

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Vol. 3 No. 27

18th August 1984

SWISS FACT - FINDING MISSION - BIG FARCE

They came (the two wise men from Switzerland), they did not see much (because they did not want to see); they were conquered (by a merchant of pesticides; or who was it?).

Their mission was to find out what exactly was happening in the North. At least, that was what they were supposed to do.

First news of the Mission's arrival came through a Reuter despatch from Berne published in *The Island* on 15th August:

"Two senior Swiss officials are on a fact-finding mission in Sri Lanka to report on the situation of minority Tamils living on the Island, a Justice Ministry spokesman said today".

"Their reports would form the basis of a decision by the Swiss Government on whether Tamils, whose requests for political asylum here have been rejected, can be repatriated without facing danger, he said.

"At the time, Mr. Peter Hess, Director of the Federal Office for Police Affairs, one of the officials now in Sri Lanka, said that the Swiss authorities had no evidence that the Colombo government was responsible for Tamil repression".

The local agent of a company which has connections with Switzerland made all the arrangements for the visit, including the fixing up of appointments.

Among the individuals and organisations who were invited to meet the members of the Mission were the Bishop of Jaffna, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Deogupillai, the Jaffna Citizens Committee, The Refugee

Rehabilitation Organisation and the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

The plane was delayed due to a technical defect so that they arrived in Jaffna only about 11 a.m.

Interviews fixed at Hotel Ashok from 10 a.m. were either rescheduled or cancelled.

The two members went on a hurried visit to Valvettiarai accompanied by their "guides" and returned soon and thereafter began the so-called interviews.

TRRO Chairman, Mr. K. Visuvalingam could get in only a word or two before he was told that they had gathered enough information already.

The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW met with the same response.

OTHERS, INCLUDING THE BISHOP AND MEMBERS OF THE JAFFNA CITIZENS COMMITTEE DID NOT GET EVEN THAT RESPONSE.

THEY NEVER MET THEM.

Dr. J. P. C. Philips, at whose Office they were to meet members of the Citizens Committee at 3 p.m., told the SATURDAY

REVIEW that the Swiss officials arrived there but were not even introduced to the Committee members.

One "Huff Man", who accompanied the two Mission members, told Dr. Philips that they had no time for any more interviews.

Then the Mission left for Colombo.

It was a classic case of how not to conduct an on-the-spot investigation. They might as well not have come to Jaffna at all.

For one thing, it was one of the quietest days in Jaffna, so that the two "investigators" could well go back and report to their Government that, as stated in the main headline of the state-controlled Daily News: "QUIET DAY ON THE NORTHERN FRONT".

(We wonder whether the Daily News response was in answer to the SATURDAY REVIEW headline last week: "BIG TROUBLE ON THE NORTHERN FRONT".

For another, the Mission seemed to have made up its mind before it came to Sri Lanka. Note the words

of Mr. Hess before he left Berne: "The Swiss authorities had no evidence that the Colombo Government

was responsible for Tamil repression".

We can only say HA! HA!



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EDITOR
GAMINI NAVARATNE

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Devolution : Crux of Problem

Mr. Abdul Aziz, President of the Democratic Worker's Congress, speaking on the National Question at the Centre for Society and Religion, Colombo, said the crux of the problem was the devolution of power and not the decentralisation of the administration.

He said "The most feasible solution is devolution of power to provincial units with powers of legislation to the provincial assemblies on agreed subjects. While we feel that final settlement on the precise nature of powers to be devolved should be by negotiations, the centre should retain defence, foreign policy, foreign relations, currency and banking, communications, railway and air transport and over-all economic development; the rest of the powers should go to the provincial assemblies. The question of state-oriented land settlement should be a provincial subject; the details, however, can be a matter of negotiation at the All Party Conference.

While the Police may be a provincial subject, the

over-all internal security should be in the hands of the Centre and it should have an over-all authority of supervision and handling of the internal security in the background of integrity and sovereignty of the nation.

I feel that a District cannot be a viable unit for devolution of power. First of all, devolution of power would imply legislative authority, which means creation of legislatures in the units. For a small country like ours it would be far too much of a financial burden to create 25 legislative assemblies with legislative powers. Furthermore, for effective devolution of power the unit should be such that reasonably wide powers would be devolved on them. For economic development the unit should be large enough to be able to organise adequate resources; even in the matter of health, a province would be a viable unit which would have its basic health research coupled with hospitals and equipment to develop proper preventive health care of the people. In the matter of education,

each province can have its own university and formulate its own educational policies for development.

In fact every branch of human activity would be better organized with sufficient allocation for development. A district would be far too small a unit to have adequate resources for development. In the proposal of creating provinces, apart from the question of solution of the ethnic problems, there is also a national dimension. In fact, the country has three problems. One is the solution of all ethnic groups and not only of the problem of the Ceylon Tamils. As much as the Sinhala and Ceylon Tamils have their cultural, language and other problems so also the Muslims and the Indian Tamils have their own aspirations.

While these two communities would, through Provincial Legislatures, seek solution of their peculiar problems, they also would be able to play their role adequately in the affairs of their region and the country.

These two communities are scattered all over the country. Therefore, through a Provincial Legislative set-up, while the country would be solving the ethnic problem of the Ceylon Tamils, the problem of these two minority communities would also be looked into and settled. Therefore, for this a Provincial set-up is essential. Through a provincial legislative structure all ethnic groups would be able to play their role, in the affairs of their region as well as of the country.

The second question is that of adequate and closer participation of people in the affairs of their regions. Unitary Parliamentary system does not give an opportunity for effective participation to people in the affairs of their regions. A provincial legislative system would make peoples' participation possible and would give them a greater role in managing the affairs of their region. This would apply to not only the Sinhala people but also to the minorities

(Continued on Page 11)

ISRAEL IN SRI LANKA

— Sarath Nawana

The arrival of Israelis in Sri Lanka was a secret. This secrecy was exposed through a newspaper story. A question was then raised in Parliament by an Opposition member. The answer of the Minister of National Security was cagey. There came a statement from the Ambassador of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation which was not given adequate publicity in the so-called National Press. The statements of the opposition political parties were published in the newspapers. The reactions of the Moslem organisations were sharp. Most of these Moslem Leaders who have brought the votes of the poor Moslems to the United National Party could not resist the pressure of the poor Moslems.

The Moslem citizens of our country have demonstrated their objection to the presence of the criminal and terroristic organisation of the Israelis, named Mossad, very eloquently. The protests in Mosques were expressed in the orations of religious leaders, the burning

of the Israel flags and the distribution of leaflets in very strong terms. In the Eastern Province the protests caused a number of deaths. The Government used Emergency Powers in imposing a press censorship on news pertaining to the presence of and the consequences of the presence of Israelis.

The reaction of the Moslem Embassies too have been sharp. The Embassy of Iran in a press release recalled "the harrowing experience of the people of Iran when thousands of the agents of the Zionist Regime had been in Iran during the defunct regime of the Shah."

The Libyan Embassy in its press release said that it explained to the President of Sri Lanka "that the reasons for Sri Lanka breaking off relations with Israel still existed because Israel continues to violate the resolution of the United Nations."

In the light of this it is quite natural for the

Moslems to request the Moslem Members of Parliament to resign their seats in Parliament. The President threatened those dissatisfied with the decision of the Government to resign. The U.N.P. like the S.L.F.P. are parties of the bourgeoisie and are not socialist. Both parties are representative of the rich of their respective communities. Their property interests take precedence over all other interests. But it is certain the mounting pressure of the poor majority of Moslems will isolate their leaders.

The Government of Sri Lanka contends that the services of the Israel secret service criminal organisation, Mossad, was necessitated by the activities of the Eelamists of the North and East. How a foreign criminal organisation could do this, beats us. No knowledgeable and intelligent person would believe in the Government. Bourgeois politicians, both Sinhala and Tamil, are all responsible for this situation. They have all concerned them-

selves with Sinhala and Tamil votes to propel themselves into power and not in solving the problems of the nation.

The U.N.P.-C.W.C. government of Sri Lanka has given constitutional guarantees to foreign capitalist property interests. They have become security guards of Imperialism. They are tied to Imperialism. The visit of President Jayewardene to meet the most dangerous of Terrorist Leaders of the World, Ronald Reagan, could only be viewed with fear not only by us but our neighbours.

This terroristic government of the U.N.P. pays lip service to democracy. The democratic rights of the people are being whittled away and the consolidation of the dictatorship of the capitalists is continuing. Israelis, apart from being committed to the elimination of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel and destroying the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, are a genuine threat to Sri Lanka.

American Imperial strategy needs a dirty mission in this region. However, the Americans do not want to expose themselves by conducting these missions themselves. Therefore with the connivance and blessing of the U.N.P. the Israeli terrorists have been provided with a base to conduct these missions in Sri Lanka and outside Sri Lanka. Many countries in this region will develop counter-plans to protect themselves. They will arrogate to themselves the right to react in a manner that may transform Sri Lanka into a battle-field for so many countries and parties.

