.4
Other Christian	23	0.2
Unspecified	74	0.7
Total	10,192	100.0

Source: Obeyesekere, A, 53, Table III, p. 370.

94.3 per cent of them were Buddhists.

Regarding the characteristic of their rural background (point d), it is supported by the fact that 86 per cent of them had a vernacular educational background, and the schools

they were educated in, were located in the rural areas.

The occupational status of the 10,192 suspects indicates that a large number of them were unemployed or underemployed (Point e). From what can be gauged from these statistics (Table F) occupationally, 1-

Table F

Occupations of Suspected Insurgents

S.No.	Occupation	Number	Percentage
1.	Administrative position in Government and Private Sector	10	0.1
2.	Doctors (Western Trained)	2	0.0
3.	Engineers	1	0.0
4.	Lawyers	2	0.0
5.	Officers - Police & Security Services	6	0.1
6.	Ayurvedic Physicians	9	0.1
7.	Middle Grades in Government	247	2.4
8.	Government Clerks	117	1.1
9.	Teachers	214	2.1
10.	Other ranks in Security Services	28	0.3
11.	Minor Grades in Government	660	6.6
12.	Technicians and Artisans	698	6.8
13.	Fishermen	25	0.2
14.	State Labourers	193	1.9

.....

Table E contd...

S.No.	Occupation	Number	Percentage
15.	Traders	434	4.3
16.	Cinnamon Peelers	55	0.5
17.	Barbers	63	0.6
18.	Washermen	20	0.2
19.	Textile Weavers	47	0.5
20.	Beedi Wrappers	205	2.0
21.	Casual Labourers	1,091	10.7
22.	Cultivators	2,737	26.9
23.	Students	1,270	12.5
24.	Unemployed	1,738	17.5
25.	Others	110	1.1
26.	Clergy (Buddhist)	34	0.3
27.	Unspecified	128	1.3

Source: Obeyesekere, n. 53, p. 373.

70 per cent of the detainees were living in what could probably be called, the worst conditions - 40 per cent were underemployed cultivators and/or casual labourers, 17.5 per cent were openly unemployed and 12.5 per cent were students with their aspirations, coming from poor backgrounds with families to whose income they had to contribute, but for

whom the future did not hold much considering their verracular education. Of the approximately 40 per cent mentioned above, a little more than 10 per cent were agricultural workers, 1.9 per cent were plantation workers. Only 26.9 per cent were actual farmers.

It must be noted that the socio economic survey of 1969-70 indicated that unemployment was more rampant in the lower income families, i.e. those receiving less than Rs.200 a month. The estates, of course, constituted the largest group (42 per cent) in this section; the rest of the rural sector, 36 per cent, and the urban unemployed 19 per cent. It is also of some consequence that the percentage of unemployment decreased in successively increasing income groups.⁵⁵

The idea that the movement as well as the uprising was basically a caste phenomenon, was abandoned early, although the caste factor was considerably stressed upon.⁵⁶ In-depth studies highlighted other extreme disabilities from which the majority of the population of this country suffered, and particularly the youth who overcrowded the labour market. "Caste would have been much more important had the JVF been

⁵⁵ Victor Gunewardena, "The Insurgency (Part III)", Times of Ceylon Sunday Illustrated, 4 January 1976, p. 7.

⁵⁶ Howard Wiggins and C.H.S. Jayawardena, "Youth Protest in Sri Lanka (Ceylon) - An Interpretation", in Howard Wiggins and James Guyot, eds., Population, Politics and the Future of Southern Asia (London 1973).

an open movement, drawing its recruits from a wider age range.⁵⁷
 As it was, some interesting facts came to light from a perusal
 of Table G.

Table G
Caste Affiliations of Suspected Insurgents

Name of Caste	Traditional Occupation	Number	Percentage
Coysigama	Farmers	5,962	58.5
Karava	Fishermen	636	6.2
Seligama	Cinnamon Peelers	193	1.9
Vahumpura	Jaggery Makers	1,038	10.2
Uhoby	Washerman	204	2.0
Hunu	Lime-burners	38	0.3
Batgama	Servants to Coysigama	944	9.3
Navandanna	Galths	159	1.6
Iodiya	Untouchable Muggers	2	-
Borava	Drummers	156	1.5
Durava	Toodytappers	267	2.6
Kuchal	Potters	27	0.2
Paraiyar		17	0.2
Vallala		16	0.2
Heriyar		10	0.1
Ialdiyam	Tamil Castes	2	-
Aamudis		1	-
Madar		1	-
Unspecified		520	5.1
Total		10,192	100.0

Source: Ubeyekera, n. 53, p. 371.

⁵⁷ Ubeyekera, n. 53, pp. 372-3.

The percentage of Ceyigama in the sample study is higher than that which constitutes part of the total population. In contrast to this, the Karava and Salagama castes are under-represented. The Vahumpura and Batgama are over-represented. What becomes evident is that a large part of the following, in the sample study, are from other than the highest caste. Hence, not only did it cross-cut the caste affiliations, but while doing so it did not prejudice its followers. In fact, two of the lower castes Vahumpura and Batgama suffered the greatest number of casualties since some of the fiercest and most prolonged fighting occurred in areas where these castes were concentrated. The leadership of the movement, however, came predominantly from the Karava caste.⁵⁸

This brings us to a study of the social background of the leadership of the movement, who will be regarded as synonymous with the 41 major suspects⁵⁹ tried by the Criminal Justice Commission. We shall try to form some conclusion from the sketchy data available on 33 of these 41 who were said to have constituted the 'brains' of the movement.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ The list of names is available in Jayamaha Weeraratne, "CJC Trial Opens on Saturday", CQN, 20 July 1972.

Twenty-six of them were between the ages 20 and 30; 7 were above that, and only one below it. 17 of them were unemployed, 4 of them were students, 8 of them had some form of employment with only 2 out of this number being comparatively well-off (one was a Research Assistant and the other was the Director of Agrarian Research and Training). All of them came from very large families. The data on education being very skimpy, we cannot give exact numbers, but some had passed the GCE (O) levels a few the GCE (A) levels. Except for Wijeweera, who had some education in the Soviet Union, and two others, with education in the West, none of the others seem to have been educated abroad.

We see then, that this leadership was essentially different from the old left leadership or any leadership in the country, for that matter. Barring a few, it was totally indigenous in its social background and education and far from affluent. It was rural based, but not landlord and not even rich peasant, in its family connections.

Conclusion

Analysis of the available figures leads one to the contention that there existed a high degree of solidarity among the rural youths. Most of them had some education.

Conclusively, the movement absorbed within its fold, the dominant characteristics representative of Ceylon's

ecological and social setting. It contained the predominant age-group, the predominant religion, caste, ethnic and linguistic group. That it did not absorb the remainder was not so much a failing as a pre-emption - a conscious counter effort was made to disable it from doing so. It was steadily making an effort to involve the working class, circumscribed as it was in the Sinhalese areas, with certain Buddhistic overtones, it was not a racial, religious or caste movement; it did not whip up any of these frenzies. It was growing, developing, expanding, in a word maturing - structurally, organizationally and socially. It was thwarted precisely because of its effectiveness as also the speed of its penetration into the social fabric.

CHAPTER IV

THE APRIL UPRISING

The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) harboured a miscalculation based upon which it prepared itself to launch a struggle. This was the contention that the United National Party (UNP) upon losing the 1970 elections would be bent upon establishing a military dictatorship. Simultaneously, however, it made clear to its cadres that regardless of the party which may come to power, its duty was to oppose. This last position was a conditional one, the condition being that the United Front (UF) when it came to power would need necessarily to speedily implement its election promises or suffer certain consequences.

"We shall continue to support the government", stated Wijeweera, "if they progress towards Socialism...but if they fail in reaching the Socialist goal, we will do this...."¹

1 Carlton (hereinafter referred to as CCN), 11 August 1970. This Wijeweera declared at a public meeting on 10 August 1970.

On 27 February 1971, at a JVP rally in Colombo, he said:

"With one hand we have helped this government, which calls itself socialist into being. With both hands, we are ready to support it if it advances toward socialism. But with these same hands we will strangle it, if it rejects socialism. If they declare us illegal, we will launch the revolution."

....

Similar to all developing countries, Ceylon suffered a politics of extravagant promises, made and broken. This was what appeared to be the case with the existing political authority when the JVP rose in opposition. The Government seemed to be tardy in the implementation of its 'socialist' programme - in tackling the rising cost of living, in the control of agency houses, the effective implementation of the State monopoly of trade. It had also failed to set up an administrative machinery to involve the masses through People's Committees, Workers' Councils and Advisory Committees. Not only that, while calling for austerity it chose a particularly incorrect time for announcing a raise in the allowance of MPs and salaries of Ceylon Administrative Service personnel. The bolstering of the import of Peugeot cars and the many trips abroad by the former, did not help in improving the image of the UF Government.² Most important of all, it did not help in

Rene Dumont, "Rene Dumont Accuses...", Peace Express: An International Information Service, vol. 7, nos. 5 and 6, June-July 1971, p. 3.

He also declared:

"We will strike when we are provoked to do so by the armed forces". Cull, 23 February 1971.

² Anonymous, "The April Uprising of Insurgent Youth: A Viewpoint", 22 April 1971 (cyclostyled paper), p. 5. Also Jacques Decourcy, "Ceylon - A Case of Perseverant Political Action", Le Monde Weekly (English Edition), 1-7 July 1971, p. 4.

portraying any dramatic change even in the outward appearance, from the path followed by the previous government.

It must be admitted that the time allowed to the coalition government (10 months) by the JVP, for bringing about changes, was indeed short. The UF could not, and neither could any other Government have solved the problems within the obtaining framework, as they wished to do. What should have been attempted was a structural rejuvenation. Because the problems taken together, formed a vicious circle, they could not have been solved according to their individual merits or demerits. As it was, the minimal promises of the UF had come to naught very soon. The rate of increase in unemployment accelerated rather than the reverse; the rice-ration was restored but at three times the price promised; on the Ceylonization of the tea-estates, the Finance Minister, A.M. Perera, admitted his helplessness: "We have agitated for the nationalization of the tea estates for the past forty years. After assuming office, I realize that it is not advisable to do so now."³ The plan for the nationalization of foreign banks was shelved and no steps were taken against the powerful lake house press combine in the country. People who had voted the UF into power in 1970 were making assessments now which ran something like this:

³ Fred Halliday, "The Ceylonese Insurrection", in Robin Blackburn, ed., Insurrection in a Subcontinent (Middlesex, 1975), pp. 185-6.

The JVP is right when it says that the government took no real socialist measure in the eleven months it was in office. During the election campaign the coalition candidates accused the right (UNP) of being extravagant. But after the election, the present government bought French cars for all its elected members, who also went on frequent trips abroad. The UNP has been accused of being a tool of the World Bank and Western interests. But what has changed? Being a progressive abroad, by recognizing North Korea and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam didn't mean being progressive at home. 4

Considering the limitations under which the UF had to function, it was quite a harsh assessment but it was being increasingly contributed to, much to the advantage of the JVP. "The more the time passes (sic)", said Wijeweera, "the greater were our advantages. The more they got disgusted with the Government the more could we have held classes, won them over and expanded our party."⁵ Despite disillusionment, the JVP continued to support the UF Government, while critically evaluating its performance, and held this position till at least the beginning of 1971. Criticism in itself, has never been the sole reason for the fall of a government, but the UF seemed inclined to feel so - following the February 27th mammoth public meeting of the JVP in Hyde Park, Colombo, the Government came down heavily upon it, and thus came to an

4 Jecorney, n. E, p. 4.

5 Wijeweera's statement to the Criminal Justice Commission (cyclostyled), p. 152.

end, the brief respite the Party had enjoyed in open volubility and organization.⁶

Over the period of a few months preceding the April uprising, a series of events took place to alarm and alert the Government. On 6 March a group calling itself the "Mao Youth Front" (supposed to be Dharamsekera's group) attacked the American Embassy and the entanglement resulted in the death of a policeman. This Mrs. Bandaranaike believed to be a "carefully planned armed attack" which was the "culmination of indications of an imminent attack on the Government".⁷ On 10 March a bomb blast at Esalaemula (Sabaragamuwa Province) brought about the death of three youths. The accident revealing some of the plans afoot brought Government action in a heavy way. Wijeweera and five others were arrested on 13 March and incarcerated in Jaffna Jail and Emergency was declared on 16 March. Following this, another bomb blast shook Peradeniya on 20 March instilling further upon Mrs. Bandaranaike, the seriousness of the situation. She stated in Parliament on 23 March that inquiries had revealed the existence of a "carefully planned attempt to manufacture, store and distribute hand-bombs on a wide scale."⁸

6 *Ibid.*, p. 132.

7 *CMB*, 24 March 1971, "Agents of Violence Comprise many Splinter Groups" (Text of Mrs. Bandaranaike's speech of 23 March in Parliament). Also see Appendix A.

8 *Ibid.*

JVP's Plan of Action

Strong enmities and friction, were meanwhile, breaking the already considerably ruffled waters of the JVP leadership and a meeting had been scheduled for 6 March 1971, to heal these breaches.⁹ Rajewera was working towards patching up some of these when he was taken into custody.

After his arrest a meeting of the JVP leaders took place at Mahipala Zoo (in Colombo) in the last week of March, in which it was agreed that since the bomb caches had been discovered, it was not safe to start a struggle. It was decided that leaders should visit the various areas to assess the situation, which would then be discussed in a meeting scheduled for 3 April. A part of the leadership which supported Rajewera, wished to keep in the background and not take up arms for the time being:

... we did not have the support of the masses and that we should wait for the situation to develop. We were also told that Rajewera had sent him a message through one of his friends who was arrested with him and who was told to say that we should not hurry but wait quietly. 10

⁹ For details of the dissensions in the JVP leadership, see Chapter III. Also see [redacted], 13 January 1973. Loku Atanig's statement. It is not known whether the meeting was held or not.

¹⁰ W. J. Cecil Chandera's (25 years, unemp. 1970), JCE (U) Level 1000) statement, p. 18.

It was evidently without the knowledge of this group, or without its consent that, on 2 April, the "Politbureau" of the JVP met and decided to launch an attack for the capture of power. Only six members were present in this meeting who had differed with Wijeweera on tactical issues. Apart from him, three other members were also absent - Susil Siriwardena, Piyatilleke and Lionel Bopage.¹¹ Since only a part of the leadership of the JVP was free to formulate a plan of action, we can lend some credence to Wijeweera's contention that the situation would not have taken the same shape had he been present. He said:

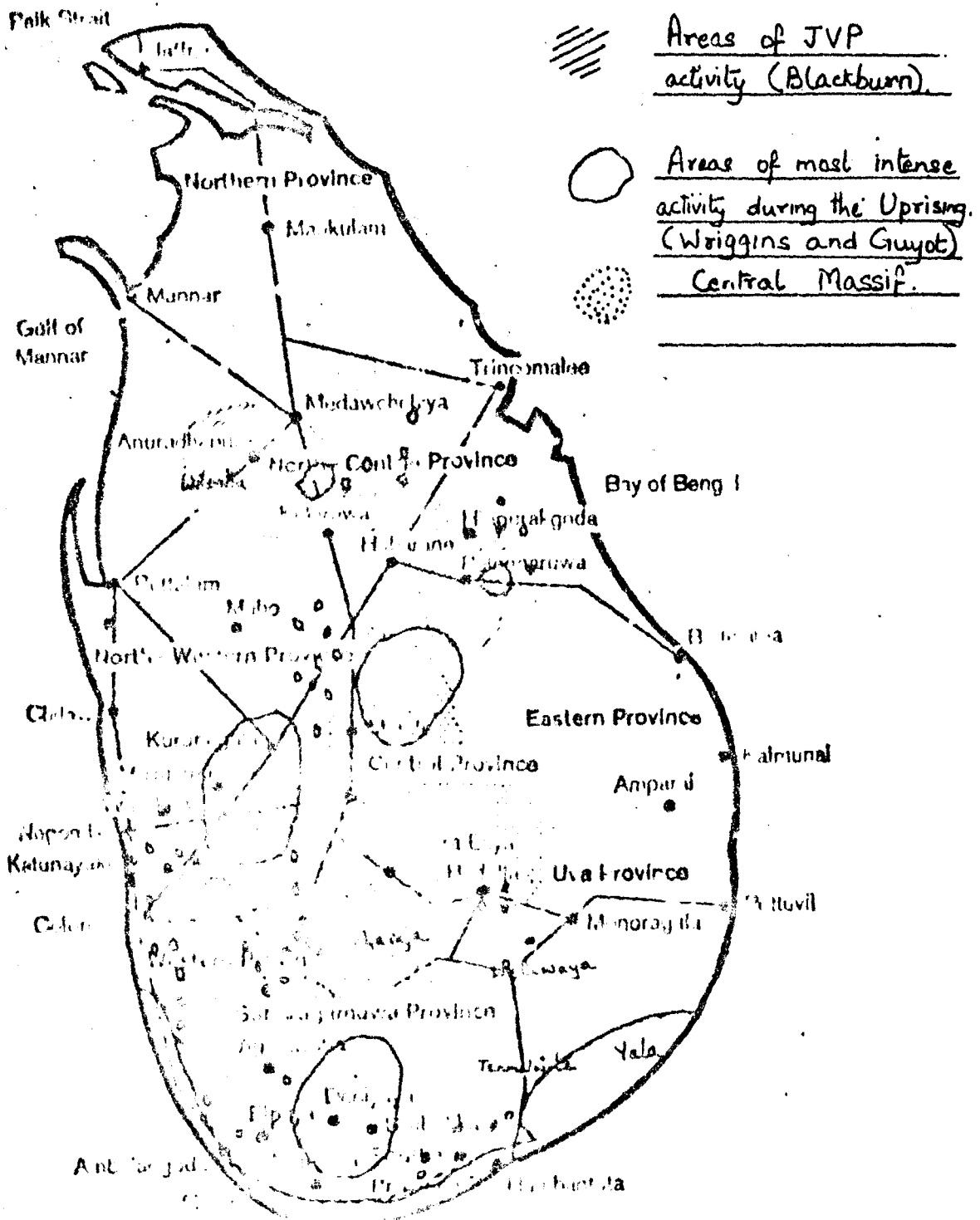
I don't know what decisions they took; only Piyatilleke, Atanula and the crowd will know. But all that I can say is their modus operandi was incorrect. I knew beforehand that the party could not face repression. That was why I requested Susil and crowd to retreat in case of one. If we did so there would have been legal action taken against some 300 of us the most. Not like this; so many honest people would not have died. I mean our members. 12

This is by far, the most logical argument against the actual steps which were taken by the Party. As the situation was, the remaining leadership decided that in order to continue in existence, it must prove its mettle and engage in combat or be demolished. The plan included a country-wide attack

11 Colt, 25 January 1973.

12 Wijeweera, n. 5, pp. 129-30.

AREAS OF JVP ACTIVITY



Adapted from Fred Halliday, "The Ceylon Insurrection", in Robin Blackburn, ed., EXPLOSION IN A SUBCONTINENT (London, 1975), p. 154, and Howard Wriggins and Jane Guyot, eds., POPULATION, AND POLITICS AND THE FUTURE OF SOUTHERN ASIA (London, 1975), p. 224.

on police stations simultaneously, as well as a concerted attack upon Colombo with the objective of the capture of the Prime Minister, other Ministers and the senior officials of the armed forces. In case of failure, participants were to retreat to hideouts (mostly jungle areas in the interior) to carry on a protracted struggle. Hence, a change from insurrection to procrastination of struggle was envisaged or thought likely. Nilgattu (Murudhapura district), Yala (Kumbhanta district), Wasgamuwa were among some of the places of retreat. The first two are ^{nature} sanctuaries. In case of failure in Colombo, retreat was to be to the Sinhara forest (Dambapura district, south of the Central Line), and Nilgattu.¹³ (see map)

April 1973 and the days that followed

From all considered reports, Wellawaya, an important road junction in the south of the island, was the first to witness a violent exchange between the JVP and the police on 6 April resulting in the death of two policemen and three youths. On this same day, one group made an abortive attack on Jaffna jail in a bid to free Wijeweera, apparently acting upon his own instructions (which, however, he denies). About

13 CRS, 16 February 1973.

37 suspects were arrested for this.¹⁴ A curfew was immediately declared in five districts as well as in Colombo.

