

# Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

# Tamil politics enters

Vol. 1 No. 44

November 27, 1982

## Viewpoint

"The evidence that army spokesman led before the press of the alleged involvement of the two priests was startling enough. It needed no embellishment. The cold, clinical precision of detail with which it was presented blah, blah, blah...."

—Justice DAILY NEWS passing judgement in the Editorial of November 25, 1982.

Imagine that! EVIDENCE LED BEFORE THE PRESS... We had all along thought that evidence is usually led before a court of law? What does the Lake House think it is? This is as good (or as bad) as saying that some State Counsel led evidence before his mistress! All of Sri Lanka knows that this fat old lady of Lake House—the Daily News—was "kept" in her time by not one government, but by two governments over the past few years. It is time that the Sinhala and English language Press of this country—with the exception of the ISLAND—drops its pretence of being independent or fair-minded, or even DECENT in its approach to news presentation and comment in respect of the Tamils. Ever since the Tamils came to be plagued by mob terrorism from 1956 and by State terrorism in the North and East subsequently, the Colombo Press has lost its moral authority to be considered non-partisan or non-sectarian. In fact, the one Editor from Lake House—Tarzie Vittachi—who had the moral uprightness to chronicle the dark days of the anti-Tamil riots in 1958 with fidelity and sorrow, in his book "Emergency '58", quit Lake House and the country thereafter. Three years ago, in June 1979, the DAILY NEWS (under a different Editor) but under the same government, perpetrated the most monstrous falsehood in the history of journalism in Ceylon when it reported and later maintained against all evidence to the contrary that respected artist Manjusri was assaulted in Jaffna.

The Editor of this paper along with a Sinhalese colleague and friend of Manjusri happened to meet the artist (in some other connection) at his flat on the day after his return from Jaffna where he was accidentally knocked by a cyclist on a dimly-lit road. This was told by Manjusri himself, and ten days later the DAILY NEWS fabricated the story of his assault, and kept maintaining it and in the process nearly engineered another race riot. The SATURDAY REVIEW will some day give its readers a full account of this sordid episode in journalism.

As for the SUN, the less said of it the better. It had been a racist rag ever since its birth, and unlike the DAILY NEWS which had its lucid intervals, the SUN has been consistently racist. In its issues of August 11 and 12, it ran two articles by Prof. F. R. Jayasuriya which were provocatively anti-Tamil, and five days later the biggest anti-Tamil riots got into swing. As recently as November 7, the WEEKEND carried a pontifical piece by Ranil Weerasinghe on the Chavakachcheri Police Station attack, where he makes this curious statement: "One of them (senior Police officer) told WEEKEND, 'At present nearly all the other enforcement agencies seem to think that the laws of the land do not apply to the North. While cinema halls are closed throughout the country on Poya days, they remain open in Jaffna. So do the beefstalls and bars....' We do not know who is lying, whether it was the unnamed senior Police officer or Ranil Weerasinghe, but the Sinhala Buddhist readers of SATURDAY REVIEW should know that the allegation is a 100% fabrication. If this is not a blatant attempt to inflame Sinhala sentiment, what else is it? Cannot President Jayewardene's government take action against such untruthful racially-inciting reports?"

# a new phase: TULF now back in the field

Tamil politics entered a new mass agitational phase in Jaffna this week, following the arrests and questioning of several Roman Catholic, Methodist and Anglican priests in connection with terrorism and the Neervely Bank money robbery of 1981 and the peremptory ascribing of guilt to the members of the clergy by the State-controlled and other media in Colombo.

Whole-day protest fasts and sit-ins are being held throughout the peninsula with the Tamil United Liberation Front itself actively mounting chorus of protests. On Tuesday the 30th, there will be a collective one-day fast in both the North and East, demanding an end to the arbitrary detention of the priests and University Assistant Lecturer Nithyananthan and wife Nirmala, the abolition of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and an end to State terrorism.

Here are reports of some of the protest demonstrations up to Friday:

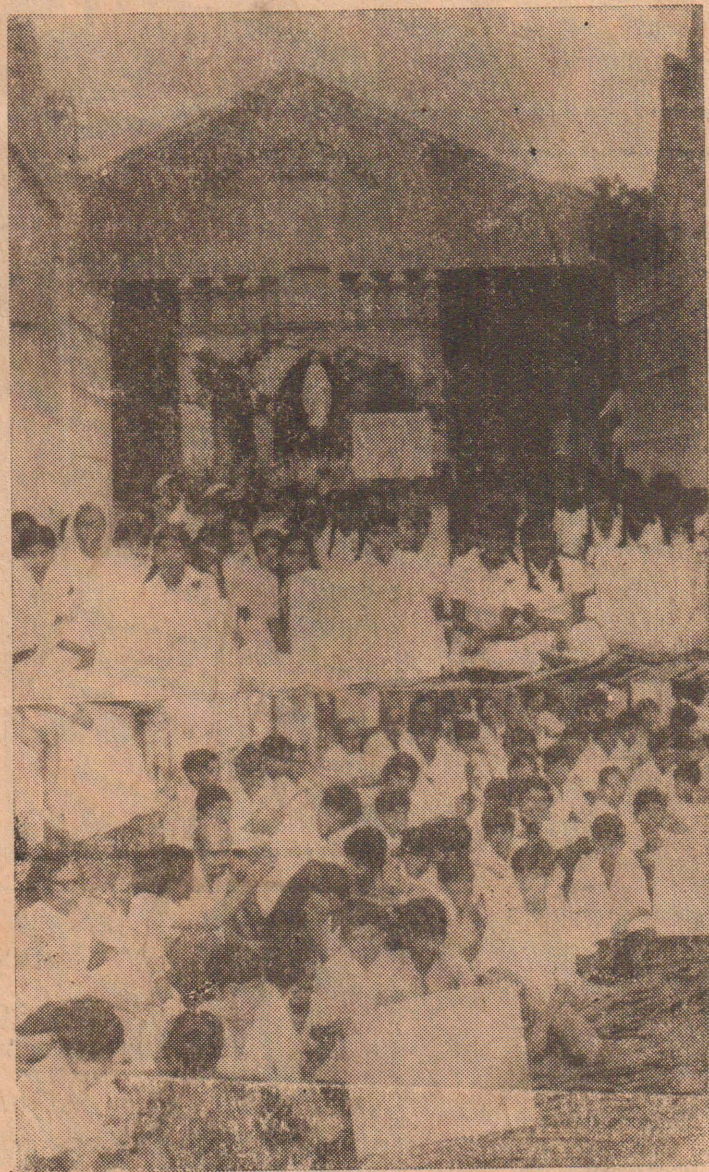
★ PANDATHARIPPU: On Sunday the 21st, from 7 a. m. to 5 p. m. Parishioners of Pandatharippu Church and Vilan Fatima Church were involved in a protest fast in the Periavilan Market compound. They sang hymns and held prayers in support of the arrested clergy. Hindu residents of the area too joined in the sit-in. At the end of the fast the members sent an urgent telegram to the

President that the clergy should be freed immediately.

★ THINNAVELY: On Monday the 22nd the students of the campus boycotted lectures and staged a protest march through the main roads, demanding the release of Assistant Lecturer Nithi-

yanandan, his wife Nirmala and an undergrad. The Catholic Union of the University played a leading role in the protest activities. After the protest march the students had a meeting to decide on further action.

(Continued on page 12)



Protesting students at sit-ins: Scenes such as these were a daily occurrence this week.



# Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

No. 118,  
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JAFFNA.

Editor

S. SIVANAYAGAM

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**COLOMBO:** Six employees of the Government owned National Textile Corporation, all members of the UNP controlled Jathika Sevaka Sangama who were dismissed for being on no-pay leave for over 28 days are alleged to have assaulted the Mill Manager, the Personnel Manager and the Accountant of the Mattegama Factory of the Corporation. The men are said to have been armed with pistols and a kris knife.

**COLOMBO:** The Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions in a letter to the Commissioner of Elections has said that Section 50 of the Referendum Act is being violated by the display in public places of thousands of posters and placards carrying the lamp symbol. They have alleged that such posters had been displayed on buses of the Sri Lanka Central Transport Board calling upon the people to mark 'X' against the 'Lamp' symbol

in support of the Government's intention to postpone the general elections for six years from August 1983.

**JAFFNA:** Three armed men are reported to have broken into the office of the Principal of Victoria College, Chulipuram and robbed cash amounting to Rs. 47,000/- on 22nd November. The incident occurred at 2.30 p.m., when the cash was being counted for payment of teachers' salaries. The robbers, two of them in trousers and one in sarong were reported to have come on bicycles.