There is no guarantee that secret and sensitive information pertaining to our country, which will be open to the Israelis, will not be sold or made available to other parties for a higher fee.

Through the use of Israelis to solve an internal problem of Sri Lanka, the Government has made its own contribution to internationalising this problem, because it is natural that many other parties will react and get involved.

JAFFNA TODAY

In most Jaffna homes with television, there are often two antennas, one tuned to Rupavahini and the other to Doordharsan.

This is symbolic of the schizophrenic life now led by most members of the Tamil community.

The bulk of them still want to be very much part of Sri Lanka, but in times of trouble they invariably look to India for succour.

This is something that riles many members of the Sinhalese community, who look at India especially Tamilnadu, with suspicion and even fear; as far as the Tamils are concerned, however, it is a natural reaction: Any weak

or bomb blasts, signifying operations by the militant youths or the Security Forces. If the consensus is 'All quiet', they heave a big sigh of relief.

Operations take place in the daytime, too. At the first sign of trouble, shopkeepers put up their shutters, offices and schools are closed and people begin rushing home. It is amazing to see how fast the central bus stand empties on such occasions.

At other times during

Security Forces that is driving the people indoors by dusk. Even during the daytime people, especially youth, are liable to be stopped on the road anytime and their identity checked. There have been instances when those arrested and taken away to one of the camps were found dead or never returned.

In this situation, parents find it prudent, provided they can afford or arrange it, to pack off their sons between 15 and 25 years to some foreign country. Though education and employment are the ultimate concerns, the immediate propellant is the fear of physical safety.

A recent survey by the "SATURDAY REVIEW" revealed that, as a result of the exodus, in some parts of the Peninsula the proportion of girls to boys in this age range has now risen to five to one.

DOWRY SYSTEM

This is bound to lead to serious problems in Jaffna society, which is already saddled with a rigid dowry system and a consequent tight marriage market.

The bride price demanded now for marriages of middle income families is a house and Rs. 100,000 in cash PLUS another "donation" of Rs. 100,000 to meet the marriage expenses of the bridegroom's sister.

Could not some of the smaller robberies in the North be the handiwork of desperate brothers trying to find the dowries for their ageing sisters?

Just as there has been an exodus of youths from Jaffna - the number who left in the last year alone has been estimated at nearly 20,000 - there has also been an influx of people from the South following the July 1983 Holocaust.

The sudden swelling of the population was something that Jaffna was not geared to accommodate. The socio-economic impact of this development can be imagined by talking into consideration just one fact: the spurt in land values. A 'lachcham' (one-sixteenth of an acre) now costs Rs. 200,000 at least, nearly ten times the previous value.

This in turn has seriously affected house-building at a time when more houses are urgently needed. Sharing of houses has now become common.

PRICE SPIRAL

Living in Jaffna is a very costly business. The increased demand arising from the increase in population, frequent disruption of transport after outbreaks of violence and crop failure have all contributed to push up prices.

Onions went up to Rs. 80 a kilo, brinjals and other

Fishermen, too, are going through a tough time. The establishment of a "Surveillance Zone" off the northern coast to check illicit traffic has greatly restricted fishing. Originally, fisherman were not allowed to go more than three miles out to sea.

After Mr. Devanesan Nesiiah who was the Government Agent until July, took up their case, with the Government, the fishing range has been extended to five miles.

But the best catches are in the deep sea and until the restrictions are removed or relaxed fish is going to be scarce in the North, The

by Gamini Navaratne

vegetables to Rs. 25 a kilo, mangoes up to Rs. 7-50, while a single drumstick for Rs. 5.

It is the unusual rains late last year and early this year resulting in floods, that is mostly responsible for the price spiral of locally-grown crops. Rice, chillie, onion, ulundu, vegetable and tobacco cultivations were equally affected, adding to the distress of the people, both consumers and producers:

delectable crabs, prawns, cuttle fish and seer have gone off the tables of all except the rich

With a system of registration of the fishermen and their craft, it should be possible for the Government to maintain the "Surveillance Zone" and yet allow deep-sea fishing. This would ease the lot of the people not only in Jaffna but elsewhere as well because normally there is a surplus of fish in the North.

(To be continued)

This is the first of a series of articles intended to convey to the people in the South some idea of what it is like to live in the North now. This particular article was written before the recent spate of fateful incidents in the North beginning with the shooting of Navy personnel at Valvettiturai on 4th August.

and beleaguered minority anywhere would do the same.

Even in Jaffna, heartland of Tamil country, the people now live in a perpetual state of anxiety, not certain what would happen the next moment, the next day, the next week.

SMILES OFF

It is an eerie life, which is having a demoralising effect on the people. One sees few smiling faces these days.

In the morning, the first question that people ask when they meet one another is: "Heard anything last night?" The reference is to gunshots

the day, Jaffna, especially the town, is a very busy area, the roads clogged with people and traffic.

During the night, except for the occasional two-legged "Tigers" and members of the Security Forces, there is hardly anyone on the roads. By 7 p. m. almost everyone is indoors. The people generally behave as if a curfew is on even when there is none.

Public cinema shows are over by 6 p. m. but there are late private shows in some homes. All social functions end by evening

It is the fear of arrest and interrogation by the

Festival of Nallur Skandan

'Gainst the bright and azure sky
The crimson camphor flames leap out.
'OM, OM, MURUGA' - the devotees cry
With fervent prayer, penitent and devout.

Mounted astride HIS peacock throne
The Sovereign LORD rides out 'midst song and dance
HIS blessings he bestows to his very own;
Dispels all fears with HIS hallowed lance.

With golden jewels bedecked, HIS face
Casts an aura of potent Sakthi
HIS six-fold face bestows the Grace
To those who're immersed in deep Bakthi.

(The Festival of Nallur Skanda commenced on 2nd August with the hoisting of banner of Ceval. The festival concludes on the 26th. Due to the present difficulties of travel, the festival is completed before 6 p.m. This is done to enable the devotees from all parts of the North to return to their homes before dark.)

by R. C. Thavarajah

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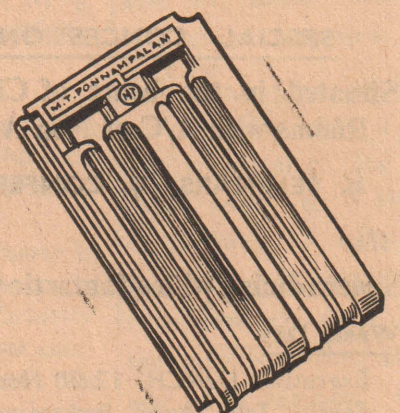
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A BLESSING IN DISGUISE

The Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW.

The SR of 14th July has taken up cudjels against the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Jaffna for having refused to do anything with the new Dept. of Siddha Medicine. I am inclined to think that it is a blessing in disguise.

The granting of university status to Siddha Medicine by the University of Jaffna augurs well the future of Siddha Medicine. The Arts Faculty will lend imperative encouragement with its numerous literary sources to the further study of Siddha Medicine.

The prevalent practice of Siddha Medicine is empirical and stands divorced from its innate metaphysical nature. The teaching of Siddha Medicine is far removed from its theoretical background which is steeped in Hindu philosophy and mythology. The

system itself has been relegated to insignificance by the over-zealous teaching of redundant western medical subjects, which have done more harm than good towards the practice of Siddha Medicine. The annexing of the Dept. of Siddha Medicine to the Arts faculty would enable it to develop as a separate and individual system of therapy, which could stand on its own merits.

The advent of western medical science has overwhelmed Siddha Medicine and reduced it to a state of demoralised inferiority. But let us not in our enthusiasm to elevate the standard of Siddha Medicine, pamper it beyond its realistic potential. In comparison to the growth of western medicine, Siddha Medicine, although as old as humanity, is but a stunted dwarf. It cannot hope to cope with the giant strides

made by ever-advancing western medical science. To place Siddha Medicine alongside western medicine would be the surest and swiftest way of smothering the ancient system.

Siddha Medicine has to be critically analysed. Its value in terms of therapeutic, diagnostic and rehabilitative application needs to be defined and demarcated. A clear strategy has to be mapped out to ensure its healthy growth. Perhaps the Faculty of Medicine can help with its modern technology and know-how, to evaluate evidence of curative efficacy and safety Siddha Medicinal products and practice.

The Siddha system of medicine has stood the test of time over a millennium. Let us not allow it to be over-ridden by the fast advancing western medical system.

Dr. Patrick Aloysius Anthony Pillai

D.I.M. & S (Ceylon)
Medical Clinic,
Ilavala.

A HAVEN

The Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW.

It was Thursday 26th July 1984. The second day of the hartal. The time was 10.30 p.m. I felt an excruciating pain in the stomach. The belly was swollen up to the rib bones. Slowly and steadily the pain radiated throughout the whole stomach. No one dared to get out of home to seek medical aid. Having endured an inferno of pain, the following morning I came to the Jaffna Hospital at 8 a.m., and was admitted to ward No. 20.

