

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

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Editorial

Swimming against the tide?

In a country like Ceylon which got freedom on a plate after India won hers after tremendous struggle and bloodshed, in a country like Ceylon where no new hero appears to have emerged in 2000 years in the Sinhala consciousness since Dutugemunu—as against India's contemporaneous heroes within living memory like the Gandhis, the Nehrus, the Bhagawat Singhs and Subbas Chandra Boses who fought for Indian freedom in their own different ways along with millions of unknown heroes who lost their lives or spent a better part of them in jails, in a country like Ceylon, one wonders, of what stuff are heroes made?

When some of the finest flower of Sinhala Youth rose in rebellion in 1971, they failed to live on as heroes, not because they did not have the stuff in them or the ideals (theirs was the only organised effulgence of idealism in Ceylon's modern history), not because they took to violence (after all Dutugemunu became a hero through violence), not because they challenged the existing state-power, (do not all successful rebels and coup leaders do the same?) but because of two reasons: (1) they failed in their avowed mission; (2) Youth ideals are no match for naked State-power.

But long before 1971, long before freedom came, one of the most commendable and tangible expressions of aspirations towards Ceylon's freedom came from the Jaffna Youth. Imbued with ideals, influenced by Mahatma Gandhi, charged with the surging power of India's battle, the Jaffna Youth Congress demanded "POORANA SWARAJ" for Ceylon nearly 20 years before the plate containing freedom fell in the laps of the 'moderate' Sinhalese leaders.

In 1930 the Youth Congress successfully carried through their call for boycott of the first State Council in the North on the ground that the Donoughmore Constitution did not advance enough the cause of self-government—an achievement which earned the spontaneous commendation of leaders in the south. Today, 51 years after 1930, 34 years after freedom, in vastly changed circumstances no doubt, there is again a move afoot in the North for a boycott of Sri Lanka's Legislature. Let there be no illusions about it—the move represents a resurgence of Youth ideals. Let there also be no escaping from the stark, significant reality—that for the first time in 26 years, a set of Tamil leaders who have been time and again returned by a popular unshaken faith may find themselves swimming against a popular tide. Their possible plea that they are good swimmers with 30 years in the sea does not interest us. Where are the Tamil people, already writhing under State terrorism, going to find themselves in a future internal imbroglio, with their hitherto accepted leaders themselves hobnobbing in the citadels of State power?

While T.U.L.F. goes to Kotte, Jaffna stages a hartal

Jaffna observed a peaceful hartal on 29 April—the day of the ceremonial opening of the new parliament building at Sri Jayawardenepura, Kotte—to protest the participation of Tamil United Liberation Front MPs in the opening ceremony.

The significance of this hartal, political observers point out, lies in the fact that this is the first time a

hartal against the TULF has been observed in Jaffna.

The hartal was quite a success, according to reports. Grand Bazaar—the commercial centre—was virtually deserted. Most shops were closed and buses ran half empty. Most of the schools had poor attendance and were forced to cancel the afternoon sessions. Theatres

too cancelled all shows. A few incidents involving buses were reported and no buses ran after 6 p.m.

The hartal call was jointly issued by the Tamil Eelam Liberation Front and five other organisations: Eelam Manavar Pothu Manram (a student organisation), Students' Association of the University of Jaffna, Tamil Ilaigiar Peravai (Liberation Wing—a youth organisation), Revolutionary Communist League and the Jaffna Branch of the Public Corporation Workers' Union.

Representatives of these organisations which issued a call "to observe a hartal on the 29th to maintain the self-respect of the Tamils and to renew the determination to re-establish Tamil Eelam" garlanded the statue of King Sankili at Nallur—the capital of the old Jaffna kingdom—and held a brief meeting on the spot.

Confrontation at the Chelva memorial!

The political polarisation taking place in the North surfaced recently when two groups—both committed to the ideals of the late Tamil leader Chelvanayakam—observed Chelvanayakam Day on 26 April at the Chelvanayakam Memorial, Jaffna.

The Tamil Eelam Liberation Front, which is spearheaded by ex-Mayor Dr. S. A. Tharmalingam, arrived at the venue on schedule, pitched a tent and went ahead with their observances.

About an hour later, the Tamil United Liberation Front leader Appapillai Amirthalingam suddenly arrived on the scene, followed at intervals by TULF MPs and Municipal Councillors. The TULF group

assembled about 30 feet away from the TELF.

While Amirthalingam was addressing his group, Dr. Tharmalingam and other speakers addressed the other group.

Since both groups were within earshot distance of each other, speakers from the rival groups answered each other in a verbal point counterpoint.

While SUTHANTHIRAN EDITOR, KOVAI MAHESAN (TELF) was reading out the Eelam proclamation Mangayarkarasi Amirthalingam (TULF) sang the TULF anthem.

The TULF group left as abruptly as it arrived while the TELF group continued its meeting till about 7-30 p.m.

Hartal leader taken in for police questioning

Dr. S. A. Tharmalingam, the leader of the Tamil Eelam Liberation Front, was summoned round about 6 p.m. to the Jaffna police station, at the end of the successful hartal spearheaded by the Front.

At the time of going to press, round 9 p.m. on the 29th, Dr. Tharmalingam had still not come back from the police station.

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The 9th Asian Games in New Delhi - the Count-down has begun

The count down for the 9th Asiad has already begun. The Asian Games torch will return to its birth place, New Delhi after a lapse of over three decades, having travelled all over Asia acquiring the character of a major international sports event. It was on March 4, 1959 that India's first Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru lit the Asian Games torch for the first time, from the sun-rays at the historic Red Fort. Since then, it has visited six important capitals of Asian countries spreading a message of peace and friendship and cementing relations among different countries, besides providing opportunities

to improve physical standards. Though it was only a modest beginning with eleven countries taking part in just six disciplines, today, it has become a big international sports event with more than 35 countries actively participating.

In the forthcoming Asiad in New Delhi almost all the Olympic disciplines of the last Moscow Olympics are going to be staged. It will be a record 21 disciplines to make it the biggest Asiad ever. The disciplines included are: Athletics, Archery, Badminton, Basketball, Boxing, Cycling, Football, Gymnastics, Hockey, Handball, Shooting, Swimming, Table Tennis, Tennis, Volleyball, Weight-lifting, Wrestling, Yachting, Equestrian and Rowing, Golf, Handball, Rowing and Equestrian will be the new disciplines included for the first time in the Asian Games. Besides, there are two more demonstration games — Sepak Takraw of Malaysia and Kabaddi of India—obviously with a view to bringing them into the pur-

view of the Asian Games in course of time.

Staging of 21 disciplines and two demonstration games is indeed a Herculean task, and definitely an ambitious programme. It involves huge expenditure on the construction of various infrastructural facilities, like Stadia of international standards, procurement of electronic equipment, pooling of resources, in both men

and material including talented and qualified personnel for the smooth conduct of games, provision of facilities to participants, delegates, visitors, spectators etc.

MASCOT AND LOGO

The Baby elephant 'APPU' with a mark of Bindiya on the fore-head has been chosen the Mascot of the 9th Asian Games. The Elephant is loved all over the world for its wisdom, strength and loyalty. In India, it is considered particularly auspicious and figures predominantly in her mythology and folklore. 'APPU' the prancing baby elephant, gay and playful, with a merry twinkle in his eyes, amply embodies the spirit of the Asian Games. The mark of a Bindiya on his forehead is actually the symbol of the Asian Games.

Spent politico eyes diplomatic post

Is a veteran politico from the Eastern Province, who hop-stepped and jumped into the ranks of the government, anxious to exchange his portfolio for a diplomat's briefcase?

the politico thinks his stock has not yet hit rock-bottom, is a way out from such ignominy, they point out.

Reports from Colombo indicate that this politico, who has recently been riding the crest of a religious wave, thinks it is time he attended to the development of his own affairs, political and otherwise.

Political insiders say he is eyeing a No. 2 diplomatic posting in a neighbouring country where he has substantial stakes.

The reason for this urge to lie abroad, say these sources, is the politico's premonition that he will be way down in the ruling party's list of candidates at the next general elections, if not overlooked altogether.

A diplomatic posting, especially in a country where

A God-send for some

The recently - concluded World Hindu Conference seems to have come as a god-send for some Conference participants from India.

Once they landed in Ceylon, these participants made a bee-line to the duty-free shop at Kollupitiya where they went on a shopping-spree, buying up all the imported goods they could afford.

Some of them had reportedly headed back home without even once stepping into the Conference Hall!

