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Main Enemy Eludes The Sinhalese

There seem to be many Sinhalese people—too many, it appears—who cannot think logically; rather, they tend to react emotionally to various situations, only to regret immediately thereafter what they have precipitated through lack of a little caution and foresight.

This is a weakness seen particularly among most of their leaders.

In 1815, some Sinhalese leaders conspired against their King and handed him over, bound hand and foot, to the British. It was too late when they realised their folly.

Descendants of participants to that great folly are among us, playing

similar treacherous games.

Who was responsible for the break-up of the United Front Government in 1975? The Americans, of course!

It was one of the greatest acts of betrayal of the mass movement in Sri Lanka.

The disillusioned masses went to the other extreme

and voted Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's United National Party to power in 1977.

What folly, many (Sinhalese) people openly regretted just a few days after the election.

They compounded this folly by voting UNP at the Presidential Election and the Referendum in 1982. (It is no excuse to say that the ruling party

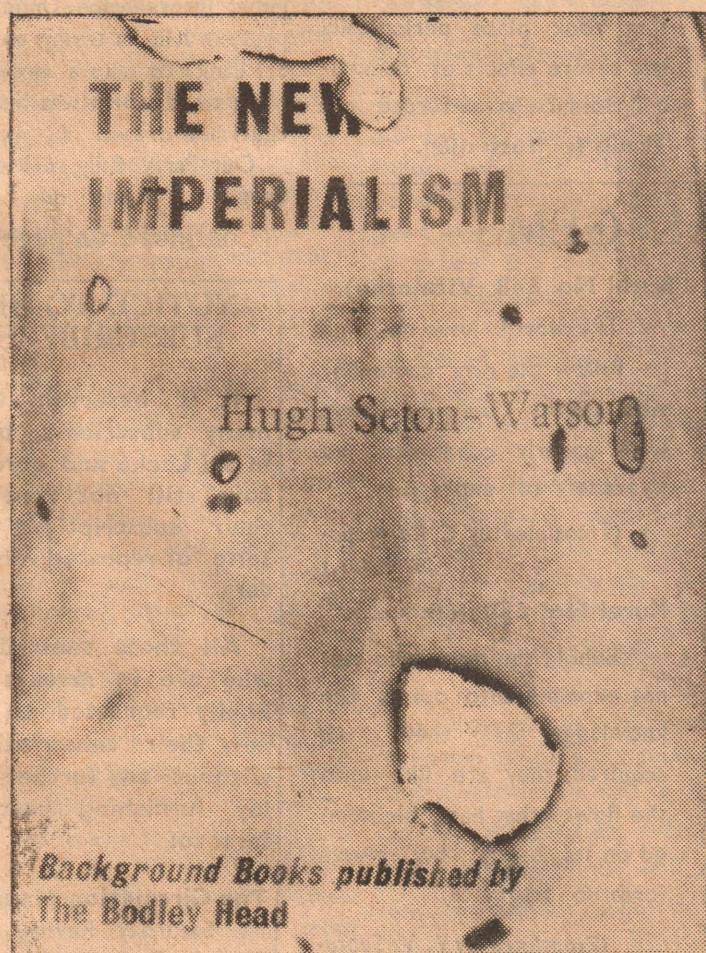
misused power on both occasions).

Then in July 1983 (let's forget July-August 1977 and other sad events) many unthinking Sinhalese—Buddhists as well—committed the biggest folly of their lives by attacking Tamil people living in their midst.

In the ultimate analysis, it would be found that the Sinhalese lost more in real terms by this mass madness than the Tamils.

The tragedy is that even now many Sinhalese

(Continued on page 12)



In recent times, the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW has been very close - dangerously very close - to the scenes of action in Jaffna, the only part of the "Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka" where some action is on, according to most of the Colombo-based media.

Pictured here are the front covers of two publications-souvenirs? - he picked up from two scenes of action, the first at Hartley College Library in Point Pedro and the other at the house of the Mallakam Magistrate at Atchuvally.

These two publications were the only things left unburnt. One is a Felicitation volume to the late, much-respected, much-maligned Solomon West Ridgeway Dias Bandaranaike. The other is a dissertation on "The New Imperialism" by Hugh Seton-Watson.



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GAMINI NAVARATNE

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MASSES' VICTORY

The lifting of the prescription on the Nava Sama Samaja Party after 1 year and 2 months is a "tremendous step forward for the struggle of the workers, peasants and the Tamil-speaking people" says its General Secretary, Dr. Wickramabahu Karunaratne, in a press release.

The statement charges that the "July '83 riots were entirely due to the bankrupt policies of the Government. Economic policies dictated by the IMF combined with racist politics let loose the biggest holocaust the country experienced in recent times. Obviously, things will never be the same and instability and disruption will continue till either the Government is overthrown by the revolutionary masses or a semi-fascist dictatorship is established as an outpost of American imperialism in the Indian Ocean.

The NSSP thanks all those who fought for the release of the party and we assure masses that we will continue to work for the revolutionary overthrow of this system."

C. T. U. RESOLUTIONS

Here are some of the resolutions adopted by the Ceylon Teachers' Union at the 27th Annual Session:

1. The present government which has cruelly attacked the living conditions of the people in the face of the growing economic crisis is today on its way to open dictatorship. It has begun to use the armed forces and the police to repress mass struggle and agitation against actions of the State which are hostile to the people, taking cover under Emergency Regulations. While a handful of those associated with the government are making millions, 80 per cent of the population of the country are unable to live from day to day. The younger generation is falling prey to all manner of problems.

The National Liberation Struggle of the Tamil People is also posing a real threat to the government day by day. By trying to impress upon the people that the Tamil National Liberation struggle — which is a struggle of people who have no other way of living for their basic human and democratic rights — is an anti-Sinhalese movement, the government is taking steps to build a strongly anti-democratic dictatorial state.

2. The Ceylon Teachers' Union should agitate with the Teachers' Union movement to bring about a united Trade Union plan of action which will build School Committees in every school, creating solidarity among all active Teachers' Trade Unions with the aim of winning better working conditions and higher wages in keeping with the rising costs of living.

ing conditions and higher wages in keeping with the rising costs of living.

3. We propose that the Ministry of Education appoints Transfer Boards with representatives from Teachers' unions to implement a rational scheme of Teachers' transfers doing away with the present system whereby D. E. Os can transfer teachers within their district in a way that creates more and more economic difficulties for teachers who are already engaged in a

massive struggle for the day to day survival.

4. We also condemn the propaganda carried on by this government to foster racism and anti-Indian feeling while not taking any steps to resolve the problems of the oppressed Tamil people. We tell the government that there is no military solution possible for the National Question. We therefore call on the government to withdraw the Armed Forces from the Northern and Eastern areas. This gathering also soundly condemns

the shooting and killing of unarmed innocent civilians in Jaffna for the past two weeks. We also call on the government to repeal the Sixth Amendment to the constitution.

5 The CTU condemns the killing of two University students and the arrest of hundreds of students, teachers and others by the Police. The CTU appeals to all People's Organizations to hold a "National Mourning Day" to protest against these atrocities.

NATIONAL QUESTION SHARPENS

The following are excerpts from the political report adopted at the first national congress of the Sri Lanka Communist Party (Left), according to a communication sent by its General Secretary, Mr. K.A. Subramaniam.

It has to be admitted that the national question in Sri Lanka has sharpened to an extent. At the same time, our Party does not in any way share the argument that the racial contradiction in this country has developed as the principal contradiction. We also do not accept the view believed by some extremist communal forces that by nature the national question has knotty problems that cannot be resolved. By approaching the problems under the guidance of Marxist-Leninist proletarian stand a solution can be found to the national question in Sri Lanka. S.L.C.P.

(Left) is of opinion that there cannot be a lasting solution to the National Question under a capitalist set-up. However, our party considers that by adopting certain ways the matter could be tackled smoothly even in that set up.

Tamil speaking people are being discriminated against, neglected and subject to alienation of their traditional land by the various governments that came to power one after the other. Compulsory language policy, planned Sinhala colonisation, discrimination in employment, standardization in higher education, unconcern for the development of Tamil areas are the basis for the problems of Tamils. Along with this the communal riots that took place periodically and severe effects of communal violence have forced the Tamils to frustration.

Today the comprador bourgeois UNP submerged in chauvinism mooted military actions against the entire Tamils. "Putting down terrorism is a holy duty" says the Government. By subjecting the Tamils, it tries to divert the attention of the people of this country. Talking of Indian threat it has fallen flat in front of America. Behind the National Question, in Sri Lanka two super powers are confronting each other. The Soviet Union is trying to advance through India. U.S. is trying to come forward through J.R. and U.N.P. For the domination of the world, in the long run, Sri Lanka's role is necessary for the Soviet Union and hence we cannot under-estimate the threat of Indian intervention. Under this pretext J.R. is trying to push Sri Lanka to take a pro-American stand which was his long cherished dream.

Our Party fully realises the danger facing our country. (Continued on page 12)

Solomon's Gems

The rich man's wealth is his only strength. The poor man's poverty is his only curse.

*

The good man's earnings advance the cause of righteousness. The evil man squanders his on sin.

*

Anyone willing to be corrected is on the pathway to life. Anyone refusing has lost his chance.

*

To hate is to be a liar; to slander is to be a fool.

*

Don't talk so much. You keep putting your foot in your mouth. Be sensible and turn off the flow."

