

# Saturday Review

## SRI LANKA

Vol. 3 Nos. 9/10.

14th-21st April 1984

# THE WEEK OF THE BIG BANG

Trauma after trauma That seems to be the fate of the people of Jaffna.

But rarely have they been more shocked at any time this year than by the events that took place on 9th, 10th and 11th April.

We are precluded by the special censorship rules applicable only to the SATURDAY REVIEW from giving a detailed account.

So we are presenting a resume of the tragic events, based mainly on versions published in the Colombo newspapers.

9th April-Black Monday-began with the news that an armed gang had robbed the Point Pedro branch of the Bank of Ceylon of Rs. 900,000.

Then, silence, until around 2 p.m., when there was the BIG BANG.

The action took place less than 200 yards from the SATURDAY REVIEW.

A gang of armed youth had attempted to intercept an Army patrol opposite the Church of Our Lady of Refuge on 4th Cross Street.

Apparently, a bomb had been planted in a stationary vehicle near the Church and it was activated as the Army patrol passed.

The blast shook the SATURDAY REVIEW office. It was as if our own office were under attack. The staff, including the Editor, hooked for cover. After all, everyone would like to live as long as possible.

The Army boys responded with a volley of fire, Machine-gun as well as cannon.

Very unfortunately, the Church was also damaged.

The armed youths had presumably operated from the Church premises.

That the Church was damaged was an "accident" as the Minister of National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali.

Thereafter, for nearly one hour, there were more blasts and gun-fire, mostly along Hospital Road.

Wild rumour took frightened wing as people ran helter-skelter for cover.

Later, a row of shops and the Jaffna Co-operative Stores Ltd. went up in flames.

At one stage, an Air Force helicopter came over.

At the end of the action, about 36 persons were admitted to Jaffna Hospital

with injuries. Fifteen of them were soldiers with minor injuries.

In the night, the Sinhala Maha Vidyalyaya, the Naga Vihare (not to be confused with Nagadipa Temple on Nainativu Island) some shops, bakeries and a garage were destroyed.

On Tuesday early morning the Stanley Road branch of

### Editorial 1 :

**Do not forget the Common Enemy**

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### Editorial 2 :

**Senseless Censorship**

—Page 11

the Bank of Ceylon was robbed of Rs. 12 lakhs by an armed gang.

People, especially youths, began congregating at street corners and there was an air of anger and excitement about the town.

Some youths stopped passing cars and demanded petrol.

To deal with the developing situation, the Government declared a curfew at 1 p.m., on Tuesday effective until 6 a.m. the next day.

On Tuesday night and on Wednesday, Army patrols

Editor, Saturday Review.

Dear Mr. Navaratne,

The Saturday Review upholds the little which remains of the integrity of the Sri Lankan Press. Even in its censored form, it has the greatest significance; it is testimony in itself to the erosion of civil liberties in Sri Lanka.

Moreover, this is not only a usurpation of the rights of the Tamils. It is a threat to the Sinhalese also. And as long as you bear witness to this, censored or uncensored you do the cause of truth and justice the greatest service.

Remain, therefore and let the censors do their worst. Your readers at home and abroad—and how many foreign readers does the servile Colombo press have?—are skilled at reading between the lines, as well as on them. We know very well the conditions under which you labour for any writer to serve the truth. Do not therefore take any initiative to suspend publication. Publish on; and put to shame, even in your silences and blank spaces, those whose greatest fear is the truth, and those who tell it.

Yours Sincerely  
DAVID SELBOURNE

Station Road, shifted to what they believed were more safer areas.

"What the hell was going to happen next?" appeared to be the thought in every person's mind as fear and anxiety gripped the town.

The New Year came and went.

Quite quietly. Not a single cracker burst was heard anywhere in Jaffna.

THAT WAS THE WEEK THAT WAS.

## Combind issue

Production problems caused by the recent disturbances compounded by the curfew, prevented the SATURDAY REVIEW from coming out as usual.

We are now presenting continued issue — Nos. 9&10 and dated 14th-21st April-incorporating some matter that was intended for last week's issue and other matter that we planned to use this week.

We hope our Readers will bear with us in these difficult times.

EDITOR

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# A MOMENT

# WITH DIOGENES

There was a newspaperman who asked the Philosopher on his walk on Galle Face Green what he thought of the Bold New Approach of the Reagen Administration to stamp out the Drug Menace which is destroying the youth of the United States. One-third of the children in the States between the ages of 12 and 17 are drug addicts.

Diogenes observed, "I am told that the strategy of the Reagen Administration is to publish COMICS and through them to wean the children off drugs.

"The money-makers will now make money both by selling drugs and selling comics.

"The youth will now have both the comics and the drugs. They will identify themselves with the tragic heroes in the comics. The same business complex will publish the comics and supply the drugs.

"Money is the root of all evil in the developed countries. It is a case of sex, violence, drugs, corruption, revolvers, neurosis, tension and thrombosis on the hand, and money-making out of all the said evils on the other hand.

"The children are the victims of this super material society. The adults cannot control their greed for the material things in life and the children cannot control their dependence on drugs. The church has no happiness or hope to offer time.

"The greater tragedy is that, in the name of development, these evils are spread to the developing countries with the emphasis on democracy and free markets.

"The old destroy the young. It is a case of the old causing all the frustrations for the youth. The threat of the nuclear war is imminent. The power of money is in conflict with the power of the people. It is this conflict that will ultimately destroy mankind.

"The philosophy behind the power of money is 'be exploited or be destroyed'.

"In fact, one economist in a prestigious university in the West propagated the theory that it is better for the developing countries to be exploited than not to be exploited and it is better in the development process to play the workmen cheaper, wages than for them to be unemployed and not be paid any wages at all."

"How is it, Master, that the developing countries allow this exploitation when they have all the national resources? Some of the countries in the Third World have gold, precious stones, diamonds, oil, uranium, tea, coffee, rice, skills and so on?" asked the newspaperman.

"It is simple, the multinationals and the giant business tycoons have their agents or compradors in the developing countries who are prepared to sell out these natural resources on commission and they become richer and richer at the expense of the country and the people.

"It is a case of development without the participation of the people.

"It is a case of development which has no meaning to the people.

"In this conflict between the power of money and the power of the people, even the people of the First World are victims and casualties. The states have a high rate of unemployment and so is the case in West Germany. In Israel, there is an exodus of the Israelites from the Promised Land as they cannot manage to live with the cost of living rising towards the skies. There is recession in the West. The people in that part of the world, too, suffer and the power of money influences the state policies of the Western democracies.

"For instance, there is a price tag on an aspirant to the presidential office in the United States. The Americans themselves say so. It is not the quality of the candidate that matters but how much backing he gets from money power. The people, on the other hand, are made hysterical with slogans like democracy and republic, freedom of speech and human rights and horror stories about communist countries.

"Humanity now faces a crisis. No brakes can any longer be applied to the dynamic greed for money and more money. The power of money is hell-bent to destroy everything and every

political philosophy which holds out to save man and society. The Military-Industrial Complex in the United States will crash headlong if war conditions do not multiply in all the countries in the history of human civilisation. They control everything. Even prestigious universities survive on their endowments in the States.

"Well, the time is short and everything is hotting up and will boil over to cause a nuclear flare-up to destroy mankind.

"The scientists in the States say the medical men there, too, say that in this nuclear holocaust it is better to die than to survive. It is their view that the only living creatures who will continue to survive in their pristine glory will be the cockroaches who are immune from the effects of radiation and, as for the human survivors, they will be skinless, limbless, eyeless and spiritless. They will be subhuman monstrosities and pests to the cockroaches.

"We are all heading for all this totally tragic calamity if money power vanquishes the power of the people. Money makes adults mad, drugs make youth mad. The weapons of violence destroy both the adults and the youth. The greed for money ultimately destroys the greedy. The cockroaches will have no need for religions, temples and churches.

"It will be a posthumous victory for the United Nations. They would have achieved the peace of the grave for all Mankind!" said Diogenes.

"This is a very morbid speech of yours, Diogenes. Let us now pass on to something less unpleasant. What do you think of the special committee appointed to inquire into the Chief Justice's conduct?"

"Remember, Parliament today is always right. There is something called the Bre-

ach of Privilege. I do not want to be taken away from my Galle Face walks to Jayewardenepura.

### WHO IS DIOGENES?

Several readers have written in asking for the identity of Diogenes.

He, as Diogenes himself revealed in the very first new issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW, is none other than the Greek philosopher by that name who lived more than two thousand years ago.

Unfortunately for him, as part of the Karmic cycle of birth and death, he has been reborn in Sri Lanka during a most turbulent period of its history.

He generally hovers around Galle Face Green, where any person with a discerning eye would be able to spot him.

One thing we can reveal to interested readers: He is definitely not the Editor of this journal.

"This much I will say. Whether the Chief Justice is right or wrong when he exercised his freedom of speech, I hope there was quality in his speech.

"One thing more, as a man in the street who is representing the voice of the People, if judges should not enter controversies they must neither praise nor censure the establishment outside their domains.

"Praise no less than censure are not for evolved personalities. Praise is as bad as censure. Logically, a judge who praises a controversial establishment must be brought up before the special committee even as the judge who censures.

"Please leave me alone and do not report this in the papers. I do not want to get involved and lose my leisure," replied the Master.

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### International

### Tamil Conference

The International Tamil Conference organised by the Tamils of U. S. A. and Canada will be held at Holiday Inn, Nanuet, New York on July 30th, 1st and 2nd June 1984.



# TRINCOMALEE -- THE BIG SELL OUT

So the Trincomalee oil storage facilities have finally been leased by the Sri Lanka Government to a Western consortium.

The Government's decision is likely to have far-reaching consequences for Sri Lanka's domestic as well as external policies in the years to come.

The decision was not unexpected by observers who have noticed that ever since the United National Party, under Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, came to power in 1977, Sri Lanka has taken up pro-Western positions on many issues concerning domestic and foreign affairs.

In fact, our domestic and foreign policies are now more attuned to the West, led by the United States of America, than at any previous stage in the country's post-independence history.

It is a well-known fact that ever since the British withdrawal in 1957, the US has been casting covetous eyes on Trincomalee, one of the finest natural harbours in the world, situated strategically in the Indian Ocean.

After the UNP came to power, according to diplomatic observers, Washington is known to have been exerting pressure to get a foothold in Trincomalee in return for continued economic assistance.

Washington made the first breakthrough when the UNP Government decided in 1980 to throw open Trincomalee port to warships of all nations provided the nations were not at war and the ships did not carry nuclear weapons.

The biggest beneficiary of this decision was the US 7th Fleet, whose ships thereafter began to call not infrequently at this port.

Indian and Russian warships also visited the port, more as a test of the Government's bona fides than to use the facilities available there.

Up to then, the policy of successive Sri Lanka Governments had been to keep Trincomalee closed to warships of nations, though they were allowed at Colombo.

Shortly after the decision, a map published by the Pentagon showed Trincomalee as "one of the global facilities available to the US but not to the Soviets".

After the matter was raised in the Sri Lanka Parlia-

ment by the Opposition and India and other non-aligned countries expressed concern, Washington explained that the inclusion of Trincomalee in that particular map was a "mistake by a junior official".

Because the direct grant of base facilities was certain to rouse opposition both in Sri Lanka and abroad, Washington and Colombo decided on a remarkable strategem: to lease the oil tank farm at Trincomalee to the Singapore-based Coastal (Bermuda) Ltd., a subsidiary of Coastal Corporation of America.

Cabinet Spokesman Mr. Ananda Tissa de Alwis announced at a news conference in mid-1981 that the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation had worked out a deal with this company and that an agreement would be signed shortly.

According to information put out by the Government, Coastal (Bermuda) Ltd. was to supply oil only to commercial vessels. But "The Island" revealed that an agreement as prepared made provision to service US warships as well, after getting clearance from Colombo.

This raised such a howl of protests locally and abroad the Government quietly dropped the deal and decided to call for fresh tenders.

Seven international companies submitted bids. Among them were a Soviet and an Indian company - as well as Coastal (Bermuda) Ltd.

The Russians were obviously wasting their time - because an official spokesman announced that the award of the tender would be guided by foreign policy considerations and not merely technical and commercial considerations.

India was also out because

Trincomalee has a vital bearing on the National Question.

Inside sources said that the Singapore-based, recently-formed Orolleum Far East Pvt. Ltd., was the best bet.

