

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Vol. 3 No. 15.

26th May 1984

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In addition to the constraints imposed on us by the censorship, the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution, approved by Parliament on 6th August 1983, states under Article 157 A (1): "No person shall, directly or indirectly, in or outside Sri Lanka, support, espouse, promote, finance, encourage or advocate the establishment of a Separate State within the territory of Sri Lanka."

Public Library rises out of the ashes

The third stage in the reconstruction of the Jaffna Public Library which was destroyed, by khaki-clad goondas from the South on 1st June 1981, will be inaugurated on 4th June.

At noon on that day, Mr. A. Amirthalingam, the Secretary-General of the Tamil United Liberation Front, will ceremonially

open a wing constructed at a cost nearly Rs. 3 million.

In the first stage of reconstruction, the northern wing, the lobby and ground and first floors were repaired.

The second stage centred on the restoration of the children's section.

This work cost nearly Rs. 240,000.

On the recommendation of the Lionel Fernando Committee, Rs. 2 million was granted to the Library as compensation from the President's Fund.

Another Rs. 3.2 million was raised through public donations.

So far, about 45,000 books have been received by the Library as gifts from

various individuals and organisations, both in Sri Lanka and abroad. About 35,000 of the books have now been catalogued.

At the time of the destruction, the Library housed nearly 100,000 books, some

of which were not available elsewhere.

At the function on 4th June, a donation of books from South Indian Universities is expected to be handed over to the Library by Mr. S.J.S. Chatwal, High Commissioner for India.

Arrangements for the function are in the hands of the Library Committee headed by Mr. S. Sivagnanam, Municipal Commissioner.

(Also see P.3 for 'Library's Baptism by fire' by K. Nesiah)

RELEASE SINGARAYAR, NIRMALA, URGES SIVA

The Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW.

The Amnesty International Newsletter of April 1984 has listed the case of Father Aparanam Singarayar under the heading 'Appeal cases' where in is stated six appeal cases as a representative sample of the cases of torture and ill-treatment. There follows an appeal to all lovers of freedom to write to the President and others asking for the immediate trial or forthwith release of Fr. Singarayar. I wish to appeal through the columns of your esteemed journal to make as wide and as loud an appeal for the trial or release of Fr. Singarayar, as was rightly made in the case of the Allen couple. Our concern should be for all detenus, particularly of Fr. Singarayar and Mrs. Nirmala Nithyananthan. The continued detention, without trial on the orders of the executive of these detenus is an affront to human dignity.

Fr. Singarayar and Mrs. Nirmala Nithyananthan were arrested somewhere in November 1982 and detained under the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. In February 1983 they were arraigned in the High Court of Colombo with offences under the same Act. The case was set down for trial. The judge presiding in this court was to retire soon. The defence counsel asked for an early date. The prosecution argued that this was a long case and that it could not be finished before the judge goes on retirement. Yet the judge fixed an early date. But a chief prosecution witness, a senior police officer, fell ill and the case had to be postponed. In the meantime the July-August riots, the massacre at Welikade, and the jail-break at Batticaloa took place and the trial could not be held.

Four of the fellow-accused of Fr. Singarayar and Mrs. Nirmala Nithyananthan

are no longer in jail. Fr. Singarayar and Mrs. Nirmala Nithyananthan have to languish in jail for no fault of theirs.

The fact that four co-accused are not available need not hold up a trial, since trial in absentia can be held or there can be a separation of trials.

Fr. Singarayar, Mrs. Nirmala Nithyananthan and young Sriharan displayed rare qualities of human compassion and regard for human dignity, when they made impassioned appeals for the release of the Allen couple. Should not the same qualities, of which we heard so much recently, move the powers-that-be to order immediate trial or forthwith release of all detenus particularly Fr. Singarayar and Mrs. Nirmala Nithyananthan.

Yours Sincerely,
M. Sivasithamparam.

Karaveddi East,
Karaveddi

DOUBLE STANDARDS

Why all the fuss over the Allens?

This was going to be the theme of our editorial this week.

But this question has been asked already by one of our readers — and an American at that. (See page 4).

We hope the people of our country, especially the major Sinhalese Buddhist community, would display the same concern for ALL beings, in line with the lofty and off-repeated Buddhist prayer, "May all beings be well and happy".

Since July 1983, how many innocent people have been killed in Sri Lanka, especially in the North?

How many of our Sinhalese Buddhist leaders, including members of the Maha Sangha, have condemned these killings?

Why the double-standards?

Did the Allens get 'special treatment' because they were Americans and white-skinned?

Will somebody supply us the answers?

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Disease of Nationalism

Are you a Sinhalese? If you are a Sinhalese how do you know that? I have asked this question from

many who call themselves Sinhalese. I have so far never received a satisfactory reply from any of them.

I have also asked those who say that they are Tamils, Telegus etc., as to how they know that they are Tamils, Telegus and so on. From them too, I have never received a satisfactory reply.

When this question is asked, some get annoyed. Some ask back why I should ask this question when the reply is so obvious. Some consider that the question is asked merely for fun. Still others reply that they have never given thought to this question. Anyway a satisfactory, a logical and an acceptable reply does not come forth from any of them.

"I am a Sinhalese because my parents are Sinhalese." This is the argument of many. This surely is not a reply but only shifting the question a little further, as the next immediate question would then be "how do you know that your parents are Sinhalese"? This shifting can go on further and further, but the question will not there by be solved.

"A person is Sinhalese because he speaks the Sinhalese language". This is another argument that is usually adduced. But there are people of other nationalities who speak only Sinhalese because they happen to be brought up from early childhood in homes where only Sinhalese is spoken. Simply because they speak the Sinhalese language they do not thereby become Sinhalese. And also there are Sinhalese people who speak a language other than Sinhalese because they were brought up in non-Sinhalese homes. They are not considered non-Sinhalese simply because they cannot speak Sinhalese. It is therefore clear that one is not a Sinhalese just because he speaks Sinhalese. Similarly a person does not become an Englishman simply because he speaks English.

If so, how can one conclusively know that a person is Sinhalese, Tamil, English German or Japanese? There is no reply that could be given to this question. A right reply can be given only to a right question. A right reply cannot be given to this question because the question is wrong. When in truth there is no such thing as a nationality, how is it possible to give a right reply

when one is asked to which nationality a person belongs?

If you have an infant child please examine its entire body as carefully as possible. Is there any special part of its body or mark which differentiates it as a Sinhalese child? However much you may search you will never find such a distinguishing characteristic. There are people different in colour of skins such as black, brown, white, yellow etc. That is due to the fact that their ancestors lived for thousands of years in places differing from each other in climatic and geographical conditions. But that colour does not give an indication

race; what goes as Sinhalese, Tamil, English and a thousand other nationalities are only designations born out of belief and having no intrinsic significance whatsoever.

If one sees things that do not exist and believes that they do exist, such a person we call a mental patient. On one occasion when I went to the mental hospital at Angoda to visit a friend who was a patient there, a person calling himself His Majesty Diyasena the King of the Sinhales spoke to me and got in to conversation with me. Not only did he firmly believe that he was King Diyasena but in his

unclear weapons etc. In small countries like Sri Lanka they kill human beings on a smaller scale and they hurt people's feelings with various ridiculous mad activities such as the defacing of name boards written in languages other than their own.

Mankind today is living in a most critical stage. Many do not understand how dangerous the present situation is. We should understand that the forces that work in the world today are different from those that existed in the past. Even a slight mistake can make the entire human species disappear from the face of the earth. We can avoid that catastrophe and survive this critical period only if we act sanely with the feeling that this is our world and not by murdering each other saying that this is our nation and our country.

Should not we therefore be free of insanity of nationalism and thereby cease to be enemies of mankind?

This is the translation of an article written by Mr. Adikaram twenty five years ago for the Sinhalese paper "Silumina". It was a strange coincidence that this article first appeared in print just a couple of days before the outbreak of the sad conflict between the Sinhalese and the Tamils in 1958.

The article, since then was re-printed many times and was distributed widely among the Sinhalese-speaking people of Ceylon. The article has had a mixed reception. Some received it with much appreciation and understanding, while some others showed deep resentment. The article is now receiving increasingly better attention and appreciation.

Nationalism is not the road to peace. Truth alone will bring us peace and freedom.

WANTED

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S. Sivasubramaniam
Orthodontist,
No. 23, Moor Road,
Wellawatte.

by **Dr. E. W. Adikaram**

as to what nationality a person belongs. As that child who is common to the entire human race grows up he will be given a name and will be deemed to belong to a particular race or nationality. That child who at the time is incapable of logical thinking, who cannot discern fact from non-fact and who hasn't the ability to compare and contrast, accepts unthinkingly and unknowingly the nationality that has been thrust upon him. Having accepted it he gradually comes to believe that he belongs to that particular nationality.

Please think over the fact that you became a Sinhalese not because you had something naturally Sinhalese but because of the belief created and imposed on you by the environment and society including your parents.

Species of birds differ by birth from one another. Between the eagle and the dove, between the quail and the peacock there is a natural difference. Is there such a difference between the Sinhalese and the Tamil, between the Englishmen and the German?

So are the other animals. They have species differing from one another. There are natural characteristics that differentiate the tiger from the bear and the horse from the bull. Is there such a difference between the Japanese and the Jew or between the Chinaman and the Eskimo?

Unlike birds and animals, all human beings in the belong to one species only, the human species. In truth there is only one human

behaviours he even showed an affected regal demeanour. If any one told him that he was not Diyasena, he would naturally consider that person a lunatic.

If we consider as insane a person who calls himself a non-existent King Diyasena, how can we consider as sane those people who call themselves Sinhalese, Tamil, English when in truth there is no such thing as a Sinhalese nation, a Tamil nation or an English nation.

There is only one human race. We are human beings and not Sinhalese, Tamil or English. Biologically this is so. But those who are fettered with the belief that there is racial difference are incapable of seeing this fact.

As the idea of nation has come in to being by assuming as existent something which does not exist, nationalism has to be necessarily considered a form of insanity. Not only here but in the whole world the vast majority of people are tethered with that belief, with that delusion.

The main cause for all the wars that took place in the world in the past was this psychological ailment, namely nationalism.

Even in the modern world which, due to advancement in Science, has all the opportunities for comfortable living, man has to suffer because of this disease of nationalism and its inevitable political tentacles.

In big countries those who suffer from this madness contrive to bring about murder on a big scale with

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GAMININA ARATNE

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Assault on Right to Read : CRM

The Civil Rights Movement has issued the following statement on the new press law under consideration by the Government:

The Civil Rights Movement is dismayed at the report that the Government appears to be proceeding with the plan to require newspapers to provide financial security against possible defamation actions as a pre-condition to being allowed to publish.

CRM had hoped that this ill conceived idea, first mooted last year, had been wisely abandoned.

Now it appears that not only is legislation under preparation, but that the Cabinet is to decide the amount of cash to be deposited or

guaranteed by bond by the newspapers.