HINDU CONFERENCE BIGWIG SWITCHED OFF ABRUPTLY

There is a limit even to fawning.

Lakshmana Iyer learnt this when he moved the vote of thanks on the opening day of the World Hindu Conference. And the person who taught him this lesson was President J.R. Jayawardene who inaugurated the Conference.

Lakshmana Iyer compared President Jayawardene to King Parakramabahu, among

others, and said the President was more than an avatar of these illustrious kings as he had surpassed them all.

The President, who was listening intently, sent up a note to Hindu Affairs Minister Chelliah Rajadurai who was presiding.

Minister Rajadurai thereupon whispered something into Lakshmana Iyer's ear. The fulsome praise was abruptly turned off.

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A MEMORIAL SERVICE For The Late

DR. S. C. ARULANANDAM

The above service will be conducted
on Sunday 2nd May 1982 at 5-00 p. m.
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No, my wings have not been clipped by the Editor of the "Saturday Review". Nor has there been any pressure from elsewhere to cramp my style. I mention this because a number of readers had asked why this column had been conspicuous by its non-appearance in last week's issue, after a particularly stinging attack on the Head of the Government in the previous issue. I should like to remind readers that journalists, too, have the right to occasionally take French leave, especially during festive times like the New Year! Apart from that, I continue to remain free to write what I wish, in the public interest.

However, this is not to concede that there is complete freedom of the Press in Sri Lanka, as claimed by leaders of the ruling party from public platforms. Far from it. Two of the five main newspaper companies, the radio and television continue to be state monopolies, while a state-appointed watch-dog is constantly on watch. Even the newspapers that do call themselves independent are highly selective in their criticism for a number of reasons, including fear of losing state advertising.

That conditions do not exist in Sri Lanka for Press freedom to flourish—despite all the constitutional guarantees—will become evident from the following story.

Before the "Saturday Review" made its appearance, some of us journalists planned to launch a similar independent weekly from

Colombo. A trust was to be formed to preserve the independent character of the publication while there was to be a consultative body representative of all the communities and all the professions. But we could not find a printer!

All the Colombo printing firms we approached were reluctant to undertake its publication because they tended to equate "independent" with being "anti-Government"; this, they said, would not be good for their other business.

One printer, in fact, pointed to the existence now of South African-type laws as part of the normal law of our land that, without the actual declaration of a state of emergency, the Government could ban any publication or seal any printing press, if it were so inclined.

Of course, we could have gone to one of the party presses; some of them would have loved to undertake the work. But then we would have been under a handicap from the start. So we gave up the idea.

In this context, I think we are fortunate to have a journal like the "Saturday Review", especially to highlight nationally significant news and views which now receive scant or no publicity at all in the mainstream media, a journal which, moreover, recognises no boundaries to the freedom of the Press except those set by strict adherence to the truth and the public interest.

Political Causerie

by

Gamini Navaratne

The polarisation of opposition political forces, which has gathered momentum in recent weeks, will be on public display at the May Day celebrations today.

Main interest is certain to be focussed on the rally at Campbell Park, Colombo, presided over by Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike. For the first time since the split of September 1981, mother and son will be seen together on a public platform, signifying the healing of a rift that at one time had threatened to put the main opposition party completely out of gear.

Compared to this development, whether the SLFP(M)

party headquarters before the elections or even whether her party is recognised by the Commissioner of Elections as the real SLFP or not can at best be only side issues. For recent developments have served to underscore the fact that the SLFP is where Mrs. Bandaranaike is!

Her party together with the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (though now divided), the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna, the Ceylon Communist Party and the Lanka Prajatantrawadi Peramuna constitute a formidable challenge to President Jayewardene's United National Party at any election, parliamentary or presidential. Whether they

The Communist Party of Sri Lanka appears determined to keep aloof from the moves to forge unity against "the common enemy". Probably, its bitter experience with the united front experiment between 1970 and 1977 has something to do with its present attitude. Or is it that it is awaiting instructions from Moscow?

J.V.P.—Strong enough to take on the UNP alone?

Whatever the eventual decision of the Cotta Road party Mr. Rohana Wijewe-

The S.L.F.P. is where Mrs. B is

would also eventually give up its go-it-alone policy, whether Mrs. Bandaranaike is allowed the use of the

could go on from their present understanding to form a "united front" remains to be seen.

era's Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna could continue to claim to be the only uncompromised leftwing party left in the country, uncompromised in that, so far, it has not formed any alliances with any other party. The boast of Mr. Wijeweera is that it is strong enough to take on the UNP alone! Something of its might will indeed be visible at its May Day rally which, as in past years, can be expected to be one of the best-organised and most impressive.

'Even Anura Daniel can contest, but not I'



Mrs. Bandaranaike made two significant points at the Press Conference held at her Colombo residence on April 26.

1. "I was deprived of my civic rights mainly because I extended the emergency. On the same argument, Mr. Jayewardene should also be deprived of civic rights for the Dudley Senanayake Government of 1965-70 of which he was a leading member, ruled by emergency laws for 1086 days of its 1825 days of existence, according to A. J. Wilson's book."

2. "Anura Daniel, who was caught allegedly trying to smuggle in gold worth millions of rupees, was made to resign from parliament, but there is nothing to prevent him from contesting the next elections, whereas I cannot do so."

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Brian Barnes

Brian Barnes (I-man Theatre) in Jaffna

With his superb modulation of tone and voice, a wide array of appropriate gestures, flexibility of movement, and his ability to depersonalise himself and enter into characters as various as the comical Cheshire cat of Lewis Carroll and the serious young king of Oscar Wilde, Brian Barnes not only convinced us of his theatrical abilities but produced an enjoyable evening on the 26th at the Chundikuli Girls' College Hall.

The opening playlet, 'The Young King' by Oscar Wilde had a serious social import which was lacking in some of the following ones which were only of theatrical signifi-

cance. On the night before his coronation the prince experiences three consecutive dreams which make him tragically aware of the oppression of the toiling poor by which the superficial grandeur of his crown is earned. He reveals his changed outlook the next morning when he appears in rags and scandalises the Nobles as well as the peasants.

But the next dramatization of a scene from 'Alice in Wonderland' could have bored the largely adult audience slightly, not only

because of its length, but also because of the nature of the playlet itself whose humour heavily relied on the subtle use of language of Lewis Carroll for which the audience gave scant attention; the "mad tea-party" of Alice, the Mad Hatter, the March Hare and the Dormouse too slightly confused the audience as it was obviously difficult for one actor to dramatise their long chat without confusing the four characters in the minds of the audience.

Often, when Barnes found himself not getting the expected response from the audience he had to resort to farce (i.e. exaggerated physical action to evoke

and lessen the distance between him and the audience. But some of his anecdotes like the peculiar laughter of the natives of Fiji, and the peculiar English of the Indians, smacked slightly of the typical colonial condescension of the British.

A review by SURESH

laughter) which was quite untypical of him. But, knowing that too heavy a reliance on the subtleties of the Queen's tongue might bore an Eastern audience Brian might have consciously employed farce to communicate more simply and humourously to us.

A gap in communication was prominent in Barnes' dramatisation of a scene from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. The humour of the act lay in his ironic revelation of the accidents and confusions that resulted in the crude Shakespearian theatrical techniques of the 16th century. Barnes mistakenly assumed that the audience was already acquainted with 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' as well as the theatrical conventions of the 16th century which were necessary to understand the irony of his parody. But he must have been really surprised to see the blank 'serious' faces of the Eastern audience for a dramatisation of which a British audience would have rolled with laughter.

But the well-known 'Pied Piper of Hamelin' was a more enjoyable playlet. The admirable feature of the act was Barnes' heroic battle for realistic dramatisation against the flat monotonous rhyme of Browning's poem. Browning, the Victorian poet now pushed into poetic obscurity because of his difficult syntax and heavy and mechanical end-rhymes, would have jumped in his grave with glee if he had known how dramatic and live his lines became in the skilful handling of his poem by Barnes!

Between the playlets Barnes quoted various anecdotes to add variety to the programme

The last item, 'The Pedagogue', was undoubtedly the best playlet of the evening. With its strange fusion of levity and seriousness, it had profound implications for the audience. The realistic dramatization of an eccentric old teacher's inability to establish a proper rapport with his unruly students, was a superb satire on the inefficiency of the formal Educational system of the Western model which was adopted by our country too since colonization. But the play had a deeper philosophical dimension. The teacher though a child of scientific humanism yet holds on to his religious conviction of 'In the beginning was the Word'. When alerted to the dangerous excesses to which science had led man, he confidently asserts values such as 'courage, and faith in the Authorities'. But as the disgruntled students finally walk out of the class despite the pleas from the abandoned teacher, they dramatically symbolise the revolt of the modern generation against all forms of Authority—whether Teacher or God.