By associating two other firms, Tradinaft of Switzerland and Oil Tanking of West Germany in the agreement, signed in Colombo on 12th April, the Government has tried to give more respectability to the deal, thereby hoping to stave off criticism.

It has also made it a point to emphasise that adequate safeguards have been written into the agreement to ensure that Sri Lanka's vital interests are not jeopardised.

But we say that the safeguards are good as useless - because Sri Lanka does not have the means to enforce them.

What is there to prevent a tanker from Trincomalee going outside our territorial waters and servicing US warships?

Or even supplying oil to Diego Garcia base?

Another point to remember is that in this age of multi-nationals there are any number of American companies registered abroad under names which do not reveal their true owners or directors.

It is worth noting that the name of the person who was to sign on the dotted line on behalf of Coastal (Bermuda) Ltd. in 1981 was Douglas Hentry Miller; the name of the Managing Director of Orolleum is also DOUGLAS HENTRY MILLER.

Is this a mere coincidence?

Would it not have been far better for Sri Lanka itself to have operated the oil tank farm after hiring the necessary experts?

Why this craze to involve

whether, in return for long-term US aid, the UNP Government has not bartered Trincomalee away to a Western consortium in which the US has interests?

## C. J's Affair

From the inception, this Government has displayed a perverse tendency to get involved in "side issues" when more urgent tasks and problems await resolution.

The SATURDAY REVIEW has several times in the past focussed public attention on this tendency, resolute adherence to which has cost Sri Lanka much time and money.

Now, the Government is bent on getting involved in another side issue - the controversial speech of the Chief Justice, Mr. Neville Samarakoon.

President Jayewardene has spoken his mind about this speech at a public function recently.

I think the Government should let the matter rest there, instead of proceeding to go into it through a Parliamentary Select Committee.

What good can this bring to the country when there are many urgent problems that need the Government's undivided attention?

## POLITICAL CAUSERIE

by Gamini Navaratne

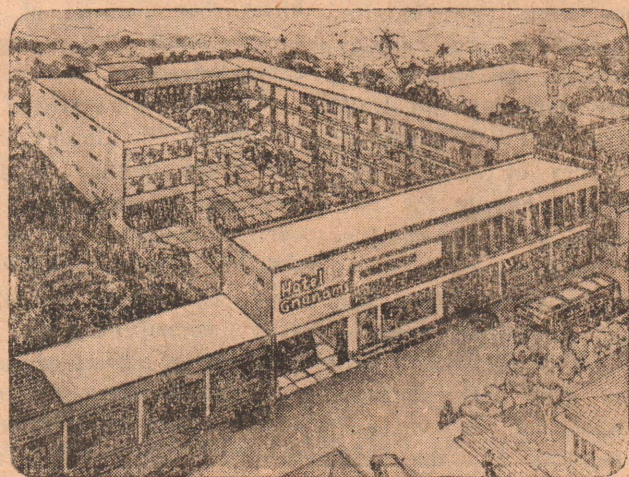
Western multi-nationals in every sphere of our economy?

I am reminded of what President Jayewardene, then in the Opposition, said in Parliament after Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, as Prime Minister, visited Peking in January 1963.

Mr. Jayewardene alleged that there appeared to have been, "secret discussions" in the "handing over of a naval base in the island to China in return for long-term financial aid". Vide House of Representatives Hansard, 8th February 1963. For evidence he cited a report originating from London and published in an Indian Newspaper.

Is it then unjustified for the Opposition to now ask

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# 'WHY BLAME LSSP?'

The Editor,  
Saturday Review  
Dear Sir,

I refer to Mr. T. Subramaniam's article appearing in the 3rd March issue of your journal.

Mr. Subramaniam, propounding his solution to the burning question of the day i.e. the ethnic problem or Sinhala-Tamil relations in Sri Lanka, has made an unkind reference to the Lanka Sama Samaja Party. He says inter alia, "The policy of the LSSP on the language question is wellknown but unfortunately, when they had a chance to implement it, they miserably failed". Nothing can be further from truth than this statement.

First, it has to be admitted that the LSSP never had a chance to implement its programme through a Government of its own. The party along with the Communists, had sat in Governments led by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. In such a set-up, one cannot act in the manner one desires. One's actions are circumscribed by the interplay of various forces both within and outside the Government.

Secondly, the failure to win Tamil rights cannot be pinned either on the LSSP or any other left party. It is the Tamil leadership that is responsible for such a situation. The leadership of the Tamil people failed to grasp the hand of friendship extended to it by the LSSP in 1960 and again in 1964 and thereafter in 1970.

In 1956, when the language issue was bedevilling all political parties of the South, the LSSP alone openly stood for parity-equality of status to both the Sinhala and Tamil Languages.

They were assailed for this reason at the Time by reactionaries of all hues and colours, including the UNP and the SLFP. It is part of the history of the LSSP that it suffered heavily for its forthright policy on the language question.

Despite severe odds, the LSSP, I remember, went to the polls in March 1960 on the same parity platform and what did we witness? The rejection of the LSSP not only in the South but, ironically, in the North as well. The communal parties in the North ensured it.

In the year 1964, when the LSSP entered into a Coalition Government with the SLFP, the LSSP extended the hand of friendship again to the then leadership of the Tamil people and negotiations were commenced. Mr. M. Tiruchelvam, on behalf of the Federal Party met Dr. N.M. Perera who was

authorised by the coalition to negotiate. Here is what Mr. Tiruchelvam said in the then Senate:

"In fairness to Dr. Perera, I must say that when I met him our hopes were high and we thought that a speedy solution of the language problem would be possible..... He said, "I still believe in parity; that is the policy of my party".

But what happened? Mr. Tiruchelvam and the FP, sorry to say, did a volte-face. Instead of strengthening the hand of the LSSP in the coalition the Tamil leadership became the tool of the UNP, with which it joined up to bring down the SLFP-LSSP coalition.

Thereafter, we saw another sorry spectacle. We saw the accredited representatives of the Tamil people end up in the seven-party coalition of the UNP Government, which carried the bogus label of a "National Government". The solitary Tamil Minister in that Government had to make an ignoble exit without any achievement to show the Tamil people.

Then came the United Front Government of the SLFP-LSSP-CP of 1970. The Tamil leadership got another opportunity to link up with the rest of the progressive movement so as to strengthen its own position to fight for Tamil rights more effectively. The LSSP and the CP, with all restrictions within which they had to function in a front and Government that was dominated by the SLFP, made a sincere effort to enlist the support of the Tamil representatives, but to the great chagrin of all we saw than the Tamil leadership was not capable of exhibiting that element of maturity which the situation demanded of it.

All these were missed opportunities. Opportunities that were spurned. And all this because the Tamil leadership, whether it be of the TC variety, the FP variety, has always shown its deep commitment to the interests of private property - a commitment that runs much deeper than its oft-claimed fight for Tamil rights.

After the disruption of the United Front by the leader of the SLFP Mrs. Bandaranaike, in 1975, the TULF began the search for a modus-vivendi with the UNP. Mr. S. Thondaman President of the Ceylon workers congress disclosed in Parliament recently the pains he took to bring the TULF and the UNP together. As a consequence they received some measly concession: National

language status and the district Development Councils. Both have proved to be unworkable and worthless.

The Tamil leadership cannot absolve themselves of the responsibility for the present plight of the Tamil people. If there is anyone who failed the Tamil people, and failed miserably, it is the leadership of the Tamil people, whether it be of the past or present.

Mansoor Rasheed  
Colombo-2

## MARGA SAYS

The Editor,  
Saturday Review.

I refer to the lead story "Hold it, Your Excellency!" in your issue of 17th March 1984. The first part of it states: "A 'military approach' is not the answer to the National Question and the violence in North Sri Lanka."

"This was the consensus at a seminar held at the Marga Institute in Colombo recently. Even the participants from the Armed Forces and the Police, but for one or two exceptions, agreed with this view."

The correct position is that these was a Consensus at the seminar that a political solution must be found to the problems affecting the Tamil community in Sri Lanka and that a viable scheme of devolution would contribute to defusing ethnic tension.

However, in its discussion of security problems, the seminar was faced with two major issues. On the one hand, there is the problem of combating terrorism and other criminal activity in the North and East directed mainly against the State, its institutions, agencies and personnel; and on the other, there have been recurrent outbreaks of violence directed against members of the Tamil and Indian Tamil communities. On both issues divergent points of view were expressed by participants, the security problems being different in the different locations.

There were no serving members of the Armed Forces at the seminar. There were only two retired Army officers and only two Police officers. While all four of them agreed that a political solution must be found, they were also of the view that terrorism had to be countered effectively by the Police and Armed Services.

I shall be glad if this letter is given due prominence in the early issue of your paper.

Victor Gunewardena  
Editor,  
Marga Institute, Colombo-

# LETTERS

## TREE CUTTING

The Editor,  
Saturday Review.

While our leaders are shouting from public platforms urging people to plant trees and getting foreign aid for reforestation to save our country from becoming a desert, tree cutting is going on pell mell.

In the Jaffna Peninsula, the Portuguese, the Dutch and the Britishers planted mahogany and other trees along the highways and parks. But after Independence, most of the trees had been gradually cut for some reason or other and no new trees planted in their places. You cannot see a single young mahogany tree now.

During the first week of last December, a large number of coconut trees, palmyrah trees, mango trees, jak trees and several varieties of fruit trees were earmarked to be cut on private properties along Chemman Road, Nallur, for a 33 KVA high tension electric line. Among these were two Bo trees of two historical temples dating back to King Sangilian's time.

The taxpayers of Chemman Road sent individual protests and a joint protest signed by 480 of them. A delegation of taxpayers met the Additional Government Agent and explained the hardships that would be caused.

The undersigned met the Chief Central Electrical Engineer and explained the hardships that would be caused and requested him to lay an underground cable. He instructed me to lodge our protests with the Government Agent. I met the Government Agent and explained matters, especially about the spiralling price of coconuts and the Rs. 50 paid as compensation for a tree which is capable of giving a maximum of Rs. 15,000 a year. He was in full agreement with me.

I also referred to the Gazette notification issued by the President not to cut coconut trees and fruit trees.

The G. A. told me the difficulty and cost of laying an underground cable. I pointed out that, with the advancement of engineering, electrical cables are laid and maintained under the sea and there is no reason why our engineers could not do it. He made an order that the cutting of coconut trees, fruit trees and the temple should be avoided.

Despite all our vehement protests, a farce notice dated 10th December was posted

to taxpayers on 3rd January under registered cover stating that if no objections were made within 14 days from the date of notice action would be taken to erect posts after 30 days, but some posts were erected even before the posting of the notice.

The officers concerned seem to have no respect for the poor people whom they are expected to serve.

Nallur. P. S. Nathan

## COLONIAL RULE

The Editor,  
Saturday Review.

If Sinhalese and Tamils can face facts and accept the "divide and rule policy" of the colonial rulers as the cause for their current differences, we can find peace, unity, and happiness in our land overnight.

Tamils who formed less than 10 per cent of the Island's total population had held jobs and owned property completely out of proportion to their numbers. This was in keeping with the divide and rule policy of the colonial masters.

By the introduction of cheap Tamil Indian labour into the estates for their benefit the colonial rulers deprived the Sinhalese population in the wills of their lands.

By these two acts, colonial rulers had set a time bomb on post-independent Lanka?

The switch to Sinhala Only righted the wrong in regard to employment of Sinhalese youth in the public sector but it could not remedy the imbalance in regard to trade and ownership of commercial houses.

The July 1983 holocaust has remedied this imbalance. Now that the injustices caused to the Sinhala majority by the colonial rulers have been eliminated, should not the Sinhalese permit the Tamils to live, work, and contribute to the national economy as peasants, businessmen and industrialists in their own areas?

The causes of terrorism in the North and the East is the sudden closure to Tamil youth of all avenues of employment.

Will a father offer a stone to a child who asks for bread? Will the Government offer bullets to Tamil youth who ask for jobs?

A solution satisfactory to both sides can be found if the Government will view the Tamil problem as a humane problem more than as a communal or ethnic issue.

D. J. Tharmotheram  
Colombo 6.



# Tamils must have their own cultural home

(Continued from last week)

Apart from electoral pressure which the Government will find difficult to resist, it may be rightly considered that a person proficient in the official language will prove more useful as a public servant. The chances are that in course of time very few Tamils will be able to find government employment unless it be in the Northern and Eastern Provinces and there too only if the regional administration is carried on in the Tamil language.