The working Committee of CRM has accordingly decided to once again draw the attention of the public to the very grave nature of this threat. CRM reiterates the reasons why this extraordinary, unprecedented and illogical measure can find no place in a society which claims to be free.

At stake here are two crucial freedoms, which are the very basis of most other

civil and political freedoms in a democratic society. These are:

Its right of every member of the public to READ news from a wide variety of sources, and to RECEIVE information from the sources which he or she chooses, whether these sources be state-owned newspapers, private newspaper companies or well-funded large political parties, or whether they be impecunious individuals, small

groups or minor political parties; and

The right of every person or group, powerful or weak, rich or poor, to COMMUNICATE with others by publishing a paper.

2. Nobody contends that a newspaper has the right to defame or vilify, but the remedy for that lies elsewhere. The proposed measure is totally disproportionate and would place the monetary interest of a few potential victims above the two vital interests set out above.

3. To treat every paper as a potential lethal object like a motor car which must be insured against third-party risks is a strange idea which is not, so far as CRM is aware, known elsewhere. (Voluntary insurance practised by some large newspaper concerns is an entirely different

matter). This concept ignores the basic role of newspapers in the freedom of expression and freedom of political activity in a democratic society; they cannot be treated on a par with other consumer goods or business enterprises.

Other remedies

4. In the case of defamation, several remedies already exist even if the newspaper has few assets. The plaintiff can (a) through the Press Council secure the publication of a retraction and an apology; (b) further vindicate his reputation—which should be his major concern—through a court action if he so wishes; (c) obtain a public retraction and apology through court; (d) have all the personal assets of the writer, the editor, the proprietor and the printer (including the machinery and other equipment of the printing press) sold to satisfy an award for damages. This already acts

(Continued on page 10)

LIBRARY'S BAPTISM BY FIRE

by K. Nesiah

The last recorded destruction of a library in the sub-continent was towards the end of the 12th century when a Central Asian horde under Khilji annihilated Nalanda University, the famed Buddhist seat of learning in North India, with a three-block library, one nine storeys high.

It was then nearly 800 years after that, on the inglorious first of June 1981, the priceless collection of nearly 100,000 books in the Jaffna Public Library was consigned to the flames and a building which was the architectural pride of the North severely damaged.

It was in the early 40's that District Court Secretary Chellappah pioneered the movement which resulted over the decades in one of the finest libraries in the land. It is a heart-rending spectacle to those associated with the movement from the beginning.

The grimmer is the tragedy because the perpetrators of this dark deed were no other than those who were expected to be custodians of law and order and the moment chosen for their misguided action was the eve of the election of what was believed to be the conciliatory gesture of the District Development Council.

Would that we realised that the loss is not just to the North and to learning among the Tamils? It is a deep dent in the country's intellectual system and loss, too, to the international community of learning. So don't send to find for whom the bell tolls!

But, did not A. N. Whitehead say that at the ter-

minal period of the Greek and Roman contribution to European civilisation, the fate of that civilisation was saved by the fortunate eruptions of barbarians and the rise of two new religions, Christianity and Islam?

Learning did not cease in India with the dismantling of Asia's then best collection of manuscripts at Nalanda and the disbandment of the then world's finest assemblage of scholars.

Was it not in subsequent centuries that Indian scholars, writers and scientists made their great contributions in other Indian languages besides Sanskrit, Pali and Tamil, and in languages like English.

Or, to take an example from another field, was it not following the Great Fire of 1666, London emerged as a great city of brick, stone and concrete and in some ways the world's capital city, built on ashes of an erstwhile timberbuilt town? It has often times happened that such deep tragic experiences in the history of a people have proved a turning point in their life where their turned a disaster into a triumph.

It is heartening therefore to note that, on the advice of the Library Committee the city fathers have decided to immediately reopen in an improvised place, the children's section and the periodical and newspapers rooms. It is fulfilling an obligation cast by the Human Rights Declaration in Article 26 and 19. In due course, even before the library is re-built, let us hope that the Library

will resume its role as an agent of continuing education. And in the long term it could become the centre for a system of libraries in the region and partake, too, of some of the characteristics of a national library for the Tamil people of Sri Lanka.

Towards re-designing and rebuilding the library in due time, the taxpayer apart, men of means and men with the architect's genius have an obligation. Towards restocking the library, there is an obligation on the part of those who have books or could get at books, regardless of geographical frontiers. But the immediate obligation is to citizens of the city. Will every family contribute one book each and those who can, books by the tens and by the hundreds?

The purpose of a general public library is somewhat the same as that of education as conceived today. If education seeks to implant a sense of heritage and impart a vision of the future in the minds of the young and continue through life to stress that sense of heritage and enlarge that vision of things to be, so does a modern public library.

The library then is much more than a classified stock of books and audio-visual aids. It has to be in its building design and mode of functioning an educational institution within its walls and without. Well may we say that a city's public library is the eye of the city by which the citizens are able to behold the greatness of their heritage and behold the still greater greatness of their future.

(Reproduced from the 'Morning Star' of June 1981)

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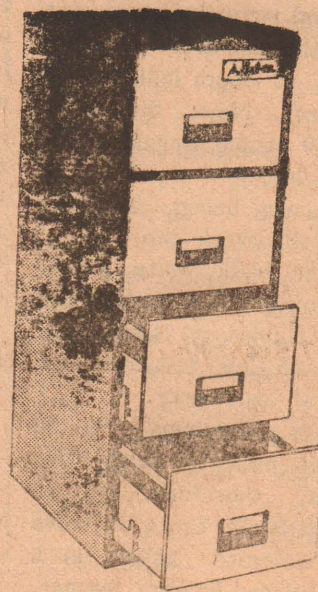
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What a fuss over the Allens!

Editor,
Saturday Review

As an American I was both happy, shocked and ashamed at the undue publicity and fuss given to the capture and release of the young Allen couple. I was amused at the way they were treated by your President and Ministers after their release. They were treated like children who were lost and found.

We Americans are used to this kind of kidnapping back home and no one pays the slightest attention to it. The Allens have volunteered to cross many miles of ocean to work in a strange country and that, too, in a country which is under siege by Government forces. No one there moves after dark—some not even in the day. The Allens were, therefore, well prepared for the eventualities that their abduction should not have surprised them: nor were they frightened.

We Americans have faced several conflicts. We fought the Indians, the British in the Wars of Independence, we fought, ourselves in the Civil Wars, we waged a relentless war against Hitler and his demonics. We have fought in the Middle East. We succumbed in Vietnam. Whenever we fought we established a pretence for being there and the American people felt it was a just cause. All is fair in Love and War.

When we come to intervene in the domestic affairs of another country, it is a different matter. So much concern was shown for the young Allens by all cross-sections of the people, for which my friends and I are thankful. But why were the people not concerned with the mass killings of innocent and defenceless Tamil people during the July 83 pogrom. I was shocked and grieved to see unprovoked aggression in its worst savagery. Many Tamils were stoned to death, burnt alive, their homes and belongings pillored and plundered and virtually driven out of their country to take refuge in South India by the thousands. Now, there are 40,000 people languishing in South India.

Human beings are the same all over the world, whether black, white, yellow or brown. God made them equal. Human life is too precious to be destroyed for political expediency.

We Americans are the greatest nation on earth. We should, therefore, try to help little Sri Lanka to solve her domestic issues in a peaceful and humane manner, or better still leave the Sri

Lankans to pull together and live as equals without foreign interference. Interference from outside will never bring about unity. Sri Lanka, let wise counsels prevail. May God be with you.

Wilbur Smith

Beach Road,
Mt. Lavanla.

TRAGEDY OF ERRORS

The Editor,
Saturday Review.

I am in no way qualified to comment on the booklet "Sri Lanka - A mounting tragedy of errors" by Paul Sieghart issued in the name of the International Commission of Jurists. However, I must confess that, having read it, I felt unclean. I belonged to a nation where the legislation described by Mr. Sieghart had taken place. No more comment than that on my general reactions.

Just before the present Government came to power, I with some other like-minded individuals, mounted a campaign to do away with what was then called "The Chit system". We were encouraged to continue the protest by a letter from the leader of the Opposition, Mr. J.R. Jayewardene, in which he commended our efforts.

Our campaign did not produce any lasting results - the chit system endures. It gives every M. P. great powers over all peoples in the electorate, for all have to come to him to get a letter if they want employment. It is a modern device which perpetuates a feudal system of power.

He must be either a brave man or a fool (I suspect I belong in the latter category) to enter the lists against either the M. P. or the State, where legislation exists as described by Mr. Sieghart.

Mr. Sieghart quotes the following speech of President Jayewardene soon after he came to power "When you have these powers hidden away somewhere, in some wardrobe or closet, someone feels like using them. I do not want that temptation in our Government. When these are repealed (The previous Government's ill-liberal acts) all the laws that will be operative in Sri Lanka will be normal laws. No man can be looked up by the Police for more than 24 hours. He must be brought to court.... This is the only piece legislation that now exists on our statute book under which the Police can keep a man indefinitely without any recourse to advisory boards or to anybody except the

Criminal Justice Commission, which never acts against the advice of the Police. For days and months they can be kept, they can be harassed. When you are arrested by the Police under normal law you are not taken to this place or that place.... Under this law the Minister can declare any place to be jail. All such powers will be done away with once this Bill is passed. (Hansard October 1977). All members of Parliament ought to be made to meditate daily on these noble words.

On the Prevention of terrorism Act, Mr. Sieghart has this to say: "No legislation conferring even remotely comparable powers is in force in any other free democracy operating under the Rule of Law. Indeed, there is only one known precedent for the Power to impose restriction orders under Section II of the Sri Lanka PTA and that - as Professor Leary rightly pointed out in her Report - is the comparable legislation currently in force in South Africa."

town. My evidence covered the events that over too my brothers and sisters and their families as well.

The entirety of our belongings were looted in broad daylight while the curfew was on. Our houses were completely damaged and thereafter set on fire.

I made several appeals to several persons regarding compensation going right up to the President.

In the last letter which was received from the Presidential Secretariat in July 1982, I was requested to take up the matter with the Minister of Social Services as, "a Committee has been appointed by the Minister of Social Services to make recommendations in regard to the payment of compensation for loss and damage to private persons during the period 13th August 1977 to 15th September 1977, as recommended by the Sansoni Commission".

I went personally to the Ministry of Social Services and was referred to the De-

partment of Social Services

of destruction and deprivation is shortlived. It may have been that the July 1983 incidents would have been averted or reduced to a minor proportion if the victims of the 1977 communal disturbances had been rehabilitated and compensated. On the other hand, was the July 1983 tragedy so enormous because the perpetrators and their promoters were encouraged by the indifference shown to the victims of the earlier disturbance?

Rehabilitation has come to me in the most unkindest form - deduction of Rehabilitation Tax from my monthly pension.

S. Thambyrajah
Colombo 3.

BEAUTY CONTEST

The Editor,
Saturday Review.

