

# Saturday Review

## SRI LANKA

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# WHO'S AFRAID OF RAJIV?

LSSP General Secretary Bernard Soysa's article, reproduced in our 8th March issue from the CHRISTIAN WORKER, should open the eyes of those in the South who believe that it is the Tamil militant groups who are standing in the way of a negotiated settlement of the ethnic problem. He met representatives of the five main groups in Madras recently.

According to him, "Those who were at the discussions said that they had no desire to fight the Sinhala people or any other community. They wanted to live in peace with all in the Island. It was their earnest desire that the present struggle should not be converted into a 'civil war between the Sinhalese and the Tamils.'"

"I said that the present course of events had led to an intensification of communal hatred on every side. I stated that the reiteration of the demand for a separate state of Eelam roused communal hatred among all others and principally among the Sinhala people."

"They replied by saying that the fact that they went to Thimpu and participated in the discussions there, both formal and informal, and even more, the fact that they had now consented to the TULF's formulating propositions and negotiating meant that the ENLF is prepared for a negotiated settlement. There were those who had some hope while there were also those who had no hope."

The groups were reiterating what they had told the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW in Madras in December 1984. Their views were promptly conveyed to the

Government. That was 15 months ago!

So many lives lost since then; so much destruction caused; so much human misery.

All the communities are suffering; not the Tamil community alone.

Where is all this going to end? In civil war?

In the meantime, the national economy is sliding downhill fast.

The precariousness of the economic situation has been underscored by Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel in a number of his recent speeches.

\* Owing to the heavy defence expenditure — Rs. 6.5 billion a year — there will be no money for new development projects.

\* Even existing projects may have to be curtailed or abandoned.

\* And there is increasing resistance from among donor countries to request for more aid — because

they find that much of the money is misused.

The Government has so far been able to contain the simmering discontent in the South through resort to repressive laws and even thuggery.

But there is a time when even a worm will turn.

The Philippines scenario should be a warning to the Government!

We urge the Government to stop the India — baiting and instead use New Delhi's good offices to bring an end to the ethnic conflict.

With this problem out of the way, there will be no limit to the heights that Sri Lanka could achieve.

We would like to remind the Government what Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi told the Lok Sabha recently.

Refuting as 'baseless' the Government charge of Indian 'involvement' in Sri Lanka's ethnic problem, he said "India had only tried to help evolve a negotiated political settlement. We wanted Sri Lanka to do more than just profess its faith in a political solution. There should be concrete action in this direction."

## AIDMK, COMMUNISTS KEEP MUM GET TOUGH WITH LANKA, INDIAN MPS URGE

Representatives of nine opposition groups have accused the Indian Government of pursuing a vacillating policy towards the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka.

They have urged the Government to consider economic measures against Sri Lanka, to shed its role of a mediator and to identify itself with the Tamils in the island.

Mr. Nedumaran, who had brought video recordings from strife-torn areas of Sri Lanka, said he had been waiting since October for an appointment with the Prime

Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi.

He contended that if recognition could be given to SWAPO and the PLO, the same status could be extended to the Tamil Eelam movement.

The two communist parties and the AIADMK are not signatories to the joint statement. Mr. Gopalaswami explained that while the CPI leaders were all away for their party congress, the CPM had reservations and the AIADMK was not willing to criticise the Centre.

According to Mr. Gopalaswami, no issue had aroused so much pas-

sion in Tamil Nadu as the plight of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. This was reflected in the local body elections, he said.

The statement was signed by Mr. M. S. Gurupadasamy (Janata), Mr. L. K. Advani (BJP), Mr. P. Unnikrishnan (Cong. S), Mr. Vee- rendra Varma (Lok Dal), Mr. Murasoli Maran (DMK), Mr. G. M. Banatwalla (Muslim League), Mr. P. Upendra (Telugu Desam), Mr. P. Nedumaran (Tamil Nadu Congress (K) and Mr. Gulam Rasool Mato (National Conference).

There was a **landmine blast** on the Vavuniya-Kandy Road in which 7 police commandos were reportedly injured. In retaliation the following were shot dead—Mrs. Gnaneswary Maheswaran (43) a mother of 7 children, a dry fish vendor—Manickam Thuraiarajah, Sathasivam Kamalavathi (22) of Pandarikulam, Govindan, a vegetable seller and a one legged beggar.

In a sequel, the Colombo-bound Yarl Devi was set on fire on the 25th of March at Omanthai by a group of unknown persons. In another blast at Kiththulootru in Trincomalee three soldiers were killed and four injured on the same day.

## 'BOYS' HAVE SAMs?

The current issue of the prestigious, London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies' (ISS) military balance for 1985/86 says Sri Lankan Tamil militants are armed with Soviet-made surface-to-air missiles (SAM).

## BOMBERS GROUNDED

The Government decided on Monday (24th March) not to resume aerial bombardment in the North and East.

Air strikes were suspended for a week from 15th March.

The National Security Council which met on Monday to review the situation, recommended the continued suspension of aerial bombing.

## DANIEL PASSES AWAY

One of the Tamil pioneers of the Socialist Realism school of writing in Sri Lanka, K. Daniel, passed away on Sunday (23rd March) in Tanjavor, South India, where he had gone for medical treatment. The remains were interred there on 24th Monday.

Daniel, a novelist and short-story writer, won the Sahithiya Academy prize twice.

This issue was printed on Wednesday due to press holidays.

## Release ALL Political detenus in Sri Lanka jails



## Saturday Review SRI LANKA

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EDITOR  
GAMINI NAVARATNE

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# S. KATHIRAVETPILLAI REMEMBERED

The fifth death anniversary of Mr. S. Kathiravetpillai, M. P., falls on 31st March.

During a lifespan stretching from October 1924 to 31st March 1981, Kathiravetpillai was known as a philosopher, scholar, eminent lawyer and a Member of Parliament who took his constituency seriously — an outmoded concept. Everyone who knew him privately remembers him as an immensely compassionate man of few words. A charming aspect of his character was his humility in the face of his superior intellect. He was patient with all comers and I do not think he would have used the word 'fool' on a person even in private. If he became angry, it was in the face of perceived dishonesty and immorality.