This is a situation to which the Tamil people have to reconcile themselves. Though at first sight it might appear a great hardship, yet it is worthwhile to pay this price for the sake of communal peace and amity. The keen competition in the field of public employment has been the principal cause of ill-will and friction between the two nationalities.

The entire political thinking of the Tamil leadership during the past 30 years has been dominated by the one idea of conserving to the Tamils their position in the Public Service. It is this which has contributed to some reactionary proposals made by this leadership in the past and the consequent impression created in the minds of the Sinhalese people that the Tamils were against the progress of the country.

## Fatal Blow

The "Sinhala Only" Act has dealt a fatal blow to the position of the Tamils in the Public Service, and the educated youth of the Tamil country will have to seek other avenues of employment. The main fields in which they can hope to be employed are agriculture and industry, particularly in the homelands of the Tamil people.

Despite the intense racial propaganda of the last fifteen months, there is hardly any animosity between the farmer in the Northern Province and his counterpart in the South. It is significant that during the communal troubles in June 1956, the area in which there was the most serious rioting and bloodshed was Gal Oya, which had a mixed population.

If one desires to avoid communal friction it is not

advisable to create rural settlements with mixed populations in the present state of economic development of the country.

The above considerations will show the desirability of adopting regional autonomy as a solution to our troubles. If this is done, some Tamil citizens will be able to find employment under the regional authority while others will be able to embark on agricultural and industrial pursuits in the regions set apart for them, without coming into collision with their Sinhalese fellow citizens.

In course of time, with an expanding economy and full employment which must necessarily result with the establishment of a truly socialist pattern of society, friendship and understanding are bound to replace the present hostility between the two nationalities. No doubt, life in the region will not be a bed of roses, particularly for a class of people who have been prize-winning office jobs and professional careers, but without sacrifice and hardwork on the part of the Tamil people there can be no lasting or permanent solution of our internal conflicts.

Besides, it is the duty of the government to take the necessary steps to solve the ever-increasing problem of Tamil unemployment which will result from the full implementation of the Sinhala Only policy and to alleviate in some measure the inevitable economic distress in the Tamil areas.

Government has not seriously addressed itself to this problem perhaps because it has not yet become acute, but it cannot afford to wait until it does become acute to search for a solution.

If it seriously examines the question now it will find that regional autonomy affords a satisfactory solution of the problems created for the Tamil people by the passing of the "Sinhala Only" Act, without causing any prejudice to the Sinhalese nationality.

It must also be remembered that the right to his national culture is a basic right of every citizen. Ever since the first European war it has been widely recognised by most thinking people that minorities must be protected against the danger of their "losing their na-

tional character and that an individual could not enjoy human rights in any meaningful sense unless adequate recognition was given to the ethnic collectivity of which he was an integral part".

The present Government has taken the right step in recognising Tamil as a medium of instruction for Tamils from the kindergarten to the university. But this alone is not sufficient to protect the Tamil people against losing their national character. The language, customs, culture and traditions of a people are preserved not in cosmopolitan towns but in the village and the countryside.

If one took a group of people speaking the Tamil language and settled them in large numbers in colonisation schemes in the Southern Province among people

region within the Tamil people may be able to participate in the administration and share in the cultural life of their nationality.

This shows the necessity of creating an autonomous region which could absorb all Tamil citizens and their descendants inclusive of those who will be thrown out of employment or who will be unable to secure employment once the "Sinhala Only" Act is fully implemented.

If the Tamil people are given the land in their own areas to develop, and if they have an assurance that this land will be there for them and their descendants, they should not worry about losing their position in the Public Service and the professions. With hard work they should be able to develop their region and contribute substantially to the

protecting the cultural and economic interests of a minority nationality must recognise "a higher national unity and superior national interests which transcend the interests of the particular national region".

Regional autonomy affords a reasonably satisfactory method of resolving the conflict between the ideal of a nationally homogenous state and the reality of ethnic and cultural heterogeneity. It reconciles the right of self-determination of a minority nationality with the sovereignty of the State.

"Sovereignty has its own natural limits; chief of these is the duty of respecting the liberties or rights of the individual including his right to national liberty. But national liberty is also not an absolute right; it is only to be asserted to the degree in which it is compatible with organised social life".

If one bears the above principles in mind it should not be difficult to evolve a satisfactory scheme of regional autonomy. The Regional Council Bill published by the Government cannot serve the purpose unless it is suitably modified, because it has been framed to meet a totally different set of circumstances.

It must further be recognised that the ordinary rights of democratic local self-government in towns and countries, communes and departments, are not an adequate answer to the demand for regional autonomy. It is an essential element in the claim of nationality that the nation or sub-nation should be treated as a unity. Even names are important in this connection.

If once the principle of regional autonomy is accepted it should not be difficult to work out the details with the assistance, if need be, of well-known experts on the subject.

The adoption of such a scheme will prove beneficial not only to the Tamils but also to the Sinhalese people.

by

S. Nadesan

who cherish a different language and culture, one would be undermining the national character of the people of the area.

The same applies to large-scale colonisation of the Tamil areas by Sinhalese colonists. The principal method of affording protection to a minority culture and language is to carve out a territorial area in which such minority is concentrated and in which there should be no state-aided colonisation by persons speaking a different language and belonging to a different culture. If such colonisation is permitted it will be detrimental to both cultures.

It should also be noted that the language of a people cannot be adequately safeguarded unless it is used in some measure in the daily administration of the region in which such people are concentrated. Thus, the demarcation of a region in which the Tamil nationality is concentrated and the employment of Tamil in the administration of the region are two essential pre-requisites for the protection of the Tamil language and culture.

The Government cannot carry out its avowed policy of affording such protection unless it carries to its logical conclusion its educational policy and demarcates a

economic prosperity of the country. Moreover they will have a cultural home in which their language which is found in its pristine purity only in Ceylon will flourish. This will also remove all causes of friction and hostility between the two nationalities, and usher in an era of friendship and fruitful co-operation. All these results can be achieved only if there is an adequate measure of regional autonomy.

Though the term autonomy in its original meaning includes the concept of independence, the term as generally used now implies a relationship between a social body and a power to which it is subordinate. One cannot ask for a separate state within a state and call it regional autonomy.

The basis of regional autonomy is that the state for the sake of peace and contentment of a minority grants a certain measure of self-government within the political framework of the state so that the minority nationality may develop a "regional individuality" and also participate fully in the public life of the community.

The population is thus afforded full scope for the exercise of its political energies and it will feel that it governs itself in matters which vitally affect it. It should however be noted that regional autonomy while



# PROBLEMS OF LAW & ORDER

Ethnic conflict between the Sinhalese and the Tamils is a matter of history. If one takes into account the sporadic engagements between them, culminating in the Dutugemunu-Elara duel which led to the rationalisation on geographical deployment, whereby the Tamils inhabit the North and East of Ceylon and the Sinhalese inhabit the remainder of the country.

Conflict lay dormant in the colonial period but differences surfaced during the British period, when preferences given to the Tamil people were resented by the Sinhalese. Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike sought to redress these and other differences by some form of federal arrangement based on Tamil control of the North. Mr. Ponnambalam for his part saw merit in a 50/50 arrangement, involving parity of some sort whereby, the Sinhalese would have 50 percent of seats in the proposed Parliament of independent Ceylon, whilst all other communities would share the other 50 percent. Neither of these initiatives succeeded and public accepted the view of Mr. D. S. Senanayake and UNP Prime Ministers who succeeded him, which were based on Sinhala/Tamil participation in the Cabinet, with Sinhala preponderance.

## Abortive Efforts

The situation changed with formation of the MEP Government under Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike who brought into being the Sinhala Only Act of 1956. This generated Tamil hostility which in turn led to ethnic conflict which was experienced on a mild scale in 1956, widened to island wide proportions in 1958, continued in 1977, 1979 and 1981 and ended on a gigantic scale in 1983.

Efforts at resolving the problems raised by the Jaffna Tamils were made on their behalf by Mr. Cheivanayakam, both with Mr. Bandaranaike of the SLFP and with the UNP Government under Mr. Dudley Senanayake. During this period, Mr. Chelvanayakam advocated a federal arrangement as most acceptable to the Tamils in the devolution of power. With the failure of these initiatives, the situation deteriorated during the regime of Mrs. Bandaranaike and the Tamils decided that federalism was inadequate for the satisfaction of their demands. The Federal Party was accordingly replaced by the creation of the Tamil United Liberation Front which

demanding a separation of the country. There was a parallel development, in the formation of a terrorist organisation called the Liberation Tigers designed to undertake terrorist activity against the organs of the Government.

## Recent Developments

The advent of the UNP Government under President Jayewardene disclosed an identification of the problems of the Tamil people and an effort to settle them. He accordingly entered into negotiation with the leaders of the T.U.L.F. in the search for a political solution. The process took longer than was anticipated or was indeed desirable. This was perhaps the result of the complexities of the situation facing the negotiators. There were, concurrent developments abroad which aggravated this situation by hardening TULF attitudes. For one thing, the TULF was being supported by Tamil expatriates in various parts of the world, who gave moral and financial assistance. The TULF was also being supported by persons of Tamil origin resident in Tamil Nadu in India. This was evident in the political field through the staging of demonstrations, apart from protestations of support both in and outside the Tamil Nadu legislature. Concurrently, there was physical support of the local terrorists who were enabled to take refuge in Tamil Nadu, if they were evading arrest by the Sri Lanka authorities, and to set up training facilities in Tamil for their personnel, in their confrontation with the law enforcement authorities in Sri Lanka. Increasing evidence of terrorist activities in the Northern region became evident including attacks on banks, on government institutions, on government personnel and on personnel sympathetic to the Government culminating in due course in attacks on service personnel. There is ample evidence that the significance of all these matters was duly noted by the Sinhalese people.

The Government reacted by giving special orders to Armed Services to bring the terrorist activities under control, the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and other relevant enactments. It would be profitable to examine service reactions at this stage. A basic factor was one of hostility to being separated from families, even though on a roster footing. A second was the unattractiveness of the Northern region from a welfare standpoint. Thirdly,

This paper was presented as a background document for the Seminar on "Security in a Multi-Ethnic Society" held at the Marga Institute recently.

the service found themselves unwelcome in the North, because its people, having advocated separatism in the 1977 elections, not merely became unco-operative but even hostile. Perhaps the language barrier, which made communication between servicemen and civilian difficult, resulted in what has been described as brutal behaviour on the part of the servicemen, leading inevitably to the services being treated as forces of "occupation". Additionally, there arises the fact that, given the parallel initiative of the Government to find a political solution, the services were placed in an invidious position, by the need to harmonise military activity with the imperative of a political solution. This perhaps accounts for the assessments of the analysts that the services preferred to react to terrorist activity, rather than take positive initiatives. Be that as it may, there is some evidence that these factors contributed to some frustration which perhaps led to a lowering of morale. Finally, even allowing for a lack of knowledge of the precise situation, there is unquestionably the possibility that the expansion of the services may have led to a lowering of standards not merely of discipline but also of leadership.

The position was being compounded by the fact that, increasingly, the ethnic aspects of the matter were surfacing. On this basis, the servicemen tended to take note of the fact that, when his comrade is attacked, the attack is by a Tamil and not necessarily by a transgressor of the law whose ethnic character is not in issue. The fact that he himself was concurrently a Sinhalese therefore became more and more evident and perhaps more and more decisive. This is the setting in which the ambushing of the thirteen soldiers in July this year took place. That this was an outrage against the persons of Sinhalese and not necessarily the result of military engagement during service deployment, became the predominant thought. The result would in the circumstances be predictable and we have evidence of the comrades of deceased soldiers going on the rampage in Jaffna and their associates in the Navy going on the rampage in Trincomalee. It was a demonstration of esprit de corps which is inculcated in

"the services—unquestionably laudable in normal terms but reprehensible, when one notes that the actions were directed against innocent civilians, and certainly in breach of discipline.