In the first few days more than 30 police stations were attacked. Initial attacks on outlying police stations had been staged for the purpose of accumulating some modern hardware other than the produce manufactured by the JVP.

It appears that due to some confusion, the attack on Wellawaya took place one day earlier than the appointed time. This was the main reason why Colombo could not be attacked, leave alone taken, because the police forces were forewarned. The groups waiting to launch an attack upon Colombo awaited information on successful/unsuccessful attacks on various other police stations, following which they were supposed to attack. But the communication network of the JVP seems to have bogged down at this point so that many of them remained uninformed. Their apprehension led to demoralization and further disorganization until the whole attack was automatically abandoned and the individuals dispersed to bias.¹⁵

14 On 5 September 1973. 64 of these 87 indicted for offences committed in Jaffna, pleaded guilty, 13 pleaded not guilty. Of the 87 suspects, 21 were school boys, 14 were students of Vidyodaya University, 6 were from Colombo University, 5 from Katubedden Technical College, 12 were employed persons, 24 were unemployed. 34 of them were between 16-20 years in age, 47 were between 20-30 years, 3 between 30-40 years and only one above.

15 The 16th suspect L.K. Banda's statement, gives in greater detail the planned attack on Colombo for, as he claims, he was responsible for this operation. pp. 45-56.

Immediately upon the outbreak of the uprising, Parliament was adjourned and Mrs Bandaranaike instructed her 13,000 strong police force and 11,000 strong army to crush the JVP. Initially, because of danger in the Colombo area, the forces were concentrated here, but soon they were to be dispersed to various areas.

In the first week of the uprising the ranks of the JVP seem to have increased phenomenally until, according to an account, ^{they} outnumbered the armed forces by three to one.¹⁶ The ranks of the JVP might have been this high even prior to the outbreak but may have appeared as an increase because, at this point of struggle, all those who had remained in the background to date, had to show their hands. This was the time to act, and it seemed that no one was averse to revealing their role in decisive combat.

On 10 April, the Prime Minister was assuring the nation that the situation was well under control.¹⁷ The actuality, however, appeared to be different. As is evident from the map, large areas of the Central and Southwestern parts of the Island experienced heavy JVP activity and it was after two to three weeks of occupation and administration of some of these areas by them, that the Government forces

16 *Ibid.*, 12 April 1971.

17 *ibid.*, 10 April 1971, "The Prime Minister's Appeal to Misguided youth to give up their 'hard campaign'" (Text of the Prime Minister's broadcast of 9 April 1971). Also see Appendix B.

were able to wrest control. This, of course, with the help of the arms aid it received from all quarters.

Including the Northern and Eastern provinces, the remaining Islands experienced the uprising with the intensity varying from place to place. The most intense attacks took place in 14 out of the 22 districts. *Amara*, *Anuradhapura*, *Beniyaya*, *Elpitiya*, *Galle*, *Lambentota*, *Kegalle*, *Kokirawa*, *Natala*, *Koderagala*, *Nuwara*, *Kedawachchiya*, *Polonnaruwa* and southern *Vavuniya* (not war) were centres of heavy fighting. The following are a few reports of occupation:

- (1) From April 5 to 21, civil administration in *Elpitiya* (*Galle* district) broke down and the 150 square mile area was administered by the insurgents who distributed rice, kerosene and other foodstuffs. A judicial machinery was also established.¹⁸
- (2) By April 11, the entire region of *Nuwara* (a district at the southern tip of the Island) except the town itself was under the control of the JVP as were practically all the police stations.¹⁹
- (3) By April 11, practically the whole of *Kegalle* (a district in central Ceylon) was in JVP hands except three

18 *ibid.*, 14 June 1971. Capt. G.C. de Silva's evidence at the Criminal Justice Commission sittings.

19 *ibid.*, 14 June 1971. Evidence of Lt. Col. G.J. de S. Seneviratne, Co-ordinating Officer of *Nuwara* District.

areas which remained under the control of the Co-ordinating Officer, Lt. Col. S.C. Ranatunga.²⁰

Feeling its numerical inferiority, the Government, through a decree, called up its reserves and began fresh recruitment with the specific provision that no one under thirty-five years of age need apply.²¹ This was indeed a sign of the paranoia which the Government suffered in relation to the youth of the country.

For the JVP, matters took a turn for the worse; when foreign military and financial aid began to come to the Government. In the period April 5 to 14, Government indecision had combined with the JVP's surprise action to destroy much of the defence machinery of the island. When the situation came to a head, Mrs. Bandaranaike decided to appeal to 'friendly' countries. Simultaneously, without explanation, the North Korean embassy personnel were duly asked (on 12 April) to leave the country by 16 April. (This and the imprisonment of Mannagathaman, leader of the CCP(M-L) were actions taken for the benefit of countries such as India who might have feared a Chinese involvement. However, this is only a surmise). The Government's appeal for help (as has been discussed later in this chapter) drew a

²⁰ See, 14 June 1977; Evidence of Lt. Col. S.C. Ranatunga, Co-ordinating Officer of Regula District.

²¹ Ranasinghe, N. 3, p. 200.

response from an assortment of countries - the United Kingdom, the United States, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Egypt, India, Pakistan and even China. Britain was the first to supply war material (before 12 April) in the form of small arms, spare parts for grounded planes as well as helicopters. The arrangement for the supply of these it had made through its Singapore base. Indian help came on 13 April. It sent its frigates to patrol the coastal waters around the Island and also some defence personnel to guard the Katunayake airport on the west coast.²² It also, along with Pakistan and the United States (which made arrangements with Britain) gave helicopters. The USN sent six A1G 17 jets with training facilities and crew, two K16 troop-carrying helicopters, with 60 Soviet personnel in toto.²³ This arrived as late as 19 April. China's assistance, materially, was a long-term, low-interest loan for Sri Lanka, amounting to ^(2.75) \$1.150 million (approximately \$ 25 million) which came even later.²⁴

22 Senator Birchelva stated:

"...Let the people of this country know that during the time of the insurgent threats on the country at least four warships of the Indian Navy were protecting the territorial waters of Ceylon..."

Ceylon Daily Mirror, 21 May 1971.

23 Dirty (1971) report, "Internal War and International Intervention: The Case of Sri Lanka" (Unpublished paper), p. 22.

24 CDS, 27 May 1971. Also see Appendix C.

It was the filtering in of this aid, that not only precipitated the crisis, but also increased the number of casualties, specially on the side of the JVP. Needless to say, excesses were committed by both sides, but it is very probable that many personal enmities had been violently resolved under the guise of 'insurgent' activity, resulting in further maligning the participants in the uprising. These deaths were partly also, a result of the accumulated enmity of the police and armed forces whose ranks had suffered in the early stages, because the element of surprise had been in favour of the JVP. This had worked greatly towards the hardening of attitudes in those government personnel. A ranking officer of the police was quoted as saying: "Once we are convinced prisoners are insurgents, we take them to the cemetery and dispose of them."²⁵ Another officer: "We have learnt too many lessons from Vietnam and Malaysia. We must destroy them completely";²⁶ a third: "We have never had the opportunity to fight a real war in this country. All these years we have been firing at ducks, now we are being put to use."²⁷ The tragedy in terms of the lives lost,

²⁵ Malaya Today, 20 April 1971.

²⁶ Malaya Today, n. s., p. 200.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 201.

not only in the ranks but among the leadership becomes further substantiated by the following extract from Wijeweera's speech at the Criminal Justice Commission sittings:

A number of close comrades of mine are no longer living. The entire revolutionary leadership of the Western District exists no more. Comrade Susil Wickram, Comrade Jayatilaka of Deniyaya, Comrades Liyatunga, Loku Mahatunga, Suraweera, Jayaweeera, the two Bogamawatte brothers were both personal friends and fellow comrades. No one can speak about their fate. ~~on inquiring, speak about their fate.~~ On inquiring from their ~~names~~ ^{names} all I have learnt is that they are no longer among the living. 23

From 18 April the Government knew that it was only a matter of time before the end came, and it would be decisively in its favour. In her broadcast to the nation, on 25 April, the Prime Minister declared that it would only be a matter of time before the "terrorist insurgents" were hunted down and warned that she would "have to give the order for a military offensive by the Armed Services",²³ which she did. By this same date many of the JVP members and supporters had retired to the comparative safety of the hilly interior. But they were not safe for long. Forest areas where these

23 Achin Wijeweera, "Speech to the Criminal Justice Commission", in *Sinhawarna*, n. 3, pp. 249-50.

24 *ibid.*, 25 April 1971, "Premier gives details of the 'one-day revolution' that I led" (Text of Mrs. Bandaranaike's broadcast of 24 April 1971). Also see Appendix 5.

young men had retreated were finished off through aerial bombings, and individual brutalities were innumerable.³⁰ The hard core of the JVP took refuge in the Kitigala hill range in the North Central Province.³¹ The highest mountain in this range is only 2,514 feet, but because of its abrupt rise on all sides, it offered an excellent retreat for those familiar with the multitude of caves dotting the hills in their range. According to one assessment the army would have to use armour and heavy fire-power to dislodge these "terrorists", which was what eventually happened.

In an effort to pin down a section of the youthful participants, the Government declared that all teachers in all schools had to report on duty as of 23 April, failing which and in the absence of a satisfactory explanation they would be dismissed.³²

In her April 25 broadcast, the Prime Minister gave four days -- 1 to 4 May -- to the youths of the JVP to surrender and it was implied that softer measures and even amnesty would be granted to those who capitulated. The

³⁰ "Documentation of some Atrocities", Bulletin of the Ceylon Committee, No. 1, p. 9, October 1971,

³¹ For evidence on air attacks see text of Mrs Bandaranaike's broadcast of 24 April 1971, Appendix D.

³¹ Halliday, n. 3, p. 201-2.

³² Tribune, 23 July 1971.

immediate result was surrender by those who had been peripherally or lightly connected with the movement. By the deadline date of surrender 3,978 people had come forward to give up, and this was still a provisional tally as figures had not arrived from some remote areas.³³

By the end of May, the movement revealed itself only in sporadic violent incidents involving straggling bands of the JVP and the armed forces. Continuous reports of the arrests and deaths that occurred in these days appeared in the national mass media³⁴ and it was evident that the former

³³ CON, 6 May 1971, and after the extension of this period of amnesty from 7-9 June 1971, another 236 surrendered.

CON, 25 April 1971.

³⁴ For press coverage of daily events at the height of the uprising see Tribune, vol. 17.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Date,</u>	<u>Year</u>
1-3	30 June	1971
4	14 July	1971
5	23 July	1971
6	15 August	1971
7	29 August	1971
8	15 September	1971
9	30 September	1971
10-11	30 October	1971
17	20 January	1972
20	20 February	1972
21	29 February	1972

was suffering a heavy toll. The strength of the movement by this time, remains a difficult matter to assess, for apart from the deaths the number of imprisoned 'insurgents' at its peak was, 18,500 which in proportion to the population, is the highest number of rebels in jail in any country at any one time.³⁵ Hardly any of the known leadership escaped either death or imprisonment. No concrete evidence seems to exist of any 'not-known' leadership, and foreign backing of the movement, if any, has also not come to light. In fact, its absence was acknowledged by the Prime Minister. The despatch of North Korean ambassadorial personnel (while not breaking diplomatic relations with that country) was justified not because of their direct involvement but because "the effect of certain activities carried on by them was giving strength and support to these terrorists...."³⁶ This probably referred to the publication of works of Kim Il Sung, Mao and other revolutionary leaders.

Strategies of Leadership

What happened in the weeks of April and May proved a harrowing experience for the population and historic though

³⁵ Times of India, 30 September 1974.

³⁶ CAN, 25 April 1971, apart from mentioning this in her 24 April broadcast, the Prime Minister repeated it in an extensive statement before Parliament on 20 July 1971.

CAN, 21 July 1971, "Death toll under 1,200--PM tells Parliament" (Text of Prime Minister's speech of 20 July 1971 in Parliament, summing up the April uprising comprehensively). Also see Appendix E.

bloody for the Island. But it must be noted, that the Government though ill-prepared, was hardly taken unawares by the uprising. During the rule of the UNP, studies had been made of this movement and two reports in 1967 and 1969 were submitted to the Government by Mr. John Atiyagalle, Special Security Adviser to the Ministry of Defence.³⁷ An 'insurgent unit' of the CID was set up in early August 1970, by the UF to observe the movement.³⁸ Police investigation reports brought out in this same year had even hinted at such a disturbance. The Prime Minister then appointed, on 1 March 1971, an Additional Permanent Secretary to be in sole charge of National Security:

This appointment resulted in a number of important decisions. The Service Chiefs and the I.C.F. met almost daily, sometimes twice a day, and discussed the information available. An operations room was set up and deployment of Service personnel properly controlled. There was a gradual build-up to a state of readiness in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Police. All services entered into a no-leave period and the services were put on practice alerts at short notice in order to quicken their responses.³⁹

And as one officer stated, when the JVP began to operate openly, it was quite easy to infiltrate it.⁴⁰ But the UF

³⁷ Ibid., CIN, 21 July 1971. Also see Appendix F, "Additional Permanent Secretary's Statement", CIN, 22 September 1971.

³⁸ Mrs. Bandaranaike, n. 36, CIN, 21 July 1971.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ CIN, 13 June 1972, Inspector General of Police, Mr. Stanley Senanayake's evidence.

had desisted from early action against it partly because of its own misjudgement regarding the movement's influence and boundaries, as also reluctance arising from its now more authentic image as a left-wing Government and opposition from some of its members who called for leniency. That it was a section of its own people which fought with such intensity and which had to be countered, shook the foundations of the ruling government and proved to be emotionally traumatic for the public. For, after all said and done, it was their own young boys who were getting killed.

This fact the SDFP showed a great awareness of, and when referring to the movement, it capitalized on it by skillfully differentiating between the leadership and the rank and file. This not only brought vacillating elements in the public around to its point of view but was also useful for isolating the leadership and breeding mistrust and doubt among the following. Completely denying the legitimacy of the JVP,⁴¹ the Prime Minister began by regarding the leaders as -

41 Mrs Chandrasekera, n. 17, stated:

"My Government will fight these terrorists in the remote areas, will fight them in the provinces and will fight them everywhere but will not surrender my right to govern or the trust you have placed in me... No government can afford to look on and let a gang of power-hungry, blood thirsty, and treacherous schemers come to power...."

CMA, 10 April 1971. See Appendix B.

a group of disgruntled and denigrating persons from the rejects and the unwanted of practically every recognised political party, motivated by overwhelming personal ambitions, personal frustrations and disappointment and ready for instant solutions to all ills of the world. 42

The movement, she declared was "backed by big money, diabolical minds and criminal organisers" who were "operating through young men and women whom they had successfully led astray".⁴³ She made successive appeals through the mass media referring to them as 'misguided' children, assuring them of a return to peaceful life, and portraying a mother-figure with a forgiving nature. Other SLFP leaders also spoke in similar terms, exposing an organized policy decision on the handling of the movement.

"Today", Mr. Maithripala Senanayake affirmed, "we have been plunged into confusion and threatened with terrorism by a horde of misguided persons, mainly our children and youth who have been brainwashed and indoctrinated over a period of years, by a gang of power-hungry schemers,"

making continuous references to them as the "unfortunate young boys and girls" and "unfortunate children", in his speech.⁴⁴

42 Mrs. Bandaranaike's broadcast, CIN, 25 April 1971. See Appendix D.

43 Mrs. Bandaranaike, n. 17.

44 CIN, 16 April 1971, "Power-hungry Schemers have brainwashed our youth" (Text of broadcast by Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, Minister of Irrigation, Power and Highways). Also see Appendix G.

The UNP on the Uprising

The main opposition party, the UNP, came forth with a pledge to support the Government. In his statement in the Parliament's brief sitting on 22 April, J.A. Jayewardene gave the stand of his party as: "We extend our co-operation to all such measures as are necessary to restore law and order in the country."⁴⁵ but it was a critical support. Dudley Senanayake, leader of the UNP, agreed that as the nation was in the "throes of a grave national crisis" he had "deliberately refrained from any comment as to the causes for the current tragic situation". But since, according to him, the Government, through its spokesmen and the mass-media was misrepresenting the facts and distorting the truth, he wished to clarify the situation. This was a part of the exchange of mud-slinging which took place between the SLFP and the UNP, each claiming that leadership of the JVP came from the ranks of the other party. While conceding that "the protagonists of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna cause are a section of the youth who had been misguided or misled", the UNP held that those who had misguided them, instigated them, roused their passion and encouraged them to be dissidents were none other than the left parties who were today discredited

45 *Colt*, 22 April 1971, "to restore law and order" (extracts from Mr. J.A. Jayewardene (UNP) Opposition Leader's speech in Parliament's brief 18 minutes sitting on 21 April 1971).

in Parliament.⁴⁶ When it was hinted that the participants in the uprising may have been supported by "un-social" elements, Dudley came out in strong condemnation: "I would not insult the youth of this country by alleging that they had been motivated by black marketeers and such like anti-social elements." "Perhaps", he ^{observed} ~~abjured~~, "the inability of the Government to carry out the promises made to the people, promises that were incapable of fulfilment within the resources of the country...caused a sense of desperation that the aspirations of the youth would not be met."⁴⁷ The UNP was hence making political capital out of the discomfiture of the SLFP by not only stressing the latter's incapacity but also revealing that among its supporting partners-in-Government, there was a team of one-time rabble rousers.

Tamil Parties and other organizations

No comment upon the situation seems to have come from the Federal Party of the Ceylon Tamils. It may be that this section of the people were relatively alienated from the gravitas as well as the intensity of the movement. It was not their shallowness but more, a failure of the JVP which

46 *Ibid.*, 3 July 1971. "Text of letter to P.M. Dudley clears up certain points" (Text of letter of Mr. Dudley Senarathna, leader of the UNP, sent to the Prime Minister on 25 April 1971). Also see Appendix G.