At every Miss Sri Lanka beauty pageant, participants are expected to parade in swim suits, in cloth and jacket and in saree. In the Miss World contest, the participants are required to parade in swim suits and in their national costume. So it is natural that the Sri Lankan selectors expect the participants in the Miss Sri Lanka contest, for selection to the world contest, to parade in swim suit and in saree.

But why should it be necessary for the participants to parade in cloth and jacket? It is a Sinhalese attire. When the Tamils, Burghers and Muslims participate in the contest, I am sure it will be the first time they will be wearing that dress. So naturally they do not feel comfortable and are handicapped.

At a time when our country is striving for national unity the authorities should take steps to stop this practice, instead of trying force Sinhalese culture on the non-sinhalese.

The parade of the beauties in swim suits is held in privacy because it is against the Sri Lankan culture to expose oneself too much. But the organisers have failed to realise that it is against the culture of the Tamils and Muslims to expose their belly or to wear a blouse without covering it with a shawl or saree.

I hope to see an improvement when next year's beauty pageant, be held, and a fair chance be given to the beauties of all races.

(Miss) Sarah R. Nathan
Kondavil

(More letters on Page 9)

LETTERS

There have been many voices raised in Sri Lanka calling on all to eschew violence and to work for peace. Each time I hear these pious speeches I am reminded of the words of a writer, Thomas A Kempis, who years back said "All men desire peace, few men desire the things that make for peace". We hear little from our public speech makers regarding the things that make for peace. Alas.

In reading the teaching of Jesus, I have come to the conclusion that He holds only one sin to be of serious social consequence - that sin is Hypocrisy. We might also meditate on the reason for this. Especially in a land where all mouth the truths of religion so frequently and with such fervor, meditation on hypocrisy might have moral and spiritual significance.

Bryan de Kretser
Prithipura, Hendala.

REHABILITATION

I was a victim of the communal disturbances of August-September 1977.

I was the first to give evidence before the Sansoni Commission when it held its sittings in Kandy, my home

There I was informed that a committee, which will be chaired by a retired Supreme Court judge, will commence its sittings immediately financial provision is made for its expenses and a building is available for the office.

When I went subsequently, I was asked to await a notification in the newspapers. This notification did not appear and on further inquiries I was unable to get a proper reply. While I was wondering what I should do next, the July 1983 incidents overtook me.

There were several public spirited persons, eminent, matured, educated and experienced (not victims) and associations who appeared before the Sansoni Commission and offered various suggestions to avoid a possible recurrence of such events. There was one matter on which all of them, including the Commissioner, agreed - that speedy and adequate compensation will act as a damper against the recurrence of such incidents, since it will bring home to all concerned, especially the perpetrators and the promoters of hooliganism and thuggery, that the objective

The happenings in Punjab

The Punjab killings, which have become a daily feature have confused the social scientist. He has failed to characterise them and give them a name. But if we look at them closely, we find that they are part of what is known as insurrectionary policies or guerilla warfare. The features are salient enough and the patterns they throw up cannot be missed.

Guerilla warfare is an old phenomenon known to us in India too—Maharana Pratap and Shivaji waged relentless guerilla warfare. But in recent times, its scope has increased greatly and it has also found its theorists. T. E. Lawrence, in his *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, has discussed the relation of space to forces and has pointed out the offensive value of this form of warfare. After the triumph of Bolshevism in Soviet Russia, insurrectionary politics has become a "science", which is taught to foreign selected revolutionaries in specialised institutes, where skills in sabotage, in wielding weapons, in forging documents and in counterfeiting currencies are also imparted.

A major thinker and practitioner of this form of warfare was Mao Zedong who developed his ideas in his *Guerilla Warfare*. The next most important theoretician was Che Guevara who added new dimensions to this form of warfare. Mao, for example, had paid no attention to urban sabotage, but Guevara found in it a major help. Now there is also a mini manual available for urban guerillas by Carlos Magihelle (published in 1969).

Guerilla warfare is not a static concept: it is assuming new forms. In olden days, a guerilla war was waged against a hated invader or imperialist; after Marx and Lenin, it has also been used as an important weapon of "class war" even in the thick of a national war. Mao's policy was "70 per cent expansion, 20 per cent dealing with the Kuomintang, and 10 per cent resisting the enemy" (the Japanese), for example.

International nexus

There are other differences. Earlier thinkers had stressed the importance of popular support. A guerilla war was "waged by the few but having the support of the many", according to Mao. But the second requirement is no longer necessary. Che Guevara points out that "a hard core of thirty to fifty men is, in my opinion, enough to initiate armed revolution". The early theoreticians spoke

of injustice, of grievances of the people, of an objective revolutionary situation. Now the logic is reversed. "One does not necessarily have to wait for a revolutionary situation to arise; it can be created", Che Guevara tells us. If there are no worthwhile grievances, they can be manufactured and profitably adopted. In any case, political power has nothing to do with people's grievances—that "comes from the barrel of the gun". As we can see in our case in Punjab, the Akalis have invented grievances and merils have sprung among one of the country's most prosperous communities.

The old picture of a guerilla fighter as a patriot taking to arms in defence of his country is now outdated. He was an amateur and worked on the local scene. The modern guerilla fighter is a professional. He is part of a larger, international nexus. A congress of left terrorists took place in Havana in 1966, attended by 513 delegates

law though he himself is far from behaving like a lawful citizen. While he has his hit-list and he kills indiscriminately, he himself is innocent unless proved guilty. The behaviour of the police must conform to the standards laid down by civil liberties associations and the Amnesty International, while the terrorist himself follows another code, another ethics.

One important characteristic of terroristic warfare is that under certain circumstances it is cheap to wage but difficult to contain. It imposes enormous cost on the society. For example, in Malaya, 8,000 partisans tied down 180,000 Malayan special police and 80,000 British, Australian and Nepalese soldiers. It took 1000 man-hours of patrolling to contact one guerilla and around 30,000 to eliminate him. In India itself, at one time, in the few districts of Hyderabad, five battalions of the army along with a sizable police force were tied down in counteracting com-

by **Ram Swarup**

from 83 groups belonging to different countries. These groups are controlled at the top by hardnosed manipulators and tycoons who do not know the rough and tumble associated with guerilla warfare. They function from safe havens and live luxuriously in villas. Persons like Qaddafi finance and control many international guerilla groups. Several of them are frankly organised as a mafia.

The guerilla fighters or terrorists differ in many ways but they have one thing in common: They fight no pitched battle, their form of warfare is ambush; their tactics is "hit and run". Their asset is intangibility and ubiquity. They are elusive. They are everywhere and nowhere. They fully exploit the element of "surprise". The most important ingredient, initiative, is in their hands. They choose the target: they shoot first. In many cases, there is no target in particular, but any killing does, for the purpose is to spread terror and to strain the resources of the state.

They generally operate from safe sanctuaries provided by anonymous city crowds, or ravines, or thick jungles or hilly areas, or a friendly rear provided by a hostile neighbouring country, illustratively like China or Bangladesh or Pakistan. In the case of India, The sanctuary could also take a wholly political and civic form. In a democratic state, the terrorist is protected by

munist-led insurgency. In Bengal, in the disturbed days of the sixties, a 16,000 strong police force was employed. Sometimes, a cracker was thrown at a busy corner or a running bus. Probably it did not cost the "revolutionaries" more than Rs. 20 in terms of the cost of the material and the payment to the urchin who was employed to throw it, but the material and psychological damage to the community was immense. The word went round that bombs were being thrown which paralysed transport and fled people with fear.

Then came the days of Naxalism. The streets of Calcutta were deserted as soon as dusk fell. The terrorists had their hit-lists and they killed indiscriminately. The papers reported on an average ten killings a day, day after day, for months together. One day a passenger was taken out of a bus, beheaded: the killers played with his head as a football and hung it on a lamp post in broad day-light in the sight of thousands of frightened people. But then came a sudden turn. There was retaliation by some group or groups whose identity has not been established. Apparently after the necessary preparation they struck one day. The papers reported 30 killed in Howrah. This was repeated after a few days, though on a smaller scale, in Kashipur area. The killings by the Naxalites stopped.

Gurdwaras as bases

In Punjab the terrorists combine clandestine activities with open political work. They hit and run. They choose whom to shoot and when to shoot. They have all the initiative. They function from the safe sanctuaries of gurdwaras. The law protects them. They are usually not apprehended, the few who are set free by courts.

While the terrorists have all the initiative, the government is paralysed. It lives from day to day. On the day no killings are reported, the administrators heave a sigh of relief. But the next day when killings came back with greater virulence, the authorities clench their teeth closer. They hold the inevitable round of meetings, dash from one place to another, promise to plug loose administrative holes, promise more police vigilance and do more of the same thing in the same direction.

The killings have their own logic of self-escalation. These may degenerate into mutual killings between two sister communities, and these will not be restricted to the Punjab alone. It will be a slight for common enemies to gloat over.

The Sikhs are the cherished brothers of the Hindus. And the feeling is more than a sentiment. It has a solid base in a long history of common struggles, sorrows and joys. They have common scriptures, common heroes, common ancestors, common blood. But, also, some unprincipled leaders have taken over the gurdwaras and pretend to speak for the whole community of the Sikhs. They even say that they are a separate nation. The common Sikhs should throw away their passiveness and reassert themselves.

(Courtesy: The Times of India.)

INDIAN TEA OUTPUT UP

After reaching a record production level of 585 million kg in 1983, the Indian tea crop shows promise of a further large increase during 1984.

While the north-east Indian crop is only just beginning to be harvested, the climatic conditions there are stated to be favourable for good production. In south India, which suffered a crop decline of eight million kg. last year, the prospects for this year are definitely brighter, the crop for January and February alone reaching a total of 20.2 million kg. against 12.6 million kgs. during the same period of last year, recording an increase of 35 per cent.

It would be safe to forecast that the all-India crop for this year would exceed 600 million kg., thus setting up a new record in Indian tea production.

Sri Lanka, which suffered a severe shortfall of crop last year, is also forging ahead and during the January-February period the production reached 33.7 million kg., an increase of 9.0 million kg., over the corres-

ponding period of 1983. The 30-35 per cent rise already achieved in South India and Sri Lanka is an indication that the world crop for the year will also touch a new record.

The increase in Indian crop will, however, be only just sufficient to meet internal requirements estimated at 400 million kg. and leave a modest quantity of 200 million kg., for export. This could enable the withdrawal of the existing ban on CTC tea exports, which while being helpful the price for the local consumer and meeting the local demand, has unfortunately brought down the image of India's tea in overseas markets.

The withdrawal of the ban would enable India to rebuild the image and recover some ground recently lost. The industry earned Rs. 500 crores in foreign exchange during 1983—some 130 crores more than it had in 1982—but it could have earned even more without the ban on CTC exports.