## The Disturbances

The events at Kanatte when the bodies of the thirteen soldiers were brought to Colombo were the inevitable sequel to what has been discussed above. Those who assembled at Kanatte for what was meant to be a solemn burial with military honours were, at the core, the emotionally disturbed next of kin, their close relatives and associates from their villages and the equally emotionally disturbed comrades of the soldiers. They were joined by the inevitable sightseers and rubbernecks, largely from the local shanties. The delay in the arrival of the cortege created speculation at first but developed into hostility when a funeral at night appeared to be the intention. It was not difficult for "ag-

lists in the hands of the mobs and the drill towards destruction disclosed a prior planning and method which was uncanny. So far, the identity of the mobs has not been established, leading inevitably to the current speculation whether they were part of the "private armies" of some politicians or whether they were members of political parties which have been proscribed by the Government for suspected complicity.

We suggest that it is imperative that such speculation should come to an end that action be speedily taken to punish offenders who are identified. The Government owes such action, not only to the public but also to itself.

There was a third phase, namely the looting phase, which was extensive but readily controlled, because of the ease with which the looters were identified and arrested. Given the identity of such looters as shanty dwellers, it is logical to suggest that future security risks from the same sources would be reduced, if the dwellers are removed to

## by Maj. Gen. Anton Muttukumaru

(Former Commander of the Sri Lanka Army and Retired Ambassador)

ents provocateurs" to whip the crowd into a spirited move to close the graves which had been dug and into a frenzy, when the police teargassed the crowd, which now turned into a seething mob. In determining the psychology of mobs, it is customary to say that they are unthinking and bent only on destruction. In this case the destruction was selective and the nature of the targets selected for destruction, which were all Tamil, suggested that the mob was impelled by a common motive. Clearly, the ethnic character of the events in Jaffna and South India culminating in the thirteen deaths, which had been duly publicised by the media, had not passed unnoticed and what was witnessed was a demonstration of Sinhalese fury which demanded immediate vengeance, before it would abate.

If the foregoing was bad, what followed was worse. Colombo now witnessed, not the spontaneous uprising just discussed, but a precise and systematic orgy of destruction, directed at Tamil commercial establishments big and small and Tamil residences, palatial and moderate. The precision shown in the identification of targets from

places outside Colombo and set up in quarters consistent with their dignity as citizens.

The carnage and destruction in Colombo was followed by similar destruction in the outstations where again the Tamils were the victims, whilst many attacks were made on the persons and property of Indian origin, thus clearly demonstrating Sinhalese reaction to the South Indian support of the Sri Lanka Tamils.

This is the setting in which the law enforcement authorities had to operate. It is to be noted that the Armed Services and the Police are not new to ethnic violence. Both in 1956 and 1958, and later in 1977, 1979 and 1981, the country went through periods of ethnic violence but the forces were able to contain it with demonstrable rapidity and without the terrible and terrifying destruction to property and risk to human life which erupted this year. In this case, the Armed Services failed to contain the mobs till the latter had achieved their destructive purpose.

There are many causes to which this has been ascribed which are worth setting out. One was the totally unexpected turn of events and the spontaneity and speed



# STEMMING FROM CONFLICT

with which initial mob reactions erupted. A second was the size of the mobs. In contrast to the size of the security forces which have been described as very thin on the ground until the mobilisation of the volunteer forces took place effectively. A third was a delayed deployment of troops and a delayed imposition of a curfew, which had an undeniable impact on the control of the mobs. A fourth was the ethnic rapport which appeared to exist between the forces and the mobs, who have been reported to have openly cheered the forces and who indicated that they were destroying Tamil establishments, as an act of retaliation for the killing of the thirteen soldiers, thereby inhibiting the services from interfering with their destructive purposes. A fifth is closely connected with the fourth, as it centres round the assertion that the mobs were identified as members of the "private armies" of political personages or as members of political parties, having adherents in the forces.

The cumulative effect of these factors is that they disclose a lack of effectiveness on the part of the law enforcement authorities which the public is entitled to expect from them, whatever the extenuating circumstances are. There is consequently a feeling of insecurity which is being currently experienced.

## Insecurity

This feeling of insecurity has been heightened by the Government thesis which has been publicised, according to which the July disturbances reflected merely the first phase of a deep laid plot, exploiting Sinhala-Tamil hostility, which will be followed by a second phase involving Sinhalese and Muslims, a third phase involving Buddhists and Christians, all of which would weaken the Government which would inevitably fall with the military intervention of sections of the services hostile to the Government.

This has led to considerable speculation among many sections of the community at large, as to their possible involvement in a security situation in which they would be vulnerable, and in particular, whether the law enforcing authorities would be equal to the task of ensuring security should they be threatened. The Tamils in the South of Sri Lanka are particularly perturbed because they find that, although the demand for separatism was voiced in the voting in the North (resulting in the election of members of the TULF) to which they in the South were not a party, the targets of

the mobs operating in July were Tamil persons and premises in the South. They feel that because their ancestors settled down in the South and because they themselves have proven interests in the South, whether for professional, commercial, industrial or personal reasons, they should receive immunity from retaliation. Their view is echoed by members of other communities (Muslim, Borah, Baratha and also Sinhala particularly if they are Christian) because they are disturbed and wish to be assured that their security is sacrosanct.

## Remedial initiatives

It is our view that the Government bears a special responsibility to ensure such security, not merely because it flows from an inherent right which a citizen should enjoy, but also because it has an added responsibility, since the enactment of the Sixth Amendment, to persons of the South who have eschewed separatism and have sought membership of a unitary state, to be guaranteed the protectiveness of the security forces of the Government, so as to ensure freedom from insecurity or, in the words of the UN charter, freedom from fear.

There is evidence that it is such fear that is uppermost in the minds of many Tamils who refuse to return to their normal habitat, in the aftermath of the July disturbances. It is self evident that, so long as there is such disinclination to return to normalcy, the individual concerned is divorced from the main stream of national life and therefore makes no contribution to such life. The impact of such divorce will be felt in two sectors. One is the process of economic regeneration which must, given the grievous destruction experienced during the July holocaust, represent a matter of paramount importance to the Government and its people. The other is the process of national reconciliation between the Sinhalese and the Tamils, which must constitute an imperative in the planning for nation-building which will surely be retarded without such reconciliation.

Given the extent of the emotional trauma which the services have experienced, some of the unpleasant reactions discussed above would have been predictable. The public is however aware that such reaction have not been universal and that there have been many instances where services steadfast and maintain law and order. Such action is, we recognise, within the highest

traditions of the services which deserves public approbation. We also understand that many delinquents identified during the recent riots have been weeded out of the services. This again is within service tradition. Following this, we would suggest that the Government consider giving due publicity to such weeding out action, so long of course as such publicity does not reduce morale. We believe that publicity will go far to restore confidence in the minds of the public. In urging this, we are mindful of the many instances being brought to our notice that, even now after months following the ethnic violence, there are representatives of the services who are harsh and even insulting to Tamil persons when instituting search. The right of the services to search is of course recognised, but we suggest that there is no need to humiliate the person being searched or to treat him as though he is a terrorist or a terrorist sympathiser.

What we advocate is that a proper climate of understanding between the services and the public be created. In such climate, the fear of the services which today exists will be eliminated and the image of the of the services will revert to that of fairness and impartiality which they have been able to project in the past.

In ensuring the future effectiveness of the services, the Government will undoubtedly take into account some of the weaknesses that have been disclosed. This would we believe, include up to date techniques of intelligence and security. It would also involve organising, equipping and training the services, in anti-terrorist operations. It would certainly involve attention to what the public is entitled to expect in the members of the Armed Services charged with law enforcement responsibilities - namely a professionalism which would exploit methods of intelligence enabling the location of their terrorist adversaries, employ tactical skill leading to the outwitting of such adversaries with the minimum risk to life and property and, if death should eventuate, to accept such fate as part of military engagement, which would justify punitive action only against the adversary causing such death and would certainly not tolerate action against defenceless citizens.

We would suggest the merit of the following:-

Firstly, the desirability of increasing the Tamil content in the services. The matter of the lack of communication has been mentioned above. There

is however the even more important factor of creating understanding between the communities, which will be served by the admixture which we advocate. We are aware that, in the recruitment to the services, Tamil involvement has been slow but we suggest that special efforts should be taken to adjust attitudes which are currently inhibitive.

Secondly, we suggest that the Government consider the merit of utilising the services of young Ex-servicemen who have been exposed to ethnic violence during their service, in the expectation that their experience could be of advantage to the serviceman who had not such exposure.

Thirdly, we believe that the Government intends to set up Home Guard units and Vigilance Committees to supplement the work of the security forces in the actual neighbourhoods in which such Home Guards and Vigilance Committees live. The sharing of security responsibilities underlying such a scheme is important and the initiative should be encouraged. We suggest that there is merit in the Government recruiting the services of older Ex-servicemen, who have had experience of being members of the Home Guard Units and National Defence Service Units (since disbanded), so as to provide the hard core of the new Units now being contemplated. The support of the Sri Lanka Ex-servicemen Association can be sought in tracing the whereabouts of the Ex-servicemen who can

be of service.

Fourthly, we wish to mention for further consideration, the importance which should be attached to some of the imponderables which have received mention in this paper. The most notable of these imponderables are the restoration of morale, the raising of standards of discipline and stiffening of leadership by ensuring that leadership qualities are properly assessed before selection for command and developed during service.

Finally, there is the all important matter of "esprit de corps" which must be directed to the furtherance of a national purpose, from which the individual must not be diverted no matter how imperative such diversion might appear to be. The servicemen should surely consider himself to be a participant in a national purpose and eschew all restrictive thinking, whether it springs from ethnic or other narrow considerations.

What the services have experienced following the July disturbances is a measure of diminution in public approbation of performance, which contrasts with approbation of earlier performance in ethnic conflict. It is a situation from which they will, and indeed must, recover. In the recovery process, the public of this country should make the services aware of the reality underlying the dictum, so succinctly stated by a great British jurist that, "in the long run, it is on the maintenance of law and order that civilised society depends".

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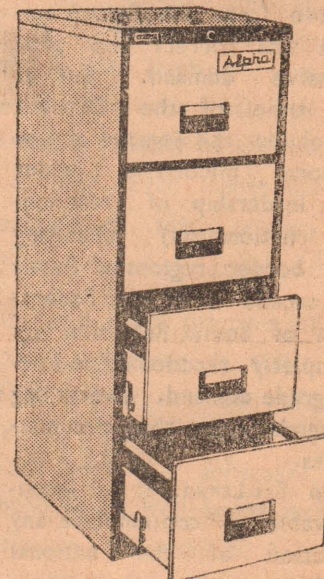
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(Continued from last issue)

It was because the Tamil leadership felt they could not obtain these demands inside a unitary state that they put forward the extreme demand of separation. But it is possible to grant the essence of these demands by means of some form of regional autonomy or a federal State. This is the proposal that the Ceylon Communist Party has been putting forward ever since 1958. This is the only solution that could today solve the national problems of Ceylon Tamils.

The Ceylon Communist Party had advised the Tamil leaders not to put forward the demand for a separate state of Eelam for the simple reason that it could not find any support from any section of the Sinhalese people, even from the non-communal and good, hearted Sinhalese people of whom many sheltered and protected Tamils during the communal violence of July 1983 even at great personal risk to themselves. Partly, it is because they do not like to see the small island truncated and partly it is due to pure sentiment. What ever it is, these sentiments must be respected. The correctness or incorrectness of any demand of any section of the people can only be tested by the question as to whether it unites or divides the progressive and revolutionary movement of the whole country - and whether it serves the interest of the revolutionary movement. Judged by this standard the demand for Eelam is both unfortunate and incorrect.

This is not a question of the denial of the right of self-determination, including the right to secession. The right to secession does not mean that the right can be exercised under any circumstance. As has already been said earlier, during the second world war, the demand of India and Egypt for Self-determination and to secede from the British empire was correct and progressive demand. But at the time of the October Revolution the demand of the national minorities (under the leadership of reactionary nationalists) inhabiting the border regions of Russia to secede from the Federation of Soviet Republics was completely reactionary and retrograde demand. Everything depends upon the circumstances.

In Sri Lanka, it is inconceivable to contemplate any solution of the national problem within the context of the existing neo-colonial state represented by the UNP puppet government. Neither the Sinhala bour-

# WHY MANY JAFFNA WOMEN REMAIN UNMARRIED

geoisie not the Tamil bourgeoisie genuinely wants this problem solved because it would deprive them of the basis for their political existence. Besides, the Tamil problem can only be solved in the context of solving the problem of neo-colonial servitude of the whole of Sri Lanka. I am a Marxist first and a Tamil second. What does this mean? It means that I look for the solution of the Tamil problem only in the context of the solution of the problem of the semi-colonial oppression of the whole of Sri Lanka.