**JAFFNA:** Inspector General of Police Mr. Rudra Rajasingham flew to Jaffna on the 22nd to discuss security arrangements in connection with the proposed visit of President Jayawardene to Jaffna to canvass support in connection with the impending referendum. After presiding over a conference in this connection Mr. Rajasingham flew back to Colombo by the same plane.

**MANNAR:** Rs. 32,000/- was robbed from a mail bag on the Colombo Talaimannar Mail Train at the Thiruketheeswaram Station by a party of armed men. These men are reported to have jumped into the Guard's Van at the end of the train, threatened the guard S. Ganeshanaathan, gagged him and tied him up while they slashed through several mail bags

when the train was on the move. The Guard Mr. Ganeshanaathan (50), the father of Jegan now facing a death sentence along with Kuttimani, was detained by the Police and held for questioning.

**MOSCOW:** A Subramania Bharati jubilee committee has been set up here to mark the centenary of the Tamil poet known here as a 'poet of two Russian revolutions, (1905 and 1917). The committee is working out a programme for the celebrations in cooperation with the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries.

The Writers Union and the Soviet Academy of Sciences are also cooperating in this connection.

**COLOMBO:** Mrs. Chandrika Kumaranatunga, second daughter of ex-Prime Minister Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike has filed an application in the Court of Appeal seeking a direction to quash the detention order by which her husband Vijaya Kumaranatunga was arrested and held in Army custody since November 19th, 1982.

**TRIVENDRUM:** The 12th All India Conference of Dravida Linguistics will be held at Pondicherry from November 26th to 28th under the joint auspices of the Regional Centre of the International School of Dravidian Linguists and the Director of Linguists' Association.

**MADRAS:** K.C.P. Ltd., Madras, has secured the prestigious contract from the Sri Lanka Development Corporation for implementing the Sevenagalla Sugar Development Project in Sri Lanka.

The Industrial Complex will be located in Sevenagalla, 160 kilometres south east of Colombo. The sugar mill will have an initial capacity of 1250 tonnes daily and there will be provision for expanding the capacity at a later stage to 2000 tonnes daily.

The cost of this Asian Development Bank aided project is \$.24 million and the work will be completed by the end of 1984.

**JAFFNA:** 19 Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes in Jaffna were simultaneously searched by the members of the armed forces on the 19th of this month on suspicion that members of the party that attacked the Chavakachcheri Police Station, who were injured in the process could be seeking treatment there. About 160 armed personnel were involved in the search but it proved futile.

**SINGAPORE:** In a major shake-up four stalwarts were replaced with younger members in the central executive committee of Singapore's ruling People's Action Party.

The four who stepped down were the two Deputy Prime Ministers, Dr. Goh Keng Swee and S. Rajaratnam, Senior Minister of State Lee Koon Choy and former PAP President Toh Chin Chye. Their Ministerial functions remained unaffected, at least for the present. The changes still left Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew firmly at the helm of the 14 member top policy-making body.

**BELFAST (NORTHERN IRELAND):** A wave of political violence in Northern Ireland left two Policemen and 2 civilians—three Catholics and a Protestant—dead, bringing the death toll to 17 in only four weeks. The Protestant killed was a head of an extremist para military group and it was feared that his death would bring a bloody series of reprisals. Lennie Murphy, 29, was known as a "Master Butcher". His group the 'SHANKILL BUTCHERS' were responsible in the 70s for the death of at least 20 Catholics picked at random and found in the street with their throats cut.

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# Jaffna plans a mass campaign of Satyagraha

Plans are now afoot to organise a mass Satyagraha campaign in defence of Human Rights in the North. A common body representing 15 organizations is to be formed to co-ordinate the campaign. A public meeting is also expected to be called soon. These decisions were taken at a meeting of the General Union of Eelam Students (GUES) held on the 23rd November with Mr. M. Davidson, Secretary of the Organization presiding. 15 Organizations were represented at the meeting including MIRJE and the TELF. The following Press Statement was issued:

"The UNP Government has deprived the masses of even the few rights that can exist in a capitalist

democratic state; freedom of speech and writing are some of these". The trend is now towards fascism. Workers, youths, students, intellectuals, clergy and women have been arrested and are undergoing torture. Family members are held as hostages for those being wanted. Myliddy fishermen have been shot at in the sea by the Navy.

"A frightening atmosphere prevails with Nithiyanandan (Lecturer, Jaffna University), Mrs. Nirmala Nithiyanandan, Rev. Fr. Singarayar, Rev. Fr. Sinarasa, Paranthaman (Laboratory Assistant of the Technical College), and Raviraj (Student, Jaffna University) all being arrest-

ed and their whereabouts not announced.

"Condemning these arrests, torture, and violation of human rights, we demand that either all these people should be released immediately or immediately produced before Court and that oppressive laws which are against the fundamental rights of the people such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act and Emergency Regulations should be removed immediately, that the Armed Forces in the Tamil speaking areas should be withdrawn immediately, and that all activities calculated to crush the Tamil Nation's struggle for the Right to self-determination should be stopped forthwith".

## Jaffna University Teachers protest

The University of Jaffna Teacher's Association has issued the following press statement:-

"The University of Jaffna Teacher's Association at its emergency meeting held on Monday 22nd November at 10 a.m. discussed in depth the recent arrest of one of its members Mr. T. Nithiyanathan, Asst. Lecturer in Economics and his wife Nirmala and express its grave concern and deplors the manner in which they were taken into custody and detained at the Gurnagar Army Camp.

"The arrest and detention of Mr. & Mrs. Nithiyanathan and several Priests marks a new phase in the operation of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which has been condemned by human rights organisations and several Political Parties, Trade Unions and mass organisations in this country and by responsible international bodies such as the International Commission of Jurists and Amnesty international. We urge the

Government at this juncture to repeal the Prevention of Terrorism act which allows for indiscriminate arrests and detention and interrogation under inhuman conditions.

"Bearing in mind that Mr. & Mrs. Nithiyanathan and several others are being held under this act, we call for their immediate release or that they be produced before a magistrate under the normal law of the land immediately."

## Funds needed for Jaffna Intensive Care Unit

The Jaffna General Hospital Development Association has urgently appealed for funds to complete building and equipping the Intensive Care Unit at the Jaffna General Hospital; work is now almost at a standstill as funds have run out.

The Association needs another Rs.80 lakhs at least. If a hundred per

## 'Suthanthiran' to resume publication

The twice-weekly Jaffna-based Tamil "Suthanthiran" which was sealed under the Emergency Regulations on the night of October 20th is expected to resume publication in the first week of December. The resumption of publication follows the lapse of one month which was the period specified in the prohibitory order signed by the Competent Authority, Mr. Douglas Liyanage, Secretary of the Ministry of State-

## The Referendum Act

We invite the attention of SATURDAY REVIEW contributors and readers to the following advertisement that appeared in the Government-controlled CEYLON DAILY NEWS of November 18, 1982:-

### REFERENDUM—1982

NOTICE FOR THE INFORMATION OF ALL PROPRIETORS, MANAGERS, EDITORS, PUBLISHERS OR OTHER OFFICERS OF SUCH NEWSPAPERS, JOURNALS, MAGAZINES, PAMPHLETS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS.

The following Section of the Referendum Act, No. 7 of 1981 is reproduced for general information:-

Section 58 (1) Where there is published in any newspaper any false statement concerning, or relating to-

- (a) the utterances or activities of a Referendum of any recognized political party or any person: or
- (b) the conduct or management of such Referendum by any such recognized political party or person.

and such statement is capable of influencing the result of such Referendum, then, every person who at the time of such publication was the proprietor, the manager, the editor, the publisher or other similar officer of that newspaper or was purporting to act in such capacity, shall each be guilty of an illegal practice unless such person proves that such publication was made without his consent or connivance, and that he exercised all such diligence to prevent such publication as he ought to have exercised having regard to the nature of his function in such capacity and in all the circumstances.

(2) In this section, the term "newspaper" includes any journal, magazine, pamphlet or other publication".

R. K. CHANDRANANDA DE SILVA.

Commissioner of Elections.

Office of the Commissioner of Elections,  
33, Horton Place, Colombo 7.  
16th November, 1982.

## C.J.'s letter was marked 'Confidential'

The Indian Express reports under the head-line "Jayawardene vs Chief Justice" in its issue of November 19th:-

"The Sri Lankan President Mr. J. R. Jayawardene and the country's Chief Justice Mr. Neville Samarakoon are involved in an unseemly controversy over the role and status of the Executive vis-a-vis the Judiciary."

"The exchange of letters between the two over the subject which was released on Wednesday by the Information Department of Sri Lanka Government (notwithstanding the fact that the Chief Justice's letter was marked 'Confidential') shows them at loggerheads even over the fundamentals of the Sri Lanka Constitution."