'Dutugemunu ashes'

(Continued from last week)

Nowhere do we read of a *thupa* or *cetiya* being built over it. Nowhere do we read of the populace paying homage to his cremation site throughout the centuries. Nowhere do we read that the *Dakkhina Thupa* was built over the ashes of Dutugemunu. Surely the author of the *Saddharmalankaraya* could have, while reporting that the *Dakkhina Thupa* was built at the *Maha-pulimaluwa* (of which more later), added the words "where Dutugemunu's body was cremated and where his ashes were laid." This would have been the obvious thing any knowledgeable writer would have done if that was true, being aware of the pre-eminence of Dutugemunu in the religious and national history of Sri Lanka.

On the other hand, we have the evidence of the *Mahavamsa* that on his death, Elara was defied by his conscience-tormented conqueror. He enjoined worship and caused a *cetiya* to be built. A *cetiya* is more than a "monument"—it is a *thupa*. The *Mahavamsa Tika* refers to an *Elarapatimaghara*, an image house of Elara. Nowhere else do we hear of an image of a king of Sri Lanka being worshipped on temple grounds. Nowhere else do we hear of a tomb being given such extraordinary obeisance for over two thousand years, until, sad to say, this was stopped and a much honoured king's will defied by an order from a mere archaeological commissioner of our time.

It is not surprising, therefore, that there was a public outcry when Paranavitana began to dig up the *Elala Sohona* in 1947. He himself says in this connection, "We started to clear the passage opened by old treasure-seekers on the western side. Before we had proceeded very far with this work, however, a certain section of the people of Anuradhapura started an outcry that the Department was desecrating sacred places, reportedly held meetings of protest, sent urgent telegrams to the Ministry to intervene, and in all possible ways tried their utmost to create public opinion against us." Paranavitana had to call the Minister from Colombo to his aid, and print some 5,000 copies of a pamphlet for distribution during the Poson season before finally assuaging the feelings of the outraged public. He continued digging until 1948 and

his reports of his work are found, as we had earlier observed, in the Administration Reports of the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon. Conservation had been carried on thereafter.

In his Reports, Paranavitana disclosed his discovery of a long inscription in Brahmi characters, the longest of its kind in Sri Lanka, on a number of broken slabs. Although thirty-three years have passed since this discovery the translation of the writing on these slabs by Paranavitana has not seen the light of day. This translation was handed over to the Archaeological Department as early as 1967.

Meanwhile, Saddhamangala Karunaratne, also was Archaeological Commissioner, had edited and translated this same inscription and included it in his thesis for the Ph. D. degree of the University of Cambridge. This learned thesis, entitled Brahmi inscriptions of Ceylon which some of us have had the privilege of cursorily reading at the University Library at Cambridge, is still deserving of publication although it is now twenty one years since it was accepted.

Karunaratne's reading of this slab inscription appears in *Ancient Ceylon* No. 1 published in January 1971. What we can gather from this reading is that the inscription relates to various donations given for the maintenance of the *Tissa-maha-cetiya* of the *Dakkhina Vihara* which had been inviolably established by the great King Pita, son of His Majesty. Paranavitana had observed that "the name *Dakkhina Vihara* occurs in more than a dozen places in the legible part of the document". Thus we have found confirmation that the mound called *Elala Sohona* was part of a *thupa* named *Tissa-maha-cetiya* of the *Dakkhina Vihara* established in the reign of Vattagamani Abhaya (the "Pitaraja" of the inscription, circa 80-77 B.C.).

The *Mahavamsa* has recorded that one of the seven warriors of Vattagamani Abhaya had "built to the south of the city the so-called *Dakkhina Vihara*". It will be noted that the author of the *Mahavamsa* himself has described it as the so-called *Dakkhina Vihara* in much the same way as the *Elala Sohona* had come to be described in more recent times as the *Dakkhina Thupa*.

There has always been a confusion about the founding, rebuilding and repairing of *Viharas* and *thupas*. In some cases, the person who re-

pairs shrine comes to be known as the one who had built or founded it. In the present case, it is generally accepted that Uttiya had built the *Dakkhina Vihara*. As noted above, this does not exclude rebuilding, expanding or repairing.

Kaniththa Tissa (167-186 A.D.) is reported in the *Dipavamsa* as having "built" a *vihara* and *thupa* in the *Dhakkhinarama*. The *Mahavamsa* clarifies this by saying that this king had (only) "added a mantling to the *thupa* of the *Dakkhinavihara* and a refectory, besides doing away with the boundary of the *Mahameghavana*. And moving the wall of the *Mahavihara* to the side, he also made a road leading to the *Dhakkhinavihara*".

The *Tissa-maha-cetiya* described in the slab inscription is thus the *thupa* that was enlarged by Kaniththa Tissa. It was another name current at that time for the *Dakkhina Thupa*, otherwise known as *Elara Dagaba* or *Elala Sohona* in the south of the city. The *bodhighara* discovered by Bell at a site in south of *Dakkhina Thupa* may well have been "part of the *Dakkhina Vihara*". The *Elarapatimaghara* too was situated in the south of the city. The "spot where Elara had fallen" and where his body was cremated, where Dutugemunu had built a *dagaba* or *cetiya* over the ashes and had ordained worship, is described in the *Mahavamsa Tika* as being between a potters' village on one side and the *Elara* image house on the other. We have, therefore, a monastic complex in the south of the city of Anuradhapura, and admittedly this was outside the precincts of the *Mahavihara*. It had evidently included a *dagaba* or *cetiya* built over the ashes of Elara, a *bodhighara*, and an image house of Elara, all within the southern monastery known as *Dakkhina Vihara*.

Evidently the *Elara Dagaba* built by Dutugemunu was the first structure at this place, and the *Vihara* built in the reign of Dutugemunu's nephew Vattagamani Abhaya was the second. As in most other monastic complex in Sri Lanka these were enlarged and added to in the course of time. According to Senake Bandaranayake, "apart from the *stupa* itself, everything else has (now) been obliterated". The stub or stump of the *Elala Sohona*, however, has fortunately remained to tell us the true story.

During the excavation of

the so-called *Dakkhina Thupa* (to use a suggestive epithet in the *Mahavamsa* of the sixth century), Paranavitana has reported the discovery of charcoal and ash. He had dug thirtyeight feet from the top of the mound when he found a stone pavement. After removing the stone slabs he dug deeper arriving at a depth of thirteen feet from the level of the pavement and fifty one feet from the top of the mound. Here he found ample traces of a "compressed layer of charcoal". In the course of his digging he had discovered that *stupa* robbers had ransacked the place.

Almost as an afterthought, he wrote in paragraph 67 of extensive Report of 1948, "It may here be mentioned that fragments of charcoal and lumps of ash were met with sporadically at levels considerably above the bottom of the pit. It is evident the *stupa* robbers had thrown up much of the charcoal and the ash which they found, and in the filling of the pit later these became scattered all over the place". It will be noted that the word "ash" is mentioned twice here and there is no other mention of it anywhere else in his reports.

by Dr. James T Rutnam

De Silva, who had dealt with Paranavitana's views in 1957, had at the time examined some fragments of charcoal and lumps of clay, but he does not seem to have seen the "ash". What happened to this ash?

The debate between de Silva and Paranavitana was over (among other issues discussed) the nature of the fire, and the inconceivability that "Dutugemunu's funeral pyre would have stood at the bottom of a pit the depth of which is equivalent to the depth of the foundations of the *Dakkhina Thupa*". As the place had been ransacked by vandals and robbers and as there was the likelihood, to say the least, of flaming torches being used by the despoilers to find their way in the darkness, the examination of this area had become more complicated. In any case this issue itself is of no consequence to us in determining whether the *Dakkhina Thupa* was Elara's or Dutugemunu's tomb. We may therefore leave it alone.

But de Silva's arguments centering on the literary and topographical evidence are

formidable. It is very creditable that a young Assistant Commissioner, with preferences in his career to look forward to, was daring enough to express his views publicly and unreservedly against his reputedly omniscient Chief, who had about that time relinquished his post and been appointed the first Professor of Archaeology at the University of Ceylon, but who nevertheless was still a force in the Department. All that de Silva seemed to have got in reply to his serious attempt to differ from Paranavitana was contemptuous indifference from the latter.

An incidental reference to the *Dakkhina Thupa* in the *Saddharmalankaraya* of the 14th century had been used by Paranavitana to build up, in his own characteristic and skilful way, an amazing thesis to prove that Dutugemunu's ashes were buried under this *thupa*, and in this process to disprove and demolish the age-old belief that the *Elala Sohona* was nothing but the tomb of Elara.

In paragraph 49 of his report 1948, Paranavitana had announced the foundation of his thesis as follows: "The *Saddharmalankaraya* has

recorded a tradition, that the *stupa* of the *Dakkhina Vihara* was built at a place known as *Maha-pulimaluwa* (the great terrace of the *pulila*). For some reason or other he does not give the actual reference. Paranavitana has been found, for reasons of his own, to be very selective in citing chapter and verse when giving references. In some cases he is quite lavish with details, but in others he leaves it to the reader to look for them. The student is thus led to great inconvenience in trying to seek the sources of Paranavitana's assertions. Administration Reports of a Commissioner of Archaeology should specially not suffer from inadequate documentation.

However we have now traced the reference and are able to give below a translation of the words in the *Saddharmalankaraya*. "Our Buddha, in the eighth year after attaining Buddhahood on the invitation of the divine ruler named Mahasammana and having arrived at the city of Anuradhapura stayed at the *Maha-pulila*

theory a myth

maluwa where the Dakumu-Maha-Saya (later) stood".

Having referred to the above text, Paranavitana rushes to correlate it with a reference in Geiger's *Mahavamsa* to a "picula" tree mentioned in connection with the visit of the Saint Mahinda to Anuradhapura. The quotation in the *Mahavamsa* reads as follows: "and the therā (Saint Mahinda) went to the royal dwelling and scattered eight handfuls of blossoms about the picula tree standing on the south of it".

Before we go any further we are obliged to correct the above translation of Geiger. This correction was brought to the notice of scholars by the learned A. P. Buddhadatta Mahathera. He had pointed out, with which Geiger later agreed, that this passage should read as follows: "And the therā (Saint Mahinda) went to the royal dwelling and standing on the south of it, scattered eight handfuls of blossoms about the picula tree". From this correction we find that the picula tree was not stated as being on the south of the royal dwelling.

Having shown us that south of the city there was a maha-pulila-maluwa over which the Dakkhina Thupa (later) stood, and that at the time of the Saint Mahinda's visit to Anuradhapura there was a picula tree, which would have been later the site of a kammamalaka, Paranavitana has rushed to say that both the maha-pulila-maluwa and the kammamalaka were one and the same, with a view to drawing some fanciful conclusions that Dutugemunu was cremated at this malaka and that his ashes lay at the bottom of the thupa built over it.

