

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Vol. 6 No. 1 24th January 1987

YES OR NO ?

Direct talks on the ethnic problem yes or no ? We ask this question from all parties concerned. The SR has been plugging a line which has been unpalatable in certain quarters. We will continue to plug that line till the plug is closed.

SONG OF 5-YR. CHILD

Five years old. What a lovable period in a child's life. But this child has been different from the start. Naughty, haughty, defiant, dropping dirty nappies and heavy bricks everywhere, especially in the last three years. He cannot care less as he walks his wayward way, a very bad trait in a budding child.

With his small fists he has been hitting out at everything, near and far.

He has hit out at people on the highest rungs, people who tower above him, people who could simply smother him.

A spoilt child? Not in the traditional manner. The problem is that he has learnt the facts of life in his infancy itself. Especially the facts of life in the North.

He has seen blood and gory in plenty. Enough to scar his memory for a life-time. He has even seen the

bayonet marks on a seven-month-old sister at Kurikadduvan.

He is a terrible child, who will not listen to advice from any quarter. He thinks he is very clever. His mother and father often throw up their hands in despair.

Kill the child, before he gets out of hand?

Some people have tried and failed. All they could do was to keep his mouth tied up for seven months.

The trouble nowadays, some people say, is that little children try to rule other people's lives, not knowing the chaos they are creating all round.

But children are children. How lovable they are, especially at the age of five. Naked for half the time, not mindful of what they are showing to the whole world.

That is the SATURDAY REVIEW. It will be that way, whatever any people might say.

Greetings to all those, of whatever race and creed who are in Sri Lankan Jails!

FLASH 1: Hartal in Batticaloa in Protest Against Fuel Ban on North.

We are going to have a wonderful birthday party today.

We will remember you.

FLASH 2: L. T. T. E. attacked Sentries at Jaffna Fort on Thursday, Lieutenant Dassanayake was killed. Three other soldiers injured.

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

No. 118, 4th Cross Street,
P. O. Box 122
JAFNA

Telegrams: SATVIEW

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
GAMINI NAVARATNE

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S. R. Editor's Refugee Relief Fund

Opening balance	Rs. 266,536.17	Payments,	442,607.45
Contribution	Rs. 644,921.54	Loan to affected parties,	12,000.00
Refund of loan	Rs. 3,100.00	Cash in hand	40,905.00
		Cash with Editor	5,000.00
		Cash at Bank	414,045.26
	<u>Rs. 914,557.71</u>		<u>Rs. 914,557.71</u>

Balance as at 31st December 1986, according to the Auditor's Report.

LIST OF THE LATEST DONORS

Mr. S. Parameswara.	...	2 Bundles of garments.	
Mr. Mylvaganam.	...		Rs. 700.00
In loving memory of the late Mr. K. Veeragathy			Rs. 500.00
Mrs. R. Thambithurai	...		Rs. 250.00
Mr. R. Somalingam	...		Rs. 50.00

The DM. 3,000 contribution of the Sudasien Buro of West Germany has netted in Rs. 44,050 to the Refugee Fund. The amount of Rs. 35,000 mentioned in the issue of 10th January was an approximate amount before the realisation of the cheque.

DISBURSEMENTS

Food supply to Trincomalee refugees at Velanai.	Rs. 4,999.15
Muthur Students Association for refugees in Muthur	Rs. 15,000.00

Patrol Boat Sunk

A Navy boat which was on patrol off Jaffna was blown when it struck a mine on the high seas in the evening of 20th January, presumably killing all on board. Consequently the Karainagar area was shelled for many hours resulting in many people abandoning their houses.

SHELLS AGAIN

The Security Forces after a 'breather' of a few days again sprang into action with a volley of shells on the afternoon of 21st. January, presumably after a 'good booze and a hearty lunch'. Sweltering under the heat of the blazing noon-day sun, the crowd in the market area ran for shelter amidst the shrieking siren. Shells were fired intermittently from the Fort Ramparts.

Five people were killed in the shelling and 15 injured.

Among the dead were two muslim women—Meera Sahib Nachchiya Mohideen (65), a mother of six children and her daughter Mohamed Yaseem Thahira (43) both were killed at their home, which was completely destroyed. Vendors at the Vegetable stalls were the other victims. They were Muthuvelu Ratnasabapathy (33) father of four children, Perinpanathan (42) father of 6 children and Kandiah (45).

23 Charged

Twenty three persons have been charged on 14 counts, including conspiracy to overthrow the Government by the use of violence. Among the suspects are both Sinhalese and Tamils. Some of them according to Government sources, are university lecturers, others are under detention, while yet others are "missing". The offences are alleged to have been committed between August 1983 and April 1986.

One of those charged is Miss. Pulsara Liyanage.

St. Jude Novena

May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, loved, adored and glorified throughout the whole world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus have mercy, St. Jude, helper of the helpless pray for us.

Say this prayer Nine times a day, by the 8th day your prayers will be answered. Say it for 9 days and it has never been known to fail.

publication must be promised, Thank you. St. Jude.

WEDDING

The marriage of Kathirgamanathan, son of Mr. Gunasegaram and the late Mrs. Gunasegaram of 24, Long Meadow Road, Tumbull, Connecticut to Sivanayaki, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. Kanagarajanayagam of Jaffna will take place at the Hindu Temple, 45-57, Bowne Street, Flushing, New York, on 31st January.

A reception to mark the occasion will be held at the residence of Mr. Kanagarajanayagam, a Director of the New Era Publications Ltd., Publishers of the SATURDAY REVIEW, at 200, Kasturiyar Road, Jaffna, at 4 p.m. on 31st January.

Greasing The Palm

A soldier who requested and obtained a bribe from a lorry driver at the Elephant Pass barrier on 18th January was arrested by a C.I.D. officer and taken in for questioning by higher authorities.

JANARDEN'S FOR



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VERANDAH CHAIR,
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OFFICE TABLE, DINING TABLE
DINING CHAIR,
CANTEEN TABLE,
HALL SET, STEEL BED,
STEEL CABINETS,
T. V. STAND &
GATE GRILL WORKS

K.K.S. ROAD,

INUUIL

BUFFALO IN THE MUD



A South African made Buffalo Armed personnel carrier destroyed by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) on 14th January (Thai Pongal day) in Mannar.

PROTEST MARCH



Foreign journalists in Jaffna.



Protesters march the streets of Jaffna denouncing the Government's fuel-ban. The protest was organised by the Association of the mini-bus owners in the North on 19th January.

BURNING POST OFFICE BUILDING



Three Negombo - born fishermen who went adrift and landed in Jaffna.



The militants set fire to the Veerasingam Hall and the Post Office in a move to prevent the Security Forces from getting in.

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THIRUNELVELY.

ABHIRAMI



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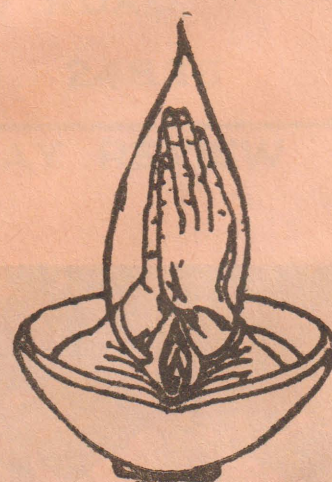
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Lalith Vs SR: Act 3

On 5th December 1986, the third and final day of inquiry by the Press Council of Sri Lanka into the complaint filed by the Minister of National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali against the SATURDAY REVIEW over an article by Dr. David Selbourne published on 10th August 1985, the Editor gave evidence.

His evidence was led by Mr. S. Sittampalam, attorney-at-law, who appeared on behalf of the defendants — the Editor, Proprietor, Printer and Publisher of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

The main point in the Minister's complaint was that he never said (in his talk with Selbourne in the course of a ride in President Jayewardene's car to Katunayake in July 1982) that he was "going to smash heads".

The Editor said that he was convinced that what Selbourne said (it was a speech at a Seminar in Toronto in 1985 published in article form) was what the Minister actually said.

He said he had high regard for Selbourne as a journalist. Selbourne had an international reputation. None of his previous articles published in the Manchester "Guardian" and other foreign newspapers on the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka had been challenged.

The Editor said that the SATURDAY REVIEW was a fully independent newspaper. The paper made it a special point to give publicity to news and views, which were given scant or no publicity at all in the Colombo-based media.

The paper's main thrust was to build bridges of understanding between the Sinhalese-dominant South and the Tamil-dominant North.

The SATURDAY REVIEW had all along opposed President Jayewardene's "military approach" to the ethnic problem. It maintained that there was no military solution to the problem, only a political solution by direct negotiations with the Tamil militant groups who have been fighting for a separate state for the Tamil people.

Under cross-examination by Mr. R. Gunaratne, attorney-at-law, counsel for the Minister (who was present throughout the proceedings), the Editor said that President Jayewardene in several press interviews had said that the Government was intent on a military solution in the first instance.

Mr. Athulathmudali was a member of the Cabinet of Ministers. There was a convention called Cabinet collective responsibility. As a Minister, Mr. Athulathmudali could not disclaim responsibility for the "smashing of heads" that was going on, of which the Editor had seen plenty in the North.

It was in this context that the Editor decided it was worth publishing Selbourne's article.

When the Minister's counsel pointed out that Mr. Athulathmudali was not Minister of National Security at the time the conversation in the car took place, the Editor said that at the time of publication, the Minister was holding that post. As a journalist, he would have brought Mr. Athulathmudali's designation up-to-date even if Selbourne had referred to him as Minister of Trade and Shipping (the post he then held.)

The Editor said it made no difference whether the words used were "smashing" or breaking" or "dashing" of heads; that was what had been going on in the North for several years. And the Minister was a party to it.

The Editor said he met the Minister in another connection on 7th September 1986. As he was about to leave after a nearly one-hour chat, the Minister referred to Selbourne's article and asked whether a correction would be published, if it were sent. The Editor said he was prepared to publish whatever was sent—if the Minister believed he had been wronged.

Two weeks later, a two-paragraph letter was received from the Minister and it was published in the SATURDAY REVIEW on 26th October 1985.

The Minister's counsel said that there was no retraction or apology by the Editor. He retorted that the publication of the Minister's letter on Page 1 of the SATURDAY REVIEW was apology enough. Not a comma or a full stop was changed. He could have trucked it away on Pages 4, 5 or 6 in which Selbourne's article appeared. Further, there was no mention about an apology in the letter. The Editor kept his promise. The Minister did not deny this.

No reference to this fact has been made in the Press Council's order.

The Editor read out a cable sent by Selbourne (in response to one informing him of the Press Council inquiry) that he stood by

every word he had uttered at the Toronto Seminar.

Nevertheless, the wholly Government-appointed seven-member Press Council, in its wisdom, held against the SATURDAY REVIEW. The SATURDAY REVIEW is used to this sort of thing.

We publish on page six the full text of the Council's order, as required by law.

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**WE CONGRATULATE
SATURDAY REVIEW FOR ITS
UNBENDING STANCE!**

PRESS COUNCIL CASE

ORDER (No. S2/85/543A)

This inquiry was held as a result of a complaint in respect of an article published in the SATURDAY REVIEW on 10th August 1985, under the heading "David Selbourne Rides Again". This article is spread over pages 4, 5 and 6 of that issue of the SR and each of these pages is marked respectively P1A, P2 and P3. The complaint is concerned with certain passages in P1A, which have been marked P1B to P1E in evidence.