The report sent by K. Sri Ram, from Colombo, goes on to say; "The prompt-

ness with which the exchange of letters was released to the press by the Government yesterday after Mr. Justice Samarakoon's return to the island after a short tour in India—is considered significant, and the possibility of the Chief Justice resigning is not ruled out."

The Sri Lanka Supreme Court on Wednesday issued notice to president J. R. Jayawardene and two other respondents cited in the Polls Petition filed last week by the defeated Sri Lanka Freedom Party Presidential Candidate, Hector Kobbekaduwa.

"The Chief Justice will nominate a panel of five judges including himself in terms of the Provisions of the Presidential Election Act to hear the petition. However, he has the option to keep himself out of the panel."

Unit in the Jaffna General Hospital.

Donations may also be sent to the account of the Jaffna General

Hospital Development Association (No.12 154) Commercial Bank of Ceylon Ltd. Hospital Road, Jaffna, Sri Lanka.





## Foreign View

# 'A dark and dread future awaits this gem of an island'

Jaffna, Sri Lanka—Now that Junius Richard Jayawardene has succeeded himself as president, handily winning in elections last Wednesday against five mostly leftist opponents, he is going to have to come up with ways to deal with the Tamil separatist question. Already there has been much bloodshed, and the prospects are for more violence between the minority Tamils of the north and the minority Sinhalese of the south.

It is a question with implications beyond this island nation, for the 3 million Tamils and the 10 million Sinhalese are pitted in a classic ethnic confrontation involving social, economic and political issues—the sort of confrontation that troubles many Third World societies.

### BATTLE LINES

### ARE DRAWN

The battle lines are drawn. President Jayawardene and his predominantly Sinhalese associates say they will never agree to the Tamils' demand for a separate state.

"Our country is too small to contain two independent nations," Mr. Jayawardene said in an interview in this northern hotbed of Tamil nationalism, where he had travelled to campaign for Tamil votes. His advisers had been against the visit, his first here since he promoted himself from prime minister to president five years ago. "We will continue to take a hard line against the Tamil terrorists," he now declared. "We will come down hard against those who preach and practice violence."

But Tamil leaders such as Appapillai Amirthalingam, leader of the opposition in the 168-member Parliament, and Vetivelu Yogeswaran, a member of

Parliament representing Jaffna, maintain that the differences between the Sinhalese and the Tamils are irreconcilable.

"It's too late for any reconciliation," Mr. Amirthalingam said in Colombo before setting off for Libya to meet Moamer Qadhafi, who is suspected by some Jayawardene aides of financing Tamil terrorists.

Mr. Amirthalingam denounces the terrorists' methods.

they cannot get admitted to universities because of the preference given to Sinhalese youths.

"Jayawardene's economic policies have benefited Sinhalese areas, not Tamil areas. The government has started imitating the Israeli practice of planting outsiders in the West Bank—only here the outsiders are Sinhalese who are being settled in Tamil areas to provoke us."

One of Mr. Amirthalingam's sons has obtained

movies on show are mainly produced in India's southern Tamil region.

A visitor does not take long to sense the tension. Virtually every street corner now has armed troops and police on duty. When Mr. Jayawardene came, more than 4,000 troops manned these stations.

Virtually every conversation with local residents immediately gravitates to

concept will "never work." Why not? "Because we have been given no power, we are merely glorified errand boys with no power and no real money with which to carry out projects."

He feels that short of allowing a separate state the Colombo government should agree to the creation of a federal system in which the Tamil areas would get their own district with semi-autonomy.

Mr. Jayawardene says he would never agree to this. What then? There are Western and Asian diplomats who feel that perhaps there ought to be some sort of national reconciliation conference between Sinhalese and Tamil representatives and that both sides should make immediate accommodations. Asked about this, Mr. Jayawardene said it does not appear to be a possibility.

The interviewer came away with the sad feeling that a dark and dread future awaits this gem of an island.

by

Pranay Gupte

*International Herald Tribune*

Mr. Yogeswaran, a voluble intense man added somberly that "the key question now is how many more lives are going to be lost."

Tamils from southern India — mostly Hindus—migrated over the centuries to settle generally in this northern region of Sri Lanka. They prospered as traders, farmers and later as bureaucrats, and eventually more Tamils came across the 22-mile channel from India to be employed as indentured laborers in this country's myriad tea plantations.

The Sinhalese majority mostly Buddhists came to resent the Tamil occupancy of prize positions in government, the private sector and education, and two decades ago a short sighted Sinhalese prime minister decreed that Sinhalese would be the sole national language.

As a result the Tamils' share of government jobs plummeted from 50 to 10 percent by 1981, and Tamil employment was also severely affected in the private sector.

"We are being discriminated against everywhere in Sri Lanka", Mr. Amirthalingam said: "Our youths are fleeing abroad because

political asylum in Britain after charging that Sri Lankan authorities harassed him. Another son was recently involved in demonstrations in India against a visiting Sri Lankan cricket team that consisted entirely of Sinhalese.

Mr. Amirthalingam eschews violence but says that the "Eelam Tigers"—the guerrillas who attack police stations, kill policemen and steal weapons—are gaining support among unemployed Tamil youths.

Mr. Yogeswaran pointed gloomily to his home, which last year was burned down by irate Sinhalese policemen who were apparently reacting to the murder of three colleagues by the Tamil guerrillas. The Sinhalese policemen were also accused by Tamil leaders of burning down the Jaffna library, destroying nearly 100,000 volumes of priceless history and sociology of the Tamil culture.

Jaffna is a languid leisurely community of 200,000; its people farm, trade and fish for a living. No Buddhist shrines can be seen here, only domed Hindu temples. On the narrow roads that wind through the coconut plantations, motorists and cyclists perform complicated ballets around deep potholes. The

the Sinhalese-Tamil issue.

Mr. Jayawardene says the way to resolve the tensions is through local district development councils that will enable the Tamils to promote economic development. But the chairman of the local development council, a wily lawyer named S. Nadarajah, says the council

## Tamil deaths and disappearances: What happened to the report?

Amnesty International's Report for 1982 covering the period January to December 1981 states, in its chapter on Sri Lanka:-

A parliamentary Select Committee was set up in 1979 to investigate the reported deaths in police custody of three young Tamils and the "disappearance" of three others: R. Balendran, S. Parameswaran and S. Rajeswaran. After two years it had still not completed its report. The fate of the three "disappeared" men remained unknown; their families said they were arrested by the

police in July 1979 and believed that they had died in police custody as a result of torture. The government apparently denied that they had been arrested. Amnesty International submitted information about these three "disappeared" Tamils on 20 March to the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances established by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

We are now in November 1982. What has happened to the Select Committee report?



President Jayewardene's second visit to Jaffna within less than two months must be warmly welcomed. That he is coming mainly to ask for the people's vote, as was the purpose of the visit shortly before the Presidential election, should not be allowed to detract from the significance of the event. The Head of the Government's appears to have begun to take a keen interest in the Northern region. It is a belated recognition of the importance of the North in Sri Lanka's national life.

Both the 22nd December Referendum and the proposed "National Government" are likely to figure in Mr. Jayewardene's talks with Tamil leaders who are willing to meet him. Where does the Tamil United Liberation Front come in?

The TULF General-Secretary, Mr. A. Amirthalingam has repeatedly denied that, despite the "dialogue" with Mr. Jayewardene, there is any secret pact or even understanding with the Government. We have to take his word for it.

However, the conduct of the TULF leadership at the Presidential election has aroused much comment. The leadership's argument was that contesting the election would serve the Tamil people no purpose, hence the "non-participation."

**LEADER'S ROLE IS CRUCIAL**

But the leader of the rival Tamil Congress, Mr. Kumar Ponnambalam has gone to the extent of alleging that the "non-participation" only helped the United National Party candidate, that "if the vast majority of the Tamil voting population had gone to the polls, it would never have been possible for Mr. Jayewardene to have obtained 52.91% of the total votes polled enabling victory on the first count." ("Saturday Review" 6th November).

At the Referendum, too, the Tamil vote could be crucial, depending on how the leaders advise the people to exercise their franchise.

No Opposition party could possibly agree to go along with the Government's proposal to extend the life of the present Parliament. The arguments against the Referendum have been well-aided in the last two issues of the "Saturday Review."

# Political Causerie

by

Gamini Navaratne

Significantly, the "Saturday Review" is the only newspaper in Sri Lanka to have given adequate publicity to viewpoints opposed to the Government's in a country in which, we are repeatedly reminded by the President, there is complete Press freedom.

the Tamil people to say "Yes" at the Referendum particularly if it is not certain that the party could hold all the 14 Northern seats it captured in 1977. But the leadership has said that it is opposed to the extension of the life of the present

A committee has been formed (according to a report in "The Island") to conduct propaganda against the extension.

