

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Vol. 1 No. 15

May 8, 1982

Rs. 2

Editorial

It must be said to the everlasting credit of our ex-colonial masters, the British, that they left behind for us some useful and profitable legacies. The Tea industry continues to occupy the No. 1 position in our export economy; despite twenty six years of Sinhala Only, the English language continues to possess a greater clout; even our new non-traditional exports like housemaids to Dubai and carpenters to the Middle East are better off with English than with Sinhala. Cricket has got so much into our bloodstream that even Colombo taxi-drivers know the difference between a late cut and a square drive. But somehow, we as a nation have begun to lose the taste for other legacies which the British left us, such as Parliamentary democracy, Independence of the Judiciary and the Freedom of the Press.

Many, many years after freedom, we continued to think of the Press in this country as the Fourth Estate, an exclusive British concept that gave the newspapers the right to influence the country's politics along with the lords, the commons and the clergy. The apogee of this concept was reached during the years immediately before 1956, when the greatest Press baron this country had seen, Esmond Wickremasinghe, along with his side-kick J. L. Fernando, virtually ran the government for that belted knight Sir John Kotelawala. The belting that Sir John and his United National Party received from the Sinhala people in the succeeding election finished off the Lake House hegemony for good. And when in 1970 Mrs. Bandaranaike came to power for the second time, she made it her first business to take over the controlling share of the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. and vest it in the Public Trustee. Since then, Lake House has become the private coconut, scraper of whichever government is in power.

Today with both Lake House and the Times of Ceylon Ltd., controlled and owned by the government, there is no more legitimacy in the term "The Fourth Estate". They are run like State-owned Rubber estates!

The Independent Newspapers Ltd. continued to be non-government controlled and therefore independent on the face of it, joined recently by the Upali Newspaper Ltd. But when it came to a question of Press Freedom, the biggest demonstration of it came from the first three newspaper groups, in the area of Sinhala-Tamil relations. Whatever inhibitions they showed in other respects, they carried on systematic campaigns at various times against the party that was consistently returned by the Tamil people for a sustained period of twenty five years. Leader writers, reporters, cartoonists, letter writers — they all had a field day and enjoyed their Press Freedom to the full in ridiculing, lambasting, pummelling the Tamil United Liberation Front.

And yet it must be said on behalf of the T. U. L. F. and its leaders that despite being victims of "Press Freedom", they hold the proud record of being the most consistent upholders of Press Freedom in this country. When in 1978, the National State Assembly passed "The Parliament (Powers Privileges) Amendment Act" and immediately thereafter summoned Observer Editor Harold Pieris and Associate Editor Philip Cooray and asked them to show cause why they should not be punished over a piece of negligence involving a mix-up in picture captions, the loudest voices in defence of the journalists came from the T. U. L. F. leaders A. Amirthalingam and V. N. Navaratnam.

Today, the SATURDAY REVIEW poses this question in all earnestness. Is the T. U. L. F., (as in many other matters too) in danger of besmirching its proud record on the matter of Press Freedom? Having exhibited an amazing record of tolerance of Press Freedom in the South, are we to understand that they have a weak stomach for Press Freedom in the North?

T. U. L. F. toys with the idea of a 'Kamaraj Plan': 5 M.P.s may retire

The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) is likely to adopt a 'Kamaraj Plan' to beat off the challenge of breakaway groups in the North and the ruling United National Party in the East, according to sources close to the Front.

Under this plan, TULF President M. Sivasithampam, the Nallur MP, may step down from office to make way for an Eastern

Province MP to take over the presidency. The person tipped to succeed him is Trincomalee MP R. Sampanthan.

Five senior parliamentarians in the North, according to these same sources, will retire from the parliamentary arena to concentrate on building up the Front at grassroots level. Some of the names being mentioned in this connection are the

parliamentarians representing Point Pedro, Kayts, Manipay and Chavakachcheri. The Mullaitivu MP too is likely to step down, these sources say.

The TULF's Kamaraj Plan is expected to be formally announced at the Front's conference to be held in June.

This conference—the first after the Averangal conference held a few years ago—will see younger faces emerging to carry on from where their seniors left off. Some of the persons being spoken of in TULF circles as likely successors include a rising young businessman from Valvettiturai and a youth front activist whose name suggests a generalissimo.

The TULF is concerned not only about the inroads the UNP has made in the East: the breakaway group the Tamil Eelam Liberation Front (TELF) also seems to be gathering support there. The TELF had, according to informed sources, held a successful May Day meeting in Batticaloa whereas the TULF's May Day celebrations were confined to Jaffna.

Amir attacks the youth and rebels

This year's May Day Celebrations in Jaffna saw an escalation of the verbal clash between the Tamil United Liberation Front and its erstwhile youth supporters

Speakers at the May Day meeting organised by the General Union of Eelam Students (GUES) condemned the TULF for not living up to its promise of winning Eelam through a non-violent struggle. After 1977, they pointed out, the TULF had not carried out any non-violent struggle. Unable to bear the harassment of the Government any longer youths had been compelled to resort to violence, they argued, through a sense of frustration.

TULF Secretary-General Appapillai Amirthalingam pulled no punches in his hard-hitting speech at the Tamil Trade Union Front's May Day Meeting.

In a blistering verbal onslaught on his critics, partic-

ularly those who had broken away from the TULF, Amirthalingam warned "there are some elements who are trying to bring about bloodshed in our community. This must be nipped in the bud."

Amirthalingam emphasised it is the unity of the people which protects youths. Ninety per cent of the people, he pointed out, are with the TULF. Can youths afford to antagonise such a large section of the people, he asked?

Woo-back bid fails

Attempts made recently by the Tamil United Liberation Front to woo back a former parliamentarian who represented an outlying constituency in the North have failed, the SATURDAY REVIEW reliably learns.

The negotiations floundered on certain concrete proposals on development the 'brainy' ex-parliamentarian

wanted incorporated in a new manifesto.

The go-between was a parliamentarian with plenty of experience of friendship societies. But all his persuasive powers failed to convince this ex-M.P. who struck out on his own on the separatist issue and paid heavily for it.

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The U.S. Ambassador in Sri Lanka John Hathaway Reed will pay his first official visit to Jaffna on May 10. During his two day visit he will be entertained to tea by the Evelyn Rutnam Institute (May 10) and the Jaffna Municipal Council (May 11).

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Casteism and the World Hindu Conference

Columnist Sabita Shetty of the Indian Express writes in the issue of the paper dated April 27:

It has often been argued that it would make for certainty in law if the higher courts wrote shorter judgments. In fact this is one of the points thrown open for comment in the famous (or infamous!) questionnaire sent out by the Law Commission.

The observation applies equally to the many resolutions passed at the seminars and conferences called to consider this and that. It would certainly make for certainty of intention if the resolutions were to be shorter and, therefore, more precise.

A case in point is the resolution passed at the World Hindu Conference being held in Colombo. The resolution reads (I am quoting from a report by T. B. Subramaniam, I.E., April 26): "Considering that Hinduism upholds tolerance, justice, equality, recognising the need to unite Hindu society and realising that certain practices in Hindu society which were relevant at one time have outgrown their usefulness should be given up, the World Hindu Conference appeals to Hindus to uphold their ancient values and respect the dignity of all human beings."

Does it take so many words to say that casteism should be abolished?

Jaffna undergrads to launch a struggle

The Student Assembly of the University of Jaffna seems poised to launch a struggle to win its long-standing demands.

The concluding paragraph of a cyclo-styled leaflet issued recently under the signature of Student Assembly President K. Rasanayagam states: "It is only by overthrowing a rotten administration and setting up a new one that our needs can be met. Let's prepare from now onwards to set up a new administration on 14th May."

Pre-election scenario: May Day was a good test

Those who are aware of the recent political history of Sri Lanka would not be surprised at the current convulsions and convulsions in our body politic. For such has been the pattern of behaviour with the approach of every election, with individuals and parties seeking accommodation with various others, always professing a noble ideal—to serve the people better—but actually with a base motive—the advancement of their own selfish interests.

We saw it happen before the first general election in 1947. The Ceylon National Congress, the Sinhala Maha Sabha, the Muslim League, the Labour Party and some other assorted groups banded together as the United National Party. The one thing they had in common was a rabid conservatism—and a desire for power.

THE 'NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'

We saw it happen again in 1956, when the Sri Lanka Freedom Party coalesced with the Vipavakara Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the Bhasha Peramuna and some other language and religious groups to form the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna.

At the March 1960 elections, for the first time, most of the parties decided to strike out alone. Besides the UNP and the SLFP, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the MEP (actually the VLSSP) and the Lanka Prajantrawadi Party also fielded over a hundred candidates each, all in the fond hope that power would be theirs for the asking.

The bitter lesson learnt by most of them induced the formation of new alliances at the July 1960 elections. The most prominent among them was the understanding between the SLFP and the LSSP, which during the dying days of the SLFP regime was converted into a coalition.