This is typical of Paranavitana's more recent methodology with which other scholars have now become familiar. His syllogism is as follows:

$$A = B$$

$$b = C$$

$$\therefore A = C \text{ E u-r-e-k-a!}$$

Indeed this sounds plausible, but it is obviously fallacious. For there is a vital difference between the capital "B" and the simple "b" although they sound alike. Whoever in the wide world had said that the maha-pulila-maluwa and the kammamalaka are one and the same? Where do we find that the kammamalaka where Dutugemunu's body was cremated was the one that was built where the picula tree one stood? There were, as we had already observed, thirty-two

malakas at Anuradhapura sometime or other. Where do we find in all literature that a thupa had been built over Dutugemunu's ashes? During the 2109 years since Elara's ashes were laid to rest, no one, a single old text, not a single commentary, not a single inscription, not a single ola leaf, not a single archaeologist, not a single historian, has said that a thupa was built over Dutugemunu's ashes. But Paranavitana says so. Must we blindly follow his ipse dixit?

To the credit of Paranavitana it must be said that he did not for long continue to press his opinion, tenacious though he generally was, on scholars and the public. For, after 1948 and the subsequent display of a board marking the Dakkhina Thupa as Dutugemunu's tomb, Paranavitana contented himself with depositing the so-called "ashes" of Dutugemunu in the Archaeological Museum at Anuradhapura. Meanwhile R. H. de Silva had proclaimed with banner headlines in the Sunday press. *Dakkhina Thupa—Not Dutugemunu's Tomb* had eventually taken steps to remove the misleading board at the Dakkhina Thupa. This drew no protest from Paranavitana, a power to be reckoned with even then.

In chapter 3 of Part 2 of Volume I of the University of Ceylon History of Ceylon, which Paranavitana had edited and was published in 1959, Paranavitana had occasion to refer to Elara and Dutugemunu. In a footnote relating to Elara's tomb he maintained his known position that it was "in reality Dakkhina Thupa", and that Elara's monument "must have been a few yards to the north of the present Medical Officer's bungalow at Anuradhapura", where he identifies the southern gate of Anuradhapura. He admits that up to the time of the commentator of the *Mahavamsa* "Elara's image received worship". He says nothing about Dutugemunu here. It is only when he describes the cremation of Dutugemunu that he allows his conjecture to come out in print as follows: "The body was cremated in the terrace outside the boundary of the Mahavihara where the Sangha used to assemble for public functions, most probably at the spot where the Dakkhina Thupa was later built. "Most probably" was the furthest he could go, and the "ashes" thus remained undisturbed in the Museum.

"Thirty-two years later" wrote Marcus Joseph, a correspondent to the Sun news-

paper. In its issue of 2nd July 1980. "on hearing that ashes were lying unnoticed in the Museum, E. L. B. Hurulle, Minister of Cultural Affairs (who has since alerted the Archaeological Department to look for the bones and ashes of Vijaya and the garment of Kuveni was shocked. He immediately rushed his officials and brought the ashes down to the Colombo Museum and sealed the ashes." "Thereafter" Joseph continued, "he (the Minister) brought it to the notice of the President and the Cabinet and on their advice the Minister appointed a Committee consisting of the country's outstanding archaeologists and historians to study literary evidence surrounding the history of the ashes".

This Committee was appointed in November 1978. It took nearly six months to study all relevant documents after which it is said to have submitted its findings to the Minister, who in turn brought them to the notice of the President and the cabinet.

On 28th February 1980 the Ceylon Daily News published on its first page under the caption "Yesterday's Cabinet Decisions" the following announcement; "The ashes of King Dutugemunu are to be laid to rest in the Dakkhina Thupa where they found. Test conducted in Paris by the Government of Sri Lanka established that the ashes are nearly 2000 years old. Other historical facts prove that they are the ashes of King Dutugemunu."

On 12th August 1980 the Ceylon Daily News reported. "The Government has made arrangements to build a monument to deposit the ashes of King Dutugemunu at Anuradhapura. The ashes were taken in a motorcade from the National Museum of Colombo to Anuradhapura via Maagama, Tissamaharamaya, the birth place of the king. The ashes will be visible through the bullet proof glass which covers the open receptacle. This monument is estimated to cost Rupees eight lakhs."

The Report of the Committee has not been published. The Committee consisted of twelve individuals, some of whom have achieved distinction and now hold high office in their specialised fields, while, it would seem, some have still to win their spurs. The present Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Archaeology are two of its members... But R. H. de Silva, a former Commissioner who differed from Paranavitana in this matter, was not one of

them. Abaya-Aryasingha, Head of the Department of Archaeology at the Kelaniya University was a member, but we find he had dissociated himself from the committee. Vide his letter to the Ceylon Daily News of 10th January 1979).

From the announcement of the Government we find that it had received a Report on scientific tests conducted in Paris, as well as a Report on the historical facts. Where are these Reports? Did all the members sign these Reports? And who were the scientists, and what was the organisation that had conducted the tests in Paris?

From the articles that appeared in the Ceylon Daily News of 29th January and 26th February 1980, we find that Dr. Granville Dharmawardene, Head of the Radio-Isotope Centre of the University of Colombo, had engaged himself in these tests. He is said to have worked with scientists in the Atomic Energy Commission of France. Well and good. But where is the report? Was it signed by the Atomic Energy Commission of France?

We are obliged to ask these questions, for we find from the two articles referred to, that Dr. Granville Dharmawardena has himself claimed to be an authority on a special type of technique which he had "developed for studying ancient materials". An article in 1969 in the prestigious British scientific journal Nature is listed under Cousins and Dharmawardena. Evidently, the latter is our Dr. Granville Dharmawardena, from Sri Lanka of whose achievements, as disclosed by him, we should be very proud indeed. But since the name of the Atomic Energy Commission of France has been "dropped" in passing, it is nothing but fair to expect its imprimatur in any certificate produced.

For our present purpose, however, the only question to be answered is whether "ash" was from a human source (doubts have been expressed about it) and whether it was 2000 years (plus/minus) old? Of course nobody could say whether it was Dutugemunu's or Elara's — the real bone (ash) of contention. Again, where is the certificate? and does it have the signature of the Atomic Energy Commission of France?

Although there has been much talk of scientific tests, these have hardly any relevance to the present controversy. There is written evidence, and an almost uninterrupted tradition for 2000

years that the body of Elara was cremated in the south of the city and that a cetiya was built over it. The only question is whether the southern dagoba, now in ruins was that cetiya. Against this position Paranavitana has speculated that as the stupa was built at a spot where a pulila tree once stood, and as Dutugemunu was cremated at a place where a picula tree once stood — there is no evidence whatever that [he was] — could these places have been one and the same? There is no tradition to support this conjecture, and to be frank, no literary evidence either.

Let us now see how the Committee had dealt with this problem. But again, where is its report? Of the twelve members, how many had signed it, indeed how many had seen it? Marcus Joseph's article in the Sun has fortunately given us some clue towards knowing the contents of this elusive report.

The report (described as a summary) that appeared in the Sun on 2nd July 1980 was evidently based on a copy in the possession of Marcus Joseph. This copy was made available to us. It is entitled "Report on (sic) the Sub-Committee appointed to examine the ashes of King Dutugemunu". It has a "bibliography" which is confined only to the 23 references indicated in the text. It rightly describes the position taken up by Paranavitana who, the report says, had declared "of course with a fair degree of uncertainty" that the ashes "could be" the ashes of King Dutugemunu.

Paranavitana had made every effort to prove that the ashes were those of King Dutugemunu and had obviously failed. But the Committee had taken upon itself the task of going one better than Paranavitana by making "uncertainty" certain. They had however exposed their bias by saying that they were examining the ashes of Dutugemunu, not the alleged ashes of the king. Perhaps this was an honest mistake. Let it pass.

We are not sure who among the twelve had really drafted this Report, but it certainly does little credit to the scholarly stature of such archaeologists as Saddhamangala Karunaratne and Roland Silva. Most of the arguments advanced, though to no avail, could not have escaped the eagle eyes of Paranavitana. The Report therefore looks like flagellating a deceased equine.

(Continued on next page)

Yankee Dickie's China visit

The one Sri Lanka politician who fought tooth and nail against the formalisation of trade relations with China was in Peking this week.

China which obviously was a "bad country" then, as far as Mr. J. R. Jayewardene was concerned, is now a "good country".

How times change, nations change and people, especially politicians, change!

As President Jayewardene remarked during an interview given to journalists aboard the plane on his way to Peking, Sri Lanka's relations with Far Cathay date from very ancient times. Indeed, over two thousand years ago, when some of the great nations of today were yet unborn or mere toddlers, there were cultural and commercial interchanges between Sri Lanka and China. Independent corroboration of this remarkable fact of history is provided by the Roman historian Pliny. He records that the Sri Lanka ambassadors who arrived in the court of Rome in his lifetime in the first century AD said that at the time there was commerce between Sri Lanka and China, along the almost impossibly tough 2,000 mile and route through India and over the Himalayas.

Sri Lanka's literature until a comparatively later age is singularly silent about the relations with China, but there are many references in Chinese texts, beginning from the third century. These are the works of Chinese pilgrims, scholars and officials who on their return from foreign tours

published itineraries and descriptions of the countries they had visited. Some of them contain vivid accounts of the island and its people, their religion and their customs.

One of the primary reasons for the mutual attraction of the two peoples was obviously the identity of the national worship, Buddhism. "The emperors of China were accustomed to send ambassadors and laymen and theologians to obtain images and relics of the Buddha and to collect manuscripts of the sacred books, which contained the expositions of the doctrines, and the kings of Sri Lanka despatched in return envoys to reciprocate these religious sympathies and to do homage to the imperial majesty of China...." These exchanges served to sustain and reinforce the religious faith and cultural growth of the two peoples.

There was also the fact that Sri Lanka and China were — and still are — the only two countries in the world to possess Tooth Relics of the Buddha.

Entrepot Trade

The other major reason that brought the two countries together from ancient times was commerce. Not only was there a fair volume of trade between them but the island was also an important wayport for China's trade with the West. Sri Lanka had become the point at which the merchant fleets from the West met those from the East.

The cultural and trade exchanges had continued uninterrupted up to about 760 AD, after which, for nearly four centuries, there is hardly any mention of Sri Lanka in Chinese literature. This gap has been explained by some commentators as resulting from the unsettled political conditions that prevailed in China during large parts of this period. There was also the fact that the carrying trade between the Middle East and China was dominated by the Arabs from the eighth century onwards and they would naturally have discouraged direct contact between Sri Lanka and China.

A particular object mentioned in the writings of most visitors to Sri Lanka, Chinese as well as others, was the Tooth Relic. The great Chinese emperor Kublai Khan had also heard about it. According to the Venetian Marco Polo, who spent a number of years in the Chinese court and visited the island around 1293 on his home-ward journey, Kublai Khan succeeded in obtaining it as well as the Bowl Relic. But the *Mahavamsa* contradicts Marco Polo.