What a welcome haven it was! The vociferous but kind male nurse gave me an injection which the doctor with a radiating smile prescribed. When I felt like vomiting the male nurse like a kind mother guided me to a sink. How wonderfully relieved I was within a few minutes.

Then came in the Professor. He patiently questioned me and advised me about my diet and future behaviour pattern.

Beside me there was another patient, a young man who married on 2nd July, fell ill on July 9th, and due to the negligence of somebody had a relapse on the

26th July and was fighting for his life.

I can still hear the resonant voice of the Professor sounding a warning note to the Final Year students of the Medical Faculty. Pointing to the patient he said, "Doctors, lawyers and teachers should not be negligent in their duties, a slight carelessness of a doctor will mean the life of a patient: a client entrusts his case to a lawyer expecting him to do his

was a sign that fascism was raising its head in Jaffna.

I should like to refer to the newspaper reports that Armed Services personnel had forced shopkeepers who had closed their shops in Vavuniya and Mannar for the Hartal on the 25th to re-open their shops.

If the action of the Tamil youths is a sign of fascism how will the Minister describe the action of the Armed Services?

K. Sivanandasundaram
Point Pedro.

LETTERS

2nd CHAMBER

The Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW

duty; carelessness by a teacher ruins a child. In a few months you will be practising your profession. Many men will entice you with handsome dowries to marry their daughters. They will put up beautiful buildings to set you up in private practice, but remember money is not everything. For goodness sake be careful in your duty. See what has happened to this young man just in the prime of his life".

I wish every member of these professions heed what this Professor said. Then Sri Lanka will be a true Paradise.

N. Sivagnanam

(Retired Principal)
Vaddukoddai.

FASCISM

The Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW.

The Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation in its Tamil news broadcast on 29th July reported that the Minister for National Security, at a function in Devinuwara, referred to the disturbance created by some Tamil youths at the fast organised by the Tamil United Liberation Front in Jaffna on the 24th and said that the denial of the right to protest peacefully in one's own way

Federal and Autonomous states differ in many ways. In an autonomous state the component units enjoy greater freedom than in a Federal state. In a Federal State there is a division of powers and a system of checks and balances. It is also not necessary to be a socialist country to have autonomy. Therefore it is not necessary to follow the socialist path.

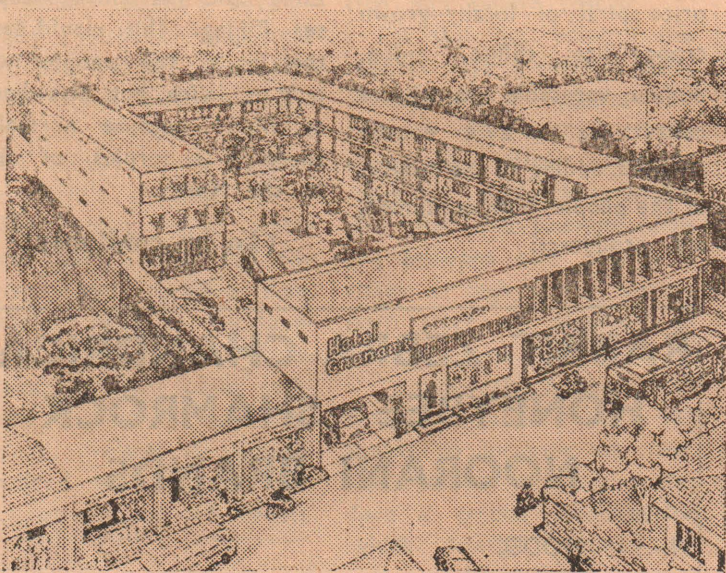
The best example is Switzerland. They also have the Referendum and the Recall. In a Federal State there are special procedures adopted for Amendments involving the Second Chamber.

We all know how legislation is rushed through Parliament and how very little time is given for any serious debate. A Second Chamber is necessary with equal powers in ordinary law making and special powers in regard to Amendments. Two members from each District is fair but they must be elected directly by the people. But of course the ethnic problem has to be solved first.

S. Kanagasabai
Tellipallai.

(More letters on
page 9)

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"It seems that the Round Table Conference is about to end with absolutely nothing having been achieved. It is just as well, since it never did honestly get off the ground. The non-participation of some political parties has anyway taken much of the validity or legitimacy out of this conference," states The All Ceylon Tamil Congress in its observations on the proposal for a Second Chamber presented to the Round Table Conference by its Chairman President Jayewardene.

The following are further excerpts from the A.C.T.C.'s observations:

Even though a regional or provincial set-up was not one of the political objectives or demands of the Tamil parties present at the Conference, in order to contribute towards a peaceful reconciliation, we announced that we were prepared to consider a reasonable alternative to separation, which alternative we could place before the Tamils for their consideration. We do not want bloodshed in any part of this island.

It was our considered view that a regional set up, as proposed by the Ceylon Workers Congress, with the Northern and Eastern Provinces together being one of many regions, could be a reasonable alternative which we could commend and place before the Tamils for their acceptance. We thought that regional issues and problems could be more effectively and satisfactorily dealt with by regional councils and hence were prepared to discuss their composition, powers and functions.

Being sincere in our efforts to find a peaceful, lasting and acceptable solution, we went out of our way to meet other delegations and discuss these matters.

Change of stance

At the beginning, it seemed President Jayewardene showed keenness in solving the ethnic problem, and as has been established now, he was indeed the architect of Annexure C. But today he has had to give way to the opposition of Sinhala chauvinists both within and outside his United National Party. This is the reason why a solution is said to be not possible.

Who ever who drove the Tamils to wanting a separate state by denying them their

Second Chamber: Retrograde step

legitimate rights, it is they who still do not want the Tamils to have their legitimate rights. Therefore, the Tamils are becoming even more resolute in their opinion that they cannot ever live together with the Sinhalese in one polity.

From his proposals, it is now clear that the President too, has accepted the inflexible position that the district should be 'the only sub-national unit at a structural level', and that he does not want to create a broader or larger provincial or regional structure. It is on this basis that the President proposes to set up a Second Chamber and that too, only as an 'exception for necessary functional operations', whatever that may mean.

The District (Development) Councils is a system that is in existence today. It is not a system set up in order to solve the ethnic problem. It has not solved the ethnic problem either. If the powers that be are of the opinion that the status quo should remain and that the Tamils should not be given their legitimate rights, why was the Round Table Conference convened? Was it only to show the world outside that the powers were keen on reconciliation and reverse the world opinion after the 1983 racial riots.

It is surprising that the President should have thought it fit to propose a Second Chamber and say that that was necessary because of the impasse regarding district councils and regional councils. There has been consensus at the Conference regarding the necessity for devolution of power. A committee of experts has been set up many moons ago, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, to report back to the plenary as to how devolution of power should be effected. Without waiting for that report, how can the President come to the conclusion that there is an impasse regarding the unit of devolution? What has come of the two committees of experts that were set up.

The demand of the Tamils today is that they wish to be secure in those areas which have been accepted by successive Governments and constitutions as the traditional homelands of the Tamils, and to be in a position to effectively mind their affairs.

Towards this thinking, the Tamils have departed, during the last four decades, from the initial position of responsive co-operation, to wanting decentralisation of administration, and then devolution of power in the form of regional autonomy and federation, to wanting and in sheer desperation, complete separation.

When the demand of the Tamils has been to get away from the centre more and

- T. C.

more, the proposal to set up only a second chamber as a means to solve the ethnic problem, seems to the All Ceylon Tamil Congress, as having completely failed to understand and appreciate the legitimate aspirations of the Tamils. The proposal to bring back the Second Chamber and nothing more is therefore a retrograde step.

If the President's proposal of a second chamber is to be a chamber consisting solely of representatives from the Tamil areas, the A.C.T.C. could have considered it favourably. Such a second

chamber should be one of the aspects of a regional set up. To such a second chamber, the A.C.T.C. would expect the following subject to be assigned; higher education, education, employment, law and order, power to raise loans, land settlement, irrigation, industries fisheries art and culture.

It should be a chamber that could prevent Parliament passing legislation of a discriminatory nature in respect of ethnic, religious, and linguistic matters and legislation which tends towards the inequality of man. If it is a chamber of this character only, would it be a meaningful step towards the solution of the ethnic problem.

If the Round Table Conference fails, it will be a victory for those who want the countries of the world to know that the Government did not have a reasonable scheme for a peaceful solution. It will also be a victory for those who say that the talks are only a farce.

Up on religion, down on morality in U. S.

New York: Americans are strong on religion, but weak in morality, says a 1984 compilation of the latest surveys about those aspects of life.

The results add up to a 'glaring paradox' says veteran pollster George Gallup Jr., whose organisation conducted the numerous studies over the past year.