We saw the biggest—and most heterogeneous—coalition, styled the "national Government", arise after the 1965 elections. It comprised such disparate elements as the UNP, the MEP, the Federal Party, the Tamil Congress, the Jatika Vimukthi Peramuna, the Sri Lanka Socialist Freedom Party, the LPP and the Ceylon Workers Congress! Its main objective was to keep at bay the SLFP and its leftist allies.

We saw it happen again in 1970, when the SLFP,

the LSSP and the CP (Moscow) formed a United Front.

In 1977, the UNP had as its allies some of the elements which had been with it between 1965-1970, while the SLFP and the left parties went their separate ways.

Now, with the campaign on already for the next elections even before an official announcement of a poll has been made, we see the same unseemly hurry to arrive at electoral understandings and alliances.

The UNP, which has been assiduously wooing the TULF and the CWC, appears to be very near to winning over their leaderships though what their followers feel about any such link-up will be known only after the voting.

Against this, there is the emerging coalition of the SLFP, (B), the LSSP (two groups), the MEP, the Democratic National Front and the pro-Maoist CP.

In the North, where the TULF (formerly the Federal Party), held almost undisputed sway since 1956, new and radical forces are arising to present a formidable challenge to it.

It is fashionable to describe what is taking place as a continuation of the "polarisation of political forces" in the country. But a most all the splits and alliances that we have witnessed in Sri Lanka up to now have been more the result of clashes between personalities than of policies and principles. Political expediency was, and still is, the motivating factor; in other words, how to retain or grab state power—even at the expense of long-standing friends and colleagues! But that is politics, the cynic would say.

This is not to deny that in the country at large political, economic and social forces are at work which are propelling people to one or other of the traditional postures—the RIGHT (represented by the UNP and the TULF), the CENTRE (represented by the SLFP and its allies) and the LEFT (now re-

explosion as in 1977; "unusual" in the sense that these are not directly connected with the Government's development plans. One is the employment opportunities that have opened up abroad. The money flowing in from overseas has served to ease the life of many a family. Secondly, gemming, both licit and illicit, coupled with smuggling, is putting money into the hands of a wide circle of people, from the rural areas to the cities. Thirdly, large numbers of people have found jobs in the betting, narcotics and kasippu trades!

Still, the situation is not a happy one for the UNP, even under the proportional representation system. That is why there is increasing talk of the "need to forget ideological differences and work in a spirit of brotherhood to fully realise the development goals of the country" (a la President Jayewardene's May Day message). What is proposed,

That code of ethics for Journalists

Are journalists in Sri Lanka going to be licensed, like in Singapore and some other countries?

This fear is entertained by sections of journalists now that a Code of Ethics for them devised under the auspices of the Government appointed Press Council is in force.

For what is the use of a code unless it could be effectively enforced?

In the case of politicians, the code devised by the President provides for expulsion from parliament for any serious breach of it.

For journalists, it could well be revocation of the licence to practise the profession, as in Singapore, the model for the United National Party Government in more ways than one.

The Press Council has power, where appropriate, to

Political Causerie

by

Gamini Navaratne

presented mainly by the Communist Party and the JVP).

Judging by the May Day demonstrations of strength, the SLFP-led alliance appears to have a clear edge over the other parties in the South; the JVP put up the next best show, while the UNP came a poor third (discounting the crowds who turned up to hear Nutan sing.)

This is evidence of the growing public disenchantment with the UNP, which came into power with so much promise but has not lived up to people's expectations. It is the UNP's pledge to speedily and substantially ease living costs and unemployment that turned the popular tide against the SLFP. Whatever impressive gains have been made by the Government in other spheres, these twin problems are graver today than before and no amount of talks about "factors beyond Sri Lanka's control" is going to help it at the polls.

I think three unusual factors have contributed in a big way to averting an

in other words, is a "national government" an idea which has been touted several times earlier.

Whether the SLFP would bite this one now is doubtful, whatever blandishments may be offered, even a pardon for its leader. For Mrs. Bandaranaike has expressed confidence that, given "free and fair elections", her party stood a good chance of capturing power.

While not holding a brief for the ex-Prime Minister, we must say we share her qualms, for the same reasons that she adumbrated at her recent press conference, that the coming elections, whether presidential or parliamentary, would not be fair and free as elections in the past.

The surprise is that so far the Government, whose leaders profess undying devotion to democratic ideals, have not done the one thing that could allay these fears and restore public confidence in the electoral process, that is, the appointment of a public servant acceptable to all parties as the Commissioner of Elections.

order a newspaper to publish a correction or censure a journalist. This power existed even before the code was devised.

It is reliably learnt that some persons in the UNP believe this power is "inadequate" to bring to heel those journalists who "persistently misreport or misrepresent" the Government policies and actions, that is, those journalists who are not willing to be the ruling party, mouthpieces.

Here are the RULES made by the Sri Lanka Press Council Setting out of Code of Ethics for Journalists under Section 30 (1) (a) of the Sri Lanka Press Council Law, No. 5 of 1973, and approved by Parliament under Section 30 (3) of the said Law as Published in the Gazette Extraordinary on October 14, 1981:—

1. These rules may be cited as the Press Council (Code of Ethics for journalists) Rules, 1981.
2. Every journalist shall—
 - a. Use all reasonable means

(Continued on page 12)

LETTERS

No. 4, Lee Grove,
Chigwell,
Essex, U. K.
25-4-82.

The Editor,
Saturday Review,

Dear Sir,

I feel compelled to reply Mr. V. Sinnadurai, whose letter was published in the S.R. dated 4-3-82.

What Mr. Sinnadurai has failed to remember is that whether it be a sailing ship or a freedom movement the men behind the leader are there to do or die and not to tell the leader the course of action to be taken. If this was not so the goal could never be achieved.

One of the most important requirements of a freedom movement is the implicit faith it places on its leadership. If the rank and file of the movement begin to doubt the integrity of the leadership and if every action of the leader had to be explained to the members of the movement there is no possibility of the goal being reached.

Many Tamils seem to think that their duty towards the restoration of the lost sovereignty was over once they had given the mandate to the T. U. L. F.

Every single Tamil, who believes that his birthright has been lost, must do his or her duty in the achievement of freedom.

How many of us could say with honesty that our contribution, however small it may be, has been made in the struggle for the achievement of freedom.

Instead of which criticisms are heaped on the T. U. L. F. for every action or inaction of theirs.

Hand in hand with the negotiations or collaborations our freedom struggle must continue.

Those who oppose these measures of temporary truce are those who fear that in the process they would forget their ultimate goal of an independent Tamil Eelam.

If one has the ideal of an independent Tamil Eelam in mind, whether it is peace or war, their actions and thoughts will always be towards the achievement of this ambition.

I wish also to make a constructive criticism of your newspaper.

When it was announced sometime ago that the Saturday Review was to be published I was extremely delighted. I felt that it would be a

newspaper out of the ordinary, fit to satisfy a long felt need of the Tamil Nation. I thought that it would be an instrument in education and guiding the Tamil Nation in its long struggle for the attainment of freedom.

However, after reading your newspaper regularly during the weeks since its inception, I have at times felt somewhat disappointed.

You have at times given importance to sensation, the gimmick, that is a part of journalism in Ceylon.

I also feel that the Saturday Review should not encourage controversy among our people on trivial matters. It should help to harness all our energies in the liberation of our people.

Yours truly,
Dr. S. Srinivasan

Kasturiar Road,
Jaffna.

Dear Sir,

Now that our leaders have successfully led the people to the slaughter-house and have gleefully gone through the garden path (without being led) to Jayawardenepura to rejoin their head, we have no time to lose if we are to save our face, if not our souls.

Now is the hour to shake ourselves free from the clutches of politicians of every hue, educate the masses of the lesson of the day-the great Betrayal, organise youth councils in every nook and corner of our motherland and form an executive central committee for the express purpose of achieving our cherished goal, Eelam.

P. Ramachandra.

Ferguson Road,
Colombo-15.

Political parties getting split seems to be a current epidemic in the country. The vibrations of the South now seem to echo in the north as well.

At this critical juncture, it must be borne in our minds that it will be an impossible task for any political party to fulfil the aspirations of their supporters. Of course, evidently, there is a dissatisfaction over the present go-

ingson of TULF, which may have contributed to this new party move.

On the other hand, we had been able to get sympathy from the world, particularly in times of trouble because Ceylon Tamils had one sole official voice. In a parliamentary democratic system, such a collective political organ is unquestionably indispensable to voice the grievances of the minority. If our representatives were to split into two or three different parties like in the past, the international media interest would have been little or marginal.

At all times in the history we have always lacked real unity among us. At least TULF symbolizes this unity. A break up or emergence of any new party should be discouraged by all means.

Mano Thiruchelvam.

All Ceylon Tamil Congress
120, Main Street,
Jaffna.