The public importance of Kathiravetpillai stems from the fact that he was a leading member of the TULF whilst it was playing its most crucial public role in the late 70's, and could then have been called its leading intellectual. In a pamphlet *Co-existence; Not Confrontation* he wrote: "Ceylon, now Sri Lanka, is the island home of two nations — the Sinhalese and the Tamils. They differ from each other by history, territory, language, religion, culture and traditions. This is the indisputable fact of over 2500 years of Ceylon's history. The Tamils have come to realise that their 'right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness' now depends on the restoration and reconstruction of the Tamil state of Eelam in Ceylon."

The first contention is the orthodox history of Kathiravet-

pillai's day, born in the heat of the age of nationalisms, but would be disputed by scholars of integrity today. The second is a succinct statement of the Tamils' state of despair. The proposed solution which Mr. Kathiravetpillai expounded to Sinhalese audiences on many occasions was neither racist nor lunatic as uncomprehending persons have tried to make out. In my several conversations with him, I had come to know that his point of view was well



thought out and born of compassion and a full understanding of the Sinhalese point of view. It would have met many of Jehan Perera's arguments. In comparison to the amount of bloodshed since his death and the consequent discrediting of the Sri Lankan national entity — an eminent Sinhalese who was in Hong Kong during the naval bombardment of Valvettiturai in August 1984, remarked in shock, 'we may as well concede Eelam' — the practicalities of Mr. Kathiravetpillai's solution would have seemed small. I can recall his telling a Sinhalese audience, 'you complain about too

many University places for the Tamils, and you complain about the misappropriation of the lands of Kandyan peasants by our erstwhile colonial masters and the consequent influx of Indian Tamils. We accept these grievances. If we agree to live separately all these will be sorted out. If you will let the upcountry Tamils move to the Northern and Eastern provinces, the problem of landless Kandyan peasantry will be solved. That will also remove the issues of colonisation and statelessness, and we can live happily and separately as friends.'

Kathiravetpillai believed in non-violence and even on his last mission believed that separation can be achieved by non-violent political means. He believed in the moral strength of his cause and would not compromise. For this he believed would weaken the cause and he believed implicitly that no government in Colombo can be sincere. Instead of meeting his arguments by rational and genuine decentralisation the government has now resorted to bombing and shelling the Tamil civilian population. With Tamil peasants being killed every day by the security forces the law, the principal arm of the state, has ceased to have any meaning. The Sri Lankan state has been discredited by its principal defenders. For the Tamils, it is a struggle for life and dignity — sometimes in the face of even fratricidal strife engendered by an extreme situation. What we lack profoundly is Kathiravetpillai's stout reassurance.

Rajan Hoole

## EASTER'S MESSAGE OF HOPE

Many, many years ago, one sad Sunday morning, a few forlorn women came to the tomb where the dead body of Jesus Christ was laid. They had come to embalm the body with spices they had prepared. But they found the tomb opened and the body of Christ missing. As they stood there, perplexed, two angels appeared to them and said, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here but is risen, remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and the third day rise again.'" (Luke 24:5-7). This message brings hope to oppressed people all over the world.

Jesus did good to the people. He was a lover of the common

man. He lived among the poor, loved them and served them. His jealous, religious, self-righteous enemies condemned Him and committed Him into the hands of the ruling Romans who mercilessly tortured Him and then crucified Him. He was laid in a tomb and just as He had promised, He rose again from the grave, on the third day.

This has a message for Sri Lanka too! Jesus said, "I am the Way, The TRUTH and the Life" (John 14:6). The people in power can try to torture and kill 'TRUTH' and bury it, but one day it will come out again. "Lies die and are buried and they remain buried, but TRUTH will rise again." History has proved it time and again. We can be sure that it will happen here in Sri Lanka too.

—Anton Ravindran

## PAK-LANKA

### Military Ties Worry India

India is deeply concerned about the growing military links between Pakistan and Sri Lanka, according to a Reuter report from New Delhi, which quotes a government report.

According to the government report, "The growing military nexus between Pakistan and Sri Lanka is being viewed with some concern."

The government report did not give details of these links but said India was also 'seriously concerned' by reports that Israeli intelligence units and British security experts are helping Sri Lanka.



**TAMIL FEARS AND ASPIRATIONS: MR. M. SIVASITHAMPARAM, PRESIDENT TAMIL UNITED LIBERATION FRONT:**

Tamils have genuine fears, hence they have demands. History has been prostituted by Sinhalese scholars, even men like Prof. K. M. de Silva retracting statements he had made previously. When Ponnampalam asked for 50—50 representation, what he asked for was balanced representation. Trouble started when Britain began sharing power with the Sinhalese. The conflict is political and racial, not religious. You wanted to make Tamils second class citizens. This is substantiated by a number of events (i) Sinhala Flag was made the national flag. The 1972 Constitution put in 4 bodhi leaves, to make it a Sinhala/

## OXFORD UNION SEMINAR

# AN ISLAND IN TURMOIL — 2

Buddhist lion flag. (ii) Over 1 million plantation workers disenfranchised, to reduce the power of Tamils (in 1947 they sent in 7 members to Parliament, in 1977 Thondaman was the only elected representative) (iii) Education. In 1969 merit system. In 1974 the Tamils allowed in were drastically cut (Figures from C.R.D. Silva quoted). UNP promised rectification. In 1978 they kept their word and went back to merit. When Tamil entrance increased Cyril Mathew accused the Tamil teachers were cheating: when Tamil MPs challenged that a public enquiry be called, nothing

was said. C. Mathew was already a problem case in 1978, but it took the government 7 years to find out. But then the UNP introduced another system, and Tamils were again barred from the University. (iv) Employment—most discriminating against Tamils, especially under J.R. Jayewardene. Even J.R. admitted "This is the only field in which you are right". The President conceded to discrimination against Tamils. (v) Colonisation. Yes. Tamils have houses in Colombo. My own house was burnt, with the Buddha statue I had. But the houses were bought with hard earned money,

not with government funds. From 1946-81, there has been an 8 fold increase in Sinhalese in the Eastern province. Hence a separate seat was allocated for a Sinhalese. Sinhalese are welcome to come to the Northern and Eastern provinces, but buy the land with your money. Do not send the criminal lot under State rehabilitation programs. When we asked for our rights, you attacked us. In 1956 we asked for our language rights, you beat up the volunteers in front of Parliament in Galle Face. Killed political prisoners—Day 1:38. Day 2:17 people killed. In Badulla in 1983 a whole family with seven children, you burnt to death. Army atrocities—800 villages destroyed in Trincomalee. You raised no voice in

(Continued on page 7)

## Sinhala Colonisation Is No Solution

The text of a pamphlet issued by the Movement for Inter-racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE):

The settlement of peasants, on dry zone lands brought under irrigation, has been one of the key elements in policies for agricultural development followed by successive Governments in Sri Lanka since the 1930s. The State has undertaken the construction of the irrigation works, the clearing of land, the selection of allottees to occupy the land and the construction of basic housing and other amenities. Up to about 1981, 488,000 peasant families have been settled in over a million acres. More families have been settled since then in the areas brought under irrigation by the Mahaweli project.