47 *Ibid.*

had completely left out the Northern and Eastern Provinces of the country (where the majority were Tamils) from its calculations. But on behalf of the Indian Tamils, such organizations as the United Plantation Workers' Union and the Democratic Workers' Congress, led by the older leaders of the plantation workers, Ganesh and Aziz, pledged their support to the Government.⁴⁸ While on the subject of trade unions, we must take note of the fact that except for the Ceylon Mercantile Union of Bala Tampoe, most of the other unions came out behind the Government. Other major unions were ^{under} the control of the LSSP and the CP (Moscow), CP(M-L) as well as the SLFP.

Left Parties' Response

While the SLFP had reason to feel harassed, it is notable that the traditional left parties in their totality were opposed to the movement. This they established in their very unambiguous verbosity, the rashness of which exceeded that emanating from any other party. The threat combined with the restiveness that it had engendered in their youthful ranks resulted initially in bringing out their criticism in full force. Labels ranging from "ultra-leftist" to "right reactionary" were stamped upon the JVP

48 Ursula Phedris, "Insurgency in Ceylon - Hard Challenge and Grim Warning", Economic and Political Weekly, vol. 6, no. 19, 8 May 1971, p. 968, Footnote 18.

with a vehemence bordering on panic.

The LSSP believed prior to and during the uprising that the JVP was reactionary opposition to the UF. In his 13 April 1971 broadcast, Minister of Finance, N.A. Perera called upon all to rally round the Government to eradicate this 'menace'.⁴⁹ Its political programme was described as a mixture of guerrilla-type leftism and anti-Indian racialism, the ideology as directed at the splitting of the working class, and the Five Lectures as bearing the "stamp of fascism" in their "amalgam of socialist demogogy and racialist appeal" and having a "peurile intellectual level" and a "negativist approach to an economic programme". They topped it all by calling the JVP the "assassins who would hook off the accepted leaders of the working class".⁵⁰

But it was the analysis and characterization of the April 1971 events which created the sharpest point of difference at this Party's 3 November 1972 Congress.⁵¹ The minority resolution stressed the potentiality of mobilizing the youth for revolutionary action and highlighted the possibility of using the social base of the movement for propelling it towards proletarian socialist ideology.

49 Cen., 14 April 1971.

50 W.A. Wisnewarnagal, "The Marxist Parties of Sri Lanka and the 1971 Insurrection", ASIAN SURVEILLANCE, vol. 15, no. 9, September 1975, p. 743.

51 Cen., 20 October 1971.

The CPC joined the LSSP in its denunciation campaign; for it the JVP had nothing in common with scientific socialism and was proposing "an infantile form of negative nihilism".⁵² In a broadcast talk, Pieter Keuneman, a leader of the Party and a Minister in the Government came out strongly against the movement; "In the JVP we are confronted with a potentially fascist and terroristic movement, which serves the interests of sinister forces who have not yet declared their hand", and ended with an appeal to all to "rally behind the Government to defeat this threat from fascism and terrorism".⁵³ The movement, according to him, was directed against the UF and was hence, "in essence reactionary and potentially counter-revolutionary", its ideology was a "hotch-potch of concepts from Mao-ism and from certain contemporary forms of petty-bourgeois pseudo-radicalism in the West, combined with anti-Sovietism, anti-communism and masked racism". Their techniques of seizure of power had "more in common with the putsch and the coup d'etat than with Lenin's teachings on the mass insurrectionary seizure of power".⁵⁴

52 CON, 10 April 1971, "Sinister Forces Threaten Nation" (Text of Housing Minister, Mr. Pieter Keuneman's broadcast talk). Also see Appendix H.

53 Ibid.

54 CON, 27 August 1971, "CP Looks back at the April Attacks", Resolutions of the Central Committee (Extracts).

But it appears that a section of this Party possessed a more critical approach and this it publicized through its outspoken newspaper "Aththa" which consequently suffered because of this (with the withdrawal of Government advertisements etc). This strong dissident section controlled the paper and continued nevertheless, to criticize, attacking the Criminal Justice Commission Bill as a draconian measure, and the Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions (under it) launched a campaign against the same Bill. The rising tension between the CPC and the rest of the United Front^{almost} resulted in its virtual dismissal from the Government Parliamentary Group.⁵⁵ Internally, the CPC suffered a split with the victory of the hardliners but a tenuous reunification was in order in July 1974.

hence, such was the seriousness of the effect which the JVP movement had upon the two major Left parties, that major changes and realignments occurred internally.

The CCF (M-L) claimed to be "the first in the country to recognize the counter-revolutionary nature of the policies and activities" of the JVP, and to "carry out an island-wide campaign against it".⁵⁶ In the Hyde Park rally of the JVP in August 1970, this party issued a leaflet criticizing the

⁵⁵ Wisuwarnepala, n. 50, p. 751.

⁵⁶ Ceylon Communist Party, Letter from the General Secretary to the Prime Minister, 7 February 1972. See Appendix for extracts. Also see Appendix I.

JVP and continued this latter activity in the Congress of the Ceylon Trade Union Federation held from 16 to 19 December. The Party General Secretary, N. Shanmugathasan, in his analysis of the April events regarded the movement as "misguided and badly led", following "completely wrong tactics", "used from behind for reactionary purposes" and having a philosophy that was "out and out anti-Marxist-Leninist" and "counter-revolutionary" despite some positive factors.⁵⁷

The extensiveness of the anti-JVP campaign which this Party carried out (as it admits itself) was mostly because much of the leadership of the JVP had been drop-outs from its own ranks and each of them had naturally taken along with him a few more from the same party. The danger was hence, apparently, greatest for the leadership and the rank-and-file support of the CCP (M-L).

The revolutionary LSCP (MSSP, breakaway from LSCPM) leader, Edmund Samarakody, viewed the movement as having no clear vision of the future, no anti-capitalist or anti-imperialist programme as such, but nevertheless "a very courageous undertaking without any hope of success".⁵⁸

57 N. Shanmugathasan, "An analysis of the April events in Ceylon", *THE JOURNAL* (an Australian CP (M-L) journal), nos. 21, 22, 23, 1972. Also printed originally in *Worker*, vol. 4, no. 37, 11 December 1971, pp. 5-11.

58 "The Samarakody interview", *Internationalism*, 1971, pp. 62, 63, 10. (London, n.d.)

The LSSP (R) was the single party which viewed the JVP party programme and movement in some favourable light. (The connections between it and the latter have already been touched in both Chapter II and Chapter III). In the words of the leader Bala Tampoe, the JVP was "entirely a genuine mass movement of Sinhala youth" which had a "degree of racialist orientation" because of this. But "with each passing month, they have developed more and more in the revolutionary socialist direction".⁵⁹ Through the Ceylon Mercantile Union, this Party continuously carried on propaganda in favour of proper treatment of the imprisoned suspects as well as the state of the country under the Emergency.⁶⁰

All the major parties of the country, whether of the 'right' or the 'left' could not forego expressing a grudging admiration for the courage of those youth who participated in the uprising and even their condemnation could not hide this.

59 "Interview with Bala Tampoe, on 'the guerilla' youth movement in Ceylon", Anti-Communist Review, 12 April 1971. (reprinted from issue of 1971 in US of Anti-Communist, a monthly journal of the Australian Communist Youth League).

60 H.A.I. resolutions, Anti-Communist Review, 12 April 1971. (reprinted in Anti-Communist Review, 12 April 1971). The resolutions are listed here from the Ceylon Mercantile Union; five are letters to the Prime Minister upon the subjects of human rights and the Emergency situation and its prolongation; one is a statement on this latter; one is a letter to members of the House of Representatives on democratic rights and civil liberties; and the are CNU resolutions.

But, not only did the youth face opposition within their country, they had to suffer the more dangerous antagonism of strong forces outside (more dangerous because of their material strength) whose views seemed conveniently to converge upon the matter of the JVP and the position of the Bandaranaike coalition.

International Support to the UN Regime

As we pointed out earlier, by the third week of April, a dramatic change had taken place in the course of events, which forecast the doom of the JVP in the immediate future, specially after foreign aid began filtering into the Island. We have also detailed the type of machinery which found its way into the country. But what becomes important in this context, is the motivations which lay behind these actions taken by the various foreign powers - factors such as the obtaining power position and alignment on the global scale as well as in the subcontinent, their view of Sri Lanka's importance, its leadership in power and so on. We shall deal with these powers separately to bring out these points with more clarity.

In the policy of the United States, we note two important characteristics:

- (a) its 'low profile' posture based on its assessment of the relative importance of Sri Lanka, and

(b) the absence of any effect of its actions upon its bilateral relations with either the Soviet Union or the People's Republic of China.

Based on its experience in the Vietnam war, its 'low-profile' was an adoption of the Nixon line in the matter of involvement in domestic armed struggle in small countries and a relative withdrawal from Asia. All military assistance was given without any commitment and on a purchasing basis. But this 'low profile' underwent some change when the Soviet Union entered the scene with its considerable aid (18 April 1971). Consequently, around the end of April and the first week of May, the US supplied a significant amount of armaments and medical materials, this time from its Pacific bases.⁶¹ It threw no barbs about foreign backing of the movement and generally believed that such a situation had arisen because of Sri Lanka Government's inability to satisfy the economic needs of the people.

The Soviet Union's action was motivated by its Asia policy which called for a replacement of western and the countering of Chinese influence in the area. By sending the largest amount of aid along with a large crew, it overshadowed the previous western aid to Sri Lanka and also preceded any word from the Chinese. Also, by the time it sent its assistance

61 Gajameragedera, n. 23, p. 21.

(18 April) the Sri Lanka Government's attitude to the movement in its leftist credibility which had suffered to some extent as a consequence of its dealings with the Indian Kerner diplomats.⁶²

The USSR also acted with a view to showing its might to the rest of the nations in the area. Its policy hence, had wider implications, especially with the developing situation in erstwhile East Pakistan. It also did not make any declarations to the effect that there was any foreign involvement in the movement. Along with China, it termed the movement "ultra-left" and "right opportunist reactionary."⁶³

As regards Ceylon, on 5 April when the Ceylonese government became aware that a Chinese ship carrying ammunition for Tanzania, was on its shores,⁶⁴ it requested the diversion of these arms to its aid. But the vessel played a 'disappearing trick' a few days later and the Chinese government pleaded its inability on grounds that the request had reached ^{it} ~~them~~ too late. This was, however, a weak excuse. If it was only due to incidental reasons that the Chinese

62 Ibid.

63 Moscow radio broadcasting in standard Chinese for South-East Asia on 13 April said the emergency arose from "a plot by ultra-left terrorists and reactionary forces" and that the JVP's objectives had nothing in common with true socialism." Chen Chien's letter to the London Daily also characterized it as "ultra-left and right opportunism."

64 Ceylon, 15 June 1971.

government could not comply, it could easily have sent arms through other means. The behaviour of the ship caused misgivings that the arms may have been carried to the shores of the Island for other purposes, for instance in support of the Uprising. Seen in this light, the timing of the arrival of the Chinese Premier's letter of support to the Bandaranaike Government (23 April 1971) with its promise of a loan could be viewed either as a placating gesture, as most are wont to regard it, or the culmination of the "wait-and-see" role that the Chinese had been playing. By this time it had become evident that the winning horse was the ruling Government since JVP cadres and rank and file had already suffered heavy reverses. It may be surmised that China would have backed the victors and/or capitalized on any confusion that may have arisen if and when the JVP might have come to power. Chou's letter of 26th was the first policy pronouncement on the attitude of the Chinese Government and its view of the nature of the movement. Along with lauding Mrs Bandaranaike's success in putting down the JVP, it also successfully put forward the point that it did not like the presence of the other powers (India, US and Soviet Union especially) on the Island - China did not believe in "interfering in other countries internal affairs" and was opposed "particularly to foreign reactionaries taking advantage of the opportunities to carry out armed intervention".⁶⁵ It is noteworthy that

65 See Appendix C.

the contents of the letter were made public by the UK Government a month later.

Britain's concern with her commercial and plantation interests within the country alongwith imperial and commonwealth ties brought it forward. Even then, it was not very outgoing in the volume of support that it gave.

India's was the most crucial role in the putting down of this Uprising. Not only did its aid arrive at a particularly grim moment for the Bandaranaike Government, but it was also possible to alphon it off to the most needed areas and in the weakest links in the chain of defence of the Government's counter-insurgency operations. Its help was given with no holds barred and the delay in giving it (13 April) was entirely due to bad communication.⁶⁶ India even went forth to cancel the cost of this assistance, as did others.

For India, two major reasons, spurred it to action - (a) it did not wish to have a hostile power (for the JVP appeared anti-Indian) at its feet, and (b) it wanted to exhibit its capacity as a middle-range global power in the subcontinent. Many other reasons combined with these. The growing problem on its east, countering China's influence, safety of the Indian Ocean area, and subtle pressure on Sri Lanka's much prided independence in foreign policy,

66 Gajenaragedera, n. 23, p. 27.

also appear to have been responsible for the Indian Government's response.

Despite Mauritius' strategic interest in Sri Lanka and its need for a special comradeship with Indonesia's Government to counter India, it was not able to play any significant role because of its domestic constraints. The limited amount of help that it was able to give did not, however, work against it at its own time of need. In the Bangladesh crisis it was allowed port and air facilities on the Island.

Levy and Murali via because of their connections with Sri Lanka in the non-aligned group, came to its assistance unequivocally.

Causes of the Failure of the Uprising

We note then that international and subcontinental pressures, pulls and alignments motivated the policies and reactions of the various powers during the April 1971 uprising in Sri Lanka. Many reasons have been cited for the failure of this Uprising, but there is almost universal agreement that the JVP would have taken the reins of power if foreign assistance had not so timely arrived.

The panicky reaction of the UF as well as the derogatory verbose opposition from all the Left and other parties revealed somewhat, their fear of losing a considerable

following; from within their own ranks. This new organization threatened not only the established Government but also all political organizations, for it had managed to penetrate the majority rural population as no other party had done before it. The Sinhalese small farmer with his traditional prejudices and beliefs was forced to observe things beyond his limited horizon and yet directly concerning his little circle, through his young, unemployed though educated children.

As has been stressed before, the movement engendered by the JVP engulfed a major part of the population and was making efforts to bring the remaining sections within its fold. It had developed links (though tenuous ones) with Balatempoe of the Ceylon Mercantile Union and Illanchelyan of the Young Socialist Front. But they were not influential enough within their sections as to be exceedingly helpful and neither did any of them extend the full hand of friendship. It is notable that none of the members of the LSP (R) were touched by the Government during the Uprising. The LSP, the CPC (~~xxxxxx~~) as well as the CCP (M-L), kept the majority of the working class in a passive state and consequently stunted the expansion of the JVP and made its development slower. Hence, when the Uprising took place, the JVP lacked practically all support from the urban working class, the plantation workers as well as the Ceylon Tamils for added measure.

Since it is a known fact that the majority of the participants were young, it became evident that a considerable section of even the Sinhalese peasantry stood aside passively, though sympathetically and in awe, to observe the movement and the events of April 1971.

Hence, although the JVP did not deny the importance of the working class, it did not attribute the highest importance to it in the matter of its own organization, development and operation. Thus while receiving considerable support from the peasants, it lacked this simultaneously from the workers (seen in a relative context).

One other glaring shortcoming of the JVP lay in the organization of the party. Democratic centralism was not the principle upon which it functioned. The election of leaders and the filling up of important posts through this method is not mentioned anywhere. Yet there was excessive decentralization. This made organized effort and speedy contact more difficult than otherwise. If this lent secrecy in the clandestine stage of functioning, it certainly did not give internal cohesion when the party came into the open. As one member claimed, at one point in time, the movement was in such a state of disarray that it was difficult for two people of the party to meet.⁶⁷ This was probably why the party operated effectively in its clandestine period and even prior to the

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 8 August 1973, Jamiya Uyangoda's statement.

action, but broke down almost immediately after the outbreak and the consequent suppression. The initial tactically advantageous element of surprise and strength was not utilized to its fullest capacity, and enough time elapsed for the Government to regroup and strengthen for necessary counter-action. The latter's strategy of a combination of placation, pleading and pressure, worked well towards weaning away the weaker and still vacillating supporters of the JVP.

Apart from this, the lack of outside support, even if only verbal, the absence of an independent source of arms (factors related to the comparative ease with which the surrounding coastal waters of the Island could be patrolled) and lack of adequate training in guerrilla warfare (and ^{how many} ~~who~~ could escape aerial bombings?) lent to the immediate failure of the uprising.

Tactically also, it seems that the JVP lacked a comprehensive programme of action after the takeover of power. While we hear of administrative and judicial machinery being set up in the captured areas, there is no talk of any substantial structural change like the take-over of the land and its distribution etc. Everything seemed to hinge upon the takeover of the highest embodiment of state-power centered in Colombo. When this failed all else seemed to fail. Protracted warfare through the setting up of bases in the captured areas had been envisaged but in its operationalization and consolidation, the JVP mechanism

seemed to break down. Much of this could probably have been seen because large portions of the leadership had been clapped into jail even prior to a shot being fired,⁶⁸ and many after April 5.

The high degree of courage and will on the part of the participants did not evidently cover up these many deficiencies.

68 Coonetioka, n. 60, p. 47.

A total of 5,067 persons were taken into custody from 18 police divisions between 16 March (the declaration of Emergency) and 5 April (the outbreak of the Uprising). So many were hence immobilized before anything could happen.

CHAPTER V

1971 AND AFTER : DILEMMAS OF THE LEADERSHIP

Six years have elapsed in Sri Lanka, but time seems not to have subdued either the interest in the '71 Uprising or in the causes for it. While marking a historical point, it has affected almost every aspect of life and society upon this Island and stimulated processes of social change. This Chapter attempts a descriptive analysis of the evolving situation in Sri Lanka since April '71. This, not only in the context of the total population of this Island, but also in the context of the degree or extent to which these socio-economic changes have affected the lives of the suspected 'insurgents'.

Evolving Situation and Governmental Measures

We have already dealt in the preceding chapter with the immediate tactics of the leadership during the uprising. The point now is to deal with the follow-up action taken by them and the outcome of these. The processes of containment/suppression/absorption (depending upon the strategy and tactics employed by the ruling United Front) of the movement led by the JVP, appears to have led to a greater centralization, institutionally and power-wise, as well, greater militarization of the State machinery.

We shall deal with the latter contention first. On the militarization of State machinery, it would be well to state that defence spending was almost the first thing to be raised as a consequence of the April events. Expenditure outlay on the Army was Rs.4.8 million, on the Navy Rs.36.6 million, and the Air Force Rs.40.1 million in 1972 compared to the previous year's Rs.1.5 million, Rs.23.8 million and Rs.20.9 million respectively.¹ This has not been later reduced. Meanwhile arms aid was coming in from various countries, two important ones being the US and China. The importance may have been more from the political viewpoint but the volume also was not negligible. "The first piece of heavy equipment constituting the 3 million dollars Grant Aid package from the U.S. Army to the Ceylon Army was delivered...the aid agreement between the two countries covered gifts of helicopters, transport aircrafts, wireless equipment, and motorized vehicles."² The Chinese Government, for instance, in addition

1 Ceylon Daily News (hereinafter referred to as CDN), 8 January 1972.

2 CDN, 27 January 1972; and

"In recent months ships of the seventh fleet...have been cruising in the Indian Ocean"; CDN, 4 March 1972; and

"United States transport planes arrived here today to deliver four Bell Helicopters to the Ceylonese Government.

