

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Vol. 5 No. 11

5th April 1986

Jekyll And Hyde

Nothing underscores the Government's schizophrenia on the ethnic crisis better than the contrast between the blithe indifference of National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali's assertion — helicopter strafing is NOT aerial bombardment — and the anguished appeal — this country is slowly but surely bleeding to death — of Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel to the Mahanayakes, the Maha Sangha and the Sinhala Buddhists to help solve the problem.

Lawyer Lalith (according to Thoreau, 'The lawyer's truth is

not TRUTH but... a consistent expediency') is certainly entitled to his favourite pastime of chop logic but it's no consolation to the victims to learn that they have been strafed and not bombed.

Lalith the purist reminds one of Ogden Nash's conscientious scientist Professor Twist who

Camped on a tropic riverside, One day he missed his loving bride. She had, the guide informed him later, Been eaten by an alligator. Professor Twist could not but smile, "You mean," he said, "a crocodile."

Over the last few days various parts of the North — Palaly, Kaduvan, Keerimalai, Pt. Pedro, Kayts, Senthankulam, Ilavala — have been strafed and shelled. There have

been quite a few casualties, including some deaths.

On the heels of these attacks comes the Government's warning to the civilian population in the North to move out of the line of fire as the security forces will not hereafter confine themselves to defensive actions but move out of their camps in hot pursuit of the 'terrorists'. Yes, move out to avoid getting caught in the crossfire and go where, pray?

Is the Government seriously waiting for Romesh Bhandari or is it about to unleash the dogs of war?

It's time the Government decides, once for all, whether it wants to play Dr. Jekyll or Mr. Hyde.

KOKKAVIL AMBUSH

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has claimed that its landmine ambush at Kokkavil on Wednesday (2nd April) killed 25 security personnel, including a lieutenant. It lost 4 of its cadres. The Government's tally is 9 security personnel killed.

CHEMICAL SPRAY?

The helicopter blitz at Senthankulam, Ilavala and Periyavilan on Wednesday included the spraying of poisonous chemicals, according to reports. The casualties are warded in the Jaffna Hospital.

'CURIOUS SITUATION'

Excerpts from President J. R. Jayewardene's interview with Michael Hamlyn (THE TIMES, London, 15th March):

There can be no political settlement in Sri Lanka until the separatist rebels in the north and east give up their terrorist campaign, according to President Jayewardene.

Speaking on the day his Government announced a new initiative to bring the militant Tamils to the negotiating table, the President painted a gloomy picture of its chances of success.

"Until the terrorists are defeated or surrender, I can't have a political solution," he told me in the study of his house in the leafy Cinnamon Gardens area of the capital.

He explained that the last time there was a political compromise between the Tamils and the Government over devolution of power to district councils the ensuing elections were disrupted by terrorists, and a peaceful political development became impossible. "Even if you have a political solution you can't implement it," he said.

He also spoke of the curious situation in the northern Jaffna dis-

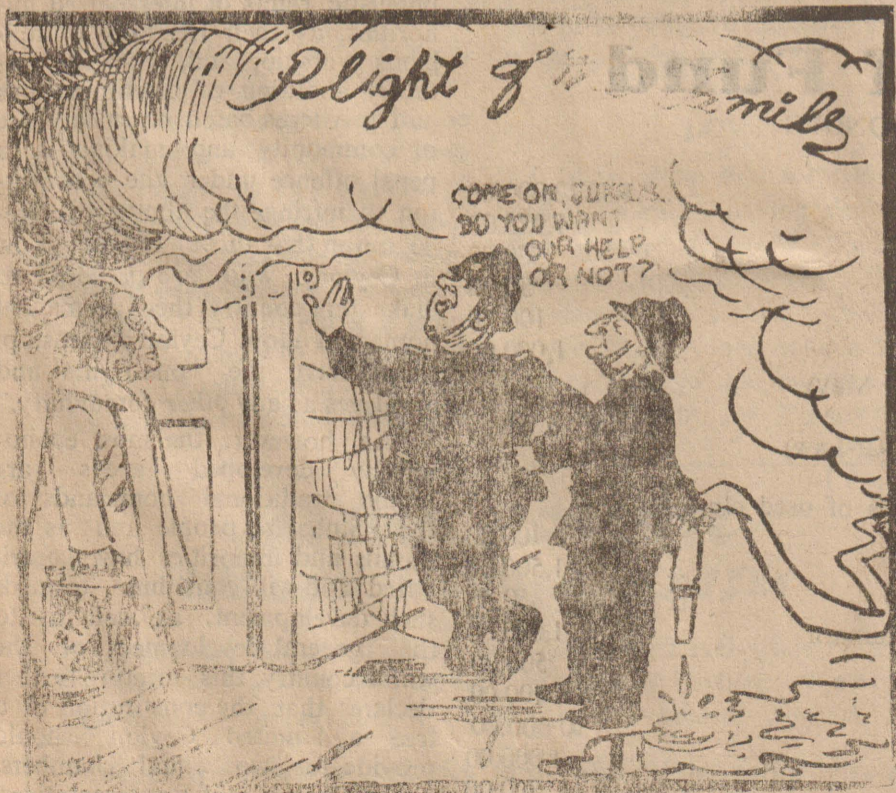
trict, where the Government still runs the schools and hospitals, but where it can take no responsibility for law and order.

"In Jaffna peninsula though we have the Army and police in the camps, the terrorists control it completely. It is our administration, the civil servants are paid by us, the teachers are paid by us, the university is run by me as Minister for Higher Education, but law and order is preserved — or the lack of it — by the terrorists. What is one to do? Are we to say, well, you have it?"

"We don't know what is happening inside, how men, women, girls, boys function. They just do what they want. It is a sad, sad state of affairs."

"How to take Jaffna is a problem," he admitted thoughtfully. "It means the killing of innocent people."

We regret to inform our readers and subscribers that copies of the SATURDAY REVIEW Nos. 8 & 9 dated 15th and 22nd March, 1986, which were despatched by rail to Colombo and foreign countries, were in the train destroyed by fire near Omanthai on 25th March.