### SAFETY VALVE

State-aided land settlement on this scale was essentially a strategy of the extension and preservation of peasant production. Its motivation was the politically conceived need of the ruling elite to placate an impoverished peasantry who were suffering from a scarcity of arable land and the lack of employment opportunities in other sectors; it was thus firmly rooted in the context of electoral politics based on universal franchise. It also had the advantage of preserving traditional agrarian relationships in other parts of the country by relieving peasant pressure.

This process acquired ethnic overtones with the expansion of such colonisation schemes into areas that had been traditionally occupied by Tamil people since the greater number of selected allottees were Sinhala. The practice was defended on the ground that

(1) the expenditure came from the National budget & benefits should therefore be shared among all citizens and (2) there were not enough Tamil peasants to take up all the available lands.

The implications of such settlements for ethnic relations in the country were recognised by the political leaders of the Sinhala and Tamil people. The demography of the predominantly Tamil areas, particularly in the Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Vavuniya, and Mullaitivu Districts was being slowly changed putting into jeopardy the ability of the Tamil people to reproduce themselves as an ethnic group with a linguistic and cultural identity of their own.

This was one of the main grievances expressed at the convention of the Federal Party in 1956: it called for "the immediate cessation of the colonisation of the traditional Tamil speaking areas with Sinhalese people". Since then land settlement has been one of the main areas of ethnic tension.

The importance of this issue was recognised in the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam pact of July 1957 "it was agreed that in the matter of colonisation schemes the powers of the regional council shall include the power to select allottees to whom lands within the area of authority shall be allocated and also power to select personnel to be employed for work on such schemes". The alienation of lands under the Gal-oya scheme was however left undefined.

The lack of any agreed procedure for the colonisation of such lands after the collapse of the B-C

pact and the continuing settlement of such peasants in these areas made the problem more acute. It is this recognition that underlay the more specific provisions of the aborted Senanayake-Chelvanayakam pact of March 1965: "Mr. Senanayake further agreed that in the granting of land under colonisation schemes, the following priorities will be observed in the Northern and Eastern Provinces: (a) first, the landless persons in the District. (b) second, to Tamil speaking persons resident in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. (c) third, to other citizens of Ceylon, preference being given to Tamil residents in the rest of the island."

This formulation makes it quite clear that the intent was to prevent changes in the demographic composition of the areas inhabited by Tamil speaking people. However the settlement of Sinhala people in these areas continued and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that it was a policy of political aggrandisement consciously and deliberately adopted by the Sinhala political leaders.

The present proposals of the Government to settle 250,000 Sinhala peasants in the Northern and Eastern areas is a more naked continuation of previous policies and is designed to alter for good the population mix in these areas, to dilute the political power of the Tamil people through a dilution of their electoral bases and to deny them the territorial basis of their separate identity.

### AUXILIARIES

The further proposals to give these settlers training in weaponry and to arm them is an indication

that they are also being thought of as auxiliaries to the Security Forces in their war against the armed separatists. The move should therefore be seen as one of ethnic confrontation in line with recent statement about the 'border'. It is only in this context that the Tamil people will perceive the proposal.

Thus it can be concluded that this proposal is an integral part of the solution to the ethnic problem being now pursued by this Government: the suppression of the armed separatists and of the Tamil people by military force and the subsequent installation of systems of local Government for areas of mixed ethnicity. Recent proposals to take under State protection and care Buddhist places of worship in the Northern and Eastern areas and to redefine some district boundaries should also be seen as part of this strategy. All this amounts to a denial of Tamil ethnicity.

In calling for a political solution that encompasses a genuine devolution of power to the Tamil people, we have expressed our opposition to a military solution. We now wish to express our total opposition to the proposals for the State-sponsored and State-aided settlement of Sinhala people in the predominantly Tamil areas. We believe that this will only exacerbate the tensions between the two peoples and increase the propensity for violent clashes. It will postpone the day when the two peoples can live together in a harmonious relationship.

We call upon the Government to drop this proposal and to proceed forthwith to work out with the representatives of the Tamil people a political solution that recognises their territorial, linguistic and cultural identity.



# All Censorship

A couple of references to my Emergency 58 in the New Lankan Review evoked some reflections about its writing and publication which I thought might interest you and your readers. It was not written as some supposed, to offer a solution to the problem of the "race riots" of a quarter of a century ago. Nor to earn some extra money which, to every vendor of words, is a proper motive. It was a journalist's protest at being prevented by censorship from reporting the terrible events of that time and a way of refusing to be thwarted by authority, competent or not, from practising my trade. But, of course, like everyone else I had a "solution" to the problem. The exacerbating issue in those riots was language—not ethnicity or territoriality—and my solution was that the Sinhalese and Tamil people should realise that language was "only" a means of communication (pass the seeni-sambal, how much is a half pound of jadi?, which way to the Income Tax department?, et cetera) and nothing more. Ergo, it was absurd to quarrel over a means of communication because the result was discommunication between people who had lived side by side for more than 2000 years.

I thought that it was absurd for Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, then Prime Minister, to insist on all Ceylonese using Sinhala only even on their motor car registration plates, and equally absurd for the proponents of Tamil also to poke him in the eye by using the Tamil 'Sri' on their number plates. My "solution" was that we should all recognise that language was a means and not an end.

It took me a long time to realise that I was wrong. Reporting "race" conflicts later in many parts of the world and the role of language in them, I realised that language is not only a practical mechanism of communication but also the repository of people's culture, the idiom and, often, the substance of their dreams and the incessant traffic of their minds. We think in words; therefore, we live in words. The way we use words tells who we are. It is language which separates us from animals. That is why we like to believe that dolphins are 'human' when we discover coherent patterns in the sounds they make. In the beginning and in the middle and at the end is the word.