This article is from a speech made in 1985, at Toronto, Canada, by a journalist, David Selbourne. He, like the complainant, who is presently the Minister for National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, had been reading law at Oxford University from 1955 to 1958. It refers, among other things, to a meeting which David Selbourne had in July 1982 with President Jayewardene; and in evidence the date of that meeting was established as 28th July 1982. David Selbourne met the President in Colombo, and travelled that day in the President's car with the President, one or two others and the complainant. The complainant has since 23rd March, 1984 been the the Minister for National Security and is also a member of the National Security Council. He had previously been the Minister of Trade and Shipping. It is also in evidence that this motor car journey was from Colombo to Katunayake, where they were going for a tour of the Air Lanka catering services facilities.

The complainant gave evidence that in fact he and David Selbourne had not known each other at Oxford, but knew of each other. He also remembered his name as that of a person who had written articles in the *Manchester Guardian*. They had not been at the same college.

The complaint was directed mainly at that part of the article which is marked P1B. This passage reads:

"I didn't have a notebook in front of me. We were talking as ex-fellow undergraduates. I recall what he said when I asked him (tongue-in-cheek), 'Well, Lalith, what is the solution to the Tamil Problem?' He said, 'We are going to smash heads'. The date of that conversation was July 1982. I registered it mentally and I wrote it in my notebook afterwards".

It is clear from the article published on 10th August 1985 that

Selbourne was giving the impression that he was favoured with this utterance by the complainant regarding the Tamil problem because they had been, to quote his own words "contemporaries as students in Oxford" who knew each other" (marked P1D in evidence) and "because of the old school tie which operated with great effect when I first went to Colombo", (marked P1E in evidence.)

This special relationship was denied by the complainant in his evidence before the Press Council. He also denied the truth of Selbourne's statement that it was the complainant who introduced him to the President and 'vouched for him', marked P1C in evidence.)

However that may be, there is put in evidence a further production marked P5 by the complainant: this is another article by Selbourne published in the same newspaper under the heading "Meeting President Jayewardene in his bullet-proof Daimler" on 28th August 1982. That is just one month after the meeting of 28th July 1982, to which reference is made in the article published on 10th August 1985 in the SATURDAY REVIEW. In the article published on 28th August 1982, produced marked P5, there is only one reference by David Selbourne to the complainant. It is marked P5A and reads as follows:-

"We get no credit for running a democracy." Lalith Athulathmudali the Minister of Trade said. He did not seem to be joking."

In evidence the complainant admitted that he did say "We get no credit for running a democracy." He said further that the reference in P1B to his having said "I am going to smash heads" was an invention created in 1985 after he had been made Minister of National Security. The complainant said that Selbourne was falsely ascribing to him something which he never said.

It is on the basis of a contradiction or a discrepancy between P1B and P5A that this Council is invited to reject P1B as false. If in fact the complainant had told Selbourne on 28th July 1982 "We are going to smash heads" it appears somewhat inconsistent with his report just one month later that, on the same occasion, the complainant had stated "We get no credit for running a democracy". What is clear from a comparison of these two passages, P1B and P5A is this:

the second passage was closer in time to the 28th July 1982 (it was published one month after), but it assumed a more distant relationship between the journalist and the complainant. It was not damaging to the complainant. On the other hand the first passage was more distant in time, (it was published some three years after 28th July 1982) but it stated a much closer relationship between the journalist and the complainant; it was very damaging to the complainant.

In the space of these three years, the "Tamil Problem" has grown much more serious. On the 28th July 1982, the complainant was the Minister of Trade and Shipping and as such was not directly concerned with the "Tamil Problem". After he became Minister for National Security in March 1984, he has been dealing with this problem.

If in fact Selbourne did know the complainant personally at Oxford, one would have expected him as a journalist to have mentioned it in P5, which is a vivid account of the Sri Lankan political scene and personalities, meant presumably for Western readers. He has however waited for three years before invoking personal acquaintance as undergraduates and the old school tie in order to support his account that the complainant had told him "We are going to smash heads". To claim a special relationship in order to damage a man's reputation is a deadly stratagem but if in fact there was no special relationship, that cannot have much value. In this Council's opinion there was no such special relationship. It is a reasonable inference that Selbourne had in fact invented the statement "We are going to smash heads", and this Council holds accordingly that this is false and that a correction is required.

CORRECTION

In the SATURDAY REVIEW of 10th August 1985, an article based on a speech made by Selbourne, a journalist, has been published under the caption "David Selbourne Rides Again".

In this article the following passage appears; "I didn't have a notebook in front of me. We were talking as ex-fellow undergraduates. I recall what he said when I asked him (tongue-in-cheek), 'Well Lalith, what is the solution to the Tamil Problem?' He said, 'We are going to smash heads'. The date of that conversation was July 1982. I regis-

tered it mentally and I wrote it in my notebook afterwards".

Mr. Athulathmudali made a complaint to the Sri Lanka Press Council against this publication and denied having made the statement "We are going to smash heads", in a conversation with Selbourne on 28th July 1982.

The Press Council held an inquiry into this complaint and found that the publication on 10th August 1985 of the statement "We are going to smash heads" alleged to have been made on 28th July 1982 by Mr. Athulathmudali is the publication of an untrue statement. The Council was able to arrive at this finding largely on the basis of a previous article by Selbourne published in the SATURDAY REVIEW on 28th August 1982, when he wrote that the complainant had, on that same occasion, said "We get no credit for running a democracy". The complainant admitted that he said these words and this admission makes his denial of the alleged statement "We are going to smash heads" all the more credible.

The Council found further that in the article published on 10th August 1985, the description of the complainant as Minister of National Security in 1982 is a false description as the complainant was then Minister of Trade and Shipping and there was at that time no office of Minister of National Security.

MOHAMED HUSSEIN
Chairman

23rd Dec. 1986.

IN THE PRESS COUNCIL OF SRI LANKA

Complaint No. S2/85/543A

In the matter of a Complaint under section 9(1) of the Sri Lanka Press Council Law No. 5 of 1973.

Between

Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, P. C. M.P., Minister of National Security and Deputy Minister of Defence, Ministry of National Security, Raks-hana Mandiriyaya, No. 21, Vauxhall Street, Colombo-2.

Complainant (and)

1. Mr. Gamini Navaratne, The Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW. 2. The Publisher. 3. The Printer. 4. The Proprietor, (All of) No. 118, 4th Cross Street, Jaffna.

Defendants

Whereas a complaint dated 21st July 1986 was made by

(Continued on page 19)

“SATURDAY REVIEW: A Reliable Source”

Born in a time of increasing strife and mounting peril, when politics in Sri Lanka began to take a frightening tilt towards authoritarianism, the SATURDAY REVIEW began to display forms of intellectual courage and styles of journalistic daring without peer in the recent history of the local press. For the most part the National media have been content to be muzzled by an open or insidious censorship or muffled by their own self-imposed veils of silence.

The SATURDAY REVIEW has preferred to deviate from these graven paths, and undeterred by subtle or overt forms of intimidation, has chosen to seek out the truths of the situation. Under the most trying circumstances and in the teeth of the storm, in a zone where the clash of arms is seldom stilled, the paper contrives to hold up an undistorting mirror to reality. Not for the SATURDAY REVIEW the grotesque and manipulated images of conventional press.

To many readers here and abroad, the SATURDAY REVIEW serves as a reliable source of facts, however limited the coverage, intrepid comment and forceful analysis. One has learned to be grateful for the publica-

tion, confined though in its scope, may be conditions beyond its control.

Reading the SATURDAY REVIEW weekly, one picks up unsuspected strands of resilience and discernment so as to withstand the impact of current terrors and contemporary illusions. One discovers fresh stren-

gth to surmount the horrors of passing phenomena and to face to the direct challenges of the future. In a period of insensate turmoil and bigoted disorder under the Sri Lanka heavens, the SATURDAY REVIEW has blazed a trail of renewed vision and inextinguish-

able resistance to public folly and political ineptitude.

H. A. I. GOONETILLEKE

2659 Tamils In Custody

It is learnt from informed sources that nearly 2,659 Tamils are presently in custody at the Boosa Camp.

SATURDAY REVIEW — The Great Fighter

The SATURDAY REVIEW complete 5 years this month. Today, in Sri Lanka, 'press freedom' is enjoyed only by those who patronise the ruling regime and its epigones. Under these difficult and dangerous conditions a few upright fighting journalists are found in the island. The SATURDAY REVIEW journalists belong to this rare breed.

A war is waged by the ruling regime of Sri Lanka in the North and East. Military is fighting the armed Guerillas is fighting for their basic nationalistic rights. It is only the SATURDAY REVIEW among the English Publications that reflect the true situation in the North and East. State terrorists who are planning and manoeuvring for a militaristic solution to the crisis in the

North and the East accuse the SATURDAY REVIEW as an organ of the 'terrorists.' It is no wonder the State terrorists who are advised and instructed by the 'Saints' of the Mossad, the SAS and Zia's, accuse the SATURDAY REVIEW. Because 'SATURDAY REVIEW' is waging a heroic role against all sinister forces like the Israeli Mossad, SAS and various secret agencies who are trying to destroy the freedom of this small island.

As a trade unionist, I have witnessed Sri Lankan journalism for the last 20 years. After all, journalists are also human beings like ordinary citizens. So in a country where State and its agencies have a strict control over what is published in newspapers, it is not an easy task for an outspoken and up-

right journalist to survive. Still a few are surviving. The SATURDAY REVIEW is an encouragement to such forthright journalists. The SATURDAY REVIEW may have its own difficulties. It must try to overcome the regional outlook it reflects. We do not deny that the "SATURDAY REVIEW" functions under extraordinary conditions.

We wish a long life for all at 'SATURDAY REVIEW' staff including its Editorial Chief.

— H. N. FERNANDO

Gen. Secretary,
Ceylon Teachers Union

THE GIMMICK OF ONE MILLION HOUSES

The public is bombarded *ad nauseam* by the media about the virtues of the one million programme of the Minister of Housing. Housing is not merely shelter (CDN January 1st 1987) but 'shelter all the factors that go to improve the quality of life of individuals who form families.

Let us examine and understand what in fact the Government's policies are. Whom does the Government represent? Not the poor, but the rural rich and urban rich, the professional and bureaucratic classes. One has only to look around in every sphere to realise this.

So a housing programme like which is planned is a mere gimmick to fool the greater numbers of the masses who may believe that poverty can be eliminated in this social Government. No such housing programme can solve the problem in this country as long as minority of people say about 10% of the population owns the resources within the country whether it be land, housing or capital. The rest of the 90% of the people do not own resources, some have employ-

ment, others beg, steal or live off on extended family who can support them.

To whom are these houses of the programme allocated? To the united National Party (UNP) supporters!

In fact, other housing programmes of the Government are designed to fatten the landlords and the house-owning classes. One such example is the implementation of the ceiling on Housing Property Law of 1973 (CHP). That law attempted to attack the root of the problem reduce the power of the land less and permit tenants to purchase housing units excess of the law. But since the UNP Government came into power the Housing Minister, in many laws, personally has seen to it that he has directed excess housing (which tenants signed agreements to purchase from the Housing Commissioner) back to the landlords. The Minister in my own personal case and many dozens of others known to me, divested excess property after 12 years of forward payments towards purchase, against the CHP Law, to the landlords.

So what class is the Minister supporting? Certainly not the classes he is talking about in this programme about a million houses.

Secondly, through the Colombo Municipal Council the Minister has raised by 100% the rates and taxes in 1987 and the assessed value of housing by 100%. This would mean landlords can increase rent by 100%. Is this in favour of people who are non-house owners and have to rent property? No. it is in the blatant interests of the landlords!