This cartoon by R. K. Luxman appeared in a recent issue of THE TIMES OF INDIA.

Release ALL Political detenus in Sri Lanka jails

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

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TIME'S RAVAGES

The universe has awoken from its slumber, and the fleeting events have left astrologers dumb-founded. The unforeseen collapse of malignant rulers—Duvalier, Marcos—has been so swift, that Reagan has been gasping for breath to retract his last statement. Some speculate a stellar collapse in a distant galaxy. Bleary-eyed astrologers have been queuing outside the psychiatric clinic at Tellippalai, thus saving it from imminent closure. Doctors have been working hard with all leave and afternoon naps cancelled. It is now Pinochet's turn to question the sanity of the Reagan administration. Pinochet of Chile has issued a call for a meeting in Colombo in order to organise a protest calling upon the UN to defend the fundamental rights of rightwing baddies, which the US has now taken upon itself to violate. What harm is there in having fun with a bit of torture or using lethal weapons on civilians? If the West stops aid for the purchase of these instruments by impoverished third world rulers, how can these weapons be tested? The defence capability of the West is at stake, they argue.

Some astrologers kept their heads, and persuaded the Mathematics and Physics dons of the University of Jaffna to enlighten them on Einstein's General Relativity, Stress-Energy tensors and black holes. After seven sleepless nights these dons have organised a bandh complaining of ragging by the Jaffna Astrologers Association. This association has

NOT THE NEWS

now issued its statement: "Our previous calculations were in error because they were based on Newtonian assumptions. With events moving close to the speed of light, these assumptions were very misleading and had to be replaced by laws of relativistic physics. Fantasies such as Thomas Hardy's Oxen kneeling on Christmas eve may sound too good to be true, but we are on the threshold of great wonders. The prospects for the rulers of our Island are not as bleak as one may have expected. Here are some, which will come true before the year is out.

"Our President will eschew all violence, will don a Gandhi cap and perform satyagraha outside the UN calling upon the Indonesian forces to withdraw from East Timor.

"The Minister for National Security will don a father's cassock and pray for the souls of those departed before their time, including Father Bastian. His tears of confession so moved the Bishop of Jaffna, that he had to call his fellow Bishops to take turns, lest they too broke down crying.

"The ex-minister will regularly publish his sermons and poems in the SATURDAY REVIEW. The former being a model of sobriety and the latter a testimony to the ex-minister's humility and devotion to higher things.

"The Prime Minister will lead a quiet retired life in one of the modest houses put up by his former ministry. For his leisure he will read the poems of Subramanya

Bharati in praise of 'Mother India.'

"The Minister for Transport will run a tea boutique in Jaffna, travelling to work seated on the roof of a Jaffna Mini-bus. He will thank the Almighty everytime the Mini-bus goes over a hump and he finds himself still sitting—in the drain if not on the roof."

QUOTABLE QUOTE

FLASHBACK TO 1944

Excerpts from RESOLUTIONS OF THE CEYLON COMMUNIST PARTY, 15th October 1944: "As there are distinct, historically evolved nationalities — for instance, the Sinhalese and Tamil — with their own contiguous territory as their homeland, their own language, economic life, culture and psychological make-up, as well as interspersed minorities living in the territories of these nationalities, this meeting declares that the constitution of a free and united Ceylon should be based on the following democratic principles: (a) Recognition of the equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Ceylon; (b) Recognition that the nationalities should have the unqualified right to self-determination, including the right, if ever they so desire, to form their own independent state; (c) Recognition that the free constitution should contain statutory guarantees protecting and advancing the political, social, economic, educational and linguistic rights of interspersed minorities, as their freedom of religious worship; and, secondly, statutory abolition of discriminations and privileges based on caste, race or community and making it a penal offence under the constitution to infringe the above; (d) Recognition that those Indians now in Ceylon, who are prepared to make this country their permanent home and adopt Ceylon citizenship, should have the same rights and privileges as any other community."

"As, however, the most economically developed areas are in the traditional homelands of the Sinhalese people and as the Tamils and minorities have contributed and will contribute towards such development, as well as to the general development of the whole country, this meeting further declares that the constitution of a free and united Ceylon should provide for two equal chambers, one a Chamber of Representatives, elected on the basis of universal adult franchise according to territorial electorates and the other a Chamber of Nationalities, elected on the basis of universal adult franchise and ensuring the principle of the equality of the nationalities of a united Ceylon."

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Rs. 43,170.00

CONVERSATIONS WITH 'ORATOR' - 4

'Orator' Recalls Sinhalese Friends

Our conversation took place at Orator's residence 'Shanmuka Nivasa' in Manipay. A healthy man for his 84 years, Orator chose to sit inside as the evening was damp and cold. For Orator and his wife, it is a quiet life of retirement. The couple evinced the happiness and contentment of those who spend their declining years in the knowledge that, 'come what may, we have done our bit.' Old students do drop in and there is the occasional public engagement. Whilst his wife served us tea, Orator reminisced about his Sinhalese friends.

"S.A. Wijeyatilleke, Wilmot Perera and G. B. Wickremanayake Q. C were friends of mine and were all chief guests at our functions at Skanda. They were fine gentlemen, absolu-

tely free from communal prejudice. S. A. Wijeyatilleke, who was principal of Ananda College, made a very moving speech and pleaded for communal harmony. He referred to the climate of inter-racial amity that existed at Ananda College and said how some of his senior pupils volunteered during the 1958 riots to escort safely their Tamil school-mates to their homes in distant places like Mt. Lavinia and Kelaniya at the height of the communal riots and did it without fear. How he wished other Sinhalese leaders too worked for communal unity.

Wilmot Perera said that the majority community must respond in a positive way to remove the fears of the minorities and as indi-

viduals they should lay the foundations for lasting racial harmony. Wickremanayake said that in all matters coming under his ministry, he thought and acted as a Ceylonese and never as a Sinhalese. "The boys in my School were greatly influenced by these and other speakers and for many years they too believed in a united Ceylon. I visited these friends at various times before they died and they were sorely disappointed at the communal frenzy growing among the people, especially among the Sinhalese."