Yet, Mr. Amirthalingam appears willing to co-operate with the President in the formation of a "National Government" which

ing that he would, "in the interest of the entire country consider sitting down to negotiations (leading to a "National Government") if it comprised true representatives of political parties in the South" because the formation of such a Government "could well signal an era of both peace and progress."

Cannot the leadership's stance on the Referendum and the "National Government" be interpreted as an attempt to run with the hare (the People) and hunt with the hound (the Government)?

The votes of the Tamil people could well mean the difference between an old Parliament with some new faces put in there by the party leaderships and a brand new Parliament elected by the people.

The President knows this. That is why he is up North again.

It is the duty of the TULF to give correct and wise leadership to the people at this crucial juncture in the political history of Sri Lanka. They should not be left to grope around as at the Presidential election.

If it agrees with the other Opposition parties that the proposal to prolong the life of the existing Parliament would result in a negation of democracy in Sri Lanka, it must go all out to induce the people to record a massive "NO".

The "National Government" can wait.

# referendum and the Tamils

All the Opposition parties, except the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, have (at the time of writing) come out unequivocally against the Referendum, demanding instead fresh parliamentary elections. The possibility is that at a general election some of these parties, especially the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, could hope to increase their parliamentary strength or find representation if they are unrepresented now.

On the basis of this argument, it may well serve the interests of the TULF leadership to ask

Parliament in the manner proposed. It has gone to the extent of asking the party M.P.s to hand over letters of resignation effective on August 3, 1983 when the current six year term expires.

Mr. Jayewardene has explained, would be the next logical step in case a majority of the people said "Yes" on 22nd December.

In an interview with the "Weekend", Mr. Amirthalingam is on record as say-

## The Referendum Raga



"The accompaniments are O. K., it is the vocal that is disturbing"



# EELAM

## CONSTITUTION MAKING

### Some basic principles

Organizing a State from scratch is no mean task. In the first instance an appropriate frame of mind in the nation at large has to be created. It is a constructive and creative approach. That is why the writer feels that the use of the term Liberation is not appropriate, Poorana Swaraj is the appropriate term; similarly the word separation serves to place emphasis on a consequential step; when we cease to interfere with the polity of the Sinhalese and proceed to create our own polity, separation takes place; that is something incidental. The word partition or division of the country is absolutely wrong; the country is the Island of Ceylon; and it cannot be divided; it is a geographical expression; we create our own polity Eeylom and leave alone the Sinhala polity of Sri Lanka. The least that the Tamils could have done in the direction of ceasing to interfere in the Sinhala polity is to have refused to appropriate the Leadership of the Opposition which some accidental chance threw before us. Perhaps Providence wanted to test our fitness to have a polity of our own and placed this temptation in our path.

#### Deficiency in the character

Tamils are probably the most ancient civilized community still extant as a group but they do not have a self-governing polity of their own anywhere in this wide world. Undoubtedly there is some serious deficiency in the national character of the Tamils. In the writer's view the Tamils have a pronounced weakness, instead of building up on their own, to exploit opportunities elsewhere and in the process interfere in the affairs of others.

Some twenty years ago the writer propounded at a Conference held at St. John's College the very same ideas he has been outlining recently in the columns of the *Saturday Review*. The son-in-law of a politician, who was present there, asked: what would be our standard of living? The writer replied: Our standard of living would be what we create by way of production. We have never given thought to building up our own economy. If, for instance, the expenditure incurred in holding the Eeylom Conferences at New York was used instead, in establishing a centre for

technical education we could have put up an excellent Technical school at Trincomalee in the land acquired by the Tamil University Movement.

Down South, they have ventured with a private Medical College at Ragama. Surely it is not beyond the resources or capacity of the Tamils to establish a Medical College in Jaffna making use of the Manipay Green Hospital and the Moolai Co-operative Hospital to serve as the nucleus for the teaching hospital. Instead, some of us are prepared to give a donation of a lakh or two to get their sons or daughters a place in some Medical College. The octopus of a most uninspiring and self-seeking leadership which enveloped the Tamil nation during the last few decades has sapped all the spirit and venturesomeness of the people. What

importance of the appropriate frame of mind necessary to constitute a polity of our own called Eeylom, let us now address our minds to some basic principles which should underlie the Organic Law (Constitution) of the self-governing State the Tamils envisage. Both in India as well as in Ceylon, the tone of public life has deteriorated alarmingly. Gross inefficiency, unashamed pursuit of self-interest by politicians who ought to function as trustees of the people, exercise of power for personal vendetta, corruption of mounting dimensions and like maladies have come to characterize political life since independence, in many countries which copied the British model of the democratic apparatus. Man is a bundle of impulses, noble as well as base. It is the environment which leads

and ideals emerging and ensuring equilibrium in the political plane with one in the seats of power and the other forming the Opposition ready to take over the responsibility of Government when the party in power errs, is sheer fantasy. Either it degenerates into a veiled dictatorship or unmitigated chaos.

The people in the East have always looked up to one person, the monarch, to exercise governmental power. Monarchic form of government is what the people understand and what they look up to. Consequently a democratic approximation to the monarchic form of Government is what suits the national ethos of our people. A Presidential form of Government—the President exercising Executive authority—is the obvious form of democracy suited to our

by

Somasundaram Vanniasingam

is urgently needed today is the will to cultivate a spirit of self-reliance and self-help and a leadership which can exude infectious self-confidence to the community at large. If the leadership which had behind it three to four hundred thousand votes had never told "Look; We are not going to submit to Sinhala Imperialism; we have as much right for self Government as the Sinhalese have; we mean to have our own polity", how could the necessary frame of mind among the people at large be expected? Instead we have been talking of language, colonization, citizenship, Development Councils, Standardisation, this, that and so on. The word "Sinhala Imperialism" has never been used; that is the word to be used.

Having emphasised the

to the nobler impulses dominate over the base impulses. If that happens the tone of the public life is elevated; if the environment promotes the baser passions and impulses the tone of the public gets lowered.

The British system of the democratic apparatus requires considerable modification to suit the national ethos of the people of the East. The system of a political party, i.e., a group of people with similar views and ideals being brought together solely by their attachment or dedication to such views and ideals and such group being elected to wield political power is a far fetched notion for these countries. To think of two such groups with different set of views

people. A President elected for a specified period with freedom to choose his Ministers from among best talent available in the country gets automatically spelt out as the hard core of the democratic apparatus for the machinery of the State. But power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. To guard against this risk a Legislature elected by the people at large have to be vested with legislative as well as Control and Review functions. Working on these lines the salient features of the Constitution of the Sovereign Tamil State of Eeylom could be spelt out as follows.

1. The President vested with Executive authority to be elected for a period of

five years—the electorate determined on the basis of Universal Adult Franchise. A President can be re-elected but only once.

2. The President selects his Cabinet of Ministers from the country at large so as to rope in the best talent and character available in the country. In fact no one elected to the Legislature is to be selected to Cabinet rank at any rate unless he resigns his position as an elected Legislator. The number of Ministers is not to exceed ten.

3. The Legislature is to be elected by Universal Adult Franchise for a period of six years. One third of the Legislators of the first Legislature will be retired at the end of the second year, the persons to be retired being determined by the drawing of lots. The resultant vacancies to be filled by the holding of elections within six weeks. Another one third will be similarly retired at the end of the fourth year also by the drawing of lots. The resultant vacancies will be similarly filled by election within six weeks. The remaining one-third of the members of the first Legislature will automatically be retired at the end of the sixth year and their places will be similarly filled by election within a space of six weeks. Every legislator, except the first batch elected to the inaugural Legislature will hold their membership for a period of six years. Thus every two years there would be an election for one third of the number of seats in the Legislature. Thus new blood will be coming in every two years but the Parliament is a continuous institution. Any Legislator who is retired either by the drawing of lots or by effluxion of time is eligible to be re-elected any number of times.