The Editor,
"Saturday Review"
303, K. K. S. Road,
Jaffna.

Sir,

I refer to your lead story on page one of your Journal of the 24th April 1982 under the caption "TULF and TC may merge....."

I wish to state that there can never be a merger of the ACTC with any other political party. We are proud of our party, however small it may be, and are not prepared to sell the past for a mess of pottage. In the past, the ACTC has resisted every attempt to be swallowed up by another party and this attitude will continue to be so in the future as well.

Your story was again an instance where you were trying to show the ACTC off in a poor light in the eyes of the Tamil speaking people by trying to show that the ACTC is only interested in seats. Unlike the TULF, whose only objective is the capturing of seats in any election, the ACTC has not yet started thinking about elections.

Can the ACTC merge with another party which has absolutely no aims or objectives or a program of action? To label

the TULF "a liberation movement" will be downright dishonesty.

Can the ACTC have anything to do with the TULF which today has all but merged with the UNP? One could only describe the present relationship between the UNP and the TULF as a coalition Government!

Whenever elections are round the corner, whatever the elections may be, this type of kite flying is indulged in with a purpose. The purpose being to instil confusion in the minds of the Tamil speaking people and to show that the ACTC has joined the TULF or the TULF uses the now hackneyed phrase "let no one disrupt the unity that has been achieved amongst the Tamils". Such tactics are indulged in in order to get votes for the TULF and to see that there is no opposition to the TULF.

We are surprised that your journal, which says it has nothing to do with the TULF, should have also now come out to do the dirty work for the TULF.

Being the only regional English paper in Sri Lanka, you would have doubtless been aware of the type of propaganda indulged in by the TULF only because M. Sivasithambaram and I signed a joint communique on the 2nd of June 1981 in the interests of the Tamil speaking people at a time when Jaffna was burning.

As regards the "TULF seeking to disarm the ACTC by offering to accommodate one or two of its key members in the TULF electoral list", I am wondering why the TULF should go to this length when they know how to win an election without accommodating any member of the ACTC. As one TULF Member of the Municipal Council told some persons at the Mullaitivu Rest House in April 1981, "We know how to win elections; burn two boutiques at the correct time and we are through"!

I shall thank you to give the same prominence to this letter that you gave to that kite flying lead story of yours.

Yours truly,
(G. G. Ponnambalam Jr)
GENERAL SECRETARY

Batticaloa

The Vipulananda Music College, which was "opened" recently at Kallady, Batticaloa, is one of the latest 'mirages' of the Ministry of Regional Development. It was announced that the Vipulananda Music College was to be put up at a cost of 40 lakhs Rupees. But alas, what has happened to day?

(i) The Vipulananda Mani Mandapam Hall in which the "opening" ceremonies were held with pomp and show remains closed from the day of opening.

(ii) Mr. Shivanandampillai who came from India to function as the Principal of the College has gone back to India.

As far as the Music College is concerned, it could be easily started with Annamalai Trained Music Teachers from Batticaloa at least on a part-time basis.

But the Minister has announced that the famous Musical Maestros such as M. L. Vasanthakumari Violin T. N. Krishnan from India will come to conduct special classes for the students of the Vipulananda Music College (forgetting the students are beginners and amateurs) Will this ever happen? God alone knows.

Thousands of Rupees were wasted in bringing down the famous play back singer of South India Films Seergali Govindarajan and film star "Vennira Adai" Nirmala for the so-called opening ceremonies of the Vipulananda Music College and the Tamasha went on for two days. This money could have been spent for putting up of Temporary sheds for the Music College as desired by the Principal so that the College could function from the day of opening.

There was a Music-Dance class going on in the Vipulananda Mani Mandapam organised by some parents. This too has been shifted to another building. Sunday classes and Religious Meetings were a Common feature in the Vipulananda Mani Mandapam. All these have been shut out by the Music College Mirage and the building remains closed, thanks to the Hon. Minister for Regional Development etc., etc.

—Tamilpan



Prof. Arasaratnam

Tho 1982 Chelvanayakam Memorial Lecture

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

No. 4. in the Series

(Continued from last issue)

When the Jaffna tombo were completed in 1677, the poll-tax was increased to 8 fanams a year. It was done on the ground that there was increased economic activity in Jaffna since Portuguese rule, that land prices had risen as also had labour wages. There was more money in circulation and the people could afford to pay these increased taxes. There was a big outcry against this increase and the Dutch were constrained to remit the increase, and the Dutch were constrained to remit the increase in 1689. Thereafter the majority of taxpayers paid this tax at the rate of 2 to 3 fanams a year.

Second Personal tax

A second personal tax was what the Dutch called *office gelden* or professional tax. It was levied on all who were free of service and was originally a communal tax on professional castes which the caste headmen then divided among members. In this form it was assessed as a lump sum from the headman of the caste. It gave rise to much abuse and corruption on the part of headmen and taxcollectors. So the Dutch in 1696 made it a tax on each individual member of the caste which appeared in the tombs register under his name. This enabled them to increase the amount collected with the increase in population.

Third Personal tax

A third personal tax was the *adikari* tax. It originated as a tax paid to the *adikari* for his maintenance. It later became a tax of 1 fanam per person paid by three particular castes, which must have been the oldest castes in the kingdom. These three castes apparently considered it an honour to pay this tax and it is reported that other castes that wanted to raise their status were pressing to be allowed to pay an *adikari* tax.

Labour Service Tax

In addition to these personal taxes, there was a personal

labour service tax levied on every able-bodied male who had to perform labour for the state for a total of 12 days a year. This service was called *uliyam* and could be directed towards any public works undertaken by the state. Those able to do so could pay instead a fine of 1 Rix dollar or 12 fanams (equivalent to Rs. 2.00) per year. Generally those of the more affluent agricultural castes, *paradesis* or foreign settlers, *chetties* and other merchants and Muslims made money payments and freed themselves from labour. A large number of others performed labour. The Dutch saw this obligation as a necessary means of getting together a labour force. There was a great increase in public works under the Dutch. These ranged from the construction and repair of dams and canals, the transport of goods and people on palanquins, building of roads, erecting fortifications, redoubts and watchposts, provision of timber and the satisfaction of a variety of needs.

Circulation of money

At first it was the more affluent members of society who paid cash fines in lieu of service. But gradually the numbers of people who preferred to pay the fines increased enormously. This was an index to the increasing circulation of money in the country as well as to the availability of employment for money wages. The Dutch were alarmed at the consequent reduction in the availability of free labour and there were proposals to double the fine payable in lieu of service and even to abolish the option of paying money for service. Towards the end of the 18th century, the money realised from *uliyam* fines amounted to about 75,000 florins.

Taxes on land

Apart from these personal taxes, there were a set of taxes on the land and its produce. There was firstly

a quit-rent on land of which there were records in Tamil for each village dating from the period of the Jaffna kingdom. It was the registration of land-holdings and the rents to which each was subject that the Dutch devoted their attention to in the first fifty years of their rule. A committee of surveyors went round each village, inspected the records held by the headmen, measured and described land-holdings and prepared a map of these holdings. The purpose of the exercise was to bring out into the open land held without tax obligations by influential men in the village over years of defrauding the state. It was not surprising that the new thombos showed an increase of revenue of over 70,000 florin. The thombo for a village listed each of the holding by its traditional name, its presents owner his caste. It further listed the extent of paddy land in this holding, the extent of garden land, whether there was a house on the grounds, the number of palmyrah trees, margosa trees, and *illupai* trees.

In addition to the quit-rent on land, there was a tax on gardens and fruit-bearing trees. It was for this purpose that the number of trees were counted and noted in the thombo. There was a tax on each palmyrah, margosa and *illupai* tree and the amount was added on to the rent that was due from the land.

A grain tax too

There was further a grain tax levied on the harvest as a tithe or a tenth of the produce. This tax was always a subject of complaint among the cultivators as an excessive burden on top of the rents which the land already bore. Quite often representations were made to the authority for remission of this tax but without avail. The tax was collected in paddy at harvest time and used to feed Dutch military and civilian personnel.

Peasant unrest

The process of land registration was accompanied by popular discontent which resulted in the only major outburst of spontaneous peasant unrest in Jaffna in modern times. When the Committee of registration officials began to visit villages and summon landholders to appear before them with their title deeds, it generated a great fear among them of increased imposts. They appealed to the government to stop the registration process, offering a straight doubling of land rents in return. It is clear that there was a good deal of unregistered holding and cultivation of land for which taxes were not being paid. The richer land-owners who were influential in the village would have been the losers by this registration. They stirred up the poor peasants who have a natural fear of any effort to increase taxation. Under the leadership of the village leaders, many of these peasants evacuated their villages and absconded southwards into the Vanni. This was, all over south Asia, a traditional form of peasant protest against the state. Villages of Vadamarachi and Thenmarachi were thus denuded of cultivators. In the Vanni they had the support of Kaila Vanni, the powerful Vanniyan of Panankamam who was then engaged in hostility against the Dutch. He gave refuge to these fugitives in the Vanni villages and enabled them to defy the Dutch for some time.

