

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

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Delay Means Danger

Judging from the speeches of Government leaders and the trend of tragic events of recent weeks, the Tamil people had better prepare for total annihilation before long.

The Sinhalese people had also better prepare for annihilation.

For once the war dogs are unleashed, it will be a no-holds-barred affair, with foreign countries also getting involved.

We abhor violence. We have condemned it in all its forms and from whichever quarter it emanated.

We have particularly condemned the killing of innocent Tamil civilians by the Security Forces.

In the same way, we condemn the killing of innocent Sinhalese

civilians by the militants, to whichever group they belong.

Violence only brutalises humanity, destroys and destructs.

We have been particularly saddened by the internal killings that took place last month. What purpose did these serve than weakening the will and spirit of the Tamil people in their struggle for national liberation?

There may be an historical inevitability in what happens in the course of national liberation struggles. But we cannot condone what happened recently.

In this decade-long struggle which has wrecked Sri Lanka, where does the SATURDAY RE-

VIEW stand? This question has been posed by several readers.

We stand for Truth (including the utmost respect for and the utilisation of the freedom of the Press) and for Justice (for all the people of Sri Lanka).

We have been subjected to threats of various kinds from various quarters. But nothing can deter us from doing what we perceive is our duty.

We urge the powers-that-be to no longer delay in coming to a settlement of the ethnic problem. The delay, so far, has been mostly on their part.

The problem has been discussed from all angles for so long that there is nothing to discuss further. What is needed is action.

The militants have now begun to probe deep into Sinhalese territory. How further they will strike, we do not know.

We humbly appeal to President Jayewardene to save the nation from catastrophe, to save the people, to save himself also, by a display of statesmanship.

DELAY MEANS DANGER TO EVERYONE.

Out Of Lalith's Mouth...

National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali yesterday said that the government had benefited by not intervening in the LTTE-TELO war.

Replying to allegations by the MP for Maharagama, Dinesh Gunawardene the Minister said that government's order to Security Forces to refrain from taking any action, was a 'strategic order' not to be debated in public.

The decision, he said, had served the government best, and pointed out that if the government had intervened, the two groups would have joined forces to fight the security forces, which the propaganda machines abroad would have made out that innocent civilians were being killed.

The outcome of the fight he said was beneficial to those who were for the unity of Sri Lanka.

THE ISLAND, Friday, 9th May, 1986.

'SOME DEGREE OF FEDERALISM'

President J. R. Jayewardene, in an interview with the "Sunday Times", London, which was broadcast over the BBC on 11th May, called on the West to help him eradicate terrorism in Sri Lanka and that if it did not the country might face partition.

According to the BBC broadcast, Mr. Jayewardene had said he was prepared to give the Tamils some degree of federalism, proposals for which were now being formulated in New Delhi.

But if those proposals were not accepted "I will unleash the troops", he was quoted as saying.

"I can and I will wipe out this trouble within a month", he said.

He appealed to the English-speaking world to help suppress the "rebellion" as he called it, by giving arms and money.

"Another two years of this", he said "and we would have bled to

death or we will be partitioned like Cyprus with United Nations troops guarding the frontiers".

He also called on the West to bring pressure on India, which he condemned for supporting the Tamil groups.

"The assistance it is giving now", he said, "is destroying us".

The President described the problem facing Sri Lanka as no longer ethnic or racial but simple, naked terrorism.

He said that India should be made to realise that terrorism was an International menace and if the militants would not accept the proposals he would have no alternative but to go for a military solution.

(Based on a report in THE ISLAND of 12th May).

JMA SESSIONS

The 4th Annual Sessions of the Jaffna Medical Association will be held on 23rd, 24th & 25th May 1986. It will be inaugurated by His Lordship of Jaffna Rt. Rev. Dr. B. Deogupillai at 2.30 p. m. on 23rd May 1986. The venue of the sessions will be the Nurses' Training School, General Hospital (Teaching) Jaffna.

NOT NOW

The Government of India considers it 'premature' to make a statement on the outcome of the recent visit to Sri Lanka by an Indian delegation led by Mr. P. Chidambaram, Minister of State for Personnel and Administrative Reforms, according to a report in the "Hindu" datelined 8th May.

Full Diplomatic Status For Israel?

Israel may very soon have full diplomatic Status with Sri Lanka. Mr. Haem Devon, leader of the Israeli Interests' Section now in Colombo is reported to have made a statement on these lines. Meanwhile an Israeli Trade Delegation of about 20 members is due to visit Sri Lanka from 23rd May to 30th May. It may also be stated that this is the first visit of its kind after sixteen years. It is also further reported that Tea, Rubber and Coconut have been purchased by Israelis this year and they have paid a substantial amount for these products.

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PROMOTION



Mr. K. Kandasamy has been appointed Additional Deputy Principal of Jaffna Central College.

This is the first time in 30 years that an old boy of the school has been appointed to this post.

Mr. Kandasamy, who joined the staff of Central College in 1956, has held responsible posts in the Town Teachers' Association, The Northern Province Teachers' Association and The All Ceylon Teachers' Union.

MEG'S TUMMY

It was announced over the BBC world service last week that Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was indisposed as a result of a tummy ache. Messages of sympathy began arriving from all parts of the world. Here are some:

President Ronald Reagan (USA): This cowardly act, this heinous crime against humanity, is the work of Libyan terrorists who had smuggled some unwholesome substance into the Prime Minister's cabbage soup. In the name of peace, justice and freedom, this shall be avenged. I shall bomb not merely Tripoli and Benghazi in Libya, but shall also bomb Moscow, the Kremlin etcetera etcetera, the whole evil empire if you like.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi (India): My nation sincerely expresses its deepest sorrow from the very depths of its heart. We offer our good offices in suggesting that the good lady changes her eating habits to have a go at Tandoori Fried Rice from Nazim's Cuisine in East Ham. This is bound to be a bigger success story than our efforts in Sri Lanka.

President Junius Jayewardene (Sri Lanka): Separatist Marxist terrorists are the cause of all the troubles in this world including the displeasure caused to the interior of the lady's anatomy. She does not know how to deal with her troubles in that despicable Ireland.