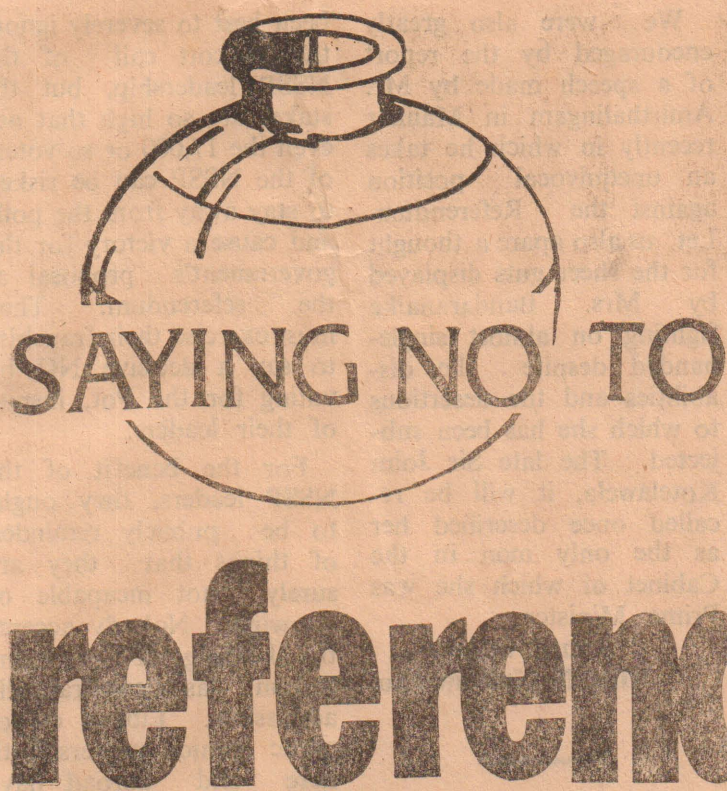
4. The members of the Cabinet selected and constituted by the President shall carry the designation "Secretaries of State for (the specified Portfolio)". The Members of the Cabinet hold their appointment at the pleasure of the President. The functions of the Portfolios shall be specified in a Schedule to the Constitution. The President performs and discharges the executive functions entrusted to him through the Cabinet. The Cabinet meets as frequently as the President and his Cabinet may think it

(Continued next page)



This is the continuation of the memorandum submitted by the Centre for Society and Religion to President Jayawardene. The first portion of this appeared on page 6 of last week's issue of S. R.

## 'What is legally correct is not necessarily just and righteous'



# SAYING NO TO referendum

12) If the present President relinquishes his office before February 1989 i.e. the end of his second term, it is the present Parliament, which now wants its term extended, that will elect a President to complete the balance period of the second term. This too is a breach of trust concerning the presidency itself.

The present referendum if accepted by the electorate may be legally correct, but it will be a contravention of the principles and spirit of democratic government. It will be an unfair use of power by the majority in a Parliament in the last few months of its term. It is a grave breach of trust by the rulers who promised to hold elections and spoke

so eloquently of proportional representation.

Such a situation will frustrate the large minority of 45-49% who will have to be content with 16% of the representation in Parliament. When the political process leads to such frustration, there is a loss of faith in representative government, in the electoral process and gov-

ernment by consent. Our electoral map would then in effect be rolled up or frozen for 12 years, 1977-1989. There will then be no legal possibility of changing policies or rulers by popular will. We are on the way to one party rule. This is the road to the violence of the disaffected, to legal injustice, terrorism and counter-terrorism.

This is the sad state to which our country will be brought by this urgent rush to freeze now the composition of our Parliament from 4th August 1983 to 4th August 1989.

The path of justice and

statesmanship demands more than mere legal correctness, or political strategy. We are indeed distressed that those in the present parliament should so seek to entrench themselves in power irrespective of the grave damage to the fifty one year tradition of democratic elections in modern Sri Lanka. The rulers of today bear a heavy responsibility for the future of our country if they thus deprive a large section of the population of a democratic path to determine policies through elected representatives.

We therefore urge the Government for the sake of our democratic way of life, and for its own good name not to proceed with this measure which in effect denies the electoral representation to nearly half the population and seriously limits also the choice of representatives even of the Government supporters.

The proposed referendum to extend the life of Parliament for another six years without holding a general election has provoked the thoughts of several people. It has become the talking point in all nooks and corners of the country. The question is generally asked whether there is any significance in the move to get the people's sanction to extend the life of Parliament. The answer is simple. The Parliament is not just the building at Jayawardenepura. It is the elected members of the people who constitute the Parliament; as it is, if the members have submitted their resignations, the Parliament ceases to exist. After the referendum which President Jayawardene

## The last chance

hopes to get a majority in his favour he is going to nominate his members to the Parliament building at Jayawardenepura. This is something enigmatic. The nature of this demo(n)cracy is simple to understand.

Democracy is the inalienable fundamental right of the people to conduct their affairs of state through their elected representatives. Since the introduction of the proportional representation with the right given to the Secretaries of political parties to nominate the members of Parliament at their will, the peoples'

right to elect one of their choice has ceased to exist. The Parliament as it is a devalued Parliament and democracy has become foolocracy.

However even this limited right is to be taken away from the people. Even the rights of Secretaries of political parties will devolve on the President to nominate members to constitute the Parliament. Another point becomes stark clear: that is a new Parliament is to be constituted with nominated members. In

President.

It may be said that the present government should be there to continue with the development projects. While there may be some truth in the latter concept an important fact should not be overlooked. After all the powers devolve in one person—the Executive President who is the Head of the State, who is above Parliament and can dissolve Parliament at his will. He presides over the Cabinet of Ministers and is the Head of the Armed forces and hold even some of the Ministerial portfolios. In short it is absolute power in one individual.

greater power. The federal laws cannot override the laws pertaining to the States. The Governors of the States and the Congress are elected and the President has no control over them. There is also a Vice-President who is also President of the Senate. The Senate controls money bills. The President could be impeached and so on. Do we have any of these safeguards here?

Therefore the only chance the people are left with in this country now is the referendum. Any unwise decision by the people might take them not for another six years but in-

by

M. Mahalingam

## Eelam—Constitution ....

(Continued from page 6)

to be necessary. The President will preside over the Cabinet meetings.

5. There will be a Vice-President who is chosen and nominated by the Presidential candidate before he goes for election and the election of the President is also the election of the Vice President. If the President dies or is rendered incapable of functioning, the Vice President will function in the place of the President and exercise all the powers vested

in the President.

6. All legislative powers are vested in the Parliament. The President can however enact in the event of an emergency an Ordinance but this will cease to have force, of course without prejudice to what has already been done thereunder, unless it is ratified by the Parliament at the earliest opportunity. The Parliament will of course have the power to amend or modify any such adhoc Ordinance enacted by the President.

(To be continued)

such a situation extending the life of a non-existing Parliament is also a misnomer. Furthermore the new eligible voters in future elections will be deprived of their civic rights.

A virile opposition is a *sine quo non* in a Parliamentary democracy. It exposes the shortcomings of the government in power and offers an alternative government. So an opposition which has the potentialities of increasing its strength stands muffled. These are some of the advantages held in threat as a result of the extension of Parliament and devaluation of Parliamentary power in the Executive

“Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” However good and well-meaning the Executive President may be, is it not a grave risk to place the country's destiny on an individual? Hitler came into power through the normal process of the ballot. He raised the Jewish problem after the first world war and pledged to create a greater Germany. What ultimately happened is common knowledge.

The United States Government which the Sri Lanka Government apes so much needs closer observation. It is a federal state where the states enjoy

definitely. Let us also remember what has been reported in the papers during the Presidential elections. President Jayawardene is reported to have stated at a meeting at Anuradhapura that if he is elected President there will be no election for the next ten years.

This is neither a Sinhala nor a Tamil question but a human question at large involving fundamental rights. The concept of a barren boycott is not going to serve any useful purpose but may spell doom to all. So let's all remember that “a stitch in time saves nine”.



# LETTERS

## Darkness at Noon ?

17, Wijerama Lane,  
Nawinna,  
Maharagama,  
17, November, 1982.

The Editor,  
"Saturday Review",  
118, 4th Cross Street,  
Jaffna.

Sir,

As a regular reader of your courageous weekly from its inception this year, I am enormously heartened by the forthright and enlightened attitude displayed in your columns to recent political crises in our land. On the issue of the coming Referendum you have already declared your position without ambiguity. Your stand on this and other matters of moment is in distinct contrast to the spirit and letter of craven compromise exhibited in the dominant sector of the English press of this country....

We have witnessed, since July 1977, the gradual emasculation of familiar democratic institutions and processes, sanctioned, however, by an overt display of constitutional pomp and legislative ceremony. Despite the spacious constitutional halo around a thinning democratic pate, the political process has, for all practical purposes assumed the forms and appurtenances of a one-party dictatorship. A spirit of totalitarianism is writ large in our polity already. Coming events have begun to cast their lengthening khaki shadows across our streets.

What the voters are being arm-twisted into doing on December 22nd is, no more and no less than to signify, their assent to a pattern of autocratic behaviour, which has systematically eroded the rights of the people. They are being intimidated into legitimizing a system which enables the Chief Executive to hamstring the Legislature at will, and to instal a constitutional dictatorship under the transparent facade of a captive parliamentary majority.

A largely compliant press has saddeningly assisted this political slide by accommodating a veritable deluge of false propaganda and lying statements of all sorts intended to deceive and engulf the incautious reader. Dubious stories and murky rumours are set afloat to mask official double-talk. The truth of the political reality is consistently degraded by interminable evaluations of nauseous triviality and monumental self-deception. Eyes getting used to darkness at noon have come to value your journal as a small candle in the enshrouding gloom.