Though the actor's skill was highly impressive, a theatrical experience involves not only the actor but also the audience. It is this interaction which defines the quality of the performance. Though the audience consisted of the English-educated middle class, still it was not sufficiently acquainted with the English literary scene to respond adequately to items such as the ironic 'Midsummer Night's Dream' and the peculiar puns of 'Alice in Wonderland'. The fact that even despite this slight cultural gap Barnes could produce an enjoyable evening speaks volumes for his mastery of verbal and physical communication. Though it was an interesting evening for us, it must have been a memorable experience for the actor himself who confidently gambled for the appropriate response from an unpredictable Eastern audience!

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Prof. Arasaratnam

The 1982 Chelvanayakam Memorial Lecture

A Historical foundation of the Economy of the Tamils of North Ceylon (Continued)

(Continued from last issue)

Other export commodities in the 17th and 18th centuries consisted of a variety of local produce, each of small volume but adding together to make a substantial contribution to the Jaffna economy. Palmyrah timber and other produce of the tree were perhaps the most important of these. The timber was exported in large quantities to Malabar, Madura and Coromandel and the trade was in the hands of the peddling traders of Jaffna and the south Indian coast. Palmyrah produce such as dried roots and **pinaddu** were shipped south to Colombo and Galle. The timber fetched high prices in south India. There was a time when the export of timber was contributing to the denuding of trees in Jaffna and Mannar. On representations made by the people and their headmen, the Dutch issued regulations restricting the felling of palmyrah trees for timber. Another article of export was the **chaya** root that grew in Karanagar and the islands and in Mannar. It was used in the making of dyes for dying cloth and was sold in the weaving villages of south India. Its export that was flourishing in the 17th century seems to have died off in the 18th, perhaps because of extensive harvesting of this shrub. There was some export of handicraft goods made out of local wood and palmyrah leaves such as mats, baskets and the like. Also exported were jaggery, coconut oil, margosa oil and **illupai** oil. In one year in the 1680's, it was reported that 256 vessels sailed out of Jaffna ports with a variety of articles.

WEAVING INDUSTRY

The Dutch attempted to establish a weaving industry in Jaffna. There was probably a small scale weaving industry under the Jaffna kings. Under the Portuguese it had probably not been fostered but the Dutch, who entered into the textile trade on a grand scale, had aims of establishing an export industry in Jaffna. During the big famine in Madura of 1659-60, they induced a number of **kaikolar** weaver families to migrate to Jaffna.

They were settled in villages near the Jaffna port and in the Mannar island. Cotton yarn was imported from South India and the weavers were put to work. The finished cloth was bought from them by the Dutch. The migration of weavers dried up once conditions improved in south India and weaving never rose to the proportions of an export industry. What was produced was not enough for the internal market and large quantities of textiles had to be imported from Bengal and Coromandel. The Dutch concentrated on dying as the **saya** roots of Jaffna was believed to produce colours superior to those of south India. Plain cloth was imported from south India to be dyed in Jaffna which was reexported to Europe and to Batavia for the South-east Asian market. The cloth dyed in Jaffna was seen to produce reasonable profit. Some technical improvements were made to the industry. The dye root had so far been pounded by hand in rice-blocks (**utal**). The Dutch built a crusher mill for them worked by two oxen. Large copper kettles replaced earthen pots. The tank whose water was used for washing was deepened and drained of mud. All this cut down the cost of dying and painting and the industry continued to provide the Dutch with some export earnings till the end of the 18th century. All weavers and dyers were kept in employment and their products sold in Jaffna, Colombo and Batticaloa and at reasonable profits.

It is difficult to assert with certainty who the domiciled merchants were. Most of the export trade was in the hands of foreign merchants, Bengalees, Tamil and Telugu Chetties, South Indian Paravas, Malayalees, Cholias or Tamil Muslim and Moplahs. Some Tamil and Telugu Chetties were settled and domiciled in Jaffna. There was a Muslim community which the Portuguese had resettled from the water-front near the port to where they are now to be found. Some Jaffna landowning and maritime families had taken to trade. These locals functioned as

brokers and middlemen between exporters and primary producers. Coastal people of Jaffna sailed in small boats to Batticaloa, Trincomalee and Colombo. Dutch policies had the effect of stifling local enterprise. They did not allow competition in goods they traded in. Duties were high and shipping was subject to control by passes and regulations.

PEARL FISHERY

The pearl fishery provided a lucrative income to the state as well as bringing money into the country and generating economic activity when a fishery was on. It was not regular and depended on how well the pearls grew and matured. When a fishery was announced anywhere along the banks between Mantota and Kudiramalai, there was a period of hectic activity. The pearl divers came from Tuticorin and Mannar. In a good fishery about 700 boats would participate for up to about 50 days. There would be up to about 10,000 people assembled along the coast in temporarily erected sheds. Vendors of all sorts of things were there and it provided an opportunity for merchants of Jaffna and Mannar among others, to buy and sell goods. Much of the supplies were taken from Jaffna. A good deal of money came into the country in this way, as to the market came wealthy buyers of pearls from Indian, Persian and Arab ports. The extent of activity may be gauged from the amount of money accruing to the state in taxation. In 1753, the revenue from a fishery held off the coast of Arippe was Rs. 65,000.

The budgetary position of the Jaffna Commandement, throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, appears to have been sound. The state revenues consisted of a variety of taxes of a personal character and taxes on land and its produce. Then there were the duties on export and import goods, on passage between passes and wharfage charges in ports, bazaar taxes, professional taxes and the like. The revenue on the pearl fishery, whenever one was held, substantially added to the revenue. To this was

added the profits on monopoly goods bought and sold by the Dutch such as elephants, some varieties of textiles, pepper and spices. As compared with revenue, the expenditure in the province was generally low. There was no necessity for a large Dutch establishment and military and equipment costs were low. There were no major problems of law and order and much of the administration was done by native officers who were paid very low salaries.

SURPLUSES OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE

The consequence of this was that, from the very first year of the conquest of Jaffna, the Dutch were realising substantial surpluses of revenue over expenditure. This situation continued throughout the period of Dutch rule, with a few exceptions when some untoward happening or some drastic mistake in policy resulted in the drying up of a major source of revenue. Throughout the 1660's, for example, Jaffna's revenues were between 200,000 and 290,000 Dutch florins while expenditure varied between 93,000 and 200,000 florins. It is interesting to compare the budgetary situation with the two other provincial governments, Colombo and Galle.

Both these provinces produced deficits throughout the 1660's and it was only in the 1670's, after the affairs of the southern province were put in order, that Galle produced surpluses, but nowhere near those of Jaffna. Despite having larger territories and populations and despite the more brisk trading activity in the two ports, their total revenues were sometimes less than those of Jaffna and at other times not much greater. Thus Jaffna contributed to bridging the budget deficit that the whole island suffered throughout this period.

THE MOST TAXED PEOPLE

The question arises as to why it was that Jaffna produced higher returns in personal and land taxes than

the rest of the island. Its cultivated land area was smaller, its population was less and the land generally less fertile. A number of factors help to explain this, the effect of which was to make the Tamils of the north the most taxed people in the island under the Dutch. Unlike in the south and west of the island, there had been no great unsettlement of cultivation and population caused by prolonged war. Both the Portuguese conquest and the Dutch expedition had been short and sharp and the country soon settled down and adjusted itself to its new masters. There was continuity in the administrative machinery at the level of the village and the district and in the important respect of laws and judicial processes. There was therefore a continuity in taxation and the methods of collection. Taxes had been clearly laid out in the Portuguese forals for each village and some of these were available to the Dutch.

With their methodical attention to the creation of administrative records, the Dutch set about to provide their own land and tax registers for each village from 1674 onwards. It is significant that the first such efforts at preparing thombos were made in Jaffna. Furthermore, the taxes themselves had less of a personal element among the Tamils than in the Sinhalese villages. Even those taxes that had begun as personal service taxes had been commuted for money and were fixed. Thus there was greater precision in the amount of tax to be collected from the various villages and peoples of Jaffna.