It is the UNP that is the Common enemy and oppressor of both the Tamil people as well as the Sinhala workers, peasants and radical intelligentsia. Common sense, therefore, demands that all the forces that could be united against the UNP unite behind a common programme, which should include as one of its points a just solution of the Tamil problem and under a revolutionary leadership. Only on the basis of the overthrow of the UNP and its neo-colonial over-lords at the hands of the forces united against the UNP can there be any basis for the solution of the Tamil problem. Anything else is fantasy and gross deception of the people.

It is equally imperative for the revolutionary and working class among the Sinhalese to unconditionally and unhesitatingly to support the just demands of the Tamil people and their struggle in support of them and fight against all manifestations of Sinhalese chauvinism and communalism and to forge a close alliance with the Tamils against the UNP.

At the same time it behoves the Tamil people and, particularly, the militant youth to correctly assess who their enemies and allies are and to fight against the real enemy alongside the real allies. The Tamil people must realise that among them live a third of their numbers who speak their own language but are socially disregarded as so-called depressed caste and untouchables. They are among the best revolutionary fighters among the Tamils. They are afraid that any government or state under the leadership of Mr. Amirthalingam, Sivasithamparam or Tharmalingam would be tantamount to going back

to feudalism when they were treated as slaves. The militant youth must recognise these sections as allies and must raise the demand for the abolition of untouchability and the caste system. If a few timid upper caste Tamils withdraw because of this, that is no tragedy. But the movement would have won a powerful and revolutionary ally.

So is the question of women. Today in Jaffna, many women remain unmarried because of the curse of the dowry system which is getting worse and worse. The youth must raise the demand for the abolition of the system of dowry and thus attract the women to their movement.

Similarly, the people must recognise that they have potential allies among the Sinhalese. It could very well be that, at the moment there might be no discernible revolutionary movement among the Sinhalese. But dialectics teaches us that nothing stays still. Everything changes.

appeal that they should make common cause with the rest of the anti-UNP and anti-imperialist movement of the country. For a short time, about the middle of 1980, when the general strike of 1980 had failed and general government repression against the masses increased, we were able to draw them into a common alliance with the SLFP, the LSSP, the MEP and our CCP directed against the UNP. Only the CPSL, the NSSP and the JVP refused to come into the alliance. This five-parties alliance did a lot of anti-UNP propaganda in different parts of the country.

It was as a result of this unity that in the middle of 1981, when elections were held to the district development councils, the SLFP, for the first time in its history, supported the candidates of the TULF at Trincomalee and Amparai despite the fact that the SLFP itself was boycotting the

who could then have acted as their saviours. The Tamil people should at least now know that the people at whose hands they suffered so horribly in July 1983 were the forces allied to the "friends" of the TULF - the UNP - with whom they were having friendly discussions to the last.

The conclusion of all this reasoning is that the problem of Tamil minorities cannot be solved without the unity of all the forces opposed to the including the Tamils, and without the revolutionary overthrow of the UNP and its neo-colonial overlords.

I have dealt mainly with the problem of the Sri Lankan Tamil minority. But the problem of the Indian Tamil minority, is a completely different kettle of fish. These men were brought by British colonialists to slave in their plantations during middle of the last century. Nearly a million Indian Tamil workers were dumped in the midst of the Kandyans whose lands had been earlier robbed by the British through such laws as the Waste Land Ordinance of 1948 and 1897 etc. This accounts for the anti-Indian sentiment of the Sinhalese who lived in villages surrounding the plantations in conditions which were then even worse than that of the Tamil workers.

(Continued Next Week)

by N. Sanmugathasan

As the effect of the world's economic crisis begins to affect our economy which has taken as ever beating as a result of the recent communal violence; and as the UNP government transfers the burdens of this crisis on to the shoulders of the masses - both Sinhalese and Tamils - revolutionary movement will develop among the workers, peasants and radical intelligentsia. We must be patient and have faith in the revolutionary sections of the Sinhalese. For a cart to move forward both bulls (Sinhalese and Tamils) must pull together. There is no other way to bring down the UNP and neo-colonialism.

It is precisely this failure on the part of the TULF to distinguish between who the enemy is and who the allies are, and in particular, to identify and find allies among the Sinhalese people that has led it to its present plight and complete isolation from all the political forces of Sri Lanka. From the very beginning, it refused to recognise that the UNP was the main enemy of both TULF and the Tamil people. They refused our

elections. This enabled the TULF to defeat the UNP easily.

This was the chance that the TULF must have grasped with both hands. They should have developed this unity into a firm alliance on the basis of a common programme which should have included as one of its main clauses a just solution for the Tamil problem. But they did the very opposite. By then the government had got jittery about the possibility of all the forces opposed to it being united in a common front. It made overtures to the TULF for discussions and the latter fell for these blandishments. Several discussions were held between the UNP and the TULF and, as the TULF now complains, nothing came out of them and even whatever was agreed was never honoured.

If ever there was a chance of having averted the terrible catastrophe that recently overtook the Tamils in July 1983, it could only have happened if the TULF and the Tamil people had been united in a firm alliance with the rest of the Sinhalese Anti-UNP forces

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# IN CEYLON'S TEA GARDEN

From time to time  
from the highway  
I shall strike  
upon my harp  
And sing my song...

I sing of Lanka's men  
born of  
the paddy field,  
the patnas,  
the tea  
and rubber land;  
Yes, the men I love.

To the tom-tom's throb  
The dawn lies startled  
Trembling upon the tea;  
The last dew bead is fresh  
Before the morning treads  
On this mating hour,  
Where suffering and pain  
Decay and death are one  
In the life - throb  
In the breathing of men

The tom-tom's throb!  
It resounds and sighs  
In the still mountains  
And the soundless valleys;  
They in their ancient vigil  
Keep in a record of bones  
The tears and the sweat  
Of a hundred years.

My men!  
They lie dust under dust  
Beneath the tea;  
No wild weed flowers  
Or memories token  
Tributes raise  
Over their humble mould.  
The sons trample,  
Over the fathers' biers!  
O shame! what man  
Ever gave them a grave?  
Only God in His Grace  
Covered them with His grass.

Withered roses their days  
Remembered in thorns  
Unchanged in each detail  
Days like other days;  
So have the hundred years  
Gone one by one  
To the tom-tom's throb!

The endless monotone  
Of the green expanse  
Of the rolling tea-land,  
Set tier on tier  
Sheds her shimmering haze  
Against rock-ridden hills  
Beyond horizon's eye...  
The grevillea's flame  
Besides abizzia's shade  
Seeks the kinship lost  
From the jungle tide...  
Where the Na trees  
And the kumbuks grew,  
Where feline life  
And Big Ones moved  
In regal grace;  
Upon their highroads  
Now shanties and sheds  
In grim aloofness built  
Wear the desert face...  
The red gravelled path  
From factory to field  
The wire shoots above  
The bridges far below  
Over bridges and river  
Bring the distant near.

Dark ravines foaming white  
Between flushing fields  
Of maturing tea  
Make the beckoning call.  
Its urge ignites the fire  
In muscles and marrow  
Of lithe-limbed lasses -  
Mothers and matrons  
Fieldwards drawn they go,  
Baskets flung a ross  
Beat rhythm on their flanks:  
Their leaf-shaped eyes  
Their star centres  
Scan the flushing rows,  
And deft fingers clip  
Two leaves and a bud,  
Two leaves and a bud.

Here no noontide's fire  
Or monsoon's flail

Or water's swelling ire  
Stay the anklet feet;  
The baskets glimmer  
The tea's golden foam.  
The load full poised  
The frail caravan  
Moves machine's pace  
Over crag and cliff;  
Awaiting the hour  
Behind the scales.

For a minor lapse  
Or a minor slip:  
A coarse leaf or two  
Or lagging on the row  
Or late arrival  
From the cresche,  
Bring on its trail  
A hail of abuse  
Or turning off the field.  
They scar the nights  
Of renewed toil  
Amidst household cares  
To feed and foster  
Her man and child...

Weary grow her limbs  
On midnights' mat;  
Her star-centred eyes  
Between wake and sleep  
Dream of dawn's white grin  
And the tom-tom's throb.  
Thus her nights enfold  
A round of broken days  
And empty years

And O, how often  
While in harness  
Factory or field  
Authority forgot  
The original shame  
Unknown to Eve  
And crucified the flesh!  
Mother earth then  
Her bosom laid waste  
Raped and ravaged  
Sighed and sobbed  
For lost womanhood...  
Their dignity defiled,  
A tragedy for the ages  
Lie broken and profaned  
For a hundred years  
And the tom-tom throbs.

My bronze-bodied man  
Noose the morning light  
From dell to dale,  
From upland and inclines  
Echoes rise and fall  
To the rhythm of pickaxe  
Mammoty, fork and crowbar.  
Forkers and pruners  
Ferners and sprayers  
Each skilled in the task  
They enter the field.  
Disturbed beehives, their hearts

Their hands honey-combs  
Drip warm with the sweat,  
Eight hours in a day  
Seven times in a week;  
Thus their life blood flows  
To fashion this land  
A paradise for some.

What man dare speak  
His fettered, unbroken  
Days of drudgery -  
That sole legacy  
From sire to son!  
Harried by debt  
Poverty and shame  
Bound to the cart-wheel  
A beast of burden  
Cowed and bent  
To a lesser beast,  
An outcast  
From the mainland  
And here a holot  
Stripped of his name -  
A reproach and danger  
To his kin and clime  
He bides his time  
For a destiny.

The weeders and coochmen  
Reflect and recall,  
Their days now and then;  
How their sires came  
From across the seas.  
The Musalman's boat song  
The wind upon the mast  
The fast swelling sails

Waft here across the coast  
A mother's sigh for a son  
A sister's tear for a brother,  
Who sold their souls  
For gold beneath the tea.  
The blame the boatmen  
The wind upon the sails,  
The first immigrant who came  
Footsore on weary trek  
And through Anuradha fell  
Languid, broken, dead!

Their bleached bones tell  
Unflagging onward march  
From old Manner  
Through Kurunegala  
And Tamil Matala  
To time-known Kandy's land,  
Where the virgin jungle  
Shrieked under woodman's

axe;  
There amidst her contours  
The coffee trees gleamed  
The coffee beads beamed.

Beyond unscaled mountains  
Ere the rail tracks came;  
The macadamed road  
Buildings and bridges rose  
Over the leopard's lair!  
The Thavala and stage coach  
The postman with bell spear  
Brought state to estate  
Brought city to hamlet;  
And so began to shape  
England's Eden, the planters'

raj  
For over a hundred years  
To the tom-tom's throb.

by

C. V. Velupillai

This poem by a well-known short-story writer, poet and trade union worker, which was first published in Sri Lanka in 1956, has relevance today in the context of the growing unrest on the plantations.

Here is no hamlet -  
Nor deserted village  
Where manhood grew  
Where history made  
The sword and fire!  
Here is but a row  
Of tin-roofed lines -  
The very warehouse  
Where serfdom thrives.  
Within a scanty space  
Of ten by twelve  
There is the hearth and home  
Drenched in soot and smoke  
To eat and sleep,  
To incubate and breed  
To meet master's greed  
To meet master's creed.

Here are the old men -  
The broken mouths  
Of a broken age!  
No S. D. bids them tarry:  
No P. D. bid them wait  
Their autumn days done  
Their summer nights blown  
Their wine and vintage gone  
They rot and linger  
In a workless waste.  
Their guillotined ghosts  
Of old age pension  
Or retrenchment schemes  
Their hearts uprooted  
Thrown on the dust,  
With a tin for beggary  
A staff for support  
Await the final hour  
To cast their weary limbs  
Underneath the tea  
To the tom-tom's throb.

By the low-growing fence  
Where the sun-flowers shed  
Pollen on the sod  
The tea-birds sing.  
When night winds blow  
The country dogs greet  
The silver-ringed moon.  
Its shades on the wall  
Weave life's sweet cocoon

For children there born.  
The sun's sheen lay  
Deep in their flesh,  
Yet unkempt their hair  
Yet unwashed their skin  
They wallow in the mud,  
Brother to bandicoot  
Fowl and the brute.