Yours truly,  
H. A. I. Goonetilleke.

### The emerging dictatorship

University Campus,  
Kelaniya,  
20 November, 1982  
Editor,  
Saturday Review,  
Jaffna.

Dear Sir,

In your Viewpoint of 13.11.82 you have pinpointed with penetrating insight the desperate plight in which our politicians find themselves today, whatever their hue, be they Government or Opposition. The fast changing political situation darkened by the unmistakable signs of an emerging dictatorship has cast its shadow over all of them and in the resulting fear and confusion survival is their only motivation.

On the one hand are the Government MPs once the proud tribunes of the people now reduced to mere puppets, first by the abolition of bye-elections and now by the total suspension of the election process itself. The final surrender of their free wills through the undated letters of resignation is a measure of their degradation.

On the other hand are the prospective parliamentarians of the Opposition parties. For five long years they have dreamt hopefully of the coming General Election but suddenly the dream has become a nightmare. What they see before them is a vast political wilderness. Hence their panic and in the ensuing scrabble for survival there is no place for loyalties and principles. The mass crossings we see today have to be seen in this light....

The strategy adopted behind a smokescreen of sanctimonious dharmista rhetoric has been executed with Machiavellian ruthlessness. Manipulation of constitutional forms and processes and the use of bicycle-chain type of strong arm tactics have been among the methods practised. Loudly proclaimed old-school-tie standards have been observed only in the breach. It is not cricket to win match by throwing chillie powder in the eyes of the best batsman in the other team. But this was exactly what was done in the case of Mrs. B., and it stands to the eternal credit of that truly honourable old Royalist Sir John Kotelawala that he was against it on that occasion. Sir John never saw eye to eye with Mrs. B. in politics but being a true democrat he believed in fair play. It has also been reported that the US Ambassador in Colombo at the time held the same view.

This prevailing contempt for truth and fairplay is also evident in the current campaign supporting the Referendum. Admittedly the Referendum as such is a democratic instrument depending on the purpose for which it is used. To present the Referendum as a democratic substitute for the General Election is however a gross perversion of the truth. And when such sophistry is adopted tongue-in-the-cheek particularly by knowledgeable political leaders with academic backgrounds the damage done to public moral standards is immeasurable.

It has been said that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. In this country the threat to liberty is imminent and in these dark days we are beholden to news media such as yours which steadfastly tell the people the truth without fearing the consequences.

We were also greatly encouraged by the report of a speech made by Mr. Amirthalingam in Mannar recently in which he takes an unequivocal position against the Referendum. Let us also spare a thought for the sheer guts displayed by Mrs. Bandaranaike fighting on almost single-handed despite the disabilities and the desertions to which she has been subjected. The late Sir John Kotelawela, it will be recalled once described her as the only man in the Cabinet of which she was Prime Minister.

Yours faithfully,  
Miss. N. Kodituwakku.

204, Kasturiar Road,  
Jaffna,  
14.11.1982.

The Editor,  
Saturday Review,  
Jaffna.

Dear Sir,

Your viewpoint (S.R. 13.11.82) makes interesting reading. It is daring exercise in truth and most welcome....

Yours faithfully,  
P. Ramachandra.

### Boycott madness and the NSSP

Kandy.  
The Editor,  
Saturday Review,  
118, 4th Cross Street,  
Jaffna.

It is a happy omen, for the future of democracy, to find that the TULF has been finally able to rid itself of the 'boycott bug'. If we are to judge by the reported speeches of Mr. A. Amirthalingam in Vavuniya and Mannar, it would seem that the TULF is launching a serious and sincere campaign for the rejection by the people of the proposal of the government to extend the duration of Parliament by a full-life span of six years. One can only add that the TULF ought not confine this campaign to the North & East only, for there are Tamils outside the North & East who are supporters of the TULF and the TULF is yet the official opposition party.

But the boycott bug seems to have unfortunately penetrated the heads of the NSSPers, their mathematical doctorates notwithstanding. We can hardly afford the luxury of polemic controversy at this juncture. Perhaps it would have

been best to severely ignore the boycott call of the NSSP leadership, but the stakes are so high that not even the 17,000 or so voters of the NSSP can be risked to stay away from the polls and cause a victory for the government's proposal at the referendum. They must exercise their franchise to say a decisive NO by voting for the Pot, in spite of their leaders.

For the benefit of the NSSP leaders, they ought to be publicly reminded of things that they are surely not incapable of knowing. Nobody accepts the holding of the referendum as democratically admissible. Liberal democratic opinion makers both here and abroad have criticised it vehemently. Even foreign investors have expressed alarm at the turn of events—the decision of the government to hold a referendum. They know who's who in Sri Lanka's politics and do not need any assessment of B's strength at a referendum campaign. Several UNPers themselves are opposed to the referendum decision of the government.

Even if the government wins at the referendum either by polling 50p.c+1 vote or by polling 2.7 million votes (if the NSSP succeeds with its boycott call), and thereafter proceeds to extend the life of parliament, which it will, such an extension will be still undemocratic even if it is constitutional and legal. The people will have to cross that fence when they come to it, but why not advise the people to avoid that situation by forthrightly defeating the government at the referendum particularly when there is a clear possibility of ensuring such a defeat.

It is only broadbased and relentless campaign for democracy now launched through participation at the referendum that can give the people the means and strength to carry on the struggle even after the referendum.

A boycott of the referendum will cause government's victory by default and will demoralise and depoliticise the people who will then be compelled to remain apathetic and further acquiesce with the changes brought about by the open economy—changes in values, in life-styles and attitudes from egalitarianism to upward-striving individualistic acquisitiveness, from concepts of collectivisation to the veritable dog eat dog scramble of the animal world. These are the realities, not that one condones them, but one must

(Continued next page)





Prof. Wilson : A Volte face?

Mr. H. A. I. Goonetilleke of 17, Wijerama Lane, Nawinna, Mahara-gama writes:-

Sir,  
"Prof. A. J. Wilson, redoubtable Sri Lankan political scientist, presently domiciled in Canada, has always been known as an apostle of parliamentary democracy in the pristine Whitehall traditions, and a hot gosseller for free and

fair elections as an essential component of this system. It is more than passing strange, therefore, to find him mouthing rather diametrically opposed views on the subject at a prestigious Washington seminar on "Democracy in the Third World" a fortnight ago. He is reported, according to a revealing USIS statement released in the local press, to have proposed at least two new principles of democratic political behaviour: (1) Free elections do not necessarily result in an informed and

# Wilsonian Democracy in the 3rd World?

intelligent electorate capable of throwing up a responsible national leadership; (2) "Vindictive socialism" in office can spell disaster for the common weal through perverse and inappropriate policies. The logical upshot of these tenets from the Wilsonian bible of pragmatic political theory point unerringly to an election-less "guided democracy" by a capitalist oligarchy in the interests of the people who can no longer be trusted to choose their leaders wisely. Wilsonian thought is apparently father to the current wish.

"Prof. Wilson does not spare a thought, even in passing, for the consequences of a policy of vindictive capitalism on the other hand. We have been eye-witnesses to the process in the last five years. A return to economic policies

which favour the rich and disadvantage the poor, oppress the meek and exalt the arrogant, dismiss workers at the slightest whim, mistake dissent for revolution, persecute political opponents, harass social groups and terrorize racial minorities attempting to fight for their rights, revitalise the old colonial elites at the expense of the national intelligentsia, and humiliate the native literati and its religious and cultural luminaries. All this orchestrated by a one-sided cacophony of intellectual tyranny imposed by the juggernaut of this state apparatus and a docile mass media.

"Prof. Wilson, along with countless others, may well be a beneficiary of the condition of vindictive capitalism as enshrined in the 1978 Constitution, of which he was a Founding Father and articulate protagonist,

and must, in the interests of its survival, propound congenial extensions of the political philosophy underlying its present and future operations. Since the art of politics is nearly always the craft of the possible, one cannot be surprised at any seeming volte face on his part. In the interest of the practitioners, their advisers and their followers the system must, perforce be perpetuated, and deviations from democratic norms have become the rule rather than the exception. When electoral maps are rolled up, it is, however, people who begin to make history. Sowers of the capitalist wind must, sooner or later expect to reap a socialist whirlwind, vindictive or otherwise. Prof. Wilson is too shrewd a political scientist not to realise this but further prescriptions for delaying the inevitable are no doubt in the offing!"

## LETTERS

(Continued from page 8)

take them into serious consideration, if one is serious about politics, and not pontificate sweepingly that the "Masses who are frustrated by the unfair Presidential Election will inevitably tend to reject the referendum". What utter tosh! Ye, gentlemen of the NSSP!