One cannot feed a million people daily and eradicate poverty. This is the same with the housing programme. The root of poverty and landlessness is in the unequal ownership of resources in the country. Only with a reorganisation of resources as has happened in the socialist countries in the world, can the housing problem be solved. What the Government is engaged is a mere gimmick to fool the the unintelligent sections of the masses to believe that poverty can be eradicated by this Government.

— KALYANI GUNAWARDANA

Ramzin Speaks out

At a Press Conference under the auspices of the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (EROS) on 21st January, Ramzin of the "Jihad Front" in Erukampiddy, Mannar stated that he was trained in the use of firearms at Kandy. 30 Muslims youths were likewise trained and the army supplied them with all the weapons. They had branches at Batticaloa, Amparai, Trincomalee and Mutur. The main objectives of the "Front" was to create a rift between the Tamils and muslims and help the Security Forces to fight the militants. He stated that henceforth the "Front" will espouse the Tamil cause. It may be recalled that the 2nd M.P. for Batticaloa, Mr. Rizvi Sinne Lebbe stated that this front should be disbanded in the interests of Muslim-Tamil friendship.

Asylum By LTTE

Three Negombo-born fishermen who were settled in Trincomalee went adrift and landed on the shores of Valvettiturai. They were given asylum by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and looked after well by them. They are K. P. Leelasena (26) M. H. Landis (42) and R. P. Arunasiri (14). They have expressed the wish that they would like to get back to Colombo.

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- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. New Steel Chairs. | 2. G. I. Pipes and G. I. Sheet Tents. |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|

MANOHARAN & VETTIVEL,
57, Ampalavanar Road,
Jaffna.

J. C. C.,
Urumpirai Junction,
Urumpirai.

Theatre developed from rituals. But, in course of time it became independent of rituals. Rituals were a feature of tribal or primitive life. They were embedded in Religion. When we say drama had its origin in Rituals we also accept that each tribe or race would have had its own Rituals, etc. Therefore it will be fair to say that the theatre of a race or group would reflect the cultural patterns and peculiarities of that race.

The Sri Lankan Tamils too have their own traditional theatre from the very beginning of history. Although there aren't enough records of these, a national theatre of the Tamils was traced and identified by the Tamil dramatists of Sri Lanka.

There were two schools of the theatre introduced and developed before the sixties besides the theatre which used folk dances and songs as its origin. The European Naturalistic Theatre was introduced by Prof. Kanapathippillai and the Victorian theatre by Kalaiyarasu Sornalingam. But the roots of our national theatre was found in rural folk dances, 'Nadukkoothu'. It was in different styles like 'Vadamodi', 'Thenmodi', 'Kaththavarayan Koothu' 'Vasanthan Koothu' and so on. These were handled by various dramatic groups in the countryside to treat puranic and historic plots.

When the Sinhala language was made the official language in 1956 there was a new upsurge in every sphere of life among the Sinhalese. Prof. Ediriweera Sarathchandra reformed the Sinhala National theatre using the Sinhala folk dances like *Kolam*, *Sokkari* and *Nadagama*. His contribution to the Sinhala Theatre is exceptional. 'Maname' 'Sinhabahu' are some of his outstanding productions.

The same trend was found in the Tamil theatre, too. It is not a coincidence that that university was behind the revival of Tamil drama as well. Prof. S. Vidiyanathan reformed Vadamodi and Thenmodi folk theatre using modern techniques. His outstanding productions are 'Karnan Por', 'Nondi Nadagam', 'Ravanesan' and 'Vali wathai'. His students followed him. S. Maunaguru used Vadamodi in his *Sangaram*.

The seventies ushered in a new era for Tamil Drama. Much interest was shown in experimentation. Some of the new theatres experimented are Epic Theatre, Stylised Theatre, Direct Theatre, Symbolic Theatre and absurd Theatre. Some workshops were conducted by foreign dramatists. The Ministry of education started a Diploma Course in Drama. The Colombo based Tamil dramatists were able to take part in them.

Modern Trends in Sri Lankan Tamil Theatre

The result was a new wave in the Tamil Theatre. Some of the dramatists who shone in later days made their stamp this stage. A. Tarcesius, N. Sundaralingam, Kulanthai M. Sanmugalingam, S. Maunaguru and R. Sivanandan were some of them. It was this group that formed the College of Drama and Theatre in 1978.

The political situation changed in 1977 and with the racial riots the Colombo based dramatists moved to Jaffna. The searching for a national theatre continued. The College of Drama and Theatre blended some foreign theatres with our folk theatre to evolve a new form. The play named 'Poruththathu Pothum' (Enough of waiting) won the national

award in 1980. The best actor award was won by Francis Janam, one of the finest actor the Tamil theatre has come across so far, who played the leading role in this play.

by

Kandiah Shriganeshan

The performing Arts Society was active in the same period. But, the approach of this Society was different. World classics were produced in Tamil with a view to cultivate the taste of the Tamil audience. J. K. Balendra, though an engineer by profession had impressed the Tamil scene with his stage images and skill through the Performing Arts society.

It goes without saying that both Tarcesius and Balendra gave a new impetus of the Tamil Theatre but unfortunately both of them left the Country and now in exile. The back bone of the Performing Arts Society was Nirmala, whose versatile talent in acting and his smooth translations of plays also played a key role.

In the eighties the political situation again changed. With the 1983 holocaust the creative Arts suffered a setback. Checks and harrasments by the security forces became com-

mon. Many youths groups emerged to fight for the rights of the Tamils. The declaration of a state of Emergency, the invocation of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the clamping down of Press Censorship brought all creative activity to a standstill. However schools continued to stage plays within the constraints imposed on them.

The cultural group of the university of Jaffna staged a symbolic play 'Mann Sumantha Meniyar' (The bodies were soil stained) along with a performance of poetry. The script was written by Kulanthai M. Sanmugalingam, and S. Sithamparanathan directed the play. It was stylised one certain weaknesses of the Jaffna man were well brought out in this play. The problems faced by him during the emergency rule were spotlighted. The dialogue was satirical. The success of the play was due to the script and direction. The liberal use of folk songs and contemporary modern

Tamil poetry was a notable feature. Cheran's lyrics set to Music by Kannan were hit.

The cultural group of the university of Jaffna produce a street play 'Mayaman'. The form of street play is not found in our tradition. We had 'Makudikkoothu' and it could be developed into a street play. 'Mayaman' was written by Cheran and directed by Sithamparanathan. The title was taken from an episode from the Tamil epic, Ramayana. The actors wore masks made out of clothes and acted in the open space at nights under the lamp posts. The false hope that India could do something to solve the ethnic problem came under severe attack.

In 1984, S. Maunaguru produced 'Thadi Adu' (bearded Goat) a symbolic children play. The message was that children should be allowed to learn through experience left to themselves, they could cultivate their talents. In the Political field the youth took over the responsibility for fighting for the rights of the Tamils from the Members of Parliaments who had been in the field for decades. The emphas-

is was on self-reliance. Attempts at compromise were ridiculed. Folk dances were used. The drum was among the instruments used.

As the civil government broke down in Jaffna peninsula, certain unscrupulous elements started brewing 'Kasippu' V.M. Kugarajah dealt with this problem in his street play. It was acclaimed for its commitment. The Jaffna society is still casteridden. The rural cultural group produced a drama 'Sinthikka Thodanki Vid-darkal' (Those who have started thinking). The exploitation of the so-called depressed classes was the theme. By coupling the class struggle with the struggle of Tamils, the playwright and director Balasingam is confusing the issue.

The same group presented 'Avalangal' (The tragedies), a street play. This play takes to task those who stand aloof in the freedom struggle. The political groups, too, produced their own plays viz. 'Malarum Puthuyham' (A new era will flower), 'Vidiwai Nokki' (Towards the dawn) 'Niram Murum Manitharkal' (The men who changes their colour) are some of these. The freedom struggle of the Tamils is the theme.

Women are created, second rate in the social set up of Jaffna. They are expected to abide by the norms of the society. The dowry system the oppression by Mudalalis and Kanganis, lower wages were some of the problems, Maunaguru's 'Sakthi Pirakkuthu' (Energy is born) dealt with. There is a new awareness among Jaffna women to fight for their freedom. Maunaguru used folk dances and folk tunes with Bharathanatyam to champion the cause of women. Critics have commended the drama for its search for a form. In search for a national Tamil Theatre Maunaguru exploited Bharathanatyam, Kathakali, Russian ballet and folk dances in some of his other productions like 'Vidivu' (The down) and 'Malai' (The rain) with the students of Chundikkuli Girl's College and Jaffna Hindu Ladies College.

The play 'Veriyaddu' written by R. Murugaiyan was directed by V. M. Kugarajah. Critics were not satisfied with the way the director handled the script. But its contribution was substantial. Though 'Manithanum Mirugamum' (Man and Animal) directed by him was a success, critics were quick to point out certain contradictions in the theme.

Government Teacher's Training Colleges too got involved in Drama. The English Course, Palaly produced 'Uruthi' (Determination) using the epic theatre and folk dances. The theme was the problems forced by

(Continued on page 15)

OUR WARM GREETINGS TO
SATURDAY REVIEW
ON ITS 5TH ANNIVERSARY

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JAFFNA

T'PHONE : 24817

DONS DEMAND A LIVING WAGE

In response to a call by the Federation of University Teachers' Associations (FUTA) the Jaffna (University Teacher's Association) (UTA) and the Medical Teachers' Association (MTA) had decided that none of their members will perform extra academic duties from 5th January 1987. The issue this time was salaries with respect to which there is widespread dissatisfaction. Dons point out that a young lecturer with a doctorate gets Rs.2325/- per month, less than a clerk in the banking sector and less than what an unqualified person can earn by going as a domestic help to Singapore. The rationale behind this action is that once the heads of departments and deans of faculties resign, the University will in time come to a standstill if the matter is unresolved. It is a form of union action with minimum risk.

University dons have pointed out that salary is one of the main reasons why the well-qualified are not attracted to university jobs. Employment abroad or even in the private sector has become far more lucrative. Research and teaching standards in universities have been affected to such an extent that over-worked dons face the grim prospect of professional stagnation, in international terms, and the national universities are being gradually run down.

The difficulties of Jaffna University have been compounded by a war situation. Only 19 of the 79 places in grades of lecturer and above in the faculty of Science have been filled. Only two of the 39 assistant lecturers who went abroad on study leave over the years have returned. The Medical Faculty has faced a steady loss as a result of emigration. In the Arts Faculty, those with an exposure to international centres of scholarship are ageing. Many younger members of the Humanities staff are securing permanency by writing MA theses in Tamil. Obviously higher wages and procedure more streamlined to encourage scholarships will go a long way.

It, however, must be said that the university has not been enthusiastically welcoming towards qualified persons from abroad wanting to come here. Complaints have been made that those applying from abroad had been asked to re-apply when posts are advertised, as though persons in the US and the UK can be watching pages of the "Daily News". However, of late, arrangements have been made to retain applications and consider them the

next time round. Many dons have complained of a built in resistance to "outsiders" based on considerations apart from merit.

Dons angrily point to low priority awarded to education in this country as opposed to defence. The former which affects the entire youth of this country and determines the nation's future has been awarded Rs.4.5 billion in the 1987 budget whilst the military which has been progressively eroding the national fabric has been awarded Rs. 10 billion (or 15% of the budget). They point to the urgent need to pay the teaching profession far better wages and improve its morale if it is to deliver the goods.

Dons point worriedly to the creeping privatisation of education which may eventually deprive the poor of a sound education. The welfare state they say is being slowly eroded like selling off the family silver, the social consequences of which may be unthinkable.

A senior USTA official said that the union's action is not directed against the students but is meant for the benefit of students in the years to come. What will the state

standing. They recognised that Jaffna had special problems and would have been content with a statement of solidarity. Despite this the MTA (Jaffna) decided to join in.