In addition to the helicopters, the United States will give Ceylon 60 pieces of communications equipment for use by the Ceylonese armed forces."

New York Times, 10 April 1972.

to its earlier subsequent aid, sent 150 tons of arms and ammunitions to the Island on 4 May 1972.³ A slight deviation, but a notable point all the same, was the fact that the Prime Minister's nephew, Lt. Col. Anurudha Ratwatte was in charge of the Army's special security unit.⁴

This brings us to an important aspect; not only of the centralization of power but also its accumulation in the hands of a few; or to be more precise, in the very feudal familial network which Mrs Bandaranaike built around herself - 200 relatives were ensconced in important official positions. To name a few - four of Mrs Bandaranaike's brothers were so placed - Seewali Ratwatte, in charge of the Export Promotion Bureau; Clifford, Chief of the State Planning Corporation (till early 1976); Mackie, her private Secretary and lastly Barnes, who as the Public Trustee oversaw the functioning of the leading "Lake House" newspaper group. Mrs. Bandaranaike's elder daughter, Sunethra was her coordinating secretary with special responsibility for the food drive, and Sunethra's husband Kumar Rupasinghe, Director of the Youth Service Council which extended considerable influence over unemployed youth.⁵

3 Ceylon Solidarity Campaign Bulletin, April 1974. On the U.S. aid, reports to this effect appeared.

4 Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23 September 1974.

5 Ibid.

At this juncture, it is interesting to note that while the opposition parties had already been trying to 'woo' the misguided youth, over the last year the Government also attempted to form a youth organization which would attract the known members of the movement of 1971 for a 'redressal' of their grievances. Mrs. Bandaranaike's son, Anura Bandaranaike, (leading the youth League of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party) claimed that although the Government was against the methods adopted by the youth to express these grievances, it had never failed to recognize the causes which led to this frustration.⁶ The success of this absorption tactic is yet to be seen in political terms.^v

Institutionally, in the field of education, 1972 saw the amalgamation of the four universities into one administrative structure with several campuses. This centralization makes possible effective and increased governmental control in the effort to rationalize the educational structure and content. One of the aims is to reduce the ranks of the art graduates who are said to have formed the 'brains' of the JVP movement.

1972 also witnessed the promulgation of^a constitution for Sri Lanka, which made the country a Republic,

6 Victor Gunewardena, "New Interest in the Ex-Insurgents", Times of Ceylon Sunday Illustrated, 21 December 1975. Anura Bandaranaike said that he had already formed an organization to look into the problems of those involved in the 1971 Uprising. According to him, 11,000 ex-detainees had rallied round this organization. CUN, 9 November 1975.

bestowed it with one legislature, the National State Assembly, and made the Executive, which operatively, was the Cabinet, the most powerful body. The State Assembly now exercises legislative, executive and judicial powers and any laws passed by it are valid until repealed by the body itself. Even infringement of fundamental rights becomes valid. Now virtually all the laws passed by the body are non-justiciable. The President, today is nominated directly by the Prime Minister and all powers which had been vested in the former by the Public Security Act are now in the hands of the Executive. Not only this, the Council of Ministers possesses final control over all appointments and dismissals in the public services.

The Emergency condition existing since April 1971 made the adoption of this and many other steps comparatively easy. It was in this situation that the Government had decided to hold the trials of the detainees (of the April Uprising) who had been kept in camps and prisons. Approximately 18,000 youths were languishing behind bars, many of them till two to three years after detainment. The existing legal framework and institutions were considered inadequate for dealing with the situation and an attempt was made to lend permanency to some of the Emergency Laws and to set up judicial commissions for this purpose.

...The Government's intention is to bring these people to trial under the equivalent of existing

...

law. But the existing law today includes emergency regulations which have been formulated to deal with the situation. These emergency regulations by their very nature are in the nature of temporary laws--laws which are in force only the duration of an emergency. The Government is of the opinion that this is not a very satisfactory approach and that it would be better to bring into law all the existing things that exist as law so as to have it on the State Book as Permanent Law before the actual prosecutions are launched. For that purpose a draft is now in course of preparation by the Ministry of Justice...it includes provisions like what exists today in emergency regulations. 7

Trials

A Criminal Justice Commission's Bill was passed in April 1972; and almost a year after the Uprising, Special Tribunals were to be set up and a 5-Judge Criminal Justice Commission (CJC)⁸ began its sittings on 12 June 1972 to try

7. CDN, 31 November 1971 (extract from Mr. Felix Bandaranaike's speech in Parliament of 30 November 1971).

8. Section 2 clause 1 of the CJC Bill clearly stated;

"The practice and procedure of the ordinary courts are inadequate to administer criminal justice for the purpose of securing the trial and punishment of persons who have committed such offences." Some of its disturbing characteristics were;

- (a) It allowed 'confessions' while in police custody, as admissible evidence.
- (b) There was to be no Jury.
- (c) The right of cross-examination could be suspended.
- (d) There was no right of appeal against conviction, and lastly,
- (e) It could hold sitting in camera and exclude the press and the public (which incidently, it did not).

"The Trials Begin", Ceylon Committee Bulletin, no. 4, August 1972, p. 1.

the 41 major suspects. The charges were-

- (a) waging war against the State;
- (b) conspiracy to wage war;
- (c) collecting arms and ammunition to wage war.

Nine of these suspects were to be tried in absentia. To further strengthen the judicial machinery, the Interpretation Ordinance (Amendment) Bill⁹ was passed, but it was notable that despite the extensive powers given to the CJC, it had no say in the matter of keeping suspects in detention or of releasing them. This power rested directly with the Ministry of Justice.

The trials¹⁰ threw some doubt upon the methods of the police especially in the matter of the recording of statements of the suspects after their arrest or surrender.¹⁰

⁹ This was accompanied by the Press Council Bill in August 1972 which apart from all else proposed a control of the content of press reporting.

The Interpretations Ordinance (Amendment) Act made non-justiciable, an important class of cases and the reason cited for its passing⁹ to make it easier for the Government to deal with challenges in courts to their land acquisition policy. Incidentally, by restricting the right to go to the Supreme Court by way of Habeas Corpus, it removed certain essential safeguards in the cases of the April detainees.

¹⁰ CDN, 28-30 September 1972; 7 October 1972; 23-25 and 27-28 October 1972.

These give the account of the CJC proceedings with regard to the Assistant Superintendent of Police, Shanmughan, of Kandy, and of sergeant Wijesinghe.

Two police witnesses were found to have made false statements before the CJC.¹¹ In this main case of the 41 suspects, 4 pleaded guilty at the outset, the charges against one were withdrawn. Of the 36 remaining suspects, all but four were found guilty.¹² Wijeweera was given a life sentence which was later commuted to 20 years rigorous Imprisonment. Of the others (from the 41) 26 were given 3 to 15 years of rigorous Imprisonment.¹³ The Government believed in following a liberal policy in meting out punishment, and death sentences were not empowered to the CJC.

The trials of these 41 and the CJC reports form an interesting and most momentous chapter on the history of this Island. The impassioned appeals of the suspects revealed their sincerity in the matter of the pursuance of their goal. Not many relented upon the role they had played. But apart from these 41 accused, there took place a host of other trials

11 One Judge stated:

"We do not propose to punish you for those faults and those faults may be known to your superiors. They might punish you, they might not, but they now know your faults. All I wish to say is that by truthfully answering my questions you will be helping the Commission and helping yourself. Now that you have been compelled to tell the truth on some matters, it will help you to speak the truth on other matters."

"The Trials drag on", Ceylon Committee Bulletin, no. 8, December 1972, p. 1.

12 Gunewardena, n. 6.

13 CDN, 17 January 1975.

all over the country. The suspects who were brought forth had been detained in various camps and prisons. The details of the arrests, surrenders and sentences passed up to 31 May 1976, are given in Table I.

Table I

Statistics of Arrests and Surrenders up to
31 May 1976

	Arrests	Surrenders	Total
1 Total number of forms	12,364	6,283	18,647
2 Total number recommended for release in 'A' category	3,356	805	4,161
3 Total number recommended for release in 'B' category	2,604	1,551	4,155
4 Total number recommended for release in 'B' & 'C' categories	812	726	1,538
5 Total number recommended for release in 'D' & 'MO' category	2,466	1,830	4,296
6 Total number recommended for release on hon. Attorney General's advise	748	563	1,311
7 Released (new arrests)	-	-	73
Total			15,534

'A' Arrested on suspicion without any charges framed.

'B' Those suspects who followed four classes or below without any charges framed.

'C' All cases produced before CJC.

'MO' (Minor Offences) Robbery, house breaking and theft and without murder charges.

'D' Murder charges, Police attacks.

Information supplied by the Ceylon, Department of Rehabilitation.

Up to 31 May 1976, thus a total of 18,647 suspects had been arrested or had surrendered. The surrenders constituted one-third of this number. By May 1976, 15,534 suspects were either released or recommended for release.

The Department of Rehabilitation also provides us with a further break-up of the cases dealt with by the CJC (Table 2).

Table 2

Cases Dealt by C.J.C.

Particulars	Nos.
1 Total number sentenced on suspended sentence	2,815
2 Total number sentenced on rigorous imprisonment	332
3 Total number sentenced to simple imprisonment	3
4 Total number discharged and acquitted	82
Total	2,932
Total number in custody	196*
* Suspects awaiting trial in other courts	163
Suspects recommended release and not released by prison yet	15
Suspects awaiting trial in CJC	28

Information supplied by the Ceylon, Department of Rehabilitation.

A total of 2,932 cases have been under the judicial purview of this body and, as of 31 May 1976, 28 of them were awaiting trial. (Of the total number still in custody (196), the category "Suspects recommended release and not released by prison yet" who total 15, constitutes a duplication because of its inclusion within the category "Total number recommended for release in 'B' and 'C' categories".) By the end of June 1976, all remaining cases had been disposed off¹⁴ in a bid to clear the political atmosphere and present an unblemished front for the Non-aligned Summit Conference which was to be held in Colombo in August. Later in September 1976, a Government decision revoked all restrictions placed on about 10,000 people with effect from 1 October 1976. It hence, removed all surveillance and restrictions on the movement of 3,500 persons who had pleaded guilty to having taken part in the Uprising and on whom suspended sentence had been imposed by the CJC. It also restored full freedom (within the framework of Emergency Regulations) to about 6,500 persons who having surrendered to police or having been captured, had been released from time to time by executive orders without being charged before law courts.¹⁵

Needless to note, the sentences passed could hardly be termed harsh. The 'soft line' of the Government was

14 Sunday Observer, 18 July 1976. About 800, it was reported, were still evading arrest.

15 Patriot, 23 September 1976.

motivated by the need to build up a basic trust that the leadership stuck to its promises and had not been indulging in propagandist proclamations. Police and other service personnel who were suspected of indulging in or committing unreasonable crimes, having stepped beyond the call of duty, were also tried.¹⁶

Rehabilitation Processes

After the April 1971 events, the Sri Lanka Government opened a total of 14 camps. Universities were also converted into rehabilitation centres. Vidyalankara held 2,600 as of September 1971 and Vidyodaya, 2,000 detainees.¹⁷ The situation in these camps in the early stages was highly unsatisfactory. Overcrowding¹⁸ had led to unsanitary conditions which in turn occasionally resulted in epidemics. In a report on Rehabilitation, Douglas Hyde, a British 'authority'

¹⁶ For reports of some of these trials see Sri Lanka (Ceylon), The New Law Reports, (Colombo, 1974), vol. 77, parts 2 and 3, pp. 26-72.

¹⁷ Amnesty International, "Press Statement, 29 September 1971", Ceylon Committee Bulletin, no. 1, October 1971, p. 3.

¹⁸ Some examples are - Mirigama, where 300 women were detained in a former old person's home designed for 60; Koggala, where 550 men were put in similar home designed for 40 inmates. Ibid.

For further details see Douglas Hyde, Rehabilitation (Colombo, 1972).

who was requested by the Sri Lanka Government to assess the situation, while commending the effort of the Sri Lanka Government, also reveals the sufferings of the detainees.¹⁹ But the manner in which the subject of the tactics to be employed and the psychology to be used upon the youth in these camps, is discussed, leaves one feeling that these detainees must indeed possess below average intelligence (despite continuous stress to the contrary). Perhaps the prejudice arises from the revolting idea of restricting human cattle, within enclosures and deciding upon the degree of freedom to be allowed to them. This, however, gets further compounded with the official definition of 'rehabilitation' in Hyde's report;

...a detainee may be considered to be rehabilitated when he has ceased to support a movement and a position of which, in most cases, he has had relatively little understanding and is ready to become an ordinary, useful member of the community. (emphasis mine) 20

This combined with other such platitudinous statements, in the report, project the view that somehow these individuals had become abnormal or were functioning outside the existing society and reality, when in fact they seemed most aware of it.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid., p. 2.

The situation in these camps gradually improved and various schemes were undertaken to absorb the detainees. But there were cases where the benefits of rehabilitation given, as it were by one hand, were taken away by the other. As late as November 1973, the Ministry of Public Administration issued a circular (later renewed) which stated that those who were released from detention with their sentences suspended were debarred from employment in the State sector.²¹ This State action against them also prejudiced the private sector and made it wary of absorbing them. Consequently, all the facilities for study and appearance in examination, in prison, went "out of the window". Self-employment was the only remaining avenue and this had existed even prior to April 1971. It was only that it was most encouraged now, and training in skills was probably the most effective method of neutralization and most beneficial for all parties concerned. In this context, the government did extend its hand and vocational training programmes were undertaken. They covered diverse fields - from the acquisition of simple mechanical skills, e.g. tractor and motor repairs and electrical engineering, to pig and poultry rearing and hair dressing, carpentry, toy-making, coconut etching etc. The total number of loans given for self-employment

²¹ Victor Gunewardena, "The Insurgency (Part Three)", Times of Ceylon Sunday Illustrated, 4 January 1976, p. 4.

schemes for the years 1975 and 1976 were 89.²² The amounts ranged from Rs.200 to Rs.1,500. 34 agricultural projects and 9 small industries projects were initiated with substantially large annual allocations.²³

Some other measures which showed further possibilities (for the absorption of these people in the socio-economic set-up) were the enactment by the Government, of the Land Reform Law, the nationalization of public company owned estates, the Agricultural Productivity Law and the proposed diversification of crops.²⁴ The Land Reform Law (which has been viewed by many as a direct result of the Uprising) was passed in August 1972 and gave two years for the alienation of all privately owned land which exceeded the ceiling of 50 acres of agricultural land except for paddy for which the ceiling was laid at 25 acres. All this excess land was to be vested in the Land Reform Commission, the director of which is Mrs. Bandaranaike's younger daughter, Chandrika. By 26 August the Commission had acquired 559,377 acres of land.²⁵

22 Information given by Ceylon, Department of Rehabilitation, Self Employment Scheme, 1976. In 1975 the number of schemes was 51 and in 1976, 38.

23 Information supplied by Ceylon, Department of Rehabilitation, Agricultural and Small-Industries Projects Initiated by the Rehabilitation Department.

24 Initially the programme of diversification of crops was too hastily gone into, with lack of adequate planning, and had proved unsuccessful on several estates. Central Bank of Ceylon, Annual Report 1974 (Colombo, 1975), p. 12.

25 Ibid., p. 36.

One third of the land vested was in the category of uncultivated or jungle land.²⁶ Till now, the company-owned estates remained untouched. It was only in October 1975 that the Land Reform (Amendment) Law of 1975, was passed, by which estate lands owned or possessed by public companies, business undertakings, or agency houses or trustee organisations, were vested in the Land Reform Commission. Compensation was to be determined by the Chief Valuer and the manner and mode of payment would be determined by the Minister of Agriculture and Land in consultation with the Minister of Finance and of Planning and Economic Affairs.²⁷

The total extent of land vested under this law amounts to 417,957 acres. It brings under the Land Reform Commission, 63 per cent of the total extent of tea cultivated, 32 per cent of rubber and 10 per cent of coconut. The aim is to ensure a continuing efficiency in the functioning of these estates, in the light of the fact of their predominant position in the economy and diversification of crops in the 'uneconomic' estates.²⁸

So far, immense enthusiasm has been evoked by these laws and transfer of lands etc. are in full swing.

²⁶ Central Bank of Ceylon, n. 24, p. 36.

²⁷ For text of this law see Central Bank of Ceylon, Annual Report 1975 (Colombo, 1976), pp. xlvi-lvi.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

But only time will reveal the success of all these measures and their implementation.

Economic Situation

Meanwhile, most of the steps so far outlined combined with other factors, have been straining the already flagging exchequer to a considerable extent. Compounded by the inflationary crisis in the world market, the gross external debt doubled between 1970 and 1974. From Rs.1,596.4 million in 1970, it rose to Rs.2,926.4 million in 1974. This last figure was a staggering 500 per cent rise from the debt figure in 1965 which amounted to a mere Rs.472.8 million. The short term credits taken in 1974 were also the highest ever taken.²⁹ The Central Bank in its 1974 report stated:

The deficit in the current account of the balance of payments has been the highest that the country has witnessed so far.... Both the domestic and foreign components of the public debt have risen very sharply. 30

Much of this could be attributed to the rise in price of oil and other essential commodities, but much of it found its roots in the Island's economy itself. The basic weakness remained an overdependence upon international trade. Meanwhile,

29 Central Bank of Ceylon, n. 24, p. 10.

30 Ibid., pp. 9-10. It is notable that in 1973 the total external debt amounted to Rs.2,750.5 million and by 1975 rose to Rs.3,704.9 million. Ibid. Table 13.

prices of essential foodstuffs continued to rise and showed the highest level in 1974 - 12.3 per cent.³¹ "Imported inflation fundamentally affected the entire price structure and was responsible for pushing up the prices of locally produced goods and services."³² Cuts imposed on consumer goods distributed to the public on ration were the most severe and extensive in the early '70s. There had been a 10 per cent reduction in rice imports and 60 per cent cut-back in sugar imports.³³

...the scope for further curtailment of imports of these commodities do not seem to exist. Further inroads into the cereal content of the diet could impair the health of the population. 34

Unemployment

Since unemployment was stated as one of the causes of the dissatisfaction which led to the April 1971 situation, it would be well to survey the current situation. It seems that this problem has little chance of being resolved in the near future, and the possibilities of making it manageable are also low. The situation as of 1971 is shown in Table 3 below.