Politics has never been reduced to so simplified a choice—YES (LAMP) OR NO (POT)—on so fundamental a matter. There is wide resentment among the people, irrespective of party loyalties, over the imposition of the referendum. The appeal now must be to all lovers of democracy to sink their party differences and vote NO at the referendum. The slogan must be that the people shall vote NO to protect their right to elect their own MPs. Those who call for a boycott are qualified only to have their

heads examined and perhaps be consigned to an appropriate asylum.

P. Rajan

## Sun and Lebanon

Colombo,  
22.11.82.

The Editor,  
'Saturday Review',  
118, 4th Cross Street,  
Jaffna.

Dear Sir,

Congratulations on your Front Page "PEN & DAGGER JOURNALISM" practised by the 'SUN' specially against Tamils for a long time.

Another point for your comment in the 'SUN' of 14.11.82 page 15: There is a report that "Four Lankans speak of their nightmarish experiences in War Camps in Lebanon". None of them appear to be Tamils. This same paper if I remember right reported at one time that several Tamil youths in

Lebanon who were undergoing Terrorist training were arrested.

Were these four Sinhalese among those trained to fight the cause of Tamils by PLO? Also see page 1 of 'SUN' dated 14.11.82. I do not wish to give my address for if and when your office is sealed and searched the Army and C.I.D. will beeline to Colombo and arrest me or detain me for writing this letter. Did the Army or CID question these Lebanon Prisoners of War? I don't think they will do it.

A READER.

## G. G. P (Sr.) and G. G. P. (Jr.)

82/2 Welimada,  
10th November, 1982.

The Editor,  
Saturday Review,

Dear Sir,

It was very interesting to read G. G. Ponnambalam

Junior's letter, "Non-participation, a sinister move to help J. R." in the S.R. of 6th November, 1982. Though I agree with most of what he has to say, of course with reservations on my part, I do not intend to use your columns to discuss those reservations.

I was prompted to pen this by a remark towards the tail-end of his letter in castigating Minister Thondaman.

Let me quote. "That Thondaman should have forgotten the part played by the U.N.P. in the citizenship Acts in 1948 and 1949 and the Ratnapura and Balangoda areas in June 1981, shows that memories can be even shorter than popularly believed". (Emphasis added) Memories don't run from generation to generation either. So, let's put history straight.

The late G. G. Ponnambalam (Snr) joined the UNP government in 1948 with a Ministerial post. It was this government that brought the Indian-Pakis-

tani 'Citizenship Act of 1948. Therefore, not only was the Tamil Congress a co-sponsor to this discriminatory act, it's leader G. G. Ponnambalam (Snr) helped to disfranchise the Tamil workers in the plantations and to make them aliens in the soil that for decades has absorbed the sweat and blood of these innocent men and women.

That incidentally paved the way for a second Tamil Party, the Federal Party, led by late S. J. V. Chelvanayagam.

Between that shameless act of the Tamil Congress and now, a quarter century and more has lapsed and the leadership passed from the father to son. But has the son admitted the folly the father made? Or, has the Tamil Congress admitted its dirty and sinister role?

It is like a crab teaching another crab to walk straight.

Yours respectfully,  
Kusal Perera



**The Media Scene**

# Dishonesty in headlining

The following statement issued by the CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE IN SRI LANKA was published by all the leading daily newspapers on 18th November 1982:-

"Reports appearing in the newspapers during the past few days have implicated certain priests in the north in activities connected with the terrorist movement. Readers, and particularly our Catholics, have been understandably disturbed by these reports.

"We maintain the position of the law that every person is to be held in-

nocent unless he is proved guilty. At the same time, we take this opportunity to reiterate our position as a Church, and state that we categorically condemn any and every form of violence, whatever may be the objective to be achieved and from whichever quarter it comes. Any person who violates the laws of the Country will have to take the consequences of his actions. The Church will always uphold truth justice and equity."

There are two salient points in the statement:

1) We maintain the position of the law that every person is to be held innocent unless he is proved guilty.

2) We categorically condemn any and every form of violence....

**The Island was the exception!**

Let us see how three leading Colombo newspapers headlined this statement. The Government

controlled CEYLON DAILY NEWS: RC BISHOPS CONDEMN VIOLENCE (FROM WHICHEVER QUARTER). The independent ISLAND: CATHOLIC BISHOPS UPHOLD: PRESUMPTION OF INNOCENCE AND CONDEMN VIOLENCE.

And the SUN: (in a specially boxed item) CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONDEMN TERRORISM

We applaud the ISLAND sub-editor whoever he is, for upholding journalistic integrity. The aspect of the matter we are talking about has nothing to do with Catholic Bishops or the Church or the North. It is simply a question of Journalism and a journalist's honesty of approach towards his vocation.

Both the CDN and the SUN in bypassing the first point made by the Bishop's Conference on the presumption of innocence unless proved guilty were guilty of JOURNALISTIC DISHONESTY:

The SUN in headlining CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONDEMN TERRORISM (by substituting TERRORISM for VIOLENCE) stands guilty of not only dishonesty but downright mischief!

## 'Serve the Truth - it dignifies Man': What the Pope told the media men

The Editor of the 'SATURDAY REVIEW' is not a Roman Catholic or a Christian. He is a Hindu. But to all those practicing Catholics who are serving as journalists and media men in Colombo this paper would like to pass on extracts of the address made by POPE JOHN PAUL II to representatives of the information media at Mexico City when he

addressed them on January 31st, 1979.

"...I do not forget that behind a camera stands a person, that it is a person that speaks through a microphone, that it is a person that reads and edits every line of the article that will be published in the morning.

"...Being a journalist is a real vocation. The work is done in midst of

tension & difficulties, rapid displacements & separation from the family. It is not an easy life, but in compensation it offers a special kind of cultural enrichment, as does every creative activity, especially those that are in service to others.

"...Servants of the truth, of what betters and dignifies man. You can facilitate this great

service to mankind, with your professional abilities, your necessary inclination to the work, and the means that are at your disposal. And above all, like the best of yourselves, you wish to be seekers of the truth, so as to offer it to all who wish to hear it. **Serve the truth above all, that which constructs, that which betters, and that which dignifies man.**"

## Jaffna Bishop writes to President: "Priests subject to questionable methods to extract confession"

The following letter dated 23rd November 1982 was sent to President Jayawardene by the Bishop of Jaffna Rt. Rev. B. Deogupillai

Arrest and detention of some Catholic Priests. "Last week some of my priests were taken into custody like common criminals by the security forces in the North in spite of my offer to produce them for interrogation if and when needed. Under the cover of the Emergency declared by you and the obnoxious Prevention of Terrorism Act, which has been condemned by

International Organizations such as Amnesty International, as contrary to fundamental human rights, this deplorable action was taken. I vehemently protest against this violation of the fundamental rights of the persons concerned and the humiliation and pain of mind caused to them and the disrespect shown to the Catholic Church which is held in good esteem here.

"Two of the priests taken into custody are still held by the security forces and subjected to mental pressure, intimidation and other question-

able methods to extract confessions from them. They have been denied the assistance of a lawyer during the interrogations.

Therefore, I earnestly request you to set them free immediately. If necessary they could be interrogated under the ordinary laws with the presence of a lawyer to defend their good name and their interests."

Copies of the letter were sent to:-

The Prime Minister, The Catholic Ministers & M.Ps,

The President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference & all the Bishops, His Exc. Papal Pro-Nuncio,

Rt. Rev. Dr. Swithin Fernando, Bishop of Colombo,

Rt. Rev. Dr. L. Wickremasinghe, Bishop of Kurunegala,

The President, Methodist Church, Colombo, The President, Catholic Union of Sri Lanka, The Leader of the Opposition, and

Mr. M. Sivasithamparam M.P., President, TULF & the other MPs.

## Quotable Quote!



"My Government 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 integration and unity so necessary for the economic development of the whole country, the Government feels such problems should be solved without loss of time and will take all possible steps to remedy their grievances in such fields as (1) Education; (2) Colonisation; (3) Use of the Tamil Language; and (4) Employment in the Public and semi-Public Corporations.

"My Government will summon an All-Party Conference to resolve this problem and implement its decisions" —Statement of United National Party Government's policy made in the National State Assembly on 4th August 1977.



# Vote for 'Pot' appeal by 24 Trade Unions

"Defeat the attempt of J.R. to undermine democracy by extending the life of Parliament"—so says a statement issued by 24 Trade Unions which met at the GCSU Lecture Hall, Colombo, on 11th November, 1982.