Let her send her whole SAS to me for training by my Security Forces. Once they return and are unleashed on Ireland, not only will

there be no Irish problem left, there will neither be an Ireland left.

★ ★ ★

GETTING LOST

The conduct of some Tamil militant leaders in making themselves unavailable during the recent crisis is being considered by political leaders all over the world as being an appropriate means of avoiding crises. Why speak and provide grist for awkward questions and speculations? If Ministers Dissanayake and Premadasa had gone into hiding, the Kantalai disaster would have blown over by now. If Gorbachev had taken a holiday, Chernobyl would have been forgotten. If something goes disastrously wrong, Vamoose, and let your spokesman lie, hedge or bluff as best as he can.

Who Wants Libraries?

Due to the security threat to the army camp because of its close proximity, the Trincomalee Public Library has been ordered to close immediately its first floor for the use of the general public. Hence the Reference Library and the Lending Library had to be closed or shifted elsewhere, according to reports.

Even the newly restored Jaffna Public Library had to remain closed for public use due to security reasons because of its close proximity to the army camp at the old Dutch Fort in the centre of the Jaffna City.

The Public Library of Vavuniya was partly destroyed by arson again by the security forces in August 1985.

The following are the other libraries reduced to ashes by the security forces within the Jaffna peninsula itself. Details of other libraries destroyed by the security forces elsewhere needs documentation :-

Thickam Library - August 1984; Wesleyan Mission Hartley College Library Point Pedro-September 1st 1984; Polikandy Library-September 15th 1984; Ariyalai Saraswathy Library-May 13th 1985. Karainagar Globe Library-May 4th 1985, Valvettithurai two Libraries- May 1985.

The Media Scene

ANOTHER GAMINI

"THE ISLAND" (Sunday Edition) of 11th May 1986 contained the following paragraph in an editorial titled "THE STORY THAT NEVER WAS WRITTEN":

"A classic example of this kind of lopsided reporting is when the NEW YORK TIMES featured a Sinhala journalist who continues his diatribe against his own community being lionised in Jaffna and living among Tamils. It failed to report that millions of Tamils continue to live harmoniously among the Sinhalese while the Sinhala people are being massacred by the terrorists!"

The reference was obviously to the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW, though no name was mentioned.

The whole editorial reveals the new line of thinking of THE ISLAND — since Mr. Gamini Weerakoon took over as Editor from Mr. Vijitha Yapa on 1st April. (THE DATE IS SIGNIFICANT).

Under Mr. Yapa, THE ISLAND displayed a degree of objectivity not visible in most other Colombo-based newspapers in reporting events in the North and commenting thereon.

That objectivity can no longer be expected from 'THE ISLAND' with the recently American-returned Mr. Weerakoon at the helm. He is well-known in journalistic circles for his strong anti-Indian and anti-Tamil outlook.

We would like Mr. Weerakoon to visit the North and make a firsthand study of the entire situation, instead of depending on official reports for the news, on which tainted sources most of the editorial comments are based.

Journalists come in all sizes and shapes. To what category a journalist wishes to belong is his own privilege. It is a rare privilege, we would wish to remind Mr. Gamini Weerakoon,

MONK'S STORY

The 'Monk's Story' published in the last issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW, was a continuation of the article in the previous issue. The author was the Ven. Degalle Padmasiri, until recently Incumbent of the Tissa Viharaya, Kankesan-turai.

We hope that at least some people in the South read it.

ONE DEAD

Of the Tamil officers at the Central Telegraph Office who were assaulted by their Sinhalese colleagues on 12th May, after the building was blasted by Tamil militants five days previously, one has succumbed to his injuries in hospital. He was Mr. Perinparajah.

Some Tamil officers at the Have-lock Town Post Office had also been manhandled.

WRONG KEYS IN WRONG KEY-HOLES!

Oh, how nice to be in Jaffna — my beloved Jaffna! — after a break of two months.

Not that I wanted to keep away but I was kept away by various circumstances, including bomb blasts at some points on the long route to the Northern capital which disrupted rail and road transport, and a nasty motorcycle accident which forced me to hide my face for a week.

The face looks all right now, except that, for the first time in my life, I am sporting a moustache which some of my friends say looks too Hitlerite. How a few hairs can alter a man's looks!

Immensely enjoyed the bus ride by VJP Express. The bus left Colombo Fort at 10 p.m. and reached Jaffna at 2 p.m. the next day. Sixteen hours for a 250-mile journey! Not bad, considering Sri Lanka's fast progress to a high-tech society via unbridled capitalism.

Especially after Vavuniya, the bus sometimes travelled off the road, thanks to the efficiency of the Highways Department under Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa. At these points the ride was smoother than going on the pot-holed tarmac.

Never mind, the point is that I reached Jaffna in one piece.

The usual checks were there, 12 this time. Oh, how gentle the army and police boys were. At only three points were the passengers asked to get off the vehicle. I could have carried a bomb in my handbag.

At one check-point, a young policeman asked me why I was carrying cotton wool, bandages and other medical ware. Weren't these available in Jaffna? he asked. I said these might be needed on the way, especially if flying objects like stones are attracted by a speeding bus.

At another check-point, a soldier asked, in Sinhala, where I was going. "Jaffna" was my reply. "What for?" he asked. "To see my family", I said. He was apparently satisfied though he noticed that the name on the national identity card indicated that I was travelling the wrong way.

I have always felt sorry for the security men manning the check-points. They are performing what they think is a sacred duty—preserving the integrity of Sri Lanka against the Eelamists—but

somehow the bombs reach Anuradhapura and, lately, Colombo as well.

By staying away from Jaffna for too long I missed a lot of 'fireworks' Especially the home-and-home match. In two days more Boys were killed than what the Security Forces had been able to achieve in one year.

Boys have still a lot to learn about life: after all, boys will be boys. It is easy to kill but very difficult to create. I am reminded of the many married people I know who have no children. I think that in the present context they are extremely lucky people.