The USTA decision

The Science teacher's Association Jaffna, decided to join the action from 3rd February at a meeting held on 6th January. USTA sources claim that they had not been kept informed by the FUTA which had apparently not known of the USTA Jaffna. The USTA came to know of these moves through a chance meeting between its president and the FUTA and subsequently through the UTA, Jaffna. When the UTA, Jaffna, met in mid-December to consider the FUTA's action, the meeting broke up in disarray after probing by a senior don revealed that the UTA's trade union registration had lapsed through negligence on the part of previous committees. With this background, when the USTA met on 17th December, the argument that Jaffna University had special problems with students having missed lectures for the entire academic year carried the day.

By

Our University Correspondent

of the universities be if low salaries act as a deterrent to qualified teachers?

A senior science professor pointed out that many university dons are making ends meet by taking on outside work. Some are more busy with private business and company work outside the University. University teaching has become a hobby. Is this the kind of university teacher the Government wants?

The FUTA has demanded an interim increase of Rs.1,500 for all grades pending a satisfactory negotiation of a salary package. The FUTA points out that Colombo and Sri Jayewardenepura Universities took similar action last year and the heads returned to work in April 1986 on the Government's promise that salaries will be looked into. Nothing was done until the current action when the Government responded with an offer ranging from a monthly increase of Rs.200 for assistant lecturers and Rs.1,000 for senior hands. This was not accepted by the FUTA.

Nearly all universities and faculties have joined the protest. A don from the Jaffna Medical Faculty said that when they contacted their sister Medical teachers union at Peradeniya they had been quite under-

It was also argued that with the problem of the missing student Vijitharan unresolved, taking such action may compromise the USTA's ability to take an independent stand should the students continue to face such problems. The meeting decided to express solidarity with the FUTA and reconsider the situation at a later date.

However, despite the lapse of UTA's registration, the Faculty of Arts heads met two days later and all heads of departments but one and the dean decided to relinquish their posts with effect from 5th Jan.

The USTA met again on 5th & 6th January and decided after much debate to join the action in four weeks time. The reasons given were that since students had come from faraway places for the beginning of term it will not be fair to send them back precipitately and that some notice will have to be given to the authorities.

Special exception was taken to arguments put forward by some senior dons: that the action was improper because the heads by their silence had at the senate meeting of 27th December accepted the Government's interim award; that the dons will not be paid if the heads resign; that the matter was for the

heads to decide and hence not appropriate for union action.

Describing these arguments as red herrings calculated to mislead, a senior don of the History Department said, "they must act on their conscience as to whether or not they wish to join in solidarity with the main body of University teachers in this country. We are all agreed that we cannot live on this salary. We should not say, let the others fight. If they get an increase, so would we. So far we have largely kept communalism out of the university teaching profession. It will not be good to create misunderstandings now".

It is true that the Vice-Chancellor told us about the Government's offer at the Senate meeting. And we certainly kept quiet not because we agreed, but because the Senate is not the place to discuss salaries. The Senate considers academic matters. We had our tea and vadai, went away and took up the question at the union meeting, which is the right place to discuss salaries. The contention that the staff will not be paid if the heads resign is ridiculous. If I report for work, I must be paid by law."

He added, "there is an unhealthy drift amongst the teacher's unions here. They are tending to become arms of the administration to deal with matters the administration prefers to funk. They are forgetting that they are there to look after the interests of their members. As a result the university is increasingly being controlled by a few and unions are being bent to serve their interests. We are the only Tamil University and so we must set worthy standards. There has been the feeling that scholarships and awards go to those who are in the good books of the heads and deans. I cannot say that such abuses have not taken place. There is now a move to ensure that these matters are handled by accountable academic committees on the basis of some rational principles".

A don from the Biochemistry Department of the Faculty of Medicine too, referred to the unhealthy trend towards domination by a few. He added, "it is a common cause and we did nothing. Action was initiated by someone else in the south. If we cannot co-operate there is something wrong with us.... I say, forget about a salary. We must be able to live. Give me a house to live, give me ten gallons of petrol a month, ten kilos of rice, five kilos of dhal.... and I will be satisfied. You may think that Bangladesh is a poor country. Do you know that assistant lecturers there start with Rs.5000/- plus allowances, whilst ours get only Rs.1,750/-? The USTA

(Continued on page 14)

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God," said Christ in his sermon on the Mount. Incidentally it is well to remember that this sermon was one of Mahatma Gandhi's favourite quotations from the Bible. Mrs. Corazon Aquino, the woman peacemaker of the year, is to the people of the Philippines, what Florence Nightingale also known as the "Lady with the Lamp" was to the wounded soldiers in the army hospital in Scutari during the Crimean war in the mid-19th century.

Cory Aquino is the modern angel of mercy and compassion who has brought peace and tranquillity and hope to a nation that was torn into warring camps for almost two decades. The world was stunned and shocked beyond words at the peaceful bloodless revolution that toppled the superannuated Ferdinand

on 28th February 1986 "welcoming the release of political prisoners and offering to present recommendations for the protection of human rights to the new Government."

AI's Newsletter of October 1986 states that three AI delegates visited the Philippines in May last year and met President Aquino, the Ministers for Justice and National Defence, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, the Chief Justice, the Chairman and members of the newly-established Presidential Committee on Human Rights, which had already made a number of recommendations to strengthen existing laws relating to human rights.

The AI delegates were warmly received by President Aquino and discussed the measures proposed or undertaken by her Government for the protection of human rights. The

racial riots have been an ugly feature ever since in this pseudo five-star democracy. With the prevention of Terrorism Act of 1979 and the Amendments made to it in 1982, the Government arrogated to itself the power to arrest and detain incommunicado, without any judicial supervision whatsoever. Arrest and detention is no longer a judicial decision but a political one. The judicial process has been discarded for it could not possibly co-exist with the monstrous PTA and Emergency laws holding away in the Tamil homelands. So Justice and Peace for the Tamil people in their homelands are rare commodities.

A. I. has made valiant efforts to prick the conscience of the government by drawing its attention constantly to the many drawbacks in the rule of law. Its Newsletter of October 1985 published a "File on

AI's January 1987 newsletter has a full page coverage with the shrieking headline: "More 'Disappearances' reported; AI calls for Government action" The report states that "over 30 more Sri Lankans have been reported 'missing' since AI published 'Disappearances' in Sri Lanka on 10th September 1986. AI believes that existing legal procedures, available in the Sri Lankan courts, such as habeas corpus provisions, are not effective in clarifying what has happened to the disappeared".

The report points out that the sub committee of Sri Lanka's Bar Council has also found that habeas corpus petitions do not give prompt relief to detainees held for more than 24 hours without charge. As an example, it quotes the case of Ananda Sunil, a Sinhalese, where "a habeas corpus petition failed to clarify what happened to him after his reported ar-

AQUINO'S EXAMPLE

Marcos and his crookish cronies by that remarkable new force called People Power in the spirit and style of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violence without a shot being fired. She transformed a wartorn country into a haven of peace and calm overnight by the waving of a magic wand, as it were.

What a sigh of relief it was to the afflicted people many of whose kith and kin had either "disappeared" or been killed in the civil conflict that took a toll of about 18,000 lives in 17 years of strife. She assumed the Presidency of the country on 25th February this year and after nine months of haggling, her Government has signed a 6 day truce with the communist rebels on 10th December, Human Rights Day and one can only hope that the truce will stick and that the spirit of reconciliation will not be choked but will be allowed to gather strength and momentum.

Within days of assuming power Cory Aquino ordered the release of all the political prisoners and abolished the special presidential powers which enabled former President Marcos to authorise the indefinite detention without charge or trial of those suspected of offences against national security. She disbanded the National Security & Intelligence Authority, and the Presidential Security Command, reportedly responsible for many human rights abuses under the Marcos Government. Amnesty International (AI) according to its Newsletter of April 1986, sent a telex to President Aquino

delegates welcomed the Government's initiatives in acceding to international human rights instruments. The AI Newsletter adds: "The Philippines is, in particular, the first country in Asia to ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which enables individual citizens to appeal to the United Nations Human Rights Commission."

It is pertinent to ask how Sri Lanka fares with regard to human rights. Is our society as open and free as the open economy we boast of? In comparison with last year's events

Torture" on Sri Lanka containing sworn testimony describing persistent torture. The Government, in its response, dismissed reports of torture as "unfair, biased and untrue" at a press conference on 4th December 1985. The AI's newsletter of September 1986 had a full-page report on Sri Lanka's human rights violations and refers to a new publication: "Disappearances" in Sri Lanka that gives details of 272 people who are reported to have "disappeared" since a pattern of such abuses began to emerge in late 1984.

The newsletter makes the following comments: "The Government

rest in July 1983. The magistrate found evidence that witnesses testifying that they had seen the Police taking him away had been subjected to intimidation to make them retract."

The AI Newsletter also spotlights the High Court Judge's observations in the trial and acquittal of Paul Nallanayagam, civil liberties worker. "The Judge said that he doubted if the Special Task Force could be believed when it denied making any arrests that day."

In a six-page letter sent to the Minister of National Security on 14th October 1986, AI reiterated its appeal to the Government to establish independent, impartial machinery to investigate "disappearances", with powers to protect witnesses. As AI stated in its report, "...it is important that investigations be carried out impartially by an independent body and that its findings be made publicly available. Police or Army investigations into the conduct of their own personnel may be aimed at protecting a culpable officer, rather than clarifying a 'disappearance'". The Government has an internationally-recognised obligation to take measures to find out and explain what has happened to the 'disappeared'.

AI's letter to the Minister of National Security said that by inviting the UN Working Group on Disappearances to visit Sri Lanka, the Government could "substantially

(Continued on page 23)

by

V. A. PHILIPUPILLAI

in the Philippines, we seem to have a very dismal and gloomy record. Our country is in the throes of a conflict that is far from easing.

An upsurge of popular support somewhat similar to the People Power in the Philippines gave the United National Party a landslide victory at the 1977 polls. Unfortunately, the heady wine of absolute power seemed to have gone to its head for no sooner had the UNP tasted it than its supporters went on the rampage hitting out wildly at its political opponents bringing in its train a whole host of human rights' abuses and setting the tone for subsequent events of unprovoked violence at the mere hint of dissent. Socialism and dharma came to be mere slogans devoid of content and intent. Before long the mob violence took on an anti-Tamil turn and all too frequent

has persistently refused to investigate almost all cases of 'disappearance' or to bring officials responsible for violations to justice. This refusal and legal and other measures adopted by the Government may well have encouraged members of the Security Forces to believe that they can dispose of dead bodies of people in their custody without any questions being asked by the authorities...

"AI believes the 'disappearances' and other grave violations of human rights have been facilitated by the suspension of important legal safeguards under emergency legislation. The PTA permits a maximum of 18 months incommunicado detention without trial. Under the Emergency Regulations, intermittently in force since 1979, such detention may be indefinite."

POETRY CORNER

SUMMER

Evening sky gobbles the fire
waves rise high and embrace the shore
grass beside the lake tickle the toes
fields in the west silently stare at the sky
a gentle wind embraces the body

On the new road red soil irritates the eyes
on the fruit-laden mango tree
the cuckoo bird intermittently sings
when the toe stubs a stone
its sharp edge tastes my blood
the displaced stone laughs at me
memories spread
heart pains at the lost desires

The coolness of the breeze
greenery of the trees
beauty of flowing water
in the blue lake
all those sweet memories
make me grieve forever.