(Compiled by Jupiter)

THIRUKKURAL GEMS

Kural No. 640 (Muraipadu....)

"Those ministers who are destitute of (executive) ability will fail to carry out their projects, although they may have contrived aright."

(Translated by Rev. Drew and John Lazarus.)

Kural No. 642 (Aakkamum....)

"As both prosperity and ruin are caused by words, a minister must guard against imperfection in his speech."

(Translated by V. R. Ramachandra Theedchithar.)

Kural No. 645 (Solluka....)

"Speak out your words, making sure that the word of none other can refute your own."

(Translated by M. S. Poornalingam Pillai)

Kural No. 648 (Vitainthu).

"The world loses no time to follow the rare counsellor who speaks weighty things with orderly coherence and sweetness of expression."

(Translated by C. Rajagopalachariar.)

Kural No. 650 (Inar....)

"Behold the men who cannot expound unto others the knowledge that they have acquired; they are like unto the flower that hath blossomed on its bunch, but giveth forth no fragrance."

(Translated by V. V. Subramaniya Iyer)

Compiled by V. T. K.

NOTICE TO SR SUBSCRIBERS

It is observed that many subscribers, both in Sri Lanka and abroad, have still not renewed their subscriptions in spite of repeated reminders.

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Anura takes on brother-in-law

Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, described in at least one opposition journal as the "Government-appointed" Leader of the Opposition, may think that he has scored a big debating point by attacking brother-in-law Mr. Vijaya Kumaranatunge over his reported willingness to bury his bones in each of the electorates in which he has been a candidate at by-elections: first at Katana, then at Mahara and now at Minneriya.

But to independent observers it is apparent that the game Mr. Bandaranaike has been playing since the days of the Presidential Election and the Referendum clearly helps the common opposition enemy, the United National Party.

The state-controlled Daily News naturally made a big splash of his remarks about Mr. Kumaranatunge on Page 1 on 4th October.

The parliamentary by-elections at Minneriya and Kundasale, fixed for 27th October, are clearly two non-events as far as the total political picture in Sri Lanka is concerned.

Even if the opposition parties win both seats, what difference would it make to the people of this country? Two more opposition spokesmen in the House, it may be, but more vocal power is not enough.

The opposition parties could have done better by ignoring the two by-elections altogether and concentrated instead on consolidating their power among the people by resorting to mass sathyagraha and other means on issues that affect them to the marrow, as the UNP led by Mr. Jayewardene did when it was in the opposition.

The UNP, SLFP and its splinter SLMP have nominated one candidate each in the two electorates and the rest are Independents.

Mrs. Bandaranaike is on record claiming that the large number of Independents is part of the SLFP strategy.

"The UNP will have only four polling agents at the two

by-elections while we will have 176 to safeguard the interests of the opposition candidates," she is supposed to have said at a meeting at Mahawewa, in Nattandiya.

According to her, this has been devised as a protection against possible use of "undemocratic methods" by the UNP as at the Referendum

and the 18 by-elections held earlier, particularly in view of the recent amendments to the election law by which the rules of the game were changed yet again.

Our prediction is that whatever strategy the SLFP and the SLMP can think of, the UNP will win both seats by... ..?

POLITICAL CAUSERIE

by **Gamini Navaratne**

It is known that there is no love lost between Mr. Bandaranaike and his sister Chandrika's husband.

But then the hopes and aspirations of a whole mass of people opposed to the policies of the present ruling party should not be sacrificed in the pursuit of family feuds.

Mr. Bandaranaike could do well to remember that the Sri Lanka Freedom Party can never hope to capture power again except with the co-operation of all the other progressive forces in the country; it never did in the past.

What he should strive for, if he is sensible, is the unification of all the anti-UNP forces in a broad front.

The people are willing; some of the leaders, especially Mr. Bandaranaike, seem to be unwilling.

I say, let such politicians join the UNP. They will be more comfortable within its ample fold.

As it is, they are dissipating their energies fighting one another, failing to realise that what the Government has initiated is another of those diversionary tactics for which it is famous. Until the end of this month the bulk of the people will be talking of little else besides the Tigers in the North—and the by-elections.

The by-elections would also serve to show the world that "parliamentary democracy" is still flourishing in Sri Lanka, contrary to all the claims made by the Government's critics.

Otherwise, President Jayewardene could have easily appointed two members to fill the vacancies created by the death of the two sitting UNP MPs, as it did at Ambalangoda and Eheliyagoda where, too, the sitting members died.

The number of candidates at the by-elections must be a record for any country—51 at Minneriya and 39 at Kunda-

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From Shiranee to Ramini

The Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW

I liked very much the letter written by Ramini in the Saturday Review of 6th October because she thinks like me.

I do not know Ramini but I would like to be her friend like the friend she had before the troubles in July, 1983.

I hope, Uncle Gamini, you are not married because lots of girls would like to write to you and get letters from you.

I hope Ramini's friend will write to the Saturday Review because Ramini has not given her address.

Anyway, I like to tell Ramini what I was doing when the bomb burst and killed some Sinhalese soldiers in April this year.

The truck rolled down our street firing in the air and on the walls of houses. We closed the windows of our houses and were lying under our beds in fear. Thank God, we were not hurt and we pray it will not happen again. We don't walk on the roads much because we fear the Army.

Dear Uncle Gamini, please ask Ramini to pray for us all. I hope Ramini will write again through the Saturday Review.

Like Ramini's mummy, my Pappa has corrected my spelling mistakes in this letter.

Shiranee

Jaffna.

ARMAGEDDON?

Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW

I have listened to the Sinhala as well as Tamil poli-

ticians for several years and I feel they have brought both communities to the brink of an open war. This will bring utter ruination to the whole country. I like to suggest the following proposal for consideration by progressive minded people and let us have unity between both communities, at least, even at this late hour.

I believe in a federal system of government, where in Tamil areas all three languages can be the official languages. Let Sinhala only exist in Sinhala areas, if they so choose, or have any other language in addition, as they like. Let the Sinhalese have Buddhism as their State Religion but we Tamils will have a secular religion. Tamils will prefer to run their government in a socialist system as required by the militant youths. Sinhalese can choose their own system of government.

For a person to join Govt. service in Tamil areas, he should be qualified in the three languages, Sinhalese, Muslims, Malays, Upcountry Tamils or Burghers could qualify to join government service in Tamil areas too. The only criterion for university entrance and promotion in government service will be merit.

The Central Government will control Security and other matters overlapping each area to maintain the unity of the federal system.

In the future 'The Sinhala Only' demand cannot have a grip on the Sinhalese because the Sinhalese Youth now realise that English is essential for communication with the outside world. They can

choose to learn Tamil if they wish. This proposal will, I believe, bring unity among the Sinhalese and Tamils, and allow each community to live with self-respect. It is a practical solution of this nature where there is no compulsion which will create better understanding and integration among all communities for a strong and united Sri Lanka.

I urge all progressive-minded people who have the unity of all communities and peace at heart to take steps before it is too late. A military solution is no solution and no self-respecting person will submit to it, even if it comes to losing one's life.

Unfortunately we do not have a statesman at this critical hour in the history of Sri Lanka to rise to the occasion to unite all communities and bring peace to our country.

K. R. Sundaram

Thirunelvely,
Jaffna.

LETTERS

ASSIMILATION

The Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW

I refer to Prof. K. Sivathamby's comprehensive article on the "Social Composition of the Tamils", published in your Issue of the 15th instant. He states "There has also been a substantial number of Tamils living in the Puttalam and the Chilaw Districts". He also states, "After years of acculturation and assimilation, operating mainly through the agency of the Catholic church they have, except in a few pockets like Udappu, which is largely Hindu, lost their identity and have now merged with the Sinhalese".

The process of Tamils merging with the Sinhalese and losing their identity is still continuing, and paradoxically it is through the same agency of the Catholic Church those Tamils had become Sinhalese and are further becoming

Buddhists. This process is well under way and with all this glib talk of religious unity the process is being speeded up. The Roman Catholic Church will soon cease to exist on the western seaboard. The decline has started and the fall is inevitable. The existence of Silvas, Pereras, Fernandos etc., who are no more Catholic by religion now is proof of this.

In their eagerness to join what they think is the national mainstream, the Sinhala Catholic Clergy (and Sinhala Catholic politicians), according to the media - the Press radio and T.V. - have started participating in Bodhi poojas and the like. Soon the day will come when the Sinhala Catholic will be chanting Pirth and preaching Bana!

Everywhere in the world, the Catholic Church has stood against repression, whether it is Communist dictatorship as in Poland, or capitalist dictatorship in the Philippines and the Latin American countries. In Sri Lanka alone the

Sinhala Catholic Hierarchy and clergy have adopted a most supine attitude on the National Question and plumped heavily in favour of a Sinhala Buddhist regime whose Human Rights record has become notorious in the civilised world.

S. Retnasingham

Chundikuli.

DEVALUATION

The Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW

Article 118 of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka provides the "Supreme Court of the Republic of Sri Lanka shall be the highest and final superior court of Record in the Republic, and shall exercise - (b) jurisdiction for the protection of fundamental rights".

Well, that is only in theory. But in practice this is what happens:-

"On several occasions the Supreme Court has held with the applicant, and we have had to over-rule the Supreme Court decision when we found it was wrong" - President Jayewardene-Sri Lanka Foundation Institute, as reported on pages 1 and 14 of the DAILY NEWS of 6th October.