The Dutch took measures to suppress this rebellion before it spread through the peninsula. They cut off communications of the rebels between the peninsula and the Vanni, blocking off marauding bands who had come out of the Vanni and done extensive damage in Thenmarachi. A temporary military stockade was erected at Elephant pass and Jaffna was sealed off from the Vanni. Once this happened, the rebellion lost its momentum. In a few months people returned to their homes and the land registration was resumed and completed in 1677.

The economic condition of the people of Jaffna under Dutch rule is a matter of much speculation. The Dutch officials themselves were divided as to the extent of economic prosperity and misery. It is clear that the first decades of Dutch rule brought hardships. There were a number of changes to affect the ordinary life of the people. The imposition of controls on trade and business reduced the pace of economic activity and skilled entrepreneurship. Free intercourse with overseas merchants from Bengal, Golconda, Tanjore and Madura was imperilled. This affected the incomes of the local middlemen who had serviced these overseas traders. The channelling of much of this trade in the lucrative commodities through the Dutch Company led to the pushing up of prices in import goods.

The number of overseas merchants sailing into Jaffna was reduced...

The number of overseas merchants sailing into Jaffna was reduced and this led to the shortage of imported consumer goods. Rice was one of the first to be affected. By the 17th Century, Jaffna had come to rely very heavily on imported rice. A shortage of rice would result in a drastic increase in its price which would in turn affect labour wage. Another consumer commodity to be so affected was textiles on which again the Tamils relied on imports from India. The heavy duties imposed by the Dutch and the discouragement of private trade in textiles reduced the volume of import and led to increase in prices. In this context, the local weaving industry was stretched to its limit in trying to fulfil local demands.

(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)

For if a British subject is to be treated as if he were an alien within the Empire, then the last semblance of Empire vanishes. That is the view the Indian Government has been pressing on the British Government all these years. They accepted with reluctance the theory of British impotence in respect to the autonomous self-governing parts of the Empire. They protested very strongly against the adoption of anything which differentiated the Indian from the other Britishers in the Kenya Colony. But if the Government of England were asked to bring into force the principles of South Africa and Australia and Canada in this country, I ask Honourable Members where the Empire is going to end. It is not reasonable on our part to press views which we know cannot be accepted by England without doing very great violence to the theory on which the whole Empire rests.

IN SPIRIT AND THE LETTER

If any differentiation is contemplated it should be carried out. I submit, openly and frankly—true to the spirit as well as to the letter. Some of the motions that have been placed on the Agenda and which have been duly proposed attempt to differentiate between the component parts of the Empire in spirit, though not in the letter. Now, take for instance the first motion—that of the Honourable Member for Kegalla. The second part of that motion is intended to reduce the term of residence for Europeans and for such others as may come under the term of non-Ceylonese. No exception whatever can be taken to the wording of this motion, but its real effect will be to shut out the Indians, or a large number of them, for that will be the practical effect if a literacy test is insisted on in the case of non-Ceylonese only. The alternative proposal is to extend the franchise to those who have resided here for one year and who conform to the property and other qualifications which are necessary for the exercise of the franchise under existing conditions. That again is an attempt in effect to restrict

the franchise to all the Europeans and to the few Indians who are already entitled to the vote in the present constitution, and to disfranchise the vast majority of Indians. My honourable friend has frankly admitted that...

The Hon. Mr. A. F. MOLAMURE:—I did not admit that my proposal would enfranchise only a few Indians.

The Hon. Mr. K. BALASINGHAM:—Some Indians. In effect it will disfranchise the vast majority of the Indians.

Well, Sir, I think that is a procedure which this House cannot see its way to endorse. I admire the attitude taken up by the European Members who have not sought to differentiate between themselves and the other non-Ceylonese communities. They are prepared to accept the same standard, the same qualification for the franchise as that required from other non-Ceylonese whether coming from Britain or any other part of the Empire.

As I said at the beginning of this part of my remarks the question of domicile is an irrelevant factor when we are considering the question of franchise for British subjects within the Empire. The questions of domicile and of naturalization are very relevant questions when foreigners—people who are not Britishers—seek the franchise in any British territory; but when British subjects seek the franchise in any part of the Empire, those questions are irrelevant. As I said, we cannot appeal to the example of South Africa and other parts of the Empire, where even the sons of the soil—the natives from whom the land was taken—have been denied the vote by the Governments established in those countries.

An attempt is being made to introduce the property or income qualification in the case of Indians. That, I submit, Sir, will lead to most disastrous consequences. The result of insisting on a high property or income qualification in the case of the Indians only would lead almost automatically to a demand for higher wages from that quarter and it would be extremely difficult for employers to resist that demand. If the policy of the country

the First FRANCHISE debate

is going to be to stop all further immigration, is it at all possible to refuse the demand for higher wages from persons who will say that they are refused the franchise for no fault of theirs but because they are under-paid?

The position, Sir, is not altogether free from difficulty. I admit that the subject is one of vital importance to the country. No man can regard without some feeling of anxiety the entry into one's own state of a large number of unwelcome strangers from a different country. They may be producers of wealth.

“The Indian labourers do not take the bread out of the mouths of our people. On the contrary they produce wealth”

—Hon. K. Balasingham

And in this connection I must say that I do not for a moment admit that it is correct to say that the Indian labourers take the bread out of the mouths of our people. On the contrary they produce wealth; they enable all of us including the Ceylon labourer to lead better lives and to enjoy greater comforts and more prosperity. But the absence of this economic menace alone does not solve the difficulty. I can well understand members of a community which had little in common with those coming into the country becoming alarmed at the idea that their culture and their traditions would be greatly affected in an adverse manner by this rapid influx of outsiders.

But, Sir, are there no remedies for this? I do not for a moment say that any remedy would bring in the hoped for results at once—that any remedy would lead

to immediate results which would be satisfactory to all concerned. But there are remedies which should be adopted and which, sooner or later, would solve the difficulties we have in view. Let us take the case of the United States and Canada. After all, the United States were inhabited by a few Britishers who went over there during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and it is now a country of some hundred and ten million people and yet the whole country is American. The inhabitants

exist, and must exist in the world, but all the races that live in one locality must, sooner or later, get merged. The sooner they get merged, the happier the country will be. And that progress can be accelerated only if we take proper steps for that. Take, Sir, the attempt that has been made in South Africa. Are not the Boers and the Britons who were fighting against each other only the other day, merging into one nation? I do not suggest that that process of intermingling is by any means complete. Twenty-five years is too short a period for that. We are not debating this question of Indian exclusion because of any immediate danger. Nobody thinks that the Indian is going to swamp the Ceylonese today. The fear is for the distant future—fifty or hundred years hence. When that time comes would it not be possible to evolve then a Ceylonese nation by steps that might be taken now? Are we taking those steps? Have we taken the necessary steps in the past? In the system of education that we have to-day are we trying to teach the Sinhalese the Tamil language, and the Tamil the Sinhalese language and all of them English? These are methods which draw people together and the Indians who are now gradually mixing up with the permanent population will be caught up in the vortex and will soon become part of ourselves.

SINHALESE WHO SPEAK TAMIL

If you analyze history, you will find that that process has been going on in Ceylon for many years past. Look at the north-western coast of Ceylon. There is a large Sinhalese population which today speaks Tamil. Who are they? Tamils, who have been Sinhalesized by close association with Sinhalese. Similarly, Sir, in the past there have been large bands of Indians who have come

(Continued next column)

into our midst, into the Central Provinces and other parts of Ceylon. I will not mention family names, will not mention anything which will indicate who they are, but, Sir, all of us know that from several parts of India, large numbers have come and they today form the Sinhalese race, the great race of whom we are all proud. Well, Sir, that process can go on. If we examine further, we find that the Tamils themselves are a mixture of many races, both Ceylonese and Indian, who have lived together in this country. There is Malayalee blood; and there is a mixture of Sinhalese blood even in the Tamils of the North. This unifying process must be accelerated and not retarded.

2-hour journey by catamaran

The way to solve these difficulties that have been brought about by Indian immigration is not by trying to build this franchise wall. Fortunately or unfortunately for this country, it is placed so close to India that no legislation however drastic can keep the Indian out. If through the pangs of hunger he has to leave his home, and if this country is fertile and rich—and every day it is becoming more and more so—there is nothing more than two hours' catamaran journey from South India to Mannar or Jaffna and once in Mannar or Jaffna no immigration law can be enforced against the Indian for he can easily mix up with the people.