I arrived in Jaffna town amidst the Jubilation after the recent events. I told the first man I met, that the National Security Minister had been beaming on the telly and asked what the cause of jubilation was, had Eelam become a reality? 'No,' he replied, 'one of the parties fighting for Eelam has been deprived of its address in Jaffna. Well,' I thought, 'If Lalith and some Tamils have something in common to celebrate, it must be a great day,' and I decided to join in.

Walking down the street, I met a 19 year old standing smartly with a gun I asked him, 'why all this?' He replied, 'our party does the fighting. We do not need another party to direct traffic.' I went about inquiring the reasons those celebrating had for their approval of what had happened. I received a whole lot of answers: 'The losing side had betrayed a boatload from the winning side to the Sri Lankan authorities' 'they were in league with India,' 'they were in league with Sri Lanka,' 'they were in league with the CIA', 'they were in league with the KGB,' 'they were thieves. Not that it is wrong to remove things. But when others remove things they say it is on loan.' 'well,' I thought 'if they were guilty of all this they surely deserved what they got' After deep thought I found that I had indeed always supported the winning side.

I was told of a shopkeeper who used to support the losing side. When some guys from the winning side came and smashed up a camp of the losing side in his neighbourhood, this shopkeeper

It is the toddy season in Jaffna now but the taste of the effervescent liquid is sour in the mouth. Jaffna is no longer sweet, as it once was.

The thought arises—the one uppermost in the minds of most people in Jaffna—where and when the mayhem and madness will end.

A number of people in the South and the North hold the keys to the entire problem. The trouble is that they keep poking the wrong keys in the wrong keyholes!

I like to go boating to the islands off Jaffna's coast—Analativu, Pungudutivu, Nainativu, Delft,

Kachchativu et al. I did this many times long ago. This pleasure is denied to me now. My movements are restricted mainly to certain water-holes, 'Yarita' and 'Laknivasas.' Even the old Rest House is now out of bounds. It is too close to the Army camp in the Fort.

I also like ocean food. Crabs, cuttlefish, prawns and the lot. This pleasure is also denied me—and most of the people in Jaffna. There is a thing called a 'Security Zone' off Jaffna which has effectively grounded fishermen. A state has been reached where even fishermen cannot eat fish!

— GAMINI NAVARATNE

CYNYX GOES TO TOWN

promptly walked out to offer aerated water to the winning side. 'What a guy,' I thought, admiring the man 'this is the Stuff Sri Lankan Permanent Secretaries are made of'.

When I went to bed that night I heard an announcement from a loudspeaker van which sounded like the Prevention of Terrorism Act being read out: 'All those having possession of armed men or equipment must surrender them immediately. Those failing to do so if discovered will be severely dealt with'. I thought the Sri Lankan army was back in control. I was to discover in the morning that this was not the case. This was a great relief. Hardened as I am in such matters, changing sides twice in twenty four hours is too much even for me. Only Sri Lankan MP's can do that.

I then met some businessmen who told me they were most delighted at what happened. In their Colombo branch there is only one party that came to collect money for the National Defence Fund. But in Jaffna there had been seven, making it rather inconvenient. Now, they said, that had been rectified.

On the Street I met some people asking a group of armed men for explanations. 'Why the fuss?' one replied, 'did you complain when the Sri Lankan army did such things?'

I went around on my bicycle and landed at some spot in Tinnely and bumped into some ponderous persons gesticulating earnestly

in deep deliberations over some matter of intense gravity. I soon recognised them as being academics I asked them what they thought of the recent events. The most senior of them wearing a professorial gown replied, 'to be is what is now becoming. What was is not. What is, is not be. What was in the beginning is never to be. As the ancient sage said, you never step into the same river twice. The person whom I would now describe by the perpendicular pronoun, in a sense never was and is not responsible for what was and is to come. Your question therefore refers to the unreality of perpetual flux and is therefore meaningless.' He then pointed his finger at me sternly.

'All very true', I thought, 'but not the sort of stuff to spring on a man with a morning head after last night's celebrations.'

I said, 'that may well be. All is meaningless flux. Then what do you teach the students?'

'That is a very good question,' he said, 'we shall all think about it, and take it up at the next meeting after discussing allowances, and promotions. But the question now is to be or not to be. We shall be going. Cheerio?'

FURTHER TRAINING

Mr. Indrajit Senathiraja Chartered Accountant, of the American Express Bank, Colombo, has left for New York for further training. He will be away for 3 months.

He is the son of Mr. K. Senathiraja, J. P. U. M. and Attorney-at-law and Mrs. Senathiraja of Manipay.

JAFFNA TOWN: DOES IT NEED MUCH CHANGE?

Because I know that time is always time and place is always and only place and what is actual is actual only for one time and only for one place I rejoice that things are as they are

— T. S. Eliot

Even though T. S. Eliot's poem is now many years old, the lines above are remarkably up to date. Granted that vast urban sprawls, pollution, destruction of the countryside and appalling death on the highways exist, still most people seem to derive pleasure out of their ability to accept them in the way they are. Some of the inconveniences—for instance, mothers spend a good part of each day taking their children to schools because streets are unsafe, distances have become too far to walk—have come about so gradually that people living in towns and cities have grown to accept them.

Alvin Toffler, author of *Future Shock*, pointed out that "the working masses in the high-technology societies are totally indifferent to the call for a political revolution aimed at exchanging one form of property ownership for another. For most people the rise in affluence has meant a better, not a worse, existence, and they look upon their much-despised 'Suburban middle-class lives' as fulfilment rather than deprivation."

Societies are always in state of flux. People change jobs. They move from one to another. Businesses start up, shut down, expand, contract, and shift in location. A new tract of homes goes up, an old garden-space disappears. Life, in short, becomes a game of 'musical chairs.'

Changes in society make it necessary that man must replace—in a planned and flexible way—obsolete facilities, complexes, and institutions. Ordinarily, man seeks change on a gradual basis. It would seem desirable to plan for such gradual change, but things are happening too fast. For a better insight into this point, one may read Toffler's *Future Shock*, "a book about what happens to people overwhelmed by change, a current so powerful today that it overturns institutions, shifts over values, and shrivels our roots."

