

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Vol. 6 No. 10 28th March 1987

TIGERS BLITZ CAMP

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) successfully stormed the mini-camp at the Pannai Police Quarters in the early hours of Monday (23rd March).

The Tiger blitz left 14 servicemen dead and 12 injured. Eight are held captive by the Tigers.

The over-run camp lies just across the road from the ramparts of the Jaffna Fort and next to the Telecommunication Centre occupied by Security Forces. The Mandaitivu Army Camp lies a few kilometres away.

— 7, 2 AK Drum Magazine LMG, 4 SLR.

The Tigers who died in the attack are: Rajamohan, Arunan, Pandithar and Gilman.

The operation took less than half an hour.

The Tigers attacked the camp round about 1.30 A.M.

The Army back-lash lasted over 3 hours. Jaffna Town was shelled at

The shelling killed 2 persons and injured several.

Power supply had to be cut as the lines were damaged.

No Swap?

The following news item appeared in THE ISLAND (26th March):

Negotiations to obtain the release of 8 Security Personnel held captive by the LTTE are continuing and no firm decision regarding the "swap deal" had yet been reached, Government sources said.

These sources who ruled out the possibility of releasing 20 hardcore terrorist members in exchange for the 5 army men and 3 policemen in terrorist captivity, said that such a "swap" was out of the question where the Government was concerned. "We are seeking other means through negotiations to obtain the release of the security men" Government sources said.

Meanwhile, LTTE's second in command is reported to have said in Jaffna that the security men in their custody "were being looked after well".

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Strong Demo In Town

A 3000 strong demonstration by Eelavar Munnani (Front of Eelavar) comprising men, women and children went through the Town's main thoroughfare on 26th March. The demonstration commenced from Nachimarkovil and ended up at the Kachcheri. Many eye-catching slogans were carried in procession. The main objective of demonstration was that India should recognise the Liberation struggle of the Tamils.



Five soldiers and three Police Officers are reported missing and combined search operations have been launched.

— Govt. Media Centre.



The POWs

The Tigers, who lost 4 militants in the attack, took away several weapons and ammunition.

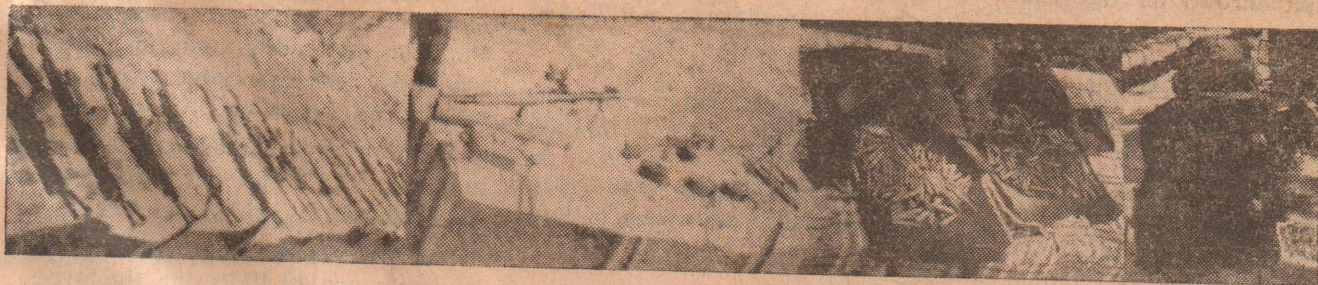
The captured servicemen are: Upasantha Gunatunga (PC 7591), Palitha Karunatilleke (PC 13760), Amarasena (PC 91966 144), Siri Kumara, Chandrasri, Bakmeewewa, Ubawanse, Thilak Kumara.

The Army weapons, now in the possession of the Tigers, are: 8 T56 rifles, 3 AK Grenade Launchers, 1 RPG

random, while helicopters strafed the Town, Nallur and other areas.

Mortar shells damaged the General Hospital, the S.H.S's Office, the Bank of Ceylon Regional Office, the Vembadi Girls' School, a private dispensary opposite Vembadi Girls' School, and several houses down First and Second Cross Streets.

The water tank in the Bishop's house premises, about half a mile away from the Fort, was damaged too.



Captured Arms

CONFRONTATION CONTINUES

More than 200 Security Forces who moved from Vasavilan army camp towards Kurumbasiddy came into direct confrontation with the militants of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) on the morning of 25th March. The soldiers were backed by two helicopters which fired at residential areas at Earlalai, Kurumbasiddy, Kupilan causing considerable damage to dwelling houses.

At about 3 p. m. helicopters again fired in the areas of Mallakam, Tellippalai and Kattuvan areas damaging houses, shops, schools and temples. In consequence educational institutions in these areas were closed. Eventually the soldiers returned to their base. In this confrontation many soldiers were reported killed and arms and ammunition seized. Manoranjan of Pungudutivu (LTTE) lost his life, and three others injured.

Continuous shell fire from Vasavilan and Palaly army camps resulted in fire persons in a family being killed and many being injured. More than 10 houses were destroyed. K. Somasundaram (50) and A. Kandiah (70) were killed instantaneously. Ambigathevi Kandiah (15) and Lokambikai Vamathevan (32), two females who were admitted to Jaffna Hospital in a serious condition, died shortly after admission.

Release All Political Prisoners In Sri Lankan Jails

Saturday Review

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No Faith In Cease-Fire

"The Sri Lanka Government under the guise of a cease-fire on more than one occasion only strengthened its position with arms and ammunition and then began to decimate the Tamil people. As such we will not again be hoodwinked by the Government to agree to a cease-fire" said, Kittu, the Area Commander of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Jaffna District in an interview to a Tamil Daily. The armed forces, he said are attempting to encircle the entire North and East and the embargo on fuel has further exacerbated the position and increased the hardships of our people.

No Takers For Fuel Coupons

The Government's decision to issue fuel on ration and on the basis of coupons came to naught as no one turned up at Palaly, Kangesanthurai, and Jaffna Fort Army Camps to draw their fuel quotas.

Of Bombs And Crocodile Tears

Just three weeks ago, shells that emanated from the Jaffna Fort, killed a number of innocent people and wounded several others. The Magistrate who conducted the Inquest has in pronouncing his verdict said that they were murders and has ordered the Police to take further action in the matter. Will the Police take action in terms of the direction made by the Magistrate and when will they bring the culprits to book? Is this possible under the present set up?

How many such cold blooded murders have taken place all over the Northern and Eastern Provinces during the past few years? When will all this come to an end?

Presidential Commissions are appointed from time to time to inquire

by

K. Thurairajah

into allegations of Bribery against Politicians. The most recent one appointed after the present Government came into power, was a few years ago and its findings were published a few months back. Several Ministers, Junior Ministers and Government Party Members of Parliament were found guilty. Have they been sent out of the Government. If not, why not?

This is not the first time that such a thing has happened. Are these done just to hoodwink, the public or to fool themselves or the world?

The Police and armed forces in any country are noted for their discipline and integrity, and are always called in as a last resort to quell disturbances. Any excesses they indulge in are the subject of severe criticism and when proved the Ministers in charge and even Governments in power resign from their positions. Can Sri Lanka think of any such Minister having resigned his portfolio? Any amount of criticism from any corner will not deter them from vacating their offices. It is all water thrown on the Duck's Back!

During the Second World War when Colombo and Trincomalee were bombed by Japanese planes Ceylon was yet a British Colony. Yet for all, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke was appointed Civil Defence Commissioner and all essential commodities required by civilians were distributed without any hitch. Today, in spite of the fact, that we call ourselves independent, people in the North are deprived of the essential commodi-

ties and the ordinary civilians are killed like mad dogs, their homes looted and burnt, their fields destroyed and all this by the so-called guardians of the law and Order!

The Government said that it was going to ration petrol and diesel on permits issued by Army Personnel. Also! no vehicle owner has so far gone to obtain these permits!

Nobody, even the President. his Council of Ministers, Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, Rupavahini and Lankapuvath can hoodwink the country and the world all the time. The time is not far away, for them to pay for all the sins, they commit.