Consolidated into a 100 page report, "1984 religion in America," he says in a summary: "Religion is growing in importance among Americans but morality is losing ground."

While levels of religious involvement are high, and most people say they are more interested in religion than five years ago, "widespread cheating is found in all levels of society" Gallup says:

"Two-thirds of Americans hold the view that the level of ethics in the U.S. has declined during the last decade."

What makes for the seeming paradox, he adds, is that "very little difference" is found in the behaviour of the church and unchurched on a wide range of items including lying, cheating and pilfer-

age."

However, dramatic differences were found in behaviour of the 'highly spiritually committed' compared with those of less spiritual commitment with the committed showing a much higher level of moral conduct.

Using various yardsticks, the studies find only 12 per cent of the population is among the 'highly spiritually committed' Gallup says these people 'are a breed apart from the rest of the populace.'

They are 'more satisfied with their lot of in life' and 'far happier' than others, he says, adding that they also 'place greater importance on family life' and are 'more tolerant' of other races and religions.

They are vitally concerned about the betterment of society and are far more involved in charitable activities than are their counterparts," he says.

The majority of church people those less committed, fall into 'the category of nominal Christians' and their ethical behaviour is little different from that of the unchurched, Gallup says.

He says this means that if the level of the country's morals are to be brought up to the level of religious interest, then churches must do a better job of strengthening their peoples commitment.

With the level of religious involvement so high, he says the situation presents "a unique and unprecedented opportunity for the churches of America to tap this burgeoning interest in religion and channel it into solid religious commitment."

The studies show 90 per cent of Americans believe in God and have a religious preference, that 70 per cent are church members, that 60 per cent attend worship services at least once a month and 60 per cent say they are more interested in religion than five years ago.

An overwhelming majority pray and believe in prayer, want children to have religious training and want religion to play a bigger role in society. Gallup says, "People are clearly searching the spiritual moorings in their lives with a new intensity."

(From "The Times of India" - 18th July '84)

Labour Movement

All human societies which are pluralistic in structure (and very many are so) today face the basic and general problem of how they can be organised in a truly democratic manner to ensure effectively the cherished democratic freedom for every individual. In such societies we see the emergence of different social groups which acquire corporate identities based on various distinguishing features. On the one hand there are the basic class formations and decisions stemming from the relations of production and the ensuing social relations, and on the other, different social groups based on common sentiments attached to such factors as race, religion, language among others which help to give them a certain sense of ethnic identification and group consciousness. Such social groups existing within a social system dominated by an evolving world capitalist system which organises human activity both international and intra-national, in a highly competitive manner, find themselves in a situation of conflict and tension generated by the whole system itself. This conflict and tension always tends to be intensified, and even becomes explosive, because of the crisis-ridden nature of the system. In the rich and developed countries, inflation, stagnation and attendant unemployment pose critical problems while in the less developed parts of the world, not only do these problems become a hundred fold more so, but in addition, make poverty and social

deprivation assume colossal proportions.

It is in this context that we have to examine the whole question of communalism and the labour movement in Sri Lanka. The communal problem as it manifests itself in this country is essentially concerned with the Tamils in Sri Lanka, who are themselves divided into two groups—the Sri Lankan and the Indian. While factors such as race, religion, language, customs etc. have helped to give these groups a sense of separateness from the Sinhala majority, the fact that both groups are concentrated in particular territorial areas has also helped to identify such feelings of communal separateness. This is especially the case with the Sri Lankan Tamils whose small Jaffna habitat in the North is located in the arid zone of the island, far removed from the comparatively large and predominantly Sinhala South in the fertile regions of the Wet Zone. Further, the fact that religion and kinship have for centuries, been formative factors in the evolution of human societies, has also helped to promote and reinforce the sense of ethnic identification and corporate identity which these groups have come to acquire. This is particularly so in the context of our society today, where the struggle for social survival and betterment is both individually and collectively acutely competitive, and where economic growth and development is both retarded and distorted. It is not surprising then that the conflicts and tensions which

arise out of the horizontal class divisions and attendant class exploitation, tend not only to cut across but also to be subsumed under those arising out of communal cleavages and resulting antagonisms which are of a vertical character. Hence the labour movement in this country, which the Marxist parties came to dominate and which they sought to develop politically as a means of promoting the class struggle, encountered in communalism a major impediment to its unfettered growth in this respect. A brief historical survey of the movement in this country will help to illustrate this thesis.

The organised labour movement assumed national importance only after the advent of A. E. Goonesinha into public life in the second decade of this century. It is significant that, even before Goonesinha emerged as an

despatch of July 1, 1915, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, stated "In order to safeguard the future, it may be advisable to modify substantially the present proportions, which show 1000 Sinhalese out of a total of 1600 employees". It is however to the eternal credit of Goonesinha that, for a while, he was able to unite and organise under one banner quite a large number of workers including important sections in the harbour and railways, centred in the city of Colombo. Strongly influenced by the British Labour Party and favoured by the relative prosperity of the 1920's, Goonesinha was able to organise the Labour Union, in 1923 and in 1928 the Labour Party, the Ceylon Mercantile Union and the All-Ceylon Trades Union Congress, as their principal founder and dynamic leader. Quite justifiably at that time, he

depression had set in, and with it there were threats of mass unemployment. Once again, there was competition for employment between Sinhalese and Indian workers, and Goonesinha had cause to complain of undercutting of Sinhalese workers by their Indian counterparts. Thus communalism once again, and with greater force, began to rear its ugly head to divide the labour movement. With the issue of universal franchise, raised by the proposals of the Donoughmore Commission at this time, middle-class Ceylonese politicians began talking of the dangers of enfranchising Indian plantation workers, and the Ceylon National Congress uncompromisingly and bitterly opposed the extension of the franchise to plantation workers as recommended by the Donoughmore Commission. In this situation, Goonesinha himself, while not

by

Neil Kuruppu

organiser of labour and its undisputed leader in the next decade, there were manifestations of communal bickering and division amongst the workers belonging to an important sector of the working-class in Colombo. To quote Kumari Jayawardena, "The Ceylonese railway workers, who feared competition from the Indians—who were poor, more docile and therefore potential blacklegs—had manifested their hostility to Indian immigrant labour on several occasions. In 1910, for example the locomotive workers had protested against the influx of South Indian workers on the railways, and in 1913, presenting their grievances before the Railway Commission, the workers complained that Indians, Tamils and Malayalls were employed in preference to Sinhalese". The British colonial authorities too, on their part, were quick to learn their lessons from the 1912 Railway strike and the 1915 riots, and sought to exploit communal differences amongst the workers. In fact, the Governor of Sri Lanka, Sir Robert Chalmers, in his

was able to state very proudly that these labour organisations were open to all irrespective of caste, race and creed. And so for a time, Sinhala and Indian workers joined hands to fight for their rights and better working conditions. K. Natesa Iyer, the South Indian Brahmin journalist, who became a radical politician and had begun organising labour on the plantations since 1925, joined Goonesinha's Labour Union and became its Vice President for a short time. In 1927 during the harbour strike led by the Labour Union, he was influential in getting the Indian workers to support it. With Natesa Iyer's growing influence and leadership among the Indian workers both in Colombo and in the plantations, it looked for a moment as if the working-class as a whole in the country would rapidly advance to new heights of class-consciousness, solidarity and action. But it was not to be and almost immediately the situation began to change for the worse. By the end of the 1920's the world wide economic

publicly opposing such as extension, showed his limitations as a labour organiser and leader. He had come to espouse the cause of the workers as an avowed nationalist and social reformer drawing inspiration from men like Gokhale and Gandhi in India and Anagarika Dharmapala in Sri Lanka. Professing to follow their example he worked, he said, to fight for the rights of the underprivileged and oppressed 'underdogs' in society. The workers, as a large and important section falling into that category, therefore claimed his prior attention. He was thus never interested in the cause of the workers as really constituting a class in itself, and ultimately for itself, in the Marxist sense of the term. In fact, Goonesinha studiously avoided, for the most part, all fraternal contacts with Communists. His Labour Party's aim was laudable but vague, general and populist, and not really class-oriented. It sought to promote "The political, social and economic emancipation of the "Moreover as a man imbued with the grow-

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and Communalism

ing nationalist sentiments of his time, he was motivated to a very large extent by that spirit of national resurgence which moved the leaders of the Sinhala Buddhist majority in the country. It was, however, a spirit which could be readily provoked to express itself in the form of Sinhala chauvinism and communal prejudice. To Goonesinha therefore the forging of an all-island working-class unity was not a primary concern, and to him consequently, the Indian worker was politically dispensable.