31 Ibid., p. 8.

32 Ibid., p. 7.

33 Ibid., p. 227.

34 Ibid., p. 11.

Table 3

Unemployed Persons Aged 15-59 Years Classified by Age and Sex
1963-71

Age Years	Males				Females			
	1963		1971		1963		1971	
	Number	As % of the labour force	Number	As % of the labour force	Number	As % of the labour force	Number	As % of the labour force
15-19	53,086	22.2	12,3861	37.1	15,531	14.3	78,662	44.0
20-24	60,021	16.0	155,605	28.4	23,028	17.8	122,391	46.2
25-29	23,771	6.7	61,979	13.9	9,983	9.8	59,884	32.3
30-34	12,036	3.5	25,323	7.1	3,088	3.9	25,567	20.9
35-39	7,859	2.4	17,061	4.9	1,417	1.8	14,906	12.8
40-44	5,179	2.1	12,168	4.0	948	1.7	9,870	11.6
45-49	4,568	1.9	10,090	3.7	936	1.8	8,237	10.6
50-54	3,902	2.2	7,378	3.6	913	2.8	5,615	11.7
55-59	3,920	2.9	5,982	3.8	886	4.7	4,283	15.6
15-59	174,342	7.1	419,447	14.0	56,729	8.6	329,420	29.8

Source: Department of Census and Statistics.
The Population of Sri Lanka (Colombo, 1974), Table 5.18, p. 88.

The figures seem uncompromisingly high - 14 per cent in the case of males and 29.8 per cent in the case of females. The increase from from 1970 to 1973 has been quite substantial. In 1970 it had been 14 per cent of the labour force and by 1973 it had reached 17.4 per cent. By this year 793,000 persons were unemployed.³⁵ Nearly 77 per cent of the unemployed resided in the rural sector, only 17 per cent in the urban sector and 6 per cent in the estate sector.³⁶ The Central Bank Report was despondent on this score: "Unemployment continues to be a major problem in the economy despite adoption of various programmes for employment promotion."³⁷ In the year 1963, the dependency ratio was calculated at 830 per thousand persons. The 0-14 and the 65 and above categories were used to signify the dependent population.³⁸ The population projections for the period 1971-2001, envisage a gradual decrease in the dependency ratio³⁹ which could indicate that a greater number are going to join the ranks of the labour force, but may find it difficult to gain employment. As such, the problem may become more acute in the future. The Prime Minister's

35 Central Bank of Ceylon, Annual Report 1973 (Colombo, 1974), pp. 11-12.

36 Central Bank of Ceylon, n. 27, p. 26. 74 per cent of the unemployed males and 79 per cent of the unemployed females were in the rural areas.

37 Ibid., p. 3.

38 Sultan S. Hasnani, "Constraints in Economic Development: The Problem of Population Growth in South Asia", in S.A. G. Robinson and Michael Adonis, eds., Development and Change in South Asia (London, 1970), p. 14.

39 Department of Census and Statistics, The Future of Sri Lanka (Colombo, 1974), p. 85.

awareness of the situation is apparent from her warning to her own party members -

Don't give false hope; don't serve out slogans. Our young people are all educated; discuss with them intelligently and objectively the situation in the country and how helpless we are against external forces, unless we achieve self-reliance....The youth...must be prepared to change their attitudes, prepare to work for themselves and for the country. 40

Mrs. Bandaranaike's assessment, however, raises certain pertinent queries. What was the situation confronting the youth of this country in the sphere of employment? What was the nature of the education that they received, and what were the social norms prevailing with regard to their absorption? To answer the first - there were not sufficient jobs in the country. The second - their's was a vernacular education while, on the other hand, even the scarce bureaucratic employment avenues required, in many cases, an English educational background. Consequently, their attitude was conditioned by their environmental situation. For them, 'work for themselves and for the country' required a change in this situation. Hence, their 'attitude' to work was never absent and never the problematic factor. In fact, their objectives entailed acquiring self-reliance for themselves and for the country.

To conclude, most of the measures to bring about socio-economic reforms (taken in the post '71 era and as discussed above) have a causal relationship with the upheaval of April 1971. The problems which had precipitated this uprising are also those to which the leadership today (both ruling and non-ruling) is according the most importance. Not only the management of these problems but also the absorption of the youth who undertook to highlight them, are the major preoccupations of the political organizations which are struggling to oust each other from positions of predominance in the light of the impending possibility of a general election which is to be held in May 1977.

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CHAPTER VI

AN APPRAISAL

The youth Uprising in Sri Lanka has been dealt with in the context of certain propositions presented in Chapter I. An attempt will be made, in this Chapter, to appraise the premises underlying these propositions. Alongside, a few tentative projections into the future of the JVP and of movements and organizations akin to it, will be hazarded.

Briefly outlined, the five propositions were, as follows:

- (a) The greater the injustice of the existing imbalance of the structure of society, the larger is the possibility of the initiation of a movement or a struggle for the destruction/transformation of the same;
- (b) Such movements gain momentum through reference to a revolutionary ideology;
- (c) In the initial stages, their clandestine nature may lend to them a greater degree of cohesiveness;
- (d) Prematurely instigated uprisings may be generally unsuccessful in their immediate outcome and also a temporary set-back for such a movement.
- (e) The processes of suppression/containment/absorption, by the ruling class, may lead to greater centralization and militarization of the State machinery.

The Ceylonese economy, as we have seen (Chapter II), exhibited a lopsidedness in structure which had defied righting precisely because successive governments had attempted dealing with the symptoms or effects rather than the causes or the structure itself. Because of the relatively higher political consciousness of the Ceylonese population, arising from factors of education and literacy, as compared to other Third World countries, a potentially explosive situation had developed. But these two factors in themselves had not initiated the movement for restructuring society. We have seen that due to various reasons the youth of this country, apart from being almost totally educated, was also the largest section of the population. Their education and consciousness had combined with their own adverse situation, to make them capable of perceiving the total state of affairs and the status quo with reference to the dire straits in which various sections of the population existed.¹ This

1 It is notable that the highest percentage of the work force which was employed, was among the Indian Tamils. Ceylon Tamils had the second highest rate of employment. The Malays had the lowest proportion of their population employed. The low-country Sinhalese had the second lowest proportion of the work force employed and this was lower than in the Kandyan Sinhalese work force. This was one of the findings of the Central Bank's Economic Research Department (1973). Ceylon Daily News (Hereinafter referred to as CDN), 28 November 1974.

These facts may have led the JVP to view the Sinhalese as the most oppressed sections. But they may be deluding because they have considered the registered employed, and since many Indian Tamils had the status of non-citizens, they could not register.

naturally led them to identify the causes. Among these they saw the imbalance of the social structure and then pinpointed it to the major antagonist - which turned out to be the inadequacy of a historically continuing leadership, not only of the right but of the "so-called left" which had together, become decadent and useless and was pulling the economy backwards, in their eyes.

Through this line of reasoning, political consciousness and inclination, came their awareness of the need to organize. The ideology and the scientific method of analysis of Marx, which they claimed to use to identify their major antagonist, found among its ranks, a set which claimed to be revolutionary in nature. But with their understanding of the economy they combined the causal factor of leadership, to conclude that, evidently, something was amiss with the "revolutionary" nature and claims of this set. These faults they analysed and put to use to perfect their own strategy in relation to the specific situation obtaining in Sri Lanka. Rightly did they attribute a flexibility to this analysis, for an analysis to be scientific, must not be doctrinaire. The Marxian methodology was no doubt, the most objective, in their eyes, but the Marxian framework was not universally applicable. Their ideology, even if it was not finely spelled out, called for a revolution; for a complete structural change and a consequent overhaul and remodelling of the obtaining social relations.

With their understanding and their ideology they perceived the danger to their developing organization. Hence, the decision to function secretly in order to save themselves from repression. This resulted in fashioning a quite cohesive organization, although with many faults (Chapter III). But two tactical mistakes were committed at this stage: (a) the decision to support the United Front in the 1970 general elections, and (b) to do so openly. This, we have pointed out, while expanding their cadres and rank and file revealed vital facts about themselves, which were to work against them only a little later. Not only did this happen, but they also lost in a matter of months, much of the cohesiveness that they had taken years to build up.

This not only precipitated the uprising, but it also caught them relatively unawares. People have spoken quite often of the surprise that the outbreak constituted for the Bandaranaike Government but not many have dwelt upon the chain of surprises which the JVP was subjected to - their organization was discovered almost in its entirety, their resources were uncovered, their leadership was incarcerated, hundreds from their ranks also jailed. Many of these developments had taken place with such lightning rapidity that action had to be taken. But "who fired the first shot?", is a question which remains unanswered to this day. Does violence, after all, mean only an exchange of fire? Force used in most forms also constitutes violence and

violence is committed as much by "establishments" as by greatly maligned rebels, and in many more covert forms.

What the JVP required was time, and this was taken away from it. Time was also the greatest enemy of the ruling government and, as it was, too much of it had elapsed. Hence we found an unprepared organization with an incomplete programme of development, forced to reveal itself prematurely and consequently face almost immediate defeat. This defeat, as we have seen in Chapters IV and V, was the direct result of certain policies adopted by the leadership of the country which also involved a large measure of international support. The balance in the combination of the tactics of suppression, absorption and containment, which was achieved by this leadership revealed its sophistication. Suppression involved the use of overt and subtle pressures. Reprimand and some cajoling together with the 'carrot and stick' policy, worked towards the absorption of urban sections from those involved in the movement as well as the containment of the movement to certain areas.

The institutional and power political concentration and centralization which followed has been dealt with in some detail in Chapter V.

Although the hand of the Government fell heavily on the JVP, and it is difficult to assess the strength of the movement today, the awareness exists that it has not died out and neither is it on the way to doing so. Though the

party was almost totally demolished, the elements which led and supported it, continue to exist. Reports continue trickling in of groups similar to the JVP, which are functioning under various names. One such movement is the 'Sulang Kalliya' (wild wind). As late as November 1974, the Government decided to clamp down on four such organizations, arresting more than a hundred of their members on charges ranging from robbery and murder to conspiracy to overthrow the Government.² One youth organization, the Lanka Viplavakari Tharuna Sanvidhanaya (Lanka Revolutionary Youth Organization) is suspected to be none other than the JVP.³ The two other organizations on which the Government cracked down were the Porodiga Sulang Kalliya and Kupahana (East Wind and Black Lamp respectively). The report claimed that leaders of these organizations had planned to extend the sphere of activity and infiltrate various state institutions and political organizations.⁴ It must be known by all, that by the scheduled date of the next general election - May 1977 - two-thirds of the population of Sri Lanka will be under 30 years of age. It seems natural that the established powers - that - be safeguard their interests by systematically eliminating all organizations etc. which hold

2 Hindustan Times, 19 September 1974 and 12 November 1974.

3 Times of India, 34 December 1974.

4 Indian Express, 10 November 1974.

the possibility or threaten to wean away this influential majority of the people.

Following these, other disturbances have been upsetting the relative stability of the situation in 1976 (as compared to 1971) fructifying in the form of various robberies and thefts.⁵ These have been placed at the door of "anti-national" elements and for some time comparisons were drawn between the contemporary situation and that obtaining just prior to the '71 Uprising when also a spate of robberies by youths took place.

Innumerable political permutations and combinations have recently come together to complicate the political scene in this country. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party has, for some time, been suffering from the vagaries of family friction which appears to have originated in the striking personality of the Prime Minister's son-in-law, Kumar Rupasinghe, and culminate in her son, Anura Bandaranaike. The former, prior to becoming a paid employee of the Government, is alleged to have (along with his wife Sunethra) gone well beyond youthful sympathy for the JVP and was believed to have tried raising funds in London in the support of these young boys.⁶ Today, as Director of the National

5 Coli, 21 February 1976; Ceylon Observer, 22 February 1976; Ceylon Observer, 4 April 1976; Coli, 11 May 1976; Ceylon Observer, 21 March 1976.

6 Times, 7 August 1974.

Youth Service Council he is engaged in organizing collective farms to attract the young unemployed. This "Janavegaya group" (so named after the Sinhala daily that it brings out) has been blamed by certain elements in the SLFP, of making possible, the infiltration of ex-JVP youths into various official and non-official institutions. Its attack against certain 'reactionary elements' within this Government, has alienated a section of this Party. Regarding Rupasinghe as a political upstart and too radical for comfort, it prefers to throw its weight behind Anura Bandaranaike, who is thought to be of a more moderate political nature. As chief organizer to the SLFP youth leagues all over the country, he seems not to have stopped short of criticizing the doings of the Rupasinghe group.

It is Mrs. Bandaranaike's iron hand and political astuteness which have combined to turn a potential drawback into a positive advantage. Through these two organizers with their varying proclivities, the possibility of inculcating larger numbers of the disgruntled youth is enhanced.

Within the UNP also, we observe the development of a factionalism of quite serious nature, which emerged from the conflict between the two dynamic leaders of this party - D.S. Senanayake and J.K. Jayewardene. It manifested itself covertly in the 1960s⁷ and overtly in the early seventies,

7 For details refer to T.D.S.A. Senanayake, UNP: The Rise of Sri Lanka (Colombo, 1976).

the death of former in April 1973, when the complete reins of power came into the hands of J.R. Jayawardene. From what can be gauged, the two factions which had existed, differed upon the matter of the attitude towards the SLFP. After the April 1971 Uprising, J.R. had tendered a proposal for joining with the SLFP. He openly declared that failing a unanimous decision of the Party, he would join the Government ranks with his band of supporters in the UNP. The antagonism between these two leaders had almost engendered a split in the Party.⁸ Even after Dudley Senanayake's death the feud continued, this time between unequals, for J.R.'s position was now secure. The second climax was reached with the expulsion of Rukman Senanayake (grandson of Don Stephen Senanayake, founder of the UNP and first Prime Minister) in May 1976, along with twenty two others.⁹ It seems that the present leader of the UNP, J.R. Jayawardene's faction possessed a softer corner for SLFP than could be conjured by the other faction. It is said to have put forward, according to Rukman Senanayake, a motion during the Colombo South by-election of Kalawewa, that if Anura Bandaranaike was selected by the SLFP to contest this seat, it should remain uncontested

⁸ Tribune, vol. 18, no. 3, 12 May 1973, pp. 15-16.

⁹ Hindustan Standard, 20 May 1976.

by the UNP.¹⁰ Kulkarni's attitude on this issue saw him outside the Party and now he has formed a new party to face the coming general election.

The apparent shift of the UNP towards the SLFP¹¹ has thus been a conditional and vacillating one, for the UNP remains a formidable opponent even in its own right. It must be remembered that in the 1970 elections, it acquired 40 per cent of the votes, but not commensurate seats, because of the alliance between the SLFP, CP and the LSSP. Not only this, the fact remains that of the twelve by-elections held since 1970, the United Front has lost eleven of them. The UNP on the other hand, has won itself quite a few.

Meanwhile, the possibility of the formation of a United Left Front must not be lost sight of. The Communist Party for many years now has been championing this cause and the LSSP has also not been slow to take it up. In September 1975 with the expulsion of the three LSSP ministers from the Coalition cabinet, and the break-up of the United

10 CON, 31 May 1976.

11 "The Government represents the masses and not any particular party. The Government's development programmes which are aimed at freeing the masses from exploitation and poverty should therefore be taken outside Party politics....I shall give my fullest cooperation to the Government's economic development programmes." These are the words of a UNP member of Parliament.

CON, 19 July 1976.

Front, the situation may have become more favourable. In May 1976, several left leaders decided to meet to discuss the formation of a United Socialist Front,¹² and S.A. Wickremasinghe of the CP said that efforts to bring about unity of all progressive anti-imperialist left parties would be a success.¹³ But the Left, as before, remains faction-ridden. Within the LSSP differences with regard to the policy to be followed vis-a-vis the SLFP, confound, the leadership. The CP has already faced its second split and then a reunification in 1974. The pressures and pulls operating within the parties, not only complicate their policies on every issue of importance, but also, makes highly difficult, their coming together.

In 1974, a new party surfaced in Sri Lanka - the Sri Lanka Vimukthi Salavegaya - with Prins Gunasekera (a figure of note in the human rights movement in Ceylon) as General Secretary. A splinter group of the SLFP, it believes that the people of Ceylon require a new face, and regards itself as a "third force".¹⁴ It expects support from those youth who were associated with the JVP "because we give

12 Vivakesari, 10 May 1976.

13 CSA, 10 May 1976.

14 Its intention is to "agitate both inside the Assembly and outside it against repressions and the massive burdens people have to bear....Our is a revolutionary socialist party not based on Marxism-Leninism. We will fight for full-fledged socialism....We don't believe in violent revolution as means of achieving power. We intend seeking power through the existing machinery." CSA, 22 October 1974.

priority to the young people of this country". It would woo the youth in the north and on the plantations also.¹⁵

All the parties of the right, left and centre, have expectations of support from the youth of this country. If they do not have it, they are nevertheless, making a consistent effort to acquire it. It is notable that in most of the recent by-elections in the country, these parties have put forward youthful candidates.

Analysing the dynamics of the obtaining political situation, we perceive a complicated array of political alliances and combinations emerging - the SLFP and the JNP on the one hand, the left parties on the other, and last but not the least, the Tamil United Front for the 'liberation' of the Tamil people.

The developing situation in the northern provinces presents a growing problem for the Government. Even earlier, but particularly since the promulgation of the Republican Constitution in 1972, some of the major Tamil organisations have nursed a grudge upon the matter of the unfair treatment of their community which constitutes 22 per cent of the country's population. In December 1975, the Federal Party gave notice of a motion in Parliament for the establishment of a separate state in the northern and eastern provinces. The Tamil United Liberation Front composed of the Federal

15 Ibid.

Party, the Tamil Congress and the Ceylon Workers Congress, is behind this. But sections of this Front seem to have given up this demand.¹⁶

An interesting development seems in the offing in the north with indications of a Tamil youth movement, and, in 1975, the Prime Minister began giving warnings of a "build-up towards another insurrection like the JVP uprising".¹⁷ Described as a "powerful underground insurgent movement"¹⁸ promoting separatist policies, the possibilities of a connection between it and as yet unidentified revolutionary movements in the south, has not been ruled out by the Government.¹⁹ It was in this context that the Government passed a law on 5 April 1976 - Prevention of Communal and Religious Discord Regulations. It prohibits the publication of any material which may possess communal overtones and makes illegal any attempts, verbal or written, which may have secessionist objectives. Even spreading

16 e.g. Ceylon Workers Congress, Hindustan Standard, 16 June 1976.

17 Hindustan Times, 1 November 1975.

18 Times of India, 3 October 1975.

19 Mrs. Bandaranaike clubs them together. She blamed the revolutionary movements operating in the Sinhala south and the predominantly Tamil north for the incidents of sabotage, arson, looting and other subversive activities. *Ibid.* n. 17. Mr. Lakshman Jayakody, Deputy Foreign Minister said that a connection between these movements in the north and south could not be ruled out. Times of India, 1 November 1975.

rumours is regarded as an offence under this Regulation.²⁰

So far, however, there seems to exist hardly any worthwhile connection and certainly no concrete evidence, of any connection between the dissident population here and those that had risen and are potent, in the south. Nevertheless, many of the causes for the springing up of these movements may be the same-structural imbalance and concomitant inability to fulfil expectations. Both spring from economic disabilities, but a brand of politics, capitalizing on the communal aspect, grasps the advantage. Consequently, an intra-Island racist movement performs, in some respects, a positive function for the Bandaranaike Government by detracting public attention from the threats of an as yet unresolved socio-economic situation in the rest of the Island.