Traditional patchwork approaches of repairing and expanding the urban areas can only invite greater urban sprawl, pollution, destruction of the countryside, and appalling death on the highways. The objective then is to design a city

that can grow and yet retain the old features. The objective then should be to redesign a town that preserves and enhances the good aspects that were symbolic of the town.

TOWN PLANNING

Modern town planning began around 1898 when the English planner Ebenezer Howard proposed the building of new towns to attract residents away from London. Howard's 'garden cities' would have their own industries, and those who worked in them could live close by. Each new small city would have various sections zoned for commerce, culture, and schools, but most important, there would be generous expanses of green areas. Each town would be enriched by its own agricultural belt so that all residents would be in close proximity to green countryside.

by

Mallika Rasaratnam

The concept of 'garden cities' influenced all subsequent urban planning. Various planners have given the 'garden city' assumptions various names, but all are basically similar.

The watered-down versions are: Greenbelts, Broadacres of Frank Lloyd Wright; Satellite Cities of Eliel Saarinen; Glorious City of Le Corbusier.

To relieve population pressure and to satisfy increasing expectations, man modifies, extends, and re-designs his urban areas. A new meaning for life could develop from a reorientation of a town. But man is not the complete master of the town or city. The town and city also shape the habits and thoughts of their people. They cannot be called stages on which the people are the actors. Rather, like a moving vehicle, they shake and jerk the people, confine their freedom, frustrate them, fill their lives with tensions and anxieties, and spoil them with their conveniences. The towns and cities are not passive.

THE HUDDLE

T. S. Eliot in one of the beautiful lines in the poem *The Rock*, says:

When the stranger says: "What is the meaning of this city? Do you huddle close together because you love each other?" What

will you answer? "We all dwell together To make money from each other?" or This is a community?

Just as people have a need to find escape from crowds, so also there appears to be the psychological need for people to gather closely together from time to time—to press against one another. This is evidenced by voluntary attendance at sports events and religious festivals where spectators can hardly see the players or the deity.

Jane Jacobs in her book *The Death and Life of great American Cities* remarks that in conventional city planning open spaces are venerated in an amazingly uncritical fashion. According to her observations, wherever streets are 'lively' with people and activities, there are always people watching the activity of other people—always

people around who feel responsible for what happens on their block and act as if they 'own the street' and this interest helps to keep the peace.

To the protest that urban over-size is full of inconveniences, Britain's Ivor de Wolfe's response is "the higher the density, the more civilized is the place." The idea he points out is that higher density makes life easier. An example of his thinking is the following. "Sixty persons per acre can support a viable bus service. Two hundred people per acre can support a rapid transit system."

The danger of mob pressure—ochlophobia—can be avoided if sufficient area in the form of park land is scattered across the city to make it possible for the people to escape, at least from time to time, from the pressure of crowds.

Most congestion problems in large cities are related to man's time-cycle. Of all the curious customs of man, perhaps the most curious is that everybody wants to do the same thing at the same time. The consequences of man's incline for rhythmic concert—all doing the same thing at the same time—has a drastic effect on the physical dimensions of a city. The size of rooms, the numbers of public offices needed to transact business, the number of desks and chairs, the breadth of highways follow as logical conse-

quences of rhythmic concert.

This phenomenon of everybody doing things simultaneously is popularly known as 'Circadian rhythm'. Erich Fromm makes some observations about this in his *Sane Society*.

SPACE AND TIME

The two concepts—the principles of space and time—if properly exploited can do much to alleviate the problems of an overcrowded town and also to avoid urban sprawl.

According to the principle of space: In order to keep population densities low, conserve land use, and avoid the problems of urban sprawl, man must more effectively utilize the vertical dimension.

According to the principle of time: In order to conserve and maximize the effective use of space and to lead a less encumbered life, man needs to free himself from the syndrome of day-night cycles by utilizing the facilities of the city more evenly throughout the twenty-four hour day.

In a town, on the average, almost one third of the population comprises the working force. In any conventional town two times a day—once in the early morning hours and then again in the evening—the force of one third of the population floods the streets of the city, going to and from work, creating congestion, a phenomenon unparalleled in history. Many of the inconveniences related to urban traffic congestion—accidents, traffic jams, the problem of finding a parking space—are the result of the existing day-night cycle. If work schedules are fully staggered, the workforce will, instead of doing the same thing at the same time, either be on their way to work or be returning, so the peak becomes spread-out and eased.

Moreover, because of staggered living patterns, there would be no sudden and excessive demand on the electrical power, water supply, or food facilities or on the transportation system between cities.

The capital investment needed in many types of physical facilities, such as public health clinics and restaurants, would be much reduced because the peak demand would be less. Even the man-hours needed to run a facility would be considerably less because personnel are constantly working and are not idle as they would be just before and after a peak hour. Reduction in capital facilities usually means that the smaller facility is used more intensively. For

(Continued on page 7)

WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE !

Woodman, spare that tree !
Touch not a single bough !
In youth it sheltered me,
And I'll protect it now.

The residents along Chemmani Road are angry and bitter at the gatecrashing tactics of government officials interested in foisting a development mania of cutting down massive historic shade trees along roadways for the purpose of laying overhead 33 KV high tension lines along sections of Jaffna-Pt. Pedro Road, Chemmani Road, Kanagaratnam Road and Kandy Road. In thickly populated residential areas in Nallur and other parts of the city. "Why can't these high tension lines be taken overhead across paddy fields and waste lands through uninhabited areas which is the normal practice?" they ask. The essence of democracy is that such welfare measures be decided on with the active participation and consent of the people who may be adversely affected in spite of the good intentions of the officials who wish to push through such questionable development projects and go about its implementation with scant respect and regard to the legitimate objections of the people who are exercising their democratic rights in safeguarding the environment due to the potential risk involved in taking high tension lines along narrow busy roads with heavy traffic.

There are tall palmyrah, coconut and other trees all along these routes that may be uprooted with the thrust of a cyclonic wind very common during the monsoonal weather. If these highly charged wires were taken across uninhabited areas, the risk to life is minimised; but to take them through crowded areas is to court needless risk to life as a chance snapping of these wires may end in a disaster on a wet day in stormy weather.