Thus it was that in 1928, Natesa Iyer became convinced and alleged openly that Goonesinha was an anti-Indian, Sinhala Buddhist communalist. This brought the parting of the ways and Goonesinha expelled Natesa Iyer from the Labour Union in that very same year. In the following year he took the still more drastic step of expelling all Indian workers from his union; he alleged that they were undercutting Sinhala workers, especially in the harbour, in collusion with Indian employers, by contravening the agreements regarding the minimum wage fixed by the first Collective Agreement between the Employers' Federation and the Ceylon Trade Union Congress signed on June 1, 1929. The situation was still further aggravated when three strikes led by the Labour Union at Lake House in 1929, at the Times of Ceylon in 1931, and at the Galle Face Hotel in 1934 ended in disastrous defeats, contributing decisively to the decline and fall of Goonesinha as the undisputed labour leader of the city workers. In two of these strikes, the one at Lake House and the other at Galle Face Hotel, Indian workers were used as 'blacklegs' to break the strikes. This provoked Goonesinha into adopting a very anti-Indian attitude, and his Sinhala paper 'Veeraya', in 1930 proclaimed that the decline of the Sinhalese was due to the 'white man, the Coast Moors Borahs and Malayalis'. In 1931 in the State Council, Goonesinha resolutely and uncompromisingly opposed the unrestricted immigra-

tion of Indian workers into the island. In fairness to him it must be said that he publicly stated that his intention and desire was to safeguard the interests of "Ceylonese workers" as against immigrants who were a floating population. However, according to a cyclo-styled statement issued by Natesa Iyer in 1929, he alleged that "Goonesinha differentiated between Indian and non-Indians in the distribution of rations during the harbour strike" (of 1927) and that he even spoke against the granting of the franchise to Indian workers declaring that he would "Kick the Indians out". Whatever the truth of these allegations it is clear that Goonesinha's attitude was essentially that of a petty bourgeois radical and nationalist inspired by the Sinhala Buddhist revival of his times. He was not therefore in the long run concerned with trying to build an island-wide unity and solidarity of the working-class, overcoming the tensions and conflicts arising out of communal feelings and the antagonisms they engender.

The way in which the spirit of communalism adversely and retrogressively affected the labour movement in the early 30's was ominous for its whole future in the country. It was no passing phase of the movement, for this upsurge of communalism cannot be attributed only to such subjective factors as the limitations of individuals and leaders in the labour Movement with their prejudices and attitudes. It has to be explained by examining a more basic factor, namely, the particular structure that our society came to assume during the period of British colonial rule. In this country British rule was imposed on a society, which for centuries had hardened into a traditional form, functioning in a very decentralised manner and based mainly on the units of family, caste and village communities. Furthermore the country itself had come to be territorially divided into a Tamil Hindu North with a minority community and a Sinhala Buddhist majority predominant in the rest of

the island, but itself divided into a low-country maritime region in the South and South-West and a Kandyan region in the central mountainous parts.

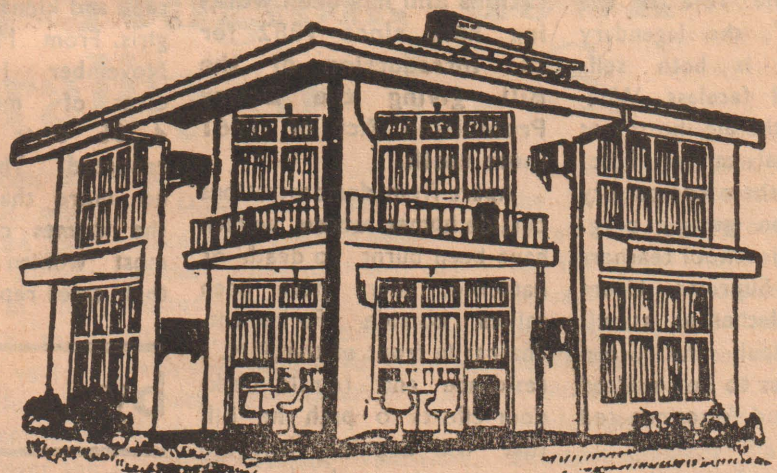
In such a land, with a society so structured, vertical divisions and cleavages tended to be stronger and more operative than horizontal stratifications and divisions based on class and class exploitation. This was the country in which British rule established a centralised government with its machinery and administration, and created new class divisions with its introduction of a particular form of the capitalist mode of production. This capitalism was

in consequence significantly different from its highly developed form in the metropolitan centres of the West. The colony, which became essentially a part of the agricultural periphery of the centre, was economically exploited on an externally oriented basis to serve the needs of that centre. There was therefore no real industrial development and no wide-spread development of generalised commodity production. This colonially imposed capitalism was therefore established essentially in the commercial sector of the economy. It was char-

acterised by the plantation enclave system with its estates located in or near rural areas, and also by the dominant role assumed locally by merchant capital operating through agency houses with their firms and offices together with the banks and insurance companies, all centred in Colombo.

(The last part of this article, excerpted from "Ethnicity and Change in Sri Lanka" published by the Soceal Scientists Association, will appear next week.)

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Never before has the Indian woman been as vocal in fighting for her rights or raising her voice against prejudice and discrimination as she is today. The revolution is taking place in the countryside as well as the big cities. It is slow and quiet in the rural areas and more obstreperous in the big cities. But it is visible.

landless should be in the name of both husband and wife. The existing laws that ensure equality for women are being fully utilised and where necessary, efforts are being made to enforce new, effective legal protection.

Mood of today

A reflection of the mood of today is the

pointed out that cases of wife and bride burning have increased from 670 in 1975 to 1,676 in 1979. In Delhi alone 356 cases were reported in 1975. From 1980 to two years later, 394,400 and 470 cases were reported. In the four months from December to March this year 228 cases of death of married women due to bur-

women there was talk of dowry and harassment but there was not a single report of wife burning.

Cost of living

With the sharp increase in the cost of living it is no longer possible to run a home on a single salary. Traditionally the Indian women has always assisted her

representation in the Lok Sabha-33. Since then their number has been slowly dwindling. In 1967 there were 28 women M.P.'s in 1971-21, and in 1977-19.

A study on women's participation in the political life of the country by the Centre for Women's Development Studies, shows that women

INDIAN WOMEN FIGHT AGAINST DOWRY SYSTEM

In the urban areas there have been a spate of rallies and angry demonstrations against rape, dowry deaths, eve-teasing, price rise, the demeaning portrayal of women in the Indian cinema and discrimination in jobs.

The Indian woman is seeking a new image. The movement, it is true, is spear-headed only by a small minority of educated women. But no longer is she willing to accept the role of the 'sati savitri', the legendary woman who is both self-sacrificing and faceless. Whether it is the air hostesses of our national carrier fighting against their compulsory retirement on getting pregnant or Delhi school teachers moving the Supreme Court against the lecherous assault by a principal, the urban woman refuses to be insulted, humiliated and discriminated against.

The seeds of emancipation have been planted in the rural areas too where more and more women are demanding that land given to the

Dahej Virodhi Chetna Manch. Women associated with different political parties have cast aside their party predilections and joined forces with voluntary women's welfare organisations, student and youth groups, teachers and trade unions for a joint fight against the most pernicious evil today—dowry. The Manch represents 25 women's organisations and has been working hard since 1982 for the introduction of the Bill giving the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 more teeth.

Apart from demonstrations outside homes where women have been burnt to death or battered, there have been rallies outside Parliament, dharnas in front of the P.M.'s residence and frantic back-door efforts to push the Bill that will hopefully halt the increasing dowry deaths.

The bureaucracy has delayed the introduction of this Bill but even the joint committee of Parliament has

ning or suicide were reported in Delhi.

Urban victims

With the revitalisation of the women's movement, social attitudes and prejudices against women are marginally less today but there has been a mind boggling increase in crimes against women, especially in the urban areas. Almost every day headlines scream the sordid stories of rape and kidnapping of school girls. From March 1980 to November 1983, 11,462 cases of molestation and 4,305 cases of rape were reported. These represent no more than a fraction of the crimes committed, for most women did not want their cases reported.

by

mate in the rural areas, tilling sowing and harvesting, but in the urban areas the number of working women has increased substantially. It is estimated that 75 percent of the women in the organised sector continue to work as scavengers and casual workers at the lowest rung of the economic ladder. About 80 percent of women working in the Central government are in the lowest paid jobs.

Though women are considered more conscientious and responsible workers, for skilled and technical jobs men are still preferred. After the year-long textile strike in Bombay the number of women employed in the textile industry dropped

who begin their activism under the general banner of a political movement, begin to develop some consciousness regarding women's issues. On the other hand women who begin activism on women's rights issues start to realise at some stage that they cannot bring about needed changes without political action.

Though India has a woman Prime Minister, a woman judge at the highest court of appeal, six lakh women teachers, 40,000 women doctors and 18,000 women scientists, the economic and social status of women has improved only marginally.

In the big cities men are demanding working wives but are still not prepared to share household duties and responsibilities. The result is that most working women work a double shift: one in the home and the other in the office. They are acknowledged to be smarter and more outgoing but many girls have to submissively hand over their wages to their husbands or mothers-in-law.