Nature abhors a vacuum

Exclusion of Indians is out of the question. We may pass the most stringent laws, but the law of nature cannot be circumvented; and the law of nature is that a vacuum must be filled for nature abhors a vacuum. The great fertile tracts of North-Central Ceylon will have to be filled by a population and that population will sooner or later be largely Indian. Our people here—I do not blame them—will not readily go into those inhospitable tracts where malaria decimates the settlers. But the Indian, driven by hunger, came and has made to a large extent what Anuradhapura is to-day. If Anuradhapura is going to expand it cannot be largely by what we Ceylonese might do to develop the vast forests around it. It must be through the influx of persons who will, by the Talaimannar railway route, come into that district.

(To be continued)



Foreign
View

Impressions of an Australian teacher in Singapore

'Young Tamils disgusted with their own political party...'

THERE has been a long history of tension between Sinhalese and Tamils in Sri Lanka, dating back to the days when Tamil kings raided the island from South India. The British did not help matters by encouraging Tamil settlement in predominantly Sinhalese areas and by their open dependence on Tamils as civil servants. Post-colonial days saw Bandaranaike governments pursue fierce pro-Sinhalese policies for political reasons. All these have inflicted so much damage on relations between the two races that efforts by the present government of President J. R. Jayewardene to break down these barriers are often misunderstood and viewed with suspicion. Worse, there is even talk of armed struggle among young revolutionaries clamouring for a separate Tamil state.

A recent spectacular daylight bank robbery in Jaffna, the Tamil centre of Sri Lanka, has raised once again the problem of the Tamil minority in predominantly Sinhalese Sri Lanka.

For this was almost certainly a politically motivated crime, and the million-dollar haul the robbers collected is even now probably being used to buy guns and bullets for the Tamil Liberation Movement.

There has been a long history of trouble between the two peoples, stretching back to the time when Tamil adventurers from South India, a mere 80 km away, raided the island and set up flourishing kingdoms. In fact, at one time, even the historical capital of Kandy was conquered by a Tamil King.

'HARDWORKING TAMILS'

In the past, the British tended to rely on the more hardworking Tamils as administrators and workers. They encouraged their settlement in the previously Sinhalese parts of the country and especially in the highland tea plantation areas.

There has been a gradual increase in tension in post-colonial times. In the Seventies, the socialist Bandaranaike governments developed a vociferous Sinhalese nationalist line to maintain popular support as the econ-

omy collapsed in shambles around them.

It is now generally accepted that in this as in many other things the Bandaranaike socialists went too far. The United National Party (UNP) government of President J. R. Jayewardene, which came to power in 1977, is trying, at least on the surface, to promote a tolerant, even-handed policy.

The Problem is proving far less tractable than was hoped however. After a brief lull, in which the state of emergency in the north was lifted, violence has flared up again.

It began in December last year when there was a spate of small-scale robberies. The Sri Lankan newspaper weekend pointed out that "the pattern in (these) cases appeared identical to (those robberies) carried out during the wave of violence which swept the north in 1978-79.

The problem is by no means easy to solve. Tamils make up 26 percent of the population and are a massive majority in the Jaffna region. There has certainly been prejudice against them in the past and in fact there were out-and-out race riots in 1976.

In the last election, the TULF, a political party dedicated to "a separate Tamil State" emerged as the major opposition party.

That was certainly an unusual election, one which

saw the almost total collapse of the previous government under Mrs. Bandaranaike, whose party won a mere 18 seats. But it does indicate the solid backing the TULF receives from Tamils. The present government says that the TULF only obtained 57 per cent of the Tamil vote, but the opposition claims more than 90 per cent support. In fact some young Tamils say that they did not vote for their own party because it is too moderate.

They want direct action, even armed struggle. These young revolutionaries speak of "the occupation and colonisation of our motherland" and talk about the organisation of guerilla groups.

separate culture, but there is no serious intention for them to learn our language".

In the same way the government's attempts to revitalise the sagging economy are often taken as attacks on the Tamils.

For example, the massive irrigation scheme underway in the east is seen by many Tamils as a plan to bring Sinhalese immigrants into traditional Tamil areas.

I have spoken to Tamil teachers in Galle and Kandy who were full of praise for the new government and its education policies in particular.

Ian Edwards
Straits Times, Singapore-Apr. 6, 1981

The extreme degree of separation between the two races has even become institutionalised in the education system. There are Tamil schools and Sinhalese schools, a division which extends into the universities.

One of the new government's measures to break down these barriers was to introduce Tamil as a compulsory third language in Sinhalese Schools and Sinhalese in Tamil schools (English is the universal language).

I talked to young Sri Lankans who moaned in disgust at having to learn "boring, useless" Tamil, which would seem to indicate that the government means business.

But the young revolutionaries dismiss this as window-dressing. "Sure" they say, "we have to learn their language, as part of the plan to destroy our

But in the north and to a lesser extent the east, there is a real undercurrent of hostility and militancy.

On the other hand, many Sinhalese Sri Lankans admit to sympathising with the Tamils' view point. A Catholic priest, Father Paul Caspersz, has organised a huge movement for inter-racial harmony and equality. He argues for unity but says that there must be more attention paid to Tamil grievances.

I remember only too well the words of a young Jaffna teacher I met recently. He explained to me that many young Tamils were disgusted with their own political party for its alleged weakness.

"We don't want armed revolution," he said. "But it's the only solution.

A new Constitution was adopted in 1977 by a Select Committee of Parliament but the TULF refused to participate in the drafting and adoption on the grounds that the government had failed to summon the promised All Party Congress to consider the Tamil problem. The All-Party Congress referred to in the UNP manifesto was never held.

LANGUAGE PROBLEMS

The government maintained that with the adoption of the new Constitution the Tamil problem had found a fair and just solution. The 1978 Constitution contains extensive provisions on the use of Sinhala and Tamil. It provides that Sinhala shall be the official language but that both Sinhala and Tamil shall be national languages. Both languages may be used in Parliament and local governments, official documents must be published in both Sinhala and Tamil, a person is entitled to be examined in either national language at any official examination and persons are entitled to education in the medium of either language. In the Northern and Eastern Provinces the Tamil Language is to be used as the language of administration in addition to Sinhala. Although persons sitting for official examination may take them in either Sinhala or Tamil they may be required also to have a sufficient knowledge of the official language for admission to government service or to acquire such knowledge within a reasonable time. Government officials are not required to have a knowledge of Tamil. The failure to accord equal status to the Tamil language remains a bone of contention.

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

The 1978 Constitution also contains provisions guaranteeing fundamental rights. The preceding administration had been widely criticised for continuing a state of emergency during most of its tenure and for severe curtailment of civil liberties. According to one scholar, "The Section on fundamental rights in the 1978 Constitution, when taken with the provisions for an Ombudsman, the independence of the judiciary, and the restrictions on the exercise of emergency powers, is by far the most extensive charter of freedom that Sri Lanka has had in all its history." Others have pointed out that the Constitution permits extensive restrictions in certain circumstances on many of the rights guaranteed. (Article 15)

EDUCATION

In the area of education, the present government made

The I. C. J. Report

Historical background to the present ethnic conflict

(continued)

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.

some changes by dropping a controversial provision for standardization of examination marks, but left basically intact a racial quota system. At the present time only 30% of the places available in universities are to be filled according to merit on an all-island basis. Fifty-five percent are allocated to revenue districts in proportion to their population and filled according to order of merit within each district. Since the Tamil population is localized in certain districts, the effect of this percentage provision is to limit effectively the two populations to a proportionate share of university entrance, and to make it possible for students from one revenue district with lower marks to achieve university entrance while students with higher marks from another district are denied admission. The remaining 15% of places are allocated to revenue districts deemed to be educationally underprivileged. The conformity of these "affirmative action" provisions with international norms will be discussed in a later section, but they have been criticised by Tamils as constituting a form of racial discrimination, since entrance is based on merit only to a limited extent.

COLONIZATION

An area in which the present government has not made concessions is that of colonization. Tamils have objected to State colonization schemes which import large numbers of Sinhalese into traditional Tamil areas. The Tamil concern about colonization is related to insecurity about their physical safety and to fears that Tamils will become a minority in their traditional homelands. The government maintains that since Sri Lanka is a single country citizens may freely move into any part of the country and that it is necessary to transplant some populations to more productive areas. The Tamils

answer that they are not opposed to individual migration but only to large scale government colonization schemes which change the ethnic composition of an area. The present writer was not able to obtain statistics on the extent of colonization in Tamil areas and thus to determine the degree to which such schemes are a major problem.

One of the most positive steps the Jayewardene government has taken in the area of human rights is the ratification in 1980 of the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The government also made the declaration under Article 41 of the Civil and Political Covenant which permits the Human Rights Committee to entertain complaints of non-observance by another state which has made a similar declaration. Sri Lanka has not yet ratified the Optional Protocol to the Civil and Political Covenant which would permit individuals to bring complaints of violations before the Human Rights Committee, but the government's willingness to accept international norms and thus to have its own actions evaluated in accordance with such norms is a welcome step.

elimination of racial intolerance. It has been frequently pointed out that the separate educational systems for Tamils and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka since independence has had certain negative effects on racial understanding. In addition, the traditional teaching of history in Sri Lanka has contributed to racial animosity. Although immediate short-term actions are necessary to diffuse racial tension, a long-range program of education in racial tolerance and understanding seems essential.