When asked what were the good values of his time that are on the decline today and in what ways, if any, the social attitudes of today are an improvement on those of his time, Orator replied, "Loyalty,

obedience and respect for elders, humanity-instinctively feeling that we should help those who are not as well placed as we are - service, avoiding dishonourable action, sportsmanship and never hitting below the belt-in addition to the morals inculcated by our religious books, the traditions of the English Public Schools which some of the early foreign principals created in some of our leading Schools-these we lack today. The only change I could notice is that our young men, speak think and act without any caste prejudice-they move on equal terms with all irrespective of caste and creed but not race!"

When told of our observation that many of his friends and he possessed an excellent sense of humour, he commented, "this is something we are losing now. Politicians and militants should have a sense of humour and look at the lighter side of problems. It

(Continued on page 7)

This article written by the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW appealing for funds for the refugees has been published world-wide through the GEMINI NEWS SERVICE, LONDON.

One consequence of the continuing ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka is the creation of thousands of refugees, who now pose a gigantic relief and rehabilitation problem for President Jayewardene's Government.

The total number rendered homeless since the anti-Tamil violence in south Sri Lanka in July 1983 is estimated at over 250,000.

About 40,000 of them belong to the majority Sinhalese community; they have been driven out of their homes and jobs in the northern and eastern provinces by Tamil guerrillas fighting for a separate state in what they call their "traditional homelands."

The others are Tamils nearly 100,000 of whom have taken refuge in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

The rest are scattered in makeshift camps scattered throughout the northern and eastern provinces, with Jaffna, heartland of the Tamils, temporarily taking the bulk of them.

In September and October alone, Jaffna had to accommodate 19,000 new refugees (4,534 families) from Vavuniya and Trincomalee districts where security forces had run riot, unleashing reprisals on civilians, and where there have been several attacks by guerrillas. These

INTERNATIONAL APPEAL FOR FUNDS BY EDITOR

new refugees come on top of the steady flow of people who have been fleeing the violence since 1983.

The Sinhalese refugees include people who had been settled in the two provinces for decades and migratory fishermen. They have been fairly lucky, because for political reasons the Government has been prompt in instituting relief measures.

The media, too, has given wide publicity to their plight so that the public has been moved to join in the relief effort.

But the Tamils have been very unfortunate. Many people in the south are not even aware that a refugee problem of such magnitude exists in the north and east because the media has generally ignored them, highlighting only the guerrilla attacks particularly on Sinhalese civilians.

Government assistance is mostly confined to providing dry rations to the value of Rs.55 a week to a single person up to Rs.200 for a family of eight. This at a time when a half-kilo of bread costs Rs.2.75.

At a conference convened to discuss the problems of the northern refugees, the government administrator of Jaffna, M. Punchalingam, confessed that "the refugee problem has grown to such magnitude that it had become necessary to seek the helping hand of non-governmental

agencies in order to look after the welfare of the displaced people effectively. What was made available by way of aid by the government was hardly adequate to meet the basic needs of the refugees."

The independent Jaffna-based journal SATURDAY REVIEW which I edit, has launched an appeal for international assistance through the foreign diplomatic missions in Colombo to tackle what it described as "a mind-boggling situation".

It said: "Almost all the affected people fled their homes with only the clothes they were wearing. Most of them have to get into their 'birthday suits' to do a change of clothing-tattered shirts, sarongs, trousers and sarees, which they wash and hang to dry while they sit in their corners pondering their cruel fate. In some camps the women do not have even such things as sanitary pads or substitutes..."

The SATURDAY REVIEW has launched its own relief fund which has netted Rs. 400,000 so far. But, as we said in an editorial comment, this amount is a "drop-a tear-drop in the ocean-compared to the immensity of the problem."

Food, clothes, fuel and drugs are required immediately. The danger of disease breaking out in the camps is ever-present. Most of the camps are school and temple premises where water and sanitation facilities are grossly inadequate. There have been

about 50 deaths from dysentery and diarrhoea. Most affected are the children, who are badly in need of milk foods.

Talks between the guerrilla leaders and the Government have been going on since June but even after an accord on the ethnic problem is worked out the long-term problem of re-settling the uprooted people, by providing housing and unemployment, will remain.

This will need resources that the Government cannot find unless it cuts its development programme, imposes more taxes, borrows still more heavily abroad or prunes defence expenditure. The defence bill this year is expected to reach Rs. 5.5 billion - 12 per cent of the total government budget.

The resettlement cost for 100 families has been worked out by some private relief organisations as Rs. 1.3 million. This is an indication of the vast amounts that would be required to rehabilitate all the affected people.

Oxfam, Redd Barna, Norad and several other non-governmental organisations have come forward with assistance for both short-term and long-term relief, but much more is needed.

"Help, please; help immediately" is the plea of the SATURDAY REVIEW to the international community.

- GAMINI NAVARATNE

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

TAMIL SOCIAL FORMATION IN SRI LANKA

Text of a booklet by P. Ragupathy, M.A., Ph. D. published by the Institute of Research and Development, Madras.

Historiography: a Re-appraisal

Writing the history of the Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka as a separate entity has a tradition of at least 500 years, beginning with the historiographical works like Vaiyapatal and Kailayamalai. Prior to that period, the conventional sources—the Buddhist chronicles on which the authoritative history of the Island is still based—are not much helpful to understand the Tamil history. History is basically the capacity of a society in remembering its past. The mode of exerting this capacity differs from society to society. Hence, one must devise appropriate tools to reconstruct the history of a particular society. Saying that a particular society has no history, without going for an appropriate tool, as in the context of the Tamils, is a crime committed on that society, which is what is being done by the Sri Lankan historians. Therefore, now we have to mainly turn towards the tools like archaeology, cultural anthropology, folk studies, historical linguistics etc. to understand the history of the Tamil society.