Now, who is devaluing the Supreme Court?

Yet, we are a "Five Star Democracy"!

'Civis'

Colombo-4.

CJ's SPEECH

The Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW

I wonder why there is such a hue and cry about the Chief Justice's speech in which he spoke the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

The Swiss officials, who came to see whether human rights are being violated in Sri Lanka, carefully avoiding evidence, make me think they were following the main virtues - see no evil, speak no evil and hear no evil.

Manouri Cooke

Badulla.

NO COMPARISON

The Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW

President Jayewardene is reported to have said that any "military exercises" carried out by his Armed Forces against the Tamils were much less than those carried out under American President Abraham Lincoln's orders and that such excesses were sometimes necessary to preserve national unity.

The comparison does not appear to be correct for the following reasons:

Lincoln was motivated by his desire to free a section of the people from slavery, unlike President Jayewardene who is trying to keep the Tamils as subservient to the Sinhalese.

Lincoln would never have condoned the massacre of helpless suspects in prison, but would have initiated an inquiry to find the culprits responsible for this savage and cowardly act.

A. Sivaram

Francis Town,
Botswana.

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Read this also, Your Excellency

I address this at a time when the gulf between the communities is seemingly at its widest. We have created a threatening reality out of an illusion of mutual suspicion of each other. Although addressed to you, it is therefore also to all of us, Sinhalese and Tamil, clergy and laity, rulers and ruled. I do not write from any special position, but only as a citizen, which is all we are, none higher, none lower, than the other. I do not wish to safeguard any vested interest or special personal position.

As one with an invitation at the highest official level for permanent residence in another country and capacity to take up residence in three or four others, my only vested interest is that here is my home, my country, and my people. I write as one who has seen too much not to warn my countrymen of where we are going. This background, though in differing ways, must be true for so many others as well.

I am impelled to write and to seek the indulgence of all for it, to warn that we have set ourselves on a disaster course. It is not of the

Government, of the Sinhalese of the minorities, but all of, us together. To each side at one time it may seem that it is winning. Both the militants and the Government may seem to be scoring, each at different times, what it thinks are victories. But the ultimate victory will not be for either.

The militants will not win; but the Sinhalese people will lose; and all will lose thereby.

accept that our leaders will not change their views as to solutions, or that the Maha Sangha will not be in the forefront of such a change, or the Tamil United Liberation Front or even the militants who after all not long ago accepted the Indian Prime Minister's position of a genuine solution within a unitary state. I wish to choose to demonstrate this for the most part

(2) The Ven. Malpanawa Seelananda Thero, High Priest of the Halpe Raja Maha Vihare, recently said, "The country is at the cross-roads The need of the hour is clear-headedness and a sense of reason No agreement can be pushed through if there are jingoists on either side.... This is true of both Sinhala chauvinists as well as the anarchists in the North. Sin-

how a "causis belli" was offered to the Turkish Government in 1974, that report asks: "What went wrong in this 'Paradise Island' of vintage tourist blurbs? The simple and ready answer is 'power sharing'. The Turkish minority.... now just over 20% argued that the Greek Cypriot political dominance reduced them to second class citizenship, denying them equal opportunities especially economic and educational, and self respect. In a natural gesture, the 120,000 Turkish Cypriots looked for sympathy and understanding (and later active support) from Turkey, 45 miles away, with a 40 million Turks".

(4) Meanwhile, we are busy trying to kill each other, in between arguing as to who are the killers. If the Bishop of Jaffna will not condemn the militants others need not agree, but let it be. In history, as we know, those who finally win always become known as heroes and those that lose become criminals. But there are much greater things to be done right now than settle this argument.

(Continued on page 8)

An open letter to President Jayewardene

by

Dr. C. Suriyakumaran

But none need lose. We have enacted a situation where we have cumulatively externalised our internal difference, escalated to the point of creating an external solution. It is no use any of us being angry with any others of us for this. The least I myself would wish is that I be right. But when it has happened it will be too late and too futile to feel that we may have done otherwise.

If it were inevitable it would be another matter. But it is indeed not, even at this hour. It is for this that I write to you. I do not for a moment

with reference to others rather than myself.

(1) The British Broadcasting Corporation at the height of recent events in the Northern Province reported in its morning news:

(a) almost everybody talked to in Jaffna said they were against separation;

(b) almost everybody wanted a genuine political solution based on autonomy of regional type administration;

(c) almost everybody conceded that if the Government refused to give this, they recognised that separation had to be the answer.

hala chauvinists must remember that, in their very zeal to preserve the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka, they might become the agents for plunging the country into anarchy; what the ideologues of Northern terrorism must keep in mind is that any acts of isolated adventurism at this stage can have tragically counter productive results." (The Island, 15th August.)

(3) The same issue of The Island had its International affairs correspondent, writing on Cyprus, using words that sounded like a lesson from which to learn. Having noted

Tamil Language and the Second Chamber

The Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW

1. The speech of President J.R. Jayewardene in the State Council appeared in the SATURDAY REVIEW of 22nd September, 1984.

2. His proposal is that the Second Chamber may be vested with the implementation of the provisions of the Constitution dealing with the National Language Tamil.

Since 1958 Prime Ministers, Ministers of Finance, Ministers of Justice and Ministers of Public Administration were in charge of the implementation of the provisions of Tamil Language laws. They failed to make any progress in this matter. All of them belonged to the majority community. Then a Tamil Minister was specially appointed to be in charge of the implementation of these provisions by the present Government. He has also failed miserably in his attempts. Now the proposed Second Chamber

is to be vested with the implementation of the provisions of the Constitution dealing with the National Language Tamil.

In this context, the following speech I made in Parliament on 7th December 1981 would be pertinent to this matter.

K.P. Ratnam
Velanai, Ex-M.P., Kayts.

"Mr. Chairman, during the last 16 years of my Parliamentary career, I have been trying in as many ways as possible to get the Tamil Language rights implemented. I have asked about a thousand questions in the House of Representatives, in the National State Assembly and in this Parliament to point out the failure of successive governments to implement the Tamil Language Special Provisions Act, No. 28 of 1958, the Tamil Language Regulations and the Tamil Language Provisions mentioned in the Constitution. I have raised

the question of discrimination against the Tamil Language for more than a hundred times during the adjournment. I have written hundreds of letters to the Ministers and Heads of Departments bringing to their notice the complaints of the Tamils regarding the perpetual discrimination against their mother tongue in violation of the laws of this country and the calculated attempt to force an alien language down their throats.

"I had a series of correspondence with His Excellency the President and gave up the correspondence after pointing out to His Excellency that his Government had made the Tamil Language Provision of the Constitution a dead letter. His Excellency referred to this conclusion of mine in his letter No. 124/1/44 dated 21st July 1980.

"I wrote a book called 'ADIMAI SASANAM' meaning 'Bond of Slavery' and

criticised the Tamil Language Special Provisions Act, No. 28 of 1958 as a corpse. Now I say that the provisions of the new Constitution regarding the Tamil Language rights are nothing but **Ornaments on that corpse**. The much vaunted claim that the Tamil language is mentioned as a national language in the new constitution is not at all a new concession given to the Tamils.

"The Tamil language was recognized as a national language along with the Sinhala language during British rule and even after that rule. In the Sessional Paper of No. 24 of 1943, there are two chapters - one is the scope of the national languages and the other, the development of the national languages.

"So under these circumstances, my conclusion is that **unless and until a Tamil language is again made an official language**, no other alternative or any power on

earth can redress the legitimate grievances of the Tamils, fulfil their aspirations, satisfy their expectations and stop their struggle to regain their self respect and sovereign status.

"Before I conclude, I should also point out that the Tamils would not find themselves in the present depressed and degraded position if the motion moved by His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka in the State Council on 22nd June, 1943, to make Sinhala the official language of the country was accepted without the amendment to include 'Tamil also' as an official language.

"Mr. Chairman, I reserve my comments on this motion for a further occasion, I thank you".

(Hansard of 7.12.81, Column 384-386).

The Solution to the

"Sinhade Demalade?" was frequently a life or death question during the July riots. It is a cruel epitaph to the hundreds killed that week in July. But it is also a testimony to the close physical similarity of members of these two estranged communities. My own reply that I was Sri Lankan did not answer the question. Neither did it satisfy the mob for, in that week of intense polarization of society, there was no room for a national identity that transcended communal ones.

recently the focus on statistical data. The thesis presented here is that amongst the economic, social, cultural, political and other factors that have contributed to the present explosive state of Sinhalese - Tamil relations, it is the psychological dimension of individual and communal identity that takes primacy. Identity is at the heart of communal conflict, and around it crystallise the economic, social and other grievances.

Confronting a communal and regional problem of much

hard to achieve this end, and there is every possibility that with his savings he will one day reap fields that are his own. But the Tamil farmer in Vavuniya does not desire to become a Sinhalese even though his Sinhalese neighbours in the district have access to larger and better-irrigated plots of land. He cannot and does not want to give up his Tamil identity, unlike the landless labourer who willingly gives up his class position, because he is proud of his Tamil identity and finds it reassuring to belong to the Tamil community.