Where is the guarantee that what happened to the various Dictators, will not happen to our High ups?

It was only last Sunday night that a handful of militants were reported to have gone into the Jaffna Police Quarters, which is now an army mini camp, and taken a number of army and police personnel as prisoners, after having killed and wounded several others, captured a good quantity of arms and ammunition.

As a result of this what have the Armed Forces done? From about 1.30 a.m. till about 7.30 a.m. more than 68 shells were fired from the Jaffna Fort, leaving aside the bombs dropped and aerial firing indulged in by Bombers and helicopters, killing and wounding a number of civilians, apart from destroying dwell-

Computer Scholarships

Three scholarships are available for a week-day computer programming course at a prestigious Centre for Computer studies in Jaffna.

The course will be held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9.30 a.m. to 12 noon.

The scholarships will be awarded applicants from affected families.

The selection criteria are average intelligence and a knowledge of English.

All applications with bio-data should be sent to the Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW, 118, 4th Cross Street, Jaffna not later than 8th, April, 1987.

ling houses, schools, shops, hospitals and government offices. How many thousands from the North and the East have been made destitutes in their own motherland leaving aside the lakhs who have fled the country to take shelter all over the world? What is happening in the North is repeated in the East as well.

If the President and his Council of Ministers are democrats (they call themselves to be) why can't they, without shedding crocodile tears, come to the North and the East and see for themselves, what their blind bombs, shells etc., are doing to the civilians here? They have their Armed Forces to protect them? Or is it that, they have no faith in them?

GOLDEN LOTUS



AARANI was a sweet child born to Shanmugam Jeyathan and Sulochana in Myliddy in the Jaffna Peninsula. She was lovingly called "THANGA".

After the demise of Mr. Thamber, the uncle of Mrs. Jeyathan, the whole family lived in his house at Karukampanai.

From her infancy this child displayed great maturity in her conversation with others and innate sense to put into practice what she had been and heard. She gained the love and admiration of those who had been associated with her even for a few hours.

Her humane feeling transcended animals and birds. She immensely loved calves, lambs and chicks.

She had passed into eternity at the early age of 10 leaving the loved parents, relatives, neighbours and friends in abject distress.

May she Rest in Peace.

Mrs. P. Kanagarajanayagam

Arrest Of Plantation Youths:

Minister's Early Warning

Excerpts from the Presidential Address of Minister S. Thondaman at the 29th Convention of the Ceylon Workers Congress, held on 15th March.

President Jayewardene too addressed the Convention.

The CWC is pained and concerned that even as declarations are made about the need for an early solution there is unabated death and destruction in the North and East. We fervently appeal for an immediate cessation of armed action by all parties and resumption of negotiations.

While welcoming the initiatives of the Government of India to end the ethnic conflict, we feel India whose good offices are accepted by the Government of Sri Lanka and the militants should work out a limited time frame for resolution of the problem and if need be even spell out its own formula.

The situation prevailing in the North and East is having repercussions in every part of the country. In the

plantation areas the indiscriminate arrest of youth by the police has created unnecessary tension and a fear psychosis. Even after repeated discussions and demands that the consent of trade union and managements be sought whenever there is a problem, the police persist in acting arbitrarily.

It has often been said in some sections, of the daily press that in objecting to arbitrary arrests of estate youth, the Ceylon Workers Congress was obstructing the forces of law and order. This is not correct. The CWC has at all times co-operated with the police in legitimate activities to maintain law and order, but we are anxious to prevent a situation of social and political disequilibrium as a result of indiscriminate arrests and detention of plantation youth who are released after long months of detention allegedly for conducting investigations. It is one thing to take into custody youth against whom there is verifiable evidence, but to detain youth on tip-offs and secret information furnished by mischief-makers is to pave the way for creating a situation such as in the North and the East. I have drawn the attention of

the Government many times in the past to the dangers of indiscriminate and arbitrary arrests of youth, and I do so, once again.

It is also well to remember that plantation youth have been, and still are, the most neglected and most disadvantaged among the youth of this country. They have been denied education all these years and a scant and meagre start is being made today. If at this time, the even tenor of their lives is disturbed and disrupted by arrests and detention on grounds which cannot be sustained, they cannot be blamed if they take to the path of violence to obtain redress.

Forces which had exploited the backwardness of these people are now irked that a serious attempt is being made to uplift them and bring them out of the situation and find a place for them in the mainstream of national life. That the plantation youth should be concerned about the legitimate grievances of those in the North and East is not beyond the pale of comprehension. Nor is this phenomenon peculiar to the plantation youth. Even

in Tamil Nadu concern is expressed about the legitimate grievances of Tamils in this country.

The CWC has been able to contain the feelings of the estate youth to expression of sympathy only and keep them out of violence. It is important that the actions of the CWC in this direction are not vitiated by the hamhandedness of the police. It is also more important that the hands of the CWC are further strengthened to keep the youth within limits.

The most positive way to wean the plantation youth from going astray is to provide them with opportunities and avenues in the national mainstream where their talents, ability and spirit could be fully used by making available industrial, vocational and professional training, so that they would be an asset to the community and country.

I would suggest, for this purpose that the Government should create a division in every appropriate ministry to be in charge of upgrading the conditions and quality of plantation worker and thus show that it is really interested in the welfare of plantation youth and in improving their quality of life.

Jaffna Farmers Appeal To The President

We publish below a memorandum submitted to the President by the Jaffna District Agrarian Services Committees Federation. The Memorandum was signed by Mr. K. Sathianandasivam, Secretary and Mr. S. Ariyadurai, President.

We wish to bring the following facts to Your Excellency's notice and to urge Your Government to take immediate remedial measures to grant redress to the suffering farmers of this District.

With the blockade of fuel supplies to the Jaffna Peninsula with effect from January 1987, the farmers depending on water pumps for irrigation had to abandon their farms due to non availability of kerosene oil.

Consequent to the petrol and diesel blockade, transport has become so expensive and difficult that agricultural produces cannot be taken to markets in or out of Jaffna and hence the produce is rotting in

the fields. Prices of tomatoes, Onions, Beet root, Plantains have dropped so low that they don't even cover transport costs.

On the other hand the price of chemicals: fertilizers and seeds have shot up so high that the farmers cannot cultivate their lands during the next phase of crop rotation in intensive cultivation. Most farmers have thus been reduced to total destitution.

Owing to the stringent checks carried out at the various barriers from Elephant Pass to Puttalam and the consequent delays often for several days the agricultural produce sent in lorries perish on the way thus causing heavy losses to the farmers.

Farmers living close to Army Camps and surrounding areas had to abandon their homes and farms. They have become Refugees in other areas.

Since 1984, the farmers of this District are supplied with only local potato seed and this has always proved to be a total failure.

The climate and soil of Jaffna are unsuited to the variety of potato which is seeded in Nuwara Eliya. Since 1984, the farmers have incurred heavy losses. Although we made repeated representations every year to the Govt., no relief was granted. Local potato seeds continue to be supplied to Jaffna District evidently to kill potato farming in Jaffna. Seventy five percent of the farmers have already given up potato cultivation.

In the cultivation of Chillies and Onions also the farmers do not get prices commensurate with the heavy expenditure they incur on cultivation.

All these coupled with the rise in the cost of living have brought about the total destitution of the Jaffna farmer.

During the November 1985 Floods, several farmers lost all their crops. The houses of some of them were badly damaged. No compensation whatsoever was paid to them although they made applications through the respective Assistant Govt. Agents.

Under the circumstances, we request that:-

Adequate Kerosene Oil supplies be made available to the farmers of Jaffna District immediately.

The Fuel blockade be removed forthwith to enable the transport services to return to normal.

Deliberate delays while checking at barriers be stopped in respect of agricultural produce to enable the farmers to transport perishable goods quickly to markets.

The import of Chillies, Onions, Bombay Onions and potatoes which are timed to coincide with the harvesting seasons in Jaffna be rescheduled so that the price of agricultural produce in Jaffna is not depressed and the farmers in Jaffna are not pauperised.