DECENTRALIZATION

The Tamils have consistently pressured for decentralization of government administration. This took the form of a demand for a federal structure of government prior to the TULF commitment to a separate state in 1976. But while continuing to advocate separation, the TULF has simultaneously worked toward decentralization within the present structure. The present government has made some important concessions in this regard. It appointed a Presidential Commission to inquire into the idea of District Development Councils and, rather than opting for

majority had a President who appeared firmly resolved to implement some of the 'democratic decentralization.' Secondly, the increased violence in the North and the ever haunting spectre of communal violence in the South appeared to warrant some type of reconciliation. Finally, even among the Sinhalese intelligentsia there was increasing scholarship which appeared to point to the need for some solutions and a radical reassessment of past policies of integration."

The unfortunate circumstances connected with the June 1981 District Development Council elections in the Jaffna Peninsula, however, and the communal violence in August again seemed to dash hopes that the Tamil problem might be settled. The repeated reports that some members of the government were responsible for the irregularities in the local elections in Jaffna as well as responsible for stirring up the racial animosity which led to violence has caused distrust of the UNP's sincerity in meeting reasonable Tamil demands.

The Jayawardene govt's ratification in 1980 of International Human Rights Covenants

Another positive step is the government support and development of the educational activities of the Human Rights Centre of the Sri Lanka Foundation. The Centre is a government controlled organization which does not entertain complaints concerning human rights, but carries on educational functions such as programs within schools to make the Human Rights Covenants better known. Racial antagonism has been such a pervasive element in Sri Lanka that it would appear appropriate for a government controlled Human Rights Centre to undertake an intensive educational campaign for the

weak councils, adopted the system advocated in a Commission dissent by the TULF appointee, Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam. One commentator has written

"This was the first time that a predominant Sinhalese Government has implemented any measure of decentralization which was also approved by the Tamil political leadership, though not as a solution to their long-term demands. The reasons for this gesture appear to be manifold: First, the government in power with a two-third

CONTROL OF VIOLENCE

The present government has been unsuccessful in controlling the communal violence, security force violence and political violence that has escalated during its tenure. Two major outbreaks of communal violence have occurred since 1977. The first which broke out immediately after the UNP election, did not, however, relate to events occurring under the present regime.

(To be continued)

Indian Express April 26, 1982

The plenary session of the World Hindu conference today was marked by disorderly debates and noisy scenes before it was hurried through to an abrupt end.

The conference, after a furious debate bordering on confusion, however, resolved to set up an international Hindu research centre in Sri Lanka. The original resolution, before it was accepted had to be amended by adding a proviso that the proposed world Hindu organisation should be research-oriented.

INDEPENDENT OF GOVERNMENT

Trouble broke out as soon as the resolution was read out. The motion was that the conference resolved to set up a world Hindu organisation in Sri Lanka and that necessary steps should be taken. This was followed by a rather disorganised debate. On some occasions more than one speaker was on his feet. Therefore, it was not quite clear what was being said. But, broadly speaking it seemed that some of the speakers wanted the proposed organisation to be non-political, independent of any government. It should be a private organisation funded by the Hindus of the world. A delegate suggested that the proposed organisation should concern itself, among its many tasks, with the problems of Hindus living abroad. He said that while they were all proud of the past glory of Hinduism the important problem today concerned the future.

AN HOUR BEHIND SCHEDULE

Faced with a near unanimous demand from the audience the organisers accepted an amendment that the proposed centre be a research-oriented one. It did not appear that any formal amendment to this effect was moved and supported. Nevertheless, the organisers who evidently realised the strength of the demand accepted it.

Sri Lanka Minister for Hindu Religious Affairs, C. Rajadurai said the organisers who had been active for a year had received considerable help from India by way of money and in kind. He added that the Sri Lanka Government had promised to give land for the proposed Hindu international centre. But its actual location was yet to be decided.

The conference also adopted another resolution urging all the "Hindus of the world to uphold their ancient values and respect the dignity of all human beings. The seconds

Disorderly scenes at the World Hindu Conference

resolution as moved from the dais said: "considering that Hinduism upholds tolerance, justice, equality, recognising the need to unite Hindu society and realising that certain practices in Hindu society which were relevant at one time have outgrown their usefulness should be given up the world Hindu conference appeals to Hindus to uphold their ancient values and respect the dignity of all human beings".

Hindus. This should be composed of the truths of the Gita, the Upanishads, Devaram, Divya Prabandam and other scriptures. He also proposed a common form of deity incorporating the features of many images now worshipped. Many members of the audience could not understand how this was possible. But there was general appreciation of Dr. Manickam's plea for unity among Hindus.

or Australia? Does it suffice with starting yoga institutes? Mr. Pudja asked. Incidentally Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population.

Along with Mr. Pudja have come three more Indonesian Hindus: Mr. Svenda Vaisnava, vice-chancellor of Hindu Institute, Bali, Mr. G. Sandi, director of Hindu religious affairs, Government of Indonesia, and Mr. Wedastera Suyasa, president, Indonesian Hindu young generation (organisation).

What is the state of Hinduism in Indonesia today? What are their customs, rituals, mode of worship etc? Are there any divisions among them, like Vaishnavism and Saivism? According to Mr. Svenda Vaisnava, Indonesian Hindus too had these differences "but we have solved the problem by installing Tirumurtis in our houses", he said. This installation of Tirumurtis in house-temples was the latest development of Hinduism in Indonesia, especially in Bali, where the majority of Hindus live. In Java, from the 8th to 14th century A. D. "There was a striking difference between the Vaishnavites and Saivites" resulting in constant clashes between the followers of these two faiths.

HINDUISM IN INDONESIA

According to Mr. Vaisnava who is presenting a paper in the conference on "The role of Hindus in Indonesia in national development", Hindu kingdoms had flourished in Borneo under King Mulavarman, in West Java under Taruma Nagara and also in Sumatra where the kingdom was called Srivijaya Kingdom.

The peak was reached in Eastern Java in the 12-15 century, during which time great literary works, like Sivaratri Kalpa, Nagarraktagama were produced. But the decline started in the 15th century with the advent of Islam and Christianity in Indonesia, with the result that

Bali is the only place today where Hindu beliefs and traditions are still extant.

NO IDOL WORSHIP

Harking back to the customs observed by the Indonesian Hindus, the delegation revealed that there was no idol worship by the Hindus there, as according to them, "Siva has an undefinable form and can only exist in transcendental form". Their temples consist of huge gopurams on top of which is erected a "padmasana"—a chair to represent the seat of Lord Siva. There are no idols inside the temples. The worshippers gather in the vast open space outside the temples and offer pujas.

When I asked them how the worshipper could offer puja without going inside the temple and with no idol to offer puja to, Mr. Pudja, who speaks excellent English, retorted: "You can put the idol in your heart (the idol is there in your heart) and perform puja." The Hindus go to the temples only on festive occasions and on such occasions, they gather in the open space outside the temple and led by a priest, they chant mantras which according to the delegates, is the puja for them. This kind of practice came into vogue in the 17th century in Indonesia.

There is a rigid caste hierarchy among the Indonesian Hindus. They are divided into various castes like Brahmins, Kshatriyas, etc. The caste system was formulated on the basis of the duties the people performed but like in India, it had gone topsy-turvy in Indonesia also, he said.

RAMAYANA AND MAHABHARATA

Mr. Pudja, who has studied in Benares Hindu University, speaks fluent Sanskrit too.

Mr. Wedastera Suyasa, who will be presenting a paper on the "Rebirth of Hinduism in Indonesia" said religious instruction in Indonesia was compulsory right from kindergarten stage and instruction was given according to the pupil's religion. Discourses in Ramayana and Mahabharata are conducted in Indonesia in the old Javanese language which was understood by everybody.

More papers were read today at the world Hindu conference. Meetings are being held in three committee rooms.

One section was devoted to philosophy, the second to science, the third, in Tamil, to Tamil Hinduism.

In the philosophy section over which Mr. M. Arunachalam presided, a Singapore scholar, Dr. A. N. Rao

(Continued overleaf)

An Indian report

T.S.SUBRAMANIAM
Express News Service
Colombo, April 23

There followed a confused debate. Many speakers, some talking in English and others in Tamil, sprang to their feet. There was also some shouting. What this reporter could make out was that there was a demand that the resolution say specifically that casteism should be abolished.