It is thus apparent in the nearly fifteen centuries before relations between Sri Lanka and China were disrupted

children, and the fact that women as well as men were addicted to chewing betel and that they did not sit down to meals with their husbands but retired to some private apartment to eat their food...

The undue emphasis given in Chinese records to cultural relations is probably attributable to the fact that these were written mostly by clerics who had little taste for worldly affairs. But that its author Mahanama was a monk of the Mahavihara monastery at Anuradhapura, bitter rival of the Abhayagiri monastery where the Chinese visited and where Mahayana Buddhism flourished for some time. The *Chulavamsa* (the more recent part of the *Mahavamsa*) "has nothing to say about the relations with China which would seem to have been not inconsiderable. The name of China not even once mentioned." Sri Lanka is indebted to Chinese sources for much valuable information which has served to clarify or confirm or to fill some of the gaps in its history. Particularly in the matter of chronology, when Sinhalese sources have been found to be not entirely trustworthy, "there is above all the synchronisations afforded by Chinese annals..."

The expansion of Europe, from the fifteenth century onwards, witnessed the beginning of momentous changes in the world, as first Portu-

by Gamini Navaratne

By the reign of Parakramabahu I (1153-1168 AD), at Polonnaruwa, according to the Arab geographer Idrisi, ships from China were again resorting to Sri Lanka. Parakramabahu is credited with pioneering state trading with foreign countries, including China. Foreign merchants were allowed to establish trading ports at the main ports and towns, probably to ensure better state supervision.

One of the few Sri Lanka texts to make any mention of relations with China, the *Kavya Sekhara*, written about 1410, records that "swords and musical instruments were imported from China and that Chinese soldiers took service in the army of Parakramabahu III (1287-1293)".

by the advent of foreign powers the two countries exerted considerable influence on each other's national belief, particularly in the spheres of culture and commerce. "The (Chinese) accounts attest to a continued intercourse and an intimate familiarity between the peoples of the two countries... This is apparent from the fact that their statements are not confined to descriptions of customs and character of the male Sinhalese but exhibit evidence that they had been invited to their families and had opportunities of noting peculiarities in the customs of the females. They describe their dress, their mode of tying their hair, their treatment of infants and

DUTUGEMUNU'S ASHES...

(Continued from page 7)

It is now clear that the *malaka* that came into being over the site of the *picula* tree is different from the *maha-pulila-maluva* where the *Dakkhina Thupa* later stood. For the case to make them identical was based firstly on an incorrect translation of a *strophe* in Geiger's *Mahavamsa*.

The *Vamsatthappakasini* has stated that the *picula* tree was in the south-east of the royal house or pavilion and the *Mahabodhivamsa* glossary has said that it was in the south-east of the Bo-tree.

For our guidance we should also note here that *picula* is the name for the Sinhalese *imbut* (*himbut*) tree, and that *pulila* is different, being the name for the Sinhalese *Kavudu-Bo* tree. Neither of these names apply to the *Tamarix Indica* given by Geiger. But

Paranavitana has rested his whole theory on the basis that "the tree which is called *pulila* in Sinhalese (*Tamarix Indica*) is referred to as *picula* in Pali. But is this so?

The *kammamalaka* was definitely within the boundary of the Mahavihara, and we agree with Abaya Ariyaratne that after the cremation of the king this *malaka*, becoming polluted, could have been declared *nissimamalaka* after we suppose a valid *simasamugghata*. It is inconceivable that Dutugemunu who had always wanted to be identified with the *Sangha*, even taking up the position of preaching *bana* to the monks, should have asked to be cremated on his death at a place outside the Mahavihara. He chose the *kammamalaka*, and that surely was within the monastery. But the site of the *Dakkhina Thupa* has

not been at any time within the Mahavihara. Thus this argument, too, falls through. An apologetic attempt to argue that these ancient sites change is far from convincing. Paranavitana never made use of such arguments. His were more plausible, though not always correct, as we now know.

This *Dakkhina Thupa* was known as the *Tissa-Maha-Cetiya* according to the slab inscription discovered by Paranavitana. Nowhere in the chronicles do we find any mention of this name. This only goes to show that the *Dakkhina Thupa* had many names. Originally known most likely as the *Elara Thupa*, it was described in the *Mahavamsa* as the *thupa* of the so called *Dakkhina Vihara*, the southern Vihara as opposed to the *Uttaravihara*, the northern vihara which

was the other name for the Abhayagiri Vihara. Both these places are situated almost in the same longitude.

Of one thing we are certain. Elara's body was cremated at the southern gate of the city and a *thupa* was built over it. Geiger following Turnour describes the spot as "near the Southern gate" which is wrong, for the Pali *pura dakkhina dvaramhi* means "at the southern gateway of the city". The Sinhalese *Mahavamsa* of Sumangala and Batuwantudawe translates the *strophe* correctly as "at the south gate of the city" *muvara dakunu vahasal dora di*.

The writer of the Committee's Report, which is still being kept a secret, makes much of "funerary mounds over places of cremation of royal personages", but the

three references produced do not really acknowledge any such universal practice or custom. One of the instances quoted is the unique case of the *cetiya* built over this very Elara's cremation site.

In this *dharmista* era it is a cruel irony of fate that a cherished memory which had lasted for over 2000 years and which had been a proud boast of the people of Sri Lanka should now be threatened with extinction. There is not a little of evidence that Dutugemunu's ashes were buried in this mound. And the "ash" that was said to have been found among the sand and charcoal that had contaminated it, may not be human ash, far less 2000 years old; but if at all it is so, the likely one to whom it belongs is Elara. Let us not make ourselves the laughing stock of the world.

(Continued on page 9)

YANKEE DICKIE'S CHINA VISIT

(Continued from page 8)

gal, then Spain, followed by England, Holland and France, took the lead in the exploration, trade and colonisation of vast regions which until then had remained largely unknown to Europeans. One country where the repercussions of this expansion were acutely felt was tiny Sri Lanka. The first Western colonisers, the Portuguese, arrived in 1505. They were succeeded in turn by the Dutch (1658-1796) and the British (1796-1948). Thus for nearly 450 years, Sri Lanka's trade and other relations with the outside world including China, were handled by or through foreign imperialist powers who exploited the land for their benefit.

A similar development took place where China was concerned, though beginning in a much later period. "Western cupidity directed Western enterprise, and when the opening of the seas provided easier pathways the ships of the oceanic nations set their sails for the East. Slowly but doggedly European trades broke into the isolation in China had held itself. They fastened like leeches upon its southern shores, the Portuguese at Macao in the sixteenth century, a hundred years later the Spaniards, the Dutch and the English at Canton. The Chinese Empire, while it did not want them, could not shake them off... By 1858, after two wars, the first (1839-42) waged by Britain alone, the second (1857-58) by an Anglo-French alliance, China had been forced to make concession after concession to Western countries through unequal treaties..."

MODERN PERIOD

Sri Lanka-China relations in the 30 years since both countries emerged as new nations can be divided from Sri Lanka's standpoint (and even China's) into four distinct periods: 1948-1956; 1956-1965; 1965-1970; and 1970-1977.

From independence in 1948 until 1956, when strongly pro-West rightwing United National Party (UNP) governments were in office, Sri Lanka was decidedly cool towards China, notwithstanding the fact that it had been one of the first countries to recognise China after the inauguration of the People's Republic on 1st October 1949, and that it had entered into the rubber-rice agreement in 1952.

With the establishment of the first centre-left regime in the island in 1956 under Mr. Solomon Bandaranaike, Sri Lanka adopted a nonaligned foreign policy, a corollary of which was the establishment of diplomatic relations with China and other socialist countries. From then onwards, political, economic and cultural ties with China multiplied, highlighted by a visit by Chinese Prime Minister Chou En lai in 1957. After Mrs. Bandaranaike succeeded her assassinated husband as Prime Minister in 1960, relations with China improved still further and there was a second visit by the Chinese leader in 1964. Earlier, in 1963, Mrs. Bandaranaike had visited Peking as the special emissary of the Colombo Powers who mediated in the China-India border conflict.

The return to power of the UNP under Mr. Dudley Senanayake in 1965 saw a throw-back to the pre-1956 period in the relations between the two countries. Owing to the policy followed by his Government,

The full story of the beginning of the Sri Lanka-China trade, including the intrigue that preceded and followed the signing of the rubber-rice pact, is contained in S. P. Amarasingham's book "Rice and Rubber", published in 1953. A further elaboration of it is contained in the writer's own book, "The Chinese Connexion", published in 1976.

allegedly at the instance of the West, specially the United States of America, there was a deterioration in relations. At one stage, there were fears that the rubber-rice agreement might be abrogated and that even diplomatic ties might be severed. China expressed its displeasure at the turn of events by keeping the post of ambassador to Sri Lanka vacant throughout Mr. Senanayake's five-year term.

From mid-1970, when Mrs. Bandaranaike formed her second Government, the pendulum again began to swing the way of China. The warmth with which Mrs. Bandaranaike was received in China during her state visit in 1972 was regarded by observers as visible proof of the burgeoning friendship. She said in Peking that as between Sri Lanka and China it was "a model of inter-state relations."

SINCE 1977

The return of the UNP to power in 1977, under Mr. Jayewardene, did not witness the same degree of cooling off of relations with China as happened on past occasions. The explanation

can be found in the fact that since US President Nixon's visit to China in 1975 there has been an understanding between Washington and Peking about the balance of power in the Asian region and China no longer frowns on Sri Lanka's close connections with the West, particularly the US.

However, there has been a sharp decrease in the volume of trade between Sri Lanka and China since 1977.

The switch to an "open economy" strategy, with its attendant multi-lateralism, virtually spell the death-knell of the rubber-for-rice pact, whose basis was barter on a bilateral basis.

The Jayewardene Government announced that in future it would sell rubber in the open market for hard currency and also buy rice in the open market.

China no longer felt obliged to obtain rubber mainly from Sri Lanka. It turned to Malaysia and Indonesia.

But with the recession in the capitalist world taking

a heavy toll of the motor car industry, the demand for rubber declined, so that Sri Lanka's rubber industry was in serious trouble.

DASH TO PEKING

At one stage the Minister of National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, then Minister of Trade, had to rush to Peking to negotiate the sale of rubber in exchange for rice.

Since it was formalised in 1952 the trade with China had been one of the few stabilising factors in Sri Lanka's economy, which had been subjected to crippling pressures originating abroad, mainly in the capitalist world.

By 1975, China had emerged as Sri Lanka's biggest trading partner, heading a list of over 100 countries as both its main buyer and supplier. Export amounted to Rs. 460 million and imports Rs. 662 million, giving a total turnover of Rs. 1,112 million.

But, because of the ill-advised policies of the Jayewardene Government designed to please the West, led by America, Sri Lanka is virtually back to the

1952 situation where the rice-rubber equation is concerned.

The total trade between Sri Lanka and China in 1983 according to the New China News Agency, was Rs. 1300 million in much devalued currency, so that the volume of trade was much less than in the past.