South Asia and Sri Lanka

Geologically, geographically, and environmentally, the Island of Sri Lanka is a part and parcel of the South Asian sub continent. The cultures—both Sinhala and Tamil—that emerged in Sri Lanka fall within the South Asian frame and particularly within the South Indian frame because of proximity.

The development of Sinhala-Buddhist culture and the Tamil culture in Sri Lanka are parallel and identical with the development of Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam cultures in South India. One can even cite a common stratum for these developments. Unfortunately, due to various reasons a comparative study of these South Indian and Sri Lankan phenomena has not been even attempted.

Pre and Protohistoric Antecedents

The human habitation in Sri Lanka began with the prehistoric microlithic people who possibly migrated through a land bridge which then existed from the South eastern coast of the present Tamilnadu. The earliest evidence of this culture in the Sri Lankan context has been now dated back to 28,000 B.C. The next wave of

migration and cultural impact were marked by the megalithic phase in protohistoric times, which was also essentially of a South Indian cultural stratum. These pre and protohistoric antecedents were an extension of the sequence that took place in the extreme peninsular India. By the dawn of history, during the time of Asoka, Buddhism arrived in Sri Lanka as a cultural inspiration. This was the period when for the first time South Asia came under an imperial unity and Sri Lanka acknowledged it.

Ethnic Structure in Sri Lanka—Myth and Realities

There are no racial differences, among Sinhalese, Tamils and the people of South India. But around 6th Century A.D., the Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka imagined a mass Aryan migration during protohistoric times, which they thought was the basis for the formation of the Sinhala-Buddhist society. This myth created in response to the then prevailing situation is unfortunately still the foundation for the authoritative history of the Island, conditioning

mention them as Nakas and there land as Naka natu or Naga dipa.

Trans-oceanic Trade, Urbanization and the Resultant Emergence of a Principality in Jaffna
C. 100 B. C.-C. 500 A.D.

The trans-oceanic trade that developed around the beginning of the Christian era had an important impact on Jaffna. Kantarotai in Jaffna was urbanized from the megalithic basis, parallel to Anuradhapura and Mahagama in the Southern Sri Lanka; and parallel to Korkai, Kaverippattinam, Arikamedu and other Cankam cities in the ancient Tamil country. Jaffna emerged as a principality with Kantarotai as its central place. This phenomenon survived to C. 5th century A.D. till the decline of the Roman trade.

An aspect of this phase was the overlapping of Buddhism with the megalithic beliefs. Further discussion on the Buddhist monuments in Jaffna is necessary, as they are often misinterpreted and misused by the Buddhist chauvinists in Sri Lanka and much dreaded by and antagonistic to the common man in

The Sinhala-Buddhist Identity in the perspectives of South Indian Regional Developments

6th-10th Century A.D.

The latter half of the first millennium A. D. witnessed the emergence of regional dynasties and regional cultural variations attaining definable forms in South India and Sri Lanka. Concurrent to the development of Kannada, Telugu and Tamil dynasties and cultures, the Sinhala-Buddhist and Tamil patterns developed in Sri Lanka. This was the time when Sinhala became an identifiable language; Buddhism was intertwined with statecraft; and the tank-irrigated agriculture attained its full development. In contrast, the Tamil country in India was facing a Brahmanic revival, Bhakthi movement and the extinction of Jainism and Buddhism. Also, the growing powers like the Pallavas and the Pandiyas often intervened in Sri Lankan politics. Such a background was the underlying current to the formation of Sinhala-Buddhist identity and to its antagonism and resistance to the Tamil culture. The Pali chronicles, Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa were an outcome of such tendencies.

Ironically, in this age of regional developments and identities, Jaffna played a very insignificant role. This was due to the fact that the Roman trade which elevated Jaffna to a principality declined around 6th century A. D., and that, hydraulic developments in the more hospitable regions in the dry zone Sri Lanka and in South India made Jaffna a poor competitor. The Tamil-Saivite evidences of this period mainly come from Mantai (Mannar District) and from Trincomalee. Jaffna was alternately absorbed into the centripetal forces that were working in the dry zone Sri Lanka and in South India.

South Indian and Sri Lankan Polity, the Cola Empire and the Emergence of the Kingdom of Jaffna

10th - 13th Century A. D.

The rulers of the ancient Tamil country often fought with the rulers of Sri Lanka in a similar way they fought among themselves. On many occasions, adventurous South Indian chieftains and princes conquered Sri Lanka, but ruled as Sri Lankan Kings. This pattern continued to late medieval times till the advent of the British. The last King of Kandy was neither Tamil nor Sinhalese but of Telugu origin—a survivor of

by

Dr. P. Ragupathy

the minds of the people. In reality, there were no objective evidences for an Aryan migration. The ethnic structure in Sri Lanka is quite South Indian with close affinities to Tamilnadu and Kerala. Sinhala and Tamil cultures derived from a common stem. Hence, the definition of ethnic differences seriously needs a fresh interpretation in the Sri Lankan context.

First Settlements in Jaffna—the Megalithic Culture C.500-100BC.

Archaeological evidences reveal that the first people of Jaffna belonged to the megalithic culture, which is undoubtedly a South Indian phenomenon of Iron Age. Emerging in around 500 B.C., the first settlers had a multifaceted subsistence of incipient farming, lagoon exploitation and cattle herding. They communicated in a language that can be termed proto-dravidian, were non-Buddhists practising a folk religion similar to that of the Cankam Tamil country and on the whole, were of a common stock of the proto-historic South India. Tamil and Pali literatures of the early centuries of the Christian era

Jaffna. During the early centuries of the Christian era, Buddhism was fairly a popular ideology in Tamil South India too. *Manimekalai*, a post-Cankam Tamil Buddhist work mentions Jaffna as a Buddhist sacred place—Mani-naka-tivu or Manipallavam—testifying to the popularity of Buddhism in Jaffna.