Thus, communal conflict has occurred in economically developed countries, (Canada, Belgium), in less-developed countries (Pakistan, Zaire), in the richer regions of countries (the Basque region in Spain) as well as in the poorer regions of countries (Northern Ireland in the U.K.). Where communal conflict has become the focus of a society it has divided people and diverted them from more objective problems that may have greater bearing on their material lives such as poverty and the unequal distribution of wealth. For instance in 1971 although rural Tamil youth had grievances similar to the rural Sinhalese they did not join forces in the

that country that spawned it. The key to improving Sinhalese-Tamil relations is not to focus on merely wiping out terrorism, a symptom, but to get rid of the cause of terrorism.

The roots of communal conflict lie in the differing perceptions of the Sinhalese and Tamils which arises from the fact of a separate Sinhalese identity that over the centuries grew and hardened in opposition to that of the Tamils. The fact is that the Sinhalese and Tamils speak different languages, and have different cultures and interpretations of what happens. Thus, the victory of Dutugemunu meant the defeat of Elara; the period of Sinhalese decay in the Rajarata corresponded to the rise of Tamil power in the Jaffna Peninsula; the historical privileged rights of one community have smelled of discrimination to the other; democratic majorities to the Sinhalese has meant the despotism of a communal majority to the Tamils, and "terrorists" to the Sinhalese are "boys" to the Tamils. Such striking differences in perception are not limited to Sri Lanka. In Northern Ireland, for instance, when Catholics and Protestants were asked

deadly work the mobs cheered the passing convoys of the armed forces, who often cheered back, and made it known that they were destroying Tamil establishments as a gesture of communal solidarity and vengeance to retaliate the killing of the thirteen. In the communally sensitive and threat-laden atmosphere of that week in July communal pressures so escalated that individuals were emotionally impelled into aligning their behaviour with that of the community as a whole; Sinhalese, peaceful and tolerant in ordinary life, united emotionally with hoodlums.

Communal identity is an extension of individual identity that gives people a sense of belonging. Identity, to quote the American social psychologist Erik Erikson, "is a process located in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his communal culture." Apparent in the search for roots in Africa by American Blacks is the search for a communal past that will lend continuity to the individual life. Even a name can be used to associate an individual who can be anyone with a sense of belonging, of time and place, and with unique values and behavioural stand-

This is one of two articles written after two years of research on communal relations in Sri Lanka on a Knox scholarship from Harvard University. The author is now back again at Harvard. Mention of him was first made in the SATURDAY REVIEW of 12th May 1984, when a previous contribution by him on the National Question was published.

The present state of relations between the Sinhalese and Tamil communities have their roots in historical perceptions that first arose in the dynastic wars fought by feudal rulers based on the island and neighbouring South India; in the later period of Sinhalese contraction these memories were resurrected and reinterpreted as the efforts of Hindu South India to absorb Buddhist Lanka. Communal grievances and fears came into focus in the heady period of transition from colonial rule to self-rule: the competition for scarce economic resources and employment in the context of a stagnant economy led to the formation of communal interest groups that cut through class; government policies and communal riots institutionalized the communal divisions.

The communal conflict can be defined in terms as broad as is desired. However, the primary disadvantage of a broad definition that encompasses the economic, social-political and cultural dimensions is that it tends to lead to the confusion of issues having a vast range of possibilities, and hence to inaction. In Sri Lanka what obstructs the vision to a clear solution to the Communal problem is the almost undivided attention given to the clutter of history, real and imagined, and more

greater complexity than that to be found in Sri Lanka, the Russian revolutionary leader and theoretician Lenin wrote 'Why will you not understand the psychology that is so important in the national question, and which if the slightest coercion is applied besmirches, soils and nullifies the undoubtedly progressive importance of centralization; large states and an uniform language'. The young Soviet State heeded Lenin's warning and today the Soviet Union has a federal system of government, no country wide official language and a high degree of communal harmony.

The Sri Lankan experience gives substance to the view that communal conflict cannot be resolved into, and is harder to solve than class conflict. The class-based 1971 insurrection was crushed in a week whereas Tamil 'terrorism' is now in its ninth year, outlasting the government that stamped out the insurrection. The reason for this is that at the heart of community is the subjective, psychological dimension that is difficult to come to grips with as it revolves around often intangible factors unrelated to objective indicators and statistics. The landless labourer in Vavuniya has the desire to leave the ranks of the proletariat and join the landowner class. He will work

insurrection because communal feelings that stemmed from divisions of language and culture were more powerful than class-based feelings that stemmed from a common poverty.

THE ROOTS

There is a growing opinion that communal conflict cannot be solved and can only be managed. Let history be the arbiter of that question. The task for Sri Lankan leadership is to improve communal relations between the Sinhalese and Tamils to the point where the major thrust of state power and initiative can be released away from communal issues towards tackling the enormous problems of development, of creating a wealthy and just society. The first step is to realize that terrorism is but a symptom, a vicious one of a deeper malady that afflicts

whether they were aware of discriminatory practices, over 75% of the Catholics said 'yes' while a similar proportion of Protestants said no.

Identity is inherent in the fact of being a someone. "Who am I?" has as its inevitable corollary "Who is he?" These questions and the existential anxieties they give rise to can be reduced in togetherness within the womb of community. In communal terms the questions then become "Who are we?" and "Who are they?" More by their actions than their words, the Sinhalese mobsters with swords and firebrands in hand were asserting their awareness of identity, that they were Sinhalese belonging to a community that had lost thirteen of its members to the Tamil collectivity. While at their

ards. Communal identity eases the problems of anonymity and weakness.

No community can maintain a viable identity without symbols and values that point to a distinctive identity. Some symbols, language, for instance, are relevant to differentiate between groups. Others, such as caste hierarchies, are meaningful only within the group and have little relevance to outsiders. When reinforced by a co-extensive history, language is usually the keymarker of distinctive identity, and consequently is a focus of communal loyalty. In addition to its obvious role in communication, language has a powerful emotional aspect that stems from its particular sound and familiarity as the mode of conveyance

by

Jehan Perera

Communal Problem

through the centuries of the thoughts and experiences of the community.

LANGUAGE LAWS

The power of communal symbols can be exploited to yield material benefits. In its struggle for political power, the newly formed SLFP reaped a rich harvest of communal votes when it skilfully manipulated the customs, values and myths of the Sinhalese and linked them to economic and social grievances. The initial thrust of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's campaign was class-based and was directed against the privileged position enjoyed by the English-educated elite. But rapidly the class component of his appeal was overshadowed by its communal implications and the language issue became a red flag to the communities. The clear basis of the SLFP's appeal lay in the elevation of the Sinhala language and the emphasis on the rights of the Sinhala-speaking masses. The power of community over economics can also be seen in the Tamil reaction. The Tamils decisively rejected the ACTC which saw in the language issue a question of discrimination in employment and education. In the wake of "Sinhala only", they swung towards the FP, and later the TULF, which gave priority to Tamil identity and political autonomy as being of the foremost importance.

It follows that the most grievous blow to a united Sri Lanka that explicitly mobilized communal solidarity and support was that struck by the cry for "Sinhala only". This election slogan which promised Sinhala only in 24 hours hit deep at Tamil self-esteem and devalued the Tamil culture.

"Sinhala-only" also made life in general that much harder for a non-Sinhala speaking Tamil who no longer enjoyed the same rights as a Sinhalese in the transaction of business with the state which, to make matters worse, was taking over a growing area of what had been the domain of the private sector.

In the struggle for education and employment, being Tamil-speaking had become a grave handicap. But the Sinhalese perception was different;

the majority community, hitherto suppressed, was getting back its rightful place and past injustices were being righted.

PAINFUL

Post-independence reality thus clashed heavily with the pre-independence perception of the Tamils regarding their equality of status as a major community alongside the low-country Sinhalese and Kandyan Sinhalese.

The psychological adjustment to the fact of being a politically irrelevant minority was painful on its own merits. The attempt of the independent state to create a single political culture over-riding communal cultures, yet drawing many of its symbols from the heritage of the Sinhalese community, such as the adoption of the Lion Flag, the installation of "Sri" number plates and the colonization of the Rajarata, reinforced the sense of Tamil grievance. The evidence from a number of countries affected by communal problems indicates that feelings of political powerlessness and status deprivation are more closely related to communal action than economic constraints.

COMMON VIEW

Although communal leaders may make complete their case with reference to economics and figures, the core of that appeal remains psychological rather than economic. Thus, today, after 36 years of independence and rule by governments heavily accountable to a Sinhalese voter base, communalism has succeeded in turning the Tamil community into seeking the psychological satisfaction of self-determination even at great cost.

There is a common belief that the Sri Lankan communal conflict is unique to the world. This is, of course, true but only in a narrow sense because any investigation of communal conflict in other countries will show recurring patterns followed rather closely by Sri Lanka. Take for instance Pakistan. In 1948 in the parliament of the newly formed state, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan said decisively, "It is necessary for a nation to have one language

and that language can only be Urdu." The Bengali speaking people of East Pakistan united in protest. Although in 1956 the Pakistani government accepted Bengali as a second official language the damage had been done, and in East Pakistan the Bengali identity superseded the Pakistani one. The language issue created a frame of mind that persisted long after the Bengali language was elevated. The cost of 1948 was paid in full in 1971.

In the Tamil cry for Eelam are two intertwined themes. One is the struggle for liberation from poverty and misrule the demand of a community possessing self-esteem to determine the course of its life, the other is manifestation of separatist frames of mind, the ambition of those who seek a country to rule. The task of Sri Lankan leadership, before it is too late, is to unravel these and give priority to the realization of the former. For in this is the yearning of people of all communities for a life of dignity and sufficiency.