PERSONAL TAXES

There were a number of personal taxes, most of which under the Dutch were commuted for cash. The most important of these was the poll-tax paid by each adult male inhabitant of the four Jaffna provinces and the Islands. Most of the men paid two to three fanams per year and merchants and artisans paid 6 fanams a year. It was more or less equal in its burden on rich and poor alike in the agrarian sector of the community.

(To be Continued)

From the pages of Hansard - 50 YEARS AGO

Debates in the Legislative
Council of Ceylon - Friday
November 9, 1928

(Continued from
last issue)

One reason why women suffrage has been urged in many countries is that women take a greater interest in certain social questions and come to more correct conclusions than men on such questions. One such question is temperance. It has been realized throughout the world that if the temperance movement is to succeed it should be mainly through the votes of women. They know too well how families are ruined by drink, and if they have the vote they will use that vote in a manner which will rid the world of this great curse of drink. That has been the ground on which many countries have been fighting for women suffrage, and I think that even in this country the exercise of the vote by women will lead to the amelioration of the country in certain respects more quickly than when they are denied the vote. Temperance is only one illustration. There are many other matters in which women are more interested than men.

THE VOTE TO INDIANS

Now I come to the very thorny question of the vote to Indians. The Commissioners have said in effect that every non-Ceylonese should reside five years in this country before he can be entitled to the vote. Nobody objects to that differentiation. I have not heard any objection to that. But the objection is to the differentiation between Indian and other non-Ceylonese, mainly European. The European members in a body have objected to that differentiation. They do not ask to be placed in a better position than other non-Ceylonese, even Indians. The law as it is to-day is this, that every British subject who resides in this country for six months in one electoral area is entitled to the franchise. That includes the Indians, Europeans, and everybody else. I may say that the period of residence may vary, but residence is the test for the franchise throughout the Empire. There are exceptions no doubt, and I will refer to those exceptions later.

Some Members appear to think that domicile is the test. It is not the test of franchise. Domicile is something apart from franchise. Franchise depends on residence. There are exceptions. Take South Africa for instance. It does not give the franchise not only to Indians but not even to the South African born negro. Except in Cape Colony in no other part of South Africa is the vote given to the South African natives. Therefore, the differentiation in South Africa and other self-governing dominions is not a point in favour of similar differentiation here. What do they seek to do in Africa? They seek to isolate the native races, expropriate their homes and put them into reserves so that they may not come into closer contact with the European. But while they refuse the vote to the African native they give the vote freely to every Jew and Pole and

DOMICILE IS NOT THE TEST OF FRANCHISE

—Hon. K. Balasingham

German. They give it freely because they desire that their country should have a large white population. Therefore the analogy of the treatment of the Indian subjects in South Africa, Canada, or Australia does not apply. There are other considerations in those countries for the refusal of the franchise. I admire the policy of certain Members who openly ask for stopping immigration. There is some logic in it; but to quote the parallel of those countries and say "Let us similarly refuse the vote to the Indians," is not a sound argument.

Then, the question arose as to why the Indians should get the vote in this country. The Honourable Member for Galle in his very able and exhaustive speech—all his speeches in this Council are learned and exhaustive—has depicted the position of the Indian here as one of exceptional preference. We cannot

deny that there are many laws specially enacted to protect the Indian labourer. The Indian Government says: "We are not going to allow our subjects to leave our shores unless certain things are done in the countries to which they go." Ceylon wants these labourers although there may be Members of this House who do not want them to come in. The Indian Government says: "Unless you house these people well; unless you make provision for medical attendance for them; and unless you are

prepared to send them back to their homes when they are infirm, we will not allow them to go out of the country". The country as a whole has gone on bended knees to the Indian Government to ask them to allow Indians to come here and would it be wrong for the Indian Government to say, after having gained bitter experience in many parts of the world "you shall not have the Indian coming over to you unless you house him well; provide him with good water and medical aid; and when he is old and infirm send him back to us, if he wants to come back to India." That is all that has been done. Is that a reason why a British subject who has been residing in this country should not be given the franchise?

If you want a precedent, you can find a precedent for anything. The precedent of excluding races of one country from another

abounds in this world. An independent nation can say: "We shall not allow anybody to come into our country." If the neighbour is powerful, she would force her way in as the western nations did, at the point of the bayonet, into Japan, where the white man was not wanted. There are self-governing Dominions which say: "We do not want dark British subjects to enter our country." The British Government has tried its level best to relax that rule because the British Empire falls to the ground if the Dominions and Colonies exclude British subjects. Conditions are now arising where the old theory of *Civis Romanus Sum* and *Civis Britannicus Sum* cannot exist, and Britain has to plead in vain with the Dominions to which she has given self-Government and to acquiesce in the exclusion of the dark races from those countries. England can plead and has pleaded her inability to put affairs right in the self-governing Dominions. The matter came to a severe test when England had to deal with a similar situation in Kenya; and India retorted: "You said you had no voice in the affairs of the self-governing Dominions, but what is your position in regard to Kenya?"

The Hon. Mr. T. B. JAYAH:—May we adjourn now, Sir.

The Hon. The VICE-PRESIDENT:—Yes, we will adjourn till 3 o'clock.

Council adjourned accordingly.

On resumption at 3 p.m.:—

The Hon. Mr. K. BALASINGHAM:—I was saying, Sir, when we adjourned, that if we seek for precedents we could find precedents for any line of action that we might intend to take. It is quite possible for one State to exclude all foreigners from entering that State, and I cited the example of China and Japan. Then there was

the example of the self-governing Colonies, which have passed legislation against the coloured races of the Empire. Not only have they discriminated against coloured races from outside, but they have also deprived even the native races whose countries they occupied of all rights to participate in the Government by denying them even the franchise.

THE THEORY OF EMPIRE

As long as the British Government was able to say that they were unable to make the self-governing Dominions to adopt a different course, the theory of Empire was maintainable; but when the Crown Colony of Kenya began to assert itself, and the white settlers in that country insisted on doing certain things which were akin to what the self-governing Dominions were doing, trouble arose. The term Empire became meaningless. If the theory of Empire means nothing more than that every part of the Empire should owe allegiance to the British Crown there is really nothing worth being proud of in being a unit of the British Empire; if all the opportunity that one has, by being a member of this wide Empire amounts to a denial of the rights of citizenship in that Empire, there is little or no meaning in celebrating Empire Day or in the effort to make the Empire something of which every part of it should be proud.

But, we know that in Kenya the British Government has been trying its utmost to make the white settlers of Kenya realize that they were breaking the bonds of Empire in the conduct that they pursued. That has been the only—the solitary—exception so far where an attempt was made to force the Empire—to force Britain—to adopt a policy which would disrupt the Empire at once.

(To be continued)

the First FRANCHISE debate

Never lend books, for no one ever returns them; the only books I have in my library are books that other folk have lent me — Anatole France.

Of all the terrifying circumstances to which one's home is vulnerable, nothing equals that of a guest who stares straight at one's bookshelves. It is not the judgmental possibility that is frightening the fact that one's sense of discrimination is exposed by his books. Indeed, most people would much prefer to see the guest first scan, then peer and turn away in boredom or disapproval. Alas, too often the eyes, dark with calculation, shift from title to title as from girl to girl in an overheated dance hall. Nor is that the worst. It is when those eyes stop moving that the heart too stops. The guest's body twitches; his hand floats up to where his eyes have led it. There is nothing to be done. You freeze. He smiles. You hear the question even as it forms: "Would you mind if I borrowed this book?"

One has books

One has friends ...

(Mind? Why should I mind? The fact that I came upon that book in a Paris bookstall in April 1959 — the 13th I believe it was, the afternoon, it was drizzling — that I found it after searching all Europe and North America for a copy; that it is dog-eared at passages that mean more to my life than my heart-beat; that the mere touch of its pages recalls to me in a Proustian shower my first love, my best dreams. Should I mind that you seek to take all that away? That I will undoubtedly never get it back? Then even if you actually return it to me one day, I will be wizened, you cavalier, and the book spoiled utterly by your mis-handling? Mind?)

"Not at all. Hope you enjoy it."

"Thanks. I'll bring it back next week."

"No rush. Take your time. (Liar.)"

Not that there is any known way to avoid these exchanges. One has books; one has friends; they are bound to meet. Charles Lamb, who rarely railed, waxed livid on the subject. "Your borrowers of books — those mutilators of collections, spoilers of the symmetry of shelves, and creators of odd volumes." But how are such people to be put off, since they are often we, and the non-return of borrowed books is a

Would you mind if I borrowed this book?

custom as old as books themselves? ("Say, Gutenberg, what's this? And may I borrow it?") It is said that Charles I clutched a Bible as he mounted the scaffold. One shudders to imagine the last earthly question he heard.