Sir Oliver Goonetilleke (then Governor - General), like most clever people, wanted to have it both ways; to censor the news of the riots and not to be respon-

sible for doing it. He wanted us editors to be our own censors. But he, as Competent Authority, would retain the ultimate right to judge if we had gone too far or not. He made it sound like a gift of trust. We editors, Sinhalese as well as Tamils, were, after all, patriots who could be relied upon to do the right thing, couldn't we? But mind you, according to his lights. I said no thank you. He asked why not. Before I responded, someone else—I don't recall who (it may have been Tori de Souza)—said it was like giving him a knife to cut the news or cut his own throat. I said all censorship was anathema to a journalist. I was full of such certitudes in those days. Even as I said this, a thought flickered in my mind: but, surely, a sort of self-censorship goes on all the time in our subconscious as we edit

be higher than you th-th-th-th-think."

We played the uneasy game for a week or two. The dreadful news everywhere was fanned into devouring flames by rumour. The Hindu priest at the Panadura Kovil was burnt alive. The Buddha image at a shrine in Delft had been decapitated and hammered into rubble. If that news had got out the language riots would have turned into a religious war. Sir Oliver ordered the Embassy in Rangoon to send Algy de Silva, one of the senior secretaries there, with a Burmese substitute and had it placed in Delft without the public knowing it. The police in Colombo stood by and watched as Tamils were abused, beaten up and murdered and their homes and shops looted and burnt. And my typewriter which had clattered and cat-

## TARZIE VITTACHI'S OBSERVATIONS AT A TIME OF EMERGENCY

FROM THE NEW LANKAN REVIEW (1985)

copy? Isn't that what we call responsible journalism and professionalism? Wasn't it what had promoted me to play down the Prime Minister's reckless identification of the victim of a murder in Batticaloa, as a Sinhalese in a predominantly Tamil area, so of judging what and how much my readers should know? So why this posturing about censorship? The answer I gave myself was that we journalists were more competent to make that judgement than a Competent Authority. Then why not accept the responsibility Sir Oliver was offering?

Clarity came like the angel of mercy in the nick of time. It was not a question of competence, but of authority. I said I would not accept responsibility without authority. If the government retained final authority to judge the appropriateness of what we printed, the government should be responsible for the decision, and I would abide by the rules, under protest, as long as I thought they were fair. When I felt the rules were unfair I would flout them and pay the price. Sir Oliver, smiling like a benign Beelzebub said: "the p-p-p-price may

called and thundered at a thousand lesser events, was silent.

One day, I heard people shouting on the street below my office. I saw a woman, a Tamil by her clothes and ear-rings dripping from overstretched lobes, roundly pregnant, trotting grotesquely down the street as three or four young Sinhalese boys with their sarongs hiked high, took flying kicks at her belly. A truck-load of policemen sat by, the men laughing at the boys' antics. My world went electric-white and I heard myself thumping on Esmond Wickremasinghe's desk screaming "I'm getting the hell out of here". He understood my rage because he knew, I think, that nothing was real to me until I wrote it and saw it in print. At home I hammered away at my old Remington, the rage and the sense of outrage keeping high. I'd never known that a man's rage could be sustained at that pitch for three and a half weeks. I wrote without stopping except for toilet and occasionally to call the office to check a fact. My two-fingered skill with the machine could scarcely keep up with the words boiling out of my head like lava stones.

When it was done, in the same clothes I had been in since I had stormed out of Lake House, bearded, filthy, I went to London. A friend lent me a top coat against the cold and I hawked the typescript around the publishing houses. They were startled by my unkempt looks but caught the fever of the words in my book and said "We will put it on our Autumn List, our Christmas list...". And I barked "Next Autumn?" My country is burning now and you will publish in the Autumn? At last, I found my man. Andre Deutsch knew my need. He himself was a refugee from Hungary and had experienced the brutality of people behaving insanely, inhumanly, to bring about a more humane society. Andre said "I'll give it to you in three weeks. But you will be in trouble back home. Let me use a nom-de-plume". I shouted at him "What the hell do you mean? This is me. This is what I am. I will not hide under a pen name." And he said, very gently "I'm thinking not of you but of your wife and children. Ask her if I'm to use your own name or not. Send me a telegram saying yes or no". At home I told her of Andre's suggestion and, characteristically, clearly, unhesitatingly she said "Aaah? You write a book and put some other name on it? That is very funny." So I cabled "yes" and waited for the sky to fall on me.

The wire services carried the news of the publication and the Press notices in London. Mr. Bandaranaike banned the book—just by ordering the Customs not to let it in. Mr. C. Suntheralingam a revered teacher, then an M.P., told the Prime Minister that if the book was not released he would read it from cover to cover on the floor of the House, and into Hansard.

The Prime Minister raved against me. He said he wished there were editors in Ceylon like the editor of the Manchester Guardian and the Spectator—the papers he had been weaned on in England. That same day the Guardian reviewed the book: "Scrupulously impartial" and the Spectator denounced the government's handling of the communal violence in its notice of Emergency '58.

Our family was torn. My wife's father, M. W. H. de Silva was Minister of Justice and a senior



# is Abhorrent

Cabinet Minister. In the book I had criticised his Ministry and challenged its facts about the killings. He came home the day the Prime Minister attacked the book in Parliament. He played with our little son, teased me as Sinhala parents do: "What is this, man? These children are so thin. Don't you feed them enough?" And as he left, he chuckled our daughter under her chin and remarked: "So Putha, I suppose you too will write books when you grow up." That was the only reference to the storm of which I was the centre.

Mr. Bandaranaike was set on suing me for criminal libel. It was item one on the Cabinet agenda one morning. The Minister of Justice felt that his presence would embarrass his colleagues and decided to be half an hour late so that they could come to a decision to sue his son-in-law. When he arrived, there was such a deafening silence that he realised at once what had happened. The Prime Minister had said it was unfair to discuss the item behind the Justice Minister's back and put it off for later. Mutual courtesy had a place in public life in those days. My father-in-law said 'Well, go ahead and sue him!' and advised them on the law. Some, like Mr. Stanley de Zoysa who had often been pilloried in my column, were jubilant that they had got me. Others like Mr. Philip Gunawardena, who was no friend of mine, could sense my father-in-law's feelings as a man and advised dropping the idea. The Prime Minister asked the Minister of Justice for his advice. He said 'You can sue him. But he will plead public interest and the courts will uphold him.' That ended that.