Adequate compensation be paid for crop failures including the 1984 potato crop failure.

Relief in the form of special foods stamps be given immediately to all farmers affected by the Fuel

(Continued on page 6)

Text of a statement by the Citizens Committee For National Harmony (CCNH).

The negotiations that took place last year to end the ethnic conflict progressed to a stage when it appeared that with a little further effort a political settlement could be reached. During the second half of 1986, the Government of Sri Lanka, and the TULF with the active mediation of the Indian Government had evolved, through intensive and painstaking negotiations, a package of proposals which appeared to resolve most of the problematic issues relating to devolution. The next step was the participation of the militant groups in the final phase of the negotiations that should have led to the formulation of proposals acceptable to all parties to the conflict. However, developments immediately thereafter have led to a sharp reversal of these peace efforts.

Before we consider how each party can take its own initiative to end the deadlock, it would be useful to recall the sequence of events which have led to the escalation of violence and the suspension of negotiations.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The militants have declined to enter into negotiations stating that the package was unacceptable in that it has not approached their minimum demand for a single Tamil region constituting the North and East, thus fore-going an opportunity to explore a wide range of options which could have dealt with the basic problems and fears underlying the demand for a unified Tamil region. The militants have also expressed a more fundamental distrust of the Sri Lankan Government and its intention to implement a negotiated settlement. Towards the end of 1986, they were reported to be considering a "Unilateral Declaration of Independence", which was later denied. This was allegedly followed by preparations to set up a parallel administration which would levy taxes, issue licences for vehicles, and take over various government functions.

The Sri Lankan Government, interpreting the actions of the militants as an unequivocal decision to pursue the military option, replied by cutting off fuel supplies to the Jaffna peninsula which was the centre of the militants' proposed "parallel administration", restricting communication facilities and launching an extensive military operation in the North and East. The Government claims that the purpose of their actions was to convince the militants that they could not achieve their political objectives

through military means, and persuade them to participate in the negotiating process. It should also be noted that the Sri Lankan Government has to face mounting opposition from sections of the Sinhala people, who having opposed the provincial council system, now point to the responses of the militants and their refusal to negotiate as proof of the correctness of their stand.

NO MILITARY SOLUTION

These sections have posed the question whether the Government of Sri Lanka, has any option except to pursue a military solution if the militants refuse to enter into negotiations for a political settlement. The assumptions underlying this question, however, cannot be dealt with in a simple and direct answer.

First, the Citizens Committee for National Harmony would disagree with a position which comes to such a final conclusion about the response of the militants. It is essential that every effort be made to bring

Military Victory No Cure For Ethnic Conflict

the militants to the negotiating table, on the assumption that the initial objections that they make regarding their lack of confidence in the Sri Lankan Government's intentions or their demand for a single Tamil region, are themselves based on a desire ultimately to reach a durable political settlement.

Second, the Committee strongly feels that if there is exclusive emphasis on a military solution in response to the intransigence of the militants, then it is likely that given the geo-political situation and the support which the militants have been able to mobilise, the conflict will be protracted and would have long term consequences that would embitter both communities.

Third, it is important in all action taken to solve the ethnic conflict, first priority should be given to those processes which can lead to reconciliation and sustain communal amity in the long-term.

Strategies which are aimed at military domination by any party or situations which are tantamount to military defeat while they may yield short-term results of a limited nature, they cannot provide durable solutions to the ethnic conflict.

No military victory, as such, can cure the peoples of our country of the deep seated roots of ethnic distrust, conflict and violence. The real healing of these wounds and removal of the curse of ethnicism is by an honest acceptance of the humane ethnical values of our cultures and religions and a return to a civilized way of life.

Success in war may not make the victors more humble, humane and civilized, or the vanquished more wise or even timed. The strong bonds of hurt ethnicity may prolong the conflict given today's technological possibilities of long-term and even long range guerilla warfare. This is all the more likely in the geo-political context of ethnic loyalties across the Palk Strait, the economic interests of arms dealers seeking markets for their weapons, and the interest of some actors in the international arena in destabilizing Sri Lanka and/or the Indian Sub Continent itself.

We have also to be warned that a course of action that prolongs the distrust and the conflict will seriously jeopardise the possibility of our

trictons on Jaffna have been producing strong reactions in India particularly in Tamil Nadu. In February the Indian Government decided that it could not continue in its mediatory role in the face of developments in Sri Lanka and what it described as military operations against Tamil civilians. This presumably referred to the killings of civilians resulting from military operations — particularly the incidents in Mannar, Trincomalee and Batticaloa — which the security forces claimed were operations against militants and militant hide-outs and camps, but which others, including persons in these locations, alleged were indiscriminate attacks resulting in a large number of civilian deaths.

The Indian Government's statement, however, contained no comment on the moves made by the militants, to set up a parallel administration nor were the military action and economic measures taken by the Sri Lankan Government recognised as action to these moves. On the

one hand, the Indian Government had reason to be disappointed that Sri Lanka took the military initiative in the middle of its efforts at mediation, and perhaps did so without any process of consultation with Indian Government which was playing the mediatory role. On the other the Sri Lankan Government and sections of the Sri Lankan people who had welcomed India's mediation and entertained great hopes concerning its outcome, had reason to be disappointed that the Indian statement avoided all reference to the actions of the militants and the problems which led to the military response by the Sri Lankan Government.

However, it would seem that the Government of India is primarily concerned that the continuation of the operations will prolong the conflict and make it impossible for her to play her mediatory role. This is the crucial issue which the Sri Lankan Government has to examine objectively, unaffected by what may be perceived as a hard position taken by the Indian Government.

RECONSIDER MILITARY AND ECONOMIC MEASURES

The Sri Lankan Government has continued to maintain that it has not opted for a military solution. On the basis of this position, it is timely for Sri Lanka, to reconsider its military operations as well as the

INDIAN AND SRI LANKAN PERCEPTIONS

In the meantime, the military offensive launched by the Sri Lankan Government and the economic res-

(Continued on page 5)

MILITARY VICTORY NO CURE FOR.....

(Continued from page 4)

economic measures which it had taken.

The economic measures in particular were taken to counter the alleged plan of the militants to set up a paralysed administration. The Government then needs to ask whether the action it has already taken has not been adequate to prevent the establishment of such a parallel administration and whether now it should not suspend the offensive and other economic measures in order to offer once again the opportunity to all parties to resume negotiations and to reach an early political settlement. The economic sanctions in particular have caused great suffering to the civilian population of Jaffna. It has disrupted their agriculture, industry, transportation and their normal day-to-day life. The Citizens Committee is of the view that any strategy of the Government to deal with the action of the militants must be such as to avoid any action which imposes hardship indiscriminately on the civilian population, or denies them their basic rights as Sri Lankan Citizens. Such action has to be decried on humanitarian grounds. It also becomes counter productive for our efforts at reconciliation and peace, as the Tamil communities would feel that the Sri Lankan Government deals with them indiscriminately as a hostile population and therefore become further alienated.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Citizens Committee for National Harmony, therefore, earnestly appeals for simultaneous initiatives by the three parties concerned. The Committee appeals:

- to the Government of Sri Lanka that it suspends its military operations and economic measures to provide for the necessary climate for resumption of negotiations and the mediatory effort by the Government of India;
- to the militants, that they make a clear and positive response indicating their willingness to enter into negotiations, accepting the agreements and discussions that have taken place between the Government of Sri Lanka, the TULF and India up to 19 December 1986, as the basis for commencing negotiations and desisting from any attempts to set up a parallel administration;
- to the Government of India, that it resumes its mediatory role, and uses its good offices and its influence to persuade all parties to

the conflict to enter into serious negotiations for a political settlement.

These initiatives will create the conditions for the measures which must follow. The address to Parliament by the President on 19 February 1987 enumerates, step by step, most of the actions needed for reaching a political settlement. These include a cease-fire, the negotiations, the amnesty and the release of prisoners. These steps should not be conceived exclusively as a sequence where one party's action follows that of the other. They should be reciprocal and wherever feasible with simultaneous commitments and actions on an agreed time-table. Then they could be effective in renewing the peace efforts and bringing all parties together to work towards a final political settlement.