Still, this custom confutes nature. In every other such situation, the borrower becomes a slave to the lender, the social weight of the debt so altering the balance of a relationship that is temporary acquisition turns into a permanent loss. This is certainly true with money. Yet it is not at all true with books. For some reason a book borrower feels that a book, once taken, is his own. This removes both memory and guilt from the transaction. Making matters worse, the lender believes it too. To keep up appearances, he may solemnly extract an oath that the book be brought back as soon as possible; the borrower answering with matching solemnity that the Lord might seize his eyes were he to do otherwise. But it is all a play. Once gone, the book is gone forever. The lender, fearing rudeness never asks for it again. The borrower never stoops to raise the subject.

Books are not for burning

Can the borrowers be thwarted? There are attempts. Some hopefuls glue EX LIBRIS stickers to the inside covers (clever drawings of animals wearing glasses, and so forth)—as if the presence of Latin and the imprint of a name were so formidable as to reverse a motor reflex. It never works. One might try slipping false jackets on one's books—a cover for *The Secret Agent* disguising *Utility Rates in Ottawa*; *A Woman's View*. But book borrowers are merely despicable, not stupid, they tend to leaf before they pluck. Besides, the interesting thing about the feeling of loss when a book is borrowed is that the book's quality rarely matters. So mysterious is the power of books in our lives that every loss is a serious-loss, every hole in the shelf a crater.

And this, of course, is the key to the sense of helplessness in this matter. Our books are ourselves, our characters, our insulation against those very people who would take away our books. There, on that wall,

extended, a way of touching eternity. "Go, litel book!" wrote Chaucer at the end of *Troilus and Criseyde*, sending his work on a journey that no man could complete.

Small wonder, then, that people will do almost every-

by **Roger Rosenblatt**

—TIME ESSAY

Ahab storms. Hamlet mulls. Molly Bloom says yes yes yes. Keats looks into Chapman, who looks at Homer, who looks at Keats. All this happens on a bookshelf continually—while you are out walking the dog, or pouting or asleep. The Punic Wars rage; Emma Bovary pines;

thing for books, to acquire and preserve them, to prevent their banning or burning. Stories of manuscripts lost or destroyed are especially heartbreaking because one knows how ephemeral ideas and images are, what vast effort it takes to dust off the confusions, tune out the

Mind? I'll break your arm, you bastard!

Bacon exhorts others to behave the way he never could. Here French is spoken. There Freud. So go war and peace, pride and prejudice, decline and fall, perpetually in motions as sweeping as Milton's or as slight as Emily Dickinson considering the grass. Every evening Gatsby looks at Daisy's green light, which is green forever. Every morning Gregor Samsa discovers that he has been transformed into a giant insect.

These things are not what we have, it what we are. Leigh Hunt exulted; "Nothing can deprive me of my value for such treasures. I can help the appreciation of them while I last, and love them till I die; and perhaps, if fortune turns her face in kindness upon me before I go, I may chance, some quiet day, to lay my overbeating temples on a book and so have the death I most envy." Plato was reputedly found dead with a book under his pillow, Petrarch in his library with his elbow resting on an open page. Books gave them more than solace. They were their lives

noise, and create those books that, for whatever inadequacies they may display, still

set the mind in order for a time, giving it a spine and a binding. There may be no more pleasing picture in the world than that of a child peering into a book—the past and the future entrancing each other. Nor does anyone look quite so attractive as with a book in hand. How many people have fallen in love merely at the sight of someone reading?

The Supreme Selfless Act

All of which would appear to offer an argument that booklending ought to be encouraged. It is the supreme selfless act, after all. Should we not abjure our pettiness, open our libraries, and let our most valued possessions fly from house to house, sharing the wealth? Certain clerics with vows of poverty did this. Inside their books was printed not EX LIBRIS but AD USUM—for the use of—indicating that it is better to lend than to keep, that all life's gifts are transitory. Should we not follow the clerics? Or might we just for once summon our true feelings on this subject and upon hearing the terrible question, smile back and speak from the heart; "Mind? I'll break your arm, you bastard!"

(*Time* of April 5, 1982)

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The I. C. J. Report

(Continued from
last issue)

Historical background to the present ethnic conflict

(continued)

In 1979, under the present government, a state of emergency was declared in Jaffna as a result of terrorist attacks. On August 1, 1979, the Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka stated that "CRM is gravely concerned at the allegations that several persons have died after being taken into custody by the police after the declaration of emergency in the North last month. According to information available to CRM it appears clear that at least some of these persons had been tortured before they died." Allegations of the killing and torture of Tamil youth by police and armed forces during the 1979 emergency are widespread.

Of more immediate concern is the action of police in the burning of Jaffna in June 1981. The situation in Jaffna between March and June has been explained previously. A bank robbery in March had been followed by the detention incommunicado of a number of Tamil youths, and on May 31, two policemen were killed, and two wounded during an election rally.

According to both government and Tamil sources, a large group of police (estimated variously from 100-200) went on a rampage on the nights of May 31-June 1 and June 1-2 burning the market area of Jaffna, the office of the Tamil newspaper, the home of V. Yogeswaran, member of Parliament for Jaffna, and the Jaffna Public Library. The widespread damages in Jaffna as a result of the actions of the police were evident during the visit of the ICJ observer in Jaffna in August. According to government sources, the police, who had been brought to Jaffna from other parts of Sri Lanka, mutinied and were uncontrollable. They had allegedly been enraged at the attacks on police at the election rally and at earlier failures to bring police killers to justice. In the early days of June several killings of Tamils were reported, allegedly as a result of police action. Tamil leaders pointed out that it was the responsibility of the government to maintain law and order and that several Cabinet ministers and high security officials were present in Jaffna when some of the violent events occurred.

The destruction of the Jaffna Public Library was the incident which appeared to

Ethnic Conflict and Violence in Sri Lanka: Report of a Mission to Sri Lanka in July - August 1981 on behalf of the International Commission of Jurists by Professor Virginia A. Leary.

announced after reports of many irregularities including lost ballot boxes. The TULF won every seat in the Jaffna District. On June 11, the government announced that it would appoint a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the events between April 20 and June 2, thus not including the events occurring after

in early June. The problem has undoubtedly been accentuated by the heavy deployment of the army in Jaffna following the attack on the Anaicottai police station in July, the emergency regulation imposing the death penalty or life imprisonment for the illegal possession of arms in Tamil areas and the

study prepared for the Minority Rights Group entitled **The Tamils of Sri Lanka:**

"If Sri Lanka is not to experience communal violence or terrorism and counter-terror on a scale which would invite comparison with Northern Ireland or Cyprus, there will have to be more readiness for compromise and moderation than has yet been shown....Is it too late for an attempt to evolve an inter communal approach to the language question and the related matters of education and employment? It would be a pity if Sri Lanka's leadership waited for bombs to explode, and for the prisons to fill up again before conceding that the Tamils need reassurance that they have a place in the future of the island."

Unfortunately, the situation thus envisaged in 1975 has come to pass: there have been two serious outbreaks of communal violence since 1975 and political terrorism and security force counter-terror have become all too prevalent. The evocation of the situation in Sri Lanka evolving into that of a Northern Ireland or Cyprus no longer seems remote.

When the United National Party won the election in 1977 there were high hopes among Tamils that the racial problem would improve in comparison with the situation under the previous government. The UNP manifesto prior to the election stated,

"The United National Party accepts the position that there are numerous problems confronting the Tamil-speaking people. The lack of a solution to their problems has made the Tamil-speaking people support even a movement for the creation of a separate State. In the interest of national unity so necessary for the economic development of the whole country the Party feels such problems should be solved without loss of time. The party when it comes to power, will take all possible steps to remedy their grievances in such fields as (1) Education (2) Colonisation (3) Use of the Tamil language (4) Employment in the Public and semi-public Corporations. We will summon an All-Party Conference as stated earlier and implement its decisions."

(To be continued)

'Police

went

on a

rampage

burning

the market area, the

office of the Tamil newspaper

the home of the M. P. (above)....



cause the most distress to the people of Jaffna. The ICJ observer heard many comments from both Sinhalese and Tamils concerning the senseless destruction by arson of this most important cultural center in the Tamil area. The Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality sent a delegation to Jaffna to investigate the June occurrences. The Delegation's report, in referring to the arson of the Public Library, stated,

"If the Delegation were asked which act of destruction had the greatest impact on the people of Jaffna, the answer would be the savage attack on this monument to the learning and culture and the desire for learning and culture of the people of Jaffna....There is no doubt that the destruction of the Library will leave bitter memories behind for many years."