If the harmless telephone cables are laid underground regardless of the cost, all the more reason why the potent high tension cables too should go underground as well, as this will save our environment of the foliage that we have never cared to raise or nurture. We are quick at felling whole trees when the chopping off of an offending branch would serve the purpose.

There is also the danger of these concrete posts sagging sideways when there is a heavy down-pour of continuous rain and the flood waters stagnate in the drains along roadways as is very common nowadays in Jaffna with many roads going under two to three feet of water. "This is a dangerous game," say the affected people in the residential area of Nallur. They are alarmed at this hasty and ill-conceived plan of the Electricity Board. Already they have cut down many huge shade trees along these roadways and parks causing soil erosion, including many ancient bo-trees considered sacred to Hindus and Buddhists.

by

V. A. Philipupillai

One of them is a 14th century old bo-tree standing sentinel at the **Veyiluhantha Pillayar** temple along Chemmani Road. A huge branch of about 8 feet in girth has been chopped off the base. There was a board with details of historic and hallowed origin gifted by the Archaeological Society of St. John's College, Jaffna, similar to the one adorning the **Sankilian arch** of the 14th century along Pt. Pedro Road near the **Satta Nathar Temple**. That board which was perhaps like a red flag to the vandals of the tree-cutting mania is now missing.

"The standard practice now is to lay high tension and telephone cables underground and prevent the roadways becoming a jungle of concrete posts," said Dr. Rajan Hoole, an electrical engineer himself attached to the Mathematics Department of the University of Jaffna and a resident along Chemmani Road. "The basic concept of planning is not merely to satisfy the short-term need but to visualize ahead the long-term wants and the drawbacks we may encounter in the foreseeable future. For instance, in Singapore there is a move to take such cables underground in line with the modern trend. The difference in cost is nothing much. One significant advantage is that one need not bother about maintenance and in the case of telephone cables, theft of valuable copper wire is ruled out. Any planning, if it is worthy of being called one, should aim at the

potential good of the people for the next fifty to hundred years".

In Singapore, all the roads and highways are lined on both sides with shade trees, though one in every five Singaporean has a motor vehicle of his own. Singapore has a very efficient public transport system and a comparatively cheap and comfortable taxi service. Bicycles are seen mostly in children's parks and not along public highways. Here in Jaffna, we depend so very much on our bicycles. How many thousands of school children move about on their bicycles? How many thousands of worshippers particularly women and children, walk to the Nallur temple on Fridays and other auspicious days sacred to the Hindu

public, in the hot sun at mid-day and during the four week long festival season?

VANDALISM

One cannot understand the vandalism of these departmental officials when one looks around to see the devastation and destruction of the natural scenery, the many huge shade trees that dot our roadways all being sacrificed to the whims and fancies of these bureaucrats who are very shortsighted in their planning. What right have they to despoil the natural wealth of the country? **Of course, timber is a money spinner, these days. There's the rub. Need one say more?**

They have not observed the normal departmental rules and regulations in the cutting and the disposal of these very valuable trees that are public property. There was a teak tree along the roadway near **St. James' Church** in Nallur. The Government Agent, who is the Authority under the Electricity Act, had given written instructions after a personal inspection not to touch that teak tree. But hey presto! The electrical engineer had his way. The tree was felled and the log was a missing item! No public tenders were called for; nor publicity given in the local newspapers, for the cutting and the disposal of the many valuable trees that have been

felled along Pt. Pedro road, Chemmani road, Kanagaratnam road and Kandy road. The total worth of all the felled trees on public property will easily run into lakhs of rupees and why should the state be deprived of its dues. Why was not an orderly system followed in this whole stinking business?

These massive trees bequeathed to us by our ancestors and the former government agents, who were lovers of nature, gave us natural scenic beauty to our landscape apart from the shade and shelter from the torrid tropical sun which is nature's blessing to us. Our public officials seem to take a delight in transforming our tree-lined roadways into desolate, desert-like tarred macadam surfaces amidst a jungle of concrete posts. They have their private or official vehicles to run about, but the poor pedestrians and the cyclists including the thousands of school children have no shelter from the scorching sun at midday. It is also well to remember that these trees along our highways provide the ordinary people who go about their day to day business, shelter and security from the trigger happy gunmen operating from the helicopters that fly around at will killing unarmed civilians in the name of the dharmista government.

The grouse of these residents is that they were never taken into confidence nor were they participants of the decision to take overhead 33 KV high tension lines along their residences and from the very outset there has been a storm of protest because they were not prepared to sacrifice their coconut, palmyrah and fruit trees like mango, jak and tamarind in their premises.

One recalls the complaint of Mrs. Lalitha Wijayatilaka of Maharagama who in her letter to the Editor published in the **Island** of 12th December 1985 questioned the arbitrary conduct of the electrical department bureaucrats who caused their workmen to forcibly enter her premises and fell a valuable teak tree when the chopping off of a single offending branch would have sufficed and wondered whether they negated the Prime Minister's grow-more-trees campaign. It seems to be a common disease they are prone to, be it in the North or the South.

AMERICA CREATED TERRORIST PROBLEM

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

There is a great deal of silly talk about 'terrorism'. People who have terrorised others with impunity, politically immature men too, are indulging in it. Britishers do not get unnecessarily warmed up or agitated when they deal with the I. R. A. So too, are people from other countries of Europe.

But, what is the genesis of terrorism? When the majority section of the population of a multi-national state rides rough-shod over the inalienable rights of the minority, the aggrieved people are naturally driven at bay and revolt against this injustice and if possible take up arms to vindicate their rights. If the men in authority are politically mature and show at least a streak of statesmanship, the minority section could be dealt with honour, dignity and humane understanding to which there would be positive response from the latter. Terrorism would have been completely eliminated. But bragging about, tall talk and the prostitution of history to win the ballot box will definitely aggravate matters and a solution to the problem becomes unnecessarily refractory. Many years of political experience of a man might have been spent in sheer pig-headedness and bragging about, which are not the ingredients of statesmanship which is necessary for the proper leadership of men.