But Emergency '58 remained under a ban. It went into 4 editions in five months.

There were questions raised about the ethics involved in my exposing abroad the problems of my country by having the book published in London. That touched me on the raw. Had I been treacherous to avoid domestic censorship and vent my frustration as a journalist and my rage as a man by publishing in foreign lands? Was I bound to leave my country's dirty linen hidden under the secretive lid of emergency regulations to prevent alien eyes seeing us for what we were? I knew that one

of my directors for whom I had some quiet respect, thought I had unfairly given people the impression that 'our people' - the Sinhalese - were brutes. I couldn't see that at all. Our people in my heart and mind, were all the Ceylonese-Sinhalese, Tamils, Moors, Arabs and Burghers. I wrestled with these questions for many months. I refused to appease my mind with familiar fat shibboleths such as "A journalist's job is to hold up a mirror to reality, et cetera, et cetera" the glib self-serving claptrap of the Beaverbrooks, the Kemsleys and the International Press Institute's editors who pretended they were in virtuous pursuit of objectivity. I was not being "objective" - consciously or unconsciously when I wrote Emergency '58. I was angry as I had never been before or since. As I said in the

vate number. He picked up the phone and I asked, "Sir Oliver, how bad is it?" He said "The w-worst".

I still had no clue what it was. I asked "Any details yet?" And he said "A Buddhist p-p-priest has sh-sh-shot him." I didn't know who. So I said, "You are in a hurry. I'll call you again in 15 minutes or so. Where will you be, Sir Oliver?" He said irritably "Rosmead P-P-P-Place, of course" and hung up. Very little checking was needed to confirm the story and, we got the first edition out with the bare news within the hour.

The next morning the official bulletin announced that Mr. Bandaranaike, had said, "A man in yellow robes shot me..." It was a very dangerous statement. We al-

'IF CENSORSHIP HAS A  
HIGH PRICE TAG,  
PAY IT THAT IS THE  
VALUE OF THE JOB.'

introduction to the book, I didn't know how it was possible to be anything other than enraged when people were being hacked to death or burned alive around me. And, the only way I could do something within my power was to write, publish and be damned if need be. I come back to what I said to Sir Oliver: a journalist must resist all censorship from outside his own head. And pay the price.

Mr. Bandaranaike's government was teetering on the brink of collapse when he was assassinated. But no one could possibly have guessed that his end would come as it did. That morning on September 26, I gave a special assignment to Ranji Handy, the Chief reporter on the Observer. She was to interview the Inspector General of Police about the curious failure of the police to arrest an absconding convicted criminal who was a close relation of a Cabinet Minister. She rushed back to the Office from Police Headquarters and told me that something startling had evidently happened but she did not know what. The interview was going well when the 'phone rang and the IGP had said into it in alarm: "What? How? My God!" and rushed out with no explanation. I asked myself who would be the first to know if some enormity had occurred. I called Sir Oliver's pri-

ready knew it was a Buddhist monk and even his ordained name, Somarama. If we published the bulletin as it was the impression would have been created that it was someone disguised as a bhikku. People might have thought it was a Tamil and, worse, a Tamil Catholic and all hell would have been unleashed. We refused to let him cry havoc and instead published the fact that the assassin had indeed been a monk.

There, again we journalists had made a political judgement about the publication of an item of news. And the Prime Minister's statement, especially at such a moment,

was undoubtedly news by any definition.

Were we professionally wrong? I think not. Had we arrogated to ourselves the right to judge what the public should and should not know? Yes but not unjustly. Did we then know better than the Prime Minister of our country about the temper of the people? Yes and journalists usually do.

I have since argued the case for such journalistic restraint in times of civil turbulence in many professional assemblies. Most of my American colleagues don't go along at all. The only feature of their constitution which they seem to value is the First Amendment which forbids any abridgement of the freedom of expression. They seem to ignore the important truth that the First Amendment was intended to protect the Press from infringements of their rights by the state. Their obligation to judge what they should or not publish in the public interest which they are pledged to serve is another matter. The British Press, on the contrary, is more sensitive to their obligations, taking their rights much for granted. The very existence of a National Press Council—however poorly it works—is an admission that journalists do have ethical responsibilities as well as rights. The Americans made a tentative stab at a similar Council but soon scrapped it because the big boys in the game would not play. When I asked one of them, the editor of a respected mid-western daily, to explain why, he told me recently: "I jes' lerve the First Amendment".

To return to the question of censorship, where do we stand? I stand by the proposition stated at the start of these notes: all censorship, except the sensitive and conscientious judgement of the professional editor, is to be abhorred and resisted with all one's might and fury. If it has a high price tag, pay it. That is the value of the job.

## AI Launches Campaign Against Rights Violations In South Africa

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL (AI) has launched a new worldwide campaign of pressure for an end to imprisonment on racial and political grounds, torture and other human rights abuses in South Africa.

The movement, which numbers over 500,000 members, supporters and subscribers around the world, pointed to a dramatic escalation in abuses over the past year. It said

the country's authorities must be made aware of the depth of feeling in international public opinion.

The campaign started with an open letter to State President P.W. Botha spelling out ten steps needed to protect basic human rights. Taking those steps, the letter said, would be evidence of a commitment to end the violations.

— AI News Release



# RESURRECTING ANNEXURE C

Editor  
SATURDAY REVIEW

In view of Sri Lanka's interest in resurrecting Annexure C, I give below extracts of a few vital clauses of the document in order to refresh the memory of the readers.

"Annexure C emerged after discussions in November 1983, during J.R. Jayewardene's visit to New Delhi for the Commonwealth summit."