Unlike in the West, where the posts of salesgirls, receptionists and typists invariably go to women, in India they must still compete for them with men.

Hundred days

In fact there has been a steady decline in women's employment between 1961 and 1981. They have lost traditional occupations as a result of changes which have transferred productive activity from homes and cottages to factories and machines.

Conscious and unconscious biases of employers operate

No one is able to explain this phenomenon of increasing crimes against women, whether it is in the garb of hooliganism during festivals, eve-teasing on the public transport system or the actual igniting of a wife, who is unable to improve her husband's material status.

Is it due to the fact that more such crimes are publicised by the increasing tribe of women journalists in the media or is this a part of the urban milieu and the frustrated male's way of showing his insecurity at the changing tide of affairs?

Dr. Veena Mazumdar, secretary of the first report on the status of Indian women and president of the Centre for Women's Development Studies, has pointed out that in 1973-74 when the committee toured the country and interviewed some 10,000

from 20 per cent to five per cent. The millowners were reluctant to take back women.

There has been a rather slow but, growing awareness among women that their participations in the political life of the country is vital for the improvement of their status. The percentage of women voters in the Lok Sabha polls was 46.64 per cent. in 1980 it was 51.29 per cent. In the last elections the difference between the number of male and female voters was just 6.40 per cent.

The number of women elected in the Lok Sabha in 1980 was 28. In a house of 527 this is indeed a very small representation. But the heartening feature is that 142 women contested the polls. Ironically it was in 1962 that women had the biggest

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(Continued on page 9)

OWL TALK! by Somasundaram Vanniasingam

Two old owls X and Y bought a copy of the SATURDAY REVIEW of 4th August. X, who was the younger of the two, turned over the pages and was attracted by the full-page headline "SR HIDES THE TRUTH" on the page for letters and began reading aloud while Y listened partly in a state of afternoon slumber. After reading through the letter and noticing that Y has not followed the letter fully X began to raise questions. The ensuing conversation between the two owls is reproduced below.

X: Why is this letter in support of the special censorship of SATURDAY REVIEW?

Y: Is there a possible vacancy in the Department of the Censor?

X: I have not seen any advertisement.

Y: What a baby you are! You must get fully qualified before a vacancy is advertised. Creation of a post depends on the availability of a suitable man.

X: He accuses the SATURDAY REVIEW of not revealing the truth and observes that the real truth never comes out in any newspaper

anywhere in the world. How can he say that?

Y: What is his name?

X: KANAGASABAI.

Y: Tut, Tut. Kanagasabai is the abode of the Omniscient Lord Shiva in Chithambaram. Hence Kanagasabai signifies omniscience. He knows what is in every newspaper anywhere in the world and what is the truth without even batting an eyelid. He is omniscient.

X: He is repeatedly referring to the Separationist Demand and says that it is economically suicidal. Is there not the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution which debar any talk of Separation.

Y: The Sixth Amendment only debar talk in support of Separation. It is not concerned with any talk against Separation. It has killed all talk in support of Separation.

X: I am puzzled. One need talk against Separation if only some one talks in support of Separation.

Y: That is the great achievement of the Sixth Amendment. It enables people to propagate against Separation within fear of a retort or reply.

X: I am still puzzled.

Y: You recall the ancient Tamil saying: "Beating a snake already killed". There are people who relish their prowess in beating a snake that is already killed; it cannot raise its head and sting.

X: Although he argues vigorously against Separation, he does not make any reference to the TULF which sought for and secured the mandate at the 1977 General Elections for a Separate State.

Y: Probably he is in the same both as the TULF.

X: He says that the Jaffna man is crafty, cunning and selfish and that he has many despicable traits?

Y: What is his address?

X: Chunnakam.

Y: That is it. He is not a Jaffna man. He is a Chunnakam man.

X: By the way, have you heard of the encounter between a senior Tamil Q. C. and the Station Master at Kankasanturai?

Y: No. I have not heard. What is that?

X: This Q. C. and his family came from Colombo with tickets booked for Jaffna but decided to go to K.K.S. At K.K.S., the S. M. demanded the payment of excess fare. The Q. C. held the Tickets in his outstretched hand and asked the S. M. whether it was not the Ceylon Government Railway. The S. M. replied in the affirmative. Then the Q. C. quipped: "Where in Ceylon is K.K.S.?"

S. M.: In Jaffna.

Q. C.: Then what the dickens do you mean by demanding excess fare? K.K.S. is in Jaffna; my tickets are for Jaffna.

X: He makes a terrific criticism of Mr. Shanmugathan. Y: For that you must ask Mr. Shanmugathan as to how he managed to earn the letter writer's enmity. I am not omniscient.

X: He makes mention of Dr. Ven. Hevanpola Ratnasara Thero but he makes no point in that connection.

Y: Don't you know the principle of the RAMANAMA Mantram? You merely pronounce the name RAMA and you gain merit. Perhaps the letter writer thinks that

LETTERS

M. P's CHITS

Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW

It is high time the pernicious system of requiring persons seeking employment to obtain a "chit" from their respective M.P. is done away with.

What is the position of a person who has no political affiliations, who belongs to no particular political party, whose only interest is to get on with the job. Is this man, who is a patriotic citizen, anxious to serve his country, to be discriminated against?

Are only political supporters eligible for jobs? There are men who would rather

if he mentions the name of the Thero he gains merit.

X: He says that if the Sinhalese built a Vihara in Tamil areas it is described as imperialism and that there are Hindu temples in Sinhala areas?

Y: Sinhalese drivers of omnibuses and motor vans decorate the Glass panel in front of them with pictures of Hindu deities. I suppose that is Hindu Imperialism.

X: He says that we might be swallowed by Tamil Nadu and that even now Indian businessmen continue to drain our resources by devious methods and a union with Tamil Nadu will seal our fate. Y: You will note that he earlier said that there was an old Tamil proverb cautioning people not to trust a stomach ache and an Indian. That proverb has long forgotten but he is now trying to revive it by accusing Indian businessmen.

X: How is it that the letter writer has touched with such self-confidence on so many topics?

Y: In psychology, there is something called complexes. we are told of inferiority complex, and such other complexes. The writer of the letter also suffers from some such complexes.

X: What complex that might be?

Y: That is probably OMNISCIENCE complex. Now do not disturb me; I must have my afternoon nap...cr...rr...chr....rr...rr.

starve than go on bending knees to politicians to seek their patronage to obtain jobs, for which they are qualified in every respect.

This system has already led to various malpractices.

E.S.R.M. Perumal
Moratuwa.

CONGRATS

The Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW.

It is very heartening to know that the United Religious Organisation (URO) made a big breakthrough in the present crisis of relationship, understanding, and communication which separate the Tamils from the Sinhalese and the North from the south. Ven. Hevanpola Ratnasara Nayake Thero and Rev. Fr. Tissa Balasuriya and Rev. Fr. Paul Caspersz and the other religious dignitaries deserve the credit of all right thinking people for the great pains they under went to bring about an island-wide reconciliation.

The readers of SR would have been glad to read the news of this big breakthrough by URO, in its weekly issue of 23rd June, 1984.

Peace is not a passive movement but an active force that brings about new thinking, new understanding, new community building, breaking down walls and barriers, of caste, creed, race and language. Peace is an active force that brings new life to all who advocate the cause of peace and makes life to overflow in its fulness to all who are receptive. Peace is an active force found in the hearts of people who are free from hatred, envy, jealousy and rancour, and also in those who are free from suspicion.

May the God of Peace fill our land with a peace that is unending. He promises peace to all men of goodwill. A will that is good is a will that is free from jealousy, envy, hatred and suspicion. Then all things will be in common, for the use of all, whether they be in the North or in the South, and they will all be children of the same Motherland, Lanka.

Fr. Mathew G. E. Silva
Parish Priest
Boragas.

Indian Women Fight...

(Continued from page 8) against their recruitment in various occupations.

The power structure in traditional families and communities prevents them from seeking and obtaining adequate attention outside employment and thereby securing independent incomes and status.

Census reports show that women's employment dropped from 28 per cent in 1961 and comprised 21 per cent in 1981. The last census also introduced the concept of marginal workers or those who worked 100 days in a year; the overwhelming majority were women. The result the improvement in female employment in the urban areas has been nullified by its decline in rural areas.

The Government is fully aware of the fall in women's employment and a concerted effort is being made not only to improve the standard of women's education but to

provide them with technical training so that they can take up skilled jobs in factories.

The Government's policy shows a shift from marginal help for destitute women to pushing them into the mainstream of development.

The Ministries of Labour and Social Welfare have identified new avenues of better paid employment for women. A sum of Rs. 1 crore has been set aside to give funds to various public sector organisations for starting training programmes for women in electronics, match-making units, furniture design and manufacture and in the leather industry. In the urban areas special courses in banking are being run exclusively for women so that they have better chances in their field. Even domestics are being trained so that they get better jobs.