—SELVI

Translated from Tamil by
Renuka Thanaskanda

Every Woman In Our Village

In the breeze
Coconut leaves move gracefully
And Say welcome
Golden Flowers stand glee fully
In the spreading yellow sun

She stretches her hands
And fixes herself with the window
Though her cheeks are cool
Her breath is hot
Outer world dims to her sight
Squirrels jump though
They never succeed

In side: her breast oozes
For her crying baby
She thinks it's the set pattern

Dark night slowly descends
Like a bird flies back to its nest
He returns home

He enjoys himself in consummation
And satisfied as insipid man

All is beautiful out side
Inhaste, Clouds gather
Thunder roars
Rain pours
Plants blossom
Leaves being Shed
And trees in ghostly dance

But She never responds
In a corner of the house
Through the window
She wonders at the street lamp
Lighted in the nights

—URVASI

Translated from Tamil by
Renuka Thanaskanda

Doomsday

There is a sense
of doom
and gloom
in Jaffna.
The Boys are there
on sentry duty.
The Army is there
itching to come out,
"A security zone"
1,000 metres in range
will engulf all
in a prison cell.
No petrol, no diesel, no kerosene
but the bicycles are there.
The Jaffna people
are a hardy lot
hardy to match
in their fortitude.
In the wake
of death and disaster
they somehow carry on,
gala weddings and festivals

Kanjeepuram sarees
gold thali - kodies
the bright pottus
and what not!
For life must go on
as it has been
for centuries
despite blue murder.
Life!
The precious spark
in everybody's heart
and soul.
Who creates?
Who destroys;
No one is to know
until it is too late.
So Children of many Gods,
I say to thee
enjoy life while you can
leave posterity to history.

—ANON - XIV

Home, Sweet Home

Chera, Chola, Pandya,
Naba, Prabha, Sabha,
Elara, Gamini, Elara,
history repeats itself.
war,
civil war, civil-peace
and cease-fire
then war.
Then came
dehumanised
men without eyes
men without shadows
men without conscience.
You, standing alone
Staring aimlessly

at passers-by.
You, still alive
a shell is yet to come
to smash your head.
what can be done?
Nothing.
Famous Jaffna Siddha
Yogar Swami
once said
'Just be'
Yes, perhaps,
Just being
is better than
Being Just, here.

—ANON - ∞

Dreamland

I dream
and dream
and dream
of grandeur
for my adopted land
—EELAM!
It is a charming dream
delightful to the mind
comfortable to the heart.
restful to the soul.
But when will the dream
come true?
How will it come?
On a platter
a silver platter
laden with the goodies of life
or bodies splattered with blood?
The mental TV works on
and on and on,
The images
come and go.

Images of great sacrifice,
images of petty in-fighting.
Images of the Unseen Hand
that works behind the scene.
The Unseen Hand?
Yes.
Trinco comes into focus
on the dream screen.
A real dream.
a real scream.
Okay, okay,
dreams are made
in Heaven,
while Man is on Earth.
The Passport Officer was nasty.
Where is your Visa?
he asked.
Why a visa?
I asked
To enter the heaven of EELAM!

—ANON — XV

View From The Summit

I wanted to express my love
by shaking hands
holding yours tight.
and planting a kiss on your forehead.
dear friend
owls hoot
winds howl
though midnight
wakeful and sensitive
you are at your duty.
I admire
your sensitiveness to humanism and
contemporary politics
admiration and our closeness
make me love you.

I longed to convey my love
embracing you while
kissing and caressing your forehead.

My love is free
no bargains
boundless as it flows
from my heart.

But my friend
I couldn't express my feelings to you
as I could with a girl
when mankind is

unsophisticated like birds and flowers
I might come to you.

Till women are looked upon as childish
and men as heroes
you might think of me and my love
the same way.
that I dislike, my friend
till there's this gap between us
you will never understand my love
what to do?
I am free from fetters
but you can't climb to that summit.

—NISHASANKARI

Translated from Tamil by
Renuka Thanaskanda

Bulldozer Overboard

Five huge bulldozers have been
brought to the army camp at Kan-
kesanthurai. While these were being
unloaded from the vessel, one fell
into the sea. The unloading opera-
tion took place on the 12th January.
These bulldozers may be pressed in-
to service if and when the Security
Forces launch their projected attacks
in the North.

A Folk Drama In Print

KAATTAVARAYAN NAATAKAM

Editor: Dr. E. Balasundaram
Senior Lecturer in Tamil
University of Jaffna.

Publisher: Folk Arts Panel, Cultural Council, Jaffna District.

Price: Rs. 15/-

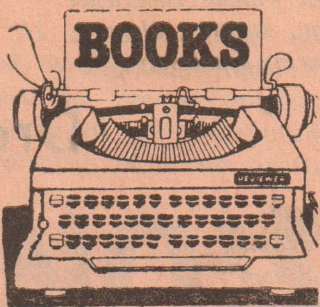
Kaathavarayan Naatakam is a popular folk drama among the Tamils—particularly Hindus. There are different versions about the origin and identification of Kaattavarayan in the legends and mythologies. Accordingly, the texts differ that far. Basically it is a religious folk drama, Kaathavarayan, according to one tradition which is popular in South India in that he is an incarnation of Lord Siva and His consort Uma. Another tradition has it that he is the son of Mari who is said to be a younger sister of Uma.

When Brahminical Hinduism began to extend its influence in Southern India the local deities, the folk deities at that, began to be called minor deities. It is in this context that when a process of interaction and synthesis took place, the avenue was created for the spinning of legends and mythologies seeking to accommodate and compromise the two traditions.

The wrath of Mari is believed to create drought, famine and some types of infectious disease like measles, chickenpox, mumps and small pox. In order to appease Mari

people make a vow and when they get over the drought or disease arrange for Kaathavarayan Nadagam to be staged in the temples of Mari. Kaathavarayan as mentioned earlier is believed to be the son of Mari. Mari and Kaathavarayan are considered to be guardian deities.

As Prof. S. Vithiananthan, Vice-Chancellor of the Jaffna University has pointed out in his brief but beautiful preface, Kaathavarayan drama texts are handled in three ways.



One is when a devotee is possessed by Kaathavarayan during a pooja and worship, the others play the Udukku and sing the songs. Another form is for one to play the Udukku and sing the songs with facial and physical gestures suiting the different contexts. The other and the currently popular one is for different persons to act the different characters in a full fledged drama—of course in the folk tradition.

This folk drama has textual and format variations in Vadamardchy in Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu and Batticaloa Districts. In Jaffna, Vadamardchy has a long and rich tradition in performing this drama

in which the artistes of Mathanai have excelled. In Vadamardchy, there is also a tradition when people of the village collect at some place during the cold rainy season where one man sings the songs invoking the blessings of Kaathavarayan. While Kaathavarayan has a shrine room only within a Mari-Amman Temple, in Vadamardchy, there are temples exclusively for Kaathavarayan, one at Urani and the other at Nediakadu, both in Valvettiturai.

Dr. E. Balasunderam hails from Batticaloa which abound in folk traditions which are yet preserved. Perhaps with this inherent attainments and aptitude he has displayed a competence of his own in editing the text of Kaathavarayan Nadagam. He has strived hard by visiting areas, meeting exponents of this folk drama at different village level and got the different texts and also inculcated the differences in the performing art traditions. He has in his analysis of these matters so vital to editing a text of this nature, discussed all aspects exhaustively. He merits the encouragement and support of all lovers of art in his future ventures too. Revival and preservation of folk traditions encompassing all aspects is very vital for a rich cultural heritage to be made dynamic and to be inherited by future generations.

Very few have encouraged or worked on folk traditions in the past. The late Prof. K. Kanapathipillai gave encouragement to this aspect which was carried forward in rea-

lity by Prof. S. Vithiananthan. The late Prof. K. Kailasapathy also encouraged this while Prof. K. Sivathamby did and continues to do for the revival of folk-arts and traditions. The late M. Satkunam, Pandit V. S. Kandiah, Vidwan F.X. C. Nadarajah, Dr. S. Mounaguru of Batticaloa, Dr. A. Sanmugasadas, the late T. Shanmugasundaram and "Ambalaththadigal" Ilaya-Pathmanathan of Jaffna and C.V. Velupillai of the Hill Country have contributed much to the study, revival and vibrant preservation of Tamil folk arts in Sri Lanka while there are efforts to preserve Kaman Kooththu and other forms of folk-lore among the Tamils of the Hill Country, much remains to be done. The stress and advancement among the Sinhalese in this field of folk-lore is admirable while it is not so among the Tamils.

— A. THEVA RAJAN

Silver Jubilee

Reverend Father A. Xavier Croos, Vicar General of the Diocese of Mannar District completed 25 years of dedicated service to our Lord and to humanity on the 20th Day of December 1986. People of this District sincerely offer heartfelt Congratulations, greetings and best wishes to him on this Golden day of his Ecclesiastical career.

The Rev. Fr. exalted himself in the service of the humanity and was appointed Vicar General on 30th July, 1981.

Mannar District like any other Tamil area has been undergoing untold hardships during the last few years due to disturbances. It was a God send that our Rev. Fr. harnessed the support of all sections of the service minded social workers and organised the "Mannar Association for Relief and Rehabilitation". As its president and Leader he was in the forefront in organising and obtaining assistance from benefactors and providing the affected and the needy Rehabilitation. Rev. Fr. is a friend in need who consoles and guides in times of distress and offers assistance.

His Silver Jubilee was celebrated at St. Sebastian's Cathedral with a Concelebrated Holy Mass and reception and variety entertainment thereafter. He was also feted at Nattann his native village.

P.K. Selvarajah,
Asst. Secretary,
Mannar Association For
Relief and Rehabilitation
(MARR)

Dons Demand....

(Continued from page 11)
might find itself joining the battle after it is over."

A lecturer in Psychiatry commented, "The main point should be to express solidarity with other Universities. By ourselves we are nothing. If we co-operate with them we can expect some support and understanding when we have a problem. Otherwise, where will we stand?" Some heads and deans as has happened, may choose not to resign not because of contentment with the Government's offer but because of a fear that someone else may later get the job.

Some very critical remarks came from a very senior and much-respected, don a veteran of several successful encounters with authorities: "The way the USTA has conducted itself one may ask, why have a union? Of course, our salaries are

far from adequate and the students will not misunderstand or complain about inconvenience. We have often been inconvenienced by students. Union action means threatening maximum embarrassment to the other side with minimum inconvenience to its members. In that sense, the present course of action is idea.

To my recall, this was first tried in Colombo during the Dayanithy affair in 1973. It was felt that Dr. Dayanithy of the Mathematics department was treated in a most improper manner. Two Tamil dons in the Department felt that their dignity as Tamils was in question. They refused to perform any administrative duties, mind you, without any union backing. They did risk getting the sack. But in the end the Vice-Chancellor came down and negotiated with them. In any action you have to act prudently and take a risk. Take those who do not want to resign their administrative duties. That is their level of sacrifice for

a common cause. In most such cases, I find some unsavoury motives at the back.

"The trouble with teachers' unions is that they talk big and when the time comes to act, they look for excuses—inconvenience to students being the one most frequently used. It is far better to fight your battles alone than going to the union.

"One would expect some idealism and a spirit of sacrifice in a place like the University. But I am hard put to find it here. An ordinary old man on the street will often have more sense. This is hardly the place for action and leadership. The Army in the early '80's made the mistake of looking for leaders of the rebellion in the Universities. Look at those young men who have changed our destinies for better or for worse! The University has at best been an ornament. It has a long way to go to take its rightful place of leadership."

ZIONISM AND APARTHEID: COMPARATIVE SEGREGATION

Our age, writes Ali A. Mazrui, stands witness to a double irony: Jews who had suffered so tragically under the Nazis have not only created the most arrogant nation state since the Third Reich but are also offering a model to South Africa under Afrikaanderdom.