The private ambitions of the separatists can then be made to flounder, as they did in Quebec and the Southern Sudan. The goal of self-determination for the Tamils must not be seen as the break up of Sri Lanka, neither as the seal on the estrangement of the Sinhalese and Tamils. Separation and the formation of a new state is but one form of self-determination.

It may be hollow in reality as in the case of satellite countries. For instance, the Italian speaking people in Federal Switzerland who constitute less than 10% of the population enjoy assuredly greater self-determination than the Soviet Union permits the Poles in Independent Poland. Thus, the goal of self-determination for the Tamils must be seen as the first step towards the rapprochement of the Sinhalese and Tamils as individuals and as communities, enjoying equally the rights to language, to the protection of the state and to self-determination.

The key question today then is not whether the Tamils should have the right to determine the course of their

lives, because in this democratic age which recognises inalienable and fundamental rights of all human beings it is evident they must, but rather given the geographical, economic, and political parameters what the most appropriate form that this self-determination should take. Before proceeding to an examination of this question it might be useful to reflect upon the experience of the Sudan which offers several parallels to the Sri Lankan case of sufficient importance to be worth considering. The final solution reached in that country is also instructive in the willingness and courage of the leadership of both sides to negotiate a lasting settlement.

IN SUDAN

In the Sudan, as in Sri Lanka, the conflict was between the northern and southern parts of the country. To the north of the Sudan are the Arab states of Egypt and Libya, while to the south are the Black African states of Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya. In keeping with this geographical position northern parts of the Sudan consist of Arabs and arabicized people who account for more than 12m. of the country's total population of 18m; in the south live approximately 4m. Blacks who speak Nilotic languages and are adherents of Christianity and native religions. Thus parallel to Sri Lanka, the north and south of the Sudan differ radically in language, culture and population.

With independence in 1956 the new state inherited acute antagonisms. During the colonial era the memories of the times when Arab traders from the north sold thousands of southern Blacks into slavery were kept alive by the British administration to facilitate and consolidate their rule, and by Christian missionaries who sought the salvation of souls against the competition of Islam. In this context, the newly independent government policy of arabicization was resented by the southerners right from the start. But the policy reached fruition for the northerners and flash-point for the south a mere 12 years later. In 1968, when a new consti-

tution was adopted in which The Republic of Sudan was proclaimed a unitary state with Arabic as the official language and Islam the state religion. It was this more than economic deprivation that confirmed to the Black African south the disregard with which the Arab north held them, their language and culture, and cast doubts on their equal membership of the polity. Relations between the north and south plunged and led to the call for the complete secession of the south and the formation of the Independent state of Azania.

The deepening crisis prompted, in 1969, the granting of limited autonomy to the south. The package was based on the assumption that satisfying the economic grievances of the south within the existing political framework would suffice. It consisted mainly of measures for the economic development of the south and included the drafting of a separate southern budget. However, these measures sidestepped the key demand for greater self-determination and failed to win the support of the south. The leadership of the Anya-Nya, the southern insurgent movement, in 1971 proclaimed the founding of the Azania Liberation Front. Civil war broke out. The government forces scored convincing victories in the initial open warfare, but when the Anya-Nya changed its tactics to that of guerilla warfare a situation of stalemate developed. Aware of the odds against a quick military settlement in opposition to an increasingly united south, and the sapping of the national coffers in one of the world's poorest countries, the Sudanese government put forward a new plan for a political settlement that envisaged regional autonomy for the south.

(Contd. in next issue)

Look on this Picture and on This

"Look here upon this picture and on this", said Hamlet to his mother, pointing out the absolute contrast between his noble father and his villainous step-father.

And now two readers have presented two pictures, of two communities, for our edification. Though comprehensive portrayal has not been attempted, or perhaps because of it, what have been presented are in total contrast, like those of the two men: one all shining white, and the other unrelieved black, with never a shade of grey.

It is a chastening experience to be reminded in these times of great anguish and bitterness that there are good people on 'the other side', and that we are not without our own faults.

No one would quarrel with the first picture. Though Mr. A has written of happier times when the canker of communalism had not eaten deep and wide into our society, the class of people he mentions has, in all probability, remained unaffected. Many who have served in the South would wholeheartedly

endorse what has been said. Those, especially, who have served in the village areas sing paeans of praise of the goodwill and hospitality of the Sinhalese there. Some, in their more expansive and self-critical moods, have declared that the Sinhalese could be 'nice' in a way in which few Tamils are!

But are these the people who went on the rampage in July, 1983? The people Mr. A writes of were neither politicians nor camp-followers of politicians. It is incredible how politics could metamorphose some men, suck them dry of kindly instincts, divest them of the culture they may have imbibed at the higher seats of learning or in liberal societies. The thirst for power stifles the principles that may have guided them before the madness bit them. It distorts their vision so that they cannot see correctly and, if they can, makes them sin against the light. Politics and politicians occupy too large a place in our national life. This is especially brought home to one who has lived

for a while in foreign parts. His ears are assailed by the braying noises on all sides, and he is shocked by the acrimony of the debates. No occasion is considered unsuitable for gibes at political opponents, be it a Dhamma School prize-giving or the foundation-stone laying ceremony for a maternity home.

Man, it has been said, is a political animal. (In Victorian times it used to be said in England that

Every little boy and gal That is born into this world

is either a little Liberal Or a little Conservative.

But that doesn't mean that one should be the politician's pawn from the womb to the tomb, as has happened in Sri Lanka, where the MP has become the divinity that shapes not merely our ends but our whole existence. The worst politicians are those who have never been exposed to liberalizing influences of any kind and have gathered small armies of thugs and hoodlums to carry out their bidding. It is generally believed that it was these that were responsible for last year's holocausts. "These are not the true Sinhalese, Sir," said Dingiri Banda of Peradeniya to a senior Tamil lecturer of the University during the riots of 1958; "the true Sinhalese would never behave in this shameful, fiendish manner."

world record in the number of ministers, deputy ministers, district ministers etc. — and MPs as a member of an honour-guard, a school band or a dance group at an opening, an unveiling or a stone-laying ceremony. Those who have not had the honour could feast their eyes on front, rear or side views or close-ups of the great men on TV which faithfully telecasts all such events for our edification.

All this indicates that we are not a mature nation, despite the 2,500 years and all that. The part that outward forms and ceremonies of religion play in our public life is also proof of our immaturity. We do not see in foreign newspapers pictures of politicians in acts of worship. It may be objected that countries of the 'decadent West', like the United States and the United Kingdom are not religious like Sri Lanka. But what of India? She has rightly declared herself a secular state and no religious ceremonies are performed at state functions, and no photographs appear in Indian newspapers of the Prime Minister, her ministers or MPs in acts of worship. And yet who can deny that Indians are a deeply religious people? Two thousand years ago a Man said, 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that

victims and been treated very well by them but turned against their benefactors. There were also those who, 'willing to wound, but afraid to strike', made use of the chance to possess luxury articles which had so far been denied them. Finally there must have been the volatiles, very 'nice' one moment but not so 'nice' the next, who contributed their share to the catastrophe.

Against all these were those who sheltered and protected, who saved lives and even nobly risked their own. There is no Golden Book in which to record their names.

But of the many it has been said that though they sincerely grieved for what happened to their friends and acquaintances, they were not very sorry for what happened to the community in general. There has been no outcry against the carnage in the country as a whole, or in the provincial towns, where ties are naturally closer, or even abroad, where members of both communities are, for the most part, of the same social class and have a fair degree of education. Far less has there been a call for atonement or attempts at restitution.

Read this also Your...

(Continued from page 5)

(5) The course towards disaster can be reversed, with no chance of victory to and but ourselves as Sinhalese and Tamils together. We have to forget that the solution is a Sinhala or a Tamil solution—there is no such thing. There is a national solution, to the national crisis; if we agree, on pain of defeat otherwise, to go beyond the ethnic confrontation as the arena for the solutions. Long before the ethnic problems were created by both sides, we had in the early forties, under the then United National Party, a scheme of decentralization of democracy and government and development, alongside a strong central system. Sir, I urge in the name of future history that we take forthwith the following steps, towards which I plead for the insight and co-operation of our leaders, the Maha Sangha, and all others:

(a) decentralize democracy to the traditional Provincial level; in a fulfilment of historic ideas then accepted;

(b) decentralize development to the Provincial level in promotion of people's participation and economic production;

(c) centralize participatory government through

(i) addition of the posts of Vice-President and Deputy Prime Minister, with provision for one Tamil and one Muslim to carry one each of the four posts;

(ii) providing for, say, 20% of Cabinet portfolios to be from the minorities;

(d) provide that (a) and (b) are contingent on (c); thus interlocking decentralization and centralization in a bond of mutuality;

(e) affirm through these means the principles of both autonomous decentralized administration and unitary State Government.

If there is one assertion that can be made on these steps it is that they will never lead to disintegration; only to stronger integral nationality. We shall win if we will that we shall.

by

S. K. Gnanamuttu

These are marginals, with no roots in the soil". They are not choosy about their victims. For a consideration of some sort or other, or after a heavy bout of drinking, or if sufficiently aroused by a senseless harangue, or even for merely 'the hell of it' they would maim and kill even those of their own race. To that extent are their actions non-communal.