The 95,000 volumes of the Public Library destroyed by the fire included numerous culturally important and irreplaceable manuscripts.

A state of emergency in the Jaffna area was declared on June 2. On June 4 the District Development Council elections were held. Results were

the declaration of a state of emergency and during the election. On June 24, Bishop Lakshman Wickremesinghe, Chairman of the Civil Rights Movement, wrote to President Jayewardene urging that the Commission's mandate be extended to include the election period,

"The allegations that malpractice occurred during this election because the orders given by the Commissioner for Elections were over-ruled and the officers trained and sent by him were intimidated in Jaffna, on the orders of certain senior personnel in your government who have your confidence, is disquieting to say the least. Whatever may have been the unforeseen circumstances to interfere with due electoral procedures is something which be investigated impartially, in order to safeguard the operation of the democratic process in the future, and especially in 1983 when the general elections are due to be held".

It is apparent that relations between the population of Jaffna and the police and security forces seriously deteriorated following the burning of Jaffna by the police

proposed requirement that identity cards be carried at all times, particularly in the north.

The great majority of police and army personnel assigned to Jaffna are Sinhalese who understand neither the language nor the culture of the Tamils. In addition, in view of the attacks on them, they appear to have a feeling of fear and insecurity. It has also been alleged that when heavy reinforcements of police have been brought into the area inadequate provision has been made for their food and housing. In July, newspapers reported that 43 policemen assigned to Jaffna requested transfers from the area. Violence by the police has not, of course, been universal. The report of the MIRJE Delegation to Jaffna in June pointed out that "The Delegation must however make it clear that it does not hold that all the police personnel operating in Jaffna and its environs during this nightmare week were equally guilty. Some of them were not guilty at all, and indeed some used their positions to deter and prevent their subordinates from committing violence."

In 1975, Walter Schwarz wrote the following in a

In January 1969, newsstands in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu started selling a new kind of publication. It looked like a magazine but read like a novel. Indeed, most of its pages were taken up by a reprint of the book PON MALAR ("GOLDEN FLOWER") by award-winning Tamil novelist Akilan. Although PON MALAR had been published in hardcover and serialised in another periodical, all 50,000 copies of the fledgling magazine, priced at a rupee apiece, were sold within hours of its appearance. "It was unbelievable," said Akilan. "(The publication) had created a new set of readers".

Thirteen years later, those readers have made RANI MUTHU, as the magazine came to be known, the largest of a breed of "novel monthlies" spawned by the success of that inaugural issue. Their combined sales stand at 400,000—a phenomenal figure considering the relatively small language group they cater to—with RANI MUTHU responsible for a chunky 34% slice of the circulation pie. The magazines sell wherever Tamil communities exist, both in India and abroad, notably Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Singapore.

100 TAMIL WRITERS

Now priced at Rs. 1.50 (12 U.S. cents) RANI MUTHU was originally conceived as a one-year publishing experiment by the Dina Thanthi group, which runs a mass-circulation Tamil daily and a weekly. The conglomerate wanted its monthly to differ significantly in content from other magazines on sale at the time. "We hit upon the idea of publishing each month a full novel by a popular writer," editor A. Marisamy, 46, told Correspondent P.S. Vaidyanathan. "It hadn't been done before not in India at least. The price of these novels in hardboard editions was beyond the reach of the common man. So we decided to publish them at a price even the poor could afford."

RANI MUTHU has published and reprinted books by nearly 100 Tamil writers, including such notables as Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, first Indian governor-general of independent India, C. N. Annadurai, Kalki, M. Varadarajanar, Jayakanthan, Chandilyan, Kannadasan, Sujatha, Lakshmi, and Sivasankari, and overseas writers Elankannan of Singapore, M. Ramaiah of Malaysia and S. Ponnudurai of Sri Lanka. The magazine has also translated into Tamil well-known works penned in other Indian languages.

The 'Novel' magazines of Tamil Nadu

Despite RANI MUTHU'S large circulation, editor Marisamy claims that his publication makes only a marginal profit. According to an insider, however, "there is a minimum of 25% net profit with each copy sold. The relatively large number of fiction monthlies now on the market, most of which are affiliated with an established publications group, seems to indicate that there indeed is money to be made in this field.

All the monthlies consist of about 100 to 120 pages and are adorned with a glossy, colourful cover, illustrated with a scene from the story, a picture of a film actress or a photograph of the author, if he is prominent enough. A few pages of newsy tidbits are included in order to make the publication resemble more closely a periodical; in this way, the publisher is able to obtain a newsprint quota from the government.

How do publishers of these fiction monthlies keep the price of their magazines so low when hardcover novels are selling at US \$ 0.80-1.20 a copy? The use of newsprint is one reason. Moreover, various promotion and production-related services—publicity in the form of house advertisements, building premises, printing presses, distribution outlets and the staff—are readily provided by the publishing conglomerates with which the magazines are affiliated. Admitted the editor of one fiction monthly: "A magazine like this does not require a big editorial staff. One person can handle it during his spare time because there really is nothing much to edit. The novel is sent straight to the press. When it exceeds our page limit, we chop off a few paragraphs. A few tidbits are of course needed, but that does not involve much work. The artist who works for our weekly does the illustrations for the monthly, too."

Besides the small production cost, the revenue from advertisements also helps to keep the price down. The

rates for each full-page advertisement range from \$ 24-64 and a magazine usually carries five to ten pages of advertising in each issue. Payment to authors, moreover, is low. An author usually receives about \$ 80-320, depending on his popularity. If it is a translation, the amount is shared equally between the author or copyright holder and the translator.



Author Akilan

Yet many authors for the monthlies still find the payment "decent." "When you serialise a novel in a popular weekly," explains author-editor Na Parthasarathy, "you only get so much and that too is paid in instalments. But here, you get the entire amount in one lump sum immediately after your novel is accepted. That's a boon to writers who have pressing financial commitments."

Adds Parthasarathy: "The main attraction of these publications is that for the price of one you can read a full novel in one sitting. If the same story is serialised in a weekly, you will have to buy the weekly for months. If you miss one issue, you also miss a link. Besides, many readers just do not have the patience to wait for one issue after another to finish the novel." For these reasons, he believes most readers of the monthlies are train and bus passengers in the middle income bracket.

Sales of the novel monthlies have not affected those of the books from which they are abridged. According to Marisamy, there is sometimes a greater demand for the hard-cover editions

after their abridged versions have appeared in magazine form. The curiosity of readers, says the RANI MUTHU editor, is aroused and they want to read the entire story. "Those who read books will continue to buy them," says Akilan. He points out that some of his works that have been circulated in magazines are still being reprinted in book form.

But the popularity of the fiction monthlies has cheapened the quality of their contents. "It began with the

reprint of known standard works," explains Akilan, "but now novels are specially written for the monthlies. Most of them are trash. This is not because there is no demand for serious writing. Inexpensive editions of such works have sold very well. But serious writers are few and they are unable to meet the demand from so many publications. So, the publishers get hold of someone, pay him something and get him to write some trash. Still, I welcome these publications because they have spread the reading habit among those who otherwise would not buy any books. And I am confident that the readers will not tolerate the trash for long."

Recently, a fiction monthly in Kannada, the official language in the state of Karnataka in southwestern India, made its debut. But whether this method of selling books will be widely used in the rest of the country remains to be seen. What is certain is that in Tamil Nadu, newsstands each month will continue to be flooded with novels published in newsprint, in a magazine format, and available at a giveaway price.

(ASIAWEEK—
Literary Review)

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C. Loganathan remembered

"He touched nothing which he did not adorn"

Of the late Mr. Loganathan it can be said that "he touched nothing which he did not adorn". As a Banker, a student of economics as well as a development Executive, he brought distinction to the institutions he served and enriched the thoughts and actions of his Community as few men in our country have done in recent times.