They raid the garden round  
Or mock meetings hold  
In sun-flower groves,  
Or go about gathering  
Firewood in the fields  
Till mothers came home.  
Or the truant play  
When school hours near  
And hide among the tea.  
There is the muse  
Unlettered and weak  
Denies them the light.  
Future holds a blank  
Offers but a weeding  
Mammoty, fork and crowbar -  
A round of sweat and labour  
To the tom-tom's throb.

Here comes Pongal  
The new born year,  
With two days of ease  
With two days of peace.  
The clarion's call  
And magpies' plaint  
Coin the tranquil hour  
From silver pointed stars  
To chime Sun God's Song...  
Under dawn-lit shadows  
In sky coloured gardens  
The mango leaves agleam  
Fold awakening fires

For the oxen's eyes;  
And the lines breathe incense  
To the brightening hours  
Of Puja and song  
To cymbal and drum.

Festons and pandals  
Of banana and palm  
Deck the temple gate.  
Sandalwood and saffron  
Camphor, joss and incense  
Betel, nuts and plantain  
Butter, milk and rice  
Filled on burnished trays;  
The dark and houri-like  
Lissom lasses come,  
And the well arrayed men.  
Amidst the rent and clamour  
Of the temple bells' call  
And sanctimonious chant  
The variegated crowd  
Lifts the hand of prayer.

Now comes Deepavali  
The festival of lights  
With two days of rest  
With two days of joy  
For evil over passed.  
Oil baths and oil cakes  
Their old ties revive  
Of lost youth and lost hope  
Of love, life and fun,  
From father sire to son...

Peacock gay sarees  
And amber soft jackets  
Of dark green and yellow  
Their old ties renew.  
The vermilion hue  
Pencilled on the brow.  
Follower's red on lips  
They leave them neat  
They leave them sweet.  
And folk song and folk dance  
The rhythm and scent  
Of Kummie and Kolattam  
Oyle dance and Urumie  
Thamboor, crouch and drum  
Stir the jaundiced soul

And life for once in lover  
Swells within the tube.

Yet once more  
A vital freshness comes  
Of Madhan's tale retold  
Of its passion's pride  
And peerless love,  
By the noon-edged night  
Till the rising day...  
Through liquid hours  
The bonfires gleam  
The surging crowd  
Of man, woman and child  
Hear the age old songs  
Of Rati's golden charms  
To the tom-tom's throb.

And these days of peace  
And these days of ease  
Of the new born year  
And festival of lights  
And madam's tale retold  
One by one they go...  
Fleeting as these faces are.  
To mimic action mould  
A Pageant of a life  
That's forever tumbling  
That's forever crumbling,  
How can it compare  
With the power and pelf  
Of S. Ds or P. Ds  
Their master, Lord and Raj  
Whose right none disputes  
For theirs is the word  
For theirs is the world.

Wherever they be  
There is always an England  
Her sins and her grace  
True to England's soil  
Born of the beggared hands  
Of my bronze bodied men.  
The Cypress and Accacia  
Proclaim the ample lawn  
Where a red-brick mansion  
Or a modern house  
Forever majestic rise.  
It inhales morning's light  
Or reflects evening's hue.  
The rolling gardens round  
In cannas and rose abound  
The fern and the rock adorn  
The fountain and the pool  
Where water lilies glow  
Wrapt in England's dream;  
And thus keep a bower  
Full of sweet dreams  
And quiet breathing.  
For S. Ds and P. Ds -  
Their lives on the tide  
Rise as bank balance swell  
To the tom-tom's throb.

From the Coffee days,  
To these - our tea days,  
From the coffee picker  
To the tea plucker,  
Between the sigh and smile  
Between the sweat and rest  
The changes came and went...  
Not this mutability  
That's our theme.  
But the pit and barrier  
Within man and man  
Within man and State  
How the one forbids  
And the other denies...

Can Law's lawless fist  
Or the master's lasso.  
Hold the flesh a helot  
Or crush its rising fire?  
Never had spirit bowed  
To the wild hammer-stroke  
Or broke upon the wood;  
But rose a vestal flame  
To write man his name  
Shine upon his cross.

And so the tom-tom's throb  
That for a hundred years  
In fettered darkness held  
My bronze-bodied men,  
Shall sound yet again  
From the mountain heights  
To the valleys below  
With a clear call,  
With a surer call.

(Continued on page 10)



# JAFFNA - NO MAN'S LAND

In other countries, newspaper and television men and women are where the action is.

In Sri Lanka, some of the best action in recent weeks took place in Jaffna.

But not a single reporter or cameraman visited the Peninsula to find out what exactly is happening there.

The Colombo-based newspapers, even those which display some sense of independence, were content to publish the official press releases.

The outcome was that the readers got only a one-sided version of the events.

This is grossly unfair not only by the readers but also the country in general and the Tamil people in particular.

Is it that journalists who should be in the frontline of action, afraid to visit the North?

It appears to be so to some extent. One cameraman who agreed to visit Jaffna and for whom a ticket was booked in the Inter-City express failed to turn up at station. His sheepish explanation; "my wife hid my camera"!

But there seems to be more to it than mere fear that is keeping Colombo journalists away from Jaffna.

A lack of concern, prejudice and misunderstanding appeared to be woven into the thinking of the majority of them, which is a great pity.

And it is a great shame that it has to be left to foreign correspondents to

explain Sri Lankan readers in the South what is happening in the North.

## Not even by Pseudonym

What more has the Jayewardene Government to hide?

We are prompted to ask this question because of its decision to bring in legislation, by way of amendments to the Press Council Law, restraining the criticism of politicians even by innuendo and the use of pseudonyms by journalists.

It frequently happens that journalists are tipped off by their contacts of unsavoury goings on in various quarters.

Because of the laws of defamation, journalists cannot rush to print with the information.

If the persons involved are Members of Parliament, there is the Parliamentary (Powers and Privileges) Act also to contend with.

That is why journalists resort to innuendo, which enables them to use at least part of the information—but still with telling effect and at the same time not laying open their newspapers to costly litigation.

Sometimes, they prefer to write under pseudonyms, especially when the sources of information have to be protected.

These are common practices in newspapers.

For example, in the gold smuggling case, the name of the UNP parliamentarian involved was not mentioned by newspapers until he was

called upon to resign from his seat and the matter went to the courts.

Now there is the scandal about the alleged undervaluing of Benz cars by four parliamentarians. The newspapers have so far not published their names because if after inquiry it is found that these parliamentarians had done nothing wrong they could become liable, to legal

action.

The non-government newspapers in Colombo have not still launched a concerted and vigorous campaign against this latest move of the Government to throttle the Press.

It might be too late by the time they wake up.

## The Media Scene

### CROWS AND RATS

Once there was a "Kakka" (crow) whose behavi-

our did not enhance the reputation of the journalistic tribe.

When things began to get hot for him, he very diplomatically flew across the Palk Strait.

Now there is a Skunk, who is shunned by his tribe because of his evil smell. He is very concerned about his "Rupa" (figure), but that is all he can boast of.

His favourite past-time: ratting to the powers-that-be on the doings of journalists from Bangkok to Jaffna!

### APPRECIATION

#### Dr. J. R. WILSON

It is very hard to believe that Dr. J. R. Wilson had passed away. I met him only a few days before he died outside the sports ministry grounds at Torrington Square where he had gone for his physical exercises. He spoke to me for about five minutes in his usual buoyant spirit.

I had heard about Dr. Wilson many years ago, as many others had heard about him, as a doctor who had been in the forefront in the eradication of the then-dreaded disease number one, Tuberculosis, and who, by his dedicated and selfless service, had been regarded by many a patient as a demi-god. Some of them, it was said, virtually worshipped him.

But I came to know him personally only in the 70's when I was closely moving with the late Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam, Q. C. who was under the personal care of Dr. Wilson. On any day at any time he would readily respond to a call to see Mr. Chelvanayakam.

A friend of mine, a Sinhalese, who was suffering from T. B. had been in the Welisara Hospital when Dr. Wilson was there. After many years, in the 70's after Dr. Wilson had retired and was in private practice, he thought of going to him for a check-up and mentioned it to me. I offered to take him to Dr. Wilson, but my friend told me not to trouble myself saying that for any patient to see him such introductions were not necessary. To my friend, who had been a patient of Dr. Wilson, it was like going to his own father. He went and saw Dr. Wilson, who not only did not take any fees from him but also gave the medicine free, knowing my friend's financial position. Such was Dr. Wilson.

His basic good nature, religious upbringing, education, contact with men of learning and culture, professional

attainments, travels abroad that broaden one's mind and outlook, participation in sports and all combined in him in good proportions to mould a person of a fine calibre and character.

He was one of the small group of people in our country who could be at ease and at home with anyone of any race, creed or class and with whom anyone of any race, creed or class could be at ease and feel at home.

He was one of the (regrettably alas!) dwindling few among our people who are well-known and genuinely respected by large numbers of all races and creeds of our country serving as common bridges for the transmission of communication of different communities and creeds. In his lifetime he created no enemies nor did he become an enemy to anyone except, perhaps, to Tuberculosis.

Arul M. Rajendran  
Colombo - 13

#### X. M. SELLATHAMBU

The death of Mr. X. M. Sellathambu is hard to forget. He meant business and never indulged in loose talk. Not only was he true to his convictions, but he translated them into actions.

He took to politics after his retirement from the Public Service, prematurely of course but this a think was not to his liking. He was driven to it by circumstances created by the Government's language policy. He had to be content with being an additional Government Agent while his juniors got catapulted to much higher positions. Having served the Government for about 32 years and earned the reputation as an honest, efficient and impartial administrator, his desire, after his retirement, to serve his people could well be understood.

"X. M." to a few and "Sella" to many was a dynamic personality. He was a crusader in any task he undertook to accomplish,

based on his convictions. Creating a separate constituency for the people of Mullaitivu and representing that constituency after its creation and carving out a separate district called Mullaitivu and establishing a kachcheri there, are efforts of his that cannot be denied by anyone including those who were opposed to his leadership.

As a parliamentarian he was a seasoned debater and never confined his view to sectarian or party thoughts. His views expressed were all in the national interest. He excelled himself during budget debates with his well-meaning criticism, flowing from the brief prepared painstakingly with facts and figures.

He was not a plain critic. He suggested solutions and remedial measures, too.

He had no prejudice or hatred against anybody who disagreed with him. He had a very sharp mind to filter and see through the truth of whatever his constituents narrate or represent to him. The quickness with which he grasped a problem put to him had to be marvelled. Without referring to any notes, he could speak for hours to quote one instance, I might refer readers to the evidence he gave before the Sansoni Commission, lasting nearly three and a half hours, narrating various incidents on particular dates, having various people and places.

If he had lived to see the fulfilment of his dream of implementing an integrated development plan for the district that was fathered by him which has got off the ground, he would have surely died in peace.

Mullaitivu electorate will have to wait for years to get another Sellathambu to represent it.

C. Kumaraswamy  
Retd. A. G. A.

Nunavil East,  
Chavakachcheri.

## In Ceylon's Tea Garden

Continued from page 9)

From their voteless gloom  
From their stateless doom  
Of rights withered dross  
Shall wake another dawn;  
In that mating hour  
Where once life decayed  
Shall spring a fire-throb,  
In the breathing of men.

The tears and the sweat  
That for a hundred years  
Scattered on the dust,  
Gathered unto the might  
Of a risen sun  
Shall beget a million men,  
To march upwards and on  
To where great mornings wait  
For the tom-tom's throb.

### GLOSSARY

Cootch - men	— Aged workers who dig out Cootch-grass
Kandi	— Early immigrants' term for Ceylon
Thavala	— Pack - bulls
P. D.	— Peria Dorai - Superintendent
S. D.	— Sinna Dorai - Asst. Superintendent
Pongal	— Hindu festival of harvest
Deepavali	— Festival of lights
Kummie	— Folk dance; women clap and dance in circles
Kolattam	— Folk dance men play with sticks
Oyle	— Folk dance of men accompanied by song and drum beat
Urumie	— Folk dance of men accompanied by flute and drum beat
Madhan	— God of Love
Rathi	— Goddess of Love.



## Just Sit & Wait!

Computer-age prophet Arthur C. Clarke has proved himself right again. The sea erosion caused by coral destruction which he has been warning about for 20 years is becoming increasingly true.

Last week, the sea swept inland causing a lot of damage in two coastal villages, Seenigama and Kahawa, on the road between Ambalangoda and Galle.