A few years ago English newspapers carried the refreshing picture of the British Prime Minister strolling unrecognized through a London park. But who is the politico who could do so in our blessed isle, where there is hardly a boy or gal who has not come within kissing distance of our many ministers — we surely have a

are God's". We can take these words to mean: "Keep politics out of religion," or "Don't prostitute religion for political ends". But we do not believe in following that principle, and to that extent are a backward people. Not to do so leads to abuses of all sorts; in extreme cases to the horrifying spectacle of the saffron-robed egging on rioters to murder and destruction, and even threatening Buddhists who have offered shelter to victims with dire consequences.

Then there were the petty traders and businessmen, who envied their rivals and seized the opportunity to destroy them and help themselves to their stocks. Some of the worst offenders were those who had served under their

or invitations to the victims to return and make a fresh start with their friends' goodwill and help. The papers reported only one such instance, that of a doctor in Panadura.

The real test of a person's attitude comes when he believes, or imagines, or is made to believe that his own interests clash with another's. Then the 'nicest' person could become indifferent, unfriendly or even openly hostile. If you substitute 'community' for person this is perhaps what has happened in our country.

(Continued next week)

The Dirty Dozen - 4

Blaming bureaucracy for most of the present day mess-up, Appu questions its integrity and professional competence to help solve problems facing the country. The rampant corruption and the growing deterioration in implementation of plan projects, he argues, is largely due to the fact that civil servants including most at the top level are more dirty than their political masters.

They are surely one-up in the game!

DOWN THE AGES, all people, especially those getting on in years, have shown a tendency to talk disparagingly of the present, and indulge in lavish praise of the 'glories' of the past. This inclination is even more pronounced in a conspicuously conservative group like retired bureaucrats. That being so, despite conscious efforts, to the fair and objective, it is quite possible that my assessment of the goings on in the bureaucracy may turn out to be rather severe. But then, history tells us that societies have experienced ages of marked decline and decay when things do set really worse. We are, without doubt, living in such a period of decline. All our institutions are in decay. The values of yesterday have crumbled. The state structure is getting increasingly dysfunctional. There is a pervasive feeling of helplessness, frustration and gloom. In such a situation there is nothing surprising if the bureaucracy too is in a bad shape.

The democratic set-up contemplates different political parties wielding power at different times. Ministers who hold office for short periods often lack the necessary experience and expertise. Hence, a professionally competent and politically neutral civil service is a *sine qua non* for the smooth and efficient functioning of a democratic government. The founding fathers of the Indian Constitution were acutely conscious of the supreme need for such a civil service. That

awareness found expression in the pivotal role assigned to the Public Service Commission in matters relating to the recruitment and service condition of civil servants and the guarantees under Article 311 of the Constitution. In no other major democratic country do civil servants enjoy as much legal protection as in India. It is, of course, quite another matter that despite all the iron-clad guarantees, our bureaucracy has failed to live up to the expectations of the founders of the Constitution. A broad assessment of the performance of the Indian bureaucracy in the post-independence

era is that the level of its professional competence has been low, that its higher echelons lack in political neutrality, and, that at all levels it is plagued by rampant corruption.

A high degree of professionalism is, at any rate ought to be, the dominant characteristic of a modern bureaucracy. The fatal failing of the Indian bureaucracy today is its low level of professional competence. The lack of professionalism reflected in the growing reluctance of senior civil servants to give frank and fearless advice, the inept handling of the major problems that bedevil the nation, inability to innovate and come up with imaginative solutions to the difficult questions that confront us, failure to keep abreast of modern developments and acquire new skills, slipshod approach to the preparation and implementation of projects, lack of cost-consciousness, dilatoriness, extreme reluctance to take decisions, and above all the unpardonable neglect of routine administration. It will not be possible to dwell upon all these failings in the course of a brief article. I shall just touch upon a few of them.

Though in a parliamentary democracy it is undoubtedly the prerogative of the minister, and in important cases of the council of ministers, to take final decision, the higher civil service plays a crucial role in the formulation of policy. In a few cases the minister may have

a broad idea of the policy to be adopted. But very often he may not have applied his mind to the question, though he may not be lacking in prejudices and preconceived notions. And more often than not, particularly at the State level, ministers have little interest in policy matters. In all cases it is the clear duty of the civil servants to examine thoroughly the pros and cons of the proposal and fearlessly express their views. Three decades ago a substantial percentage of the civil servants conformed to this ideal. But today the bulk of the

senior civil servants behave like courtiers, ever on the look out to please the ministers and their cohorts. This is to be greatly deplored because with the sharp decline in the calibre of the politicians in office there is much greater need today than ever in the past of frank and wholesome advice being tendered to the ministers.

Another important area where the performance of the bureaucracy has been manifestly poor is that of formulation and implementation of development programmes and projects. Schemes are often drawn up at the national level, particularly in sectors like Agriculture, Rural Development and Social Services without much thought being given to their feasibility, intrinsic worth, social relevance or suitability for particular areas. Very often these national programmes are modified or abandoned at the slightest provocation resulting in a great deal of uncertainty and confusion. And, at the state level projects are often formulated in great haste, almost mechanically, with little attention being paid to the relevant technical, financial and economic aspects. Mind-boggling and protracted scrutiny by the Finance and Planning Departments leads to a great deal of delay but no great improvement in the content of the projects. Strangely enough, once sanction is accorded all the hurry shown at the stage of formulation disappears. In respect of

all projects, whether of the Centre or the States, all round inefficiency at the stage of implementation invariably leads to unconscionable delay in completion, poor quality of work and phenomenal escalation of cost. It is one of the ironies of Indian economic planning that while the techniques of planning at the national level have become more and more sophisticated over the years, there has been a marked deterioration in the quality of implementation. A large portion of the blame for this must rest on the shoulders of the bureaucracy.

A notable weakness of the Indian bureaucracy is its failure to familiarise itself with modern management techniques, acquire new skills and

on the verge of collapse. Any casual visitor to a Government office will see that routine is thoroughly neglected. A stage has been reached when no citizen can get anything done without greasing the palms of functionaries or bringing to bear considerable influence on the officer concerned. The state of the postal and telephone systems and the railways shows that the organisations under the Central Government have also been afflicted by the same malady. The elementary functions of Government are not discharged with even a modicum of efficiency and honesty. And the primary responsibility for that must rest with the bureaucracy.

Though, by and large, the bureaucracy continues to be politically non-aligned, a large number of senior civil servants have identified themselves with particular political groups of individual leaders. There have even been cases where they actively helped their patrons during elections. And, of course, all over the country, and at all levels, the bureaucracy has failed to maintain the high standard of objectivity and impartiality expected of it. Few civil servants strive hard to uphold the rule of law or act in accordance with the dictates of their conscience. At the slightest of hints from their political masters, the great majority of civil servants are only

by

P. S. Appu

top civil servants rue the day they are obliged to take a decision. When it becomes no longer possible to postpone a decision, they invariably try to minimise the imagined risk by roping in a number of their colleagues into the decision making process.

The gravest charge against the bureaucracy is that it has miserably failed even in discharging its age-old regulatory functions. Law and order has broken down in large parts of the country, particularly in the Gangetic valley. People no longer enjoy security of life and property in these areas. The police, whose primary duty it is to protect life and property, has become an instrument of oppression. The administrative machinery has come to a grinding halt in some areas, and in a few places, it is

too willing to violate any law or rule or well accepted principles.

There was no time when the bureaucracy was entirely free from corruption. But some thirty years ago there were only very few corrupt men in the highest civil services. The great majority of them maintained high standards of probity, lived within their means and had a holy horror of misusing government property. During the last ten or fifteen years things have changed beyond recognition. Nowadays a large number of bureaucrats accept illegal gratification and a much larger number indulge in peccadilloes. The misuse of government transport has become almost universal. The norms have changed to such an extent that today the small

(Continued on page 11)

The following are excerpts from the address delivered by the Rector Rev. Dr. W. L. A. Don Peter, at the graduation ceremony of Aquinas College of Higher Studies.

As educators we cannot but be concerned about the sad situation in our country—the conflicts which in recent years have led to distrust, discord and division among its people, with dire consequences, the most regrettable of which is destruction of human life. All this will have a bearing on the life of children and youth. As the Pope's representative, you are a messenger of peace. We are aware of the great efforts being made by the Pope to promote peace among nations, among all peoples, in all lands. He has condemned violence in no uncertain terms. He has repeatedly reminded us that violence is no solution to human problems, that violence only begets more violence, that it leads to greater distrust and disharmony and causes much unhappiness and misery. We see around us in our country the distressing evils of violence. It is comforting to us that you have for us the same concern which the one you represent has for peace throughout the world, who is himself the representative of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ.

Our last Graduation Ceremony came a couple of months after the tragic events of July 1983. In my address last year I referred to those events as "a colossal moral collapse, perhaps the greatest moral disaster in the history of our country."

In the weeks and months that followed those dreadful days there was much soul-searching among well-meaning and sincere people who felt a sense of shame that the people of this country had been guilty of such outrageous conduct. Through the media and in private conversation they expressed deep regret and the fervent hope that what happened would never happen again.