The State of Israel was born out of a fusion between Judaism and the European concept of the nation-state. The state of apartheid in South Africa was born out of a fusion between racism and the European concept of capitalism. The Jews under Zionist leaders decided that they had to have a Jewish State for 'protection'. The whites of South Africa decided they had to have a racist state for 'security'.

Both Zionism and apartheid are now under siege—both approaches to security have been under serious challenge. Quo vadis?

We must distinguish between macro-apartheid, the commitment to separate homelands for each ethno-cultural group, and micro-apartheid, the commitment to racial segregation at the local level.

What the Jewish ideology of Zionism has in common with South Africa's doctrine of 'separate development' is the principle of macro-apartheid—a belief in separate homelands. It was this belief which made Zionists insist on a separate home for the Jews and on the partition of Palestine. It was a comparable belief which made Afrikaner nationalists in South Africa insist on 'Bantustans'.

Modern Trends...

(Continued from page 9)

the Tamil refugees. The playwright K. Shriranganesan used the poems of 'Mahakavi' in it. Last year three different courses (Palaly) used the same script 'Valpeththaikal' written by M. Sanmugalingam. Three different directors handled the same script. The havoc exam-oriented curriculum is playing was the theme.

The cultural group of University of Jaffna produced 'Man Sumantha Meniyar II' with the same director and the playwright. The emphasis was given on people's participation in fighting for the rights. Unfortunately propaganda overleaps the art form.

One could not fail to note, a sustained interest in Drama now. Drama

Both ideologies of macro-segregations are in serious trouble. Right-wing Israelis have failed to get rid of all the Arabs within their borders and can only wishfully dream of a mass exodus of the Arabs from the occupied territories. What is more, the Arab population under Israeli rule is multiplying at more than twice the growth rate of the Jews. Israel is landed with unwanted Arabs—who may become increasingly 'subversive' domestically.

Similarly, white South Africa has failed to get rid of its blacks by squeezing them into homelands. The

By

Ali A. Mazrui

Research Professor, University of Jos (Nigeria)
and Professor, The University of Michigan (USA)

regime is still reluctant to accept the inevitability of racial co-existence and, even more dramatically than Israel, is facing increasing domestic 'subversion'.

In desperation, both macro-segregationist states blame their troubles on their neighbours across their borders. Israel believes that if there were no 'naughty' neighbours there would be no PLO and if there were no PLO there would be no Palestinian struggle. Afrikaners believe that if there were no 'naughty' neighbours, there would be no ANC and if there would be no African resistance.

Israel cannot accept the proposition that the Palestinian struggle

workshop are being conducted. Many plays are staged. Quite a few new faces have appeared as directors, writers and actors. Kulanthai Sanmugalingam, S. Maunaguru, Sithamparanathan, Janam Francis, Sivanandan and Urthireswaran take an active part in Drama workshop.

V.M. Kugarajah and his mates formed a people's Art theatre at Inuvil to train young actors. The cultural council under the Government Agent Jaffna in collaboration with the Department of Fine Arts, of the University of Jaffna conducts a course in Drama.

Much have been done by way of experimentation but it must be admitted that there is a dearth of good scripts. Whether the Tamil playwrights will rise to the occasion is yet to be seen.

would rise again even if the PLO were destroyed. The Pretoria regime has buried its head in the sand—deep in the delusion that if the ANC disappeared all would be well in apartheid South Africa 'once again'.

But for the time being far more people have been killed to defend Zionism than to defend apartheid. When you compare the death toll at either Sharpeville in 1960 or Soweto in 1976, it is only a fraction of the number of people the Israelis killed in the 1982 invasion of Lebanon. This is quite apart from the casualties in the preceding four Arab-Israeli conflicts.

Similarly, Israeli raids on Palestinian camps have been more numerous and often more devastating than South Africa's raids on ANC 'camps' in neighbouring countries.

Why has the defence of Zionism been more costly in total number

of human lives lost than the defence of apartheid?

Here we must distinguish between comprehensive power and specialised power. South Africa has comprehensive power over its neighbours—economic, logistical, geostrategic, technology as well as military power.

Some of the neighbours have no access to the outside world except through South Africa. This is the geostrategic weakness of Lesotho.

Others are forced to use South African ports or railways because their other options are in disrepair or sabotaged. This is the logistical weakness of countries like Zimbabwe and Zambia.

Almost all of South Africa's immediate neighbours are vulnerable to South Africa's economic power—buying and selling goods, and sometimes actually exporting labour to the Republic of South Africa. The exporters of labour to South Africa's mines include Marxist Mozambique.

All South Africa's neighbours are in addition exposed to the Republic's military muscle. All this adds up to really comprehensive power.

In contrast, Israel's power over the Arabs is almost entirely military. With petro-dollars many Arab countries are economically far richer than Israel. The Jewish state finds it much harder to buy friends in neighbouring countries as South Africa has done in supporting dissidents in Mozambique, Angola, Lesotho and possibly Zimbabwe.

The only place where Israel has managed to 'buy' Arab support is among Christian right-wingers in Southern Lebanon. And even in Southern Lebanon the motives of the right-wingers have little to do with the money that Israel provides.

If money was their main incentive they would have sold their loyalties at a higher price to Saudi Arabia or even Libya.

There is no comparable source of funds in Southern Africa to outweigh what Pretoria can offer to African traitors. And so treason in Southern Africa can offer to African traitors. And so treason in Southern Africa can unfortunately be bought more cheaply than it can among Israel's neighbours. That is mainly because South Africa's neighbours are economically weaker and more vulnerable than Israel's neighbours. So less scrupulous Southern African Citizens can be tempted more easily and for much less money.

If then Israel has less economic power than South Africa for subverting neighbouring countries, Israel has to explore other areas of regional advantage. No Arab country needs Israeli ports or market for its trade or Israeli railways for its freight, or Israeli goods. And only those areas actually occupied by Israel (the West Bank, Gaza and to a certain extent Southern Lebanon) export labour to Israel. The Jewish State cannot threaten neighbouring Arab countries with expulsion of their immigrant workers—because there are no such workers to be used as hostages.

What then is Israel's last leverage? What is its last resort? Naked military power, pure and simple!

The Jewish state cannot threaten economic sanctions, or deny infrastructural facilities, or hold Arab workers to ransom, or close ports or switch off electricity, or buy up traitors for sale. What Israel can do is kill, maim and destroy. Israel's power is not comprehensive but narrowly specialised.

It is 'because of these factors that so many more thousands of lives have been lost to defend the Jewish state than to protect the apartheid regime. But both regimes remain symbols of some of the worst forms of injustice in the twentieth century.

They both claim to be part of the vanguard of an international fight against terrorism. Both systems are themselves predicated on state terrors—steeped in arrogance and cynicism.

It is one of the cruel ironies of our age that the Jews—who had suffered so tragically under the Nazis—should later have created the most arrogant nation-state since the Third Reich. It doubles the tragedy to see a Jewish state serve as a model to South Africa under Afrikaanderdom. The racists of Pretoria have indeed been using Israel as their paradigm for 'counter-insurgency'.

The martyrs of Nazi concentration camps are turning in their graves. Their sacred cause is now profaned. The pity of it! Oh the pity of it. (Third World Network Features/Africa Events.)

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Jaffna is Jaffna

Jaffna, as much of the world is aware, is in the throes of a fuel crisis, shortage of food and medical supplies, threat of starvation, disruption of transport services and what not! Amidst all this we have antics of the Army, melees at Elephant Pass and even tele-links severed.

But the Jaffna Man, God Bless him, lo and behold, is about his own business, his humdrum existence not bothering a wee bit about what is happening around him or perhaps what is in store for him in the not too distant future.

Fathers go about their day-to-day avocations, mothers are busy marketing or paying electricity bills or collecting pensions except those who impart education that is most of them in addition to their husbands' incomes or do some other type of work to supplement the family budget.

Children go to their schools in their starched uniforms. Grandparents, the male of the species, take their grand-children to schools as an exercise to lessen their hardening arteries.

Shells are fired from army encampments, helicopters rain death from the skies and innocent people both young or old, die. Young boys are taken into custody—not so much in Jaffna now, as in the rest of the "Tamil Homeland"—"faraway" Batticaloa or Trincomalee.

Whatever happens, the Jaffna man discusses it at length in many

places, their doorsteps, their homes the church and even the bar. But thus, thus far and no further. The discussion is purely academic. The housewife in Jaffna has a word or two with her counterpart on the way to the market "See what the soldiers are doing?" But all is forgotten before the sun sets. Young men are dying, are in prisons and so too are girls. Fireworks and crackers must go on—it is I, my wife

"Turn left into the gravel path", the old man told me, "it is the second house." A few moments later I was wheeling my bicycle up the drive. The moon shone betwixt the palmyrahs and fell on the mallikai creeper, casting sinewy shadows upon the ground. The dwelling was of the humbler sort. A few flames flickered on the verandah.

A young man came to me and broke into tears, "My brother is gone. They said no harm would come to him. We were deceived!" I was shown two pictures of a youth placed behind an oil lamp. My companion said, "That is all we have left of him" A handsome defiant face stared at me from the wooden frame. The youth had been a leader of men. Perhaps, the idol of many a lass. But his going was shrouded in obscurity. Few mourners were there besides the family. The young man and I sat on a mat placed on the verandah. He broke into uncontrollable grief again. "My brother was a true warrior, as honest a man that ever was. He did little for the home. His mind was on helping others. He

and children that matter most. Why blame, I daresay, a lawfully constituted Government, if we do not care?

Why blame a Government, if we do not exert ourselves? Has there been a whimper, let alone a squeak of protest by the people of this town against the fuel crisis, against the impending food crisis and break down of medical supplies and tele-

links? De we need a Citizens, Committee or Mothers' Front to organise a protest? Is it too much to rise in protest 'en masse' against the "actions of the Government" that should see reason better than any other Government purely because so many of the Tamils voted for it—for stability not so long ago. Now the Jaffna man is watching his slow strangulation and emasculation! What a pity! Or Does he like the "SATURDAY REVIEW" to do it for us so that he can relax and debate?

—LOUIS A. PAUL

The Night Call

protected many. Oh, only if he had died at the hands of the enemy. This is most unbearable!"

Another man stirred from the shadows. "I was even afraid to ask for directions to get here," he said, "the remains of the enemy were given to their families. 'Humanitarian grounds' they called it. But for one of us who dedicated himself for our freedom?"

I left, cycling along a straight silvery road which vanished into distant shadows. All was quiet on the tobacco fields, except for the occasional shuffling of a cow. The moon was not the gentle moon that lovers see, seated on the beach 'neath the starry vault, with the comforting cadence of waves lapping the marge. It was a moon whose light diffused through the vapoury haze, whilst grey clouds scudded by, meaningly. I shivered inwardly.

Thus each to another applies that double-edged knife. Each in turn a

villain and then the victim. At the passing of each his great qualities come to mind, leaving behind real grief and a void that cannot be filled.

One's mind goes back to that morn when people looked up gratefully to the young men—even boys—who set out with the ideals of freedom and brotherhood. That such noble ventures come to grief in dissene and fratricide is an old story. One's mind goes even further back to the glorious days of the legendary camelot King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. That glory, too, ended in tragic conflict. All were vanquished!

What has gone wrong? The answer must come from the people at large and must be sounded abroad with both courage and compassion. Defeat and humiliation stare us in the face. May God forbid, that the tears which drench this ground bring forth their wonted crimson harvest.