These Buddhist remains of Jaffna are unique in their concept and execution. They are highly localised and constructed entirely with the locally available coral and limestone. At Kantarotai they appear in clusters at a particular spot. They seem to be burial monuments of monks, a Buddhicised version of megalithism. Such a concept in architecture and its execution in coral and limestone, significantly differentiates the Jaffna monuments from those in the rest of the Island. Hence, we prefer to call this architectural expression as Jaffna Buddhism. The monuments explain how at that time the socio-economic and cultural conditions in Jaffna were able to adapt the Buddhist faith and were able to articulate it in their own way. Buddhism was an integral part of the cultural heritage of Jaffna.

(Continued on page 6)

Big sister finds her little brothers fighting over a "kurmba." She spansks both, cuts the coconut, pours the water into three glasses and scoops the meat into them. Then she takes the largest glass for herself. The little ones weep disconsolately — one boy wanted to eat the meat because he was hungry, while the other wanted to drink the water because he was thirsty. Alas, they discover too late that had they only discussed their true interests with one another (that one wanted only the meat and the other only the water) instead of fighting over a position (that each wanted the whole coconut) they could have arrived on their own at a much better solution to their problem.

Like these two unhappy boys, the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil groups have been fighting unsuccessfully to wrest as much as they can from the other. They have fought in the battlefield and at the negotiating table. The 'military solution' fails because guns do not solve political problems in the modern world. The negotiations fail because the antagonists confront each other with pre-set positions that do not overlap — the so called 'unbridgeable gap.'

Negotiation is a basic means of getting what we want from others. As a result it is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that negotiation is primarily a battle between 'us' and 'them' — where if one side is better off as a result of the negotiation, the other side must necessarily be worse off. However there is another and much better way of looking at a negotiation—as a way of satisfying the interests of both sides well. When a negotiation is approached in this way, the problem to be solved is not seen as 'ours' or 'theirs' but as a commonly shared one which both sides will be better off for solving and worse off for not solving.

Any negotiation, then, may be viewed as a side-by-side effort at solving a shared problem. But after sitting down at the table what do we do? The method of principled negotiation developed by the Harvard Negotiation Project (see "Getting to Yes: negotiating agreement without giving in" by Roger Fisher and William Ury) lays down three basic rules: (1) that we look beyond the positions (demands) the other side lays out, and discover instead the real interests (concerns) that motivate the demands they make; (2) that we look for mutual gains wherever possible — instead of seeing the negotiation as a means of dividing a cake of fixed size

(where the more one side gets, the less left for the other), we try first to increase the size of the cake (so that both sides can get more of it) and; (3) that where our interests conflict (after all the cake, whether increased in size or not, must be divided) we should insist that the result be reached by using some fair standards based on objective criteria.

SRI LANKA'S CONFLICT: A BETTER WAY TO NEGOTIATE A SOLUTION

For instance if both boys in the example given above wanted to eat the meat of the coconut then there would be a conflict of interests. We need therefore to

by

Jehan Perera

come up with a fair standard according to which the coconut may be divided. One could be a 50:50 split on the basis that each is an equal person; another could be a 60:40 division on the basis that boys require nutriment in relation to their body weight and the brothers weigh 60 and 40 pounds respectively; yet another could be a 40:60 division on the basis that the lighter boy requires more nutriment to catch up. The principle under which the coconut is divided should be rationally defensible and not something arbitrary or simply a matter of desire. And as the illustration above shows, the outcome of a principled negotiation is not pre-determined but can vary according to skills of the negotiators in figuring out just what the 'fair standards' they use should be.

Before getting into the analysis some important points must be kept in mind. They concern two strong assumptions we shall be making. First, that the 'government' represents the best interests of the bulk of the Sinhalese, and not simply the self-interest of the governing elite. Second, that the 'Tamil groups' represent the best interests of the bulk of the Tamils, and not simply the self-interest of the separatist leaders.

Not everyone is likely to find these assumptions acceptable. It is possible, for instance, to argue that the government in reality represents the interests of the elite classes. And that while the positions taken by the elite and masses may be quite similar, their interests are very dissimilar. And that if it is in the interests of the governing elite to see conflict drag

Similarly, with respect to the Tamil groups, it is possible to argue that the primary interest of the leadership is to wield power whether through bullet or ballot and regardless of the cost to the Tamil masses. And that at least some of them spurred on by self-seeking Tamil Nadu politicians have more of an interest in remaining military chieftains with arbitrary power than in campaigning democratically for votes in the aftermath of a reasonable political settlement.

The analysis that we shall perform below is not based on this viewpoint. Rather it assumes that the government and Tamil leaders in this time of exceptional crisis are capable of putting their self-interest behind them and of thinking of an overarching common interest. It is left to the reader to decide for himself whether he lives in a society where the motives of his leaders are cynical, or more or less honorable at least with respect to his own side as the following analysis assumes.

In what follows we shall apply the method of principled negotiation to the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict. In doing so we shall first separate positions from interests and preferably rank them in their order of importance, so that we have a general sense of what is really important and what is less important. This is done in the two charts that follow.

POSITIONS CHART

Government	Tamils
1. Sri Lanka remain a unitary state. No federalism. No Chief Minister.	1. Eelam, or in the alternative a federated Sri Lanka with a single Tamil state composed of the Northern and Eastern provinces.
2. No linkage of the Northern and Eastern Provinces. No Tamil homelands.	2. The Northern and Eastern Provinces to be recognized as traditional Tamil homelands. Land colonization policy to be exclusively in the hands of the Tamil state.
3. Land colonization policy to be decided by the Central government on ethnic proportions.	3. Tamil also to be an official language.
4. All police officers above the rank of sub-inspector to be appointed by the Central government.	4. Control over the state police to be exclusively in the hands of the Tamil state.
5. Renunciation of separatism and allegiance to a united Sri Lanka.	5. Direct access to foreign aid.

(Continued on page 7)

THERE IS A LIMIT TO MADNESS

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

Apropos your front-paged headline in your issue of 8th March of course, it is an appropriate term applicable to the present situation. But is the word 'Madness' adequate enough to cover all the misdeeds?