But, on the other hand, this Tamil secessionist movement has reached a climax which threatens the basic foundations of Sri Lanka's credibility as a nation state. A combination of this and the many other socio-economic problems that confront this country confounds the nation-building efforts of the ruling government, as is the case in all the other South Asian countries. Not only this, it demands and engenders, simultaneously, a profound reflection upon the status and the very existence of a small State such

²⁰ CON, 8 April 1976.

as Sri Lanka, not only in the regional but also in the global context. That the existing regime cannot independently deal with these problems is hardly to be doubted. Hence, its drive to make common cause with other powers who have a vested interest in maintaining a stability in the region, favourable to them. Even if elections were to bring forward an alternate party (projections favour the UNP) or combination, the situation portends to remain the same. In this context, even considering a hypothetical situation in which the JVP had come to power, one could not project an easy structural rejuvenation, if at all. Alongside, the regional and global alliances and political permutations, having a relatively much greater impact upon as small a State as Sri Lanka would have continued to threaten its independence in the larger socio-political context. But the history of this country reflects the quality of enormous resilience among its people, in their bid to maintain their distinctive identity. And the JVP must also be viewed in this light. Its analysis also ^{foresaw} a greater and increasing dependence upon outside powers at the cost of the country's independence. Alongside, these youth expressed the fatality of having a leadership which appeared alienated from the basic interests and aspirations of the masses. The strength of their belief or the futility and emptiness of their existence and future, or, a combination of both factors,

convinced these young people of the injustice of the existing social order and of almost a moral obligation to act.

The April 1971 Uprising thus, reflected the turmoil in the system, with the youth exhibiting a volatility which most people neither expected nor thought it possessed. Notwithstanding its immediate defeat, the Uprising proved to be a catalytic agent in speeding up the hitherto slow process of social change in Sri Lanka.

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Appendix A

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike's speech on 23 March 1971 in the house of representatives. Ceylon Daily News, 24 March 1971 (extracts)

I wish to inform Members of the House of the reasons which led my Government to declare an Emergency on the evening of March 16, 1971. As you are undoubtedly aware, there has been for some time a growing insurrectionary movement styled Janata Vimukthi Peramuna. This movement aims at the overthrow of the constitutionally elected Government by violence.

This insurrectionary movement, however, is not restricted to a single group and contains a number of ^P splinter groups with similar ideas and other anarchist objectives. Their activities involved the holding of indoctrination classes in cells in numerous parts of the island, regular educational camps and training classes in remote places and preparation for guerilla type warfare with a view to disorganising the machinery of public life. Positive proof of these indoctrination classes and preparation, has been forthcoming and in a number of cases, arrests have been made.

Had these preparations in different parts of the country been limited to indoctrination classes and theoretical lessons, it might have been possible pass this off as normal demonstrative activity. Inquiries have revealed, however a widespread plan for a violent attack on public institutions.

For this purpose significant material preparations such as the large scale manufacture of hand-bombs, the collection of explosives and detonators, the careful preparation of maps indicating the position of key installations, police stations and residence of important Government personnel, provide ample proof that the instigators of this movement had no intentions of confining themselves to social change through the democratic processes. Large scale thefts of guns, corrosive acids and other dangerous substances in different parts of the Island, added further proof of the intentions of this movement.

On March 6, as everybody is aware, a car fully planned armed attack was made on the United States Embassy, which involved damage to property and the death of a police inspector.

This flagrant attack was the culmination of indications of an imminent attack on the Government in different parts of Ceylon. It was in these circumstances and in the light of the information collected from various parts of the country, that Government was obliged in order to meet any likely disturbances, to invoke Part III of the Public Security Ordinance on March 7, 1971. This enabled me to call out the Armed Forces under Section 12 but did not involve the declaration of an emergency under Parts I and II.

Accordingly, initial steps were taken to deploy the Armed Forces to meet possible threats. Shortly after this, and coinciding with information of violent preparations in different parts of the island, an accidental explosion of a large cache of hand-bombs in a hut in Nelundeniya in the Madigama electorate which killed five youths brought the authorities to the spot.

Inquiries revealed the existence of a carefully planned attempt to manufacture, store and distribute hand-bombs on a wide scale. At Pindeniya, nine crates containing hand-bombs were discovered in a shrub jungle. There were also several instances of the manufacture of knives, spears, revolvers, pistols and even the making of uniforms.

On the basis of the intelligence reports received to-date and the accidental explosions in the course of manufacturing hand-bombs which led to further discoveries, it was considered essential that Government should arm itself with the necessary powers for investigating these offences expeditiously and for taking suitable deterrent action against the conspirators. If enquiries into these violent preparations were made in the normal processes under the present laws, considerable delays and handicaps would have been incurred thus impeding the speed and efficacy of the investigations.

It was also essential that maximum precautions be taken to safeguard public installations and the maintenance of essential services many of which were threatened by the

insurgents. In these circumstances my Government felt it fully justified to invoke the powers under Parts I and II of the Public Security Ordinance for the maintenance of public order and the safety and well-being of the general population,

Consequent to the declaration of the Emergency and the searching of various premises by the Police and Armed Services, large quantities of explosives, firearms, uniforms and subversive literature, were traced. In some cases, even after the Emergency was declared, persons were caught in the act of manufacturing hand-bombs. Explosives from Governmental stores have been stolen. Sabotage to the high tensions lines caused a power failure in Badulla.

An explosion in the Peradeniya Campus, damaging the roof of Marra Hall, brought the Police into the premises and led to the discovery of hand-bombs of large quantities of explosive material used in the manufacture of hand-bombs. These and other revelations have amply justified the steps taken by my Government to prevent a violent attack on the organs of public life and the disruption of the life of the community.

...

Appendix B

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandarenaike's broadcast
of 9 April 1971. Carlton Gally News, 10 April 1971.

Dear Countrymen;

As your democratically elected Prime Minister it is my duty today to make you realise the gravity of the situation facing us all.

A terrorist movement hatched in secret, nurtured in the jungles and motivated by lust for power has suddenly sprung a surprise attack on our whole way of life and all that we stand for. Within the last few days these terrorist forces of evil have made attacks on police stations, killed a number of loyal and innocent police officers and have destroyed public property worth millions of rupees of foreign exchange. In the process of destruction many unfortunate tools of this evil process have also died in large numbers.

I assure you that the situation is well under control thanks to the loyalty and courage of our duty-conscious policemen and our armed forces to whom we all owe so much. To all these brave men I pay a tribute on behalf of my Government and on behalf of all the peace-loving people of this land.

At this critical juncture I appeal to you to cooperate with me to maintain law and order, without which decent living will not be possible.

It was only ten months ago that you elected me and I accepted this high office of Prime Minister. When I did so I was conscious of the fact that I was the custodian of the democratic process by which Governments are elected to power through the peaceful ballot rather than by the law of the jungle. I realise it is my duty to maintain your trust and to pass on to my successors this sacred tradition of the democratic process which we have built over the years. This is not only my responsibility but also yours. We are all custodians of this valuable heritage which we must pass on to our children and our children's children.

But strangely enough even before I had taken stock of the problems confronting me there was set in motion a movement to cut the ground under my feet, to overthrow my Government and to capture power through bloodshed at the cost of human lives. This is the movement that is now threatening us all today.

It is now clear that this movement is being backed by big money, diabolic minds and criminal organisers.

They are operating through young men and women whom they have successfully led astray. These unfortunate youths do not realise what they are being made use of for. They may find it thrilling and adventurous and that may be why they have lent themselves to be used in this fashion. But what they do not realise is that they are being used to upset an entire society, increase human suffering and destroy valuable lives.

They have been led to throw hand-bombs at police stations, destroy public property which we have built up at great cost to ourselves and shoot innocent police officers who are only doing their duty to maintain law and order, and dislocate the distribution of food stuffs. All this may be exciting for those who are at the back of all these dastardly acts but I am sure you will realise what this means in human suffering.

But what is all this for? If those people who are at the back of this violence and disorder want power, then there is the civilized way of doing it, defeating me and my party at the polls, but if instead, they resort to violence, then that is a challenge that has to be met. This is a challenge to law and order. This is a challenge to democracy itself. This is a challenge to all that we hold sacred in this land of peace.

As the Head of this Government you elected to power I have to meet this challenge. My Government will fight these terrorists in the remote areas, will fight them in the provinces and will fight them everywhere but will not surrender my right to govern or the trust you have placed in me.

No Government worth its name can succumb to criminal force. No Government can bow down to thuggery and intimidation. No Government can afford to look on and let a gang of power-hungry, blood-thirsty and treacherous schemers come to power on the dead bodies of our innocent young men and women.

Today these misguided young men and women are fighting and trying to kill our own police and our own officials and are all killed in the process.

But why? I ask you, can these killings solve any problem.

You know as well as I do that there are many problems to be solved. My Government is coming to grips with them and we have the confidence that very soon we will be able to find satisfactory solutions to most of them. And their solutions will naturally be of a very radical nature in keeping with our Government's policy and therefore most acceptable to our people.

I appreciate that today's youth are impatient for changes but these have to be contained within the framework of democracy and as such they have to be introduced without loss of what we have already achieved.

But the instigators of this terrorist movement have not given us any breathing space. These enemies of democracy will not let democracy come into its own. This wanton destruction of human life and this dislocation of our day^{to day} living will only make things much more difficult for both this Government and for the people.

And that is why I am now appealing to you to cooperate with me to put down this insurrectionary movement and give me and my Government a chance to deliver the goods.

I am really sorry for those misguided youth who are lying down their lives through youthful folly.

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ANNEX C

Chou En-lai's letter to Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandunayake, dated 26 April 1971, Ceylon
2500/10000, 27 May 1971.

I am grateful to Your Excellency and the Ceylon Government for your trust in the Chinese Government and your friendly sentiments towards the Chinese people. The friendship between China and Ceylon is in the fundamental interests of the two people and can stand tests. The Chinese Government and people highly treasure the friendship between our two countries and no one with ulterior motives will ever succeed in trying to sow discord and sabotage our friendly relations.

Following Chairman Mao Tse-tung's teaching the Chinese people have all along opposed ultra 'left' and right opportunism in their protracted revolution. We are glad to see that thanks to the efforts of your Excellency and the Ceylon Government, the chaotic situation created by a handful of persons who style themselves 'Revolutionists' and into whose ranks foreign spies have sneaked has been brought under control. We believe that as a result of your Excellency's leadership and the cooperation and support of the Ceylonese people these acts of rebellion plotted by reactionaries at home and abroad for the purpose of undermining the interests of the Ceylonese people are bound to fail.

We fully agree to the correct position of defending state sovereignty and guarding against foreign interference as referred to by Your Excellency. The Chinese Government and people admire this and firmly support Ceylon in her just struggle towards this end. As Your Excellency is deeply aware the Chinese Government has consistently abided by the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, has never interfered in the internal affairs of other countries, and is also firmly opposed to any country interfering in other countries' internal affairs, and particularly to foreign reactionaries taking advantage of the opportunity to carry out armed intervention. I would like once again to reaffirm this unshakable stand of the Chinese Government.

In the interests of the friendship between China and Ceylon and in consideration of the needs of the Ceylon Government, the Chinese Government in compliance with the request of the Ceylon Government, agrees to provide it with a long-term interest-free loan of 150 million rupees in convertible foreign exchange. We would like to hear any views which Your Excellency might have on this matter. We are prepared to deliver a portion of the loan in May and sign a document on it. As for other material assistance, please let us know if it is needed.

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Appendix D

The Prime Minister, Mr. Indira Gandhi's Broadcast
of 24 April 1971, Gomca Daily News, 25 April 1971.
(extracts).

So far the war against the terrorist insurgents has been more of a defensive war. Our aim has been to maintain control over the country, as a whole and to resist the attempts by insurgents to seize power.

All casualties sustained by the insurgents have been received while attacking police stations or Government institutions or lying in ambush and attacking government vehicles; in resisting arrest, and, in a few instances, in air attacks to disperse concentrated groups who were massing to disrupt communications or to attack or ambush armed convoys.

The situation, however, has changed rapidly.

Today, the whole country knows not only that the so-called one-day revolution has failed but that it cannot hope to succeed.

The terrorists have, by and large, run out of sources of supplies, ammunition, weapons and fuel. Even the vehicles that they managed to steal or capture in the first few days are now being left abandoned on the roads.

In a military sense now the Government is in a position to launch an offensive area by area to clear up the pockets of insurgents who have taken to the hills and jungles and are now living by banditry.

* * * * *

If there is no other way, I shall have to give the order for a military offensive by the Armed Services, as part of the duty I owe to you, peace-loving citizens, who are over 99 per cent of the population.

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Appendix E

The Prime Minister Mrs. Bondar-nalike's Speech
in Parliament on 20 July 1971. Colored copy
Room, 21 July 1971.

*Mr. Speaker

It is over three months now since an attempt was made to unleash a reign of terror in this country, probably unprecedented in our history. Since the Government had occasion to declare an emergency on the 16th of March this year, I have spoken to country three times up to now and I have kept the people informed of the various aspects pertaining to this situation and the treacherous attack made on the people of this country. I did not make a statement to the house earlier because I wished to make a comprehensive statement when most of the facts were in my possession and also because a full statement made too early might perhaps have been prejudicial to the investigations that were being conducted. I however wish to make this statement now. I think it is best that I follow a chronological pattern as far as is possible so that the whole subject can be seen in perspective by Honourable Members.

From information available it would be seen that the seeds of the insurgent movement were sown sometime in late 1964, or early 1965. There have been certain valuable

studies made about this movement and the various paths that it has taken as well as certain personalities involved during the time of the previous Government. Two reports have been prepared and handed over to the then Government, one in 1967 and one in 1969 by Mr. John Attygalle, who was one time D.I.O. in charge of the C.I.O. and at the time the reports were prepared, Special Security Adviser to the Ministry of Defence. For a period of five years during the administration of the last Government various information that has been coming in about this movement have been collected and his Reports have been based on this information. I cannot help feeling that had a proper evaluation and early action been taken on these reports, perhaps we might have been able to have avoided the situation which came upon us later.

Government, and I have, on many occasions, discussed these reports with the Cabinet. However, the Government had to work against what appeared to be a clandestine movement which seemed to be rapidly arming itself for violence with a set of laws which are no doubt suitable to investigate normal crime but certainly not conducive to the proper investigation of a movement, such as the one we seemed to be investigating.

Therefore, the Cabinet considered, and then in the early part of 1971, the question of bringing in a special Bill which would have given the Government the powers to deal with these problems. Introduction of the question of

the Government by violence. This Bill would have empowered the Government to detain in Police custody without producing before a Magistrate a suspect for a month or two and would have also enabled investigating officers to take him from place to place for the purpose of furthering the investigation etc.

These steps were contemplated, because, under the existing law, a suspect could not be kept in custody for more than a very short period and if no concrete evidence could be adduced during that period, he had to be released. However, the Cabinet, after discussion, took the view that a fundamental liberty of the subject, such as this should not be tampered with unless it was absolutely necessary to do so, and though the news and information that had been coming in up to that time and during that period was causing grave concern, yet the Government did not wish to strengthen its hands at the expense of the liberties enjoyed by subjects.

By late February, 1971, rapidly increasing reports pertaining to an Island-wide movements, which definitely seemed to be aiming at the overthrow of the Government by violence was causing serious concern. Large caches of hand-bombs, arms and ammunition, uniforms, material for the manufacture of handbombs such as nails, barbed wire, detonators, fuses etc. were being discovered in various parts of the Island. Reports were increasingly also coming in about secret meetings being held in various parts of the Island.

Having reviewed all the information available to me at the time I took the decision that it was necessary to have a special officer of high rank who could devote his full attention to the security threat that was posed, I therefore appointed, on the 1st of March, 1971, an Additional Permanent Secretary to be in sole charge of National Security. This appointment resulted in a number of important decisions. The Service Chiefs and the I.C.P. met almost daily, sometimes twice a day, and discussed the information available. An Operations Room was set up and the deployment of Service personnel properly controlled. There was a gradual build-up to a state of readiness in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Police. All Services entered into a no-leave period and the Services were put on practice alerts at short notice in order to quicken their responses.

On 6th March, 1971, there was an attack on the American Embassy, in the course of which an Inspector of Police was killed. This was another extremely disconcerting incident in the context of the situation when other information of a serious nature was also coming in. On 7th March, 1971, therefore, Part III of the Public Security Act was brought into force.

On 10th March, 1971, there was a serious bomb explosion in the Dedigama electorate, resulting in several deaths. During this period, I summoned the I.C.P., all the D.I.C.'s and S.P.'s to a conference to discuss the security

situation at the time and gave categorical instructions to the Police to go all out and carry out investigations systematically and unrelentingly. The Police made island-wide searches, the results of which satisfied me that something really dangerous was afoot. Therefore I recommended to H.E. the Governor-General the declaration of an emergency on the 16th of March 1971. In a broadcast to the nation, thereafter I gave the full reasons for the declaration of the emergency and I trust that I need not go into any details about this here once again.

On the 20th of March, 1971, there was an explosion in one of the halls of Peradeniya University. Combined Army and Police searches were conducted in all the halls of residence and what was discovered was a veritable arsenal. Several halls of residence contained boxes of fuses, bags of gunpowder cases of detonators, bags of potassium nitrate, sticks of gelignite, thousands of empty condensed milk tins for the manufacture of handbombs, pieces of dynamite coil, daggers, cartridges of various bores, dynamite, handbombs, petrol and numerous other materials necessary to manufacture various lethal weapons. In addition, we found several blue uniforms with pockets to carry handbombs, cartridges etc. and also boots, tin-hats etc.

"We also discovered that some of the students had apparently fled the scene. I cannot understand what the university administration was doing whilst the entire campus was being systematically turned into a munitions factory. It

is impossible to believe that these activities were not known to the authorities, and particularly the Mall authorities. On the 2nd April, 1971, the Peliyagoda Police found in a house a very large stock of bombs and other lethal weapons. I do not think I should weary the House with a long list of the various places at which lethal weapons were discovered or where bombs were discovered or where bombs exploded etc. during this period.

In the early hours of the morning of April 5th the Wellawaya Police Station was attacked and two policemen killed. On the same morning a Police party who attempted to check a lorry at Moneragala was shot at by the occupants of the lorry who were insurgents, which resulted in the deaths of one Police officer and injury to others. A restricted curfew was imposed with effect from 5th April 1971 in Badulla, Dandy, Moneragala, Ampara and Nuwara Eliya, and an all-Island Curfew was imposed with effect from 6th April, 1971 as a result of a concerted attack by terrorists on a large number of Police Stations and public buildings, which commenced on the night of 5th April, 1971.