Mr. Rajadurai explained that the wording of the resolution could be altered after further thought. There would be many occasions when this could be done. He pleaded that the resolution as originally drafted be adopted. But there was no sign of this happening. Talk and cross talk continued. At this juncture, a famous Tamil benedictory verse was recited by a delegate from the dais and the session ended. It was understood that the resolution was adopted with some modifications.

As it is, the function began more than an hour behind schedule.

To make good the loss of time, the organisers wanted the thanksgiving speeches to be brief. It was strange that an important conference like this should be hurried through for the fault of the organisers.

In his thanksgiving speech Dr. V. SP. Manickam the Vice-Chancellor of Madurai-Kamaraj University suggested that a common scripture, like the Bible for the Christians should be evolved for the

Different shades of opinion are beginning to crystallise about the outcome of the world Hindu conference. Today is only the third day of the five-day conference. But there is enough indication as to whether it will serve any purpose or not.

For example Mr. G. Pudja, a delegate from Indonesia, who is the director-general of the Hindu and Buddha mass guidance bureau Department of Religion, Government of Indonesia, is a disappointed man. While talking to me, he said he had come here in the hope that the conference would be able to throw up an organisation or formulate a set-up which would work for the unity and uplift of all the Hindus in the world. "I realise that this conference is far removed from my expectations. I wonder if this conference will contribute anything to solving the world's problems.

"Look at the role of Christian and Islamic international organisations. They muster world-wide support wherever their followers live". Is there any Hindu organisation which can come to the rescue of Hindus whenever they are in trouble? Do we have a Hindu organisation to support the followers of Hinduism in Malaysia, Africa

NEWS BRIEFS

VETERAN NEWSMAN PASSES AWAY

The veteran newsman of the North, 'Veerakesari' Sellathurai as he was popularly known, passed away on 29 April, after a long illness.

TALK ON RELIGION AND SOCIAL CONTROL

Dr. S. Pathmanathan, Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Peradeniya, gave a talk on 'Religion and Social Control in Mediaeval South India' at the Evelyn Rutnam Institute, Jaffna, on 7 May.

BOOK ON JAFFNA'S MURALS

Kalakesari A. Thambithurai's book on mural paintings in Jaffna was ceremonially released on 5 May at Jaffna Central College Hall. K. Sivanathan, Director of Education and Patron of the Jaffna Fine Arts Society—which sponsored the release—presided and the Chief Guest was Prof. K. Indrapala, Head of the Dept. of Fine Arts, University of Jaffna.

TC MMC ARRESTED

Tamil Congress Municipal Councillor Thurairajah Shanthikumar and five other party members were taken into custody by the Army on 29 April for distributing pamphlets calling for a hartal on that day. They were later released after questioning by the police. The General Secretary of the TC, Kumar Ponnambalam, was also questioned by the army and the police.

SUTHANTHIRAN EDITOR QUESTIONED

Suthanthiran Editor Kovai Mahesan was questioned by the Jaffna Police in connection with the April 29 hartal observed in Jaffna.

CEREMONIAL SITTING OF JAFFNA DDC

A ceremonial sitting of the Jaffna District Development Council will be held on 12 May in the new chamber set apart at the Jaffna Secretariat for DDC meetings.

'HELP PARANTHAN STRIKERS' FAMILIES'

The Christian Workers' Movement has called upon the public, voluntary organisations and social service organisations to help the families of the workers of Paranthan Chemicals Corporation who have been on strike now for nearly six months.

VEMBADI GIRLS DINNER

The 27th Annual Dinner of the Advanced Level Students Association of Vembadi Girls' High School, Jaffna, was held on 5th May. Prof. Indrapala was the Chief Guest. Mrs. Shanthi Arulanandam proposed the toast of the Alma Mater and the Principal Mrs. A. Rajaratnam responded. Miss. Niranjani Balasubramaniam replied to the toast of the Association proposed by the Chief Guest.

DR. PASUPATI MEMORIAL LECTURE

Dr. P. Sivasubramaniam, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, will deliver the inaugural Dr. V. T. Pasupati Memorial Lecture on 9th May (tomorrow) at 6.30 p.m., at the Coomaraswamy Hall, Jaffna Hindu College.

The Yetties to perform in Jaffna too

The Yetties, a folk trio, from Dorset will be performing in Sri Lanka under the auspices of the British Council this month. Besides Colombo and Kandy, they will also perform in Jaffna.

The trio, Bonney Sartin, Mac McCulloch and Peter Shutter who started by performing at harvest suppers, village dances and around scout troop camp fires, have come a long way since. They are humorous, tuneful and informative and perform accompanied by a range of instruments.

The Yetties are currently on a tour of SE Asia, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Their Sri Lanka programme will be as follows:-

Colombo-Saturday 8 May, 7 p.m.-Ladies College Hall, Colombo.

Colombo - Friday 14 May, 7 p.m.-Ladies College Hall, Colombo.

Jaffna - Tuesday 11 May, 6-30 p.m.-Chundikuli Girls' College Hall, Jaffna.

Kandy - Saturday 15 May, 6-30 p.m. - Trinity College Hall, Kandy.

World Hindu...

(Continued from page 9)

explained the eternal values of certain principles in Hinduism, Dr. V. Ramakrishnan from Sri Lanka discussed the doctrine of karma. Dr. Dharma Tirunavukarasu of Madras explained the Hindu concept of dharma, Dr. A. Pandarangan of Pondicherry spoke on the Tamil bhakti movement.

In an adjoining room, the science section meeting under the chairmanship of Prof. A. W. Mailvaganam, of Sri Lanka, discussed the impact of science on Hinduism. Prof. Mailvaganam himself dealt with this. He was followed by Mr. K. P. Rajapana of Madras who discussed the question from another angle, and by Dr. Aiyadurai Karunanandan of Sri Lanka whose paper dealt with "genetic engineering and the purana stories". Dr. K. N.

Saraswathy spoke on "predictive astrology".

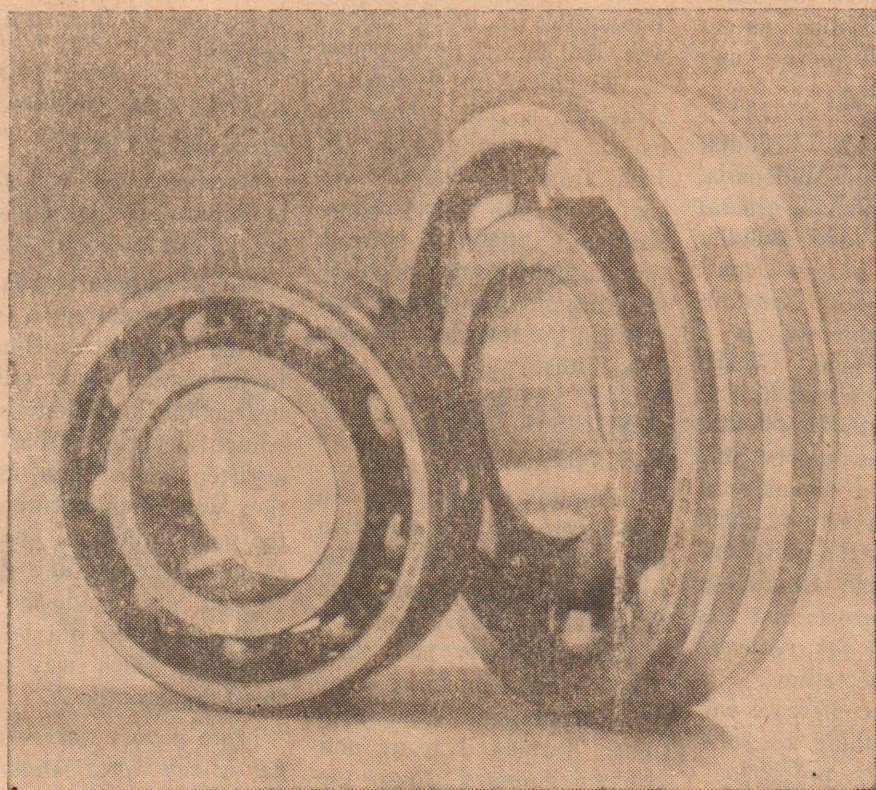
Dr. S. V. Subramaniaboda presided over the third session at which the papers were read in Tamil. Mr. R. Murugavel explained the features of Saiva Siddhanta and Mr. K. Shanmugavel of science in the puranas. Mr. R. Varadadesikan spoke on "apathe-nanam" and Vidvan C. Arumugam of Sri Lanka on current developments in Hindu society.

In another part of the city in Bambalapitiya religious and musical discourses continued to be presented. These attracted large and appreciative audiences.

The Hindu College building looks like the site of a popular fair. A few stalls where toys and the like are sold at concessional rates have been put up. Television sets are being displayed by the score. A carnival spirit reigns here.

NTN

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The Media Scene

Who burnt the Jaffna Public Library?

'The Island' does not know, or does it?