But, although more than a year has passed by, no remedial solution to the problem has yet been found. Nor has the incidence of crime linked with the problem abated. The worst evil the past year has witnessed is the wanton destruction of human life. In fact, in the events of the July 1983 and the events of

'SAD SITUATION'

the past year, the most deplorable aspect has been senseless slaying of fellow human beings. Whether it be the murder of helpless prisoners or the cold-blooded killing of one's opponents, death to defenceless fellow-humans is a dastardly barbarous and inhuman act.

A building that has been burnt down can be rebuilt; goods that have been looted can be replaced; a business enterprise that has been ruined can be set on foot again. In all these there is the possibility of restoration and recovery. But a human life that has been snuffed out cannot be brought to life again. To deprive a fellow-human of his precious life, be it the life of a Sinhalese

Tamil or any other, is a dreadful crime.

Man does not live in isolation. One has parents, brothers and sisters. One has friends, companions and colleagues; A married person has a family. To kill a human being is not merely to deprive that individual of life, but also to cause grief, suffering and loss to the loved ones left behind. It means cruelly to damage the lives of many others — spouse, children, parents, friends. To kill a fellow-human means also to plunge the blade or the bullet into the hearts and lives of others who have to suffer the pain and agony of the loss. No compensation, even if

paid, can make up for the loss of a loved one.

It is ironical that there are human beings who have little regard for the life of fellowmen in an age when at national and international level so much as being done, and so much spent, to save life, to protect life, to prolong life, to improve the quality of life. In fact, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that all scientific, medical and technological knowledge has all along centred round life in one way or another. The present obsession with environmental pollution is again for the sake of life. When so much effort is being made to preserve life, it is absolutely

senseless to cut down life so callously.

We in Sri Lanka take pride in being a religious people. Our numerous temples, mosques, and churches, our equally numerous wayside shrines, our religious festivals and rites proclaim to all the world our religious zest. But don't all religions regard life as sacred? Don't all religions condemn the killing of fellow-humans as a heinous crime? Not only in July 1983 but thereafter we have been killing one another. It is again an irony that in a society that claims to be so religious there is such disregard for the sacredness of life.

Whatever the cause one has to fight for, can the wasteful destruction of human life be justified? Is a goal achieved by the senseless killing (Continued on page 11)

DEVELOPMENT DEBACLE

The Philippines today stands counted as a country enslaved. **Development Debacle: The World Bank In The Philippines** by W. Bello, D. Kinley and E. Ellinson, 1982, is a presentation of eye-opening insights into how a people is ruled by deceit of imperialism. Written by competent individuals from the Philippine Solidarity Network (PSN was founded in 1983 and "works to expose and oppose US military, economic and political domination of the Philippines and support the Filipino struggle for a just and democratic society".) and Institute for Food and Development Policy, the book is substantiated by aid of vital documents taken directly from the World Bank's Philippine File and various contributions of international and local organizations and authorities. It is a validation of US imperialism over an international assistance body, over a Third World country's economic susceptibility, and most of all, is a validation of a self-contradiction for the champion of democracy — the United States of America.

The book, organized into seven chapters, may be summarized into three levels of perspective: one, the designs of US imperialism; two, the work machinery of the World Bank and three, the economic political and social conditions in the Philippines in the decade of the seventies.

US imperialism is the answer to gain and further concentrate power against Soviet domination. By show of force the United States took the reign of Philippine rule between 1899 and 1941 and later gave her the illusion of self-rule or independence to wash its hands and hide its selfish interest.

Economic Conditions

Postwar Philippines is described with the following economic conditions:

- one, the failure of the strategy of import substitution as a stepping stone to sustained industrialization,
- two, increasing inability of agriculture to meet the country's basic food needs and
- three growing pressure from foreign capital, significantly American, to open up the economy completely.

These conditions created a deadlock in the total social scene. In the preceding years from late 1960's to early 1970's there came a new consciousness among peasants, workers, student-youth in the wake of a stagnant economy and the abuse of the ruling elite reinforced by a US dictated government. The Marcos regime sealed its fate with its declaration of Martial Law, 21 September 1972.

The rest of the decade saw the actual implementation of American economic domination represented by monstrous financial loans which characterized the nation as an "area of concentration" with a total of seventy two billion dollars (US\$ 72.6) between 1973-1981 or number 8 in the priority list for Third World assistance via the World Bank. This was to cover increased productivity through the Land Reform program and other farm production incentives to ultimately increase export; rural development focusing on infrastructure and housing; as well as urban development stressing assistance to the urban poor through slum upgrading, among others.

The beginnings of these endeavours had the aura of success in the way they sounded novel and right on paper. But as any foul-started effort, they soon lost the sweetcoat and the sour-core was reaped. The failure of the export endeavour to reach the truly needy peasants all the more plunged them to poverty in the form of indebtedness which taught the people to doubt the government program. Another reason for failure was the absence of foreign markets for the products. The urban and rural development pro-

grams again mistargetted and eased the middle and high income groups instead of the poor. The superficial successes were turning to their spectacular collapse.

The early 80's saw the input of another spectacular foreign loan totalling to \$654 million to tide the nation through its own indebtedness.

World Bank pressures

On the other hand, the World Bank, upset by the regime's final turnout in program implementation, pressed its demands for a good performance and dictated that Marcos turn to a new set of administrators — the technocrats. Foremost among these was Prime Minister Virata, concurrently Minister of Finance. No sooner had the technocrats been tactically gathered that the cronies took rule through their affinities to the President and the First Lady, creating a new level of strain for distributing favours of power and influence. To this hour, their moments of struggle are moments of death to impoverished, deprived but not so willing masses of people.

— (SOLIDARIDAD II Jan - March 1984)

They are surely...

(Continued from page 9)

minority of civil servants who maintain impeccable standards of integrity, live within their income and attend office driving their own cars are looked upon as prigs or plain fools. Corruption seems to have become as endemic as in the early days of the East India company.

After a brief survey of the scene one comes to the inescapable conclusion that the bureaucracy in India has failed to live up to the level of professional efficiency, political neutrality and integrity expected of the permanent services of a great democracy. A package of perverse personnel policies pursued with cynical non-chalance during the last few years has resulted in the weakening and demoralization of the bureaucracy, particularly of its higher echelons. Today in the higher civil service preferment is seldom related to performance. Fawning sycophants, often lacking in ability and integrity, but, of course, gifted with a plastic conscience and a malleable backbone, get appointed to key posts. Sometimes able, upright and dedicated public servants are deliberately kept out of such positions; occasionally, upright men are even harassed by frequent transfers and other devices. The demoralization that has set in as a result of these developments is so colossal that today the civil service has ceased to be an adequate instrument for implementing government policies or even for conducting routine administration. The public image of the Indian bureaucracy as a thoroughly demoralised, spineless, inefficient, dilatory and corrupt body is by no means unfair or overdrawn.

Most civil servants would say that they are blameless and that the "dirty" politicians are responsible for the sorry state of affairs. This is really a case of the pot calling the kettle black. The Indian politicians must of course be held guilty on several counts; but, it is manifestly unfair and unreasonable to blame them exclusively, or even primarily, for the sharp decline of the bureaucracy. The major share of the guilt must be laid at the doors of the civil servants themselves. The unpleasant truth is that in most cases the civil servants have been ac-

tive collaborators, and not just silent spectators or reluctant accomplices in ruining the civil service.

I have said many unpleasant things about the Indian bureaucracy. I should, however, hasten to add that the bureaucracy is not an autonomous institution. It is an integral part of the polity, and bureaucrats constitute a representative cross-section of the society. When the polity is in decline and the society in disarray, and in India today, it is inevitable that the bureaucracy too should be in a bad shape. Hence efforts towards reforming the bureaucracy will be of no avail until the grave maladies in the body politic are set right. The first step in that direction should be conscious, well-concerted efforts to develop accountability in our policies. Once the policy regains its health it should not be difficult to set the bureaucracy right. After all, even today it has in its ranks some people of outstanding ability and integrity. And every year some very gifted young men and women of the new generation join its ranks. By following the right personnel policies and restoring its morale, it should be possible to forge the bureaucracy as a suitable instrument for the tasks ahead.

'Sad situation'

(Continued from page 10)

of fellowmen worthwhile? Isn't the use of the blade, the bullet or the bomb on defenceless people a cowardly act? Can one be satisfied with, or proud of, such a deed? Even if the goal is achieved, wouldn't the cold-blooded murder of innocent people be an indelible blot on those who have achieved it and those who come after them? Wouldn't the slain haunt their conscience ever after? Will history be proud of men who have gained their goal by the cowardly killing of fellow-humans?

Nobody really knows how many lives have so far been lost in the ethnic conflict that has been plaguing our country. But shouldn't we call a halt to this carnage? I am sure all right thinking people will join me in a fervent appeal to all concerned to desist from killing one another.

SPORTS

A SOCIAL EVENT

North's BIGGEST SOCIAL EVENT—the annual BATTLE OF THE NORTH between the age-old rivals, St. John's and Central usually enacted

in the third ... Eighty Six encounters have taken place in this BIG MATCH series and as one flits back through the corridors of memory, one is elated to refresh one's memory with the thought of such encounters which had treated the fans with thrills galore. The writer cannot easily erase off his mental notebook the 1951 EPISODE in which Jaffna Central turned virtual defeat into a glorious seven run win. It proved to be a spine-chilling 'affair' in the final hour of play when the Johnnians wickets began to tumble with studied precision against some hostile but accurate bowling by Central's indomitable opening pair, combined with some excellent 'pick-ups' and smart 'throw-ins'.