An immediate cessation of hostilities is one paramount overriding condition for a peaceful negotiation. Such a cessation of hostilities should have two basic elements. The suspension of military operations by the Government security forces, with forces remaining in their encampments, and simultaneously the suspension of all acts of violence by the militants as well as any type of action which disrupts or interferes with the civilian administration and the exercise of its lawful functions. The experience of the cease fire at the end of 1985 shows that it is important that the conditions of the ceasefire be negotiated in some detail, and the obligations of each party be clearly understood.

An impartial body should be set up to monitor and help maintain the cessation of hostilities, such a body should include an adequate number of members selected from a list of persons submitted by the militants as being acceptable to them.

The Committee wishes to emphasise that the present situation in the North and East poses a great dilemma to all those who are committed to democratic solutions. At every stage the steps that are taken should be designed to facilitate the restoration of the genuine democratic process making room for the free and legitimate expression of the will of the people. All parties to the negotiation should be committed to these basic objectives.

One step that might be taken early is the repeal of the Sixth Amendment which can reactivate the parliamentary process for the Tamil people.

The solutions on the most difficult problems as that of the unit

of devolution for the North and East should be taken after genuine democratic consultation with the people of the area who are affected in different ways by the various options that are proposed.

The Government of Sri Lanka would have to address itself seriously to the fundamental misgivings which have been expressed by the militants regarding the sincerity of its intentions, its readiness to implement a settlement and its capacity to ensure its durability. The Citizens Committee in its earlier statements has referred to several elements in the situation which has given rise to misgivings and indicated lines of action that might help to establish the necessary mutuality of trust and confidence essential for negotiations. These include: - assurances of an appropriate form in which a few concerned countries could participate, with India playing a major role; broadening the base for a national consensus on the ethnic issue through initiatives which will obtain the support of the major opposition party. The rivalries of the main political parties have prevented a peaceful solution to this issue for over three decades. These can be continued for long only at the price of sacrificing many more lives at the altar of political opportunism.

The Citizens Committee reiterates its view that one of the basic conditions for creating such a consensus would be to provide the opportunity for the opposition to participate in the political life and in the parliamentary processes in accordance with their electoral strength in the country. This would imply some agreement between the parties on when and how parliamentary elections, on the basis of proportional representation, will be held. If this approach is adopted the Government will have the opportunity of ushering in a new political era. It can heal the differences between the communities and put behind the bitter party antagonisms which have plagued the political life of the country. It is only an approach of this kind that would provide a guarantee of stability to the settlement, restore the confidence of the Government to implement this solution and create the necessary basis for a united Sri Lanka which can solve its internal problems with full national integrity.

We welcome the recent meeting between the President and the Leaders of the SLFP concerning these issues. We urge that such a continuous dialogue be developed between the Government and all the

political parties towards the achievement of National consensus.

We likewise invite the citizens groups and peoples movements in India to give consideration to the complex factors involved in this issue. We from both countries have to try to understand the conflicts of interests involved, and how these can be manipulated by politically interested groups to the detriment of both Sri Lanka and India. We recommend the growth of people to people contacts to strengthen our common efforts for a just peace.

It is also imperative that the common people of this country give more forthright expression to their desire and help all the main actors in the negotiations who are now locked in hard positions, to move towards rational compromises that accelerate a settlement. Senior citizens who have held responsible positions in professional and public life, and who continue to command attention on account of their non-partisan and impartial approach have a special obligation by the community to come forward in this time of grave national peril and speak forcefully on the need for an immediate stoppage of hostilities, and a just peace. The Citizens Committee for National Harmony in collaboration with a number of citizens bodies and peace groups in all parts of the island are attempting to provide one broad-based forum for such people's action. They invite all interested persons and citizen groups to make early contact with them to work out together modes of action which will promote peace and achieve the objective of an early end to the settlement.

A Foreign Hand?

22 persons were killed and 123 injured when the "Rockfort Express" train plunged into a river on 15th March after the track had been blown up by an explosive device. The engine and 8 carriages of the Express train went off a bridge 60 KM from Trichurapalli, South India. The General Manager of Southern Railways, Mr. V. K. Balasubramaniam who was on the ill-fated train stated that this mishap was a clear case of sabotage. Mr. P. Chidambaram, Deputy Minister of Internal Security who was booked to travel, missed it at the last moment.

The militants have disclaimed all responsibility in this train disaster. Reports from India indicate that inquiries have been set afoot by the Government to bring the saboteurs to book. The possibility of a Security precautions have been strengthened in the rail tracks. In the meantime later reports indicate that train services have been resumed. They also suggested foreign hand in the incident.

HOLD CIMA EXAMS IN JAFFNA

Editor
SATURDAY REVIEW

There has been a series of appeals, representations and requests by Registered Students, Examinees, their parents, their Lecturers, and by me representing the CIMA Jaffna Branch that the London CIMA Examinations Centre be reinstated in Jaffna.

There have been considerable misgivings and misunderstandings among the student population that our London Institute is unwilling to reinstate and does not understand our students problems.

It is however made clear in the reply received that the Commissioner of Examinations is not certain about the security of the examinations and the safety of his staff.

Therefore it is high time that we are now faced with the task and responsibility of convincing the Commissioner of Examinations, that there is adequate security and safety for the process of Examinations and for the staff deployed in the process of examinations.

I am annexing the copies of my letter to CIMA London, the reply received and my letter to G.A. Jaffna.

DR. V. Thirugnanasambanthar,
(Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, London and President of the Association of CIMA Members and Students in Jaffna)

Jaffna.

(Reproduced below are the CIMA's reply and the letter to the G.A. Jaffna).

Jaffna Farmers....

(Continued from page 3)

blockade and military activities which have made refugees of resident farmers in Valikamam North, Vadamaradchy and other A.G.A. Divisions in Jaffna District.

Imported Potato Seeds be Supplied to the farmers of Jaffna atleast from the next Season

Immediate action be taken to expedite the payment of compensation for the crops and houses damaged during the Nov. 1985 floods and by military action in 1985, 86 and 87.

We fervently hope that this appeal of ours on behalf of the poor farmers of this District whom we represent will receive Excellency's earnest consideration.

Dear Dr. Thirugnanasambanthar,
EXAMINATION CENTRE,
JAFFNA.

Thank you very much for your letter, dated 19 February 1987, addressed to the Secretary.

We are very aware of the problems encountered by our students who live in the Jaffna area, and we should very much like to reinstate examination centres both there and in Kandy as soon as it is permitted.

As you will know, the Commissioner of Examinations undertakes responsibility for the administration of our examinations in Sri Lanka, and we are not able to operate examinations in the Island without his permission and co-operation.

We have at several points over the past few years asked the Sri Lanka branch to investigate with the Commissioner the possibility of re-opening a Jaffna centre. The reply has always been that this will be done as soon as the Commissioner feels he can guarantee the security of the examinations and the safety of his staff.

The situation has not yet changed to the satisfaction of the Commissioner, and I regret that the Institute cannot make a further move without his agreement.

Yours sincerely,
M P M Nimmo

Administration Director Examinations

The Govt. Agent,
Jaffna.

Dear Sir,

London CIMA (formerly ICMA)
Examinations

I wish to refer to previous correspondence and representations in this matter by many of our Registered Students, their parents, their Lecturers and by me.

Now I have again written to our Head Office in London and a reply is received. I am annexing photostat copies of my letter and the reply received. From the reply it is clear that our London Institute is always ready and willing to re-instate their Examinations Centre but the Commissioner of examinations has given his reasons for not reinstating.

I most sincerely hope that you would be able to convince the Commissioner of Examinations that your good office along with us, members and students could guarantee the security of the examinations and the safety of the staff of the Commissioner of

Examinations as referred to in the CIMA letter of 5th March 1987.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for any further details, explanations or evidence.