Under the headline "Funds to rebuild Jaffna Library allocated" 'The Island' states on page 2 of its issue of May 1st:

When the District Development Council Elections were held in June '81 violence erupted in Jaffna when an organised gang of thugs, hooligans set fire to the most ancient library in Sri Lanka where valuable books published in Tamil, rare works of sacred literature and art were burnt away.

This library was completely demolished beyond repair. Violence erupted due to intimidation and rivalry between the U.N.P. and T.U.L.F. factions during the elections. (Sic!)

Now which was this "organized gang of thugs, hooligans" which 'The Island' has in mind? One does not know whether the report was based on malice or ignorance, because 'The Island' on its current form is capable of both. (As to what extent its ignorance can go was pitifully demonstrated when on page 1 of its issue of April 27th it said "The post of Director of Information fell vacant with the retirement of Mr. Sarath Amunugama (who actually was Secretary to the Ministry) when the person concerned was Mr. Anura Gunasekera. It is therefore worth putting the record straight for the

benefit of our Sinhalese readers in the south who had been consistently given a distorted picture of events in Jaffna by the Colombo based mass media.

We are merely reproducing below extracts of a speech made by Mr. Gamini Disanayake in Parliament on 9th June, 1981 which could help 'The Island' to know who this organized gang of thugs and hooligans were.

FROM THE HANSARD OF 9TH JUNE, 1981 MR. A. AMIRTHALINGAM, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION:

"...With the I.G.P. in Jaffna, with Hon'ble Ministers in Jaffna, these policemen go and set fire to the Public Library in Jaffna. If any one is trying to find excuse for the policemen who did all this, I think one has only to sympathise with such a person"... About 300 men were brought and housed in the Duraippah Stadium, palpably for election duty. It was this army that moved into action."

MR. GAMINI DISSANAYAKE: Minister of Lands and Land Development and Minister of Mahaweli Development.

"I do not want to contradict in any way. I wish to say that therefore, these people who were responsible for the activities complained of on the 31st, and on the 1st,

2nd and 3rd were people who were not within the category mentioned by the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition in the debate which took place in this House on 6th May. In other words they were not men of the Jaffna local Police. They were men who were brought from outside thereafter for whatever the reason was. Let me assure you, Sir, and Hon'ble Members of this House that there is no doubt

whatever that there was a very serious situation in Jaffna because the police force was on the verge of a virtual mutiny. On the 2nd or the 3rd virtually 200 policemen had deserted their posts, and since they were responsible for some very serious events which needed an answer His Excellency the President ordered—one possibility was that these people were going to attend the

funeral of Police Sergeant Punchi Banda who was shot in the head—that any of these constables or Police Officers who are proceeding to this funeral should be apprehended so that they would be made to answer as to what happened in the course of the 31st and the 1st. Not all were apprehended. In fact some have got news that the I.G.P. did give such an order, and we still do not know their whereabouts...."

Plantation workers on 2-day token strike

The Joint Plantation Trade Union Committee has called a token strike of plantation workers on 11th and 12th May.

The demands put forward are:

1) Extension of all budgetary wage increases to plantation workers:-

(a) Rs. 70/- wage increase to all plantation workers and estate staffs.

(b) Rs. 45/- wage increase announced in the budget for 1982.

(c) Wage increase on the basis of Rs. 2/- for every point increase in the cost of living index already granted to Government employees.

2. Monthly wage for plantation workers.

3. Equal wages for men and women

4. Reinstatement of all 1980 July strikers.

The members of fourteen trade unions will be taking part in this strike.

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Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Jaffna D. D. C.

Secretariat

to be put up at

Sankilithoppu

A Secretariat for Jaffna's District Development Council is to be put up at Sankilithoppu, Nallur, where Sankili the last king of Jaffna—held court.

The SATURDAY REVIEW learns the foundation stone for the Secretariat will be laid before the next General Elections.

A well-known architect, the SATURDAY REVIEW understands, is already busy at work drawing up blueprints for the building which will be modelled on classic Dravidian-style architecture.

Knowledgeable sources say the construction of the new parliament building at Sri Jayawardanapura, Kotte sparked off the idea of putting up the D.D.C. Secretariat at Sankilithoppu.

In this connection, they draw attention to the speech made by Tamil United Liberation Front Secretary-General and Opposition Leader, Appapillai Amirthalingam, at the opening ceremony of the new parliament building on 29th April.

Mr. Mathew was quite willing!

In the course of his address at the ceremonial opening of the new Parliament of Kotte, and striking humorous note, Mr. Anandatissa de Alwis, referring 'to the separatist demand of the Tamil United Liberation Front, said that if they ever had a problem in selecting a king for the resurrected "Kingdom of Nallur" he was willing to send the Minister of Industries, Mr. Cyril Mathew to sort things out. And Mr. Mathew promptly sent word saying he was "willing and able."

In the course of this speech, Amirthalingam urged the Government to help restore the glory of the old kingdom of Nallur as it had done in the case of the Kotte kingdom.

Meanwhile, there will be a ceremonial sitting of the Jaffna District Development Council on 12 May in the new chambers set apart for it at the Jaffna Secretariat.

The new chambers have been designed in such a way as to make it look like a mini-parliament.

A copper plaque inscribed with the D.D.C.'s NANDHI symbol hangs on the wall directly above the D.D.C. Chairman's seat which resembles the Speaker's Chair in Parliament.

A silver mace with Dravidian-style trappings helps recreate the parliamentary pomp and atmosphere.

Jaffna Sports Stadium site may destroy valuable archaeological evidence

The decision to site an International Sports Stadium at Kakkativu, following the recent visit of Lands Minister Gamini Disanayake to Jaffna, has deeply perturbed all those interested in the archaeology and early history of Jaffna.

What has so upset them is the inclusion of the Anaicottai archaeological sites in the area demarcated for the proposed Stadium. This means, they point out, the destruction of invaluable evidence of early Dravidian settlements in the Jaffna Peninsula.

Following a ministerial directive, the authorities have surveyed the Stadium site and staked out an area which includes the greater part of the Anaicottai sites explored by an archaeological team from the University of Jaffna in 1980.

The team's explorations at Anaicottai helped to unearth an early Dravidian settlement in the Jaffna Peninsula. Funerary relics and potsherds assignable to the megalithic culture were discovered for the first time in Jaffna at these Anaicottai sites.

Archaeologists who believe that the Anaicottai settlements were contemporaneous with those at Kanterodai, draw attention to the fact that an archaeological team from the University of Pennsylvania which carried out explorations at Kanterodai has reported, after carrying out Carbon 14 tests, that the finds are assignable to a period stretching from B.C. 500—B.C.100.

Urging the importance of preserving the Anaicottai sites, they point out that under the law not only have archaeological sites to be preserved; any attempt to destroy them in any way is an offence carrying stiff penalties.

That code of ethics for journalists

(Continued from page 3)

within his power to ascertain prior to publication the veracity of the contents of any article written by him for publication;

- b. Refrain from reporting or causing to be printed or published any matter which he knows or has reason to believe to be false or inaccurate;
- c. Refrain from distorting the truth by any act of commission or wilful omission;
- d. Take all possible steps to correct within the shortest possible space of time any inaccuracy or incorrect information in any report or article for the writing or publication of which he is responsible; and

- e. Refrain from publishing or causing to be published any matter which may offend public taste or morality or tend to lower the standards of public taste or morality.

3. Every journalist shall use all reasonable means at his command in any report or article he writes or causes to be printed or published to draw a clear distinction between any statement of fact on the one hand and any expression of opinion or criticism on the other.

4. Every journalist shall observe secrecy regarding any source of information unless the person who gave him such information authorizes the disclosure of his identity.

5. Every journalist shall respect the reputation of an individual and refrain from reporting or causing to be printed or published any information or comment regarding an individual's private life unless the publication of the said matter is in the

public interest as distinguished from public curiosity.

6. (1) In reporting or causing to be printed or published accounts of crime or criminal cases, a journalist shall not—

- a. Name Victims of sex crimes;
- b. Name any young person accused of a criminal offence who to his knowledge is below the age of eighteen and to his knowledge is a person who has no previous convictions; or

c. Name any person as being a relative of a person accused or convicted of crime for the sole purpose of informing the reader of the relationship between the person so named and the person charged.

Unless the public interest would be served by the publication of the said matter.

(2) In reporting or causing to be printed or published accounts of Matrimonial

cases or actions, a journalist shall refrain from reporting or publishing any offensive details.

7. A journalist shall not commit plagiarism.

8. A journalist shall not present any matter in a manner designed to promote sadism, violence or salacity.

9. A journalist shall not report or cause to be printed or published any matter that is obscene unless the public interest is served by the publication thereof.

10. A journalist shall not report or cause to be printed or published any matter for the purpose of promoting communal or religious discord or violence.

11. Every journalist shall safeguard the dignity of his profession. He shall not accept any bribe in money, kind or service for any matter connected with or incidental to his profession