The Johnnians had but a measly total to rattle up in the final outing to steer them to an easy win. But Central's astute leadership and fine team spirit stood her in good stead.

It may interest the reader to note that E. Thevanayagam (now a Brigadier)

captained the Johnian Eleven while V. D. Jayaratnasingham (now in Brunel) led the Centralites in this memorable match.

Of the exciting drawn games in recent years, the writer wishes to focus your attention on the 84th ENCOUNTER played in 1982. To cut a long story short, the match in question was heading towards a dull and listless draw. The tide turned in Central's favour when after tea, paceman Umasuthan wrong havoc capturing five wickets in a row within an hour. St. John's was staggering at 129 for 9 with

but twenty mandatory overs of play left and forty-two runs to make to avoid an innings defeat at this juncture.

Central's revellers were seen performing the ROCK N' ROLL and the TWIST, the BELLY and the HULLA HULLOO. Central was almost assured of an innings win but the Johnian last pair, Vignabalan and Wijayaraghavan in a determined last wicket stand went through the twenty nightmarish overs—unscathed and unharmed to turn the ignominy of an innings defeat into an exciting draw.

NEWS BRIEFS

UNITY

The Vice president of the Citizens Committee for National Harmony, Mrs. Bernard Silva responding to the appeal of the mothers of the North has appealed to mothers in the South to provide food and clothing for needy husbands and sons who are in jails in the South.

ISRAELI INTERESTS

The World Assembly of Muslims scheduled to be held in Colombo next year has been postponed. A Saudi spokesman is reported to have said that this decision has been taken on account of the 'continued Israeli presence in Sri Lanka'.

PROTEST MARCH

Nearly 1000 parents and students took part in a 'silent protest march' at Valvettiturai on the 14th instant. During the procession an armoured car is reported to have run over some of the bicycles of the students.

MORE ARMY CAMPS

Informed sources in Colombo have stated that 4 more army camps are to be set up in the North.

SYMPATHETIC

The Secretary for the Minister of National Security, Mr. D. B. I. P. S. Siriwardena has assured Tamil Congress leaders Kumar Ponnambalam and Moulal Nehru about a satisfactory solution to the issues raised by them in regard to the 'security position' in the North and East.

ENGLISH EXAMPLE

Mr. Lalith Athulath Mudali, Minister of National Security, at a meeting in Rambukkana has commended the English Example of not taking 'vendetta' on Irish citizens in England in spite of the attempt on the life of British Premier, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher by the I. R. A. An example worthy of emulation unlike what happened in Sri Lanka in July, 1983, he said.

IDENTITY CARDS

The Government Agent, Jaffna has proposed the issue of Special Identity Cards for students from Grade 8. The Co-ordinating Officer, Brigadier, Nalin Seneviratne, is reported to have accepted it.

REAL POSITION

President Jayewardene is reported to have agreed with the suggestion put forward by Minister C. Rajadurai to summon Government Agents, Heads of Departments and Religious Bodies in the North and East to ascertain the real position in these areas.

HOUSES

TWO HOUSING SCHEMES IN NORTHERN SMALL TOWNS. LOANS ARRANGED RE-PAY EASY NOVEL METHOD. SEVEN MORE APPLICATIONS ONLY. WRITE ARIVUCHUDAR THIRUKETHEESWARAM.

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

The following are excerpts from the speech of India's Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, delivered on the occasion of the 1000th Year Celebration of the crowning of the Chola King Raja Rajan I, on 16th September.

INDIA PROUD OF CHOLA ACHIEVEMENT

"It is an occasion which is of relevance and importance not merely to this district of Tanjavur, not merely to Tamil Nadu, but All India. All Indians are proud of that period of that history and of the achievements of Raja Raja Cholan and his son Sri Rajendra. They are examples of heroism, of duty and of power and its use for all Indians in India.

new settlements had been made and their majority is being reduced, or whether those others of Indian origin who are scattered over in other parts of Sri Lanka. We have concern for them not only because they are Tamils but also because we are concerned with the larger problem of Human Rights, and this concern is not merely Indian, it is a concern for all the world to consider.

"I should like to say a special word to the young people of Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu has provided some of the best brains of our country in science, engineering, legal matters and administrative matters.

"Many old concepts have to be given up. We have to seek what new ways can be found so that we can move ahead faster".

"We are trying to do everything we can in the tense situation in Sri Lanka. But we must be careful that no word or action of ours makes the situation more difficult and more dangerous for the Tamil people in Sri Lanka, whether they live in the Jaffna area, where they are in a majority, whether they are in Eastern Province where

SOME FAT HOPE FROM SWITZERLAND

The Charge d'Affaires of Switzerland in Sri Lanka has sent the SR the following communication dated 12th October:

As it might be of interest to you and the readers of your esteemed publication, I have the honour to inform you on the latest development in my country concerning asylum.

There are more than 1700 persons from Sri Lanka, the overwhelming majority of them Tamils, who have asked for political asylum in Switzerland. In all but one of the cases scrutinized so far by the competent authorities, asylum had to be refused, as the

applicant did not fulfil the conditions set down in Swiss legislation.

On 1st October 1984, the Swiss Federal Council, that is the Cabinet of Ministers, has taken the following decision: "Asylum seekers from Sri Lanka whose request for asylum has been rejected will as a rule be sent back to their home country unless, when examining each case individually, there are specific indications that they would be personally threatened.

It is therefore erroneous to assume that non-genuine asylum seekers will be permitted to stay in Switzerland;

it would also be wrong to give any credit to promises— whoever makes them—of employment there without checking first with the Embassy of Switzerland in Colombo.

National...

(Continued from page 2)

ntry as a result of separatist demand for "Tamil Eelam". That is why our party stresses the need for a solution to the National Question which has become a threat to national independence.

In keeping with the specific situation a solution to the National Question can be found by establishing more than one Autonomous Region and inner autonomous bodies. Tamils can develop their own economy, politics, education, culture, etc. in their traditional homelands. Under this autonomous set-up depressed caste 'Minority Tamils' would be given special concessions to enable them to get out of their discriminated condition for generations after generations. At the same time Muslims can also preserve their identity in their respective areas through inner autonomous bodies. Tamils of Indian origin should not consider their citizenship won by arduous struggles as only a right to cast their votes. Like other Lankan citizens they should be given land, employment opportunity, education and other rights. In addition, to enable them to guide their future, regional bodies should be set up and their independent life be assured. In this manner Tamils and Muslims living in other areas should have their rights protected. The rights of Sinhalese and Muslims living in the midst of Tamils should also be assured in the form of inner autonomous bodies within autonomous regions.

Main Enemy...

(Continued from page 1)

people are not willing to accept that they are on the wrong road.

(By the way, where is that great champion of Sinhalese Buddhists, Mr. K.M.P. Rajaratne, who was at the helm of affairs during the pro-Sinhalese campaigns of the late 1950s?)

The crux of the whole problem is that many Sinhalese people are unable to identify their real enemies.

We say in all seriousness that the main enemy of the Sinhalese are not the Tamil people but themselves—because they cannot identify their real enemies.

Power-hungry politicians, powered by the media, have created a situation where the Sinhalese people as a whole have

been hypnotised to believe that the Tamils are the cause of all their problems.

Let us be honest with ourselves. Sri Lanka is a land of only 15 million people (compared to India's 700 million and China's 1,000 million). Why cannot we arrange our affairs in such a way that we can be an example to the world?

Who is standing in our way? We say, the leaders. Both within the Government and in the Opposition, both in the South and in the North.

This is an obvious fact against which the people, both in the South and the North should rebel against. We are all being taken for a grand ride down the road of No Return.

NO TAMIL 'TERRORISTS' IN INDIA

"India is not interested in any particular political party in Sri Lanka nor has India got different attitudes to different political parties", the Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka Mr. J. S. Chatwal has assured Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister, Mr. A. C. S. Hameed.

Informed sources say that the Indian High Commissioner has told Mr. Hameed that where India was concerned there was only "one Sri Lanka" and India has only one interest

and that was the interest of Sri Lanka and the people of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Chatwal has also told "The Island" that "there are no Tamil 'Terrorists' in India and as such the question of handing them over does not arise".

TUBE LIGHTS

The President of the Mallakam Gramodaya Mandalayam, Mr. I. S. Baskaran, envisages a Three-Point Plan for the development of Mallakam. Stage 1 of this Plan is the illumination of the streets of Mallakam with tube lights on 23rd October, Deepavali Day. The initial plan has been made possible with a generous contribution of 1000 francs from the 'Movement International A.T.D. Quart Monde'.

CENSORED

As has been the practice since the SATURDAY REVIEW was allowed by the Government to resume publication in February, ALL matter appearing in this issue, too, has gone through the Censor's mill.

TRIAL RUN

Batticaloa has become the arena of the first stage of the government decision to replace the armed forces with specially trained Police Commandos of the Special Task Force (STF) in troubled areas.

The government had earlier decided to withdraw the armed forces from maintaining internal security and civil law administration in troubled areas and replace them with specially trained Police Commandos at Amparai, Mullativu, Vavuniya, Kilinochchi and Jaffna.

If the STF is able to handle the security situation in Batticaloa satisfactorily the armed forces will be pulled out of the district and sent to Jaffna.