(Courtesy The Times of India)

No Global Food Shortage

BRUSSELS: The European Economic Community's (EEC) food aid programme has come under the fire of "Agra-Europe", the Brussels based intelligence bulletin.

"Agra-Europe", suggested that the EEC could provide more food aid and save money by buying food on the open market rather than subsidising their home production.

It is only the existence of EEC food surpluses costing 30-50 per cent more than supplies available on the world market, that has forced the EEC to use these surpluses for food aid commented "Agra-Europe".

The bulletin said that it would be cheaper to scale down the surplus and buy elsewhere. There is no global food shortage, according to "Agra-Europe", but a problem of bad distribution.

Surplus in both the United States and Europe is piling up and there is no cash to ensure that the surplus is moved to areas of desperate need.

With current world grain production there is enough to feed 1,000 million more people than now inhabit the world if only the surplus could be moved to areas of shortage, the bulletin said. (From "The Times of India" - 18th July 1984.)

TOO MANY, TOO CLOSE

"The rapid spread of family planning has provided evidence from almost every country that birth-spacing can indeed have a revolutionary impact on maternal and child health" says Mr. James Grant, Executive Director of UNICEF, in his 1984 report on the state of the world's children.

The report, which reinforces last year's call for urgent action to halve infant mortality rates in the developing world by the introduction of four basic techniques - oral rehydration therapy, growth monitoring, expanded immunization and the promotion of breast-

feeding-also spells out the importance of "three Fs" - food supplements for pregnant women, female education and family spacing.

On this last priority, the reports says studies in India, Turkey, the Philippines and Lebanon, for example, have shown that infant mortality rates for babies born within one year of a previous birth are between two and four times as high as for babies born after an interval of two years or more.

"Empowering mothers with the knowledge and the means to increase the interval between births is therefore a crucial contribution which family planning can make to health", the report says.

But, it adds, studies in both industrialized and developing countries have also shown that "too many" can almost as dangerous as "too close". Research in China, El Salvador, Chile and Britain showed that the first and second child had a significantly higher chance of survival than the fourth or fifth child. Infant mortality rates in El Salvador rose from around 60 per 1,000 for first born to 160 for the fifth and subsequent children.

Births to women who are younger than 20 or older than 35 are also known to increase the risks to both mother and child.

U. S. move on the Punjab

Washington: The government of India has voiced concern over a move to hold a hearing at the Capitol Hill early this month on the situation in Punjab.

Some American legislators have made it their business to "fix responsibility" for what happened in Punjab and to "find out" how far the Government of India is to be blamed for it.

The hearing was due to begin on 7th August. It will be held by the South Asian and Pacific sub committee of the House foreign affairs committee. The sub-committee is popularly known as the "Solarz Committee" being named after its dynamic and upcoming chairman Mr. Stephen Solarz of New York, who has so far been rated as one of the best friends of India in the U. S. Congress. There is an odd chance that the human rights sub-committee may also hold a separate hearing on Punjab.

The Government of India has made a formal representation to the U. S. State Department on the issue.

According to a senior administration source here the State Department shares the Indian view that the Punjab situation or the demand for "Khalistan" are matters to be sorted out by the Indians themselves and that the American Congress ought not to concern itself normally with what is strictly a domestic matter of another sovereign country.

The State Department has been asked to testify at the hearing. There are indications that the department will send one of its senior officers to take the stand that the agitation by the Sikhs in Punjab is an "internal matter" of India.

The Congressmen who have sponsored the hearing - and Mr. Solarz is one of them - have been arguing that all that they want to do is to 'educate' themselves on what actually happened in Punjab and why "But this is no education. Nor is it a process of information," commented an expert on International law.

From "The Times of India" (15th July 1984)

China steps up one child Campaign

The Chinese Government is showing increased determination to implement its single child family policy, recent reports suggest. The policy demands that only in exceptional circumstances should couples have more than one child.

New provincial regulations narrow the range of "exceptional circumstances" and the emphasis now seems to be less on discussing what the goals are than on the technical means to achieve those goals: the intrauterine device for women with one child, sterilization for couples with two children and abortion for unapproved pregnancies. In particular, the number of sterilizations performed within an administrative area is now a criterion of its success in family planning.

In the past year several provincial administrations have said that their main task in family planning is to improve further ligation and vasectomy work. Administrative areas at all levels have been given quotas for the number of sterilization operations that should be performed within their boundaries. Nationally, the number of sterilizations shows a big rise. Last February alone, a month of peak campaigning, an estimated 8.86 million sterilization operations took place in China. From Hebei province it was reported that 1.77 million ligations and vasectomies, 85.9 per cent of its annual quota, had been performed by the end of May.

During this dramatic increase, family planning regu-

lations have included several references to "compulsory sterilization". A question much debated in the Western press was whether these references indicate a new degree of coercion in China's family planning programme, which already incorporated an extensive range of incentives and disincentives for couples and family planning officials as well as peer and group pressure. Most of the references to, and reports of, compulsory sterilization come from Guangdong province in the South, which has consistently lagged behind the rest of the country, its birth rate of 24.9 per 1,000 in 1982 being the highest. Any official condonement of compulsory sterilization there may reflect a dilemma increasingly faced by the Government.

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The Three Jacks

"Man is more complex than what it seems" Thus wrote Mark Twain in his best work—The Adventures of Tom Sawyer—a book rich in humour. "How's that?" he was asked.

"Very simple: in an adult there are three different men. Take, for instance, any fellow. Let us call him Jack. In him there is **Jack, the First**: the man he thinks he is. **Jack, the Second**: what others think he is. **Jack, the Third**: what he is in reality"

There is a lot of truth in that.

Take **Jack, the First**: one recognises him at once. Hand a group photo to him in which he is. The first thing he looks for, is that most handsome face of his. He loves himself so much that he prefers himself to others. In consequence, his love goes so far as to enlarge his merits and excuse his faults. He is like the Greek gods, as described by Homer.

They travelled around the world, hidden from the

eyes of men in a cloud. Indeed Jack, the First, has a cloud in his eyes, which hides from him his defects and faults.

St. Francis of Sales said about this type of men that they accuse their neighbour of small things, while they excuse themselves of grave things. They are keen about their own rights, but they desire that others should not insist on theirs.

In **Jack, the Second**: there are two tendencies: a great desire that men should esteem him, so that he feels sad and discouraged when men ignore him, or despise him. In general, these dispositions in Jack, the Second, are not so bad, but he should be careful to see that they be moderated. "Woe to you"—the Lord said—"who want to occupy the first places in the synagogue...to be greeted in the market place, to have all bow before you...."

Such Jacks are very keen on getting titles, concessions, on having their

names in newspapers.... When in 1939 Hitler visited Italy, he went also to Florence. The city was beflagged with festoons and displayed numberless slogans glorifying the man. Bargelini, the Mayor of the city, said to the Cardinal of Florence, Archbishop Elias Della Costa: "You see—Your Eminence, You see?"

"Don't worry—the Cardinal replied—His destiny already signed in Psalm is 37, 35-36:

"I have seen the wicked in his triumph towering like a cedar of Lebanon, but when next I passed, he was not there. I looked for him and he was nowhere to be found."

At times the "Woe" does not come as a violent punishment, but only as a mere human sneer. It may happen as with that donkey that put on a lion's skin. All were commenting: "What a lion!" Men and animals alike ran away from him. Unfortunately a strong gust of wind blew and lifted up the skin, and all saw the donkey: In a moment they all fell upon him and gave him a sound beating.

Then **Jack, the Third**: by profession he was a cook. But this is told by Tolstoi. On the threshold of the kitchen, dogs were crouching as they waited. Jack killed a calf and threw its bowels into the courtyard. The dogs devoured them and said: "What an excellent cook Jack is! He knows his job well!" Some days later Jack cleaned peas, potatoes and onions, and threw the peels into the courtyard. In a moment the dogs were upon them, but instantly turned away their mouths in disgust. They said: "Something is wrong now with the cook. He is good for nothing". But Jack did not mind what they were saying about him. "It is the master—Jack concluded—who has to eat, not the dogs. It is enough for me to have the appreciation of the master!"

Very good, Tolstoi! Well said!

Now I ask myself: "What is the taste of the Master?"

What does He like to find in me?"

One day whilst Jesus was preaching, someone told Him: "Your mother and Your brethren stand outside, seeking you". Jesus replied: "Who is my mother and who are my brethren? And stretching forth his hand towards His disciples He said: "Behold my mother and my brethren! Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven he is my brother, my sister, and my mother." (Mat. 12, 47-50).

See then what Jesus likes: the one who does God's holy will, moment by moment. Jesus is pleased when we pray to Him. "Thy will be done; but He is NOT pleased when our prayer is a pretext for avoiding some good work. "Why do you call me, Lord, and then you do not what I command you?"