What is this sheer and disgusting madness, unparalleled in the history

LETTERS

of any civilised nation, raging unrestricted and uninterruptedly, lead-

ing to the destruction of innocent lives, leave alone the devastation of property?.

Is the Government bent on driving all the people, to protect whose lives it has an imperative duty, round the banner of those whom it denounces as 'terrorists'? If the prevailing shot-phobia and

tension continues for a further couple of months, people may end up as nervous wrecks.

Even for madness, there is a limit and the government cannot go berserk and defy the norms of civilised life.

V. Mahalingam

Karaveddi

(Continued from page 4)

the legacy of the Vijayanagar empire. Apart from these dynastic conflicts, the Cola empire was the most influential factor in formulating the Tamil homeland. By the beginning of this millennium, from a powerful basis of hydraulic developments, the Cola empire emerged in South India. Trade aspirations, particularly gaining control over the trans-oceanic Arab-Chinese trade inevitably activated the maritime expeditions of the empire. Sri Lanka faced its first colonial experience under the Colas. The dry-zone of Sri Lanka and its hydraulic pattern declined. The capital Anuradhapura was abandoned. Mass migrations took place which considerably changed the demography of the North and the East of the Island. In Jaffna, Kantarotai was replaced by Nallur. As a sequence of these developments, the kingdom of Jaffna emerged in the latter half of the 13th Century A. D. when both the Sinhalese and South Indian hegemony declined. In short, a Tamil strain in Jaffna which was far anterior going back to protohistoric times was given a fresh impetus by the Cola empire in carving out a homeland of specific dimensions for the Tamils in the north and the east.

The Kingdom of Jaffna — Direct Predecessor to the Concept of Tamil Homeland

The kingdom of Jaffna is the direct predecessor to the present day concept of Tamil homeland. The kingdom was Tamil Saivite and its demographical extensions were well illustrated in the Jaffna-centric historiographical literatures which arose in these times. The demography according to these literatures cover a territory from Kutiraimalai in the west coast (Puttalam district) to Verukal in the eastern coast eastern province) encompassing more or less the present northern and eastern provinces. The kingdom was dominated by clans and feudal chieftains who had migrated from the various parts of South India, especially

Tamil Social Formation...

from Tamilnadu. On many occasions, new settlements were created by them. The kingdom was partially agrarian and partially mercantile. A kingdom exclusively for the Tamil homeland became thus possible only when there were no big powers in southern Sri Lanka and in the Tamil South India. The political reality when the Portuguese came to Sri Lanka was that there were three Kingdoms i. e., the Kingdom of Kotte, Kandy and Jaffna.

Tamil Settlements in the Vanni Districts, Eastern Province and in the Northwest

10th - 16th Century A. D.

The Cola empire and the subsequent developments had a great impact on the demography of Vanni, East and Northwest. Especially the East was in the limelight under the Colas, probably due to their activities in the Bay of Bengal. Tamil inscriptions of this and subsequent periods are found concentrated in the East-up to Tirukkoyil in the down south. Mass migrations of clans were a common phenomenon in the Vijayanagar South India, and their impact was felt in Sri Lanka too. Vanni, East and the Northwest have their own literary records narrating the settlements that arose in this period. The settlers ranged from agriculturists to traders, artisans, mercenaries and fisher folk. The indirect impact of the Vijayanagar empire prevented the political advent of Islam. But, since the early centuries of this millennium, Muslim settlements came up in the coastal areas known for maritime trade contacts. In the Tamil homeland now they are a considerable population in Mannar, Mattakkalappu, Jaffna city and Puttalam in the Northwest (which was part of the Tamil homeland till recent decades). The language of the Muslims in Sri Lanka whether in the Tamil homeland or in the rest of Sri Lanka is

Tamil. They either migrated from the Coromandel coast and the coastal areas of the Gulf of Mannar, Malabar etc., or were natives converted to Islam.

The Portuguese and Dutch Periods—Jaffna Centric Socio-economic Developments

16th - 18th Century A. D.

The Portuguese and Dutch maintained the kingdom of Jaffna as a separate unit. Jaffna witnessed considerable economic growth under the Dutch due to certain specialized industries and trade. This paved a way for the Jaffna-centric social and cultural developments in subsequent times. Towards the end of Dutch rule, religious and linguistic revival took place which created a place for Jaffna not only to lead the Tamil homeland but also to be in a position ahead of the then Tamil South India in certain spheres of cultural achievements.

The Decline of Economic Independence

The late British period witnessed a gradual decline of economic independence of the Tamil homeland, especially Jaffna. The economy became more and more dependent on the plantations and on the Colombo-centric economic developments that took place in the Southern Sri Lanka. Traditional subsistence, trading ports and trade routes declined. Missionary and native education brought in white collar jobs. The traditional trade which was cut off from its South Indian contact turned towards the Sinhalese areas in the south creating subsistence competitions. The image of the Tamils as exploiters and the resultant ethnic conflict arose in the early decades of this century with the emergence of the powerful force of Sinhala Buddhist nationalism.

The personality of the Tamil Homeland in Sri Lanka.

The Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka is characterized by a conti-

guous territory of a specific environment. It has a demography of a homogenous linguistic people who have specific subsistence patterns and who are conscious of their ethnic identity formulated over several centuries. The social formation of this territory has its own dimensions distinct from that of Tamilnadu and southern Sri Lanka. Though they call themselves as Tamils, they shouldn't be identified with the people of Tamilnadu. Their social and cultural formations should be viewed only as a parallel development to that of Tamil South India.

Tamil Homeland—Its Place in the South Asian Pattern

If one goes for a South Asian framework, the Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka may be looked upon as a regional variation. But, the prevailing political and economic conditions have made it an exerting question of Tamil nationalism, demanding a separate nation. Struggling and achieving a separate political identity; remaining as a regional variation within Sri Lanka; militarily or otherwise establishing the Sinhala—Buddhist nationalism; affiliating with India; These are some of the current options envisaged officially or unofficially in the power circles and among the common people.