While appealing to the workers, peasants, the youth, students, women, intellectuals and all minorities including the Tamil speaking people to cast their vote in favour of the symbol—POT—to defeat the dictatorial programme of J.R. at the Referendum, the statement goes on to say:

"The U.N.P. in 1977, came to power by claiming that they are the saviours of DEMOCRACY. But within a few months, they made the opening for a constitutional dictatorial

path, by way of a constitutional amendment. This new constitution was made use of to abolish the independence of the M.Ps for five long years. Anti-U.N.P. anti-capitalist forces including Workers-Peasants-Students-Youth-Tamil speaking masses and Women were oppressed through state power and thuggery and by bringing into force laws like the PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ACT. U.N.P. had the advantage of pushing through this Repression as the working class was in disarray.

The U.N.P. having come to power in the Presidential Polls, on 20th October, 1982 is now abolishing the left-over of the democratic rights under capitalism, by trying to extend the life of

the Parliament by six years.

"It is the organised WORKING CLASS that has the Might to defeat the U.N.P. dictatorial program. It is the responsibility of all democratic loving forces to unite in defeating the proposal of the U.N.P. government by shedding all theoretical and political differences.

We therefore APPEAL to all anti-U.N.P. and DEMOCRATIC forces to join hands with the WORKING CLASS to DEFEAT the attempts of the U.N.P. government.

## Fight State repression and vote for 'Pot'—J.V.P

The People's Liberation Front (JVP) has called on every individual and organization to unite with the JVP to restore their democratic rights by voting against the UNP and by marking 'X' alongside the symbol of the 'POT' at the referendum to be held on December 22nd.

A statement issued to the press by Mr. Lionel Bopage on behalf of the Politbureau of the JVP says:

"The freedom, democratic and civil rights of the people of Sri Lanka have deteriorated to an unprecedented extent. All the instruments of repression of the capitalists, including the State machinery and financial power have been mobilised against the people of Sri Lanka in an effort to create a single party capitalist state a puppet of US imperialism in the Indian Ocean. The Politbureau of the

Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (People's Liberation Front) reiterates the important role of the left force in providing leadership to the people of Sri Lanka in freeing themselves from this predicament.

"The JVP believes that the present crisis cannot be overcome by a political entity or organization led by, and representing the interests of the bourgeoisie. Only united action by the anti-Capitalist forces can accomplish such a task."

## F. P. A Seminar at the Oberoi

The Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka will hold a Seminar for Pharmacy Proprietary and Managers at the Hotel Lanka Oberoi on 29 November.

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# Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

## Detention of Mrs. Nirmala Nithiyandanan: Jaffna M. P. raises issue in Parliament

On the morning of Friday the 26th while the Parliament debated the extension of the Emergency Regulations, Mr. V. Yogeswaran (M.P., Jaffna) protested against the detention of Mrs. Nirmala Nithiyandanan in the Gurunagar Army Camp. He said that Mrs. Nirmala Nithiyandanan, the wife of Mr. N. Nithiyandanan, Assistant Lecturer in the University of Jaffna, was arrested on mere suspicion and was detained in the Army Camp amidst males, where there were no women at all. It was an uncultured act he said. Even for a woman accused of murder, it is a female who is appointed as a guard. But this has not happened so in Mrs. Nithiya-

nathan's case. "Mrs. Nirmala Nithiyandanan is an educated lady. I request the Prime Minister in the name of Natural Justice and fairness, that she should be transferred from this Army Camp to a more secure place."

The Prime Minister replied that he would look into the case of Mrs. Nithiyandanan.

### NOTE BY EDITOR:

*Mrs. Nirmala Nithiyandanan is a holder of a Degree in Political Science in an American University and is a leading figure in the Tamil Drama World. She is a skilled translator and talented actress on the Tamil stage.*

# Pop show at UNP venue: A Home & Home

Readers of the Jaffna Tamil daily EELANADU went pop-eyed when they saw a prominently displayed advertisement on Page 1 last Thursday. The advertisement itself looked harmless enough. There was to be a Pop music and dance show at the Jaffna Open Air Theatre at 6 p.m. on the morrow, that was Friday. **ADMISSION WAS FREE.** But what was intriguing was the fact that on the same evening, Friday the 26th, President Jayawardene was billed to speak at the same Open Air Theatre. A UNP bigwig in charge of Jaffna nearly burst his blood vessels when he saw this impudent advertisement. How can it be when HE had on behalf of the UNP booked the Open Air Theatre for this day?

C. I. D. sleuths soon went into action. They swooped on the Eelanadu office, interrogated the office staff and wanted to know how they could have carried the advertisement when the paper should have known that the President's meeting was billed for the same day at the same venue. They smelt a rat somewhere. Was Eelanadu also a party to it?

But soon things cleared up. Another UNP bigwig who commands more local influence than the earlier one was the one who had inspired the idea of the Pop show without the knowledge of the other bigwig. His idea was to draw a crowd for President Jayawardene's meeting, but he did not want to connect it with

the President's meeting in the advertisement itself. His admission left the Police looking foolish and the rival bigwig furious.

The advertiser wanted a repeat of the advertisement on Friday also and the Eelanadu authorities were prepared to accept it as long as the advertisement was authenticated. But the rival UNP bigwig was trying to pressurise the paper to drop the advertisement and return the money. The paper stood up to the pressure and duly carried the ad. the following day.

**Postscript:** The Pop show did take place on Friday, but not at 6 p. m. as announced but at 8 p. m. after the President had spoken.

## President's 'second coming' to Jaffna

The Open Air Theatre Jaffna, wore a festive air on Friday the 26th for the President's "Second Coming" to Jaffna. The surrounding trees were ripe with colourful bulbs, green decorative papers hid the sky from human eyes, and on both sides of the stage were mammoth pandals with the President's pleasant face and the symbolic lamp. But lurking behind all this decorative splendour were helmeted soldiers fingering the triggers of their deathly sub-machine guns.

Though the local UNP organisers saw to it that the atmosphere was more pleasant and inviting than it was during the President's previous visit, yet they were not adequately rewarded because the crowd that turned up was comparatively less this time. The pop show which was scheduled to be held from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., before the President's speech, was also intelligently postponed

to 8 p.m. to be held after the speeches were over. This was clearly the "carrot" UNP was dangling before the politically hostile Jaffna voters.

Mr. Thondaman said that the referendum was being held to safeguard democracy by extending the life of the present party; because, if elections were held a different party might be elected which would destroy democracy, he said. Delivering a half-veiled threat he said that the present party had such immense power in the parliament, that if it wished it could even cancel the referendum. The crowd responded with a loud jeer.

Even the other speakers were booed many times by the audience, and this verbal expression of opposition was something that the President's previous visit hadn't experienced. The fact that the crowd dared to jeer, knowing that

they were surrounded by armed soldiers as well as plain clothesmen, reveals the depth of their hostility.

J. R. Jayawardene arrived at 7.15 p.m. amidst the traditional nathaswaram music. He was present when the speaker who spoke before him was loudly booed by the audience when he said it was a sad feature that the Jaffna voters had let down UNP when all the other electorates had shown their trust.

So when the President began his speech he said, "Though UNP lost only in Jaffna, that was nothing to bother about. In fact there was a time when UNP lost all other seats except the North and East. Presidents and M.Ps will rise and fall. This is called 'Anichaha' or Impermanence, with which you Hindus too would agree. This solemn philosophic note in which he began, and the remarks he made often regarding the similarity of Hinduism and Buddhism was in marked contrast to the speech during

the previous visit here which was heavily flavoured with cold, confident Mathematical calculations.

## Tamil politics enters...

(Continued from page 1)

★ **MANIPAY:** On Tuesday, in the compound of St. Anthony's Church, hundreds of people including women and children gathered at 6 a. m. braving the rains and wet weather. Members of the various denominations from Manipay, Mallakam, Uduvil, Sandilipay and Anaicotai, joined this fast till 6 p. m. that day.

★ **JAFFNA TOWN:**

On Wednesday, under pouring rain and a rough wind school girls from two institutions, boycotted classes, lined up in front of their college gates, held black flags on their college flag pole and sported black badges. From 9 a. m. they held this protest - fast for six hours. The girls who are from Jaffna Holy Family (English) Convent, and

Holy Family Tamil Maha Vidyalayam, said that the teachers were not involved in this strike, and that the protest was spontaneously organised by the students themselves. Their slogans said "We'll boycott newspapers which are prejudiced"; "Struggle will continue till we sight victory".

★ **ATCHUVELY**

About 1200 people gathered in the compound of St. Joseph's Church on Wednesday from morning 6 o' clock to evening 6.

★ **DELFT:**

On Thursday, about thousand people began a protest march at 3 p. m. from the Cathedral and marched two miles around this island, claiming the release of their parish Priest Rev. Fr. Sinnarasa.