On the eve of his departure to Washington, where he is to address the Arthur C. Clarke Foundation, the professor gave Sri Lankans a point to ponder.

"Ask your readers to ask themselves this question: Which is the greater danger—the terrorists who want to separate the country, or the people who are literally destroying it?"

He has an afterthought: "In fact, if the terrorists just sit and wait, the job will be done for them by the sea!"

Is it too late to save the coastline from total erosion?

"It is never too late to save anything", was his opinion, "after all, the house is only half burned down."

(Daily News, 10th April)

## Mohamed joins in the fray

The Minister of Transport Mr. M. H. Mohamed speaking on the no-confidence motion in Parliament on 6th April, asked what action the Government of India had taken against "terrorists" who entered India illegally.

He said that if the Indian Government was keen on creating about a climate of confidence with the Sri Lanka Government, it should say what action it proposed to take to achieve that end.

"We would like to know who has issued Indian passports for Lankan citizens," he said.

Mr. Mohamed also queried why Mr. Amirthalingam and others went to India and made "irresponsible statements" and what action India had taken about those statements.

He said, "The Minister of the Indian Government who made statement on those

### EDITORIAL-1

# Do not forget the Common Enemy

The dangers of delaying to find a political solution to the National Question were underscored poignantly by the tragic events in Jaffna this week.

*Many lives were lost, some of them of innocent people, quite a number of others were injured, while considerable damage was caused to property in the space of just three days.*

We condemn violence in all its manifestations and from all quarters.

Violence only adds more misery to a world already filled with misery.

But is it not a fact of recent political history that minority groups, or sections of them, resort to violence only as a last resort, when all peaceful and democratic options open to them are exhausted?

How far is this true of Sri Lanka's Tamil minority?

We leave it to readers to think out the answer for themselves, in the context of the events that have taken place in our country since Independence, and particularly since 1956.

Any honest appraisal of the situation could lead to only one conclusion: the same conclusion to which loud expression was given in the United National Party election manifesto of 1977 and repeated thereafter by President Jayewardene—that the Tamils are a community with certain grievances relating to the use of their language, education, employment and land settlement.

Starting from this point, the UNP Government

should have gone on quickly to redress these grievances.

Instead, we as a nation have got embroiled in continued communal conflict.

In the process, we seem to have virtually lost sight of—and the grip on—our common enemy: our pitiable economic underdevelopment and the social tensions generated by it.

It has been acknowledged by many people that the violence in the North is partly, if not wholly, rooted in socio-economic causes.

With education and job opportunities diminishing every day, a blank wall has begun to loom larger and larger before ever growing numbers of Tamil children.

The Tamil youth can no longer be fobbed off with the excuse that there are similar problems in the South.

What sections of them are saying in effect is: "If you (the Sinhalese-dominated Government) cannot solve our problems, then allow us to try to solve them our own way."

The Economic Question is the inseparable twin of the National Question. To ignore the one in order to deal with the other is a suicidal policy.

Decisive action on the economic front will make the political resolution of the National Question a more feasible proposition.

This, and the fact that the "military approach" will never succeed, is the message that the SATURDAY REVIEW has been trying to convey since its inception two years ago to the opinion and decision makers in the South.

Would that they, even now, wake up to their senses!

### EDITORIAL-2

## SENSELESS CENSORSHIP

It should be a simple task to publish a 12-page journal, and that, too a weekly.

But with the Censor breathing down one's neck, it could be an annoying and frustrating task.

activities may not be aware of what is happening in Tamilnadu.

"The Indian Government should not say that it is the responsibility of the Tamilnadu Government. I sympathise with the Tamil people in Tamilnadu. They are of the same ethnic origin, but they should not allow the 'terrorists' to plot against us.

"The Indian Government has brought stringent laws to curb 'terrorism' in Punjab but when we introduced similar laws the opposition blames us," he added. Sun 7th April 1984

That is the problem at the SATURDAY REVIEW.

The special censorship, applicable only to the SATURDAY REVIEW of all publications in Sri Lanka, continues, despite our vehement protests.

Every item intended for publication has to be sent to the Censor, typed in duplicate.

Then the wait until the copy is approved.

Sometimes, we have not been allowed to reproduce items that have already appeared in even the Jaffna-based EELANADU!

Not infrequently, the copy has to be referred to Colombo for approval, which means further delay.

The result is that we find it extremely difficult to maintain printing schedules.

Sometimes, we are forced to publish news item and articles with little relevance to the situation in Sri Lanka in general and the North in particular just to fill up the pages.

Some readers have suggested that instead of doing this we should reduce the number of pages.

But we do not relish the idea of publishing a smaller paper.

We ask again: Why are the powers-that-be afraid of the SATURDAY REVIEW?

Were we in any way responsible for the events of July 1983?

Most of the Colombo-based newspapers, especially the Sinhalese publications, could be held more culpable because out-and-out racist material appeared in them before the holocaust. But these newspapers do not suffer from the censorship handicaps forced on us.

Why? we ask again.

The self-imposed ban, which we considered, is out because of the reader response and encouragement.

But, we ask, how long are we going to undergo the strangulation of TRUTH?

## STRIKE OFF

The plantations strike, involving several lakhs workers mostly of Indian origin, which began on 1st April, was called off on 10th April, following the decision of Government to grant a wage increase of Rs. 2 a day for male and female workers. Other matters at issue are to be taken up later.



# SIVAJI GANESHAN'S BIGGEST ROLE IS NOW

In Tamil Nadu it is a multistarrer that is being produced now. It is difficult to say who is hero or who is villain in it, though it is apparent that whoever is featuring in the show is overdoing his or her part. They are inflated, larger-than-life characters in gaudy make-up out to capture the groundings.

We have on the one side M. G. Ramachandran, the ageing swashbuckler whose fencing sword is now a little rusty, and his leading lady, the comely Jayalalitha, who plays the part of a political temptress of the electorate. On the other side we have Sivaji Ganesan, the Tamil version of the Maratha hero, who will have—if reports are true—his leading lady in the equally comely Vyjayantimala. Note the cast has two non-Brahmin heroes and two Brahmin heroines. Do not also forget the third male character who, though pushed to the wings, is constructing his own scenario for a take-over of the stage.

The plot has thickened today especially because it is going to be elections in a few months. Large audiences are gaping at the screen and wondering how it will resolve itself. It is presumably good entertainment for the family though we are not sure if the performances will earn the show an "A" certificate—which is what we expect of a mature people playing the game of an adult democracy. The difference between the world of reality and the world of make-believe is getting thinner and thinner all over India, but it seems to be thinnest in states like Tamil Nadu.

The procession taken out a week ago in Madras by the A-I-India Sivaji Ganesan Fans' Association was a spectacle worthy of the sets of an S. S. Vasan film. Indeed it was no mere procession but Sivaji Ganesan in real life making a dazzling entry on the political stage. It was a challenge not only to the opponents of the Congress (I) but to the leaders of certain factions in the Congress (I). In Tamil Nadu an actor's strength as well as political influence is measured according to the membership of his fans' association. Ten years ago MGR's fans far outnumbered Ganesan's. Also MGR could

flaunt an international fans' association ridiculous though it may sound. The associations are usually financed by the actors themselves. It is noteworthy that actresses are not known to have fan clubs.

With Sivaji Ganesan's near official take over of the Congress (I) in Tamil Nadu it is likely there will be an end to the factionalism that has plagued the party or what is left of it. There will also perhaps be no question of the party allying itself with another. Such alliances have been humiliating to it before. The AIADMK is not exactly a foe of the Congress but it remains to be seen how MGR will look at the party headed by his movie rival. Though the two are reputedly friends, their association going back to the early days of the Dravidian movement there is hardly any warmth of feeling between the two for one another.

How far will Sivaji Ganesan succeed in reviving his party? One tends to forget that Tamil Nadu (or Madras as the state was called) had been a "bastion" of the Congress along with Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Neither the Justice Party nor its successors, the DK and the DMK, could make a dent in its armour. In a sense the state was gifted away to the DMK by Lal Bahadur Shastri as a result of his language policy. Following the elections in 1967 when the DMK found itself in power it rubbed its eyes in disbelief. The Congress has lain in a coma ever since and even Kamaraj could not nurse it back to health. His successors with their petty differences have brought the party to the door of doom.

Indra Gandhi, with her unerring political instinct, must have seen months ago that it needed a man like Ganesan to revive the party. The political build-up of the matinee idol began with his nomination as a Rajya Sabha member—this, it was rumoured at the time, was in preference to Amitabh Bachchan, the candidate favoured by G. K. Mooppanar.

We need not recount here how Sivaji Ganesan became a follower of Kamaraj after having been with the DK and the DMK. It must be remembered that Kamaraj

respected Periyar and was in turn respected by the non-Brahmin masses. Sivaji, though he broke away from the Dravidian movement, has a large following among the classes who have a decisive say in political matters. Kamaraj had his differences with Indra Gandhi but Sivaji now regards her as his undisputed leader as does R. Venkataraman who was also an associate of Kamaraj and whose faction now has put up Sivaji as leader. (It will be recalled that after the exit of Rajaram from the Congress, Venkataraman has probably been the only Brahmin to hold office in a Tamil Nadu ministry).

To trace the film career of Villupuram Chinniah Ganesan would be to tell the story of Tamil cinema of a whole generation. He is one of the great emoters of our time. His face can register a hundred fleeting emotions. Now he is the callow romantic youth, now the staid householder jealous of the honour of his family. His face is a kaleidoscope of love, anger,

sorrow, disgust, horror, anything. His eyes become moist, his nose twitches, his lips quiver, his face changes in a hundred different ways. He mutters to himself, he rants and raves. Tamil audiences regard him as a great actor, and a great actor he could be in the hands of a great director. Sivaji belongs to a bygone era as a theatre personality with a lot of colour and flamboyance about him.

In fairness however, one must admit that there is nothing stagey about him in his personal life. He does not have the remoteness of a movie star and is full of spontaneous charm. This writer would like to repeat what he wrote in these columns last year about this matinee idol. If you wish to listen to the sonority and at the same time mellifluousness of Tamil you must listen to Sivaji speak that language. It is a pity he is not heard in the Rajya Sabha. There is a grandeur about the man and his speech and it is not the mock grandeur of the film world.

It is a sign of our times of decline that Tamil Nadu, which once boasted a large number of scholars, mathematicians, engineers, scientists, has to rely on cinema for its leadership. Sivaji Ganesan has hardly had any schooling. He is like Kamaraj and like him he has the common touch. He is also disarmingly humble. He said recently that Amitabh Bachchan should have gone to the Rajya Sabha instead of him because the Hindi actor was better educated.

When one mentions Sivaji Ganesan one is reminded of the most memorable role he has played that of Kattabomman, the warrior patriot who fell fighting the British. Today, in real life, he has a bigger role—and, a more fighting role. If he succeeds the chief ministership of Tamil Nadu will be his. Another actor, another chief minister.

—QUARK

(Courtesy "The Times of India")

## LALITH CALLS FOR TRUCE

The Ministry of National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali told a group of Indian journalists in Colombo that the Government was prepared to grant a general amnesty to Northern "terrorists" provided they lay down their arms.

"We are prepared to let bygones be bygones" he said.

Mr. Athulathmudali said the "terrorists, too, were Sri Lankan citizens. We call on them to give up arms and return to a normal democratic way of life".

He put the number of Northern "terrorists" to be around 300 though the "terrorists" claim their strength had soared to 5,000.

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He reiterated his earlier stand on the existence of "terrorist camps" in Tamil Nadu. "Sri Lanka and India should jointly take measures to eliminate the training camps," he said.

"Nothing should be permitted to hinder the long and traditional friendship

between India and Sri Lanka," he said.

The Minister also took the opportunity to allay Indian fears about Trincomalee. "Trincomalee will not be given to any foreign power. If that happens, I will be the first to quit the Government", he said.

—Daily News 7th April

# CHESTO

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# PM on Rampage

Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa is on the Rampage.

Donning the mantle of leader of the most chauvinist and reactionary circles in the Government and the country, he has started an all-round public campaign to push the aims of these circles.

In doing so, he is snapping his fingers even at president Jayewardene, whom he treats as a has-been.

He has taken on himself the leadership of the campaign to abolish political parties, brushing aside the President's protests that

such would mean the end of democracy in Sri Lanka.