Sri Lanka is the loser, while the US, Japan and several other capitalist countries have gained.

In 1952, too, when the US was holding Sri Lanka to ransom over the purchases of rubber and supply of rice, it was China that came to our rescue.

LIFE AND DEATH

Sri Lanka then was in a desperate situation. "It was a matter of life and death," as Sir John Kotelawala described it.

It was out of sheer economic necessity and not due to any policy change of the UNP Government led by Mr. Dudley Senanayake - that the rubber-rice pact was signed despite US protests.

Mr. Jayewardene was then the Minister of Finance and he led the local US-inspired to the formalisation of the trade.

At a United Nations dinner in Colombo shortly before a mission led by Mr. R. G. Senanayake, Minister of Trade, left for Peking, Mr. Jayewardene went to the extent of asking "whether it was wrong to advise caution before taking a course which may put us out of step with our friends in the UN?"

It was for his role in this episode that he came to be called "Yankee Dickie", in contrast to Mr. R. G. Senanayake, who came to be known as "China Dickie".

Mr. Jayewardene cannot claim any credit for the signing of the rubber-rice pact or its continuance in the same form until 1977.

No, Sir.

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DISPLACED TENANT

Editor, Saturday Review.

I was occupying a rented house at Nagoda, Kandana, from May 1967 to July 1983. Originally I paid a rent of Rs. 125 a month. Later the landlord filed a case at the Kandana Rent Board, which ruled that I should continue to pay the same rent as long as I stayed in the house. He then appealed to the Rent Board Appeal Court in Colombo, which gave the same verdict.

But after the U.N.P. Government came into power, he again appealed to the Board of Review in Colombo, which wanted me to pay Rs. 150 a month. He was not satisfied with this and after a year or so he wanted me and the tenants of the other two houses owned by him to pay Rs. 250/.

Earlier, I had applied to the National Housing Department that I was prepared to buy the house if it was an "excess" house, but I had no reply to this. I heard the owner had stated he had no "excess" houses and that he had given them to his children. One of his sons died about two years ago and as such he had an "excess" house now. But he repaired this house when the Colombo/Katunayake road was widened and gave it out for Rs. 700 a month. Then he tried to get the other tenants also to pay Rs. 400 a month, which none of us was prepared to do.

Then came the July 1983 disturbances and my family had to leave the house all of a sudden. Two days later house was looted and some articles burnt. The hall of the house was also burnt. We were left with nothing to call our own and now we are residing in a portion of a house at Jaffna.

We reported our loss to the Kandana Police and also to REPIA. I sent several letters, from 27th July 1983; my last letter was sent on 13th March, 1984. REPIA also sent me several letters but the outcome of all this is nothing.

The owner refuses to repair the house and REPIA wants me to occupy the house. I have told them I am unable to repair the house as I am a retired government pensioner, that if REPIA will give me the money and if the owner states he is prepared to give me the house to occupy and to deduct the repair bill from the house rent, then I will be able to occupy it.

I am at a loss to know to whom I can appeal to now.

S. T. PAUL

Chunnakam.

'PLANNED CAMPAIGN TO OUST THE TAMIL STUDENTS'

Why have the authorities at the University of Peradeniya or for the matter of that the Ministry of Higher Education not published the report on the violent disturbances on that campus during May-June 1983?

The credentials of the three Commissioners Mr. K. M. de Lanerolle (Chairman), Professor D. Calnaido and Mrs. Chandra Ranaraja the U.N.P. Deputy Mayor of Kandy are impeccable. None of them could be accused of being anti-Government or anti-establishment. Appointed on 18th May 1983, they submitted their

detailed two-volume report on 6th December 1983, but its contents have remained a dark secret ever since.

The Commissioners say that the violent disturbances on the campus "did not erupt spontaneously but represented an organised campaign" whose features "all show careful planning."

The purpose of the campaign say the Commissioners, "may be described as racist" and "was to evict the Tamils from the campus. In complete defiance of authority and acting with blatant vio-

lence, the attackers succeeded in achieving their ends.

"The attackers carried sticks, staves, iron rods, bicycle chains, belts, knives arms and legs of university furniture, and even a human humerus."

"The following offences were committed; intimidation disorderly conduct, unlawful assembly, stoning of halls, abuse, wilful damage to property, looting, restraint, forcible entry, incitement to violence, physical and psychological violence."

The Commissioners identify a number of persons are responsible for and taking part in this racist violence. It would be interesting to know what action, if any, has been taken against them. One learns that a certain student, named as a ringleader, has since following the example set by the government—been promoted and is now an acting Assistant Lecturer.

The main reason for the suppression of the report is, perhaps, its scathing exposure of the effectiveness of the university authorities and the manner in which they allowed the conditions that led to this violence to develop to flash point.

"In the University of Peradeniya", they say, "there are many authorities but no authority."

(Forward, 15th May)

COMMISSION FOR NATIONAL UNITY

The Minister of National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali has suggested the appointment of a permanent commission for national unity with powers to examine all allegations of discrimination and unfair practice by individuals and communities, and grant redress if the allegations are found to be true.

Mr. Athulathmudali made this suggestion in his address to the seventh mid-year conference of Lanka Jaycees at Hotel Holiday Inn on 20th May.

"After my recent exposure to all possible types of opinion—terrorist, militants, moderates and others—I am convinced there are grievances, real and unreal, that should be investigated and corrected. A permanent commission acceptable to all can go into these grievances and grant redress if they are real and reject them if untrue", the Minister said.

BUILDING BRIDGES

The following is a communique issued by the Sudasien Büro Kiefernstr. 45, 5600 Wuppertal 2, West Germany:

More and more people in Europe are interested in South Asia, particular in the Sri Lankan issue.

In the recent past a number of Sri Lanka solidarity groups were founded. These groups are working on different issues: human rights - social justice - tea and trade - asylum problem in Germany etc.

Often they have direct personal links to the country through supporting small development projects.

The SOUTH ASIA BUREAU successor of the Sri Lanka Co-ordination Centre Kassei, is an experiment to bring these groups together and to build up a platform for information and solidarity work with Sri Lanka and South Asia.

Our main objective is the exchange of experience and the support of local groups and individuals here and in Sri Lanka. Through team work we see a better chance of informing the public and creating more awareness among people about the linkage between the oppression and exploitation in the so-called "Third World" and our situation in the West.

Activities of the SOUTH ASIA BUREAU:

★ Publication of an information paper ("Sri Lanka Info") about Sri Lanka every second month

★ Publication of papers and booklets on behalf of Sri Lanka working groups

★ Co-ordination of contacts among Sri Lanka solidarity groups.

★ Organisation of seminars and other educational activities

★ Media service (slides, films, exhibitions, documentations, etc.) about Sri Lanka.

★ Contacts to groups, individuals in Sri Lanka and South India concerned with human rights, social justice and involved in development activities.

Our long-term aim is to extend our work about Sri Lanka and South India to other South Asian countries.

We need your help to build up an information network in order to give a clear picture of the prevailing socio-economic and political situation in your country.

It would be fruitful for both sides if an exchange of experience of your work in Sri Lanka and our activities here could be established.

INQUESTS AGAIN

The Government has asked that an inquest be held into the death of a youth who was taken for questioning by the army at Udupiddy junction on Friday, according to the Minister of National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali.

He said this was the first time the Government had asked for an inquest over the death of a suspected terrorist.

The youth had swallowed a capsule containing cyanide while being taken to the Palaly army camp by truck. It was announced earlier. (Daily News, 21st May)

Note by Editor: Inquest proceedings had been suspended in the North since early last year, so that dead bodies could be disposed of without any sort of formal inquiry.

Most of the victims of the violence since July 1983 were buried or cremated without inquests.

CRM Statement

(Continued from page 3)

as a deterrent; (e) seek the sanction of the Attorney-General for a criminal prosecution.

5. It is one of the hazards of life that a person may find himself with a good civil claim for damages which he cannot recover in full because the defendant is poor. To drastically interfere with the right of every person to freely impart and receive information merely to help a few potential plaintiffs to recover large tax free damages is, to say the least, extraordinary, and exhibits a curious sense of priorities. By the same logic one could say that no person should speak in public unless he first makes a cash deposit.

Non-Govt. press

6. In Sri Lanka where so many major newspapers are government-owned or under direct governmental control, the proposal acquires an especially dangerous character. For these papers, with the wealth of the State behind them, will find no difficulty in depositing any amount of money drawn from public funds, or obtaining a guarantee bond from a state-owned bank or state-owned insurance corporation. It is the independent and opposition press that will be hit. But it is precisely this section of our press that has a vital contribution to make in a set-up where the radio, the television, and most major newspapers, are already under total state control. It is on these papers that the public rely to learn of news which is not published in the state controlled media.

7. Especially hard-hit will

be the many lively, readable and informative small papers and weeklies run on a "shoestring" that have grown up to meet a real need of the reading public. Even today they struggle to survive; the new law may well put them out of business.

Total control

8. The Cabinet is to decide on the amount of cash to be deposited or guaranteed. Guarantee bonds are to be issued by one of the two state insurance corporations or by a bank; these will presumably have their own stringent conditions, will fix the premia or security they require from the newspaper. Insurance is a state monopoly in Sri Lanka. The above factors taken together mean that, in effect, the government of the day will decide who may publish a newspaper, and who may not. Total state control of the media by the political party in power thus becomes complete.

9. The proposed measure is an unprecedented and unreasonable restriction on the freedom of expression and publication. It is, furthermore, discriminatory against the poor, who are entitled to these freedoms just as much as the rich. It is inconsistent with not only our own constitution, but also with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which Sri Lanka signed last year.

CRM urges the Government not to proceed with this measure which is a grave danger to the freedom to read and to publish as hitherto enjoyed in our country.

'India very much misunderstood'

AS in the face of daunting political and economic problems at home, so in the realm of international relations, especially dealings with the neighbours, most people in this country tend to look for soft and easy options. But unfortunately no such options exist though the hankering for them goes on.

For instance, the fond belief that most of the difficulties with the neighbours will simply go away if only this country, as the largest in the sub-continent, would treat them "generously" dies hard. It should, in fact, have been knocked down long ago by what followed the Indo-Bangladesh accord of 1977 on Farakka, a more generous agreement than which is hard to imagine.

In any case, generosity, or lack of it, has nothing whatever to do with the storm that Bangladesh has currently raised over the construction of a barbed-wire fence along some parts of the border between the two countries to deter illegal immigration into Assam. The fence is being put up right inside Indian territory, not even on the "zero line" as the no man's land along the border is called. The Bangladesh territory or sovereignty is not even remotely affected, which makes nonsense of the slanging match, interspersed with shooting, that the military regime, headed by Lt.-Gen. Ershad, has embarked upon.