Insurgent activity was particularly bad in certain parts of the Kegalla district, the Kurunegala district, the Anuradhapura district, Polonnaruwa district, Dondyaya, Alpitaya, Mahalapoda, Ampara and Wellisoya. I have, during the course of my address to the nation after 5th April, given full and frank details as was available at the time to the people and I do not think that it would be regrettable for me

therefore to reiterate all this during the course of my statement today. These statements were given wide publicity over the Broadcasting Corporation and in the Press and I am sure all Members are familiar with the details that I have given.

I might state at this point that the week immediately following the 5th of April was an extremely vital week and the Armed Forces and the Police had to struggle against many odds during this period. They were virtually without sleep or rest and had to perform security duties round the clock and, in the areas I have mentioned, also repulsed repeated attacks by terrorists armed with handbombs, shot-guns, gellinite and dynamite, although they were inadequately equipped. It is to their everlasting credit that they acted on this critical occasion in a spirit of the highest traditions of their respective Services, and I am sure that this House would join me in paying a sincere tribute to them.

After the first critical weeks were over, security forces were able to move from purely defensive action into the offensive. Co-ordinating Officers were appointed to the following districts, in order to combine with the civilian administration and free certain areas of those districts from terrorists and terrorists control as well as to supervise the surrenders of terrorists - Negalle Kurunegala, Matale, Anuradhapura, Kalutara Galle, Katara, Hambantota, Ratnapura, Polonnaruwa, Ampara, Badulla and Moneragala. Some of the

Co-ordinating Officers have now been withdrawn from some districts such as Matale Badulla, Ampara etc, since they have completed their functions.

I might also mention that an amnesty was granted to the insurgents with effect from 1st May to 4th May, 1971. During this period approximately 3,978 insurgents surrendered. The second Amnesty was granted with effect from 7th June to 9th June 1971, when 236 insurgents surrendered. The total number in custody today is of the order of 14,000. Of this figure, 4,200 approximately are those who have surrendered on the Amnesty, the balance of roughly 10,000 in custody, is made up of those arrested and those who surrendered outside the period of Amnesty.

I think I should also lay before the House particulars with regard to the Service personnel killed or injured up to now:

Police	:	38 killed - 194 injured.
Army	:	15 killed - 89 injured.
Navy	:	3 killed - 16 injured.
Air Force	:	4 killed - 13 injured.

The total number of Police Stations that were attacked was 74 and very serious damage has been caused to a great number of these stations.

The House is aware that wild rumours had been circulating, some no doubt deliberately circulated with

malicious intent in order to tarnish the good name of the Government, that several thousand people were being killed by the Armed Services and the Police. These reports appeared in some foreign newspapers as well. Hon. Members are no doubt aware of the speed with which these rumours spread and the exaggerations that take place during the course of these passing from ^mouth to mouth. Therefore it is my duty to give you some idea as far as is possible, of the number of casualties, which have been the result of this whole episode.

In my estimation, which is based on the information that is available to me the total deaths do not exceed 1,200. These figures include Police and Service casualties, those terrorists killed in action and in combing out operations by the Security Services and those killed by the terrorists themselves for various reasons such as on suspicion of giving information to the Police etc. I do not claim that these figures are absolutely accurate.

Hon. members will appreciate that obtaining accurate figures in a situation where there has been fighting going on in various parts of practically the whole of Ceylon is by no means an easy matter. For instance, there may be persons who would have received injuries in their skirmishes with the Security Forces and then fled into the jungle, where it is quite possible that some of them might have succumbed to these injuries. Then there are persons whom the terrorists had kidnapped and about whose whereabouts there is still no word. It is difficult to say whether these people are now dead

or alive, but the figure I have given the House today is a figure which is based on the best available information as it is today.

Whilst on the subject of casualties, I wish to deal with another matter which has come to my notice in various ways. I am aware that certain allegations have been made that there have been excesses on the part of the Armed Services and the Police. I might state straightaway that I do not condone any excesses committed by the Security Forces and in the instances where there have been actual proof, investigations have been ordered and some of these are now proceeding, and the persons concerned, if found guilty, would be dealt with in accordance with the law. I had also ordered the setting up of two Ministerial Committees, one headed by the Hon. T.B. Tennakoon, to receive complaints from A.P.'s with regard to their constituents who may have been taken into custody or who may be missing etc., and the other by the Hon. P.S.G. Kalugalle, in order to look into any complaints against the Police and the Armed Services.

These two committees were set up in addition to the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Committee, of which the Hon. Nattharipala Senanayake is the Chairman.

In addition to all this, on my instructions various ministers, the I.G.P. and the D.I.C. and some of the Service chiefs had visited various areas of the country and specially counselled the Security Services against the committing of any excesses. I have also given written instructions to the

I.G.P. and the Service Commanders on this very matter.

Having said this, I wish to also draw the attention of the House to an aspect which we must not forget, when we hurl criticisms and freely exercise our judgements in the relative safety of July 1971. In the days of April, however, when this murderous attack was launched, I do not think that anybody had the time or the inclination to be pre-occupied with this question of excesses because everybody was too busy in that tense situation, in wondering what was going to happen.

It has to be appreciated that the Security Services worked under considerable strain. In the month of April in particular they worked almost round the clock without proper food or rest. They also did not have the confidence of being well-equipped; they were also suffering from the strain of having a fairly large number of their colleagues being either killed or wounded by the terrorists before their very eyes. I do not think they had also lost sight of the fact that what was really attempted on the night of April 5th was a murderous surprise attack on Police Stations which, if it succeeded, would have wiped out a very large number of Police officers, and also their wives and children who were in their quarters very often within the premises of the Police Stations themselves. It is in this context that we should assess so called charges of excesses. I repeat that I do not condone any excesses, but it is also well for us to remember that had

not the Security Services measured up to their task, we may not have been here today.

Whilst on the subject of so-called atrocities, we must not also forget the long and terrible list of atrocities committed by the insurgents against public officers as well as peace loving citizens of this country. We must not forget that there were Policemen who were burnt alive; we must not forget that there were Grama Sevaks brutally murdered; we must not forget the fact that certain persons who had helped the Security forces to clear road-blocks etc. have been hacked and cut to pieces and the remains deposited on those very roads, we must not forget the incidents of rape, of kidnapping, of arson, of looting and of the terrorising of innocent men and women of this country.

We must not forget the little children who have suffered death at the hands of insurgents ostensibly for the suspected crime of the parents being informers and finally when we speak of atrocities, we cannot forget the fact that what the insurgents planned for this country was a terrible bloodbath, in which thousands of innocent men and women would have been killed with brutality and without any compunction whatsoever. The crimes committed by these insurgents and the crimes which they intended to commit were against the overwhelming mass of peace-loving and civilised people of this land.

Hon. members are also aware that there have been various rumours circulating that all sorts of foreign people

were involved in assisting and supporting this insurrection. I wish to state that I have had no evidence of such foreign involvement. As for the reasons for the closing down of the North Korean Embassy in Ceylon, I have already given those in my broadcast to the nation on 24th April 1971. However, I would like to quote that statement in order to refresh the memory of hon. Members of this House. This is what I said:

"In the case of one foreign Embassy, I had occasion to point out to them some time ago that the effect of certain activities carried on by them was giving strength and support to these terrorists who were then preparing themselves for their nefarious tasks and that they should desist from these activities. As they did not do so, in accordance with my request, I had to ask the Ambassador to close the Embassy and leave the country. Non-alignment in foreign affairs must not be misunderstood. It means that Ceylon extends the hand of friendship to all countries, but it does not mean that we can give any country licence to subvert our independence as a nation and, as Prime Minister, I have acted in accordance with my duty to protect the interests of the country."

I might add that had I had evidence of any foreign country who is represented here in Ceylon acting in any manner that would have appeared to me to be detrimental to our interests as a nation, then I would not have hesitated to take all possible action to safeguard the integrity of this country.

With regard to the total damage caused to public property due to the insurgent attack, the position is that final reports are still coming in from the Government Agents,

but preliminary reports seem to indicate damage to the extent of Rs. 10⁰ million. But taking into consideration damage to all property, both public and private, and also counting lost production, the sum total of all this seems to be of the order of Rs. 100 million. There are still tentative figures and the final assessment would take some time more.

"I am now satisfied that the security situation in the country has improved enormously. It is for this reason that I have lifted the curfew in 8 of the 9 Provinces. Curfew is being kept on in the Western Province because it is necessary for the Government to make further investigations.

I am now satisfied that the insurgency is broken and that, given alertness on the part of the Security Services, it will not be possible for these insurgents to launch any concerted attack on governmental authority. However, there could be for some time a possibility of isolated attacks on institutions and individuals by certain desperate terrorist elements who have not yet been apprehended, so that we will have to continue to be vigilant.

There is one matter to which I must refer before I wind up. That is, that several persons including various self-styled defenders of democracy, condemned the Government for declaring an emergency on the 15th of March. They said that this was a pretext to do away with the liberties...of the people and in order to camouflage the inability of the Government to deal with the problems of the country. They went out of their way to tell people that the Government

was magnifying several small and sporadic incidents with ulterior motives in view and that Democracy itself was not safe in the hands of this scheming set of people. I hope that these persons would have realised at least now the depth of their error. I might add that if the Government, in fact, did not take the steps it had taken, some of those great defenders themselves may not have been here to defend anything anymore.

May I at this stage, express on the floor of this House, my very special thanks to the large mass of peace-loving citizens of this country who co-operated so readily with the Government in crushing this murderous attack launched on persons and property. The public has been most helpful to the Police and Service personnel and have provided them with valuable information about the whereabouts of terrorists and other details pertaining to their movements, at the risk of their own lives. I deeply appreciate the wise and courageous public support which I and my Government received during the critical period.

I wish also to take this occasion to express my grateful thanks and those of my Government to the organised trade unions of this country who, with only one or two exceptions, gave overwhelming support to the Government. All of the public sector trade unions in particular gave massive support and, in spite of the many inconveniences, not only

kept vital institutions, institutions of services, etc., smoothly and effectively, but also slipped into their pockets generously and gave freely to the Terrorist Victims' Fund which had been set up by the Government to assist the families of Armed Forces, Police Services and Essential Service personnel who had lost their lives due to terrorist attacks.

Finally, I wish to take this opportunity of recording our thanks to the Governments of numerous friendly countries which had assisted us so promptly and generously in our hour of need, by supplying us with arms, ammunition and essential military equipment, particularly during the early vital days of the insurrection. I have already mentioned these countries in the course of my broadcast to the nation on 24th April, 1971. You would remember that these countries all came to our assistance, irrespective of their political philosophies or social systems, a fact which clearly has vindicated our firm belief in pursuing a non-aligned policy in international affairs, which our Government has been persistently following and which has been originated by the late Prime Minister, Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike.

Before I conclude I think it would be useful to Members of the House if I referred briefly to the 14,000 people who are now in custody. Perhaps some Members may be aware that a special Investigating Unit has been set up.

"The task of this Unit is to go into each one of these 14,000 cases and to categorize them according to the degree of involvement of these persons and to release those who, in the opinion of the investigators need not be detained any longer. As of today, when I am making this statement, almost 2,500 persons have been recommended for release, out of about 7,000 cases which have been processed so far. Those recommended for release principally fall into two categories.

They are those who had committed no offence but have surrendered through fear etc. Because, for instance, someone connected with their family has been an insurgent and those who have been arrested on suspicion. These categories of persons could be released on certain conditions and they would be required for some time to come to report to their police stations regularly and not leave their police area without prior permission etc. There is also an added category in custody, such as Canteen-Brekers. These persons also are being released. These persons, as a result of investigation, have been found to have engaged themselves in criminal activity of any sort, would be charged under the laws of this country.

There is also another category of persons about whom I should inform the house. These are various persons who are now in custody. They were originally taken because the Government thought that they were security risks.

Subsequently, however, a number of persons among the detainees have been implicated in the course of the investigations. Therefore, it will be difficult for the Government to release these detainees until the investigations due on the 14,000 cases in custody are completed, because there is the likelihood that some more persons presently in detention could be implicated when the other 7,000 persons who have not been still investigated, are investigated. I wish to place on record my deep appreciation of the services rendered by the Investigating Unit, which is working long hours in order to expedite these inquiries.

In conclusion, I might say that this insurgent uprising has dealt a severe blow to this country, particularly in economic terms, at a time when we had to strain every nerve and sinew to ensure rapid economic growth. A great deal of money will have to be diverted to merely repairing the damage caused by these insurgents. A great deal of money will also have to be channelled to maintain the necessity set up on a basis of efficiency because it would not be possible to take any risk with regard to this aspect in the future. Keeping in custody these misguided youths is also costing the Government millions of rupees and will continue to cost a great deal of money in the future. These factors are no doubt going to aggravate the economic situation and I appeal to all people of goodwill to co-operate with the Government in its task of national reconstruction and help

us to build up this country and ensure a bright future for all of us. I hope I have not wearied the House with too many details.

"I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and the House, for the patience with which you have listened to me."

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Appendix I

Former Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence and External Affairs, Mr. G.V.P. Samarasinghe's statement of 21 September 1971. (Ceylon Daily News, 22 September 1971 (extracts)).

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"In the course of the debate on the vote on Account the only references made to me were in relation to the insurgent activities that commenced in April this year, and more specifically in connection with certain reports that had been submitted to me by Mr. John Attygalle who was, at that time Special Adviser to the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs.

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"....I did meet the Prime Minister I believe on the 29th May 1970....I did ~~not~~ mention to her that the most dangerous situation that the government would have to face was from what was called the (the) Government that there were reports both in the Ministry as well as the Special Branch of the CID in regard to that movement.

"I did not specifically mention the reports of Mr. John Attygalle for the simple reason that I was aware that Mr. Attygalle's reports were not the only reports on the movement. Indeed there was substantial information in the Special Branch.

"When the disturbances of April 1971, took place the manner in which the situation was dealt with made it clear to me on my previous knowledge of the situation that the documents available to the Ministry including the reports of Mr. John Attygalle and the reports in the Special Branch had not been studied. I, towards the end of April or early May, 1971 got it made known to His Excellency the Governor General that such documents were available and that these should be studied....

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"I had got it known to the Secretary to the Prime Minister that I had knowledge of the movement and its foreign influences and would be glad to let the Prime Minister have my views....I had almost a three hour discussion with the Prime Minister in the course of which I told her all I knew about the movement including its foreign associations....

....I gave her a statement of the reports that were there and mentioned that there was among them a sixty page report that I had prepared for the previous Prime Minister which set out the situation and on which he had authorised me to take action.

"Reference has also been made to me in connection with Mr. Attygalle's reports. These reports were given to me I believe, in 1967 and 1969. They were submitted by me to the then Prime Minister who referred them to me after perusal with the order that I should follow up action on

them. These were the only occasions when the then Prime Minister saw these reports. They were thereafter in my personal custody in the security cabinet.

"Those reports did not merely deal with internal matters in Ceylon. References were made to international involvement and in particular with the activities of certain foreign embassies in Ceylon.

"Being in charge of both External Affairs and Defence I was in the best position to assess the implications of the material. I did not therefore, consider it prudent to circulate them even among members of the Security Council. The information contained in the reports relating to internal affairs were communicated to members of the Security Council and such of the information that was pertinent relating to activities of foreign embassies to the Superintendent of Special Branch. The Special Branch was instructed to follow up on the information. Anyone reading these reports will appreciate that it was prudent to give them the most limited circulation.

"The 1970 report from Mr. Attygalle was a relatively short note and this together with other reports from the Special Branch formed the base of the comprehensive report that I had referred to earlier which was submitted to the then Prime Minister. He himself did not see the report as such.

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Appendix K G

Leader of the United National Party, Mr. Dudley Senanayake's letter of 25 April 1971, to the Prime Minister. Ceylon Daily News, 6 May 1971. (extracts)

Dear Prime Minister,

We are in the throes of a grave national crisis, perhaps the gravest in our recent history. Its effects are not merely current but have the most serious implications for the future.

In these circumstances I had deliberately refrained from any comment as to the causes for the current tragic situation. I had preferred to keep this matter above parochial party politics. Certainly the present time is not one for polemics. I had hoped that the Government would view it similarly and treat the situation as one of national crisis in which every citizen of this country would be gravely concerned.

It is, however, a situation in which the people are entitled to know the full facts for it is only then that the fullest public co-operation can be obtained; and, without this, this dangerous situation cannot be resolved. I am, therefore, deeply grieved by the use that has been made of information media, not only the Ceylon Broadcasting Corporation, deliberately to pervert the truth by the ingenious

use of the techniques of "disinformation" to give a false picture to the people of the origin and facts of the situation.

I would have continued to refrain from causing any embarrassment by making political comment were it not that I had occasion to listen in to a commentary on the current situation that was broadcast in the evening of April 18th and reproduced in full in the issue of the "Ceylon Observer" on April 19th. Commentaries of a similar character continue to be broadcast thereafter.

The contents of this commentary are so blatantly characterised by distortions of fact and by such flagrant misinterpretation of the truth that it is disgraceful that it should have been permitted to be broadcast at all. I only hope that it did not have your personal authority.

However, in view of the gravity of the situation I would still have refrained from making comment had not the commentator found it desirable in his anxiety to apportion blame to make pointed reference to the acts or the lack of action by the previous Government during my tenure of office as Prime Minister.

The commentator on the one hand presents the theory that "its (the JVP's) known leadership consists of a few politically unstable, and personally unreliable and ambitious young men. They have been joined by others, who could not

achieve their personal acts through the United Front Government. Many elements, who were favourites and beneficiaries of the previous Government are now in their ranks."

On the other hand the commentator avers that "this murderous movement was born about four years ago. Its dangers were evident, and the rulers of the day were duly warned by people who followed events. But these responsible had no desire to expose or check it. They evidently thought that it could be utilised to their advantage, sometime or other. This is clear from the identity of elements, who are supporting and encouraging the terrorists in many places."

These two excerpts from the commentary are so puerilely contradictory in content that they hardly deserve reasoned examination. I nevertheless feel that their mischievous purpose should be exposed and dealt with in the public interest.

It appears to be generally conceded that the protagonists of the Jathika Vimukthi Peramuna cause are a section of the youth who had been misguided or misled. The question arises as to who misguided or misled them to engage in the desperate acts in which they are involved.

The commentator alleges that the outburst of terrorist activity was contrived to prevent the implementation of the proposals in the United Front Manifesto. Throughout the period 1965 to 1970, particularly in the main seats of higher education, the youth were incited to react against the Government. It does not require tremendous powers of memory

to recall the various incidents that took place in the universities. The passions of the youth were roused and they were encouraged to be dissidents.

Political interests kept close contact with them and made them their catpaws. Even their own mentors, the academic staff of the Universities, many of whom have received their reward in high public office, worked incessantly in fomenting discord and leading the youth astray. Their extremism received sympathetic support both in Parliament and outside it.

You might recollect the identity of these persons. You will find them among members of the parties that now constitute your Government. You must have received information as to the identity of the immediate leaders of the youth whom you describe as terrorists. I suggest you study their histories and records both in institutions in Ceylon and outside it and the name of their close political associates, and you will understand the part they played in organising terrorist action.