He is openly campaigning against the consensus of the Round Table Conference that grass-root elected bodies like village committees and from councils should be restored in a more viable town. He is not prepared to give up in any way the non-elected gramodaya mandalayas, which are his main grass-roots political base in his bid for Presidential succession.

He is openly trying to sabotage the consensus recommendation of the RTC that stateless persons of Indian origin in Sri Lanka

should become citizens. He has indicated to Parliament that any such proposal should be put to a referendum, although the RTC made no such recommendation.

He has emerged as the main leader of the line of confrontation with India, putting even Ministers like Mr. Cyril Mathew, Mr. Gamini Dissanayake and Mr. Anandatissa de Alwis in the shade. His bellicose tirade against India's Government in Parliament recently has soured the friendly relations between the two countries and given encouragement to those campaigning for a "defence treaty" with the US, or at least an enhanced US political and military presence in Sri Lanka, to "counter the danger of an Indian invasion." (Reproduced from the "Forward" of 1st April.)

## RUSSEL ON RACIAL CO-EXISTENCE

Lord Bertand Russell (1872-1970) was a philosopher, free-thinker, mathematician, educationist, exponent of rationalism, proponent of world government and advocate of international peace. Millions of readers all over the world have been enlightened by his writings.

Esteemed by no less a genius than Albert Einstein, Russell exchanged messages with President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev over the role both leaders were supposed to play in preserving international peace.

Extracts compiled by V. S. Mani

Russell (like Arnold Toynbee, the eminent historian) was inclined to think Buddhism was the best of all religions on account of the spirit of compassion inherent in the teachings of the Buddha. He was awarded the Noble Prize for Literature in 1950.

Russell deals with the aspects of co-existence in multi racial countries in two of his books: "Political Ideals" (1917) and "Fact and Fiction" (1961). Since his writings are self-explanatory, conceptually authoritative and characteristically lucid, the excerpts relevant to our theme are reproduced below without elaboration. The pages are indicated at the end of each extract for the

sake of easy reference by readers.

"It is essential to democracy that any group of citizens whose interests or desires separate them at all widely from the rest of the community should be free to decide their internal affairs for themselves."

("Political Ideal"—P. 46).

"Democracy is a device—the best so far invented—for diminishing as much as possible the interference of Government with liberty. If a nation is divided into two sections which cannot both have their way, democracy theoretically insures that the

majority shall have their way. But democracy is not at all an adequate device unless it is accompanied by a very great amount of devolution.

"Love of uniformity, or the mere pleasure of interfering, or dislike of differing tastes and temperaments, may often lead a majority to control a minority in matters which do not really concern the majority."

(Page 23)

"The diffusion of power, both in the political and economic sphere instead of its concentration in the hands of officials and captains of industry, would greatly diminish the opportunities for acquiring the habit of command, out of which the desire for exercising tyranny is apt to spring. Autonomy, both for districts

and for organisations, would leave fewer occasions when governments were called upon to make decisions as to other people's concerns."

(Page 25)

"Another measure which would do much to increase liberty would be an increase of self-government for the subordinate groups, whether geographical or economic or defined by some common belief, like religious sects. A modern state is so vast and its machinery is so little understood that even when a man has a vote he does not feel himself any effective part of the force which determines its policy. Except in matters where he can act in conjunction with an exceptionally powerful group, he feels himself almost impotent, and the government remains a remote impersonal circumstance which must be simply endured, like the weather. By a share in the control of smaller bodies, a man might regain some of that sense of personal opportunity and responsibility which belonged to the citizen of a city-state in ancient Greece or medieval Italy."

(Pages: 20-21)

"The cure for the evils and dangers which we have been considering is a very great extension of devolution and federal government. Whenever there is a national consciousness, as in Wales and Ireland, the area in which it exists ought to be allowed to decide all purely local affairs without external interference."

Page 53

## SELECTORS IGNORE YOUNGSTERS

It is really heartening to note that the Selectors have named a pool of 19 cricketers at a time our national team is experiencing a lean and hard time. It is a fact that our national team has to trace a tedious and a long journey to the top in the test cricket arena.

Under these circumstances, real planning is expected by the cricket administrators to produce cricketers who can be compared with those other test playing countries.

At the same time, we expect the present selectors will spot out the real talent from among the youthful cricketers now in the first class and school cricket circuit.

It is really sad that the selectors have once again ignored several talented cricketers. Among the 19 now selected, there are 14 who toured Australia and Pakistan. The other five are those who were already in the national pool. Thus there had been no scouting for real new talent.

We, therefore, appeal to the Board of Cricket to include the following club players: Suhada Fernando (Saracens) Lanka Perera (Saracens) Saman de Silva (Sebastianites), Sripathi Silva (Moratuwa), Ravin Wickremaratne (Pandura) and Bandula Fernando (Colts).

We give below the names of those schoolboys who should also have caught the selectors' eye: Gehan Mallawarachchi and B. Rajadurai (St. Josephs), D. Bulankulame and A. Seneviratne (St. Thomas's), Hirantha Perera

(St. Anthony's), Gratian Karunaratna (St. Sebastian), N. Wijesuriya (Prince of Wales), D. Wickremasinghe (Mahinda), C. Mahesh (Moratuwa), A. Ekanayake (Maliyadeva), V. Sudharshanan (Jaffna Central), P. Thirukumar, V. Muralenthan and D. Jesuratnam (St. John's, Jaffna).

Among those named above, the following have topped the 1000-run mark this school season: D. Bulankulame, Hirantha Perera, G. Mallawarachchi and C. Mahesh. In addition he has already captured 75 wickets.

Let us conclude by quoting the Nawab of Pataudi, former Indian Test captain and a member of the Indian National Selection Board, from "The Illustrated Weekly of India:"

"I had said earlier that nothing had basically changed in Indian cricket in the field. I stand by that. What has changed off the field are two things. The entry of politicians and big money in the game. The politicians moved in two years ago when the Cricket Board was rather weak due to infighting. But then the Board has only itself to blame. It was not that such infighting was not there during my days, but it was muted. Now a days every one writes about it openly."

Is not the Sri Lankan situation just the same?

H. N. Fernando.  
General Secretary,  
Ceylon Teachers  
Union.

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# Saturday Review

## SRI LANKA

### RED CROSS TO THE RESCUE



Mrs. K. Shanmugalingam (centre-left) accepting on behalf of the Red Cross Society, Jaffna Division, a gift of clothes sent by Tamils resident in the Philippines at the Jaffna Residency for distribution among victims of the July 1983 ethnic disturbances.

Behind her is Mrs. Anita Nesiah, Co-ordinator for relief work connected with the refugees.

In all 60,000 persons were provided with relief in the form of food, refreshments, clothing and cooking utensils.

Mobile emergency units and first aid centres were established in the Jaffna and Kilinochchi districts. These units were manned by medical, para-medical and Red Cross volunteers and co-ordinate work with the nearest hospitals.

The record of performance by the Society was made possible by the parent body of the Red Cross Society in Colombo providing a steady supply of drugs and dressing materials, milk food and biscuits, clothing, an ambulance and two vans and funding to establish and run an office.

In order to maintain the services of the Society in future, further supplies of drugs and biscuits, milk food and cooking utensils are needed.

Besides the special services it was called upon to provide after July 1983, the Society's Jaffna division maintains 20 primary health care centres at Malvam, Inuvil (House of Hope for the disabled), Maruthanamadam (Y.M.C.A. Uduvil), Mallakam, Pannai

Orphanage, Navanthurai, Vallai (Hospital and adjoining village school), Ariyalai (Poompuhar), Ariyalai (Gandhi Community Centre), Mirusuvil (Educated Girls' Youth Scheme), Kaithady (Deaf and Blind School), Uruthirapuram, Thanniyoorthu, Children's Home, Manipay, Chavakachcheri, Mirusuvil Mathar Sangam, Mirusuvil South R. D. S., Eluthumadudal Mather Sangam, Eluthumadudal North R. D. S. and Odduveli R. D. S.

A training programme was initiated for educated girls in primary health care and midwifery work at the Chavakachcheri base hospital. Eighteen girls have successfully completed the training programme.

The Society has 119 active members and 632 subscribing members (of the Junior Red Cross)

There are detachments of Junior Red Cross in the following schools: St. John's College, Chundikuli Girls' College, St. Patrick's College, Holy Family Convent, Osmania College, Vembadi Girls' College, Kathija Muslim Girls' College and Canagaratnam M. M. V.

The Editor,  
Saturday Review.

"Third time lucky", they say. I hope my third letter will pass the censor.

The Minister of National Security, Mr. Lalith Athul-

The office bearers of the Society are:

President—Mr. P.D. Patrick.  
Vice-President—Mr. C. E. Anandarajan and Mr. K. Gengatharan.

Joint-Secretaries—Mr. D. Vamadevan and Mr. T. Palathevan.

Treasurer—Mr. M. Tham-bithurai.

Committee—Mrs. K. Shanmugalingam, Dr. Luther Jeyasingam and Rev. Fr. Francis Joseph.

## MYSTERY OF THE MISSING BODIES

athmudali had answered two of your questions re Army excesses in the North and the incidents in Chunnakam in his characteristic style. But he has not faced the problem and given an answer.

The problem is: (1) Are there excesses committed by the Armed Services in the North?

(2) How does one find out the true position?

If the second question is answered and a way found to arrive at the truth, then the answer to the first question is automatically found.

To get at the truth, one need not rely on Government's statements nor telephone messages to journalists; there has always been, in case of violent deaths, a third way and that is a magisterial inquest. Our Criminal Procedure has always insisted that a magistrate in person should hold the inquiry where a person has come by his death at the hands of the Police of Armed Services. At these public inquiries, witnesses give evidence publicly, they are examined and questioned and magistrates arrive at verdicts.

Having deliberately and calculatedly given, by an emergency regulation, the right to Police, with the sanction of the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, to dispose of dead bodies without inquests, it lies ill in the mouth of the Minister to complain about distortions!

International organisations and the Indian Government have expressed their concern and disapproval of this Emergency Regulation. Amnesty International's statement on incidents of July—August 1983, issued in September 1983, says at page 5 "The organisation's grave concern is compounded by the continued existence of Emergency Regulation 15A allowing security forces to dispose of dead bodies without inquest procedures, which Amnesty International believes, facilitates killings by the security forces....."

#### CENSORED

..... As to the truth of what happened in Chunnakam and the shooting from roofs, may we wait to see what Mr. Venkat Narayan of "India Today" has to say? He visited this place. According to Government sources, "India Today" now speaks the truth.

M. Sivasithamparam.  
Karaveddi East.

#### Quotable Quote

The following is an excerpt from an interview given by President Jayewardene on 7th April to the Editor of "India Today," Mr. S. Venketnarayan.

- Q. Some people are asking you to sign a treaty with a big country?
- A. I'm not for it. The worst India can do is to invade us. If they invade us, that is the end of the country.....

(The Island, 16th April)

## OH, BRITANNIA ! OH !

Thirtysix years after Sri Lanka was relieved of the British yoke, there are some people who still look nostalgically to the Mother Country to pull the chestnuts out of our fire.

One of them, we find, is no less than President Jayewardene himself.

Speaking before the ceremonial impounding of the Victoria reservoir, Mr. Jayewardene said (according to a Daily News report) that the British had signed an agreement with Sri Lanka to come to its aid in the event of its freedom and sovereignty being threatened.

"That agreement has not been scrapped and I hope that Britain will come to our aid if the need arises."

He said the agreement was signed after Sri Lanka won its independence in 1948. He, too, along with the late Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and Mr. Dudley Senanayake had spoken and acted to help win their freedom.

In this connection, it is worth taking note of this item which appeared in the 10th November 1983 issue of "Foreign Report" published by The Economist, London.

"President Junius Jayewardene of Sri Lanka will raise the issue of possible British military aid for his country when he confers with Mrs. Margaret Thatcher at the meeting of Commonwealth heads of state in New Delhi on 20th Novem-

ber. Jayewardene will provide the British prime minister with a dossier on Tamil terrorists in Sri Lanka and their alleged links with terrorists to know have contacts with Soviet-block countries and North Korea. He will also seek assurances that the two countries' defence agreement of 1947, in which Britain undertook to help defend Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) from attack when it was in the mutual interests of the two countries, is still in force. Britain was offered access to military bases on the island. Jayewardene is apparently thinking of reviving the agreement because he fears that the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, plans to interfere or intervene in Sri Lanka's troubles over its Tamil minority."