In the latter half of the century, the Arab world was threatened by the creation of Zionist Israel. The Palestinians bore the brunt of the Israeli terrorist attacks as the former's homeland was almost inundated with Jews who were driven from pillar to post in Europe and the remnants of the almost exterminated Jewish population in the concentration camps of Nazi Germany were forcibly colonised in the Palestine area. Even from the biblical times, Jews lived in the so-called Palestine, but, most of them migrated out to seek greener pastures and settled in many of the European countries (including U. S. S. R.) and in the U. S. A. In the meantime the Palestinian-Arab population multiplied itself rapidly and their problem became a 'living space' problem. This could have been solved amicably and diplomatically with the consent of the Arab world. But political gerrymandering in support of the Jews, supply of sophisticated arms, active moral support and the veto power of the U. S. A. in the U. N. Security Council—all led to international terrorism, as a result of the

sheer frustration of the Palestinian Arabs and their supporters.

It is mainly U. S. A. which created this terrorist problem and stoked the dormant embers in the Middle East and therefore it has no moral right to talk about exterminating terrorism. The boomerang has completed its hyperbolic circuit in the U. S. A. If you sow wild oats, you don't reap anything else.

Chankanai P. P. Sabharatnam

LETTERS

G. G. P.

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

Mr. C. Subramaniam (Orator, this was the affectionate sobriquet by which he was known from his Manipal Hindu College days) has attempted to play down the role of Mr. G. G. Ponnampalam in contemporary politics (S.R. 5th April).

The Tamil community will not take the comments of this one-time stalwart of the Youth Congress seriously, as this party's sole contribution was a downpour of words on Socialism whilst flirting with socialists like Mr. W. Dahanayake who changed his political colours to suit the times and is now with the United National Party.

It is incorrect to state that Muslims were against 50:50, because leaders like the late Mr. T. B. Jayah offered no resistance to this demand.

Whatever sceptics like Orator may say, G. G. is one leader who rose to unprecedented heights as Tamil leader on a ground-level of mass support. The following letter addressed to me by G. G., whilst I was a youth actively engaged in his campaign of 50:50 proves beyond doubt that it was this great leader who first spurred the Tamils to fight for their rights:

"My dear Gananathan,

Thank you very much for your letter that cheered me as usual. I hear a vicious propaganda is being carried out against me in Jaffna. Please keep your ear close to the ground and note developments.

As you are aware, but as doubtless many have forgotten, I was the first Tamil to raise the question of greater political power for the Tamil community; when everyone else was ready to sell the pass or

surrender everything and the entire position seemed bleak and hopeless, I raised the banner of revolt in order that my community could once again come into its own, and it both amuses me and pains me to find that those who have neither devoted five minutes of their time, or spent five cts. of their money for the public purpose should be so agitated about seats for the Tamils. I could easily satisfy everybody as I feel certain balanced representation will get a larger number of seats than almost under any other Scheme. I only do not want to raise the jealousy and opposition of my enemies. The whole thing has got to be extremely carefully, delicately and honestly handled. Mahadeva may have deceived a few in Jaffna when he said that he would be able to obtain twenty seats for the Tamils but the whole gigantic fraud was exposed when I found that not one of the Sinhalese there was prepared to support such an allocation. I put this question pointedly and elicited this answer in order that the Tamils might no longer be deceived by Mahadeva.

With best wishes,

Yours affectionately,
G. G. Ponnampalam

T. T. Gananathan

Manipal

CLOSING DOWN

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

The Sri Lanka Survey Department is making arrangements to close down its divisional offices in the North and East. As a first step they have reduced the field and office staff to a bare minimum. The Post of Superintendent of Surveys, Jaffna has not been filled for more than a year. This is due to the communal policy adopted by the hierarchy of the Department. No other Department has treated its own 'brother' officers and the public like this.

In the meantime they have stopped printing motor maps in Tamil. A Tamil or a Muslim typist is not available in the whole of the Department; out of the twenty two recently recruited Probationary Assistant Superintendents of Surveys (all graduates), you do not find a single from the minority communities. These are the officers who are going to occupy the higher seats in the Department in years to come.

Manipal

R. Sudarshan

LEARNT NOTHING

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

I have been told that the Rs. 600 billion figure mentioned in my article 'A Plea for Sanity' (S. R. 12th April, 1986) is wrong and should have correctly read Rs. 6 billion. I was only quoting the President of Sri Lanka who in his address to the Inter Varsity Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya on March 21 this year said: "Rs. 600 billion had been set aside in the last budget for defence expenditure" (Island 22nd March P. I.) Neither the paper nor the Presidential Secretariat has issued a correction up to now. If I have erred, I must admit I have done in excellent company.

I am now aware that the current expenditure is almost Rs. 9 billion a year. Whatever the true figure may be, and there is little doubt that it is increasing all the time, it represents an awful lot of money to expend on armaments and military paraphernalia for killing and maiming a section of Sri Lanka's citizens who are entitled to pursue goals of life, liberty and happiness in the country of their birth. If a principled peace and a genuine devolution of power were achieved, this colossal sum could be better spent on feeding, clothing and housing those unfortunate million of our population who eke out an existence below the poverty line.

The main burden of my plea was for a sympathetic, rational and realistic resolution of the prevailing impasse. Turning swords into ploughshares is the essence of the matter. The scope and rationale of this transformation remain prime responsibility of the Government in power. Unfortunately the wisdom, compassion, humanity and justice reflected in two previous pacts, entered into by two Sinhalese Prime Ministers with then leader of the Tamils in 1957 and 1965 respectively, were torpedoed by extremist Sinhala opinion which, tragically, appears to have learned nothing and forgotten nothing in the intervening years.

Colombo

H. A. I. Goonetilleke

A. A. GROUP

There is a move to set up an Alcoholic Anonymous group in Jaffna. Anyone who is interested in joining the group should contact Mr. V. Gandhi, No. 43, Chetty St., Nallur, Jaffna.

JAFFNA TOWN...

(Continued from page 4)

example, the restaurant table could be used 24 times as much in a 24 hour period. Consequently, it would wear out more rapidly and the entire facility could be modernized and updated in a shorter period of time.

Staggered living patterns will also help to share facilities, and floor space. The same facility and floor space could be shared around the clock.