"These proposals are in the context of the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka." 1. "The Constitution and other laws dealing with the official language Sinhala and the national language, Tamil, be accepted and implemented as well as similar laws dealing with the National Flag and Anthem." (Clause 12.) 2. "The District Development Councils in a Province be permitted to combine into one or more Regional Councils by Referendum in that district," "within each Province." (Clause 1 & 2). 3. "A national policy on land settlement and the basis on which the Government will undertake land colonisation will have to be worked out. All settlement schemes should be based on ethnic proportions so as not to alter the demographic balance subject to agreement being reached on major projects." (Clause 11). (Note the implications of "demographic balance" as against the demographic ratio of 1931 census or 1981 census). 4. "The leader of the party which commands a majority in the Regional Council would be formally appointed by the President as the Chief Minister of the Region." (Clause 3) 5. "The President and the Parliament will continue to have overall responsibility over all subjects not transferred to the regions." (Clause 4). 6. "The legislative power of the Region would be vested in the Regional Councils which would be empowered to enact laws and exercise executive powers in relation thereto on certain specified listed subjects including the maintenance of internal Law and Order in the Region, the Administration of Justice, Social and Economic Development, Cultural matters and Land Policy. The list of subjects which will be allocated to the Regions will be worked out in detail." (Clause 5). 7. "The Regional Council will also have the power to levy taxes, cess or fees" and to receive "grants, allocations or subventions made by the Republic." (Clause 6) 8. "The armed forces of Sri Lanka will adequately reflect the national ethnic position. In the Northern and Eastern regions, the Police forces

for internal security will also reflect the ethnic composition of these regions." (Clause 9). 9. "A Port Authority under the Central Government will be set up for administering the Trincomalee Port and Harbour." (Clause 10)

S.R. ASIRVATHAM

Thirunelvely

## CO-EXISTENCE

Editor  
SATURDAY REVIEW

The one prolific source of all ills since Independence in this country composed of multi-ethnic communities, Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, Burghers and others pro-

## LETTERS

fessing different faiths. Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity is the vaulting ambition of those controlling the destiny of this island nation of a heterogeneous population to transform it into a monolithic and homogeneous nation of one race, one language and one religion.

A recent example of this tendency has been manifested in the attempts made in the wake of the new citizenship law conferring Lankan citizenship on about 94,000 Estate Labourers of Indian origin to assimilate them lock and stock barrel into the main Sinhala community without allowing them to retain their collective identity and mother tongue.

What is required to forge unity in diversity is a radical all round change of heart and consciousness and a de-facto recognition that this country belongs, not nominally but actually, to all its citizens irrespective of race, creed or language.

Dr. K. Subramaniam

Point Pedro

## THE GAP

Editor  
SATURDAY REVIEW

Why are the Muslims of Sri Lanka separated from the Tamils even though they are linked together on the basis of language?

Every neutral citizen of Sri Lanka obviously knows that it's because

of South-based newspapers and some communal minded politicians.

Muslims speak Tamil and study in the Tamil medium even when they are living in pure Sinhalese areas. As Dr. B. Mahmud said the gap between these communities should be bridged. Last year's Tamil-Muslim clash was created by some anti-social elements. Later the Muslim people learnt the truth. So Tamils or Muslims should not be provoked by such elements and a good, cordial relationship must be cultivated.

Erlalai

C. M. Jaffna - A Student of History

## SHIFTING SANDS

Editor  
SATURDAY REVIEW

A Government built on falsehoods and violence cannot survive long.

Successive Governments in Sri Lanka have all the time fooled both the Sinhalese and Tamils. Many a time they have set up the Sinhalese against the Tamils. They have become blood-thirsty. Now they are setting up the Muslims against the Tamils.

The Tamils are a race with a language, religion, culture, laws and a territory they inherited from ancient times. They have an undeniable right to self determination. If the minimum demand is not accepted, the Sinhalese will be guilty of having paved the way for the division of Sri Lanka.

## APPRECIATIONS

Rev. Dr. M. H. Harrison

The Rev. Dr. Max Hunter Harrison expired in Boston, U. S. A., on Thursday 20th February. He was 91 years of age at the time of his death. He was the doyen of the 20th century American missionaries in this part of the world and came to Jaffna College in 1919 with a B. A. and S. T. M., from the Harvard University. To begin with, he taught Latin and Logic and had a knowledge of over nine languages. He married Miss Minnie Hastings, the daughter of Rev. Dr. Richard Hastings who was principal of Jaffna College from 1899 to 1906, and a grand-niece of Grover Cleveland who was President of the USA twice over.

When the Rev. Bicknell went on furlough in 1923, Dr. Harrison was appointed acting Principal. He returned to the U. S. A. in 1926 and came back to Jaffna College in November, 1928 with a doctorate from Harvard University on a thesis on the Advaita School of Hinduism, later published by the Oxford University Press under the title *Hindu Monism and Pluralism*.

Dr. Harrison left Jaffna College in 1930 to work in the mission area in Manamadurai in South India and soon became the Principal of United Theological College, Bangalore, and retired as its Principal in the mid 1950s after more than 25 years of service there. He then became the Director of the Missionary Research Library at Union Theological Seminary, New York. He visited Jaffna last in 1971 and was feted by the Alumni Association. He was admired by his students as an extremely good teacher, an outstanding and erudite scholar, a fine musician, an honoured Principal, and a truly humble and affectionate Christian missionary.

His interests in Jaffna and South India never flagged and he kept up to the very end a voluminous correspondence with old students and with the administrators of the institutions where he served.

His life was one that was fully devoted to the progress of the Church and education in South India and Jaffna. He will be remembered with much gratitude and praise by all who came to know him.

- A. Kadirgamar

Rajeswary Ganeshalingam

Rajeswary was born to Attorney-at-Law Vannithamby Kumarasamy, B.A., and Sinnathangam in 1909. Having completed her studies at her younger age at Kollankaladdy Tamil School, she went to Ramanathan College and got through her London Matriculation and she was appointed as a teacher there. During that period she got through the Mathurai Tamil Sangha Paalar Panditha examination in the First Class; she won the gold medal and also got through the Intermediate London Exam. She specialised in Hindi and Tamil languages. After the death of her father in 1936 she got married to Mr. Ganeshalingam (Teacher) Irupalai. In 1942 she got through a special degree and obtained a First Class. This was done while she was a teacher at Ramanathan College. In 1946 for one year she went to Annamalai University in order to do the M. Litt. and returned with the same. Continuing, her teaching she was temporarily appointed the Principal of the Teachers' Training College.

She helped to write the summary of 'Kailasamalai' by Muththuras Pandithar in simple verses.