It is a historical fact that the Tamil social formation in Sri Lanka over several centuries played a buffer between the Sinhalese and South Indian social formations. History also points out that it was the subsistence pattern that had determined the place, status and geo-political affinities of this social formation.

The present crisis is essentially one of devising socio-political means which will ensure a subsistence pattern for these people in their own land. A separate nation, autonomous State unitary system and affiliation with India are mere words in the absence of the incorporation of this fundamental factor.

(Continued in the next issue)

'ORATOR' RECALLS..

(Continued from page 3)

will do them good. Thennaly Raman, the hero of our childhood, used to provoke the six headed goddess Kali with some sacrilegious jokes. She appeared in a fury breathing vengeance. At her sight Raman burst out laughing and when she demanded why he laughed so irreverently, and coolly replied, 'I am wondering by which nose you would sneeze if you got a severe cold. I pity your plight, madam' Somebody like Bob Hope should be able to go among the boys and talk to them."

We asked him if the younger generations are becoming less secular than his, to which he responded: "Yes, they have to face harder problems in the present rat race. People have increased their needs and are determined to satisfy them somehow or the other. Principles and morals matter less. They are more realistic and do not believe in sham respectability. People attend Churches and Temples in larger numbers because in these troubled times they believe that they have none to help but God. 'Yagams' and other religious ceremonies in temples are an indication of this trend."

On the subject of the medium of instruction, we pointed out that having been a strong supporter of swabasha since his Youth Congress days when the proposed time of change-over was around he sounded a note of caution. He replied, "some of us wanted the change-over from English to swabasha to be gradual. I was one who was keen to have English as the medium of instruction in the Advanced Level especially in the Science and Mathematics classes—the lack of simple text books in Tamil being a great handicap. I wanted to prepare our boys in the English medium as long as the department would allow and

was very successful. Our present day students are woefully lacking in knowledge of English when compared to their counter-parts in South India."

It was clear from his conversation that C. Suntharalingam and Balasingam were amongst the Tamil leaders greatly admired by Orator-Suntharalingam, a nationalist turned separatist, as a man with a practical vision. Suntharalingam was in the vanguard of the movement to secure the Tamil homeland by settlement. Of Balasingam he said, "his master plans such as for the State Mortgage Bank and the Agriculture College have been implemented. His scheme for the converting of some of the Jaffna lagoons into fresh water lakes if implemented, would have been of great benefit to the north. G. G. Ponnambalam worked hard to get the boycott lifted and in the process got himself into the State Council. He used the boycott as a whip to lash veterans like Sri Pathmanathan and Balasingam out of politics. Mahadeva persisted and served the Tamils for some years. Then he (G G) worked for 50-50 representation for the minorities. This was a very unrealistic proposal based on the foolish belief that the Muslims, Indians and other minorities would stand by the Tamils." Orator also made special mention of S. Nadesan Q. C. as a man of ability whom he believed can play an important role in bringing an honourable end to the present conflict.

LOVE

It may come as a surprise that men like Orator having dealt with such August concerns can freely admit a healthy interest in the mundane. This is the charm of Orator. Perhaps love belongs to the sublime than to the mundane. We shall hear Orator now, "many young

people in love have come to me for advice and to get their parents' approval for marriage. I tell them, 'give yourself at least a year to know your own mind. You should have no regrets later. After a year if you feel that you must marry the person of your choice and still your parents object, come to me and I shall help.' I have succeeded in many cases. Four of my five children chose their partners and relieved me of the responsibility."

Happily, we are not saying good-bye to Orator. He will be with us yet and has promised us a series on 'Great Men of Education', featuring some of the great educationists and school principals whose efforts in the past have built up what was once perhaps the best educational system in Asia. Others who would like to contribute to this series, especially our readers from the South, are most welcome.

(CONCLUDED)

NURSES' STRIKE

LIFT PROSCRIPTION — CRM

The Civil Rights Movement has issued the following press release:—

"Since the unjust treatment of striking bank clerks by the previous government in 1972 CRM has consistently protested against the resort to action under emergency regulations to deal with trade union disputes.

Issues relating to the terms and conditions of employment should be referred to appropriate arbitral machinery. Where this does not exist it should be created, as CRM pointed out in the context of the 1980 public servants strike.

CRM urges that the proscription of the Public Services United Nurses Union (PSUNU) be lifted immediately, that negotiations be entered into regarding the union's demands, and that appropriate arbitration machinery be created without delay to which issues relating to the terms of service of public servants can be referred in the future. Such machinery already exists under the Industrial Disputes Act for the private sector; its absence for public servants is a serious lacuna in the democratic process."

A BETTER WAY...

(Continued from page 5)

INTERESTS CHART

Government	Tamils
1. Convincing the Sinhalese that they will not be pushed down into the South of the island by the Tamils as their history tells them they were in the past.	1. Achieving a lasting political solution that will not be broken like others in the past.
2. Assuring the Sangha that the Sinhalese and Buddhism will continue to flourish on the island.	2. Ensuring that elected Tamil leaders have powers sufficient to guide the destinies of the Tamils.
3. Maintaining governmental unity and not being overthrown by opposition agitation and mass discontent.	3. An end to violence.
4. Achieving a lasting political solution that will not be merely a first step towards heightened Tamil demands.	4. Satisfying the Tamils that they will not become a vulnerable minority in every part of the island.
5. An end to violence.	5. Satisfying the Tamils that they will be treated as equal citizens on par with the Sinhalese.
6. Satisfying the Sinhalese that no part of the island be "reserved" to the Tamils.	6. Preventing guerilla infighting and providing for their reintegration into the mainstream of social life.
7. Getting India to shut down the guerilla bases in Tamil Nadu.	7. Keeping the guerilla bases in Tamil Nadu open at least until the solution.
8. Ensuring no Indian invasion.	8. Retaining links with India to the extent that they guarantee Tamil rights on the island. (To be continued)

JAFFNA COLLEGE ENGLISH MEDIUM CLASSES

Classes for Advanced Level and Ordinary Level students will be conducted for those requiring proficiency in their subjects in English as a preparation for higher studies here or abroad.