When he was appointed General Manager of the Bank of Ceylon in 1952 at a comparatively early age of 38, he made history. During his tenure, it was largely due to his drive and dedication that the Bank of Ceylon was able to achieve what was described by the Bank of Ceylon Commission of 1968 as phenomenal growth. After leaving the Bank of Ceylon he served three years as Head of the Development Finance Company of Ceylon and here again his period as General Manager was marked by the infusion of dynamism into that institution. He

served subsequently as a World Bank Consultant and during this period he worked prodigiously to develop the concept of the Development Savings Bank, and to witness its acceptance as an instrument for the diffusion of economic power in some countries. During the past 5 years he devoted himself to the setting up of the Consultancy Finance Co. Ltd., and the Merchant Finance Ltd., both of which were intended to achieve goals in Regional Development. He passed away at a time when his country and the nation needed him most, and that is indeed a sad thought.

His was a brilliant mind and his remarkable success was no doubt due to his intellectual gifts. But he was also a person of absolute dedication. He was a 'driven man' determined always to achieve the goals he had set before him. It is this determination which resulted in the emergence of the two institutions in Jaffna which will remain as shining monuments to his vision and zeal.

Mr. Loganathan was no politician but he believed that political problems are basically economic, and he earnestly hoped and worked hard towards regional development as a solution to political problems.

It is our fervent hope that the Consultancy & Finance & Development Ltd., and the Merchant Finance Ltd. will continue to display the sense of commitment of their Founder and thus win public patronage and support.

M.J.A. Jayanathan

LETTERS

Stanley Road,
Jaffna,
10-4-82.

Sir,

With reference to the letter of Rev. Pio Ciampa, S. J., of Balangoda that appeared in the Review of 10. 4. 82.

I fully agree with him that "Elections cannot be allowed to turn into religious and / or

racial conflicts". Some politicians of our country should be told what their duties are. Politics means solving people's problems through a Government. Politics is wholly secular. Politicians should not drag in religion and language to achieve their ambitions, when they are unable to solve the problems of the people. I like to repeat the question posed by the late S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, the architect of the Sinhala Only Act, to his own people, "Can we eat Language"? Many innocent people lost their lives over this issue. Both public and private property in large quantities were destroyed. Those who shouted from house tops that if Sinhalese were made the official language, this land will flow with milk and honey, now know better.

Now after a lapse of 25 years they realise that even water, one of the basic needs of humanity, is not avail-

able in sufficient quantities to meet our agricultural, industrial and domestic requirements. Today more than half the population of the country is under-nourished, under-fed and under-paid. They cannot for ever live on the promises of the politicians.

In Sri Lanka some politicians in the name of Lord Buddha incite the Sinhalese against the Tamils to burn, to loot, to rape and to kill. Are these not anti-Buddhist? Alas! How will the Enlightened One react to these Adharmistic appeal? Unfortunately the Buddhist clergy in this country interfere in politics and politicians try to interpret the Dhamma. Let us render unto Caesar things that are Caesar's and unto God things that are God's. Surely this is the only way for progress in this country.

Yours truly,
A. Puvanesan

Jaffna District Development Council

VACANCIES

Applications are called for consideration for selection as Divisional Officers, Department of Agrarian Services in the Jaffna District. Applicants should possess the following qualifications:-

- (i) (a) Is a Graduate of a recognized University in Agriculture / Educational Development.
or
(b) Is a Graduate of a recognized University with special knowledge in Accounts and Agriculture.
or
(c) has passed the Senior School Certificate Examination or an equivalent Examination with First or Second Class Senior Certificate from the School of Agriculture, Peradeniya.
- (ii) Is not less than 22 years of age and not more than 35 years of age on 1.2.1982.
- (iii) Should be a resident of the Jaffna District.

Applications should be made in the applicant's own handwriting substantially in the specimen application form given below and should be addressed to the Chairman, Jaffna District Development Council (Employment Sector), Secretariat, Jaffna. The closing date of applications is 14-05-1982.

S. Nadarajah
CHAIRMAN

Jaffna District Development Council,
Jaffna.

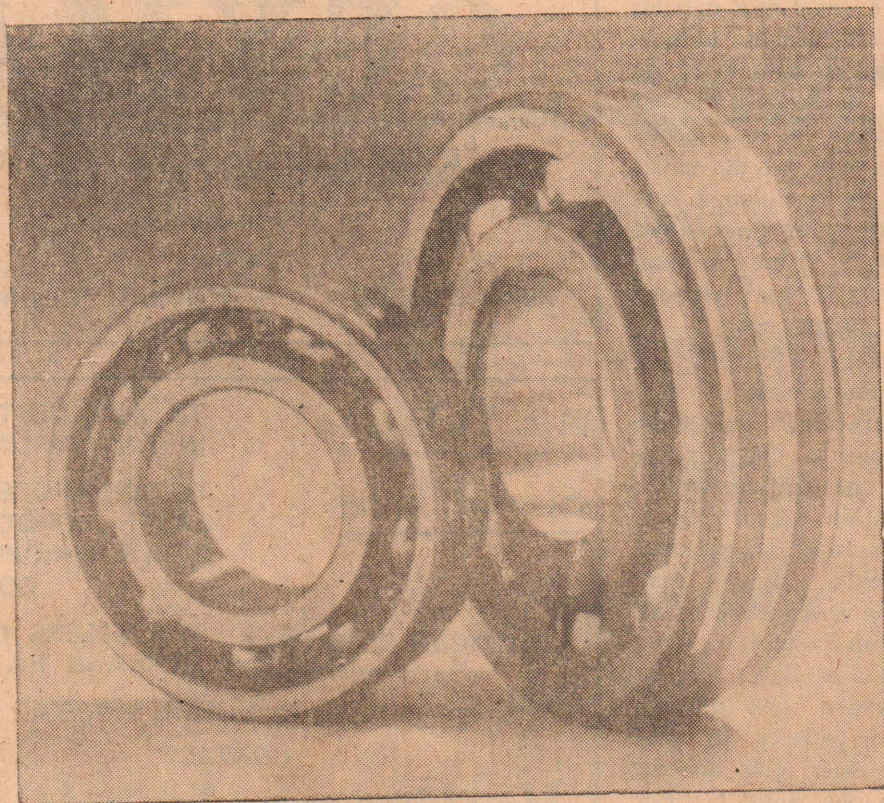
Specimen Application Form

1. Name with Initials:-
2. Names the initials stand for:-
3. Address:-
4. Date of Birth:-
5. Age as on 01.02.82:-
6. A.G.A's division in which the applicant resides:-
7. Educational Qualifications:-
 - (i) If a Graduate:-
 - (a) Name of the University:-
 - (b) Year of passing out:-
 - (c) Class obtained:-
 - (d) Subjects offered:-
 - (ii) If possessor of Senior Certificate of the School of Agriculture Peradeniya:-
 - (a) Subjects offered:- and class obtained:-
 - (b) Year of passing:-
 - (iii) If the applicant possesses S. S. C. or equivalent examinations:-
 - (a) Year of passing:-
 - (b) Subjects and grades obtained:-
8. Any other relevant information:-

Date:-

Signature of Applicant

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A DRAFT code of conduct for political parties to keep communal issues above party politics will be put before a meeting of the committee on communal and caste harmony of the National Integration Council (NIC) here on May 10.

This was disclosed by the Union home minister Mr. Zail Singh, at a meeting of the standing committee of the NIC which review today the work of the NIC and its committees on communal and caste harmony and education.

would have a proper response from the leaders of the Assam movement. He appreciated the constructive role of the opposition parties representatives in the tripartite discussions on the foreign nationals issue in Assam.

The education minister Mrs. Shiela Kaul, apprised the committee of the programme launched by her ministry to revise history and language textbooks to promote national integration. The revised textbooks were expected to be ready for use

maintenance of communal, caste and regional harmony.

The U.P. chief minister Mr. Vishwanath Pratap Singh said that the state had covered much ground in tackling the communal situation. There were fewer cases of communal riots reported in the last two years.

To ensure cordial relations between the two major communities in U.P., the state governments had declared

Sri Lankan protest over Bradford arrests

The Sri Lanka Communist Party (Left) has, in a letter sent to the British High Commissioner in Ceylon, protested vehemently against the British Government's action in committing 12 young Bradford Asians for trial on charges of conspiracy and offences under the 1883 Explosives Act.

The letter signed by K. A. Subramaniam, Secretary, National Preparatory Committee, states "We feel that these are the most serious—and the most blatantly political—charges to be brought in the wake of the uprisings which shook over 30 towns and cities in Britain last summerOver the last few years, the black peo-

ple in Britain have demonstrated that they recognise the need, their ability and their right to defend themselves, be it through campaigns against the immigration and nationality laws or on the streets of Brixton, Southall and Toxteth. The state has been unable to respond except in terms of even greater repression and in effect the trial of the Bradford 12 represents a trial of the entire black community for its growing spirit of defiance to oppression. We demand that all the charges against the Bradford 12 be dropped immediately. This trial must be stopped."