- E. Subramaniam



# AN ISLAND IN TURMOIL—2

(Continued from page 3)

protest. You stood by. Every right-thinking person accepts our demands for self-determination as reasonable. But you took us for a ride. The credibility gap between the Tamil militants and TULF (the killing of 2 TULF men) was created by JR. For 3 years he took the TULF on a ride, promising to alleviate Tamil grievances. Hence the boys lost faith in TULF. After all, who are the boys? They are blood of our blood. (Standing ovation from Tamils). (Following are from answers to questions): Prosperous Tamil businessmen could be counted on fingers. However when you destroy them every 5 years, they won't survive long. The Sri Lankan Constitution has become a joke; it seems in London a man went into a bookshop and asked for the Sri Lankan Constitution. The reply was "Sorry, we do not sell periodicals." The ball is now in the court of JR: we have asked for: Union of States (North and East) a Linguistic state. Full autonomy, like in Canada, Spain, and Philippines. These governments didn't answer with a gun. So TULF has put forward nothing new to the world. Muslims do not want to take a public stand since 2/3rds of them live in Sinhalese areas. No Muslim leader has objected to the one state idea. Muslims will have proportionate representation. As for Tamils in the South, do not say they are happy.

## SINHALA FEARS AND ASPIRATIONS: MR. MAHES WIJESIRI, SECRETARY SRI LANKA ASSOCIATION NORTH WEST:

There are many positive aspects of history. Sinhala people themselves are made up of four nations. All types of people came—and became part of the nation. Race is a mixed gem. Again the common Sinhalese man seriously believes that Tamils are their brothers. They believe that an ancient Sinhalese kingdom collapsed because of malaria. Some of them moved to the North and became immune: this they believe to be the origin of the Tamils. Though from a historical point of view this may be questioned, what is important is that the common man in the South considers the Northern man to be no less superior or no less inferior. Then the Sinhalese saw the Indian Tamils with British help taking over their lands. The 'traditional land' is a racial concept. Sinhalese people resented the loss of their land, the loss of their tradition, feared the invasion by foreign powers. They once feared the British, now they fear India. They

think India would like to have Trincomalee for their nuclear submarines. So they do not want to give it into the hands of Tamils. And 70 percent of coastland will also be lost. So the Sinhalese are frightened. I hope against hope some humane settlement for peace will be made. We have much in common. What we here in Britain can do is for Tamils and Sinhalese to live as brothers. Let brothers be brothers.

## SRI LANKA AND ITS FUTURE: PROF. A.J. WILSON AND MR. B. WEERAKOON. PROF. A.J. WILSON: SRI LANKA—ITS FUTURE AND INTERNATIONAL RAMIFICATIONS:

From July 1983 the two ethnic groups have become permanently estranged. The Sri Lankan government is not pleased with Indian interference. So the SL Government has adopted a deliberate policy of frightening India. Observe (a) Israel South Africa and Pakistan — all India's rivals, deliberately courted by Sri Lanka. Foreign policy is governed by nationalist Sinhalese ideology. They fear India, and its police actions (e.g. Kashmir, Goa). And India will not let Sri Lanka pursue foreign policies threatening India (b) When air bases were once given to Britain, the real fear was not Soviets, but India. Bandaranaike asked Britain to return. So JR tried to evoke this agreement recently (c) Hector Jayewardene's visits to Peking and Japan. But China will not countenance any interference, though they are opposed to a separate nation (like India). Peking did not interfere, however, when Bangladesh was created, despite its friendship with Pakistan. However HJ's visits are for UN propaganda, in case questions about Sri Lanka is raised in the UN. So also Esmond Wickremasinghe's visit to the Soviet Union. Sri Lanka wants to keep India at bay (d) Now Mossad's involvement within US Embassy in Colombo. Muslims (7 per cent) now isolated. This was a minor blunder, since the Islamic countries were opposed to this move (e) US supply of arms through South Africa. 1000 acres of land to USA, Voice of America—able to communicate information at low frequency to submarines. But the Americans are also open to the possibility that the Tamils may win a separate nation—so they also keep in touch with Tamil leaders in the USA. Again Thatcher and Moscow are close to Gandhi. Presidents Zia and Ershard may at any time be overthrown and hence are not dependable. So all

these courtship visits are to get a threatening message across to India. But SL government has forgotten that London, USA and Moscow have delegated India to handle Sri Lanka's problem. Now New Delhi knows that it cannot trust the SL government. But there are still possibilities of peace through an honourable process. The Sinhalese elites must recognise that the Tamils are serious in demanding self-rule. Sinhalese elites think that Tamils are a hindrance to progress. However, a solution is to send Tamils in Colombo to Jaffna over a period of say, 15 years.

## MR. B. WEERAKOON: FUTURE OF SRI LANKA:

I have been a public servant for 30 years in SL. I learnt Tamil for 8 months in Jaffna, then acted for 15 years as secretary to many prime ministers: Sir John Kothelawela, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, Mr. Dahanayake, Mrs. Bandaranaike, Mr. Senanayake. The Prime Ministers had a high mortality rate. Then I acted as Secretary of Plantation and Industries, again Secretary to Mr. Premadasa. As to the conflict in SL, no blame should be apportioned. Sinhalese and Tamils can live together—there is need for accommodation and compromise. Force is not a plausible option. You must recognise that (i) Effective political power is in the hands of an executive President, and UNP has a 5/6ths majority. They have rejected a separate state. So has the SLFP. (ii) TULF has gone out of Parliament, but willing to enter negotiations on a linguistic basis (iii) Tamils are a divided people — the TULF against militants, hence two TULF men killed; Jaffna Tamils against Batticaloa Tamils: it is significant that the most respected leader in the East, Mr. Rajadurai, joined the UNP; there are 5 militant groups, often killing each other, Tamil low caste and Brahmin caste. (iv) Armed forces of state have gained strength and number to eliminate 'terrorism', internal security act against the war against the state (v) All the elected Muslim leaders

are UNP men. The Sinhalese in the East, about 30—40 per cent, were brought as a colonising effort. (Questioners pointed out that the speaker didn't speak on the title of his speech.) Further Prof. Wilson corrected some statistics. Mr. Weerakoon quoted numbers to prove that Jaffna Tamils and Batticaloa Tamils are a divided people. Prof. Wilson commented that the numbers were improperly used by Mr. Weerakoon. Further Mr. Sivasithamparam said that the two TULF men including Mr. Rajadurai were bought over by the UNP, the rest of the TULF men refused to become such stooges and puppets).