If it happens to you to think of these three Jacks, keep an eye on the Jack, the Third: the one who is loved by God because he does always God's holy will.

(LG)

(Courtesy: Don Bosco's Madonna, Bombay, August 1984)

Devolution: Crux

(Continued from Page 2)

that are living in the different provinces of the whole country.

The third equally important aspect of this matter is Development: Economic, Cultural, Social, Educational, Health and all other branches of human activities in the region will receive closer attention. When we look at the development set-up in the country today, we find that except the Mahaveli Scheme, whatever development there is, is concentrated mostly in the Western province. Provinces like Uva, Sabaragamuwa, North Central, Eastern and Northern provinces are more or less backward without a hope of early solution of their several problems. Provincial legislatures and execu-

tives would be compelled to concentrate on their own problems and seek solutions to their needs of development. Thus in the provincial solution are contained the seeds of effective and positive solutions and above all of uniform development in the entire country.

Some people have fears that creation of provinces would lead to divisive tendencies in the country. On the contrary I feel that the principle of "unity in diversity" is a much surer way of keeping the country united and take it on to the path of uniform development. When I am referring to diversity, it is not only communal, racial or religious diversity but also diversity in development and progress.

Divine Spirit

SATURDAY REVIEW'S Guest Reporter, P. S. Chettiar, reports from Los Angeles on the opening of the 23rd Olympiad.

The **Indivisible One** became the **Many** just for SPORT! So says the great mystic Aurobindo. From the ancient Vedic seers down to Shakespeare (The world is a stage in which we are all players), the evolution, maintenance and involution is the play of Natarajah, the Cosmic Dancer.

Watching the opening ceremony on T.V. the 23rd Olympiad symbolized this philosophy on a temporal plane. I nearly cried out of an indescribable emotion when Gold Medallist Decathlon, Champion Jessie Owen's slim, young daughter carried the Olympic Torch into the arena jam-packed with 90,000 people, among whom were Olympic's one time greats. The President of the United States declared it open with 13 words. The last lap of the carrying of the torch and igniting the

Olympic Flame was done by Rafer Johnson, the American Negro, gold medallist and decathlon champion. He majestically circled the arena, climbed the steps and ignited the Olympic flame. When he stood motionless on the highest pedestal, his face was calm, dignified and heroic.

I wonder what past memories and thoughts flitted across his mind. When he was later interviewed over the T.V. he said that words were inadequate to describe his feelings at that time. He must have experienced the divine spirit of the Olympics. A strange remark he made! "Normally", he said, "a strange emotion, spirit, ecstasy pervade those present at the closure of the Olympics. "But this time", he said, "he was able to sense it at the beginning itself".

WORDS OF WISDOM

For a democracy, we require freedom of thought and expression. This demands respect for minority opinion.

—Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

In a democracy, changes are made by mutual discussion and persuasion and not by violent means.

—Jawaharlal Nehru

Democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep; under democracy, individual liberty of opinion

and action is jealously guarded.

—Mahatma Gandhi

Democracy means tolerance: tolerance not merely of those who agree with us but of those who do not agree with us.

—Jawaharlal Nehru

Democracy means more than popular government and majority rule, much more than a system of political techniques to flatter or deceive powerful blocs of voters.

—John F. Kennedy

(Collected by Jupiter)

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

News Briefs

Only prop

Only Pakistan supported Sri Lanka's stand when the UN Sub-Committee on Human Rights, meeting in Geneva this week, discussed allegations of human rights violations in the country.

RTC on 21st

The Round Table Conference, which was reconvened on 17th August after an interval of 25 days, again adjourned for 21st August after a plenary session of 25 minutes.

Army move out

Army personnel who were stationed at Rane Theatre opposite the Main Bus Terminal for the last few days have vacated the place. A complaint was made that their presence in the heart of the town had created a certain amount of tension.

Annual Festivals

The Annual Festival of the Sri Perumal Kovil, Ponnalai, commenced with the flag hoisting ceremony on 4.8.84 and will continue till 22.8.84.

The Annual Feast of Our Lady of Madhu was celebrated on 15.8.84. All arrangements for the Feast were made by Rev. Fr. J.P. Thevaraja. Last year this Feast was not held on account of the disturbances. The July Feast of Our Lady of Madhu on 2.7.84 was well attended by devotees.

Bury Rubbish

The Sanitary and Health Branch of the Jaffna Municipal Council has requested all residents to bury their rubbish, at home, as scavenging labourers were unable to get about on account of the prevailing tension.

People Quit Homes

In Mannar and Adampan areas, many people have left their dwellings on account of untoward happenings during the last few days.

Last Journey

The last rites of Allikumaran Anandan, who collapsed and died while attempting to swim the English Channel were held in London.

Present at the ceremonies were his mother, wife and two children, brother and sister and many Sri Lankan Tamils.

An inquest into the cause of his death will be held on 6.9.84.

Fishermen's Appeal

The Fishermen of Matthagal have made an appeal to the Minister of Fisheries, Festus Perera, to ensure that they continue their fishing operations which have been disrupted since 4.8.84.

They have stated that on account of harassment by security personnel on the beaches, they have been compelled to beach their fishing crafts. They have requested that sufficient security be provided to continue their fishing operations to eke out their livelihood.

Elevated Status

St. Xavier's College, Mannar, has been raised to the status of a Madhya Maha Vidiyalayam.

Chunnakam

After the incidents of the last 10 days Chunnakam is gradually returning to normal. The Market, shops and other establishments are being opened and the people are generally getting about their business.

Lalith 'shells' Bishop

The Minister of National Security Lalith Athulathmudali said on Tuesday that the Bishop of Jaffna, the Rt. Rev. Dr. B. Deogupillai, had "a lot of connections with The Boys" and that more information would be made public shortly.

The Minister made this observation in reference to a Reuter report which had quoted the Bishop as saying that he could not condemn "The Boys" because they were militants fighting for a cause.

The Bishop was also reported to have said that the danger was not from the people but from the Army.

Mr. Athulathmudali commenting on the Bishop's sympathies, said the Bishop would have better knowledge of "the Boys".

"He had written to the 'Tamil Times' and said that the attack on the Buddhist Temple and a Sinhala school in the North was a natural reaction of "the Boys".

Commenting on increased terrorist activity in the North, the Minister said that there were attacks on the Kayts and Valvettiturai Police Stations in the

early hours of Tuesday morning.

"The Kayts Police station was attacked and the Police fired back. The terrorists withdrew. There were no casualties on the terrorists side. The attack lasted 15 minutes. They attacked with bombs and guns", he said.

The attack on the Valvettiturai station, Mr. Athulathmudali said, lasted 45 minutes and there, too, with no casualties among the Armed forces.

The Minister said the latest investigations revealed that no bodies were found at the Chunnakam

Police station, which had been attacked in August. He said that if there were any, the terrorists would have removed them.

He added that investigations had shown that no Service personnel were involved in the incident at Mannar where several shops were burnt.

Note by the Editor:

To put the record straight, what the Bishop had said in his statement to the Tamil Times (as corroborated in a letter in The Island on 9th August) was that the attack was a "spontaneous and natural reaction from the people in general" and not of "the boys" as stated by the Minister.

Chunnakam:

'Wild Allegation'

The Armed Services and the Police were kept out of operation to extricate bodies believed to have been buried within the Chunnakam Police Station with good reason, the Minister of National Security Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali told the press on 15th August, (according to the Daily News.)

He said that no sooner had the explosion occurred on Saturday evening 11th August, reducing the Police Station to ruins than the "terrorist press" levelled "all sorts of wild accusations" at the services. The explosives which went off were alleged to have been left behind by the police, together with a number of prisoners.

In order that an impartial version of what had actually happened could be made available, the Assistant Government Agent of the District (a Tamil) supervised by the Government Agent, was requested to conduct the operation.

Their report was that no evidence of what had been alleged had been found.

"The usual pattern of terrorist behaviour after a Police Station had been eva-

uated was to go into it with bottles of liquor to celebrate.

"It was possible that the explosives they had taken in to blow up the police station had gone off while they were enjoying themselves", the Minister said.

HOW ABOUT VVT?

All buildings in Mannar damaged by fire last week will be rebuilt by the Government at state expense, regardless of who was responsible, the Minister of National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali said on 15th August.

The Minister said reports were being awaited by the Government on who was responsible for the holocaust in which several shops in the town were destroyed.

Mr. Athulathmudali, who was speaking to the press, announced that two inquirers, the Minister of Transport, Mr. M. H. Mohamed and the District

Minister for Mannar, Mr. M. E. H. Mahroof, were at the spot on 16th August and were expected to submit their reports soon.

The "severest action" would be taken against any members of the Armed Services who were found to have been responsible, the Minister repeated. "There will be no effort to cover up a tragedy such as this".

Meanwhile, the Minister announced that similar incidents were reported from Silavaturai and Murunkan, where buildings had been set on fire.

Daily News, 16th August