NEWS BRIEFS

ATTEMPT TO INTRODUCE RIVAL SYSTEM

The Govt. seems to be attempting to surreptitiously introduce a private postal agency system to the rural areas to supplant the sub-post office system, observed Kopay MP M. Alaiasundaram, speaking at the annual general meeting of the All Ceylon Sub Postmasters Union. He added this might bring in more revenue to the Govt. but would adversely affect the people.

MULLAITIVU TIPPLERS WANT COOP TAVERNS

Toddy drinkers of Mullaitivu District want Jaffna's cooperative tavern system introduced in their area too. At their request, the Secretary of the N.P. Palm Products Societies' Federation, K. Nadarajan, convened a meeting to discuss preliminary arrangements.

MAMMOTH PETITION TO PRESIDENT

'Grant the workers' reasonable demands and bring the prolonged strike to an end. This is the gist of a petition with 10,000 signatures to be sent to President Jayawardene regarding the Parantnan Corporation strike.

PUBLIC BEAT POLICE AT CRICKET

A police versus public cricket match organised by the KKS Police to foster better public relations ended in a 6 run victory for the public.

Code to maintain Communal amity

The committee felt that a code of conduct should be evolved for newspapers and journals with a view to promoting national integration and eschewing communal hatred and violence.

Meetings, seminars and symposia of eminent people from various walks of life, including religious heads, should be held to propagate the message of integration and unity.

The mass media, radio and television should be used to promote communal harmony.

ASSAM SITUATION

The home minister warned that the threat to the country "from within" was as grave as the danger posed by the recent developments in the subcontinent. He said the Assam situation had been causing a lot of concern.

He hoped that the government's reasonable approach

from 1983-84 session.

The National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) has also been entrusted with the task of preparing material which would help foster national unity.

The chief minister of West Bengal Mr. Jyoti Basu, outlined the steps being taken to revise textbooks with a view to promoting communal harmony. Mr. Basu did not favour the setting up of state and village-level committees.

The Orissa chief minister Mr. J. B. Patnaik, pleaded for a code of conduct among political parties and organisations as well as journalists to preserve communal harmony. Additional powers should be vested with the Press Council of India to impose strict penalties on publications found to be prejudicial to the

Urdu as the second language of the state.

(The Times of India)

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Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Hindu Conference delegates given frightening picture of Jaffna

Some of the Indian participants at the World Hindu Conference who were very keen to visit Jaffna were forced to give the North a miss, the **Saturday Review** understands.

Officials of the Ministry of Regional Development and Hindu Affairs, which had convened the Conference, had reportedly told them no accommodation was available.

The officials had also hinted that the security situation in Jaffna was not very satisfactory: they had reportedly cited an incident at Chulipuram where some unknown persons had allegedly fired at Navy personnel.

One of the disappointed participants was the famous danseuse **Padma Subramaniam** who had very much wanted to give her first Bharatha Natya performance in Jaffna.

The foreign delegates who ultimately found their way to Jaffna on a two-day trip were mostly businessmen, the **Saturday Review** learns.

★ More and more blunders committed by the Ministry of Regional Development and Hindu Affairs in its handling of the World Hindu Conference have now come to light.

One such blunder concerns a diplomat representing the country which is the cradle of Hinduism.

Even on opening day, he had not received an invitation. When his secretary contacted the Ministry he was reportedly told the invitation would be hand-delivered as they didn't trust the postal service. But even after a three-hour wait, there were no signs of the invitation.

The diplomat ultimately attended the Conference opening using his diplomatic pass.

Another gaffe was the shabby treatment meted out to pressmen representing the country which had built and donated the hall where the Conference was held. They were not even given seats, the **Saturday Review** learns.

★

A delegate who presented Rs. 50,000 worth (Indian currency) of souvenirs to the Ministry of Regional Development and Hindu Affairs for free distribution at the World Hindu Conference, ultimately did not get a copy himself!

This delegate, representing a prestigious University in South India, found to his chagrin that the souvenirs—ceremonially released by President J. R. Jayawardene—were being sold by the Ministry to Conference participants at rather stiff prices.

★ "The whole thing is a farce. Those delegates who really wanted to visit Jaffna were not sent up here by the Ministry of Regional Development and Hindu Affairs".

This was the tart comment of a South Indian participant who came to Jaffna on his own after the conference, along with another South Indian participant.

The delegate said Ministry officials had tried to discourage those who really wanted to visit the North by painting a lurid picture of Jaffna.

"The way these officials dropped not so subtle hints we got the impression that our lives would be in danger in Jaffna, what with guerillas and terrorists lurking behind every bush. Once we got here we saw the truth for ourselves" this delegate told the **SATURDAY REVIEW**.

The Police escort provided for the foreign delegates who came up to the North puzzled him. "What on earth makes the authorities think we need police protection in Jaffna? Thanapathy (a South Indian tourist who was killed at Tissamaharama in 1981-Ed) was killed in the deep South by a Sinhalese, not by Tamils in the North" he pointed out.

The delegate felt these elaborate security precautions were taken not so much to ensure their safety as to buttress the official image of Jaffna as a very dangerous place.

"The whole propaganda operation has boomeranged. We have seen for ourselves what has happened and what is happening in Jaffna. We know what the people really think" he added.

Smuggling

right opposite

President's

House

(Our Colombo Correspondent)

High officials in the Postal and Customs Departments are now investigating a racket at the Parcels Section of the General Post Office which is believed to result in the loss of customs revenue running into several millions of rupees daily, while some unscrupulous postal employees in association with some customs officials are alleged to be making huge sums in bribes.

Postmaster trapped

Already, one postmaster has been trapped by the police while a senior postmaster has been moved out of the Parcels Section for his apparent failure to check the racket.

Recently a combined team of Postal and Customs officials, on a surprise check, found that one of the items "cleared" at the Parcels Section had been grossly undervalued.

This diddling of the Government of revenue, which has been going on for several years, came to light recently owing to "gang warfare".

More gangs join in

Postal Department sources told the "Saturday Review" that originally there was only one gang engaged in this racket. But the pickings were so good that two other splinter gangs soon emerged.

The sources said that it was this development that enabled the Department to trap the postmaster, for there was now a tendency among the gangs to occasionally tip off the authorities about the activities of the rivals.

That the pickings at the Parcels Section must be really good is evident from one fact revealed to the Probe Team: the leader of the main gang—a minor employee—comes to work in an expensive chauffeur-driven car!

Other signs of affluence of the members of the three gangs are the lavish parties thrown by some of them at posh restaurants in the city almost daily!

According to information gathered by the "Saturday Review" this is how the racket is worked.

Organised rings of smugglers send large numbers of parcels containing commercial quantities of goods in strong demand locally by air mail and sea mail from such points as Singapore and Hong Kong.

Once the goods arrive in Sri Lanka, their "contacts" in the Parcels Section get busy.

The modus operandus

If say, there are 25 parcels addressed to one party, the usual practice is to open about 5 of them at random to check the contents. Actually, only one or two of them may be opened if the customs officials present are satisfied that the goods are in accordance with the documents submitted.

What happens is that the postmaster and minor employees involved in the racket pull out for checking only those parcels bearing special markings. These contain the goods as described in the documents, often used clothing or other items that attract very low import duties.

The contraband is contained in the other parcels.

The customs officials can decide on the parcels to be opened but those allegedly involved in the racket only examine those placed before them.

It is as simple as that!

The customs and postal employees who "co-operate" with the shady importers are handsomely rewarded with goodies and money. For the importers save so much of money which otherwise they would have had to pay out as customs duties.

Risk of violence

Only a small group of customs and postal employees at the Parcels Section are believed to be involved in the racket, but they seem to be able to get away with it through intimidation. Honest officials who dare inform the higher-ups about any shady transactions that they have witnessed or are aware of run the risk of physical violence.

That this possibility is very real was evident from the request of persons who gave information to the "Saturday Review" not to reveal their identity to anyone.

Styles of living

It is the receipt of large numbers of parcels daily, the rush by consignees to clear them and inadequate supervision that make it possible to operate the racket. Because of the rush, it is physically impossible to open every parcel with the staff and the time available.

Also, most of the money exchanges hands not in the Parcels Section itself but outside, which makes detection difficult.

However, close surveillance by the C.I.D. of the life styles of certain postal and customs employees would provide vital clues that could enable the authorities to smash this racket.