Classes commence on the 5th May, 1986. For further details and enrolment meet the Principal along with parent or guardian after 28th April.

PRINCIPAL
JAFFNA COLLEGE
VADDUKODDAI

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Fishermen's Dole 'GROSSLY INADEQUATE'

This is the text of a letter sent to President Jayewardene by the Pt. Pedro Citizens' Committee:

We are alarmed at the sudden decision to impose a total ban on fishing in the North. The fishing community is already in a sad predicament with scant chances of fishing imposed by the Prohibited Zone etc. The present decision throws them from the frying pan into the burning fire. By this action the economic life of a community is totally hampered. Protein necessary for general good health is denied to the average Sri Lankan at large since 50% of the fish production has been banned and this fact is acknowledged by the Minister of Fisheries in his speech at the conclusion of the Committee Stage discussion of the Ministry votes during the last Budget debate. This, our Committee feels, is suicidal as it eats into the National economy and

national health, and above all also creates an enforced impoverished community. We therefore earnestly appeal to you to rescind this order and allow fishing within limited hours within limited waters.

If, for any reason more plausible than this, you are not in a position to accede to this earnest request, please be good enough to review the subsistence allowance reportedly sanctioned by the Government to be paid to the affected fishermen.

The barest requirement for food of an average fisherman is Rs. 10/- per day and it works up to Rs. 300/- per fisherman per month. We therefore, earnestly request you to consider the grant of Rs. 300/- per head per fisherman. The present, approved amount of Rs. 200/- per family per month is grossly inadequate.

WOMEN BACK NURSES

Seventeen women's organisations and groups have expressed their solidarity and support for the nurses who have 'launched a just struggle for their legitimate demands.'

They also deplore the proscription of the PSUNU (Public Services United Nurses Union) by the Government.

Here's the text of their press release:

The exploitation of women's labour has become one of the main features of the present economy. Women's labour plays a crucial role in the health sector and nurses who receive a preliminary training of 3 years are a group who perform a vital service to the community. While they are heavily overworked, their salaries remain low. The payment of a mere subsistence wage to nurses is not only an example of their

exploitation, but is also evidence of the lack of concern displayed by the authorities to those performing an essential service to humanity. For example, the just demands made over the years by nurses for higher wages, proper uniforms, promotions and their grievances against certain irregularities of the Health Department have been ignored.

As women's organisations we would like to state that we highly value the services performed by nurses and deplore the exploitation and injustices they have been subject to. It is the government's lack of concern for the nurses' grievances that is causing hardship to patients. We therefore urge the government to grant the demands of the nurses immediately, and thereby restoring the normal functioning of the health services and demand that the proscription be lifted on the PSUNU.

VVT CITIZENS TELL J R:

Withdraw Army From Tamil Areas

The Valvettiturai Citizens' Committee has sent the following letter to President Jayewardene:

We refer to the number of letters we were compelled to write to you to bring to your notice the atrocities committed on defenceless civilian population of this area by the security forces of the State. We regret to note that so far we have not had any encouraging reply to indicate that steps are being taken to remedy the situation. There have been instances when people were indiscriminately shot and killed by rampaging soldiers. In one instance nearly seventy five people including women and children were killed in one day by the soldiers in gruesome manner. In all these instances in spite of repeated requests for help to rehabilitate the affected families and furnishing facts, the government has either denied such events or attributed them to so-called terrorist activities.

While the government gives priority to build millions of new houses the unfortunate situation in the Tamil areas is that a large number of houses are being burnt and demolished by the security forces. Large sections of people are made to flee their houses into refugee camps or to seek asylum in foreign countries. It is a common sight to see naval vessels firing shells into civilian residential areas, planes and helicopters firing into houses and mortar-shells coming from army camps sited in the midst of densely populated areas.

While it is the duty of any government to create jobs for its citizens it is a pathetic scene in the Tamil areas where fishing is prohibited or restricted and farming is made impossible thereby making all these people destitutes.

This situation is continuing for such a long time that most of these people have exhausted their savings, if any, and are now meeting their living expenses by selling their assets such as jewellery. To make matters worse breadwinners of a number of families have either been shot and killed by the security forces or kept in detention camps for long periods.

The education of the children is badly affected with a number of schools situated close to the numerous army camps unable to function. The arbitrary and large scale indiscriminate arrests of young

people and the continuing killing by the security forces of the youth have severely affected the educational progress of the Tamil youth.

To add insult to injury the Tamil people are now being denied the right of worship in temples and churches. Important centres like Koneswaram have become inaccessible and popular centres like Selvasannithy have become targets of army attack. Christian priests have been attacked by the security forces in their own churches.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the government is forfeiting its right to rule the Tamil areas of the country. The government appears so much prejudiced against the Tamils and preoccupied with its consideration for the interests of only the majority community that it has been consistently displaying a total lack of capacity to think in terms of ensuring the inherent basic human rights of the Tamil people.

As we the Tamil people of this country are tired of the indifference shown to us and the ever increasing oppression perpetrated on us and are denied the basic rights to which we are entitled, we call upon the government to withdraw the occupation army from the Tamil areas forthwith and take immediate steps to devolve sufficient powers and evolve a system of government whereby the Tamils of this country could manage their affairs and live in amity with the people in the non-Tamil speaking areas of the country.

ORGANISATION TO PROTECT TEMPLES

At a meeting of the trustees and priests of the Hindu Temples and Principals and teachers of Hindu Institutions held recently at Nallur Atheenam on the 16th of March 1986, it was resolved that the establishment of an organisation for the protection of Hindu Temples and Institutions on an all Island basis is one of the most pressing needs of our time to preserve our ancient Hindu heritage in this country.

In pursuance of the decision under the patronage of the Head of the Atheenam, the above organisation was formed. Of those present 15 were unanimously elected as the founding members of the body with Sivasiri K. Naguleswarakurukkal of Keerimalai Atheenam as the President.