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Perhaps the inability of the Government to carry out the promises made to the people, promises that were incapable of fulfilment within the resource of the country, the rising cost of living, the shortages in articles of daily use covering even such items as rice, sugar, salt, flour, chillies and the common varieties of textiles, the realisation

that leaving alone solving the problem of unemployment, further unemployment was being created by the policies of Government both in relation to the public sector as well as the private sector, caused a sense of desperation that the aspirations of the youth would not be met.

It was possibly more than a matter of employment. Why also did the Minister of Housing and Construction, the Hon'ble Pieter Keuneman asking himself the plaintive question, "what is it that these people want?" had to admit that many of the youth that had been captured had been given employment by your Government?

No employment is possible today without a certificate from a Member of Parliament, an infamous procedure which I was constrained to criticise recently in Parliament. This youth then are or were followers of the United Front parties. In these circumstances to suggest that other forces were responsible is, to say the least, infamous. I would not insult the youth of this country by alleging that they had been motivated by black marketeers and such like villainous elements.

While I wholeheartedly deplore and condemn the means that they have adopted to achieve their ends, the techniques of violence and terrorism that they have preferred, I do not feel that they are the unwitting tools of black marketeers.

I do feel, however that their economic desperation was taken advantage of by certain unscrupulous elements. It

not the root cause for the adoption of terrorist procedures the pernicious philosophies which encourage the abuse of authority, the advocacy of disintegration of society, the base of which is the family, the training and indoctrination in subversive techniques received in foreign countries, the assiduous use for parochial political ends of the sensitivity of the youth to social and economic want, the undue interference in the internal affairs of the country by foreign agencies as part of the game of international politics?

Therefore, I say again, please study the known records and histories of the young men who have emerged as leaders of this section of unfortunate youth and you may find the answers.

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were the situation not so grave I would have been amused by the puerile allegation in the commentary that "it is well to remember that, even at the moment of assuming power anti social elements tried their utmost to cause violence and if possible prevent the government from taking power. These same people are in the JVP today."

The immediate aftermath of the general election of May 1970 was a reign of terror throughout the country during which people who were suspected to have voted for the United National Party were subjected to murder, assault, rape and violence. Their fault was that they exercised their democratic rights.

The records show that the only people who suffered were those suspected of belonging to the United National Party. I note that the Government has now come to the conclusion that those who caused violence on that occasion are in the JVP now. I am not aware that the incidents immediately after the elections were caused with the intention of preventing the present Government from taking power, and I see no evidence to justify this assumption. Indeed, this is the first time that such a theory has been presented.

If I remember the situation correctly, the incidence of brutal violence and destruction after the election in which many members of the present Government and their supporters were associated was treated as part of the victory celebrations.

Even though after pressure from members of my party an investigation was made, the report that was submitted by the Inquiring Officer was not published nor is it known as to whether any action was taken by the Police on the complaints made.

Perhaps it is a comparison of this report with the current incidents that has forced the conclusion that the same people who created violence on that occasion are those who are doing so now. The conclusion then is irresistible that these were supporters of the United Front parties during the May 1970 elections.

My own view is that preparations were made for the situation that took place after the elections in the event

the United National Party would be returned and was not capable of containment even after the United Front.

I now come to the charge levelled against my Government that though "the rulers of the day were duly warned by people who follow events, those responsible had no desire to expose it or check it".

This is perhaps the most fantastic example of hypocrisy that I have come across in my political career. It is fortunate that without any commentary the true facts can be divulged by two letters that were sent to the Governor General.

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These two letters give the lie to the allegation that no action was taken by my Government or that it was not aware of the gravity of the situation. Rather it was the complacency over the last ten months that permitted the situation to develop. Which was the Government that did not follow up the arrests that were made or did not vigorously pursue investigations into activities that were dangerous to the State?

Was it a false picture that was painted by the Press and the Ceylon Broadcasting Corporation that -- to use your own words -- "a situation of violence and virtual chaos is in the process of maturing"? Is it not a "situation of violence and virtual chaos" that has now matured?

No, Madam Prime Minister, a charge of inscience or

inactivity in this regard cannot be made against the government of which I was head.

The commentary under reference alleges that the acts of terrorism that are now taking place has the support of elements of the government of which I was head. This you know, is another lie intended to mislead the people.

There is no occasion in the history of the United National Party, whether in the Government or in the Opposition, when it has advocated or organized violence.

The men who are votaries of bloody revolution, who took advantage of difficult situations in the country to rouse the people to violence, who under the guise of trade unionism instigated and encouraged private and public sector employees to sabotage, whose common cry was "a destroy", are all in your Government presenting themselves today as advocates of peace.

How ill do the feathers of the dove mask the mind and bodies of the vultures!

I have dealt with the matters in the commentary under reference which forced me to break my silence in this tragic situation.

There is one other matter that I may pertinently raise here. That is the meagreness of the information that is released to the public. I am aware that requirements of security will entail a certain reticence and that there is a need for careful assessment before information can be released.

But when the world gets information before the people of the country, and when this information is subsequently found to be accurate, security needs can no longer be advanced as the reason for reticence.

For instance, many broadcasting organisations in the world gave the news of your decision to declare the diplomatic personnel of the Embassy of the People's Republic of Korea as persona non grata long before the Government announcement. What was the need for reticence?

Information was similarly available from other sources regarding the Government's request for foreign assistance long before the Government made its cryptic statement.

Indeed, world news institutions have stated the names of the countries from whom assistance was requested and the nature of the assistance granted. It is possible that for reasons of security the nature of the aid obtained may have to be classified as restricted matter.

The countries from whom aid was requested and who acceded to your request need not be treated as classified information. After all, while what is happening is most serious -- and I do not wish in any way to minimise its gravity -- it is still an internal affair.

Or, have investigations revealed that there are elements of foreign aggression or interference? If so, the people must know the foreign countries involved.

I have been constrained to write to you at length. I would have preferred not to embarrass you in any way as I am aware of the gravity of the situation and the responsibilities you carry as Prime Minister.

I cannot, however, permit the insinuations, falsehoods and misinterpretations of fact deliberately intended to mislead the public to go unchallenged.

I may say categorically that I deplore the present situation and that I condemn the attempts made by a section of the youth to use force and insurrection and terrorism as means of political or other gain.

I feel, however, that I cannot remain silent while Ministers and propagandists of the Government take advantage of a grievous national crisis to make unfounded allegations.

I am conscious of the needs of security and of the fact that the fuller knowledge of the situation that you undoubtedly must have, must guide your decisions.

I, therefore, rather than enter at this stage into a public controversy, write to you and shall be glad if your assessment of the situation permits publication of this letter.

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Annex 12.11

housing minister, Mrs. Dister's broadcast
Ceylon Daily News, 10 April 1971

It is only 10 months since the people of Ceylon elected the United Front Government to office in an overwhelming majority.

Nevertheless, in the last few days, in different parts of the country, we have been confronted with groups of persons seeking to use terrorist violence to reverse this popular verdict and to destroy the government that the people freely chose on May 27, 1970.

Attempts to thwart the will of the people by resort to armed violence are not of course unknown in Ceylon's recent history.

We have witnessed the cruel assassination of Mr. S.W.P.O. Banderanaike in 1959 and the abortive coup attempt of 1962. And we are now compelled to stamp out a new terrorist attempt launched at a time when the government is about to introduce a new republican Constitution, when the State Transport Corporation is being set up, and when a new session of Parliament has just been summoned to move the construction from the Senate to the enactment of the Business Undertakings (Acquisition) Bill and other progressive laws.

The present wave of terrorist violence has been more widespread, more elaborately prepared and more extensively

supplied with weapons and finance than anything experienced earlier.

The Government was fortunately able to discover in time and to foil the terrorist plan to unleash violence in Colombo on the night of 5th April 1971, and also to repulse and subvert a simultaneously planned series of armed attacks on about 25 police stations in the vicinity of Colombo and in other parts of Ceylon.

Since then at the cost of some casualties to the security forces and considerable losses to the terrorist groups, the situation has been brought under control. Pockets of resistance that still remain are being systematically eliminated. But it is necessary for the government to continue to take all precautions as it is still possible to boost the flagging morale of their supporters the terrorists may still resort to sporadic acts of violence.

Who are these terrorists? What is it they want? What do they hope to achieve? These questions are often asked. The terrorists call themselves by the high-sounding name of "Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna". By doing so they hope to masquerade as something akin to the national liberation fronts in certain parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America that are fighting to free their countries and peoples from imperialism.

What is this what the JVP is doing? They scribble on walls about imperialism. But what is the concrete action

that they have asserted against the Government of the property of the country, their demands and actions are directed only against the United Front Government that has shown in deeds its solidarity with the anti-imperialist fighters of Vietnam and the Arab world, and which has raised its voice against the creation of an imperialist base like Diego Garcia.

The nick-name of "Che Cuoverista", which is sometimes given to these terrorists is an insult to the memory of a brave revolutionary fighter against pro-imperialist, fascist dictatorships in Latin America. These terrorists have nothing in common with this man or the ideals for which he sacrificed his life.

It is often claimed that the JVI is an expression of the frustrations and disillusionment of the educated but unemployed youth. But is this really so? One can't help noticing that there was no armed violence, if not at least hardly any organized protest at all, by the JVI during the periods of the last Government, when unemployment among the educated youth was far worse than it is now.

Our Government does not claim to have solved the problem of unemployment. But we have virtually none at all with the acute problem of graduate unemployment, we have begun certain schemes to employ the best trained youth. We have started to teach youth new skills and we have set aside \$1.200 million in the Budget for a special credit program to create 100,000 new jobs in 1971.

We have also been struck by the fact that a great many of the terrorist activists who have surrendered or who have been captured or arrested, are persons in employment. Several of them are persons who had got jobs only after our government took office.

It is difficult to believe that spent means movement of unemployed youth could have acquired the considerable funds and know-how in regard to weaponry that is obviously available to the JVP.

The idea that the JVP is some type of radical or socialist movement is equally untenable. This movement has nothing in common with scientific socialism. This is seen in the fact that it has almost no roots in the working class, whose trade unions and other organizations are today mobilizing in support of the government against the terrorists.

The JVP has conveniently and systematically concealed its aims. It has no positive solution to offer to the problem of the people or the youth. We know what they are against, but what are they for? What do they demand? How have they asked for it and from whom?

Instead of a policy, all the JVP offers is an infantile form of negative nihilism. It proclaims an absurd so called "war between the generations". It exalts violence for its own sake. It calls for the destruction of what it considers the "establishment".

Let us make no mistake about it. In the JVP we are confronted with a potentially fascist and terroristic move-

ment, which serves the interests of sinister forces who have not yet declared their hand.

Those who know how fascism developed in Hitlerite Germany and Mussolini's Italy, or who are familiar with more recent events in countries like Indonesia, will recognise in the JVP many familiar features of fascism -- its extreme demagoguery, its appeals to racism, its contempt for the working people and their organisations, its fetish of uniforms and pseudo-militarism, its cult of the individual "leader" is manipulation of accumulated and often contradictory grievances and so on.

Many who were formerly taken in or attracted by the JVP's demagoguery of appeals to romanticism have now seen its true face. That is why support for the government's efforts to fight back terrorism is growing.

I appeal to all who sincerely want to see a truly free and prosperous Ceylon which can advance, to socialism to all who want to defend the victory of the people on 27th May 1970, and to all who respect the will and sovereignty of the people, to rally behind the government to defeat this threat from fascism and terrorism.

Appendix I

General Secretary of the Ceylon Communist Party,
Mr. K. Chandrasekaran's letter to the Prime
Minister, dated 7 February 1972.

Madam,

I have been released on the 1st of this month after being detained on the orders of your Permanent Secretary, for a period of nearly ten months. I feel it is my duty to place before you the facts of my unjust detention, and also to plead that other victims of similar injustice be released without further misery.

In the first place let me state that it was our Party and one who were the first in the country to recognise the counter-revolutionary nature of the policies and activities of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, and carry out an island-wide campaign against it. I might also add that neither the leaders of your government nor your propaganda machine has ever equalled that effort of ours.

Just before the first public rally of the JVP held at Hyde Park in August '70, our Party issued a leaflet which contained a comprehensive criticism of the JVP. I have also to record the ironical fact that our comrades who tried to distribute this leaflet at the Hyde Park rally were prevented from doing so by your Police officers who arrested and detained them at the Slave Island Police Station till

10 o'clock that night. In my General Secretary's report to the 19th Congress of the Ceylon Trade Union Federation which was held from 16th to the 19th December, 1970, I categorically criticised the policies and activities of the JVP. That report was unanimously adopted by the Congress. Further, our weekly papers 'Konkaruwa' and 'Thollilali' have consistently carried on an ideological campaign against the adventurist policies advocated by the JVP.

We were thus the only political force in this country to fight the JVP on an ideological basis and as a result we became the central target of a vituperative attack by the leadership of the JVP. Despite these facts, when the attempted insurrection broke out in April, 1971, your government, acting under Emergency Powers with which you had armed yourselves to face the threat posed by the JVP, mis-used these powers to arrest a large number of the members of our Party and trade unions led by it. I was among the first victims. It might interest you to know that neither before nor at the time or after my arrest was I asked even a single question by the CID or any other investigating authority. That alone speaks volumes to prove that my arrest had nothing to do with the threat posed by the attempted insurrection by the JVP.

I am now convinced that my arrest must have been motivated by reasons of political revenge, because our Party was the only Party in this country that had criticised the

fraud of bourgeois parliamentary democracy and called upon the people not to participate in any way in the General Elections of April, 1970.

Further weight is lent to this conviction by the fact that, immediately after my arrest, your Police Force carried out a senseless attack on our office at 123, Union Place, Colombo 2, when they damaged a duplicating machine, our telephone, typewriters and our printing machine into which they had put sand with the purpose of incapacitating it from work. Further, they removed our mobile book-stall, constructed at the cost of Rs.1760/= and, which was standing in front of our office and later dumped it in the Beira Lake. They also ransacked our bookshop which was situated in the premises of our office and removed several hundreds of books, including translations of the works by Chairman Mao Tse-tung, leader of the Great People's Republic of China, which came to your rescue last April with a loan of Rs.150 million. At our Anuradhapura office the Police openly burnt all books by Chairman Mao Tse-tung and his pictures. Similarly hundreds of books, mostly translations of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's works were removed by the police from our offices at Hutton and Jaffna. They have still not yet been returned. Our Rathnapura office was smashed and pictures of Comrade Mao Tse-tung were broken.

Personally your government must also have nursed the illusion that by putting one and several leaders of our

Party and our trade unions behind prison bars, you could deprive the working class of correct leadership and enable the employers to increase their exploitation and profits by signing no-strike agreements with stooge unions. This is particularly evident by the senseless arrest of the leaders and over 15 members of our Ceylon Plantation Workers (Red Flag) Union from the Diabula district where there was no activity by the JVP at all. When this is taken together with the fact that it is open knowledge that the JVP had carried on propaganda against these workers of Indian origin, these arrests can have no meaning except that they were directed at crushing our Plantation Workers Union which in recent years, had expanded its membership very greatly.

I trust that atleast, at this stage, you would take into consideration the fact that they have already spent ten months in incarceration despite the fact that they are totally innocent and order their immediate release.

I must also mention the inhuman conditions under which I was detained, particularly at the earlier stages of my detention. It was revealed during the Edermani Habeas Corpus Case that despite the fact that Mr. Edermani had confessed to the Commission of Exchange Control irregularities to the tune of nearly Rs. 2 million, the police offered him a choice of being detained either at the CID Headquarters or at the Welikada Jail. He naturally preferred the CID Headquarters because he would not be locked up there. Finally, he and the

others arrested with him were detained in a bungalow at Paget Road, Havelock Town.

But no such choice was offered to me against whom the Police were unable to make even an allegation. I was taken direct to the Welikada Jail and locked in solitary confinement for 22 hours out of the 24 hours of every day from April 12th to June 19th. During this period I was not permitted any contact with my family or friends, nor permitted to get down books of my choice.

The government went through the farce of appointing an Advisory Committee to which we were told that we could make representations about our detention. I did so but was never told what their finding was.

Even if you could urge some justification for the detention of certain people in the alleged interests of the security of the state at a time of national emergency as in April, 1971, there can be no reason for the continued detention of such people for such a long period as ten months, when not even an allegation could be made against them. In a speech made in Parliament, you are reported to have said that the political detainees have to be kept in detention till the investigation in connection with all the detained insurgents are finished because there could be some cross-connection. If this argument is to be valid, then it must hold good for all the detainees and not only to some.

Can you, therefore, explain how it came about that Mr. Navi Jayawardena, son of Mr. J.N. Jayawardena, leader of

the Opposition, was released within four hours of his arrest of April 8th? Or can you explain how a kinsman of the ex-Minister of the UNP government, Mr. Hurulla, was released after a few months of his arrest because he happens to be also a kinsman of the highest in this land? Or can you explain why all but one of the UNP detainees were released on December 28th, while some of those who worked actively in support of your Party are still under detention? There seems to be no method behind this madness.

There are still about eight non JVP detainees, not to speak of the LSSP MP Mr. Vasudeva Mahayakkara, and Mr. H.L. Premadasa, proctor, who have both been ironically classified as suspected members of the JVP despite the tremendous work they put in on behalf of your Party and the united front at the last elections and which is well known to everyone. I don't want to mention everyone by name. But can you give the public any valid reason for continuing to keep these people in detention?

Answering on your behalf the Speaker said that at the committee stage of the vote on the Ministry of Justice and External Affairs, Mr. Felix Bandaranaike had asked in reply to a question raised by Mr. Suman Senanayake that the only people involved in the attempted insurrection are the members of the central committee of the JVP. Then, why continue to keep well known members of other parties in detention?

A spokesman of your Ministry of Justice has admitted that 3,000 of the detainees whom you are keeping behind

barbed-wires have not even a prima facie case against them. What moral justification can you plead for continuing to keep them in detention? Immediately following the attempted insurrection in April, 1971, you made an appeal to the insurgents to surrender and promised them that they would not be punished. Several thousands surrendered. Have you fulfilled your pledged word? Is not keeping them in continued detention a fairly severe form of punishment?

Whichever way you look at it, you cannot escape the fact that, apart from the large number of youth who were killed, following the days of April, 1971, the government is continuing to keep in detention several thousands of youth whose number well exceeds 10,000. You cannot plead that ten months are insufficient for concluding the investigation. As Senator Madson pointed out, it is the uncertainty of their fate that is killing and most demoralizing.

That is why I make an earnest appeal to you either to bring to trial or release all the detainees.

It is also high time that normal democratic and civil rights are restored to the people of this country and that the state of Emergency is lifted. Successive governments in this country have made a farce of bourgeois parliamentary democracy by ruling for a greater part of their time under a State of Emergency.

The country is facing a serious economic crisis caused by the continued stranglehold of foreign imperialists.

over our economy. The cost of living is soaring skywards and the problem of unemployment has reached unmanageable proportions. The people must have the right to discuss these issues freely and to voice their opinions about how these problems could be overcome.

I trust that you will give your serious consideration to the views I have expressed herein.

....

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