Thanking You,

I wish to remain,
Yours faithfully,

Dr. V. Thirugnanasambanthar

Pointless Checkpoints

Editor
SATURDAY REVIEW

My wife, a not too healthy person, and I travelled to Vavuniya from Jaffna Town and back—outward journey on 25th December 1986 and return journey on 17th February 1987.

On the outward journey, as the bus was routed through Mullaitivu, it had to pass through 3 checkpoints.

LETTERS

On the return journey, the bus travelled along the main Vavuniya-Jaffna road thereby passing through 7 checkpoints. At Kilinochchi alone, there were 2 checkpoints—the purpose of which is not at all understood.

On the outward journey, the bus was delayed at the Elephant pass checkpoint almost one hour and we nearly missed the train to Colombo. At Omantai, which is only 8 miles north of Vavuniya, I had to place my suitcase on the metal road now turned gravel and made muddy by the rains. At Elephant Pass too, I had to place my suitcase on the road to open it for inspection. In addition to male passengers, even the female passengers were forced to alight from the bus and made to walk a certain distance at Omantai and Vavuniya.

On the return journey, the male passengers were made to alight from the bus with their suitcases etc. at 5 checkpoints. The female passengers were, however, not made to alight from the bus. At the first checkpoint at Kilinochchi, the male passengers were made to walk a distance of about 300 yards carrying their baggage in the hot sun.

As far as I can see, the checks made by the security forces are purposeless. They only make a cursory inspection of the baggage. Except at one or two places, where improvised benches have been made

out of forest wood or used railway sleepers for the baggage to be placed for inspection, at all the other places, the baggage have to be placed on the road and opened for inspection. Why can't tables be provided at every check point to enable the bus passengers to place their baggage and open them for inspection.

The ordinary travelling public are not fools to carry with them anything objectionable especially when they travel by public transport. In my view a check of passengers baggage at Elephant Pass and again at Vavuniya would serve the purpose.

I am not a young and sturdy person. I am past my sixties and it was a trying time to alight from the bus 5 times carrying my suitcase and in one instance to walk about 300 yards in the hot sun, which I am not used to. All I had to do at the various check points was to open my suitcase and remove the cloth on top. The security forces did not see what was under the cloth. What is the purpose of carrying out a check like this? It would have been better not to check at all and thereby avoid the unnecessary harassment caused to me.

K. C. Adiapathan
Valvettiturai

An Appeal

Editor
SATURDAY REVIEW

Venerable Siyambalawewa Wajiragnana Thero, the Chief Incumbent of the temple of Wewagedara, Kurunegala, is an enthusiastic member of the Peace Committee of Kurunegala. We wish to bring to your attention the request made by him, whose wish is to have a just and reasonable solution to the ethnic question in Sri Lanka and who works towards this end.

He informs us that four people who were transporting and selling coconuts in a lorry had been abducted by a young armed group at Morawewa on 26.2.87. The lorry cleaner D. A. Anura Siriwardana and the driver Mahathun of the abducted group are well known to him. Siriwardana, especially, was a dayaka of the temple and close a friend of his. Ven. Wajiragnana came to meet us and asked us whether we could do anything to get them released.

Please do whatever possible to get them released.

Ariyawansa Ranasinghe
Secretary, Kurunegala Peace Committee
Kurunegala

REFLECTIONS OF REV. PAUL CASPERSZ

Sri Lankan government must find a political solution to the ethnic problem. Failure to do so would mean escalation of violence in the estate areas.

This appeal was made by a Catholic priest, Rev. Paul Caspersz, who serves in the plantation areas for the welfare of estate workers, when I interviewed him on his last visit to Jaffna in the company of Rev. Fr. Yogan Devananda.

It all began in a discordant note when organizers of his visit were reluctant to let him be interviewed by me as a freelance. At this stage, Rev. Caspersz intervened and said, "Alright, I consent for an interview provided you show your write up to one of the organizers before publication."

The journalist in me rebelled and I quite respectfully told the priest, "Father, norms of journalism do not let me do so". "I appreciate your position. That is the breed of journalists. It is difficult to say 'no' to them", responded Rev. Caspersz. The following is the full text of the views, he expressed during the sixty-minute interview in his room at the seminary:-

The poor plight of the plantation workers stirred me and I together with Late Bishop Nanayakara founded the Sathyothaya Centre for Social Research and Encounter in Kandy, with a greater emphasis among other things to pave the way for a right understanding between the Kandyan peasantry and the estate workers.

The take-over of 72 private estates and 75 company estates under the Land Reform by the former government hit the estate workers:

ANAESTHETIC MACHINES GIFTED TO HOSPITAL

Two field anaesthetic machines have been sent to Jaffna hospital; they were purchased on contributions collected for this purpose by Christ Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

These funds were collected as a result of concern arising from the irregularity of oxygen supplies to the heavily taxed Jaffna hospital.

Contributions came from a variety of people. The opening contribution came from the Bishop of Massachusetts, whose diocese has sent many missionaries to Ceylon. The highest contribution came from a Sinhalese donor. The smallest came from the

Although the Law of Land Reform was socialist and anti-imperialist in character, it unfortunately caused great hardships to Tamil estate workers in its implementation.

Added to this the food shortage that prevailed in the years 72-73, hit the estate workers very badly.

It must be clear that whether it be food shortage, earthquakes, floods or riots, it is the estate population that is most affected for they have the least resources to face them. We set up a co-ordinating secretariat of plantation Areas to intensify our mission.

During the tragic racial riots in 1977, the plantation workers were directly attacked for the simple reason that they were Tamils.

The period between 1820 and 1840 can be called the Darker Age for the estate workers, when they were brought from South India to build roads and establish coffee estate in the upcountry. It was an age of coffee and hardships for these workers. The only parallel we can draw from history is the transportation of Negroes from Africa to America.

The period between 1880 and 1948 was the Dark Age or the Age of Tea where conditions began to be less bad and there were social legislation like estate education.

The period between 1948 and 1964 was the age of statelessness. The Citizenship law of 1948 decitizenized the estate workers and the citizenship law of 1949 disfranchised them.

It was a terrible act and added on to all other indignities they were subjected to. It was, in fact, on this issue and on this occasion, that S.J.V. Chelvanayakam founded the Federal Party. This is to the glory of the origin of the party. But, it was unfortunate that thereafter, this party did not pursue its efforts for the upliftment of these workers.

wife of a Mexican student who heard about the project at a party and was moved to empty her purse and donate 2 U.S. dollars which was all she had. Some others responded to the appeal by offering other kinds of help besides contributions, such as mailing envelopes. The bulky package was brought to Ceylon and was handed over to Bishop Swithin Fernando by a Sinhalese volunteer.

Dr. Nachinakiniar, Medical Supdt. Jaffna, expressed deep gratitude for the gift. He added that one machine has already arrived and is functioning. This, he said, is saving several lives.

During this period Dr. Malan was head of South African regime which was characterized as an apartheid one. It was at this time that an angry Dr. Colvin roared thus:-

"Has the shadow of Dr. Malan descended upon Sri Lanka."

During the 1947 general election Ceylon Indian Congress won 6 out of 7 electorates and also influenced the election of non-U.N.P. candidates to Parliament. These unfair legislations were not only anti-Tamil and Anti-Indian but also anti-working class in character.

The period between 1964 and 1981 was the age of great uprooting and the Repatriation age. This was the result of Srimavo-Shastri Pact. This

agreement lapsed in 1981. The present benefits of an increase in wages, equal wages for males and females, ensuring 26 days of work every month are still a Presidential decree and not yet Law.

When we are in the upcountry, we get engrossed in the natural beauty of the landscape bounded by hills and brooks and are overjoyed. But the moment, we glance at the linerrooms in which the estate workers live, our joy disappears. We experience a heavy heart.

If, we find a political solution to our ethnic problem if only we can find peace with justice, we can restore understanding and live friendly in a plural society.