—by RAJAN

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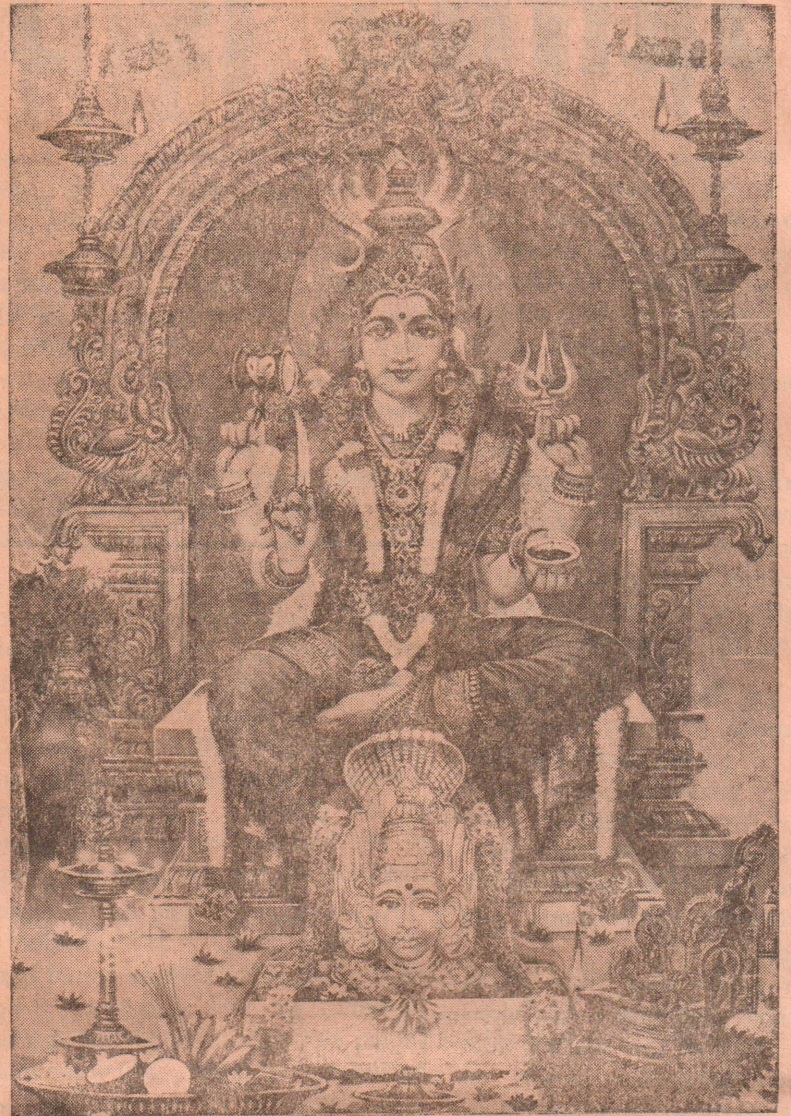


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PRESS COUNCIL CASE

(Continued from page 6)

Mr. Athulathmudali, that there had been published false and distorted statements in the SATURDAY REVIEW in its issue of 10th August 1985 under the caption "David Selbourne Rides Again".

And whereas the Council held an inquiry in the prescribed manner into the said complaint and is satisfied that the statement "We are going to smash heads" ascribed by the journalist Selbourne to the complainant in conversation with him on 28th July 1982, with regard to solving the Tamil Problem, is untrue.

And whereas the article wrongly describes the complainant as the Minister of National Security in 1982 at which time he was in fact the Minister of Trade and Shipping.

And whereas it is necessary to make an order in terms of section 9(1)(a) of the Sri Lanka Press Council Law, No. 5 of 1973.

Therefore the Council makes order that a correction be published in respect of the aforesaid publication as given in the schedule hereto.

And further orders the Editor, Publisher, Printer and Proprietor to publish the correction in the SATURDAY REVIEW under the heading "Order by the Sri Lanka Press Council - Correction" with equal prominence as that of the impugned article in the SATURDAY REVIEW within two weeks of the receipt of this order by the defendants.

In terms of Regulation 13(a) of the Press Council (Inquiries) Regulations, 1973, the Council orders that the Defendants do pay the Complainant a sum of Rs. 525 as costs.

Signed by Mrs. Manel Abhayaratne
Mr. Ranjit de Silva, Mr. Leslie Ivor-Fernando, Mr. G. S. Perera, Mr. K. B. Sugathadasa, Prof. Tennekoon Vimalananda and Mr. M. Hussein (Chairman)

Schedule

ORDER BY THE SRI LANKA PRESS COUNCIL

Correction

In the SATURDAY REVIEW of 10th August 1985, an article based on a

speech made by David Selbourne, a journalist, has been published under the caption "David Selbourne Rides Again".

In this article the following passage appears:

"I didn't have a notebook in front of me. We were talking as ex-fellow undergraduates. I recall what he said then I asked him (tongue-in-cheek). 'Well Lalith, what is the solution to the Tamil Problem?' He said, 'We are going to smash heads'. The date of that conversation was July 1982. I registered it mentally and I wrote it in my notebook afterwards".

Mr. Athulathmudali, Minister of National Security, made a complaint to the Press Council against this publication and denied having made the statement "We are going to smash heads", in a conversation with David Selbourne on 28th July 1982.

The Press Council held an inquiry into this complaint and found that the publication on 10th August 1985 of the statement "We are going to smash heads" alleged to have been made on 28th July 1982

by Mr. Athulathmudali is the publication of an untrue statement. The Council was able to arrive at this finding largely on the basis of a previous article by Selbourne published in the SATURDAY REVIEW on 28th August 1982, when he wrote that the complainant had, on that same occasion, said "We get no credit for running a democracy". The complainant admitted that he said these words and this admission makes his denial of the alleged statement "We are going to smash heads" all the more credible.

The Council found further that in the article published on 10th August 1985, the description of the complainant as Minister of National Security in 1982 is a false description as the complainant was then Minister of Trade and Shipping and there was at that time no office of Minister of National Security.

Editor,
Publisher,
Printer,
Proprietor.

More Men To Boosa

About 180 persons who were taken into custody in Batticaloa by the Security Forces were taken to Boosa on 12th January. They were all within the ages of 18 and 30 years.

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DAY AND NIGHT SERVICE

SIGNATORIES TO COLLECTIVE APPEAL

(Continued from last issue)

The collective appeal for Peace published in the last issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW, was signed altogether by 188 prominent citizens, including members of the clergy of different religions.

For lack of space, we could not publish the full list of signatories last time.

Here are the rest of the signatories.

22. Revd. Fr. J. C. Pieris S. J., St. Joseph's Church, Balangoda. 23. Revd. Fr. Ernest Poruthota, St. Thomas' Church, Kotte. 24. Revd. Fr. Sarath Iddamalagoda, Cardinal Cooray Centre, Tammita, Negombo. 25. Revd. Fr. R. J. E. Jayaseelan, Swamiar Veethy, Colombagam, Jaffna. 26. Revd. Fr. S. Edwin, St. Francis Xavier Seminary, Colombagam, Jaffna. 27. Revd. Somasiri Perera, Principal Theological College of Lanka Pilimat-alawa. 28. Revd. Dr. Paul Gunam Benjamin, Lecturer, Theological College of Lanka Pilimat-alawa. 29. Revd. Premasiri Fernando, Minister, Methodist Church, Wellawatte. 30. Revd. Canon Dr. Donald J. Kanagaratnam, Oppuruvillam, Vavuniya. 31. Revd. Yohan Devananda, Prathama Sevaka, Devasaranaramaya, Ibbagamuwa. 32. Revd. Kenneth Fernando, Director, Ecumenical Institute for Study and Dialogue, Colombo. 33. Revd. Rohan Wijesinghe, NCC Chaplain Peradeniya University. 34. Revd. J. R. Ratnayagam Vicar, Church of St. Francis of Assisi, Mt. Lavinia. 35. Revd. Lionel Peiris, Vicar, Church of St. Michel & All Angels, Colombo. 36. Revd. S. L. C. Knight, Lecturer, Theological College of Lanka, Pilimat-alawa. 37. Revd. Dr. Rienzie Perera, Lecturer, Theological College of Lanka, Pilimat-alawa. 38. Revd. Joshua Ratnam, St. Andrew's Church Batticaloa. 39. Revd. Jayasiri Peiris St. James Church, Chilaw. 40. Revd. Sr. Helen Fernando, Holy Family Convent, Colombo. 41. Revd. Sr. Francisca, Holy Family Convent, Wattala. 42. Revd. Sr. Mary of All Graces, Holy Family Convent, Gonawila—Dankotuwa. 43. Revd. Sr. Puvaneswary Thuraisamy, Little Flower Convent, Colombo. 44. Revd. Sr. Winifreda, Holy Family Convent, Colombo. 45. Dr. E. R. Saratchandra, Professor Emeritus, Peradeniya University. 46. Dr. Hilary Cruz, Professor Emeritus, Peradeniya University. 47. Dr. Ashley Halpe, Professor, Department of English, Peradeniya University. 48. Dr. W. R. Breckenridge, Professor, Department of Zoology, Peradeniya University. 49. Dr. S. Thillainathan, Professor, Department of Tamil, Peradeniya

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Biotechnology For Jaffna

One of the aims in establishing Universities in different parts of Sri Lanka is to develop the resources of that region. The resources of Northern and Eastern provinces are the cereals, tubers, cash crops like onion and chillies, palmyra products, marine fish and pearls, salt and limestone. With the accelerated Mahaweli Development, Sri Lanka will attain self sufficiency in rice, and there would be a surplus of starch based products like maize and manioc. The demand for onions and chillies in the south would decrease with increasing production of these commodities in the Mahaweli basins. Although these statistics are available, to my knowledge no serious thought had been given at the Universities and no forward planning had been done. All Universities including the Jaffna University is more than satisfied and feel proud that they have fulfilled their obligations by teaching the undergraduates. In the near future graduate Schools are to be established in the Universities to promote research relevant to Sri Lanka. With the view to promote relevant research that would add value to our natural sources, rather than export these resources at prices fixed by the developed countries including both the democratic and communist blocs, the postgraduate course (M. Sc) in Biotechnology was started in the Universities of Jaffna and Colombo. The M. Sc biotechnology course in the University of Jaffna is to be ceremonially opened on 19th January 1987. Organisers hope that this course will not only help to undertake biotechnology based research relevant to Sri Lanka but also train the manpower to meet the requirements of the biotechnology based industries in the years to

come. Biotechnology is the application of biological organisms, systems or processes to manufacturing and service industries. Spink's report (1980) on biotechnology in UK states that "If biotechnology is exploited successfully, it could be both a significant contributor to our balance of payments and a new field of employment". This remark is applicable to developed as well as to developing countries like Sri Lanka.

Today in UK, there are over 30 biotechnology based corporations in operation and in USA there are more than 200 biotechnological companies. Several companies are producing interferon, an anti-viral

not produce human insulin but bacteria fitted with human insulin gene by genetic engineering produce human insulin. This is now commercially available and diabetes is treated by the insulin produced by genetic engineering. Genetic engineering involves a micro surgery. The human insulin gene is cut out, using endonuclease enzymes and is inserted into the bacteria using ligase enzymes. This genetically manoeuvred bacteria containing human insulin gene now produces human insulin.

Cetus corporation in USA has obtained approval from the Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee to field test plants genetically en-

electricity that can do three man hour work in 10 min. Not only the cost of extraction of palmyra pulp is reduced by a hundred fold, the pulp obtained will be more hygienic and contain less of the pathogenic and non-pathogenic organisms. This would prolong the keeping quality and shelf-life of the pulp. We have also run pilot plant trials and converted the sucrose of this pulp into alcohol in good yield. Further research is continuing to convert the batchwise process into continuous process so that the cost of production can be further reduced.