Schools as we know them in conventional towns are usually overcrowded during school hours and empty from late afternoon until early the next morning. School floor space and facilities could be consolidated and operated on a continuous 24 hour cycle. School floor space could be used for temporary-based activities, such, as a health-care clinic for pregnant women and routine medical services for young and old people around the area a dancing class for children etc.

There has been growing trend toward activities that operate more evenly around the clock. In Japan there are enterprises whose working-day habits do not follow the pattern of five days of work followed by a two-day holiday. The five working days are still there (in Japan), but they are followed by a three day holiday. A man may start a five working-day cycle on Monday, take a three-day holiday and return to work on the next five-day cycle, starting on Tuesday. By varying the initial starting dates, there are always people working, and their work cycles are always shifting. This trend is desirable for an unencumbered way of life.

However, no claim is made that this use of the three-dimension—that is, the proposal to use time more evenly—is perfect in all respects. What is claimed is that after all the pros and cons are considered, it will on the whole be far more convenient than current time-cycles helping to squeeze-in as many activities possible within the area as it now exists.

GUIDELINES

In answering the question whether Jaffna Town needs much change one can only say that it of course needs change, but it is not capable of further development along the path it now appears to go.

Nearly everyone is in favour of making changes in the lay-out of

the Jaffna Town. Perhaps after the recent influx of migrants to the area, Jaffna Town has become a little puffed-up in breath and potentials. But like a housewife who itches to buy a freezer, dish-washer and clothes-dryer no sooner than her husband gets a promotion or a trade benefit, the people of Jaffna in general have started talking about an up-to-date Town Hall, Auditorium, Public Park and Swimming pool.

Lack of zoning in Jaffna Town is not at all depressing. Rising energy cost for transportation over the next few decades will mean more people working in their homes, much as people did until the 18th century. A number of cities in Europe have already begun to change their zoning laws to permit home-based offices and cottage industries. Development of home computers and other information technologies will permit more white-collar work to be done at home.

The vast majority of Tamils, with their inherent weaknesses of the salaried middle class, with their pre-determined pay packets and taxes, if any deduced at source can at no stage afford to pay for expensive goods or services. Almost four decades after independence, Tamils, by and large, remain exactly where they were. A few who are engaged in the private sector can never be expected to bring about a major economic change. It seems, even the handful who manufacture something, have yet to shift from 'Merchant-capitalism' to 'Industrial-capitalism.' Tamils are unmistakably of a feudal nature. The provincial press which always grows in times of trouble cannot be a pointer indicating pioneering nature in them.

To mark time and keep things going a short-term facelift in addition to repairs to buildings and movements are quite adequate. Studies for a long-range plan for the town, beginning with a detailed assessment of the role the town would play in the development of the regional economy, should be undertaken first before any scheme is implemented.

To avoid the embarrassment of having to acquire private premises to build or extend services in the future, a moratorium on transaction of temple lands should be enforced so that temple lands may be used for future development.

Heights and even types of buildings, both private and public, must be restricted. Partly because of its geographic location, equally

so because of the scenic beauty, the Pannai area in the town should be left untouched will a master plan is drawn to preserve the beauty of the place. It was not many years ago that one was able to see the blazing sun dipping into the sea, even from the Jaffna bus-stand. Now one would need a tower to see the beautiful sunset nature enacts daily at Pannai.

A long-term blueprint will be a sine qua non for the several purposes I have been mentioning. For preparing the master plan an expert committee representing Architects, Naturalists, Engineers and of course, public men of eminence is essential. A similar suggestion had already been made by Mr. K. Nesiiah. The method adopted in building Chandigarh (India) as a city may be a pointer on the matter.

A DAY TO MOURN TAMIL GENOCIDE

"The Word Council of Churches had recently proclaimed June 16th to be observed throughout the world as a day of mourning to protest against the killing of 500 civilians in South Africa. Likewise to spotlight the genocide and cultural genocide perpetrated on the oppressed Tamil Nation a special date should be announced to be observed as a day of mourning" said Professor K. Nesiiah, President of the **Thanthai Chelva Memorial Trust** addressing a meeting held at the Jaffna Y. M. C. A. to commemorate the 9th death anniversary of Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam.

MAN OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Mr. M. S. Seenithamby, Emeritus Principal of J/Thevaraiyali Hindu College, Karaveddi and Justice of the Peace has won the **MAN OF ACHIEVEMENT** award from the **Cambridge International Biographical Centre**, England in recognition of services rendered by him to education and community and his biography is to be included in the Twelfth Edition of **Men of Achievement** to be published shortly by the Biographical Centre. He has been invited for the convention of **Men Of Achievement** from 13th to 20th July '86 to be held in New Orleans, America.

He was awarded a Fellowship in November 1984, by the **South Asia Regional Reconstruction Association**, Bangalore to undergo Regional Leadership training in social work.

Mr. Seenithamby is the Founder of the **Vathiry Development Foundation**, its Library services, Vathiry Adult Farmers' Club, Young Stock Farmers' Club and Vathiry Coop Credit Society. Also he is the Vice-President of Karaveddi Citizens' Committee and Vadamaradchy-Live-Stock Breeders' Association and a member of the Uduppiddy Vallai Co-op Hospital Working Committee.

He is an old boy of St. Aloysius' College, Galle and Ananda College, Colombo. He graduated from Presidency College, Madras.

MAY FIRST—THE WORKERS' DAY

After the fall of the Paris Commune, The International Workingmen's Association, also called the First International, ceased to exist. Referring to this Lenin said: "The First International finished its historical role and yielded place to an epoch of infinitely greater growth of the labour movement in all the countries of the world."

The time ripened for the reconstitution of the International on a new basis, and at the historic congress in Paris, the Second International was established on July 14, 1889, on the 100th anniversary of the fall of the Bastille in the great French Revolution. The most notable decision made by the congress was the establishment of May First as a day for International labour demonstrations, in support of the proposed general strike of the American Federation of Labour for the eight-hour day, set for 1st May 1890.