V. Varathasuntharam

APPRECIATION

Mr. Ponnampalam Kumarasamy

With the passing away of Mr. Ponnampalam Kumarasamy, a Member of the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka and Secretary of the Jaffna District C.P.S.L., the country has, lost a forward-looking and patriotic son and the left movement and Trade Unionism an intrepid fighter.

KUM, as he was affectionately called by all who came into contact with him, became an ardent votary of Marxism-Leninism ever since he was a student any consistently remained true to his conviction till his death. His *modus operandi* of disentangling any complicated problem was to view it from a class point of view.

When the question of admitting children of the Minority Tamils to the Assisted Schools in the North came up to the fore in the forties, KUM, spearheaded the students' movement that uncompromisingly demanded that all students be freely admitted irrespective of caste distinctions. He fought the obscurantist caste ridden, feudal elements, that controlled the Assisted Schools and won the battle. That was the beginning of his life-long struggle for the down-trodden, which became the hall-mark of his subsequent political career.

He gave up his employment under the State, a symbol of status and one that gives a sense of security to the average middle class Jaffna Tamil and plunged himself headlong into political and Trade Union movement, motivated by the axiom "*Salus populi suprema lex esto.*"

He was so well equipped politically that he was catapulted to the membership of the Polit-Bureau of his party. As a voracious reader he was well informed and kept himself so abreast with the national and international developments, that hundreds of youth including those who were ideologically hostile to him attentively listened to him and appreciated and admired his pattern of logical thinking which was essentially revolutionary and progressive.

His periodic visits to Socialist Countries further enriched his inexhaustible stock of knowledge. His last visit was to the peoples Republic of China a few months back.

He was closely associated with the late Mr. P. Kandiah, an outstanding theoretician of Marxism-Leninism and who has gone down into the history of this country as the first Left M.P. to be returned from the North.

Conquiescat in Pace.

V. MAHALINGAM

Tamil Target

This letter appeared in The Guardian (UK) of 12th March:

Sir,—One wonders whether those 64 Tamils who have been granted a stay of deportation are aware that at Sandhurst, a number of their Sinhalese adversaries have been trained as Sri Lankan army officers. I asked one such officer what he was going to do when he got back. "Kill Tamils" he replied.—Yours faithfully.

Siman Pettman,
Bath

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Serunewa Massacre

Twenty five villagers — 12 women, 8 men and 5 children — were massacred, allegedly by militants, on 23rd March at Serunewa in the Horowapathana area.

According to Colombo reports, a large group of 'terrorists' carrying sub machine guns and AK 47 assault rifles had swooped down on the village during the early hours of the morning.

The attackers, it is reported, had come from the Trincomalee border and made their way through thick jungle to Serunewa.

Thopur Mini-camp Attacked

According to a release by the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (EROS), on 24th March an army mini-camp at Thopur was attacked by them and 5 soldiers lost their lives. The soldiers unable to withstand the attack, withdrew to the main camp and in the process damaged 5 houses and took Muslim civilians as 'hostages.'

Talk On National Question

Prof.K. Pathmanathan of the Dept. of History, University of Jaffna, will deliver a lecture on 'The Historical Dimension of the Tamil National Question' at Chundikuli Girls' College on 31st March at 3.30 p.m.

The lecture has been organised by the Thanthai Chelva Memorial Trust in collaboration with the Chundikuli Branch Library Committee to mark the 90th Birth Anniversary of Mr. S.J.V.Chelvanayakam.

Mr.K. Nesiah will preside.

Prayer Week

The Mass Movement for Human Rights has declared a 'Prayer Week' from 27th March to 3rd April.

This Movement, headed by Mr. Seevaratnam, Attorney-at-law, aims to build up spiritual strength by way of prayer and contemplation for the restoration of the lost Human Rights. The concluding day will be an Ecumenical Day where religious of all denominations will meet in front of the Jaffna Secretariat.

Police Constable Injured

A Police Constable attached to the Police Post in the Jaffna Fort was shot and seriously injured by a Fort sentry, on Wednesday, when he was going for lunch.

T. Rajaratnam (25) of Puloly had left the Fort and was walking towards the Rest House when he was hit.

Relay Fast At Welikade

The Tamil detenus at Welikade have again written to the authorities that those who are been languishing in Boosa, Welikade, Tangalle and Bogambara for more than 18 months should be released.

Justice should be done to us" states a letter by the detenus who have started a relay fast at Welikade from 26th March.

This relay fast will continue for 10 days. If the relay fast fails to find any positive response from the Government, the detenus, the letter adds, will go on a death fast.

This is the third time the Tamil detenus are on a death fast since 1983.

The letter from the Welikade prison signed by two Tamil detenus (names withheld) have already been posted to several Government leaders, it is reported.

In Welikade Magazine Prison many arrested on the orders of the Government have been detained for a considerable length of time.

In Tangalle prison Mahadevan Ambigapathy who had been detained

from 8.1.85 was brought before Courts on 28.2.85 but is still in remand jail for the last 22 months.

In Boosa Camp numerous persons are under detention for more than 18 months.

At the Jaffna Army Camp Krishnappillai has been incarcerated for 3 years.

At Pelawatte several innocent youths have been languishing under detention.

6 persons at Welikade have been kept in custody without the semblance of a trial: 1. Kandasamy Thavarajah, 41 months; 2. Rajathurai Rajkumar, 36 months; 3. Sellathurai Sritharan, 34 months; 4. Sinnathamby Tharmalingam, 36 months; 5. Kadirgamar Balasingam, 36 months. 6. Pithambaram Nagaratnam, 36 months.

These persons were supposed to have been released on recommendations made by the Advisory Council but nothing came of the decision.

Rajaratnam Skandarajah (40) has been detained for 18 months. Several others are being kept in solitary confinement.



The captives relax under the watchful eye of KITTU (extreme left) the Tigers' Jaffna Commander.

Accused Refuse To Accept Indictments

8 of the 23 persons indicted on 14 counts under the Emergency Regulations and the Prevention of Terrorism Act with conspiring to overthrow the Government refused to accept their indictments in the High Court of Colombo on 23rd March. Mr.Bala Thampoe Counsel for Pul-sara Nayani Liyanage said that if an accused wanted to have an English copy of the indictment, it should be provided.

State Counsel mentioned that she is a Sinhalese and has no right to ask for an English indictment. The Defence Counsel, Mr. Bala Thampoe stated that there is no such thing as a Sinhalese or Tamil. There are Sinhalese or Tamil speaking people.

Court ruled that as a matter of justice, an English translation should be provided.

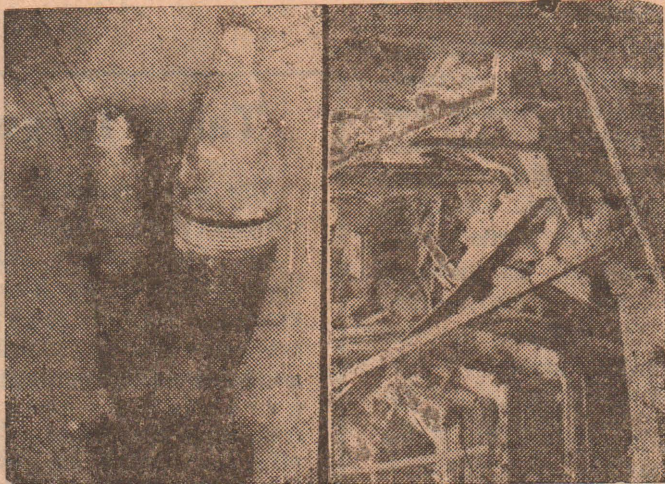
Counsel for Ramanujan Manikalingam, Mr. Kumar Ponnambalam,

stated that knowing that his client was a Tamil the state has not provided him with a Tamil indictment. State Counsel indicated that it would be made available in two weeks.

(Based on a report in *The Island*)

Commandos Killed

15 Police Commandos were reported to have been killed and their armored car (Buffel) blown to smithereens when it ran into a land mine at Porathivu in Batticaloa district on 25th March according to a LTTE press release. Another truck was also damaged in the same explosion. The bodies of the dead were airlifted by the Security Forces. A Government communique while admitting the incident claimed that three commandos lost their lives.