Sri Lanka has no fossil fuel. We spent 57% of our export earnings on import of fossil fuel in 1981. It is not only imperative that we cannot spend any more money on the import of fossil fuel, but with increasing oil price, we can import only less of the oil for the same value. An alternative is to substitute ethanol for fossil fuel. Japan envisages to light the house, run the vehicles and consume for energy the alcohol produced from vegetable waste using enzyme reactors in the year 2000.

The solar energy is converted into chemical energy by photosynthesis. The starch and cellulose are polymers of glucose. Research is going on in our laboratory to convert the starch of cereals like maize and tubers like manioc into liquid glucose by enzyme engineering. The liquid glucose can be used in confectionery industries or can form the raw material for other biotechnology industries. Immobilized enzymes are to be used to convert liquid glucose into high fructose syrup. Liquid glucose is also being used to synthesize citric acid, lactic acid and in the production of enzymes.

The engineering research to develop machinery to meet our needs is being undertaken at the Jaffna College Technical Institute under the leadership of Mr. George Pullenayagam with the collaboration of his staff and students.

The government and private sector in Sri Lanka is importing "Turn Key" industries which bring in technology and machinery that are mostly out dated. The industrialists in Sri Lanka want a package deal that would provide them both the machinery and technology which would bring profit in the first year of operation itself for his investment.

In conclusion we can say that we will endeavour to fulfil the aspirations of the industrialists in the near future.

by

Prof. K. Balasubramaniam
Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna

protein, by biotechnology and in Japan alone five companies are producing it. In contrast, in Sri Lanka no investment has been made in biotechnology or even thought of, upto date. Even the Jaffna University has not contributed a cent for the running of the M. Sc biotechnology course but, I am happy atleast their blessing is overwhelmingly there.

Biotechnology encompasses two major areas namely the genetic engineering and enzyme engineering. Genetic engineering involves the recombinant DNA technology. Human insulin is hard to get and all these years Diabetes was treated with beef insulin. Human body does not tolerate foreign substances and the treatment of diabetes with Beef insulin has led to many medical problems. This problem has been overcome today by genetic engineering. Bacteria do

geneered to resist certain diseases. Japan is in the verge of introducing a gene into rice plant that can use atmospheric nitrogen instead of the fertilizer nitrogen. These miraculous plants produced by genetic engineering need neither fertilizer nor insecticides. Using these genetically engineered plants, developed countries are almost in a position to produce rice, other cereals, vegetables and fruits at a cheaper price than the less developed countries. Thailand is forced to sell rice at a low price because of the surplus wheat in the West and in addition Thailand is already burdened with a surplus rice.

Enzyme engineering uses enzymes or cells containing these enzymes for organic synthesis, analytical applications, therapy and biochemical purifications. The enzymes are fixed chemically or physically so that they can be used repeatedly. The high fructose syrup is produced from corn by enzyme engineering. America alone produces five million tons of high fructose syrup annually. Many more millions of high fructose syrup are produced in Europe and Japan. High fructose syrup is a substitute for sucrose and the present low prices for sugar in world market could be due to the substitution of sucrose with highfructose syrup from corn.

In our department lot of basic and applied research in biotechnology relevant to Sri Lanka is being undertaken. There are ten million palmyra trees. Considering 50% as female trees and at 25 fruits per tree, the amount palmyra fruit pulp per year is 25,000 metric tons. Sucrose content of pulp is 15% which can be converted to a minimum of 5% or more alcohol. The potential high fructose syrup or alcohol per year from 25,000 metric tons of pulp is 3.75 million Kg and 1.25 million Kg respectively. We have developed a mechanical extractor operated on

Signatories...

(Continued from page 20)

163. Benjamin Ratnayake, Attorney-at-law, Kurunegala. 164. Ms. Audrey Rebera, NCC Women's Commission, Colombo. 165. J.K. Retnayagam, Jaffna. 166. Roy Rodrigo, Centre for Conscientisation, Negombo. 167. J.G. Paul Rohan, Sillalai, Pandateruppu. 168. A. Eric Roshan, Atchuveli, Jaffna. 169. Vincent Rupasingha, Egodapattuwa Peasant Organisation, Aralaganwila, Polonnaruwa. 170. J.M. Sabaratnam, President, Jaffna College Technical Institute Council. 171. Nelun Samarasinghe, International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo. 172. Ainsley Samarajeeva, Attorney-at-law, Mt. Lavinia. 173. A. Seevaratnam, Anaicodai. 174. Ms. Pushpa Selvanayagam, Mother's Front, Local

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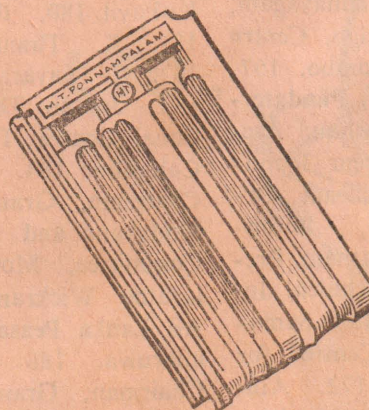
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Youths Queried

The aftermath of the discovery of a bomb at Kolonnawa last week was the taking in for questioning of many Tamil youths in Bambalapitiya, Wellawatte and even those found on the beaches. Further arrests are on the cards. All vehicles entering Colombo are also subject to rigorous checks.

12 Killed

The Batticaloa Citizens' Committee reports that 12 civilians were killed in search operations by Police Commandos at Mandur, in Batticaloa district, on 18th and 19th January. Forty persons, mostly youths, were reportedly taken into custody.

Bus Blast

Eight passengers were killed and 59 injured in a bomb explosion in a bus on the Badulla road on 18th January. Fifteen persons were admitted to Badulla hospital with serious injuries. A curfew was imposed in Badulla town after the incident.

Aquino's....

(Continued from page 12)

alleviate the sorrow and anguish of the families who, till now, have searched in vain for their relatives who have 'disappeared.'

A political analyst has said that politicians are either warriors or healers. To the Filipino people, Corazon Aquino, the healer politician, is a godsend. She is determined to put a stop to the suffering, torture and slow death of political prisoners held incommunicado in dark cells with a view to extracting confessions or their mysterious "disappearance" altogether. She is well aware that security personnel often abuse their power by getting rid of political opponents with or without the connivance of their masters. She prefers to come to grips with the causes of the conflict and not allow the Army to govern the country in the guise of providing security to those at the helm of affairs. She has had the agonizing experience of having had to pay the price of losing her husband because he opposed the Government of the day and the culprits are to be brought to book. Under Marcos they got away.

The more the so-called democratic rulers and dictators distance themselves from the people, the more they begin to depend on the army. This drives them to purchase more arms hardware swelling the debt

Elephant Pass Confrontation

There was a confrontation between the Security Forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) at Kurinchatheevu near Elephant Pass on 18th January.

The fighting was said to have gone on for nearly five hours.

Soldiers who were brought in two helicopters engaged the militants. Six militants were reported to have been killed while one soldier was injured.

Optimistic Note

On 13th January, the High Commissioner for India in Sri Lanka Mr. J.N. Dixit expressed optimism about a peaceful settlement to the ethnic problem. He observed that after the conclusion of the on-going talks with the Minister of Lands and lands Development, Mr. Gamini Disanayake in New Delhi. Further steps would be taken by the Indian Government towards a settlement.

burden of the country. Most Third World countries are caught up in this vicious circle and end up as the happy hunting ground of foreign mercenaries and arms dealer countries like Israel, South Africa and many others of both blocs including the super powers who are keen on establishing bases to enlarge their spheres of influence in the area, and so the world's trouble spots multiply rather than diminish.

Against such heavy odds, Aquino has had a measure of success in her efforts to stamp out violence and bloodshed causing grief and misery to hundreds of ordinary people who wish to live in peace and have a right to be free from fear. She has come to terms with the Muslims and the Communists. The Muslims who were clamouring for separation have been persuaded to accept regional autonomy in their homelands.

This should serve as an eye-opener to our hardline nationalists who dispute the claims of the Tamils for homelands of their own in the Eastern Province and in the Vanni. In an attempt perhaps to put the issue beyond doubt, it is alleged that the Government is using the Army to drive the Tamils out of their homelands under the pretext of enlisting its services to flush out "terrorist" strongholds by its search and destroy operations.

The endless peace talks held with much fanfare is a mere cover-up for these stealthy military operations

The people who were caught in the melee were detained at the Elephant Pass Army Camp for the duration of the "battle". They were warned that for every soldier killed, two civilians would suffer the same fate. The helicopters gave cover to the troops.

Drugs

Drugs worth Rs.50,000, which were being brought to Jaffna from Colombo, were seized at the Elephant Pass check point on 19th January. The Secretary of the Vavuniya Citizens Committee has lodged a protest.

More Fireworks

The Northern Commander of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Mr. Kittu, in a press statement accepted responsibility for setting fire to Veerasingham Hall and the Jaffna Post-Office on 20th January.

He stated that the LTTE had sufficient grounds to believe that

All the world knows that the Governments has been talking peace for well-nigh four years almost mocking the very concept of peace. There are on and off periods in the peace negotiations but no let-up in the hostilities. Killing of people does not seem to matter. Death has lost its sting.

What a happier place today's world would be, if it were blessed with a few more healer politicians of the like of Aquino. Our own island of paradise has been turned into a battle ground with the in-breeding of far too many warrior politicians "that strut and fret their hour upon the stage/And then are heard no more".

It is the common people who have had to pay the price of their lives for the folly of these infallible warrior politicians. Over three lakhs of people have been uprooted from their homes and the death toll must be in the region of fifteen thousand in a decade of emergency rule. What of the many thousands including twelve-year-olds (not to be out-beaten by South Africa) who are languishing in prison camps like Boosa?

Why is Peace so elusive? Perhaps peace-with-justice and power cannot co-exist in our country. Didn't Lord Acton say: "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men"?

Bus Operators Also Protest

The Mini-Bus Operators' Association of Jaffna staged a protest against the embargo on fuel in the North with a huge demonstration on 19th January. Slogans against the action of the Government which is causing hardship to the people of Jaffna rent the air. A mini-bus was pulled by two bullocks to signify the present predicament of the people.

Cow The Only Casualty

One house was damaged in the Koddady area and a cow killed by shelling from Army Camp at Fort on 19th January.

the Army stationed in the Jaffna Fort, which had already taken over the Jaffna Telecommunication Exchange was planning to occupy these two buildings also as part of the plan to regain control of Jaffna.

The militants had removed all furniture and equipment from these buildings before setting fire to them.

In an earlier development on 20th January, the LTTE had taken three foreign correspondents to Veerasingham Hall and Jaffna Post-Office and pointed out to them the tell-tale marks of Army firing last year, which led to shifting of the offices housed in them to other places in the town.

Veteran Awarded Diploma

A Diploma has been awarded to Mr. T.Duraisingam to mark his active participation in the Anti imperialist Afro Asian Solidarity Movement at a meeting of the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, held on 21st December 1986, at the Headquarters of the Committee in Moscow. Among those who spoke at the meeting were Mr.Tolstikov, First Deputy Chairman of the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, Dr.S.Kalandarov, Secretary General and Nikolai N. Topcheyev.

Mr. T. Duraisingam a Veteran of the Afro-Asian peoples solidarity organisation, and Secretariat member of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Association of Sri Lanka, has also addressed the 13th Presidium Meeting of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation, held from 16th to 20th of December 1986, in Ulan Bator, the Capital of the People's Republic of Mongolia.

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