For a knowledge of the French Revolution, of the First and Second Internationals and of the establishment of May Day, read the book "**Lenin and Asia**" by Attorney-at-Law T. Duraisingam, a pioneer of the working class movement of our country.

Sinhala, Tamil and English editions of the book are available at bookshops.
Price Rs. 10/-

Council for Socialist Studies
31, Wilson Street, Colombo 12.

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

EROS WARNS

The general command of the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation has sent this letter to the President, with copies to all political parties and diplomatic missions in connection with the CTO blast on 7th May.

Consequent to our attack on the Anuradhapura fuel storage Station on 23rd April, we released five demands which were not heeded by your government and your military forces.

Observing further atrocities of your military forces on the innocent Tamil civilians, we were forced, most regretfully, to carry out a mild attack on the Central Telegraph Office at Fort. We repeat below and stress again on the five demands that were put forward by us, for your serious consideration.

1. To stop all activities by the government and the military forces regarding forceful eviction of the Tamil refugees at Trincomalee and Muttur areas and make them flee towards the North, to stop the Sinhala colonisation in order to strengthen Sinhala settlements at Theehavaapi and to stop the atrocities against the Islamic population of Muttur.

2. To stop the expansion of the Palaly Airport Camp which is being carried-out, to facilitate an American Military Base, under the pretext of making it as an International Airport, at a cost of innocent Tamil civilians loss of life and property, that is being damaged daily by continued aerial bombing and helicopter shooting for eventual clearing of the area.

3. To stop all economic damages carried out by the armed forces, through burning and damaging harvestable paddy fields and cultivated crops, in addition to driving away the Tamil population, especially from their historical villages in the Kilinochchi, Vavuniya, Akkaraipattu and Muttur areas.

4. All persons taken into custody from the North, East, Upcountry and other areas, under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, should

be released immediately and unconditionally.

5. Removal of the Surveillance Zone and permitting coastal fishermen settlements to carry out their daily livelihood and to stop establishing armed Sinhala guards along the coast for purposes of driving away Tamil coastal settlements to facilitate the Government's intention of taking full control of the coast and the sea around Tamil areas.

All Sinhala people in the South should realise that ours is only a genuine freedom struggle. We have no doubt that similar inhuman atrocities taking place now against the Tamil speaking population would eventually occur in the South.

The Government circle should realise clearly and understand that a solution to the ethnic problem is not feasible while disregarding the firm and justifiable demands of the freedom fighting organisations. Carrying out false propaganda by calling such organisations as armed groups, bandits or as terrorists will not detour our goal.

We would like to inform you of our firm decision with regard to all forms of talks undertaken on the ethnic issue. Our position on the issue is as follows:

The recognition and declaration of North, East and the Upcountry as a single linguistic state of the Tamil speaking people.

This linguistic state should be called as 'Eelam.'

This 'Eelam' area should be granted the powers to establish a separate administrative structure *in toto*.

In the event of any further delay in granting our demands and fulfilling our conditions, we regret to inform you that we will be compelled to believe that you are only interested in a military solution and we, too, will be forced to intensify our military actions.

'BAD SHOW'

We publish below excerpts from the statements of the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (EROS), the Tamil Eelam Students Organisation (TESO) and the Students' Assembly, Jaffna University on the recent tragic events:

EPRLF

The killing of Mr. Sri Sabaratnam, leader of the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) and one of the founder-members of the Eelam National Liberation Front is deeply regretted. His death after nine days of fratricidal struggle is vehemently condemned by our Front. We cannot condone this killing for such actions tend to taint the image and create a sense of prejudice among the people.

In a struggle such as ours, lapses and errors are committed but they should always be corrected and the position examined circumspectly. There should be a public organisation to examine shortcomings and such a public body should be empowered to give a decision after hearing the views of the 'injured party'. Forces opposed to the struggle of the community should be overthrown by the people themselves and not done summarily or arbitrarily.

The struggle for liberation should be a continuous one and not by the 'liquidation' of a rival group which is fratricidal. People should always be vigilant and march forward unitedly and shed off all fissiparous tendencies. People should not allow killings for sectional benefits. People have always the right to issue pamphlets and put up posters, for such action could place the views in the correct perspective and the people strengthened in their objective to defeat their 'opponents.' Fratricidal struggle can always be avoided if all movements act above board.

PLOTE

When the militant organisations are fighting on a 'common platform', we cannot condone the killings which tend to create a 'dent'.

We strongly urge that members of the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) be released immediately and that the LTTE desist in solving 'political differences' by force.

At a time when people expect a 'united approach' by the militant

groups, the present action by one group to 'liquidate' another will emasculate the militant movements and even deter the youths from joining such organisations. Such action by 'force' should always be discouraged because it is a 'retrograde step'.

EROS

The Eelam Revolutionary Organisation in a statement has characterised the recent action by LTTE against TELO as a 'bitter lesson.'

Solution by 'force' in the name of 'liberation' is a bitter experience in the light of recent incidents. Using this 'Soil' by one militant group to solve political differences by 'force' should be deplored and is inimical to the people's concept of 'liberation.'

We earnestly request the LTTE to release all the arrested TELO militants and not fall foul of the confidence reposed on them by the people.

TESO

Tamil Eelam Students Organisation (TESO) has strongly condemned the action by 'force' on the part of LTTE against another.

Such an action has tended to weaken the struggle of the Tamil speaking people and is a symptom of a 'retrograde capitalist trait'.

We view the killing of Sri Sabaratnam and some of his colleagues in this light.

We deplore the fact that this 'action' has weakened the struggle of the Tamil speaking people and suggest that, 'differences' among us be aired in 'public' so that people will be the judge. It is imperative that all militant groups be diverted on the 'correct path'.

The Students' Assembly, Jaffna University:

The Students' Assembly of the Jaffna University in a statement under the caption 'We will protect ourselves in advance' indicated that they regretted the action taken by one militant group against another which resulted in a number of deaths.

In this connection it is good to remember that many militants have sacrificed their lives in their fight against the Security Forces for the larger benefit of the people.

The meaningless loss in lives of militants is a serious set-back to the community at a time their services are needed most and a great loss when success could have been achieved with the efforts of the militants alone.