Two shells that didn't explode (left); a house damaged by shells.

AN INDEX Volume 5 (1986)

(Continued from last issue)

525. Militarisation and the Social Security State / Sunila Abayasekera No. 51, 17-1-'87: pp. 5.
526. Sewing school branch opened. No. 35, 20-9-'86: p. 11.
527. Stuck in the mud / Gamini Navaratne. No. 47, 13-12-'86: p. 3.
528. Take back the night / Kalpana Sharma. No. 48, 20-12-'86: p.5.
529. Tamils, a fossilized lot? / Mallika Rasaratnam. No.42, 8-11-'86: p.3.
530. Torture: World's sinister secret. No.34, 13-9-'86: p.2.
531. Warning to Sri Lanka: Prostitution and U.S. Bases/ Halinah Todd. No.20, 7-6-'86: p.7.
532. Youth cannot be billiard balls/ Swamy Chitruapananda. No.41, 1-11-'86: p.10.

SPEECHES — J.R.

533. President's speech (Address to the Political Parties' Conference on 25th June, 1986). No.24, 5-7-'86: p.3.

SPEECHES — LALITH.

534. Out of Lalith's mouth. No.17, 17-5-'86: p.1.

SPEECHES — RONNIE DE MEL.

535. How and why wonder book of Ronnie: Corps that failed. No.35, 20-9-'86: p.6.

SPORTS

536. Battle of the Golds/ Anton Ravindran. No.9, 22-3-'86: p.2.
537. Chip of the old Block (Cricket)/ Anton. No.12, 12-4-'86: p.2.
538. Cricket Journey/ Anton Ravindran. No.22, 21-6-'86: p.7.
539. Dollars before dignity/ Rienzie Benedict. No.2, 1-2-'86: p.2.

SPY

540. Moles at work in Tamil Nadu (Excerpts - India Today, 15-7-'86) / S.H. Venkatraman. No.26, 19-7-'86: p.6.
541. The spy who came in from the cold/ No.5, 22-2-'86: p.1.
542. The woman was a spy. No.3, 8-2-'86: p.6.
543. Was the lady (Willis) a spy? No.3, 8-2-'86: p.1.

TAMIL STUDIES .

544. New horizons in Tamil studies/ A. Theva Rajan. No.32, 30-8-'86: p.2; No.33, 6-9-'86: p.2.

TEMPLES .

545. Mavai Kandan (Maviddapuram Kandaswamy Kovil) No.24, 5-7-'86 p.6.
546. Selvasannithy and Roopavahini. No.14, 26-4-'86: p.1.
547. Shift Army Camp—Action Committee (Selvasannithy) No.15, 3-5-'86: p.1.
548. Temple or cemetery? (Editorial). No.13, 19-4-'86 p.1.
549. Thirukkoneswaram: Management goes Dormant (Letters)/ S. Sivapathasundaram. No.18, 24-5-'86: p.6.

TRADE UNION

550. C.M.U. for self — determination. No.42, 8-11-'86: p.7.
551. Joint front protests activists' arrests. No.7, 8-3-'86: p.7.
552. Solidarity Organisation's demands. No.8, 15-3-'86: p.5.
553. Tighten labour laws (Industrial Transport and General Workers Union's report). No.7, 8-3-'86: p.5.

U.S. AID .

554. U.S. muscle and multinationals/ Halinah Todd. No.33, 6-9-'86: p.9.

UNIVERSITY .

555. Exercise mature Judgement (University Science Teachers' Association). No.43, 15-11-'86: p.8.
556. Fast continues. No.45, 29-11-'86: p.1.
557. Jaffna Undergrads denounce torture. No.38, 11-10-'86: p.12.
558. Jaffna Undergrads fast. No.43, 15-11-'86: p.1.
559. Jaffna University students salute Pathirana. No.49, 3-1-'87: p.9.
560. Pathirana Murder: Students Union accuses J.V.P. No.51, 17-1-'87: p.7.
561. Ragging: The two sides. No. 30, 16-8-'86: p.1.
562. Respect Democracy and decency/Rajan Hoole. No. 39, 18-10-'86: p.4.
563. Students have their say / Gita Asirwatham. No. 30, 16-8-'86: p.3.
564. Undergrads begin death fast (Vijitharan's disappearance). No. 44 22-11-'86: p.1.
565. Undergrads protest. No. 29, 9-8-'86: p.1.

VIOLENCE ACTIVITIES

566. Acting Magistrate killed (Mr. P. Ranganathan - Trincomalee) No. 17, 17-5-'86 p.1.
567. Adampan incidents. No. 43, 15-11-'86: p.7.
568. The Akkaraipattu disaster. No. 6, 1-3-'86: p.8.
569. Battle ends; death toll mounts (Editorial) No. 3, 8-2-'86: p.8.
570. Bombers strike again (Editorial) No. 8, 15-3-'86: p.1.
571. Bring unsocial elements to book - University Science Teachers Association. No. 41, 1-11-'86: p.9.
572. Captain throws his weight about (Text of a Memorandum sent by the executive Officers of the Kankesan Cement Works to the P.M.) No. 6, 1-3-'86 p.7.
573. Come, take a look / K. Navarendran. No. 39, 18-10-'86: p.4.
574. C.T.B. Bus Heli-Bombed / Gamini Navaratne. No. 28, 2-8-'86: p.3.
575. C.T.O.: a post - Blast episode. No. 20, 7-6-'86: p.5.
576. Death rains from the skies. No. 6, 1-3-'86: p.1.
577. Devils in black kill, burn 3 (Vavuniya) No. 4, 15-2-'86 p.1.
578. The facts...the facts ..and the facts. No. 2, 1-2-'86: p.7.
579. Final Solution? No. 3, 8-2-'86: p.1.
580. Gandhian's hairbreadth escape. No. 39, 18-10-'86: p.2.
581. Here come a Heli (Nedunkerni C.T.B. Bus attack). No. 28, 2-8-'86: p.3.
582. Hindu priest feigns death to escape death. No. 45, 29-11-'86: p.8.
583. Home Guards killing spree (Batticaloa). No. 4, 15-2-'86: p.4.
584. Homicide verdict in Muthur killing. No. 44, 22-11-'86: p.7.
585. Iruthayapuram: Bloody Sunday's victims - list of names of the people who were killed in Batticaloa. No. 5, 22-2-'86: p.4.
586. Iruthayapuram's bloody Sunday. No. 4, 15-2-'86: p.8.
587. Jaffna bombed. No. 5, 22-2-'86: p.1.
588. Jaffna, my beloved Jaffna (Photographs) No. 6, 1-3-'86: pp. 3,4 & 5.
589. Jesuit Priest nearly shot in Batticaloa (Letter sent to S.P. Batticaloa by Rev. L.H. Cramer.). No. 41, 1-11-'86 p.7.
590. Kalmunai: Police on the Rampage. No. 48, 20-12-'86: p.12.