The meeting was abruptly closed at 6 p.m. The seminar lasted from 10.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. with a one-and-a-half hour lunch break. It is noteworthy that neither the UNP government, nor the Tamil militants were properly represented. There were some youths (including a few English students) distributing leaflets in support of the Tamil Tigers. The leaflets were mainly copies of articles which had recently appeared in journals such as *India Today* and *Frontline*. For those youths, it appeared that such Seminars and meetings and talks produce no good results. Civilised means for justice and peace do not exist in Sri Lanka. To speak through the barrel of the gun is the only language they—the Sinhalese Buddhist leaders and the army—properly understand. Isn't there a more humane way of establishing a measure of justice in Sri Lanka? The answer, in human terms, lies very much in the hands of the Sinhalese people. They had elected and placed in power the present government. Are there only a few men who will stand up and be counted against all odds?

Many prominent men of today will be remembered, even by their own children and neighbours, as demons in flesh. But the names of men like the late Bishop Wickremasinghe will be remembered with pleasure and with gratitude; do these men, however, point only to the past, what could have been, but never will be? Or do they point to the future of Sri Lanka?

## A. G. TO APPEAL

The Attorney General will appeal against the acquittal of Rev. Fr. Aparanam Singarayer, according to a report in *The Island* (20th March).

Fr. Singarayer was charged under the **Prevention of Terrorism Act** for withholding information to the Police with regard to the Neervely Bank Robbery.

After a trial lasting 180 days, Colombo High Court Judge, Mr. H. W. Senanayake, acquitted Fr. Singarayer.

A spokesman for the Attorney General's department had told the *Island* that an appeal of this nature is unprecedented in the legal history of this country.



# Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

## OFFENSIVE REMARKS

The following editorial appeared in THE TIMES OF INDIA on 4th March.

The Sri Lanka government has made a highly offensive statement questioning India's credibility as a mediator in the conflict over autonomy for Sri Lanka's Tamil minority. It has sought nothing less than to pin the blame for the continuing bloodletting in Sri Lanka on New Delhi. The "terrorist challenge", it says, "stems from a movement" supported in every way by the Tamil Nadu government and that, although Colombo has repeatedly urged New Delhi to end such support, "it has had no positive response in that regard from the government of India". As a result, "the value of the proffered good offices of the Indian government stands impaired and its credibility diluted".

Colombo needs to be reminded of the genesis of the crisis it is so determined to resolve bloodily. Ever since Sinhalese nationalism was aroused, one of its chief means of sustenance has been the baiting of the Tamils who, whether Indian Tamils or Sri Lanka Tamils, were never accepted as equal partners by the Sinhalese majority. The comfortable social and economic position of the Sri Lanka Tamils throughout the island was as galling to the Sinhalese as the overwhelming predominance of Indian Tamil labour in the tea plantations so crucial to the country's export economy. Through one law after

another, even as regular anti-Tamil pogroms by Sinhalese mobs were unloosed by the diatribes of Sinhalese politicians, the Tamils were systematically, irrespective of which Sinhalese party was in office, made insecure and reduced to *de-facto* second-class status. Inevitably they protested, but no Sri Lanka government was prepared to go against the virulently anti-Tamil sentiment that Sinhalese leaders had themselves populistically fuelled. As successive elections showed, the Tamils were forced to fall back on themselves for protection. Here again, moderate Tamil leaders were discredited by official Sri Lankan unresponsiveness to their demands for very limited autonomy and greater security for Tamil life and property. That is when Tamil armed militancy was born. Since then, Colombo has done nothing to help the moderates retrieve any part of the ground that Sri Lankan official intransigence has made them lose to the militants. The "terrorist challenge" is the logical culmination of decades of Sinhalese intolerance and official hardheartedness and it is being sustained for the same reasons. For Colombo to see it as New Delhi's or Tamil Nadu's creation is to look for a scapegoat. The militancy will cease only when Colombo deals with the Tamils with the sympathy and flexibility that have been conspicuous by their absence in its so far utterly shameful treatment of them.

## FISHING BAN: FISHERY ORGANISATIONS PROTEST

Fishery organisations in the North have protested strongly against the fishing ban.

Here are some extracts from a memorandum addressed to President Jayewardene by the Northern Region Fishermen's Organisation:

"We the representatives of the fishing community occupying the coastal areas of Jaffna and Kilinochchi Districts register our very strong protest against the recent regulations, imposed on us under the Emergency Laws, with effect from 2.3.86. These regulations totally prohibit us from even stepping in to the sea and thus effectively prevent us from engaging in fishing. Our community is faced with slow starvation and certain death as a result of these regulations.

"The earlier imposition of the Surveillance Zone in the coastal areas of the North and East of the country was a severe blow to our community living within this zone, as it effectively prevented us from engaging in deep sea fishing, a right we have enjoyed for generations. The imposition of the new regulations which totally ban fishing activities have brought us further grief. Our community is now faced with slow extinction.

"Can our people be blamed, if they construe these regulations as a deliberate attempt to drive a sizeable portion of the Tamil community to total extinction by indirect methods of slow starvation? Our tragic experience during the last few years of loss of life, limb and property by the wanton and cruel conduct of the security forces stationed in our area ostensibly to protect us from terro-

rists, but who in fact have terrorised our community, gives us sufficient indication of how effectively these new proposals will be implemented.

"We therefore urge that the present set of regulations which totally ban our community from access to the sea, be immediately withdrawn."

Excerpts from the memorandum submitted by The Kurunagar Fishing Development Society:

We vehemently protest your announcement regarding the prohibition of fishing in the Northern area, which will paralyse the entire fishing industry. In Kurunagar itself 5000 families exclusively depending on fishing will have no alternative other than to starve.

"More than 350 inboard engine 3 tonners are engaged in deep sea fishing in both trawling and drift nets in the Kurunagar base alone. But now all these vessels, including other smaller vessels with outboard motors, have been grounded and the fishermen are twiddling their thumbs due to the closure of their traditional fishing grounds out in the deep sea. The majority of the fishing vessels were obtained on loans with the assistance of the Fisheries Dept. from the State Banks. If fishing is not allowed, it will not be possible for the fishermen to repay the loans. The expensive inboard engines fitted to the vessels will undoubtedly deteriorate if the engines are not used regularly. Thus the purpose of extending an enormous subsidy to boost the fishing industry will be of no use to the country.



Northern fishermen marched on Wednesday (19th March) to the Jaffna Kachcheri to hand over a memorandum to protest the fishing ban which has hit them in the belly.