The story is no different in Sri Lanka where the veteran President Jayewardene is resorting to equally wild rhetoric to cover up his own inability or unwillingness to solve the extremely explosive ethnic conflict. New Delhi has done nothing to create, encourage or aggravate this conflict. On the contrary. It has bent over backwards to help Colombo defuse and resolve it within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. Indeed, but for the timely and constructive mediation by the Indian government after last year's slaughter of the Tamil minority in the Sinhala dominated areas of Sri Lanka, the all-party talks on the vexed Tamil issue could not have even started.

Even so, President Jayewardene has found it expedient to orchestrate a virulent tirade against India. He has himself accused this country of "bullying" him while his more chauvinistic cohorts have made even more absurd

charges in a much more objectionable manner.

Disparity in size

In short, the current configuration of circumstances in this country's neighbourhood underscores, more clearly than before, that the complexities of India's problems with its neighbours are rooted as much in the subjective feelings of their rulers, which may or may not change, as in unchanging objective reality on India's size and that of several neighbours. Another is the dissonance between India's democratic value system and the interests of the ruling elites in the neighbouring military dictatorships or monarchies.

All these factors cannot be wished away. Nor can they be smothered by sentimentality or sanctimony. Though all efforts must be made to mitigate them it would be unrealistic to expect a radical change in the situation overnight.

This should put in perspective both Dhaka's offensive ranting against the fence and the ominous stalemate the efforts to find an amicable settlement of the Tamil issue in Sri Lanka though it must be emphasised that the two situations are not exactly alike. Indeed, contrary to interested propaganda, there is no such thing as uniformity in India's relations with all its neighbours. Relations with one can be exceedingly good at a time when those with another are under severe strain.

Moreover, relations with the same neighbour are prone to be subject to sharp ups and downs, as has been demonstrated most conspicuously in the case of Pakistan. A graph of the quest for a lasting peace between India and Pakistan is bound to show high crests and deep troughs. As of today, however, it is likely to reveal a plateau of sorts.

Relations between the two sides may not be as good as they ought to be. But they certainly are not half as bad as rhetoric on both sides of the divide often makes them out to be.

New Delhi has even refrained from making a public issue of Pakistan's aid and encouragement to the extremists in Punjab though the

matter has been privately taken up with Islamabad at appropriate levels. Guns and grenades have been making their way from Pakistan to Amritsar under cover of the massive illicit transactions in contraband, including alcohol and narcotics, which have made the Punjab border the smugglers' paradise. Mr. Ganga Singh Dhillon, leader of the so-called Khalistan movement, has not only been allowed to visit Pakistan but was also received by General Zia-ul-Haq.

Motivated propaganda

With all that, however, the dialogue between the two countries will be resumed on 19th May at the foreign secretaries' meeting in Islamabad, and the two foreign ministers are expected to confer in July when they go to the Maldives for the ministerial conference of SARC.

As an example of remarkable consistency in friendliness, Indo-Bhutanese relations would be hard to beat. This friendship has of late

Indian sentiment in Kathmandu because of various motives including the feeling that this is perhaps necessary for an assertion of Nepal's separate identity.

Kathmandu, however, is not Nepal. Whatever may be said in this city's salons or written in its newspapers is by no means shared by people in the rest of the kingdom. In fact, even in the Nepalese capital much of the anti-Indian propaganda can be traced most of the time to a single source.

In Dhaka these days, on the other hand, the shrill tirade against India over the fence issue is being master-minded by the Ershad government as a whole. No one in that country can be so demented as to believe that it can obstruct the fence-building by force. The wild talk of Armageddon and worse, therefore, only reflects Gen. Ershad's desperation in the face of the mounting challenge from the forces led by the two formidable begums, Sheikh Hasina Wajed and Begum Khaleda

headway Mr. Jayewardene will have to play the role expected of him as the only Sri Lankan leader capable of cutting the Gordian knot. He cannot go on succumbing, as he has unfortunately done in recent months to pressures from jingoists in his own ranks.

Far from blaming Mrs. Gandhi's government for "inciting" the Tamils in either Sri Lanka or India, Colombo ought to appreciate the difficulties New Delhi is facing in coping with the tremendous emotional upsurge in Tamil Nadu because of the anti-Tamil violence in Sri Lanka, the underlying injustice to the Tamil minority there and the delay in any movement towards an amicable settlement.

Such an upsurge would have been hard to contain at the best of times. To do so has been rendered vastly more taxing because the DMK leader, Mr. Karunanidhi, and the state chief minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, are engaged in a no-holds-barred competition to make the cause of the Lanka Tamils their own and that too in an election year. Mr. Karunanidhi has in fact threatened to revive the DMK's secessionist politics if New Delhi fails to "act" in defence of the Lanka Tamils.

But, however acute the consequent dilemma of the Congress party on this score, even its worst enemies cannot say that Mrs. Gandhi's government is in any way deviating from the sound policies it has pursued since she offered Indian good offices to Sri Lanka. However, it must be realised that if the Tamil issue, instead of being solved, is exacerbated, no government in New Delhi would be able to ignore the mass feeling in Madras. (Courtesy, *The Times of India*).

by

Inder Malhotra

been elevated to an even higher plane, thanks to a complete understanding between the two neighbours on the question of the Bhutan-China boundary on which those two countries have just completed the first, preliminary round of negotiations.

In the case of Nepal, there has recently been welcome progress over the Karnali hydro-electric project which will eventually do enormous good to both India and Nepal. A similar advance in relation to the Pancheswar dam is expected shortly.

In spite of the closest bonds between India and Nepal, there is often a certain uneasiness in the Indo-Nepalese relationship. But this is qualitatively different from strains in this country's relations with, say, Pakistan or Bangladesh. King Birendra of Nepal is a wise monarch fully aware of the imperatives for India-Nepal friendship and cooperation. But some of those surrounding him have made it their business to whip up anti-

Zia — demanding immediate withdrawal of martial law.

Emotional upsurge

Nor can it be argued that the reasons for having to put up the fence have been insufficiently explained to Bangladesh. A year ago when Mr. Narasimha Rao went to Dhaka he spoke about the fence at great length to not only the Bangladesh leaders but also the Dhaka press. A stage came at his press conference when he had to remark: "You seem to have run out of questions on the fence. So let us change the subject."

India has no escape from the unpleasant task of putting up the fence without which it would be impossible to maintain whatever tranquillity has been established so far in Assam, the principal victim of the massive and on-going in filtrations from Bangladesh.

In Sri Lanka the all-party talks on the Tamil question are due to be resumed, after an unduly prolonged recess, on Wednesday. But if they have to make any

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Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Let - down by SLCTB

Bus travellers between Jaffna and Pt. Pedro have been seriously inconvenienced ever since the Pt. Pedro Depot was closed on the orders of the Minister of

Transport in early May, following the robbery that took place there.

The Pt. Pedro depot was operating on four routes—750, 751, 752 and 764.

Because of the closure of the depot, a special bus has to come from Kondavil Depot (now the central operating centre for all buses previously operated from Pt. Pedro as well as other depots in Jaffna district) every morning to transport employees from Pt. Pedro to Jaffna to take the buses out.

This results in considerable delay, the bus services from Pt. Pedro to Jaffna rarely starting before 6 a.m.

The services on route 750, running through Nelliady, are fairly satisfactory. But commuters on routes 751 and 752 have a hard time because of the irregularity of the services and the gross overcrowding.

For every five buses assigned to route 750, there is only one each on the other two routes. Not infrequently these breakdowns causing more inconvenience to commuters, especially white-collar workers travelling during the peak hours 6-30 a.m. to 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The SLCTB authorities have so far been deaf to all the appeals of commuters to take remedial action.

JAFFNA C. E. B. UNIT TO CLOSE

200 JOBS AT STAKE

The reported decision of the Government to shift the Senior Centre Engineers' Office of the Ceylon Electricity Board at Jaffna to Anuradhapura with immediate effect has perturbed nearly 200 employees in this unit.

The final outcome of this decision, the employees fear would be they would be forced out of employment.

The Jaffna unit covers the Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu and Vavuniya districts.

In representations to the CEB authorities, the employee have pointed out the adverse consequences that would flow from the closure of the Jaffna unit.

★ Most of the employees at the Jaffna unit are

Tamils, a number of whom were displaced after the July 1983 disturbances. They have now settled down to work in their home station.

★ They fear to shift out of their home station without guarantees of adequate security because of the continuing tension that exists in the country.

★ They will not be able to obtain suitable accommodation in Anuradhapura

★ Familied officers with school-going children will be unable to find accommodation in schools, particularly in the middle of the year.

★ There was the likelihood that if they left their houses in Jaffna and went to Anuradhapura, these could be looted and destroyed by elements who await to exploit such situations.

★ The public would be greatly inconvenienced because they would have to go all the way to Anuradhapura in connection with the

supply of electricity and allied matters.

★ Development of electricity schemes in the Jaffna district would come to a standstill.

The employees have also pointed out that the Government's decision went counter to its avowed policy in two respects.

Under the proposed decentralisation of the administration, the district development councils were to be given more power, not less.

After the July 1983 disturbances, the Government decided to settle Tamil employees as far as possible in their respective home areas.

CMU one - day work stoppage

The Ceylon Mercantile Union has called for a one-day general strike on Tuesday 29th May to spotlight the plight of the workers who were displaced from employment and denied wages since their workplaces were destroyed or damaged by organised gangs in July 1983, to call for the restoration by the Government of the issue of food rations to such workers, once a fortnight, as was done from August 1983, but stopped in March 1984, to press for the abolition of the rehabilitation levy of 1% compulsorily deducted from the pay of all wage-earners, and to defend the fundamental right of freedom of association of the workers of Blue Diamonds Ltd., Seeduwa, and the holding of an inquiry immediately by the Commissioner of Labour into the actual circumstances in which the Company locked out all the workers on 20th February 1984.

CHUNNAKAM AFTER THE SHOOTING

The Chunnakam market, one of the oldest and biggest markets in the Jaffna Peninsula, now has a deserted appearance.

This has been so ever since the shooting incident at the market on 28th March when seven persons were killed and a number

of others injured allegedly at the hands of Air Force personnel who, according to the official version, 'fired at a group of terrorists when fired upon.'

Few farmers now bring produce to the market and few vendors also turn up for business.

One result is that the farmers are exploited by middlemen who now visit the farmers in lorries to buy the produce at very low prices dictated by them.

The middlemen in turn sell the produce at very high prices.

The result is that both producers and the consumers stand to lose.

Vasudeva surrenders

Mr. Vasudeva Nanayakara, leader of the Nava Sama Samaja Party, who was wanted by the police for questioning after the July 1983 incidents, surrendered to the I. G. P. on 25th May. The party remains banned, along with the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna.

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Words of Wisdom

"The flame of communal discord arises from narrow sectarianism and burns a community. Therefore be liberal and Catholic."

—Sri Swami Sivananda

"Kindness has converted more sinners & than either zeal, eloquence or learning."

—F. W. Faber

"Hatred is like fire. It makes even light rubbish deadly."

—George Eliot

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