591. Kalmunai: uneasy calm prevails / D.B.S. Jeyaraj. No. 30, 16-8-'86: p.12.
592. Katankudi incidents. M.P. ready to disband Home Guards. No. 47, 13-12-'86 p.12.
593. Kilinochchi killings. No. 51, 17-1-'87: p.8.
594. Kilinochchi: The facts. No.2 1-2-'86: p.1.
595. Mandaitivu Massacre: Presidential Commission urged No. 22, 21-6-'86: p.3.
596. Mannar chronicle (Incidents in Mannar from the end of Jan. to March, 1986.). No. 12, 12-4-'86: p.8.
597. Man in blue kill, burn Tamil civilian. No. 16, 10-5-'86: p.8.
598. More murder and mayhem (Mandaitivu Massacre). No. 21, 14-6-'86: p.1.
599. Nainativu incident. Victim recounts Ordeal. No. 9, 22-3-'86: p.8.
600. Navy tells fisherman to cut Brother-in-Law. No. 27, 26-7-'86: p.8.
601. Operation Mullaitivu. No. 46, 6-12-'86: p.11.
602. Rampage in Nainativu. No. 7, 8-3-'86: p.8.
603. Raped woman testified (Muttur incident). No. 18, 24-5-'86: p.5.
604. Rupa plays about with dead civilians / Rajan Hoole. No. 30, 16-8-'86: p.4.
605. Sri Lankan Army's score card for 1986. No. 51, 17-1-'87: p.6.
606. Udumbankulam Farmers' massacre: Paddy stacks' their funeral pyres. No. 7, 8-3-'86: p.8.
607. Udumbankulam Victims. No. 8, 15-3-'86: p.8.
608. Upraised hands didn't help: S.L. Navy mows down nine Indian fishermen. No. 25, 12-7-'86: p.8.
609. Vadamarachy war games: a battledress rehearsal? No.44, 22-11-'86 p.8.
610. Victims' Testimony (Pavatkulam - Vavuniya). No. 28, 2-8-'86: p. 5.
611. VVT - the facts. No. 19, 31-5-'86: p. 8.
612. Who killed the West German? No. 37, 4-10-'86: pp.11.
613. Who sells lies? / V.A. Philipupillai. No. 36, 27-9-'86: p. 10.
614. Young Girl's pathetic story (Periyathambanai). No. 41, 1-11-'86 p.8.

WARFARE.

615. Inside Jaffna Fort : Battle of Nerves. No. 35, 20-9-'86:
616. Lanka has sophisticated weapons Scanner. (Excerpts: Newsweek of 23rd June.) No. 26, 19-7-'86: p.6.
617. Post - script to Brigadier Rupasinghe. No. 6, 1-3-'86: p. 2.
618. Reply to Brigadier Rupasinghe (Letters) / Soma. No. 4, 15-2-'86: p.6.
619. Upholding civilized Norms in wartime/Premadasa Punchihewa. No. 48, 20-12-'86: p.10.
620. U.S. Style bombing in Sri Lanka / Hollis. No- 37, 4-10-'86: p.9.
621. Warning by Army (Full text of a leaflet from the Security Forces). No. 34, 13-9-'86: p. 1.

INDEX TO THE AUTHORS

(The Numbers attached to the names refer to the Serial Numbers in the Index)

Abayasekera, Sunila	525	Gnanamoorthy, J.	257
Abraham, A.S.	355	Goonetilleke, H.A.I.	22, 284, 306, 326
Amali,	243, 488.	Gunasekara, Lakshman	82, 84
Anandan, S.	459	Gurusingham, R.	181
Annam,	369	Gutierrez, Gustavo	218
Anton,	537	Hamida, Essma Ben	102
Archimedes,	242, 244	Hawksley, Humphrey	354,
Ariaratnam, I.R.	54	Hettiarachchi, A.M.	300
Asaria M. Iqbal,	160	Hollis	620
Asirwatham, Gita,	563	Hoole, C.R.A.	73
Asirwatham, S.R.	336, 359.	Hoole, Rajan	67, 79, 118, 221, 229, 249, 255, 273, 294, 309, 316, 324, 325, 333, 349 360, 362, 376, 381, 382, 513, 562, 604, 141
Balaratnam, Nirmala	105	Hunter, Jane	141
Benedict, Rienzie	539	Jaya	390
Benedict, S. Anton	29	Jayaram, C.S.	214
Brodie, Lalitha	516	Jayewardene, J.R.	136
Canagaratnam, Swendirini	59	Jeevaraj, S.	343
Chai, Ang Swee	451	jesuthasan, R,	373
Chai, Teh Chin	439	Jeyaraj, D.B.S.	69, 146, 276, 278, 319, 328, 467, 591
Cheliyan	405	Joganathan, R.	321
Chelvanayagam, S.J.V.	100	Kadirgamar, A.	45
Cheran, R.	441	Kadirgamar, Seelan	151
Chidrupananda, Swami.	532	Kamalaharan, C.	386
Coomaraswamy, Radhika	57, 522	Kanagaratnam, D.J.	34, 283
Colonel, Sheila S.	442	Kanthasamy, S.	39
Davies, Maryam	445	Karlekar, Hiranmay	123, 447
De Riggs, Kojo	403	Karunaratne, Vickramabahu	20
De Silva, D.M.	408	Khoo, Francis, K.S.	440
De Silva, Neville H.	253	Kiruparaj, Victor S.	87, 417,
Devasagayam, Charles	129	Kumar	375
Dixit, J.N.	353	Kumaresan, T.S.	258
Dixit, Kanak	435	Kunene, Mazisi	413
Eberhart, Richard	396	Laube, Sylvia	452
Emmanuel, M.P.	85	Lewin Hugh	387
Enjay	182	Machado, Roberto	124
Fernando, H.N.	21, 348	Mahalingam, V.	13, 385
Fonseka, Manel	41	Malhotra, Inder	269
		Manickavasagar, T.	40
		Manon	14
		Mapalagama, Nelum	345
		Motilal Nehru, V.L.	15

Ms Teh Poh Ai	1	Selbourne, David	340, 346
Muni, S.D.	70	Selvadurai, Peter	282
Munshi, Debashish	179	Senanayake, F. Ranil	71
Nadarajah K.	47	Senthilnathan, W. S.	155
Nanda, B.R.	152	Sharma, Kalpana	528
Navaratnam, V.N.	464	Shriganeshan, Kandiah	391
Navaratne, Gamini	26, 27, 52, 256, 339, 371, 501, 520, 523, 524, 527, 574, 588,	Siriwardene, Reggie	65, 223
Navarendran, K.	30, 573	Sivalingam, Shanmugam	421
Nelson, W.A.	164	Sivanandasundaram, K.	262
Nesiah, K.	111 119, 515	Sivapathasundaram, S.	549
Newsham, Jill F.	77	Sivathamby, K.	180
Nisha Sankari	389 420	Soma	252, 288, 617, 618
Oorvasi	418	Somasundarampillai, A.	101
Paranirupasingam, S.	383	Soysa, Bernard	500
Parimoo, J.N.	450	Sri Pathmanathaganeshan.	63
Parthipan, S.	192	St. Roche, Francis	19, 46
Pathmanathan, S.	60	Steele, Jonathan	498
Peng, Khor Kok	517	Subramaniam, E.	44
Perera, D.A.	508	Subramaniam, K.	327
Perera, Jehan.	287, 297, 312, 337, 241, 347	Subramaniam, N.	425
Perera Malcolm	277	Sunder, Shun K.	148
Perera, Rienzie, S.C.	366	Thambiah, R.W.C.	303, 365, 377,
Perera, Wilmot A.	335	Thavarajah, R.C.	292
Philipupillai, A.V.	49, 219, 308, 370, 613	Thevarajan, A.	17, 18, 161, 162, 178, 438, 544
Ponniah, S.	130, 236, 305, 378	Thiagarajah, Thayalini	388
Punchihewa, Premadasa	619	Thiruchandran, Selvy	68
Ragupathy, P.	168	Thiruchitrampalam, S. K.	163
Ramanathar, K.	496	Todd, Halinah	106, 531, 544
Ranjitha	399	Urvasi	409
Rasaratnam, Mallika	104, 331, 521, 529	Vaikunthavasan, K.	350, 42,
Ratnasamy, S. K.	48	Van Wyk, Christopher	401
Rattai, V.	363	Velupillai, A.	165
Raveendran, S.	422	Venkatraman, S.H.	540
Ravindran, Anton	83, 536, 538	Vinayagamoorthy, T.	159, 167,
Rudra, R.	35, 43,	Viraj Kumar	443
Sabesan, N.	415	Viswanathan, J.	16
Sabharatnam, P. P.	228	Viswanathan, S.	66, 222,
Sanmugathan, N.	143, 301	Vittachi, Tarzie	74
Santhirasekaram, S.	113	Vitullo, Anita	444
Sarachchandra, Ediriwira	259	Wijenayake, R.V.de S.	341
Saverimuttu, Amirthanjali.	395	Zavier, B.	357.
Schalk, Peter	72		
Sebaratnam, C. S.	234		

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